THE PLEASURE GARDENS
OF EDINBURGH NEW TOWN

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University of Edinburgh

December 1984.
This thesis is based on an historical study of the private pleasure gardens of Edinburgh New Town, the first of which was formed in the reign of George III and the last some hundred years later in the reign of Queen Victoria. Over 40 such amenity gardens - intended primarily for the use and benefit of the residents whose houses overlooked them were created covering in total nearly 100 acres (40 ha): with few exceptions they remain in the hands of local residents.

A general introduction and background to these gardens is provided in the first Section of the thesis, while the next and subsequent sections trace in greater detail the development and history of those gardens contained within the first and second stages of the New Town. By concentrating on these two periods it has been possible to achieve a greater and more rewarding insight into the subtle, but up until now little understood relationship between the building of Georgian Edinburgh and the evolution of the open spaces which so successfully compliments it.

The pleasure gardens thus included - St. Andrew's Square, Charlotte Square, East and West Princes Street gardens, the 3 Queen Street gardens, Drummond Place, Royal Circus and lastly Bellevue Crescent provide in themselves a good and interesting mixture in terms of size, shape, age, design, management, use and varying fortune: some have survived better than others, and one or two - notably the Princes Street gardens have been repossessed as public ornamental spaces.

To have covered all the pleasure gardens in such depth was beyond the scope of this thesis although several of those excluded possess a history equally as diverse and interesting. Where appropriate, however, reference has been made to them in the text, and to aid comparison a short outline of each has been added in Appendix 2.

This thesis is wholly my own work.
TO Robbie, Calum, Sarah, Thomas and Simon who have cheerfully tolerated short tempers and short shrift on many occasions due to something called *Ham's Thesis*. One day I hope they will enjoy reading it.

Regretfully my father and Aunt Mary did not have that opportunity — my writing took too long.

*Acknowledgements*

The discovery in 1970 that many of the Clerks and Secretaries on the various New Town pleasure gardens in Edinburgh still had in their possession unique records relating to their gardens - particularly in the form of old scarce books was the keystone to this research. It was as a result of a small survey on the gardens carried out by the post graduate students in Landscape Architecture, Edinburgh University and complementary to a much larger project initiated by architects in the city to assess the condition of the buildings in the new houses. These signs of fabric deterioration and innovative alterations were proven vital to post-war suburban. The results were presented as a result of a conference held at at that same year on "The Conservation of Georgian Edinburgh" - the main outcome of which was the setting up of the New Town Conservation Committee. Having studied upon this project produce source of material which had never been systematically studied, not only in the context of being lost or dispersed encouraged me to write this historical adventure.

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First therefore in my acknowledgments I must sincerely thank all the Clerks and Secretaries of the pleasure gardens who willingly gave their time to see me and made freely available the information I sought. They include: Mr A. Blair WS., Mr W. Brotherston SSC, Mr E Cameron WS, Mr W. Crabbie WS, Mr T. A. Crawford WS, Mr W. D. Davidson WS, Mr John Elliot WS, Mrs Betty Gray, Mrs S. Hamilton, Mr J. Hepburn, Miss L. Irvine, Mr John Macfie WS, Mr L. R. S. Mackenzie WS, Mr Francis More GA, Miss Pearson, Mr A. J. B. Pilcher ARIBA, Mr Ritchie CA, Mr Ian Stuart CA, Mr Tompkins WS, Mr J. Tullo CA, Mrs G. Walker, Mr F. C. Yeaman WS.

There were 2 other major sources of information: the archives of the George Heriot Trust, and the Edinburgh District Councils archives. In the former many hours were spent sifting through old minute books and checking the very rich collection of drawings - aided by the kindly and seemingly endless patience of Mr Smiley: it was a joy to work there. Of equal pleasure was my association with the archive section of Edinburgh District Council where I was similarly guided - this time by Dr Walter Makey: his stimulating response to my questions and ponderings, and detailed knowledge of the history of Edinburgh were invaluable and his helpfulness seemed to know no bounds. That Dr Makey was also one of my supervisors was a special bonus. To Mr Smiley and Dr Makey my special thanks.

Further information was culled from a wide range of libraries and other organisations including: the Royal Botanic Garden library, the Scottish Records Office, the National Library for Scotland, Edinburgh University library, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments, National Monuments Record, Scottish National Services library, National Portrait Gallery, Scotland, National Gallery for Scotland, Edinburgh City Museum, The Cockburn Association, the Walker Trust, Edinburgh District Council's parks department and estates department. In all these I was met by helpful and interested staff, and although none are named individually - all were equally appreciated. I have left for
special mention the Edinburgh Room attached to Edinburgh Public Library where I spent many hours searching through old newspapers and other items. How fortunate Edinburgh is to have such riches so freely available and meted out by most friendly and obliging assistants.

I also owe a debt to my other supervisors - to Dr Eric Stevenson for early encouragement and to Ted Ruddock who took over from Dr Stevenson at a late but important stage when his wholehearted support helped to reduce mountains into manageable molehills and to propel matters to a swifter conclusion. Mrs Ann Munro cheerfully took on the formidable task of mastering my hieroglyphics and somehow transforming them into a masterly typed document which I barely recognise as my own. My thanks to her and to Mrs Rhona Porteous and Miss Sandra Dickie for helping to avert a last minute crisis. I owe to John Byrom my interest in architecture and landscape; his skill at writing I cannot match but he has provided a standard I have tried to approach.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the useful grant received from the Social Science Research Council in 1973 which helped to fund the initial research.
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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE EDINBURGH NEW TOWN PLEASURE GARDENS

The Edinburgh leisure gardens are in their unique, for no other city or town either in this country or abroad has produced such a range and variety of comparable open spaces. True, the rapid growth of London during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries yielded an abundance of open squares, each served with a central enclosed area, but very often these were poor, dull affairs that were grafted on as green havens of retreat, and over time full visits to the individual pleasure...

The Gentleman was also rich in new schemes fixed for their elegant and carefully worked plans which harmoniously and representatively united residential terraces with broad avenues, central open spaces, and magnificent vistas. Indeed, he observed, that London's first real square - Covent Garden pleasure was modelled or at least influenced by the sixteenth century Place des Vosges in Paris (1) (the original Place Royale). A view adopted with even greater conviction by Amore in his book on Georgian Gardens (2). He traces a direct lineage between all the various Georgian squares in this country and the French example. But in one respect the Place des Vosges differed significantly. Its central...
1.1 INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen an upsurge of interest and information available on Edinburgh's past, much of it centred on the New Town itself; yet the pleasure gardens - a substantial and important part of Georgian Edinburgh-have consistently been overlooked. Their study however, has revealed extraordinary riches and fascinating detail previously unknown, complementing and extending our knowledge of the many aspects relating to the design and development of the New Town itself.

Edinburgh's pleasure gardens are in fact unique, for no other city or town either in this country or abroad has produced such a range and variety of comparable open spaces. True, the rapid growth of London during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries yielded an abundance of town squares each served with a central enclosed area, but very often these were poor, dull affairs, slow to be exploited as green havens of retreat, and several over time fell victim to the incessant pressures for additional building land. Other examples of contemporary Georgian developments in cities such as Dublin, Bristol, and Norwich, and at fashionable resorts like Cheltenham, Bath, Buxton, and Brighton very often included communal garden spaces linked with the surrounding housing, but not usually on the same lavish scale as occurred in Edinburgh. Nevertheless all these centres, and London and Bath in particular, provided an important impetus and inspiration behind the Scottish capital's own expansion and improvement which took rather longer to gather momentum.

The Continent too, was also rich in new schemes famed for their elegant and carefully worked plans which harmoniously and impressively united residential terraces with broad avenues, central open spaces, and magnificent vistas. Indeed, one writer has asserted that London's first real square - Covent Garden piazza-was modelled or at least influenced by the sixteenth century Place des Vosges in Paris (1) (the original Place Royale). A view adopted with even greater conviction by Stuart in his book on Georgian Gardens (2). He traces a direct lineage between all the various georgian squares in this country and the French example. But in one respect the Place des Vosges differed significantly. Its central
open space was never intended as a semi-private garden area, but as a communal thoroughfare suitable for public gatherings and entertainments. In a similar manner, the Italian piazza and German platz were fashioned as hard, formalised spaces, out with the control of the surrounding residents who exercised no presumptive rights or responsibilities over them. The gentler British climate, coupled with the more cultivated taste for rus in urbe, helped to produce this distinctive variation and nowhere was it adopted to finer advantage than in Edinburgh.

1.2 EXTENT, SIZE, AND GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

A little more than one-tenth of the area of the New Town (fig. 1) consists of open space formed as private pleasure gardens, ranging in size from the West Princes Street gardens (32 acres, 12.8 ha) and Regent Gardens (12 acres, 4.8 ha) to the smaller strips and squares such as those at Rothesay Terrace (0.3 acres, .12 ha) and the diminutive Rutland Square (0.35 acres, .14 ha) and Saxe Coburg Place (0.6 acres, .24 ha). Half in fact are under 1 acre (.4 ha) in extent, with the rest divided almost equally between those from 1-3 acres (.4-1.2 ha), and those over 3 acres (1.2 ha). Their creation, like the New Town itself was greatly helped by being on land mostly owned by one body, the George Heriot Trust. The Trust initially sold off a substantial portion to the Town Council, but later themselves became involved in considerable land development. This made possible large scale co-ordinated estate design, an advantage not shared by the southern capital whose own growth had been far more piecemeal and fragmented. The gardens were very much a product of eighteenth and nineteenth century neo-classical planning, with its passion for order and symmetry. James Craig's approved design for the first New Town reflected this influence; he produced a unified scheme on a grand scale, with long impressive vistas, broad streets, and elegant squares; but in addition a considerable area was left free of all building, and devoted to open garden ground intended for embellishment.

In this kind of grand design, individual private gardens attached to these Georgian town houses were usually by necessity very modest in size, often awkwardly shaped, and frequently overshadowed. At best they
FIGURE 1: OS map showing Edinburgh's new town pleasure gardens coloured green (OS 1973R 1976)
provided a fairly restricted space, usually occupied with a central lawn, an outer footpath, and with flower and shrub beds positioned against the boundary walls; and their use mostly limited to clothes drying and occasional children's play (the redoubtable Mrs. Fletcher for example, removed from 20 Queen Street to 51 North Castle Street in 1804 "... for the sake of additional house room and a larger back green as playground for the children")\(^{(4)}\). Even so, the private gardens did allow a pleasant and peaceful buffer to the more private rooms at the rear. In contrast the public rooms to the front of the house (the dining room usually situated on the ground floor with the drawing room above) were carefully positioned to face onto open squares, broad main streets, and centrally placed pleasure gardens - providing a subtle balance between the bustle of street activities with refreshing glimpses of trees and greenery beyond. The surrounding open spaces were indeed seen as supplying the necessary light, ventilation, and air, together with adequate opportunities for outdoor exercise and recreation. All supposedly essential safeguards for health and well being after the cramped living conditions of the old town. Such estates were perfectly acceptable to a population accustomed to a more communal way of life, and not as yet seduced or conditioned by notions of villadom which were still to gather popularity.

As far as we can judge from the published plans, Craig intended his 2 main octagonal shaped open spaces - St Andrews Square and Charlotte Square - to be in the form of a continental place or piazza; or of their London counterparts at Grosvenor Square, St James' Square, Cavendish Square and so on, (before their later picturesque embellishment). That is, essentially as a bare open space, hard paved or grassed, containing one or more sculptured figures in harmony with the grandeur of the surrounding architecture, and main public buildings on the central axis (fig. 3). Later architects involved with further developments in the New Town also tended to treat the smaller open spaces in a similar manner. For example, William Sibbald's design for an ornamental basin of water at the centre of Royal Circus and Charlotte Square (Section 2.3 and Section 3.7); Thomas Bonnar's plan for a fountain in the middle of Atholl Crescent (fig. 4); and William Playfair's design for the land north of Calton Hill, where the small crescents and squares were all designed about statues and other ornamental detail (fig. 5). Unlike the London
FIGURE 2:
Map showing lands acquired by the George Heriot Trust either as proprietors or superiors (History of George Heriots Hospital, William Steven)

FIGURE 3:
James Craig's plan of the new streets and squares intended for the City of Edinburgh (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh)
FIGURE 4: Thomas Bonnar's plan for Atholl Crescent, 1823 (National Monuments Record of Scotland NMR)

FIGURE 5: William Playfair: Plan for the layout of the land to the north of Calton Hill 1819 (NRS)
squares, however, Edinburgh's garden spaces often departed from the ideas shown in the formal plans and developed instead into gardens of a much more informal character having about them something at least of the Palladian rural retreat.

James Craig's plan also included a wide band of formal parkland to the south of Princes Street and to the north of Queen Street, although both areas were beyond the boundaries of the competition brief. Craig and his adjudicators, as will be later described, were more than likely influenced by the earlier ideas of the Earl of Mar who had suggested in a pamphlet written in 1728 that this land could, with advantage, be formed into pleasure gardens. The two areas in question - the Princes Street gardens, and the Queen Street gardens - eventually developed as pleasure gardens. While Craig's plan helped to promote their use for such purposes this was not easily achieved (a near bankrupt Town Council were tempted on many occasions to allow building development along the North Loch), and would never have been so without a great deal of work and financial commitment from the New Town proprietors themselves. The land fronting Queen Street (which now contains the 3 gardens of Queen Street, East, Centre and West) was in fact at first sold and subdivided into many different plots, owned by several people, and put to all kinds of uses. Although the George Heriot Trust always stipulated in the feus granted that this band of land should be used only as ornamental garden space, even so part of the ground became a clothes drying green, another pasturage for cows and pigs, a further portion made into a coal yard, and much of the rest left wild. It took many years of patient negotiation by a few farsighted and dedicated individuals, and with all kinds of daunting setbacks, before the 3 Queen Street pleasure gardens were finally formed and safeguarded under a Private Act of Parliament passed in 1822 (refer Section 3.2 for full details).

Plans for the second New Town to the north of Queen Street as will be shortly described (Section 3.1) evolved much more slowly, and were influenced by a number of different artists and architects. What is not generally known is that, as in the case of the first New Town, a public
competition was held by the Town Council for a suitable design, and in October 1800 prizes of 100 and 50 guineas were advertised in the press for the best 2 entries (a much better premium than that awarded to Craig). Out of the many submissions received, 4 were judged to be equally good and consequently their authors - William Sibbald, John Baime, Robert Morrison, and James Elliot - were given an equal share of the premium. Robert Reid, the architect was appointed fairly soon afterwards to bring together these several earlier plans into one unified scheme. The plan finally accepted included 2 main spaces which were later formed into private amenity gardens: Royal Circus gardens (originally intended as one circular garden, but later divided by a public road making 4 gardens altogether) and Drummond Place garden. Subsequently two additional gardens were formed in front of Bellevue Crescent.

Further extensions to the New Town, including the ground to the north of Calton Hill, the Earl of Moray's estate to the west, and the Victorian additions on the lands of East and West Coates, and the Dean, all followed the earlier pattern of allowing generous areas of open space, free of all buildings for the purpose of being formed into communal gardens. Several of these later Victorian gardens occupied sites of great natural advantage particularly those fronting the Water of Leith, such as the Eton Terrace/Dean gardens, Belgrave and Douglas Crescent gardens; all being carefully designed to exploit the character of the river valley and by picturesque embellishment, formed into "arcadian" woodland retreats.

1.3 AGE OF THE GARDENS AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

The gardens were formed over a fairly long period covering about 100 years. Most followed the completion, or near completion, of the surrounding houses, but several were not set up until a few years later (refer figs. 6, 7 and 8). Such an interval was experienced in the case of the Queen Street, and Princes Street gardens, as well as some of the smaller gardens without precise feuing conditions restricting the use of the land for communal pleasure garden purposes.
FIGURE 6: John Ainslie's plan of Edinburgh 1804, (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh)
FIGURE 7:
Kirkwood’s plan of Edinburgh 1817
FIGURE 6:
Lothian's plan of Edinburgh 1825
First of all the gardens was St. Andrew Square which was levelled and enclosed in 1770. Charlotte Square garden was next. Although a substantial wall and railing was erected around it in 1797 the interior was left until 7 years later. By then one of the residents in the Square - a military gentleman one Colonel Drum - had become so impatient at lack of progress that he summoned assistance from the Inverness-shire Regiment of Militia (then stationed at the Castle) to undertake the levelling of the ground. Thereafter the garden remained without walks and planting until 1808 when a nurseryman, William Weir, began the work to an approved design produced by himself. Although the forming of this garden had been somewhat long and protracted it at least preceded the completion of the Square by several years.

Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, the East Queen Street gardens (the first along Queen Street) were laid out as pleasure gardens before those of West Princes Street: the former in 1814 by John Hay, garden architect and planner (also responsible for the design of the George Square gardens); the latter not until the early 1820's when major drainage work to the North Loch enabled James Skene's tasteful plan to be carried into effect. Many of the other gardens were formed during the development boom of the 1820's including the Central and West Queen Street gardens, Drummond Place, Royal Circus gardens, Rutland Square, St. Bernard's Crescent, Saxe Coburg Place gardens, and so on. Regent gardens, adjoining Calton Hill followed in 1830. By then the demand for new buildings had largely been met: if anything, there was a surplus of accommodation for the titled, professional, and monied middle classes who had provided much of the original development impetus. Not until the 1860's and later was the New Town further extended westwards and several new gardens came into being. The 3 highly attractive ones bordering onto the Water of Leith: Dean, Belgrave Crescent, and Douglas Crescent gardens, have already been referred to. But in addition several smaller gardens were created, notably the oval shaped spaces at the centre of the double sided crescents (Eglinton/Glencairn, and Grosvenor/Lansdowne), and other gardens such as Magdala Crescent, Drumsheugh gardens, Rothesay gardens, and Clarendon Crescent.
Although responsibility for setting up the gardens rested mostly with the surrounding residents, the Town Council on several occasions provided useful encouragement in the form of financial help and other assistance. In the case of Charlotte Square and St Andrew Square, the Council contributed money for the unfenced building chances in order to hasten progress; they also purchased a number of "shares" in the East Queen Street gardens at a time when pressure to raise money to buy the land was at its peak. Furthermore, the Council took an active part in promoting the extension of the Drummond Place gardens when the opportunity arose for the removal of the disused Custom house (then occupying the eastern end). On a practical level, William Sibbald, Superintendent of Works for the Town Council, drew up the first plans for the layout of the Charlotte Square gardens, and designed the enclosing wall and railing; he it was who made the central area circular in shape instead of octagonal as intended by James Craig. So it remained until 1874 when the garden was redesigned in order to accommodate the Scottish National Memorial to Prince Albert: an equestrian statue which Queen Victoria unveiled two years later with much pomp and ceremony. Two years later. Similar professional help was also offered by another Superintendent of Works, Thomas Brown who in the early 1820's became involved with the design and detailing of the enclosing wall and railing attached to the Central and West Queen Street gardens, as well as Drummond Place.

In general, the relationship between the Town Council and the New Town residents in such matters was very good: both sides were undoubtedly motivated by self interest in their desire to enhance the beauty and prestige of the New Town. The Town Council's involvement with the East Princes Street gardens was however less laudable. This large and important area of open space had been declared the responsibility of the Council in 1776 for purposes of a pleasure garden. But acute financial difficulties made such a large undertaking virtually impossible, while the temptation to put the ground to more remunerative uses became on many occasions almost irresistible (see Section 2.5).
1.4 OWNERSHIP OF THE NEW TOWN GARDENS

The more fortunate of the New Town residents had their garden ground made freely over to them by the developer, on condition that it was kept in good order and at their own expense. St. Andrew Square and Charlotte Square gardens were both made over in this way; and the Town Council eventually transferred the central area of Drummond Place to the surrounding residents (although in this instance an annual token payment of one penny feu duty was levied). Several other of the New Town gardens for example, Rutland Square, Saxe Coburg Place, the Moray gardens, Royal Circus, Coates and Atholl Crescent, and so on, were held on a similar free basis. In comparison, the West Princes Street proprietors—in spite of committing themselves to considerable financial outlays for the making of their gardens—were never to own them; the land being mostly held in lease from the Town Council although at a modest rent.

When pressure mounted from the middle of the last century to have the gardens made public one of the most telling arguments used was that by rights ownership of the land really belonged to the whole community. By the time the garden was reacquired by the Town in 1876 Princes Street had long since ceased to be residential and was almost wholly occupied with commercial, business, and hotel premises; yet remarkably the West Princes Street gardens retained their popularity to the end and while the number of residents had dwindled to practically nothing, the number of outside subscribers eager to use the garden had increased to well over 400.

The task of acquiring ownership was not always as simple or straightforward as in the cases just mentioned: the Queen Street proprietors for example, experienced a long and protracted struggle to purchase the several areas of land which eventually were united to form the Queen Street gardens(6). They personally had to raise substantial sums of money to pay for the ground, and in the case of the Eastern gardens were committed for a long number of years afterwards to meeting various annual ground rents. But the drive to improve and safeguard their property and surroundings never seems to have diminished amongst the New Town residents. Thus when the Drummond Place proprietors had the opportunity to increase their area of garden in the 1840's they
willingly contributed extra money to buy the land; likewise Belgrave Crescent gardens (fig. 9), Dean gardens, and Douglas Crescent gardens, were all substantially enlarged by the purchase of additional ground and on the initiative of the feuars.

Apart from the West Princes Street gardens, a few other of the smaller private amenity gardens have over the years been acquired by the Town Council under powers first granted by the Edinburgh Municipal and Police Act of 1879: for example, Gayfield Square (1887), Atholl and Coates Crescent gardens (1951: fig. 10 a&b), and the southern portion of Bellevue Crescent (1965). The Act allowed owners of any space set apart or used for ornamental, or pleasure and garden ground, to enter into an agreement providing for custody and management of such open spaces by the Corporation. Frequently these gardens had experienced difficulties raising sufficient money for their upkeep, through lack of any feuing stipulations; and were dependent on too few proprietors. Most had fallen into a neglected state, and the surrounding residents were happy to be relieved of responsibility for them. As all these gardens bordered onto major approaches to the city, the Council had a vested interest in seeing that they were kept attractive and adequately maintained.

Not all the open spaces in the New Town originally intended as private pleasure gardens became properly established. This happened in the case of the Hillside Crescent gardens, and the Royal Terrace gardens off the London Road, which formed part of William Playfair's design for the land north of Calton Hill (belonging mostly to the George Heriot Trust). Hillside Crescent, begun in 1823, provided flatted accommodation and developed very slowly; about one-third of the Crescent, including a portion of the garden, was owned by the Allan family (connected with the banking firm), and the rest by the Trust. Together they met the cost of having the garden laid out and for its initial upkeep; but no regular provision was made for looking after it, and no obligations were placed on the proprietors in their feu charters. Gradually the responsibility fell by default upon the Heriot Trust, who gave it scant attention, and it remained much neglected until taken over by the Corporation in 1952. The 1.04 acres (4.23 ha)
FIGURE 9:
John Chesser's plan for Belgrave Crescent 1865
(Edinburgh District Council - EDC, archival drawing collection)

FIGURE 10 a & b:
a. Coates Crescent showing the Gladstone monument
b. Interior of Atholl Crescent gardens
of Royal Terrace garden flanking Calton Hill had an even more mixed history. At one time this land had provided a lucrative source of income to the Heriot Trust from quarry workings. But these were eventually closed after several residents along Royal Terrace complained of loss of amenity. After seeking advice from their architect, William Aytoun, the Trust took on the responsibility for having the ground laid out and enclosed as a nursery or pleasure garden. By then a lot of money had been spent on improving the ground (including the addition of a gardener's cottage) and the Trust felt obliged to recoup some of their expenses. For several years space was rented out as a nursery, the tenant having the right to sell keys to nearby residents wishing to walk in the grounds. This is a common means of upgrading land - a device much used in establishing parklands in towns and cities of the New World, including New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America. A similar plan was once considered for the East Princes Street garden. The scheme was not, however, particularly successful and after experiencing several unsatisfactory tenants, the Heriot Trust (towards the end of the last century) agreed to lease the land to the Town Council as a public pleasure garden. This arrangement still stands today. (Fig. 11 a, b and c).

Even less fortunate were the Hopetoun Crescent Gardens off Leith Walk, which will be referred to again a little later. Although carefully formed into pleasure gardens in the early 1820's and enclosed by wall and railing (9) they never benefited from systematic upkeep because the surrounding crescent remained incomplete. By the 1860's the garden had become derelict (10) and today, over 150 years later it still survives as a wilderness area (fig. 12a). Robert Brown (1815-1834), the architect responsible for the feuing plan also included another area of pleasure garden further to the north (fig. 12b) but this was never made. Another garden area planned by Brown (this time part of the Walker estate at Goates) was established but subsequently disappeared. This was a circular plot at the centre of the Melville Street, Walker Street intersection, and is clearly shown on another feuing plan drawn up in 1825 by James Gillespie Graham for the lands of east and west Goates (fig. 12c). The Melville Street garden survived until the 1850's but was then superseded by a statue to the 2nd Viscount Melville.
FIGURE 11 a, b & c:

a. Hillside Crescent gardens
b. London Road/Royal Terrace gardens - showing the lime tree walk
c. London Road/Royal Terrace gardens, upper level - showing the bumps and hollows due to the old quarries
FIGURE 12 a, b & c:

a. Hope (Hotspur) Crescent surviving plan by Robert Brown (RHS) 1846
b. Hope Crescent (unfinished) and the derelict gardens
c. James Gillespie Graham's ground plan for the lands of Coates 1825 (RHS)
(sculptured by John Steell, and erected in 1857): the surrounding area being hard paved. Earlier, the Walker family had been thwarted in their attempts to acquire the monument to the 1st Viscount Melville (refer Section 2.2). The change however resulted in a rather barren and ambiguous space whose bleakness even inspired the Town Council to recommend that "a sward of grass and railing be put down ...": this simple improvement is still wanting.

James Gillespie Graham's (1776-1855) handsome plan (fig. 12c), with characteristics not dissimilar to the neighbouring Moray development (also to his design) would have provided several more pleasure gardens had it been put into effect. The plan well illustrates the approved style of layout then in vogue and shows the sensitive balance achieved between building and communal open spaces. His treatment of the Water of Leith embankment as a continuous ornamental strip was later adopted, but on a reduced scale by John Chesser (1819-1892) architect and Superintendent of Works to the Heriot Trust. Chesser provided an open space in front of Douglas Crescent, and this eventually was made into an attractive pleasure garden.

1.5 BACKGROUND TO THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF THE NEW TOWN GARDENS

Many of the New Town gardens were formed on ground previously cultivated as rich farmland producing such crops as wheat, barley, oats and rye: Lothian soil being reputedly as good as East Anglia's. Added to this a fairly equable climate, a low average rainfall, and readily available additional soil and spoil as needed (the builders of the New Town were only too happy to find convenient outlets for the surplus material accumulated during excavation) it can be seen that the gardens benefited from certain inherent advantages.

They were fortunate too, in being created at a time when the number of nursery firms was rapidly expanding; and nursery grounds containing a wide selection of flowers, shrubs and trees were easily obtainable and close to hand. Several of the nursery firms who regularly advertised their services in the Edinburgh newspapers are illustrated in fig. 13, and this provides a useful guide to their scope and comprehensiveness.


DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS.

Newly imported, and selling

BY DICKSON AND Co.,

At their Seed Shop, No. 2, Shad'square and New Town.

A Choice Collection of DOUBLE HYACINTHS.

Pink, Blue, and White—Polyanthus Narcissi,

Tulips—Three-time Jonquils—Liliums,

Bulbs for flowering in glasses and pots—A fine variety of winter-flowering Tulips—Tulip-Knottichol, forty varieties—

Tulip—Aristocratic—Charm Imperial, fourteen different kinds—Muscari—Alstroemeria—

A complete assortment of other Dutch Flower Roots, all in good condition—also Flower Root Glasses—Garden Pot—Garden and Medley Trees—Flower Root Bulbs, &c.

All new introductions, and much inferior to the other Seeds for which the frame being made of worked iron—also HIRKES'S Patent Corn Sifters.

At their large and extensive Nurseries on the right and left of Leith Walks, a choice Collection of FRUIT TREES of all sorts, best adapted to this climate, of their own propagating—also TREES suitable for the garden, found in the left foot gardens in this country; also from England, France, Holland and America, and the greatest pains and labour were bestowed to keep them clean.

A choice collection of LEATHER and Native GOOSE-BERRIES of the best and largest sorts—with hips, Cranberries, and Raspberries—also the Antwerp Raspberries, which, for size and flavour, are not equalled by any other kinds.

A complete assortment of EVERGREEN AND FLOWERING SHRUBS—A fine variety of Keb, ninety different kinds—Hedgerow, Green-bush, and Fernaceous Plants—A full flock of FORGET-ME-NOT, pink, lavender, and white, and strong wellecorated plants, feeding and transplanted, &c. Alters, common and weeping Birches, sweet and horse Chestnuts—Sycamores, Willows, Elms, and Ashes, American Spuce, Spruce, Silver and Balm of Gilead, Euca

Hollies, Hornbeams, Lærises, Labradorums, Limes, Oaks, Photuets, Horse-chest, Cliffsider, and Weymouth Pines, Planter, Poplars, and various other Shrubs, &c., well rooted, and likely to be grown either in any soil or situation, equal with those from any quarter, either on well-cultivated or neglected grounds, and forwarded with expedition to any part of the kingdom.

As also, a large quantity of STRONG THORNS, fit for planting out this autumn with Confidence—Early, Late, and Red Cabbage Plants, of all the different sorts.

At their Seed Shop and Warehouse, said to be full, a large and first assortment of Kitchen Garden, Fruit, Tree, and Flower bulbs, newly imported, of the best kinds, and most carefully selected.

Where all orders will be carefully attended to,的印象

Dowduen Durham Flower of Mustard, and double dill'd Pepperpots Water, of the best quality.

They have published an extensive BOTANICAL CATA

logue or price list of Flora, with descriptive lessons, from which follow,

of the names are alphabetically arranged, with figures and signatures denoting the size, order, situation, and duration of each plant, and with the name, and description of the use of the same; to which botanical names may be no further familiar.

They flatter themselves, that their arrangement may be found as concise and perspicuous as any thing of the kind hitherto published, and may enable any body engaged in Agriculture or Gardening, to either of motives, at once or at all times.

'They lay down the law of their return, because to their friends and acquaintances, and especially to those who have given to them further than the firm, for they have been ever ready and prompt in supplying it, have enjoyed for many years full, and, as they have found no other labour more worthy of their protection, and especially to those who may be pleased to instil with them the execution of their orders may depend on being served with the whole, on moderate terms.

GARDENS of good character, and well experienced in their business, may be heard of by applying as above.

GARDEN DESIGNING.

Appart of and improved nature.

J. HAY, Planter and Seedsmen, begs leave to return thanks to the Nobility, Gentry, and the Public, who have been pleased to favor him with their employment, and to assure them, that he will give designs of Gardens, plans all sorts of Green-houses, Greenhouses, and other kinds of green house, and will also execute on a new and improved principle, such as that at Milltown Tower and Glenfarg Castle; he undertakes and executes the same as carefully and elaborately as the best principles, in which those errors are avoided, that so often cause disappointment, and tocorrect which much time is lost and superfluous causes, designs Parks, and layout Plantations, Shrubberies, Approaches, Poodles, Ice-houses, &c.

and, besides, having had long experience at a practical gardener, has a complete stock of Seeds and Stoves, and has designed and executed plans of several of the principal places in both countries.

J. H. has also to intimate, that he has moved his shop from Bank Street to a more commodious one, No. 42, Nicholson Street, where he keeps every one a good Green-Tree, Watering Engines, Garden Chains, Bass Mats, and all articles necessary for the garden, with everything connected therewith.

J. H. is also to intimate, that he has moved his shop from Bank Street to a more commodious one, No. 42, Nicholson Street, opposite the Aikens School, where he keeps every one a good Green-Tree, Watering Engines, Garden Chains, Bass Mats, and all articles necessary for the garden, with everything connected therewith.

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GARDEN SEEDS, AND DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS.

JAMES RICHMOND, Land Surveyor, nurseyman, &c., and Seedsmen, South Side the Graf, Market, Edinburgh.

Has just now imported, a parcel of Dutch Flower Roots, with Early Shepherds, Beans, and various seeds, fit for the season, with Garden Utensils of all kinds.

Also, at his Nurseries at Tolcross, Well Side, Edinburgh, has a large assortment of Fruit and Forest Trees, Flowering Shrubs, Thorns, Crab and Apple Trees, &c.

All which he provokes to sell off at the very lowest prices.

N. B. As J. R. has neither time nor inclination to follow the modern hints of travel, the country to procure foreign goods, he proposes to give a line every article, to every annual visit. Payments made once a year, will be thankfully obliging.

NURSERY PLANTS, DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS, AND EARLY GARDEN SEEDS.

MRS. EAGLE, at her Shop a little above the FOUNTAIN WELL, High Street, Edinburgh, begs leave to inform the public, that she has just brought for sale, as usual, at her Nursery, Fruit Plants, a Stock of Forest and FOREST TREES, FLOWERING AND EVERGREEN SHRUBS, and a quantity of STRONG THORNS for HEDGES, with every other article in the Nursery Line.

Also just arrived at her Warehouse, by the late ships from England and Holland, a Collection of DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS of the best sorts, and a large assortment of GARDEN SEEDS, English OAK ACORNS, BEECH MAST, and other TREE SEEDS, warranted of late crop.

GARDEN UTSULNS of all kinds.

FLOWER POYS AND GLASSES, &c.

Bell NEW KENT HOPS in pockets.

10 per cent to those who are pleased to favour Mrs. Eagle with their orders, &c., may depend upon being served with the best articles upon the most moderate terms.

N. B. Noblemen and Gentlemen may be supplied with experienced GARDENERS of good characters, by applying as above.

Edinburgh Advertiser 23 October — 1 November 1792.

NEW SEED WHEAT, WINTER TARES, AND RYE.

OF A FINER QUALITY, FROM ELY AND KENT. For showing directly.

A FEW POCKETS FINE KENT HOPS, just arrived for Sale at PETER LASON'S WAREHOUSE, EDINBURGH.

Who has received this week from Haverhill, near Hambour, in go of condition, his usual collection of DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS.

Consisting of double and single Hyacinths, with and without names, Polyanthus Narcissus, large double Jonquils, fine Tulips, Roses, Willow, &c.,

And at P. Lawson's Warehouse to be sold—

All kinds of

Garden Seeds,

Garden Tools, of neat patterns,

Bonnets, Ropes, Lint, &c.,

with Silver for Rolls, Cardeway, Corbeller, &c.

Also Seeds, White and Durham Brown of Mustard.

Peter Lawson respectfully informs his Friends, that they will next Spring be supplied with BLANCHING and DUTCH SEEDS, as formerly, and will also continue to be carried on extensively, in company with Thomas Gentle, at Perelens, and with John Lister here.

Those who want any of the Seed Wheat, Winter Tares, or Rye, please send their orders, to the above.

Bideford Street, No. 1. 1799.

ROSES.

CHARLES AND JOHN PEACOCK, Nur

ers and Fellers of RUBUS, have been pleased to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that, having REMOVED to a Warehouse and Grounds at SPRINGFIELD, Leith Walk, for the business of all kinds of FELLS OF ROSES, their Grounds at Swanston, will have the pleasure of showing a great variety of ROSES now in flower.

C & J. P. having paid particular attention to the ROSES and the RED JOBS AND PRUSSIAN VIOLETS, and having had the honour to take them, that they have now brought them to the highest state of perfection. The colours of the ROSES at Leith Walk and Edinburgh, will all be shown particularly and particularly.

Orders for the Roses while in Flower will be received, and punctually attended to, at the proper season.

Edinburgh Advertiser 2 July 1822.

13

ADVERTISEMENTS of different nursery firms in Edinburgh.
Only five seedsmen/seed merchants are listed in Williamson's Street Directory of 1773/74 but by the turn of the nineteenth century this had increased to nine - several by that time calling themselves both seedsmen and nurserymen. During the following years the numbers went on expanding with 37 listed firms in the 1879/80 Directory reaching a peak of 85 names in the 1909/10 Street Directory. Since then numbers have gradually dwindled. The largest and longest surviving firm was Dicksons and Co. founded by James Dickson in 1782 as Seedsmen and Florists in Bridge Street: this family business soon afterwards moved to premises in Shakespeare Square at the eastern end of Princes Street and remained there until the 1820s when they crossed the road to a newly built shop in Waterloo Place (now the Royal Bank of Scotland). This they occupied for over a century until their removal to Charlotte Square in the 1930s. Dicksons and Co. possessed extensive nursery ground in Leith, at Blantyre and Redbraes (off Broughton Road) and at Deanbank. Much of the New Town pleasure garden planting was supplied by this firm. Their closest rivals during the period when so many of the gardens were being formed in the 1820s were Eagle and Henderson (99 High Street: nurseries at Meadowbank and Leith Walk). James Dickson and Sons - no relation (32 Hanover Street: nursery at Broughton Park), Peter Lawson (for many years and up until the 1960s occupying premises on George IV Bridge), Thomas Claphorn (1 Princes Street), John Hay (Nicolson Street), and James Cunningham (Comely Bank - appointed in 1837 Florist, and Nurseryman to Her Majesty in Edinburgh - the Royal Warrant had previously been held by Eagle and Henderson). All these various names are to be found amongst the various Garden Minutes of the New Town gardens. Nursery firms prominent during the middle and later years of the 19th century included C & J Peacock (specialists in roses - Springfield nursery), Thomas Methven (15 Princes Street: nurseries at Leith Walk and Stanfield Lodge), Downie and Laird (17a Princes Street), Ireland and Thomson (20a Waterloo Place: Craigleith and Boho Bank nursery - off Dalkeith Road) and J & A Seth (12 Queensferry Street and Morningside nurseries).

FIGURE 13 b:
Edinburgh nursery firms - some brief notes
Many of these names survived well into the nineteenth century and new names were being added all the time. A number of nurserymen developed a reputation as authors of books on practical gardening, besides setting themselves up as experts in laying out and planting orchards, kitchen gardens and pleasure grounds. Men such as Thomas Fairchild, Thomas Hill and Stephen Switzer are reasonably well known in this context but only the last mentioned ventured as far as Scotland. Scotland produced a few names of similar stature—perhaps the most distinguished being William Boucher and his son. They ran a nursery at Comely Gardens, north east of Holyrood Palace and close to the public pleasure garden of the same name. Boucher's nursery was not however, a commercial success. Although the younger Boucher's "A treatise on Forest Trees" (published in Edinburgh in 1775) may have provided a useful reference source for the management committees of some of the earlier New Town gardens, other nursery firms such as the later John Hay's, Dickson and Co, James Dickson and Sons, Eagle and Henderson, Edward Sang and Thomas Cleghorn became more directly involved with the pleasure gardens themselves, and their names frequently occur in the garden minute books.

Nurseries had of course prospered with the introduction of many new plant species during the early years of the nineteenth century, particularly after the close of the Napoleonic wars in 1804 when most French, Spanish and Dutch colonies came within the British compass. Plants were brought into Europe from every corner of the earth during the course of Britain's worldwide naval activity and sea borne trade—wisteria, peonies, roses and chrysanthemums from China; dahlias from Mexico; fuchsias from Central America; and conifers from North America to name but some. Many of these were grown by one of Edinburgh's largest nurseries—Dicksons of Waterloo Place. Their nursery ground in Leith Walk propagated and sold more than 5,000 plant species, including over 500 varieties of roses. The rarest and most tender of these plants required more sophisticated garden techniques for their nurture than could be offered by the private amenity gardens and were in any case unsuited to this type of garden. Nevertheless the attendant upsurge of interest in plants and gardens made this a propitious time indeed for the creation of new open spaces.
By the Honourable the Magistrates of Edinburgh,

WHEREAS, for some years past, it has been the practice of boys and others, to pull up and cut down young trees, particularly in the vicinity of his Majesty's Birthday; which is not only a crime severely punishable by law, but greatly and unjustly complained of by the persons injured.—This is to give notice to all such persons as are now injuring trees, or cutting them down within the city, that such persons will be apprehended and imprisoned, to pay the losses sustained by such destruction of property, and to be committed to the City Guard, and dealt with in an exemplary manner.

Given at Edinburgh, June 1, 1786.
WILL. GALLOWAY, B.

THE SCOTSMAN, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 1846.

EDINBURGH'S PRIVATE GARDENS

Ownership and Refencing Problems

In Figure 14, gardens being acquired by parents.

It is objected that the ground is being respected.

The Edinburgh Advertiser, June 1786.

Figure 14

Figure 15

A newspaper article on the enclosure of the gardens after World War 2 (Scotsman 2 January 1946).
Respect for new planting was, however, a different matter and by no means guaranteed, being particularly vulnerable at times of public celebrations. King George III's birthday celebrations on 4th June were for example, notorious for their jinks and drunken excesses and said to be "...one of the greatest school boy events of the year" (17).

The vandalism and brutal destruction suffered by saplings at the hands of youngsters (presumably a satisfactory substitute to flag waving) must have reached serious proportions. Stern warnings and harsh penalties, publicised each year in the press (fig. 14). Without their walls, railings and locked gates the New Town gardens might well have found survival in the early years more difficult although those able to employ one or more full-time gardeners were better guarded from rampaging intruders. Best of all were the West Princes Street, East and West Queen Street gardens where the gardener and his family lived within the grounds thus providing round the clock surveillance. More recently, the experience of the 2nd World War when many of the gardens had their railings removed demonstrated their vulnerability to misuse, and became the prime reason for their re-enclosure (fig. 15).

For the smaller New Town pleasure garden limited by size and shape (and it will be remembered that half were under 1 acre (0.4 ha) in extent) their chosen layout tended to favour a fairly formalised and symmetrical design; not dissimilar but on a larger scale to the pattern adopted by many of the private garden areas to the rear of the houses. That is having an outer belt of trees and shrubs (providing both privacy and shelter), surrounded by a continuous footpath and a grassed central area (which might or might not be crossed by further footpaths connecting with various entrances to the garden.). Usually the centre itself featured a group of specimen trees, a shrubbery or even ornamental flower plots. Such pleasure gardens as St Andrew and Charlotte Square, Drummond and Saxe Coburg Place, Bellevue, Atholl and Coates Crescent, the central Moray gardens and the smaller Victorian gardens on the western side of the New Town - all followed this style, and were well within the competence of the local nursery firms called upon to level, lay out and plant the garden spaces.
A more imaginative approach was, however, possible with the larger gardens. This was fortunately recognised by a number of garden committees who were sufficiently enlightened to apply what they considered to be the best professional, and artistic skills, to draw up plans and designs for their pleasure grounds. Edinburgh in the nineteenth century was still a relatively small, closely knit society, rich with artistic, literary and scientific talent all of which could be tapped for help or advice. Indeed, many of the distinguished names found connected with the gardens were themselves proprietors, or friends or associates of proprietors, and therefore readily approachable. Certainly this was so for the West Princes Street and Queen Street gardens. The first garden mentioned was designed by the gifted amateur painter James Skene (1775-1864), a man of much culture and learning, and close friend of Sir Walter Scott. Skene lived at the west end of Princes Street, and was much involved in promoting art appreciation in Edinburgh. It is more than likely that through him Andrew Wilson (1780-1848) an extremely able landscape artist, and Master of the Trustees Academy, came to be involved in plans for laying out the Central and West Queen Street gardens. Neither Wilson nor Skene had previous experience of garden design but both were regarded as gentlemen of refinement and taste, and their proven artistic ability was considered recommendation enough.

Their advice followed the picturesque tradition of landscape improvement in which the natural advantages of the site were sensitively assessed and the new layout designed to subtly enhance and extend the appearance in an informal if not romantic way. Associated with the picturesque movement in the eighteenth century had been the belief that not only roughness and irregularity of form a special aesthetic value (for example rocks, ruins, wild landscape in general) but also that the art of garden design should be closely akin to that of landscape painting. The works of Claude, Poussin, and Salvator Rosa were highly admired in this respect. Yet very few painters either in the 18th or early part of the 19th century became involved in garden design, although curiously enough Edinburgh appears to have produced more examples than most.
In addition to Skene and Wilson, Alexander Nasmyth (1758-1840) must also be remembered in this context. As a teacher (Wilson for a short time studied under him) and practitioner, he more than anyone else was responsible for the enormous interest and prestige of Scottish landscape painting during the first two decades of the 19th century. Nasmyth helped to shape "the actual landscape of Scotland to bring it more into accord with the ideals of the picturesque movement." (21) As far as we know Nasmyth although commissioned to carry out several landscape projects in various parts of Scotland never became directly involved with any of the New Town gardens (had he lived in Queen Street rather than York Place the story might well have been different). He was responsible however, for creating a most ornamental and charming eye-catcher which ultimately did much to enhance two of the pleasure gardens, Moray Bank garden and Eton Terrace/Dean gardens. Both share magnificent views of St Bernards well: the graceful classical temple (based on the one at Tivoli) which Nasmyth designed for his friend Lord Gardenstone in 1789 (fig. 16a and b). This small Doric building on the bank of the Water of Leith close to Stockbridge "thoroughly in keeping with the beauty of the surrounding scenery" (22) marks the site of a mineral spring first discovered in 1760. It has considerably added to the delight of both gardens and in particular the designer of the Eton Terrace/Dean gardens (the architect John Dick Peddie) took subtle advantage of it. By creating a series of carefully placed terraces with connecting footpaths and steps he allowed promenaders many varied and picturesque glimpses of the well from different heights and angles.

For the remaining larger gardens advice was sought from a number of different individuals from various backgrounds including landscape gardeners, horticulturists, architects and others, all of whom with one exception were Edinburgh based. The exception was William Savry Gilpin (1762-1843) the English landscape gardener and nephew of the Rev. William Gilpin essayist and writer on the picturesque. For a brief spell he acted as consultant to the Town Council for the design of the East Princes Street gardens at a time when controversy raged as to what
FIGURES 16 a & b:
Views along the Water of Leith
the true intentions of the City were towards this area of land (refer Section 2.5 for details). Nothing is known of Gilpin's recommendations but his role was superseded by that of Dr. Patrick Neill who while a member of the Town Council was made responsible for directing improvements to this section of Princes Street. Neill was head of a large and successful printing firm, Neill and Co, founded by his father; but business interests came second to his life-long passion for botany, horticulture and natural history. Sadly the amazing energy he expended in having the East Princes Street gardens formed and planted was set at naught when the railway was extended through the grounds in the 1840's causing great havoc and destruction. More happily Neill's later advice on the layout and planting of Regent Gardens adjoining Calton Hill in 1830 with which Dr Graham (1786-1845), Professor of Medicine and Botany, and Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden also assisted, (23) suffered no such calamity. The main format of this 12 acre (4.8 ha) garden still survives intact. (24) In passing it must be recorded that nothing has been found to substantiate the claim by two authors writing in the 1940's (25) that these gardens were designed by Sir Joseph Paxton, nor indeed that he had anything to do with them at any point in his career. This apparent error involving as it does an individual of some fame continues to be quoted in connection with these gardens and is now in danger of becoming an established fact. (26)

Two other men, both respected horticulturists and like Patrick Neill stalwart members of the Caledonian Horticultural Society are linked with the New Town gardens, namely John Hay (1758-1836) and James McNab (1810-1879). Hay's reputation was mainly based on the design of flower gardens, kitchen gardens, and hot houses. He was also a competent ground planner (fig. 13a). Besides being responsible for the layout of George Square gardens on the south side of the City, Hay became involved with the East Queen Street gardens. But the man to have the greatest single influence on the New Town gardens was James McNab, and as his name occurs with such regularity in the history of so many of the pleasure grounds some brief details about
him are justified at this point. McNab succeeded his father William as curator of the Edinburgh Royal Botanic garden in 1849 having previously been employed as Superintendent of the Caledonian Horticultural Society's experimental garden at Inverleith. He led a busy and useful life, and regularly contributed articles on gardening, landscaping and horticulture to newspapers and journals. McNab was known to whom garden management committees turned most often when practical advice was needed. That he was held in high esteem can be appreciated from the pen portrait written about him in 1877 by a fellow gardener, William Robinson, who himself was to achieve great eminence and influence in his lifetime (fig. 17a and b). During the 1860's McNab wrote a series of articles on "Our town trees" in which he took a critical look at several of the Edinburgh pleasure gardens; also included were a number of suggestions for their improvement.

Many of the gardens were by the approaching maturity, and were requiring major replanting and renewal. The peripheral planting had in particular become thin and incomplete, revealing wide borders of unattractive black earth. McNab's timely comments sparked off a fresh interest in the gardens and stirred a number of lethargic committees into action. For as the Scotsman newspaper rightly reflected the real danger lay in "... mere carelessness and neglect casually overtaking us", thereby converting what was once ornamental into "... eyesores or deformities". McNab's subsequent comprehensive reports and careful supervision helped to improve a number of the gardens including such ones as Queen Street East, St Andrew Square and Charlotte Square.

At this time too McNab was also involved with the formation of some of the later New Town gardens, particularly the Eton Terrace/Dean gardens (the first part was laid out in 1868); he also advised on the planting and alterations to Belgrave Crescent gardens when they were considerably enlarged in 1878. In the Dean gardens he worked closely with John Dick Peddie, the architect responsible for their design: both men having liaised together on the improvements to St Andrew Square gardens in 1866. McNab's preference for "broad spaces of well kept grass, with fine

30.
JAMES McNAIR

James McNair, the present Curator of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, was born at Richmond, in Surrey, on the 14th April, 1810. He was taken to Scotland when five weeks old. For twelve consecutive years before 1834, he served as an apprentice, journeyman, and foreman in the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens under his late father. Besides the general routine of garden work, his early life was much devoted to the preparing of plans of gardens, greenhouses, building apparatus by axes and hot-water, as well as to the drawing of many of the plates which figured in the Edinburgh Gardens and Nurseries from the year 1820 and onwards. These were figured in the “Botanical Magazine,” Samuel’s “British Flower Garden,” and other works. The year 1836 was spent in travelling in the United States and Canada, and the records of the more interesting plants obtained in this journey are to be found in a series of papers published in the “Edinburgh Philosophical Journal” for 1837, and in the earlier numbers of the “Transactions of the Edinburgh Botanical Society.” In 1839 he was appointed Curator of the Caldeonian Horticultural Society’s Experimental Garden at Inveresk, where, besides the management of the garden, he had much practice in landscape gardening, as well as in the drawing of many of the plants which flowered in the Edinburgh Gardens and Nurseries from the year 1820 and onwards. These were figured in the “Botanical Magazine,” Samuel’s “British Flower Garden,” and other works. The year 1836 was spent in travelling in the United States and Canada, and the records of the more interesting plants obtained in this journey are to be found in a series of papers published in the “Edinburgh Philosophical Journal” for 1837, and in the earlier numbers of the “Transactions of the Edinburgh Botanical Society.”

In 1850 two additional acres were added to its western side, 1840, and the garden contains 54.25 stone compartments or spaces for the cultivation of Alpino and dwarf horsecorn plants. To this rock garden additions have been made every year since its commencement. At first, all the plant compartments had more or less a northern exposure, but now many portions of the southern slopes have been devoted to the culture of bellows and other plants that require their roots to be thoroughly dipped for flowering, and the result has been in every way satisfactory. During the present year, twenty-six additional acres have been acquired by the City of Edinburgh, in order to be laid out as a general arboretum. This ground lies immediately in the west of the present garden, and is well adapted for arboretum purposes, being beautifully situated and commanding one of the finest views of Edinburgh from the north, besides affording great protection to the present garden. In addition to the extensive practice of gardening, Mr. McNaïr has often been a contributor to horticultural literature, as his writings, not only in the Garden, but also in the transactions of the Botanical Societies of Edinburgh and elsewhere, amply show. He did not, however, confine himself to strictly horticultural matters, as on the contrary, his writings embrace numerous essays on Vegetable Culture, landscape gardening, and arboriculture, of which, if gathered together, would form many volumes. He is a corresponding member of several societies, both at home and abroad, and one of the original members of the Edinburgh Botanical Society, established February 9, 1848, to the transactions of which he has been a frequent contributor ever since their commencement.

Among the various features of the Edinburgh Botanic Garden which we owe to Mr. McNaïr’s skill in the Police, which is most satisfactory from the point of view of design, and still more from the point of view of cultivated and arranged gardens, is the introduction of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh and elsewhere, amply show. He did not, however, confine himself to strictly horticultural matters, as on the contrary, his writings embrace numerous essays on Vegetable Culture, landscape gardening, and arboriculture, of which, if gathered together, would form many volumes. He is a corresponding member of several societies, both at home and abroad, and one of the original members of the Edinburgh Botanical Society, established February 9, 1848, to the transactions of which he has been a frequent contributor ever since their commencement.

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Not less satisfactory are the collections of hardy horsecorn plants, Alpino flowers, shrubs, and trees in the garden. Mr. McNaïr is among the skilful few who never detest the hardy horsecorn form of our gardens for that is a feature (sometimes displeasing even to the most skilful) in our great botanical gardens. This situation of the Botanic Garden was always a garden, even during the most dismal period of the absence of variety in garden. The most plant, the most horsecorn, the most shrub, was often turned into a garden. Mr. McNaïr and his father have together laid out the rock garden, and in the past few years they have devoted much attention to the general arrangement, and to the introduction of new and interesting plants.
trees standing upon it" (31) very much in the gardenesque style advocated by J. C. Loudon (a man greatly admired by him (32)) saved many gardens from the spread of inappropriate rockeries and florid bedding schemes which were then so fashionable. A lot of the gardens had also become choked and cluttered with trees originally planted for quick effect - such as poplars and willows. Another of McNab's achievements was to encourage their systematic removal thereby ensuring the freer growth of those trees intended for more permanent effect. Likewise his frequently stated opinion that a garden's appearance from the outside was just as important as when seen from within, helped increase the public's awareness and challenged management committees to take a broader approach towards their responsibilities. This view was supported by one of McNab's contemporaries, Charles H. Smith, who for a time lived in Queen Street and practised as a landscape gardener and writer. (33)

One or two architects' names have already been mentioned in connection with the design of or later improvements to the New Town gardens. It would be true to say that the majority of Edinburgh's leading architects were involved in one way or another with the pleasure gardens. In several instances their contribution was substantial. William Playfair's name for example, has been found associated with 3 garden areas. He drew up proposals for the East Princes Street gardens which proved a useful basis for their subsequent development; he was wholly responsible for the design of the Royal Terrace/London Road gardens (which cleverly incorporated the dents and hollows caused by quarry workings into an attractive woodland bank transversed by pathways); and he carefully redesigned the lower portion of the West Princes Street gardens to reduce and disguise as much as possible the passage of the railway through the grounds. Rather as his mentor - William Stark (1770-1813), that outstanding but short lived Scottish architect - Playfair possessed a similar appreciation of the relationship between buildings and their surroundings and the importance of keeping a balance between the natural and man-made. Appointed architect and consultant
for the laying out of the grounds to the north of Calton Hill (his plan and report was published in 1819). Playfair was certainly influenced by the spirit of Stark's earlier but unfinished report; this he had started to write when appointed as assessor to the 1812 Competition for developing the ground. Stark was wholly committed to leaving the greater part of Calton Hill untouched but several of the competitors had put forward quite contrary proposals. Playfair's success at conserving most of the hill as open space was an achievement which would have met with Stark's enthusiastic approval. And the land, when formed into Regent Pleasure gardens in the early 1830's became the second largest of its kind in Edinburgh. He was also responsible for the redistribution of open space in Royal Circus which eventually resulted in 4 separate gardens in place of the one circular plot originally intended.

Two other architects having close associations with certain New Town gardens are David Cousin (1809-1878) appointed City Architect in 1847, and Consultant Architect to the Free Church of Scotland; and John M Dick Peddie (1824-1891) who ran a thriving practice still in existence. Cousin became involved with a number of landscaping projects and was responsible for the layout of many of Edinburgh's cemeteries. The rather grand, awesome approach adopted in such work was to a certain extent reflected in his design for the East Princes Street gardens drawn up in 1849. With the substantial compensation paid by the Railway Company he was able to contemplate quite ambitious ideas for these gardens which were most fully realised in the creation of the formal terraces along Princes Street. Not all his hopes were however fulfilled; Cousin had aspired to fashion an open air gallery by adding a series of sculptures as part of the terrace walk. But in the end these proved too expensive. His contemporary, Dick Peddie was fascinated by a similar idea for the West Princes Street gardens: his beguiling water colour painting showing the gardens developed in such a way was well received by the press, and given a measure of encouragement (Section 2.6). On a more practical level Dick Peddie was responsible for the major improvement
and redesign work carried out (with James McNab) on the St. Andrew Square gardens in 1866. His removal to Buckingham Terrace (as one of the first residents in the newly expanding western extension to the New Town) led him to become involved with the setting up and design of the Eton Terrace/Dean gardens. The first section of these gardens, fronting Eton Terrace were laid out in 1868 and initially consisted of nothing more than a steeply sloping bank whose declivity had been further accentuated by the tipping of builders rubble over the edges. By forming two broad terraces along the whole extent of the ground Dick Piddie succeeded in turning to advantage what was basically a difficult site to develop. On this occasion too, Dick Piddie worked closely with James McNab and the combination of the former's architectural skill with the latter's horticultural knowledge produced a garden of outstanding merit.

The following sections on the New Town gardens selected for detailed study will reveal other distinguished architects connected in one way or another with the design or improvement of the gardens; names for example, such as David Bryce (Charlotte Square gardens), Robert Matheson (Queen Street East) and William Burn (St Andrew Square). If one adds to this number all those architects not already mentioned, but who were responsible for the inclusion of open space in the form of pleasure gardens as an integral part of their layout plans - then the list becomes long indeed and includes the greater number of Edinburgh's architectural elite in the last century.

1.6 CHANGES MADE TO THE ORIGINAL DESIGN

Most of the larger gardens have undergone certain changes to their original design. These were mostly carried out in the middle and later years of the last century and were either modifications such as the forming of a raised terrace walk along the south side of the East Queen Street gardens, or of a more radical nature due to changes in circumstance. For example, the passage of the railway through the 2 Princes Street gardens, the erection of the National Memorial to
Prince Albert in the Charlotte Square grounds, and the later addition of extra land as in the case of Eton Terrace/Dean gardens, Douglas Crescent and Belgrave Crescent gardens.

As the 19th century advanced the general tendency was for the gardens to become more ornate and gardenesque in style: many additional flower beds were added for short seasonal displays, walks were elaborated, and high walls and railings replaced by ones of more elegant design and reduced height. All this was possible at a time when garden labour was cheap and plentiful, and at a time when public passion for horticultural display was at its greatest. Towards the end of the century, demand for lawn tennis favoured the return to large areas of grass.

In more recent times the majority of New Town gardens have reverted to a simpler form more in keeping with their original design and with the needs of stricter economy; this was largely prompted by the Second World War during which a number of gardens lost their railed enclosures and were made accessible for public air raid shelters, emergency water tanks, ammunition huts, and vegetable plots, at the expense of many of the gravelled walks, shrub and flower borders (fig. 18). Rising costs continue to favour simplification which is not to be regretted provided the main outlines and structure of the planting is not in essence changed: the real danger today is from the replacement of forest trees with species of a smaller ornamental variety out of scale with the bold massing of the spaces and their built surroundings.

1.7 THE PLANTING OF THE NEW TOWN PLEASURE GARDENS

Early in 1803 John Claudius Loudon then aged 20 left Edinburgh for London where he began a successful career as landscape gardener, and prolific writer on gardening, horticulture and landscape matters. Almost immediately his attention seems to have been drawn to the parlous state of many of the London Squares whose layout and planting impressed
Map showing position of air raid shelters and static water tanks (*)

(Guide to Edinburgh's air raid shelters, published C.J. Cousland & Son 1939)

FIGURE 18 a - e:
Map and views of air raid shelters
him as being so "miserably deficient" that he was prompted to write a letter to the Literary Journal putting forward his views. This letter (his first item ever to be published) was more in the form of an essay and headed "Hints respecting the manner of laying out the grounds of the public squares in London to the utmost picturesque advantage". In it he criticised the monotonous character of the gardens; the incongruous mixture and lack of harmony in the arrangement of the planting; and the inappropriate choice of plants, selected for their exotic value rather than for their more enduring qualities such as good growth, beauty and fragrance. Loudon also found the gardens lacking in evergreens and without a balance of form and colour throughout the year. When these hints were written only one Edinburgh garden (St Andrew's Square) had been formed and planted so that his cautionary comments and sound advice came at an opportune time. And hopefully had some influence on existing and potential members of garden committees.

Edinburgh's pleasure gardens were however, saved from the worst excesses of inappropriate and extravagant forms of planting—so despised by Loudon—as a direct result of cost conscious management committees, who already having spent substantial sums in having the grounds enclosed and levelled (and in the case of the Queen Street gardens for the actual purchase of the land itself) were careful to spend what remained as economically and frugally as possible. Hence gifts of plants were always warmly encouraged, and a keen eye kept for other cheap sources of supply. The East Princes Street gardens (as will shortly be described) were at the start entirely stocked with trees and shrubs donated in their hundreds by all the leading nursery firms in Edinburgh. As a result no other garden commanded such a wide range of species or in such numbers.

Evidence from the several early garden minute books shows that generally first planting concentrated on the provision of trees and shrubs, with flowers and smaller decorative planting being added later. Most trees selected were hardwoods—like lime because of its compact shape, fine foliage, and promise of fragrant flowers in the
years ahead-the most popular choice to border the edges and to line the grander of the terrace walks. Other trees such as elm, sycamore, oak, ash, horsechestnut, whitebeam, hawthorn, plane, birch and beech were all freely used and still remain the predominant trees in the various gardens. Smaller ornamental trees, particularly those favoured for their blossom, such as lilacs, laburnums and cherries did appear but not in great numbers. St Andrew Square garden shows the most marked change in this respect for it is now dominated by smaller flowering trees: a tendency which Charlotte Square was in danger of emulating until more recent policy exercised more careful restraint.

Willows and poplars were commonly planted at the start to provide quick growth and shelter until the slower forest trees became better established. Several of Shepherd's drawings in the early 1820's show how successful these were in adding depth and height to what were essentially young and very immature gardens. All too often however, management committees neglected to effect their gradual removal to the detriment of many trees planted for more permanent embellishment. This lapse was frequently noted by McNab when writing in the 1860's. In a few cases the gardens inherited a certain amount of existing planting which was carefully absorbed into the new layout thereby adding a greater variety than would normally be expected. Thus for a number of years both Queen Street East and Queen Street West gardens contained a number of apple and pear trees - remnants of a former kitchen garden.

Some gardens in fact owed their very existence to the presence of trees already well established on the site which the feu superior rather than see destroyed, made a special effort to have incorporated as part of the new development. Hence the garden in front of Hopetoun Crescent was formed in order to preserve a number of rare old arboretum trees: these had formed part of the old Botanic Garden in Leith Walk but were too large to successfully remove to the new garden at Inverleith. (43) Equally intriguing is the origin of St. Bernards Crescent garden whose
creation apparently was suggested by the artist David Wilkie while on a visit to his friend, Sir Henry Raeburn at St. Bernards, Stockbridge. Wilkie was so much impressed with the "picturesque effect of the double row of stately elms" which lined the driveway that he: "... proposed to his friend to erect on each side of the trees a deep crescent in the purest style of Grecian architecture," (44). Raeburn and his architectural consultant James Milne (45) had earlier intended to build 4 more parallel rows of terrace houses corresponding to those in Ann Street and covering the greater part of the site (fig 7, top left-hand corner). Significant changes were consequently made and these seem to have inspired Raeburn and his family to consider preserving other fine trees in the neighbourhood, and to protect them by means of strict conditions laid down in the feu charters. (46) All the old elms have now disappeared; the last survivor was one in the crescent garden which fell victim to the Dutch Elm disease and had to be removed in January 1980. (47) In a similar fashion Coates Crescent garden was enhanced by some of the mature elm trees which had formerly marked part of the south boundary of the Walker estate as it followed the curve of the old road to Glasgow. (48)

Next after trees, the outer edges of the gardens were usually planted with shrubs to provide increased shelter and privacy, and laurel, aucubas, holly, berberis and privet were all popular choices. Many of the holly and laurels subsequently attained tree like proportions in the absence of any consistent pruning: generally it has been the shrub planting which has suffered most from long-term neglect and McNab writing in the 1860's constantly referred to the dismal condition of much of the shrub planting. Decorative shrubs such as rhododendrons, flowering currents, cotoneasters and roses tended to be reserved for the inner display beds but could also occur in other areas of the garden; while box, yew, beech and privet were all used as hedging material.

Although in the last century and early part of the present one many of the well-to-do families were absent from Edinburgh during the
summer season, sufficient must have remained behind to justify the expenditure on herbaceous and annual flowers which are reported in the majority of garden minute books, and from just after the gardens were first formed. Details are often lacking as the choice was frequently left to the gardener concerned. Hence Alexander Henderson, the nurseryman responsible for laying out the West Princes Street gardens was instructed by the management committee in 1821 to plant annuals along the borders, the only proviso being: "... that you will have a considerable proportion of mignonette". Mignonette, with its yellow-green flowers and attractive foliage was at this time a firm favourite and widely planted in most of the gardens. Otherwise a wide selection of flowers - of varied colours and fragrances seem to have been grown - wallflowers, roses, sweet williams, phloxes, delphiniums, carnations, pansies, hollyhocks, verbenas, calceolarias, geraniums, stock, chrysanthemums, dahlias, and others besides are all found mentioned in the various minute books. Some gardens such as Moray Place and the Central Queen Street gardens had their own hot beds to aid propagation of the more tender seedlings. But Edinburgh had an abundant supply of nurseries, all keenly competitive, and anxious to attract business.

As the 19th century progressed the number of flower beds tended to increase. Several new ones, for example, were formed in the Charlotte Square gardens during the 1870's to decorate the pathway up to the Prince Albert Memorial. The proliferation of flower beds was however kept in check by the advent of lawn tennis where the demand for large continuous areas of grass took precedence over the desire for floral display. Increasing labour costs (particularly since the Second World War) have forced garden committees to simplify maintenance as much as possible. For this reason when the gardens were reinstated after the war, a greater area was laid down in grass. Today the subtle balance of grass, trees, and shrubs has become one of the most admired features of the gardens. Their 20th century appearance would have particularly delighted someone like James McNab.
Although the serious cultivation of flower beds and borders has virtually disappeared the popularity of spring flowers has if anything increased following the decision by many committees to concentrate their energies on this more practical outlet. Thus March and April see many banks, borders and lawns covered with daffodils, narcissus, tulips, snowdrops, scillas and crocuses. A degree of friendly rivalry is sometimes evident. For example, Drumsheugh gardens decided in 1950 to abandon all flower growing apart from spring bulbs; and were able to report their success 17 years later with a comment in their minutes that "... we now have a display (of crocuses) nearly up to the standard of Charlotte Square".

1.8 MANAGEMENT AND UPKEEP OF THE GARDENS

Most, but not all, of the gardens have been regulated and run according to the conditions laid down in the various feu charters when the land was sold for residential development. Some are regulated by a Private Act of Parliament, and a few (Bellevue Crescent, and the East and West portions of Royal Circus) have no form of legal sanctions at all. Not surprisingly those in the last group have encountered the most problems over the years, particularly in the voluntary raising of money for management purposes.

In the majority of cases where an area of open space was clearly intended as a private pleasure ground (and shown on the feuing plan as such) the houses surrounding and overlooking it had written into their feu charters several clauses referring to the open space. Usually these clauses described what the space was to be used for, or not used for, the obligations for enclosing and laying out the ground, and the arrangements and conditions for its perpetual upkeep. Thus, St. Andrew Square and Charlotte Square shared the same feuing conditions; and similar ones were laid down for the garden areas at the centre of Royal Circus, the Moray Place development, Coates and Atholl Crescent, Rutland Square, Saxe Coburg Place, St. Bernard's Crescent and so on. This was the simplest and most straightforward method. In some instances however, the ground itself was made over to the adjoining
proprietors by a separate feu charter, as in the case of Drummond Place and Regent Gardens; these charters tended to be more detailed, and were drawn up after the superior had been approached by the feuars to form the space as an ornamental garden.

Some gardens were set up under a Private Act of Parliament, namely the West Princes Street gardens (1816) and the 3 Queen Street Gardens (1822). Both large tracts of land bordering Craig's plan for the new town were made into gardens some years after the surrounding houses had been built; and a Private Act was necessary as no earlier provision for such use had been drawn up. For the most part, the various charters, and Acts of Parliament have held the gardens together remarkably well and have provided a reasonably flexible framework for their management and upkeep. This is not to say that problems have not arisen from time to time. Towards the end of the last century, for example, when subdivision of property into flats and offices became increasingly common much worry and thought was given to the question as to the rights of use to the gardens, and how assessments should be altered to cope with changes. Two or three of the gardens have also been at a disadvantage in being limited by their feu charters in the maximum amount of permitted assessment. Unfortunately, what must have been a handsome sum over 100 years ago is no longer adequate to meet expenses. One of the gardens so affected - Regent Gardens - has been forced in recent years to obtain a private Act of Parliament allowing them to increase the stipulated maximum assessment from £10 per individual stance, to a sum not exceeding £20 a year. (52) Douglas Crescent and Englinton/Glencairn Crescent are restricted in a similar fashion but to a now ludicrously inadequate figure of £2. To overcome this handicap an additional "voluntary" contribution is levied on all proprietors and therefore becomes dependent on their goodwill and co-operation. (53)

Garden management committees and their clerks have provided valuable continuity in the management of the gardens. The legal profession's liking for the New Town as a place to live and work has been reflected in the composition of the committees, and has proved
invaluable when dealing with complex financial issues, in framing and enforcing rules and regulations, drawing up contracts for garden staff, and at all times when litigation or some other major issue threatened the wellbeing of the gardens. Had this professional expertise been lacking the gardens would not have survived or prospered as well as they have.

In many respects, garden management committees were early fore-runners of amenity societies and their interests have and still do frequently extend well beyond the garden. This has been particularly true of the Charlotte Square gardens; here the management committee has formed a useful vigilante group when other matters important to the square have arisen. The minute books of the several gardens reveal the time and long years of devoted service given by certain proprietors and their clerks to the management of the gardens. In several cases clerkships have spanned 2 if not 3 generations passing from father to son to grandson, and on some occasions from uncles to nephews. Usually the clerk receives a modest honorarium but in the early days when financial resources were limited the clerk often gave his services free. Many eminent Edinburgh citizens have been found associated with the gardens, perhaps the best remembered one being Henry Cockburn. He actively campaigned to keep the East Princes Street gardens as open space, and was closely involved in the formative years of the Charlotte Square gardens.

For the most part proprietors have been content to leave the running of the gardens to the willing few, unless some major or controversial issue has arisen. During the last century for example, the extension of the railways through and beneath certain gardens prompted much angry and united action. More recently transport in the form of the private motor car has posed a not dissimilar threat: during the 1930s and 1940s serious proposals were made to excavate beneath the East Princes Street, the Queen Street gardens, Charlotte Square and St. Andrew Square gardens in order to form underground car parks.
According to many of the garden clerks, however, interest in the gardens by the general body of proprietors has increased over the last few years. Annual meetings are now better attended and since the First World War women have assumed a more active role on the committees; indeed before then they had been completely male dominated.

Although initially some exchange of ideas, experience, and even personnel took place between a number of gardens being established at about the same time (particularly in the case of the Queen Street gardens, Drummond Place, and the Royal Circus gardens) they very quickly thereafter tended to go their own separate and independent ways. Thus an early and eminently sensible idea to link all 3 Queen Street gardens together by underground tunnel while pursued on a number of occasions was finally abandoned due to lack of widespread support. A later and equally exciting proposal which the proprietors and committee of the Dean gardens tried (in the late 1870's and early 1880's) to unite their garden with Belgrave Crescent; and to form a connecting footpath to the Moray Bank gardens similarly met with an unenthusiastic response from their neighbours. And was consequently shelved.

On the subject of upkeep there is no doubt that the New Town gardens owed much to the humble, lowly paid, and ever abundant supply of gardeners: many of whom gave years of faithful care in return for an assured wage, and a degree of independence and job satisfaction shared by few of their contemporaries. Much of the work must have been physically very taxing as no mechanical aids were then available and the tools in use were often clumsy and heavy to operate. The formation of the larger gardens as will be described later, relied initially on large squads of unskilled labourers to form the drains, level and mound the grassed areas, shape the banks, cut and form the footpaths and so on.

Afterwards the appointed gardener was allowed occasional unskilled
or semi skilled help at certain times of the year - usually during the summer and early autumn months - when the demands of the garden were at their peak. It must be borne in mind how time consuming and laborious much of the work was, for example, lawns were still being cut by scythe well into the first half of the 19th century. According to Budding (who patented the first cylindrical lawn mower in 1830) an acre of lawn (0.4 ha) required 3 men to work for a day, but however skilled they were "... circular scars and inequalities and bare places ... continued for several days" (56). Nevertheless it took several more years of development and refinement before the mechanical lawn mower was reliable enough to be widely adopted. By the 1860's they were coming into more general use: the West Princes Street gardens were the first to acquire one, having decided in 1861 to purchase a "Shank & Co. Abroath mowing machine No. 2" for the sum of £8.10 (57). Two of the New Town gardens with considerable areas of grass - Belgrave Crescent and Regent gardens - acquired a horse drawn mower: the former in 1880 (58) and the latter in 1902 (59). The horses were hired and dressed in leather overshoes to prevent the hooves causing damage to the turf. The days of plentiful cheap labour have long since gone; now the majority of gardens rely either on the services of jobbing gardeners willing to fit in what hours they can, or on a contract with one of the nursery firms.

1.9 USES MADE OF THE GARDENS

The gardens were intended partly as a visual amenity and partly to provide gentle, polite outdoor recreation; for walking and taking air, for small children's play, for sitting in and for passing the time of day; the "lower" classes were strictly excluded except for servants in charge of children. These gardens were essentially the preserve of the privileged, who (even if they never ventured through the gates) could still have the almost equal satisfaction of surveying them - particularly from the upstairs drawing room windows - where much of the household's entertaining took place. This was the reason too, why ground floor rooms were half a level above the street to enhance privacy and improve the sight lines onto the pleasure ground.
The bounds of proper conduct, of what could or could not be done in the gardens, was always prescribed in the set of rules and regulations issued to each proprietor whenever a particular garden was first set up; and which were occasionally updated as circumstances demanded. These varied little from one garden to another and indeed this was one area where exchange of information did take place. Four examples of the clauses relating to garden activities are given below, and it can be seen that they were all similar in content and designed to protect the gardens from over vigorous games and other hazardous or rough use.

**Princes Street West (circa early 1820's)**

... all children shall carefully keep upon the gravel walks and old grass ... nor shall any games be allowed such as cricket, golf, football, shooting with bows and arrows, or such others as may expose persons walking in the grounds to risk or annoyance. No dogs permitted to enter the grounds. Smoking of tobacco or other offensive practices not to be permitted.

**Queen Street Central Regulations, 1833**

... nor shall any games such as slinging or throwing stones or any hard substance, golf, bows and arrows, and the like be allowed. Games of every description must be confined to such part of the gardens as may from time to time be pointed out by the gardener. No person shall bring in dogs. Bird nests not to be robbed. No fireworks or discharging of guns, cannons etc allowed.

**Drummond Place Garden, 1823**

... nor shall games be allowed such as cricket, golf, football, bows and arrows, and the like. No person shall bring in dogs. Bird nests not to be robbed, or birds in any other way to be disturbed or annoyed.

**Saxe Coburg Place Gardens, 1863**

... No games shall be allowed such as cricket, golf, football, bows and arrows and the like; but handball, shuttlecock, bowling and thence of fancy china balls and amusements such as foot racing, leaping and healthy recreation of a kind not injurious to the ground will be allowed.

Even the best behaved Victorian child once exposed to fresh air and the free delights of an open space was unlikely to "carefully keep
upon the gravel walks" and most garden committees were sanguine enough to adopt a lenient approach by not enforcing the rules too strictly. Saxe Coburg Place garden (in the rules quoted above) succeeded in conveying a positive and very human approach to children - highly creditable for one of the smallest gardens in the New Town and therefore more at risk from damage. It would appear however, that even the gardens of more limited size have had to cope with a similar range of demands as the larger ones. Saxe Coburg Place at .6 acre (.24 ha) has, in its time, gallantly accommodated croquet, tennis, cricket and football. Although a resolution passed in 1927 reminded families living in the Place that while no objection was raised to cricket being played on one half of the garden "... when the ladies came out to sit or walk in the gardens the boys behave as gentlemen and recognise the rights of the ladies"(60). Rutland Square - little more than half the size of the last garden - found sufficient room for badminton and tennis in the late 1870's(61). But for these smaller spaces such activities could only be sustained by closing the garden completely for certain periods of the year to allow necessary time for recovery.

Some semi organised forms of games such as bowls (West and East Princes Street, and St. Andrew Square gardens all had greens), pitch and putt, and more popular still, croquet were all played in the gardens from the beginning; but the game to out rival them all was lawn tennis. First introduced in the 1870's when a rubber ball able to bounce on grass, and a mower which could keep the grass short enough for the new ball to bounce on were both developed, tennis was an ideal game for the Victorian leisure classes to play at summer parties. It was also the first active game in which women could play in the company of men. Courts were marked out wherever sufficient space could be found (Queen Street East had 4 at one time, and Charlotte Square 3). Clubs were established with their own separate rules (some of these were amongst the first private tennis clubs to be formed in Edinburgh)(62) and parties and tournaments were held amongst the residents during the summer months (fig. 19). Tennis continued a popular pastime up until the Second World War but afterwards the cost
Douglas Crescent
Lawn Tennis Club.

Founded in 1892.

Donor Secretary,
Miss A. RAINY, 28 Douglas Crescent.

Donor Treasurer,
Mr L. L. CADDELL, 13 Douglas Cres.

RULES

I. The Club shall be called the "Douglas Crescent Lawn Tennis Club," and any one residing in Douglas Crescent or in any of the neighbouring houses as subscribe to the upkeep of Douglas Crescent and Belford Bridge Gardens shall be entitled to become a Member, on paying 2s. 6d. Entrance Money, and an Annual Subscription of 5s., provided he or she be not under fourteen years of age. The Annual Subscription must be paid on or before 15th May in each year.

II. The Management of the Club shall be in the hands of a Committee of not more than eight Members, one of whom shall be Convenor and Honorary Secretary, and another Treasurer, three Members to be a quorum. This Committee shall be elected annually in April, and their Regulations shall be subject to the approval of the Crescent Garden Committee.

III. Each Member shall have the privilege of introducing two friends at a time, who shall only be entitled to play with a Member; but a resident who is eligible as a Member of the Club cannot be introduced as a friend.

IV. Members of the Club shall provide their own racquets and balls. All players must wear proper lawn tennis shoes, under penalty of a fine of 2s. 6d.; a fine incurred by a friend shall be paid by the introducer.

V. No one shall be allowed to play when a Member of the Committee declares the ground unfit for use.

VI. A book shall be provided, in which Members may engage Courts. Each Member shall have the right of engaging one Court for not more than two hours in each week, and not more than one week in advance. After nine o'clock on each day, if there are disengaged hours, each Member may put down his name for one additional hour for that day.

VII. Members who have engaged Courts must take possession of them not later than ten minutes after the hour, otherwise they will forfeit them to the first comer. When no Court has been engaged, Members shall cease playing after finishing two sets if other Members are waiting to play.

VIII. The Committee reserve full power to suspend or alter any of these Rules, or to make such new Rules as they think necessary, but always subject to the approval of the Crescent Garden Committee.

Douglas Crescent Lawn Tennis Club Rules.

Douglas Crescent had 2 tennis lawns and a flourishing club up until World War 1 (Douglas Crescent garden minutes)

Moray Place gardens 1933 (Peggy Bowden)

Regent gardens 1887 (Mr. & Mrs. J. Bertram)

Lawn tennis play in the gardens
of reinstating and upkeeping the courts was usually beyond the means of most management committees. Only one garden retains a court (Regent garden - a hard asphalt one), although tennis quoits is still played in Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent garden.

Other forms of garden entertainment have included firework displays, usually to mark special events: Regent gardens for example, celebrated Queen Victoria's birthday in such a way, and the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Princess Alexandra of Denmark in 1863 provided another spectacular occasion. Also popular were musical parties when military bands were invited to play while residents and their friends gathered to listen or promenade. Nothing created such an air of excitement or expectation as the sight and sound of smartly uniformed men assembled with their musical instruments; and the West Princes Street gardens—the scene of most performances—(others are also recorded as having been held in St. Andrew Square and Charlotte Square gardens, the Queen Street gardens, Regent gardens, and Belgrave Crescent gardens) usually drew exceptionally large crowds. Although none begrudged "persons of respectability" from gaining access on these occasions this was not always easily determined in the heat of the moment: while policemen were usually commandeered to guard the gates and railings there were sometimes outbursts of rowdyism and drunken behaviour within the gardens. But the majority came to enjoy the music as the adjutant of the King's Own Regiment reminded the West Princes Street garden committee in 1853: he wrote suggesting that while his band played: "... nursemaids and children shall not attend as the former occupy all the seats and the latter by their noise and gambols interrupt the harmony and annoy those who really wish to attend the music". In addition to musical afternoons the larger gardens have frequently provided successful venues for garden parties, fetes and exhibitions; often for charitable and worthwhile causes, and open to the public (fig. 20).

Most of the gardens have in fact granted access to nearby residents (who have not been proprietors) on payment of an annual subscription: a
REGENT GARDENS

FETE

SUNDAY 28th JUNE

Entrance 30p
Children & OAPs 20p

ENTRANCE

DOG SHOW
By kind permission of S.S.C.
Exemption and Pet Classes
Judge for Exemption Class—Mrs BARBARA HART
Judge for Pet Class—Mrs MARGARET CAIRNS
PLEASE ENTER YOUR DOG

Music by the
WHITBURN BURGH JUNIOR BAND
Home Baking, Teas, Pony Rides and Other Attractions

Enter by CARLTON TERRACE LANE, off ROYAL and REGENT TERRACE
BLENHEIM PLACE, OR CALTON HILL, above OLD ROYAL SCHOOL

BUS ROUTES: 1, 4, 5, 15, 26, 42, 44

TODAY

Viws of Regent Gardens fete held in June 1950

FIGURE 20 a, b, c & d:
Garden fete held in the pleasure grounds
useful supplement to a garden's income. Garden committees have also, on the whole, been kindly disposed to requests for use of the gardens by outsiders for any appropriate activity requiring outdoor space, or otherwise available. Thus innumerable children from the many private day and boarding schools established in the New Town, have trod the gravel footpaths during the mid-morning and afternoon breaks under the wary eye of a master or mistress. In more recent times and with fewer restraints - Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts - have all on occasion been allowed access to the gardens for summer meetings; while during the war years Home Guard Battalions, Cadet Corps and Auxiliaries made good use of the central gardens for training and drilling. Some unusual applications have also been acceded to. In 1927 for example, the Fencing Academy in George Street was allowed to practise on the pathways of Charlotte Square gardens during the summer months; and the Scottish Fencing Club continued to utilize these gardens for a number of subsequent seasons. (65)

The 2 most common sources of friction over the use of the gardens have been with older children wishing for more boisterous forms of play, and dog owners. Football and cricket balls have been banned on numerous occasions; and minute books refer to the occasional contretemps with unruly boys running wild in the gardens and causing damage to flower beds, trees and garden equipment (fig. 21 a and b). But for the most part, wilful damage to the gardens has not been too great a problem. Evidence from diaries and reminiscences shows that generations of children have enjoyed the great freedom for imaginative play afforded by these gardens. All within safety of the railed enclosures, and with the more or less tolerant control of the gardener.

Dogs however, have probably caused more difficulties for management committees than mischievous boys, for the gardens have always been well used by dog walkers. Rules have been in force to exclude dogs from the gardens. To permit dogs only on a leash, or at certain times of the day in the hope of controlling damage and dirt. For the most part such restrictions have tended to be ignored.
INSTRUCTIONS
GIVEN TO
THE POLICE OFFICER.

The first duty which the Policeman has to perform is generally to enforce the keeping of the Printed Regulations.

Should any Lady or Gentleman be in the Pleasure Grounds, who, the Policeman has reason to think, has no right to be there, he is to request their Names; and if they do not appear in the List, he is to report to Mr Smith.

Should any boys be there who have no right, or should any of the Regulations be infringed by them, they are to be immediately turned out, and their Names taken; and should they refuse to give their Names, their hats are to be retained.

Should any particular boys persist in the infringement of these Regulations, the Officer is instucted to report to Mr Smith.

In consequence of many serious accidents having happened already, by the throwing of stones—should any boys be found doing so, either at each other, or at others on the outside, or any other infringement of public Police, orders are given to the Officer to take them to the Police Office, in doing which the Gardeners have orders to render every assistance.

The Officer has orders also to take possession of all bows, arrows, or bats for cricket, in the event of boys playing with them in any of the Pleasure Grounds.

a. Moray Gardens e 1830's (Mrs Hope)

b. Douglas Crescent gardens 1861

c. "Meeting called to discover damage done to river wall of the gardens Belford Bridge, to the garden roller, and destruction of at least 6 shrubs. Read correspondence with Mrs S (in her husband's absence abroad) whose son with a friend while playing with a roller allowed it to roll away over the steep slope and crash against the wall at the foot; the complaint having been sent by Mrs Y as her children were near the spot at the time and run some risk of serious injury. Mrs. S willing to make good the damages" (Douglas Crescent garden minute book 22 March 1905)
But it would be wrong to end this section on such a mundane note. The gardens of Edinburgh New Town have provided so much delight, and so many havens of green whether from within or without, that their value can never be adequately assessed or even perhaps appreciated. They are an integral and essential part of Georgian Edinburgh requiring the same careful conservation as the surrounding buildings. Today, when official policy is to encourage families to remain within the centre and to limit further conversions of New Town property into office use, the concept of a private outdoor space accessible to key holders paying an annual assessment or subscription is still valid; particularly as most of the surrounding houses have now been subdivided into flats without any individual private garden space of their own. But whether they should additionally be made more accessible to the public remains a point of controversy. (66) (fig. 22) It is certainly true that the character of those made fully accessible has changed significantly; much of the bold simplicity of a strong framework of large forest trees has been lost often to artefacts either too fussy and trivial, or too dominating.
Edinburgh's gardens, padlocked to the public.

IN THE HEART of Edinburgh, just a few hundred yards from Princes Street, there are three large, very beautiful gardens. Together they cover about 17 acres and extend for more than half a mile. Almost the size of St James's Park.

Set deeply into a north-facing slope, the gardens are sheltered from the prevailing winds by a luxuriant hedge of mature treeline - elm, lime, sycamore, beech, copper beech, chestnut, and some oak. Down in the hollow (20 or 30ft below the level of the main road and well away from traffic noise) the lawns are immaculate, the walkways well-maintained. There are plenty of seats, and the southerly beach and flowerbeds bulge with flowers. And, because the gardens are surrounded by probably the best Georgian domestic architecture in Britain, some of the vistas through the trees are stunning.

Queen Street gardens are pure delight. Queen Street gardens are also private. All three of them. The are not strictly for passer-by, kids, tourists etc.; refugees from city-centre shops. The gardens are intended for the gentry who live in the houses nearby (and their servants). The patience is enhanced by the two footpath level differences, pergolas, and gateways which are firmly locked by distinctive Georgian-style ironwork.

But the gentry are not gentry. thin on the ground, their retainers long gone, and any private gardens round the houses have been converted into small hotels and beds. With the regret that this beautiful and valuable amenity in Edinburgh's centre is grossly, and seemingly uninterestingly, disused. However, the situation is not going to be easily changed. Queen Street Gardens are regulated under a Private Act of Parliament, dated May 16, 1752, which lays down who the gardens are for, and how they should be run and used. William Davidson, an Edinburgh solicitor, explains how the system operates: 'The land is owned by a few hundred shareholders who are all property owners in the houses. They, of course, have keys to the gardens. But we also send keys to the policemen at six varying from 13.30 to 14.00 a year. Until a few years ago the gardens had their own resident caretaker, which was useful for dealing with troublemakers and so on. Mr Davidson says'...but there was just not enough work to keep a man busy all the year round. Now we have no contact basis.'

Under the Act the gardens are run by 24 commissioners (all shareholders). They decide what should and should not be allowed in the gardens. "Small things usually," Mr Davidson says. "Whether we should allow bicycles on the paths, for instance. Or, whether we should allow our who children to be on bicycles on the paths. Most problems seem to be over children or dogs. (According to some young mothers who use the garden, the problem is really "are there any problems?"")

The private garden system is well-established, well-regulated and has a lot of powerful support. Battle - Davidson Young, for instance, senior Conservative councillor for St Andrew's Waverly (which includes the gardens). Mr Davidson Young, for instance, senior Conservative councillor for St Andrew's Waverly (which includes the gardens), is an enthusiastic St Andrew's Waverly Labour Party advocate. "It is important that there is more to it than that; the gardens are left as they are," he says firmly. "We are, after all, trying to make the New Town more residential. People who come here will want something more than a place of death where no one can live. People don't want a zoo, Dick or Harry coming in. We get vandalism and all sorts of things. I'm sure other Conservative councillors would agree with me - we both.

And he's right. Jan Crawford, another Conservative councillor for St Andrew's Waverly (all the Conservative representatives are Conservative) says: 'These gardens are the lungs of the area. You want the people who live around about. We would certainly oppose any move to take them over. Very very strongly. I'm secretary of the Conservative group so I know how they feel. Anyhow, the people who do want to take over the gardens want it for the same reason" - is the sentiments of Mr Davidson Young.

The gardens are also the lungs of the area. You want the people who live in the houses nearby (and their servants). The patience is enhanced by the two footpath level differences, pergolas, and gateways which are firmly locked by distinctive Georgian-style ironwork.

Taking over the gardens for public use has long been a plank in the Labour Party platform. The trouble has been that in the past Labour councillors were no kind of pressure group. "It is one of those issues that we all agreed about," says Peter Wilson, leader of the Labour Group. "It's never actually been done, nothing about it, though." It would all matter, less if Edinburgh were well-endowed, with public open space. But in that league Edinburgh comes well down the list. According to the Planning Department's figures, Edinburgh has 0.67 acres per 1,000 population. Which is, less than the average available to Leeds, Sheffield, Cardiff, London, Doncaster, Kilsyth, Clydebank and Aberdeen, for example. What makes it worse is that, Queen Street Gardens are not the only private preserves in Edinburgh's centre. For instance, there are also - no name only - some little Pleas Gardens, Alnuko Place Gardens, Drummond Place Gardens (very fashionable), Royal Circus Gardens and other small pocket squares such as the Gardens (17 beautiful areas). The Conservative councillors, however, would add something to it with some imaginative planning and environmental decency. They are still fighting the battle against the prevailing winds, and this is a battle for once. And this is a battle for once.

George Rosie

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Sunday Times article about the new town pleasure gardens (5 November 1972)
THE PLEASURE GARDENS OF THE FIRST NEW TOWN

Some improvements had taken place in the several cities but usually only on sites made available by the vacancy of older buildings. They were in any case on a limited scale and benefited only the wealthier class of citizens. In practical terms Edinburgh remained more breathing space for its expanding population together with better facilities to match its status as capital of Scotland. All this could only be realistically achieved by extending the city beyond its old boundaries. Such a notion had been canvassed as early as the 17th century when the idea of bridging the valley of the Earls Lock had been advanced by the Duke of Albany and York (James II later James II) while acting as Royal Commissioner to the Scottish parliament between 1679-1682. (3)

With even greater imagination bordering almost on the prophetic were the lines of Mary's (4) suggestions for the development of Edinburgh written in 1725 during his exile abroad for his part in the 1715 uprising. Mary's lively interest in architecture and land improvements found some outlet in his writings and somewhat extraordinary houses designed for his friends in Britain but his proposed improvements for Edinburgh were essentially practical and sensibly far-sighted and in several ways influenced later thinking on the formation of the New Town.
2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST NEW TOWN AND TO ITS OPEN SPACES

For centuries Edinburgh had slowly grown within the confines of the city walls, the greatest number of buildings being concentrated along its central axis - the High Street. As the area of ground gradually diminished dwellings were forced to grow upwards and what had once been attractive backland garden areas disappeared as they became increasingly built upon (figs. 23a and b). All this took place with only the minimum although still useful controls being exercised to maintain safety standards(1) but with scant attention to such important amenities as adequate light, air and ventilation. While all classes jostled together for living space - reputedly making for a more equal and friendlier society - the conditions for many were extremely cramped and overcrowded, and most often sordid and miserable. The risk of fire remained a very real and frightening hazard and the decayed and neglected state of many of the tenements put them in constant danger of collapse.

Some improvements had taken place in or around the old town but usually only on sites made available by the razing of older buildings(2): they were in any case on a limited scale and benefited only the wealthier class of citizen. In practical terms Edinburgh required more breathing space for its expanding population together with better facilities to match its status as capital of Scotland: all this could only be realistically achieved by extending the city beyond its old boundaries. Such a notion had been canvassed as early as the 17th century when the idea of bridging the valley of the North Loch had been advocated by the Duke of Albany and York (James VII later James II) while acting as Royal Commissioner to the Scottish parliament between 1679-1682. (3) With even greater imagination bordering almost on the prophetic were the Earl of Mar's(4) suggestions for the development of Edinburgh written in 1728 during his exile abroad for his part in the 1715 uprising. Mar's lively interest in architecture and land improvement found some outlet in his ambitious and somewhat extraordinary houses designed for his friends in Britain but his proposed improvements for Edinburgh were essentially practical and amazingly farsighted and in several ways influenced later thinking on the formation of the New Town.

FIGURE 23: a and b: Plans showing the old town of Edinburgh.
FIGURE 23 a & b:
Maps showing the old town of Edinburgh.
Crucial to Mar's plan was the building of a large bridge over the North Loch providing ready access to the land beyond "where many fine streets might be built". In particular 2 principal streets were envisaged: one approximately in line "where the long gate is now" providing on the south side "... a fine opportunity for gardens down to the North Loch" and another on the other side "towards Broughton" presumably matched by a similar band of open space. Mar's recommendation of forming a canal along the whole of the North Loch had already been seriously considered by the Town Council (refer Section 2.4), but his emphasis on turning the whole into an ornamental space integral to any new development yet providing a natural and attractive link with the old town was wholly original. This idea was later incorporated as one of the proposed improvements for Edinburgh published in 1752, as well as one of the main changes made by the architect James Craig between 1766-1767 to his initial plans for laying out the New Town.

It was not however, until the middle years of the 18th century when the benefits of growing prosperity consequent on the 1707 Act of Union began to accrue, and the nation entered a more settled era after the crushing of the 1745 rebellion, that ambitious plans for the development of Edinburgh and the creation of a "new town" became at all feasible. While circumstances now favoured such changes they might not have been so successfully or completely achieved had not Edinburgh the good fortune of possessing during this critical period a remarkable citizen - George Drummond (1687-1766). Drummond, (fig 24) a man of imagination, and determination (combined with formidable administrative and financial skills) and commanding such widespread respect that he achieved the unique distinction of being elected Lord Provost on six separate occasions, & became wholly committed to the improvement of Edinburgh by the creation of "... a splendid and magnificent city" on the lands beyond the North Loch. Most would have lacked the courage and stamina required for such a long-term utopian project. Drummond's practical skills had however, been well tested in his lengthy and dedicated association with the promotion and establishment of Edinburgh's public hospital - the Royal Infirmary.
FIGURE 24: George Drummond, Lord Provost (from an engraving by Mackenzie)

FIGURE 25: Site of the new town including Barefoot Parks - owned by the City of Edinburgh (based on survey plan prepared by John Laurie in 1766). The Lang Dykes can be seen, and Gabriels Road; other feu owners and tenancies are named, RIC archives
Under Drummond's strong leadership (and during his third term of office as Lord Provost) the magistrates and Town Council together with the College of Justice, and several persons of rank within the city drew up a number of far reaching plans for the improvement of Edinburgh. These plans were subsequently submitted to the Convention of Royal Burghs and received their wholehearted approval in July 1752. To gain wider publicity and financial support the detailed proposals were printed in pamphlet form one month later under the authorship of Gilbert Scott of Minto, and also reproduced in the Scots Magazine for the same month. This was a call to action framed in patriotic and idealistic terms but tempered with strong utilitarian and economic motives: London's achievements as a thriving business and trading centre, with an abundance of space, fine buildings, neat houses, attractive and convenient streets, open squares, large parks and extensive walks were singled out as being equally within Edinburgh's grasp given the right incentives and application.

What therefore were these important proposals? In the first place various new public buildings were projected for the centre of the old town including a merchant's exchange "upon the ruins of the north side of the High Street" and another to accommodate the law courts, the Town Council, the Convention of Royal Burghs, the Advocates Library and other public apartments "upon the ruins of the parliament close". Of much greater significance however, were the plans to obtain an Act of Parliament for extending the Royalty in order "... to enlarge and beautify the town" by opening new streets to the north and south, removing the markets and shambles, and turning the North Loch into a canal with walks and terraces on each side, and the building of a connecting bridge to the north. The spirit of Mar was very much alive in these proposals.

In a surge of enthusiasm the first step towards achieving these goals was taken in September 1753 when 4 weeks after the pamphlet was circulated the foundation stone of the Royal Exchange was laid. It proved premature: two further years were to elapse before actual building
commenced, and a further 6 years until it was completed. Meanwhile reaction to the possible extension of the city had met with hostility both from landowners outwith the boundaries, and the ancient burgh of Canongate. Such was the vigorous opposition from these sources that when a draft bill to extend the Royalty was presented to parliament in 1759 it had to be abandoned.

It was a discouraging blow but Drummond had already taken the initiative in another direction, and in the early part of the same year had asked William Mylne to make out a plan for the "... new intended north passage". This was the start of an excellent tactical move for it switched emphasis onto opening up a convenient northern access with consequent improved links to the port of Leith rather than on the more contentious issue of extending the Royalty; thus safeguarding future plans while bringing them significantly closer to being achieved. Mylne (1734-1790) a descendant of the hereditary master masons of Scotland and brother of the better known Robert Mylne had returned to Edinburgh in 1758, after a 4 year absence abroad and had taken over his father's business as mason. In this role he fulfilled a variety of routine maintenance work for the Town Council. As a man possessing good practical skills combined with a broader background, and being readily accessible Drummond must have had every confidence in Mylne's skill for such a task. Certainly, in the ensuing years William Mylne went on to play an active role in the development of the new town - not only in his capacity as designer and builder of the bridge that was ultimately built, but as convener of the special committee set up to further all the "intended improvements" on the fields to the north of the city.

Even so little further progress was made until March 1763 during Drummond's sixth and last term in office as Lord Provost: probably as the result of some unobtrusive canvassing on his part the Town Council in that month received a written proposal from one of its most respected citizens Lord Kames; (who as far back as 1754 had been closely involved with plans to forward the bridge) urging them to make a start
on the project. (17) As a result a committee was appointed to pursue the matter and to purchase whatever property or ground was necessary. The following months saw a bustle of activity: a plan was prepared by Sir William Bruce of Kinross (but later discarded for another more suitable one). A portion of the North Loch was drained, proper foundations were sought, a trial pit dug to assess the bearing for a bridge, and the stone in Bearfoot's Park examined to see if it was adequate for the masonry. Finally in 1763 an announcement appeared in the local newspapers telling of the projected bridge and inviting all those interested in undertaking the work to give in plans, elevations and estimates, or to base their submissions on a plan already available and open to inspection. (18)

By October a trial pier had been built, and the foundation stone laid by Drummond. For some unknown reason all this activity then came to an abrupt halt. Maybe the advertisement had yielded a poor response, but whatever the cause over a year was to elapse before a new committee was formed in November 1764 "for forwarding the scheme of communications with the fields of the north of the city by a bridge over the North Loch" more briefly known as "The Bridge Committee". It became a highly important committee whose responsibilities were within 2 years widened to include "... all matters relative to the intended improvements on the Fields to the north of the city" ie the building of the New Town itself. (19) At the beginning the Committee consisted of 11 members including the senior members of the Town Council, "old Provost Drummond" (who remained actively involved with its work until his death), and the Deacon of Masons - William Mylne on the strength that "... he is posest of a plan which has been well digested ..." and was likely to provide helpful support. (20) Gradually the Committee increased in size as new names were added, and 'outsiders' with specialist skills and knowledge were co-opted, for example, John Adam, architect, and Dr Alexander Webster - whose mathematical talents helped to calculate and divide feuing plots to best advantage. (21)

From now onwards progress was more consistent and rapid. In
January 1764 a fresh notice appeared in the local newspapers inviting architects and others to submit plans and estimates for a bridge over the North Loch - with the added incentive of a prize of 30 guineas or a gold medal to the same value. The ploy worked; at the close of the competition one month later 22 entries had been received, several being considered of "great merit". Preference was ultimately given to two plans (Number 5 and 7) both thought almost equally good: the prize however could not be divided, and ultimately plan number 7 was selected - the author being identified as David Henderson, a mason cum architect from Alloa. His close rival had been William Mylne - whose design had been preferred by one of the more critical assessors, Sir James Clerk of Penicuik (1709-1782) a gentleman architect of some skill.

Several weeks later the contract was in fact awarded to Mylne who unlike Henderson (the only other contender for the job) was able to find full security for building a bridge to his own plans while also putting in the lowest tender. His success was unfortunately to be clouded 4 years later when part of the bridge collapsed in August 1769, but no such calamities marred the start and the bridge commenced in a wave of optimism. Another bill was presented before parliament in 1765 for permission to extend the burgh and on this occasion the argument in its support was indisputable. With a new bridge allowing ready access to the lands of the north many people would be attracted to live there simply to avoid the city taxes: a loss too substantial to ignore. Some opposition was still encountered from a number of burgesses with property in the proposed extension but their objections were overruled and in May 1767 the bill was finally passed.

Some of the land to be included within the extended Royalty had been in the Town Council's possession for a number of years (Bearford Parks for example, the site of Princes Street) was purchased in 1716 (fig 25). Some other parts were more recently bought to allow the bridge to be built, but the greater area was not acquired until 1766 when the George Heriot Trust agreed to sell just over 34 acres/"part of the lands of Broughton" to the town. The close affinity between the
Trust and the Town Council (the governing board of the Trust was largely composed of members drawn from the Council) guaranteed the success of this highly important transaction without which all the ambitions proposals for a new town might well have foundered.

With the bridge underway, and negotiations with the Heriot Trust well advanced, the Town Council confidently embarked on the next momentous stage; during April 1766 a notice - repeated several times in all the Edinburgh newspapers-invited architects and others to give in plans for a new town to the north of the city with the expressed intention of "... preventing the inconveniences and disadvantages which arise from carrying on buildings without regard to any order or regularity". Just over one month was allowed for submission and the best plan was to be awarded a gold medal together with the freedom of the City placed in a silver box: both items were valued at 25 guineas - less in fact than the premium offered for the bridge design. Of all the public competitions held it allowed the most meagre time for entry and the least financial reward. These deficiencies were noted by one "citizen of Edinburgh" in a critical letter to the Edinburgh Advertiser early in May 1766. He reported that having enquired of several acquaintances if their plans were completed he was met with the response "... neither had they made nor intended to make any plan"; when pressed for reasons they had answered in effect that "... the prescribed time by the magistrates was by far too short for contriving and laying down with accuracy and precision the plan proposed, especially for those who had other business to attend to; and that the premium ... was no temptation to any man of business to relinquish his daily concerns for several weeks and bestow the labour and attention which such a plan requires". His verdict proved correct: by the closing date only 6 entries had been received.

No comment appears in the minutes about the standard of the submissions, but significantly while one plan was unanimously selected as having "the most merit" and therefore entitled to the prize, the
Committee did not consider it to have sufficient merit "... to be adopted as the plan to be carried into execution", but rather to be of use "... in giving others hints to improve upon". Advice on the matter had been sought from Commissioner George Clerk (brother of Sir James Clerk), and John Adam (1721-1792) the eldest of the Adam brothers who had earlier been consulted about the north bridge project: the plan so singled out "Number 4" was by a young man of 21 - James Craig (1744-1795), (fig 26). Craig's background still remains a mystery and little is known about his early life. He appears to have gained experience in technical drawing and become a competent draughtsman: sufficiently good to be entrusted with the task of preparing an accurate plan and elevation "... of the bridge to be built over the North Loch" in July 1763. This had been made available to any party interested in submitting proposals and estimates for the bridge's construction, and also printed in the Scots magazine for the same month. Four weeks later another plan was published showing not only the bridge but also the suggested new road system designed to connect with it (fig. 27). These drawings are all marked "James Craig delinit" and were most likely based on the designs and proposals first put forward by William Mylne in 1759 at the request of George Drummond.

Here is clear proof of Craig's technical ability but more importantly of his close involvement at an earlier but significant stage in the plans to promote the extension of the city. Nearly 3 years before the competition was held Craig was already interpreting other peoples plans and ideas and developing an insight and familiarity with the site - all distinct advantages in view of the tight time schedule allowed for submissions. The plan submitted by Craig probably bore little resemblance however to the layout now accepted as his winning design - but which was really only developed after several months of redrafting and revising his first set of ideas - under the careful supervision of the Improvement and Bridge Committee, and their panel of informed advisers. Although we cannot say for certain there is a reasonable possibility that Craig's initial entry was included in sketch form as part of John Laurie's Plan of Edinburgh published in 1766 and marked "New Edinburgh". Laurie had prepared the ground survey for the
FIGURE 26:
Picture of James Craig by David Allan c1771 (National Portrait Gallery, Scotland); a variant of his plan is also shown, with a drawing of the Physicians Hall in the right hand corner.

FIGURE 27:
Scheme for the new bridge over the North Loch 1763, delint J. Craig. "A plan and elevation of the intended new bridge over the North Loch with a plan of Edinburgh exhibiting all the proposed improvements in that city (from Meade, Architectural History Vol 14, 1971)."
competition (fig. 28) and he would have been eager to use the premiated design when producing an accurate up-to-date map. To have added anyone else's design would certainly not have made sense. The layout shown has as its main feature a large central square with streets radiating from it in similar pattern to the Union Jack and crossed by further streets running from north to south. One long straight road terminates the scheme to the north and to the south each having houses on both sides. The North Loch includes a rather crudely drawn canal bordered by trees but with no attempt made to link this open space to the rest of the new scheme.

Had Craig's success really been met "with acclamation" (44) as claimed by one biographer it would surely have received some notice in the local press: (45) instead his solution appears to have been accepted far more tentatively and wholly on the basis of "... giving others hints to improve upon". It was in fact the faithful William Mylne who was first entrusted with this task. Not only was he busy with the construction of the bridge but also continued to play an active role on the Improvement and Bridge Committee. (46) Early in October 1766 he had been appointed convener of the Committee which at the same time had co-opted certain additional members capable of giving more specialist advice. (47) At their third meeting held on 29 October 1766 Mylne had available a "rectified plan" and this was referred to the previous assessors - Lord Kames, Sir James Clerk, Commissioner George Clerk and Mr John Adams "to examine and give their opinion". (48) The Committee at this stage could give it scant attention being fully engrossed in all the detailed preparations required for piloting the Royalty extension Bill through Parliament.

Whether Craig in the meantime was also encouraged to reconsider his initial plan, or whether he took the initiative himself remains obscure, but we do know that at the last recorded meeting of the Committee in 1766 "... two plans in different views made out by Mr James Craig of the proposed improvements" were produced and remitted as Mylne's to the same panel. (49) No further information is offered but it seems likely
FIGURE 28: John Laurie’s plan of Edinburgh 1766 – possibly showing Craig’s original scheme (Meade, Architectural History Vol 14, 1971)

FIGURE 29: A slightly later plan by John Laurie: new town now named and shown more similar to Craig’s approved plan but more densely developed (Meade, Architectural History Vol 14, 1971)
that one of these plans was incorporated into a slightly more detailed and updated version of John Laurie's map still dated 1766 (fig. 29). Now named "new town" the layout begins to take on a closer resemblance to the design finally chosen, particularly in the siting of a square at the west and east ends, each with a church to close the vista along the central axis, but otherwise there are important differences. Most noticeable is the intensive and repetitive development of the area between the 2 squares - divided by 5 long parallel streets running from east to west, and by 2 cross ones: in common with Laurie's first map houses are still shown on either side of the northern and southern lateral streets.

Evidence from a totally different but reliable source tends to support the view that Laurie's maps do represent, even if somewhat crudely Craig's evolving plans for the New Town. At one of the Architectural Institute of Scotland's meetings held during the 1850-51 session, Patrick Wilson, a member, gave a talk whose theme was "Remarks on the architecture of towns" - later published in the Institute's Transactions. (50) In it he refers to an original drawing by Craig showing "another" plan for the New Town containing some of the features as the adopted one but in this version "... another square is introduced entitled "Grand Square" with a fountain of water in the centre of it" (sounding curiously similar to the central square shown in Laurie's 1766 map). More significantly however, Wilson mentions a detail totally unacceptable to him and from which "... we are happily saved" for "... a row of houses on the south side of Princes Street": a feature common to the 2 layouts already discussed. (51)

No further action on any of the revised plans was taken until after the Act to extend the Royalty had received Royal assent in May 1767. Anxious then to avoid further delays the Lord Provost at the next full meeting of Council conveyed the opinion of the Bridge Committee that "...It would be necessary to settle the plan of the new buildings and to offer out the grounds on the north of the city as soon as possible". A sub Committee was appointed to prepare a report "... with regard to the
best manner of expediting and settling this business" and to "... take what advice therein they may think necessary". They set to work immediately and in just over 1 months time the Lord Provost was able to present not only a "new Plan" made out by Mr Craig "by their direction" but also a list of detailed recommendations relating to the feuing of the land, as well as a set of building conditions. These achievements were the outcome of "many meetings" and consultations held with Lord Kames, Lord Alenuir, Commissioner Clerk, Mr Adam and "... other persons of skill in these matters" during which all the former plans had been reviewed "... with the greatest care and attention", together with "several amendments" proposed by Mr Craig.

This "new plan" by Craig - now on display in the Huntly House Museum, (55) (refer fig 3. for a later engraving based on this drawing) became the blue print for the New Town itself; and was the product of careful revision under the guidance of a group of individuals whose age, experience and cultivated backgrounds would have made them valuable and competent critics. (56) What were the changes to have been made? Overall, the evidence suggests that these centred on the density of the development, the allocation of open space, and the decision to abandon a central emphasis in favour of 2 grand squares at the east and western ends. All having important consequences for Edinburgh's pleasure gardens. The 2 layouts depicted in Laurie's maps of 1766, and already discussed, showed a site used to greater intensity for roads and buildings including a double row of houses facing onto the North Loch. One of these plans was based on a central square. A solution which we know from Patrick Wilson's comments Craig had worked upon. That Craig preferred some form of central emphasis is further substantiated by the additional plans he presented to the Town Council a few years later in 1774 (seemingly on his own initiative) incorporating 2 suggestions for a circus at the centre of George Street (58) (figs. 30 and 31). The assessors appear to have supported a simpler design rather than one that was more ambitious but which might have presented greater practical difficulties; more significantly however, they seem to have

69.
FIGURE 30:
A revised plan by Craig showing a circus at the centre of George Street c. 1774: an equestrian statue to George III is shown at the centre of the circus, and an obelisk in the middle of the square at either end; 2 garden temples are shown on either side of the west end of the canal - in line with Castle Street (Meade, Architectural History Vol 11, 1971)

FIGURE 31:
Engraved plan of Craig's circus scheme 1774 - also featured in the portrait of Craig by David Allan (Fig 26). A church or public building has been added to the north and south sides. Garden area to the north and south - Princes Street and Queen Street are shown more highly finished - with no tree planting along the 2 streets to allow open vistas (Meade, Architectural History Vol 11, 1971)
reconsidered the 1752 proposals for Edinburgh's improvement which emphasised not only the creation of a spacious new town but also the reclamation of the long neglected, swampy and unsanitary stretch of North Loch by its formation into an ornamental canal with walks and terraces on either side.

It would seem to be no coincidence that Craig's approved plan of July 1767 includes the area of the North Loch drawn with the same careful attention to detail as the New Town itself and presented as an integral part of it. The long terrace rows of houses along the south street (the future Princes Street) are shown with a completely open aspect onto an extensive expanse of open space, free of all buildings. This ground is laid out as pleasure gardens in a series of rectangular shaped grassed areas, tree lined (apart from the street side - to allow uninterrupted views across to the old town and the Castle rock), and with gravelled walks. Along the entire length of the lower portion of the North Loch is an ornamental canal with a further series of matching gardens beyond. The earliest engraving of Craig's plan (produced sometime between August and October 1767) and all subsequent versions show in addition a similarly developed band of open space fronting the houses along the principal street on the north side - ie Queen Street, and therefore, the first real hints of the Queen Street gardens. Although no commitment was given at this stage that either area would eventually be assigned for use as open space (59) - the fact that it was shown in plan as such proved a powerful influence in safeguarding its future.

Craig's revised scheme - pronounced dull and uninventive by some but more generally credited as a skilful and intelligent use of the site - combined simplicity with spaciousness and elegance: the formal open spaces added to this effect and were intended to harmonise and complement the surrounding housing and other public buildings. The suggested treatment of these open spaces (as far as they can be judged from the actual drawings) appears to have been a little austere and architectural in character relying for effect - particularly in the case of St. Andrew and Charlotte Square - on a bare expanse of ground offset by

71.
an imposing ornamental feature (an obelisk or other sculptured monument) positioned in the middle and in line with the central axis. Neither square developed in this manner, and although both acquired a central monument - this was determined more by the availability of space rather than their being specifically designed to suit the site. The rest of this section traces in detail the history and varied fortunes of these 2 gardens as well as those of East and West Princes Street which together make up the pleasure gardens of Craig's first New Town - now the most enduring testament to his ability as an architect and planner.(60)

Almost all the earliest building was in St. Andrew Square... By 1781 it had been entirely built - a popular and fashionable place of residence rivalled only by George Square, a housing development to the south of the old town. Gradually however, the character of the square began to change; many distinguished families continued to live there but by the 1790’s the New Town had progressed so far upwards at Castle Street. Besides a greater choice of where to live there was also an increasing demand for the facilities required by an expanding population - shops, hotels, banks and so on which until no longer be conveniently supplied by the old town. From 1800 onwards St. Andrew Square began decreasingly residential and by the 1820’s the change was already quite marked; an Edinburgh citizen for example, when writing his diary in 1823 reflected on the migration of the “great folk” elsewhere... leaving Princes Street, St. Andrew Square etc to be occupied by public offices, hotels, shops, lodging houses and the like”. By the end of the 19th century the square was almost wholly a commercial area.
2.2 THE ST. ANDREW SQUARE GARDENS

"For Louis and me the St. Andrew Square Gardens, spacious green lawned, their privacy ensured by elegant iron railings, were bare of interest, for no child ever played in them. In the centre the fluted columns of the Melville monument seemed in our eyes to rise to endless heights". (Elleanor Sillar, c. 1880's) (c.1770)

St. Andrew Square garden is the oldest in the New Town, octagonal in shape as planned by Craig, and extending to 2.6 acres (1.28 ha). Almost all the earliest building was in St. Andrew Square. By 1781 it had been entirely built and had become a popular and fashionable place of residence rivalled only by George Square, a handsome development to the south of the old town. (2) Gradually however, the character of the square began to change: many distinguished families continued to live there but by the 1790's the New Town had progressed as far westwards as Castle Street. Besides a greater choice of where to live there was also an increasing demand for the facilities required by an expanding population - shops, hotels, banks and so on which could no longer be conveniently supplied by the old town. From 1800 onwards St. Andrew Square became increasingly residential and by the 1820's the change was already quite marked: an Edinburgh citizen for example, when writing his diary in 1825 reflected on the migration of the "great folk" westwards "... leaving Princes Street, St. Andrew Square etc to be occupied by public offices, hotels, shops, lodging houses and the like". (3) By the end of the 19th century the square was almost wholly a commercial

72(a).
centre and at the present time banks, insurance firms and associated companies predominate. It was against such a background that the garden developed and inevitably was influenced by it.

Feuing Conditions in Relation to the Garden

All the feu charters granted for property surrounding the square made reference to the area within the line of the streetways which was to become: "... a common property for the accommodation, pleasure and convenience of the several feuars around the square": the space to be "... levelled, and inclosed by parapet wall and iron rail!

Two conditions were stipulated, first, that the Square was to be used "... for the pleasure, health, or other accommodation of the feuars and their families", and was not to be converted into a common thoroughfare or used for any other different purpose; and second, that the space "with parapet wall, railings, entrys, banks, gravel walk and grass ground" was to be preserved and kept in order at the common and rateable expense of the whole feuars who were to pay "... annually or oftener as may be required a proportion of the expense which the majority of feuars with consent of a Committee of the Town Council found necessary". (4)

These concise conditions have provided a sufficiently adequate and flexible framework for the management and upkeep of the garden since its foundation. (5)

The Setting up of the Gardens

The first known meeting of residents to discuss ways and means of enclosing and levelling the central area was one held on 29th March 1769, presided over by Sir Robert Murray and referred to in the Town Council Minutes of 5th April 1769. (6) Others had, however, preceded it.

Already estimates for the necessary work had been obtained, and informal agreement reached with the Lord Provost and some of the magistrates that the feuars would take over the responsibility, provided the Town Council contributed their portion of the expenses for the unfeued stances in the square. Co-operation in this respect was mutually beneficial, for as the feuars pointed out: "... nothing can contribute more to the speedy feuing of what remain in the Town's hands"
than the formation of the central garden and streets.

Estimates for the work amounted to £750, and in their submission to the Town Council the feuers expressed willingness to advance £392, upon the Town agreeing to give £357 for the unfued plots; the whole undertaking to be completed on or before 1st January 1770, and any surplus money to be used "for further beautifying the ground". With still nearly half the building plots on their hands the Town Council not surprisingly gave their unanimous support. Enclosing the garden was the most costly item: the railing (£387), and parapet wall (£210) together accounted for over two-thirds of the estimate; it was however, a substantial affair consisting of a 2½' (.76m) high stone wall into which was fixed a plain 4' (1.22m) high railing with large cast iron balusters at the 4 gated openings and at each of the corners; and the whole painted green. This cope and railing survived for nearly 100 years before falling into a dilapidated state but from various accounts appears to have had little ornamental merit (see McNab's comments - fig. 37). The cost of levelling the ground amounted to £134 which included the provision of 2 dry stone drains running from corner to corner; sufficient earth was readily available within the space and close by to make this part of the operation relatively straightforward.

Once enclosed the interior was grass sown and a walk formed around the outer edges, following the octagonal shape of the garden (see Ainslie's plan - fig 32a). From time to time the Town Council was asked to contribute towards the cost of "dressing" the area; thus in 1773 the City Chamberlain was authorised to subscribe a sum not exceeding £4 (9) and again in 1775 the City Chamberlain paid Robert Gullon, gardener a little over £3 as the city's share of "dressing, cutting and rolling". (10) A few years before Gullon had worked as gardener at Drummond Lodge, former residence of Lord Provost Drummond. (11) The square itself remained incomplete and despite a petition by residents living on the north side in 1773 (12) requesting the streets to be: "...paved and laid with all convenient speed" it was not in fact causewayed until 1782. It must have been a more pleasurable experience to
Various plans of St Andrew Square gardens

FIGURE 32 a - g.
a. Ainslie's plan 1804
b. Kirkwood 1817
c. Kirkwood's plan and elevation 1819
d. Kirkwood's new plan 1821
e. Johnston's plan 1851
f. Bartholomew plan 1891
g. os plan 1952
exercise in the garden than to navigate the uneven and unfinished streets outside: not surprisingly therefore James Boswell when visiting his father's new house in the Square chose to take an airing "... round St. Andrew Square on the gravel walk" while discussing family business with other relatives. (13) During these early years the upkeep of the garden seems to have been run on fairly makeshift lines with no systematic attempt to raise money from the proprietors. Not until 1791 are there signs of more regular procedures being initiated when the Town Council received a petition from Sir James Colquhoun, (14) Chairman of the proprietors requesting them to appoint a committee in terms of the feu charter as the feuars "... find it necessary to assess themselves with certain sums for the keeping of the said square in order". (15)

The acquisition of the Melville Monument

Sometime between the turn of the century and Kirkwood's detailed plan of Edinburgh (figs. 32a and c) a considerable amount of tree planting had been carried out around the perimeters and the former footpath remade circular in shape. Otherwise, the garden was kept mostly grassed and of plain design. It was soon however, to acquire an ornament of some considerable size which still continues to remain its chief distinguishing feature - namely the Melville monument - a lofty pillar and statue rising 152' in height (46m). In 1817 a committee was formed to raise money for a public memorial to Henry Dundas (1742-1811), first Viscount Melville, who was Lord Advocate in 1775 and filled some important positions in government during William Pitt's administration. (16) William Burn, (1759 - 1834) architect was commissioned to design the monument which he based on a fluted version of Emperor Trajan's column in Rome.

Various sites were considered for the memorial but one citizen in particular - Sir Patrick Walker of Coates (a staunch admirer of Dundas) - was anxious to have the monument placed on his ground in Melville Street (already named in honour) at the centre of the intersection with Walker Street. Robert Brown, architect of the feuing plan for this area had earlier shown a circular garden in this position (fig. 12c). Walker
entered into detailed negotiations with the Committee, and even went so far as to have the site excavated, but plans were dropped due to his insistence that the monument, once erected, became the property of his family. This the Committee would never agree to, and after much bitterness and legal wrangling the promoters thankfully accepted the unconditional and unanimous offer of the St. Andrew Square proprietors to have it placed in the centre of their garden. (17)

Problems were encountered almost immediately in securing an adequate foundation for such a colossal monument, and to allay the apprehensions of residents in the square the advice of Robert Stevenson, engineer (builder of the Rock lighthouse amongst others, and grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson) was sought, and his recommendations acted upon. (18) While the garden was besieged by labourers assembling the column under the superintendence of William Armstrong - the builder awarded the contract - the surrounding ground no doubt suffered. Not until 1823 was the column finished although meantime the decision had been made to add a 14' high (4.27m) statue of Melville. Modelled by the sculptor Chantry the figure was cut by a Lanarkshire stone mason, Robert Forrest, whose exhibitions of statuey, on Calton Hill became a regular feature during the 1820's and 1830's. (19) Four more years were to elapse before the 16 ton statue was completed and with a rousing local farewell left the quarry at Nethan Foot in 12 carts for St. Andrew Square; there on arrival it was within a few minutes "... by means of machinery ... safely deposited on the green". (20) Afterward "... the high masses were in succession, safely elevated to the top of the pillar" by means of scaffolding and machinery constructed on "new and improved principles" from a model provided by Stevenson. Although views on Dundas as a political figure remained divided most were agreed (21) that St. Andrew Square garden had acquired a "splendid" and "elegant" column, forming "... an important feature of the town" and "highly ornamental". (22) (figs. 33 and 34).

The deteriorating state of the garden and its subsequent improvement in 1833

While possessing a monument of imposing scale it was as well
FIGURE 33:
View of St Andrew Square c1827
(Shepherd's views of Edinburgh)

FIGURE 34:
St Andrew Square 1870's - 1880's (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh)
sightseers raised their eyes heavenwards for at this time and for the next few years the condition of the garden gradually deteriorated. The various difficulties experienced were outlined in a report presented to the proprietors in 1833 by a Committee especially elected to effect improvements. Part of the trouble was due to the gardener, Robert Turnbull, a faithful servant since 1825—but now elderly and infirm and "... quite incapable of any active exertion". He was consequently dismissed, but on humanitarian grounds ("feeling it their duty "... to administer in some degree to his relief") he was given a weekly allowance of 3½ shillings (17.5p). His successor Charles Lyon was employed on a weekly basis at a rate of 12 shillings (60p). The parapet wall was also in a "ruinous state", and the coping chipped and injured. Financially, the main cause for concern were the many outstanding arrears in assessments together with a substantial debt owed chiefly to 2 nursery firms—Messrs Dickson & Co (£110), and Messrs Eagle & Henderson (£20). All indications of a serious lapse in efficient management.

To remedy matters the Committee vigorously set to work. Besides resolving the various practical problems they were also concerned to improve and embellish the interior. After "... many meetings and mature deliberation upon plans and estimates" they decided on implementing the following:—the addition of much new shrubbery, the planting of several hundred young trees of various kinds, the formation of serpentine walks, and a handsome circular cast iron railing placed round the base of the pillar (fig. 32e and fig. 39). In addition, the parapet wall was repaired, and the railings repainted green with new locks added to the gates. A good water supply was assured by the sinking of a 24' (7.32m) well in the north east corner.

All these alterations, carried out at considerable expense (over £230 had been spent on the improvements) were noted with approval in the local press and the proprietors congratulated on their taste and public spiritedness (fig. 35a). One year later however, the new planting had made little or no impact, and the garden appeared bare and
FIGURE 35 a & b.
Notices about improvements to St Andrew Square gardens

ST ANDREW’S SQUARE.—It will be observed with satisfaction, that the interior of this square, which has long been in a very neglected state, is undergoing alterations upon an extensive scale, which will render it highly ornamental to the city. New walks of a serpentine form are in progress, several mounds have been thrown up, and a much greater proportion of the ground will be laid out in shrubbery than formerly; a handsome circular railing is also to be placed round the base of Lord Melville’s monument, which will greatly add to the appearance of this handsome pillar, and at the same time protect it from injury. When completed, St Andrew’s Square will equal in beauty and elegance any of the most fashionable gardens in town, and it reflects the highest credit on the taste and public spirit of the proprietors of this square, at whose expense the alterations are making, that they have done so much to improve one of the most frequented thoroughfares in the New Town.

a. Edinburgh Evening Courant 27 April 1833

THE IMPROVEMENTS OF ST ANDREW SQUARE.
The improvement of St Andrew Square has now advanced sufficiently to enable an opinion to be formed of the effect which will be produced by the completion of the plans. It will be remembered that, in the early part of the present year, the proprietors of the Square commenced a movement for having the garden opened up, and otherwise made available as a public promenade and an ornament to the locality. Like other similar enclosures in the New Town, the garden was enclosed by high coping and a heavy railing, which, with the dense shrubbery within, combined to give the place a gloomy and unattractive air. The hand of Time, too, had been at work on the wall and railing, which had fallen into a state of dilapidation quite out of keeping with the character of the locality. Once the question of renovation was taken up, it was seen that no amount of tinkering could effectively improve the old railing, and it was resolved to remove it. After considering the matter, the proprietors of the Square favourable to its improvement employed Mr J. Dick Peddie, architect, to prepare a design for levelling, laying out, and enclosing the garden. Mr Peddie’s plan was accepted in part; but in consequence of the resistance of one or two of the proprietors, it is not at present to be carried out in its entirety. The chief alterations embraced in the plan were the replacing of the old coping and railing by a coping rising only six inches above the pavement, and a malleable iron railing of a much lighter form; the removal of the rough cast-iron footpath outside the enclosure, and the laying down of a broad pavement of Calcutta slabs; the formation through the garden of a wide thoroughfare from west to east, in continuation of George Street; and the removal of a considerable portion of the shrubbery. With the exception of the formation of the central thoroughfare, the above alterations have been nearly completed, and the effect is most pleasing and promising, the wonted funereal aspect of the place having given way to one of airiness and beauty, which must impress every observer with the desirability of proprietors in some of the other squares, not less needful of improvement than this, doing something in the same direction. The work not having been undertaken till rather late in the season, the border remains black earth at present, but will be laid down in grass in spring, which will still further enhance the cheerfulness and beauty of the area. If plots of bright-coloured geraniums and other gay flowers were cut in this emerald border, St Andrew Square might almost vie with similar open garden spaces in Paris, such as those in the Palais-Royal, for example. The new iron railing is of an elegant pattern, and being delicately touched with gilding, has a highly ornamental effect. At each of the angles and flanking the gateways are handsome lamp pillars and at intervals cast-iron stanchions are introduced in the railing, imparting strength without detracting from its ornate character. It appears that a very small minority of the proprietors object to the garden being opened to the public, and it would seem that these, unfortunately, have the power to prevent its being so opened; and this being the case, the formation of a broad path through the Square is not to be procured with in the mean time, but the promoters being confident that a time will come when the objections will be removed, gateways have been constructed in the railing to admit the proposed pathway. The cost of the work, so far as at present being carried out, will be about £1700; and this sum, together with a balance reserved for maintaining the garden in good order, was subscribed by the proprietors of the Square in two days. In addition to the above alterations, the approved design showed groups of statuary at the angles of the garden, and on each side of the main entrances; and we are pleased to learn that there is a probability that the first instalment of this costly part of the ornamentation will be in the form of a copy in bronze of Mr John Steell’s well-known and spiritedly-executed group representing Alexander taming Bucephalus.

b. Scotsman 30 November 1866
without shelter. We learn of this from an account written by
Charles Dickens (then journalist to the Morning Chronicle and covering
Earl Grey’s visit to Edinburgh) when on one hot September afternoon
he attended a fund raising promenade in the garden organised on behalf
of the Blind Asylum, the Deaf and Dumb Institution and the House of
Refuge. It was, according to Dickens "... most respectably attended,
but a lamentably dull affair": a military band played under a marquee
"... erected in the centre of a parched bit of ground, without a tree
or shrub to intercept the rays of a burning sun".(25)

The Committee also examined the different ways available for raising
garden assessments: their own had been based on the Stent masters
valuation lists (compiled for local taxation purposes) but were
thought by some to be not altogether equitable. Other methods also
had their drawbacks, so instead the Committee decided to have all the
property surrounding the garden accurately measured and for proprietors
to pay according to the width of their frontages(26) (the foot frontage
principle). This system was consequently adopted and remains in force
today; some of the other New Town gardens follow the same practice -
namely Rutland Square and Clarendon Crescent. In addition, the
Committee successfully recovered nearly £50 in outstanding arrears
and had a set of regulations printed and circulated.

The gardens from 1833-1866

After the major improvements of 1833 nothing more is heard about
the garden until 1851 when it reemerged into the limelight on account
of a serious proposal to convert the central area into an open place. Not
dissimilar in style to the rather formal space first envisaged
by Craig. At an annual general meeting of proprietors held in
February 1851(27) 2 possibilities were presented, one retaining some
of the garden's previous character, raised, but with a major footpath
running from east to west and open to the public during the daytime
(fig 36a), and the second a completely unenclosed and hard paved area
(fig. 36b). Such radical changes required however, wider discussion and
the special committee appointed to consider all the implications wisely
First proposal shows a 50' (15m) broad walk from east to west across the centre (Miscellaneous papers St Andrew Square gardens)

Proposal showing an open place (Miscellaneous papers St Andrew Square gardens)

FIGURE 36 a & b: 1851 proposals to open up St Andrew Square gardens
sought the views of a range of informed citizens (but in particular architects and artists) competent to judge and offer advice: an early forerunner of public participation in planning. This was achieved by means of a circular letter signed by the Convener of the Committee - Robert Chambers (28): the letter explained how the square had largely been transformed into a business centre, the significance and accessibility of which would probably be aided by opening up the garden thereby heightening "... the architectural effect of the various facades"; all this to be in place of "... a by no means thriving shrubbery". The circular requested comment on 2 points; first, the likely result of the changes on property values, and second, its aesthetic effect and convenience to the public it being understood that any "new arrangement" was undertaken "... in a manner accordant with the principles of good taste".

Replies were received from many prominent individuals including 13 architects, 12 artists, 3 builders, 3 civil engineers and 14 private gentlemen. (29) With only 2 exceptions (30) all supported the opening of the square and considered property values would be enhanced rather than adversely affected. Several of the architects and artists sent in their own ideas and plans incorporating fountains, statues and other public monuments. Enthusiasm for change ran high provided "... it was properly and completely done" (W. H. Playfair), and several waxed lyrical on continental places, (31) although one or 2 had reservations that lacking permanent blue skies and sun a place in Edinburgh might not be altogether appropriate. Lord Cockburn, one of the private individuals approached viewed the improvements favourably, for as he remarked in his reply "... At present St Andrew Square is in its building, the most ambitiously ornamented square in Edinburgh while in its associated ground it is the meanest." Public response was encouraging, but the idea proved abortive due to strong resistance by a small group of residents who did not wish to see the central area become a public thoroughfare; (32) and who also shared the Scotsman's reservations as to how far "... the elevated situation of the square, with openings on all sides may not render the proposed place subject to frequent clouds and whirlwinds of dust." (33) While public debate continued the garden became the scene of more tranquil proceedings:

83.
the first exhibition and promenade for the season of the North British Professional Gardener's Society being held there in mid May 1851. It was an occasion of some note as: "A more varied and beautiful display of the varieties of horticultural produce has rarely if ever been witnessed in Edinburgh"; the weather however failed miserably and the anticipated "numerous and fashionable attendance" did not materialise. (34)

During the following years the garden was well looked after; "the excellent keeping of its walks and grass lawns" was praised by McNab (fig. 37) in the 1860's together with the fine mixture of well formed trees both of forest growth and smaller ornamental varieties. The outside appearance of the garden was however marred by the decayed state of the wall and railing: "mean in appearance and a great blemish"; and while in the early 1850's "the interior ... during the summer months was a sealed letter to outside pedestrians", by the 1860's the dense thicket of evergreen and low deciduous shrubs around the outer edges had dwindled to such an extent "that it is now impossible to conceal from view those individuals privileged to walk in them." (36)

A further opportunity to reconsider the state of the garden arose in 1865 prompted by a Police notice requiring the proprietors to form a proper pavement outside the garden in place of the rough causewayed footpath. (37) Once more a special committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Sir William Johnstone - former Lord Provost, and member of the earlier 1851 Committee. On this occasion the Committee favoured the replacement of the old wall and railing, and the provision of footpaths across the square from north to south, and east to west, open to the public during daytime (fig. 38a). These suggestions were incorporated into a pamphlet dated November 1865 which together with one new sketch plan (fig. 38b), and a reprint of an earlier proposal (fig. 36a) were circulated to proprietors for comment. (38) The earlier notion of converting the square into a place was now virtually a dead issue, for as the pamphlet explained it would not be tolerated by "... some of the most influential proprietors" nor by the general public who did not wish "... the doing away with a green spot in the
OUR TOWN TREES.

ST. ANDREW SQUARE GARDENS.

[From the Scottish Farmer of July 12, 1865.]

This central town square continues to receive a fair share of attention from its supporters, as testified by the excellent keeping of its walls and grass lawns. The interior of the grounds is rather pedes- trian, centred as it is by the Melville column, planted when looked at from the high windows which surround it. The outside wall and rail is homestead antiquated, and stands much in need of repair. It does not har- monise with the general keeping within, nor yet with the magnificent architectural structures bordering it without. If it should ever be con- templated to make any alteration in the rail fence, it would be advisable to have the four angles rounded outward, and the space left between the trees and rail laid down with grass. The trees round the outside wall are far too numerous, all much about a height, and composed of tolerably good kinds. It is nearly destitute of evergreens and flowering shrubs, which at one time were abundant amongst the deciduous trees. It is also free of the mezzanine poplar and willow trees, which prove so advantageous to town gardens; and it is the absence of these which has caused all the others to be better shaped than they would otherwise have been. The trees in the interior compartments stand quite free, and have a pleasing effect when seen from the sur- rounding windows, as well as the smaller raised belts of evergreens, placed opposite the gate- ways. Those round the outer border, as be- fore stated, are numerous to remain healthy in their present overcrowded state; besides, in such a limited space of ground it is impossible to bring many to perfection. The trees in St. Andrew Square are very much mixed—some of them of forest growth, such as elms, lime, yew, and horns, chestnut, and other trees of limited growth, such as thorns, laburnums, elms, &c. When trees are so very much mixed, it is impossible to stand quite free of each other, as it is difficult for all to work together. Those naturally of a free and most growth will soon overpower the slower flowering kinds, and to such an extent that the former become absolutely necessary.

In order to render St. Andrew Square more pleasing than it is at present views from without, it will be necessary to break up the present dense hedgerow of trees encircling it. To a height of two or three feet the trees are much effective, but it would be to form two or more semi-circular openings altogether. The space between the wall and the rail, the widest portion being towards the wall. At each of the eight openings it is proposed to make, the turf should be continued close up to the railings, leaving a finely-shaped tree standing out 10 or 12 feet from the rail.

The clearances should be such as would allow the tender outlines of the trees left, as exhibited by the accompanying diagram. From the progress which trees generally make, it is not at all unlikely that in the course of twenty-five or thirty years a tree standing on grass at irregular distances will be the only one even round the square; and as the trees which it now so strongly stand on grass will take the lead, they ought to be well cared for with a view to their becoming landmarks. It is proposed to convert St. Andrew Square into a Pleas. If the proposal should ever be carried into effect, of valuing gravel for grass, it is to be hoped that those trees which it is now suggested should stand on grass will be carefully preserved and surrounded with a suitable fence, and at such a distance from each other as to prevent them sustaining injury from external causes. Towards the corners, as well as on each side of the en- trance gates, the trees in the meantime should be considerably thinned. It would, however, be advisable to have a few good evergreen shrubs bordering the semi-circular portions of grass, provided the space left for the purpose. Were some alteration of this kind carried out it would greatly enhance the picture- like character of the grounds as seen from those windows overlooking, as well as by the pedes- trians walking along the square. One or two good-shaped trees effectively placed on the large open space of grass would also im- prove the general appearance.

Some years ago the promenaders in St. Andrew Square were entirely concealed from the gaze of the outside walkers, owing to the dense banks of evergreen and the broad deciduous shrubs which were growing among them. It will be difficult, but not all other places of the sort, these smaller trees are obliged to succumb, the roots of the stronger growing ones being rather too much for them; and consequently they are fast dying out, and every year the screen is becoming more and more open, so much so, that it is now impossible to conceal from view those individuals privileged to walk in them. About eighteen years ago this state of matters did not exist the interior of this square during the summer months was sealed over to outside pedestrians. Year by year they have become more and more open to public gaze, and will continue to do so, until the point before described is reached, viz., grass with fine outlined trees standing at distances so as not to interfere with each other. This condition of affairs can be avoided, as the roots of the larger and more growing trees take possession of the ground. If the growths of trees were such that the weaker kinds cannot possibly exist, and hence the gradual disappearance of all subordi- nates, first by partial decay, and ultimately by death, it is therefore expedient that something should early be done to prevent the trees in St. Andrew Square going beyond a point from which it will be impracticable to correct them. This is by a process of thinning and pruning, and continuing the grass towards the outside fences the gardens could be made to look infinitely better than they now are, and prove that the St. Andrew Square proposal have a taste for the picturesque by being early in carrying out improvements for which they were designed again. If all the trees are allowed to go on sprouting themselves, other the contrary, the ground they are at is pro- tected, they will in a very few years become a ravelling mass, from which it will be difficult to select trees for future decision, and they will be greatly detract from the beauty of the sur- rounding buildings. Just now the thinning could be done with great advantage. Of late a naked fence, planted with climbers, has been con- structed round the north-east corner. This is neither an ornament in itself, nor yet from the windows it overlooks it. After what has been stated, it becomes the duty of all to do what they can for the increased embellishment of Edinburgh. The architect has done much, and every day additional ornamentation shows the magic power of his hand. It now remains with the public to cultivate an architectural taste, so as to assist in the further beautifying of our noble city, so as to make it still more worthy of the appellation of Modern Athens.

J. M. N.

FIGURE 37:

Article by James McNab about St. Andrew Square gardens
(Scottish Farmer 12 July 1865)
FIGURE 38 a & b:
Modified proposals of 1865 to improve and partly open up the square
(pamphlet circulated to proprietors dated November 1865: Miscellaneous papers)
Nevertheless, the 1865 Committee were anxious to open up the square to some extent and the plans proposed were therefore something of a delicate compromise. In January 1866 John Dick Peddie, a well known and distinguished Edinburgh architect was appointed to prepare designs for the new railings, together with a footpath 45-50' wide running east to west across the centre, as well as a pavement round the outside. James McNab (refer Section I) was asked to advise on the treatment of the garden area. All these suggested changes met with the approval of the Town Council who over the years appeared to have had a fairly close and amicable relationship with the management committee.

By early March Dick Peddie's plans had been prepared and later in the month were exhibited at a General Meeting of proprietors: the gathering was enlivened by the strong protests of Mr John Dundas WS, one time member of the 1833 improvement committee and resident in the square for 60 years who on behalf of himself and a near neighbour, Lady Boswell, objected to the various alterations, preferring that "... matters should remain as they are". His vehement opposition to any attempt to open up the square stemmed it seemed not from any likely infringement on the privacy of the garden but rather because the square "... acted as a great stopper for the dust and other horrors that blew down George Street": and that as the Water Company never watered the streets such an alteration would leave him "... exposed to all the dust of the summer." The Committee however had anticipated this attack and the Chairman at the start had cautiously stated that plans to open up the square had been suspended for the time being due to 1 or 2 proprietors being strongly adverse to the idea. Apart from Mr Dundas, all the proprietors present formally approved of the plans to renew the wall, railings, and outside pavement.

At the beginning of April 1866 another meeting was called when the financial arrangements for covering the costs of the improvements were discussed. The Committee favoured raising the necessary money (£450 for the footpath; and £669 for the railings) by voluntary subscriptions and
already an informal approach to the banks and insurance companies in the square had elicited within 2 hours promises of enough to meet the cost of the railings. The presence of substantial business interests on whose image the sad condition of the railings reflected poorly was not without advantages. By now practically all the parties involved, including the Town Council had approved of the changes, but still, even after firm assurances that nothing was to be done to open up the garden, Mr Dundas and Lady Boswell, together with another resident, James Finlay, continued their opposition, threatening immediate legal action if the old railings were so much as touched. Several diplomatic letters passed between the Chairman and the solicitors acting on behalf of the objectors and eventually they were sufficiently appeased to abandon the idea of entering into litigation. Without the protest of this small nucleus of residents St. Andrew Square might easily have developed into an open thoroughfare and its character quite altered. (42)

**Improvements to the Gardens 1866-1867**

By the end of 1866 a pavement of Caithness stone had been laid around the outside of the garden and a new cope and railing erected: the change in appearance was dramatic "... the wanton funeral aspect of the place having given way to one of airiness and beauty". Careful thought had been given to the design of the railings - one of Peddie's main aims having been to create an almost "invisible" effect: he had expressed this intention in a letter written to the Chairman of the Improvement Committee when submitting his plans:

"As the enclosure is required merely to save the gardens from encroachment and injury I have endeavoured to make it as slight and inobtrusive as is consistent with strength, so that the gardens, while actually enclosed, should be in appearance open; and persons walking on the pavements and roadways of the square should have the advantage of all the charms which the grass and foliage give to it". (43)

The cope was only some 6" (15cm) above the pavement, the iron railing much lighter than its predecessor and at each of the angles, and flanking the pathway were handsome lamp pillars, the whole being delicately touched with gilding. Unfortunately, these most attractive railings were removed during the Second World War but ones to an almost identical pattern by the same architect can be seen around the George Square gardens.
FIGURE 39:
St Andrew Square c.1870, view to east side: the gardener can be seen cutting the grass; with the door to the toolhouse at the base of the monument open (Edinburgh as it was 1814-1924, C.S. Minto)

FIGURE 40:
St Andrew Square from the west c.1900 - 1930: note the Gladstone memorial which was removed to Coates Crescent gardens in 1955 (IHBES)
To complete the improvements McNab's advice on the interior was carried into effect during the spring of 1867; here the aim was to make the garden more visible from the outside by the removal of all the old shrubbery. The vacant plots were then levelled and grass seeded, and the grass continued to the railing. Several of the less well formed trees were removed. Response to these improvements was enthusiastic and well reported in the press (fig. 35b); one article was particularly complementary: "... Foremost in fairness, as being newly redressed, is the enclosure of St. Andrew Square; which the skill of Mr McNab, aided by the architectural taste of Mr J Dick Peddie has converted from a tangled wilderness of scrubby underwood into a truly ornamental bit of park or pleasure ground". The releveling and grass sowing of the border was particularly praised and emphasised as an improvement which other gardens might follow: - "very slow are our town gardeners to acknowledge particularly that grass is our finest evergreen." In fact, the changes made to the St. Andrew Square garden at this time did help stimulate a whole wave of improvements to other gardens in the New Town.

The Gardens since the 1860's

No further changes were made until the First World War when in 1918 the proprietors with the consent of the Town Council gave the American YMCA permission to erect hostel accommodation in the garden for the use of American soldiers and sailors. A postcard view taken at this time shows the garden occupied by a quadrangle of wooden huts erected round the Melville monument - taking up the space formerly occupied by gravelled walks and shrub beds. After the end of the war the ornamental pathways dating from 1833 were not reinstated; likewise, a bowling green formed on the south side of the garden in the 1850's also disappeared (fig. 32f). As in the earlier days, the garden became more simple in style, consisting mainly of grass and trees.

During the Second World War, Dick Peddie's fine railings were removed, and a static water tank built at the centre of the north side (fig. 18b). Thus unprotected the garden gradually deteriorated. In 1947 new railings were erected to the same design, and by the same contractor as those in Charlotte Square (Section 2.3); thereupon
restoration work on the garden was able to commence. It was at this time that a tree lined hard paved footpath was made across the square running from east to west, not unlike the one proposed by the 1866/1867 Improvement Committee but narrower (fig. 32g). The circular iron railing which had surrounded the Melville monument since 1833, and now in a dilapidated state was removed and the footpath continued around the monument. A stone and brick tool shed was added in 1951 to the south of the column in a semi sunk position and a small footpath made to it (fig. 41d). Some new tree planting was carried out after the war and today there are about 85 trees in the garden mostly between 40 and 80 years old: these are of a great variety ranging from forest trees such as elm, sycamore, plane and oak to several smaller, ornamental trees including cherry, hawthorn and laburnum (refer fig. 41a, b, c, d). Trees are now planted throughout the garden, a policy started after the Second World War and which in one way has helped to change the appearance of the garden quite significantly (fig. 32g): up until that time a large grassed open space formed the central part of the garden (fig.32 a-f).

Uses made of the garden; and attempts to open it to the public

While St Andrew Square garden has existed for over 200 years only for a relatively brief period did it function as an outdoor recreational space for the benefit of surrounding families yet it remains a private garden run and administered on the same principles as when first set up in 1770. Attempts to open up the gardens in the 1850's and 1860's as already described proved abortive due to the fierce resistance of the few remaining private residents. Since then other moves have occasionally been made and mainly on the instigation of the Town Council. In 1890, for example, the Lord Provost's Committee considered approaching the proprietors to see if they would agree to the removal of the bronze statue of Alexander and Bucephalus from the roadway on the west side of the square, to the greater safety of the garden: thereupon forming a public walk from east to west. (47) The proposal however, was not taken further. More recently during 1968 and 1969 as part of an attempt by certain members of the Town Council to acquire St. Andrew Square

91.
The Melville monument

a. North east corner

b. The Melville monument

c. North side showing central footpath

d. Semi sunk tool shed built 1951 can be seen on the extreme right

FIGURE li a - d: General views of the garden
(together with Charlotte Square) gardens "... so as to make them available to the public throughout the year and for use at the Festival\(^{(48)}\) 4 feasibility reports were submitted to the Lord Provost's Committee by the Director of Parks and Recreation, the Chief Constable, the City Engineer and the Town Planning Officer. All 4 reports were generally favourable although the Chief Constable expressed concern at the risk to the young and elderly gaining access unless special provision was made for pedestrians crossing the extremely busy roadway. More sinister in its implications however was the view expressed by the City Engineer to the effect that "... public ownership of the gardens would be advantageous if consideration was later given to the provision of underground car parks". Neither this move nor a later one in 1974\(^{(49)}\) (to also include the 3 Queen Street gardens) gathered sufficient support to prove successful.

The present proprietors and their Management Committee are content to retain the garden as a private well maintained space and willingly contribute towards the costs of upkeep. During the summer months the garden enjoys brief periods of use when staff from the surrounding offices cross over in the lunch hour but the main pleasure of the garden is now derived from the views of it from the outside - which can be enjoyed by all passing pedestrians, car and bus travelers, and of course by those whose offices face onto them.
"In May we removed to Charlotte Square, a house I found the most agreeable of any we have ever lived in in Edinburgh; the shrubbery in front, and the peep from the upper windows at the back of the Firth of Forth with its wooded shores and distant hills made the look out so cheerful". (1) Elizabeth Grant, 1817.

St. Andrew Square garden had been in use nearly 30 years before its companion at the west end began to take shape. The building of 46 houses in Charlotte Square was spread over a long period (2), interrupted by the Napoleonic War and the consequent scarcity of money. Its beginning was however, auspicious. Partly in response to growing criticism that much of the building in the New Town was dull and lacking distinction the Town Council in 1791 commissioned Robert Adam the gifted Scottish architect to produce a unified scheme of frontages for the dwellings. One year later Adam was dead, and sadly, only the north side, the first to be built faithfully kept to his design. In its early years the square housed a number of nobility and gentry, and was also popular amongst the legal and medical professions as a place of residence. Business and commercial interests were slower to intrude, (3) and even by the end of the last century the square consisted mostly of family houses. The following years saw a gradual change however, and today office accommodation (particularly legal firms) predominates. An echo of its former glory persists in the prestige attached to 2 official residences now housed there - that of the Secretary of State for Scotland (No 6), and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (No 7).

Tourists, historians, and students from many disciplines are attracted to this square not only to view the Adam architecture, but also to visit the National Trust's Georgian House (4) or to research in the once fashionable Church of St. George's which as West Register House provides additional accommodation for the Scottish Records Office.

The early development of the Garden

Charlotte Square shares the same feuing conditions relating to the management and use of the central space as St. Andrew Square (section 2.2). Curiously enough however, while the 2 areas designed by Craig were intended to match one another, Charlotte Square departed from the octagonal shape (fig. 42a) and became instead a smaller, circular enclosure, and remained so for the following 70 years. (5) What prompted the change remains a mystery but it probably gradually evolved out of a series of sketch plans, the first prepared by Robert Adam in 1791 (fig. 42b) and the rest by William Sibbald, City Superintendent and Overseer of Work from 1790-1809 (figs. 42c and d).
Plan of 1785 showing central area as planned by Craig
(EDO archival drawing collection)

Pale colour wash by Robert Adam 1791: showing
various possibilities for the treatment of the
central area: the bolder outline of an equal
sided octagon seems to be the one favoured by
Adam (EDO archival drawing collection)

A William Sibbald drawing of 1795: it shows the
central area similar to the one drawn up by Adam
but also has an outline of a circle - too faint to be
seen (EDO archival drawing collection: wrongly dated
as 1875)

Plan dated 23 February 1803 showing a circular
garden area drawn up by William Sibbald
(EDO archival drawing collection)

FIGURE 42 a - d:
Evolution of the central area Charlotte Square
Sibbald's involvement highlights a further major difference between the 2 squares: the earlier garden had been set up on the initiative of the residents, but the slower and more protracted development of Charlotte Square, with its handful of new proprietors hardly in a position to take concerted action, required the Town Council to assume greater responsibility in this respect. It was after all to their ultimate advantage if the improved appearance of the central area helped to promote the swifter feuING of the remaining plots. Thus as early as May 1795 the Town Council remitted to a sub-committee "everything relating to completing the inner square of Charlotte Square", and after an interval of several weeks were informed by this Committee that "they had directed Mr Sibbald to proceed to the bringing of it to a proper level, that they had procured a plan and estimate from Mr Sibbald and that they had got from Mr Chalmers (blacksmith, in Potterow) different designs for a rail, but they had not yet met with the feuars on the north side of the square to settle the mode to be adopted when advertisements for estimates will be published." (6)

At this time Sibbald led an exceedingly busy life for apart from his post with the Town Council (at an important and demanding period in the development of the New Town) he also acted as consultant to the George Heriot Trust, (7) besides running a private business as architect cum builder. Although in many ways a key figure his personal life and circumstances remain largely obscure. Little more is known about him except that he was born in Inverness and later moved to Edinburgh where he was in partnership with a builder called William Lumley. He showed himself to be a competent designer: being responsible for a new manse attached to St. Cuthbert's Church, the elegant spire of St. Andrews Church (George Street, Edinburgh 1789), Lady Ystters Church (1803), and with plans for laying out the second New Town (8) (1793 and 1802, see Section 3.1). Seemingly a popular and well respected individual, he was elected Dean of Masons from 1807-1808 and his death one year later was "... much and justly regretted." (9)

There was a delay of nearly 2 years before a formal meeting (in March 1797) was arranged with the feuars to discuss Sibbald's plans for the central area: during the interval attempts to feu off further plots in the square continued with the upset price reduced in order to tempt would-be purchasers. (10) The meeting concentrated on the first
priority of having the centre properly enclosed and agreement was reached "... in terms similar to what was adopted respecting St Andrew Square ... to finish the inner space of Charlotte Square by building a circular parapet to be 2' 6" (85 cm) high above the level of the street."(11) Approval was also given to details concerning the railing - whose full length balusters of cast iron were to be 5' (1.52 m) in height (1' (30 cm) for the intermediate ones) with 16 added lamp posts, and 4 ornamental gates. Perhaps the most significant item in this information is the reference to "a circular parapet" indicating beyond doubt that Sibbald's plan was for a garden of this shape: favoured maybe on grounds of economy (less stonework and railings required) but more likely as a matter of personal preference. Adam's idea for an equal sided octagon seems to have been further considered at one point, but then discarded (fig. 42c). There is no hint of any outcry at Sibbald's somewhat radical change and it appears to have been readily accepted.

Another meeting followed less than 3 months later in June 1797 to further discuss the arrangements for erecting the parapet wall and rail. Various small changes were made to the original specifications including a 4" (10 cm) increase in the height of the wall (thus creating a formidable barrier of just under 8' (2.44m) - a foot greater than its counterpart in St. Andrew Square). Already 6 estimates had been obtained for digging and constructing the foundations of the wall and Mr Sibbald was asked to calculate the amount of rubble and ashlar work besides the amount of digging in order to judge "... which of the estimates is the cheapest". Final agreement was also reached on the form of the railing, the one marked "Number I" being adopted: as this differed in some particulars to the one previously described for which estimates had also been obtained, Sibbald was further requested to supply schedules and drawings of the new rail so that the necessary revisions could be made.

From this time onwards progress was more rapid. At the third and last joint meeting of the feuars and the Town Council held at the beginning of July 1797, 4 tenders for the railings were opened and "... Mr Chalmers estimate found to be the cheapest, and George Winton
formerly found the cheapest for mason work": the meeting agreed to award the contracts to these 2 men - a decision endorsed later in the month at a full meeting of the Council. Winton's name strangely enough reappears several years later in connection with another New Town garden, for he became part owner of some land which was subsequently sold to form part of the eastern section of the Queen Street Gardens. Both contracts have survived and provide some interesting detail about the work itself. (12) The deadline for completing the parapet wall was set at 15th November 1797 "... at the sight and to the satisfaction of William Sibbald": no overall sum of money was mentioned for the masons job but different rates of pay applied to different parts, for example, rubble work of 16" (40 cm) thick was paid at "... £5 per rood of surface measure", and the broached ashlar at "6½ penny per foot superficial". Once the wall was built, the blacksmith was required to add the 1150' (351m) of railings within 3 weeks for the sum of £509. (13)

The garden from 1797-1817

Ironically the haste to complete the enclosure proved highly premature for although the central area was now well protected it remained an abandoned and unfinished piece of waste ground. Nearly 6 years went by before some of the proprietors began to voice discontent and to put forward remedies in the face of their continuing difficulties due to shortage of residents.

In July 1803 the Lord Provost received a letter from Colonel Alexander Dirom along with other feuars on the west side of the square seeking permission to alter the elevations of 2 houses being built (one belonging to Dirom and the other to William Traquair) chiefly by increasing the height of the windows by an extra foot: (14) the greater portion of of this communique was, however, preoccupied with the central space for which it seems there was no shortage of original ideas:

"with regard to the improvement of the interior or garden part of Charlotte Square it is extremly desirable that it should be done without delay - we find however, that there is not any hope of it being done by the proprietors themselves as it would be difficult not only to unite their opinion on the subject but also to raise the money for that purpose, as a great part of the lots are not yet

98.
sold - we therefore beg leave to submit to your Lordship and the Town Council whether it would not be most advisable to have the square laid out and finished under your own direction by Mr Sibbald and charge this further expense which cannot be considerable upon the different lots in the square in addition to the expense for inclosing it, which has been already incurred. In laying out the square it may deserve consideration whether it would not be desirale to have a piece of water in the middle of it, which may be easily obtained by bringing in a spring in the Lothian Road, as the distance is only a few hundred yards, the level of which has already been ascertained by Mr Sibbald. Such a reservoir which would command the whole of the New Town, might be extremely useful in cases of fire, might be occasionally employed to sprinkle or wash the streets, and in winter would be a safe and convenient place for the inhabitants to enjoy the recreation of skating. The additional expense of that improvement might be defrayed to the town by levying a small contribution, if they should think it an object, from the skaters not belonging to the square, as the Proprietors of the Square and their families would have a just right to it from giving up a part of the ground to be applied to that purpose.\(15\)

Alexander Dirom (1757-1830) of Mount Annan, chief instigator of the letter was a military gentleman with experience of war service in India and later appointed Quartermaster General for Scotland.\(16\) The proposed change to the elevation of his house (Number 18 Charlotte Square - he and his family lived in Queen Street prior to its completion) was drawn up by William Sibbald, and Sibbald's concise and favourable report on the alterations received the approval of the Town Council. While consulting Sibbald about his house Dirom seems to have taken the further opportunity to confer with him about the central space and the somewhat fanciful if not ambitious plan "for a piece of water" corresponds almost exactly to notions entertained earlier by Sibbald for the inner area of a circus designed for the western end of the second New Town. Sibbald had been particularly engrossed with this latter plan both in 1793 and again in 1802 - just shortly ahead of his periods of involvement with Charlotte Square and it would seem too much of a coincidence that the ideas for the one did not rub off on the other. Whether the Town Council, or other feuars took this suggestion seriously is not known but it would certainly have posed difficulties over accessibility, and more pertinently on maintenance. Such an idea for example, had been considered for Finsbury Square, London (completed
in 1791) but abandoned on sanitary grounds and a garden substituted instead. The experience of St. James Square was also not very encouraging: improved in the 1720s with the addition of a circular basin of water, fountain, and decorative boats (fig. 43) its upkeep proved troublesome and eventually fountain, water and basin all disappeared. (17)

Colonel Dirom however, was a man of action and not to be thwarted. A further letter to the Lord Provost, dated March 1804 indicates that during the intervening months he had started to take the initiative for having the ground levelled and laid out, and had in fact come up with a novel method which promised to be both quick and cheap. The letter ran as follows:-

"My Lord, I beg leave to acquaint your Lordship what the Quarter-master of the Invernessshire Regiment of Militia has represented to me that he cannot direct the working parties of the Regiment to level the Circus in Charlotte Square, or to carry the stones to where the walks are to be made until the levels are ascertained and the walks laid out according to the plan fixed upon by the Town Council, I beg leave to submit to your Lordship the expediency of giving instructions to Mr Sibbald to take the necessary levels and to mark out the walks according to the plan signed by your Lordship, bearing date 23 February 1803, in order that the work which may be done by the troops to level the Circus for their own purpose, may also be useful in forwarding the plan for the final improvement of it."(18)

The Invernesshire Regiment of Militia (fig. 44) referred to in Dirom's letter formed part of Edinburgh's Castle garrison between December 1803 until January 1806; (19) during the period 1802-1815 this garrison was manned almost entirely by Militia and veteran battalions as most of the regular battalions of the line were involved in the Napoleonic Wars. The Militia were not regular soldiers but part of a reserve force which every town and county had to provide under the Militia Acts of 1798 and 1802; (20) They were never very popular and tended to be regarded as "the scum of the earth". As this Militia formed part of the Castle garrison they were available in Edinburgh as 'labour' if the right strings could be pulled (but such work would have been regarded as being beneath regular soldiers). It would simply have
FIGURE 13:
St James Square London, view by Sutton Nicholl 1752; at the centre there is a fountain surrounded by water on which rests a boat. Sibbald's suggestions for Charlotte Square were very much along these lines.

FIGURE 14:
Hon Francis William Grant of Grant, Colonel of the Inverness-shire Militia; men from this regiment and under his direction were responsible for levelling Charlotte Square in 1803 (Kay's Portraits)
been a matter of getting men available without disturbing their first priority of maintaining guards and providing sentries. Dirom was of sufficient importance in the hierarchy to authorise the use of the Militia (in agreement with the Commanding Officer - a man named Grant) for such non-military purposes. Hence the Invernesshire Regiment provided a labour free source for the back breaking job of levelling the central area, justified on the score of it being a useful training exercise and time filler.

Thus the central area was levelled, and a single circular walk formed close to the parapet wall (see Ainslie's plan 1804, fig. 45a). Sibbald's more elaborate, and still surviving design "bearing date of 23 February 1803" (fig. 42d) which was mentioned by Dirom in his letter was only partly carried out - curtailed most probably by the restricted time the Militia could be assigned to the task. But the inner area while now considerably better than it had been was still in a rudimentary state, devoid of trees, shrubs, or any other decorative planting. So it remained for a further 4 years until the proprietors - now of increased numbers and more competent to take action - organised a meeting in December 1807 for all those "... interested in the improvement of the Square". (21) A Committee was appointed which included the former protagonist Alexander Dirom and such other eminent gentlemen as Sir John Sinclair (initiator of the Statistical Account for Scotland), Sir William Fettes (founder of Fettes College), Thomas Allan (banker) and Walter Watson. The several resolutions passed at this meeting were later presented in a petition to the Town Council and ran as follows:

"1st that it is highly expedient, for the inhabitants of Charlotte Square and for the credit and ornament of the City of Edinburgh that the centre of the said Square shall be completed and laid out in a neat and elegant manner with gravel walks and shrubbery; 2nd that the plan drawn up by William Weir of Greenside Place, Edinburgh ... seemed to be well calculated for the object in view and that if a sum adequate to the expense thereof can be raised the said plan should be adopted with such alterations as may be judged necessary by the Committee; 3rd, that for raising the sum required every feuar should subscribe the sum of £6 and a sum not exceeding £1 per annum for 3 years as the Committee shall judge necessary, in consequence of which each feuar shall be entitled to
FIGURE 15 a-f: Various plans of Charlotte Square
a key to the central area, and the liberty of walking therein for himself and family, and that the said privileges shall remain annexed to the house belonging to him subject to such regulations as the majority of feuars shall from time to time think expedient; and 4th that the Lord Provost and Magistrates be applied to ... to subscribe for those stances of houses in the Square which have not yet been feued. That it be represented to them, in strongest terms, that it will greatly tend to improve the appearance of the City if this Square is elegantly fitted up; that in consequence thereof the feu still vacant will be more readily taken, that it can be no loss to the City, as any sum they advance will be repaid when the feu are taken and that without this and it is impossible for the existing feuars to take upon themselves the burden of said improvement".

At a full meeting of the Town Council in January 1808 the proprietors' request for financial support was approved and the City Chamberlain authorised to subscribe for the unfued stances in the Square. Judging from figures quoted in the feu charters as to the proportional sum payable to the city for enclosing and laying out the central area it would seem that the total cost of forming the garden was in the region of £1,000. (22)

Next to nothing is known about William Weir whose plan was "well calculated" to achieve the "neat and elegant layout so desired by the Committee. A man of the same name had been employed by the Town Council in 1801 and 1804 "for digging" in Albany and Duke Street, (23) and a James Weir, merchant (father, or brother?) of 6 Greenside Place (a continuation of Leith Walk) appears in the street directories and stent rolls for this period. Leith Walk was certainly a popular part of town for nursery and seed shops being close to the old botanic gardens and the several market and nursery gardens in the vicinity. (24) Sibbald too, resided in this district and may have been responsible for recommending Weir to the Committee either as a local contact or on the strength of his previous work for the Town Council: the lack of more direct leads on Weir suggest that he was probably a small nursery contractor, capable of turning his hand to many different jobs.

Weir's plan was relatively simple but successfully transformed a
dull empty space into one of more pleasing appearance and interest: several years later the Moray Place garden was laid out to a very similar design. A thick border of evergreen shrubs and trees (consisting of thorns, laburnums, sycamores, limes, birches and elms) was planted between the railing and the outer circular walk; 2 curved footpaths were made from east to west leading to a central circular walk, tree and shrub planted on the inside (see Kirkwood's plan 1817, fig. 45b). The remaining space was left turfed but Kirkwood's plan of 1819, fig 45c, shows a scatter of trees on the grassed area - an early hint of the gardenesque.

Early Management and Development of the Garden

The planting was probably finished by the spring of 1808 after which the proprietors had to assume responsibility for its upkeep; but with still only one-third of the square built this must have been done on a fairly ad hoc basis. A petition presented to the Town Council in 1817 by "... The Committee for managing the affairs of Charlotte Square" verifies this assumption: by then the square was nearing completion and the Committee had become concerned "... to settle upon an effective financial arrangement for maintaining the gardens ...". The preface was signed by the Convener - Henry Cockburn, later Lord Cockburn, a man who not only distinguished himself in legal practice, but was also a spry commentator on human affairs, and staunch defender of Edinburgh's open spaces, and fine natural features (see East Princes Street Gardens, Section 2.5); in it the details of the feu charters relating to the central space were outlined with the comment added that:

"The inhabitants have gone on till now, without getting the matter put upon a proper footing but this has always been felt to be irregular and inconvenient, and they now wish the assessments to be put into a form agreeable to their charters, which is by the majority of the feuars coming to some resolution and getting a committee of the Town Council to approve of the arrangement which they propose ..."

Approval had already been given by "... more than a majority of feuars" for the required sum for the garden's maintenance to be fixed
at the annual meeting of proprietors held in January with a set upper limit of 2 guineas per house. The feuars had also agreed that such an arrangement should continue: "without any renewal until it be regularly altered and shall include the contributions for the current year". In response the Town Council appointed a Committee of 3 to confer with the proprietors, one of whom was Baillie Henderson - later to become Lord Provost. The feuars were at least assured of one sympathetic ally: earlier Henderson had been involved with the East Queen Street gardens as the Town Council's representative when efforts were afoot to set them up as pleasure gardens, and later his nursery firm - Eagle and Henderson were responsible for laying out the West Princes Street gardens. Nothing further is recorded in the Town Council minutes which indicates that the 1817 arrangements for levying assessments proved satisfactory. This contrasts with St. Andrew Square where the method of assessment was later altered and fixed on the basis of the area occupied by the dwelling (the foot frontage principle): Charlotte Square retained the flat rate system which is the one still practised today.

Over the next 50 years the garden gradually matured (figs. 46 and 47) and no real difficulties appear to have been encountered. By the late 1860's however, many of the trees and shrubs had grown old and past their prime. A newspaper article written in 1867 which highly praised the recent improvements to St. Andrew Square criticised the Charlotte Square gardens as appearing "... particularly offensive in style" and concluded with the disparaging comment that "... At present it has little either within or without". Important changes to the central area were however, imminent, prompted by the acquisition of an important statue of great value and prestige - the Scottish National Memorial to Prince Albert. In the 1820's the garden had come close to accommodating 2 memorials: one "a colossal statue" to Lord Hopetoun, and another, a proposed replica of the Column of Antoninus to the younger Pitt. But the Prince Albert project was altogether more ambitious and kept a worthy Committee and numerous other people busy for nearly 15 years. It also prompted much speculation as to what form
FIGURE 46:
Charlotte Square c 1820 showing one of the pillared entrances to
the garden (Views of Edinburgh and its vicinity 2 J. & H.S. Storer 1820)

FIGURE 47:
View to west side c 1825 showing the circular garden with wall and railing:
the planting although established is of no great height. The turrets on
either side of the dome of St George's church were never built (Picturesque
Views of Edinburgh 1825 drawing by W.H. Lizar)
the memorial should take, and where it should be sited.

The Prince Albert Memorial, and consequent changes to the Garden

Shortly after Prince Albert's death in 1861 a central Committee was set up for promoting a Scottish Memorial with the Duke of Buccleuch as President (33) and William Walker of Bowland as Secretary. (34) The intention was to raise subscriptions from as many people as possible including "the industrial classes", and eventually after a lot of hard work £13,000 was collected. (35) Ideas for the design of the monument were gathered by means of a competition held in 1864 which attracted 60 entries - several by notable artists and architects including David Bryce, David Cousin, John Steell (appointed Her Majesty's Sculptor for Scotland in 1838), David Rhind, Robert Matheson, William Calder Marshall, and J. Noel Paton. (36) At this stage the site still remained undecided but the West Princes Street Gardens, and Charlotte Square were both favoured, although there were some misgivings about the latter on account of its detachment from the public and the main thoroughfare Princes Street. Other suggestions were not lacking - an advertisement placed in several newspapers requesting ideas yielded many sensible and some outlandish proposals (37) and from all of these 4 were shortlisted: the West Princes Street Gardens, the east side of Charlotte Square, a knoll on the north east spur of Arthurs Seat, and a further site in Queen's Park. Further uncertainty was temporarily halted by Queen Victoria's stated preference (in March 1865) for John Steells equestrian statue (38) (fig. 48) which she wished placed in Holyrood Park close to where the Volunteers had been inspected by her in 1861.

By 1870 however, the site of the memorial was still not fixed. The Committee had grown increasingly nervous of supporting the Queen's recommendation due to the review ground at Holyrood being in "... the vicinity of the lowest and worst of the population of the city and it would therefore be almost impossible to protect the memorial from being injured." (39) Far safer was the front of the Palace but this alas would have required the removal of the fountain whose position had carefully
THE PRINCE-CONSORT MEMORIAL. 

SELECTION BY HER MAJESTY OF A DESIGN BY MR JOHN STEELL.

We understand that Mr John Steell, R.S.A.; Her Majesty's Sculptor for Scotland, has received official intimation that Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of one of his designs for the proposed Scottish National Memorial to the late Prince-Consort, and, further, that Her Majesty considers that the most appropriate site for the memorial would lie in the Queen's Park, near the place where Her Majesty inspected the Scottish Volunteers on the 7th August 1851. Mr Steell appeared as a competitor, on the invitation of the Committee of Advice, and sent in three designs. That which has been selected by Her Majesty in thus described in a letter addressed by Mr Steell to the Committee of Advice:—

"The intention in this design is to give us now, and to preserve for posterity, an actual and full representation of the Prince as he was—the very likenesses of the man—to give illustrations of his life and character—and to express the admiration in which he was held by the whole people. The centre of interest in an equestrian statue of the Prince; my opinion, supported by the greatest artists of student and modern times, being, that this mode is the most appropriate and effective for representing such men. The attitude of the Prince is intended to be calm, quiet, and calm—of the head, giving to the rein, is lowered, showing the arch of the neck, and serving to exhibit the rider. The general form of this design is pyramidal, composed of several stages. On the sides of the upper, or pedestal proper, are bas-reliefs illustrative of the character and events of the Prince; on the one side a representation of his marriage, on the other, the opening of the International Exhibition, 1851. On the front panel, in allusion to the great wisdom, affection, and example there displayed, the Prince is represented in the midst of his family; and, on the book, awarding rewards of merit. On the second stage, long quotations from the Prince's public speeches enrich the surface; and, on each corner, a medallion of his virtues and pursuits. Symbolical emblems to this extent. I trust, may be acceptable; but, in our day, purely conventional or emblematical sculpture, I humbly think, will not satisfy public feeling, especially on such an occasion as this, when the very heart of the nation is stirred by the loss of the excellent and much-loved Prince; and when all classes seek to evoke the depth of their feelings: by contributing, thus to honour his great and good name. I have, therefore, in my attempt to meet these feelings, adopted the most direct and familiar mode of expression, so that every grade may not only at once perceive, but feel the idea. I have introduced at each of the angles of the first stage or base, groups representing the people, of all classes, from the peasant up to the monarch. Approaching the effigy of the Prince, looking up to it with reverence and affection, and viewing at its base chaplets and wreaths, in token of their gratitude and love. One group is representative of the various offerings of rank and wealth—the Peer lifting his coronet from his brow as he pays his willing tribute to the dead; another group illustrates honest labour, the workman and his son, carrying a mattock in hand, accompanied by his wife and child, the latter regarding, with youthful curiosity, the Prince's effigy, towards which his gaze is directed. The other groups are—the soldier, the sailor, and the engineer, coming to offer their homage: also the artist, the student, and the venerable sage; who, pointing to the Statue, addresses the youth:—'Such is the reward of virtue.'

"These groups are intended to represent us, in this our day, and to tell to coming generations, how we admired and sought to honour the great virtues and talents of 'The noble Father of our Kings to be.'

F The sites suggested by Mr Steell as suitable for the above memorial were West Princes' Street Gardens, Charlotte Square Gardens, the Queen's Park, or in front of the General Post Office or Industrial Museum; but the preference given by Her Majesty to a site in the Queen's Park is likely to rule the decision of the Committee of Advice.

FIGURE 18: Notice in Scotsman about the Prince Albert memorial including Steell's own account of his proposals: the group of statuary designed for each corner were carried out by the following sculptors: William Brodie RSA—votive offering of rank and wealth; Mr. Clark Stanton—the soldier, sailor and engineer; George McCullum succeeded by David Stevenson on the latter's death in 1858—the honest labourer, and John Steell—the artist, student and venerable sage. The equestrian statue and 3 or 6 bas reliefs were completed by Steell, and the bronze work cast at his Grove Street founder, David Bryce designed the stone pedestal (Scotsman 11 March 1865)
been selected by Albert. An impatient public continued to favour Charlotte Square as well as a late contender - Chambers Street (opposite the new museum whose foundation stone had been laid by the Prince in 1861). Chambers Street was however pinched on space, and Charlotte Square remained an inaccessible private garden.

Frustrated at this continuing stalemate some of the Charlotte Square proprietors "... feeling that it would be a very graceful and becoming act if the Square were to be placed at the disposal of Her Majesty, and the Memorial Committee"(40) began to take action; canvassing the opinion of other residents, and seeking advice from Robert Matheson, architect as to the necessary alterations to the gardens in the event of the Memorial being placed there. Amongst those most involved in this initiative were the Duke of Argyll, the Dowager Duchess of Athole, and Lord Ardmillan. At a meeting of proprietors held in July 1871 all but one out of the 44 present or represented, voted in favour of the memorial being placed in the Square. Full agreement was subsequently reached(42) and the garden forthwith placed "... at the disposal" of the Memorial Committee. Thankful for a solution to their problems the Committee recommended the Queen to accept "... this fine position" and their request was granted without further trouble.(43) It was also agreed that any alterations to the layout of the garden in order to make it more suitable as a site for the memorial should be undertaken by David Bryce, (44) architect for the pedestal.

Work on the redesign of the garden took place between 1871-73 and was carried into effect in 1874. The plans and report already drawn up by Robert Matheson were forwarded to Bryce; Matheson had favoured a square shaped garden with rounded corners but Bryce changed this to one of octagonal shape, identical to St. Andrew Square. Thus Sibbald's smaller circular garden finally disappeared and with it the high wall and railing - replaced by a more attractive lower wall with neat plain railings. A 20' (7m) wide gravel footpath (as specified by the proprietors) was formed from the centre of the east side leading to and around the memorial in the middle of the garden; this was railed
off separately thus allowing the public full access to the statue but not to the rest of the garden (figs. 45e, 50 and 51). All the costs of the improvements (apart from the expense of a 9' (2.74m) footpath around the outside - paid for by the Paving Board) were met from the by now almost exhausted funds of the Memorial Committee.

James McNab, Curator of the Edinburgh Botanic Garden (refer Section 1) was consulted about the interior treatment of the garden. In order to open up better views of the memorial from George Street he recommended the removal of over half the old tree belt planted inside the former circular railing, retaining some of the better shaped ones to be left free standing. Similarly he suggested the removal of all the evergreen shrubs around the outside and moving the better formed specimens into regularly shaped belts, close to the circular walk; none of the shrubs to be higher than 3' (91 cm) and to be made up of aucuba, variegated and green holly, boxwood, lawn cypress and bay laurel. At each of the 4 newly created corners McNab proposed the planting of 5 trees - 4 English Elm, and 1 Corstorphine Plane (Acer pseudo Corstoptinum): the last remnants of Weir's 1808 design were also obliterated - the outer border and the 2 curved walks from the east and west sides were levelled and grassed over. All this resulted in a major change to the garden's appearance - even more substantial than in the case of St. Andrew Square, which itself had been radically improved in the 1860s. Charlotte Square was now not only different in shape and size but was also more readily visible from the outside and therefore far less private. (46) (fig. 53).

A solitary pedestal was the only ornament to grace the newly laid out garden for the next 2 years; much to the embarrassment of the Memorial Committee and the consternation of the Charlotte Square proprietors progress on the monument itself was greatly delayed by an accident at the foundry and Steell's continuing ill health. Finally however, on 17 August 1876 at 4 p.m. Queen Victoria unveiled "... most successfully, without a hitch" (47) the monument to her beloved Prince Consort. A contemporary photograph of the event (fig. 49) shows the huge crowds assembled for the ceremony, and how open and bare the
FIGURE 50:
Railed pathway from east side of Charlotte Square c 1880 (NRS)

FIGURE 51:
Railed inclosure looking across to east side of Square 1876
(Edinburgh as it was 1844 - 1924 Vol 1 C.S. Hinton)

FIGURE 52:
Recent photo of garden showing inner area entirely grassed with
free standing trees and monument no longer accessible to the public.
Note new railing designed by Leslie Graham Thomson
FIGURE 53:
Charlotte Square in the mid 1870's: now octagonal in shape and with new railings and outer pavement but as yet without the Prince Albert memorial. The removal of the outer thick shrubbery has made the garden more open to view (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh)

CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS.

RULES FOR LAWN TENNIS.

1. The Gardener shall lay out and mark not more than three Courts, and change the position of the same from time to time, so as least to injure the turf.

2. The privilege of playing shall be confined to proprietors and tenants of houses, and their families and their friends, when accompanied by them.

3. All players shall use Lawn Tennis shoes.

4. No one shall be allowed to use a Court for more than two hours at a time, if any other party entitled to play is wishing to play, and there is no Court vacant.

5. To enable arrangements to be made, parties shall give notice to the Gardener the day before, and no one shall be entitled to engage a Court for more than once at a time. A list to be kept by the Gardener.

6. Each party shall use their own net, unless by arrangement, and the net, &c., to be removed after play.

7. A fee of one shilling a-week to be paid to the Gardener by those who play, and that for each week they play.
garden appeared at this time. The following month the care and custody of the memorial was entrusted to the Town Council; and in 1878 John Fraser, the Charlotte Square gardener was appointed to keep the surrounding ground in good order for £5 annually. This was important in the early years when the memorial attracted many sightseers (figs. 50 and 51).

The garden since 1876

No major changes were made to the garden until the Second World War although the trees and shrubs had grown large and thick over the intervening years (fig. 55 a, b and c); and to such an extent that complaints were made in the 1930's about the Albert Memorial being obscured. Some thinning and cutting was consequently carried out and the shrubbery in the north corners removed in 1938. Flower plots were added alongside the pathway leading to the memorial and in 1883 and for a year or so after were supplied with plants from the city's parks department; when this source ceased the proprietors bought their own - favouring dahlias, wallflowers and polyanthus. For the most part however, garden flowers were limited to spring bulbs - daffodils, tulips and crocus and many thousands of bulbs have been planted in the past. A slightly incongruous addition was made to the garden in 1909 when 2 trivial and misguided rockeries were formed by a nursery firm at a cost of £2.50 each.

The privacy of the garden was rudely shattered by the outbreak of the Second World War when in June 1941 the Town Council took possession for defence purposes. Air raid shelters were erected around the perimeters and the garden also accommodated a gas decontamination hut (south west corner), and a 5,000 gallon static water tank (fig. 18). In August 1942 three-quarters of the railings were removed causing the garden to become an open thoroughfare (fig 56); no gardener was employed and the ground rapidly deteriorated. The garden was returned to the proprietors in July 1946 after the various wartime appendages had been removed and a basic amount of levelling and reinstatement work completed by the Ministry of Works.
a. Outer circular footpath can be seen – dating back to when the gardens were first formed but obliterated after the Second World War.

b. In the background can be seen the railed pathway leading up to the memorial with privet hedging alongside.

c. Similar position to b above.

FIGURE 55: General views of Charlotte Square c.1918 (Mrs Peggy Bowden)
FAMOUS SQUARE
Edinburgh Plan Raises
3/1/46
Controversy

"BARBARIC" RAILINGS

FIGURE 19:
Charlotte Square, Edinburgh's famous West End square, which has the distinction, believed to be unique in Europe, of having a Town Planning Scheme Order of its own, produced an amenity controversy yesterday at a meeting of the Streets and Buildings Committee of Edinburgh Town Council.

The Committee was considering the garden, which includes a well-planted flower garden, and there was an application before the Committee on behalf of the proprietors of Charlotte Square Gardens under the Edinburgh Town Planning (Charlotte Square) Scheme Order, 1930, for consent to the removal of a portion of the former railings and the erection of a new railing around the garden.

The application was strongly opposed by some members. It was suggested that a smaller railing than the former one might be substituted, not higher than two feet, five inches while four feet and 3 inches would also advocate laters of a surrounding hedge. The Committee decided, after considerable discussion, to appoint a deputation to meet the proprietors, giving the members' power to discuss alternative methods of enclosing the garden. Councillor R. E. Douglas, chairman, presided.

Councillor Muir, convenor of the Streets Sub-Committee, opposing the restoration of railings, said in various public parks no railings were necessary to prevent people damaging and destroying flowers, and the flowers were not destroyed. He did not see why this particular place should be treated in a different way. The Corporation should take the government over and make it the responsibility of the City Gardener to maintain its properly.

The suggestion for a low railing, 30 inches from the ground, came from the chairman, who said this would be sufficient to keep children and dogs out of the garden and avoid the mess in which it had now got.

PROPRIETORS' OFFER

Councillor Logan Strang reminded the Committee that the proprietors had offered the garden to the Corporation, and the Parks Committee seemed to be looking for a gift horse in the mouth. Councillor Phind, who led the advocates of the hedge instead of railings, described a relic of barbarism and contended that a good hedge would serve the purpose without being an eyesore.

The Town-Clerk, Mr. J. Storrer, pointed out that the proposition that the Corporation should take over the garden had still to be disposed of, and pending decision on this major question of policy, the proprietor sought to erect the railing so that Charlotte Square might look at its best to the International Festival of Music and Drama, which was to take place next year.

Councillor Logan Strang stated that the railing would be put up at the expense of the proprietors of the garden, and there was no suggestion of a claim for compensation if the Corporation ultimately decided to take the garden over.

The Town-Clerk recalled that the Town Planning Scheme Order visualized the retention of Charlotte Square of all its features and character for all time, and said it was only by the consent of the proprietors whether the proprietors of the private garden should be permitted to erect a railing with a view to the protection of the garden. This was a temporary plan, without prejudice to the future use of the garden.

Baille Farrer—Opposed again the railings to be again may take another way to get the down.

FIGURE 58:
Sketch plan by Leslie Graham Thomson 1946 for the redesign of the garden. Without the railing the garden had become an easy shortcut across the square and the purpose of the new design was to provide for such usage in the event of the garden becoming open to the public: the shallow pools or channels of water were to be partly ornamented, but also intended to prevent further short-cutting between the footpaths (Miscellaneous papers-clerk to Garden Committee.)
Shortly before this event the proprietors met to discuss the garden's longer term future; several being of the opinion that as most of the houses were now converted to offices, and the space open to all for more than 4 years this might be an appropriate time to hand the gardens over for permanent public use. The Management Committee was asked to consult with the Town Council to see whether, with certain safeguards the Council would be prepared to take over custody of the garden: initial reaction to this proposal was however rather guarded and lukewarm. Another meeting of proprietors considered at length whether or not to replace the railings: no decision was reached but for a number of subsequent weeks the Committee carefully observed the movement of pedestrians and others in the garden. Their survey confirmed that the central area was being used mostly as a short cut, but was also frequented by children from areas to the north and east of the square: in addition a certain amount of malicious damage to the planting was being experienced and in some instances actual theft. The Committee concluded that if the garden was to become a public space and converted at the same time from an "... ill kempt wilderness into a tidy ornamental garden" a degree of control was necessary; and that this was best achieved by having a railing with gates (open during the daytime) and by forming a number of hard surfaced footpaths across the square: "strategically convenient" for the army of shortcutters.

Leslie Grahame-Thomson, architect was commissioned to design suitable railings and gates, and to advise on a new layout and pathway system which would provide "dignity, harmony and appearance of space". His draft plan (fig. 57) failed to match these simple aims and the proposal to have no less than 8 pathways cutting across the grassed inner area to a hard paved square around the Albert Memorial, with the space further subdivided by 4 concrete channels or pools was too fussy and impractical. Fortunately it was rejected on cost grounds and a more straightforward plan substituted which reduced the pathways to 6 and omitted the ornamental pools. This revised design was submitted to the Town Council with the suggestion that the proprietors should pay
the cost of adding new railings and gates, while the Council took over responsibility for putting the garden in order (including the new pathways) and from then on for it to become public.

Negotiations with the Town Council were however halted, due to another proposal then under consideration for the construction of an underground car park beneath the garden. Frustrated by these delays and unwilling to see the ground deteriorate further the proprietors decided that no successful restoration work could be carried out until it was once more properly enclosed. Notwithstanding certain hostility from some members of the Council (fig. 58) and public, the necessary permission was sought and granted; new railings (to the design by Grahame-Thomson) were erected in 1947 at a cost of £2,500 met by a special levy of £50 on each dwelling. (57) Soon afterwards a firm of landscape gardeners was employed to level the grounds, remove the privet hedging and rockery, and to grass seed the whole area. The pathway leading up to and around the Albert Memorial was allowed to become overgrown, and the outer circular pathway dating back to 1804 was filled in.

The garden now consists entirely of trees and grass with the Prince Albert Memorial standing in splendid isolation at the centre (fig. 45f). Happily the danger of the square becoming suburbanised in scale (policy at one time favoured smaller more ornamental and flowering species of trees) has been averted and the latest replacements have been with forest trees.

General Management of the Garden, use, and other points of interest

There has been little change to the management structure over the years and it operates on an informal basis; financial matters (58) are administered by a paid Clerk and there is a voluntary committee of 3. Proprietors have the opportunity of keeping in contact through the Annual General Meeting (attended by between 8-12 people) at which the accounts are presented, the yearly assessment fixed, and other items important to the garden discussed. But any apparent sign of lethargy is
quickly dispelled whenever the wellbeing of the Square or garden is in jeopardy. Such a crisis occurred in 1890-91 when the Edinburgh and Leith Junction Railway Bill was presented before Parliament: one of the clauses contained a proposal to construct a tunnel through Charlotte Square, 40' (12.20m) below the garden running beneath the Albert Memorial and then along George Street. After being advised by A. W. Belfrage CE, the proprietors lodged a petition against the Bill in March 1891 and in the face of this and strong opposition from other quarters the Bill was withdrawn soon afterwards.

A few years later between 1909-1911 the Committee and proprietors forestalled the unwanted addition of a large bronze statue to the Marquis of Linlithgow which the Town Council in a bid to assist the Memorial Committee wished to assign to the south east corner of the garden or alternatively in the roadway at the south west corner. Less successful was the proprietors involvement in a more recent controversy whose long term consequences have been more damaging to the Square. In 1958 the proprietors accepted in principle a plan to introduce a one way traffic system, and the removal of the stone setts. When work started on the north side to alter the level and camber of the road to facilitate this change, the proprietors quickly became alarmed at the extent of the excavation and mounted an immediate protest. They rightly felt that the full implications of the new scheme had not been clearly explained to them: although their concern was strongly supported by several amenity groups, as well as the Fine Art Commission, plans had advanced too far to be recalled. While the consequent change to the level and camber of the roadway has not improved the visual appearance of the square, by allowing traffic to flow faster it has also posed a more formidable barrier to the garden than any high wall or railing.

Charlotte Square has always been rather special insofar as the interests of the square and garden have tended to overlap, with the proprietors, generally showing a keen awareness of the architectural importance of their surroundings. Thus, the Edinburgh Town Planning (Charlotte Square) Scheme Order 1930, set up to preserve and protect the existing features of the square, including the garden, came about as
a result of pressure from occupants anxious for stricter control over such matters as hotel and business signs and alterations to the frontages of buildings. Charlotte Square was unique in Scotland in having such a town planning order of its own. (64) The garden committees interests have similarly encompassed wider issues such as a move in the 1960's to encourage the replacement of missing astragals to doorheads and fanlights, and with various lighting proposals for the Square.

During the last century the garden was well used for walking in and for young children's play. From the 1850's onwards the rules were relaxed to allow pupils of "the Young Ladies Institution" at 33 Charlotte Square to exercise in the garden at midday under the watchful eye of a governess. This arrangement continued until the 1880's by which time the proprietor, Mr Oliphant had acquired another girls school at 23 Charlotte Square. The consequent increase in the number of girls using the garden "as a playground" aroused criticism both from the gardener and from other proprietors; eventually permission was withdrawn in 1885. (65) A delightful story is told of how Elsie Inglis, a pupil at No. 23 between 1876-1885, (later to achieve eminence for her medical work with the Serbian Army in Russia during World War I, besides initiating the Scottish Women's Hospital movement abroad) pleaded with the Directors of the school for the girls to be allowed to play in the gardens: only to be informed that the consent of all the proprietors was first necessary. Accompanied by another girl, Elsie then went round all the houses in the square with the result that limited access was granted "... at certain hours ..." until a regular playfield was arranged. (66)

Tennis was first introduced in 1880, and continued to be played until 1930 and proved so popular that special rules were drawn up establishing the correct procedure for booking courts (at one period there were 3) and the time limits on play when demand was at its peak (fig. 54); later these came to be incorporated into the general set of rules (fig. 59). Croquet was also played but a request for a putting green in 1890 was refused. (67) The days when a Commissionaire was specially appointed to make random visits to the garden during afternoons and evenings to check on such breaches of the regulations as cricket
RULES AND REGULATIONS
TO BE OBSERVED
REGARDING THE USE
OF THE
CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS

1. The Proprietors of the Gardens, and their Families, and Visitors shall alone be entitled to use the Garden Key, except in the case of a house being let, when the Key may be transferred to the Person occupying the house; and he and his Family and Visitors shall have the same right to use it as the Proprietor.

2. Those entitled to access will be admitted to the Grounds at all times of the day, until one hour after sunset, when the grounds will be closed for the night.

3. On each key there shall be stamped the Name of the House in respect of which it is issued; and in case of a key being lost, application for another (if required) must be made to the Secretary, who will issue a key on payment of 5s.

4. The Gardener shall have right at all times to require inspection of the keys by which persons obtain admittance to the Gardens. The Gardener is authorized to detain any key which he has reason to believe has been irregularly obtained.

5. No person shall lend or transfer his key, but every one enjoying the right of access may exercise the privilege of admitting his friends in company with himself or a member of his family.

6. Servants and others, when in charge of and bringing with them the children of those entitled to access, shall be allowed to enter the Grounds.

7. No persons shall cut, pull, or injure any of the Trees, Shrubs or Flowers, or stand upon or in any way injure any of the Seats; and all persons shall keep upon the gravel walk and grass. No canes shall be leaned in the grounds; nor shall Cricket, Football or Fireworks be allowed. The use of Bows and Arrows and of Catapults is strictly forbidden.

8. It is strictly forbidden to introduce Bicycles into the Gardens.

9. Dogs shall not be admitted unless on leash.

10. Lawn Tennis shall be permitted only on the Courts marked out by the Gardener, with the iron lawn tennis poles belonging to the Gardens, which will be shifted from time to time in order to preserve the lawn; and no private lawn tennis poles shall be permitted. No persons will be allowed to play wearing other than Lawn Tennis Shoes.

11. A new key will be allowed to use a Court for more than two hours at a time, if there is any other party wishing to use it; and it shall be confined to Proprietors and Tenants of houses and their Families, and to Visitors introduced by them.

12. To enable arrangements to be made, parties desiring to play shall give notice to the Gardener in time to enable him to secure the Court; and if not occupied within ten minutes of the time for which it has been secured, the Court will be held to have been given up.

13. A List will be kept by the Gardener, who will mark upon a card affixed to one of the poles of each Court, the name of the members of each party, who are engaged. A fee of one shilling a week shall be paid to the Gardener by each Proprietor or Tenant by whom or in whose right the ground is used for Tennis.

14. Heads of Families shall be responsible for offences committed by their Children or Servants, and bound to make good all damage done by them.

By Order of the Committee of Management.

March 29th.

FIGURE 59:
Charlotte Square Rules and Regulations 1906 (MRE, GD 282)

FIGURE 60:
Use of Charlotte Square gardens for a public exhibition ( aids for the handicapped and disabled 1981)
playing, bicycling, and tree climbing have long since gone; nor is any gardener required to attend "... at all times whether there be work to do or not from 6 o'clock in the morning to sunset, Sundays of course excepted, in order to keep off all intruders, and to prevent children, servants, and others from doing injury to the trees and shrubs in the garden"; and to better fulfill these duties "... shall reside as near the square as possible". Now the garden is mostly used at summer time by office workers relaxing during their lunch hour breaks, and occasionally for special events open to the public such as fetes, exhibitions and concerts. Its value as a visual amenity remains however, undiminished.

The North Loch belonged to the town and in 1676 was opened for their interest by purchasing 30 acres of adjoining land near Lochpark or Bearford Park (fig. 35) extensively by the foresight of a zealous one neighbour (69) but also with an eye to the future expansion of the city. By now the loch particularly at the western and the south degenerated into "... a mostly inaccessible swamp, a haven even upon all sides, the receptacle of poor vermin, and mulchery of all the wretched cens, deemed dogs, and destruction of the cattle at the western and the south banks were lined with smoke from butchers' slaughterhouses... There was however, no opportunity "... to walk along the north side facing the most scenic, the north street which lived in the eastern district of Beltrees Hill and leading to the West Kirk (3)." With the addition of the North Loch clearly "... neither a nuisance or a wonder" to the council; the Council decided the time was opportune for bettering the town and street by "opening an axis communication" with Lochpark. 

122.
GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCES STREET GARDENS

The East and West Princes Street gardens were formed in the valley separating the old and New Town of Edinburgh (fig. 61-63). In the reign of David I (1124-1153) part of this land may have been included within the gardens of the castle whose kitchen and orchard cum pleasure ground stretched a considerable distance to the south and west. Until the middle ages the valley remained a marsh watered by 2 springs rising from the castle rock and in 1450 the streams in the valley were deliberately dammed for defence purposes; this catchment remained for 3 centuries and was known as the Nor' Loch. The loch became the centre and source of many legends and traditions, and even the place for the punishment of certain offences. At this period it was a reasonably pleasant stretch of water with swans and wild ducks provided by the magistrates, and according to Chambers a favourite place for boating and skating. In 1715 the year of the first Jacobite rebellion the City dammed the sluice to increase the depth of water.

The North Loch belonged to the town and in 1717 they extended their interest by purchasing 30 acres of adjoining land known as Lochbank or Bearfords Park (fig. 61) ostensibly to rid themselves of a troublesome neighbour but also with an eye to the future extension of the city. By now the loch particularly at the western end had degenerated into "... a nearly impassible fetid marsh, a stinking swamp open on all sides, the receptacle of many sewers, and seemingly of all the worried cats, drowned dogs, and blackguardism of the city"; at the eastern end the south banks were lined with tanneries and butchers slaughterhouses. There was however, an attractive "green broad walk" along the north side forming the most direct route for those living in the eastern district of Multrees Hill and St. Ninians Row to the West Kirk (St. Cuthberts). With the additional land, and the North Loch clearly "... raither a nuisance as a convenience" the Town Council decided the time was opportune for having the loch drained and by "opening an easie communication" with Lochbank to encourage residential
FIGURE 61:
View from Castle Hill showing the Nor'loch and Bearfords Parks.
The site of Princes Street (Paul Sandby c1750)

FIGURE 62:
View of the new North Bridge and North Loch - divided into enclosures for the pasturing of sheep and cattle
(etching by Thomas Donaldson c1775)
development. In 1720 instructions were sent to the Lord Provost (then in London) to obtain a clause in an Act of Parliament sanctioning these improvements: the move proved premature but one year later the Edinburgh College of Physicians added pressure by pointing to the loch as a distinct health hazard and recommending urgent action for its drainage and formation into a canal. Money for this purpose was authorised as part of an Act of Parliament obtained in 1723 but further action failed to materialise. Five years later however, the importance of the North Loch as an invaluable open space, capable of considerable enhancement and integral to any plans for a New Town beyond was illuminated in a paper produced by the exiled Earl of Mar and referred to in Section 2.1. He suggested diverting one of the small tributaries of the Water of Leith into the Loch, thereby ridding the valley of its stagnant water while providing an attractive feature to be complimented by the formation of gardens along the sides.

Here we have the true beginnings of the Princes Street gardens, and a canal "with walks and terraces on each side" came to be adopted as one of the 1752 improvements for the city proposed by the Royal Convention of Scottish Burghs (Section 2.1). Later Craig translated these earlier ideas for the North Loch into his commended design for the New Town and his engraved plan of 1768 (fig. 3) shows an ornamental sheet of water occupying the lowest part of the valley with gardens on either side. The inclusion of such detail in the layout proved critical. For the public took it as certain proof that the area of the North Loch was destined as open space to be used for pleasure garden purposes, although the Town Council themselves had made no firm commitment to this end (refer Section 2.1: note 59).

Indeed, it was not long after house building had commenced at the eastern end of the New Town that the Town Council in 1769 feued out a portion of land on the south side of Princes Street to John Home, coachmaker. This land adjoined the north bridge and Home commissioned David Henderson, architect, (winner of the North bridge premium) to draw up plans for a mixed scheme of housing and work premises. (fig. 64). Further land was added and by the summer of 1770 Home owned...
FIGURE 63:
Another view of the North Loch with horses and sheep 1781
(from a print by Philip Mercier)

FIGURE 64:
Brown's Map of Edinburgh 1793 showing the area of the North Loch divided by the earthern mound and the cluster of buildings (Young and Trotter) in the far eastern corner
a 162' (49m) frontage along Princes Street. Part of this area he sub feued to Young and Trotter, upholsterers, and together they successfully applied for a further portion of adjacent land for work-
shop and warehouse accommodation - the only stipulation being that none of the new buildings were to rise above the level of Princes Street. As Home's property neared completion public anxiety began to escalate.

By the time his next door neighbour was about to start on his development, a vociferous protest was directed at the Town Council and their decision to allow any building on the south side of Princes Street. Included amongst the indignant citizens were many individuals of importance and influence, such as David Hume, philosopher and historian; Andrew Crosbie, a leading advocate; the powerful banker Sir William Forbes; and Alexander Wight, advocate.

After raising a summons of declarator and damages against the Council, the New Town feuars presented a Bill of Suspension and Interdict on 5th October 1771 to prevent the progress of Young and Trotter's building. The Bill stated that the feuars had largely been attracted to the New Town because it was understood that:

"no buildings were to be erected on the south side of Princes Street, by which means the proprietors of houses on that street in particular, would enjoy advantages which they considered as of the greatest value, viz., free air, and an agreeable prospect, while on the other hand, the fine opening from the city upon that street gave at once an idea of the beauty and elegance of the general design." (14)

The feuars rightly claimed that Craig's published plan showed no buildings south of Princes Street so that the Council was in complete breach of faith; in reply the Town Council maintained that Craig's plan was not binding in its details and that one of the clauses in an Act of Council dated 29th July 1767 (and entered into the Princes Street feu charters) had referred to the possibility of building along the south side at some future stage.

A long, complicated and bitter controversy followed (15) with the case passing from the Court of Session, to the House of Lords and back to the Court of Session before finally being submitted (by way of a
compromise - the buildings in question were then nearing completion) to the arbitration of David Rae, afterwards Lord Justice Clerk, and better known by his title Lord Eskgrove. His award of 1776 allowed Young and Trotter to finish their buildings (the Council's height restriction being upheld) but of greater importance was Rae's ruling that the remaining land westward to a point just east of Hanover Street was to be "... kept and preserved in perpetuity as pleasure ground." More than this the decreet arbitral specified in some considerable detail how the pleasure garden was to be set up. It was to be done as soon as possible, the responsibility and cost of preparing the ground (including refilling the quarry at the western end with earth) was to be met by the Town Council. Thereafter they were not to be liable for any further expenses in "... the dressing of the ground" apart from "what may necessarily arise from humouring the natural lying and situation". Rae recommended that a walk should be formed along the verge of the loch with a temporary fence placed along Princes Street until such time as the Town Council was able to provide a parapet wall and rail "... with proper gates and entrances to the pleasure ground". The area of land formerly occupied by the loch "... shall be dressed up by forming a canal and making up the banks in a decent manner", and that "... as soon as the season will permit", the Council were to "... cast a ditch of sufficient breadth for the purpose of draining the loch". Allowances were made for the fact that "... the town's funds may not soon be in so favourable a situation as to admit of works attended with considerable expense" and the programming and detailing of the canal was consequently left open.

At the time of Rae's award Princes Street was extending slowly in the direction of Hanover Street and already a crude pathway of stones and planks was being formed across the North Loch as a shortcut between the old and New Town. While the origin of this route (James Court to Hanover Street) was partly accidental the need for an improved communication soon became apparent and in 1780 a number of old town residents petitioned the Town Council to this end; as a result the Council ordered that all the stones, earth and rubbish excavated from the foundations of new houses should be dumped between stakes set
up between these two points. From 1781-1830 "the Mound" as it became known mushroomed in breadth and height (21) (figs. 64 and 65). Its growth not only blocked the natural flow of water in the North Loch but also effectively divided the land into two separate parts - an east and west section.

The immediate future of the Eastern section notwithstanding all the protection and advantages under the decreet arbitral remained dismal and it required another major outcry by Edinburgh citizens before its future as a pleasure garden was secured many years later. In contrast the western end enjoyed even fewer safeguards and indeed one of the clauses in Rae's award upheld the Town Council's right to feu out land on the south side of Princes Street west of Hanover Street, and under the same stipulations as previously. (22) Small wonder that the subsequent history of the western section centred on the Princes Street proprietors concern to preserve the area as an open space by converting it at their own expense into pleasure ground.
Oil painting by Andrew Wilson (1780-1848) of the North Loch c1820 (before the mound was completed). Highly esteemed as a landscape painter in his own lifetime, earning the epithet "the Scottish Claude" during his sojourn in Italy, Wilson's paintings particularly of Edinburgh scenes are extremely rare. This picture which dates from sometime after his return to Edinburgh to take up the Mastership of the Trustees Academy in 1817 and just prior to the laying out of the West Princes Street gardens by his colleague James Skene reveals many of the subtle qualities of his work — his careful composition and skilful use of colour finely balanced to produce a work of great serenity and tonal effect. The broad horizontal line of the Mound can be seen as well as the rocky outcrops along the southern bank of the North Loch. Wilson's talents as a landscape painter were later employed in the design of the central and west Queen Street gardens (Section 3.4 & 3.5) (photo Tom Scott)
2.5 EAST PRINCES STREET GARDENS

"The interest of the City of Edinburgh is so much connected with the interest of the feuars that it must be owing to misunderstanding alone if any disputes ever arise between them."(1) TCM 16 August, 1780.

Within days of Rae's award of 1776 the Town Council took heed of their newly assigned responsibilities for forming into pleasure gardens the remaining open space within the eastern section of the North Loch: labourers appeared and: "began to work at the banks of the intended canal between the old and New Town"(2); a ditch was cut to improve the drainage of the ground(3) and a little later a start was made in filling up the quarry and grass seeding part of the bank along Princes Street.

The town's good deeds were however short-lived and quickly fell victim to a shortage of cash and lack of a workforce. What improvements had been achieved were soon destroyed as the ground remained unenclosed ...

"The consequence of which is that public roads have been made through it for the purpose of driving cattle and even carts down the bank, - By this means and by suffering sawpits to be erected upon the top of the bank and logs of wood to be thrown down its face, what has already so properly begun has been greatly tore and defaced." (4)

The complainant was Alexander Wight, advocate (one of the leading agitators in the previous bid to stop the Town Council feuing off any further land on the south side of Princes Street), who on behalf of himself and other feuars, presented a Memorial to the city listing a number of grievances and suggested remedies. In particular, the feuars had been most displeased that while one quarry had been filled in, William Jamieson, Master Mason (5) had been allowed to open another. And that far from having an attractive pleasure ground the space remained unprotected, ill-drained (with open sewers running through it), and the whole made worse by the pasturing of livestock(6) (fig. 63) and the accommodation of carpenters yards, sawpits, and timber bushes along the Princes Street banks (fig. 66). Representatives of the feuars
and a committee of the Town Council met together and agreed to a course of action which included the following: the filling in of Mr Jamieson’s quarry; the prohibition of carpentry yards, sawpits, and timber bushes, “or other nuisances along the banks, Princes Street, or within the pleasure ground; making good the inner area and sowing with grass seed; and the erection of a parapet wall and rail along the Princes Street side. It was further decided that the common sewer should be covered and the drainage improved by making a deep cutt at each side of the loch with the central area grass sown: the canal project to be left meantime in abeyance.”

The only tangible result of the feuars attempts to stir the Town Council’s conscience was the enclosure of the ground along Princes Street by a parapet and rail placed – according to an announcement in the local press, 15' (4.58m) north of the upper edge of the bank - "... by which there will be a commodious walk or terrace within the rail." (8) (fig. 67). Work on this project commenced in August 1781 and at the instigation of Alexander Wight an extra gateway was formed between St. Andrews Street and St David Street for the convenience of the New Town proprietors. (9) Otherwise the vision of a well laid out pleasure garden remained far distant and the ground continued ill-drained, wet and trampled by cows and other animals. If anything its condition seems to have gradually deteriorated for several years later in 1788, George Sandy, then a 16 year old apprentice WS noted in his diary that on several days in May the eastern half of the North Loch was "... a good deal overflowed", and that men were at work cutting trenches and some very broad drains, and repairing the culverts below the Mound (fig. 68) - one of which had become blocked. Sandy also noted that "... we hear that a canal is to be made in the North Loch ... we took a walk by the North Loch and surveyed it". (10) This canal was probably the "very broad drains" referred to above for nothing more is heard about it. What had for long been a prominent feature in the various plans for the improvement of the North Loch, and indeed at one time had expanded to become part of a grand inland water system was quietly forgotten about.

133.
FIGURE 6A: Painting by Alexander Nasmyth 1825: this well illustrates the paraphernalia and mess associated with building work along Princes Street – in this instance, the erection of the Royal Institution (RSA). The east North Loch is still a waste land (Princes Street Edinburgh: the Life Association of Scotland 1938)

FIGURE 67: Far eastern corner of the East North Loch in 1812: the boundary wall and railing along Princes Street can be seen (erected in 1781): the space between the bridge and the little mound is occupied with Young and Trotters furniture and upholstlery premises and the houses in St Annes Street and Canal Street (painting by J. Clark)

FIGURE 68: Drawing of the streams feeding the North Loch: and the paved circular drains under the mound (George Sandy 1788)
FIGURE 69a - g:
Various plans of the East North Loch
By the end of the 18th century the condition of the eastern section had improved somewhat on the completion of a large drain running from east to west (see Aislie's plan of 1804, (fig. 69a)) and very likely the culmination of all the activity witnessed by Sandy in 1788. Sheep and cattle however, continued to be grazed there and part of the south side appears to have been cultivated - possibly as market gardens: Brown's map of 1793 for example, (fig. 64) shows several enclosed plots of various sizes. Otherwise the ground was put to more mundane purposes - becoming a popular shortcut from Princes Street to the little mound (near Waverley Bridge Road) and the busy fish, meat, fruit and vegetable markets beyond. Several of these features can be seen in a drawing by Sir John Carr, published in 1809 (fig. 70) which captures well the forlorn rather barren state of the east loch at this time, as well as the slightly later painting by Kay (fig. 71).

1800-1827: Years of continuing neglect and fresh threats of building development

By 1800 Princes Street was practically complete and many of the original residents at the east end had begun to move further westwards - their former houses being acquired as shops and offices: not surprisingly the incoming business proprietors felt less involved with the open space opposite their property while those transferring westwards began putting their energy into setting up the west section of the North Loch as an ornamental open space. Thus the eastern portion, notwithstanding its 40 year start over the west began to lag far behind, remaining a miserable and ill cared for space. Indeed the same Improvement Act of 1816 under which the western gardens were formed (Section 2.6) allowed a new road to be made from the top of the bank opposite St. Andrew's Street to the west end of Canal Street in place of the "... steep and incommodious street or lane called St. Anne's Street" with the result that the Eastern section became even more of a thoroughfare. Kirkwood's plan of 1819 (fig. 69c) shows the newly completed Serpentine Road with railings and gas lights, and
FIGURE 70:
East North Loch 1809: an open space used for sheep grazing and as a shortcut to the markets. The new Bank of Scotland can be seen on the extreme right: part of the sloping bank became their property (sketch by Sir John Carr).

FIGURE 71:
East North Loch 1811: various short cuts can be seen curving across the steep sloping banks. The wall and railing along Princes Street is of some considerable height and the mound from this angle can be seen as a substantial pile (from a painting by A. Ray).
also the considerably widened route to the markets which cut almost diagonally across the site from the north west corner to Canal Street and the Little Mound. Apart from a sizable area now devoted for access (and Ewbank's drawing (fig. 72) indicates how busy these routes were both for pedestrians and carts) a large part of the south side was gradually put to use for clothes drying by housewives of the densely crowded old town. Twenty clothes posts can be counted in Kirkwood's plan (fig. 69c) stretching across the ground in one long wavy line, as well as 2 water pumps. Washing was also laid out to dry or "bleach" on the grass - Shepherd's drawing (fig. 73) shows the space well utilised for this purpose although the illustrations by Ewbank already referred to indicates some of the hazards the washerswomen had to contend with, including smoke from bonfires as well as roving cats and dogs.

Rae's award was now virtually a dead issue and long since forgotten about. So much so that from 1815 onwards the Town Council began to entertain various notions to build on the land - suitable space being required for a new jail, church, theatre, riding house, stable and yard for the Midlothian Yeomanry (scathingly described in the Scotsman as "... a perfect specimen of the abominable ... the very dung itself is objection enough"(12)), and a new High School. Although the press and public reacted with little enthusiasm to any of these proposals (refer fig. 74) the Town Council seemed in blissful ignorance of the hostility such projects might encounter. (13) Fresh fears and dissatisfactions were however, already mounting and the now elegantly laid out west Princes Street pleasure gardens only helped emphasise the continuing vulnerability and dismal state of the eastern portion.

Apprehensions had further intensified with the activities of 1825 when during that year the Town Council had incurred "great expense" in employing labourers "to spread the earth laid down in the hollow ground to the east of the mound and in constructing the drains necessary for adapting the ground for the purpose"(14) (Kay's painting of 1814 gives some indication of the steep fall in the land at this point - see fig. 71). One citizen particularly alarmed by these developments
FIGURE 72:
Serpentine road made under 1816 Improvement Act: leading from Princess Street to the north-west corner of Canal Street and the markets.
(J. Ewbank: Picturesque views of Edinburgh 1825)

FIGURE 73:
East North Loch as a drying green (T. Shepherd: Views of Edinburgh c1825)
RENEWED ATTEMPT TO BUILD IN FRONT OF PRINCE'S STREET.

After the late discussions about the North Bridge—buildings after the splendid changes which have lately been made in this city,—after the general improvement of public taste, which the opening of the Continent has created,—and after the recent operations to the west of the Mound, have shewn the embellishment of which the valley that separates the new from the old town is susceptible,—should we be unwilling to call the attention of our readers to a project which threatens to introduce a lasting reproof to the metropolis, and which has hitherto been so quickly proceeded with, that no time is to be lost in counteracting it. We shall state all that we have learned of the plan,—of its effects,—and of the means of preventing it.

1. Though every individual in the Edinburgh Yeomanry were to keep a horse, there are abundance of private stables for putting up all their cattle, and, accordingly, they have gone on for 20 years, accommodating themselves: like their brethren all over the country, with few exceptions, reprobate for their beauty. But now, it seems, that the public service (for their own magnificence has nothing to do with it), invites them to build stables, which shall have a row of barracks within the city. For this purpose a great yeomanry stables is to be built at the price of £4000. The spot selected for this purpose is the most valuable in the whole place, being in the park on the north side of the park, which is the principal part of the garden of the North Loch. It will stand between the Bank of Scotland and the Little Mound. The building, according to the most accurate accounts, is to be a perfect specimen of the abattoir. It is to be of an oblong shape, its sides being along the vacant space." Can this be so?

In order to keep it out of the market, there is to be a great quantity of rotten buildings; and in the course of the oblong there is to be a thing sticking up that is to be called a Tower, looked on from the top. This central erection is to be a riding school, and the four surrounding sides of the oblong are to be stables, with all necessary accommodations, for troop horses. The Architect is a gentleman of acknowledged taste and ability, but Michael Angelo himself could not make a stable tolerable if he were employed just to combine the greatest possible quantity of internal accommodation with the smallest possible expense.

There is to be no architectural decorations, or proportions of any kind, except that on the top of the oblong sides there is to be a series of inverted tea-cups, which is the part of the design that the houses will admire most, because they are intended for the admission of hay. The whole thing is to be a mass of unbroken ridge and slate, fifty feet high in the centre.

2. The effects of this are very plain. First, One of the most striking and peculiar prospects of the kind in Europe is that strange, old, irregular, picturesque, high-piled ridge of buildings, which forms the scene when looking from Prince's Street to the Old Town. Mathurin's regular edifice can be built in front of Prince's Street, without hurting the character of this singular prospect. Yet, after it has survived the barbarism of centuries, we are now to have the whole scene marked by a dull range of stables, which must be seen from every house, from every carriage, and by every foot-passer on Prince's Street. Secondly, This new blot will be conspicuous from the North Bridge—more so than, even the slattern-house, which is so near the Bridge, that the eye goes beyond it. Thirdly, But the baseness of its defects may be most glaringly prominent from the Mound; especially if its offensive sluggishness be deepened by the execution of that beautiful horizontal line of buildings, by which the genius of Bayfair has enabled us to connect the ancient with the modern divisions of the town.

Fourthly. Nor is it merely the eye that is to be thus hurt at every point where the lump can be seen. Its ears are peculiarly unfortunate for a situation so exposed, and where every breath of shrubbery or of grass is so invaluable. A troop of horses implies a troop of horsemen; and these a troop of grooms; and these a troop of stable boys, with a due proportion of ostlers, farriers, dealers, bricklayers, joiners, and dogs,—so as nothing of the members of other troops—the mounted trumpeters—the gallant page-joiners—the everlasting rough riders—the lounging friends—and the mob of vulgar grazers. The very dung itself is objection enough. For, let the possible system of perfection he adopted,—let it be, that the man himself be recalled, and act as press of the Cleaning Committee, the air must, to a certainty, especially in warm weather, be loaded with the bowels of all bad odours, if this Augusine edifice is to be erected. Fifthly. It is said that it will hide the stables. But, last, it will not: Sixthly. The view will be much improved by hiding the stables by something worse than themselves: Sixthly, They will be better covered, as has been contemplated, by trees: Sixthly. The stables are to be in themselves, too small to not so often be actually in these kinder stables are proposed to be. They are in a corner, behind the little Mound. The stables are the first building it has been attempted to bring fairly out to serve the centre of the valley.

FIGURE 74:

Newspaper article on the renewed attempt to build in front of Princes Street
(Scotsman 16 February 1832)

3. Independently of the public at large, there are various select claves who may interfere to ward off this abomination. We are not utterly without hopes that the Yeomen themselves may, upon Reflection, see the propriety of withstanding the rest of the inhabitants in a matter so essential to the decoration of the city. If they should not, then we trust that, even though the Magistracy does contain a Yeoman, the Town-Council will not be so very extravagant as to give them ground. We have heard it stated that they have given it already. But we don't believe it. However, it is true, then this private (and we presume gratuitous) disposal of part of the common good of the burgh, will form an essential check of itself. Should both our military and our civil defences prove inconstant, then we must look to other claves—The neighbours, we conceive, may legally object to being sunk. Nor is it of any avail to hint that the stables are under their noses already. There is the less need of annoying them more; and it has been judicially determined, that no accumulation of nuisances at one spot, however old and offensive, can oblige the neighbours to endure any addition to this calamity. But without having recourse to legal measures, the people of Prince's Street are entitled to object without assigning any reason. Any individual may stop the scheme in a moment. We know that many contents have been very pleasingly asked, and very rashly given. But a sufficient number of men of sense remain, and the inhabitants at large look to them for firm and judicious exercise of their privilege on this occasion. Indeed, if they don't exercise it now, they may just as well give it up on all; for, if they allow this edifice,—equally ill-placed, ugly, and useless—to get up, what building can the court object to ?

We have no desire to put the Yeomen to any inconvenience. But now that the spare ground within the city is getting every day less and less, the health of the people, and the elegance of the town, require that, for this very reason, what remains should the better preserved. And this valley is so exposed to view, and so tempting for various sorts of bad buildings, that it ought to be a sacred principle never to allow another edifice to be erected to the west of the little Mound, but to get the whole valley, from this Mound on the east to the West Church, covered with trees, shrubbery or grass, as soon, and as permanently as possible.
was Henry Cockburn and he more than anyone led the campaign to keep the east North Loch as open space, free from all buildings. As a powerful voice in the Faculty of Advocates he had already had contact with the Town Council - in this same year over the intended Improvement Bill - designed to provide a much needed south and west approach to the city. (15) Not everyone however, was wholeheartedly in favour of these projected improvements: several New Town residents felt that the likely cost was hardly justified at a time of economic depression, and others argued there was little reason to open up better communications with the south side and the old town when this was in decline. Who in fact would choose to visit the "cheerless Meadows" when there were attractive rural walks and pleasure grounds closer to hand. (16) The support of the Faculty of Advocates was therefore vital and Cockburn exploited this by insisting that the proposed Bill should contain a clause prohibiting any building on the south side of Princes Street east of the Mound. Having already suffered one defeat with the Bill (in 1824) the Council agreed to redraft it accordingly - although this too fared no better in Parliament.

By now however, several eminent New Town residents led by Cockburn were united in their concern to preserve the east North Loch as open space and willing to take action. Early in 1826 the following notice appeared in all the Edinburgh newspapers:

"As the rapid accumulation of Earth between the Mound and the North Bridge cannot fail soon to prove destructive of the picturesque effects of this City, and as very serious alarms have been for some time entertained that there is a design to erect Buildings along the south side of Princes Street east of the Mound, in consequence of the filling up of the valley, and other circumstances give probability every day that these alarms are well founded we request a meeting of proprietors in the New Town to be held within the Waterloo Hotel on Monday the 6th instant (February), at 2 o'clock, and we earnestly entreat all such proprietors who feel any interest in preserving the beauty of Edinburgh to attend on this occasion". (17)

16 signatures were appended - several belonging lived at the west end
of Princes Street, including 4 members of the Management Committee of the Princes Street gardens. The meeting, described in the press as a "highly respectable" gathering discussed under the Chairmanship of Sir James Ferguson of Kilkerran a letter received from the Lord Provost in reply to various queries: it was considered "... not a very satisfactory answer" for the excuse was made that "... the great delay had been due to the building of drains" but without any firm assurances that the land was to be kept open. Henry Cockburn reminded those assembled of all the previous attempts to build on the space and concluded his remarks with the question "Have not the magistrates in their possession at that very moment under lock and key a plan for building east of the mound". Further to the meeting a Committee of 7 was elected to confer with the Town Council - which included the banker Sir William Forbes (Convener), Cockburn, James Moncrieff, Robert Graham (Professor of Botany) and 3 members of the West Princes Street garden Committee (James Skene, Sir Henry Jardine and Alexander Douglas).

With public opinion so strongly opposed to any proposal to develop the land east of the mound combined with the Council's desire to press ahead with the Improvement Bill (which was still dependent on the support of the Faculty of Advocates) the magistrates had little option but to abandon all ideas for building on this space. Any lingering doubts were dispelled by the appointment of a special committee in March 1826 "... to direct and superintend the arranging and dressing of the ground east of the mound it having been nearly brought to the intended level". More than this the Committee sought the advice of the distinguished and well respected Edinburgh architect - William H. Playfair (1789-1851) whose report and plan was submitted to the Town Council in June 1826, and a little later made available to the public.

Playfair's plans for the improvement of the East North Loch

By the 1820's Playfair's reputation as an accomplished designer was already established; he had moreover been associated with the development...
of part of the Mound for a number of years, and in 1822 his revised plan for the Royal Institution (now the Royal Scottish Academy) had been approved. This work had brought him into contact with the leading members of the West Princes Street proprietors - who appear to have held him in high regard - an opinion also shared by Cockburn. To seek his advice was therefore not only a shrewd tactical move on the part of the Town Council, but made good sense insofar as Playfair was already familiar with that part of Edinburgh. He also had more experience than most in appreciating the wider implications of layout design; and his sensitive handling of the Calton Hill project, his revised plans for Royal Circus, and his involvement with the formation of the Royal Terrace (London Road) gardens all demonstrate this ability: he certainly had a good background in the ideals of picturesque improvement - as is evident in the sales catalogue of his library prepared after his death. (24)

Playfair's advice to the Town Council reflected this ability to carefully and sympathetically evaluate the grounds potential and his report (25) (fig. 75) concentrated on an overall strategy rather than on a detailed planting plan. One of his main recommendations centred on the formation of a 25' (7.62m) wide terrace along the Princes Street side, with a belt of trees and shrubs next to the road, and a broad gravel walk within: this would not only compliment the "beautiful character" already assumed by the western garden but also enhance the views of the "picturesque buildings" of the old town when seen "... in unison with the foliage in the foreground". Playfair suggested that the surrounding banks, particularly the one opposite the rear of the Bank of Scotland, be more gently sloped, with good soil added and then tree planted; leaving the central area to be levelled and grass sown (with possibilities for use as a future clothes drying or bleaching green). This latter operation would require the diagonal roadway to be obliterated but in any case it disfigured the site and caused nuisance from dust: the serpentine road would however, remain but with improvements. While Playfair favoured enclosing and planting the whole area he was also keenly aware of the limited funds available, and

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Glasgow and Harbour Commission.—Wednesday the Lord Provost stated, that he regretted very much to have to lay before the Council a letter from Mr. Gilchrist, in which he resigns his office as one of the Commissioners, in consequence of being presented, by the present state of his health, from discharging the duties at that office in such a way as he could wish. The Council accepted of the resignation, and appointed James Mitchell his successor.

North Loch.—The Lord Provost stated, that the Committee, some time ago appointed to consider the subject in which the North Loch, east of the Mound, should be laid out, had consulted Mr. Playfair on the subject, and that, at a meeting of the Committee held a few days ago, that gentleman had laid before them a plan and relative report, showing the manner in which he proposed laying out the ground. The Committee having minutely considered the plan and report, had agreed, his Lordship said, to recommend to the Council to give directions for carrying into effect the suggestions at the end of the same; but as the subject was of great importance, and one in which the beauty and appearance of the city were much concerned, he proposed that the matter should lie over for a week, to enable the members to peruse the details at their leisure.—

Maxwell, however, at the Council's views regarding the ground in question had been much misconception, and as they had never yet done any thing in regard to such required enrolment, or to make them tear the public opinion, his Lordship proposed that the report should be made public, and that the plan should lie in the Superintendent's office, for general inspection. The Magistrates and Council approved of his Lordship's proposition.—We subjoin Mr. Playfair's report.

Edinburgh, June 26, 1826.

In obedience to the wishes of my Lord Provost and the Committee, I have examined the present state of the North Loch, and have now the honour to report my opinion as to the manner in which it may be improved and improved.

It appears to me, that the road at the back of the Field of Reminiscence should be completed according to the plan already adopted, making it 45 feet broad, and giving the sloping banks a very gradual declivity towards the North Loch, and covering it with a deep layer of good soil to promote the growth of trees or grass.

It is also my opinion that the serpentine road opposite Andrew's street, and leading down to the market, should be remedied last steep, by giving it a greater depth towards the west, and by raising up the northern termination of it at the place called the Little Mound—by which it might be made generally united with the road leading down past the Bank of woodland, and which has just been alluded to. To be followed to the rear, the serpentine road should be partially filled up to prevent accidents, and to give the surface a more natural appearance, and the space between the Little Mound and the slaughter-house should be enclosed and planted, both for ornament and for protection.

Having thus obtained two good approaches to the market, I would earnestly recommend that the road falling from the northern end of the Mound should be unshaded, as it intersects the ground in a very awkward and inconvenient manner, and is the occasion of much dirt.

I would next propose, that there should be formed a terrace, twenty-five feet wide, upon the south side of Prince's Street, consisting of a belt of shrubs and trees, the street, and a broad gravel walk within, looking from the eastern side of the Mound to the serpentine road before mentioned. By doing this the eastern end of Prince's Street would soon acquire the same beautiful character that the western division has already assumed, and the picturesque buildings of the Old Town in the distance, would be seen in union with the foliage in the foreground.

The gravel walk should be carried horizontally along the east side of the Eastern Mound, should be shaded, and the present wall and pavement altered to suit this arrangement.

If the beauty of the town were alone to be considered, and the expense were no object, there can be no doubt I think, that the whole of the ground in question should be engulfed and planted. If it were thought desirable to afford a breathing ground for the convenience of the inhabitants, the sloping banks only might be planted, and the level ground in the centre might be laid down in grass for that purpose.

But as it would take a large sum to do all this, which may not be easy to obtain, I would recommend that the belt of planting and the sloping bank along the side of Prince's Street, be proceeded with, and that the remainder of the ground, being formed or before described, should be laid down in grass. The four walls which have been so judiciously provided in the lower grounds, will be highly useful, either for the purpose of irrigation or of bleaching.

If all this were done, the North Loch, which has hitherto presented so melancholy and neglected an appearance, would soon become a great ornament to the city.

(Signed) W. H. PLAYFAIR.

FIGURE 75:
Playfair's report on the laying out of the East North Loch
(Edinburgh Advertiser 30 June 1826)
the report ends with him singling out as first priority the formation of the terrace, with the remainder, meantime, shaped and grass sown: thus the North Loch would be transformed from such a "... melancholy and neglected appearance" into "... the greatest ornament to the city".

Further plans for the East North Loch - William Sawrey Gilpin

In addition to Playfair's report the Town Council also commissioned an "eminent landscape gardener" - William Sawrey Gilpin (1762-1843) to put forward proposals for the improvement of the North Loch; one of the rare occasions when an outsider was approached to give advice on the layout of an Edinburgh pleasure garden - and surely an indication of the considerable pressure felt by the Town Council to restore public confidence. (26) William Sawrey Gilpin - son of Sawrey Gilpin, a successful animal painter, and nephew of the more famous and influential Reverend William Gilpin (27) had become a landscape designer relatively late in life. (28) It was only after many years as a drawing master and President of the Water Colour Society followed by a career as a military landscape draughtsman that finally in 1820 with the encouragement of Uvedale Price he decided to use his considerable landscape experience and the advantages of his name and family connections in the profession of landscape gardening. He was then 58 years old and without any close rivals (Repton had died 2 years previously) he went on to develop an important practice. The Gilpins, whose old family home was Scaleby Castle on the borders had a great predilection for improving the grounds of castles - that most picturesque of all picturesque subjects. Gilpin advised on the landscape improvement of many castellated houses in England, Scotland and Ireland and although little is known about his Scottish commissions he was certainly involved in plans for laying out the grounds of Balcaskie ..., Fife and Kinfuans Castle in Perthshire (fig. 76).

The eastern section of the North Loch, its skyline of the old town "... being one of its finest, most important, and even sublime features" (29) culminating with views of the castle to the west was a
marvellously picturesque site and fully suited to Gilpin's taste to which he could apply his "... best endeavours to improve ... in conformity with its leading features". (30) Gilpin was employed "... for some time in making plans for beautifying the ground" (31) and according to one source appears to have produced not only a plan but also a model for an ornamental garden. (32) In October 1826 the Town Council Minutes record that W. S. Gilpin was paid 12 guineas "... for attendance on account of the projected improvement to the North Loch". (33) One month later at a joint meeting of the Council and Faculty of Advocates (relative to the future progress of the Improvement Bill) his name was effectively used to reassure any lingering doubts that the Council's intentions for east of the mound were anything other than honourable. Cockburn was still not fully convinced but the Scotsman Newspaper while praising his firm stand felt that the "good faith" of the Magistrates had been sufficiently proved "... by their being, at this moment, occupied in carrying into effect a highly ornamental plan for laying out the north loch." (34) Although always spoken of in these highly favourable terms the details of Gilpin's design remain obscure - for no plans have survived and his name is never again referred to. Soon afterwards he departed for Ireland to work on several commissions there (35) and all connections with Edinburgh seem to have ceased.

1827 Improvement Act and subsequent developments

Whatever the reassurances, it no doubt came as a relief to many when the Improvement Bill was finally passed in 1827 and among its many clauses guaranteed the space east of the mound as "one of the lungs of the city" (36) the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links receiving similar protection. (37) After a lapse of over 50 years therefore, the battle to preserve the east North Loch as an ornamental space and pleasure ground was won for a second time.

Although plans by Playfair and Gilpin were now to hand the Town Council seem to have been in no hurry to set about implementing them. Indeed further alarm was caused in the following months by a rumour
that the central area was to be used as a "... vast expose of the laid out washings of the lower classes" (fig. 77), while the fertile but erratic imagination of Robert Gourlay "a scientist", was also busily at work: he produced plans for a large amphitheatre sited on the "waste ground" east of the mound, flat roofed, and ornamented with a fountain "... sprouting from the middle to a height of 30 or 40 feet" with carriage way and walks sweeping round the top: providing an exhibition area for feats of horsemanship, games, gymnastics, races and other large gatherings (39) (fig. 78). Rather more mundanely the Town Council gave instructions in April 1827 for the area to be grass sown (39): 2 years later however, the task remained incomplete although by then Thomas Brown, Superintendent of Works was busy having the surrounding banks formed into more regular slopes (40). The delay proved of some benefit as the eastern side was straightened and a hollow filled by earth discarded from St. Giles Cathedral - then in the process of being "restored" by the architect William Burn (41).

Now that preparations had reached a more advanced state the Town Council appointed a committee to draw up detailed plans for an ornamental terrace along the Princes Street side - in the manner proposed by Playfair (42). Their carefully written and well balanced report (submitted to a full meeting of Council in September 1829) (43) reflected more than anything the skill and expertise of the Chairman Councillor Patrick Neill (1776-1851) whose wide-ranging interests and depth of horticultural knowledge were to have unforeseen benefits for the East Princes Street gardens.

Patrick Neill and the formation of the gardens

A thin, serious, tophatted and bespectacled figure of medium height and slightly stooped is the portrait of Patrick Neill depicted in Crombies "Modern Athenians" (fig. 79). The image fitted his character. He was a scholarly, rather retiring bachelor, diligent in his business but with an overriding passion for natural history (particularly botany and horticulture) (44) elected the first secretary of both the Wernerian Natural History Society (founded in 1808), and the Caledonian Horticultural Society (established one year later) he held the latter post
I would add a hint, and but a hint, on the notorious manners of the nymphs who "wash the day" in the
boiling process, and who will be congregated in dihines in this work, public spots with incalculable aggra-
vations, if the projected demand of water tempts them to the end撕sor peculiar to Scotland.

It is much a thought, too; whether a pool of water
should be restored in that situation. Dr. Bucelassh in this work, public spots with incalculable ag-
gravations, if the projected demand of water tempts them to the end撕sor peculiar to Scotland.

It is much a thought, too; whether a pool of water
should be restored in that situation. Dr. Bucelassh, a little published in the London Di-
Journal, on Maldon, repudiates pools and ponds, and
ornamental pieces of water, in which vegetable cor-
pus most singular, as, even in this country, in his
marshes, the principal cause of unhappiness are ex-
iously impudent to the heat of the season. A quar-
yard pond even, or gravel pit of pools, will, in its
wide spreading mischief.

We are told that the denial of this piece of ground to the
lower orders for their clothes will make an outcry.

I answer, that an outcry is unreasonable, when there is
no right, and yet more unwarrant of regard, when there
is no right to give a right. But while liberty is natural
to degrade and determen this ground with stairs and
sheds, I should be the first to applaud its being made
as freely to the public as a pleasure ground.

Our humble orders have not a higher character for respec-
ting public decorations. They could not, however, much
difuse gravel walks, and might have a trial, under a
keeper, of forest trees at least, if not of shrubbery. I
should love the rising generation might be educated to
this species of humanity, and trained in these very
grounds to a practical application of the lesson. This,
however, is a very distinct subject, and my letter is al-
ready too long.

But whatever may be done, "are there the monopol-
st of the bystanders?" Deliver us from the washing-
green! When the first bivouac shall "with all the
smells," only them will all its horrors be felt. But it
will then be too late, but although there is yet
there time to avoid the evil.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servaant.

Our correspondent's remarks are worthy of con-
templation, but we cannot entirely come in. We
have now a great deal of ground laid out for ornament
about the town; and it is but reasonable that one spot
and a more central one could not be found—should
be reserved for a purpose which conduces so materially
to the accommodation, and we may add, the health of
the poorer classes. Our correspondent should recol-
clude that it is but the passers-by, that can be afforded
by the spectacle of the blankets, for there are few general
families living within view of this green; and as
beauty depends on association, we submit whether there
is not something in the notions of salubrity we connect
with clean shirts and bed clothes to counteract the de-
sirability being complained of. Besides, we would ask
whether, with the slaughter house in the back ground, this
plan can be made to satisfy the eye of taste? At all
events, we would have a trial made of the washing-
green; and if it is found to be a nuisance, another plan,
can be easily adopted.

FIGURE 77: The East North Loch a washing green
(Scott'sman 17 November 1827)

FIGURE 78: Robert Gourlay's plans for the improvement of the East North Loch
(Robert Gourlay 1829)
for 40 years until shortly before his death. Equally committed
to preserving Edinburgh's historic past, he was highly regarded by
such men as Henry Cockburn who described him as "... a useful citizen,
a most intelligent florist, and one of the few defenders of our
architectural relics"(45): an opinion shared by J. C. Loudon (the
eminent garden designer and prolific writer of gardening books) who
spoke of Neill as "... a most benevolent and intelligent man and a
skillful horticultural connoisseur".(46) Loudon's wife was one of
the ones, along with scores more from all parts of the country to
brave the unsavoury journey through piggeries and cow byres to visit
Neill's 1 acre garden at Canonmills (a little to the east of Eyre Place)
famed for its collection of rare botanical species as well as zoological
specimens.(47) (fig. 80). In all, a man of "great worth and public
spirit". (fig. 81).

Neill most likely used the Serpentine Road daily as a convenient
shortcut to his printing works in Fishmarkets Close(48) and would
therefore have been well acquainted with the east North Loch area.
The "excellent" report on which Neill "had bestowed so much care and
attention "met with the full approval of the Town Council(49), as well
as "... the approbation of Mr H. Cockburn and other gentlemen of
taste, who take an interest in the grounds in question". (50) Provision
was made for a 45' wide (13.72m) terrace (rather broader than the one
suggested by Playfair, but narrower than the present-day one) -
consisting of a 20' border (6.10m) next to the railing (with a main
avenue of lime trees, 10' apart (3.05m), a secondary row of English
elm and sycamore, and the intervening gaps planted with privet, holly
and laurel), a 15' gravel walk (4.57m), and a 10' border (3.05m) on
the other side (planted to match the top one). The report recommended
that the sloping bank "should be thickly planted with common hardy
forest trees" including Scotch elm, sycamore, birch, horse chestnut,
oak and maple, with a smaller proportion of quick growing varieties
such as willows and poplars to provide for more immediate but temporary
effect: the whole appearance to be enhanced by forming 2 or 3 swells
or hollows to provide a more undulating surface.(51) Clumps of forest
It is our painful duty to record the death of this distinguished naturalist, at six o'clock yesterday morning, at his villa of Canonmills.

Dr Neill, we believe, was in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and although of a somewhat delicate constitution, was able, until the last year, to attend to business, and enjoy his favourite pursuits. To a highly cultivated and well-regulated mind, he added a kindly disposition and a genuine modesty, which greatly enhanced the value of his general deportment. In his moral character he was temperate, friendly, consistent, and truthful. Religion had early taken a strong hold of his mind, and, while strictly Calvinistic in principle, and regular in the observance of Christian ordinances, he was no formalist. At an early period of life he was a member of the Anti-Burgher communion, but for many years he was a steady supporter of the Established Church—an elder in St Mary's, under Dr Grant, and a lay member of the General Assembly, representing the Presbytery of North Isles in Orkney. He enjoyed, however, the friendship of not a few who differed from him in ecclesiastical politics; and we have seen at his table three professors of the Free Church College, including the late Dr Chalmers—the guests enjoying the society of their host, and the host delighted with the company of early and esteemed friends. As a man of business, Dr Neill was uniformly open, honourable, and accommodating, willing to yield a great deal for the sake of peace, but possessed of a suf- ficient share of firmness, when an attempt was made to overreach him, or to act in a stealthy manner towards him. As a friend he was candid, judicious, and conciliatory, and, in this respect, very many will deeply lament his loss. As a citizen the town of Edinburgh has lost a clear-sighted and determined supporter. Whether to establish an Experimental or Zoological Garden, to decorate the North Loch, or to erect the Flodden Tower, Dr Neill was ever ready and willing, with his pen and his purse, to promote every useful improvement, or save from ruin time-baulked relics. The merits of Dr Neill as a man of science were very generally acknowledged. His published labours as a horticulturist, botanist, zoologist, and geologist, bear but a small proportion to his private efforts to advance the interest of natural science— as secretary of the Waverley Society, as the patron of rising merit, and as ever ready to offer the warmest sympathy to congenial spirits. The blank occasioned by his death will be severely felt by those who enjoyed his friendship, and by a far wider circle who had satisfactory proof of his great worth and public spirit.
trees were also suggested for a triangular piece of ground, east of the serpentine road. Less amenable to treatment was the "offensive place of retreat" or "public necessary" undecorously sited at the north west corner and happily removed in 1831: uneasy however, that old habits might persist the Town Council thickly planted the vacated area with wild brambles, briars and sloe thorns besides sowing furze and whin seeds to ward off further nuisance. (52) The costs of carrying out these various improvements was put at no more than £70 - the most expensive item being the large amount of larch paling required to enclose and protect the new planting: the work itself was to be undertaken by the towns carpenters and workmen "... among whom it is understood there is at least one experienced gardener and planter who could oversee and direct the operations of others".

By the end of October 1829 preparatory work on forming and dressing the North bank was nearing completion. (53) Thomas Brown, Superintendent of Works and Neill having co-operated closely together: (54) next the Committee went on to consider plans for the rest of the east North Loch - and reported to Council in December 1829 their decision to enclose all the sloping banks surrounding the meadow and for these to be "... more or less covered with trees". (55) Much time had been spent negotiating with the Bank of Scotland - owners of a portion of the south bank (56): the Committee felt that the greater part of this southern section should be thickly planted with trees and the rest left "... in scattered irregular patches of grass sward so as to vary the surface as seen from Princes Street and the mound". To this end the Bank agreed to contribute £50 on the understanding the Council assumed responsibility for its future upkeep. (57)

The following year saw renewed activity as the remaining banks were shaped, planted and enclosed: by the Spring of 1831 the work had been completed and the east section of the North Loch after many precarious years established as an ornamental area. Something of the magnitude of this task can be measured from the final report of the Committee written by Patrick Neill and presented to the Town Council in
April 1831: it contained much illuminating detail as well as practical advice on future management. (58) In all over 5 acres \( \frac{2}{5} \text{ha} \) of banks had been planted, with nearly 27,000 trees and shrubs (misquoted in Crombie's Modern Athenians as 77,000 trees and shrubs in the West Princes Street Gardens - hence the erroneous association of Neill's name with the laying out of these gardens (59)); the generous planting was to compensate for the anticipated lower survival rate due to variable soil conditions, and the exposed nature of the site. Now formed were many good clumps of deciduous and evergreen trees but their "... proper effect ... in regard to variety of colour and shape of foliage" would not be seen until after the first or second thinnings. The main terrace walk had been slightly widened and several footpaths made to sweep gently down the other banks "... so as to render every part readily accessible". Notice boards already carried warnings to would-be trespassers (60) and Neill further recommended that the grounds be kept closed for 2-3 years with instructions to the officers of Police "... to be very diligent in guarding the whole from intrusion or injury". The central "meadow" part of the loch had not been touched apart from being treated with lime and grass sown. (61)

The most impressive part of the report however, was Neill's description of the overwhelming response experienced by him in his quest for plants: an indication not only of his own splendid reputation but also the worthwhile nature of the project. In the first instance he had approached certain individuals and groups whose support could be depended upon, for example, James Skene (designer of the West Princes Street gardens, and active on their Management Committee (refer Section 2.6) who donated 300 sycamores and poplars 6-12' high (1.83m-3.66m) from the western gardens. Next was Dr Graham, Professor of Botany to whom a request was made "... for suitable young forest trees and evergreens" from the Botanic gardens - Neill being rewarded with 1,500 plants "some hundreds of a large size". Last in this category was the Horticultural Society who supplied about 500 plants from their Experimental gardens at Inverleith including 250 bay laurels and 50 common lilacs. But with yet "still many thorns and plants" required Neill began to make enquiries at local nurseries to see "... what
kinds of large plants suitable for the purpose could be procured at reasonable rates". To his most pleasant surprise he was met "with voluntary offers": Messrs Dickson & Co. of Waterloo Place "led the way" and made the largest contribution. They donated over 1,200 plants including most varieties of forest trees, as well as willows and poplars, and 5,000 larch, spruce, fir and Scotch pine. After requesting Neill to make a list of anything else required they added over 2,500 ornamental and rare trees such as Turkey oak, striped gold leaf plane, fern leaved chestnut, purple beech, double scarlet thorn, guelder rose, Persian and Siberian lilac, evergreen privet, and Balm of Gilead firs. The avenue lime trees were supplied by James Dickson and Son, Inverleith nurseries, who also gave over 1,000 Turkey oaks, mountain ash, walnuts, hazel and bud cherry trees. Eagle and Henderson, another large nursery firm provided 200 portugal laurels "trained in the tree style". Contributions were also made by 3 other nurserymen - Alexander Wight, Thomas Cleghorn, and Charles Lawson; while a further substantial donation was made by a private individual, John Bonar Esq of Kimmer Gham who gave 8,500 forest trees "all of them the best plants of their kind to be found in the Edinburgh nurseries". The only sum spent by the Town Council on planting came to less than £5.(62)

Subsequent years: the extension of the railway through the garden and the addition of the Scott Memorial

Transformed from a bare, unkempt space to a well planted and potentially highly ornamental pleasure garden the Town Council nevertheless lacked any clear policy for its future care and upkeep. Two months after the work was completed the City Chamberlain was however, authorised "... to let the cutting of the grass in the North Loch"(63) while the Improvement Committee were given powers "... to grant a limited number of keys to the grounds, and to put up ticket boards against trespass". But the notion of establishing a key system whereby those willing to pay an annual due would have the right to walk in the grounds came to naught, and by the following year 2 other possibilities were under consideration: first, the leasing of the
site for nursery purposes (Thomas Cleghorn, nurseryman and florist in Princes Street had already approached the Town Council) and second, the conversion of the central area into a bleaching green—an idea guaranteed to provoke immediate hostility which it did. The suggestion made in the North Briton newspaper that a portion of the ground be set aside "... for the manly and athletic games of Scotland" and a "safe and noble pond" of ice formed in the winter "... for all the risques of "the rinks" and the bracing and elegant exercise of skating" also gained few supporters.

With no practical choice but to pursue the first option, the Town Council advertised its plans and at a public roup held on 18th May 1832 let the ground to Thomas Cleghorn for 28 years. This arrangement had certain advantages as it relieved the Council of the expense and trouble of upkeep while placing the new proprietor under some obligation to combine his nursery with a form of pleasure garden. We learn of this from another newspaper report which announced that Mr Cleghorn, florist, had become lessee "by authority of the magistrates of the grounds which were to be laid out as a nursery and flower garden with pleasure walks, and ornamental shrubbery, to which respectable citizens will have access for a small sum annually". The information accompanying the article—and quoted below—provides useful detail not only on the progress of Neill's planting but also on Cleghorn's rather ambitious ideas for the central area:

"The sloping banks which dip into the broad valley are already planted with trees and shrubs, and the artificial knolls and serpentine walks are beginning to rusticate among flowers and green foliage. The great plain measuring upwards of 7 acres was ploughed up last week preparatory to laying down the gravel walks and planting the nursery and shrubberies. In the centre of the area an artificial rock work will be piled. From this point eight shaded walks radiate away to the boundaries, and the space betwixt the roads will be allocated for the operations of the nurseryman. The roads are to be hedged with holly and Portuguese laurel, and belted with forest trees and shrubbery."

In addition a moss house was to be erected in the north west corner
with coloured glass windows "... through which the spectator can descry passengers on the Little Mound and North Bridge in the shape of green fairies, swart savages, or blue devils, as his fancy inclines him".

Many of these projected improvements can be seen in Laing and Forbes map of Edinburgh, 1832 (fig. 69d) but were probably never fully implemented: subsequent information on Cleghorn concerns his expanding nursery business and his need for ancillary accommodation such as a keeper's cottage, greenhouse, and conservatory, and indeed access seems to have been restricted to nursery visitors only. In 1838 the Town Council mindful maybe of its wider obligations made the suggestion that the west gate be left open for a trial period to allow "... the free admission of the public at all proper hours (Sundays excepted) by the public being understood all respectable persons". Whether the experiment proved successful is not known, but in 1841 Cleghorn left the site having granted a sub lease to Eagle and Henderson (already lessees of ground in the West Princes Street gardens - see Section 2.6). By this time the trees in the eastern section were becoming well established (many had been donated by this same nursery firm) - so much so that a number of those living in this part of Princes Street presented a petition to the Town Council requesting that the trees opposite be thinned. Neill's advice had obviously been overlooked - a common failing with many of the New Town gardens. Repairs were also required to the fencing at the southern end which had suffered continual damage from intruding boys to the detriment of the trees: the complaints made by the Bank of Scotland however, largely went unheeded.

Not long after taking over the lease the new tenants were confronted with a renewed attempt by the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company in 1842 to extend their line from the Haymarket terminus to the east end of Princes Street. Their previous attempt of 1836 had failed due to the vigorous campaign led by the West Princes Street proprietors determined to keep their pleasure garden intact (see
Had the East Princes Street gardens been similarly set up with a management committee they would no doubt have provided useful support, for if anything, the eastern section was more vulnerable, being almost adjacent to the site earmarked for a station. But by now the public mania for railways was overwhelming and pressures for other lines from the north and east increased the need for a terminus towards the east end of Princes Street: a move not unwelcomed by proprietors of business and commercial property which had established themselves in this part. Permission for the extension was granted by Parliament in July 1844 and although a bitter disappointment to the West Princes Street proprietors their persistent opposition at least guaranteed adequate safeguards to minimise the intrusive effect of the railway: besides its proper enclosure the Act required the formation of embankments to help screen the trains and reduce noise levels, as well as the construction of footbridges "... all at the sight of William Henry Playfair, architect".

What was the effect of the railway extension on the East Princes Street gardens? Apart from bisecting it and reducing the area by well over a quarter much of Neill's 1831 improvement work was wrecked. For 3 years workmen occupied the garden making tunnels and laying tracks, and without the vigilant eye of a management committee "encroachments" (earth, stones, rubbish and debris) were dumped everywhere. Not that the Town Council remained undisturbed by such events: they did in fact become sufficiently roused to take legal action against the Railway Company in 1845 and successfully prevented further abuse. By 1847 however, the gardens were in "... a most dilapidated state" and to such an extent that it could "... no longer be called a garden".

To add to the chaos further damage had arisen from the invasion of labourers and masons working on the Walter Scott monument which had been provided with a site close to the north east corner of the garden. The foundation stone was laid in 1840 and gradually there emerged 180' in height (55m) "a vast and intricate pile of gothic masonry" designed by an obscure Edinburgh joiner, George Kemp.
Scott monument in 1891 fully completed and with new cope and railing along Princes Street (an illustrative Architectural guide, Charles McKeon 1982)

Scott monument in the final stages of erection c1846: Thomas Cleghorn's gardeners house can be seen in the foreground (demolished in 1850) (Collotype by D.B. Hill)

Scott monument completed apart from the seated statue of Scott by Steell and the statues of Scott's 'characters'. Some of the houses provided for the railway engineers can be seen to the east of the monument (Princes Street Edinburgh, Life Association of Scotland 1938)
enclosing a marbled statue sculptured by John Steell placed there in 1846 (figs. 82, 83 and 84). Playfair, a not altogether disinterested bystander criticised the monument for being "too large for its position" (84) and so it must have appeared to many when all around was bare and ill formed. Permission had been granted in 1845 for the terrace along the Princes Street side to be more than doubled in width in order to provide more suitable space for the memorial - the extra earth required being conveniently supplied by the Railway Company from their excavation work further below in the valley. (85) Neill's attractive avenue of limes and elms, and planted banks thus vanished forever, all the trees being cut down and removed - an event which according to McNab took place "without a murmur" (86). With funds completely exhausted, the monument's Committee were able to do the barest minimum to enhance the ground round the memorial in time for its inauguration in 1846. The rest of the ground remained in a semi derelict state for another 2-3 years: by 1849 trains had started to run through the gardens and in that same year (after months of negotiation) an agreement was reached between the Railway Company and the Town Council relieving the Company of any further obligations in return for compensation amounting to £4,400. (87)

David Cousin, and the redesign of the East Princes Street Gardens 1849-51

David Cousin (1809-1878), one time assistant in William Playfair's office, (88) and since 1847 City Superintendent of Works (and the first to be also known under the title of City Architect) was the man responsible for the redesign of the gardens - which to this day remain largely as he planned them. Cousin was not only a competent architect (89) but also showed ability in the broader field of landscape design, and was responsible for example, for the layout of 4 Edinburgh cemeteries - Warriston (1843), Newington, Rosebank and Dalry (all in 1846); with plans for the improvement of Calton Hill and the Meadows, and in later life was responsible for an attractive feuing plan for the lands of Mayfield (the property of Lord Provost Duncan McLaren) which incorporated Victorian housing built around a private pleasure garden (Waverley Park). He was also called in to advise the West Princes Street Garden Committee in 1840.
Cousin's appreciation of the site's importance as a "prominent feature of the City" comes across clearly in the sensitive and detailed report written by him in 1849 and presented along with plans and perspectives to the Town Council (90): his well considered ideas (even if some were a little whimsical) received their approval and work on implementing them started almost immediately. Unlike most pleasure gardens where the inner appearance was of greater importance than the outer, Cousin felt that in the case of the East Princes Street grounds the reverse held true particularly as the space was surrounded by thoroughfares at considerably higher levels and therefore constantly overlooked: hence his decision to lay out the grounds "... in masses, more as a foreground ... to the surrounding objects of interest rather than to cut them up into smaller sections".

Not surprisingly the presence of the Scott Monument had a strong influence on Cousin's layout and became an important feature of it. Apart from broadening the terrace nothing else had been done to make the surrounding area appropriate to the scale and grandeur of the monument. Cousin aimed to rectify this by making a level terrace 95' (29m) wide along Princes Street with a 20' (6m) wide gravel walk through the middle - lining up with the centre of the memorial, with lawns and shrub planting on either side. To complement the monument and complete the south margin of the terrace, Cousin designed a 4' (1.22m) high wall "... of gothic character" (91) which included space for 6 pedestals and led at either end via a handsome flight of steps to a lower terrace walk. The rest of the bank was to be laid with "smooth turf" and planted with clumps of evergreens: forest trees being reserved for the lower slope. No changes were suggested for the south and west banks apart from tree thinning and pruning, and making good the existing pathways and slopes. As to the flat ground on either side of the railway Cousin recommended that a large proportion should be grassed and surrounded by "well formed gravel walks and masses of evergreens": the railway itself was to be enclosed by a 4' (1.22m) high stone wall with an earth embankment of either side grass sown, and thickly planted with shrubs and a thorn hedge at the top (refer fig. 85).
FIGURE 85: David Cousin's layout for the East Princes Street gardens 1849: the possible site for a fountain along the top terrace walk is also shown (EDC archival drawing collection).

FIGURE 86: East Princes Street gardens shortly after being laid out: early 1850's (NMRS).
All these proposals were relatively straightforward and practical, yet Cousin was anxious to promote one other rather more ambitious idea which was to develop the great terrace along Princes Street as an open air gallery for the display of statuary and other works of art. This notion had partly been encouraged by the knowledge that a sum of money had been left available "... at a future period for the erection of a fountain in combination with bronze statues of Wallace and Bruce"(92) - and Cousin in his plan had provisionally set aside a possible site for these additions to the west of the Scott Monument: with the suggestion also that his terrace wall could be extended at a later date. In the meantime however, Cousin concentrated his energy on promoting 6 "colossal" statues (at an estimated cost of £600) for that part of the wall central to the monument, and devoted a large portion of his report to making out a convincing case for their adoption. Like many Victorians Cousin firmly believed in the ennobling and enriching value of art and was sincerely of the opinion that if the right opportunities and encouragement in the Fine Arts were made available to the Working Classes their minds and even behaviour would be suitably improved and uplifted. Much was at stake in the success of the East Princes Street pleasure grounds - the first of their kind in Edinburgh - and Cousin, as his comments below indicate felt strongly that by including the statues a wider sense of identity and respect would be kindled -

"When it is kept in view that this portion of the Princes Street gardens will be thrown open to the public, under certain restrictions, the propriety of introducing statuary as a feature of the design will be obvious. The matter of expense is not to be set against advantages of such vast importance to the whole Community as will be gained by exciting and fostering a taste for the fine Arts, as for its quiet but exaulted enjoyments amongst the body of the People. Most assuredly no portion of the Community will hail this acquisition more cordially than the great mass of the Working Classes; and whereas it has been said, with too much truth indeed, that no pleasure ground is safe when open to them - this in particular will become their own which they will be glad to protect - a taste for such objects will be fostered, the stigma hitherto attached to our Townsmen of destroying everything that had any pretensions to art will be removed, it will be shown that they can be trusted with works of art - other pleasure grounds in the neighbourhood will be thrown open, and the old semi barbaric spirit of destruction may be expected to be abandoned along with other tasteless practices of a half civilized community".
Cousin’s aspirations achieved some outside support: the professional journal - the Builder expressed great dismay at the prospect of Steelj’s equestrian statue of Wellington being added to the front of Register House and suggested instead that a central position close to the Scott Monument would be far superior and where indeed "... a perfect galaxy of sculptural and architectural ornaments might be and ought to be crowded and concerted" (93). Later in the 1860’s John Dick Paddie nurtured similar ambitions on an even grander scale for the West Princes Street gardens (refer Section 2.6): such idealistic hopes however, were not fulfilled as the statues for the terrace wall were abandoned as being too costly.

But work went ahead on the rest of Cousin’s proposals: the formation of the great and smaller terraces and the railway embankments was aided by the addition of yet more surplus earth and rubble this time removed from the Mound (94) (where excavation work was underway on the National Gallery site), and from cartloads deposited by John Alexander the builder engaged on making a reservoir on Castle Hill for the Water Company. (95) By October 1849 estimates had been received for the terrace wall and stairs, and for a new parapet and iron railing along Princes Street (to a design by Cousin): the work involved 3 different firms and came to an overall cost of £1,215. (96) Meanwhile the trees on the south and west slopes continued to suffer "... great and irreparable damage from idle boys who overrun the grounds" and at Cousin’s suggestion a full-time watchman was appointed: fortuitously he was also a "practical gardener" who quickly busied himself in the improvement work and soon required additional help. (97) In November 1849 the central part of the garden was temporarily rented out to Mr William Langdon "... proprietor of the Chinese Collection" for an exhibition: various sheds occupied the ground for 3 to 4 months and delayed progress a little. (99)

Much was achieved the following year however; the foundation work on the terrace walls, stairs and ornamental parapet wall was completed in the first half, the old walks among the trees on the south slopes
were cleared and brought into proper shape, and the ground to the north and south of the railway was laid out, and new walks formed at the cost of £80. (101) By the middle of the year a full-time gardener - Peter Thomson was appointed (102) and he was responsible for selecting much of the new planting (103); the cottage built by Thomas Cleghorn at the north-east end was also demolished. (104)

On the anniversary of Sir Walter Scott's birth, 15 August 1851, the East Princes Street gardens were officially opened with due pomp and ceremony: the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council assembled along the lower terrace at 3 p.m. together with various high officials associated with the Scott memorial committee, and the Directors of the Bank of Scotland, ladies also being "invited to be present". Adding to the festivities were the bands of the 6th Dragoons of the 33rd Regiment who provided a suitable musical accompaniment to the afternoon's promenade. (105)

The gardens since 1851: their management, later changes and improvements

Thus after a long and chequered history the East Princes Street gardens finally became established as a public pleasure ground - regulated by rules not dissimilar to the ones operating in many of the private gardens but if anything even stricter. (106) Edinburgh citizens were now on trial, and many were turning their eyes to the neighbouring gardens and making demands that these too should be made public. It was therefore important that the eastern garden should be carefully looked after and in no way misused.

David Cousin was placed in overall control and Peter Thomson, the gardener who had supervised the laying out of the grounds appointed Keeper: his responsibility also extended to the Meadows, Bruntsfield Links and Calton Hill. Thomson was therefore the first man to hold the position as head park keeper although at this stage no parks department as such existed. It was his duty to organise the workforce between the different open spaces under his care and to employ additional temporary help as required: for this he was paid £1.25p weekly. At first the garden's financial arrangements were closely
allied with the compensation money paid by the Railway Company; £2,000 of this had been invested with the intention that maintenance expenses would be met by the interest supplemented by the municipal revenue account. Later in 1861 the maintenance costs of the East Princes Street gardens and Calton Hill became chargeable against the Public Parks and Bleaching Green account. (107)

Not long after the gardens were opened ornamental flower plots were formed along the outer margins of the great terrace (108) and the Botanical and English names fixed by markers to plants close to the walks. (109) At this period the garden presented a rather bare appearance particularly the north terrace side - and the evergreen shrubs and forest trees which Cousin intended for the sloping banks do not seem to have been planted (refer fig. 86). Nevertheless, the grounds seem to have been popular and well used; in the summer of 1854 for example, the Council gave permission for instrumental and pipe bands to play during the evenings, (110) and by the following year a third bowling green to the north of the railway line was formed as the existing ones on the other side had proved insufficient. (111) A little later on, the Saturday half holiday Association were granted permission to hold musical promenades in the garden on Saturday afternoons, the Council generously contributing 10 guineas towards their expenses. (112)

In the early years of the 1860's numerous thin-stemmed elm trees were planted along the top and lower terraces of the north bank (113) and the rather dilapidated fence on the south side between the Mound and Waverley Bridge was replaced by a cope and railing in 1877. The gradual tendency has been for the garden to become more simple in layout: many of the looping and winding pathways in the lower central area, and the south bank have completely disappeared (refer fig. 69e, f and g); so too, the broad gravel walk at the centre of the great terrace - replaced by a wide lawn and flower plots (fig. 87) and a new footpath formed alongside the terrace wall. During the second world war this top section was used for air raid shelters (fig. 88) and the flower plots were probably formed sometime afterwards.
FIGURE 87:
Modern view of top terrace: note flower beds and the main pathway now moved from the centre to the south of the monument (J. Arthur Dixon)

FIGURE 88:
Air Raid shelters along the top terrace, World War 2
(Sunnie News 23 August 1973)

FIGURE 89:
View of the gardens from the east side (Whiteholm Ltd)
Cousins lived long enough to see 3 statues added to the great terrace: the first at the west end to John Wilson ("Christopher North") by John Steell and inaugurated in 1865; the second in 1876 to David Livingstone (designed by Amelia Hill, wife of David Octavius Hill) and sited to the east of the Scott Monument; and the last to ex Lord Provost and MP Adam Black (1877) by the sculptor John Hutchison. Although it would seem impossible now to imagine the East Princes Street gardens as anything other than an ornamental space (figs. 89, 90a, b and c) the passage of time has not entirely eliminated further and indeed much more recent threats to their existence: in 1955 for example, the Town Council decided to apply for a Provisional Order allowing the use of the gardens as a car park. Appropriately, one of the strongest protesters was the Cockburn Association (Edinburgh Civic Trust) who, as their namesake had done many years before when faced with similar threats organised a public meeting: much to everyone's relief the scheme was withdrawn by the Council a little later. (114)
a. Lower terrace walk and central lawn

b. Head of lower terrace walk looking eastwards

c. Mid terrace walk looking towards Royal Scottish Academy; Cousin's ornamental wall along the top terrace can also be seen.
"Walk to the Post Office, come back by West Princes Street garden, where well dressed people were decently sauntering along the grass, enjoying themselves, I think innocently, and it might even be profitably - to mind as well as body." (1) (Rev. Aitken, 1868)

The West Princes Street gardens situated in the valley of the North Loch and dominated by the Castle towering above was, with the exception of those bordering onto the Water of Leith the one with the most outstanding picturesque advantages (fig. 91). It was also the largest (2) and most popular of the private pleasure gardens, attracting subscribers from all parts of the New Town, until made a public garden in 1876. Its transformation from a stinking marsh - so solitary that the volunteers could safely practice ball firing from the north side to targets set on the lower ledges of the castle rock (3) (fig. 93a) - to a well drained, highly ornamental space, was due almost entirely to a group of Princes Street proprietors determined to avoid the misfortunes experienced by the eastern section of the North Loch.

By 1800 Princes Street was completely built and the property west of Hanover Street wholly residential and occupied by families of great respectability - lawyers, members of the nobility, and a few affluent merchants. This population remained relatively stable for a number of years and undoubtedly contributed to the successful setting up of the gardens. After the long, controversial legal skirmishes in which the Town Council had become involved after feuing ground to the south of Princes Street east of the mound (refer Section 2.4) they were anxious to avoid further confrontation with the New Town feuars. No evidence has been found to suggest that the Town Council had at this time any schemes for building on the western portion of the North Loch apart from the possibility of allowing a chapel to be erected in Peter Lawson's nursery ground north of St. Cuthbert's church (by Bishop Sandford's congregation - later known as St. John's church), and the various proposals for the Mound itself. But the threat nevertheless remained. For while Rae's award of 1776 protected the eastern half of the North Loch from
further development it had upheld the Council's rights to feu out the western half, provided that the houses were not less than 96' (29m) from those on the north side of Princes Street, nor extended more than 160' (49m) to the south. Not surprisingly therefore the new residents lost little time in conferring together and in December 1801 submitted their view to the Lord Provost that no buildings could lawfully be erected on the south side of Princes Street, opposite their own. Whether this yielded a satisfactory response is not known but no further action was taken until 1811 to 1812 when the feuars sought Counsel's opinion on the subject, and were relieved to find that it reaffirmed their own earlier ones. (4)

Reassured by these events the feuars began to consider possibilities for having the loch drained and improved, and made approaches both to the Town Council and the Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers in Scotland to see if leases could be obtained for the western portion and the Castle bank area. A Committee was formed to aid progress but was soon frustrated by lack of funds. With many uncertainties still not resolved, and a task ahead of Herculean proportions it was little wonder that some proprietors were reluctant to become financially committed too quickly. The Town Council on the other hand, now burdened with the responsibility for the eastern section of the north loch were only too pleased to encourage any move for the improvement of the western section by the proprietors themselves: they consequently agreed by Acts of Council dated 3rd and 11th August 1813 to grant a 50 year lease of the land "... for the purpose of being improved and laid out in an embellished form" (6) and to abandon all right to build on any part of the area.

Due to the circumstances just described no formal contract was signed, and no further action resulted until over 2 years later. Prompted then by the increasing pressure for a chapel at the west end of Princes Street (7) the feuars met together in Oman's Tavern towards the end of January 1816 to discuss the various issues at stake. Under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Baron Clerk the
feuars decided not to give assent to the chapel unless a new Act of Council was passed similar to the ones of 1813. (8) After another meeting which endorsed the previous resolutions, a committee was formed (consisting of the Hon. Baron Clerk, Henry Home Drummond junior, James Keay, Vans Hawthorn, Henry Jardine and Alexander Douglas) to negotiate once more with the Town Council and other interested parties for a feu or lease of the ground. As a first step towards the improvement of the North Loch the feuars agreed to erect at their own expense a parapet and iron railing along the south side of the street from the Mound to the chapel boundary, the latter to be also enclosed in a similar manner (but not at the cost of the feuars) and the eastern end set out in shrubbery and plantation. (9) Wisely the Committee - several of whom were drawn from the legal profession - were aware that sanctions would be necessary for setting up the gardens and raising the money required besides securing the land as open space for all time; it was therefore put forward, that the resolutions agreed to should be included as part of an Act of Parliament, which the Town Council were in the process of applying for in connection with the building of the chapel and other improvements. The Town Council offered no objections and in May 1816 the necessary Act of Parliament was obtained. (10) Fifteen years had slipped by before this stage had been reached but compared to the fortunes of the eastern gardens no major set backs had occurred, and the future looked full of promise.

The 1816 Act of Parliament and the initial stages in setting up the gardens

The Act prohibited any building on the south side of Princes Street west of the Mound apart from the chapel and those necessary for a pleasure ground - such as a gardener’s lodge, hot houses or conservatories. (11) It authorised the feuars to erect a parapet wall and railing along Princes Street (making them liable for all future maintenance) and for all the proprietors of houses between Hanover Street and Hope Street to contract with the Town Council for a lease or feu of the ground in question "... for the purpose of laying out the same in
West North Loch c1774 looking across to the old church of St Cuthberts. A swan skims across the water's surface and on the western edge cows graze; wending along the north side can be seen the 'green broad walk' (section 2-4) leading to the west kirk from Kalkrees Hill (John Clerk of Eldin).

FIGURE 92:
Alexander Douglas in 1839: first clerk to the West Princes Street gardens serving with great commitment for 35 years (Crombies Modern Athenians)
whole or in part in a garden, nursery for trees, or pleasure ground, or under grass, or otherwise embellishing and enclosing the same" and at their own expense. Every house within the limits described was deemed to be a house in Princes Street provided any of its windows faced directly onto the street. The Act also set up a management framework for the gardens; proprietors were empowered to hold meetings after due advertisement, to appoint a Committee of not more than 5 persons to carry the Act into effect, to fix and levy assessments, and to borrow money of up to £5,000.

Soon after the Act was passed a general meeting of proprietors took place in the City Chambers; although not very well attended (14 were present) a Committee was elected which included 3 individuals who had earlier been active in negotiations, namely: James Clerk Rattray, one of the barons of the Court of the Exchequer, Henry Home Drummond of Blair Drummond, advocate, and Henry Jardine WS - then depute King's Remembrancer in the Exchequer, as well as Andrew Murray, advocate, and Alexander Munro. All were names of considerable prestige and eminence, and apart from only 1 or 2 changes this small committee held together for many years and contributed greatly to the successful forming and administration of the gardens. This arrangement seems to have suited the rest of the proprietors (numbering about 60 altogether) who were content not to become closely involved although occasional meetings were held for their benefit and information. Alexander Douglas WS (1780-1851) (fig. 92) who had also been involved at an earlier stage was chosen (at a salary of £30 per year) as clerk and treasurer; a position he held until his death whereupon his son Christopher succeeded him. It was a happy appointment, for Douglas - sometimes nick-named "Dirty Douglas" on account of his scruffy appearance - was a conscientious worker "... of strong and upright character": he devoted unsparing time and energy to the detailed administration of the garden besides running a successful solicitors' practice (at 137 Princes Street - he later moved to 17 Drummond Place), as well as being connected with other public activities.

The Committees' first important task was to obtain a legal title to the land, and while the greater area belonged to the Town Council and
was therefore straightforward to negotiate, other integral parts were owned by several different people: all favoured the idea of forming a pleasure garden but it nevertheless took time and persistence before the various agreements were concluded. (17) The second major undertaking was the erection of a parapet wall and railing along Princes Street; this was completed in 1818 at a cost of nearly £1,500, and designed by the Edinburgh architect Richard Crichton (c.1771-1817) who died shortly afterwards. (18) Crichton had been appointed architect for the St. Anne's Street improvements and had previously been responsible (along with Robert Reid) for the Bank of Scotland building on the Mound (1802-1806). (19) The railing was of fairly plain design (see Fig. 93d) with 2 arched gateways lit by overhead lamps facing opposite Castle and Frederick Street with a wider gateway at the western boundary adjoining the new church. While this project was underway extra earth was being added to the bank along Princes Street in preparation for a tree lined terrace walk. Meantime, the rest of the ground was let as pasturage and provided a useful income of £63 per annum until 1819.

One vital issue remained to be faced without which no ornamental space could properly be created - and that was the proper drainage of the land. A broad drain had been made across the centre sometime towards the end of the 18th century (fig. 93b) but had only proved partially effective. Robert Stevenson, civil engineer was the first to be consulted for a plan to make the area "at least tolerably dry"; when the Committee discovered that his estimated cost of achieving this was £2,900 (based on bringing a sewer across the middle of the bog rather than through the glebe land at the bottom of the churchyard as eventually adopted) they rather took fright. (20) As an alternative they considered the possibility of subleasing the land on favourable terms as nursery garden on condition that the responsibility of laying out and improving the ground rested with the sub tenants. But although widely advertised the search proved unfruitful. (21) The Committee had little option but to tackle what they now knew to be an expensive project: to this end a general meeting was called on 7 July 1818 at which consent was given to the Committee's request to
a. Brown plan 1793
b. Ainslie 1793

c. Kirkwood 1817

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borrow up to £3,000 for this purpose - later arranged through the banking firm of Sir William Forbes & Co. (22) Richard Stephens, land drainer, surveyor and engineer was the next to be consulted, (23) and his "plan number 1" was finally selected at a cost of £1,775. (24) The work was carried out by John Ormiston, mason (25) and completed by the summer of 1820. While considerably improved certain problems still remained particularly at the outfall. Old and defective sewers in the Mound area caused extensive flooding of the ground at times of heavy rain and this nuisance continued for many years, until the 1850s when a proper connecting drain was made during the construction of the National Gallery.

The design of the gardens, and the involvement of James Skene

After Mr Stephens had been paid £42 for his plans and work on the drainage scheme, he was further asked to "... make out a sketch of a design for laying out the grounds". This was in February 1820. (26) A few weeks later the Town Council invited the Committee to inspect 2 plans for building on the Mound (the Royal Institution - now the Royal Scottish Academy (27)) - one by William Playfair, and the other by Archibald Elliot, with the result that Stephen was requested to extend his brief to include suggestions for the Mound area also. We learn of this through a minute of a further meeting held in the City Chambers in June 1820, attended by all the parties interested in the development, (28) and at which Stephen's plan "... both for building on the Mound and embellishing the North Loch and grounds on both sides" was presented. It was, however, no match for the carefully considered proposals drawn up by Playfair and favoured by the Council, and not surprisingly Stephen's ideas for the Mound were dismissed by the Lord Provost as - "... not suited to the views of the Magistrates or the Public". His treatment of the garden area was not discussed but afterwards the Committee decided that in order for it to be "duly considered" Mr Douglas their Clerk should "... forward the plan to Mr Skene". Nothing in fact is revealed about Stephen's design except that a pathway was planned at the bottom of the Princes Street bank, which was to lead round the side of the Mound, and along the face of the castle bank. (29) An accurate plan made out by a surveyor must if nothing else have provided
a useful base for Skene to work upon and develop: this he did without further delay and within 9 days he had himself produced a design for laying out the grounds.\(^{(30)}\) By the time this plan was shown at a general meeting of proprietors in January 1821 work had already commenced on parts of it. Skene's continuing involvement however, was guaranteed by his election at this same meeting\(^{(31)}\) onto the Committee where he fulfilled an active role for the next 17 years apart for periods when absent abroad.

But who was Mr Skene, and how did he come to be approached? James Skene\(^{(32)}\) (fig. 94) (1775-1864) of Rubislaw, an estate near Aberdeen and now part of it, became heir to the family property on the death of his elder brother in 1791. As a child he had lived first in the old town (Riddells Court) before moving to George Street, opposite the Assembly Rooms. The North Loch was the scene of many of his boyhood frolics and escapades - skating and sliding in winter, kite flying in summer along with other High School boys, interspersed with perilous ascents over the rock face.\(^{(33)}\) As a young man he travelled abroad - to Germany (and after the Peace of Amiens) to other parts of the Continent including France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Sicily. In all his wanderings, even in later life he was a prolific diarist and indefatigable artist. On his marriage in 1806 to Jane Forbes (youngest daughter of the Edinburgh banker - Sir William Forbes) he settled at Inverie, Kincardineshire, living the life of a country gentleman of comfortable means. Although admitted to the Scottish bar, he never practised. For the sake of his children's education he was drawn back to Edinburgh and in 1816 he and his family moved to 126 Princes Street. Soon he became involved in several of Edinburgh's literary and scientific societies, providing in a number of cases a much needed fresh stimulus. He was appointed curator of the Royal Societies Library and Museum, and held a similar post with the Society of Scottish Antiquaries (when operations were underway to form the West Princes Street gardens Skene took the opportunity for carrying out some excavation work at the Well House Tower - the results of which he presented in a paper to the society).\(^{(34)}\) One of the great pleasures of his life was the long and close friendship he developed with Sir Walter Scott, dating from 1794; for Scott too it was a relationship of great worth - describing his
companion to another as "... an amiable and accomplished young man and for a gentleman the best draughtsman I ever saw". (35) Skene went on to illustrate 2 volumes of the Waverley novels, and completed many drawings of the city, particularly the old town which he and Scott planned to publish as a descriptive volume entitled Reekiana: sadly this never materialised but many of these drawings now form a valuable collection in the Fine Art department of Edinburgh Public Library. (36)

To therefore have at hand one such individual "... of very elegant tastes and numerous accomplishments", (37) himself a Princes Street proprietor and readily accessible through his brother-in-law and active garden committee member - Henry Jardine (their paths frequently crossed through membership of several other mutual committees) was a stroke of good fortune for the West Princes Street gardens. Shortly afterwards Skene was asked to design part of the East Queen Street gardens (Section 3.3) and he also advised Scott on his garden at Abbotsford. But his most important role came later - on his appointment as Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Manufacturers in 1830 which allowed him to promote the Fine Arts in Scotland. (38)

Skene's hand drawn design for the West Princes Street gardens has not been found but the details were fortunately preserved in the various maps of Edinburgh appearing from 1821 onwards (fig 93e). — and first shown in Kirkwards "new plan" of that year. His layout sought to combine ornament with utility, for the Committee still desired to sublease a sizable portion of the central area for nursery garden purposes. The surrounding ground was treated in various ways but its main features were: - a tree lined avenue along the top of the Princes Street bank (agreed upon earlier), a lower walk round the whole of the garden which merged at the western end into a series of curving pathways, and a number of walks looping along the Castle banks and finally sweeping right round the Castle onto its southern flank. The plan included considerable tree and shrub planting around the perimeters and banks, and selected clumps within the interior. (fig. 93e)
Progress in the laying out of the gardens, and the different people involved.

The Committee was anxious to implement Skene's plan without further delay. As a first step permission was obtained from the Town Council to close a public footpath cutting across the site from Kirkbraehead Road (King's Stable Road) to Princes Street (39) (figs. 93 b and c) to secure the grounds at this point (it was feared that boys would gain easy access by scrambling up the Castle rock) the decision was taken to build a 9' (2.75m) high wall from St. Cuthbert's Church manse to round the back of the Castle as far as the old city wall. This was completed in March 1821 at a cost of between £400-£500. (40) James Skene was then asked to organise the formation of the upper terrace walk along Princes Street, as well as the walks to the rear of the Castle: (41) the contract for this work being awarded to Alexander Henderson (1768-1827) a highly respected and well established Edinburgh nurseryman (42) (fig. 95). Towards the end of September 1820 the Scotsman's critical eye had noted with approval the improvements underway although making clear that their expectations ran high "... looking at the capacities of the ground, and the picturesque objects which surround it". Nevertheless some disquiet was expressed at the removal of the public right of way, and the newspaper made the plea "... that the promenades and shrubbery between the Castle and Princes Street will be open to all the respectable part of the public on reasonable terms". What was feared was that "... the narrow and exclusive club spirit which disgraces the society of Edinburgh" would be allowed to prevail and if that happened "... there will be few reasons for boasting at what is in progress". (43)

In the Autumn of 1820 with the garden only partly completed James Skene and his family departed for France and were away from Edinburgh for one year. During his absence Henderson, his foreman, and team of labourers continued to work on the grounds; the upper and lower level walks along the Princes Street side were completed in March 1821, the upper avenue being planted with a double row of lime trees, and the banks with oak, chestnuts, limes, sycamores, ash and elm. Poplar and willow were added to the bank along the Mound, and
FIGURE 94: James Skene of Rubislaw, designer of West Princes Street gardens (from painting by Raeburn)

FIGURE 95: Alexander Henderson, nurseryman, and Lord Provost: he contracted for the laying out of the gardens (painting, Royal Bank of Scotland)

FIGURE 96: Receipt for the annual subscription to the garden dated 1826

FIGURE 97: Key to the West Princes Street garden (Huntly House Museum)
beech and fir on the west bank of the Castle wherever there was sufficient soil. Altogether 34,000 trees were planted as well as a large stock of shrubs. The superintendence of the garden could not in fact have been left in more capable or caring hands than Alexander Henderson's. For many years an active member of the Town Council and "... a zealous promoter of all objects for the improvement and decoration of the City" (the move for a better western and southern approach owed much to him - finally achieved by the 1827 Improvement Act which also safeguarded the East Princes Street gardens, the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links as open spaces) he already had had contact as a Council representative with the Queen Street East Garden Committee, as well as the Charlotte Square proprietors (Section 2.3 and Section 3.3). In 1817 he generously gifted plants and tools for the relief work on Calton Hill. Henderson went on to become Lord Provost in 1823 a position he held for 2 years bringing to it such invaluable qualifications as "much good sense, great experience of the world and knowledge of human character, united to such activity of mind and excellent business notions as rendered his services at all times valuable". A most popular man and "a person of substance and character" well suited in fact to become the new tenant of the projected nursery ground at the centre of the West Princes Street gardens - an arrangement carefully encouraged by the Committee. Henderson's main nursery was off Leith Walk but as business expanded he must have thought it worthwhile to have a more central outlet. In 1821 he entered into a 19 year lease with the Committee for about 9 acres of land extending from Castle Street to the Mound (fig. 93f) at an annual rental of £63: as part of the agreement he was required "... to allow a certain number of trees to grow up and remain permanently upon the ground as an ornament to the premises." On Henderson's death in 1827 the lease was taken over by his son under the firm's name of Eagle and Henderson and they continued to operate in the gardens until 1843.

Henderson's professional involvement with the West Princes Street gardens must have brought him much personal satisfaction, yet it was also to cause him heartache and distress. When his main account was submitted in March 1823 for a sum approaching £350, the Committee (unprepared for
further substantial payments having coped already with the considerable costs for enclosure and drainage) reacted with anger and dismay, and accused Henderson of making charges that were "... very exorbitant and highly objectionable"\(^{(50)}\). Practically every detail in the account was challenged, and a reduction demanded based on an independent arbitration. Although kind and conciliatory by nature, the tone adopted by the Committee deeply offended Henderson and believing his account to be honourable and fair he expressed unwillingness to submit the matter to arbitration. There the matter rested for 2 further uneasy years (meantime payment of the nursery rent was withheld) until 1826 when having at last conceded to an independent assessor Henderson was completely exonerated; the Committee thereafter was required to pay in full, with interest\(^{(0)}\) the outstanding arrears.\(^{(51)}\)

By the Spring of 1821 the garden was sufficiently advanced for it to be opened to proprietors, and to anyone else willing to pay an annual due of 4 guineas:\(^{(52)}\) (figs. 96 and 97) amongst the first 10 applications for keys (all from the New Town) were the Lord Justice Clerk (Right Hon David Boyle), William Burn, architect, David Hume, advocate and the City Clerk - Carlyle Bell WS.\(^{(53)}\) With Skene still abroad expert help when needed was sought from Robert Brown, architect:\(^{(54)}\) he advised on 2 matters - first the linking of the underwalk at the Well House Tower to the walk leading from it by means of steps and a bridge, and second, the formation of a bowling green "in the hollow ground in the division west of Castle Street"\(^{(55)}\). As summer slipped by all the walks were completed apart from those on the north east slopes of the Castle banks; a palisade was erected along the top of the Mound, and "by way of experiment" Mr Henderson had provided some iron seats for the grounds. Earlier in the season the borders had been stocked with annuals, including "... a considerable proportion of mignonette" and rose bushes.\(^{(56)}\)

By now the services of a full-time gardener were necessary and after dispensing with the various casual labourers, Robert Murray was appointed to take charge at 15 shillings (75p) a week - together with whatever price he could raise by selling the grass from the bleaching...
and bowling greens. He proved a reliable and conscientious worker right up till his death in 1846, and apart from his gardening responsibilities (additional help was provided from time to time, together with someone to "watch" the grounds on Sundays during the summer months) he was also required to act as gatekeeper. A little later as a result of a suggestion made by Skene (and based on a sketch made out by him) a gardeners house was built in the grounds close to the present day lodge, and completed sometime during 1823.(58)

Skene returned to find most of his design accomplished although some modifications had been made: an oval shaped walk for example, had been substituted in place of the more complicated network of curving pathways at the western end (fig. 93f). Improvements had still to be carried out on the Castle Hill however, and in November 1821 Skene was asked to prepare a sketch showing "... what ought to be done": a sub Committee was formed consisting of himself, Baron Clerk Rattray, and Mr Drummond to carry the project through, together with other planting still required at the western boundary and elsewhere (a considerable proportion of the original planting had not fared well and had to be replaced).(59) But progress was dependent on negotiating a lease with General Ramsay, owner of a field at the back of Ramsay Lodge and this was not achieved until one year later. (60) In 1825 and for several years following part of the Castle hill and north Castle bank were let for sheep pasturage - a useful device for keeping the grass cropped and providing at the same time a modest income. (61) The cause of more prolonged delays was however, Skene's further absences abroad and not until 1829 was work resumed in earnest on the Castle bank area: in the early part of that year the gardener was busily engaged on forming the pathways and made use of a quantity of rough stones (to secure the embankments) and stone steps ("to facilitate the ascent of the walk") from houses demolished at the rear of the Castle in preparation for the Johnstone Terrace Improvement Scheme. (62) Later in the summer Skene submitted to the Committee "... a sketch of a plan for improving the Castle bank" with the suggestion that "... the same should be trenched, and weeded and a terrace walk formed". (63) The Committee's reluctance to become involved in any great expense in this connection was happily resolved by an application to the Treasurer of "The subscribers for the
relief of the labouring poor" who was able to supply 24 labourers at a cost of 1 shilling each (5p) per day. Once.trenched the ground was sown with potatoes for a couple of years to improve the soil and the profit from the sale of both crops more than covered all the recent financial outlays.

Nearly 10 years had elapsed since the gardens were first put down and by now they had become reasonably well established - their maturing shrubbery and plantations offering protection to all kinds of wild life. A fox for example, had taken up residence on the south west quarter of the rock (his lack of detection being aided by the rule forbidding dogs into the grounds) and there had been a considerable increase in the number of birds; these however, had not gone unnoticed by "The Society of Princes Street cats" who according to James Skene were prone to holding nocturnal hunting parties. Many of the cats were shot by the gardener "in defense of the poor birds" but even so they prospered. It was their love of musical parties and serenades "... in the usual melodious style" which led to their eventual downfall alerting the "... ears of the terriers and other curs of Princes Street". A battle between cats and dogs ensued and "... the slaughter of cats which strewn the garden in the morning showed that the contest would soon terminate, which accordingly took place and has never since been renewed". The garden was also able to provide some useful stock (sycamores and poplars) for the East Princes Street gardens when they were being planted in 1830 (see Section 2.5).

Although Skene's contribution to the setting up of the West Princes Street gardens was considerable we learn from Sir Walter Scott that his endeavours were not always appreciated. In the bleak days following the bankruptcy of Constable - Scott's publisher, Skene was in the habit of "winkenneling" his friend from his study "... when we walked for an hour and a half in Princes Street gardens talking with a degree of subdued cheerfulness which seemed to soothe him very much"; Scott in his Journal refers to one of these perambulations with "... the good samaritan Skene" and makes the observation that "... The walks have been conducted on the whole with much taste, though Skene has undergone much criticism, the usual reward of public exertions, on account of his plan."
Later changes to the garden and the coming of the Railway

The construction of the new west approach road from 1827 onwards (Johnstone Terrace and the Kings Bridge) resulted in the loss of the high level terrace walk to the rear of the Castle which had provided scenic views over South Edinburgh and to the Pentland Hills. There had been hopes of restoring the walk but the Committee ultimately decided that this could not be done without "... materially injuring the grandeur the increased height of the rock will afford to the new approach"; instead they accepted 300 guineas in compensation with the Road Improvement Committee taking on responsibility for forming a parapet wall and rail along the new boundary (not erected until several years later).

In 1831 the lease of the Glebe land belonging to St Cuthberts Church (about 2 acres (0.8 ha), see Ainslie's plan of 1804, fig. 93b) expired; nearly half of this area had been used as a bleaching green and was reacquired by the Kirk Session, but the remainder was sold to the proprietors for £400 and became a permanent part of the pleasure gardens.

In 1840 a new 3 year lease was negotiated with Eagle and Henderson which reduced the nursery area by one half - the western division being taken over by the proprietors; a plan for incorporating it into the rest of the garden was made out by the architect David Cousin (see also Section 2.5). James Skene was no longer available to give advice as he and his family had departed for Greece in 1835. One of the conditions of Henderson's new lease required that more trees should be allowed to grow up as standards, besides the removal of the dunghill and pig sty at the toolhouse - close by the well house tower. This latter request was ignored and one year later the Clerk complained in a letter that he had been surprised on his walk the previous day "by hearing the grunting of pigs in the grounds let to you" and on further investigation had been astonished to find "... not only several pig stiles but several pigs" of which "some belonged to you".

All the changes so far described were but slight and inconsequential compared to the major upheavals and traumas soon to be encountered. In 1836 the Edinburgh, Glasgow Railway Company applied to Parliament for...
powers to allow them to extend their line through the lower reaches of the West Princes Street gardens, then under the Mound, through the adjoining gardens to a terminus at the east end of Princes Street. The Railway Company defended their action in a circular addressed to the proprietors by saying that such an undertaking was in the public interest, and to the advantage of Edinburgh, and that with careful treatment and design the gardens would experience little or no injury, with the trains and track kept hidden from view. Their Chairman, ex Lord Provost John Learmonth (the last to hold office before the Burgh Reform Act of 1833) asked the proprietors to judge the proposals with "calm" and "dispassionate consideration". Such a major and unexpected threat to their gardens, on which so much care and money had for so long been lavished could hardly be taken with equanimity and reaction indeed was unreservedly hostile. As many families were still absent following the summer recess James Skene took the initiative to formally reply to the Railway Company's circular, and to give warning that once all the proprietors had reassembled a meeting would be called and a corporate statement issued. His carefully composed letter (fig. 98) outlined the delights and benefits of the gardens to the proprietors, of his own close association with their formation and subsequent development, and his future hopes to enhance and extend them by incorporating the land now desired by the Company and scathingly referred to by them as "... the low damp ground" once the lease held by the nursery had expired.

The proprietors case, framed by a specially elected committee was more detailed (fig. 99) and gave a summary of the considerable financial outlay required to transform "a filthy and offensive bog" into "... one of the most beautiful and attractive objects of which this city can boast". It had cost over £7,000 to have the grounds drained, enclosed, and laid out, and a further £300 a year for their maintenance. Hence the proprietors concern to stand by their understanding that "...Parliament would never sanction any attempt to carry Railroads or Canals through Gentlemen's Pleasure Grounds". (See fig 99). Copies of the case were sent to John Richardson, (80) parliamentary agent in London for distribution amongst members of both houses. As a result of this strong united
Sir,

Give me leave to offer a few observations in answer to your Circular respecting the introduction of a Railway into the Prince's Street Garden. I take it liberty, both as holding property liable, in my estimation, to be injuriously affected by that scheme, and also as a member of the Committee intrusted by the Proprietors of Prince's Street with an important charge, in which, for many years, I have had occasion to take an active share, especially in laying out the grounds, and superintending all the operations in the Garden, towards transforming that subject from its original condition of a filthy and offensive bog, to become one of the most beautiful and attractive objects of which this city can boast.

As these circumstances necessarily led me to consider with more minuteness and attention whether it would be likely to affect the beauty or improvement of those grounds than any other which were likely to bestow upon it, I may perhaps be excused in forming a very decided opinion, even although it should happen to stand opposed to the views which your letter is intended to support.

The arguments contained in that letter are of a twofold nature: First, That all fears as to the privacy and comfort of the Gardens being destroyed, or even injured, by the introduction of a Railway through the centre of it, are groundless; and, secondly, That they were even not so considerations of public utility ought to induce the Proprietors to depart from any objection which would prove an obstacle to the completion of the Railway.

Previous to advertling to these arguments, it must be observed, that to the Proprietors of Prince's Street this is a very different case from that of an ordinary encroachment on the privacy of ornamented ground. The Gardens have been formed for a special object, are held for an adequate rent, and cost, in draining, enclosing, and improvements, above seven thousand pounds, independent of the yearly charge for their maintenance. They now afford a most agreeable resort for the families of the Proprietors, and are eminently suited as a safe and beautiful place of recreation for their children at all times, independently of the advantage which the singularly beautiful and uninterrupted view of these pleasure grounds afford to the inhabitants of that attractive quarter of the city.

These are objects of importance to them; and it is plain that any thing which would tend to interfere with the privacy, quiet, and comfort of the Gardens, would utterly defeat these objects. It is accordingly vain to suppose that any consideration could compensate for such a loss.

I can scarcely suppose, that you are serious in maintaining that the Railway would not have this effect, and on this point it would appear superfluous to enter into any detail; for it is inconceivable to imagine, how a Railway, in whatever manner enclosed or masked, along the line—or which numerous steam-carriages will be constantly passing from one end to the other, (and steam-carriages do not generally pass without a certain degree of noise, smoke, and disturbances,) can prove otherwise than a most serious annoyance and interruption to the comfort and privacy of the Garden. It would, at least, be a hazardous experiment for the Proprietors, without any discoverable inducement, and no advantage, to submit their Garden to be thus interrupted, while they have the certainty, upon the failure of your anticipations, (of which one may reasonably entertain some doubts,) of its proving a very serious and irreparable misfortune.

With regard to the argument on the score of public utility, I will only remark, that before you can use such an argument, it is incumbent on you to show that the line through the Gardens is the only possible mode of communication, which, I apprehend, is far from being the case; and, even supposing it were, although it may be proper for persons to yield considerations of privacy and comfort for those of public utility, could the Proprietors, with any colour of justice, be called on to sacrifice altogether the important advantage that derives from the free enjoyment of these grounds, without risk, interruption, or annoyance of any kind, and that an advantage acquired at great expense, for the loss of which they could not be compensated—the more especially as I do not see, when all these railways emanate from Edinburgh, that it would come, from the want of a connecting line, to be the centre of communication, or that all those glories consequent you anticipate would ensue.

I may, in conclusion, advert to your observation, that the line proposed for the Railway is such as to be altogether innocuous; because, in your opinion, "No part of the low ground is, or can properly be, used as pleasure ground." I can in no respect concur in this view; and as the loss of the nursery ground is nearly concluded, I hope, in the course of a few years, should I still remain in charge of that department,—to convince the Proprietors, that a very beautiful and valuable addition to their pleasure grounds can be derived from the portion at present under lease. And while I sincerely hope, that the brilliant prospects which you anticipate to this city from the extension of the Railway system will be speedily and amply realized, I must, in so far as I am individually concerned, object to the accomplishment through the invasion and sacrifice of private rights; and, in the present case, so far as I can discover, gratuitously.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient humble Servant,

JAMES SKENE.

P.S.—You have already been made aware, that the Committee named by the Proprietors of Prince's Street, are most decidedly hostile to the proposal of carrying a Railway through their Gardens; and as soon as families are returned to town, a general meeting of the Proprietors will be called, and resolutions submitted to them, for authority to give the proposal their most determined opposition.

J. S.

N.B.—Tenants are requested to forward this to the Proprietors of their respective houses.

FIGURE 98:
James Skene's letter to John Learmonth re the passage of the railway through the garden, October 1836 (EDC Archives)
CASE for the Proprietors of Prince's Street, west of Hanover Street, Edinburgh, relative to the Bill brought into Parliament for a Railroad between the Cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, in so far as is proposed to carry the same through the Gardens and Pleasure Ground, formed between Prince's Street and the Castle of Edinburgh.

To these acquisitions with the City of Edinburgh, and with the progress of its improvements, it would be superfluous to describe the remarkable change effected on its aspect and salubrity, by which they transform the valley, called the North Loch, which lies so romantically interposed between the ancient and modern cities, from its original state of a marsh and unknown bog, into a beautifully wooded and ornamental stretch of Pleasure Grounds. But, for the information of others, it may be proper to state shortly, that this marshy district had been formerly laid out in walks, and a view of the Castle and being afterwards neglected, had become a common receptacle of the most offensive character, when, about the period of the year 1767, it underwent a partial and very imperfect process of draining.

Having thus disposed of the project of constructing a New Town was contemplated, and an extended plan was prepared by the Proprietors of the ground, inviting the public to build houses, as an inducement to which, the valley of the North Loch was represented in the plan to be laid out as Pleasure Grounds, tastefully arranged with shrubberies, walks, terraces, and ornamental pieces of water.

The prospective advantages held out by this plan proved successful in inducing many to build their houses on the terrace overlooking the North Loch, which now constitutes Prince's Street,—an urban terrace unequalled perhaps in the world, for the magnificence of the view it commands. But the Corporation, to whom the ground belonged, having attained the object neglected to fulfill the condition in respect to the North Loch, and in place of terraces and walks as proposed, permitted the commencement of buildings, of the meanest description, upon the ground which the Proprietors of Prince's Street had been led to believe was destined to be laid out as above, in a way conducive to the healthfulness and beauty of the place. The Proprietors had recourse to a Court of Law to prevent such an infringement of what they conceived to be the contract by which they had built their houses in Prince's Street. They were so far successful, that upon appeal to the House of Lords, some time between the years 1768 and 1780, an interdict or injunction was obtained, which put a stop to the further erection of buildings in the North Loch. This Loch, however, continued as a mere swamp, through which the contents of the common sewers, both of the Old and New Towns, passed until the year 1790, when an Act of Parliament was obtained, by which the inhabitants of Prince's Street have been in a very considerable sum, for completely draining and forming covered common sewers through the ground, enclosing and laying out the same into Pleasure Grounds and Pleasure Grounds, by which what was originally a filthy and offensive base has now become one of the most beautiful and attractive objects of which this City can boast, embedding in its circuit the romantic crag on which the Castle of Edinburgh stands. For the ground itself, belonging partly to the Corporation, the Governor of the Castle, General Ramsay, and the Minister of St Cuthbert's, the Proprietors of Prince's Street have obtained, as an annual payment of nearly £150 per annum, in addition to which, and the annual expense of nearly £600 for keeping the ground in order, the Proprietors have laid out in draining, enclosing, and improvements, above £7000. The Gardens are now a most agreeable resort for the families of the Proprietors, and a safe and healthful place of recreation for the children residing in the street and neighbourhood, independently of the advantage which the singularly beautiful and uninterrupted view of these Pleasure Grounds afford to the public at large.

This, one of the finest features of the City, is now the object of the promoters of the Railroad in question to destroy, by carrying the proposed Railroad entirely through the centre of the ground. And thus, the vested rights of a numerous body of the Citizens are greatly endangered for the sole benefit of a private speculation in which they have no share, and they are threatened to be deprived of the proper use and enjoyment of a property embellished at such a great expense. In common with the rest of the Inhabitants, they are to be subjected to all the annoyances of stench and steam, waggon-trains and noise, in lieu of the quiet retirement and amenity of their beautiful gardens, while their property, which at present so highly privileged, becomes thereby seriously lowered in value. The arguments adduced in support of the scheme are, 1st, That all fears as to the privacy and comfort of the Gardens being destroyed, or even injured, by the introduction of a Railroad through the centre, are not grounds; and also, That, were it even so, considerations of public utility ought to induce the Proprietors to deport from any objection which would prove an obstacle to the completion of the Railway. In regard to the first, it is too absurd to require any answer; for it is incontrovertible to suppose that the existence of a line of steam between the very centre of a flourishing and large extent of Pleasure Gardens, however the Railroad might be attempted to be masked or modified, will not prove a most serious annoyance and interruption to that privacy and enjoyment which was the object in view in forming these Pleasure Grounds at so great an expense. And as to the second, it has been always understood that Parliament would never sanction any attempt to carry Railways or Canals through Gentlemen's Pleasure Grounds. If this is considered an equitable regulation, in so far as regards even a single private individual and his family, much more should this regulation be adhered to in regard to Pleasure Ground in the very centre of a City, belonging to perhaps an hundred persons and their families, and formed at so great an expense, and upon which so much care and attention have been bestowed. But, further, public utility does not require any such sacrifice, as the Railway could terminate with so much more advantage at the west side of the Leithen Reach, a very short distance from the Pleasure Ground in question, and in a situation detached from the New Town, and equally convenient for the City at large. Public utility would rather seem to require that this Pleasure Ground should be left open and unobstructed for the health and comfort and amusements for the introduction of the Railway would gradually change the whole character of the houses and of the street, and lead to the introduction of inhabitants of a different class, who could not afford to leave any portion of their property unoccupied.

Upon the whole, the Proprietors trust Parliament will never sanction a measure not only fraught with almost entire destruction of one of the finest objects in the City, but as being an unnecessary and unwarrantable invasion of their rights.

This case is submitted to the consideration of the Members of both Houses of Parliament by the undersigned, being a special Committee appointed by a General Meeting of the Proprietors, called for the purpose, and in terms of the Statute 56 Geo. III. cap. 141, and held on 7th December, 1836.

H. Home Drummond.
Henry Jardine, Knight.
Alexander Munro.
James Ekin.
James Keyt.
Alex. Laing.

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J. B. Greensides.
Russell Martin.
Thos. Muriel.
Robert Pethrie.
J. Murray Belcher.

[FIGURE 29: Proprietors case against the railroad being extended through the gardens as submitted by the House of Commons, December 1836]
protest the Bill was defeated and Haymarket became instead the terminus for the Glasgow line. But victory was shortlived. In 1842 the Railway Company gave notice that they intended to apply for another Bill to extend the line through to the North Bridge. Opposition the second time was more tardy and far less forceful; overtaken by an air of resignation and inevitability - so that when the Clerk had contact with Richardson once again it was "... to make the best arrangement he can if he finds the Bill cannot be effectively opposed by obtaining an obligation to be secured by clauses for concealing the railway by tunnels and embankments of such description as to preserve as much as possible the ornamental appearance of the ground". The Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Act was passed on 14th July 1844 and the desired clauses were included under Section 11, with William Playfair named as supervisor and director of any remedial work required to the gardens (refer also Section 2.5, footnotes 78 and 79).

Playfair was by now at the peak of his career as a successful and sensitive designer, well acknowledged as "a man of taste", although dogged by recurrent ill health which was to cloud his later years; this was to prevent him from exercising close supervision on the gardens and to cause some delays in progress. His proposals for screening the railway and landscaping the adjoining area were submitted to the Committee at the end of September 1844 and were generally approved by them: they were as follows:-

"The Railway to be inclosed on each side by a rubble stone wall about 6' (1.83m) high with a plain circular cope, both the sides and top of each wall to be completely covered with ivy. The space between the south wall, and Castle Rock and bank to be planted with trees and evergreens. A mound of earth to be raised along the level of the Railway and to extend all along the north wall so as to conceal the railway from the drawing room windows of the houses in Princes Street which mound should be sloped down rapidly towards the wall and more gently towards the garden grounds with which it must be gracefully united. This mound must consist of good soil to encourage the growth of evergreens and trees with which it must be thickly planted. The face of the tunnel through the Mound to present as little appearance of masonry as possible and to be covered and obscured by ivy, periwinkle etc. By a profuse use of Ivy, evergreens and trees wherever the works of the Railway occur, the presence of the railway will not be discoverable, unless from the appearance of the steam and smoke when a train is passing, and the usual appearance of the garden will be preserved which I consider to be the great object in view". (83)
Early in 1845 the Railway Company took possession of the lower portion of the garden which was then fenced off from the rest: access being limited to the gateway on the Mound, and also King Stables Road - the latter taking the heavier traffic including all the carts. The labourers were given instructions to carefully set aside all the surface earth amassed during excavation for later use when forming the embankments. In 1846 the head gardener, Robert Murray died and amidst the general chaos the Committee decided to delay appointing a successor. Meanwhile however, Playfair had taken on a Mr Alexander Brown to superintend the garden work related to the railway operations; and during the same year had himself designed 3 wooden bridges over the railway lines (at the centre, east and west ends) besides making out a planting list of the shrubs required for the sloping banks. After months of turmoil the workmen departed on the first day of March 1847, leaving the whole "in a most insufficient state". The embankment had not been finished, nor the planting, and the paths leading to the bridges as yet unformed. With Playfair now ill and confined to bed, the hard slog of applying steady pressure on to the Railway Company to fulfill their obligations fell to Mr Douglas the ageing but still energetic Clerk. Another year elapsed but finally in May 1848 Mr Playfair was able to report the satisfactory completion of all the necessary work. His Superintendent of Works who had impressed the Committee with his competence was re-employed as head gardener.

Although some of the garden had been lost to the railway it was in part compensated by the addition of the central area after Henderson's lease had expired. No details are recorded in the minute books about this save reference to a payment of 10 guineas in March 1847 to James McNab of the Botanic gardens "for a plan for laying out the ground" but McNab's improvements can be seen in Fig. 93g which also shows the changes consequent to the railway. At the centre of the revised design was the existing lower nursery footpath - considerably widened with 2 new gently looping pathways connecting with the low walk along the Princes Street terrace; and in similar fashion with the footbridges on the south side. Generous tree and shrub planting was carried
out at the various intersections, new flower borders constructed, and the remaining area grassed. (91)

Previous forboding as to detrimental effect of the railway had not been realised and with the gardens once more restored to use the Clerk was able to give an enthusiastic report at a general meeting of proprietors held in August 1849. He recorded with "much satisfaction" the transformation of the gardens from "... a very delapidated state" to "complete repair" and in a manner "that cannot but prove satisfactory to the proprietors". Not only had the "very considerable" costs of the landscaping work been met by the Railway Company, but they had also made payment of £1,000 "... on account of amenity and intersection of the ground" together with a promise of further compensation for the area of ground lost (paid in 1851 and amounting to £745). (92) The money provided a welcome boost to the garden's funds and helped to clear off all the outstanding debts: for the first time since the gardens were formed they now had a healthy cash balance of £271.

Few other changes were made from this time on until the gardens were handed over to the Town Council. In 1856 some improvements were made to the walks along the Princes Street bank and the bowling green was levelled, then laid with gravel for a children's playground. (93) The Committee had sought the advice of James McNab who one year before had been consulted about the avenue of limes along the top of the Princes Street bank whose development had suffered due to lack of systematic thinning. (94) Too late now for this he recommended instead the removal of several of the least healthy ones and in such a way as to create 4 openings which would allow views across to the Castle bank and old town. This operation however, produced a great outcry: one newspaper vigorously protested that - "A more outrageous act of vandalism and impertinence never was perpetrated against a community than this" and bitterly condemned the management Committee who - "... assassin-like" had chosen to have the felling carried out early in the morning "when nobody was stirring to cry shame upon them". (95) Additional fuel in fact to the growing movement to have the gardens made public.
McNab carried out a further detailed planting survey in 1868 advising on the need for considerable pruning and thinning throughout the garden, with the further removal of lime trees along the upper terrace and the better care of the many fine elm trees in that part. (96)

During the 1860s 2 large artefacts were added to the garden: one a statue of the poet Allan Ramsay, sculptured by John Steell and placed in the north east corner (98) and the other a fountain gifted by Mr Daniel Ross, an Edinburgh gunmaker (figs. 100 a and b). The Ross fountain (a large elaborate iron structure designed and founded in France by A. Durenne and modelled on a similar one in Paris) was placed at the west end of the central walk: a position carefully chosen on the advice of James McNab and the architect John Dick-Peddie (99) (his partner Charles Kinnear was an active member of the Committee).

Dick-Peddie - who was also at this time involved with the St. Andrew Square gardens (Section 2.2) became equally fascinated with the Princes Street gardens for he went on to produce an imaginative and finely executed water colour painting containing his ideas for their future enhancement (fig. 101): in addition to the fountain he also included a winter garden, and a considerably enlarged upper terrace along the Princes Street side to accommodate an open air gallery for the display of sculpture and other monuments. Although his proposals aroused a certain amount of interest (100) they were perhaps a little too ambitious and extravagant to be taken seriously. His painting was however exhibited on many occasions at the Royal Scottish Academy (101) and reappeared in more recent years to delight the scores of visitors at the 1979 Garden exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Management Matters, and use made of the gardens

Not only because of its greater size and number of "outside" issues which had important implications for the garden (the new western approach road, the feuing of St. Cuthbert's glebe land, the advent of the railway, and the gradual move to make the garden public to name but some) the Clerk and Management Committee had to cope with
Various artifacts which have been added to the gardens:

1. Ross fountain, designed A. Durenne 1869 (Charles Skilton's postcards)
2. Alan Ramsay: statue by Sir John Steell 1865
3. The genius of Architecture, sculpted William Brodie 1862, donated 1891
4. The Royal Scots Greys Memorial, sculpted Sir John Steell 1862
5. Thomas Guthrie: sculpted P.W. Pomeroy 1910
7. Sir James Young Simpson by William Brodie 1875
8. The Royal Scots Memorial, semi-circular monument, Sir Frank Neary with C. Pilkinson 1952

*(b-f. Janet Brunton, Princes Street Gardens Historical Guide, photos Iain Gow)*
more taxing demands than occurred in most other New Town gardens. The strength and stability provided by a closely knit Committee, which rarely changed was therefore an advantage in the formative years. Its structure remained unaltered until the 1850s by which time the lawyers and gentry had departed from Princes Street and a business and merchant class taken over. The 1851 Committee consisted for example, of 2 merchants, one hotel keeper, one confectioner and one upholsterer; a more democratic approach was adopted with more regular meetings of proprietors and the election of 2 new Committee members annually. But the degree of commitment and dedication to the well being of the garden remained unaltered. Charles Kinnear, architect (1830-1894) proved a useful Committee member in these later years and gave helpful advice on a number of design related matters such as the replacement of the wooden bridges with iron ones, the provision of new garden seats, and with proposals to build a bandstand.

A lot of money had been spent on making the west Princes Street gardens - James Skene quoted an overall figure of £7,000; the Committee an approximate sum of between £8,000-£9,000; part of which had by necessity been raised by a loan from the banking firm of Sir William Forbes and Co. It took until 1849 for all the debts to be cleared and it would have taken longer without the unforeseen compensation paid by the Railway Company. But although a degree of financial restraint had to be exercised in the early years the popularity of the gardens ensured their growing prosperity - and to a degree not matched by any other New Town garden. Finely situated, centrally positioned, extensive, and well laid out the gardens had from the very start attracted outside subscribers drawn from a wide area of the New Town (most of whom enjoyed no rights to a private amenity garden) who gathered there for the pleasure of promenading, sitting and casually meeting others. Even by the latter part of the 1820s there were more outside subscribers than proprietors; just before the construction of the railway their number had risen to 100 and it simply went on increasing so that by the 1870s the Clerk had over 400 names on his books. Such was the substantial and ever growing income from this source (keys fluctuated in rental from between 2-3 guineas, with an extra guinea
FIGURE 101:
John Dick Peddie: a suggestion for the improvement of Edinburgh; painting exhibited at RSA 1866 and on 4 further occasions (J. Peddie)

FIGURE 102:
Band playing in the West Princes Street gardens c1830 (EPL)
charge for a second one) that the Committee in 1853 dispensed with the proprietors annual assessments and thereafter they paid nothing for the benefit of the garden. Their numbers were in any case dwindling - as property became subdivided for non-residential use, and the rules of the Committee did not generally recognise tenants as having any rights to the gardens.

There was little danger however, because of its generous size of the garden ever becoming overcrowded on normal occasions, and the constant presence of people in the grounds probably ensured a better standard of conduct and care for the rules: only occasional incidents of rough play, illicit cricket practice, and mal-treatment are found recorded in the minute books. The real problem presented by the large number of users was keeping control over the many keys in circulation, and as more keys became lost, lent and unauthorised copies made this became something of a management nightmare and led ultimately to over half the rules being concerned with matters connected with keys and access. Another rule which became increasingly difficult to enforce was the ban on smoking: it received too great a challenge from the cigar and tobacco smoking fraternity attached to the New Club - the all male stronghold which had removed from St. Andrews Square to Princes Street in 1834.

Musical entertainment featured in the gardens from an early date - the proprietors being excellently placed to tap the resources of the various regiments stationed at the Castle (fig. 102). Thus in March 1826 the Edinburgh Advertiser noted that: "The promenaders in the enclosed ground of Princes Street and the Castle bank have lately had their walks enlivened during the fine weather, by the alternative attendance of the fine bands of the Carabineers and the 17th Foot". To the belles of Edinburgh the advent of the military bands to the gardens added excitement and colour: the smart young officers proving to be handsome and dashing escorts "... their military headgear and clanking swords quite cutting out the more sober accoutrements of the youthful advocates and writers to the signet, who were usually the only other representatives of the male sex to be found there".
What had begun as an innocent and pleasant afternoon's diversion to those privileged to use the gardens gradually became however more fraught with tension and conflict. Nothing attracts better than the sound of a band yet to the crowds gathered round the outside but denied a closer share their feelings of delight must also have been tinged with frustration, if not discontent. It is no coincidence therefore, that the various wrangles over band playing occurred most overtly from the 1850s onwards when pressure to open up the gardens to the general public was beginning to accelerate. Thus in 1853, the King's Own Regiment agreed to play twice weekly during the summer on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons: the proprietors and subscribers had intended this for their own amusement while the Regiment had assumed that all "respectable members of the public" would be allowed free access. In the event many "of all denominations" surged through the gates, overwhelming the gardens, and causing certain damage. As a compromise the Committee subsequently employed policemen for each entrance in an attempt to separate "the respectable" from "the rabble" but with only moderate success. To avoid further trouble band performances were discontinued, but when later resumed exactly the same problems arose.

Finally, all passions broke loose in 1875 triggered by the decision of the 1st Royal Scots band to play on a Saturday afternoon rather than on a weekday. It was not a change welcomed by the Committee - fearful of crowds and with only the minimum of garden staff available to cope with the expected influx. After various skirmishes had occurred, the Committee announced the cessation of future weekend performances - an act which provoked instant retaliation from the press. A bitter attack was launched on the "Committee of shopkeepers" for converting what was essentially "... a municipal possession, nay, even a national glory and inheritance into a private demesne", simply because they paid a few "miserable" pounds a year for its upkeep. To their further embarrassment the same band (at the request of the Town Council) transferred to the East Princes Street gardens on a Saturday afternoon where they played to a delighted and well behaved audience; the only cause for complaint being shortage of seats. The credibility of the West Princes Street garden Committee had been surely shaken.
The same year which saw London celebrate the magnificent Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, Edinburgh also but in rather more modest style commemorated an occasion of some significance - the opening of the redesigned East Princes Street gardens to the general public - the first ornamental park of its kind in the city. It was a move in sympathy with the times - when many believed that the creation of public parks in large towns could provide opportunities for healthy, wholesome exercise both of mind and body - a panacea to some of the many ills of society then prevalent, including insanitary housing, harsh working conditions and all the deprivations and degradations of poverty.

By the late 1840s, early 1850s the west end of Princes Street had largely succumbed to commercial and business interests so not surprisingly with the east garden newly opened several individuals began to question the relevance of keeping the neighbouring space as an exclusive and locked area instead of being freely accessible to all. One of the earliest and most influential champions for such a change was the Reverend James Begg (1808-1883) a prominent member of the Free Church of Scotland and a tireless worker in the movement to improve the housing and social conditions of the working and poorer classes. (116) When Henry Cockburn bemoaned the lack of interest and inertia in matters affecting the appearance of Edinburgh (117) Begg took the opportunity to counter attack. Public involvement he declared was dependent on public rights and the "... shutting of them out from public parks and gardens has gone far to destroy their public spirit". In particular, he cited the West Princes Street gardens as a blatant example of an area of land rightfully belonging to the citizens but from which they were most "unjustly" excluded. (118) The first tentative step in this direction was taken in December 1851 when an approach was made by the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness requesting that the gates be left unlocked between Christmas and the New Year "... with a view of keeping parties out of the dram shop". Fear of injury to the grounds "... when so many idle people are going about" prompted a refusal by the garden Committee. (119)
similar request made one year later by the Lord Provost, Duncan McLaren, a well respected liberal sympathetic to the needs of the working classes - and himself a keyholder, proved more successful: this time assurances were given that 2 police officers would be employed to keep watch and although still a little nervous the Committee gave their consent. For 3 further years the grounds were opened at Christmas and the New Year, without it seems any problems arising. (120)

Meantime the Town Council decided to play a more active role, and in October 1852 enquired of the Committee whether the proprietors would consider relinquishing their right to the ground in favour of the Council, and if so, on what terms. (121) The Committee hedged by asking for more definite proposals while expressing doubts on the Council's ability to meet the annual maintenance costs (then placed at over £400 a year).

During the next 2 years the Council cautiously put forward two suggestions for providing increased (although still limited) public access to the gardens: one on the basis of an annual payment whereby the garden might be opened 2 or 3 days weekly, and the other - an even more modest arrangement allowing free access on Saturdays in return for a reduction in the ground rent. In an attempt to gain a sympathetic hearing the Council referred to its support of the Temperance movement whose aim was to prevent and curb indiscriminate drinking "... by adding to the rational enjoyment and amusement of the working classes". What better way of contributing to such a noble end than by allowing the gardens to be opened for "... innocent and healthy recreation one day a week". (122) The Committee however, remained unimpressed and full of misgivings: their greatest fears centred on the likely loss of privacy, and the lowering of tone - being convinced that "... no respectable female would frequent them on the days when they were thrown open to the public". Instead they sought refuge by seeking Counsel's opinion and were relieved to have their views confirmed that under the 1816 Act of Parliament the proprietors had no rights to assign the grounds to anyone else. (123)
For a time negotiations ceased but the Town Council had become more aware that in future stronger measures would be necessary if their quest to open up the gardens was ever to be achieved. On 2 occasions in the 1860s the Council considered the possibility of obtaining powers through parliament to acquire the gardens on behalf of the community. Nothing came of these proposals but they helped to pave the way for more decisive action which followed a little later.

Not until 1875 (fig. 103 shows a drawing of the garden at this time) was the matter resumed again in earnest by the Town Council and compared to the previous ineffectual attempts a lot was achieved surprisingly quickly. There was good reason why it should happen then - for the first half of the 1870s emerge as a highly productive and significant period in the history of Edinburgh's open spaces - including the West Princes Street gardens. A number of chance events occurred around this time which combined together to help sharpen public awareness of amenity matters and to provide more solid and visible support to what the Town Council was trying to achieve. It was prompted initially by the appearance of an advertisement in March 1874 for feuing out the remaining portion of Colonel Learmonth's lands at the west end (opposite the western half of Buckingham Terrace and stretching northwards from Queensferry Road to Comely Bank). Some of Learmonth's original feuars (the proprietors of houses in Eton, Oxford and Buckingham Terraces, Clarendon and Belgrave Crescent) were dismayed to discover that their open prospects and spaces were soon destined to disappear, and those living in Eton Terrace were particularly apprehensive that the wilderness bank area in front of their houses - alongside the Dean bridge and adjoining the ornamental pleasure ground already created by them, might still be used for the construction of Cambridge Terrace - a row of houses shown in John Tait's earlier feuing plan for Learmonth. In an attempt to avert further building a campaign was launched by various west end residents to purchase the land (hopefully with help from the Town Council) in order to form a West End Park. (127)

One of the prime movers behind this action was David Smith WS
FIGURE 103:
The West Princes Street gardens in 1875 just prior to becoming public (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh)

FIGURE 104a & b:
Proposed winter garden (a) and covered rock garden (b): 1880
(EMC archival drawing collection)
(1801-1880) "... a prominent though not obtrusive man in public affairs"(128) who for many years was manager of the North British Insurance Company and in his spare time associated with numerous philanthropic causes.(129) More importantly in this connection he had a well developed interest in amenity open space - having served as convenor to the Moray Pleasure gardens (from 1837-1856) during a critical period when the bank garden was beset with problems due to a series of land slides,(130) and from the time he moved to Eton Terrace in 1867 with the setting up of the Eton Terrace pleasure gardens. (131) When Smith and his fellow Memorialists presented themselves to the Town Council over the issue of the West End Park they received a courteous hearing but the Council did not feel financial assistance was justified to an already privileged section of the community.

The West End Park movement slipped quietly into obscurity but although shortlived and unsuccessful in its immediate purpose it was to yield an unforeseen and enduring benefit. Not only had a number of people been brought together on an environmental issue but it had helped focus attention on the new wave of building expansion (the Grange also was undergoing rapid change as well as other areas) - with the threat to long established views, open spaces, greenery, trees and so on - and to such an extent that "... we are building out nature". (132)

Of greater significance however, it highlighted the need for a more permanent group of well informed citizens committed to preserving and extending the fine features of the City, acting as watchdogs against undesirable encroachments, and working in co-operation with the Town Council.

At a public meeting held on 15th June 1875 in the Freemason's Hall, George Street the Cockburn Association was formed to fulfill these aims, the name being chosen "... to commemorate the exertions made for those objects by the late Lord Cockburn (Edinburgh citizens had been reminded of his substantial contribution by the publication of his Journal in 1874 which had included as an appendix his pamphlet on "The best ways of spoiling the beauty of Edinburgh"). First Convenor of the Association's newly elected Committee (subsequently known as Council) was
David Smith, and the man appointed Treasurer - William Mitchell was partner in the legal firm who had acted as agents to the West End Park movement; well over half (58%) of the original Council members lived in fact on the west side of Edinburgh; just over a quarter (26%) on the south side, and the rest from the New Town and elsewhere. (133)

But what ideas for improvements were to guide this new association? Seven suggestions were presented to the inaugural meeting, all on matters connected with open space within the city. Leading the list however, was the opening to the public of the West Princes Street gardens together with associated changes to alleviate congestion in Princes Street: these included - the addition of part of the gardens top terrace into the street thereby allowing a public footpath to be formed along the south side, for the pavement on the north side to be widened, and the northern tramline realigned further south to provide more room for carriages (horse-drawn trams had been introduced into Princes Street in 1871). Second on the list was the acquisition of the wooded grounds of Inverleith adjoining the Botanic Garden to serve as an Arboretum and a public park for the north of Edinburgh (the land had been offered for sale in November 1874).

It was no coincidence that both these issues occupied high priority in the Town Council's agenda of improvements, and the newly formed association composed as it was of many prominent citizens determined to "... lend support and vigour" to the Council's activities gave the necessary impetus to ensure success. Another aspect of critical importance was the fact that the Town Council had at its helm a strong Lord Provost - James Falshaw (1810-1889), a blunt Yorkshireman of forceful personality who had retired comparatively early from a highly successful career in civil engineering. Falshaw was himself a west end resident having moved to Belgrave Crescent in 1873 whereupon he became actively involved in the enlargement of the Belgrave Crescent Pleasure gardens. During his term of office (1874-1877) he skilfully promoted and carried through several worthwhile projects of an amenity nature "getting needful things done" which apart from the 2 major items mentioned above, included the widening of the North Bridge
(reopened in October 1875), the creation of the roof garden on top of the new Waverley Market (1877), and Moorfoot's water works (1879).

A detailed account of subsequent events has been well chronicled by Robertson (159). Suffice it to say here that in order to avoid further setbacks and delays the Town Council decided to apply directly to Parliament for powers to take the gardens over, together with the acquisition of the lands at Inverleith. With public support so firmly in favour of the Council's actions the garden committee had little option but to accept the inevitable and their role from this time on was concentrated on making sure that the future wellbeing of the garden was protected as fully as possible. The terms and conditions of transfer (including arrangements for improving the Princes Street roadway) were drawn up at a series of meetings held between the Town Council, the garden committee and the City Road Trust and a formal agreement between all three parties was finalised by the end of April 1876. (140)

Shortly afterwards on 13th July 1876 an Act of Parliament was passed allowing the Corporation to take over the gardens with the undertaking that it should be maintained in such a way "... as to preserve the amenity of the district." (141) Three months later a formal deed of acceptance, conveyance and renunciation "... of all rights whether of property, lease, privilege, regulation or otherwise" (142) was made over by the garden committee on behalf of the Princes Street Proprietors in favour of the Town Council. From then onwards the Town Council became fully responsible for the West Princes Street gardens, and the Committee after many years of dedicated service were able to gradually wind up their affairs.

The Gardens after Acquisition

Fears of a fall in standards once the gardens were taken over seem to have been partly realised for at the very last general meeting of proprietors held in January 1879 it was decided to send a letter
of complaint to the Town Council drawing their attention to the "... very unsatisfactory state in which the gardens have been kept ... and to the very offensive manner in which not infrequently some persons conducted themselves in the garden". According to another reliable source the southern part of the gardens "... had become a resort of roughs and of the very lowest classes, who entered by the gate from the Castle Esplanade, congregating within the gardens, and lying about the slopes in such numbers, that the gardens there were quite deserted by respectable people". As a result the top gate was kept shut and the nuisance appears to have abated.

Once in possession of the gardens certain changes were made by the Corporation, the most important one being the construction of a broad level straight walk about 20' (6.10m) lower than Princes Street - running from the east to the west end and with small pathways diverging from it (fig. 93h). This was formed in 1879 at a cost of nearly £2,000, and replaced the top terrace walk which was lost when Princes Street was widened. A collection of large greenhouses appeared on the south east side - beyond the railway line: these were removed and re-erected in Inverleith Park in 1904, and a bowling green formed on the cleared site: a happier solution than the Usher Hall which a little earlier had been a serious contender for this part of the garden.

For a number of years plans were also afoot to build a substantial winter garden and covered rock garden at the western end (prompted by a legacy left by Mrs Ross in 1877 whose husband had earlier donated the fountain - and maybe inspired by J Dick Peddie's extravaganza for the gardens (fig. 101). Although the Council's archival drawing collection contains many fine drawings and plans of draft schemes (fig. 104 a and b) none were ever carried out: the Cockburn Association had been strongly opposed to any such ideas, maintaining that "... Nature has there supplied a rock garden so grand and imposing, besides which anything artificial must sink into insignificance." A more appropriate gift to the gardens was Peddie and Kinnear's handsomely designed bandstand (fig. 105) erected in 1880 and paid for.
FIGURE 105: Peddie and Kinnear's bandstand erected in 1880 (EFL)

FIGURE 106: Ross bandstand erected in 1930's

FIGURE 107: Floral clock: special design to commemorate 400th anniversary of the founding of Edinburgh University 1983 (Edinburgh University)
by the former garden committee out of their surplus funds. It replaced a smaller and less ornamental model built in 1872, and was itself superseded in the 1930s by a considerably larger and bulkier edifice known as the Ross bandstand. Although used for a relatively brief period each summer it remains to dominate the garden for the rest of the year and bears unhappy comparison with its modest predecessor (fig. 106).

Other changes to have taken place reflect the greater use of the gardens by the public: the replacement of gravel pathways by hard paved ones, the addition of public lavatories, shelters, a super abundance of rather clumsy heavy wooden seats (mostly donated as memorials), and the parks department pride in display - with bedding out flower plots laterly used as rose beds, and the now famous floral clock in the north east corner (fig. 107). A few more statues and memorials have been added; and more recently a rather amateurish piazza introduced providing an open air cafe during the summer months, and a children's playground.

Something of the gardens old character remains - particularly on the south boundary against the Castle, with its network of informal walks as planned by James Skene: but too much of the rest has been altered by artifacts or made diminutive by tree planting not in scale with the picturesque conventions of the original design (fig. 108). Bolder forest trees have been replaced by smaller, more timid ornamental planting, and the generous scale of the grass extent on the south Castle flank has degenerated. A trace of McNab persists but his layout for the central area was obliterated when the bandstand was constructed across the middle walk thus disrupting the sequence of pathways. He would not have approved of the subsequent treatment of the north bank along Princes Street, nor the lower terrace walk (figs. 109-110) which he would have considered too broad, too predictably long and very dull.
FIGURE 108:
View across the garden to the castle banks (J. Arthur Dixon)

FIGURE 109:
Upper terrace walk showing the various shelters (A. D. Henderson)

FIGURE 110:
Mid section of upper terrace walk with statue of Thomas Guthrie in distance
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECOND NEW TOWN AND ITS OPEN SPACES

A few years ago, the Magistrates of Edinburgh, finding that the First New Town was inadequate to the increasing population, purchased the house and grounds of Dalwen, and some extensive fields to the north beyond Queen Street, and have begun to lay down another new town that shall be named the Second New Town. The plan is still in progress.

While the first New Town was gradually being built, the ground to the north beyond Queen Street remained as it had been for many years the scene of peaceful rural pursuits. The land formed part of the extensive and ancient farm of Broughton, which had been in the possession of the George Burtis Trust since 1645. What is now the pleasure gardens was leased out to different owners for arable and grazing purposes, the 3 principal tenants being Thomas Wood, Henry Anderson, and Robert Robertson, all farmers at Broughton. A portion on the eastern side, amounting to some 12 acres (4.9 ha) or so (later to be known as the Lands of Dalwen) had already been sold by the Trust in the mid-eighteenth century to a John Cozens, a flamboyant tradesman and butcher by trade, and either he or a subsequent owner built a modest garden house upon it (refer Section 2.6). This relatively small area of land was sold shortly thereafter and the establishment of the Second New Town and the pleasure gardens contained within it.

SECTION 3

THE PLEASURE GARDENS OF THE SECOND NEW TOWN

Unlike the First New Town which from the start had been planned by the Town Council and kept within certain modifications, the Second New Town had been kept open and involved many more people. In all the previous proposals however, it seems to have been accepted that the area of land now known as the Queen Street gardens should be kept as an open space. Indeed, the very first charter granted for a portion of this ground in 1799 already specified that it was to be kept "...for the purpose of a garden only" and that in all time coming "...no dwelling house shall be erected ... and no other..."
"A few years ago, the Magistrates of Edinburgh, finding that the New Town, extensive as it is, was inadequate to the increasing opulence and population of the City, purchased the house and grounds of Bellevue, and some extensive fields reaching near to Drumsheugh; and have begun to lay down another new town that bids fair to eclipse the former in extent and beauty of architecture" (1)
(The strangers guide to Edinburgh 1817).

While the first New Town was gradually being built, the ground further to the north beyond Queen Street remained as it had done for many years the scene of peaceful rural pursuits. The land formed part of the extensive and ancient Barony of Broughton which had been in the possession of the George Heriot Trust since 1636. (2) Most of it was leased out to different farmers for arable and grazing purposes, the 3 principal tenants being, Thomas Wood, Henry Anderson and Robert Robertson, all farmers at Broughton. A portion on the eastern side, amounting to some 13 acres (5.2 ha) or so (later to be known as the lands of Bellevue) had already been sold by the Trust in the mid-eighteenth century to a James Cumming a flesher, or butcher by trade, and either he or a subsequent owner built a modest mansion house upon it (refer Section 3.6). This relatively small area of land as will shortly be described became of critical importance to the eventual establishment of the second New Town and the several pleasure gardens contained within it.

Unlike the first New Town which from the start had been promoted by the Town Council and apart from certain modifications had kept to the competition submission by James Craig (refer Section 2.1), the design of the second New Town was far more protracted and involved many more people. In all the various proposals however, it seems to have been accepted that the area of land now known as the Queen Street gardens should be kept as open space. Indeed, the very first charter granted for a portion of this ground in 1769, long before designs for developing the whole area had been drawn up stated quite clearly that it was feued "... for the purpose of a garden only" and that in all time coming "... no dwelling house shall be erected ... and no other..."
building whatever excepting proper offices for the use of the house to be built upon the said street ... (in this case, No. 8 Queen Street, the residence of Lord Chief Baron Ord) ... hot houses, gardeners house, or such other buildings as may be necessary for said garden". (3) These conditions were repeated in the 8 subsequent charters made out between 1781-1791 for land within this strip (fig. 111) and each one affirmed that the restrictions and servitude were made out in favour of the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council "as representing the Community", the proprietors of houses in Queen Street, and the proprietors of houses to be built on Thomas Wood's or Robert Robinson's farm ground (ie, the land to the north of Queen Street).

Why the governors of the Heriot Trust took this course of action is nowhere recorded but it would appear that to some extent they felt bound by Craig's plan which had shown a residential layout flanked by a wide band of formal parkland to the south (the valley of the North Loch) and one of similar character to the north (the Queen Street gardens). The parkland in each instance stretched the complete length of the New Town itself. Compared to Craig's design the Queen Street garden area became considerably foreshortened - the land at the extreme western end no longer being owned by the Trust and therefore outwith their control. (4) An attractive area of open space providing a buffer between the two developments could only enhance future feuing prospects; in addition the Governors were probably anxious to avoid the controversial sequence of events which had permitted certain workshop accommodation to be sited at the south eastern end of Princes Street (Section 2.4).

Although the Queen Street Garden area enjoyed these basic safeguards from an early date, several years were to elapse before more definite proposals for a second New Town began to emerge - for with so much building still in progress in the New Town itself there was simply no immediate need to expand further. The first set of plans to be drawn up however, were not on the instigation of the Heriot Trust but by a former Lord Provost - one David Steuart (5) (1746-1824). Steuart, the youngest son of John Steuart of Dalguise, Perthshire was by all accounts a handsome man (Fig. 112a and b), "... of excellent taste and
FIGURE 111: Dates of the various charters and ownership of land in the Queen Street garden area
passionately fond of literature", an avid book collector (fig. 112g) and an ardent whig. (6) By profession he was a merchant who through the course of his business had also set up a private banking firm in partnership with his friend Robert Allan (7) (refer Section 3.4). Altogether an enterprising individual, involved in a wide range of activities and possessing a more than moderate interest in the improvement of Edinburgh. During his term as Lord Provost (1780-82) for example, he attempted (although prematurely) to have the slaughterhouses removed from the North Loch besides making an enthusiastic attempt to amend the New Town plan by adding a circus to the centre of George Street; this latter idea also proved abortive but eventually found form in the Royal Circus (Section 3.7).

How did Steuart become involved with the second New Town? In 1780, or a little earlier he and his family moved to Queen Street (No. 5), and in 1781 he purchased from the Heriot Trust over 2 acres of land (0.8 ha) opposite his house and adjacent to the first feu granted in the Queen Street garden area to Lord Chief Baron Ord in 1769 (10) (fig. 111). This ground was converted into a private garden for his own use (refer Section 3.3) but Steuart's energies were not contained here. Sensing the opportunities not far distant when the New Town would need to extend its boundaries he began to purchase land in the vicinity on a purely speculative basis: the main and largest portion acquired was an area of 13 acres or so (5.2 ha) lying to the north of his garden in the region of Abercromby Place and beyond. This land had been advertised for letting as "garden ground" as far back as 1774 (fig. 115a) when a man by the name of Alexander Ramadge took over the tenancy: in 1782 he sub-tacked it to David Steuart. Three years later Steuart approached the Heriot Trust (the feu superiors) with a request to purchase it from them: the conditions under which this was agreed to indicate that the Trust was well aware of his motives - for one of the clauses stated that if the land was to be feued or leased for building purposes (other than for one single family house) then in addition to the annual feu for the whole area Steuart would be required to pay an extra feu for each house erected. (11)
To be sold by public auction, within the Warehouse of D. Stewart and Co., on Monday the 30th of October, at 11 o'clock a.m.

Ten tons of Carolina Rice, and Four tons of Dutch Butter.

To be put up in such lots as purchasers may desire.

Edinburgh Courant, 27 September 1791.

David Stewart & Co., Merchants in Leith.

Intending to wind up their present concerns as speedily as possible, beg leave to inform their friends, that their stock of goods will be sold off on the most reasonable terms. The following articles are particularly deserving of attention. viz.

10 Pipes of Old Superior Red Port Wine.
15 Do. Three-year old Ditto
3 Do. Old Superior Ditto in Bottles
1 Do. Lisbon Wine
1 Do. Cacavella Wine
2 Bottles (in cask and bottle) Mountain Wine, a considerable part of which has a quality not to be often met with, being 16 years old.
5 Bottles (in cask and bottle) Sherry Wines
5 Bottles Ditto (in cask and bottle) of the most approved Growths and Vintages.

The above goods are not only genuine, as imported, and particularly of the best quality, but have advantages in point of age and proper keeping rarely to be met with.

Edinburgh Courant, 8 July 1793.

This Day was Published,

A CATALOGUE
OF A SMALL BUT TEST
SELECT COLLECTION OF BOOKS,
In which are to be found some of the
FINEST SPECIMENS OF TYPOGRAPHY EXTANT
FROM THE FIRST ATTEMPTS ON WOODEN BLOCKS,
UNTIL THE PRESENT TIME;
Particularly from the Preface of
John Cuthbertson; C. Swerdfen and A. J. Tulk and P. Schottel; A. Panosartis.
Laurence Rollin, Wynken de Wores; Michael Jenkin, and many of the other
and devine de Spire
Printers who flourished in
William Carus
the Fifteenth Century;

As well as of
Adon: - Giulini
Boileau - Bakercrovi
Ebor - Graeff
Estridge - Bodard
Stevens - Petru
Stevens - Barthe
Tooke - D'An
dale - Funk
Vesale - Harby
Ryall (Paris) - Fouca
Ryall - Hurr
Patterson - Eulmer
And other eminent Modern Printers;
Whose works will be sold by Auction, by Mr. Elliott, at
No. 14, Cowgate, Edinburgh, on Monday the 18th
May next, and the Eleven following days, at Twelve
o'clock.

Catalogues (price One Shilling each) to be had of
Manners & Miller, and the other Booksellers
in Edinburgh.

T. Payne, Moort Gate, London;
Palmer and Hanwell, Oxford; W. H. Lunn, Camb.
Hopp and Reid, Glasgow; A. Brown, Aber
dun; W. M. Morison, Perth; G. Mylne, Duned; Gilbert
and Huntington, Dublin; and at the place of sale.

Edinburgh Courant, 15 May 1801.
Steuart's initiative seems to have prompted the Heriot Trust to consider the remaining large area of land still in their possession for they decided "... to get a proper plan of the ground to the north of Queen Street and of the streets that may be proper to lead into said ground in the view of the same becoming building ground". (12) A plan was drawn up by John Laurie, Surveyor, but having made this move the Trust took no further interest in the matter for another 5 years or so.

Meantime, the remaining land in the Queen Street garden area was all feuded off as private garden space. In 1786 Steuart acquired Ord's former garden adjoining his own, and in 1791 he bought another portion further westwards adjacent to his friend and former banking partner, Robert Allan. (13) By then the partnership had been dissolved and Steuart had started business on his own account as a general merchant in Leith (fig. 112c, d and e). By now Steuart was beginning to seriously consider the possibilities for developing his land. Towards the end of 1790 he had granted permission for a building intended "... as a workshop for two industrious young men cabinet makers" to be erected close to the south west corner of his 13 acre feu. He had earlier applied to the Trust for this small angle of land in order to square off his boundaries, and while agreement had been reached in principle no charter had formally been made out. The Queen Street proprietors - particularly those most affected by views of the workshop (Captain Patrick Hunter at No. 12 was one of the most voluble) were quick to register their annoyance and disapproval by letter to the Heriot Trust. Steuart's reply, delayed by "... a painful and tedious illness" (he was the victim of gout) explained that neither the nature of the manufacture to be carried out, nor the building itself could be regarded as a nuisance, that the Governors - many of whom had acquired their fortunes by application to similar trades should be sympathetically inclined, and that "... if I can accomplish my intensions with respect to the ground I have feued from Heriots Hospital I hope to plant as many buildings upon it as will bring the charity nearly £2,000 a year additional revenue, without any exertion or expenditure on their part". (14)
The proprietors appeal to the Trust met with no immediate response, but the appearance of this one building caused certain apprehensions about the future with the fear that long cherished open views across farmland and woodland to the Firth of Forth, and the Fife hills beyond might now be in jeopardy. Hence a second approach was made to the Trust with a proposal to purchase a servitude upon 2 fields to the north of Queen Street "... as may be necessary to preserve the present view of their houses to the northward that no buildings be erected thereon". (15) All these events served to remind the Trust that the time was fast approaching when some more definite decisions would have to be made about the land in question, and indeed, within the space of a few months David Steuart had started negotiations with them for a joint building plan. As discussions and plans became further advanced the Trust realised that it was not in their interest to come to any private arrangement with the Queen Street proprietors, and that instead the ground should be advertised on the open market as building land. (16)

First plans for the Second New Town

First mention of a plan actually having been drawn up is found in the Heriot Trust Minutes of 4 June 1792 (17) which refer to a letter received from David Steuart stating that "... In consequence of what passed between the Committee of Governors and George Heriot's Hospital and me I have with the assistance of Mr William Sibbald your surveyor made out a plan for building on the ground laying to the north of Queen Street the property of the hospital and myself". William Sibbald as it will be remembered was also superintendent of works to the city. During the following months Sibbald continued to prepare further sketch plans both on behalf of the Trust (who were wanting to establish the feuing value of the land) (19) and David Steuart, who was anxious to resolve the boundary line between his and the hospital's property. (20)

By the middle of the following year details of a mutual building plan finally became settled: (21) the boundaries between the Hospitals and Steuart's land were readjusted on the understanding that Steuart would

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remove the building which the Queen Street proprietors had taken objection to, and that "... the area in the middle of the Square to be common property to the houses fronting the same". A copy of this plan still exists in the Heriot Trust archives, dated 18th October 1793 and signed by John Gloag, Dean of Guild on behalf of the City of Edinburgh and David Steuart (fig. 113). Whether the ideas contained in the plan belonged wholly or partly to Steuart, or to Sibbald is not known; it is likely however, that Steuart in the first instance outlined a number of suggestions (the notion of a circus for example) after which it was left to Sibbald to work them out in detailed and presentable form. Although this plan of 1793 was not implemented, for reasons to be shortly described, it proved an important advance and a major influence on later designs. The plan contained 2 distinctive features - an open space at the west end in the form of a circus (containing a basin of water - similar to Sibbald's slightly later suggestion for Charlotte Square - Section 2.3) and the other at the east end in the shape of a square. Both these 2 large spaces were connected by a central road, with cross streets linking with a new road to the south (alongside the Queen Street gardens) and Queen Street beyond, and with 2 crescents on the northern boundary. In all, a plan to complement that of the first New Town and providing a generous proportion of open space.

Over the next few years Steuart tried on several occasions to prod the Trust into further action but without success, although in 1796 they agreed to his request that the plan should be engraved "... and a thousand copies to be cast off ... for the inspection of such persons as may intend to feu." One year later Thomas Wood the tenant farmer who for upwards of 60 years had rented much of the land in the area to the north of Queen Street died thus removing one obstacle in the way of the lands development. This probably encouraged Steuart to once more make contact with the Trust and in 1798 he informed them of his intention to have printed 200 copies "... of my agreement with the Hospital relative to the building on my feu ... for the use of persons intending to feu as reference to it will be made in the feu charters ..." But little real progress could be made
FIGURE 113:
Plan dated 18 October 1793 made out by William Sibbald for the lands to the north of Queen Street (belonging to David Steuart and the George Heriot Trust (NRS))

FIGURE 114:
Sibbald's plan transposed to show its position in relation to the second new town as developed (note how the area was extended by the addition of the lands of Bellevue further to the east)
without a similar move by the Trust and by now the Governors were preoccupied with their plans for feuing out a portion of their grounds further eastwards for the building of Duke Street, Elder Street and York Place.

Thwarted in one direction, and by now experiencing serious financial difficulties in his mercantile enterprises Steuart saw the erection of the new buildings as an opportunity to raise some much needed money. In February 1799 he wrote to the Heriot Trust with the proposition that the line of buildings in York Place "... which so far from being of any publick injury are agreed ornamental to the city" be extended westwards as far as his area of private garden, and that if the Trust withdrew the servitude over this ground he would divide the money from those taking up the feus between himself and the Trust. Happily, the Governors stood firm and refused permission for any houses to be built in the Queen Street garden area. (28)

Steuart's business ventures finally collapsed and by the end of 1799 he was bankrupt. Early in the following year the 13 acres on which he had placed such high hopes were put up for sale (fig. 115 b and c), the ground being advertised as "... well adapted and will bring a considerable price for building stances". (29) His private garden area in Queen Street was listed as a separate lot (30) being rented out at that time to Alexander Finlayson, gardener and later in the year to John Richmond, nurseryman (31) (see also Section 3.3). Agents for the sale were Maxwell Gordon, and John Morison, writers to the signet (Morison had been appointed trustee for the creditors following Steuart's bankruptcy) who had in their hands "... the plan for building on the grounds" (ie Sibbald's plan of 1793). Whether Steuart's own failure branded such an enterprise as risky is not known but the land remained unsold although readvertised at regular intervals "... upset price reduced" throughout the first half of the year. (32) It was not in fact sold until 1802, and 3 years later changed hands again when curiously enough Gordon and Maxwell, the original agents for the sale became part owners: by then however, the prospects for the lands development were well assured.

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GARDEN GROUND to LET.
To be LET for fifteen years or more as can be agreed upon, and entered to at Martinmas next.

THIRTEEN ACRES and upwards of GROUND, lying immediately to the north of Lord Chief Baron's garden in the New Town, commonly called Top-knot-well, bounded on the east by Drummond Lodge park dyke. ALSO, two acres of ground, bounded on the west by the said garden, and on the east by Gabriel's Road. — And likewise about seven or eight acres of ground lying on the road leading to Leith, called the Gallises, lying immediately to the south of Dr. Hope's garden, all presently peddled by Mr. Anderson in Broughton.

The ground is all of an excellent soil, and exceedingly well suited for garden ground, as it lies to the near city of Edinburgh, and capable of great improvement, being 10 feet measure of every kind.

Proposals in writing to be given in to John Bogue writer in Edinburgh, at the head of the New Admiralty close, and such as are not accepted of, shall be kept secret, if desired. Any who want further information, may apply to him.

a. Edinburgh Advertiser 8 July 1774

SALE OF FRUITS FOR BUILDING.
Garden Grounds adjoining the New Town of Edinburgh, having been leased to the Governor of the Bank and the Merchants of the Bank of Scotland, are to be sold by public auction, on Saturday, the 16th January next, to be commenced at 10 o'clock afternoon, the following SUBJECTS.

Lot I. THIRTEEN ACRES or more of AGRICULTURAL GROUND, lying directly south of the Town of Edinburgh, and bounded on the east by the town walls and on the west by the garden of the Earl of Leven, and on the north by the gardens of Lord Haddington, and on the south by the gardens of Mr. Johnston. The ground is well adapted to cultivation, the soil being a rich loam, and the drainage excellent.

Lot II. The GARDEN GROUNDS lying immediately to the north of the garden of the Earl of Leven, and extending to three acres or more.

b. Edinburgh Evening Courant 10 February 1800

g. Edinburgh Evening Courant 11 January 1800

WANTED a PLAN or DESIGN for laying out in STREETS, SQUARES, &c. for Buildings, the GROUNDS of BELLEVUE, belonging to the City of Edinburgh, and the north of the Gardens of Queen's Street, and to the north extremity, to be sold by public auction, to the highest bidder.

The plans to be scaled, and delivered to the Town Clerks between the first day of January next, and any competitor who wishes to have the plans, may apply to Mr. Smith, at his house opposite the Kirk of the Canongate.

d. Edinburgh Evening Courant 25 October 1800
Involvement of the Town Council: the purchase of the lands of Bellevue, and the competition for the laying out of the second New Town

Without Steuart's enterprising spirit plans for the second New Town might well have foundered: no-one it seemed was prepared to buy his land and to take on a commitment which to some extent was dependent on the goodwill and co-operation of the Heriot Trust. But the gap left by Steuart's withdrawal was almost immediately filled by the Town Council when, in the early months of 1800 they purchased the property of Bellevue, including the mansion house, garden and some 5 acres (0.2 ha) of land. (33) This property, once owned by Lord Provost Drummond - instigator of the first New Town, lay to the north east of Heriot's and Steuart's feu and formed a potentially useful and obvious addition to any plan for the development of the ground to the north of Queen Street (fig. 114). It was not however, simply a fortuitous move on the part of the Town Council but one calculated to give them an opportunity to become involved in any such plans, and indeed to take a large measure of control. As subsequent events indicate the Council knew what they wanted to achieve, that they considered themselves in the best position to achieve it, and that no more time was to be lost in settling once and for all a plan for the second New Town (refer also Section 3.6).

After acquiring Bellevue the Town Council speedily set to work. The land was surveyed and cleared: vines and other plants belonging to the house were sold by public auction, and the trees cut down and removed. (34) No more the delightful views of "... the sea of Bellevue foliage gilded by the evening sun" which had long given pleasure to countless strollers along Queen Street. Taken so completely by surprise Edinburgh citizens apparently reacted passively although "... shuddering when they heard the axes busy in the woods of Bellevue and furious when they saw the bare ground". These events recorded by Henry Cockburn in his Memorials (35) closed with the wistful comment that "... all that art and nature had done to prepare the place for foliaged compartments of town architecture, if being built upon should prove inevitable, was carefully obliterated, so that at last the whole spot was made as bare and dull as if the designer of the New Town itself

219.
had presided over the operation". A sentiment which Cockburn was to reiterate later in the case of the Moray estate at Drumsheugh which suffered a similar fate prior to development.

The mansion house was retained and later sold to the Board of Customs (see also Section 3.6); meantime however, the Council assumed full initiative, and decided as they had done 35 years before to hold a public competition in order to obtain "... a Plan or Design for laying out in streets, squares etc for buildings, the Grounds of Bellevue belonging to the City of Edinburgh, also the grounds westwards, and on the north of the Gardens north of Queen Street, belonging to David Steuart Esq., and to Heriots Hospital, as far west as the grounds belonging to the Earl of Murray". In October 1800 2 advertisements were placed in Edinburgh's newspapers (fig. 115d) offering a prize of 100 guineas for the best, and 50 guineas for the second best plan submitted - a considerable advance on Craig's premium of one gold medal and a silver box. This important sequence of events has hitherto been overlooked even although later minutes indicate an enthusiastic response with a "great many" plans received and the entries subsequently judged "... by gentlemen of taste". Four designs were singled out as being of equal merit and the decision was made to divide the prize money between the 4: as each plan however "... contained qualities which the others wanted". a further 50 guineas was set aside "... upon them producing a plan made up by them from the four plans to contain what shall be thought best in each of them". No names are mentioned in the minutes but an account book for this period reveals that payments were made to James Elliot (architect and surveyor), Robert Morison (architect), John Baine (architect and designer) and William Sibbald (overseer of Public Works to the Town Council, and the George Heriot Trust).

All 4 men were accomplished designers of some standing although their names have rather slipped into obscurity. James Elliot (1770-1810) for example, was in joint practice with his now better remembered elder brother Archibald, who had an office in London while James...
remained in Scotland to supervise the firm's work there; together they worked on a number of Scottish country houses including Dreghorn Castle, Midlothian; Stobo Castle, Peebleshire; Auchmore House, and Taymouth Castle, both in Perthshire. Had James not died relatively young his reputation would no doubt have matched that of his successful brother. John Baine and Robert Morison are both mentioned in a book published in the early years of the nineteenth century as examples of the many "... excellent architects" produced by Scotland, along with other such names as Adam, Craig, Henderson, Gillespie, Burn, Baxter and Stark. Baine had once been a student at the Edinburgh School of Design, where his textile designs were said to have been outstanding. Later he was one of the candidates for the Mastership of the School when it became vacant in 1785 - Alexander Nasmyth, the portrait and landscape painter also being a contender; neither was successful and Baine shortly afterwards established himself as a teacher of mathematics and scientific drawing "... giving private lessons particularly to the gentlemen of the Army and Navy and to Engineers in Mathematics and those branches of the art of drawing dependent upon them as Perspectival Fortification, the drawing of Machinery, Maps etc." The newspaper advertisement from which the preceding is taken intimates that Baine was about to extend his classes to other members of the public, to be held "... at his lodgings at Mr Nasmyth's, No 11 South Bridge Street". The two men were obviously well known to each other. Maybe Baine's commitment to teaching curtailed his scope for creative design for apart from being one of the competition winners no other work of his has been identified. Robert Morison (-1825) was probably the best trained architect amongst the four; he had been a pupil of Robert and James Adam for several years and later appointed assistant to Sir John Soane; in 1794 he published a little known work entitled: "Designs in Perspective for Villas in the Ancient Castle and Grecian Styles". He practised as an architect in Edinburgh from 1807 until his death and was no doubt responsible for the design of a number of houses in the New Town. He was also one of the architects selected to submit plans for the completion of the University buildings in 1815 (he had drawn up earlier designs in 1789). None of the prizewinners however, could match William Sibbald's
knowledge and familiarity of the grounds in question, and his earlier plans on behalf of David Steuart and the Heriot Trust must have placed him at a distinct advantage. A competent designer himself (refer Section 2.3) he understandably had a vested interest in entering for the competition which allowed him to take part anonymously.

None of the winning designs has survived - but 2 items have which together tell us a great deal about what the competition achieved. The first, and most important is a drawing entitled: "Plan for laying of in Building the lands of Bellevue, and the adjacent lands westwards", dated 25 April 1801, and signed by Robert Morison, William Sibbald "senior", and James Elliot (fig. 116); the second a document written by John Baine as a "Exploratory memoir" to accompany his competition submission. Clearly the former is the combined drawing produced at the request of the Town Council by the prizewinners and containing "...the best of each...". Baine's absent signature indicates that for one reason or another he dropped out at this later stage. Maybe he did not wish his plan to be compromised for his memoir reveals not only a man well versed in town planning principles at home and abroad but also having rather idiosyncratic and elevated views as to how the land should be developed. In essence Baine's design consisted of 2 large enclosures one at the east end of octagonal shape which he named Drummond Place (for more details refer Section 3.6) and the other at the west end in the form of an amphitheatre, with "monuments to illustrious Scotchmen" in the centre (he rejected the idea of a circus as destroying too much ground) each linked by 3 main parallel streets 100' (30.5m) broad: there were to be no narrow streets or thoroughfares providing accommodation for "common people", as "...good air, light, and sunshine, the great blessings of bounteous heaven...ought not to be withheld from the poorest of mankind".

As in Baine's plan, and Sibbald's much earlier one the combined competition drawing incorporated as one of its main features an open space at either end. Sibbald's former circus reappears on the west side although positioned further northwards: to the east but now further distant from the circus is an oval shaped space having at its centre
FIGURE 116:
Joint plan by 3 of the prize winners, Robert Morison, William Sibbald, and James Elliot for the second new town: signed and dated 25 April 1801 (EDC, Archival drawing collection)

FIGURE 117:
Revised plan for the second new town made out by Robert Reid and referred to in the contract between the 3 parties involved, the City of Edinburgh, the George Heriot Trust and the new owners of David Steuart's feud dated 23 March 1802 (EDC Archival drawing collection)
the old mansion house of Bellevue. The large square originally envisaged by Sibbald was not so well suited to accommodating the house with its remnants of garden - as required by the competition brief, and this more attractive solution must have been devised by either Elliot or Morison. A broad street connected the 2 open spaces, with other roads running parallel and intersected by a series of cross streets - 3 of which further linked with Queen Street. Two other features of Sibbald's first plan remain: a crescent on the north-eastern edge, and a straight line of buildings opposite to and running the whole length of the Queen Street garden area. Had the latter been carried into effect it would have required the absorption of part of the eastmost garden.

In all these events the Heriot Trust appear to have readily acquiesced, and indeed, no mention is made of them until well after the competition was held; then in June 1801 the Treasurer reported to a meeting that as a result of the Town Council having purchased Bellevue, several building plans had been made but of the ground to the north of Queen Street and that "... it would be for the interests of the hospital and the ornament of the city to adopt one of these plans, in place of the plan that had been already fixed upon". (51) It was therefore arranged that the Trust should hold a meeting with the Town Council and David Steuart and his trustees to discuss the matter further.

Further Revisions to the plans by Major Stratton of the Royal Engineers, and Robert Reid, architect.

Nothing more is heard about the plans until nearly 6 months later when the Town Council minutes refer to a payment of 25 guineas to one Mrs Stratton for work carried out by her late husband Major Stratton, commanding Royal Engineer in North Britain "... to revise and improve plans given in for a new town to be erected on the lands of Bellevue". (52) Presumably Major Stratton in view of his professional background was a competent surveyor and draughtsman, (53) and must have been consulted as a result of the joint meeting of all the interested parties when the combined competition drawing would have been studied in detail and the decision made that further modifications were necessary. But while some
improvements had been suggested and new plans made out before Stratton's death, the work was not complete: the task therefore passed to someone else - this time to Robert Reid, surveyor and architect.

Robert Reid (1774-1856) who was responsible for the final set of revisions to the ground plan was then 27 years old, and this commission certainly helped to launch him as a successful architect. How or why he came to be approached is a matter for conjecture but his background must certainly have proved helpful: his father, Alexander Reid was a well established mason and builder who feued various areas in the New Town between 1785 and 1797 becoming also a member of the Town Council from 1789 to 1791. Reid appears to have practised for a time as a land surveyor in Trunk Close but by 1800 he was describing himself as an architect, occupying the same address as his father at 18 South Castle Street. Soon afterwards he became involved with another architect, Richard Crichton (see also Section 2.6) on the design of the Bank of Scotland on the Mound. Reid therefore had the advantages of his father's business connections besides making something of a name for himself as an up and coming architect, well confident in his own abilities.

Access to all the previous plans would have been readily available to Reid and his task was to bring together all the several ideas and modifications into one "improved" design. Little time was lost and by the end of 1801 the minutes of both the Town Council and George Heriot Trust reported that the joint committee "... are unanimously of opinion that the plan produced by Robert Reid ought to be adopted, except as to the north east part of Bellevue ground". The Heriot Trust gave further instructions that "... a plan on a large scale should be made out with all possible dispatch by Messrs Sibbald and Reid from the sketch or plan now presented to the Governors". This enlarged plan was presented at a meeting held on 15 February 1802 and approved; a few days later the Trust agreed that their lands to the north of Queen Street should be included within the new extension to the Royalty of Edinburgh.
What of Reid's plan however? In essence it adopted much of the basic form of the previous plans, particularly the combined competition drawing, with Sibbald's influence clearly showing through (fig. 117). The 2 most distinctive features remain - an open space at either end connected by a broad street (King Street - later named Great King Street) with other main streets running parallel. To the west the space is still in the form of a circus but the buildings on either side form a continuous curve (unbroken by cross streets as before), with a wide entrance at the eastern end allowing full view of the church positioned opposite. This circus, soon to be called Royal Circus was the only part of the ground plan to experience subsequent alterations (refer Section 3.7). A more radical change was made at the eastern end with the open space enlarged into a square on 3 sides with an oval shaped end (Drummond Place). The crescent on the north eastern boundary was retained (Royal Crescent) but Reid introduced 2 new crescents: one on the eastern side, Bellevue Crescent (a more attractive solution than the straight angled line previously adopted), and Abercromby Place to the south. Abercromby Place was the first curved street facade to be built in Edinburgh and because of its novelty attracted widespread attention. (60) It was chosen however, not so much on aesthetic grounds but rather to avoid encroachment on to the Queen Street garden area, the whole of which was protected from building development. Earlier plans had all ignored the projecting area of garden, and had shown instead a straight building line. (61) Reid therefore made few substantial changes but successfully incorporated a number of improvements and refinements which became the blue print for the second New Town. (62) Early in April 1802 just after the first building stances were advertised for sale the Town Council, the Governors of George Heriot's Trust, and the new owners of David Steuart's feu (63) entered into a contract whereby all 3 parties agreed to conform "... to a regular plan" made out by Robert Reid for building on the lands to the north of Queen Street. (64) This was an obvious safeguard necessary to ensure a uniform development over a considerable area while allowing a degree of flexibility should later changes be found desirable. (65) When Steuart's old feu once more
changed hands in 1806(66) - being acquired by a group of builders cum architects - Winton, Nisbet and Morison, together with Gordon and Morrison WSs (the latter having acted as trustees to Steuart's bankrupt estate) the contract was renewed. (67) On this occasion William Sibbald's name became added to that of Robert Reid's and henceforth the ground plan generally became known as "Reid and Sibbald's plan".

From 1802 onwards the land was gradually feued out: Heriot Row was the first to be completed, but building went on well into the 1820s particularly in the Royal Circus and Drummond Place areas: the northern section of Bellevue Crescent was not in fact finished until the 1880s. Robert Reid was further commissioned to draw up suitable elevations for the east and west sections of Heriot Row, Abercromby Place, Great King Street and Drummond Place, and these were carried out with certain modifications. The remaining streets apart from Royal Circus (Playfair), Bellevue Crescent and neighbouring streets (Thomas Bonar) involved several different architects and builders whose names have largely been forgotten.

In all the various proposals for the second New Town the provision of open space formed an integral part and important visual relief and balance to what was otherwise to become a fairly intensely developed site. Plans however, can prove to be beguilingly deceptive - conveying as they do a sense of order and agreement not necessarily existing in practice. The formation of the pleasure gardens which came to occupy these various spaces was far more haphazard, following no set course, and wholly dependent on the initiative and perseverance of local people. This is the reason why there is so much variation in the ways the gardens are run, although few Edinburgh residents today are aware that such differences exist or that the evolution of the gardens was quite so long, complicated and piecemeal. The story begins with the Queen Street gardens.
3.2 THE QUEEN STREET GARDENS: GENERAL INTRODUCTION INCLUDING DETAILS OF THE 1822 ACT OF PARLIAMENT

"Who would not regret if the gardens below Queen Street were to be swept away, and their place occupied by an insipid and monotonous pile of buildings" (1) W. H. Playfair 1819

The ground which eventually became the Queen Street Pleasure gardens was bounded on the south by the newly made Queen Street, to the north by the track leading from Broughton to Thomas Wood's farm, on the west by the route from Stockbridge to the West Kirk (St Cuthberts) and on the east by the ancient Gabriels road which connected the rural hamlet of Silvermills to a passage in the old town at the foot of Halkestones Wynd. Within these boundaries the land was later divided by 2 cross streets - Frederick and Hanover Street-which besides providing the main links between the first and second New Town cut the ground into 3 separate and unequally sized portions.

As building progressed from east to west along Queen Street (and by 1780 practically three-quarters of it had been completed) some of the new house owners set about purchasing or renting areas of open space opposite them (or as near opposite as possible) for use as private gardens. The first feu granted by the Heriot Trust as mentioned in Section 3.1 was to Robert Ord in 1769 for 2½ acres (1 ha) at the eastern end and solely for use as a garden or park; no buildings were allowed apart from those necessary for such purposes and even then a height restriction was imposed.(2) These conditions were respected in the 8 subsequent charters and by 1791 the 3 main units of land in the Queen Street garden area were in the hands of several different owners (refer fig. 111).

The earliest attempt to form a communal garden for the benefit of surrounding inhabitants came in 1809 when several proprietors in Heriot Row approached the Heriot Trust to see if they would be prepared to sell the western section of ground attached to the central area. This land had been sold in 1786 but was repurchased by the Trust in 1804 to facilitate the continuation of Frederick Street. Since then it had been abandoned and its wilderness appearance was something of an eyesore. But although the land was offered to the residents at the same price
paid by the Trust, they were unable to raise the required amount (Section 3.4).

It was in fact part of the eastern portion which was first laid out as a common pleasure ground. The next section will tell in detail how this was achieved but suffice to say here that by 1812 the owners of the 2 largest areas no longer having any desire to retain a private garden space offered to sell it on this basis and by 1814 the purchase was complete. In order to do this however, a large sum of money had to be raised and the method adopted was to make out a number of shares which could either be bought outright or else subject to an annual payment. Anyone could buy a share and thus it came about that the new proprietors of the gardens were not limited to those overlooking the space as had been the case in the earlier New Town gardens, and the majority of the later ones but were drawn from a wider area.

Once acquired the 2 private gardens were joined together and named - "The Queen Street Gardens" but the ensuing years were to reveal several unforeseen complications in connection with the share holding system and the levying of the annual assessment for the upkeep of the gardens. Lack of firm legal sanctions proved a handicap, and looking to the experience of the Princes Street proprietors the Management Committee on the advice of their Clerk resolved to obtain a private Act of Parliament whereby the administration of the garden could be placed on a more secure footing: as many people were anxious that the remaining areas of open space along Queen Street should be similarly set up as pleasure gardens, powers to do this were sought under the same Act.

1822 Act of Parliament

On the 15th May 1822 an Act of Parliament was passed "... for regulating, maintaining, and improving the Premises in the City of Edinburgh, termed Queen Street Gardens, and for effecting certain other improvements in the vicinity thereof and connected therewith" (for further details see Section 3.3). The Act - partly modelled on the 1816 one under which the West Princes Street Gardens had been set
up, contained several similar clauses but was also more detailed in scope: it provided a common framework whereby the individual private gardens along Queen Street could be acquired and united into common pleasure grounds for the benefit and use of surrounding residents. How was this achieved? The Act carefully specified the means by which the Gardens were to be set up and managed, stating as a first requirement that all the proprietors of the existing Queen Street Gardens together with proprietors of houses along Queen Street (from Hanover Street to 63 Queen Street), and Heriot Row were to meet and elect 24 General Commissioners.

Once appointed the General Commissioners' main duty was to divide the grounds "... into such number of districts as they shall see expedient" and to appoint "... from their own number certain persons to act as Commissioners within each district". It was with these district Commissioners that the real onus for forming and managing the gardens rested. The Act gave them power to purchase the ground (although no transaction could be concluded without the approval of the proprietors at a district meeting), to levy special assessments in order to do this, and to borrow money if necessary. All matters relating to the upkeep and running costs of the gardens became their responsibility - aided by the help of a Clerk or Cashier. Should legal action ever be resorted to (especially in cases of heavy arrears in payment of assessments) the District Commissioners (or their Clerks) were given rights to sue or be sued.

Provision was however, made in the Act for the proprietors themselves to have some opportunity to voice their opinions and wishes, and their consent had to be gained on such matters as the renting out of keys to non proprietors, and the framing of rules and regulations. A general meeting of all proprietors in the district could be called at any time by the District Commissioners (except between 15th July to 15th November), or by requisition of 7 proprietors provided they stated the reason for calling a meeting: no business could be conducted unless at least 7 proprietors (or their proxies) were in attendance. In addition, the Act specified that an annual meeting of
all proprietors was to be held on the third Monday in May, mainly for the purpose of electing new General Commissioners, 8 of whom were to go out of office "by rotation". This in theory provided a useful opportunity for the different districts to formally meet together but its potential has rarely been realised. The various titles to the land making up the new pleasure gardens were to be vested in the General Commissioners as trustees, and were to remain "... the Common property of the proprietors of the district ... or their successors unless four-fifths of the proprietors in number and value shall otherwise determine".

One section of the Act dealt specifically with the shareholding system adopted by the already existing pleasure garden and particularly to the method of transfer about which some doubts had been raised. Shareholding was to continue but the clerk was required to keep a transfer book listing the names of all the holders and a set procedure followed whenever shares changed hands. A share was deemed to be heritable property, and proprietors of annual shares were bound to pay £3 a year exclusive of the annual assessment: if this was unpaid for 3 successive years it could be declared forfeited and held by the Commissioners until resold.

The first meeting of all the proprietors took place on 18th June 1822 when the 24 elected General Commissioners were also appointed as District Commissioners - a practice which has continued ever since. Three districts were formed: the Queen Street Gardens became the eastern district; the houses in the first division of Heriot Row and Queen Street between Hanover and Frederick Street became the central district; and the houses in the second division of Heriot Row, and Queen Street between Frederick Street and No. 64 Queen Street became the western district. Hence the Queen Street gardens as we know them today - east, central and west came into being: each linked by the common terms of the Act yet each separately run by their own District Commissioners. Initially there was some discussion on the possibility of connecting all 3 gardens by underground tunnel thereby allowing proprietors free access to the neighbouring pleasure grounds but the idea did not receive widespread support and was gradually shelved. (9)
In the summer we played in the Queen Street Gardens, to us an immense country where the shruberies of rhododendrons had the half fearful charm of unexplored forests, and the lawns seemed endless stretches of grass and daisies. (1) Elizabeth Sillar, c 1870s.

The history of the Queen Street Gardens begins with the eastern section, the largest of the 3, consisting of just under 7 acres (2.8 ha). In the eighteenth century this ground formed part of the farmlands leased by the Heriot Trust to the Anderson family - farmers at Broughton. Between 1769 and 1786 however, a portion was sold off as 3 separate private gardens (fig. 111), the first, as already described to Robert Ord, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer from 1755 until his death in 1778. (2)

Ord's important position was reflected in the substantial and elegant house he had built in Queen Street (No. 8) to a design by Robert Adam. Here he lived "magnificently" and according to Boswell, the Chief Baron's "... own ample fortune with the addition of his salary, enabled him to be splendidly hospitable". (3) He had moreover a keen interest in gardening and horticulture, and during his former residence at Dean House had been amongst the first, if not the very first individual to successfully cultivate a pineapple in Scotland. (4) Such interests were unlikely to be satisfied by the small overshadowed garden area allocated to his new house, and well before it was completed Ord had started negotiations for a much larger piece of land immediately opposite. Initially he procured a sub tack from the farmer Henry Anderson for about 2½ acres (1 ha) of ground, and shortly afterwards applied to the Heriot Trust as feu superiors to feu this same area of land "... for the purposes of a garden". (5) His request proved successful and the Trust agreed to sell the land for £121 together with an annual feu (ground rent) equivalent to the selling price of 2 firlots of wheat and 7 bolls of barley "according to the highest fairs of Midlothian". (6) The conditions laid down in this first feu charter, made out in June 1769 have already been referred to in Section 3.1 and 3.2.
Ord's large Queen Street garden was used both for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables(7) and as a pleasant, ornamental space to be enjoyed by family and friends. Boswell, for example, in his diary entry for Sunday, 21 July 1782 mentions that his wife - a lady of delicate health - had taken an evening walk there.(8) The garden was regarded as a valuable extension to the house, and made even more convenient and accessible by the construction of an underground tunnel beneath Queen Street from the basement of No 8, right into the garden itself. A unique feature, which still survives, although now blocked from the garden end. On Ord's death in 1778 the house and garden came into the possession of his son John, a barrister and former MP for Midhurst, Hastings and Wendover successively (between 1774-1790). But by 1786 the family had moved from Queen Street to George Street,(9) and the house and garden sold(10)(fig. 118a). The latter was bought by ex Lord Provost David Steuart (refer Section 3.1) who already possessed the adjacent 2½ acres (1 ha) of private garden ground to the east (fig. 111) which he had acquired from the Heriot Trust in 1791.(11) He was therefore the second person to obtain a feu for land in the Queen Street garden area.

By now Steuart possessed some 5 acres (2.0 ha) or so of garden ground and his house at No. 5 Queen Street(12) practically overlooked the centre of them. Two or three years later however, Steuart left Queen Street(13) and in 1793 he sold Ord's former garden to a close neighbour - Major Roger Aytoun of 9 Queen Street, while retaining the eastmost plot. Aytoun "... a man of remarkable stature, being upwards of six feet four inches in height"(14) (1.92m) remained in possession of the land until he died in 1808 whereupon it passed into the hands of the Cunynghame family who had moved from George Square to Ord's old house at 8 Queen Street. Sir William Cunynghame had at one time been MP for Linlithgowshire and had held several responsible positions in public service but he was now approaching retirement and the land was bought in his wife's name.(15) Nevertheless he appears to have had ambitious ideas for improving the garden for early in 1810 an advertisement was placed in the Edinburgh Advertiser inviting plans and estimates for a range of hot houses to be built on the north side opposite Abercromby Place (fig. 118d).
HOUSE IN QUEEN STREET, TO BE SOLD.

And entered to as soon as a purchaser shall incline, THAT LARGE and commodious HOUSE, and OFFICES, which belonged to the late Lord Chief Baron Ord, with the Garden in front, upon the north side of the street, consisting of 24 acres of ground.

Apply to John Walshep, Esq., to the signet.

a. Edinburgh Advertiser 12 November 1735

PUBLIC GARDEN.

FINLAYSON takes this opportunity to acquaint the Public, That his GARDE, EXTEND OF QUEEN STREET, is now open for the reception of Ladies and Gentlemen to eat FRUITS through the SEASON; they will find there to be among the best the country can produce; the Garden is laid out and fitted up for the above purpose in the modern taste. By particular desire, there will be MUSIC every Wednesday evening; on the weather being dry, it will otherwise be played; and after 6 o’clock, everyone will retire. Admiration on the 4th of the week grants.

M.B. Families ferred with Fruits and Vegetables from the Garden, or Garden Stuff from his Stable, Green-market, opposite the mail receiving-rooms.

b. Edinburgh Evening Courant 7 July 1794

FORCING HOUSES FOR FRUIT.

WANTED Plans and Estimates for a Range of HOT HOUSES, to be erected along the North Side of the Garden, opposite Abercrombie Place.

For further particulars, apply to Sir William Augustus Cranmer, March, 9, Queen Street.

5th January, 1810

c. Edinburgh Advertiser 30 January 1810

DVERTISER. 1810.

A CAPITAL INHABITED HOUSE IN THE CRESCENT, at ABERCROMBIE PLACE, TO BE SOLD.

THAT HOUSE, No. 19, being the Eastmost built, and which will form the centre of the East Crescent, it extends 32 feet in front, was built and finished by the proprietor in a most substantial and elegant manner; has a large area of back-ground, with coach-house and four-stalled stables, and the courtyard only is 52 ft. by 40.

The house consists of three rooms on the ground, and three on the drawing-room floor. The drawing-room is 15 by 15, the first drawing-room 20 by 10, and the second 20 by 10. On the bed-room floor these are four excellent rooms, and in the attic storey, which is covered with a lead top, there are four additional bed-rooms. The principal floor can be thrown open into a suite of rooms for company. The kitchen floor, and the one under it, are laid out in a most convenient, and comfortable manner for a large family; having two stoves, waist-chute, &c. &c. for accommodation for servants, with water-pipes, closets, cellars, pump, well, &c. The situation is one of the best in Edinburgh, having Queen Street and the intervening broad thoroughfares front, over which there is a servitude against building; and also lines to the north possess a most commanding view of the Forth, &c., and high country; and is highly improved by the making of a projecting road through the garden, and the easy communication from the said road by the new road to be opened from Jock’s Lodge to the Head of Loth Walk.

The premises have been inhabited for near two years, are very warm, and comfortable, and free from smoke.

For particulars apply to the house, which will be thrown every day from 10 to 3 o’clock, of Mr. Troxler, upholsterer, Prince’s Street.

d. Edinburgh Advertiser 16 January 1810

FIGURE 128 a–f:

Early entertainments relating to the East Queen Street gardens

a. The sale of Baron Ord’s house and garden

None of the splendour of Ords House is indicated in this brief advertisement but it would at least have matched - if not surpassed that of a neighbour Mill (Fig. 116b)

b. One of the substantial and elegant Queen Street houses

c. Stewart’s former garden open to the public for the sale of fruit and musical entertainment

d. Sir William Cranmer’s advertisement for a range of hot houses in his adjoining garden to the west

e. Sale of house in Abercrombie Place with reference to garden ground in front and the proposed road through them

f. Queen Street garden - Coal yard
Several years earlier David Steuart also had spent a considerable sum in having his first private garden area at the eastern end enclosed and laid out, for in a letter written to the Heriot Trust in 1799 he mentions having spent about £500 on these items. Ainslie's plan of 1804 (fig. 119a) certainly shows Steuart's garden to be rather more imaginatively designed than the other 2 with what looks to be a serpentine shaped pool overlooked by a summerhouse or conservatory. Perhaps partly for sentimental reasons Steuart held on to this portion of garden ground after removing from Queen Street but more likely he would have considered it a prudent measure in view of his 13 acres (5.2 ha) or so of land to the north which he still hoped to develop. Meanwhile his garden was rented to a rather enterprising nurseryman - A Finlayson by name who during the summer months opened it "... for the reception of Ladies and Gentlemen to eat fruits through the season": an especial attraction being the provision of musical entertainment on a Wednesday evening from 7-9 p.m. or the following night should the weather prove inclement (fig. 118c). By this time the garden was obviously well established and productive of a generous supply both of soft fruits and vegetables, besides being an attractive place to visit: a foretaste indeed of the pleasure grounds to be. Finlayson continued with the lease until January 1800 when it was taken over for a short period by another gardener called John Richmond, who had other nursery property down Leith Walk.

The third strip of private garden at the western end was only about one-third the size of the other 2 gardens. It had been bought in 1786(18) by Adam Rolland of Gask (1734-1819) a distinguished advocate, bachelor, and close friend of Henry Mackenzie. Lockhart once met him at Mackenzie's house: he was then a very old man but made a lasting impression on the much younger visitor who observed later that he had "... never seen a finer specimen both in appearance and manner of the true gentleman of the last age". Rolland lived practically opposite his garden at 15 Queen Street, and it remained in his possession, and subsequently his trustees until acquired for communal pleasure garden purposes under the 1822 Act of Parliament.
Ainslie's plan 1804

Kirkwood's plan and elevation 1819

Kirkwood's plan 1817

Knox's plan 1821

Johnston's plan 1831

Bartholomew's plan 1891

Various plans of the East Queen Street gardens
Imminent Changes, and the move to form a pleasure garden at the Eastern end of Queen Street

By the end of the eighteenth century all 3 gardens were well established and the layout of each was similar (refer fig. 119a) consisting of a pathway around the outer edges and the inner areas grassed and tree planted; various garden buildings had been added along the northern side, and a stone wall divided one garden from another. Changes were however, imminent. The dawn of a new century coincided with certain events which were to have important repercussions on the future of these 3 private gardens - leading ultimately to the formation of the first pleasure ground in Queen Street.

What were these changes, and what prompted them? For this we have to return to the owner of the most easterly section of garden - David Steuart, the gentleman who had played an active although unsuccessful part in trying to promote the development of the second New Town. Steuart, it will be remembered began to experience severe financial difficulties in his business enterprises, and as part of an attempt to stave off disaster he seriously considered selling off his Queen Street garden as building land, hopeful that York Place might be extended further westwards. His proposals were however, firmly rejected by the Heriot Trust, and bankruptcy became unavoidable. During the first 6 months of 1800 Steuart's sequestered estate, including his Queen Street garden, and the 13 acres (5.2 ha) or so of land further northward were repeatedly advertised for sale (fig. 115b & c).

It was not until 2 years later that the ground was purchased and then by such a curious collection of individuals that one wonders if Steuart's own friends or business colleagues did not finally step in to help. Some maneuvering seems to have been afoot for after a 3 year interval the land was sold again this time to 2 of the trustees for Steuart's creditors - Maxwell Gordon WS (-1809) and John Morison WS (1769-1837), in conjunction with 3 builders - namely George Winton (the mason responsible for building the wall round Charlotte Square gardens), James Nisbet, and Thomas Morrison.
The new owners bought the land primarily for its development potential and Steuart's former private garden in Queen Street which made up part of the larger feu was only of more marginal interest: at the same time what became of this space could have important repercussions on the successful feuning or otherwise of the ground further northwards so its longer term future could not be ignored.

There were however, some uncertainties attached to the garden area: in 1805 tentative plans had been discussed to form a roadway through Steuart's garden connecting Queen Street with Abercromby Place. Although no written agreement was drawn up there was an "understanding" between the Heriot Trust, the City, and the new owners of Steuart's feu that if need be garden ground would be relinquished for this purpose and the costs shared equally between all 3 parties. (23) The idea lingered until 1812 (fig. 119e) when it was finally abandoned as being of unlikely benefit. (24) Prior to this decision a small portion of Steuart's garden along the eastern side was sold off in 1807 in 5 different lots to the proprietors of houses on the west side of Duke Street who wanted to improve the shape and size of their back gardens: a move which may well have been instigated by John Morison WS, part owner of Steuart's garden and himself living at 7 Duke Street. (25) While the future of the garden remained undecided it continued to be rented out and at some stage a portion seems to have been sub-leased as a coal yard. (26) An advertisement in the Courant during December 1812 (fig. 119f) indicates that the Queen Street coal depot was by then a well established part of the scene and strategically placed for serving an expanding market. A dismal encroachment for those living in close proximity but fears of other undesirable developments no doubt helped to promote a series of events which resulted within the space of a year or so in the formation of the 2 largest sections of private gardens (Ord's and Steuart's old feus) into one communal pleasure ground.

The first signs that such important moves were afoot are to be found in a circular dated 25 June 1812 (27) addressed to all the proprietors in Abercromby Place and the east end of Queen Street and signed by William Cunynghame, Roger Aytoun, and John Morison. (28)
(fig. 120a): a similar but abbreviated notice appeared in the press 2 days later (fig. 120b). According to the circular the central portion of garden had recently been sold in order to facilitate the completion of roadway in Abercromby Place: (29) as this mainly concerned the owners of David Steuart's feu they not surprisingly were amongst the purchasers which also included Roger Aytoun WS and Sir William Cunynghame - whose wife had formerly held the land. Some previous understanding has obviously been reached by the new joint owners that here was a splendid opportunity to promote the creation of a communal pleasure ground - capable of being extended to include the neighbouring garden (David Steuart's old feu) if desired, and on this basis it was offered for sale to the surrounding residents.

Presumably the Cunynghame family had no further wish for a private garden space but were wanting to safeguard their interests until the land's future was safely assured. This was also a critical time for the owners of David Steuart's feu who were building in Abercromby Place from 1810 onwards: the successful feuing of their land must have depended to some extent on assurances that steps were being taken to have the open space in front formed into a communal garden - a notion which carried greater conviction when it could be pointed out that one of their number - John Morison (whose name appeared in the circular) was soon to become one of the new proprietors in the crescent. (30) Already in residence was Roger Aytoun WS the third name appended to the form who carried on "a steady going business" at Frederick Street: later he was to become a "blazing Radical", (31) but for the meantime he seems to have channeled some of his energies into supporting this venture - taking on the initial responsibility for administrating the subscription papers.

Although pressure was brought to bear by the imposition of a 14 day deadline, and the rather ambiguous but somewhat ominous statement that if the offer was not taken up then the owners would be free to dispose of the land "... as we see most for our own advantage", it proved hopelessly unrealistic. To find such a substantial sum so quickly (3,000 guineas for Lady Cunynghame's land and £2,100 for Steuart's old feu, making a total of £5,250) particularly when several
PROPRIETORS OF QUEEN STREET AND
THAT PART OF QUEEN STREET EAST
AND MAILA
gardens, in respect that the same have
been made an object of public notice by
the present owners, in order to give notice
of their intention of erecting a public
building on the premises. The
condition of their being thus
announced will be that the premises
shall be let to the highest bidder, on
which condition they will be
transferred to the use of the
proprietors. The terms of
rental will be as follows:

The premises shall be let for a
period of 21 years, from
June 28, 1812, at the
annual rent of $2,000.

The premises shall be let to
the highest bidder, on
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proprietors.
building plots along Abercromby Place were still vacant was just not possible. The idea however, of a share holding system as a means of raising the necessary cash did persist and became the basis of all future negotiations for the land.

Plans to complete the roadway in Abercromby Place met with greater success: in January 1813 we learn that Messrs Winton, Morison and Co (owners of Steuart's feu) had submitted designs to the Town Council. These were considered by Thomas Bonnar, Superintendent of Works, who commented favourably upon them reporting that:

"the parapet and rail proposed leaving the gardens to view will be a very handsome and proper manner of completing the street and so far an advantage to the city's property adjoining ... that it would be desirable to allow Messrs Winton, Morison and Co. to complete the design over the city's ground and also a moderate sum towards completing the work say £50 which together with the value of the difference of the ground given into the garden will be equal to about £90 sterling". (32)

The Council agreed to Bonnar's recommendations. (33)

It was not long however, before fresh attempts were made to sell the 2 gardens for pleasure grounds, only this time greater efforts were made to make the purchase terms easier. (34) In March 1813, John Morison took the initiative on behalf of the other garden owners and made contact with a Mr William Bell of 9 Queen Street offering the gardens for £5,250; one half to be paid as an annual feu duty (ground rent) and the rest in 2 equal instalments at Whitsuntide and Martinmas 1813. Immediate entry was guaranteed apart from the east garden where the tenant claimed right of possession until the end of 1815. (36) William Bell (1783-1849), who was later appointed first Clerk to both the east and west Queen Street gardens (37) had emerged as one of the leaders in the previous attempt to raise money and from this time on he became wholly committed to seeing the project successfully concluded. His first move was to inform other proprietors in the neighbourhood of the offer (by means of a circular), and shortly afterwards a local action committee was formed. (38) The appeal for subscribers was no longer limited to those in Abercromby Place, and the eastern end of Queen Street but was more widely based including any
proprietors living in the locality: a choice was offered of making a lump sum payment for the purchase of 1 or more shares, or else contracting to buy an annual share for a much smaller amount but carrying the obligation to pay an additional sum yearly (this was intended to cover the cost of the ground rent).

Approaches were also made to the Town Council as owners of some of the unfeued stances at the south eastern end of Abercromby Place: first by a petition presented in April 1813, followed 2 months later by a letter from William Bell on behalf of the Committee. Both communications told of the opportunity to buy the land and the desire of neighbouring residents to purchase it "... for the purpose of it being held a joint property and laid out in pleasure grounds, in order to prevent any use being made of them that might be disagreeable to the neighbourhood and offensive to the town in general; and also with the view not only of benefiting their own properties but of securing a very great increase of beauty to that part of the city of Edinburgh". And as "... a great public benefit must unquestionably result", the Council was asked to contribute by making a subscription for each of their unfeued stances. The matter was remitted to a subcommittee consisting of Baillies Robert Johnstone and Alexander Henderson - who after conferring with the garden committee made a positive recommendation in their report to the Council that the feuars aims to improve their surroundings should be encouraged "... as a measure intimately connected with the beauty and elegance and respectability of the city". It was a happy omen that Alexander Henderson should be involved in such a venture for as a well respected Edinburgh nurseryman with a keen interest in environmental matters he was a sympathetic ally and had fulfilled a similar liaison role with the Charlotte Square proprietors (Section 2.3). As a result the Council were persuaded to take 2 annual shares for each of their unfeued stances (40) (10 altogether).

By the end of September 1813, 102 lump sum subscriptions had been promised together with 16 annual shares, but this was still not enough. With greater patience, the owners of the gardens extended the deadline until 15th January 1814. Further publicity was launched in December, and another circular distributed (fig. 121a) in which the urgency of
Gardens North of Queen Street.

In April 1813 proposals were published and circulated for raising Subscriptions to purchase these GARDENS for Pleasure Grounds.

The price at which the Proprietors have agreed to sell to the Public was £2500.

Which sum was proposed to divide by Subscriptions of £30, for each share, in money, or £20, in yearly payments.

Pursuant to the 20th September many Subscriptions were procured, but not enough to accomplish the purchase, when, at a Meeting of the Subscribers of that date, it was proposed to raise the subscription for each share to £40, and the Annual Payment to £2.4d. Instead of 30 shares have been subscribed for, which, at the increased rate of £40, would produce £1600.

In the meantime the Commissioners are employed in assigning the grounds to their respective proprietors.

Adversely to the Proprietors of the Gardens situated between Queen Street and Abercromby Place, consisting of about five acres, for the purpose of purchasing them at the John Property of the same to subscribe to the Accommodation of the Subscribers for their final settlement.

As apparently having offered for purchasing these Grounds for the above desirable object an equal consideration, it is proposed that the same should be sold to the highest bidder, who shall offer for the Shares of £20 each, in the proportion of the actual amount of the Annual Payments of £2 each, and an additional £2 at the end of every ten years.

Upon which data it is expected that less than 5000 shares (at least 100 of which being reserved for the subscription) will be taken up by the Proprietors at the Annual Meeting, to be held for that purpose.

A particular and binding obligation, with the conditions and details of the scheme, to be drawn up by a Committee, to be appointed by the subscribers at the Annual Meeting, to be held for that purpose.

The subscribers to the above proposal, in order to enable the Proprietors to appropriate the Grounds for Pleasure Grounds, are bound to name the number of shares for each of the subscribers, either in present money, or annual payments, as they shall choose.

But declaring that, if the funds sufficient for the purchase of the Gardens shall not be raised, the subscribers to this paper may be dissolved, and the Grounds sold by Public Subscription, under the following terms, tendered: that is, each subscriber who shall have subscribed a share of £20, or £1600, shall be bound to pay the sum subscribed for, with interest at 5 per cent, and to enable the Proprietors to appropriate the Grounds for Pleasure Grounds, in order that upon the payment of the subscription, they may be raised to the sum of £1600.

The same shall be raised as follows:

For the purposes of Public Walks, so much wanted in Edinburgh, and for safety and amusement of the inhabitants, shall be the ground more suitable, to be found for the same.

Subscribers, either in one sum, or in annual payments, shall continue to be received by William Bald, 6, Queen Street, till the 4th of January next.

December 1813.

List of Subscribers to the Proposal for Purchasing the Gardens in Queen Street, by Subscriptions for Shares of £20, or for Annual Payments of £2 each, and a subscription each 10th year.

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Notes:
The Town of Edinburgh have agreed to take Ten Shares. The Shares have subsequently been raised to £30 per share, and in additional subscription each £100 per share, and to the above Subscribers generally agree.

a. Circular dated December 1813 (Queen Street central records).

Notice is hereby given, That it is intended, in the ensuing session of Parliament, to apply for leave to bring in a Bill to enable the Proprietors of certain Streets in the City of Edinburgh called Queen Street Gardens, to convene and convoked meetings, and to create and establish Committees and Regulations, for the better management of and to key away the impropriety, maintaining and improving the said premises, and for raising, by the means of the said Committees, the money required to enable the said Proprietors to acquire and add to the said ground, the ground between the same and the street leading from Queen Street to Elmwood Place, for payment of the same, and for improving and maintaining the same: And, farther, to enable the Proprietors of houses in Queen Street to be able, at any time, either by purchase or by force of a Court of Equity, to acquire all or any part of the ground lying to the westward of and bounded by said street leading from Elmwood Place to Queen Street, and to the same extent, or any other extent, to acquire all or any part of the ground lying to the eastward of and bounded by said street leading from Elmwood Place to Queen Street, for payment of the same, and for improving and keeping the same.

b. House attached to church doors and Session House 1821, 1822 (Queen Street central records).
the appeal was given greater emphasis for "... If the gardens are not then purchased for pleasure grounds, the proprietors have received offers for different lots of them which they seem determined to accept of; and in that event this fine opportunity will be lost to the public, who are certainly interested in getting it converted into pleasure grounds, as well as the proprietors of the adjoining houses". Such a benefit could not be lightly cast aside as the circular was at pains to stress: "... for the purpose of public walks so much wanted in Edinburgh, and for the safety and amusement of children, such a space is nowhere else to be found" (41) Princes Street gardens were as yet unformed (and in any case not so conveniently sited for residents in the second New Town): Queen Street - although once a popular boulevard (42) had lost some of its rural charm since the new wave of building activity further northwards, and with many families moving into Abercromby Place and Heriot Row, and nearby streets the advantages of possessing a large communal pleasure garden within close proximity was obvious.

This approach proved successful and early in 1814 about two-thirds of the ground making up the eastern district of the Queen Street gardens was purchased by William Bell "... on behalf of a number of individuals". In all, 140 shares were purchased - 92 as lump sum payments of £40 each, and 48 as annual shares at £3 each, with a further yearly payment of £3. This number has remained constant throughout the subsequent history of the garden. Many of the shareholders - just over one quarter in fact, bought more than 1 share, and the former proprietors of the land themselves purchased one-fifth of the number - a sure indication of their goodwill and keenness to promote the setting up of a communal garden. Subsequent advertisements for houses and building plots in Abercromby Place and Heriot Row, and other property having a share in the garden were quick to exploit this newest acquisition and to add it to their list of most desirable features (fig. 121, b, c and d).

The Gardens from 1814 until the passing of the 1822 Act of Parliament: their design, and the various problems of administration

Although the first garden minute book has disappeared the Clerk
to the gardens still has in his possession miscellaneous papers which tells us something about the early days of the newly formed "Queen Street Gardens" and the problems that were encountered. To start with a large labouring force was employed to lay out the gardens and Kirkwood’s plan of 1817 (fig. 119b) clearly shows the design adopted: a simple plan of pathways radiating from a central point in a star-like pattern and connected at the edges by a serpentine walk which looped around the outer edges. Many new trees were added and the area in between sown with grass.

The man responsible for the design was very probably John Hay (1758-1836), "seedsman", "surveyor", "landscape gardener", "garden architect", "ground planner", and "hot house builder" (43) His name was to the forefront at this time having been awarded the contract for the design and laying out of the George Square pleasure gardens on the south side (44) the fact that in 1823 he was consulted over plans to incorporate Mr Rolland’s small garden with the rest of the East Queen Street gardens provides reasonable foundation that he had been involved at an earlier stage. Hay - "... an excellent horticulturist and a good man" (45) was a competent and skilful designer - much in demand, who had prepared plans ... "for the best new gardens which have lately been formed in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh" - including Preston Hall, Calder House, Dalmeny Park, the experimental garden for the Caledonian Horticultural Society at Inverleith, (46) as well as the George Square gardens just referred to.

Newly planted and attractively laid out the maintenance of the garden posed few problems although a major item of expense arose in 1816 when an iron railing was erected along the Queen Street side in place of "the old dead wall". A full-time gardener was employed who lived within the grounds in a house close to the north east boundary of Ord’s old feu (fig. 119b). Almost from the very start however, difficulties were experienced in the administration of the gardens - due almost entirely to the idiosyncrasies associated with the shareholding system. Rules and Regulations had been drawn up shortly after the purchase of the ground and adopted at a general meeting of proprietors held in June 1814 (47) but these proved inadequate. An
attempt to achieve a more formalised and binding set of management conditions was worked out in 1816 by means of a deed for disposing the garden ground to a group of Trustees, and approved of at a general meeting held in July of that year.\(^{(48)}\)

The deed made over the ground to the Trustees "... as one whole and individed property and pleasure ground for the accommodation of the Proprietors thereof - a common property unless four-fifths of the said Proprietors in number and value shall otherwise determine."

Various rules relating to the shareholding system were stated in the disposition for since 1814 many shares had changed hands (on death, removal from the district and so forth), and the procedure for their sale or transfer remained somewhat ambiguous. The number of shares was to be kept at 140, one for each proprietor and their family, and deemed heritable property. In future when shares were sold (fig. 121e) the details had to be entered into a transfer book, and the form signed by the seller concluded the transaction. Surplus shares could be "let out" at not less than £3 per annum (the annual assessment remaining the responsibility of the holder). Arrears extending over 3 successive years could lead to forfeiture of an annual share - which the Management Committee were then entitled to sell. Other matters in the disposition specified the duties of the Clerk - his role generally defined as being "... to undertake and perform the whole duties of a factor upon an heritable estate\(^{(49)}\) and how meetings were to be convened.\(^{(50)}\)

Several of the detailed clauses in the disposition later became incorporated into the 1822 Act of Parliament.

Even this array of regulations did not provide a totally satisfactory solution and 4 years later William Bell the Clerk, noted with an air of frustration that: "... many difficulties have already occurred and more may be expected to arise in the management of this concern from the peculiar manner in which the rights and powers of the proprietors have been constituted".\(^{(51)}\) His paper listed 3 main issues which had persistently caused problems: first, in relation to general meetings of proprietors - these had proved
difficult to convene, and it was not clear the extent to which and upon what points majorities could bind the minority and absentees; second, the considerable difficulty and doubt over the transfer of shares (the procedure laid down was infrequently acted upon); and finally, the almost impossible situation pertaining to the recovery of arrears. On this last matter, if legal steps were taken to recover money only the Trustees could appear as defenders, while legal action of a more general nature required all the proprietors to be summoned. Such a cumbersome method had effectively debarred any recourse to the law with the result that debts had steadily accumulated. In the Clerk's opinion "... These various evils can be remedied only by the intervention of the authority of Parliament", the West Princes Street Gardens being upheld as a successful precedent, and a copy of the 1816 Act under which these gardens had been established was annexed to the Memorandum. Bell's proposals were considered by the Management Committee and at various meetings of proprietors but action was delayed until the following year when at a general meeting held in February 1821 a special Committee was elected to investigate the possibilities for obtaining an Act of Parliament. Later in the same month the Committee reported on their deliberations to another general meeting - having come out firmly in favour of Bell's proposition.

Immediately afterwards the Committee, with the help of their Clerk set about drafting a Bill which not only made provision for regulating the management of the East Queen Street Gardens but also gave powers to the proprietors of houses and premises in Queen Street and Heriot Row "... to acquire, enclose, layout, and embellish the remainder of the ground between the two streets". A number of the Queen Street garden shareholders lived in Heriot Row and over the years several unsuccessful attempts had been made to acquire some of the derelict land opposite their houses for conversion into pleasure gardens (see Section 3.4). Foremost amongst the active campaigners were John Cay, advocate (11 Heriot Row) and Donald Horne WS (17 Heriot Row); both were members of the Queen Street garden sub Committee, and very sensibly grasped this opportunity for extending the scope of the Bill - a move which met with widespread approval.
No major obstacles were encountered, and in September 1821
handbills were fixed to the various church doors within the parish, and
at the Court of Session giving notice of the proposed Act which was
passed a few months later on 15th May 1822, and remains effective to
this day. Three major pleasure gardens were produced as a result: the
East Queen Street gardens (although already three-quarters formed),
the Central, and West Queen Street gardens. An outline of the Act's
major clauses has been given in Section 3.2: suffice it to say here
that they were largely based on the former regulations of the eastern
gardens but making good the various pitfalls previously experienced:

hence, for example, the change of rules concerning the convening of a
general meeting of proprietors and the numbers required to be present
before resolutions could be passed, the powers conceded to District
Commissioners or their Clerks when taking legal action, and the detailed
clause relating to the transfer of shares - placing the procedure on a
similar footing as a formal conveyance.

The completion of the East Queen Street gardens

Adam Rolland, long time owner of the smaller strip of private
garden (fig. 119a) died in 1819 and the proprietors agreed to purchase
his portion of land in order to make the whole of the eastern section
into one unified common pleasure garden. Negotiations with Rolland's
trustees began towards the end of 1821 but were not concluded until after
the Act of Parliament was obtained. The cost (£1045) was raised by the
levy of a special assessment of £2 per share for 4 successive years, the
initial sum being borrowed from the banking firm of Messrs Ramsay,
Bonar and Co (and finally paid off in 1831).

Once acquired the stone wall between the 2 gardens was removed and the District Commissioners - "proceeded in the first instance with the aid of Mr Hay, planner, and latterly with that of James Skene Esq of Rubislaw, to incorporate the property so purchased with the garden" by the spring of 1823 the work was nearing completion. John Hay was paid £3.70 for his plan - and his involvement at this stage strongly suggests as previously mentioned, that he was responsible for the
initial design of the gardens when first laid out in 1814. Skene's contribution on the other hand was rewarded with the gift of a free key to the gardens "... for the use of himself and his family during their residence in Edinburgh." His design abilities and excellent good taste were already yielding worthwhile results in the recently formed West Princes Street Gardens (Section 2.6) and it was no doubt a matter of some prestige to also have his name associated with the East Queen Street Gardens. About £250 was spent on enclosing and laying out Mr Rolland's old garden - labourers wages, and the replacement of the former high wall on the north side with a low parapet and railing accounted for the largest part: but the latter improvement allowed "... the whole ground" to be "... laid open to view from Abercromby Place". New pathways were made to link with existing ones and the ground in between grassed and tree planted. To mask the rather rough stone wall along the west boundary a thick belt of shrubs was added; later in 1828 a more elegant cope and rail was erected.

The gardens since 1827: changes made to the original design, and other improvements and additions

No further major improvement work was carried out for several years—until the 1860s: by then, the garden had reached maturity and many of the trees dating back from the time when the ground was tended as private gardens were well past their prime. In between these years however, a number of alterations had been made to the footpaths which little by little changed their form. Few clues to these changes are to be found in the minute books but most likely they are linked with the creation of a large central shrub and flower bed sometime in the 1840s. All the walks were repaired and regravelled in 1829, and again 10 years later and modifications to the pathways were probably made on both occasions. Certainly a comparison of Knox's plan of 1824 (fig. 119d), with Johnstone's plan of 1851 (fig. 119e) shows the extent to which the rather simple star pattern of walks had become replaced by a looser collection of interconnecting paths with a consequent loss of a central focus. Such gradual changes were probably inevitable and were at least more compatible with the demand for larger areas of recreational space when tennis play reached its peak towards the end of the century.
TO THE PROPRIETORS OF QUEEN STREET GARDENS,

videotest,
THE GARDENS LYING BETWEEN QUEEN STREET AND ABERCROMBY PLACE,
DENOMINATED THE EASTERN DISTRICT.

TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF QUEEN STREET GARDENS.

"EDINBURGH, 9th Jan., 1826.

GENTLEMEN,

WILL it be agreeable to you to hold a General Meeting of the Proprietors of Queen Street Gardens, Eastern District, for the purpose of RE-CONSIDERING, and finally deciding upon the expediency of taking down the Wall on the West Side of these Gardens.

Our reasons for making this request are, because we had not an opportunity of expressing our opinion at the meeting held on the 25th ult. Because we consider the numbers who attended that meeting as too limited to express, satisfactorily, the general sense of the proprietors, more especially as the state of the weather, shows how equally the opinions of those present were divided. And because we consider the resolution of the meeting as too important to be finally decided by the casting vote of the Chairman.

We have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,
Your most obedient, &c.

(Signed) W. TROTTER,
JAMES MONCRIEFF,
GILBERT L. FINLAY,
JOHN WAUCHOPE,
Against removing the wall.

JOHN BONAR,
GEORGE HOGARTH,
JOHN BROWN,
GEORGE ROBERTSON,
PARNELL WATSON,
THOMAS Ewart,
J. G. HOPKIRK,
ALEXANDER HARRIS,
THOMAS MILLER,
AND J. KEAN,
JOHN THATCHER,
J. S. MORE
ALEXANDER ROBERTSON; for Mrs. D. Robertson’s Trustees.

DAVID HAY,
A. GILLOCHRIE, M.D.,
J. A. ROBERTSON.

In consequence of due notice not having been given for the last General Meeting, held on Friday the 22nd day of December last, and of the foregoing Requisition, the Proprietors of Queen Street Gardens, videotest, the gardens lying between Queen Street and Abercromby Place, denominated the Eastern District, are hereby required to meet in the Garden House, on Monday the 5th day of January current, at 2 o’clock, P.M.

WILLIAM BELL, Clerk.

Edinburgh, 10, Queen Street, 13th January, 1827.

There are 124 proprietors, of whom only 24 gave their vote at the last meeting, and of these 17 voted on each side.

FIGURE 122 : Notice regarding the west wall, Queen Street East (footman 17 January 1827)

REGULATIONS

To be Observed by the Proprietors of Queen Street Gardens.

1. Shares may be let on lease for a period not exceeding one year, and at a rent not less than L.2, the lessee paying the annual assessment for the repairs, &c. of the Gardens, and agreeing to conform to the other Regulations, and entering the lease in the transfer-book. The term of entry must be at Whitsunday in every year.

2. Each Proprietor, or his Tenant, shall have access to the Gardens at all times of the day, until one hour after sunset, when the Gardens will be shut up by the Gardener.

3. Each Proprietor shall be furnished with two Keys, having his name engraved upon them. Tenants of shares shall also be furnished with two Keys.

4. In case of a Key being lost, application for another (if required) must be made to the Cashier. Those procured in any other way will be considered as forgeries. The price of Keys is 3d. each.

5. Private Doors, which now communicate with these Gardens, may continue to be used by the Proprietors, upon condition of a Lock, which can be made fast by the Gardener, with his Master-Key, being put upon each door.

6. No Person shall lend or transfer his Key to Non-Subscribers upon any account, nor shall any one be entitled to lend them even to a Subscriber, though he himself shall be out of the Town.

7. Access to the Gardens shall not be given to the inmates of any house or other lodging-house, or to the members of any club, upon or in respect of any share belonging to the hotel or lodging-house-keeper, club-master, or any other person, or to the proprietors of any house occupied in such way.

8. No Servant shall on any account be allowed to enter the Gardens, except Female Servants having the charge of, and bringing with them children of persons entitled to access to the Gardens.

9. Proprietors, and Members of their families, may occasionally introduce, but only when along with themselves, Non-Subscribers into the Gardens.

10. Boys shall not be permitted to introduce into the Gardens any of their Companions who are not Sons of Proprietors.

11. No person shall cut, pull, or injure any tree, shrub, or flowers in the Gardens. All children shall carefully keep upon the gravel walks and grass. No clothes shall be permitted to be washed or dried, —no carpets beaten,—nor shall any games, such as slinging or throwing stones, or any hard substance, cricket, golf, foot-ball, bows and arrows, and the like, be allowed. No person shall bring in dogs. Birds’ nests not to be removed.

12. The Commissioners have power to impose Fines, not exceeding L.1, for the infringement of any of the Regulations. These fines shall be recovered by the Gardener, and applied either towards the expense of the management, or be given to the Gardener, as the Commissioners shall appoint, and the Commissioners shall further be entitled to insist for payment of damages, for repairing the injury done to the Gardens.

13. The heads of families shall be responsible for offences committed by their children or servants, and shall be bound to make good all damages done by them, and pay all Fines imposed upon them; and in the event of any children being convicted of a second offence, it shall be in the power of the Commissioners to exclude them from the Gardens for a given time.

14. All Persons labouring under, or lately recovered from, infectious diseases, shall be excluded from the Gardens until the risk of infection shall be certified by a medical gentleman to have ceased. The attention of parents is particularly requested to this rule, which will be strictly enforced by the Gardener.

Besides observing and assisting in enforcing the foregoing Regulations, heads of families are requested to attend to the absolute necessity of abstaining themselves and all times from pulling or cutting a single flower or shrub, as the practice would immediately become general, and destroy every regulation for the management of the place. The younger members of families will take notice, that confidential Servants of Police have been furnished with keys to the Gardens, who are entrusted with carrying all the Regulations into effect. The heads of each family must consider the family key to the Gardens as under their own charge, and must not allow it to go out of their keeping in any way that may admit of a breach of any of the Regulations. Particular care ought also to be taken to prevent keys from being lost, and thus passing into the hands of persons not entitled to access to the Gardens.

By order of the Commissioners.

WILLIAM BELL, Clerk.
10, Queen Street, Edinburgh, 24th July 1827.

FIGURE 123 : Copy of Regulations dated 1827 (Queen Street central records)
Aware of the overgrown state of the garden - which had never benefited from any systematic plan of upkeep, the District Commissioners in 1859 sought the advice of James McNab, Curator of Edinburgh Botanic Garden. His detailed report covered both planting and other aspects which he considered would improve the garden's appearance. McNab's belief that "... a well balanced landscape picture" was best achieved by "... broad spaces of well kept grass, with fine shaped trees standing upon it" - providing both attractive vistas from within and from outside the garden was reflected in his criticisms. To restore the gardens to a less cluttered state McNab recommended the careful removal of several trees, particularly the coarse poplar - originally planted for quick effect, besides many elms, thorns, and other trees in the central area. The elms and plane trees around the outer edges were also noted as requiring attention, being in danger of becoming a "... mass of confusion" destroying both themselves and the evergreen and deciduous shrubs beneath. These trees had been planted in 1837 at the suggestion of Dr Graham, Professor of Botany. Two shrub beds, one in the centre and another in the south west corner were considered better reduced in size: McNab recommending that only the best shrubs be kept and the rest of the ground turfed over. Flower plots likewise were not to be encouraged: their short seasonal display of dahlias and other annuals provided too brief a moment of glory compared to the many months when the borders remained dark, dank and empty.

More generally, McNab put forward proposals to improve both the north and south sides of the garden. The approach from Abercromby Place was neither attractive nor convenient for the garden being considerably lower than street level was reached by a steep flight of steps. In place of these McNab suggested the formation of a limited terrace at 3 or more intervals, close to the level of the outside footpath: pathways could then be made to wind gently down the banks - which were to be grass sown and planted with irregular clumps of shrubs. The gardener's house - now in a deteriorating condition and described by McNab as "... an eyesore and very inconveniently situated" was recommended for
demolition, the site used as the central point on which to build one of the projecting terraces. (68) Rather similar ideas were suggested for the south side - which McNab considered would be enhanced by the creation of a continuous terrace, allowing a broad gravel walk on the upper part alongside Queen Street with the bank gradually tailing out into the lower part of the garden. Such plans were feasible at a time when continuous building work in the New Town required the removal of tons of surplus rubble and earth which builders were only too pleased to dump close by.

The Commissioners decided to concentrate initially on the removal of trees - particularly the poplars and thorns, together with the old decaying shrubs. Between 1859 and 1860 (69) several trees were cut down and further thinning and pruning took place in the Autumn of 1866 all under McNab’s supervision. Some replanting was carried out, and former shrub plots grass seeded. Well pleased with the results of this work McNab was asked to draw up a further report on the garden: (70) this second one which was submitted to the Commissioners in March 1867 commented favourably on the improvements achieved but not surprisingly repeated the earlier recommendations which remained to be acted upon.

McNab’s more radical proposals might once more have been shelved had not a number of other substantial improvements been necessary at about this same time. The gardener’s house was soon to become vacant and because of its poor state was considered unlettable: (71) its appearance still presented "... a most unsightly aspect" and uselessly occupied "... a considerable space of valuable ground in the choicest situation;" the cope and rail along Queen Street and Abercromby Place had become dilapidated and the railing "... so corroded and broken that the garden is insufficiently fenced, and exposed to depredators and intruders"; the lower levels of ground were in need of better drainage, and a new tool house was required. (72) To cope with this substantial programme of work a separate improvement Committee was appointed (73) and their first move was to investigate the possibility of acquiring free supplies of soil for making the terraces suggested by McNab.
It was in connection with this that the architect, Robert Matheson (1808-1877) was approached: he lived at 25 Abercromby Place, directly overlooking the gardens but was not at this stage a shareholder. Employed as surveyor to Her Majesty's Board of Works his design work covered a variety of projects ranging from the new Post Office in Waterloo Place (1861) and the one at Leith (1875), to the Palm House at the Botanic Garden (1858 - which brought him into close contact with James McNab), and the attractive rustic gothic lodge houses in Holyrood Park: his name is also linked briefly with the Charlotte Square gardens (Section 2.3), and with Wester Coates - where as the owner of a small portion of land he was responsible for the layout and development of Grosvenor Crescent, with its central oval shape pleasure garden. Almost immediately Matheson became involved with the East Queen Street gardens and "... most handsomely placed his valuable services" at the disposal of the Committee thereby providing the necessary direction and professional expertise to ensure success. His commitment was further guaranteed when on becoming a shareholder he was promptly elected a District Commissioner in place of the retiring member Dr Lyon Playfair (Professor of Chemistry at the University) in 1868 and then made Convener of the Improvement Committee.

By the end of 1867 several plans had been prepared and estimates received for new railings on the north and south sides, the removal of the gardener's house (the old materials to be re-used for a new tool house), and an offer by a builder to dump earth and rubble in the garden without charge for the construction of the terraces. The Committee were now thinking in terms of a continuous terrace along the Abercromby Place side and had consulted McNab and Matheson for their opinion: both had given general approval although McNab emphasised that to be effective it would have to be of generous proportions - at least 16' (4.88m) broad at the top and made to shape gently into the garden. Such a terrace would mean the loss of several fine trees (mainly elm and lime), and a large number of large evergreen shrubs "... many of them exceedingly beautiful" composed mostly of yew and holly. It was also likely to take about 2 years to complete and McNab expressed his inability to become much involved due to his other commitments; he was at this time exceedingly busy with the construction of a Rock Garden - his last major contribution to the Botanic Garden.

Nothing could be achieved however, without the necessary money, and
funds to hand amounted to £400. This was a healthy reserve but insufficient to finance an ambitious programme of improvements which Matheson had estimated would cost between £900 - £1,000. Certain modifications such as the omission of the north and south terraces might reduce the sum to £600 but this was still more than the money available. An appeal for voluntary subscriptions was therefore launched accompanied by a detailed statement to all the shareholders telling of the various plans under consideration and their likely costs. It met with only moderate success: one fifth of the subscription papers were returned blank and although just under £200 was promised by the rest the greater part of the money was conditional on all the improvements being carried out: only £68 was in fact freely given.

In view of the response the Committee decided to concentrate resources on repairs to the parapet and provision of new railings on the north and south sides, the removal of the gardener's house (and nearby summer house), and the construction of a new tool shed; an estimate by Thomas Tait, Smith and ironmonger for £550 to carry out the whole of this work was consequently accepted. Matheson however remained confident that with careful budgeting funds would still allow a terrace to be formed along the Queen Street side, particularly as free earth and rubble was still available and could be conveniently deposited while sections of the railings were being removed. The rest of the Committee were finally persuaded and the construction of the terrace went ahead with the rest of the improvements and under the direct supervision of Matheson.

Work commenced during the summer months of 1868 and continued until the Spring of the following year. Temporary fencing was put up while repairs were being made to the coping and before the new railing was erected; once the gardener's house was demolished the site was mounded and formed into a new approach with an entrance provided almost opposite to Nelson Street (figs. 119f and 124 a and b). Extra labourers were employed to construct the Queen Street terrace: the passageway leading from Baron Ord's old house into the garden might well have become permanently sealed off by this operation but instead
FIGURE 12: a - d:
General views of the East Queen Street garden - north side
 provision was made to extend the tunnel by building a double arch under the mound and using the space so created as a tool shed.\(^{(87)}\) Matheson’s young assistant at the Board of Works - Hippolyto Blanc (1844-1917)\(^{(88)}\) prepared a plan of the garden showing all the alterations made and this was presented to the Committee in October 1868.\(^{(89)}\) Blanc became further involved with the gardens several years later when he was asked to advise on the drainage of some of the steep walks.\(^{(90)}\)

By 1869 funds were practically exhausted but much had been achieved and the gardens appearance considerably enhanced. Towards the end of that year McNab was consulted once more but for the last time;\(^{(91)}\) on this occasion he suggested the removal of more trees and the planting of new ones, while further areas were earmarked to be grass sown. He also drew attention to the need for a shelter, and recommended the formation of a sloping bank at the north east corner in place of the steep flight of steps. The latter was not carried out but a shelter with verandah was built in 1871 at the north western edge of the garden and provided space for tools and croquet equipment.\(^{(92)}\) A further extensive programme of tree and shrub thinning took place in 1887, and the years immediately following on the advice of Mr Mackenzie of Methven and Son, the nursery firm.\(^{(93)}\) He particularly singled out the thorn and laburnum trees for removal as well as many of the lime which were in a “backgoing condition”; in their place he suggested the planting of Scotch elm, sycamore, oriental plane and white birch. Since then there is no record of any outside advice having been taken about the gardens until the early 1950s and 1960s\(^{(94)}\) when staff from the Royal Botanic Garden, and the City Parks department were consulted.

By then the garden was slowly recovering from the neglect of the war years when it had not only become open to the public but also provided accommodation for air raid shelters, vegetable plots (at the eastern end) and an army ammunition store.\(^{(95)}\) (fig. 125b). Advice from both sources recommended the removal of many of the older trees and the planting of new ones. At the present time there are about 170 mature trees in the gardens consisting mainly of sycamore, elm, ash, lime, hawthorn, birch, holly, beech, yew, horse chestnut, white beam, and some ornamental trees, shrubs and hedges (see figs. 124 and 125 for general views of the garden).
a. Top terrace walk formed in 1860's

b. View of m Jensen hut and toddler play enclosure

d. Temple of Pluto - the gas pressure reducing station constructed in the garden 1951
(Scottish Gas)
When information on the East Queen Street gardens was collated by the researcher in the 1970s no major change or addition to the gardens was found to have taken place since the extensive improvement plan of the 1860s. To have suggested then that an extravaganza in the form of a Temple of Pluto would appear at some future date would not only have sounded improbable but totally absurd. Yet in 1984 such a whimsical folly has emerged at the south west corner of the gardens — and cleverly conceals a gas governor station which the Gas Board found necessary to install in order to regulate the pressure of Town Gas within the city centre. Initially the gardens had been threatened with a structure "... resembling a half buried lock-up garage" (96) and it is greatly to the credit both of the Cockburn Association who convinced the officials of the importance of producing a building complementary to its Georgian surroundings and the Gas Board who responded so imaginatively that such an ingenious and attractive solution was found (fig. 125d).

Management and Upkeep

The 1822 Act of Parliament allowed 12 General Commissioners to be appointed for the Eastern gardens, out of which the District Commissioners directly responsible for managing the gardens were to be chosen. In practice, no distinction has been made between the two and the running of the gardens has tended to devolve on those commissioners (usually between 5 and 6) with the time and interest to become involved. This has proved reasonably satisfactory and many commissioners have contributed many years of dedicated service (97) (sometimes between 20 to 30 years). Alexander Douglas WS, the longstanding and active Clerk of the West Princes Street gardens (Section 2.6) was one of the first commissioners. The first lady to be elected was a Miss Ritson in 1937 (98) and since then women have continued to be represented on the Committee. Meetings are usually held about once or twice a year (these used to take place in the garden house — until demolished in 1868) when the usual business covers such matters as fixing the annual assessment, revisions to the rules and regulations, and any special work required in the gardens.
A paid Clerk is responsible for the day to day administration of the garden - a substantial part of which concerns the collection of assessments, making arrangements for the transfer of shares, and other financial issues. There have only been 8 different Clerks since the gardens were formed in 1814 - the first 3 - William Bell (1814-1843), John Rutherford, senior (1843-1865) and John Rutherford junior (1865-1913) established an impressive and unmatched record of 100 years service between them. In general, the majority of shareholders have shown but slight interest in management matters, and although annual meetings were held in the early days to report on progress, by 1835 the numbers attending had dwindled considerably that they were abandoned. (99)

No further meeting of shareholders appears to have been organised for over 100 years until 1949 (100) but by 1955 the minute books refer once more to poor attendances and again they were discontinued. (101)

Like most of the other New Town gardens the East Queen Street ones enjoyed the benefit of a full-time gardener for the greater part of its history, with additional labouring help as and when necessary. Hours of work were long - commencing at 6.30 a.m. from March until October when the gates were opened (8 a.m. for the rest of the year) until they were locked at night time "... at a reasonable hour after sunset" - due warning being given by the ringing of a bell. To be so completely tied was maybe less of a hardship during the period when the gardener resided on the premises, but no less was demanded of him once he had removed some distance away. His services too were bought comparatively cheaply; wages remained steady throughout the last century so that while the first gardener earned about £40 a year his counterpart in 1900 was receiving only a little more at £60 a year. Although a lot was expected and not all the gardeners were satisfactory, the minute books nevertheless reveal a good and caring relationship between the two sides. Roderick Robertson, for example, the gardener from 1847 to 1860, Kew trained and apprenticed at Scone Palace, was burdened with a "numerous family" and financial debts: on one occasion the Commissioners advanced him a sum of money which they later discharged in place of his annual Christmas bonus. At another time, having heard that he had surrendered an insurance policy on his own and his wife's life, revived
it and paid in addition the following year's premium. (102) A fortunate move as Robertson died 2 years later.

Following the death of another gardener in 1881, the Commissioners decided by way of a trial to have the gardens maintained on a contract basis - an arrangement being made with the nursery firm of Messrs Dicksons, Waterloo Place for a 2 year period. (103) The experiment proved only partly successful mostly because it failed to provide "...the constant supervision necessary to maintain order in the gardens". (104) and consequently the contract was not renewed but another full-time gardener employed instead. In recent years the contract system has once more been reverted to for cost reasons and of necessity standards of care have had to be compromised.

Financial Matters: the shareholding system and other issues

Most of the private amenity gardens have experienced administrative problems of one kind or another during their lifetime but none have had to cope with the complicated and cumbersome shareholding system peculiar to the East Queen Street gardens. It will be remembered that originally 2 forms of shares were introduced: 92 "money shares" costing £40 each (to cover the capital sum required to purchase the ground) and 48 "annual shares" costing £3 each with an additional annual burden of £3 (to meet the annual ground rent of £144) making 140 shares altogether. (105)

From an early period however, the £3 annual payments proved difficult to collect particularly in cases where the owners had left the area or died. In the early days too, the owners of several "money shares" also had the irksome task of arranging the transfer of surplus shares either by selling them outright, or by renting them on a yearly basis. While the 1822 Act of Parliament placed the gardens on a sounder legal footing, matters still remained far from straightforward - and the holding of an annual share remained an unattractive proposition - particularly as other people wishing to make use of the gardens could do so by renting a key from the Commissioners at a lesser cost.

As a result two things tended to happen: in the first place a number of annual shares were forfeited when left unpaid for 3 years or
more and when this occurred the Commissioners found they were only able
to resell them as ordinary shares disburdened of the £3 annual payment.
There was no fixed resale price; some were sold for £10, others for
much less. Secondly, several of the holders of annual shares (and in
many instances these were the trustees of deceased shareholders)
applied to the Commissioners for redemption of the annual due, and
this was agreed to on payment of a lump sum - usually £75. The first
annual share so redeemed was in 1824: by 1865 only 20 out of the original
48 annual shares remained; by the beginning of the present century only
4 annual shares were left, and the last to be bought out was in 1954.
Money from the redemption and resale of shares was treated for a long
time as simple revenue but by 1880(106) the Commissioners decided that
it should be applied to the extinction of the ground rent - payment of
which had in itself caused some problems in the past.(107) Consequently
one of the ground rents (belonging to the trustees of Maxwell Gordon WS)
was bought in 1880 for £648(108) and a further one purchased in 1918
at a cost of £275.(109) The last 3 ground rents have all been
redeemed in recent years under the 1974 Feudal and Conveyancing (Scotland)
Act, as well as the feu duty payable to the Heriot Trust.

The redistribution of surplus shares has also continued to be
cumbersome to operate. For a long time shareholders or their heritors
were obliged to make their own arrangements - but the market was limited for
very often casual users preferred the more straightforward system of
renting a key annually from the Commissioners - and thereby contributing
a useful source of extra income.(110) Eventually the Commissioners
agreed in 1867 to suspend all yearly leases in a bid to encourage
people to buy up the surplus shares, and to take over the responsibility
for letting them out.(111) Since then there have been further periods
when spare shares have tended to accumulate: in 1939 for example, 20
shareholders were wanting to dispose of their shares, and to try and
promote sales a notice was placed in the Scotsman(112) again, in 1953 the
Clerk had a list of 26 proprietors wishing to sell shares, with 13 others
in his hands - mostly belonging to people who had left the district
or who had died.(113) More happily, at the present time all the 140 shares
are taken up, and anyone else wishing to use the garden can rent a
key on an annual basis. The majority of shareholders (two-thirds) live
in Abercromby Place, Nelson Street, Dublin Street and Dundas Street, and the rest are drawn from 21 other streets in the New Town. Whatever the disadvantages of the shareholding system, the eastern gardens have in fact catered for a more widely dispersed group of New Town residents and allowed the rights to the garden to be mostly retained in the hands of private households and families. (114)

Most of the garden's income has been derived from the annual assessments levied on all the shareholders, supplemented by smaller and irregular sums from key rents, the redemption and resale of shares, the sale of fruit (the apple and pear crop of 1823 raised nearly £19) (115) and grass cuttings (useful as cattle feed in the city byres). The Act of Parliament specified that the cost of purchasing the gardens and the expense of enclosing, levelling and laying out should be met by an annual payment not exceeding £2 for each share but that the costs for further upkeep should be assessed by the District Commissioners "... in the same way and by the same proportion". For many years this was interpreted as a £2 upper limit which could not be exceeded. By 1861 this limit had been reached, and rather astonishingly was maintained for the next 60 years. During this period the garden's finances became at times very precarious indeed, and any extraordinary items of expenditure required money to be raised by voluntary subscriptions. (116)

By 1921 however, the £2 assessment was proving wholly inadequate. Expenditure exceeded income, and costs were rising sharply due to increases in the gardeners wages and in the feu duty. To overcome these problems shareholders were asked to contribute a further £1 annually on a voluntary basis (117) and this system continued for several more years. During the second world war and immediately following the garden's finances had once more reached a parlous state. Many shares were up for sale, and by 1948 there was a deficit of over £200. To remedy a desperate situation it was generally agreed to exceed the supposed £2 limit (although never clearly established - and certainly the two other Queen Street gardens never laboured under such a belief) and the assessment was raised to £3.75 with the proviso that it should not exceed £5. (118)
Seventeen years on and the new upper limit was once more found inadequate - particularly to meet such pressing and major items of expenditure as the repainting of the railings. A general meeting of proprietors held in 1964(119) agreed to raise the limit, and subsequent years have seen a gradual increase with the assessment now standing at £26 per annum. But after years of financial struggle the garden's fortunes seem better assured now than at any other time for with the recent addition of the gas governor - the Temple of Pluto - has come payment of a substantial ground rent by the Gas Board(120) an unforeseen bonus which other gardens might well become envious of.

Rules and Regulations, Uses and Abuses

An early set of rules is shown in fig. 123 and comparison with later ones shows remarkably few changes - and those mostly relating to the control of dogs and more vigorous forms of ball play. Football was totally banned until 1955,(121) and then permitted on condition that boots were not worn nor a full-sized football used: now both dogs and football are tolerated "... subject to the discretion of the Commissioners". While the rules governing the individual New Town gardens have all been similar, the Queen Street East ones differ in two respects: first, in the special references to their unique shareholding system, and second, in the provisions required to regulate private access to the gardens by residents in Duke Street whose gardens abut onto the grounds. As mentioned earlier the first Duke Street proprietors negotiated for a small portion of the eastmost garden in 1807, when still in private ownership in order to improve and extend their backland area, and with no thought that the land beyond might one day become a communal pleasure garden. When this came about in 1814 a boundary wall was built at mutual expense between the Duke Street properties and the garden, with openings left in the wall for direct access. The rules relating to this private access have never altered: it is allowed subject to the "pleasure of the Commissioners" provided the proprietors are also shareholders and have suitable locks on their doors.(122)

It was as a recreational space - for walking in, for children's play and as a feature to enhance the neighbourhood that the garden was
first created, and still continues to have meaning. For young children in particular the garden has provided a secure yet stimulating environment, of sufficient size and variations of level, with large trees and shrubs to allow wide space for all kinds of relaxed and imaginative play – probably to a greater extent than many other New Town gardens. This is revealed in such youthful reminiscences as those by the Reverend William Robertson DD (1847-1936) - son of one of the gardeners already referred to; his notes provide a lively and colourful account of children's play which is sadly absent from the more formal issues found recorded in garden minute books. In an article published in the Scotsman (123) during the 1930s he wrote as follows:-

"To the youngsters of the district the gardens were a real joy: nowhere had people to obey the usual notice "Please keep off the grass". Near what may be termed the St. David Street gate they indulged in handball; cricket was forbidden except between 6 and 8 a.m. when no young children were about. Near the chief walk grew a hawthorn as well as an elm, the root of each marking a small heap of forfeits when the youngsters indulged in the game named "French and English". The broad avenue serving as "no man's land", the game consisted in raiding the territory of the enemy and carrying off spoil without being caught".

Trees, whatever the rules, were climbed and the Reverend Robertson described how "... on the branches of a much loved hawthorn the boys made dwellings after the manner of certain heroes", while a "... venerable elm with wide stretching arms", standing close to the western railings was climbed by others in order to catch sight of the soldiers from the Castle marching towards the Firth of Forth en route to the Crimea. A similar sense of freedom, adventure and delight has been equally well captured by Elizabeth Sillar in her recollections of Edinburgh in the 1870s: her family lived in York Place and she and her brother spent many happy hours playing in the Eastern gardens. (124)

More organised forms of sport brought families and friends together during the last century: croquet was popular during the 1860s but later surpassed by tennis - first introduced in 1879 and remaining a well enjoyed summer activity up until the Second World War. There were 4 courts altogether - 2 in the upper east plot, one in the lower east plot, and a fourth in the lowest west plot, but according to a memorial
presented to the Commissioners in 1883 (requesting the removal of some newly planted trees which were interfering with play) the space available was barely sufficient to meet demand.\(^{(125)}\) In 1913 the south east upper plot was properly levelled to make a full sized court at the cost of £27.\(^{(126)}\)

The East Queen Street gardens were also once the scene of a colourful if not stirring ceremony presided over by Sir Walter Scott, in full Highland attire. Scott had given the official welcome to King George IV when he landed at Leith on 15th August 1822 to begin his long awaited visit to Edinburgh. Early the next morning (at 6 a.m.) Sir Walter "... arrayed in the Garb of old Gaul" (which he had of the Campbell tartan in memory of one of his great grandmothers) was attending a muster of these gallant Celts in the Queen Street Gardens, where he had the honour of presenting them with a set of colours, and delivered a suitable exhortation, crowned with their rapturous applause."\(^{(127)}\)

The Celtic Society "... a flourishing and respectable institution"\(^{(128)}\) took part in the various processions connected with the King's visit, and no doubt the occasion in the gardens was witnessed by many spectators in spite of the earliness of the hour. At other times the gardens have been used by outside groups - for guide meetings, private schools and playgroups, for the training of signallers attached to the Edinburgh Royal Garrison Artillery\(^{(129)}\) (1906-1910), and during the Second World War a battalion of Home Guards held weekly practises in the gardens.\(^{(130)}\)

Few instances of wanton damage are recorded in the Minute books. Occasionally "undesirable mischief" by boys "... having right of access, and still more by others having no such rights introduced by them" caused concern and this led on one occasion in 1828 to an offender being expelled for one month and the assistance of "Captain Brown late of the Police" being called upon.\(^{(131)}\) Reasonable protection was afforded by having a resident gardener but the incidence of vandalism or misuse does not appear to have changed significantly over the years. At times, when overnight damage was discovered the Police were usually informed; they were in fact given a set of keys and asked to patrol the grounds occasionally.
Dogs rather than mischievous boys seem to have given rise to more complaints, particularly after the erection of new railings in 1869 which allowed sufficient space for strays to squeeze through. Cats - rather as in the West Princes Street gardens were also something of a menace in the early days and came up for discussion at one of the general meetings of proprietors held in 1829. On this occasion the worthy James Pillans (1779-1864), Professor of Humanity, and staunch promoter of educational reform who lived at 22 Abercromby Place made the suggestion that the gardener be "... furnished with a terrier or two in order to exclude cats, or that cats should be killed by some other method". The matter was remitted to the Commissioners, who were asked to consider any other means by which birds nests might be protected.

The tossing of litter from the street has been a constant nuisance over the years; as far back as 1831 for example, the same Professor Pillans made a request that one of the gardener's children be sent round every morning "... to pick up the rubbish thrown over such as pieces of paper, stones, tin canisters etc". When part of Queen Street alongside the gardens was used as a bus stance during the 1950s, the bus company concerned contributed £2 per week towards the cost of clearing the extra litter from the gardens; considerable quantities of wind blown paper still collect, together with bottles and canisters tossed over by thoughtless passers by. A far worse act of vandalism however, which fortunately came to naught due to instant and overwhelming opposition was a proposal made in 1970 to build a large underground car park beneath the Queen Street gardens (the East Princes Street gardens had been similarly threatened in the 1950s - see Section 2.5). Initially the idea had been enthusiastically promoted by a member of the Town Council, and further developed by a member of the public - one Mr George Cunningham who considered the "lifting" of the gardens to a level with Queen Street a "simple engineering feat". On this environmental issue support for the Queen Street gardens as "irreplaceable" and "sacrosanct" spaces was united - for as one correspondent in the Scotsman pointed out "... only when outrageous suggestions are submitted do Edinburgh citizens react in a positive manner".
"Wood's Farm, whose cattle pond now ornaments Queen Street Gardens was then in its pure integrity as a Scotch farm steading and the fine spring well which bubbled forth close to the court is now hid in a cellar in Heriot Row. I well recollect the venerable figure of the old farmer, father to Dr. Alex Wood of celebrated memory, stepping about his fields and chiding us boys in our amusement of navigating his pond on an old door, of which shipwreck was the invariable result accompanied with a ducking in the pond. Escaping from one of these disasters with my companions General Ainslie and his brother, we had repaired to the shelter of a saw pit to scrub off the mud from our clothes, and have a leaping match among the logs of wood where I had the misfortune to break my arm." James Skene (1)

Skene's boyhood adventures on Farmer Wood's pond took place sometime after 1783 when as an 8 year old he came with his widowed mother, and family to live in Edinburgh: while trespassing on the farmer's land and delighting in muddy play Skene could not have guessed that one day, nearly 40 years later he would be asked to design the pleasure gardens along this stretch of Queen Street. In 1769 the ground within this central area, extending to some 7 acres (2.8 ha) or so had been leased to the Town Council (2) probably to allow space for masons and carpenters to lay their material on - rather as happened in the centre of Drummond Place and East Princes Street. Skene's description of the saw pits would certainly seem to bear this out. In 1785 however, the Town Council relinquished their interest in the ground when the lease (sub tack) was taken over by Sir James Hunter Blair, John Brough, and Adam Rolland; (3) a few months later in 1786 the George Heriot Trust as feu superiors granted charters to these individuals restricting the use of the land for garden or park purposes (4) (refer Section 3.2). Rolland's portion eventually went to make up the western side of the Queen Street East gardens, while Brough's and Blair's share - some 4.25 acres (1.7 ha) together formed the Central Queen Street gardens (5) (refer fig. 111).

Queen Street at this time was progressing steadily westwards and attracting new residents: the Hunter Blair family for instance, were still living in George Street when they acquired the lease to the garden...
a. Blairquhart, Ayrshire 1795; Sir James with his wife and children
(portrait by David Allan from Scottish painters at home and abroad
David and Francina Irvin)

b. Sir James Hunter Blair (lays Portraits)

TO BE SOLD
By Auction, on Wednesday the 6th April 1814, at
two o'clock afternoon, within the Royal Exchange
Coffeehouse, if not previously disposed of by private
bargain.

THAT FIELD, bounded by QUEEN
STREET on the south, and HENIOT ROW
on the north, lying between Hanover Street and Frede-
rick Street.
The Field consists of two acres, one rood, and thirty
falls; and from its very central situation, is applicable
to a great variety of useful purposes. Being out of
lease at Whitsunday, possession may be had at short
term.
For further particulars apply to John Bell, W. S.
56 Heriot Row.

FIGURE 127:
Notice of the sale of Blair's uncultivated garden plot -
Queen Street central gardens
(Edinburgh Evening Courant 17 March 1814)

3. Sir James Hunter Blair (laid Portraits)
ground. Sir James (1747-1797) was then at the peak of his career, having succeeded David Steuart as Lord Provost in 1784 (fig. 126 a and b) (whereupon he resigned his seat in Parliament having first been elected in 1781, and re-elected in 1784); he was also joint head of one of the most important private banking firms in Scotland. In spite of his short life his achievements were outstanding. Not only successful in business and public life (while Lord Provost he promoted several important projects including the rebuilding of the University, and the construction of the South Bridge) he also carried out extensive agricultural improvements to his wife's family estate at Dunskey in Wigtownshire, and practically rebuilt the town of Port Patrick. But for his premature death this zest for improvement would surely have been applied to his newly acquired garden plot in Queen Street.

The bereaved family moved to Queen Street, first to No. 7, a house situated towards the eastern end and a little distant from the garden, later to No. 10, and finally in 1796 to No. 34, practically opposite the garden. They remained undeveloped apart from being enclosed by a stone wall. This was subsequently damaged on the north and eastern sides when the road along Heriot Row and the extension of Hanover Street were constructed. In 1804 the Hunter-Blair family left Queen Street: Sir John the eldest son who inherited the title to the garden ground had previously bought the mansion house together with 14 acres of land (5.6 ha) at Powderhall, and lived there from 1795 until his early death in 1800. His successor was a younger brother, Sir David Hunter-Blair of Brownshill, who with his partner John Bruce held the appointment of printer and stationer to George IV, their offices being in Blair Street.

While of no direct use to himself Sir David nevertheless retained possession of his garden in Queen Street and leased it out for a number of years. In 1814 he tried to sell it. Nothing had been done to cultivate the land and it was advertised simply as a field which: "from its very centrical situation is applicable for a great variety of useful purposes" (fig. 127). The ground was not sold but re-let and used
(probably as before) as a clothes washing and drying area, rather as the south side of the East Princes Street gardens had been bedecked with stretches of washing lines and posts, and laid out washing in the early years of the nineteenth century (see fig. 69c with fig. 128d). The dejected and scruffy appearance of Blair's field at this period left a lasting impression on the young Elizabeth Grant who with her family (the Grants of Rothiemurchus) had moved to their temporary new residence at 4 Heriot Row in 1814; in her book written some years later she described the house as "warm and cheerful", the general situation as pleasant, but the outlook alas, was most disagreeable for ...

"There were no prettily laid out gardens then between Heriot Row and Queen Street, only a long strip of unsightly grass, a green, fenced by an untidy wall and abandoned to the use of the washerwomen. It was an ugly prospect, and we were daily indulged with it, the cleanliness of the inhabitants being so excessive that, except on Sundays and "Saturdays at e'en", squares of bleaching linens and lines of drying (ditto) were ever before our eyes". (12)

This unattractive view was shared by everyone living in the eastern section of Heriot Row but because of the steep fall of land from south to north they were more exposed to it than the neighbouring proprietors in Queen Street. All the paraphernalia associated with washing - posts, lines and water pumps can be seen in Kirkwood's plan and elevation of 1819 (fig. 128d) together with the outline of Wood's farm pond. It is not too difficult to imagine the irritation if not embarrassment that proprietors must have felt when surveying the scene from their windows - particularly as the main public rooms were all to the front. Whoever held the tenancy was however, acting within his rights and presumably made a small income by hiring out the space to washerwomen.

Matters did not improve with time. In 1820 Sir David Hunter-Blair finally succeeded in selling his land for the considerable sum of £1,450, the purchaser being a Mr James Webster, builder and late "plasterer in Edinburgh". (13) Webster might well have been the former tenant, and he certainly seems to have had an interest in the adjoining area for 2 years earlier he had approached the Heriot Trust with an offer to rent the waste ground next to Blair's field for 5 guineas a year. (14) No record of an Edinburgh address can be traced for Webster and the indications are that he bought the land more as a speculative
FIGURE 128 a–h:
Various plans of the Queen Street central gardens
measure rather than for any personal use: indeed, very shortly afterwards he subleased the land to Robert Winter, flesher (butcher) who had premises close by at 11 Jamaica Street. With a rent of £100 a year Webster was receiving a good rate of return on the money invested. Although the same feuing conditions continued to apply, the agreement drawn up stated in addition that the new tenant "... shall not plough or dig upon the turf ... but shall keep the same in good order and condition during the currency of the lease ... and likewise ... keep the posts at present placed in said ground for the purpose of drying clothes and the fences and gates ... in perfect good order and condition". (15) Reference to the clothes drying posts rather suggests Webster's responsibility for their provision and his approbation for such a usage. Certainly the practice of clothes drying continued but Winter's main use of the ground was for keeping livestock. In addition to a piggery, a cow byre was erected, and a small house built for himself. (16)

Surrounding proprietors must have viewed these developments with increasing dismay and concern. Here was an important and large area of open space intended as a garden but being completely misused; and even more so causing offence not only because of its untidy appearance but also from the smell of pigs, and the traffic of animals and washwomen to and from the ground. Were however, the proprietors so affected taking any action at all? The small portion of land next to Blair's field provides the first real clue, and reveals that the earliest attempts to form communal pleasure gardens along Queen Street were in fact taken by residents living in the central part and from a fairly early date.

It will be remembered that this other strip was purchased by John Brough, a builder (17) from the Heriot Trust in 1782. Brough took a number of feus in the New Town, including ones in Princes Street, George Street, Rose and Thistle Street, and Queen Street, and he probably acquired the Queen Street plot as a convenient storage and preparation space for his materials. (18) His business did not however prosper, and by 1788 he was bankrupt. Part of his sequestered estate was advertised for sale in October of that year including his ground in Queen Street at an upset price of £40 (fig. 129); it was subsequently
sold in 2 portions, one to Alexander Sheriff, a wine merchant in Leith, and the other to Alexander Wight WS, who lived at 23 South Hanover Street. The latter may well have intended forming a private garden not far distant from his house, but the ground continued to be left uncultivated (refer Ainslie’s Plan 1804 fig. 128a); and in 1803 Sheriff’s portion on the west side was readvertised for sale. This fact comes to light in the Heriot Trust minute books, for the Trust were apparently interested to purchase the ground "... if it could be obtained at a reasonable price" in order to make the continuation of Frederick Street (the stretch between Queen Street and Heriot Row) "... of a proper breadth". Negotiations were successfully concluded and the Trust bought the land for £200, subsequently adding the other portion which Alexander Wight agreed to sell to them for £150. Thus after an interval of 18 years the Trust in 1804 once more took possession of part of the Queen Street central garden area - but solely for road widening purposes; the ground itself remained neglected and overgrown (fig. 128b).

By 1809 most of the eastern section of Heriot Row was complete, and the new residents roused by the unattractive waste land in front of their houses decided to take action. In the summer of that year they approached the Heriot Trust with the proposition to form a pleasure garden provided the Trust was willing to feu the ground to them. The request was sympathetically received and in January 1810 the Committee to which the matter had been remitted recommended that a feu should be granted for this purpose - on payment of £427, together with a yearly feu duty. It was also required that the feuars would erect and maintain "... a sufficient retaining and parapet wall on the west side for the security of the road and safety of the public". Subsequently a draft charter was drawn up in favour of "... John Ferrier WS and others", but the move proved premature. Those interested in the venture were unable to raise sufficient money; not everyone it appeared shared the same enthusiasm for acquiring a small wilderness area when the future of the much larger adjoining space was so uncertain. Pleasure gardens were still something of a novelty and unknown quantity - only 2 such existed in the New Town - St. Andrew Square and Charlotte Square - the latter only having been recently completed after years of
struggle and delay. First attempts to set up the West Princes Street gardens a little later on met with similar setbacks.

Further moves to form a pleasure garden in the central area

Disappointed at their lack of success the matter was allowed to drift, and not until 3 years later was a fresh attempt made to secure the land. In 1813, two approaches were made to the Heriot Trust, the first by James Horne WS, a resident in Heriot Row offering to lease 

"... the ground lying waste in front of East Heriot Row" for 10 years

"... at a reasonable rate"; and the second by John Mowbray WS (in succession to Ferrier now removed to 12 York Place) on behalf of the other proprietors. Mowbray's letter, fully recorded in the Trust's minutes conveys the feuars' anxiety to acquire the land but on more manageable terms. The letter, dated 2nd December 1813 ran as follows:

"Sir, In these times I found it impossible to get all the parties concerned in the western area, between Queen Street and Heriot Row, to agree to advance their proportion of the sum necessary for the purchase of that area, from the Governors of Heriot's Hospital and for enclosing it, but I have little doubt that they will at once agree to pay their proportion of the yearly feu duty, supposing the price converted into an annual payment.

Instead therefore of paying the principal sum of £427.18.2d. and 4 Bolls, 3 firlots and 3 pecks of Barley mentioned in the draft of the Charter by the Governors in favour of Messrs Ferrier and others, if the Governors chuse to accept of a yearly feu duty of £25 and the fairs price of 4 Bolls, 3 firlots and 3 pecks of barley, I have little doubt, that the transaction will be immediately closed.

I think it right to add that besides this yearly feu duty, which altogether, will not amount to less than £35 for a piece of ground which cannot be built upon, it will cost the parties concerned about £2,000 to make a proper enclosing wall and railing and retaining wall on the west side of the area which it is at present incumbent on the Hospital to make, and this beside all the expense of levelling and ornamenting this piece of ground which forms, on one side the main entry to all the ground belonging to the hospital, which is as yet to be feued. Under all these circumstances I trust that the Governors of the hospital will be decidedly of opinion that it is very much in their interest that the area in question should be under the charge of the proprietors of Heriot Row and Queen Street". (25)
A further request was made that the draft charter be also modified to allow a small gardener's house to be built. Although under the circumstances the feuars plea was reasonable the Governors took no action deciding perhaps that it was not in their interests to start tampering with what was to them a perfectly adequate and straightforward charter.

By now more ambitious and pressing plans were afoot to the east for the formation of a considerably larger area of pleasure garden between Queen Street and Abercromby Place (Section 3.3). The substantial sum of money necessary for this project (well over £5,000) required a major fund raising campaign, involving several of those living in Heriot Row. All attention became focussed to this end so that support for the earlier, more modest central project came virtually to a standstill. The efforts of the East Heriot Row feuars must have appeared singularly luckless; they could not have foreseen however, that the formation of the East Queen Street gardens was in its turn to provide the key for the setting up of the other two pleasure gardens along Queen Street.

Not until the spring of 1819 - 5 years later did matters spring back to life prompted on this occasion by the Heriot Trust having received 3 applications to feu their strip of land. Two were from builders - Robert Watson of Dublin Street, and James Webster (formerly described as a plasterer) and the same individual who had offered to rent the ground one year before and who was now owner of Blair's field to the east. The third was from Mr Cuningham WS (fig 133), a newcomer to Heriot Row whose house at No. 14 overlooked the space. Spurred by the news of the other 2 contenders, and anxious to forestall any other undesirable developments he did all in his power from this time onwards to promote the formation of the central pleasure gardens. Charles Cuningham (1775-1856) although by nature "... very indifferent about business" was comfortably well off; his family connections had secured for him the post of City Clerk in 1807 (along with John Dundas, who in turn was succeeded in 1816 by Cuningham's son-in-law, Carlyle Bell), and also much of his firms business. He was not a forceful personality but rather a "... very good natured, kindly man", gentle, scholarly, and conscientious.
The 3 applications were considered and may be to ensure total fairness the Trust decided to put the land up for sale by public auction. (30) (fig. 130). It was however, subsequently cancelled as in the meantime both Mr Cuningham and Mr Watson submitted firm offers for the land. But the Governors still deferred coming to any immediate decision and instead asked their Superintendent of Works, Thomas Bonnar to design a gardener's house "suited to the ground". (31) Maybe this step was thought a necessary safeguard should either party have wanted to take advantage of the original feuing conditions which allowed provision for such a building. (32) Bonnar's plan and elevation (fig. 131), dated 6th August 1819 shows an attractive single storey dwelling in the classical style, rather similar to the one later built by the Trust in the London Road gardens.

More weeks slipped by but finally "... after deliberating at considerable lengths on the subject" the Governors agreed, in February 1820, to accept Cuningham's offer - which was to feu the ground on the same terms as those drawn up in the 1810 draft charter (in favour of John Ferrier WS and others). Cuningham's offer had been stated in a letter to the Trust, dated 18th July 1819 (33) which from its wording shows that while the initiative rested with him he was clearly acting in the interests of the other feuars: - "... some measures have been taken towards acquiring the ground belonging to Sir David Hunter-Blair but it is quite obvious that no general plan for improving this ground can be accomplished unless the feuars have the command of the area belonging to the Hospital also". Had Cuningham known then that Blair's field, far from being secured by the feuars (and presumably inability to raise money sufficiently quickly had proved again the stumbling block) was instead to be bought by one of the contenders for his own land (who certainly had no interest in decorative garden space) he might well have shied from his commitment.

Fortunately perhaps, he did not know: the transaction went ahead and within 2 weeks of acquiring the land Cuningham had had printed a circular which was distributed to all the proprietors of East Heriot Row, and Queen Street (between Hanover and Frederick Street).
YSER for 1788.

To be SOLD by public roup, within the house of Patrick Pitcairn, Wintzer, Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 16th November next, at six o'clock in the evening.

THE following HERITABLE SUBJECTS, being part of the squatted estate of John Broug, Upholsterer and Builder in Edinburgh.

SOUTH BRIDGE STREET.

A Large WAREROOM, 28 feet by 16 feet or thereby, entering from Bridge Street, a few steps down, with a large Room off it, having two fire-places, and so could be turned into two apartments—There are several good chimneys and cellars belonging to the premises.

A DWELLING-HOUSE, having an entry both from Bridge Street and Niddry Street, consisting of a kitchen and two rooms, thirteen steps down from Niddry Street. Three apartments from steps up from fail street, besides a large dark Room, 10 feet by 22, with a large vault, 22 feet by 19, and a cellar 15 feet 3 inches.

This house would answer very well for a shop and tavern.

A first floor and back SHOP, with a fireplace in each, entering from Niddry Street, with a cellar.

Another floor and back SHOP, with a fire-place in each, also entering from fail street, with a cellar.

A Small HOUSE, entering from Niddry Street, consisting of three apartments, with fire places in two of them, and a cellar perfectly polished by Mr. Fuglie.

Another Small HOUSE, containing two apartments, with fire places in each, and a cellar perfectly polished by Mr. McDonell.

REGISTER STREET.

A Large ROOM in Register Street, five doors up stairs, 30 feet by 22 or thereby, polished by the said John Brough, with the Writing-room off the same.—Upset price 100l.

Another WAREROOM in said street, second door up stairs, perfectly polished by Mr. Naismith painter.—Rent 26l. 16s.—Upset price 150l.

A Large ROOM in said street, presently used as an Episcopal Chapel, 42 feet long, and to the extent of 26 feet of the length, 32 feet broad, and for the residue of the length, 16 feet broad within walls, with the small Room off the same, about 9 feet square.—Rent 55.—Upset price 200l.

N. B. The purchaser of this Chapel will not enter to the rents until Martinmas 1796.

GROUND IN QUEN STREET.

A Large AREA, lying on the north side of Queen Street, consisting of about an acre of ground, bounded by the feu of the late Sir James Hunter Blair on the east, and the new street in the line of Frederick Street on the west.—Upset price 40l.

GEORGE STREET.

An AREA, lying on the south side of, and facing George Street, consisting of 63 feet front by 150 feet deep, immediately to the rear of the feu of Mr. James Hill mansion.

For particulars, application may be made to Mr. Stead, the Surveyor in Edinburgh, or James Jollis, Writer to the signet, trustees of the estate.

A N D

On Tuesday the 11th November next, there will be sold by public roup, the Whole STOCK OF GOODS, without reserve, belonging to the said John Brough, consisting of a great variety of Upholstery and Cabaret articles.

They will be exposed in lots on very moderate terms.

The place of sale, and other particulars, will be afterwards advertised.

FIGURE 129: John Brough's Queen Street land advertised for sale (Edinburgh Advertiser 28 October 1788)

FIGURE 130: John Brough's former garden ground advertised for sale by the Heriot Trust (Edinburgh Advertiser 1 July 1819)

FIGURE 131: Thomas Bonnar's plan for a gardener's house, dated 6 August 1819 and considered for John Brough's former garden ground (1826)
This circular, (fig. 132 a and b) written in almost apologetic terms explained, as he had done so earlier to the Heriot Trust his motives for acquiring the land: "... to forward any general plan for improving the whole ground between Heriot Row and Queen Street which the proprietors interested may deem it advisable to carry forward", and offering to make over the ground to the feuers at any time during the following 12 months on payment of his expenses. Failing this the space would be enclosed and turned to "some beneficial purpose on my own account". Cunningham's appeal was unsuccessful - a fact he must have sensed early on for within a few months he was having a wall built around his ground: (35) this of course he was required to do in terms of the agreement with the Trust but was also essential to prevent a popular shortcut which had become established across the ground (fig. 128d).

By now many proprietors must have despaired at the several lost opportunities for forming a communal pleasure garden between East Heriot Row and the centre of Queen Street, even fearing that such an aim might never be realised; and while there were good prospects of Cunningham's plot of land being improved, this was certainly not the case for Blair's field with its blossoming population of cows, pigs, byres and shacks. On the other hand events had proved that the only real hope for the future rested with some form of legal sanction which would give powers for the ground to be taken over and maintained as a communal garden at the expense of all the residents overlooking it.

The opportunity for such a move came almost fortuitously as a result of the intractable administrative and financial difficulties experienced since 1816 by the now well established Queen Street gardens between Abercromby Place and Queen Street. Details of these difficulties have been well documented elsewhere (Section 3.2 and 3): suffice it to say that their Clerk and Management Committee agreed that the only possible remedy was to obtain a private Act of Parliament, similar to the one governing the West Princes Street gardens whereby a proper legal framework could be established. Many of the Queen Street garden shareholders came from Heriot Row and other parts of Queen Street, and under their
Circular to the Proprietors of East Heriot Row, and of Queen Street, between Hanover Street and Frederick Street.

14, Heriot Row, Edinburgh, 20th February 1820.

I take the liberty of enclosing a Copy of an Act of the Governors of George Heriot's Hospital, dated the 18th instant, accepting of an offer made to them by me on the 8th day of July 1810, for a Feu of the vacant Area lying to the west of that belonging to Sir David Hunter Blair, between Heriot Row and Queen Street. From the terms of my letter making this offer, you will observe that I acted under no authority from the other feuars, and consequently have no right to ask them to relieve me of the bargain. My view, however, in engaging in this matter being to forward any general plan for improving the whole ground between Heriot Row and Queen Street, which the proprietors interested may deem it advisable to carry forward, I shall hold myself bound, at any time between and Martinmas next, to make over to them this piece of ground, on my advance being replaced.

It is impossible in the mean time to make any use of the area, without incurring the expense of inclosures which might not suit a general plan; but if no general plan of improvement is matured between and Martinmas next, I shall then consider myself at liberty to turn it to some beneficial purpose on my own account.

I am,

[Charles Cunningham, U.S.]

Your most obedient humble Servant,

ACT of the Governors of George Heriot's Hospital, accepting of Mr. Charles Cunningham's Offer for Piece of Ground in Front of Heriot Row.

Heriot's Hospital, the eighteenth day of February, eighteen hundred and twenty.

Wrote the day read Report, by the ordinary Committee, of the following terms: "Treasure's Office, 12th July 1819. The Committee having taken under their consideration the Report of former Committee relative to the disposal of the piece of Ground between Queen Street and Heriot Row, immediately to the east of the road between Frederick Street and Howe Street, and also, letter from Mr. Charles Cunningham, W.S. of the 8th, and letter from Mr. Robert Watson, Builder, of the 12th days of July current, making offer by private bargain; and having also considered the restriction and servitude contained in the Charter granted by the Governors to John Bevan, in 1785, of said ground, the Committee, after deliberating at considerable length on the subject, agreed:

1. to procure the offers for the Governor for their consideration; and, in the mean time, directed the clerk to send notice to the Exchange Coffee-house, that the sale was not to proceed on Wednesday next, as advertised.

Which Report, and offers therein referred to, having been considered by the Governors, and after deliberating at considerable length on the subject, they agreed to accept of the offer made by Mr. Cunningham, which is addressed to the Clerk, and of the following terms: Edinburgh, 18th July 1819. Dear Sir,—As one of the feuars of the Hospital in Heriot Row, I formerly took the liberty of addressing a letter to you, relative to the area between East Heriot Row and Queen Street, which, I see, is now advertised for sale on the 14th, unless previously disposed of by private bargain. Since the date of my last letter, some measures have been taken towards acquiring the ground belonging to Sir David Hunter Blair; but it is quite obvious that no general plan of improving this ground can be accomplished, unless the feuars have the command of the area belonging to the Hospital also. Under this impression, and that the Governors would prefer the forwarding of such a plan to disposing of the area otherwise, I hereby make offer to take the said area on the terms on which the Governors agreed, by their act of council, 32nd January 1810, to dispose of it to the feuar, namely, to pay of purchase-money £1477.16.s. and of annual feu-duty, 4 bolls, 3 sitches, and 2 pecks barley; to carry to the highest star of Midlothian; and doubling the same at the entry of heirs and singular successors; the price to be payable in one payment.

I understand the restrictions are to be the same as those contained in the charter granted to Bevan in 1785, and that the purchaser is to relieve the Governors of every obligation incumbent on them as to including and maintaining the inclosures of said area. I am, etc.

(Signed) "C. Cunningham.

Extracted this and the four preceding pages, from the Records of George Heriot's Hospital, by (Signed) John McRitchie, Clerk.

FIGURE 130 a & b: Circular written by Charles Cunningham to surrounding proprietors 1820 (EFL)

FIGURE 133: Portrait of Charles Cunningham, City Clerk (Crombies, Modern Athenians)
representation the proposal was further extended to include provision for forming pleasure gardens along the rest of Queen Street in place of the several fragmented strips of space all privately owned. The Committee formed to draft a suitable bill, consisted amongst others of 2 residents in East Heriot Row - John Cay (1790-1865) advocate, and Donald Horne WS (1787-1870) both of whom subsequently played an active role in the running of the Central gardens after they were set up under the 1822 Act of Parliament.

Progress following the passing of the 1822 Act of Parliament

After years of abortive effort the creation of the central pleasure gardens once the Act was passed must have seemed both sudden and swift. Towards the end of June 1822 the 3 districts (east, central and west) making up the whole of the Queen Street garden area were established, with the central or middle district composed of houses in East Heriot Row and those in Queen Street between Hanover and Frederick Street.

The 6 new district Commissioners became the first Management Committee: apart from one they were all legal gentlemen, and 2 were already familiar names - Charles Cuningham and James Cay. Cay was appointed convener and his close association with the gardens continued up until 1846 when he left the area: his major contribution was acknowledged by the presentation on departure of an honorary free key to the grounds. Donald Horne WS (17 Heriot Row) became the first Clerk and cashier - and generously provided his services without charge during the 14 years in the post.

The task immediately facing the Commissioners was the purchase of the 2 portions of land making up the central area. No difficulties were encountered over the western strip, which Cuningham offered to sell for £736, a price which covered his purchase cost in 1820, the expense of enclosure, together with interest up to February 1822. James Webster, the owner of Blair's old field to the east proved less tractable and practically the whole of July was spent negotiating with him and his agents. Although Webster had paid £1,450 for the land 2 years before he now considered it worth as much as £3,000, and was therefore
very disdainful of the offer made by the Commissioners for £1,750. A shrewd opportunist, out for what he could get, and prepared to fight for it - the Commissioners reacted by putting on an equally hard front, and even threatened legal action if their offer was declined on grounds that the land was being misused in terms of the feu charter.

Webster reduced the price to £2,500, then to £2,100, and after further bargaining he finally agreed to accept £2,000. He was not entirely satisfied with this, as his agent made clear in a letter to the Commissioners "... He thinks it very hard that so wealthy a body as your constituents, and to whom £100 can be of little consequence should after he had reduced his demands seek still further to reduce them to £2,000". Nevertheless, Webster's profit was still substantial and he had little to gain by prevaricating. The deal concluded, Mr Horne the Clerk was asked to order the removal of the piggery, and to come to some arrangement with Webster's tenant "... to prevent any clothes from being hung up during his Majesty's visit to this city".

July 1822 was a busy month in other ways - the last before the summer recess when most of the Committee would have foresaken Edinburgh for their country retreats. Effective protest was mobilised against the appearance of a Hackney coach stand in East Heriot Row, contact was made with the western district Commissioners to discuss what method of assessment should be adopted (the police rating list was subsequently chosen as providing the simplest and fairest basis - later replaced by the City's rating list), and preliminary steps were taken to obtain plans for laying out and enclosing the grounds. Eagle and Henderson, the well established Edinburgh nursery and seed firm were asked to "... furnish a plan and estimate of the manner in which the grounds should be levelled and embellished; keeping in view that at some future period it may, if practicable be resolved on to communicate the whole gardens by tunnels under the streets leading from Hanover and Frederick Streets": while Thomas Brown, the City Superintendent of Works was requested to supply designs and cost details for a surrounding wall and railing "... in a style the same or similar to Drummond Place". In the middle of the month a general meeting of all the proprietors was organised mainly to seek their approval on the various transactions
relating to the purchase of the ground. Although well advertised, it was but poorly attended - 8 people being present - a foretaste of the level of support to be generally expected.

It was not until nearly the end of November before all the Commissioners met together again, and the detailed arrangements for forming the ground into pleasure gardens resumed in earnest. By then an agreement had been reached with Robert Winter whereby his tenancy of Blair's field was allowed to continue until the following May provided full access was granted for the purpose of enclosing, levelling and trenching the ground. His half yearly rent was accordingly reduced from £50 to £30. Winter was also given permission to dry clothes on such part of the whole grounds (including the field purchased from Mr Cunningham) as may not be cut up in carrying on the improvements; he was however, forbidden to let cows or other animals roam loose.

Thomas Brown's estimate was also now to hand and put at around £900 (£650 for enclosing the Heriot Row and Queen Street sides, and £250 for the other 2 sides): a sum which must have worried the Commissioners a little for they decided to concentrate initially on the Queen Street and Heriot Row sides, and for 3 of their members - Messrs Gordon, Gay and Currie "... to examine different enclosures of that kind about town and report back".

Little else could be accomplished until the ground was properly secured by enclosure, a point stressed by Alexander Henderson, the Manager of the nursery firm approached when he told the Commissioners that it would be "... premature or even impossible to give such a plan" before this was achieved. Henderson, of course may have been playing for time, as he was extremely busy at this stage completing the contract for the laying out of the West Princes Street gardens (Section 2.6). Undeterred however, the Commissioners enthusiasm remained undaunted, and the garden minutes go on to record that -

"Being aware of the good taste of Mr Skene of Rubislaw in such matters, and of the great benefit derived by the Commissioners of the Princes Street grounds, and of the Eastern District of these gardens from Mr Skene's directions, they are extremely desirous of availing themselves of his superior judgement, and therefore resolve before going on with this part of the work to consult him thereon".
Before concluding their November meeting the Commissioners -
"having observed that the evergreen shrubs, and trees are removing
from Lord Moray's ground in consequence of the building going on
there"
asked their Clerk to apply to Lord Moray's "... man of business" for
permission to remove some of them for transplanting into the central
garden: and if the request was granted to employ "... some skilful
person" capable of carrying out the necessary preparations.

One month later the Commissioners met again to examine the various
estimates received for enclosing the ground "... according to the
amended specifications and plan made up by Mr Brown". Right had
been submitted and the one by Mr Walter Stewart Dinn, builder was
selected as being the least costly (amounting to £597 for a parapet and
rail along the Queen Street and Heriot Row sides). As part of the
contract he was required to carry out the work under the supervision of
Thomas Brown, and to complete it by the end of March 1823 unless the
winter proved inclement, in which case he was allowed an extra 3 weeks
grace. Perhaps it was due to the rush to finish the work on time, that
one of the masons - a James Ding met with a "distressing accident" when
one of the railing curb stones fell on him: the Commissioners however,
felt sufficiently responsible to open a subscription on his behalf to
provide some money meantime for the support of his wife and children.(53)

Designs for laying out the gardens

Information regarding a suitable design for the garden does not
resurface in the minutes until early in January 1823 when at a meeting
attended by 4 of the Commissioners it is reported that "... Mr Wilson's
plan of the grounds was submitted ... and he explained to the Commissioners
his ideas thereon". His design met with their approval and he was
asked to "... superintend the execution and to suggest such alterations
as may from time to time occur". Discussion also took place as to
whether or not to retain Farmer Wood's cattle pond but "... as its
being preserved or not will make no material alteration" a decision was
suspended pending investigation by the Clerk of whether a piped water
supply could be laid. Confidence in Mr Wilson's plans appeared to be
such that the Commissioners were prepared to implement them immediately:
at the same meeting they not only agreed to appoint Mr Richard Walker, gardener, as superintendent of the operations (at 2 guineas a week) with permission to buy plants "... where they can be got cheapest and most suitable", but also entered into a contract with George Rofs "... for culling and carrying away the bank opposite to Heriot Row".

Who however, was Mr Wilson? Although his name occurs several more times in the minute book there is nothing to identify him until the appearance of a draft report, dated 28 April 1822 prepared for presentation to a general meeting of proprietors. (55) This progress report - also in the nature of a morale booster (costs were rapidly escalating, and the proprietors were soon to be told of their financial commitment) pointed to a promising future but one promoted by much careful thought and soundly based on expert advice - hence "... we obtained several plans for laying out the grounds, and before adopting any one of them, we had recourse to the professional skill and admitted taste of Mr Andrew Wilson, landscape painter. The plan for the railing was not fixed on until after the most mature deliberations, and after much pains had been bestowed in examining the different works of a similar description in and around Edinburgh". Hopefully the proprietors were reassured and impressed with such detail but more pertinently for us they uncover one of the most interesting and important findings in the history of the New Town gardens.

Andrew Wilson (1780-1848): designer of the Central Queen Street gardens - and subsequently the West Queen Street gardens

Andrew Wilson "... one of the most eminent landscape painters of the Scottish school" (56) whose name "... holds first place in the annals of Scottish art as a promoter of its progress and as an artist of high power" (57) was born in Edinburgh of an old Scottish family but one of depleted fortunes. (58) His artistic talent showed itself from an early age and for a time he studied under Alexander Nasmyth, the eminent and influential portrait and landscape painter: under his guidance Wilson would have absorbed something of his master's admiration for the work of Claude Lorraine and of the eighteenth century English idiom of landscape improvement inspired by it. He soon went on to broaden his education and at 17 left Edinburgh for London to attend the Royal Academy
school—becoming friendly with another pupil—Turner. Two years later (c. 1799) he made an enterprising journey to Italy (by sea to Leghorn) and spent some time in Rome and Naples sketching and studying the work of the great Italian masters; his knowledge of the latter being considerably increased by his friendship with the artist James Irving and his companion the wealthy collector of works of art—Mr Champernoun. Absent for nearly 3 years he returned to London in 1803 and showed several of his Italian paintings at the Royal Academy exhibition. Soon after he went back to Italy to seek out and purchase old masters on behalf of several wealthy clients (works of art could be purchased relatively cheaply at this time due to the unsettled state of Europe during the Napoleonic wars— but equally travel was difficult and hazardous). Wilson was arrested by the French at Turin, sent to Verdun as a prisoner-of-war, made his escape, and after further adventures reached Genoa where he settled under the protection of the American Consul. After a stay of nearly 2 years he had collected together over 50 pictures (including ones by Rubens, Titian, Claude Lorraine, Michael Angelo, and Poussin)—some of which are now in the National Gallery of Scotland: all this in addition to painting and exhibiting his own works.

Wilson returned to London in 1806 and spent the next 2 years painting—mostly in watercolours. Then in 1808 he was appointed teacher of drawing at Sandhurst Military College and married in the same year Rachel Kerr "... an amiable lady of great personal attraction", a union which ultimately produced 4 sons and 3 daughters. Making a living as a young landscape painter had not been easy so this appointment "... although not calculated to enrich him" at least afforded some financial security to support what was to be a pleasant period of his life: his genial society was apparently much sought after by his countrymen in College and by Scottish cadets. Meanwhile he continued to exhibit his works at the Royal Academy exhibitions as well as renewing contacts with his native city. In 1813 for example, a private exhibition of his drawings was held in Edinburgh, and 2 views of Tivoli and Rome were later engraved and sold to the public.

Maybe Wilson was already entertaining ideas of returning to
Edinburgh, and certainly a suitable and tempting opportunity arose in 1817 when the post of Master of the Trustees Academy fell vacant on the death of John Graham. Established in 1760 by the Board of Trustees in Scotland under the leadership of Lord Kames (65) the Academy provided instruction for pupils who followed or intended to follow a trade; as such it was one of the very first industrial design schools in Britain, and a forerunner of the nineteenth century schools of design which later developed into today's Art schools and colleges. Nine artists offered themselves as candidates including Wilson, his former teacher - Alexander Naysmith (66) and another landscape painter - Patrick Gibson. (67) Andrew Wilson proved the successful applicant and in 1818 at the age of 38 he secured a position of prestige and one wholly congenial to his abilities (fig. 134). Kind, sociable and intelligent, with considerable gifts as a painter, Wilson did much to encourage and inspire his pupils several of whom went on to become well established and famous artists - such as Robert Scott Lauder, William Simpson, Walter Geikle, and David Octavious Hill. (68) One year later he was also appointed Manager of the newly founded Institution for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Scotland (modelled on the British Institution in London) for the annual exhibition of pictures of old masters and subsequently those of living artists. (69) During a particularly flourishing and lively period in Scottish art, Wilson was one of the central figures, and "... On all subjects connected with the collections of works of art and the promotion of taste, Mr Wilson was consulted and he formed a circle of friends including the noblest and most eminent men in Scotland. During this portion of his active and useful career he exhibited annually in Edinburgh, his admirable pictures finding a ready sale". (70) (figs. 135 and fig. 65). Wilson was also one of the 7 artists selected by George IV to contribute to a small private exhibition held in Holyrood House during the Royal visit in August 1822. (71)

But how did Andrew Wilson become involved with the Central Queen Street gardens? His skill as a landscape painter, very much in the picturesque manner and his important position in Edinburgh's artistic circle would have singled him out as a possible choice, and by nature he was at once helpful and approachable. More likely however, he was
THE COMMISSIONERS and TRUSTEES for MANUFACTURES, &c. in SCOTLAND, hereby give notice to Students of the Fine Arts, and to those young men engaged in such Manufactures and House-worke as require to be figured or ornamented, that they have appointed MR ANDREW WILSON, professor of painting, to be the master and conductor of their Drawing Academy, in the room of the late Mr Graham: That it will be opened on Monday the 22d instant, at Sir O'clock afternoon: and that those desirous of being continued or admitted as students, must lodge at this office written applications, stating their ages, professions, and parentage, with certificates of character from their masters, or gentlemen who know them; and the masters must at the same time oblige themselves to allow their apprentices to attend regularly four times a week, from six to eight in the evening, for two years, in case of their being admitted.

To prevent unnecessary trouble, it is particularly to be observed, that no young men are eligible, who merely study drawing as a polite accomplishment.

TRUSTEES' OFFICE.
Edinburgh, 4th Feb. 1818.

FIGURE 134:
Newspaper advertisement about the appointment of Andrew Wilson as Master of the Trustees Academy (220 February 1818)

No. 2t.—Landscape (Andrew Wilson.) This artist unites in all his works a rich and brilliant style of colouring, an admirable manner of representing light, and much elegance of composition. His figures, though not highly finished, are well drawn, and introduced with such skill as uniformly to bestow additional value on the scene, and also to increase the richness of the general effect. Mr Wilson has had great opportunities of improvement by travelling, and he certainly has not thrown them away. He is distinguished, however, more for delicacy than strength of feeling—harmony rather force—beauty rather picturesque.

Yet there is something picturesque—something simply romantic—in the associations which his compositions are calculated to awaken; and a fine moral keeping is discoverable, or rather felt, in all his pictures. The largest of them is an Italian sea-port (a delightful production, except as to the great extent of continuous and unbroken blue sky) and there are several smaller subjects, of a pastoral character. They are all works of a very pleasing as well as considerable interest—But, from the press of other matters of a more temporary interest, we must defer our farther remarks till another week.

FIGURE 135:
A review of Andrew Wilson’s paintings at the 3rd annual exhibition of the Institution for the encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland; held in Mr. Bruce’s gallery, Waterloo Place, and the first to include works by living artists: other exhibitors included Alexander and Patrick Nasmyth, F. Gibson, John Wilson, David Wilkie, Raeburn, and many others (Scottish 21 March 1821)

DEATH OF MR ANDREW WILSON.—This gentleman died here a few days ago. Mr Wilson is a name well known to those conversant with art. No mean proficient himself as a landscape painter, he was for many years master of the Trustees’ Academy in Edinburgh; and many an artist now enjoying celebrity in Scotland is indebted to Mr Wilson for his induction into the elementary knowledge of his profession. Having filled the mastership for many years, he retired to the Continent, where he passed more than twenty years of the latter part of his life—chiefly at Genoa. The readers of the late Allan Cunningham’s “Life of Wilkie,” will recollect the correspondence between the latter and Sir Robert Peel relative to certain portraits by Vandyke, of which Sir David negotiated the purchase from Mr Wilson on behalf of the Baronet. Many of these letters are characteristic of all the parties. To Mr Wilson’s long residence abroad, and intimate acquaintance at once with Italian collections, and with the circumstances and necessities of their owners, we are indebted for the enrichment of many British collections besides Sir Robert Peel’s. Mr Wilson filled at one time—many years ago—the office of Professor of Drawing at the Military College at Sandhurst.

FIGURE 136:
Notice of Andrew Wilson’s death (220 September 1848)
directly recommended to the Commissioners by James Skene who as we are told in the minutes was to have been consulted about the design of the garden. Skene at this time was due to set off for France; he was in any case a busy man, active in many societies and already closely committed to the West Princes Street gardens (Section 2.6). Both Skene and Wilson knew each other well. They shared much in common, being of a similar age, artistic, well travelled and good company. Their paths frequently crossed: while Wilson for instance was Manager of the Institution for the promotion of Fine Arts, Skene was its Secretary and business and other matters must have brought them together regularly. (72) If Skene was unable to take on the task, for whatever reason, Wilson would have come immediately to mind as an excellent alternative.

Although Wilson was a prolific artist, most of his paintings were of Italian scenes and examples of his Scottish works are now very scarce (refer fig. 65); it is a happy chance therefore that the Central and West Queen Street gardens survive (with only minor changes to their format) as a living testimony to one whose reputation was largely based on picturesque landscapes and Claudian effects and who made a significant contribution to the development of Scottish Art. He did not share the pleasure however, of seeing his vision grow to maturity for in 1826 he departed with his family to take uppermanent residence in Italy; (73) by the time he made a return visit over 20 years later his health was in decline, and he was probably too feeble to even enjoy a walk round the gardens he had helped create: Andrew Wilson died in Edinburgh on 27th November 1848, his body being accompanied to the grave by members of the Royal Scottish Academy. (74) (fig. 136).

Andrew Wilson's plan for the Central Garden, and the formation of the garden

Unlike the East Queen Street gardens, the designer of the Central gardens inherited no established planting or semblance of a garden at all. The area 4½ acres (1.8 ha) consisted of coarse grass, a steep bank on the Queen Street side, and a muddy pond; on the other hand the land was closer to ground level and without the awkward steep fall which
characterised the eastern garden before its later improvement. None of
Wilson's sketches have survived, and the first available layout is one
shown in Knox's plan of 1824 (fig. 128e). This plan is similar to
subsequent ones (fig. 128f) but reveals one basic difference: the design
in the earlier map has a central path curving to accommodate the pond
(as it is today) but the pond itself is not indicated — presumably
because neither Wilson nor the Commissioners had at that time taken a
decision to develop it. Otherwise, the only other difference from
the garden as it was built was the omission of an oval shaped walk just
south of the pond probably due to the steep change in level. Was this
in fact the design which Wilson submitted to the Commissioners at their
1823 January meeting, or was it rather one of the "several plans"
mentioned in the April report to the proprietors as having been studied
by the Committee? Common sense would suggest that this was Andrew Wilson's
sketch design as the Commissioners would have been unlikely to pass
over any other plan to a map publisher when one by their chosen designer
was to hand.

While Wilson's layout and ideas received general approval, the
minute books also indicate that they were regarded by the Commissioners
as being reasonably flexible and capable of modification — and dependent
to some extent as to whether or not the pond was retained as a feature.
Once Wilson became more familiar with the ground (and we know he made
frequent visits to it with the Clerk)\(^{(75)}\) he became more firmly convinced
as to the merits of keeping the pond: and indeed it today helps to
compose the central main vistas to east and west in a distinctly
Claudian manner (fig. 137c). Hence in spite of the rather discouraging
letter from the Water Company stating that "... the supply from public
pipes of water to the pond cannot be relied upon", the Commissioners
"... being satisfied after consulting with Mr Wilson that it is an
object of the first importance towards the embellishment of the grounds
that there should be a pond", decided to see instead "... if sufficient
command of water can be obtained by boring".\(^{(76)}\) The circular footpath
as first shown was therefore abandoned in favour of the pond which became
the central focus and "... finished according to Mr Wilson's design."\(^{(77)}\)
It was formed into a more subtle oval shape (fig. 137b and c), and a
small rocky island included to increase the sense of apparent extent. The central area of garden was kept as an open grassed space with 2 main sections of lawn crossed by gravelled walks: a series of other footpaths were made to curve around the outer edges with an upper and lower terrace walk along the Queen Street side. Most of the tree and shrub planting was concentrated around the boundaries to provide shelter and privacy, with a few specimen trees within the middle and a number of shrub beds in between the outer walks. Trees were mainly deciduous hardwoods including sycamore, elm, ash, lime, beech, Spanish horse chestnut, oak, whitebeam and birch, with also some hawthorn, holly, yew and rhododendron. The several weeping ash and elm trees were a later addition.

Andrew Wilson remained closely involved during the whole period of construction - which took well over a year although the bulk of work was completed by the summer of 1823. His advice was readily sought and acted upon; hence the Commissioners decided to extend the railings along the east and west sides following Wilson's opinion that: "... the operations carrying on would be incomplete unless the whole were enclosed". The pond was kept and improved, and towards the end when the Commissioners began considering the need for a tool house, Wilson was once more consulted and his recommendations as to its position and appearance accepted without query: "... it should be erected in the centre of the eastern bank, showing a front to the west as laid down on Mr Wilson's sketch and sunk in the bank as far as possible". This toolhouse (fig. 138a) dating from 1824 was built by the same mason responsible for the railings and is unique among the 40 or so gardens of the Georgian New Town. It is a good deal more than just a tool house serving also as a portico for any tunnel connection to the East Queen Street gardens should this proposal ever become a reality (see Section 3.3). It takes the form of a small Doric pavilion and completes the composition of what is in effect a miniature Claudian landscape with tree framed sward and water; and although much of the broad effect has since been trivialised by crude additions particularly to the planting of the island and a fenced off sand; it, it remains a charming fragment of idealised composition in the Claudian manner.

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Wilson, a sensitive and skilful artist must have derived considerable satisfaction in what for him was as far as we know a new venture of creating a garden. This was reward enough and as the Commissioners acknowledged "... in undertaking it Mr Wilson had not pecuniary recompense in view": at the same time they were fully appreciative of "... his great trouble and unremitting attention" and when all the work was nearly finished the Committee met and agreed to present him with a key to the garden "... for his own use" (Wilson in fact lived quite close by at 35 Howe Street) together with a gift of 25 guineas.

Thomas Brown who had designed and supervised the erection of the railings received 7 guineas.

The formation of the garden progressed smoothly. Although Robert Winter, the tenant had been allowed to remain on the ground and in possession of the house and byre until May 1823 his presence in the end proved something of a nuisance and he was asked to leave by the end of February. By this stage the railings on the north and south sides were well advanced, the bank of earth and rubble along the Heriot Row side had been removed, and estimates for extending the railings along the other 2 ends, and for draining the land had been obtained. Next followed a hectic period when in addition to the work force employed by the builder, a large number of other labourers were taken on under the superintendence of Richard Walker, the head gardener. All the remains of Winter's small holding must have been cleared at this time, and the ground shaped and formed ready for the gravel walks, and grassing, and to allow at least some of the tree and shrub planting to be carried out before Spring. Mr Finn, the mason, was instructed to erect "... in or near the present situation" 2 pump wells "... of an elegant pattern and with movable handles"; while early in April Walker was told to visit Sand's nursery at Kirkcaldy "... and if suitable plants there at moderate prices to buy or order in addition to those obtained from Mr Ballantyne at Dalkeith". He was however warned not to take plants "... of such an oversize as may endanger their thriving", and he was also given the rather curious and misinformed advice to avoid "... the resinous tribe, as they never thrive in a smokey atmosphere". Wilson and the Commissioners must have exercised
a degree of guidance and control on the nature and position of the planting, but Walker too it seems was left a certain freedom of judg-
ment. Alexander Henderson, the nurseryman, generous by nature, and maybe also with an eye to future business, (84) gifted 300 weeping birch plants, and Mrs Graham, wife of the Professor of Botany sent a present of 6 weeping willow plants. (85)

Soon however, the Commissioners began to press the superintendent for swifter progress, and to voice dissatisfaction with the quality of the hired help. Walker was told to dismiss "... some of the worst workmen and to reduce the number to about 24 good hands" it being rue-
fully noted that "... some have been employed quite untrustworthy of
the wages stated for them and that the men have not been so industrious
as the liberal wages allowed should have induced them to be". (86) By early August most of the work was completed, and Walker and his men were discharged: the task of looking after the garden was thereafter
entrusted to Henry Bell who was paid 15 shillings (75p) a week, with occasional assistance as and when required. (87) During the first
3 months of 1824 the garden walks were finished (the Trinity gravel
pits supplying the gravel), the pond reshaped, cleaned, with large
gravel laid on the bottom and some ornamental fish added, and plans for
the tool house settled upon. (88) With the garden now virtually in
order, the Commissioners decided to open the grounds to other nearby
residents on payment of 3 guineas annually for a key.

The garden since 1823

Remarkably few changes have been made to the Central Queen Street
gardens since they were designed by Andrew Wilson. At no period has any
major improvement or reconstruction work been carried out: during the
Second World War the railings along the Heriot Row side were removed
and the garden used to accommodate a static water tank (fig. 18a) and
2 Home Guard ammunition huts, and this was the greatest disruption ever
faced by the gardens. Throughout these war years a gardener continued
to be employed, and this must have aided their restoration in 1947 -
when new wrought iron railings were also erected on the north side. (89)
Unlike most other New Town gardens particular care seems to have been taken in the early years with the planting, and in 1829 only some 5 to 6 years after the gardens were first stocked do we read in the minute books that thinning, pruning and transplanting of trees had already taken place under the supervision of William McNab, and new items including 20 handsome beech plants, 20 white and red arbutus, and 10 sweet bays added. William McNab (1780-1848) who as principal gardener and curator of the Edinburgh Botanic Garden had successfully supervised and carried out their removal from Leith Walk to Inverleith in 1822 would have preferred useful and sound advice; curiously enough his better known son James who was asked for similar help many years later (in 1875) received something of a snub; the Commissioners' response to his report was that "... they were in the main condemnatory of any action being taken". This particular report is not included in the minutes but James McNab's recommendations were usually held in high esteem and it seems odd that he was dismissed in such a peremptory manner. The garden however, was fortunate in having some well qualified people amongst its Commissioners: Dr Robert Graham (1786-1845) "... a respectable botanist and a good teacher" who held the prestigious post of Professor of Medicine and Botany at the University, as well as Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden (from 1820-1845) successfully persuaded his own and his fellow Commissioners of the 2 other Queen Street gardens to plant a row of elm and lime trees around the periphery of the gardens: this was in 1837 and its adoption allowed a degree of uniformity and improved appearance of all 3 gardens. James Jardine (1776-1858) civil engineer, who lived at 12 Queen Street was another useful member: he became a Commissioner in 1831 and all matters to do with the maintenance of footpaths, upkeep of the railings, and so on were usually referred to him: his engineering skills were however, put to better use in the Moray Bank gardens where he acted as consultant and designer of the retaining piers, arches and parapets constructed there between 1838-1839 after trouble with land slippage had occurred.

The planning of floral displays was not overlooked and in 1829 the gardener was instructed to: "... prepare suitable beds of mignonette, and to provide annuals, and a moderate collection of spring flowers but
a. View towards centre of East Heriot Row, Close to entrance on north side (Tom Watson)

b. View from Queen Street side with central pond (Tom Watson)

c. View from north side across to pond

FIGURE 137 a – c
General views of the Queen Street central gardens
not to overload the border with them". (95) Dahlias are mentioned frequently in the accounts, but details of other plants and seeds obtained from nurseries are rarely given. Certainly in the past quite a lot of time and money has been spent on herbaceous effect, and the cultivation of more tender plants was aided by the acquisition of a hot bed in 1842. (96)

Unfortunately the good beginning referred to earlier was not maintained and during the late 1830s and 1840s the garden became neglected. Part of the trouble was blamed on the gardener taking on other outside work which was not strictly permitted in his contract. The fall in standards possibly encouraged other misuse for there was an outbreak of vandalism which was severe enough to prompt a specially printed notice to be sent to all proprietors. The circular (dated 1st May 1847) told of serious damage done to property in the garden "... by several young gentlemen who had access to it, by firing pistols at the doors of the summer house, breaking the glass in the hot bed frames, injuring the seats and railings, and destroying plants, some of them rare and of slow growth. Stones have been thrown, and several hurts received by persons in the garden and passengers in the adjoining streets; the remonstrances of the gardener have been met with rudeness and incivility, and generally the conduct of many of the boys is unruly and riotous". (97) It had also become common practice for the boys to gain access by climbing over the railings which "... being dangerous to the boys and injurious to the rails, the Commissioners are determined to put a stop to". The police were asked to keep a stricter watch, and in 1848, the short intermediate ballusters were removed and replaced by full height ones as a preventative measure. (98)

The garden's condition continued to deteriorate, and after increasing complaints from proprietors the gardener was dismissed towards the end of 1848. When the nursery firm - James Dickson and Son were consulted they gave their opinion that "... it will require a great deal of extra labour the first year to bring it into a proper state of keeping" particularly the trees "... which appear to require a great deal of attention". Somewhat misguidedly, but true to their trade, they drew
attention to certain plants which would "... much ornament the place and make it like the other gardens" recommending the addition of 500 dwarf roses of various kinds, 50 standard roses, 100 dahlias, and a collection of "... showy herbaceous plants such as hollyhocks, Sweet Williams, phlox's, verbinas, calceolareus, wallflowers etc". (99) For the following 5 years James Dickson and Son took charge of the garden whereupon it was kept in better order and considerably restocked with shrubs and plants. Once their contract expired however, the decision was made to adopt the former mode of management "... by a gardener, the exclusive servant of the proprietors". (100) This method has operated ever since.

The ensuing years have passed uneventfully by (apart from the upheavals during the last war), the minute books mostly recording successive efforts to thin and prune trees and shrubs, and the removal of dead and decayed ones: advice being sought from the City Superintendent of Parks (A. A. Macleod in 1881 and 1882, and Mr Jeffreys in 1885). Further extensive tree pruning (and some replanting) was carried out in 1930 by Mr Imrie, forrester - particularly of the limes and elms, and again shortly after the war, but no major programme of removal and renewal was embarked upon until 1966-67. At the present time much replanting - especially of shrubs, ground cover, and spring bulbs is being carried out together with new trees to maintain an adequate balance of age with special regard to the boundary canopy. (101)

The pond remains a distinctive and attractive feature but has caused a few minor problems over the years. One of the unforeseen consequences of acquiring some ducks in the 1870s (102) - as additional ornament was to encourage the increase of weeds and dirt in the water. Cleaning and draining the pond must have been one of the gardener's least liked tasks and he was probably thankful when they were dispensed with in 1883. (103) In 1895 the curbstones around the edge were repaired at the footpath relaid by the Granolithic paving Company: (104) more recently, the floor of the pond and its surrounds have been concreted making it easier to maintain but less attractive visually. (105) (For general views of the garden refer figs. 137 and 138).
a. Wilson's tool house designed as small Doric pavilion (Tom Watson)

c. View from centre of south side (Tom Watson)

FIGURE 138 a - c:
Further views of the gardens, Queen Street central
Financial and Management matters, and uses made of the garden

When first formed in the early 1820s the majority of property overlooking the gardens consisted of single family houses: under the 1822 Act of Parliament 53 separate residences were assessed for the making and upkeep of the garden. This number has gradually increased due to the conversion of several whole houses in East Heriot Row into flatted accommodation. East Heriot Row remains mostly residential but practically all the property along the central part of Queen Street is now used as office space: the Post Office and the Regional Assessor's Officer own between them 9 of the former houses and consequently carry a major burden of the assessment.

Although the central garden has fewer proprietors compared to its neighbours, money matters do not seem to have posed any particular problems. Occasional arrears in assessments have mostly arisen due to absentee owners, and in one year, 1877, funds were sufficiently prosperous for the assessment to be temporarily suspended. Assessments for many years now have been based on the city's rating lists and fixed at so much in the pound. (106) Extraordinary items of expense (as occurred in 1848 when new bars were added to the railings, and again in 1948 on the erection of new railings along Heriot Row) are met by levying a special assessment.

It cost about £6,000 to form the central gardens: half of this sum was spent on acquiring the land, the cope and railing cost over £1,000, and the rest went on forming the interior. (107) In 1823 the Commissioners drew up a 9 year assessment (based on the 1822 Act which allowed a 10% assessment for acquiring the ground, and 2% for enclosing and laying out) to meet these costs: 11 proprietors agreed to pay the sum outright (being given the benefit of a small discount) but the rest contributed annually. The Commissioners had expected to clear off all the outstanding debts well within this period, but by 1829 a little over £2,000 was still due on the gardens. To raise funds to meet these debts the Commissioners decided to borrow money from a Banking Company but when they discovered that the Bank of Scotland required them to take on personal liability they abandoned the idea. (108) Instead a loan of
£2,000 was negotiated with a private individual - a Dr Johnstone of Kirkcaldy and the money so obtained was used to pay off Webster for the land. (109) Later in 1833 the Royal Bank of Scotland granted a loan of £1,600 which allowed the Commissioners to reimburse Dr Johnstone (110) - but the debts were not finally cleared until 1839.

The central gardens share the same management framework as the 2 other Queen Street gardens - responsibility for the administration of the grounds being undertaken by the 6 Commissioners and their appointed Clerk who meet together at least once a year. Annual general meetings of the proprietors used to be held in the Waterloo Hotel, Waterloo Place, and then in Cays rooms (later Dowells) in George Street but were usually poorly attended and were gradually allowed to lapse unless called for any specific reason. Outsiders have always been allowed the use of the garden on payment of an annual subscription and numbers have increased steadily over the years: there are now about 60 yearly key holders - drawn mostly from nearby families with young children or else dog owners.

Early regulations (fig. 139) followed a similar format to those adopted by other New Town gardens, but as the garden was smaller than its neighbours more care had to be exercised over the control of children. Hence the gardener had the right to limit games to certain areas he thought suitable, and children were generally encouraged to...

"Carefully keep upon the gravel walks and grass" (rather as in the case of the West Princes Street gardens): sentiments rather touchingly transposed to verse by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) who as an only son beleaguered with ill health spent some of his boyhood leisure hours in the Central garden...

"the gardener does not love to talk
He makes me keep the gravel walk
And when he puts his tools away
He locks the door and takes the key"(111)

The secret world of Wilson's tool shed must have aroused curious speculation to an imaginative child with time to spare. So too, the...
THE CHOLERA.—The returns again exhibit a decrease in the number of cases, but the diminution is not yet so decided as to justify the expectation of so immediate mitigation and speedy disappearance of the epidemic. The new cases in Edinburgh on Saturday amounted to six, and the deaths to five; and yesterday there were four new cases, and six deaths; leaving 144 cases, most of which are treated in the hospital at Surgeons’ Square. In the ports of Duddingston there was one fatal case on Thursday, and no reports have been received of the recent occurrence of cases in any other district of the county. In Glasgow there were two new cases on Friday, and two deaths; and on Saturday other two new cases were reported. There have been five fatal cases of cholera at Kelso, and eleven cases at Coldstream; and in various other places throughout the country the epidemic has been prevalent.

KEL. — We regret to state that there have been four cases of cholera since Wednesday last, two of which proved fatal, and two remain under treatment. Since the commencement of the disease in this town, there have been, deaths, 7; recoveries, 2; under treatment, 2; number of cases since commencement, 11.—Kelso Mail.

JEDBURGH.—Small pox is still raging in this place, and with increased virulence and fatal results. It is now nearly a year since it first made its appearance amongst our population, and, notwithstanding that type of the disease has increased instead of abating, attacking indiscriminately old, young, and middle aged, vaccinated or unvaccinated.

b. 

FIGURE 139 a & b:

a. Regulations of the central Queen Street gardens 1833
b. Notice relating to outbreak of cholera (1833): Rule 12 which was a standard item in all new town garden regulations was an important consideration in the days of epidemics and contagious illnesses - unchecked by antibiotics
pond with its island - a rich source for thoughts and fancies. Who can say what subconscious memories of childhood were stirred years later when Louis on holiday in Braemar casually started to sketch out and colour a map of a mysterious island - the genesis of Treasure Island - that highly successful adventure story written in the first instance to amuse his step son. (112) The Stevenson family had moved to 17 Heriot Row in 1857 (when Louis was 7 years old); his father a respected and deeply religious civil engineer (he worked as engineer to the Board of Northern Lighthouses) became a garden commissioner in 1860 and remained one for the following 22 years. As a son of a Commissioner Robert Louis Stevenson would have been under extra pressure to be of good behaviour when afoot in the gardens.

But while the gardener was the main line of defence in exerting control, the Commissioners certainly did not want this to be done harshly or intolerantly. It was made a condition when they entered into a contract with a nursery firm in 1848 for the upkeep of the gardens that the same person should be responsible throughout and carefully chosen so as to be "... of such disposition as to insure kindness to the children". (113) Rules now are more relaxed, and children and dogs are free to use the gardens without restrictions provided no damage occurs. A wired off enclosure with a sandpit is provided for children of toddler age, and the steep south bank provides older children with a popular toboggan run - rather to the hazard of the spring bulbs.

**Upkeep and uses made of the garden**

Apart from the 6 years between 1848-1854 when the garden was maintained by a nursery firm at all other times it has been in the care of a single gardener. Some have given long years of devoted service the most outstanding example being James Watt - employed from 1883 until his death in 1918 and previously in charge of the Waverley Market roof garden.

Sports and games of a more organised kind were introduced rather
later than in the other 2 Queen Street gardens partly due to the reluctance of one of the Commissioners, Alexander Stevenson WS, of 9 Heriot Row. He was closely involved with the running of the gardens during the middle years of the last century and for 27 years jealously guarded the gardens from any unworthy intrusions. When a petition was presented in 1863 by 15 of the proprietors requesting permission to play croquet he strongly opposed the idea fearing "... that it would destroy the garden and would make it impossible to prevent the playing of other games". (114) Pressure was such that croquet was allowed on a trial basis for one year - but the minutes do not record whether this experiment was successful or not. Some attempts seem to have been made at using the pond for winter skating: in 1889 the Clerk refers to the possibility of leading the runnel which went into the pond away into the sluice which drained out of it in order to secure "... better and stronger ice for this purpose". (115) Little is heard about tennis play in the gardens: no reference is made to this activity until 1918 and there appears to have been just one court probably sited to the west of the pond. (116)
3.5 THE WEST QUEEN STREET GARDENS

"After drawing a sketch from our window I went this morning to Nasmyth's to ask his opinion of it. He said it was very well done and advised me to try and finish it on canvas". Journal of Jessy Allan 1902(1)

When young Jessy Allan (1776-1836) sat sketching the view from her father's house at number 29 Queen Street she would have seen immediately before her the rough and treeless space of what was later to become the central Queen Street gardens and a nearly completed row of houses beyond - "... just under Lady Blair's field so that our situation is still very open for a town". The predominant feature of the outlook was still essentially one of fields and farmlands. Although the western half of Heriot Row was advertised for feuing one year later it too was kept at arm's length from the now well established residents in Queen Street - separated by the strip of land which eventually became the highly attractive West Queen Street gardens. To the left of the window Jessy would have caught sight of this open space part of which had been owned a few years earlier by the Allan household as a private garden and may even have been the scene of much happy play by Jessy, her 3 sisters and brother.

The Allan family had moved from 20 George Street to Queen Street sometime during the late 1780s. Robert Allan (1745-1818) the father was a well known public figure being a banker and proprietor of the Caledonian Mercury; for a time he also served on the Town Council and was an active member of the Chamber of Commerce. Prompted no doubt by the needs of his young and large family Allan had approached the George Heriot Trust at the end of 1789 "craving a feu of 1½ or 2 acres (0.6 ha or 0.8 ha) of ground for a garden to the west adjoining Frederick Street" (ie the closest portion still available for feuing to his own dwelling - a little further eastwards). This formed part of the remaining stretch of open space immediately to the north of Queen Street which the Trust as feu superiors had committed themselves to keeping for garden or park purposes - and free from building development

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Shortly afterwards two other similar applications were made to the Heriot Trust for garden ground within this section of open space: one by the Honourable Alexander Gordon of Rockville (1739-1792), a senator of the College of Justice and noted for his tall, handsome appearance, and the other by Robert Brown WS of Kirklands (1758-1812). Lord Rockville wished for 2 acres (0.8 ha) or so "nearly opposite" the fine house he was having built at 64 Queen Street (refer fig. 140b for details of his former residence), while Brown requested "a small piece" (about half an acre (0.2 ha)) also opposite his house.

These various requests were duly considered by the Trust's main committee who after visiting the ground and studying the measured drawing produced several years earlier by John Laurie, Land surveyor, presented a detailed report to the Governors in April 1790. Their recommendations were fully accepted and it was agreed that a feu of 1 acre (0.4 ha) west of Frederick Street should be granted to Robert Allan for £32 together with an annual feu of 6 bolls "good and sufficient barley", an adjoining half acre (0.2 ha) to Robert Brown for £18, and a feu of 2 acres (0.8 ha) "of the grounds eastwards of the old road leading to Stockbridge" to Lord Rockville for £72 plus an annual feu of 12 bolls of barley. Each was to be bound by the same conditions upheld in all the feus already made out for land between Queen Street, Heriot Row and Abercromby Place and as first laid down in Robert Ord's charter of 1769 (Section 3.2): namely, the ground was only to be used for purposes of a park or garden with no dwelling-house allowed apart from a gardener's house, hot houses, "proper offices for one dwelling" or "such other buildings as may be necessary for the garden or park". In addition, Thomas Wood who had worked for many years as tenant farmer for much of the land to the north of Queen Street and whose farmhouse stood within Lord Rockville's new feu was allowed possession of his dwelling for the rest of his life.

About one acre (0.4 ha) of ground to the east of Lord Rockville's feu still remained to be feued and by June 1790 the Heriot Trust had received 3 applications - from Alexander Wallace, banker.
a. Portrait of Hon Alex Gordon of Rockville, owner of a plot of garden ground on the west side (Kay's Portraits)

b. Edinburgh Advertiser, 25th February 1791., the remaining one acre (0.5ha) plot advertised for sale and bought by David Stewart

c. Sir James Grant of Grant with his Regiment, the Strathpey or Grant Fencibles, new owner of Rockville's house and garden (Kay)

d. Rockville's previous residence in Castle Hill (Edinburgh Advertiser 7 January 1791)

e. Edinburgh Advertiser, 15 May 1795

Various items relating to the early days of the West Queen Street gardens
(29 North Frederick Street), Alexander Young W3 (48 Queen Street) and Doctor Deas (not traced). Perhaps to ensure absolute fairness and maybe to capitalise fully on the land that was left the Trust decided to sell it by public auction (fig. 140c). On 2nd March 1791 within the Exchange Coffee House the ground was sold to the highest bidder for £72 - double the upset and costing as much as Lord Rockville's land at twice the size. (14) Understandably perhaps the 3 residents who had earlier shown an interest did not compete at this price and the successful purchaser proved to be none other than the ex-Lord Provost David Steuart, merchant and banker. As we already know (Section 3.1 and 3.3) he also possessed 2 large gardens at the east end of Queen Street (where his house was situated) besides a further 13 acres (5.2 ha) or so to the north of these gardens. His interest in this additional piece of land must have stemmed from his general involvement in land speculation which appears to have occupied his attention so much during this period - for he clearly had no real need for a third garden so distant from his other two. On the other hand he may have become involved as a result of his friendship and close business connections with Robert Allan - owner of the neighbouring strip of land: both men had recently set up in partnership as private bankers (15) and maybe he entertained ideas of one day moving nearer to the Allan household.

Once the division of land within the western section had been settled feu charters were drawn up: all were dated 17th April 1791 (16) and were made out to David Steuart, Robert Allan, and Alexander Gordon - Lord Rockville (fig. 111). Allan's portion was increased to include the half acre (0.2 ha) first allocated to Robert Brown W3 but no longer required by him due to his removal to North Hanover Street: as a result this was the only charter to allow provision of "proper offices" for 2 gardener's dwellinghouses. (17) These were the last feus to be granted for the open space along Queen Street and preceded by several months the first tentative plans for developing the land further northwards - the second New Town (Section 3.1).

More than 30 years elapsed before the ground now designated as three private gardens and amounting overall to some 5½ acres (2.3 ha)

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were rejoined together and made into the West Queen Street pleasure gardens. What briefly became of these separate plots during the intervening period - were they for example transformed into attractive gardens similar to those established earlier at the east end of Queen Street, or did they remain like those in the central area, uncultivated and neglected? To start with minor setbacks were experienced but on the whole relatively few changes of ownership took place and more important these were kept in the hands of nearby residents: the result was that the gardens were mostly well cared for and never came under the same threat of undesirable or uncongenial use as occurred in some of the other areas of open space along Queen Street.

Few improvements however, were made to the 3 gardens during the first 5 years of their existence for within this period a complete change in ownership did take place. In less than a year David Steward sold his central portion to Alexander Young WS(18) (1759-1842) who had been one of the earlier contenders for it and whose house was situated almost opposite. Farmer Wood had previously grazed his cattle and horses on the land which also contained a stable or byre and pump well; most likely it was the roughest and most difficult part to cultivate and perhaps for this reason it continued to remain as a field for pasture. Young did not in fact hold on to it for very long for in 1796 he bought Robert Allan's adjoining strip to the east which was slightly larger and better positioned. Whether Allan had carried out many improvements to his garden is not known but he may have done little apart from enclosing the land with a stone wall: the fact that he parted with it while continuing to live in Queen Street suggests that the novelty and responsibility of owning a garden had gradually become less attractive. Young on the other hand showed greater commitment and during his long period of ownership (26 years altogether) he established a neat, attractive and productive plot - the layout of which is first shown in Ainslie's plan of 1804 (fig. 141a), and in greater detail in Kirkwood's plan and elevation of 1819 (fig. 141c). It consisted of an outer border planted with trees and shrubs, a looping pathway, and a large inner portion crossed from north to south by two paths; this area was divided into miscellaneous borders for

307.
vegetable, fruit and flower growing. The north western corner was reserved for clothes drying and within this corner stood a small gardener's house and hot house.

Soon after purchasing the eastmost garden Young sold his central portion to "the good Sir James" - Sir James Grant (1738-1811) who had recently moved from his town house at the foot of the Canongate to Lord Rockville's former residence at 64 Queen Street. He had bought the house together with Rockville's 2 acre (0.8 ha) garden opposite in 1795 and from this time onwards the two adjoining gardens remained under the one ownership. Lord Rockville had in fact barely sampled the pleasures of his fine and spacious new house when he died unexpectedly in 1791 from a fever consequent to an accidental fall. His widow remained in possession of the house until it was put up for sale 4 years later (fig. 140d) and under the circumstances it would seem unlikely that the Rockville's instigated many changes or improvements to their Queen Street Garden. Little is said in the advertisement about the garden apart from mentioning its size and that it contained "a large hot house" but lack of any reference to Thomas Wood and his farmhouse must indicate that the elderly tenant farmer had by then removed himself to other quarters. It is possible that the hot house had been built on the foundation of the farmer's old house.

Sir James Grant (fig. 140e) the new proprietor owned extensive estates in Morayshire (which he represented in Parliament for many years), and while an energetic promoter of agricultural improvements he was at the same time equally concerned to safeguard the well being of his tenants - hence the affectionate title by which he became known. Such indeed was his patriotism and wholehearted support from his tenants that on the declaration of war with France in 1793 he was amongst the first (if not the very first) to assemble a regiment of Fencibles drawn almost entirely of men from his own estates. His loyalty and service was recognised in the official appointments which followed - Lord Lieutenant of Moray in 1794, and the General Cashier of Excise for Scotland in 1795. All these commitments must have left him with only limited time to enjoy or make use of his Edinburgh town house and
garden. Nevertheless, Sir James seems to have applied the same energy and organising skill to his garden ground as to his other estate improvements - as indeed, he had a keen interest both in landscaping and gardening.

True the central plot remained a rough field but together with the western portion it was now enclosed along the Queen Street side with a new cope stone and elegant iron railing; this replaced a somewhat cruder and higher stone wall - similar to the one erected along the southern boundary and which was said to have "... long disfigured" the western half of Heriot Row. The new railing (refer Kirkwood's Plan, fig. 141c) quickly became regarded as one of the desirable local amenities. When for example, one of the houses opposite at No. 50 Queen Street was put up for sale in 1800 the notice drew particular attention to this feature "... The advantages these premises enjoy from the situation are too well known and too much prized to require any aid from an advertisement; but it may be just mentioned in general, that the street at this place is finished off to the north with a handsome iron rail which is not only a great ornament but preserves the full view even to the parlour windows".

As no detailed plan exists prior to the early years of the nineteenth century showing the layout of the land immediately surrounding Thomas Wood's farmhouse it is difficult to say to what extent the well ordered western garden (fig 141a) was due to the farmer's own labours on whether it had been made afresh by Sir James Grant. Very probably it was a mixture of both although the southern half with the tree planted bank along Queen Street, and the footpaths leading to and parallel with it were more likely to have been formed by Grant. The rectangular shaped hothouse which occupied a central position towards the northern end became a focal point of the garden and remained so until demolished in 1825 following the acquisition of the land for pleasure garden purposes. Tucked away in the north west corner was a gardener's house, with a kitchen cum vegetable plot adjoining; the rest of the garden seems to have been kept mainly in grass and trees - including an orchard on the eastern side. Several rows of apple
FIGURE 14.1 a-g: Various plans of the West Queen Street gardens
trees were later incorporated into the new pleasure grounds and continued to provide crops of fruit for many years until old age forced their removal in the 1850s.\(^{(30)}\)

Neither Young's garden on the east nor Sir James Grant's one on the west experienced any significant changes in layout over the ensuing years and they remained well tended and cultivated. There was just one occasion for alarm in 1803 when West Heriot Row was advertised for feuing: both Alexander Young and Sir James Grant - but particularly the former, feared that access to their gardens on the northern side would become blocked off once the extended roadway was made level with East Heriot Row. Young in fact believed he had a right of servitude over this road. Preliminary discussion with the Heriot Trust did nothing to allay Young's fears and on the day appointed for the sale of the building plots both men entered a formal protest. As a result the auction was hurriedly postponed and the matter taken to Court. The outcome was in favour of the Trust although they were made liable to pay compensation for any damage caused to either garden.\(^{(31)}\) Two years after this incident Sir James Grant retired to his family house, Castle Grant at Speyside where he died in 1811 after a long period of ill health. In 1805 his son approached the Heriot Trust with an offer to sell his father's house and land in Queen Street for £8,000, or separately - £5,000 for the house and £3,000 for the garden and park (ie the central field). The offer was declined.\(^{(32)}\)

Before Sir James's death however, the house together with the 2 acres (0.8 ha) of ground were sold in 1810 to Francis Charteris (1772-1853), 8th Earl of Wemyss. A few years earlier he had moved from the old town to a sizeable house and park at West Lauriston,\(^{(33)}\) but was probably attracted to Queen Street as a more convenient and central base for his town activities. A wealthy man of refined tastes\(^{(34)}\) (he also owned 2 very attractive country estates - Amisfield House outside Haddington, and Gosforth House close to Longniddry), he too like his predecessor lavished care on his Queen Street garden, although as before the central portion was left as a rough field.

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311.
From private plots to public pleasure gardens - 1822 onwards.

Had the other areas of open space further eastwards not experienced rather more mixed and uncertain fortunes the private gardens to the west would in all likelihood have continued as individual well tended plots for a very long time. The movement to form communal pleasure gardens along Queen Street has already been described (Sections 3.1 and 3.2). Suffice it to say here that the first stirrings began within the central portion as early as 1809, but that it was the increasing administrative difficulties encountered by the "Queen Street Gardens" - the pleasure grounds already established at the eastern end in 1814 which generated the necessary drive to promote the private Act of Parliament under which the 3 Queen Street gardens were finally set up. The act was passed in May 1822 and provided a legal framework under which the various private gardens could be purchased, and then made and managed as communal pleasure grounds for the benefit of the surrounding residents. Although little of the impetus had been provided by those living at the western end of Queen Street and Meriot Row they at least supported the idea, and it was one of their residents - the Right Honourable James Wedderburn, Solicitor General for Scotland who principally helped put the Act together. (35)

Full details of the Act are given in Section 3.2 and need not be repeated here; in brief however, the newly created "Western District" or division of Queen Street (the other two being the central or eastern districts) included the whole of West Meriot Row and the section of Queen Street from the corner of Frederick Street up to and including 64 Queen Street; the land in between becoming known as the West Queen Street Gardens. All owners of property whose windows fronted or opened onto these two streets (even if their main door was elsewhere) (36) were deemed to be proprietors of the garden ground and therefore liable to pay assessments towards the making and keeping of them. A little later on, in 1827 the Act was extended to include Wemyss Place, then under construction so unlike the two other districts the western one had the advantage of increasing its number of proprietors and therefore its financial resources.
The first meeting of the 6 district Commissioners elected under the Act (ie the first management committee) took place towards the end of June 1822. Most of the Commissioners were from the legal profession and included: Solicitor General Wedderburn, 31 Heriot Row (he died a few months later and was replaced by Andrew Murray, advocate who had previously served on the West Princes Street garden committee), Sir Robert Dundas of Beechwood (1761-1835), 30 Heriot Row (one of the principal Clerks of the Court of Session and a keen member of the Committee: his last attendance was at a meeting just three days before his death), William Inglis WS, 49 Queen Street (from 1796 he acted as deputy Secretary to the Prince of Wales in Scotland), Alexander Irving of Newton, 27 Heriot Row (-1832) advocate and promoted to the Bench in 1826 taking his seat as Lord Newton, Lieutenant General Martin Hunter, 54 Queen Street, and James Scott, accountant, 50 Queen Street - who was appointed convener. The illustrious William Bell WS, long established Clerk to the eastern gardens and prime initiator of the 1822 Act was elected at this meeting as Clerk and Cashier - a fortuitous choice as his local knowledge and previous experience were an undoubted advantage to the newly formed Committee. As far back as December 1821 for example, Bell had had contact with one of the private garden owners - Mr Young to find out his reaction towards proposals for forming communal gardens along Queen Street and the sort of price he would expect for his garden.

Negotiations for acquiring the western gardens consequently began with Young who had already stated his willingness to co-operate and had put the price of his 1½ acre plot (0.6 ha) at £3,000. Young was now turned 63 and seems to have been finding his garden too large for he mentions in a letter to William Bell that should his offer be rejected "... it is my purpose to carry into effect a plan of my own during the ensuing spring by curtailing the size of my garden". By the end of June 1822 and just prior to the summer recess, the Committee had received a formal offer from Young to sell his land for the sum already named, entry to be granted "at the ensuing term of Martinmas", while "reserving the crop in the garden and the young nursery to be removed in the spring". Thirty one years before Robert Allan, the original proprietor had bought the same land for a mere £54
but since then of course much had been spent on improving it and the value of ground greatly increased with the extension of the New Town. Nevertheless Young's asking price was considered "much too high" and instead the Clerk suggested that £2,300 was a more realistic sum (being based on the rate paid for Mr Rolland's smaller garden at the east end of Queen Street(39)). When negotiations were resumed again after the summer break Young remained adamant in his demands: finally after all the details had been presented to a general meeting of proprietors (held on 2nd December 1822 at the Waterloo Hotel) Mr Bell was authorised "... in order to prevent any further dispute ... to pay the price of £3,000 for Mr Young's garden". The offer was made the next day and accepted shortly afterwards. (41)

Similar attempts to purchase the adjoining park and garden belonging to Lord Wemyss proved unsuccessful at this stage. To ask his Lordship not only to relinquish his fine garden but for a sum somewhat below its market value (42) was deemed a delicate matter: appropriately enough Bell's first offer to his agent in May 1823 was couched in highly diplomatic terms and laid emphasis on the worthiness of the cause:-

"Holding however that the elegant embellishment of Lord Wemyss' garden may save expense in the adoption of our general plan we shall take the liberty of offering for it a sum of £4,000, and for the park which is little more than an acre on which no improvement has taken place the sum of £1,000. We do so both on account of the importance of this great object to the unrivalled elegance that this general plan will produce if carried fully into effect and that we are particularly called upon to follow this mode in treating with Lord Wemyss who we are convinced will only dispose of this property from a desire to adorn the city not from the amount of any price whatever, but still in suggesting so great a sacrifice to family comfort, we are bound to offer the highest sum that our Trust will allow".

In contrast, the reply to this rather verbose entreaty was curt and to the point: Mr Bell was informed through the agents that Lord Wemyss was "... not inclined to part with his garden or field opposite to Queen Street".(43)

The matter was not pursued further at this point and instead the Commissioners concentrated their energy on raising the money for
Mr Young's garden, on having this part enclosed by a cope stone and railing (in place of the old high stone walls) and laying it out as a communal pleasure garden. During the first 6 months of 1823 many meetings were held and important decisions made although much time and unnecessary effort was saved by the experience and knowledge already gained by the central district: slightly ahead with the formation of their own pleasure garden they freely exchanged information and advice with the western district Commissioners. Such in fact was the speed of operations that by the end of the year all the necessary work was completed and a gardener engaged full time to take charge of the ground.

The enclosure of Mr Young's garden

While at the beginning of March 1823 Mr Young was still busy removing his nursery plants, the season being "so far backward" the Commissioners had already acquired from the central district full details of their garden railing - the specification for which had been drawn up by Thomas Brown, Superintendent of Works for the city. They decided to adopt the same design and were hopeful as a result that costs might work out rather less than the Central garden particularly as building material from the old walls was to hand, and of some second hand value. It came as rather a surprise therefore when Mr Dinn, the Contractor put in a higher estimate (£1. 8s. 9d. per yard) as compared to the Central district's (£1. 5s. 6d. per yard). Mr Dinn was consequently abandoned and estimates sought instead from other firms who had tendered for the Central gardens, as well as from Mr Henry, builder, Mr Forrest Smith, and Mr Hector, Royal Circus. Altogether 7 estimates were obtained for enclosing the Queen Street and Heriot Row sides which ranged in price from £217 to £394.

The lowest had been submitted by a Mr Ralph Buchan, and the Clerk was asked to "enquire into his character" and if satisfactory to accept his offer and for "the operations to be begun instantly and completed with the least possible delay". Details of the work were contained in a formal contract drawn up on 27 March 1823 in which it was specified that the existing walls were to be lowered to the level of the street and a crib stone placed 11" or 12" (27.5 cm or 30.0 cm) on
the side above the level of the footpath: the ground was to be enclosed with a neat cast iron railing 5' (1.59 m) high with 3 gates, the railings and gates to be: - "... of the same dimensions, pattern, quality and workmanship as those in front of Hillside Crescent and the only difference is that the ballusters instead of being plain shall be fluted on the front ... and only have one wrought iron collar plate at the top" (fig. 144). Everything had to be completed within 3 months and the railing painted with "... three coats of oil or lead paint, green in colour". Buchan went ahead as planned and for the most part the work progressed uneventfully. Some adjustment had to be made to the north wall along Heriot Row which required straightening and a reduction in the angle of slope from the eastern corner to the centre: Thomas Brown's opinion was once again sought and he went on to supervise the removal of 1½ feet (46 cm) of walling and its rebuilding "in a proper line".

As the new railing steadily advanced around the north and south sides the oddity of the high stone wall along the eastern side became more pronounced and in May 1823 the Commissioners decided to continue the railing round this portion at an additional cost of £150. By the end of the year everything had been completed apart from "some small details" and a few weeks later following a favourable report from Mr Brown, the Contractor was paid his dues - £391 a sum which included a small amount for extras.

The laying out of Mr Young's garden

While arrangements for the new railings were underway the Commissioners began to consider plans for laying out Mr Young's garden. Early in March 1823 they visited the ground and although still occupied with Mr Young's nursery plants (then in the course of removal) it was decided that as a first and important improvement an embankment should be formed and carried round on the east and northern sides as high as the level of the street "... and it is understood that earth and rubbish can at present be had from the Royal Circus for nothing no delay should take place in arranging for Mr Young as to breaking open the wall for this purpose". This was an early example where the wastes and trash from one part of the developing New Town was put to convenient and good use and many an ornamental bump or mound in certain pleasure gardens owes its existence to such a source. In addition the Clerk was asked to be on the look out "... for a proper person to act as gardener and who must be well qualified
to attend to and give his assistance in making the necessary alterations and improvements."

Once more the experience of the neighbouring pleasure garden proved helpful for 7 days later another meeting took place in the garden this time with Richard Walker the contractor for the central district also present. His competence and ability to handle several fairly large jobs together(57) must have impressed the Commissioners for without further ado it was arranged that he should "undertake the superintendence of the operations in this district, of employing labourers, and removing the good soil along the north side and part of the east and receiving in earth to complete the bank along these two sides and replacing the good soil again."(58) Walker's wage at 1 guinea a week was half that received from the central district but presumably had been calculated according to the size of the job. It was no use however, organising the manual side of the garden's formation without possessing an overall design to work to; consequently while arrangements were made for employing the contractor the Clerk was directed "... to request Mr Wilson to furnish them with a plan for laying out the grounds calculated so as to admit of its extension in the event of the ground to the westward being acquired, and to request him at the same time to give them a slight sketch of such a bridge as might suffice for enabling the two districts to communicate underneath the street". (59)

Mr Wilson, as we now know was Andrew Wilson, the talented landscape painter and popular manager of the Trustees Academy: his "professional skill and good taste" were beginning to transform the Central Queen Street gardens from a derelict wasteland into a carefully composed design which in years to come would embody the Claudian style landscape he so much admired and loved (refer Section 3.4 for further details on Andrew Wilson). What was Wilson's contribution to the western gardens? By the time he was consulted Mr Young's garden was already in a state of upheaval with the banks being formed along the north and east sides, and rubbish from the surrounding walls about to be dumped inside ready for making the walks. (60) Some useful mature trees still stood along the boundaries but the interior was by now badly trampled and needing to be re-made. Wilson's challenge therefore was not only to design a new garden complete in itself but one also capable of later extension - a rather more difficult exercise than that presented by the Central gardens.
Undeterred however, Wilson swiftly became involved and within 2 weeks of being approached he had visited the ground and produced a plan. On 22 March 1823 he was invited to attend a meeting of the Commissioners where his design was examined and fully discussed.

Overall response was favourable: the minutes record that the meeting:- "approved generally of it, with these exceptions. That the principal walks shall be 10' (3m) broad, that the walks in the south east corner shall be done away, and the space planted up, and the south west walk also planted up". With the year now well underway, and spring imminent there was no time for dallying and the Commissioners in a confident and buoyant mood agreed at the same meeting to:- "Direct Walker under Mr Wilson's superintendence to plant all the banks, as soon as possible, with such forest trees and shrubs especially evergreens as are most suitable to the situation, and to execute with the utmost dispatch such portions of the walks, and alterations of the surface as must be done before the trees are planted, and to plant trees and shrubs throughout the grounds under Mr Wilson's directions".

Apart from the details just described, the garden minutes say little else about Andrew Wilson's plan for the garden even although he must have prepared a number of sketches and drawings illustrating his ideas. Nothing however, not even the plan he presented to the Commissioners has been retained amongst the garden's books or papers. It is a matter of luck therefore that his design has been preserved by other means for it was incorporated into a map of Edinburgh published in 1824 (fig. 141d). This is the only map showing the layout of the new pleasure gardens before they were extended in 1825 to cover the whole of the open space along the western end of Queen Street. We can see from the map that in essence Wilson's plan looks a little reminiscent of Young's former garden with thick tree and shrub planting along the boundaries and an inner footpath around the whole. The central and largest portion was however completely altered becoming a mounded grassed area intersected with walks (capable of extension westwards) and with clumps of trees or shrubs planted at intervals. Both the two short stretches of footpaths which the Commissioners wished "done away" with can be made out: it also appears
from Knox's map that all the walks in Wilson's plan were of an equal size (6' or 2.44m or 1.83m) was the width most commonly used) and maybe for this reason the Committee decided there was a need to provide more contrast between the main footpaths and the smaller connecting ones.

April and May 1823 saw much activity in the garden with both Mr Buchan's workforce busy with the walls and railings and Mr Walker's squad of labourers forming and planting the interior; and all under the watchful eye of Andrew Wilson. No major decision affecting the garden's layout seems to have been made without Wilson's opinion being sought. Thus when there was some debate as to the choice of position for the 2 main gates on the north and south sides the Commissioners agreed that they should be placed in the centre of the rail "... or as nearly so as Mr Wilson shall find to be conformable to his plans and to the general plans for the garden". (61) By the end of May a start had been made on the construction of the pathways and a quantity of local gravel ordered from Henry's pit at Bellevue. (62) Before the Commissioners retired for the summer Walker was seen on the ground and "... urged the necessity of dispatch in finishing the work and of seeing that the men are attentive in their work". (63) Steady progress seems to have been maintained free of any major setback or delay; towards the end of September the garden was sufficiently advanced for the Commissioners to have bought such equipment as garden seats, a roller for the walks, and rope for securing the trees. The workforce too must have been paid off about then for a document of accounts shows that by the same month £372 had been spent on labouring wages, together with payments for earth, gravel, turf, trees, plants and manure: the wages taking up just under two-thirds of the total sum. (64)

Walker aware of leaner times ahead once the two contracts for the Queen Street gardens were completed took the initiative of writing to the Commissioners with the request that he be considered for appointment as Superintendent of the new gardens. It was not of course expressed quite so bluntly - his manner of approach was more subtle and carefully
avoided stating directly the rather sensitive matter as to the actual sum of money he would expect to be paid - "... After finishing the western district of the Queen Street gardens I would esteem it a particular favour should the proprietors be pleased to entrust me with the keeping of it in good order. As to the yearly allowance of keeping the same I refer to the proprietors what they may deem adequate for the purpose". (65)

His letter was favourably considered, and when the Commissioners conferred again after the summer break they decided that: "... if the advantage of Walker's superintendence can be combined with the benefit of an operative person being constantly engaged this would be the best plan". A joint scheme with the Central district was thought a possibility but on enquiry the Clerk discovered that the neighbouring garden had already made their own plans. The matter was subsequently left until all the new railings were in place; two days before Christmas 1823 the Clerk reported to a commissioner's meeting that an arrangement had been made with Richard Walker giving him "... the entire charge of keeping the gardens in most proper and perfect order" at £35 per annum. (66)

For this sum Walker had to supply "... a decent steady civil person as gardener" on constant attendance and performing "all the duties of a garden keeper". This was to include locking the gates at night, opening them in the mornings, attending as far as possible "... to see that no strangers intrude into the gardens" and preventing damage being done "... to the plants or otherwise". His margin of profit from this must have been slight although modestly augmented by his right to use the appointed gardener "occasionally" for work in the back greens of houses in the district. The system probably only worked at all because of a wider family involvement. Richard Walker put his brother Archibald in charge of the gardens - a post he held until his death in 1834 when he was succeeded by another brother James. (67)

Apart from noting the appointment of the gardener, the last minute of 1823 indicates that plans for opening the garden to the proprietors were well advanced. Keys were ready for distribution and by the following meeting held early in the New Year a proof copy of the rules
and regulations was available for checking. (68) Although the minute book does not record exactly when the pleasure garden was officially available for use one would judge that at least by February 1824 proprietors had access. Certainly by mid April it was being frequented by children and causing headaches for the gardener who was attempting to stop all running on the grass and walks "till these acquire firmness". (67)

After a demanding first year (when 19 management meetings were held) the Commissioners now entered a less hectic period during 1824 when the number of meetings dwindled to 6. Various payments for completed work had to be sanctioned - one of the last being to Andrew Wilson who was personally approached by Mr Bell, the Clerk and requested to put in his account "for laying out the ground". It was a request that seems to have caused Wilson a little embarrassment for as he explained in his reply: "... he wished rather to be considered as wishing to foreward so laudable a public improvement than as making professional charge. That unasked he would not have rendered an account, and now would wish it to stand on this footing. That as he had acted on the same principal with the centre district and had accepted 25 guineas from them, and as the ground was about one half the size the sum should probably be fixed at the corresponding about of £12. 12s." (70)

Apart from such matters little other activity is recorded in the minutes for 1824. Steps however, were taken to overcome "the nuisance at the south west corner" which if true to other so called "nuisances" must refer to an unofficial urinal: in order to remove "... this great cause of complaint", the pillar between the east and west park together with 2' 2" (76 cm) of dividing wall was removed and replaced by a railing. (71) This incident could only have acted as a further reminder that the greater part of open space along the western end of Queen Street was still outwith the control of the Commissioners, and towards the end of the year a second attempt was made to acquire the land from the Earl of Wemyss. At a November meeting of the Commissioners it was agreed that the Clerk should approach Wemyss' agent to see if he would be willing to sell. (72) On this occasion response was favourable but
at the same time the Commissioners learnt that his Lordship had already received "... two several liberal offers for the purchase of his whole property in Queen Street", although he also made known that he wished "to give the Commissioners first chance of securing the garden and park for the public". Fearing therefore "that the property will be disposed of to others if it is not secured for the public" the Commissioners promptly decided to make an offer of £6,080 "... the same rate paid for Mr Young's garden", and over £1,000 more than their previous bid.(74)

The purchase of Lord Wemyss's ground and the extension of the garden westwards

Early in 1825 the Commissioners heard from Lord Wemyss's agent that their offer was acceptable but on condition that if at any time the ground ceased to be occupied as public gardens his Lordship should have the right of repurchase and at the same price. The Commissioners were not altogether happy about this as they felt that once money had been spent on improvements the land should be independently revalued.(75) Lord Wemyss however, was not willing to make allowances for any changes made as he argued that: "The turning of the small pasture field into pleasure garden will no doubt cost some expense but in the very improbable event of the clause of preemption coming into operation ... it will cost Lord Wemyss and his successors a great deal more to convert his garden into a private and productive one than every expense now to be conveyed on the small field".(76) As it was not worth jeopardising negotiations by taking issue over this basically trivial matter the Commissioners decided to accept the terms without further ado.

No such transaction could be completed without the prior approval of all the proprietors and during the second week in February 1825 a general meeting was held at Oman's Hotel (Waterloo Hotel) in Waterloo Place. The amount of money required was substantial (Mr Young's garden together with Wemyss's land brought the total to over £9,000 making it the most expensive of the New Town gardens) but as some
reassurance the proprietors were told that the ground was at least "... favourably situated and will cost comparatively little in laying it out ... and the value of the materials on the property much more considerable than those of Mr Young's". (77) In addition the Earl of Wemyss had agreed for his house to be included within the Act of Parliament and the Commissioners hopefully "entertained expectations" that his example would be followed by other proprietors in adjoining streets. They were also informed that a strip of land on the west side of the garden "if thought advisable" would be used for widening the roadway (Wemyss Place) between Queen Street and Heriot Row. These various proposals were approved by the proprietors who authorised the additional land to be purchased.

With the West Queen Street pleasure garden now trebled in size what steps were taken to unify the two newly acquired parts into one larger garden of over 5 acres (2.0 ha)? Not surprisingly subsequent minutes show a greater preoccupation with financial matters than with the physical changes made to the garden itself and details about the latter tend to be sparse. Enough however, can be surmised to form a reasonable picture of what was achieved.

One of the first acts was to obtain an estimate from Mr Buchan for the construction of a cope stone and railing along the rest of Queen Street and Heriot Row. His quotation came to £700 (78) - a higher rate than previously but more preparatory work may of course have been necessary. In any case it was not a sum the Commissioners quibbled over and at the beginning of April 1825 a contract with Buchan was formally agreed. (79) It was time now to clear the ground of its various old materials "... stones, iron and other items". These were of sufficient quantity to justify a public sale - which was well advertised beforehand by hand bills and successfully raised £200 for garden funds. (80) Included in the auction were the former handsome iron railings erected by Sir James Grant at the end of the eighteenth century, stones from the high wall along Heriot Row, and material from the large hot house on the north side of the garden close to the centre built during Lord Rockville's...
occupancy. The western boundary wall remained at this stage (no firm decision had been reached on the road widening proposals), together with the gardener’s house in the north west corner which provided accommodation for Walker and his family.

After all the rubbish and surplus materials had been sold and removed, and with the work on the railing making steady progress the Commissioners next considered what arrangements to adopt for having the ground laid out and united with the existing one. When Andrew Wilson had been approached 2 years before with a request to design the first section of pleasure garden he had been especially asked to make his plans capable of extension westwards: this he most certainly did but as there was no immediate prospect of the land being acquired a detailed layout for the western side was not produced. Wilson however, must have formed some preliminary ideas and because of his earlier involvement he was obviously in the best position to complete the design for the enlarged garden. It therefore comes as a surprise to find the following note recorded in the garden minutes for July 1825:

"Resolve to employ a person to superintend the operations and having considered Mr Neill’s letter, approve of Mr Niven and direct the Secretary to see him and learn what are his terms, and if he has been in the habit of making plans to desire him to furnish one". (81)

Mr Neill is without question Patrick Neill the skilled amateur horticulturist whose knowledge of plants and gardening was widely known; he became involved at a little later date with the formation of the East Princes Street gardens and Regent gardens. His advice as to a competent gardener had undoubtedly been sought and the man recommended lived like himself on the north side of Edinburgh. (82)

Why the former, and apparently satisfactory arrangement of employing Richard Walker as Superintendent under the guidance of Andrew Wilson was not repeated remains to some extent a matter of conjecture: change of circumstance would provide the most valid...
explanation - Walker for instance, may simply have moved away from Edinburgh, or even have died. We do know that in the case of Andrew Wilson 1825 was a critical year in which important decisions were taken as to his own and families future and that these could well have made him reluctant to take on fresh commitments. His wife had inherited considerable wealth on the death of her eldest brother - one of the judges of the Supreme Court in Calcutta and their newly found financial independence immediately opened up prospects of removing permanently to Italy - a country much loved by Wilson. Within months of his brother-in-law's death he had in fact resigned from his post as Manager of the Trustees Academy and sometime in 1826 the family left Edinburgh for Rome.

The rest of the minutes for 1825 remain oddly silent on the subject of the garden's formation; one might too readily conclude that little was achieved apart from the completion of the railings but a set of figures compiled at a later date by Patrick Brodie, accountant, shows this to be quite erroneous. (83) These accounts show that in the year 1825 (up until September) payments for "levelling, enclosing and laying out" amounted to £1,268. If we deduct the £700 cost for Buchan's railings this leaves a sizable £568 - presumably the amount spent on employing labourers, an overseer, and on the necessary items for making a garden such as earth, gravel, turf, trees, plants and so on. Further large sums were spent the following year (£364) and even the year after (£189). So a lot of activity certainly took place even if for the most part it went unrecorded. The garden as such is not referred to again until March 1826; (84) early in that month the Commissioners met together and according to the minute: "... approve of proceedings in laying out the ground". Once more details are frustratingly absent quite unlike the rest of the meeting where for example, the discussion relative to arrangements for renting out keys to the garden are fully described. (85) This at least, if nothing else does confirm that the garden was nearing completion and ready for public use.

It is not until the end of 1826 that more light is shed on what
"proceedings" were actually adopted and the important fact conveyed that Andrew Wilson despite his involvement with other pressing matters did take on the responsibility for the design of the extended garden. At a meeting held on Boxing Day the Commissioners amongst other matters considered "Mr Wilson's charge" and authorised the cashier "... to settle the amount claimed by Mr Wilson for behoof of his brother Mr A. Wilson". (86) Payment however, seems to have been delayed for in Brodie's financial report already referred to there is listed against September 1833 - "Account to Mr Wilson for making a plan of the garden and superintending the laying out - £31. 10s. (ie 30 guineas). While details are therefore sparse we do have this very clear proof that Wilson was the designer of the whole of the West Queen Street gardens. Maybe the late appearance of his name was due to his initial reluctance to take on the task because of his imminent departure from Edinburgh (the Commissioners also may have hesitated to approach him due to this very reason) but when attempts to find a satisfactory alternative failed (i.e. Richard Niven) Andrew Wilson was persuaded to complete his earlier work. Not everything was finished before he left: the same December minutes note that the central bank next to Queen Street had still to be laid in grass and the walks to be gravelled while instructions were issued to the gardener for the - "... large trees to be uplifted and planted where the Convener and cashier direct". (87)

What was Wilson's design for the rest of the garden? As before no personal record has survived but the plan can once more be readily seen in the various maps of Edinburgh made out from this time onwards (fig. 141 c, f and g) and comparison between the different maps reveals how extraordinary little the original layout has changed over the years. Unlike the Central gardens where Wilson adapted the old farm cattle pond to become a distinctive feature of the new design the ground at the western end lacked any such special characteristic. It did however, possess a variety of mature trees and was the most level of all the pleasure ground along Queen Street. Andrew Wilson in a simple but extremely subtle manner exploited these assets and created one of the most successful and delightfully laid out gardens in the
a. From western end with attractive cast iron seat

b. Asphalt footpath along the Queen Street side

c. The central grassed area

FIGURE 142 a - c:
General views of the West Queen Street gardens
New Town. The greater part of Wemyss's former garden and field were formed into two large oval shaped areas of lawn which cleverly linked with the grassed area and walks previously designed by Wilson for the first section of pleasure garden at the eastern end. From the western side the central lawn looks to be continuous but by sudden dips contrives a number of cross paths which from a distance are not seen but leave a sward vista undisturbed (figs 142a and c). A continuous terrace walk was formed along the Queen Street side at the base of the bank (fig. 142b) across which several short connecting footpaths sloped down from the street. At this stage there was no access from Wemyss Place, the whole of this end still being enclosed by a 10' (3m) high stone wall.

The garden following Andrew Wilson's involvement: the addition of the proprietors in Wemyss Place under the 1822 Act of Parliament, and later advice from James McNab

Wilson's skilful design has experienced few changes (cf for example fig 141 f and g) and combined with subsequent careful and sensitive management has produced a green arcadian retreat in the best classical manner (figs. 142 and 143). Its special attractiveness was noticed from an early date: thus a newspaper article written in 1858 on the subject of "Trees for towns" criticises the dearth of fine trees and planting in Edinburgh's open spaces and cites the West Queen Street gardens as the only example "... of a really artistic and scientific treatment of trees, shrubs, and turf; a most encouraging one however, even in its present immature state". Nearly 10 years later in similar vein the Western gardens were once more singled out as being one of the most pleasing in the New Town laid out as they were "... in park like style" and combining more successfully than most "... a certain feeling of interior privacy with fine peeps of grassy slopes from outside the railings".

The pleasure gardens were not in fact fully completed until the early years of the 1830s when the very high wall along the western boundary was removed together with the gardener's house in the northern corner, and a new wall with railings to match the existing ones was
View from east end to centre

The gently undulating surface adds to the attractiveness of the garden - giving a Claudian landscape

The south side of the garden

Tobogganing in the gardens c1931 (Peggy Bowden)

View into the interior
erected a little to the east of the former boundary line. A small strip of garden was incorporated into Wemyss Place to allow the roadway to be widened.

These changes formed part of an agreement entered into with David Scott W3 (1791-1839) owner of the angle of land between Albyn Place and Wemyss Place which he had bought from Lord Alva in 1818. Almost immediately after purchasing the ground Scott had commissioned plans for its development and there exists in Register House an unsigned drawing showing a 3 storey terrace row of houses occupying the west end of Queen Street.(91) These proposals preceded the much more ambitious Moray scheme adjacent to it but were nevertheless viewed with much displeasure by many of the Queen Street residents living at this end of the street and accustomed to open views from their windows. Attempts to prevent the lands development however, failed(92) and building work slowly commenced from 1821 onwards. A few years later however, when the first Commissioners of the western gardens were facing enormous outlays for the purchase and construction of the pleasure gardens what had previously been considered a threat "... to the beauty and uniformity of the New Town"(93) was now seen as a potential financial asset.

In 1825 James Gillespie Graham architect for the Earl of Moray's development, and Mr Scott were both contacted by the Commissioners to see on what terms they might be willing to allow the 1822 Queen Street Garden Act to be extended to their property. Of the two approaches the one with Scott proved fruitful and 2 years later a settlement was drawn up between Scott and the Commissioners whereby the ground on the west side of Wemyss Place was included within the Act. It was agreed that once all the houses had been completed and entered into the Police rental lists they were liable for garden assessments including also a contribution towards the cost of purchase and laying them out. The new proprietors therefore gained full rights to the gardens and as part of the transaction a narrow strip of garden ground at the western end was made over to David Scott in order to allow Wemyss Place to be
It was therefore a settlement of advantage to both sides. As Scott was already involved with builders and contractors he agreed to take responsibility for carrying out the necessary alterations to the gardens although the actual cost of the new wall and railing were to be met by the Commissioners. The old wall and gardener's house seem to have been pulled down sometime in 1829 for the minutes record in April of that year an offer by Mr Scott of £30 for the materials, and one assumes that the realigned wall and railings (which provided two gateways into the garden) followed soon afterwards. Little however, is made of these events apart from various speculations as to the probable costs to the Commissioners. They were kept in suspense for quite a long time as Scott's account was not submitted until the end of 1835; his bill for £501 was considered "too much" by Mr Alison the builder whose opinion had been sought by the Commissioners. Some tactful bargaining must have subsequently taken place for the sum when settled in 1837 came to considerably less - £428.

During the following years the gardens gradually reached maturity and by the 1850s much of the "new" planting dating back to the 1820s, as well as that of an earlier period were in need of attention. The Commissioners wisely sought the advice of James McNab who after visiting the grounds submitted a report to them in January 1855. Typical of all McNab's reports it was full of sound and sensible suggestions which readily won the Commissioners approval and resulted in the first major programme of improvement work since the gardens were formed. His stern warnings towards the end of the report as to the irretrievable damage caused by haphazard and incautious pruning were opportune and he rightly drew attention to the point he never ceased to stress that: - "In the management of Town gardens ... their beauty does not depend upon the number of trees so much as upon a fine outline of foliage". Consequently "In the pruning and thinning of such gardens everything should be freely sacrificed for those trees selected for permanent effect". He recommended the removal of most of the poplars throughout the centre of the gardens (originally planted as 'nurse' trees for quick effect), together with the rows of old apple
trees at the western end (a residue from Farmer Wood's time) as well as the intermediate trees along the south boundary. Extensive thinning and pruning were required of the trees on the south sloping bank, and the elms along the eastern boundary which were beginning to overhang the rail - "within the reach of idle boys". McNab also drew attention to the large number of deciduous shrubs in the garden which he considered provided little winter decoration and were better replaced by such evergreens as hollies, aucubas, Portugal laurels and box.

The Commissioners gave McNab a free hand to carry out his recommendations stipulating only that not more than £10 was to be expended and that the central willow trees be allowed to remain. (101) All this meant a lot of extra work for the gardener and as a reward he was allowed the money from the sale of all the cut wood - a sum of £1 10s. (£1.50). (102) By the end of March 1856 the task was complete. Usually McNab's good works in setting gardens to rights after years of uncurbed growth were greeted with cries of protest: surrounding residents disliking the sudden bare appearance. But in this instance no such outbursts are recorded. The Commissioners seem to have exercised firm control and certainly must have been pleased with the results for 2 years later McNab was again asked to inspect the ground and to put forward further recommendations for improvements. It is in fact interesting to note that although McNab became involved in so many of the New Town gardens between the 1850s and 1870s he developed the closest and most regular contact with the West Queen Street gardens. His professional skill and expertise must have been greatly respected: over a 20 year period he made out no less than 5 detailed reports on the garden (103) besides being consulted informally on other occasions. (104) The suggestions he made were usually heeded and put quickly into effect and the garden still exhibits the benefit of this long continuous period of thoughtful and planned care.

McNab's second, and following reports continued the improvement work initiated in 1856, and resulted in the removal of further decayed or misshaped trees, cutting down those which obstructed views into the
garden from the houses along Heriot Row, and thinning and pruning others particularly the trees around the boundaries. Apart from trees, McNab's other main concern was to rid the garden of many of its ailing and ineffectual shrub plots. He very much disliked areas of black earth which only served to support a few sickly specimens of slight ornamental worth, and many of these beds - mostly along the Heriot Row side and the western end were grassed over. Thus the bold and harmonious effect of trees and grass which is one of the distinctive features of the West Queen Street gardens owes much to McNab, as well as the foresight of the Commissioners of that time who had sufficient imagination and confidence to support their consultant's ideas. Most of the changes made were in fact straightforward although McNab's suggestions regarding the north east end (close to the entrance gate) required more basic work. His report of 1872 recommended the removal of shrubs along the wall allowing extra soil to be deposited up to the level of the bottom of the cope stones: the new mound to be grass sown with the addition of a few ornamental plants where thought necessary. This project was delayed until the Spring of 1875 (105) and not completed until the following year when the small grass embankment up to the railings was extended as far as the central gate in Heriot Row. Once more improvements were made possible by the availability of large quantities of soil at favourable rates: a short distance westwards the remaining portion of the Walker estate at Drumsheugh was under development and 175 cartloads of soil dug from the foundations of Drumsheugh gardens were readily absorbed into the West Queen Street grounds. (106)

The garden in more recent times

By the end of the 1870s the West Queen Street gardens were in good condition and apart from routine maintenance probably required little basic remedial work done to them for several years. Unfortunately the minute book covering the next period from between 1880-1927 is lost so we do not know for example, to what extent the garden was adapted for tennis play which was such a popular activity during this particular time. It would be surprising however to learn of any real
upheavals or traumas occurring during these late Victorian years to match those recounted in the next series of minutes when they resume in 1927. At the start the story is one of continuing upkeep to the garden, with details of a fairly extensive tree pruning and removal programme carried out in 1931 under the guidance of Mr W. S. Imrie, a forester. (107) Nine lime trees were removed from the western end of Queen Street to relieve congestion, with 5 further trees in other parts of the garden (listed as 1 lime, 1 sycamore, 1 hawthorn, 1 laburnum and 1 pyrus). All the trees along the boundaries were pruned, together with those in the central areas. When the Commissioners met, it was usually to discuss such niceties as the merits of providing bird boxes, the replanting of the central rhododendron bed, the re-employment of a ranger during the summer months, whether to accept a bird bath as a memorial to one of the proprietors, and so on. (108)

Soon, all this was to abruptly change as the country became caught up in the Second World War; from then onwards the Commissioners' concern was almost wholly focussed on securing the survival of the garden in the face of unfamiliar pressures and usage - which included the accommodation of army and civilian shelters, army training, and other military based activities. Recruits of the 1st and 2nd line Lothian Border Armoured Car Company (stationed at Wemyss Place) were the first to be allowed to drill in the gardens during the summer months of 1939 between the hours of 7.30 p.m.-9.30 p.m.: numbers were limited to 60 men, no wheeled vehicles were allowed, and the Commanding Officer was asked not to use the ground when it was wet. (109) The tread of heavy feet did however, cause considerably less damage than an overreaction to an air raid warning in September 1939 which prompted the troops to rush into the gardens and to hastily dig trenches "for their own protection". (110) Refilling the hurriedly constructed trenches proved a much slower and tedious undertaking, and required a lot of tenacious pressure by the Clerk and Commissioners before the work was carried out over 6 months later. (111) The result was far from satisfactory due to insufficient top soil having been added; slowly parts of the western lawn began to sink. Further attempts to even out the
humps and hollows were however reluctantly abandoned as futile until the war ended. (112) Instead the Commissioners were granted £100 compensation (113) and the ground was not re-levelled until 1951. (114)

Although the 2 other Queen Street gardens were both affected by the war (115) neither had to accommodate quite such extensive use from the drilling and exercising of military and associated personnel as the Western garden, largely because so many of the army detachments were stationed at this end of the New Town. Thus in January 1941 the Commissioners granted permission for the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force to drill in the gardens (116) (limited to 20 per session); in March 1941 the garden was requisitioned for use by local battalions of Home Guard for bayonet practice, (117) in 1943 girls of the AT3 detachment division in Wemyss Place were allowed to play basketball (provided the pitch was regularly changed), and in addition football was also allowed by the Anti Aircraft defence group. (118) During the summer of 1944 and 1945 the 1st City of Edinburgh Battalion Army Cadet Corp were using the garden for training purposes. (119)

In addition to these various activities the garden also provided space for 3 air raid shelters: one for the Royal Engineers (stationed at 52 Queen Street) and placed next to the Central shrubbery, and 2 for the Merchant Company for use of the girls and staff attending Mary Erskine school then situated at the bottom end of Queen Street (120) (fig 18a). Two ammunition stores were also erected alongside Wemyss Place. (121) Exercising effective control over the garden became much less easy from September 1942 when the railings along most of Wemyss Place and the entire length of West Heriot Row were removed for war purposes. (122) At first the freedom of the garden proved an attractive novelty to the youthful but rather more scruffy fraternity living in nearby Jamaica Street (since demolished as sub-standard housing). Some initial damage was caused to trees and shrubs (123) but this does not seem to have persisted. The police were asked to keep a special eye on the garden but they were in a difficult position of not really knowing who had rights of access and who had not. A better solution was the one initiated by the East Queen Street gardens who too were experiencing a similar problem. They decided to employ...
a ranger to patrol the grounds during the summer evenings and for the whole day at weekends - an arrangement which the western Commissioners decided to take advantage of in exchange for sharing costs. (124) This approach worked reasonably well and continued until the railings were replaced in 1948. In many ways the gardens were particularly fortunate in having a full-time gardener during the whole of the war years and although supplementary help was almost impossible to obtain at least a degree of regular care prevented the rapid deterioration which would otherwise have occurred. Nevertheless it must have been a frustrating period both for the gardener and proprietors whose use of the ground was so curtailed (125).

As life gradually returned to normal after the war so too did work begin on the garden's restoration. The various shelters were removed in 1946, (126) and in 1948 after many discussions and various setbacks new cast iron railings were erected along Wemyss Place and Heriot Row at a cost of £708: (127) to raise the necessary money a special 6% assessment was levied on all the proprietors. From then on more solid progress was possible and the following years saw a certain amount of tree and shrub renewal, pruning work, improvements to the drainage on the eastern side of the garden, (128) levelling of the lawn on which trenches had been dug, repairs to the seats and the purchase of new ones, repointing the boundary walls, and the repainting of the railings. (129) Some of the large old trees were pruned by the city Parks Department in 1964. (130) During the whole of this period from 1942 until 1965 the garden benefited from having the same gardener - a Mr Dickson (131) whose skill and devotion aided its successful restoration.

At the present time a fairly long term programme is underway for the gradual removal of some of the older trees and shrubs and the replanting of new ones - to match the existing character and balance of the garden. (132) In recent years some of the pathways have been asphalted including the terrace walk along the Queen Street side: (fig. 142b) the days of the well kept gravel walks are sadly numbered.
Financial Matters

Eight pleasure gardens in Edinburgh were purchased wholly or partly by the surrounding proprietors, and of these the West Queen Street gardens proved far and away the most expensive. (133) Mr Young's garden and the Earl of Wemyss's land together cost the proprietors £9,080 - over £3,000 more than the price paid for the East Queen Street gardens - although the latter were considerably larger. It made the Central gardens at £2,736 seem an absolute bargain. Even the much later gardens fronting Eton Terrace and Belgrave Crescent, both of greater size and acquired in the 1870s were bought for very much less. (134) True the Western Commissioners inherited ground which had for the most part been well tended and lovingly cared for and maybe for this reason neither of the private owners were prepared to make any financial concessions, however worthy the cause: perhaps too, they felt their continuing obligation for the land's upkeep in terms of the annual assessment was contribution enough. Faced with the initial high cost of the ground, as well as the substantial outlay for enclosing and laying out the new pleasure garden it is not surprising that the early minutes show a particular concern with money matters: a keenness for economy combined with a sharp check on those feuars falling into arrears with their payments were indeed the hallmarks of the early years.

It was as well that the purchase of the land and its formation into pleasure garden was spread over a 2 year period as it allowed the Commissioners more time to become organised, and not to become completely overwhelmed at the outset by the enormous financial burdens they eventually became committed to. Indeed, it soon became clear that substantial sums of money were not to be immediately forthcoming from the proprietors themselves. After Mr Young's ground had been purchased, just less than one quarter of the feuars agreed to pay the necessary assessment outright (at a reduced rate of £50) while the rest (many of whom did not even bother to reply to the circular sent out by the Commissioners) opted to pay annually over a 10 year period. (135)
Unlike the Commissioners of the Central Queen Street gardens who baulked at the idea of becoming personally responsible for a bank loan, the Western counterparts had less choice and to meet their pressing monetary problems they applied in March 1823 to the Bank of Scotland for credit up to £2,100. (136) This transaction was smoothly and speedily effected by Sir Robert Dundas one of the Commissioners and member of the Bank's Governing Board.

The money so raised quickly disappeared. One year later the minutes show that the cost of converting Mr Young's eastern portion into a communal pleasure garden had amounted to £793: the largest portion of which had been spent on new railings (£391), followed by payments to Richard Walker the contractor and his team of labourers (£237); the remainder went on buying earth, gravel, turf, manure, trees and plants (£134) and on administrative matters (£29). (137) Even greater expenditure was soon, however, to be embarked upon: at the end of 1824 the Commissioners reopened negotiations with Lord Wemyss's agent for the purchase of his ground in order to complete the western garden. Certain circumstances had by then moved in favour of the Commissioners and the almost certain prospect of the 1822 Act of Parliament being extended to include the new property being built along Wemyss Place encouraged them to increase their previous offer from £5,000 to £6,080 - thus securing the ground.

Once more the bulk of money was raised by an additional loan from the Bank of Scotland this time for a sum of £6,000. (138) But acquisition of Wemyss's land simply heralded a whole array of substantial expenses which were impossible to avoid. The railing and cope stone around Mr Young's former garden required considerable extension, the rough central field needed total improvement, while the western end had to be adapted and integrated with the new design. From various figures quoted in the minutes it would seem that about £3,184 was spent on this second stage of which £1,128 went on new walls and railings, and the rest on levelling, laying out, planting, garden equipment and so on. (139) This gave a total outlay on the Western gardens (including their purchase price) of approximately £12,250. (140) - double that of
the Central gardens and considerably more than the eastern ones. (141)

No wonder that the minutes of a meeting held just after Christmas 1825 record a little desperately "... needing money badly" (142) and the consequent decision by the Commissioners to start levying assessments for the garden's upkeep. Up until then payments by the proprietors had only been for the cost of the land and its formation into pleasure gardens, although Mr Young's portion had been fully in use for 12 months. Also to help increase income a positive policy was adopted towards the use of the gardens by non-proprietors. Shortly after all the garden had been completed, the Commissioners ordered 60 new keys to be made, all stamped with the letter 'R' to signify 'renters'. To advertise this prospective amenity notices were posted at several of the garden's entrances addressed to "... The inhabitants of streets adjoining the west garden in Queen Street", and informing them that "... a few keys may be had by application to Mr W. Bell, 10 Queen Street, conferring the benefit of the western district of the Queen Street gardens". The charge for this privilege was to be 4 guineas a year. (143)

Despite careful economy, and the additional income derived from key renters (144) together with (from 1837 onwards) the extra assessments from the proprietors in Wemyss Place, the debt on the garden remained substantial and many must have wondered what hope there was of ever paying it off. The eastern gardens had become fully solvent by 1831, and the central gardens in 1839, and the better fortunes of the two neighbouring gardens must have aroused anxiety amongst several of the western district proprietors. Indeed, in May 1838 the minutes report a statement by one of the Commissioners - a Dr Craigie that - "... there was at present a feeling amongst proprietors and Commissioners that every exertion should be used to reduce the amount of debt". (145)

To this end the Commissioners had been offered the gratuitous services of Mr Thomas Gray Scott WS (1811-1856) son of one of the Commissioners to act as Clerk and cashier. (146) His offer was accepted "solely with the view to saving expense" and while William Bell was accorded a vote of thanks the cursory manner in which he was dispatched
(after being a loyal and diligent Clerk since June 1822) must have seemed hurtful and offensive. Up until this time Bell apparently had never bothered to claim the full range of fees due to him, but the action of the Commissioners sparked off such a degree of bitterness that new bills were submitted. The rights and wrongs of what payments he was entitled to dragged on until 1841 when the matter was finally settled by arbitration. In view of the hard feeling caused and the extra money spent in legal skirmishes one wonders if the Commissioners had acted wisely or really effected much of an economy by changing their Clerk. On a happier note however, the Scott family went on to give nearly 100 years service as Clerks to the Commissioners: Thomas Scott was succeeded by his brother Archibald, a solicitor who in turn was succeeded by his son Andrew Thomas Steele Scott WS (1851-1931); he was appointed to the post in 1887 and only resigned from it shortly before his death.

The size of the debt continued to worry the Commissioners, and in 1842 they decided to appoint an accountant - Patrick Brodie to make a detailed examination of the garden's financial state and to report how many more years it would take (at the same rate of assessment) before the debt was cleared. His report (a most detailed compendium of expenditure and income since the garden's formation) was not without encouragement insofar as it showed that the assessments had already paid off the price of the gardens, "... but considerable debt still existed for levelling and laying out the gardens". A further 13 years were to elapse before the sum owing to the Bank of Scotland was finally cleared; on 23rd February 1855 the formal discharge was registered, an event which must have produced considerable relief and satisfaction. It was a day which none of the original Commissioners lived to see.

Since then the garden's finances have remained relatively stable with usually a small surplus to hand. Once funds started to accumulate the rate of the annual assessment was reduced for a number of years. From 1867 assessments have been based on ratable value.
at the present time - 3% - a figure which varies according to the level of expenditure. The number of premises due for assessment has more than doubled since the gardens were first formed due mainly to the subdivision of property along both Heriot Row and Queen Street. Heriot Row remains mostly residential but Queen Street has very gradually been taken over largely for office and commercial use, and because they are more highly rated so too is their contribution. Some argue that this is unfair in view of the limited use such premises make of the garden; but they enjoy an unrivalled position and perhaps compensate a little for their part in despoiling the New Town of its residential character. For a number of years now it has been the practice to set aside a sum of money annually to help meet the periodic cost of repainting the railings - which in financial terms has grown to be a substantial undertaking.

Management of the gardens

The gardens continue to be run under the same administrative framework as established by the 1822 Act of Parliament. For the most part the 6 district Commissioners and their Clerk take responsibility for the management of the garden meeting together at least once a year, and sometimes more frequently depending on what matters require attention. This part of the New Town has always been popular with the legal profession whose chambers and homes very often occupied the same premises; not surprisingly the majority of district Commissioners have tended to be men connected with the law and have included some very eminent names. Whatever might be the demands of an exacting and busy professional life the general pattern has been (as for many other New Town gardens) for long years of dedicated service often only broken by death or removal from the area. When this occurs new Commissioners are recruited by personal recommendation from other Commissioners which ensures minimal upheaval and the choice of individuals likely to be interested and concerned with the gardens.

It is by nature a somewhat oligarchical structure but one that
seems to have worked exceedingly well over the years providing stability and continuity. (155) The general body of feuars are by no means excluded from being involved should they so wish: their views and suggestions can be represented at the annual meeting of proprietors held in February each year, and should a matter of urgent concern arise then a special meeting can be called at any time either on the initiative of the Commissioners or by a requisition signed by at least 7 of the proprietors. Their interests are therefore well safeguarded. Special meetings have not occurred often. In recent years two have been called in response to changes in rules allowing dogs into the garden; (156) in 1948 a general meeting was arranged to gain approval for the cost of re-erecting sections of railing removed during the war years; (157) and nearer to the present - in 1972 a meeting was held to inform proprietors about a proposed tree felling and replanting programme. (158) This last mentioned occasion had worthwhile results for the proprietors suggested that the work should be carefully phased and that a professional landscape designer should be called in to advise. Consequently, David Skinner, landscape architect was appointed to draw up the necessary plans - the first stage of which was completed in 1974: this is to be a long term project and will gradually lead to the removal of much of the old tree and shrub planting.

The Gardeners

The Commissioners have always preferred to employ their own gardener and even today (although arranged by contract with the nursery firm of Dobbie & Co.) a man is kept in the grounds on a full-time basis. Not surprisingly the western gardens achieve a higher standard of upkeep than the 2 other Queen Street gardens and certainly better than most other New Town gardens. For the first 14 years of the garden's life its care remained in the hands of the Walker family. After Richard Walker had completed the contract for laying out the first section of garden his brother Archibald took charge in 1824 and continued until 1834 with occasional labouring help at busy times of the year. To start with he lived in a small house in the north west corner which was demolished in 1829 to allow Wemyss Place to be
widened. He then moved to rented accommodation for which the Commissioners gave an annual allowance of £4. 50. (159) His services had been secured for £32 a year - rising to nearly £42 in 1826 when the area of garden increased significantly with the addition of Lord Wemyss's land. (160) Rarely do we gather any hint of the poverty and breadline existence which many of these low paid gardeners must have experienced but when Archibald Walker died in December 1834 a note in the garden minutes records that "... he left a young family mainly destitute". (161)

Stirred by the poignancy of the case - occurring as it did so close to the season of goodwill the Commissioners favourably considered the application made by another brother James - "a gardener at Brunstain" who was willing "to engage and dispense with all assistance except that of the (deceased's) son, and also to take some charge of the deceased's family". This son "... a lad of fourteen" had for some time been helping his father in the garden and the Commissioners agreed that he should be allowed to continue at the same rate as that paid for labourers - ie 30p a week. In March 1835 James Walker was formally appointed to the post at £40 per annum with an £8 allowance for a house "in the immediate neighbourhood of the garden". His responsibilities were clearly documented in the agreement he had to sign which not only demanded his total commitment to the garden's upkeep but also the qualities of a skilled diplomat:

"I shall cut the grass from 9 to 10 times a year and shall always have it as it ought to be in well kept lawn and shrubbery ground, and pull the fruit before it is ripe. I shall keep the gardens in the best style and shall attend to the rules of the gardens as these have been in use to be observed, and in particular as to the time of opening and shutting the gardens, and shall always be there myself. I shall give my whole and undivided time to the gardens and shall not engage myself in any other occupation whatever. I am to be allowed the assistance of a labourer for about 4 months in the year whose wages the Commissioners are to pay. I shall be constantly civil and attentive to all persons entitled to access to the gardens, and at the same time firm in repressing any breach of the rules." (162)

The Walker family seemed prone to misfortune. Three years later the minutes record that James Walker: "... since his accident" (163)
REGULATIONS
TO BE OBSERVED BY
THE PROPRIETORS OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT
OF THE
Queen-Street Gardens.

E. Each Proprietor has been furnished with one Key gratis, and in case of one or two additional Keys having been arranged, or in case of a Key being lost, application must be made to the Gardener for a further grant of additional Keys, at 2s. each.

II. Each Proprietor having the number of houses to which they belong stamped upon the Key, and the whole Keys belonging to any Proprietor may be given by him to the Tenant of his house in the District; but the Proprietor is not to reserve one Key, and give his Tenant another. The Gardener is instructed to require production of the Keys from persons in the Gardens, which must be complied with, as the only means of excluding intruders.

III. Access shall be given to the Gardens at all times of the day, until one hour after sunset, and the Gates shall be shut up by the Gardener.

IV. No Proprietor shall lend or transfer his Key to Non-Proprietors upon any account, excepting to his Tenant, as above mentioned.

V. The Proprietor or Tenant of any house occupied as an Hotel, Club-room, or Lodging-houses, shall not be entitled to confer the privilege of using the Gardens on the lodgers in such house, or members of such club.

VI. Female Servants having the charge of children of persons entitled to access shall be admitted to the Gardens, but no other Servants.

VII. Proprietors or Tenants entitled to access to the Gardens, and Members of their Families may introduce Non-Proprietors into the Gardens, but only when along with themselves.

VIII. Boys shall not be permitted to introduce into the Gardens any of their Companions, who are not Sons of those entitled to access.

IX. No person shall cut, pull, or climb upon, or otherwise injure any of the Trees, Shrubs, or Flowers in the Gardens. All children shall carefully keep upon the Gravel Walks and Grass. No clothes shall be permitted to be washed or dried, nor any Games played, such as Slingshot or throwing Stones, or any hard substance, Cricket, Golf, Football, Bows and Arrows, and the like be allowed. No person shall bring in Dogs or smoke in the Gardens. Birds' Nests not to be robbed. No fire works, nor discharging of guns, canons, &c., allowed. All persons going into and leaving the Gardens shall shut the gates.

X. The Commissioners resolve to impose Fines, not exceeding £1, for the infringement of any of the Regulations. These Fines shall be recovered by the Gardener, and applied towards the expense of the management; and the Commissioners will further insist for payment of damages for repairing the injury done to the Gardens.

XI. The Heads of Families shall be responsible for Offences committed by their Children or Servants, and shall be bound to make good all damages done by them, and pay all Fines imposed on them; and in the event of any children being convicted of a second offence, it shall be in the power of the Commissioners to exclude them from the Gardens for a given time.

XII. All persons labouring under, or lately recovering from, infectious diseases, shall be excluded from the Gardens, until the risk of infection be certified by a medical gentleman as having ceased. The attention of parents is particularly requested to this rule, which will be strictly enforced by the Gardener.

Head of Families will see the propriety of observing and assisting in enforcing the foregoing Regulations, and abstaining, at all times, from pulling or cutting a single flower or shrub, as the practice would immediately become general, and destroy every regulation for the management of the place. The younger members of families will take notice, that, in case the Regulations are disregarded, confidential Servants of Police have been furnished with Keys to the Gardens, who will be entrusted with carrying them into effect. The heads of each family must consider the family Key to the Gardens as under their own charge, and must not allow it to go out of their keeping in any way that may admit of a breach of any of the Regulations. Particular care ought also to be taken to prevent Keys from being lost, and thus passing into the hands of persons not entitled to access to the Gardens.

By order of the Commissioners,

T. G. SCOTT, Clerk.

—EINBURN, 14th June 1839.

FIGURE 144: Hillside Crescent garden railing by W.H. Playfair 1822; ones to a similar design were adopted for the West Queen Street gardens (Playfair collection 1821).

FIGURE 145: West Queen Street garden’s regulations 1839.
had provided indifferent service and unable to carry out active
gardening work himself had sent other men to tend the garden. Such
fitful care soon led to deterioration and the Commissioners decided
they had little option but "to part with Walker at Martinmas" when
his contract was due to expire. At his request the gardener left
with a lump sum payment of "five pounds in full of wages" his only
capital in a new venture to earn a living by selling fruit and
vegetables; and this is the last we hear of the beleagured Walkers.

Faced with a sadly neglected garden requiring urgent and con-
siderable care the Commissioners decided the backlog of work would
be better tackled by a nursery firm. Two were approached -
Peter Lawsons, 3 Hunter Square (later, and for a long number of
years at George IV Bridge), and Thomas Cleghorn (who at this time was
renting ground in the East Princes Street gardens). Neither firm
were very impressed with what they saw and when estimates were
submitted both referred to the extensive labour that would be needed
"for several weeks to hoe and clear the grounds and walks and also
to cut the grass, and prune off the dead wood from the trees". Cleghorn's estimate being slightly cheaper was accepted, and after
putting the garden to order they continued to look after it during the
following year. At the end of this experimental period the
Commissioners came to the conclusion that - "the gardens are better
off with a gardener" and after advertising the post, and
receiving a number of applications, one George Dickson "residing at
Hillhousefield" was appointed to be in sole charge. It was an
arrangement which proved of far better value: not only did the
Commissioners gain the advantage of once more having someone full-time
in the garden for less cost than the nursery contract, but out of the
£60 annual payment - Dickson was expected to provide his own tools,
to meet the cost of any additional labouring help, besides providing
annual flowers for bedding display. At this time of considerable
rural and urban unemployment Dickson probably counted himself lucky to
have a secure job: he must certainly have been satisfied with his lot
for he went on to give 40 years continuous service which only ended
when he finally succumbed to old age in 1878. Over that long period
his wage never altered, and his successor Thomas Todd - a gardener
from the Botanic Garden (recommended by James McNab) started at
the same rate. (171)

The Commissioners continued to employ their own gardener up until
the Second World War but labour shortages made this increasingly
difficult, and in 1942 the upkeep was once more placed in the hands
of a nursery firm. (172) This method has continued, and from 1966
onwards the contract has been with Dobbie & Co. who supply a man on
a full-time basis. (173)

Rules and Regulations, uses made of the garden, and other
miscellaneous items

The first set of rules were drawn up in January 1824 and
reprinted in 1839 (see fig. 144); in content they were practically
identical to the slightly earlier ones adopted by the Central gardens
and were probably based on them. Further comment is not necessary
apart from noting that the clause banning dogs caused the most
discord. Ill-nourished stray dogs gained easy access through the
railings until intermediate ballusters were added in 1879; but
the denial of proprietors' dogs was a different story. Over the years
various compromises were tried which for the most part allowed dogs
limited access at certain times of the day and with reduced use during
the summer months. Such restrictions, which were not only cumbersome
but difficult to enforce have long since been abandoned and pro-
priets with dogs are now free to exercise their pets in the grounds
provided "proper control" is exerted.

Such a genteel pastime as croquet was accepted as an agreeable
garden activity, but the Commissioners showed far less enthusiasm for
the notion of inviting a military band to perform - fearful that gate-
crashers might damage the grounds and even cause embarrassment by their
rowdy and uncouth behaviour. Thus, in 1829 the request of
Mrs Sandford (a proprietor living in Heriot Row) for the admission of
the Band of Lancers was refused for the second time due to the
Commissioners being informed "... that broils and misunderstandings
occurred in other districts where this practice was followed". (174)
Undeterred, Mrs Sandford and her several supporters submitted another request one month later and couched in the most diplomatic terms possible:

"The Lieutenant of the 12th Royal Lancers having politely offered his band to play occasionally in the Western division of the Queen Street and Heriot Row gardens between the hours of 3 and 5 o'clock, and having at the same time expressed his willingness to send dismounted troopers to guard the gates and railings, we the undersigned, request the Commissioners to take these circumstances into consideration, and allow a trial to be made, which need not be repeated if any injury is done to the garden or anything unpleasant occurs.

We beg leave to observe that the hours proposed are not liable to the same objections, as in the evenings. That no expense will attend the measure, neither the band nor soldiers being allowed to accept of remuneration, and that the portion of the inhabitants who wish to enjoy this amusement may very fairly request that their representation should be attended to, and a trial made in what in every other metropolis is considered not only unobjectionable, but eagerly sought for and solicited as a favour from the officer commanding." (175)

With most of the objections met, the Commissioners cautiously agreed "... to allow a trial to be made for a short period": this after all was a festive year celebrating the coronation of the young Queen which had taken place just six weeks before on 20th June. People were in the mood for musical relaxation and gaiety. The experiment presumably proved successful as the minutes record no disastrous consequences. No further reference to bands occurs until 1868 when, on the suggestion of Professor Maclagan (one of the Commissioners) the band of the Queen's Edinburgh Rifle Volunteer Brigade were invited to play in the gardens during the autumn evenings. (176) On this occasion all passed off smoothly and as a mark of appreciation several proprietors joined together to raise a subscription. So successful was the entertainment in fact that the band was asked back the following year.

Wisely the Commissioners have always resisted the several temptations to encumber the garden with assorted artifacts although suggestions have never been lacking. In 1825 for instance, Professor John Leslie (1766-1832) the talented Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh
University, whose appointment several years before had caused a furious uproar wrote to the Commissioners recommending the purchase of a telescope. (177) Two years later another proposal was put forward for the erection of a jet d'eau in the grounds (178) — perhaps by the same individual who had earlier suggested (in a letter to an Edinburgh newspaper) the addition of fountains or jets d'eaux in the West Princes Street and Queen Street gardens to enhance their appearance. (179) Closer to the present time, and just prior to the Second World War an application was made to site a memorial bird bath in the garden; (180) thankfully all these ideas have been tactfully but firmly rejected.

Gifts of plants and trees on the other hand have always proved acceptable and have been made from time to time — mostly by the Commissioners themselves, but also occasionally from proprietors. The earliest recorded instance of such a donation was in 1838 when Miss Cockburn: "... lately presented a handsome collection of flowers to the garden"; (181) the minute went on to note that the lady "... was in delicate health and will soon request permission to take her chair into the garden as before". This most likely was the invalid daughter of Henry Cockburn who along with two or three other disabled ladies were allowed to bring their "light carriages" or wheel chairs into the grounds. (182)

Few incidents of wanton mischief or damage are found recorded in the minutes — the presence of a full-time gardener has acted as a useful deterrent. Occasionally the gardeners wrath was sufficiently roused for him to make complaints to the Commissioners — but mostly in the early, more vulnerable years. Thus in 1831 children were cited as causing injury to plants by their over exuberant play; (183) in 1836 some trouble was experienced by "lads" breaking the tops of railings and throwing stones into the grounds; (184) and in 1839 in cheerful defiance of the rules a number of boys became enthusiastic cricketers "... destroying everything in the neighbourhood of the place where they play". (185) The worst offenders on this occasion were not so much the proprietors sons but their friends, whom the
gardener found "... very unruly and mischievous, running through the borders and the like", and almost beyond control. But for the most part the gardens have well accommodated the many generations of children (fig. 143e) who have played in them and whose enjoyment has far exceeded the small amount of injury caused by the occasional wild excesses.
"No part of the home scenery of Edinburgh was more beautiful than Bellevue, the villa of General Scott. It seemed to consist of nearly all the land between York Place and Canonmills - a space now wholly covered by streets and houses. The mansion house stood near the eastern side of the central enclosure of what is now Drummond Place; and a luxurious house it was. The whole place waved with wood, and was diversified by undulations of surface, and adorned by seats and bowers and summer houses". (1) Henry Cockburn, 1802.

Curiously enough George Drummond, Edinburgh's most outstanding Lord Provost and progenator of the first New Town had (even if somewhat circumstentially) almost as an important connection with the second New Town as with the first. Drummond Place was so called not merely to honour a great Edinburgh citizen but also to mark his close associations with the area, for the estate of Bellevue so vividly described by Cockburn had before General Scott's time been owned by him. Had not the ground of Bellevue been acquired at a later date by the Town Council the second New Town as we know it today, would in all likelihood have been to an inferior design, certainly more limited in extent, and less well related to the first New Town. And there would have been no Drummond Place.

It is unlikely however, that Drummond ever contemplated that the land occupied by his house and grounds would one day be swallowed up as part of the expanding New Town; but he would most probably have reacted with enthusiasm and delight that his vision for Edinburgh could have proved so overtly successful. He would certainly have approved of the handsome town square and adjacent streets which replaced his rural retreat although may be saddened that the attractive wooded landscape he had helped create was so completely destroyed as a result. The former Lord Provost had called his house Drummond Lodge: it stood close to the centre of the later pleasure gardens approached by an avenue to the east along the line of the present London Street beyond which was the north road to Canonmills (now Broughton Street). A little to the south east was the old village of Broughton. Drummond and his third wife Elizabeth Green (a quakeress and lady of considerable wealth) (2) had bought the house and some 13 acres (5.2 ha) of land in 1757. Previously
it had been owned by a Mr John Davidson, described in the Feu Charter as a "merchant in Rotterdam", (3) and he might well have built the house situated as it was within reasonable proximity of the port of Leith and Edinburgh. Before him the Cumming family had owned the land; they were fleshers or butchers by trade and would certainly have used the fields as pasturage for their animals. Drummond Lodge was one of several "quaint little mansions" (4) scattered about this neighbourhood and seems to have resembled Heriot's Hill house in appearance - being in the main a square 2 storey building with garrets and a single storey wing on each side with cellars below (fig. 146b). (5) It was a comfortable residence of relatively modest size, well set up with an array of outbuildings (stables, coach house, laundry house and so on) and by the time of Drummond's death in 1766 extending to over 30 acres (12 ha) of "well laid out" enclosures and planting. (6) Some of the land owned by the farmer Henry Anderson had been added over time.

After Drummond's death the house and grounds were rented out for a few years (fig. 146a), the ownership having passed to his second eldest surviving son Dr Archibald Drummond, resident in Bristol. (7) But in 1774 the property was sold to Major General John Scott of Balcomie in Fife, (8) - an immensely rich man whose wealth seems to have been largely derived from his skill and success at gambling. (9) Drummond's old house was too small and insignificant for such a colourful character of unlimited means, so that it was demolished and replaced by a larger and grander square shaped mansion, 2 storeys high, designed and built by James Brown architect of George Square (10) (Scott had previously lived there before moving to St Andrew Square (11)), and named Bellevue (fig. 146c). One popular story holds that Bellevue was in fact built at the expense of Sir Laurence Dundas to redeem a gambling debt for £30,000 which he had staked on his own magnificent house at the centre of the east side of St Andrews Square. (12)

Whatever the romance attached to the building of Bellevue it marked the near end of Scott's gambling career for he died in December 1775 shortly before the house was completed. (13) He left a widow and 3 small
daughters (14) aged 3 years and under and in 1779 the title to the property was registered in the name of the eldest - Henrietta. (15) Bellevue continued as the Edinburgh residence of the Scott family (there was also a house in Piccadilly, London and the family seat at Balcomie) for the next 20 years or so. In 1795, Henrietta then a young lady of 22 and "... the greatest heiress in the country, her fortune being reckoned upwards of £600,000" (16) married the Marquis of Tichfield, eldest son of the Duke of Portland. (17) Lucy the second daughter, also possessing a substantial fortune was married in the same year to Francis, 10th Earl of Moray (he was responsible for developing the Moray estate at the western end of the New Town), and 5 years later Joan, the youngest married George Canning the distinguished statesman in Pitt's ministry. Mrs Scott did not live to see the marriage of her youngest daughter for she died at Bellevue on 23 August 1797 (18) after which the house was rented to John, Duke of Argyll who previously had apartments at Holyrood Palace. (19)

With no further use for Bellevue House it was put up for sale in 1799 (figs. 146 d and e). Unlike the previous advertisement 30 years before this one placed greater emphasis on the attractive situation and surroundings of the house and its several external features rather than on the building itself (although far more impressive than Drummond Lodge had ever been) except to note that "... it is finished in the most complete manner". It is clear from the description that considerable money and labour had been spent on the ground since George Drummond's time as well as many additions including a gardener's house, further coach houses, poultry house, ice house, hot houses, and green houses. Immediately surrounding the house was a well kept shrubbery and pleasure garden with an orchard nearby beyond which were further fields "ornamented with thriving plantations". The advertisement had been designed to catch the eye of someone rich requiring a large and sumptuous family residence: its potential for building development was ignored - a slightly curious omission (20) considering that tentative plans for the area immediately adjoining the Bellevue estate to the west owned by David Steuart, former Lord Provost, and the George Heriot Trust had been under discussion since 1792.
DRUMMOND LODGE, with the offices, gardens, and inclosures, is to be let for one or more years, as may be agreed upon. The entry to the gardens and inclosures is to take place from the term of Candlemas, and to the house and offices from the term of Whitunday 1769. The house offices and gardens will be let by themselves, if a tenant does not choose to have the grounds.

The center house consists of a parlour dining room, drawing room, and five handsome bed-rooms, besides closets, garrets and other conveniences. In the west wing there is a very elegant room 35 feet in length, 20 feet in breadth, and 16 feet in height, and a neat library or study. Underneath these are exceeding good cellar, neatly fitted up. In the east wing here is a good kitchen, and accommodation for servants. The offices consist of a laundry, wath house, coal house, stables, coach house, &c. The inclosures which are well laid out exceed thirty acres, including planting.

Robert Gullen, gardener at the lodge, will show the policy and for further particulars, apply to Archibald Hope, secretary to the Royal Bank of Scotland.

a. Ex Provost Drummond's residence advertised for letting (Edinburgh Advertiser 17 January 1769)

CAPITAL VILLA, AND GROUNDS NEAR EDINBURGH.

The House of BELLEVUE, with the Grounds, Garden, Coach-houses, Stables, Poultry House, Gardeners' House, Sashbribery, Pleasure Grounds, Icehouse, and all conveniences belonging thereto, all as previously possessed by the Duke of Argyll.

The house is fituated in the most compleat manner and the situation is remarkably pleasant, pleasing the beauty of the country, and all the convenience of a town's residence, being within a few minutes walk of the New Town of Edinburgh. The house commands a delightful prospect of the Firth of Forth and country adjacent. The stables, green-house, and garden, are well stocked with fruit-trees and shrubs of the best kinds. The grounds are divided into small fields, are well inclosed, and ornamented with thriving plantations. In short, the whole property is fituated and stocked up in a style that is seldom to be seen in this country.

Tickets for viewing the house, &c. can only be delivered to those who intend to purchase the premises, by applying to the office of James Walker, W.S. The house will be shown by the housekeeper at Bellevue, and the grounds and gardens by Thomas Henderson gardener.

And any person who may incline to purchase the premises may apply to Mr. Walker.

d. Bellevue House and grounds up for sale (26 July 1799)

GARDEN; HOT-HOUSE, &c. NEAR EDINBURGH.

To be let, and entered to immediately or at Martinmas next, THAT CAPITAL GARDEN and HOT-HOUSE at BELLEVUE, near the New Town of Edinburgh, and containing near three acres of excellent ground, which is completely inclosed by a very high wall, and well stocked with fruit-trees in good bearing. There is also a high splendid wall which runs round the borders, and is furnished with good bearing trees; likewise a large Pinery of two divisions; two large Peach Houses, and a pit in each for forcing roses, &c. with vines upon the front; also a large Hot-house, with urns; all of which are well stocked with proper fruit, and excellent plants, inforcing; likewise a large Green-house, with a good collection of plants, particularly some beautiful Orange Trees; and there is also a collection of Horn-bred Frames and Glass. The garden is well supplied with water, and as it is quite contiguous to the New Town of Edinburgh, it has always the advantage of a ready market. It is at present fully cropped for the winter, and the tenant may have the crop at a reasonable valuation.

The whole will be let for one or more years; and persons inclining to take the same may lodge proposals at Mr. Francis Brodie, at Mr. Walker's, W. B. George Street.

e. A further advertisement for Bellevue House and garden (29 September 1799)
Steuart's several attempts to promote a common plan for the extension of the New Town north of Queen Street over his land and that owned by the Trust has already been described in detail (Section 3.1) but it is important to remember here that almost at the same time as the property of Bellevue was advertised for sale Steuart himself was heading for bankruptcy and just over 4 months later in January 1800 his own adjacent 13 acres (5.2 ha) was also up for sale (fig. 115 b and c) and his involvement with land speculation at an end. Neither Bellevue nor Stuart's property found immediate purchasers - probably because the future held too many uncertainties. There were after all prestigious parts of the New Town where feuing was practically at a standstill, as in Charlotte Square. The insecurities arising from the French wars including the scarcity of money limited the number of individuals prepared to take the risks of large scale land speculation.

Faced with these circumstances and no doubt fearful of the dangers of piecemeal development should the various areas be sold and further subdivided, the Town Council acted with inspired boldness and foresight: they entered into negotiations with James Walker WS, the Marquis of Tichfield's agent for the sale of Bellevue to purchase the property "for behoof of the city of Edinburgh" (21). The magistrates had wisely seen the importance of having a stake in the land which one day would accommodate the main extension to the original New Town thereby exerting a controlling influence over its future development. That they took this opportunity at a time of great social unrest when they were grappling with the problems caused by an acute food shortage in the city (22) makes their action seem even more courageous and inspired.

The Town Council minutes of 30th April 1800 record in full the terms on which "... the whole property of Bellevue ... including the marshy piece of ground between the south wall of Bellevue and Albany Row" were to be offered to the City of Edinburgh. All the furniture in the mansion house was to form part of the sale - apart from the movable mirrors, the pianoforte, the paintings and prints on the first floor, the wine in the cellar, and "... any furniture Lady Tichfield wishes to keep but not to
exceed 100 guineas in value"; all the many offices attached to the house were also included, as well as - "the vines, pines, hot house and green house plants and shrubs, melon frames" and so on. The asking price for all this was a yearly feu of £10.50 with the Town Council being given the option to purchase the whole in 1807 for £21,000. These conditions were "unanimously" agreed to by the Town Council and without further ado the Bellevue estate passed into the hands of the City.

Subsequent events have already been fully described in Section 3.1 and it is necessary here only to dwell on those details important to the development of Drummond Place. We know that almost immediately after acquiring Bellevue the Town Council began making preparations for having the land surveyed, and cleared of its trees; by the end of October 1800 a public competition had been announced with prize money amounting to 150 guineas for a plan or design "... for laying out in streets, squares etc and for buildings, the grounds of Bellevue belonging to the City of Edinburgh" including also the adjoining land to the west belonging to David Steuart and Heriots Hospital (fig. 115d).

The advertisement emphasised that the mansion house of Bellevue was to remain and to be made "part of the plans": a substantial part of the purchase price was after all tied up in the house which was by no means old, exceedingly well fitted up, and large enough to be adapted for several uses.

Making the house form an attractive and natural feature of the design rather than seeming an intrusive oddity was therefore something to test the skill of the would-be competitor, and there is no doubt that the decision to preserve the mansion house did have an important influence on the way plans developed. The chance survival of the notes submitted by one of the prize winners - John Baine to accompany his entry illustrates this point and allows some useful insights. His careful reflections on this matter were as follows:-

"It appeared to me after considering with all due attention the situation and nature of the house of Bellevue that whatever arrangement of streets should be adopted, this splendid house should
not be placed in an obscure corner, otherwise it would lose all its value; and much better taken down at once, than crowd other buildings into its neighbourhood at too near a distance. As the house fronts four ways and is of very considerable magnitude it ought not to be placed at the head of a street. ... It therefore became necessary to think of placing it in an Enclosure of some kind.

Baine rejected the idea of a circus or square favouring instead an octagon ("a figure new to this country") because he considered it better suited to the slope of the ground and more convenient for building (avoiding awkward shaped rooms); in support of his octagon he quoted three successful examples known to him - the Place Vendome in Paris, Fredericks Place in Copenhagen, and one in the new town of Berlin on the south west side of the River Spree. To avoid "... the dry unpleasant language of geometry" Baine had written on his plan "with a black lead pencil so they can be rubbed out" names to all the streets, and the one chosen for the octagon "to consecrate a part of what was once his" was Drummond Place. The principal or middle street was to run in an east to west direction through Drummond Place with a contrasting opening at the western end in the form of an amphitheatre: Baine further suggested that if Bellevue were to be bought by the Board of Customs (a proposal which must have been under discussion and commonly known about) its appearance in the overall layout would be enhanced by adding a colonade to the front with a coat of arms on a pediment above the main doorway.

Baine's solution of placing the mansion house within "an enclosure of some kind" and using it as the main axis of the plan balanced with an opening at the western end was one which probably many of the competitors decided to adopt: certainly the 3 other prize winners - Robert Morison, James Elliot and William Sibbald all came up with similar solutions. The composite plan drawn up later by these three "containing the best of each" has Bellevue house at the middle of an oval shaped enclosure with a circus at the western end (fig. 116). Details were to change but this basic structure continued as the core for the various modifications and improvements which followed - first at the hand of Major Stratton, then by Robert Reid under the watchful eye of William Sibbald, the Town's Superintendent of Works (Section 3.1).
As far as Drummond Place was concerned however, it ended up neither square, round, oval or octagonal but instead a combination of a square with an oval or crescent shaped eastern end. It was in fact a little reminiscent of Sibbald's much earlier plan of 1793 for David Steuart, (fig. 113) but this one was better adapted to accommodate Bellevue mansion. The house with an acre of surrounding garden occupied the eastern portion of the central space, the rest - about two-thirds of the total area later became the private pleasure gardens for use of the surrounding proprietors.

Robert Reid's ground plan was approved by the Town Council on 30th December 1801, (25) and on the following day by the George Heriot Trust (26) apart from the north east corner (Bellevue Crescent) which was left over for further consideration. This matter must have been speedily resolved for towards the end of January 1802 the Town Council had already begun advertising the sale of the lands of Bellevue beginning with the south west portion (fig. 147a). But whether the notice first appearing in the Edinburgh newspapers lacked sufficient emphasis or descriptive appeal it certainly failed to arouse much interest and the city Chamberlain had to report to the Council that none of the stances had been sold at the auction held on 10th February 1802. More encouragingly however, some plots were sold shortly afterwards both to private individuals and to building firms - these being in the western portion of Abercromby Place, Duke Street, and the north east corner of Dublin Street. (27)

Perhaps because initial response had been so dilatory the Town Council on the second occasion chose to combine with the George Heriot Trust in advertising "... several lots of building ground being part of the lands of Bellevue and of those lying to the north of Queen Street" in a bid to promote greater interest (fig. 147b). To what extent this next sale - held on 10 March 1802 proved more successful is not known but it was immediately followed by another consisting of "... the materials of the stables, poultry court, porters lodge, the gate way of iron with a considerable quantity of iron chain". Bereft of all the
appendages of its former glory (nothing was saved but a few plants which Dr Rutherford, Professor of Botany managed to salvage for the Botanic Garden, then in Leith Walk(28)) the mansion house of Bellevue must now have looked very stark and strangely isolated.

Arrangements for its future use had not however been neglected; during the same busy period when the Town Council began selling building stances as well as finalising the joint contract between the parties involved in the common ground plan, they also started negotiations with the Commissioners of the Board of Customs offering Bellevue house to them "on reasonable terms". (29) The move they pointed out would bring the Board of Customs into closer proximity both with Leith, and the Excise office in St Andrew Square; (30) being a detached property there was also less risk from fire. At this time the Board occupied somewhat unprepossessing offices at the rear of the Exchange building so that the offer was not without attraction. Nevertheless there was some doubt as to whether the mansion would be large enough and in order to effect the sale the Town Council undertook to build an additional storey as well as carrying out various other improvements and alterations including the erection of a parapet wall and railing around the exterior (fig. 148). In return, the Commissioners agreed to pay the Town Council £8,000 once the work was completed and ready for occupation. Discussions must also have taken place as to the longer term relationship between the new Custom house and the rest of the central area destined for pleasure gardens for the 1802 Minute of Sale granted a right or servitude to the Commissioners and their employees "... to walk in the remainder of the plot of ground or area to be enclosed of Drummond Place"(31) access to the garden was to be gained through "... a door of communication along the western boundary". (32)

Without further loss of time James Thin, mason was engaged to carry out the improvements and the Town Council Minutes of August 1803 record payments to him of £845 "for work done at the new Custom house"; (33) in 1805 a further sum of £300 was paid to James Paterson, Edinburgh foundry for the surrounding iron railings and gates. (34) Although the
Council Chamber, Edinburgh, Jan. 25th 1802
BUILDING GROUND NEW EXTENDED ROYALTY.

By Authority of the LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES, and COUNCIL of EDINBURGH, and the GOVERNORS of GEO. HERIOT'S HOSPITAL.

There will be exposed to Sale by public roup, on Wednesday the 26th day of February at one o'clock.

**THAT PLOT of GROUND, being the South-West Part of the Lands of BELLEVUE, in the number of Feet as purchase shall incline.**

**The plan and articles of sale to be seen in the City Chamberlain's Office.**

**c. EEC 25 January 1802**

**FIGURE 147 a & b:**
The lands of Bellevue advertised for sale

**FIGURE 148:**
New custom house (Bellevue House) with additional storey and enclosed garden 1820 (J & H.S. Storer, Views of Edinburgh and its vicinity)

**FIGURE 149:**
Custom house 1829 with the houses in Drummond Place completed; the surrounding shrubbery is well established (Shepherd)
mansion was ready for occupation by the summer of 1804 the Board of Customs did not become fully established there until one year later in 1805. Long before any houses appeared in Drummond Place therefore, the route to it became well trodden for those whose business took them to and from the Custom House, and in the intervening years the area around the mansion became "...tastefully laid out in walks and shrubberies" - a small oasis in the midst of builders mess and unformed streets (figs. 148 and 149).

Subsequent attempts to feu out parts of Drummond Place were not however immediately successful. In 1810, for example, the west side as well as part of Nelson Street and Duncan Street (later renamed Dundonald Street) had been offered for sale by public roue along with ground in Great King Street, Cumberland Street and Northumberland Street: nearly all the plots were purchased apart from those in Drummond Place which as a completely new venture was perhaps regarded as a less attractive proposition. To help promote feuing in Drummond Place while making use of the abundant supply of cheap labour then available the Town Council decided to set about improving and levelling the ground: in 1817 the quarry situated in the south west corner in the vicinity of Nelson Street was filled in, and between October 1819 and January 1820, £272 was paid out by the city Chamberlain for "... poor labourers employed at levelling Bellevue ground". Unemployment was widespread at this time and such projects - others included the construction of pathways on Calton Hill and along the front of Salisbury Crags, sloping the banks of the North Loch (Section 2.6), and levelling Bruntsfield Links helped (if but slightly) to alleviate some of the consequent distress and hardship. The expenditure proved worthwhile and no further difficulty was experienced in selling off building plots in Drummond Place - mostly from 1817 onwards when the majority of feus in Great King Street had been sold. Several builders took up blocks of stances, for instance William Henry, Thomas Fringle and Thomas Caldwell all purchased frontages on the south side; Charles Alison, John Neill and William Wallace & Son on the north and eastern ends; and Charles Watson on the western side. All were required in terms of their respective feu charters to conform to the design and elevations made out by Thomas Bonnar - who had succeeded
a. West side with view down Great King Street (note church at far end on site of Royal Circus) (EDC Archival drawings)

b. West side with close-up view down Great King Street (EDC Archival drawings)

c. Elevations of south and north side, Drummond Place (EDC Archival drawings)

FIGURE 150 a – c:
Sketch plans and drawings of Drummond Place by Robert Reid 1804.
William Sibbald as Superintendent of Works in 1809. His design with certain modifications were based upon earlier ones drawn up by Robert Reid.\(41\) (fig. 150 a, b and c). Building proceeded rapidly and by 1823 Drummond Place was completed and largely occupied. To the early residents it must have been something of a relief to see the central open space finally cleared of the wood and saw pits and other paraphernalia which had been allowed to collect there during building operations.\(42\)

The formation of the gardens

Although several years had elapsed since the Town Council had had direct experience of feuing property surrounding a Common open space intended for pleasure ground, it still seems a little odd that they did not adopt the same procedures relating to it as they had done in the case of St Andrew Square and Charlotte Square. But they did not, and probably for no other reason than that the matter was overlooked. Thus none of the feu charters made out for houses within the Place made reference to the garden area except for one late one granted in 1821 for a corner stance on the north west side. This stance had first been sold in 1818 but after twice changing hands it was acquired by James Greig WS; on it he had built a main door house for himself (entered from Drummond Place); above were 3 self-contained flats with 2 further adjoining flats on the Great King Street side - all of which had access from that street.

In terms of Greig's feu charter the whole of this corner stance was given the right "... in common with the several feuars around Drummond Place to the area of the square within the lines of the street-ways thereoff" which was to become "a Common property for the accommodation, pleasure and health" of the surrounding feuars. The conditions then listed repeated almost word for word those used in the St Andrew and Charlotte Square Charters, ie - that the proprietors

"shall be obliged to pay a proportional part of the expenses of levelling and erecting a parapet wall and iron railing around said area ... that the space shall be used for the pleasure and health of
the feuars and their families and in no ways to be converted into a common thoroughfare or used to any other purpose whatever, and that the said space with the parapet wall, railings, entries, banks, gravel walks and grass grounds shall be preserved and kept in order at the common and rateable expense of the whole feuars on all sides thereof, and their heirs and successors in all time coming ... shall be bound and obliged to pay annually or oftener as may be required a proportion of the expense which a majority of feuars with the consent of a committee of the Town Council may find necessary for the purpose." (43).

Maybe Greig as an astute legal gentleman insisted that these special provisions relating to the central space should be clearly spelt out in his charter but this seems unlikely; much more plausible is the notion that here was a belated attempt to rectify a glaring and somewhat embarrassing omission. The Council certainly had no desire to be burdened with responsibility for the upkeep of such a space but they were now placed in a somewhat ambiguous position - a point the feuars were quick to exploit in their later negotiations with them.

Anxious no doubt to get the matter resolved quickly the Town Council initiated action by taking the first major step towards the formation of the gardens: in March 1822 the Superintendent of Works, Thomas Brown drew up designs and specifications for a wall and railing to surround the central area, and by the end of the month various estimates for the work had been received - the lowest being one submitted by Thomas Pontin for £540. (44) At a Council meeting held on 17th April 1822 the cost of "... enclosing the area in a very handsome stile by a cast iron railing" was fully discussed and the decision reached that £270 should be offered to the Drummond Place feuars "on condition of them enclosing the same and receiving and maintaining it as a common property"; if the offer was refused the Council would "proceed to do the work in as economical a manner as possible". (45)

The readiness with which the Drummond feuars conferred to consider the Town Council's proposals suggests that they already had had contact with the City about the garden area, and most likely at the instigation of one of the proprietors - a Mr William Dallas WS (1759-1852) of 7 Drummond Place. He became Convener of the Drummond Place feuars.
and spokesman for the group, and shortly afterwards was elected Chairman of the newly formed garden management committee. Little is known about him apart from the fact that he was the fourth son of William Dallas Wright in Edinburgh, and that for a time he energetically pursued the cause of the Drummond Place gardens and helped formulate the detailed garden feu charter which later followed.

A meeting attended by 17 feuars took place on 20 April - just 3 days after the Council had made known their resolution. The minutes of this meeting (fully recorded in the Town Council minutes) show the delicate balance of interests at stake between the two sides. Dallas explained to the feuars the offer which had been made with the telling comment that "... there could be no doubt that if an arrangement is not made with the Town Council that the area may be enclosed by them at a much smaller expense than the estimate, and of course it would be done in such a way, as would not improve the appearance of Drummond Place".

The cost of forming the garden did not however, end with its enclosure: Dallas had made enquiries to see what extra would be needed to level and plant the ground, and to make the necessary gravel walks and had found that "... the additional sum required could not be estimated at less than £260" making a total outlay of around £300. The special feuing conditions relating to the north west corner of Drummond Place seem to have been interpreted by William Dallas as committing the Town Council on behalf of the other feuars for the layout and upkeep of the garden. He put it to the meeting that as the feuars were intending to relieve the "Good Town" of considerable expense not only in the near future but also in the long term their offer should more appropriately be based on half the estimated outlay, ie in the region of £400. This proposal was supported by the feuars who appointed Dallas together with David Munro Binning, Advocate (24 Drummond Place) to confer with the Town Council. As a result the Magistrates and Council agreed to increase their contribution to £300 but "... without admitting that they were in any way liable for laying out and planting the area of Drummond Place" and on the understanding that no further claims were to be made.
Negotiations did not however end here and from the end of April until the beginning of June 1822 - a period of 6 weeks much activity took place amidst minor crises and setbacks. The delay was obviously frustrating to the proprietors but at least it had the benefit of helping them to clarify their goals. During this time the feuars were told quite clearly that the Council was not prepared to reconsider their revised offer: if it was unacceptable the Council would simply proceed, as they had stated at the beginning "... to enclose the area at the most moderate expense". Once more the threat of an inferior railing produced a fast reaction: another meeting of feuars was hurriedly called and on 20th May 1822 with 15 proprietors present they voted to accept the Town Council's offer of £300 and "to relieve them of the expense of inclosing said area, laying out the same and keeping it in order in all time coming, the Magistrates and Council making over the property of said area to such of the proprietors as shall agree to pay their proportion of the expense of inclosing, laying out and keeping the same in order ...". In the event of the feuars conditions not being agreed to the meeting resolved to withhold payment of their feu duties until the central area "is properly inclosed". A Committee of 7 proprietors were appointed to confer with the Town Council. (49)

The feuars attempts to exert pressure on the Town Council completely misfired however, for the Magistrates refused to negotiate further until the feu duties were paid. It was a miscalculation which required to be swiftly rectified as none of the proprietors least of all William Dallas wanted matters to be brought to a standstill - their intent all along had been to promote action not to delay it. For the third time therefore the feuars of Drummond Place were summoned together and at a meeting held on 1 June 1822 the resolution relating to the retention of feu duties was immediately withdrawn. (50) With this contentious issue out of the way the rest of the meeting was usefully spent reconsidering the best way of setting up the garden area. That a lot of hard thinking was achieved is indicated by the clarity of instructions issued to the new Committee of 3 (William Dallas, David Munro Binning and John Greig) appointed to resume negotiations with the Town Council. In the event of
"an arrangement" being successfully made with the Magistrates the Drummond Place Committee were to ask the Council:

"... to grant a charter vesting the property of the central area in the proprietors of the dwelling houses having main door entry from Drummond Place and in the proprietors of the floor immediately above said main door where the tenement is divided into flats, provided that such proprietors shall within the space of one month from the date of the adjustment with the Town Council, signify their desire to become proprietors of said area".

Those not indicating a wish to become proprietors would therefore be excluded from the central area; likewise those houses occupied as lodging houses, hotels, and "all other houses of similar description, and shops" as long as they were occupied as such. The cost of enclosing and laying out the grounds, its annual upkeep, and the maintenance of the causeway around Drummond Place "... shall be paid by the proprietors in proportion to the feet in front of their respective house and that the corner houses entering from Drummond Place and the flat above are to pay in proportion to two-thirds only of the feet in front of the tenement". Nothing was to interfere with the rights and obligations of the proprietors in the north west corner of Drummond Place to the central area as already laid down in their individual feu charters.

Three days later on 4th June 1822 a Committee of Magistrates and Drummond Place feuars met together once more. By now both sides were more than anxious to have matters settled and to co-operate fully together. The Town Council were after all soon to become immersed with the welter of arrangements preparatory to King George IV's visit to Edinburgh in August - an event of enormous excitement and consequence, and no doubt one which equally made the New Town residents even more concerned to effect improvements to their surroundings. The Town Council's former proposal to advance £300 and to grant a feu right to the central area (following the terms outlined by the proprietors) was now formally accepted in return for which the feuars agreed to resume total responsibility for the central space and cease any further claims. These transactions received approval at a full Town Council meeting held the very next day.
Drummond Place Garden - Peu Charter

Drummond Place is the first instance of a pleasure garden being set up under a special charter granted by the superior (in this case the Town Council) to the surrounding feuars. A similar procedure was adopted a little later on in the case of Regent gardens (the Calton Hill pleasure grounds), and again in the 1870s when extra land was acquired to extend the Dean and Belgrave Crescent gardens but in none of these other examples was the land freely made over.

By the time the Drummond Place charter had been drawn up and officially registered the garden itself had been enclosed and laid out. The delay was understandable for before anything could be settled the Committee had to establish which of the eligible feuars wished to be included within the terms of the charter. There were however, not so many proprietors to approach as nowadays for out of the 42 dwellinghouses or tenements only 8 had been built with flats above. Three feuars (10, 36 and 42 Drummond Place) declined to become parties to the charter and their property was (and still is) excluded from the rights and privileges of the garden area. All those agreeing are found listed in the charter: several builder's names are amongst those included for at least one quarter of the property still remained in their hands. Any improvement to the central area was likely to encourage sales, consequently 2 of their number attended the various meetings of feuars and lent consistent support to forwarding the garden's construction. Otherwise the list closely reflects the social structure which ultimately became established in the square - the largest proportion of new residents being attached to the legal profession or else having private means, with a sprinkling of other professional groups such as doctors and accountants, as well as one or two merchants, military gentlemen and widows. The right to the garden (and the consequent obligations for its upkeep) was therefore vested in the proprietors so named in the charter and to their houses; in addition the previous servitude or right to the garden granted in 1802 to the Commissionaires of Customs as owners of Bellevue House was reaffirmed. This provision must have been included at the instigation of the Town Council but the rest of the charter seems to have been wholly the work of the 3 legal gentlemen.
Dallas, Greig and Munro Binning appointed by the feuars to conclude matters with the Magistrates.

These 3 had taken their brief seriously and the detailed and well considered list of conditions and regulations making up the rest of the charter indicates the time and careful thought expended on it. Every possible contingency or so it appears was provided for and as a result no other pleasure garden in the New Town was so well protected or set up as the one at Drummond Place. Some of the consequences of inadequate legal sanctions had after all been well demonstrated by the then recent experience of the East Queen Street gardens close by (Section 3.3): the private Act of Parliament which had been promoted to overcome their problems as well as to create further gardens along the rest of Queen Street had just been passed in May 1822 and in itself must have formed a useful guide and check list for those concerned with the setting up of Drummond Place gardens.

Briefly, the regulations covered 3 main items: who had rights to the garden (particularly in cases where the property was rented or used for non-family purposes); their general administration; and financial matters. Under the first, all dwellings used as hotels, lodging houses, shops, or similar were to be excluded (although the proprietor retained the right to the garden as well as the responsibility for paying a share of its upkeep); on the other hand "boarding schools for young ladies" received special dispensation and were not to be denied the opportunity for genteel, healthy exercise in the gardens. (53) In cases where property was let to private families they too were allowed the use of the central area provided the proprietor agreed to forego his right. Strict control over keys was to be maintained by issuing only one key to each household which was stamped with the appropriate house number.

As to administration - all the proprietors were required to meet together at 2 p.m. on the 3rd Monday after the date of the charter in the Waterloo Hotel to elect a Management Committee and appoint a
Secretary. (54) The Committee was to consist of 5 members (with 3 a quorum) one of whom was required to retire annually. New Committee members were to be elected at the annual general meeting of proprietors fixed for the last Monday in May when the accounts were also to be presented and a new assessment agreed to. Other meetings could be held at any time provided a written request was made by at least 3 proprietors; at such meetings any 7 present constituted a quorum and any resolution passed by the majority (proxy votes were allowed) then became binding on the rest of the feuars. Changes to any of the regulations contained within the charter could be made at any special meeting called together for that purpose and provided that at least two-thirds of proprietors were in agreement (again, proxy votes were allowed).

With reference to the third item - financial matters, the charter stated that the annual assessment levied on each proprietor was to be based on the extent of his frontage, with the corner blocks (including the main door and flat above) paying a three-fifth part. Drummond Place seems to have been the first garden in Edinburgh to use this method of assessment although St Andrews Square and Rutland Square gardens adopted it in the 1830s as well as one or two of the later Victorian gardens. Any dispute as to the proportion payable was carefully avoided by a detailed table being included in the feu charter showing the exact measurements of all the property concerned. (55) Extra income could be raised by renting out keys to non-proprietors but only if sanctioned at a meeting called specifically for that purpose and with the assent of two-thirds of the proprietors.

During the long period of the garden's existence (now well past its 150th anniversary) only 2 changes have been made to the regulations; and these within relatively recent times. In 1949 in the face of some opposition (56) the required majority of proprietors voted in favour of fixing the annual assessment on a flat rate basis for all proprietors and this has become the established method. Three years later the proprietors voted to change the date of the annual general meeting from May to March and to readjust the financial year accordingly. (57)
Design and Layout of the Drummond Place Gardens

The same care which went into handling the details of the feu charter as well as the earlier meetings called between the proprietors and the Town Council and meticulously recorded in the various minutes already quoted would have been continued in a set of garden management minutes once work commenced on the central area. It is frustrating therefore, that the next critical and interesting stage in the garden's history should be a virtual blank due to the disappearance of the first minute book from the Drummond Place records; these in fact start with the second book covering a period from 1856 (58) to 1936 and although containing a certain amount of useful material do not unfortunately provide answers to such questions as: - who was responsible for the design of the garden; the costs of setting it up, what problems or difficulties if any were encountered? and so on. Other sources of information do however, provide certain clues and allow, even if only in a limited way some insight into the garden's subsequent development.

Almost immediately after the last meeting held between the Committee of feuars and a Committee of the Town Council early in June 1822 (at which all the main issues relating to the central area were satisfactorily resolved) work on enclosing the garden ground commenced. The contract was awarded to Thomas Paton, 5 London Street, the same builder who had earlier submitted the lowest tender (£540) for a surrounding wall and cast iron railing to a specification by Thomas Brown the City's Superintendent of Works. (59) Good progress was made. By the beginning of September the job was nearing completion and the Town Council had made over the promised contribution of £300 to Mr Dallas, Chairman of the feuars. (60) It should be noted that by this stage the outline of the garden had been modified from that shown in the feuing plan - where the west and east ends had been designed as matching shaped crescents (refer figs. 151 a and b); instead the Committee chose to straighten the western end in line with the cross street and to gently round the two corners (fig. 151d). This slightly increased the size of the inner area but was probably adopted to harmonize better with the boundary rail dividing the garden from the
custom house. The task of levelling and laying out the ground followed quickly: by the time the feu charter was signed in April 1823 the pleasure garden "with the walks, shrubbery, well and small house for holding tools" was complete. Indeed, the first set of regulations are dated March 1823 which suggests that the work had been carried out over the preceding winter months.

The chosen design (fig. 151d) was not dissimilar to the one adopted in the George Square gardens on the south side of Edinburgh which had been laid out in 1814 by John Hay landscape gardener and planner - a well established nurseryman and garden practitioner. Hay might easily have been consulted by the Drummond Place Committee for in the early part of 1823 he had had contact with the Commissioners of the Queen Street East gardens on the best way of uniting Mr Rolland's old garden with the rest of the pleasure grounds (Section 3.3); and professional expertise had a habit of being exchanged from garden to garden. In form the layout consisted of an outer border thickly planted with shrubs and trees (providing privacy and shelter from the road) alongside which ran a continuous gravel footpath; gateways were provided at the centre of each side (including one at the eastern end to allow entry from the Custom House), and from each of these a slightly curved footpath crossed a grassed inner area to link with a central oval shaped walk ornamented with 6 shrub beds. The treatment of this middle area was not quite so subtle or successful as in George Square. Here the choice of weeping elm at the heart surrounded by a circle of shrub planting helped to create a more mysterious yet strong focus to the garden. It rather suggests that while John Hay may have proffered general advice the actual work and detailing was the responsibility of a competent but less skilled gardening contractor. What evidence exists does in fact support this view. The minutes of the Queen Street West gardens record that a certain Robert Walker was employed to look after the Drummond Place gardens: Walker as we know (section 3.4 and 5) had taken charge of laying out the central Queen Street gardens as well as the Western ones. It would seem that in a similar fashion he had contracted for the making of the Drummond gardens and had subsequently been retained to continue with their maintenance.
a. Ainslie's plan 1804
b. Kirkwood 1817

c. Kirkwood's plan and elevation 1819
d. Knox's plan 1824

f. Bartholomew's plan 1891

g. OS plan 1952 and 1968 (modified)

FIGURE 151 a-g:
Various plans of Drummond Place gardens
With the garden newly formed the Committee were naturally concerned to protect the young and immature planting and to see "that the objects for which the great expense has been incurred" were properly respected. A list of regulations was consequently drawn up and circulated to all the proprietors in March 1823; although several of the items have a familiar ring one can detect in these rules a greater emphasis on good behaviour and manners (fig. 152). Those tempted to such anti social acts as garden stripping - by the insidious but mostly innocently practised habit of "just taking a small cutting" were thus warned in no uncertain terms of "... the absolute necessity of abstaining themselves" from such misdeeds. Nor was the gardener to be implicated either - he too was "... strictly prohibited from complying with all such requests". Standards were indeed placed high: "It is expected" stated the note in italicised writing at the bottom of the sheet "that every person on going into the garden will clean their shoes on the scrapers at the doors". No other garden Committee either before or since issued such strict commands to its garden users. To meticulously clean ones feet on entering the garden must have been the very model of good propriety and conduct!

Having set the garden up, the Committee's energy or more correctly that of their Chairman, William Dallas, continued undiminished - for towards the end of 1824 we find him writing long letters both to the Town Council(63) and to the George Heriot Trust(64) on the subject of the possible purchase (with view to demolition) of the former mansion of Bellevue - the Custom House. Apparently a rumour was prevalent that if £5,000 could be raised "... the Lords of the Treasury would accept of it and erect a new building in Leith". What had not so long before been described as an "elegant mansion" was now disparagingly referred to as "a very great deformity to one of the finest streets in the City" and "... unquestionably therefore it is desirable that if possible it should be removed". Mr Dallas hoped that the Town Council would be sympathetic towards this proposal and help bring influence to bear on the parliamentary Commissioners then visiting Edinburgh. More pertinent however, was the question of financial support and not surprisingly: "... It occurs to some of the Gentleman in this..."
neighbourhood, that the Town Council with their usual liberality will give some aid, and that surely the Governors of Heriots Hospital who have such an extensive property in that neighbourhood will readily contribute to so very material an improvement". In the event the Town Council offered to subscribe a modest 100 guineas and the Heriot Trust, £300; although it had been calculated that about £2,000 could be raised by the sale of the building materials this still left a very substantial sum to be met by the residents themselves. Such support was not forthcoming and the plan was subsequently abandoned. The Custom House remained standing for a further 20 years and provided if nothing else a degree of shelter and protection to the still young and immature garden. In 1823 the Board of Excise and Customs were amalgamated and the office of Excise moved to Bellevue House in 1825 following the sale of their former premises in St. Andrew Square. From 1841 the house became the property of the Commissioners of Excise, and known as the Excise Office.

The Enlargement of Drummond Place Gardens

Although the Princes Street proprietors put up a tremendous fight to stop the extension of the railway through their pleasure gardens and eventually had to concede defeat, in the case of Drummond Place the proposal to build a railway line beneath Bellevue House at the eastern end was greeted with more cautious approval; hidden from sight no problems could be encountered visually and the likelihood of irreparable damage to the foundations of the old mansion would provide good justification for its removal and a consequent opportunity to extend the area of garden. In a series of moves shortly to be described the Town Council, in contrast to their previous rather indifferent attitude towards the future of Bellevue House, took full initiative and the successful outcome was largely due to their involvement and skilful negotiations. This positive approach owed much to the then Lord Provost - Adam Black (1784–1874) who held office between 1843 and 1848 (fig. 153 a and b). An extremely able and energetic man, he founded the successful publishing firm of A & C Black, was an ardent Whig and reformer, and in his 70th year elected MP for the City. More important in this context however, was the fact that he was a Drummond Place
REGULATIONS.

In order that the objects for which the great expense has been incurred, in laying out this Garden, may be secured, the following Regulations shall be observed:

1st. Each proprietor or his tenant shall have access to the Garden at all times; unless where the house is let as a hotel or lodging house, such hotel or lodging house, and all other houses of a similar description, and unless, being expressly excluded from access to said Garden, so long as they are occupied as such. Boarding-schools for young ladies are not considered as lodging houses, and are not excluded.

2d. Each proprietor shall be furnished with a key, having Drummond Place, and the number of his house, engraved upon it.

3d. No person shall lend or transfer his key upon any account; and when the house is let to a tenant, the proprietor or the tenant may have access to the Garden, but the proprietor and tenant shall not both have access thereto.

4th. No proprietor shall be entitled to transfer his key upon any account, nor lend it though he and his family are out of town.

5th. No servant shall upon any account be allowed to enter the Garden, except female servants having the charge of, and bringing with them the children of persons entitled to have access to the Garden, or children residing in the families of such persons.

6th. Proprietors or members of their families may occasionally introduce into the Garden, only amongst themselves, persons who are not proprietors.

7th. Boys shall not be permitted to introduce into the Garden any of their companions who are not sons of proprietors.

8th. No person shall cut or injure any of the trees, shrubs, or flowers in the Garden; and all children shall carefully keep upon the gravel walks and grass. No clothes shall be permitted to be washed or dried. No baskets or baskets, such as crickets, golf football, bows and arrows, and the like. No persons shall bring in dogs. Birds nests not to be robbed, or birds in any other way disturbed or annoyed.

9th. The Committee of Management shall have power to impose fines, not exceeding ten shillings, for the infringement of any of the Regulations, which shall be recovered by the Gardener, and paid over to the Treasurer, to be applied either towards the expense of the management, or otherwise, as the Committee shall appoint. And the Committee shall further be entitled to insist for payment of damages for repairing injuries done to the Garden.

10th. The heads of families shall be responsible for offences committed by their children or servants, and shall be bound to make all damages done by them, and pay all fines imposed on them, and in the event of any children being convicted of a second offence, it shall be in the power of the Committee to exclude them from the Garden for a given time.

11th. All persons labouring under, or lately recovered from infectious diseases, shall be excluded from the Garden until the risk of the infection shall have ceased. The attention of parents is particularly requested to this rule, which, it is evident, must be strictly enforced.

Besides observing and assisting in enforcing the foregoing Regulations, heads of families are requested to attend to the absolute necessity of obtaining themselves at all times from cutting of single flower or shrub, or even asking the Gardener to do so, as the practice would immediately become general, and would counteract all the pains and expense which have been bestowed upon the Garden, and would destroy every regulation for the ornament and management of it. The Gardener is strictly prohibited from complying with all such requests; and he is entrusted with the carrying of all these Regulations into effect. The heads of each family must consider the key to the Garden as under their own charge, and must not allow it to go out of their keeping in any way that may admit of a breach of any of these Regulations. It is requested of all the parties connected with this Garden, if they shall at any time witness any breach of these Regulations, that they will give immediate notice thereof to the Gardener.

It is expected that every person, on going into the Garden, will clean their shoes on the scrapers at the doors.

FIGURE 152 :
Drummond Place garden regulations 1823
(Belgrave Crescent garden papers)

NEW TOWN, Drummond Place
Over £24,000

FIGURE 154 :
The gardens still retain their amenity value
(Scotland 21st September 1984)
proprietor (from 1844 until his death 30 years later he owned Number 38) (67) the active part he played along with other residents "... in procuring the removal of the Excise Office which stood within the gardens of that square and so effecting a great improvement in the amenity of the neighbourhood" was remembered at a distance of many years in the long and detailed obituary appearing in the Scotsman 2 days after his death. (68)

But what of this railway line which was ultimately to bring about beneficial changes to Drummond Place gardens and to increase their size by nearly one third to 2.70 acres (1 ha). The Edinburgh, Leith and Newhaven Railway Company (the last local railway company in the City) was set up in 1835 to build a line from Edinburgh to Trinity Pier, with a branch to Leith. (69) One year later the necessary Act of Parliament was secured for the venture; at that time the estimated cost of the scheme was set at £100,000 and a most optimistic return of 15% prophesied. Later, it was found that the cost had been seriously underestimated and the project languished until 1839 when the control of the Company was taken over by parties interested in Trinity Pier. Thereupon a new Act was obtained to build a line in that direction somewhat to the west of the route originally authorised.

The first section of the railway between Canomills Station (later known as Scotland Street) and Trinity, a distance of slightly more than 1½ miles (2.4 km) was opened in 1842. Afterwards the Edinburgh, Leith and Newhaven decided to extend its line from Trinity to Granton. The necessary powers were obtained in 1844 when the railway changed its name to Edinburgh, Leith and Granton; this section of line was fully in use by February 1846, and in May of the same year the 1½ mile (2.4 km) branch to Leith from Warriston junction was completed. The final section of the Edinburgh, Leith and Granton railway was opened on 17th May 1847 and linked the temporary terminal at Scotland Street to Canal Street Station (now absorbed within Waverley Station).

Although only half a mile (0.81 km) long this part was constructed in a tunnel on a gradient of 1 in 27 rising towards the city and
passing beneath Scotland Street, Drummond Place, Duke Street, St Andrew Square and Princes Street: the Scotsman described it as "... the most arduous feature hitherto connected with any Scottish railway or other public undertaking". As the locomotives of that period were quite incapable of hauling trains up so steep an incline they had to be drawn up by cable rope operated by a stationary engine. The Scotland Street tunnel as it became known enjoyed but a relatively short life: the system upon which it depended proved too cumbersome and in 1868 the tunnel was closed when the North British opened a new and easier route from Abbeyhill to Leith and Granton. Since then the tunnel has been put to occasional use for wagon storage, mushroom growing (halted by the uncontrollable spread of a parasitic fungus) and as air raid shelter accommodation for railway staff during the Second World War.

The history of the Scotland Street tunnel has now passed into obscurity and the trials, negotiations and organisation required to launch such a project and to harness the vast army of labour necessary to excavate and build the tunnel - all but forgotten. A record of the transactions relating to Drummond Place have survived however in the Town Council minutes and provides us with a useful account of the several moves involved before the old Custom House was finally pulled down and the vacated land added to the pleasure gardens. Briefly, the events were as follows. Towards the end of June 1844 the Railway Company put in an offer to purchase "... the building and premises belonging to the Crown in Drummond Place - the Excise office" for the sum of £5,000. This immediately prompted the Town Council to put in a rival bid for the same amount with the request that they should be given first consideration - as indeed happened. In a time of great financial stringency when the City was desperately trying to regain control after years of accumulating debt their eagerness to take on such a commitment (which years ago they had been more than happy to relinquish) might appear a little odd. The reason however, was honourable if not laudable and explained by the Lord Provost - Adam Black in the letter of acceptance "... we purchase the property for the purpose..."
of preventing nuisance or the disfigurement of that part of the City": hence it was requested that "... the Lords of the Treasury and the Commissioners of Excise will convey to the Town Council the powers vested in them by the Railway Acts for the protection of the property insofar as they can do so". This assurance was given and in February 1845 the contract of sale between the Commissioners of Excise and the Town Council was signed. (74)

Soon afterwards the agents of the Edinburgh, Leith and Granton Railway Company entered into detailed negotiations with the Town Council over their proposal to build a tunnel beneath the Excise Office as part of the new railway link between Scotland Street and Canal Street. By May 1845 the Treasurers Committee (in whose hands the matter had been placed) concluded that the usual practise of paying way-leave together with an additional sum for any damage caused was inappropriate in view of the likely fall in value of the property. Instead the Committee decided to offer the railway company the opportunity to buy the house and land for £5,000 it being conditional that the ground surrounding the former Excise Office was to be kept in shrubbery "in all time coming", no extension or additional buildings were to be allowed, and right of access to the Drummond Place gardens was to be limited only to private families living in the mansion. (75)

Nothing more is heard about these proposals and it is not until several months later in November 1845(76) that the subject of the Excise Office resurfaces in the Town Council Minutes. On this occasion a minute of a meeting held 3 days earlier "... relative to the removal of Bellevue House" was reported in full: present at the meeting convened in the City Chambers were Adam Black, Lord Provost, the city Treasurer, Mr Alexander Douglas WS Clerk on behalf of the Committee of the city creditors, Mr E. Sandford, Chairman and on behalf of the Edinburgh, Leith and Granton Railway Company, and Mr John Stodart representing the Drummond Place proprietors. Sympathetic support for anything connected with the improvement of Drummond Place was well to the fore at this gathering: Adam Black's commitment has already been noted

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and it was usefully complimented by another fellow resident - Alexander Douglas. Douglas held several public appointments but more pertinently he was closely involved with the West Princes Street gardens (Section 2.6) being their long serving Clerk and therefore well versed in amenity issues.

The tenor of this latest meeting indicated that it was the culmination of a longer period of deliberation and discussion during which time several Drummond Place proprietors had made known their interest and concern in any negotiations which might lead to the removal of the mansion house and the consequent extension of their pleasure garden: a notion not without attraction for the Railway Company who could not have wished to be burdened with a large old building for which they had no use. Thus "... having deliberately considered the expediency of taking down Bellevue House and that the area should never again be built upon but thrown into pleasure ground in all time coming" the assembled group concentrated on framing a number of resolutions with this in mind. These were as follows: - that "Bellevue House shall be forthwith removed" and the materials to become the property of the railway company; the Railway Company to be granted the right to carry a tunnel through the present site of Bellevue House; that the area of land be given to the Drummond Place proprietors to form part of their pleasure garden on condition that it should never be built on. The Railway Company were to be responsible for levelling the cleared area and for putting it "... into a condition to be taken into the pleasure ground". In order to meet the purchase price it was agreed that the Railway Company should pay £3,200, the Drummond Place proprietors £1,200, with the Town Council making a not ungenerous contribution of £600.

These terms were accepted by all 3 parties and just over one month later the formal proceedings relating to the sale of Bellevue House and ground took place. On 22 December 1845 the former Excise Office and ground were auctioned in 2 lots: the first being the house was bought by Alexander Robertson of Eldin on behalf of the Edinburgh,
Leith and Granton Railway Company for the upset price of £3,200, and the second being the solum and attached ground - purchased by Alexander Douglas and John Stodart on behalf of certain proprietors in Drummond Place at the upset price of £1,200. By the middle of February 1846 the money from both the Railway Company and the Drummond Place proprietors had been paid, and in March a second feu charter for this additional area of garden ground was made out in favour of all the proprietors who had subscribed towards the purchase price.

Five householders chose not to contribute (house numbers 10, 13, 21, 27 and 42) - which included 2 out of the 3 (Nos. 10 and 42) who had not been party to the first garden charter of 1822. This means that 6 houses in Drummond Place (by the terms of the 2 feu charters) have rights to only part of the central garden area; an anomaly which subsequently has been ignored. Only the 3 houses omitted from the first garden charter remain without rights or obligations although one of these (No. 36) could in fact claim a partial right under the later charter.

Some time during the early part of April 1846 Bellevue House, the once elegant mansion of General Scott and local landmark disappeared under the hands of the demolishers. By the end of the month the Scotsman newspaper noted that work was by then underway on the section of tunnel "... on the site of the late Custom House" by which time a complete junction had been formed between "shaft number 3 at the top of Dublin Street and shaft number 4 lower down, the tunnel being finished betwixt these two points." Very likely the masonry from the old house was reused in the fine stonework at the Scotland Street entrance; Captain Coddrington, Inspector of railways who examined the tunnel prior to its opening expressed great satisfaction at "the substantial nature and elegance of the masonry". The Railway Company had been allowed 6 months from the 2nd January 1846 to level and put the ground in good order before handing it over - so that by June the extra area of garden finally came into possession of the Drummond Place proprietors.

The additional area of Garden: Layout and Design

We know from the description in Storers "Views of Edinburgh" that
the ground surrounding the Custom House had been attractively kept in grass and shrubbery so that once the Railway Company had levelled and made good the site occupied by the mansion the task of uniting the new area of garden with the old would have been reasonably straightforward. The shrubbery and tree planting had been concentrated around the perimeter and was therefore useful to retain for screen and shelter purposes. One slight change seems to have been made at the crescent shaped end where the small indentations on the north and south sides were removed and rounded off (fig. 151e).

To a large extent the design of the new area was determined by the layout of the existing garden - just as this in its turn had been influenced by the presence of the Custom House. Thus the outer footpath was simply extended right round the garden and a new entry formed at the centre of the eastern side: the pathway which had followed the former eastern boundary now became a link between the north and south sides. The addition of new ground did however, throw a little out of balance what had previously been its central focus - the shrubbery and trees with surrounding oval walk and access paths to each of the gates (refer fig. 151d); the planting in this area was by now well established,(87) and there would have been an understandable reluctance to tamper with it. Consequently it was left unaltered and by way of compensation a second but more minor feature was created at the eastern end. This consisted of a rhododendron plot enclosed by a railing and circular path which on the east and west sides continued in a straight line to join with the other walks in the garden (fig. 151e). As experience later proved the garden became in fact over-supplied with pathways and these tended to divide the ground up into too many small compartments.

The Gardens since 1846

The next 30 years passed uneventfully and during this time the garden was well cared for by a most competent gardener - Thomas Finlay: he had been "highly recommended" to the post in 1856 by James McNab, Curator of the Botanic Gardens and went on to give 23 years conscientious
a. East end from London Street

b. Just inside the main entrance, western end

c. Grassed area with outer footpath, western end

d. Central flower/shrub plot with view down Great King Street

FIGURE 155 a - d: General views of Drummond Place gardens
Apart from this one instance McNab does not appear to have been involved with the Drummond Place gardens which makes it one of the few major New Town gardens not to have benefited from his advice. After Finlay's departure in 1879 the garden seems to have declined particularly during the late 1880s and 1890s when the gardener in charge - William Orr by name - failed to maintain his predecessor's high standards: he had in fact succeeded his brother John, a former gardener in the Princes Street gardens but his personal problems proved too great and in 1895 he was dismissed on account of his "intemperate habits, persistent inattentions and idleness". His term of employment had in fact corresponded with a busy period when tennis play replaced croquet as the most popular pastime - continuing as such until the late 1920s. The gardener's lack of attention seems to have been matched by general apathy amongst the proprietors: the minute book records that for several successive years the annual general meeting had to be abandoned either because only 1 or 2 residents attended or as on a number of occasions none at all.

The appointment in 1896 of William Wilson an "active and capable" young gardener at "one pound a week" halted further deterioration, and more importantly helped stimulate a fresh interest in the garden. Wilson devoted the rest of his working life to its care and is still remembered by some of the older residents as "Gaddy" - the man under whose kindly but watchful eye generations of children had played.

By the end of the nineteenth century many of the trees and shrubs had reached maturity and were requiring attention. Some new tree planting was carried out in 1897 to coincide with Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, and the following year a privet hedge was planted alongside the railings at the western end - partly to increase shelter but also to prevent paper being blown into the gardens. A year later many of the old and "unsightly" hawthorn trees were removed around the perimeter and some new shrub planting carried out in their place.

As the trees became taller and the shrubs older and more spindly the garden suffered increasingly from the draughts and through winds...
1. Circular area showing hut and rather crude fencing

2. Similar view - in Summer

3. Close up of the inner area

4. Grasped area west end with view down Great King Street

FIGURE 156 a - d:
Further views of Drummond Place gardens
which cut across most noticeably in an east to west direction (if nothing else the Custom House had provided a good buffer while it stood). During the early years of the twentieth century the Committee were much occupied with this problem and took professional advice on how to achieve better shelter in the garden particularly within the "central" roundel. First to be consulted (in 1901) was Mr Mackenzie - attached to the seed and nursery firm of Thomas Methven and Sons. (94) His suggestions were essentially practical and not without merit: he recommended the removal of 11 or 12 trees around the central shrubbery be t which were interfering with the healthy, vigorous growth of the shrubs, and increasing the width of the beds at the east and west ends. The beds were to be replanted with strong wind resisting shrubs both evergreen and deciduous. He also recommended the removal of the tool shed and yard, and the resurfacing of the central area with ash or gravel on which seats and rustic tables could be arranged. (95) Eighty years on the clutter of sheds, yard and crude palisading continue to blemish what was originally designed as a wholly ornamental space - the unrestrained growth of a shelter or summer house added at a later date for the benefit of the proprietors. MacKenzie's advice however, was ignored. The Committee baulked at the idea of spending £60 on reconstructing the roundel and had equal misgivings at the prospect of removing so many trees.

With little respite from the chilling east winds the Committee sought further advice and in 1912 they approached Mr McHattie, head gardener to the Town Council. (96) He suggested as a means of providing improved protection within the roundel changes to the shrub beds on the east and west sides by remaking them into crescent shaped mounds planted with evergreens. (97) McHattie's advice proved acceptable and during the following winter months the new raised beds were formed. In January 1913 an extra 12 loads of soil was ordered "with a view to extending the mounds" as the Committee felt that what they saw was "hardly large enough". (98) The work was undertaken by the Osbourne Nursery in Corstorphine Road who had submitted the keenest estimate at £45: (99) they appear to have been a thriving nursery firm who were also responsible for many years for the upkeep of 2 pleasure gardens at
the west end of the New Town - Douglas Crescent and Magdala Crescent. To complete the central area two additional seats were purchased and placed in front of the newly created mounds, the tool shed was converted into a shelter, and fresh gravel was laid down.

Later in the same year attention was focussed on the rest of the garden: several old trees were removed and 12 new ones planted in their place; the circular rhododendron plot at the eastern end was thinned and replanted and the now somewhat dilapidated railing around it removed. While the garden benefited from this period of improvement and increased care the attempts to reduce the draughts and cross winds were not entirely successful and subsequent minutes refer to this continuing problem. Over the years the 2 raised crescent shaped beds have gradually shrunk to insignificance and in place of a thick barrier of shrub planting the plots have taken on the character of an herbaceous border - stocked with a variety of small shrubs, rose trees, and decorative plants and providing little in the way of protective shelter. Something of the original boldness of this area has in consequence been lost.

No other substantial changes have been made to the gardens until recent years when an active committee (one of whose members was a landscape designer) drew up revised plans more appropriate to present day needs, while taking into consideration the alterations already made following the Second World War. During the war years the western end of the garden had accommodated a static water tank (fig. 18), and the railings - apart from those at the tank end had all been removed. Afterwards, when the garden was reinstated, the western side was levelled and grassed over and the central footpath never reformed. The large area of grass thus made available proved popular for young children's play and in 1961 the Committee with the assent of the proprietors decided to extend this principle to the rest of the garden. As a result all the remaining footpaths save for the outer one were obliterated, and the rhododendron plot at the centre of the eastern end removed and a new bed formed on the north east side close to the footpath. (fig. 151g). This simpler yet attractive combination of
a. Eastern end - irregular grassed area due to subsidence caused by Scotland Street tunnel below

b. Eastern end - with outer footpath and view of central shrub and tree area

c. Eastern end - a popular sitting and sunbathing spot

FIGURE 157 a - c: Some other views of Drummond Place gardens
continuous grass and trees provides a feeling of greater spaciousness, allows for easier maintenance and helps disguise the unevenness of the ground at the eastern end caused by subsidence - the result of the tunnel beneath.\(^{(105)}\) With improvements to the interior complete the Committee next turned their attention to having the wire mesh fencing (a temporary expedient after the last war) replaced by a more permanent and attractive iron railing. This move gained the support of the proprietors and in 1965 a new railing - designed by one of the residents\(^{(106)}\) was erected at a cost of £1,800.\(^{(107)}\)

Today the garden contains over 80 trees and has some of the finest Ash trees in Edinburgh - these being particularly suited to the garden - preferring alkaline soils and allowing plenty of light through their canopies. Small numbers of beech, sycamore, gean, elm and other species make up the balance of the tree population. A number of these however, are now passed their maturity and the garden Committee has wisely committed itself to a longer term replacement programme together with other planting improvements under the guidance of a landscape consultant.\(^{(108)}\) (For general views of the garden refer figs. 155, 156 and 157).

**Management, Use of Gardens and other matters**

Only in fairly recent years have the proprietors in Drummond Place taken a more direct interest in the running of their garden, and for most of its life the management side has been left entirely to a few dedicated residents serving on the Committee - often for long numbers of years. The poor attendance at AGM's (held on many occasions in the nineteenth century at Dowell and Lyons, 18 George Street) has already been referred to so it is encouraging to find that these are now better supported.\(^{(109)}\) Drummond Place has always been a popular place to live and has more successfully retained its residential character than certain other areas in the New Town.\(^{(110)}\) Some of its distinguished residents have in fact served on the Management Committee - for example, John Henry Lorimer R.S.A., artist and portrait painter\(^{(111)}\) and brother of Sir Robert Lorimer, Architect, and Colonel F. M. Bailey who
was responsible for introducing the blue poppy from Tibet which now bears his name. (112)

Few problems have ever been encountered in the running of the gardens and if on occasion the Committee has been criticised for its somewhat oligarchical behaviour this at least has provided a catalyst for greater involvement by the rest of the proprietors. Neither has the garden faced any major financial problems although differences over financial matters have occasionally arisen. (113) One matter to arouse occasional conflict has concerned the admission of outsiders on payment of an annual due. The feu charter made allowances for this provided two-thirds of the proprietors were in agreement; in practice it has been left mostly to the discretion of the Committee after receiving general approval at an AGM. The granting of admission "to any respectable applicants" (114) proved a useful source of income and a minute of 1868 noted that "... since 1857 the assessment on proprietors has been reduced by nearly one-third in consequence chiefly due of the revenue derived from the admission of non proprietors". (115) But because the garden has tended to be well used by its own proprietors (and the number of households has increased over the years) not all have been equally welcoming about letting others in (particularly as many of the key renters tended to be dog owners). In consequence no consistent policy has ever been adopted and at different times outsiders have been banned altogether, allowed in without limit, or else restricted to a certain number. (116)

Drummond Place is the only garden for which we have information from the residents themselves. In a study based on the provision and design of shared local open space in housing, carried out by the Architecture Research Unit, Edinburgh University in 1971-72 (117) Drummond Place was selected as one of the early examples of such space. The results based on a 50% random sample of all the dwellings showed that satisfaction with the garden ran very high indeed and that its particular advantages were seen as providing an attractive open outlook and as a safe place for young children's play. Drummond Place at this date was occupied mostly by smaller households (3 or less in the family) and drawn from the older age groups (only 28% of the
households interviewed had one or more persons aged under 16 in the family - a situation in complete contrast to former days).

Recollections of the gardens alive with youngsters still lingers in the minds of some of the older inhabitants. Grace Milne Rae for example, daughter of the Reverend Milne Rae whose family moved to Drummond Place in 1892 described to the writer how she remembered looking across to the gardens and seeing "young ladies" playing tennis there. (118) So popular was the game that an extra court was marked out, and finally a third one. Children and babies were taken into the gardens by their nannies (although few wore uniform) and this reflects one of the greatest changes to have taken place for mothers (except maybe at weekends) rarely accompanied their children. The Raes were friendly with the Henderson and White families who lived close by and while the Henderson children perhaps felt some obligation to keep within the bounds of law (their father was appointed Secretary to the garden Committee in 1909) (119) the Whites were obviously under no such restraints. Their exuberant and dare devil behaviour still remains vivid in the mind of this old lady who recounted how on one occasion one of the White boys was caught at the top of a tree singing: - "Drunk, drunk, drunk, I'm as drunk as a lord" and on another how Freda White (later authoress of several travel books) in retaliation to being forbidden to climb trees organised a revolt amongst her girl friends - all of whom climbed up trees in protest. The gardeners patience must have been sorely tried.
3.7 ROYAL CIRCUS GARDENS

"...Ann our nurse had led us by way of Queen Street gardens and Heriot Row down to the, to us unknown regions of Royal Circus. It was May and in the Circus gardens, facing the crescent of tall grey houses, the trees were fresh with the green of spring, lilacs scented the air, and laburnums gleamed". Eleanor Sillar, c 1878. (1)

To Eleanor Sillar reminiscing about her Edinburgh school days in the late 1870s the image of Royal Circus with hershe was led to Madame Kunz's school (2) centred almost wholly on the gardens: recalled vividly to mind by the texture, colour and scent of mid spring days. A warm and inviting scene to a small girl in contrast to the more austere "tall grey houses" beyond. Her reactions are interesting because they draw attention, even if unwittingly to the importance of the gardens in this particular development.

When Royal Circus was under construction in 1821 some highly critical comments appeared in the Scotsman (fig. 160) focussed largely on the apparent inadequacy of the layout to compensate for the marked changes of level within the site. Hence in the writer's estimation the north side was "... so much sunk and disjoined" from the southern section as to give it a "... distorted and disagreeable appearance to the general surface of the ground" becoming consequently "... a most glaring defect". Most people today would be puzzled by such a reaction and would find it hard to credit Royal Circus with the reputation of being "... a monstrous deformity"; indeed it is now spoken of in terms of some awe as "Edinburgh New Town's most elegant crescent (fig. 164) ... this superb Craigleith stone development" exhibiting "very fine and plain detailing" (3) - an early example in fact of the skill and sensitivity of the designer - William Henry Playfair.

The identity of the architect was plainly unknown to the Scotsman critic otherwise his remarks might have been less disparaging. Playfair's reputation following his success at winning first prize in the competition for the completion of Robert Adam's university building (1816), together with his highly acclaimed and "splendid plans" (4) for the layout of a new town between Edinburgh and Leith (1819)
was gaining strength, and he was already regarded as a talented, extremely hardworking and dedicated young man. However, the writer was not simply venting idle spleen: he was judging Royal Circus at its barest and the "defects" in their most accentuated form. He was without the advantage of seeing the Circus set against a mass to tall trees and foliage both of the central gardens and to those on the east and west sides. The gardens have proved a successful means of masking the steep downward slope of the ground besides providing a degree of unity between the north and south sides which would otherwise have been absent. In contrast, the earlier circus at Bath on which the idea for Royal Circus was probably based was designed with a hard paved interior. (5)

Whatever the inspiration behind Royal Circus it is clear that the adoption of this form of layout owed much to ex Lord Provost David Steuart - that energetic and cultured citizen whose influence and involvement with the development of the second New Town has already been described in some detail (section 3.1). It was on his initiative that the idea for including a circus at the middle of George Street was revived in 1781 (6) (Craig it will be remembered had also tried to promote this modification in 1774 (refer figs. 30 and 31)). Apart from being fashionable and ornamental Steuart reasoned that such a central position would prove to be an extremely attractive feuing proposition particularly for those still in search of prestigious sites for public buildings (fig. 158b). But although the proposal made some headway (a public meeting was called, (7) the Town Council agreed to advertise for suitable plans with a reward of 5 guineas for the best, (8) and a map was produced by Ainslie incorporating the "intended circus" (fig. 158a) the impetus seems to have dwindled and come to naught. (9) The notion of a circus was not entirely dead however, and reappeared 10 years later when draft plans were drawn up by William Sibbald on behalf of Steuart for the development of Edinburgh's second New Town on land to the north of Queen Street a portion of which was owned by him. As discussed earlier this plan (refer fig. 113) contained two distinctive features - a large square at the eastern end, and a circus at the western end - the latter practically identical to the one shown

391.
FIGURE 158 a & b: Earlier proposals for a circus in the new town

CIRCUS
IN THE PLAN OF BUILDINGS WITHIN THE EXTENDED ROYALTY OF EDINBURGH.

Proposals were this day made by the Land Provost to a General Meeting of the Proprietors for making a Variation in the Plan of the Buildings within the Extended Royalty of this City, which would not only be ornamental, but a great inducement to the Public to erect Buildings there. His Lordship's proposition was, That a CIRCUS should be introduced in the Plan on George Street, in that part of it where it is intersected from north to south by Frederick Street, being the centre-point between the two figures in which any future public buildings that might be erected within the Extended Royalty would probably be situated.

The fevers who were present at this meeting unanimously approved of the proposed variation; but in order that this measure may be fully understood by all concerned, may, and that, if they can be, it may timely lodge their objections to it with me, the meeting authorize me to publish this their resolution in all the Edinburgh newspapers, and in the London Gazette; and adjourned the further consideration of the matter till their General Meeting, to be held here in Saturday the 16th of June next, at Prince's Street Coffee-house, at one o'clock afternoon:—Of which all concerned are hereby required to take notice.

Edinburgh, Feb. 19, 1781.

HERBERT DONALDSON.

b. Notice of intended circus at centre of George Street

(See 11, 18 & 25 April 1781)

PLANS FOR THE CIRCUS, &c.

(From a Correspondent.)

In our last we noticed the celebrity with which architectural works are undertaken and executed in this city; and in particular the rapidity with which the very extensive buildings in the Royal Circus have been proceeded in. But while the spirit and enterprise of the individual builders have been so conspicuous in the execution of such substantial, elegant, and apparently well-arranged houses internally, it is to be desired that the original projectors of the ground, and those charged with the general arrangement of the plan, should not have been better qualified to direct such an operation. The difference of level in the several parts of the Circus, by which the north side is so much sunk and disjoined from the south portion of it, and the defective and disgraceful appearance thereby given to the general surface of the ground, is a most glaring defect.

We are led to join in the opinion so generally expressed on this point, and to remark on it from lately having seen a lithograph sketch of the Circus which clearly points out how easily the defects might have been avoided; and while the beauty of the place was consulted, how greatly both the value of the houses composing it, and the surrounding property would have been enhanced, by the superiority of receive.

The evil has gone too far, and is evidently now unalterable; but although the errors and defects are so conspicuous, and the remedy impracticable, it is still possible to make that which is bad still worse; and we cannot but suggest to the individual builders and proprietors to weigh well the proposal now made to them, of placing a church on a level platform, as it were, on the west end of the Circus. Such an embellishment and erection, if carried into execution as proposed, it is evident, as matters now stand, must tend still further to detract from appearance, and destroy all connection between the parts of the Circus, and will have the effect of making apparently the north side still further from the surface level.

It appears to us that the only mode in which the plat can now be finished, instead of embarking at a level the bottom of India Street for the site of a church, is to continue the slope of that street till it joins the Stockbridge road, and thus assume some kind of connection between the two wings of the Circus. We do not mean to say that finishing it in this way will remove or even before the present monstrous deficiency of the place, but only to give for the consideration of the proprietors, who are materially interested in the question, whether by raising an embellishment, and forming by that means a high level platform for the site of a church, the west end of the Circus would not greatly increase the general deformity, and thereby tend to determine the adjoining property still further.

ADVERTISER, 1819.

BUILDING AREAS TO BE FEUED.

To be Feued by public roup, within the Connell Chamber of the City of Edinburgh, upon the 10th day of January 1790, at one o'clock afternoon.

The following AREAS, in the Extended Royalty of the City of EDINBURGH, adjoining to the Governors of George Heriot's Hospital, fronting the streets with situation, and situated between Howe Street and Stockbridge, viz:—

I. The Whole AREAS fronting the Circus, at the West end of GREAT KING STREET, consisting of upwards of 1000 feet.

II. The Corner STANCES at the West end of GREAT KING STREET.

III. The AREAS fronting ST. VINCENT'S STREET.

IV. The AREAS West of the Circus, at the bottom of INDIAN STREET, excepting the Area marked out for a public building.

V. About 200 Feet on each side of INDIA STREET.

These grounds were comprehended and delineated upon the general ground plan for buildings north of Queen Street, but an improvement has been made upon part of the ground now to be feued.

The ground, as now improved, and elevations for the buildings facing the Circus, will be seen at the Office of Mr. DUNIHILL, Treasurer to Heriot's Hospital, Site's Square; and the articles and conditions of group will be seen in the hands of Mr. MACHTICHIE, No. 4, Bank Street; and for further information, intending different purposes, may either apply to Mr. DUNIHILL, or Mr. MACHTICHIE, Mr. THOMAS BONNAR, the Hospital's Superintendent, will point out the stances to be feued.

Edinburgh, 8th Dec. 1819.

FIGURE 159: Advertisement for the feuing of land in Royal Circus: note reference to site for a public building (a church) and the improved plan.

FIGURE 160: Newspaper comment about the building of Royal Circus (Scotsman 10 November 1821)
on Ainslie's map for George Street, being divided into 4 segments by cross roads. At the centre of the circus an ornamental basin or pool of water is shown - an idea favoured by Sibbald and one he considered possible, a little later for Charlotte Square (Section 2.3).

Steuart's and Sibbald's plan was as we know superseded by others - as a result of the Town Councils involvement following their purchase of the lands of Bellevue: in all the subsequent changes however - right through to the final modifications made out in 1802 by the architect Robert Reid the idea of a circus for the western end remained intact - although moved further over to the north west. By then, the 4 segments had also been replaced by 2 continuous semi circular crescents with straight ends to the north and south, and having an enlarged entry on the east and west sides; the latter space being reserved for a church, and with an enclosed circular area (but no longer identified as a basin) in the middle. (fig. 117)

This 1802 layout, now more commonly referred to as "Reid and Sibbald's plan" became the blue print for the second New Town, and all 3 parties concerned - the George Heriot Trust (feu superiors of the greater part - including the Circus), the Town Council, and the owners of David Steuart's former feu bound themselves by contract to keep to it unless specific and official approval was sought for any later deviation found necessary. The area destined for a circus was the last major part to be put up for feuing: it was also the only section to experience quite substantial alterations to the ground plan including the arrangement of the central ornamental space. What were these changes, and why did they occur? If we look carefully at the 1802 design it becomes apparent that the road system between the western end and surrounding areas, particularly Stockbridge had by no means been satisfactorily resolved. India Street appears destined to be continued as the main thoroughfare northwards with access to the circus being limited to 2 narrow streets positioned on either side of the proposed church. Seemingly aware that some modifications would at some time be necessary the Heriot Trust had at a later stage acquired a further area of land to the west of the circus in the direction of Stockbridge known as "Spring Gardens". (10)
Nothing was done however, until the beginning of 1819 when the Trust began to seriously consider the expediency of feuing the whole of the circus area: approaches having already been made by certain builders eager for other prestigious sites now that Great King Street, and Drummond Place were nearing completion. (11) Thomas Bonnar, the Trust's Superintendent of Works was consequently asked to draw up a supplementary plan showing how the property of Spring Gardens might link with the 1802 layout: towards the end of January 1819 the revised ground plan was submitted to the Middle District Road Trustees "... for liberty to alter the present line of road from Howe Street to Stockbridge to suit these ground plans". What still remained of the old road to Stockbridge from the south side (including the cluster of adjoining cottages and farm house) can be clearly seen in Kirkwood's plan and elevation of 1819 - cutting almost diagonally across the intended circus. It was an old and established route which the designers of the various ground plans had chosen to ignore (fig. 162b).

When the Road Trustees met in March 1819 to consider these revised plans their reaction - recorded in a terse set of minutes forwarded to the Heriot Trust was highly critical. (12) The proposed new line of road was described as "very objectionable" due to the number of awkward turns and because of the narrowness of the streets to the north: the junction of Howe Street and entry to the circus on the east side was also considered clumsy with a steep fall to the north, "... as would not only appear extremely unhandsome but would even be dangerous to the traveller". The Heriot Trust were asked to revise their plans and in particular to see if the road entering the circus could be aligned - "... more to the south by turning off nearly immediately to the north of the buildings already erected in Howe Street, from where the line of the road would naturally continue round the south side of the circus until it reaches the north west corner where turning to the west it would pursue a straight line to Stockbridge ...". Their recommendations followed in fact a very similar route to the existing road already referred to.

Without this setback Royal Circus would in all likelihood have proceeded
on the basis of the 1802 ground plan and with the overall responsibility for the building design work in the hands of Thomas Bonnar or his successor Thomas Brown - rather as happened in the case of the Heriot Trust's smaller developments, for example Atholl Crescent and Bellevue Place. They chose instead to seek additional professional help, and the small Committee set up to deliberate further was given power - "... to take the opinion of Mr Playfair or any other architect of eminence". (13) In such a matter as reassessing the road system William Playfair was an obvious first choice: he was at this time and had been for the previous 12 months engaged in the detailed planning of a "third" New Town to the north of Calton Hill. Much of this land belonged to the Heriot Trust and their representatives on the joint Committee (14) for feuing the land would already have been familiar with Playfair's thoroughness of approach and design ability. One of the first tasks in fact that Playfair had been concerned with in the Calton Hill development was to give advice on the most appropriate level to adopt for the new London Road: so there was no doubt of his competence to handle such technical details. (15)

During the following weeks Playfair produced at least 2 possible sketch plans for a revised layout of the circus (figs. 161a and b) each of which attempted to resolve the best route for a road through it while taking into account the still current proposal to build a church at the western end. Both factors strongly influenced the way the plans were gradually modified - in particular the change from a straight to an oblique angled end to each side of the 2 crescents, and the division of the central open space into 2 crescent shaped gardens separated by a gently curving road through the middle. The main portico of the church had originally been intended to face the circus thus providing a focal point along the east to west axis of the second New Town. Playfair toyed with the idea of moving the church slightly westwards to allow it to also become an imposing feature at the head of India Street. Both sketch plans left small areas of residual open space, particularly at the eastern end of the circus which are shown as the site for some sculptured monument or obelisk in line with the main opening to the church.

These draft plans must have formed the basis of informal discussion.
Another variation with a different road system cutting through the centre (NMRS)

Feuding plan of Royal Circus by Playfair, dated 18 January 1820 showing 2 large open spaces on the east and west sides (NMRS)

FIGURE 161 a - c: Various plans by William Playfair for a revised layout of Royal Circus
between Playfair and the appointed sub Committee, and by the end of July 1819 after other revisions had been made a sketch "... showing how that part of the plan could be executed without interfering with the present road" was presented to a full meeting of governors. (16) They in turn directed that the plan be submitted to the Lord President of the Court of Session and the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer - who were both required to authorise any changes to the 1802 layout. (17) This procedure took time but by the end of the year the sub Committee's Chairman was able to report that the proposed alterations had received official approval. Without further delay the governors "... authorised that part of the ground ... to be feued out agreeably to said alteration ... and appoint Mr. Playfair architect, to make a clean copy ... and directed him also to make out levels and elevations for the Buildings situated to the different streets and circus ..." (18) It was also recommended that Mr. Playfair's advice should be sought "... as to the propriety of erecting a bridge across the Turnpike road" - presumably to allow easier and safer pedestrian access over what was to become a fairly busy traffic route. (19)

Playfair worked rapidly on his assignment, and on the last day of the year notices appeared in the Edinburgh newspapers announcing the imminent sale of building land in the circus area (by public roup in the Council Chambers on 13th January 1820) together with reference to the "improved plan" (20) (fig. 159). Compared to Playfair's earlier draft proposals the plan finally adopted (fig. 161c) varied little as far as the circus itself was concerned but the idea of making the church into a more imposing feature was not developed further. Instead a more limited portion of land was left vacant between the bayed openings to the crescents matched by a similar void space at the eastern end (a larger scale ground plan by Playfair, identical to the feuing plan does however, show these two areas as green enclosed spaces). (21) The feuing plan itself gave no indication what these spaces were destined for and this element of ambiguity while understandable at the time was to prove something of a handicap in the long term. It had no immediate effect however, on the successful feuing of the ground: when the circular part of the circus was publicly auctioned in the middle of January 1820
all the lots were bought by various builders\(^{(22)}\) who on average paid a higher price for ground on the north side.\(^{(23)}\) The Heriot Trust must have felt pleased with these results particularly as "... several other offers for parts of the ground not feued at the roup" were made at the same time.

The setting up of the Central garden area

One of the conditions of sale (later repeated in the different feu charters)\(^{(24)}\) stipulated that owners of areas "... upon the circular part of the plan" were "... bound to enclose the areas in the circus with parapet and retaining walls and iron railings in a suitable and handsome manner according to drawings and directions to be given and furnished for executing the same by Mr Playfair whom failing him by any other person to be named by the said hospital; and the said proprietors shall have the exclusive privilege of using the same as ornamental pleasure grounds". The cost of upkeep being made the responsibility of these same proprietors.

Compared to the conditions under which other contemporary pleasure gardens were established (eg Drummond Place, the Central and West Queen Street gardens) these were the shortest, surpassing even those governing St Andrew Square and Charlotte Square gardens (already noted for their brevity). The Heriot Trust had never before been directly involved in promoting a communal pleasure garden, and provided that certain standards were met their main concern seems to have been centred on transferring unequivocally all responsibility onto the proprietors' shoulders. As the 2 crescents only contained some 26 whole houses the Trust probably rightly assumed that detailed matters of administration could best be left to evolve on a more informal basis. Fortunately however, the uniform creation and development of the 2 main central gardens (each consisting of just under one acre (0.4 ha)) was guaranteed by making them over as one common area for the equal use of all the householders whose windows faced directly on to them. Only since the reconstruction of the gardens after the Second World War have the two sides separated and now function quite independently of each other.
Most of the houses in Royal Circus became occupied between 1821 and 1823 the new development proving a popular place in which to live - attracting several legal gentlemen as well as those from other professional backgrounds and one or two of the aristocracy. What makes Royal Circus a little unusual however, is the fact that the central garden area appears to have been laid out well before all the building work was completed; it is shown thus in all the various maps and plans of Edinburgh from 1821 onwards, and therefore precedes the central and western gardens in Queen Street and also those in Drummond Place.

What then is known about the making of these gardens? Unfortunately not a great deal. As with many of the smaller pleasure gardens little survives in the way of formal records and the only minute book to be traced - and that very incomplete - is one dating from 1893. From such fragments of information that do exist it would seem that much of the initiative for setting up the gardens came from one of the first residents - Alexander Wood of Woodcote (1793-1864) an Advocate who had moved from Charlotte Square to 1 Royal Circus; for several years he served as sheriff of Kirkcudbright, becoming Dean of the Faculty in 1841, and raised to the title of Lord Wood one year later. Besides being first Convener or Chairman of the Central garden area it was on his initiative that an approach was made to the George Heriot Trust with a request "... to enclose the ground in front of the bayed openings at the east and west entrances into Royal Circus agreeably to a plan produced". More will be said about this shortly, but Wood's letter to the Trust (dated 26 December 1821) indicates that the central garden area had by this time been completed.

The 2 central spaces were designed in a similar and complimentary manner; each had an outer belt of tree and shrub planting with a continuous gravel path running alongside, while the rest was grass sown and planted with various specimen trees. Access to the gardens was by a gated opening at the centre of each crescent (fig. 162c). It was a simple and straightforward layout in keeping with the fairly limited space available and broadly on the lines suggested in Playfair's ground plan. The work involved was easily within the competence of a good nurseryman.
Figure 162 a–h: Various plans of Royal Circus

a. Ainslie's plan 1804
b. Kirkwood's plan and elevation 1819
c. Knox's plan 1821
d. Knox's plan 1824
e. Lothian's plan 1825
f. OS plan 1853
g. Bartholomew's plan 1891
h. OS 1950
cum gardener, and most likely was carried out by Richard Walker who a little later successfully contracted for the making of the Central and West Queen Street gardens (Section 3.4 and 5). We certainly know that he was responsible for the upkeep of the gardens for in 1823 when soliciting the Management Committee of the West Queen Street gardens for their maintenance he quoted as referees - Alexander Wood, Circus, and William Dallas, Drummond Place "... as I have charge of these places". The planting seems to have established itself reasonably quickly - as can be seen from Lizar's engraving of 1825 (fig. 163), and also Shepherd's drawing (c. 1829) - the latter showing a thriving garden area with the poplar trees already attaining a substantial height (fig. 165).

The Central Gardens since Formation

Little is known about the subsequent history of the Royal Circus gardens until the 1860s when James McNab, Curator of the Royal Botanic gardens in Edinburgh wrote a number of articles on "The town trees of Edinburgh" including one (the 12th in the series - published in March 1868) about these particular gardens. Prior to this however, the first large scale ordinance survey sheets of 1853 showed that by the middle of the last century the 2 portions of garden had become more ornate in style; a further curved footpath had been added across both centres which gently looped around a new shrub bed. Each garden had also acquired a tool shed - discreetly hidden amongst the shrubbery at the western end (fig. 162g).

McNab's article provides a useful commentary on the state of the gardens as they approached maturity. True to form his criticism while tactfully phrased was not lacking bite and indeed his opening remarks were designed to rouse an apparently lethargic Management Committee back into action:-

"At the present time when so much is being done for the embellishment and general improvement of the town squares and gardens of Edinburgh, it is surprising to see that this taste for improving has not yet been taken up by the proprietors of Royal Circus grounds ... the thinning of trees, as well as the general improvement of the surface of the ground in the two chief garden sections is much required. Both compartments contain many fine trees, but rather crowded together, and it is a pity to see that nothing is being done to relieve them."
FIGURE 163: Royal Circus from India Place 1825 showing the west and central gardens (W.H. Lizar, Picturesque views of Edinburgh)

FIGURE 164: Present day advertisement for property in Royal Circus (Conversion of hotel into flats); note reference to garden area (Scotsman 23 August 1984)

FIGURE 165: North section of central gardens 1829; note high cope stone wall and railing (T. Shepherd)
Most of the original planting it seems had been allowed to grow unchecked (a common failing amongst the New Town gardens) with the result that several trees had become misshapen, too dense in growth, or else were interfering with the successful establishment of better shaped and more attractive specimens.

As a remedy McNab recommended the removal of several trees (including all the poplars apart from the Lombardy's) together with the "judicious pruning" of what remained. In his view not only would such action improve the appearance of the gardens but also bestow benefits of a more sanitary nature for: "the houses would also be rendered decidedly more healthy than they can possibly be with such a mass of close vegetative matter in the vicinity, particularly during the autumnal months". Other more radical changes were also put forward - these included: the reduction of the surrounding walls on the north and south sides to allow a better view into the gardens, increasing the width of borders alongside the central roadway to allow additional space for planting white and scarlet hybrid rhododendrons, and the re-making of the outer footpath in a more serpentine form and at a greater distance from the wall and railing. These latter suggestions were never acted upon and one surmises that the Management Committee were prompted to do little more than carry out basic tree pruning and some removal work. It is perhaps not without significance that the last known meeting of the proprietors was held in 1868 - the year of McNab's report and thereafter lapsed until 1893 when a new Committee was formed. (30)

The general tone of desultory care which McNab's article conveys seems to have continued unaltered for many more years: the one surviving minute book dating from 1893-1947 certainly confirms the casual and fitful way in which the gardens were run for much of their existence - with many gaps in the records - one extending to 12 years, another to 17 years when no formal meetings of proprietors or Management Committee were held at all. This of course, was not an uncommon pattern with the smaller New Town pleasure gardens whose struggle for existence has in consequence been all that more precarious.

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The minute book itself resumes after an interval of 25 years when on 27th November 1893, eleven proprietors in the Circus attended a general meeting to discuss the future of the gardens. This somewhat novel experience had been prompted by the imminent retirement of Mr. John Young (1836-1897) who, we learn had for "... upwards of 23 years" held the role of Clerk and now due to ill health wanted to be relieved of further responsibility. Although Mr. Young wished for no reimbursement, the meeting learnt that he had in fact paid over the entire period "... the whole wages of the gardener employed in the upkeep of the gardens" and was now "... out of pocket to the extent of upwards of £400".

Presumably he had chosen to do this rather than have the trouble of continually collecting small sums of money from all the proprietors, and maybe too, as a bachelor money was of a less pressing concern.

Mr. Young's resignation, coupled with the fact "that the gardens were not at present being properly kept up" and were indeed suffering damage caused by over-vigorous games played by older boys roused those attending to form an Improvement Committee. Action was not long delayed. The gardener was given notice, and estimates obtained for putting the gardens fully in order. Two further meetings of the Committee and proprietors took place and at the second one held in March 1894 approval was given to an estimate of £4 submitted by Mr. A. Swanson (Ironmonger and Smith, 9 North West Circus Place) for the repair of railings and seats in both gardens; and one by Mr. W. Whitlaw of £47 for work on the garden itself. This latter figure included £20 for the removal of certain trees and the pruning of other trees and shrubs, and the remainder on improvements to the pathways (trimming to 6' (1.83m) in width, clearing of weeds and other matter, and relaying with red ash) and continuing the area of turf up to the railings.

To cover these and other recent expenses the meeting also agreed that all the proprietors apart from the former Clerk should be assessed at the rate of £2.50. By the end of May 1894 the necessary work had been satisfactorily completed and Mr. Whitlaw appointed "to keep the gardens in order for a year" at the cost of £18 "payable quarterly".

Once these various tasks had been accomplished the Committee held together for just one more year before reverting as formerly to the
"interim Clerk" to shoulder unaided the responsibilities for the management and financial upkeep of the gardens. George McIntosh SSC of the firm Waddell, McIntosh and Peddia was appointed to this role in 1894 and his commitment eventually surpassed his predecessors by several years and only ended with his death in 1923. During his long reign as Clerk only one meeting of the Committee is recorded as having taken place, and for the greater part of the time the assessment remained unchanged at 1 guinea per annum. His death, however, did precipitate another meeting of proprietors called by Sheriff Crole the sole surviving member of the Committee set up in 1894. The gardens had by then accumulated debts of over £40 due to a 5 year lapse in the levying of assessments - a matter which a newly constituted Committee quickly put to rights. From this time onwards meetings of Committee and proprietors became more regular with a consequent increase in the level of interest shown in the gardens. From the 1920s onwards much of the property had been subdivided thereby adding to the number of householders with a right to the gardens: as a general principle it was decided early on that each new proprietor irrespective of the size of their accommodation should pay the same flat rate towards the ground's upkeep. During the 1920s and 1930s the gardens were maintained under contract with the Lyndoch Place nurseries who carried out substantial tree pruning work in 1936 (the first in years) as well as planting new shrubs. Little by little the gardens were put into better order and more attention given to such long neglected matters as the repair of seats, and the repainting of the railings.

The split in management between the North and South sides

Rather frustratingly the improvements achieved by a better and more regular standard of care were to be shortlived. With the advent of the Second World War all the railings surrounding the gardens were removed and extensive damage caused to the southern section with the construction of 2 air raid shelters as well as a static water tank. Virtually deprived of the use of their immediate garden area several proprietors living on the south side declined payment of their annual dues. Never before had the unity of the 2 gardens been questioned but this change in circumstance and fortune which had placed one half to be at such a disadvantage prompted the matter to be raised. At a meeting of proprietors
in Royal Circus, held in July 1942 (and attended by only a handful of residents and their Clerk) the proposal that in future - "... the gardens should be divided, namely that the proprietors on the north side of the circus should be responsible for the upkeep of the northern portion, and the south side the southern portion" was fully discussed. No objections were recorded, and there is no indication of any other debate having taken place. According to one longstanding resident the split was accomplished "quite smoothly and without difficulty" each side simply deciding "to go their own way".

In the case of the north garden the task of making good the years of war time neglect was relatively straightforward, and considerably helped by the energetic commitment of one of the residents, Colonel Charles Usher (1892-1981) - "... in clearing up the ground, and cutting the grass and generally making the place look tidy". A wire mesh fence was added to the top of the cope stone but in 1975 with the help of a substantial grant from the New Town Conservation Committee together with money raised by the proprietors themselves it was replaced by a new iron railing based on the original design (fig. 164).

At the present time there are approximately 30 mature trees in the garden consisting mainly of elm, ash, lime, whitebeam, sycamore, hawthorn, holly and horse chestnut, with shrub planting around the outer boundary, and a fairly large shrub bed at the centre (fig. 166a). Some new trees have been planted in recent years particularly on the eastern side. The general standard of care appears adequate although the footpaths are in need of better maintenance. Greater thought is required to improve the western corner which houses a somewhat sordid looking tool shed, and rubbish heap - both all too visible from the outside and detracting from the appearance (for general views of Royal Circus gardens refer fig. 166a-d).

The south garden emerged from the war years in a more dejected state, and took longer to put back into order. In 1950 the ground was bulldozed and levelled covering all traces of the former air raid shelters, and water tank apart from the residue of glass and stones which hampered to some extent the successful grass seeding of the central area; the
b. Central garden, south section: note original walled and coped stone with post war mesh fencing

c. Western section of garden

d. Eastern section: this is equipped with a climbing frame which is popular with children
central footpath and shrub bed which had been formed sometime towards the middle of the last century was also obliterated (43) (fig. 162g) although the outer walk survived. As yet the tree planting in the south garden closely matches its northern half - containing a similar number and range of mature trees. Pruning however, has been less sympathetically carried out - particularly the limes on the south side; and the addition of several conifers at both ends (so woefully out of character) highlights one of the unforeseen consequences and dangers of dual management. (44)

For most of their life the Central Royal Circus gardens have been treated as one unified area, and it would be a great pity if this was lost by each side pursuing a planting policy out of harmony with the other. Sadly too, the southern garden has not yet managed to raise enough money to replace its railings, and although the substitute wire and mesh fencing is adequate it contrasts unfavourably with the simple but handsome railing of the garden opposite (fig. 166b).

Royal Circus - East and West garden areas

Playfair as we know worked on several variants for the Circus and from the surviving plans it would appear that the suitable treatment of the surplus space at the east and west ends did cause a degree of uncertainty, with the matter not having been fully resolved by the time the feuing plan was produced (refer fig. 161a, b and c). A sufficient area was however retained for a church at the western end (an idea it will be remembered first introduced in the 1802 revised layout for the second New Town (45) (fig. 162a) although Playfair had also shown in one of his draft proposals the possibility of simply enclosing both spaces for garden purposes.

While Royal Circus was under construction the notion of providing a church at the western end remained under lively debate: the Scotsman article referred to earlier (fig. 160) voiced strong opposition to such a plan, stating in no uncertain terms that it was still feasible "... to make that which is bad still worse" and requesting the builders and proprietors "... to weigh well the proposal now made to them, for placing a church on a level platform as it were, at the west end of the Circus". In the writer's opinion the layout had already failed miserably to accommodate itself adequately to the pronounced changes of level.
dislike to erect a church in a situation where comparatively speaking it would be much out of view" (i.e. at the bottom of St Vincent's Street), but "... after making every exertion however, he had found it impossible to induce the proprietors of the circus to give up the stance looking eastwards to Great King Street the only other situation in the neighbour- 
hood at all fitting for the purpose." Trotter finally gave his whole- 
hearted support to the St. Vincent Street site rather than see it jeopardised by some Council members who wished to modify the plans in order to save money. (48) 

For some reason those taking on the responsibility for making the east and west gardens in the circus made no attempt to set them up on any kind of legal basis: had the Heriot Trust been pressed they very likely would have agreed to grant a feu charter (as had already happened with the Central garden space) making them over to those named proprietors who had contributed towards the costs of enclosing and levelling the land, and willing to pay for its perpetual upkeep. Maybe Alexander Wood considered the areas in question too small to merit such a formal approach (the West garden is .60 of an acre (.24 ha), and the East garden half an acre (.25 ha) and not worth the extra trouble when the costs of upkeep were likely to be minimal. 

Whatever the explanation this total dependence on the voluntary goodwill and involvement of those living in the vicinity to contribute towards maintenance costs has caused recurrent problems and crises. Their survival has in fact rested solely on the availability of just a handful of proprietors prepared to give generously of their own time and energy towards the garden's management and care. Naturally such a commitment cannot be guaranteed to continue indefinitely and on several occasions where voids have occurred both gardens have come perilously close to total neglect and even abandonment. 

Of the two however, the West garden (slightly larger and rather more private) has been rather more successful in sustaining interest and better order. Thus when James McNab was reporting on the condition of the Royal Circus gardens in 1868 the West Division was the only section
raised for its standard of care, much having apparently been done "... both for its present and ultimate improvement". (49) Only the Lombardy poplars were singled out as requiring attention - being regarded as "... rather unsuited for such a windy spot". All the poplars have long since disappeared, and of the 20 to 25 mature trees in the garden most consist of lime, ash, elm, sorbus and sycamore - concentrated around the perimeter. Other changes have occurred over the years - the extent of footpaths has been considerably reduced and is now limited to one running from east to west across the centre (fig. 161i).

The fortunes of the east gardens - situated at the busier end of the circus have in comparison been far more chequered. Care had obviously been taken in the original design to help increase the degree of privacy and shelter from within by forming embankments around the 4 sides which were then tree and shrub planted: the central area was levelled and grass sown. Whether Alexander Wood continued his interest in this area of garden once it became established is not known: he died in 1864 and certainly by the time of McNab's article 4 years later it had degenerated into "... a very neglected condition". There was little in fact about the garden that was right: "The grass is as much as 6 or 8 inches (15 or 20 cms) above the low parapet wall. The trees now growing on it are in a miserable state, and not above three or four of them capable of improvement and fit to be retained."

On this occasion McNab's criticism went unheeded - directed as it was to a management structure which no longer functioned. The East garden drifted on in this unsatisfactory manner until 1883 when the George Heriot Trust decided in the face of what appeared to them complete indifference on the part of the surrounding proprietors to let the garden out to a Mr Crighton for £1 a year "... he keeping the ground in order and maintaining the railings". (50) No other details of this arrangement are mentioned in the Heriot Trust minutes but it emerges 1 year later that the garden was simply being used as a convenient play area for the boys attending Circus Place School - directly opposite. (51) Such an apparent "abuse" was sufficient to provoke strong local protest which
culminated with certain proprietors in Circus Place approaching the Trust with the request that they "... be allowed to take the management of the ground in front of their feu and use it as a pleasure ground."(52) Their petition was granted but only on the condition that the garden was kept "in good and sufficient order". (53)

Within 16 years however, the East Circus Place garden had once more deteriorated to such an extent as to prompt a further crisis: on this occasion the Town Council brought pressure to bear by exerting their rights under Section 148 of the Municipal and Police Act 1879 which amongst other matters required owners of public spaces and squares held in common to keep them in good condition. Failure to do so, once an order had been served could result first in a fine, followed by the Council taking over the management and custody of the space "for the public benefit and advantage". (54)

The Trust no doubt thankful at the prospect of being rid of this long-standing and troublesome matter decided in fact to lease the pleasure garden to the town for a 20 year period and at a nominal rent of one shilling (5p) per annum. (55) Such a plan however, provoked great consternation amongst the local residents and prompted them once more to rally together. In December 1900 a deputation consisting of Professor Sir Henry Littlejohn, Gerald Crole, Advocate (both members of the Central garden Committee) and William Smith WS "... on behalf of the feuars of Royal Circus and Circus Place" attended a special meeting at the Trust's offices (the Convener of the Town Council's Parks Department also being present) where they made clearly known the willingness of the feuars "... to arrange for the proper upkeep of the gardens." (56) This resulted in the first rather more formalised arrangement to be made with the Meriot Trust: Professor Sir Henry Littlejohn and Mr Crole were appointed as Trustees to act on behalf of the other feuars taking on a 10 year lease to the ground and being made personally responsible for seeing that the garden was looked after "... to the satisfaction of the Governors and the public authorities". (57) Thereafter, the garden was put into better order and a fairly considerable amount of new planting carried out. (58)
Since then leases have been renewed for various periods of between 5 to 15 years, with the overall charge placed in the hands of 2 to 3 trustees appointed by those having an interest in the garden. Most of the garden subscribers are drawn from South East and North East Circus Place, and the lower end of Howe Street, Great King Street and St. Vincent Street. Even so, its existence as a private pleasure ground remains as precarious now as in the past, and within recent years there have been at least 2 further occasions when the garden has come close to being handed over to the local authority. Over the last decade the responsibility for the garden's management and upkeep has rested almost wholly with the one nominated trustee - John Dewar, photographer and a resident of North East Circus Place. During this period the garden has greatly benefited from a carefully considered programme of pruning, some tree removal work, and new tree and hedge planting. (fig. 166d) There are some 20 or so mature trees in the garden consisting mainly of elm, hawthorn, sycamore, holly, and ash, enclosed by a plain iron railing set on a cope stone. One of the constant problems faced by this garden is the amount of street blown or deposited litter particularly now that much of the protective wire netting placed at the bottom of the railing has had to be removed because of its dilapidated state.
In none of the proposals for the laying out of the north east corner of the second New Town had space been allocated for the creation of any kind of adjoining pleasure garden or ornamental space. The land on which Bellevue Crescent was built had formed part of the ground attached to Bellevue House (refer Section 3.1) and after the Town Council had acquired it in 1800 they continued to let the parks for pasturage together with a profitable sandpit in the neighbourhood of the crescent. (1) Preliminary ideas for the development of this part had tended to favour an oblique line of buildings following the angle of the old road to Canonnills. When Robert Reid was commissioned in 1802 to revise and improve on the earlier draft plans for the second New Town (Section 3.1) he put forward two possible solutions for this corner, and the one selected by the Town Council (because they felt it was a better feuing proposition) consisted of a continuous crescent lying almost adjacent to the line of the old road (2) (fig. 167a) the land beyond to the east was out with the feuing boundary and owned by the George Meriot Trust who for a long number of years rented it out as nursery ground.

Shortly before relinquishing his post as City Superintendent of Works Thomas Bonnar drew up designs for the front elevations of the crescent (he was also responsible for another crescent - Atholl Crescent at the west end of Edinburgh built between 1823-1825 (fig. 4)) and in July 1818 the first building stances were put up for sale. (3) By 1823 the southern half was completed and occupied but by then it had been decided to carry out a minor modification to the feuing plan which nevertheless was to have fairly important consequences for the development of the adjacent open spaces. In September 1822 the Town Council decided to build a new church at the centre of Bellevue Crescent in preference to two other possible sites at the eastern end of the New Town - London Street and Albany Street. (4) Unlike the Royal Circus feuars when faced with a similar proposition (Section 3.7) the Bellevue Crescent proprietors raised no objections and in fact welcomed the idea as a means of promoting their own plans for the improvement and enhancement of the Crescent. Maybe also, the feuars felt encouraged by
the example of their nearby neighbours in Drummond Place who in 1822 had successfully negotiated a feu charter with the Town Council for the setting up of a communal pleasure garden within the central area; perhaps too, they realised that the addition of a church would attract many outsiders to the crescent and therefore it was important to make the surrounding approaches as attractive as possible. Certainly their early ideas were both imaginative and ambitious. At a meeting with the Town Council held in November 1822 when the proprietors present reaffirmed their approval for the new church they took the opportunity of putting forward two suggestions: first - "that the ground marked as stable ground in the general feuing plan should be converted into pleasure ground on such terms as might be afterwards arranged", and second that an enclosure should be formed in front of the Crescent "as might be considered suitable". The Town Council showed interest in these plans and "declared their readiness to co-operate with the feuars".

Attempts, however, to form the rear as a pleasure garden (at around 1.5 acres (.6 ha) it was the largest backland space in the New Town) proved abortive. With only 11 dwellings completed in the crescent (and no immediate prospect of the northern half being built) there were just not enough residents available to promote such a considerable undertaking: in addition the consent of all the surrounding proprietors whose property adjoined the space (for example, Scotland Street, the north east wing of Drummond Place, London Street, Mansfield Place and Cornwallis Place) would have been required. A daunting task indeed. However, the very fact that it was raised as a serious proposal does seem to have curtailed the development of the land as originally intended "... for stables, coach houses and washing houses" (6) (refer fig. 167a). Only one plot was ever feued for this purpose (fig. 167d): demand for stabling accommodation may in any case have been on the wane, but all too likely residents were deterred from applying simply because of the uncertainty of how the land was to be developed and the Town Council's apparent willingness to keep options open almost indefinitely. (2)

Instead therefore of an attractive urban oasis of shrubberies, trees, sward and pathways it gradually became a neglected wilderness apart from one or two small areas used as drying greens. Once the church was
completed the narrow carriageway from Scotland Street (the only access point originally allowed for vehicles) was extended through to the Crescent, dividing the ground into 2 portions and making any uniform development even less likely (fig. 167d). The ground is still owned by the City, and for many years part of the southern section has been leased to Drummond Tennis Club, a private club well used by local residents. (8) (refer figs. 167f and fig. 168b). Cars unfortunately have been allowed to penetrate into this half: a rough pathway running alongside the back walls of the Crescent provides access to hardstandings and garages in certain private gardens, to the stable block now used as garage accommodation and to a concrete courtyard with 3 lock-ups tuck ed away in the south-west corner (fig. 168 a). In 1928 an area of ground in the northern half was first leased for allotments and the 6 well cultivated plots continue much in demand and rarely change hands. (9) (figs. 168c and d). Although the tennis club and allotments have occupied the greater part of the site for many years the land's future still remains unresolved and insecure. Pressure from local residents culminating in the appointment of a planning consultant - Dr F. R. Stevenson in 1973(10) to make suggestions for the improvement of the backland area did at least impress on the Town Council the need to restrict further infiltration by cars. Response to the consultant's plans indicated that most of the surrounding proprietors were in favour of keeping the status quo but with the areas of wasteland - "... landscaped to an agreed standard not as a formal garden but rather as a small area of pleasant parkland suitable for walking and recreation and preserving the semi rural aspect" - and maintained by the local authority. A fragment only of the pleasure garden first envisaged by the original Bellevue Crescent proprietors but similarly blighted by lack of available funds.

The North and South Pleasure Gardens fronting Bellevue Crescent

The foundation stone of St Mary's Church at the centre of the Crescent was laid on 15th August 1823 (a date carefully chosen to coincide with the 1st anniversary of George IVs visit to Edinburgh) by the Lord Provost William Arbuthnot amidst suitable ceremony and pious speeches. (11) An event which did not wholly convince one of the reporters
FIGURE 167 a-f:
Various plans of Bellgray Crescent gardens

a. Ainslie's plan 1834
b. Kirkwood's plan and elevation 1819
c. Knox's plan 1824
d. Johnston's plan 1851
e. Bartholomew's plan 1891
f. OS plan 1952
a. View from SE corner showing parked cars, stable, & tennis courts

b. Drummond tennis club

c. Wilderness footpath to the allotments

d. One of the allotments
present who a few days later took the opportunity in the Scotsman to criticise the proposed building as "... a decent, orderly, old fashioned, poor sort of indifferent thing". He lamented that no architect of eminence had been employed although fairly confident that both William Playfair and the late Archibald Elliot had submitted proposals.(12)

For whatever reason (but most likely to save expense) the city preferred to let their own Superintendent of Works - Thomas Brown act as architect: he was a competent but not outstanding designer who already had one church to his credit.(13) His work had brought him into contact on several occasions with various New Town gardens - for example, he was consulted about the design of the railings for the Central Queen Street gardens, and for those around Drummond Place. Brown was responsible for drawing up a revised plan of Bellevue Crescent sometime in 1822 to include the addition of 2 oval shaped gardens grassed and tree planted in front of each half and with the church frontage left open. Knox's 1824 plan of Edinburgh (fig. 167c) first shows these two garden areas - which at .30 of an acre (.12 ha) each are amongst the smallest of the New Town gardens.

Although Brown's ideas seem to have been perfectly acceptable both to the Town Council, and the proprietors alike, no garden area could be formed in front of the crescent until the old roadway to Canomills was realigned (refer fig. 167b). This caused a delay of many years for the impetus to make the necessary changes did not gather force until the George Heriot Trust began to take positive steps to feu out the ground opposite the Crescent in what was to become Bellevue Terrace and Bellevue Place. Thus, after an interval of nearly 20 years the notion of forming pleasure gardens in front of Bellevue Crescent suddenly sprang back to life.

In March 1841 a meeting was held to discuss improvements to the section of roadway between the Crescent and Mansfield Place attended by the various interested parties: these included - members of the Town Council, the George Heriot Trust, the Middle District and Crande Road Trustees, and 4 proprietors.(14) Thomas Brown now approaching his final
years as City Superintendent of Works was once again involved for together with a Mr Blackwood (overseer to the Road trustees) he had been responsible for working out the detailed proposals. Their plan (approved by those present) required the old road to be moved further eastwards thereby allowing space in front of the crescent for a pleasure garden. The area gained, however, was at the expense of the Heriot Trust who were required to relinquish a slice of their ground opposite then let to the nursery firm of Eagle and Henderson. As some compensation therefore it was made a condition that not only should the proprietors in Bellevue Crescent "... enclose with a proper parapet wall and iron railing and lay out in shrubbery the area shown in the plan opposite to the southern division of the crescent" but that access to this ground should be granted "... to the feuars of Heriots Hospital on the opposite side of the road ... on the same terms with the feuars of Bellevue Crescent". (15) It was also mutually agreed that the enclosing and planting would be carried out "simultaneously" with the other improvements and to the satisfaction of "Messrs Brown, Blackwood and Mr Black the Superintendent of Heriots Hospital".

Alterations to the roadway proceeded almost immediately but it soon became apparent that the Bellevue Crescent proprietors were experiencing difficulties in carrying out their part of the bargain: the cost of making the garden began to escalate far beyond what they had budgeted for. Appeals to the George Heriot Trust for extra time and with the invitation to contribute financially met with a cool response. The Trust sharply reminded the proprietors of their obligations and disclaimed any liability to support them. (16) Several months went by and gradually work on the garden ceased altogether as the money ran out. Eventually towards the end of October 1842 the proprietors in a fairly desperate and frustrated mood appealed to the City for help "... praying that the Council in respect of St. Mary's Church would contribute liberally towards the improvement". (17) They explained in their petition that each resident had already subscribed £25 but even so the enclosure was still "... not two thirds completed", and there were accumulated debts amounting to just over £32. Fortunately for the feuars the Town Council after some initial reluctance agreed to pay £125
towards the completion of the work - the church being held to occupy the equivalent of 5 house spaces.

This extra money was wholly spent on finishing the parapet wall and railing: the interior continued to remain derelict for more than a year - until March 1844 when some of the proprietors gathered sufficient courage to risk a fresh approach to the Heriot Trust for financial assistance. On this occasion their request was treated more sympathetically: the Trust agreed that as the improvements had cost more than anticipated and as "... the completion of the work will be to the advantage of the hospital feuars" they should make a contribution of £40. No further demands however, would be tolerated and the garden was to be "fully and properly completed". (18) For such a relatively tiny space it had indeed proved a costly and protracted exercise with the total expenditure approaching £450.

In the absence of any garden minute books not a great deal more is known about the subsequent history of the garden. Being small, and dependent on only a limited number of proprietors (none of whom were under any legal obligation to pay for its upkeep) it probably survived on a fairly ad hoc basis relying on the spasmodic services of a jobbing gardener: a pattern certainly common to other similarly sized pleasure gardens in Edinburgh. We do know however, from a description of the garden written by James McNab in 1865 (19) that the layout and planting of the ground was carried out under the direction of William Crawford Esq of Cartsburn, a proprietor on the Crescent and actively involved in promoting the garden's formation from the very beginning. He was a keen member of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society (20) and would have been known to McNab who was then curator of their experimental garden at Inverleith. The choice of planting was in McNab's opinion a little unusual insofar as no free growing nurse trees were used, and the ones that were - limited to 2 varieties - elms along the east side, and a row of limes round the west side, together with a few evergreen shrubs introduced into the borders. It had apparently been Mr Crawford's intention "... to attend carefully to the pruning and thinning" but while he continued to take a personal interest in the garden
up until his death it afterwards fell into a neglected state. In the absence of any regular maintenance programme the trees became overgrown and overcrowded. By the middle of the 1860s trees and shrubs had become so dense as to obscure views into the garden from all but the upper windows, and branches overhanging the street were becoming a nuisance and hazard besides "... being liable to be broken down by idle youths". The lawn too had suffered as a result - the grass having grown coarse and in many places bare, and the trees planted in the centre "dwarf stunted".

Remedial action was without doubt urgently required but McNab's advice was probably just a little too drastic and radical to be contemplated by the small number of proprietors interested in the garden. He recommended, for example, the removal of every alternate lime tree, two-thirds of the elms and the pruning of the remainder: further tree thinnings to be carried out at 5 or 6 year intervals "... so that the intended permanent ones will stand about 40' apart (12.20m)". In addition, he suggested planting 2 or 3 good elm or lime trees within the grassed interior in place of the stunted ones besides extending the grass up to the railings and creating two or more rounded grass belts to break the monotony of the dead level centre. McNab's criticism promoted some tree thinning and pruning but on a much more moderate scale.

During the Second World War the railings were removed and the garden used for civil defence purposes. (21) It was restored by the Bellevue Crescent feuars in the late 1940s when a post and wire fence was erected inside the original cope stone, and a privet hedge added around the edges (fig. 167f). Not long afterwards the proprietors approached the Town Council to see if they would be willing to take it over as a public ornamental space: responsibility for its continued maintenance shared amongst so few residents none of whom were under any legal obligation to contribute financially had become increasingly burdensome and unworkable. The suggestion was not lacking practical sense, as the City had for a long number of years been responsible for the upkeep of the northern section (see details below). However, the offer was rejected and the garden left to struggle on for several more years until the Corporation finally agreed to take it over in March 1965. (22) No
major changes have been made to the garden since, and it is now a well kept, attractive space with the original lime and elm trees still in good shape (fig. 169a, b and c).

Bellevue Crescent - North Garden

Bellevue Crescent remained half finished for a very long time and it was not until the early 1880s that the ground on the north side was advertised for sale. Once begun however, building proceeded rapidly and within 2 to 3 years the second stage was completed. It will be remembered that Thomas Brown's revised plan of 1822 had shown two nearly oval shaped gardens fronting each half - an arrangement chosen to allow an open view of the church.

Recollections of the protracted attempts by the first proprietors to raise money for the formation of the southern portion of garden may well have influenced the Town Council to take the initiative on this second occasion: no doubt too they were anxious to avoid any issue which might hamper the successful feuing of the land already delayed by many years. Under the circumstances it was probably simpler and quicker to assume full responsibility rather than leave it in the hands of others. (33) Hence in May 1883 the Council gave approval to a report submitted by the Public Parks Committee recommending the making of a garden in front of the north wing of Bellevue Crescent; (24) by then estimates had already been obtained for enclosing the ground with parapet wall and iron railing (Peter Sinclair, builder was appointed to do the stone work for £259, and Wilson and Dunnet the iron work for £85). The layout of the new garden was made to compliment the earlier one: lime and elm trees were placed along the perimeters, the central area grass sown with 3 or 4 specimen trees added, and a gravel footpath formed along the outer edge.

From 1883 onwards the garden has been under the care of the public parks department. (25) Some improvement work is recorded as having taken place in 1896 following referral to the Parks Committee - "to consider and report on the necessity of putting Bellevue Gardens in a more attractive condition". (26) What this consisted of is not known but the head gardener
a. Southern section with St. Mary's church on the left

b. Inner view of the south garden

c. South garden with privet hedging around exterior

d. Northern section - rather bare with post wire mesh fencing

e. North garden with notice "No ball games" on gate
was authorised to carry out the suggestions made by him at a cost of £5. Nothing more is heard about the garden until many years later when in the 1950s steps were taken to restore it after the war. A post and wire mesh fence (similar to the one used in the southern half) but without any privet hedging was erected so that today the garden compared to its neighbour is more bare and open in appearance (fig. 169d); money too was spent on reconditioning the interior. (27)
INTRODUCTION TO THE EDINBURGH NEW TOWN PLEASURE GARDENS


3. George Heriot, jeweller and goldsmith was appointed banker and jeweller to James VI in 1601, and on his death in 1624 Heriot bequeathed his considerable wealth to the Civic Authorities and Clergy of Edinburgh for the building and maintenance of a hospital "... for the education, nursing, and upbringing of youth, being poor orphans and fatherless children of decayed burgesses and freemen of the said burgh, destitute and left without means". During the 50 years or so after setting up the Trust the governors were not only occupied with the building of the school (finally opened in 1659) but also investing surplus money in the large scale purchase of land in and near Edinburgh including various properties in the Barony of Broughton and its immediate neighbourhood (the site of much of the New Town). In 1636 the Trust acquired the whole superiorities and remaining lands in the Barony in a transaction between King Charles I and the Earl of Roxburgh in which the former's debts to the Trust (Heriot had supplied the King with £8,300 of jewels on the occasion of the Royal visit to Spain in 1623) and to the Earl of Roxburgh (previous owner of the Barony who had sold it to the King but had never been paid) were finally settled (for details see: History of the Barony of Broughton, John Mackay, Edinburgh, John Menzie & Co., 1869, p.49). The land purchased by the Trust was for its agricultural worth and the high increase in its value as it was later developed for building would not have been foreseen by the first governors.


5. The revised and finally approved design of July 1767 (now on display in the Huntley House Museum) shows the 2 squares each with an obelisk in the centre together with 2 statues facing along the axis of the central principal street (the western square is shown however, wrongly set and reads from south to north). Later engraved plans of January 1768 show just one equestrian statue placed in the centre of each of the squares.

6. The Town, and new proprietors along Queen Street, Heriot Row and Abercromby Place were in the first place given a servitude or right over the ground in front of their houses by a clause in the
feu charters limiting the use of the land for garden or park purposes (full details - see Section 3). A similar servitude was granted to the Dean feuars in the case of the land between Eton Terrace and the Water of Leith (excluding a portion at the western end intended for a row of houses - Cambridge Terrace, which in fact was never built) restricting its use "for occupation as pasture, nursery, garden or pleasure ground": Royal Terrace feuars also had a servitude in their favour for the land in front of their property (which eventually became the Royal Terrace/London Road gardens). This was a simple and useful device for providing a degree of protection for areas of ground when such practicalities as to how it was to be run, by whom and for whom had still to be determined.

7. **Edinburgh Municipal and Police Act 1879**: 42 and 43 Vict c 132

8. Because the Heriot Trust continued to retain ownership of the London Road Gardens information relating to its subsequent history is well documented in the Heriot Trust minutes. Among the most important minutes on which this information is based are the following: GHT Minutes, 26 Dec. 1823, v 23; 27 Nov. 1826, v 24, 31 Oct. 1834, vol 26; 15 March 1838, v 28; 29 Oct. 1840, vol. 29; 2 July 1841, v 30, 3 Oct. 1867, v 41; 21 Aug. 1871, v 42: the Cottage was completed in 1837; and the lease for the garden entered into with the Town Council in 1893. In his design for the garden Playfair took account of "...The footpath requested by the ex King of France" which was marked off and "... an estimate procured for its execution including 2 gates at the Extremities" (W. H. Playfair's letter book 1830-1833. Report to the Calton Hill Committee: 27 January 1831; EUL Manuscripts). The King referred to was Charles X who returned to stay at Holyrood Palace after his abduction in 1830: here he was safe from arrest - being pursued for money by the suppliers of his armies and in danger of imprisonment. Maybe he regarded the London Road gardens with their locked gates as another safe retreat - but he would not have enjoyed them for long as he left the Palace in 1832.


12. **George Heriot Trust Minute**, 13 July 1825, vol. 24; Kincaid Mackenzie, Treasurer of the George Heriot Trust from 1822 until 1830 successfully persuaded Sir Patrick Walker, and a Mrs Carnegie (owner of adjacent land) to join together with the Trust in commissioning "... Mr James Gillespie, architect, to prepare a
plan for feuing out the ground at Coates". Apart from the Moray development, Gillespie Graham had much earlier been involved in plans for this area - having drawn up designs for Alva Street and Stafford Street for James Erskine in 1809 - see Edinburgh Evening Courant, 3 August 1809. His fee for the Coates project was substantial - exceeding 300 guineas and considerably more than the Trust had paid William Playfair for his Calton Hill plan. It was not finally paid until January 1839 (see George Heriot Trust minutes 16 October 1837, vol 28; 19 February 1838, vol. 28; and 9 January 1839 vol. 28).


15. This survived from 1758 for 30 years or so as Edinburgh's "wretched imitation" of Vauxhall. It did however, enjoy a brief moment of fame as the scene of James Tytler's colourful but highly unsuccessful attempt to launch flight by hot air balloon in 1784 - see Balloon Tytler, Sir James Ferguson, Faber & Faber, 1972, pp. 63-64. The garden is also rather disparagingly referred to in "Letters from Edinburgh 1774-1775", Edward Topham, reprinted by James Thin, 1971, pp.134-135.


17. James Nasmyth, Engineer; an autobiography edited by Samuel Smiles, London, John Murray, 1883, p.90: included also amongst the boyish delights of this particular day was the firing of gunpowder, and the throwing of squibs and crackers "from morning till night".

18. Much of Wilson's plan for the Centre and West Queen Street gardens has survived, but Skene's design for the West Princes Street gardens has largely been superseded by very indifferent municipal improvements.

19. For one of the best accounts of the Picturesque movement see: The Picturesque: Studies in a point of view; Christopher Hussey, G. P. Putnam's Sons, London and New York, 1927: the names associated with the movement tended to be men of literature and poets, for example, Addison, Pope, Shenstone and Uvedale Price.

20. In comparison only one London Square is known to have been designed by a landscape artist - Edward's Square, Kensington by Aiglio in 1819 - now a forgotten name but described by Loudon as an "eminent" painter who adopted a naturalistic style of layout: see Encyclopaedia of Gardening, J. C. Loudon, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 2nd edition 1824 p.1030.

22. James Nasmyth, Engineer, op. cit, p.44: James Nasmyth gives an interesting account of his father's many abilities which ranged from portrait and landscape painting to garden design, urban planning, architecture and mechanics. According to his son, Nasmyth was fascinated with the developing New Town and often while walking round the town would form ideas for improvements to building and roadways which he often passed on to builders and other concerned.

23. Dr. Graham was also involved at this time with the Queen Street Central gardens for which he was elected a commissioner.

24. Regent, Royal and Carlton Terrace gardens, Minute book 1825-1841 Minute, 5 November 1830 "... The meeting recommended to the Committee that in executing and carrying out the plan into execution they should take the advantage of the advice of Dr. Graham and Mr Patrick Neill who had already very kindly given and still offered to give their assistance and directed the Preses of Committee to communicate to these gent emen the thanks of the meeting for their services." Minute book in possession of the Clerk to the gardens.


Georgian Edinburgh, Ian G. Lindsay, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1948, p.51.

At the time Regent gardens were being laid out Paxton was a young man of 27, and mostly preoccupied with his landscaping and greenhouse construction projects at Chatsworth, Derbyshire. His Horticultural Register of 1831 did however carry a design "... for forming subscription gardens in the vicinity of large commercial towns" (vol. 1, p.58) - the germ of Paxton's typical park suburb layout. This was for an area of 12½ acres divided into 50 gardens of ½ acre each for fruit and vegetables, with a common botanic or flower garden for a further 4 acres in the centre available to all subscribers; this is the closest connection found between Paxton and Regent gardens - a park of similar size privately maintained but developed in fact completely differently. The Regent garden minute books make no mention of Paxton's name at any stage nor has any record been discovered of Paxton being involved with any projects in Edinburgh: he was however commissioned to draw up plans for a number of Scottish parks such as Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow (1852), Queens Park, Glasgow (1857), Baxter Park, Dundee (1859), Dunfermline Public Park (1864) - see: The works of Sir Joseph Paxton, G. G. Chadwick, Architecture Press, London, 1961.

27. This garden was established in 1835 on a 10 acre plot (4.0 ha) adjoining the south side of the Botanic garden to which it was later joined in 1867.

28. William Robinson (1838-1935): he revolutionised British gardening by his advocacy of natural informal design and planting; he founded the weekly newspaper The Garden in 1871 (to which McNab contributed) and is probably best remembered for his masterpiece: The English Flower Garden, published in 1883.

29. These articles provide a valuable and comprehensive record of the state of the various gardens during the middle years of the 19th century: details of their publication (all appeared in the Scottish Farmer - later to become The Farmer) are as follows: Queen Street Gardens, 31 May 1865; East Princes Street gardens 28 June 1865; St Andrew Square gardens 12 July, 1865; Royal and Recent Terrace gardens 16 August 1865; Gayfield Square gardens 30 August 1865; Hope and Bellevue Crescent gardens, 13 September 1865; Moray Place gardens, 21 August 1867; (The Farmer); Royal Circus gardens, 26 March 1868 (The Farmer), McNab also included in the same series: the Meadows, 14 June 1865; Calton Hill, 2 August 1865, and Queens Park, 3 January 1866.

30. The Scotsman, 16 September 1865: this was a long article supporting McNab's views for the general improvements of the gardens.

31. Our Town Trees: the Queen Street gardens, the Scottish Farmer, 31 May, 1865.

32. During the several horticultural expeditions made by McNab to other parts of the country while superintendent of the Horticultural Society garden at Inverleith he nearly always tried to visit London while in London, often spending an afternoon or morning with him: information from: the various touring diaries kept by McNab, manuscript book, Edinburgh Botanic garden library.

33. A little surprisingly maybe Smith's name does not occur directly in connection with any of the New Town gardens and the record of his actual design work is slim indeed (see The landscape garden in Scotland, A. A. Tait, op. cit., p.258); he is now best remembered as author of Parks and Measure grounds, published in London 1852 by Reeve & Co - which included one section on street gardens. About these "city paradises" Smith is generally enthusiastic but at the same time he decried their inferiority of design, their too frequent ugly appearance when viewed from the street, and the "great barbarities" perpetrated on the shrubs and trees by "worthy" but ignorant management committees "with a
jobbing gardener as their executive" see pps. 166-169. His comments were perhaps more directed to the London squares where he was then living.

34. Report to the right Honourable the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh, the Governors of Heriots Hospital, etc., etc., on a plan for laying out the New Town between Edinburgh and Leith. Submitted to them on 12 April, 1819 by W. H. Playfair, architect, printed by Alex Smellie, Edinburgh, 1819 (Copy EPL).

35. Report to the right Honourable the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh, and the Governors of George Heriots Hospital, etc., on the plans for laying out the grounds for buildings between Edinburgh and Leith, William Stark, June 1814, printed by Alex Smellie (pamphlet 32 EUL).

36. It is possible to gain quite an accurate impression about the different entries as the competitors' written description of their plans together with the detailed reports submitted by the assessors have been preserved in Register House, see - RH, CD113 (Innes of Stow) v. 322: Entry of Plans for the new buildings in the order they were received by Mac Ritchie and Little 1812 being descriptions by the designers of their plans in Calton Hill and Leith Walk area of Edinburgh, with comments on the schemes by Robert Reid, John Baxter, William Burn, James Gillespie and John Patterson, 1813.

37. He had previously lived in Claremont Crescent, and as far as it is possible to tell from the street directories moved to Buckingham Terrace sometime in 1866 or 1867.

38. At this stage the land was rented from the owner Colonel Learmonth who for a time seriously considered building a row of houses "Cambridge Terrace" on the more level ground at the western end. Ultimately the whole area was bought by the Dean feuars in 1876 and the western side joined to the existing garden becoming known thereafter as the Dean Gardens.

39. All the following architects were thus involved:- Robert Brown (Coates Crescent - part of the lands of Easter Coates for the Walker family; and Hope Crescent (now Hopecoun Crescent) off Leith Walk - part of a development for the Hopes); Thomas Bonar (Atholl Crescent for the George Heriot Trust); James Milne (St. Bernards Crescent, and Dean Bank for the Raeburn family; James Gillespie Graham (Moray Place, Ainslie Place, and Moray Bank gardens for the Earl of Moray); Archibald Elliot and John Tait (Rutland Square - Learmonth family), and John Chesser (the lands of Wester Coates for the Heriot Trust, including Magdala Crescent, Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent and Douglas Crescent; also Belgrave Crescent, Buckingham Terrace, Clarendon Crescent and Eton Terrace for Colonel Learmonth).
40. Usually built between 4-6 ft deep of brick walls and concrete floors and with a capacity of up to 250,000 gallons. They were left filled for the duration of the war as an emergency supply for fire fighting purposes. As well as tanks in St. Andrew Square, Charlotte Square, Queen Street central and Drummond Place gardens, there was also a tank in the Meadows and George Square gardens; information from Mr. M. Hilland, Lothian Regional Council Water Supply Services.

41. Literary Journal II No. 12 (31 Dec. 1803): also included as an appendix in an article on - John Claudius Loudon, The plane truth; Lawrence Fricker, Puror Hortensis, Elysium Press, Edinburgh 1974, pps. 76-81. Fricker's article usefully exposes the enormous discrepancy between Loudon's text, and the text as remembered by his widow and quoted in a biographical note on her late husband. Thus arose the erroneous belief perpetrated by successive authors that Loudon favoured the replacement of grimy soot-laden evergreen trees and shrubs in London squares with those of a deciduous variety - particularly planes, sycamores and flowering almonds - sentiments never expressed at any stage by Loudon himself - at least not in anything he wrote.

42. Other advice on layout and planting of public squares was also given by Loudon in subsequent writings for example, his Hints on the Formation of Gardens and pleasure grounds (1813) contained a design for a square - a similar one to which was also included in his popular Encyclopaedia of Gardening, first published in 1822. In the latter he usefully summarises the main aims to be taken into account when laying out a square as follows: 1. Sufficient open space both of lawn and walk so as the parents looking out from the windows of the houses which surround the square, may not long at a time lose sight of their children. 2. An open walk exposed to the sun for winter and spring: 3. A walk shaded by trees but airy for summer. 4. Resting places and a central covered seat and retreat which being nearly equidistant from every point may be readily gained in case of a sudden shower.

43. Our Town trees: Hope and Bellevue Crescent, James McNab, op. cit: the new Botanic garden was opened in May 1824 having taken 2 years to remove the stock from the Leith Walk garden.

44. The Scotsman, February 3, 1827

45. We know for certain that Milne was working as Raeburn's architect from the early 1820's onwards (see RHP 812, Feuing plan of Athole Street, India Place, part of the property of Henry Raeburn Esq of St. Bernards, signed James Milne 1822) and it would seem likely that he acted as consultant before hand. Indeed the scale and character of the first stage of the St. Bernards development (Ann Street, Dean Terrace) has much in common with two contemporary schemes close by - Saxe Coburg Place, and Lyndoch Place, both designed by Milne.
46. Two elms which stood on the roadway at the east end of the crescent were retained, also a group of trees around the entrance to Leslie Place. No property owner was allowed "to cut down or injure any of the trees on the grounds even those standing in the carriageways unless with consent of nine tenths of the whole proprietors". Articles and Conditions of feu of St. Bernards Crescent, Crescent Place, Charlotte Street, Dean Terrace and the unfeued lot in Ann Street being part of the lands of St. Bernards belonging to Henry Raeburn esq., copy E.P.L.


48. These trees are referred to in the feu charters of the houses in the crescent - see Chartulary vol. 1, 1903-1920, Walker Trustees.

49. Princes Street Minute book 2, Minute 10 April, 1821, see Sec. 2.6 fn5.

50. Drumshaghe garden minute book 1, 1878-1974, Minute 10 March 1967; since then many thousands more crocus’s have been planted - in 1968, 1971 and 1974; Minute books in hands of garden secretary.

51. In certain instances where the long term management of the land was uncertain a servitude was granted to the feuars overlooking the open space granting that the ground should not be built upon but be used for such purposes as a private garden, pleasure ground, nursery ground or pasturage - see also footnote 6.

52. Regent, Royal, Calton Terrace Gardens, Edinburgh order, Confirmation Act, 1970, Chapter ii; the sum of £20 can be exceeded provided three-quarters of the proprietors are in agreement.

53. It had originally been intended that under the 1872 Articles of Roup all the Heriot Trust feuars living in Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent, Magdala Place, and Douglas Crescent were to have an equal right to the land fronting Douglas Crescent and stretching down to the Water of Leith; the decision to fix an upper limit on the 2 assessments may well have been taken by the Heriot Trust to reassure the feuars that the costs of upkeep would never become too burdensome. As it happened only the proprietors in Douglas Crescent took on the responsibility for making and upkeeping the area of land in front of their houses.

54. The raising and collecting of money has always been one of the important functions of management committees, and assessments have been based on a variety of methods including the rateable value of the property (in succession to the police rating lists), on the measured width of a house’s frontage (the foot frontage principle), and as a standard flat rate for all the property irrespective of size or position.

56. Shire Album 41, Old Garden Tools, Kay Sanecki, Shire publications Ltd, 1979, p 41.

57. West Princes Street, Minute book 7, Minute 3 April, 1861.

58. Belgrave Crescent Minute book, Minute 12 March, 1880: the horse was hired from Mr James Stewart, coach hirer for £9, per annum.

59. Regent garden Minute book 3, Minute 30 January, 1902, and 30 January 1908: the second minute recorded that although the horse drawn mower had been used to some extent it had not proved wholly successful and was in fact being sold.

60. Saxe Coburg Place Minute book, 1863--; Minute 25 March 1927; garden secretary.

61. Rutland Square Minute book (1875-1923): Minute 15 March, 1878: a separate tennis club committee was formed - responsible for drawing up rules and looking after the grassed area. Minute books held by Clerk to the gardens.

62. Histories of the Edinburgh Lawn Tennis Clubs, compiled by G. H. P. Alexander for R. W. Forsyth Ltd, 1933; the oldest tennis club listed in this book is the Inverleith Tennis Club, formed in 1880: the various clubs attached to the pleasure gardens were not included in the description.

63. The bands mostly came from regiments stationed at the Castle, but also on a few occasions from Piershill Barracks.

64. West Princes Street Gardens, Minute book 6, September, 1853, letter from Lt. Col. Trevor.

65. Charlotte Square garden, Minute book 1927-1945; Minute 29 April, 1927; book in possession of Clerk to committee.

66. The last serious attempt to bring the private pleasure gardens under the control of the city was in 1974 just prior to the reorganisation of local government; in September of that year the Lord Provost's Committee agreed to examine the possibilities of acquiring the 3 Queen Street gardens, St. Andrew Square and Charlotte Square. This aroused a certain amount of publicity and real concern that a local authority whose funds for maintaining existing public open spaces was already stretched to its limits could hardly cope with additional responsibilities: see Evening News, 18 September, 1974 "City may take over private gardens"; Evening News, 9 October, 1974: "Gardens, there is a demand" and The Scotsman, 8 July, 1975 "Siege outside the railings", article by Nicolas Wapshott. Public versus private gardens also received widespread debate just after the Second World War - see fig. 15.
2. **THE PLEASURE GARDENS OF THE FIRST NEW TOWN**

2.1 **INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST NEW TOWN AND TO ITS OPEN SPACES**

1. In 1621 for example, an Act was passed prohibiting the use of thatched roofs, and in 1677 wooden houses were condemned; in 1698 it was forbidden to build houses more than 5 storeys above street level: see *An Edinburgh Alphabet*, J. F. Birrell, James Thin, The Mercat Press, Edinburgh 1980, p.80.

2. For instance, Milne's Square designed by Robert Mylne, master mason to the Crown and built between 1684 and 1686; Milne's Court in the Lawnmarket constructed sometime between 1690 and 1700; the 8 storied James's Court erected in the 1720s, Argyle Square completed about 1742, and Brown and Adam Square built in the 1750s.

3. OEC vol. XXIII, Lord Kames and the North Bridge, Thomas McCrae p.147.


5. Details of the Earl of Mar's paper are quoted in *Old Statistical Account*, vol. viii, 1793, pps. 647-648; the date of the paper has been quoted in some sources as 1726.

6. He also proposed another bridge on the South side.

7. More or less the site of George Street: the "lang gait" or Long dykes was a picturesque walk for the burgesses and their families; it was also the established route taken by the carts of the Canons when transporting their farm crops. It wound from Holyrood along the north back Canongate, Low Calton, Leith Street, St James Square, Rose Street and crossed the west end of Princes Street at Kirkbraehead.

8. A comment made by Drummond in a conversation with Thomas Sommerville, probably in 1763, and quoted in *Old Statistical Account*, vol. XVIII, p.547.

9. A useful account of the life and achievements of George Drummond is given in an article: "George Drummond; An eighteenth century Lord Provost" by William Baird, OEC v10, p.1-54.

10. The pamphlet was entitled: "Proposals for carrying on certain public works in the City of Edinburgh". Gilbert Elliot was a Lord of Justiciary, a statesman, philosopher and poet. The following quotations are taken from the pamphlet as reproduced in the *Scots Magazine*, August 1752.

434.
11. The centre of Edinburgh was indeed in a ruinous state at this time; the plans had partly been prompted by an accident one year before when the side wall of a 6 storey building suddenly collapsed killing one person. As a result of this catastrophe a general survey of all the old houses had been carried out and those considered dangerous pulled down.

12. They saw the projected New Town as a threat to itself and feared the loss of distinguished and noble families away from its community.

13. It is perhaps significant that the earlier 1753 Act of Parliament which was obtained to facilitate the purchase at an agreed valuation of the ground and houses necessary for building the Exchange, and also for widening and enlarging the streets of the city "and certain avenues leading thereto" made no mention of the proposed extension of the Royalty.


15. The Town Council's Account book for 1763 makes mention of payment of work done by Mylne from 1761-3 on the following matters: the lamps, City Chambers; Flesh mercat; mending a dyke at Kirkbraehead; Tripe mercat; Physic garden drain; Coal fold at Cowgate port; and work at the Pier of Leith.

16. Henry Home, Lord Kames (1695-1782), sometimes spelt Kaims or Kaims. He was according to Grant (Old and New Edinburgh, vi, p.171) rather eccentric but distinguished for his literary abilities, his metaphysical subtlety, and wonderful powers of conversation. He gave helpful advice to the young James Boswell (see Boswell's London Journal, 1762-3) and did much to improve his wife's estate at Blair Drummond, Stirling (referred to by J. C. Loudon in his Encyclopaedia of gardening). His involvement with the north bridge project has been described in an article: Lord Kames, and the North Bridge, Thomas McGrae OEC v13 p.147-154. Kames was also asked to advise on the New Town competition - see Bridge Committee Minute 2nd July 1766. (refer FN 19)

17. TCM 9 March, 1763.


19. One of the Minute books of this Committee has survived and is available in the City Archives; its full title is as follows: "Sederunt book of the Committee appointed by the Town Council for forwarding the scheme of communication with the fields of the north of the city by a bridge over the north Loch,
7 November 1764-31 January 1770. It provides a fascinating and unique record of the preliminary stages in the formation of the New Town. For brevity's sake the minutes where referred to will be described as "The Bridge Committee".

20. **TCM 7 November 1764**, Mylne's name was put forward by one of the baillies. The plan referred to may well have been the one made by Mylne in 1759 at the request of George Drummond and was possibly the one referred to in the newspaper announcement of 1763 and printed for consultation - the drawing for which was executed by James Craig.

21. **Bridge Committee Minutes 8 October 1766**: the Rev. Dr. Webster (1707-1784) Minister of the Tolbooth Church was a colourful character with an enormous capacity for work and wine. He is best remembered now for conducting what was practically the first census in Scotland in 1755 - see, *One man and his census*, Sheila Mackay, Scotsman Colour Supplement, 4 April 1981.

22. **Edinburgh Evening Courant**, 23rd February 1765: announcement of the winner and invitation to architects and others to submit tenders for building the bridge according to Henderson's or William Mylne's plan.

23. David Henderson (-1787) a mason from Sauchie, who established himself in Edinburgh: regarded as a good and competent architect he seems to have handled a wide variety of work including the design and building of bridges, drains and houses.

24. The others included Earl Finlater, George Fraser,(deputy auditor of Excise), Sir Alexander Dick, Prestonfield, Mr John Forest (one of the trustees of Act of Parliament). John Adams was invited to judge but seems to have been absent from the various meetings.

25. Clerk expressed great disappointment at the low artistic standard of all the entries: none having adopted the Roman or Greek aqueduct style favoured by him and which he tried his best to get implemented - see Bridge Committee Minutes 6 March 1765; 18 March 1765; 20 March 1765; 2 April 1765; 10 April 1765; 21 May 1765; 26 April 1765; 27 April 1765 and 6 May 1765.

26. The opening of the bridge was consequently delayed until 1772. A useful and detailed account of the history and building of it is given in Youngson's book, *The making of classical Edinburgh*, pps. 59-64; and also in *The Building of the North Bridge*, E. C. Ruddock, op. cit.

27. See TCM 17 January 1766.

28. **Act. George III, an 7.C 27**: the bill to extend the Royalty was passed on 16 April 1767 and received Royal assent on 20 May 1767.
29. Other areas acquired were as follows: Allan's parks (site of Charlotte Square) 1758; Halkerstons Croft (north part of north bridge and ground on the west) 1758; Henderson's feu (Mulltrees Hill) 1763; Buchan's feu (Mulltrees Hill) 1769. Later in 1785 an agreement was made with Lord Alva to purchase 11 acres (4.4 ha) at the west end of George Street, Young Street and Queen Street to allow the City to complete Craig's plan of the New Town. The former owner Lord Barjarg had been one of the burgesses to oppose the extended Royalty Bill: see The New Town of Edinburgh: the extension of the Royalty. R. C. Mears and John Russell, OEC v23, 1940.

30. A charter making over the land to the Town Council was drawn up in October 1766; see TCM 6 October 1766, v82.

31. TCM, 29 January 1766, and the Bridge Committee minutes 9 April, 1766; the plans were to include: "... marking out streets of a proper breadth, and by lanes, and the best situation for a reservoir, and any other public buildings which may be thought necessary".

32. Bridge Committee Minutes, 26 August 1766.

33. The Competition for the design of the second New Town (in 1800) allowed 2 months for submission, with 100 guinea first prize, and 50 guinea second prize; for laying out the lands to the north of Calton Hill (in 1812), 6 months was allocated for entry, and prizes of 300, and 100 guineas offered.

34. Edinburgh Advertiser, 13 May 1766.

35. Bridge Committee Minutes, 21 May 1766; there was also one late entry.

36. Bridge Committee Minutes, 26 August 1766.

37. Sir James Clerk, and Lord Kames were also invited to give advice, but were not available to do so; see Bridge Committee Minute, 2 July, 1766.

38. He had taken over his father's well-established and prosperous Edinburgh architectural practice on his death in 1748, and had been at an early stage involved with the city's improvements: he prepared, with his brother Robert the designs for the new Exchange building although the work was undertaken by others. Although less talented than his younger brother his sound business sense coupled with his design experience would have made him a competent judge.

39. His father, William Craig was a merchant, and his mother, a sister of a minor but reasonably successful poet - James Thompson - a relationship of which Craig was extremely proud (although he probably never met his Uncle as he died when Craig was only 4).
40. In the hands of George Fraser, deputy auditor of Excise: see Edinburgh Advertiser, 2 July, 1763 (and other local newspapers).


42. The "well digested plan" referred to in the TOM, 7 November, 1764. Mylne as a potential candidate for the bridge contract would understandably have preferred to remain fairly anonymous at this stage; Craig on the other hand as an ambitious 18 year old would have welcomed any opportunity to publicise his name.

43. Where Craig acquired this skill is not known: Redgrave's statement (Dictionary of Artists 1874) that he was a pupil of Sir Robert Taylor is thought now to be incorrect (see Biographical Dictionary of Architects, 1600-1840; Howard Colvin, op. cit.) The Town Council Accounts for 1763 show no direct payments to Craig for work done. Two accounts which might have included the bridge plans were settled in that year - one to John Scott, land surveyor (26 June 1763), and another to Robert Robinson, architect (20 December 1763). Craig may have gained surveying and technical experience under the guidance of one or other of these men; or even maybe under William Mylne.


45. During 1766 and 1767 for example, the 2 key years when designs for the New Town were being finalised, the only reference to appear in the Edinburgh Evening Courant was on 4 July 1767 when it was noted that "... The magistrates and Council of Edinburgh have now ordered the ground on the north side of the city belonging to the good town, to be staked out in lot for building, which will be done with all expedition; and 14 days hence they will be ready to treat with those who incline to take feus of the same ground".

46. Bridge Committee, Minute 22 October 1766: reference is made to the plan of the New Town which Mr William Mylne is making out with the request that it should be ready for the next meeting. Mylne remained on the Bridge Committee until October 1768.

47. TOM, 8 October 1766; the additional members included John Adam, architect, Commissioner George Clerk, and the Rev. Alexander Webster (see footnote 21).

48. Bridge Committee, Minute 29 October, 1766.

49. Bridge Committee, Minute 10 December 1766.

50. Transactions of the Architectural Institute of Scotland, Session 1850-51, No. VIII, RIAS Library.
51. This drawing described by Wilson (of which no trace has been found) could well have been the other of the "two plans in different views" presented by Craig to the December meeting. The fact that the central square is labelled "grand square" would also help confirm that this was one of Craig's earlier draft proposals: in his 'new' plan of July 1767 the squares on the east and west ends are given the same title.

52. *TCM*, 24 June 1767, v83, p.79; the sub Committee consisted of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, old Provost Stuart, and the Convener (William Mylne?).

53. *TCM*, 29 July 1767, v83, p.118-123; another Act relating to building in the New Town was passed early in 1768; as building gradually got underway further regulations were passed in 1781, 1782 and 1785 in an attempt to maintain some overall control and standards of the many different builders involved. The details of these can be found in *The making of Classical Edinburgh*, A. J. Youngson, op. cit. pps. 80-82.

54. Including presumably Mylne's "rectified plan" although his name is no longer separately mentioned in this connection.

55. The plan is signed by Gilbert Laurie, Lord Provost and bearing the date of the Council meeting - 29 July 1767.

56. John Adam's skill as a professional architect, combined with Karnes' and Clerk's long-standing commitment to the development of the New Town must have helped contribute to a better conceived layout than the one first submitted by Craig.

57. No reference has been found in the Town Council Minutes nor the minutes of the Bridge Committee to Craig having been commissioned to produce these plans: neither do the city's accounts show any payments having been made to Craig for this work.

58. Craig must have been reasonably confident that his improvement might eventually be adopted (or did he feel it to be a truer representation of his original submission) for he chose to have it featured in his portrait by David Allan painted at about the same time (fig. 26). The idea of having a circus was not without its supporters and resurfaced as a serious proposal under the provostship of David Steuart in 1780.

59. Indeed the Magistrates appear to have been undecided about whether or not to build on the south side of the North Loch: the only protection offered to the new feuars along Princes Street was the proviso that while "... it is not intended at present to feu out the ground betwixt the south street and the north loch, the feuars upon that street should have an obligation in their favour that if houses were afterwards built they should not be nearer to their houses than 9' (29m)": *TCM* 29 July, 1767, v83.
Craig's subsequent career did not fulfil his early promise and although his successful association with the design of the New Town yielded a wide variety of commissions both from the Town Council, the George Heriot Trust, and from private individuals and other organisations only a fraction of the projects he was involved with were ever completed. Why he failed to capitalise on his many opportunities is not clear but seems to have been due in some measure to defects in his own character; he died in middle age, his last years clouded by increasing unemployment and consequent financial difficulties. A detailed list of Craig's work is given in Colvin's, Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840, op. cit., p.238. During the present study some additional projects by Craig were discovered as follows:—Plan for a Lazarette, Inchcolm Island, 1770, archival drawing collect, Edinburgh District Council; A plan for Leith Walk c1773, GHT archives; Feuing plan and elevation for an area of land belonging to Merchant Co, north of Brown Square, EEC, 25 June 1774; and A new designed square, the property of Robert Hoe (east of Patrick Square, Newington) 1788, RHF 11128.
2.2 ST ANDREW SQUARE GARDENS

1. Mrs Sillar writing about her childhood spent in Edinburgh during the 1870s-1880s: see Edinburgh Child: some memories of 90 years, Eleanor Sillar, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh and London, 1961, p.3.

2. And outwith its boundary: George Square was built from 1766 onwards and designed by James Brown, architect: Brown had bought the land which had formerly been part of the policies of Ross house - a mansion close to where the McEwan Hall now stands. It was named after his brother.

3. Extracts from an Edinburgh Journal 1823-1833, part 1, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (OEC), Vol. 29, T & A Constable, Edinburgh 1956, entry for 12 October 1825; similarly, an advertisement appeared in the Scotsman in 1824 advertising Number 1 St. Andrew Square for sale and conversion "into elegant shops" remarking that "... this is now acknowledged to be the best situation in town for first rate shops". See: The Scotsman, 7 February, 1824.

4. St. Andrew Square feu charter, Chartulary vol.1, City Archives.

5. Some of the later New Town gardens have in comparison run into various problems on account of Clauses in their Charters being too detailed and limiting in scope.

6. TCM 5 April 1769, v.85; the following information is based on this minute.

7. They would not in any case be out of pocket for the purchasers of subsequent feus were made responsible for paying a share of the money advanced by the Council.

8. The length of railing required had been measured at 1241' (379m) (240' (73m) on each "great side", and 70' 8" (22m) on each corner).

9. TCM, 21 April 1773, v90.

10. TCM, 22 November 1775, v90.

11. See Edinburgh Advertiser, 13 January 1769, advertisement for sale of Drummond Lodge - "Robert Cullen gardener at the lodge will show the policy".

12. TCM, 1 September 1773, v90.


15. TCM, 7 December 1791, v119; the Council nominated the Youngest Baillie, the Dean of Guild, the Dean Convener as a Committee, with any 2 a quorum.

16. The fund in fact had originated amongst naval officers as Melville for a short time held the post of First Lord of the Admiralty - and during his term of office had rendered considerable services to the navy.

17. TCM, 17 January, 1821, v11; see also The Melville Monument, W. Forbes Gray, OEC, March 1927, vol.15, pps. 207-213 for a detailed account of the history of the Monument. Two other sites were also considered - namely the north east shoulder of Calton Hill, and Coates Crescent (presumably at the centre of the Crescent garden). Sir Patrick Walker went on to claim £10,000 damages for breach of agreement but finally settled for £158: the Committee however, had to pay out an additional £250 in legal expenses - the beginning of many financial problems which beset the erection of the monument.

18. Stevenson made no charge for his advice; he suggested extending and strengthening the foundation, and recommended the use of stones large enough to fill up the entire thickness of the walls instead of rubble as proposed by Burn.

19. For example, one of his exhibitions in 1832 consisted of 30 groups of statuary under the patronage of the Royal Association of Contributors to the National Monument.

20. This and the following quotation and information is taken from an account in the Scotsman, 4 August 1827.

21. Not everyone was impressed however: Henry Cockburn, for example made the comment on seeing the column after the scaffolding had been removed (in time for George IV visit in August 1822) that while the site was good, and the design "not very bad", it nevertheless lacked a "very correct grace in the proportion" which a plain column required. Another writer a little later criticised the monument as "... towering over the tops of the houses like the chimney of a gas works, and out of all proportion whatever with the surrounding objects": see Some letters of Lord Cockburn, edited H. A. Cockburn, Edinburgh, Grant & Murray, 1932 p. 105; and Edinburgh and its society in 1838, Sebaldus Naseweis, William Blackwood & Son, Edinburgh 1838, p.102.

22. Scotsman, 28 February 1827. Report on Town Council proceedings in which the Council agreed to subscribe 50 guineas towards finishing the monument.

24. No mention is made in the report of any professional advice being sought so presumably the changes made were carried into effect by a nursery contractor acting on instructions from the Committee.

25. Morning Chronicle, 20 September 1834; paragraph by "our own correspondent", and quoted in Edinburgh: The Story of a City, E. F. Catford, Hutchinson, London 1975 p. 183. Earl Grey, recently retired from Parliament had been honoured by Edinburgh with the Freedom of the City which he received on 18 September 1834; he had been largely responsible for the successful passage through Parliament of the Reform Act (1832), and the Burgh Reform Act (1833). The local newspaper gave a more enthusiastic account of the charity promenade - the last of the season "... but by far the most splendid for beauty and fashion that ever took place in Edinburgh". Nearly 2,000 people attended, and 90 guineas raised: EBC, 20 September 1834.

26. Where the property was in multi-ownership, the overall amount was apportioned equally amongst the different proprietors.

27. See: Report of the Committee of St Andrew Square proprietors, appointed at the Annual Meeting, February 4, 1851 to consider the propriety of making a change in the central area of the square, copy EPL. The following information is taken from this report.

28. The convenor - Robert Chambers (1802-1871) was not however, a St. Andrew Square proprietor (he lived in Donne Terrace) but was probably chosen because of his known interest in the city's history. He first made his name as author of "Traditions of Edinburgh" and was a prolific writer as well as being partner with his brother William in a highly successful printing and publishing business. Lord Provost Johnstone - one of the active Committee members would have known Chambers well, as he too was in the printing and publishing trade - and most likely through this contact Chambers became involved.


30. Mr John Henderson, Architect, and Peter Ramsay, Manager of Edinburgh branch of the Western Bank of Scotland, St Andrews Square both supported the retention of the garden.
31. Those specifically named were as follows: Place Vendome, Paris; Place Royale, Brussels; Piazza del Popolo, Piazza Navona, Piazza Vecchia; and Piazza di San Marco.

32. The Town Council do not appear to have voiced any objections on this score; however, the Lord Provost at this time was W. Johnstone of W & A. K. Johnstone, geographers, engravers, and printers, St. Andrew Square) and also active on the garden Management Committee.

33. Scotsman, 31 May 1851. Proposed Alteration of St. Andrew Square.

34. Scotsman, 21 May 1851, Horticultural Show and Promenade.

35. Quoted in a pamphlet: Improvement of St. Andrew Square, 27 November 1865, copy: Clerk to Management Committee, and McNab manuscript file.

36. Dur Town Trees, St Andrew Square Gardens, Scottish Farmer 12 July 1865, James McNab (fig. 37).


38. This, and the following information is taken from a small minute book entitled "Improvement of St Andrew Square", in possession of the Clerk to the Management Committee.

39. John Dick Feddie started as a pupil of David Rhind thereafter going into partnership with Charles Kinnear. The partnership was very successful and responsible for many public buildings including the Caledonian Station, Edinburgh; Cockburn Street improvements; the magnificent Telling room, Royal Bank of Scotland, St. Andrew Square; Aberdeen's municipal buildings and several churches and country houses. Very likely he had been involved in the 1851 proposals.

40. No doubt helped by one of the active proprietors - Sir William Johnstone who had long associations with the Town Council; also, up until the end of the 1860s 2 members of the Town Council always attended the annual meeting of proprietors - a custom which seems to have arisen from the fixing of the annual assessment; it was laid down in the feu charter that this should be agreed upon by "a majority of the feuars with the consent of a Committee of the Town Council".

41. An account of the meeting was given in the Scotsman, 27 March 1866. John Dundas (1803-1873) was the 5th son of James Dundas W3.

42. The Edinburgh and Leith post office directory 1865/66 indicates how few private citizens still lived in the Square: only 7 names are found listed without added qualifications (ie being used solely for residential purposes).
43. Scotsman, 18 March 1866, letter written by J. Dick Peddie.

44. Scotsman, 1 July 1867, Our Town Trees.

45. TCM, 17 September, 1918; 2 October, 1918.

46. Valentines post card "Calton Hill and the east end from the air", Register House GD 1/533 No. 251.

47. TCM, 3 March 1890; the statue was by John Steell and had been presented to the City in 1884; it was eventually removed (to the City Chambers) in 1917 to make way for the Gladstone memorial - which itself was resited for road safety reasons in 1955 and now forms the centre piece of Coates Crescent gardens.

48. TCM, 20 February 1969: the following quotations are taken from this minute which is a report of an earlier meeting of the Lord Provost's Committee held on 5 February 1969.

49. Refer Section 1, footnote 66.

50. Some delicate negotiations were however, required with the adjoining owner - the Earl of Moray no boundaries and survivals relating to the north west corner of Charlotte Square had these not been successfully concluded a major change to Craig's plan have proved unavoidable and the Lord Provost did suggest at one point that if the necessary ground was not available then a circuit or approach might have to be built instead. 1955 6 October 1766; 21 March 1792; for greater detail see Allen The Building of Classical Edinburgh, op. cit., 92-93.

51. TCM, 3 September 1793, vol.13.

52. The first Superintendent of Works appointed full time to the George Heriot Trust was John Paterson in 1809; before then the Treasurer took responsibility for general oversight calling in the aid of practical men as required.

53. Sibbald was probably responsible for the design and building of several houses in the New Town. A little confusing however, is the fact that another William Sibbald lived in Edinburgh at the same time also practicing as an architect and builder. This other Sibbald died in 1823 and was. In partnership with James Smith and Robert Night, both described as architects and builders, the firm being known as "Sibbald, Smith & Co builders". A number of houses in Charlotte Square were built by this firm. It is not known whether the W Sibbalds were related although it is very likely they were father and son - the younger one usually describing himself as "junior architect" in legal documents. Certainly their paths crossed on many occasions as Sibbald "senior" was responsible for "superintending" the buildings being erected by Sibbald "junior" and in 1808 both submitted a joint report to the Town Council on what to do with the garden contents of Bellovus House (see TCM, 6 April 1808).

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2.3 CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS

1. Memoirs of a Highland lady: the autobiography of Elizabeth Grant of Rothiemurchus afterwards Mrs Smith of Baltiboys 1797-1830; London, John Murray, 1911 p.316. The time referred to was the year 1817.

2. From 1792 up until 1820; almost one third of the square was finished by 1808, but the majority were completed from 1811 onwards.

3. One or two changes had taken place at an early date for example Oman's Hotel had taken over No. 4 and 6 on the north side in the 1820s, and in the 1850s No.33 was occupied by the Young Ladies Institution.

4. At No. 7: the basement, ground floor and first floor are furnished in the character of a 'typical' Georgian town house; No. 5 Charlotte Square is the headquarters of the Scottish National Trust; and the Scottish Arts Council have their offices at No. 19.

5. Some delicate negotiations were however, required with the adjoining owner - the Earl of Moray re boundaries and servitudes relating to the north west corner of Charlotte Square: had these not been successfully concluded a major change to Craig's plan may have proved unavoidable and the Lord Provost did suggest at one point that if the necessary ground was not available then a circus or crescent might have to be built instead. TCM 8 October 1788; 28 March 1792; for greater details see also: The Making of Classical Edinburgh, op. cit., pps. 92-93.


7. The first Superintendent of Works appointed full time to the George Heriot Trust was John Paterson in 1809: before then the Treasurer took responsibility for general oversight calling in the aid of practical men as required.

8. Sibbald was probably responsible for the design and building of several houses in the New Town. A little confusing however, is the fact that another William Sibbald lived in Edinburgh at the same time also practising as an architect and builder. This other Sibbald died in 1823 and was in partnership with James Smith and Robert Wight, both described as architects and builders, the firm being known as "Sibbald, Smith & Co builders". A number of houses in Charlotte Square were built by this firm. It is not known whether the 2 Sibbalds were related although it is very likely they were father and son - the younger one usually describing himself as "junior architect" in legal documents. Certainly their paths crossed on many occasions as Sibbald "senior" was responsible for "overseeing" the buildings being erected by Sibbald "junior" and in 1808 both submitted a joint report to the Town Council on what to do with the garden contents of Bellevue House (see TGM, 6 April 1808).
9. EEC, 8 April 1809.

10. TCM, 24 February 1796 v.125.

11. TCM, 19 July 1797; this minute gives details of the various meetings held earlier with the feuars and is the basis of the following information in this section.


13. The cost of the railings appears to have increased, as the final settlement was for £549, see TCM 20 June 1798, v.128.

14. Leave to do this had already been granted to feuars of houses on the north side.


16. Old and New Edinburgh, Grant, vol.2, p.124. Dirom was author of "A Narrative of the campaign in India" which terminated the war with Tippo Sultan in 1792." According to the army lists of 1804 Dirom was 2nd Lt. Colonel of the 44th (East Essex) Regiment of foot; he is still Lt. Colonel of the 44th regiment in 1809 but with the army rank of full colonel. In the list of 1812 he remains Lt. Colonel of the 44th, but with the army rank of Major General as from October 1809, and by 1815 had left the 44th. This double rank was apparently not uncommon and indicates that Dirom had an appointment away from his Regiment (Information supplied by the Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh).


18. TCM, 21 March 1804, v.139.

19. And again from 1808-1809.

20. Under these Acts all men aged between 18-50 years had to be registered and so many were "called up" by ballot; substitutes could however be paid to take their place. They received a basic training lasting between 3 to 4 months a year after which they returned to their ordinary jobs. While Militia units were on garrison duty they became de facto regular troops for the period concerned, and subject to Military Law (Information supplied by the Keeper, Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh Castle).

21. This, and the following information is recorded in the TCM, 6 January 1808, v. 150.
22. Calculated on the basis of the £21 specified in the later feu charters although this varied slightly according to the width of the frontages.


24. Dickson & Co. for example had premises in Waterloo Place; Eagle & Henderson, and James Alexander in Leith Walk; and John Hay, landscape planner and nurseryman had offices in Catherine Street opposite Greenside Place. William Sibbald lived in Catherine Street.

25. Report of the Charlotte Square gardens, James McNab, 10 January 1874; Charlotte Square Minute book 2, 1869-1894, RH GD 282/box326/f. McNab gave details of the planting in the outer border, which over 60 years later were described as containing "many useless trees".

26. The pathway on the west side had a downward curve, and on the east side an upward curve; many maps however show the curves of the pathways reversed - due to an error in the engraving.

27. The second minute book of the Charlotte Square gardens refers to an earlier book dating from 1807; unfortunately no trace of this has been found.


29. Cockburn moved to 14 Charlotte Square in 1813, and retained his house there until 1848.

30. The Scotsman, 1 July 1867, Our town trees.

31. The Scotsman, 1 September 1824; advertisement inviting people to contract for the erection of the statue which was to be "... of bronze, upon a pedestal of granite at the east gate of the enclosed ground of Charlotte Square". This statue was finally placed in 1835 outside the Royal Bank of Scotland - formerly Dundas's mansion house in St. Andrews Square.

32. The Melville monument, W. Forbes Gray, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club vol.13, March 1927; the idea of a column was later abandoned in favour of a statue of Pitt placed in George Street.

33. Much of the material relating to the Prince Albert Memorial has been taken from the Buccleuch Papers in Register House, see RHGD224 666/3.

34. Walker lived at 26 Moray Place, and was also the "indefatigable" Secretary of the Board of Supervision for the Relief of the Poor in Scotland. Cockburn once described him as "... honest, poor and a gentleman" - see Some letters of Lord Cockburn, op. cit., letter to Thomas Cleghorn 1852.
35. Aberdeenshire and Glasgow decided to have their own memorial and therefore did not contribute.

36. Catalogue of designs for the Scottish National Memorial to his Royal Highness, the Prince Consort, December 1864, EPL

37. For example, the summit of Castle Rock, the top of Arthurs Seat, the summits of Craiglockhart and Corstorphine Hill, Buccleuch papers Minute of the Central Committee 11 July 1864 RHGD 224 666/3.

38. John Steell (1804-1891) was the son of a well known wood carver who moved from Aberdeen to Edinburgh in 1805. Steell who spent several years studying in Rome became one of Scotland's most outstanding and successful sculptors - designing almost one-quarter of the statues in Edinburgh. His Prince Consort statue is thought by many to be his greatest work but he is possibly better remembered for his Wellington in front of Register House, and the seated figure of Scott, in the Scott Memorial along Princes Street.

39. Excerpt of Minute of Meeting of Executive Committee, 2 July, 1870, Buccleuch papers, op. cit.

40. Charlotte Square Minute book 1869-1874; Minute 30 June 1871, WRH

41. Robert Matheson (1808-1877) architect to Her Majesty's Board of Works; his name also occurs in connection with the Queen Street East gardens and also Grosvenor Crescent - as owner and developer of the site.

42. Two residents had initially objected to the original proposal to form a public right of way across the middle of the garden from east to west; this idea was dropped in favour of limited access by a single gate in the centre of the east side: the gate being kept locked at night time.

43. Duke of Buccleuch papers: Minute of Executive Committee 12 July 1871 op. cit. The final decision pleased Steell who had always made known his preference for Charlotte Square.

44. David Bryce (1803-1876); he had one of the largest and most successful practices in Victorian Britain; in Scotland he was involved with over 100 country houses, and in Edinburgh is best known for Pettes College, the Royal Infirmary, and the Bank of Scotland on the Mound (adding to the earlier building by Reid and Grichton). Bryce had in fact entered for the memorial competition; his submission had incorporated a peel tower or keep within the Castle precincts inside of which there was to have
been a fine vaulted chamber having at its centre a statue of the Prince Consort; see - *Silences that Speak*; William Pitcairn Anderson, Alexander Bruton, Edinburgh 1931 p. 635.

45. **Report by Mr James McNab as to Charlotte Square gardens:** 10 January 1874; op. cit. McNab also had ideas (maybe influenced by Dick Peddie) of placing statues "on uniform height of pedestal" at each of the 4 corners; his suggestions were for - Dean Ramsay in the south west corner, Chalmers statue - north west corner, Livingstone - south east corner and Dr Simpson in the north east corner, see the *Scotsman*, 27 April, 1874, letter signed by McNab.

46. None of the proprietors seem to have raised any complaints about this.

47. **More leaves from the Journal of a life in the Highlands:** Queen Victoria's notebook: Messrs Smith, Elder & Co., 1884. After the ceremony the Queen returned to Holyrood House where she knighted Mr Steell, and also Professor Cakeley who had been responsible for all the musical arrangements.

48. **TOM, 5 September 1876, v.317.**

49. **TOM, 20 August 1878, v.322.**

50. This and the following information is taken from the 2 Charlotte Square garden minute books dating from 1869-1894; and 1895-1926.

51. Under the emergency powers conferred upon the Secretary of State for Scotland by the Defence (General) Regulations 1939.

52. The dilapidated state of the garden prompted one Edinburgh citizen to versify his lament as follows:-

"But nude the foot of war has crushed
Green spears and petals gay
And where once beauty quietly shone
There's ugliness today"

*Edinburgh Evening News*, 28 February 1945
Signed FG3.

53. This and the following information is taken from miscellaneous papers in the possession of the Clerk to the Management Committee.

54. Particularly in an east to west direction from George Street to the former St. George's Church.

55. Best remembered now as architect of Reid Memorial Church, Blackford Road, 1933.

56. These were 9" (21.5 cms) deep with small fountains at the memorial end intended to reduce shortcutting between the pathways.
57. Six gateways were made to allow for the diagonal footpaths if and when they were ever made. These same railings still enclose the garden and are plainly designed with a regular square bar set into a double horizontal bar at the head. The gates themselves were more ornamental with an acanthus leaf motif. Railings to the same design were also erected around St. Andrew Square and Rutland Square gardens.

58. No financial problems seem to have been experienced in the upkeep of the garden: claiming assessments from business firms appears easier than it sometimes is from individuals. The garden has never been in debt and whenever extra funds have been needed they have been raised without difficulty.

59. Edinburgh and Leith Junction Railway Bill was intended to set up a Company of the same name with powers to construct railways connecting portions of the North British and the Caledonian Railway Companies undertakings in Edinburgh and Leith, and other works in Midlothian, and for other purposes.

60. See, Charlotte Square garden Minute book 1869-1894: minutes between 19 December 1890 - 13 March 1891 when 16 separate meetings about this issue are recorded. A copy of the Charlotte Square proprietors petition against the Bill is also contained in the minute book.

61. Charlotte Square garden minute book 1869-1894: Minutes 27 April 1909-31 May 1911. The proportions of the statue were thought unsuited aesthetically to the Square and garden, and a likely traffic hazard if placed in the roadway.

62. Charlotte Square Press Statement, 24 June 1960, issued by David Birrell WS, Clerk to the proprietors: miscellaneous papers in possession of the Clerk. The proprietors sought the advice of Mr. F. R. Stevenson, architect and planning consultant - who supported the proprietors in their view that the work should be abandoned. Unfortunately as it was classified under 'roadway improvement' no planning permission was necessary.

63. This gave powers under the Town Planning (Scotland) Act, 1925.

64. Since then the Act has been superseded by others, for example, The Building Preservation Order, No.1, 1951, issued by the Secretary of State under powers contained in Section 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947: the provisions however, remain largely the same.


66. Dr Elsie Inglis. Lady Frances Balfour, Hodder and Stoughton, p.31, ND.
67. Charlotte Square garden minute book 1869-1894, op. cit.,
Minute 11 February 1890.

68. Charlotte Square garden minute book 1895-1926, op. cit.,
Minute 19 July 1921: the Commissionaire was given a free key
to the garden and allowed a yearly gratuity of £2 - a practice
which continued up until the Second World War.

69. Charlotte Square Minute book 1869-1894, op. cit., Minute of
agreement between James Mylne WS Clerk to the Proprietors of
houses in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, and John Fraser, presently
residing at 16 Breadalbane Terrace, Dalry Road, Edinburgh, 1875.
His wages were put at £55 a year. At the present time the
garden is looked after by 2 or 3 retired men who work on a
casual basis: the grass is cut by an outside contractor.

Later corrected to Beresford Park, St Andrew's Park, then
the previous owner had been in business with his sister in the
family. A detailed account of this and the construction of the park is
given in "Beresford Park", Wm. Falconer 1885 and still more
recently.

Edinburgh 1711, p. 394.

TOM 26 April 1706, vol. 36.

The 12 January 1729, vol. 48.

See the Appendix. The condition of the garden is the subject of
discussion in Edinburgh corporation and this may prove to be a
report on the state of health of the population and of their
discrimination. However, the condition of the garden has been
consulted by the New Council since the plague visited although

An Act for enabling the Governor of His Majesty's forces in
Edinburgh to erect a battery for the protection of the
people from attack, and to erect a battery on the
Edinburgh) For the purpose of enabling the Governor of His
Majesty's forces in Edinburgh to erect a battery for the
protection of the people from attack, and to erect a battery on
the south side of the city, in 1829.

John Duke has originated many ideas about the development of
Princess Street as the new street. This is led on one side
of the south side and has been described as the last century in action.

Further his ideas on the north side and the east side.

452.
2.4 GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCES STREET GARDENS

1. The gardens of the castle; C. A. Malcolm, OEC vol. XIV, 1925, pps. 101-120.

2. In 1562 for example, the Town Council ruled that all persons of "loose life" should be ducked in a certain part of the loch, and between 1589-1670 many witches were ducked in the loch before being burned on Castle Hill, see Castle and Town, D. Robertson and M. Wood, Oliver and Boyd, 1928 p. 10 and 14.


4. Later corrupted to Barefoots Parks; Robert Hepburn of Bearford the previous owner had been in frequent disputes with the town. A detailed account of this and the acquisition of the land is given in "Barefoots Parks", William Gowan, OEC, vol. XIII pps. 79-91.


8. See the Appendix: The Condition of the dwellings of the operative classes in Edinburgh by Alexander Wood; this formed part of a report on: "The Condition of the poorer classes of Edinburgh, and of their dwellings, neighbourhoods and families", Edinburgh, Edmonston & Douglas 1868. The College of Physicians had been consulted by the Town Council following the latter's fears of the plague visiting Edinburgh.

9. An Act for enlarging the term granted by an Act made in the 3rd year of his Majesty's reign (for continuing the duty of 2 pennies Scots upon every pint of ale and beer sold in the City of Edinburgh) for the purposes therein mentioned and for discontinuing the payment of the petty port customs there) and for making the said Act more effectual; passed on 9 October 1722 and printed in 1723.

10. John Home had originally bought land on the north side of Princes Street at the east end; the land in question on the south side had first been offered by the Town Council to Graham, a plumber, in exchange for his ground on Mulfrees Hill - the site intended for Register House. Graham and later his heirs declined this area of land, but finally after lengthy negotiations Home in 1768, and as a favour, offered to give over to Graham's heirs his land on the north side for the land they had declined on the south side; See:- The buildings at the East end of Princes Street and the corner of the North Bridge, William Gowan, OEC.
11. Next to the bridge St. Ann Street was built consisting of 5 storey tenements which dipped steeply into the valley until joining Canal Street. This street was demolished in 1817 as part of the Edinburgh Improvement Act, 1816.

12. A sub Committee of the Town Council did recommend at this time that no more land on the south side to the west of the feu already granted should be made out until "... the quarries are filled up, that the Town and their feuars may have a proper place to dispose of the earth which they may be obliged to dig"

TCM, 8 August 1770, vol. 87.

13. Alexander Wight, Solicitor General to the Prince of Wales, Vice President of the Society of Antiquaries, and Director of the Music Society lived on the south side of St. Andrews Square and was particularly fond of the view of St. Gile's steeple from his back windows; in order to keep the view he bought the vacant ground in Princes Street immediately behind, and placed a restriction on the height of any building to be erected there. This restriction was finally rescinded in a Court of Session Action in 1937: see - Princes Street Edinburgh, Life association of Scotland, op. cit., p.28.

14. Quoted in Youngson, The making of Classical Edinburgh, op. cit., p.86 which provides a useful background to this episode.

15. Full details of this are given in The buildings at the East end of Princes Street, William Gowan, OEC, Vol.1 pps. 145-149.

16. Published on 19 March, 1776.

17. The buildings on Home's feu remained almost unaltered until they were demolished in 1896.


19. To be settled and directed by the Lord President of the Court of Session, and the Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer when the occasion arose; John Stodart (then Lord Provost) was named as the overseer for the other improvement work to be carried out.

20. George Boyd, a clothier in Gosfords Close is said to have made the first steps across the marshy valley which others then added to; for a long time it was named "Geordie Boyd's Brig".

21. According to Creech about 1800 cartloads of earth, stones etc were deposited daily, see Letters to Sir John Sinclair; William Creech, first published 1793.
That is, that any houses built were not to be less than 96′ (29m) from those on the north side, or extend more than 160′ (49m) in depth to the south; the land beyond this point was however, to be reserved for pleasure garden purposes.
1. TCM, 16 August 1780, v.99; Memorial subscribed by Alexander Wight Esq., Advocate, for himself and in name of other feuars of Extended Royalty, dated 28 June, 1780.


3. Some drainage work had been carried out as early as 1763 prior to the building of the North Bridge.

4. TCM, 16 August 1780, v.99, op. cit.

5. Jamieson was one of the most important of the New Town builders: he was employed in the building of Register House, Sir Lawrence Dundas's house in St. Andrews Square, and other New Town houses. He was a member of the Town Council, and in 1779 he was granted permission to quarry some ground on the south side of Princes Street east of the Mound (of which he was a feuar) on condition the land afterwards was reinstated, see TCM 8 December 1779, vol. 98.

6. The feuars pointed out the damage caused by those renting the land for cattle grazing of "gorging up" the water in winter to make it overflow the ground; consequently it became perpetually wet and swampy.

7. The Dean of Guild Grieve was to put this proposal to the Town Council; he himself was a Princes Street proprietor with a house at the corner of Hanover Street.

8. EEC, 12 May 1781.

9. TCM, 29 August 1781, v.101: the proprietors volunteered to pay for the cost of the additional gate which the Town Council agreed to on condition it could be freely used by everyone and the proprietors accepted responsibility for its upkeep.


11. At one period the ideas for a simple, ornamental sheet of water had grown to a more ambitious notion of a North Loch Canal forming part of an inland waterway connecting with Glasgow to the west, and with Leith (via an immense harbour at Greenside) to the east. By such means the New Town was to be converted to a sea port: designs were drawn up by experienced engineers, a plan published, and Canal Street named in anticipation of the great canal envisaged by the City. Reference to this project is made in - Old and New Edinburgh, Grant, vol.2, p.99. No exact dates are given but ideas for a functional canal seem to have been widely discussed in the 1760s and 1770s. In 1764, for example Robert Mair "a merchant" brought out a pamphlet...
entitled - "The Edinburgh paradise regained or the City set at liberty to propagate and improve her trade and commerce" (copy in EUL) which suggested a broad freshwater canal between Edinburgh and Leith.

12. Scotsman, 16 February 1822, article entitled, "New attempt to build in front of Princes Street". William Burn was appointed architect for the yeomanry stable.

13. The east side of the Earthen Mound (area unspecified) had in fact been advertised for sale by the Town Council in 1823 along with other building stances in Fettes Row, Royal Crescent, Duncan Street, Scotland Street, east end of London Street and Bellevue Crescent see - Edinburgh Evening Advertiser, 24 June 1823.

14. TCM, 17 August 1825, vol.193; details of "the purpose" are not given in the minutes - the business of the day being more concerned to recoup some of the money spent by levying a charge of 1 penny per cart "for every person depositing earth or rubbish in that situation"; this was later reduced to ½ penny per cart - TCM, 26 August 1825, v.193.

15. Ideas for this had first been put forward in 1823 and during the intervening years several different plans had been drawn up including ones by Robert Reid, Robert Gourlay (an interested amateur - responsible for many original but rather wild ideas for the improvement of Edinburgh), Thomas Leslie, Thomas Hamilton and Robert Stevenson, engineer (grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson). Thomas Hamilton and William Burn were finally appointed to draw up plans. For a detailed account of these improvements see:- George IV Bridge and the western approach, David Robertson, OEC, Vol.18, 1932, pps. 79-99; also The making of classical Edinburgh, Youngson, op. cit., pps. 166-181.

16. Opposition to the Bill was led by William Drysdale, WS.

17. Scotsman, 4 February 1826.

18. The 14 names were as follows:- Robert Dundas, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer; H Home Drummond of Blair Drummond, Sir William Forbes (banker), Henry Cockburn, advocate, Sir John Connell, Judge of the Court of Admiralty, Sir Henry Jardine, Kings Remembrancer in the Exchequer, James Skene of Rubislaw, Thomas Allan, banker, John Cay, Advocate, A. Alison, Advocate, John Russell WS, John Kinneir, banker and Alexander Douglas WS. The names underlined were members of the West Princes Street gardens Management Committee.

19. Reported in the Scotsman, 8 February 1826; and also in the Edinburgh Advertiser, 7 February, 1826.

20. The Lord Provost at this time was William Trotter, head of the firm of cabinet makers and upholsterers who had their premises on the south side of Princes Street close to the North Bridge; his father, the previous feuair of the land together with John Home, coachmaker, centred in the earlier controversy re building on the south side of Princes Street (see Section 2.4).


22. TCM, 28 June, 1826, vol. 197.
23. Playfair's best known Edinburgh buildings include the Royal Scottish Academy, the National Gallery, Surgeons Hall, New College, the new observatory, Calton Hill, St. Stephen's Church and Donaldson's Hospital. He also was responsible for the design and additions to several country houses. All his architectural drawings were offered by his trustees to Edinburgh University in 1858.

24. Most of his books were on the subject of architecture but there were also a number of influential publications on the principles of landscaping, for example, Uvedale Price's "Essays on the Picturesque (1821 edition), Richard Payne Knight's "Inquiry into the principles of taste (1808), Alison's, "Essays on the nature and principle of taste (1811), and the Reverend William Gilpin's, Picturesque tour of the lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland (2 vols. 1786). For more practical gardening books Playfair seems to have relied upon - Whately's "Observations on modern gardening" (1793 edition), Papworth's "Hints on ornamental gardening" (1823), and perhaps, the most useful of all, J. C. Loudon's "Encyclopaedia of Gardening" (1826). A copy of the catalogue is in the NLS: Catalogue of the valuable library of the late W. H. Playfair Esq. to be sold by auction by Mr. T. Nisbet in his great room, 11 Hanover Street, Friday and Saturday, 27th and 28th November, 1857.

25. TCM, 5 July 1826, v.197; also reported in the Edinburgh Advertiser, 30 June, 1826.

26. This step may have been taken on the suggestion of Alexander Henderson, former Lord Provost and still an active member of the Town Council; as head of one of the largest nursery firms in Edinburgh he had worked as contractor for the West Princes Street gardens and would certainly have been aware of the leading landscape designers of the day. There is also a chance that Gilpin may have been appointed on the recommendation of Andrew Wilson, landscape painter and Master of the Trustees Academy in Edinburgh. Wilson in earlier life had taught drawing at Sandhurst Military Academy - as Gilpin had also done although no records exist to show whether their appointments overlapped. Wilson designed the Central and Western sections of the Queen Street Gardens (refer Section 3) before he took up permanent residence in Italy in 1826. His advice may well have been sought on the eastern portion of the North Loch, and Gilpin's name put forward.

27. He illustrated the first of his Uncle's celebrated Tours in Search of Picturesque Beauty - on the Wye.

28. Information on William Sawrey Gilpin was provided by Mavis Batey, Garden History Society; see also Dictionary of National Biography vol. VII, 1908, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, Smith, Elder and Co.

29. Scotsman, 8 November 1826.
30. Practical hints for landscape gardening, W. S. Gilpin, quoted by him in the preface, 1832.

31. Scotsman, 8 November, 1826.

32. Scotsman, 17 November, 1827.

33. TOM, 4 October, 1826, v.198.

34. Scotsman, 8 November, 1826.

35. He advised on landscape improvements for Crum Castle, Enniskillen Castle and Castle Blayney.

36. Scotsman, 8 November, 1826, q. cit.

37. Act of 7th and 8th year of King George IV, Cap 76, "An Act for carrying into effect certain improvements within the City of Edinburgh, and adjacent to the same". The Act provided for the opening of a communication from the west end of the Lawnmarket to the west by a road along the south bank of the Castlehill, and a bridge over the road at the back of the Castle (Johnstone Terrace and King's bridge); a road from the Lawnmarket opposite Bank Street to the south via a bridge over the Cowgate (George IV bridge); for levelling, widening and improving the Earthen Mound and Bank Street; for improving access from the west to the Grassmarket (King Stables Road), and from the east end of the Grassmarket by opening a road to the Lawnmarket (Victoria Street); for lowering, levelling, paving and improving the Lawnmarket and certain parts of the High Street, and for widening Castlehill by removing certain houses and buildings on the north side: 82 Commissioners were appointed to carry out the Act; 8 of these being members of the Town Council and their numbers were equally divided into sub committees. The important Plans and Works Committee consisted of 33 members and included amongst others - Henry Cockburn, James Skene of Rubislaw and James Gibson Craig WS.

38. Plans for the improvement of Edinburgh, No. 1. Robert Gourlay, Edinburgh, printed by W. Burness, 1829. Gourlay devoted much time to devising a whole range of "improvements" for the central area of Edinburgh, and bombarded the Town Council as well as other bodies with plans and reports of his various schemes. His ideas were well meant, but mostly impractical, and he was regarded as something of an eccentric. Many of his plans still survive in the archival drawing collection, Edinburgh District Council. Some of the competitors in the Calton Hill competition of 1813 had similar proposals for a gymnasia - based on the notion that every good and completed classical city modelled on ancient precept needed its stadium, amphitheatre and gymnasiu.

39. TOM, 4 April, 1827, v.200.
40. TCM, 3 June, 1829, v.205.
41. TCM, 19 August, 1829, v.205.
42. TCM, 24 June 1829, v.205.
43. TCM, 2 September 1829, v.206: the whole of the report is quoted in full.
44. Neill's written works included: "Tour through Orkney and Shetland" published in 1806; a translation with notes on Dubuissons, "An account of the Basalts of Saxony" 1814; an article on "Gardening" - in Encyclopaedia, 7th edition - subsequently published under the title of: "The flower, fruit and kitchen garden"; and: "An account of a tour through the Netherlands and the North of France", published in 1823, which reported on a horticultural tour undertaken in 1817 on behalf of the Caledonian Horticultural Society and accompanied by James McDonald (gardener, Dalkeith Park) and John Hay (garden designer and plantsman). During his lifetime 3 plants were named after him - Erica Neilli, Neillia Thyrstiflora and Alstermeria Neilli, and Edinburgh University awarded him an honorary degree of Doctor of Law.
47. Neill was also a founder member of the Edinburgh Zoological gardens, founded in 1840 and situated in Broughton Park (opposite Claremont Crescent).
48. The business was inherited from his father Adam Neill, and continued in existence until the 1970s where they occupied extensive premises in Newington; during the last century many horticultural, botanical and scientific papers were printed by the firm as well as nursery catalogues. The father had also been responsible for buying "several ruinous houses and others thereon in Cannomills" in 1796 from Alexander Sprott, tanner see Register of Sasines 20301, December 11, 1816.
49. TCM, 2 September 1829, op. cit.
50. The report and plans appear to have been submitted to the Commissioners of the Plans and Works Committee set up under the 1827 Improvement Act: see, Report to the Commissioners for the City Improvements, Edinburgh 1830, EUL pamphlet 81; and TCM 16 December 1829, v.206.
51. This sounds the sort of advice that James McNab might also have given: as Neill and McNab had close contact with each other it is likely that they could have discussed the matter together.
52. *TCM*, 13 April 1831, v.209: this was carried out on the suggestion of Mr Solicitor General Cockburn in the hope that ... "These precautions ... may tend permanently to prevent the occurrence of nuisance at this place which was dreaded." A more elaborate, but at least underground "public necessary" now occupies a site nearby.


54. See for example, Thomas Brown's letter book, EDC archives. Letters of 30 July 1829, 7 September 1829 and 31 December 1829.

55. *TCM*, 16 December, 1829, v.206; at this stage the Chairmanship of the Committee had temporarily been taken over by Dr William Wood.

56. Their right to a portion of the North Loch had been acquired in 1800 when the land was bought in connection with the building of the new bank: it amounted to just over 1 acre (0.4 ha).

57. *TCM*, 16 December, 1829, v.206; this gives a full account of all the transactions with the Bank of Scotland.


59. Crombies, Modern Athenians, 1837-1847, reprinted 1881, Edinburgh, Adam and Charles Black, p.31: Neill was not consulted about the West Princes Street gardens until 1831 when he was asked to give some minor planting advice.

60. *TCM*, 15 December 1830, v.208.

61. *TCM*, 2 March 1831, v.209; Neill's request for a quantity of bag lime agreed to.

62. Paid to Thomas Scott, a farmer at Lauriston for 1200 bay laurels and 100 hollies. There had been other incidental expenses: for example, Eagle and Henderson were paid £14 for shovels and grass seed between March and November 1830, *TCM* 20 July 1831 v.210.


64. *TCM*, 21 March, 1832, v.211.

65. *TCM*, 7 March 1832, v.211.

66. The matter was referred to a sub Committee of the Town Council who pointed out that under the terms of the 1827 Improvement Act the space must be kept as an ornamental area. Consent for this use had been refused by the Directors of the Bank of Scotland (part owners of the south bank) and many others had made known their opposition; instead it was suggested that the Old Physic garden might be of use as a bleaching green, see *TCM*, 4 April 1832, v.211.

67. The North Briton newspaper, 3 May 1832, the games were to include cricket, quoits, bowls, archery, the rifle, football, leaping, foot races and wrestling.
68. The Bank of Scotland had given their approval for the land to be let "for nursery or pleasure ground" purposes and were willing to extend the lease for their portion of land on the south slope for another 19 years provided they had a share of the rent acquired from the new tenant, TCM 25 April 1832, v.211.

69. TCM, 30 May 1832, v.212.

70. The Scotsman, 30 May, 1832; also reported, but not in such detail in Edinburgh Evening Courant, 31 May, 1832. A similar strategy of combining a private nursery with pleasure gardens was adopted a few years later by the Heriot Trust for the Royal Terrace/London Road gardens but did not prove very successful.

71. When the new buildings started to appear a number of Princes Street proprietors protested but they were given firm assurances by the Town Council as to the temporary nature of them: see TCM 31 July, 1838, v.227; 21 August 1838, v.227; 11 September 1838, v.227; 25 September, 1838, v.228; 27 November, 1838, v.228.

72. TCM, 21 August 1838, v.227.

73. TCM, 10 August, 1841, v.235.

74. TCM, 6 April 1841, v.234.

75. TCMs, 10 July 1843, v.239, 23 August, 1843, v.239; 11 June, 1844, v.242, 8 April 1845, v.243. The Council usually agreed that there was cause for complaint but simply passed the matter onto the tenant - Eagle and Henderson.

76. A case might well have been made that any extension through the eastern section of the North Loch contravened the clause in the 1827 Improvement Act which specified that the space was to be kept as ornamental garden ground free of all building excepting a theatre or playhouse.

77. Act of Parliament 7 and 8 Victoria, Cap 59 "An Act to authorise an extension of the Edinburgh and Glasgow railway and to amend and enlarge the provision of the Act relating to such railway, 4 July 1844.

78. Section 11 of the above Act: or failing Playfair "such other competent party as should be appointed by the Sheriff of Edinburgh".

79. TCM, 6 May 1845, v.243: particularly on the east and north sides of the garden. Application was made to the Sheriff for an interim interdict to prevent further encroachments.

80. TCM, 24 August 1847, v.248.

81. It had originally been destined for the West Princes Street gardens, but then refused on grounds that no buildings were allowed under the 1816 Act of Parliament.
82. A fund-raising Committee had been set up shortly after Scott's death. One of the most active members, until he went to live abroad in 1840 was James Skene of Rubislaw, (see West Princes Street gardens 2, 6) a close friend of Scotts: Sir Thomas Dick Lauder was Chairman of the Committee. A public competition for the design of a memorial was held in 1836 although previous to this several plans had been made out by various artists and architects; 54 designs were received which included 22 Gothic structures (highly favoured because of Scott's predilection for Gothic architecture), 11 statues, 14 Greecian temples and 5 pillar monuments, 1 obelisk, and 1 fountain. Three prizes were awarded to - Mr Rickman; Charles Fowler, Architect, together with R. W. Siever, Sculptor London; and John Moro (per name of George Kemp): all 3 had designed Gothic crosses. The Committee was not completely satisfied with the results and decided to obtain fresh plans from other artists not competing. Kemp, however, went on to improve his design and this was finally accepted: see The second report of sub Committee for erecting a monument to Sir Walter Scott, Edinburgh, Neill & Co., 1839.


84. Quoted in a letter from Playfair to Rutherford, 20 February 1843, NLS 9704, Manuscript department. Playfair was likely to be a little critical since he had not only advised on the laying out of the eastern section but had also been one of the individuals to submit designs before the holding of the competition: his 200' (6im) high Egyptian obelisk of Craigeith stone was selected, along with a Gothic structure by Rickman as being the most suitable.

85. TCM, 22 April 1845, v.243.

86. East Princes Street gardens, James McNab, Scottish Farmer, 28 June, 1865.

87. TCM, 13 March 1849, v.151; Draft agreement discussed and approved. The Bank of Scotland gave their assent and agreed to continue leasing their portion of land on the south bank; they also agreed to the Town Council admitting the public to the grounds "under proper regulation". The Town Council must have decided that it was preferable to take over the whole responsibility for reforming the gardens rather than let the Railway Company daily there any longer: in any case Playfair, who was supervising the enclosing and embanking of the railway in the West Princes Street Gardens was at this time continuously ill, and probably reluctant to take on more work.

88. He was involved with both the Donaldson's hospital and National Gallery projects.

89. Cousin was consultant architect to the Free Church of Scotland, and worked on a number of ecclesiastical buildings such as St. Caroline's Convent, Lauriston gardens; St. George's, Deanhaugh Street, and the reconstruction of Greyfriars Church, His public buildings included amongst others - 4 corn exchanges - at Edinburgh (now demolished), Dalkeith, Kelso and Melrose; the abattoir at Fountainbridge, Edinburgh; Reid School of Music,
Edinburgh University; the Heriot Watt College, Chamber Street, Edinburgh, and the Herbarium for the Royal Caledonian Society in their experimental garden at Inverleith (now part of the Botanic garden).

90. *TOM*, 12 June 1849, v.252; Cousin's report is included in full in these minutes, and the following information is taken from them.


92. The subsequent fortunes of this other project are not known but statues to Robert Bruce and William Wallace were erected in 1929 at the gateway of Edinburgh Castle to mark the 6th centenary of Bruce's Charter to Edinburgh; see *Edinburgh Alphabet*, J. F. Birrell, *op. cit.*, p.44.


96. *TOM*, 30 October 1849, v.252; David Lind was responsible for the terrace wall and stairs; he had been the building contractor for the Scott Monument, as well as the Assembly Hall (Tolbooth Church - Castlehill); John Alexander was given the contract for the parapet, and George Knight for the iron works.


98. *TOM*, 19 March 1850, v.253; his first task was in firming and dressing the embankment on either side of the railway.

99. *TOM*, 23 October 1849, v.252; Mr Langdon was charged a rent of £10 per month.

100. *TOM*, 2 April 1850, v.253 and 14 May 1850 v.284; progress reports by David Cousin.

101. *TOM*, 30 July 1850, v.254; William Dowzie was responsible for making the paths.


103. *TOM*, 22 October 1850 v.254; Cousin obtained several lists of plants and prices from nurseries which he passed over to Thomson.


106. TCM, 9 September 1851, v.256: the first set of rules were as follows:- 1. The gates will be opened during the summer at 6 o'clock am, and during winter at sunrise. They will close at sunset. 2. No children will be admitted except under the care of a grown up person who shall be responsible for their conduct; 3. No intoxicated or disorderly person will be admitted. No smoking allowed. No dogs admitted. 4. No person carrying burdens or packages of any kind will be admitted. 5. Persons detected pulling flowers or injuring shrubs, trees or buildings will be committed to the custody of the police. Persons carrying flowers will not be admitted. 6. Visitors are requested to keep to the walks and to protect the grounds. The "no smoking" rule does not appear to have been taken too seriously although it continued in force until the 1870s - see TCM, 8 July 1861, v.282; letter of complaints from John Hope, WS referring to the prevalence of tobacco smoking in the gardens.

107. TCM, 3 September, 1861, v.283: £2,000 of the compensation money had been lent to the Cornmarket account, and the rest (£2,400) spent on City bonds together with a sum placed in the bank. The expense of laying out the grounds had been met by the sale of the bonds with the addition of the bank money.

108. TCM, 21 October 1851, v.256: plan made out by David Cousin.

109. TCM, 6 July 1852, v.258; 400 tallies were bought at a cost of £10.

110. TCM, 18 July, 1854, v.264.

111. TCM, 13 March, 1855, v.265.

112. TCM, 2 June, 1857, v.271.

113. The Scottish Farmer: East Princes Street gardens, James McNab 28 June 1865; McNab very much regretted that some of the original elms planted in Neill's time had not been retained.

114. Some practical good: George Bruce; The Cockburn Association 1975 p.35; the proposals were withdrawn on 16 December, 1955.
2.6 WEST PRINCES STREET GARDENS


2. Just over 32 acres (12.8 ha).


4. The Counsel consulted were David Monypenny (afterwards Lord Pitmilly), Mr Cathcart (Lord A-loway), and Mr Ferguson.

5. A very detailed account of the proprietors case for keeping the North Loch free of buildings is given in the first Garden Minute book of the Princes Street proprietors 1816-1819 pp.s.51-80; held along with the other 8 Minute books in the City Archives, Edinburgh District Council, and referred to in these notes by their respective number.

6. TCMs, 3 August 1813; and 11 August 1813, v.164: the lease was to be for the whole of the Town's property between Princes Street and the Castle extending from the earthen mound to Lothian Road. In 1814 Thomas Bonnar, Superintendent of Works submitted a report to the Town Council on the draining of the North Loch but this was held over until the feuars intentions became known - see TCM, 6 July 1814, v.166.

7. The nearest episcopal church at this time was St. George's in York Place, built in 1794 and at the eastern end of the New Town. The new chapel, later named St John's Episcopal Church was erected in 1817; William Burn, architect was responsible for its design.


10. Act of Parliament, 56th George III c41. "An act to enable the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh to carry into effect certain purposes in regard to the erection of a chapel, at the West end of Princes Street and for effecting certain improvements in the neighbourhood thereof, and in other parts of the Extended Royalty of the said city," 1816, published by Spottiswoode and Robertson. The cost of obtaining the Act was equally divided between the Town Council, the Princes Street proprietors - west of the Mound, and the proprietors of the other area scheduled for improvement - St Anne Street.

11. Building on the mound itself was not prohibited - plans then being afoot to build shops there. William Sibbald had early on produced a design for the Mound showing a row of buildings on either side with a church as a central focal point (Edinburgh District Council, Archival drawing Collection YDA 1961. 1,
signed but not dated, and incorrectly catalogued as 1815 - Sibbald died 1809). More detailed plans for a carriageway and shopping arcade were drawn up several years later by Archibald Elliot and Thomas Brown (EDC Archival drawing collection YDA 1961.2, 1820) but were abandoned to make way for the Royal Institution building at the foot of the Mound (1822). The 1816 Act of Parliament gave reasonable protection to the West Princes Street proprietors as it was stipulated that any proposals for the Mound had to be shown to a general meeting of proprietors, and if not acceptable to be then submitted to the Lord President of the Court of Session, the Lord Justice Clerk, the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer and the Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court.

12. The assessment for the parapet and railing was not to exceed 10% of the rents of the premises in any one year, and any other assessments not to exceed this sum either.

13. Advertised in the Edinburgh Evening Courant, and the Edinburgh Correspondent to take place at 12 noon on Monday, 24 June 1816 in the City Chambers. Minute Book 1, 10 June, 1816.

14. Jardine became King's Remembrancer in 1820, and was knighted by George IV in 1825. According to Kay he was "... most conspicuous as a public spirited citizen" and was an active member of many learned societies and charitable projects. Parental influence seem to have left their mark: his mother was a daughter of Lord Provost Drummond, and his father, the Rev. John Jardine a prominent and influential minister - see Kays Portraits, vol. 2, p.327.

15. He was the son of Dr. Douglas a leading practitioner in Kelso. For many years he was a Commissioner of Police, a Director of the Water Company, and Trustee (afterwards Clerk) for the City creditors, and Fiscal of the WS Society: see Silences that Speak: William Pitcairn Anderson, Alexander Brûtton, Edinburgh 1931, p.457 and Modern Athenians 1837-1847, Crombie, op. cit., p. 31.

16. This and the following information is taken from various Committee meetings held between 3 July 1816 - 25 May 1818 and recorded in Minute book 1.

17. These were as follows:-

a. The centre ground stretching from the Mound westwards to the Chapel was held in lease under an Act of Council from the City of Edinburgh for 99 years from Martinmas 1816 at £50 per annum. The Council reserved the right to throw over more earth on the west side of the Mound to bring it to a proper slope and width.

b. The 2 fields lying between Ramsay Lodge and the North Loch were granted on 2 leases from General Ramsay, 1 for 96 years
from Martinmas 1819 at a rent of £2.50 per annum and the other for 3 nineteen year periods from Candlemas 1822 at £17 per annum.

c. The Castle banks including the north, south and west banks were held under a contract from the Board of Ordnance, dated 8 December 1818, "until the same banks and ground be required for public service" at a rent of £32 p.a; the Governor and officers to be given free right of access to the grounds and walks.

d. Some of the glebe land of St. Guthbert's Church was held in feu (up until 1831 part was used as a bleaching green by the proprietors). A portion of this land was purchased in 1831 for £400.

e. A right to part of the western slope of the earthen mound was acquired in 1822 and 1823 when an agreement was entered into between the trustees of the former owner of the land - Mr Tod, the proprietors, and the Town Council.

18. Crichton's heirs were paid 10 guineas for his plan and specification. Minute book 1, 13 January, 1818.

19. Crichton was also responsible for the design of a number of country houses, and in 1815 was nominated one of the prize winners in the competition for laying out the streets to the north of Calton Hill. The bank building was later extensively altered by David Bryce between 1865-70.

20. This and the following information is taken from: Report of the Committee of the General Meeting of proprietors of Princes Street West of the Mound, Minute book 1, 6 July, 1818.

21. The advertisement was placed in the Edinburgh Courant, once a week for 4 weeks, see Minute book 1, 25 May 1818.

22. £2,000 was borrowed from Sir William Forbes and Co. - a banking firm which helped finance a number of New Town projects; Minute book 2, 20 November 1819; see also note 6; Section 3.4

23. Very little is known about the career of Richard Stephens but he seems to have worked as an engineer cum land surveyor and planner. He is recorded as having worked on several Scottish estates including Balnoon (Balnaoon) Angus (1812); Kimmerghame, Berwickshire (1821), and Lees, Berwickshire (1816); see The Landscape garden in Scotland, 1735-1835, A.A. Tait, op. cit., p.258.

24. Minute Book I, 31 March 1819; Minute book 2; 20 May 1819.

25. Minute book 2, 9 July 1819; Ormiston put in the lowest estimate and was also strongly recommended by William Burn, architect.

27. Minute book 2, 26 April 1820. The Royal Institution at the foot of the Mound, and facing onto Hanover Street was completed to a design by Playfair in 1826 but later enlarged by him in 1833-6. It provided accommodation for the Royal Society, the Institution of Fine Arts, the Society of Antiquaries and the Board of Trustees.

28. Minute book 2, 8 June 1820; the following people attended: the Lord Provost, Baillie Manners, the 2 City Clerks, 3 agents of Mr Tod’s heirs (Mr Tod had originally owned one of the tan pits which was situated on the south shore of the North Loch), 3 members of the Princess Street garden Committee and their Clerk, William Playfair, James Skene (curator of the museums both of the Royal Society, and the Society of Antiquaries both of which were to be accommodated in the new building), and Mr Stephen.

29. In order to do this it was necessary to obtain access to a field between Ramsay Lodge and the North Loch: the Clerk immediately began negotiations with the agents of General Ramsay, owner of the land, and a lease was granted in 1822. A further payment was made to Stephen of £25 for "a plan" and his work on supervising the work on the drains - Minute book 2, 18 January, 1821.


31. Minute book 2, 19 January, 1821; Skene was elected in place of Andrew Murray - who had moved from Princes Street.


34. Remarks on the Well House Tower, James Skene, Antiquarian Society Transactions, v.2, Edinburgh, 1818; very little was found apart from some old coins.

35. Scott’s journals and familiar letters, 1, 44, letter to Lady Dalkeith, 1806.
36. Many more of Skene's drawings and water colour paintings still exist particularly of studies carried out during visits abroad. The National Gallery of Scotland have 2 large folios of pen and water colour drawings made during a tour of France 1820-1821, and others of Germany and France. Two exhibitions of his work have been held in recent years: "Views of Greece by James Skene; an exhibition arranged by the Anglo Hellenic League to mark its jubilee 1913-1963, RWS Galleries, 26 Conduit Street, London 1963, and The Art Council of Great Britain Scottish Committee: A selection of water colours and drawings by the Artist, Traveller, and Scholar James Skene 1775-1864; catalogue by The Stanley Press, Edinburgh 1964. The Arts Council Gallery, November 1964.

37. Quoted by Sir David Brewster, Lord Provost and Principal of Edinburgh University in an obituary on Skene.

38. In 1838 he left Edinburgh for Greece due to the indifferent health of some members of his family and stayed there for 6 years. On his return in 1844 he settled first at Leamington, and then at Frewin Hall, Oxford. He had 7 children, with many descendants, and many of his drawings and diaries must still be in the hands of family members.


41. Minute book 2, 10 July 1820.

42. Minute book 2, 20 July 1820; 21 July 1820; Henderson's estimate for forming the top terrace came to £200.

43. The Scotsman, 30 September 1820: many years later when pressure was mounting to have the West Princes Street gardens freely open to the public, the campaign was well supported by all the Edinburgh newspapers.

44. Minute book 2, 19 March 1823: this minute provides useful information on the work carried out by Henderson. Some extra planting was donated to the garden a little later - namely trees and shrubs from Lord Moray's estate at Drumsheugh, and young oaks and horse chestnuts from Mr Erskine of Mar; see Minute book 2, 16 December 1822.

45. The Scotsman, 7 February, 1827, obituary on Henderson.

46. Edinburgh Advertiser, 9 February 1827, Report of an address by Lord Provost Trotter on his predecessor. After Henderson had retired from office, he became master of the Merchant Company. He was a man of considerable business capacity and largely responsible for the formation of the National Bank of Scotland, of which he was first President, and of the Scottish Union.
Insurance Company. His popularity is indicated by his funeral, which although a private family affair consisted of 33 mourning coaches, with shops closed in the High Street, North Bridge and Regent Bridge, and the streets filled with numerous spectators watching the entourage make its way to the New Calton Burial ground - see Edinburgh Advertiser, 13 February, 1827.

47. Minute book 2, 19 January 1821, quoted in a report by the Committee to the general meeting of proprietors.

48. Minute book 2, 13 February 1821; and the Tack between the proprietors and Alexander Henderson (after the minute of 13 July 1821). In February 1824 Henderson wrote a letter to James Skene informing him of his intention to plant 30 or 40 ornamental trees in the garden and requesting names of any particular varieties desired, and their positions - although preference was stated for the margins - Minute book 3, 26 February, 1824.

49. The rent from the nursery provided a useful contribution towards the proprietors own outlay for leasing the various parts of the ground. For most of the time the nursery and pleasure garden appear to have co-existed reasonably well together although there were some initial teething problems. Henderson complained for example, of boys entering his grounds at night time and causing damage to the young saplings (Minute book 3, 18 July, 1825), and also people helping themselves to strawberries and rose buds (Minute book 3, 5 July, 1826). Access for carts and pedestrians was also difficult until an entry was made at the corner of Princes Street and the Mound, Minute book 3, 26 September 1826 and 29 September, 1826.

50. Minute book 2, 19 March 1823; see also minutes 30 April 1823; 2 May 1823; Minute book 3, 17 May 1823; 18 July 1825; 24 December 1825.

51. Minute book 3, 13 November 1826, and 23 November 1826; Gibson Craig WS was appointed as assessor, and he consulted with Mr Willet, factor on the Barnton estate. To rectify the records a note was added to the previous minute of 19 March 1823 (which had queried Henderson's account) mentioning that their observations had been based on misleading information, and that the Committee regretted that any misunderstandings should have arisen.

52. Minute book 2, 19 March 1821.


54. Robert Brown (1802-1860) was responsible for the design of a number of country houses, and various projects within Edinburgh: these included - the layout and elevations for the Melville Street, Coates Crescent area at the West end for the Walker family (designed in 1814); and a portion of land adjoining Leith Walk, including the unfinished Hope Crescent, owned by the Hopes, who
also possessed land in Newington which Brown became involved with. Queens Mall (formerly Newington and St. Leonard's Church) was designed by him, and he was asked by James Hope to make suggestions for the improvement of the Moray Place gardens in 1832.


56. Minute book 2, 10 April 1821; 6 July 1821; 13 July 1821.

57. The bleaching green formed part of the Glebe land belonging to St. Cuthbert's Church and leased to the proprietors until 1831 when it was taken over by the Kirk Session as an extension to the burial ground. Access was by a separate pathway from Princes Street and proprietors paid an extra sum for a key to the gate.

58. Minute book 2, 13 July 1821; 21 January 1822; 3 October 1822; 4 October 1822; 16 December 1822; Minute book 3, 24 March 1824: the gardener's house was demolished in 1885 as it was said by then to be "insanitary". It was replaced by a new lodge designed by Mr Moreham, city architect.

59. Minute book 2, 17 November 1821; see also Minute book 2, 19 March 1823 which tells of the failure of much of Henderson's planting.

60. Minute book 2, 23 May 1822; September 1822: the agreement was for 3 periods of 19 years at £12 for the first 9 years, and £17 per annum thereafter, the ground to be used only as garden, nursery or pleasure ground.

61. Minute book 3, 24 January 1825: let to Principal Baird, tenant of Ramsay Garden at £24 per annum "for sheep and lambs only".

62. Minute book 3, 11 February 1829: the Clerk wrote a letter to Thomas Hamilton, Architect for the Johnstone Terrace improvement project requesting the use of the stones.


64. Minute book 3, 12 February 1830.

65. Minute book 4, 14 February 1831.

66. Reekieana, James Skene, op. cit.

67. Reminiscences of Scott, James Skene, NLS MS 965.

68. Sir Walter Scott's Journal, January 1826, quoted in Grant, Old and New Edinburgh, vol.2, p.98. In 1827 Scott, at the request of the Committee was presented with a free key to the garden - a privilege appreciated by the author "... as my health requires exercise which I can take much more easily and agreeably in these beautiful walks than along the public street? Minute book 3, 21 May 1827.
69. Minute book 4, 1 July 1830.

70. Minute book 3, 10 January 1828.

71. The loss of the bleaching green was sorely felt and many proprietors put in the request for alternative space. Henderson's nursery however, occupied the only other possible area but the Committee rejected any such suggestions as they considered that "... the constant passage of servants with baskets of clothes along the walks would be a most intolerable nuisance" Minute book 4, 21 February, 1832.

72. There had been some earlier fears in 1822 when plans were submitted to Parliament for feuing the Glebe lands belonging to St. Guthbert's (they also included ground on both sides of Lothian Road) that buildings might one day be erected on the land within the Princes Street Gardens. The proprietors had opposed the Bill, but unsuccessfully. Before it could be passed, however, the consent of the Crown as patron of the parish had to be obtained, and on this account a remit was made to the Barons of the Exchequer (which included Baron Clerk Rattray an active member of the garden committee) and they reported that no buildings should be allowed so near to the Castle. The Duke of Wellington intervened (as Master of Ordnance) and the Bill was substantially altered prohibiting the erection of any buildings on any part of the Glebe within the boundaries of the garden. The part purchased by the proprietors in 1831 extended from the churchyard wall as far as the bowling green. See: The Princes Street Proprietors; David Robertson, Oliver and Boyd, 1935, pp. 15-16.

73. Minute book 5, 18 March, 1840.

74. Minute book 5, 25 March 1840; and the accounts for 1840/41; David Cousin was paid 2 guineas for his plan but no details are given.

75. Prior to the move he had gone to live in Moray Place.

76. Minute book 5, 25 March 1840; 23 August 1841.

77. Minute book 5, Circular: To the proprietors and Tenants in Princes Street, west of the mound. Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company, signed John Learmonth, Chairman, 11 October 1836.

78. Minute book 5; Princes Street Gardens, letter - James Skene, Esq., to John Learmonth Esq., Moray Place, 22 October, 1836.

79. Minute book 5; Case for the proprietors of Princes Street, west of Hanover Street, Edinburgh, relative to the Bill brought into Parliament for a Railroad between the Cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, insofar as it is proposed to carry the same through the Gardens and Pleasure Ground, formed between Princes Street and the Castle of Edinburgh.
Richardson was a close friend of Henry Cockburn. He went to London in 1806 and became head of an eminent firm of parliamentary solicitors: Richardson, Loch and Maclaurin.

Minute book 5, 5 March 1844; letter from the Clerk Alexander Douglas to John Richardson.

Minute book 6; 16 November 1846, letter from Mr Douglas, Clerk, to William Playfair.

Minute book 5; 30 September, 1844 letter from Playfair to Mr Douglas, Clerk.

Minute book 5; 4 November, 1844.

Minute book 6; Accounts for 1845/6.

Minute book 6; letter to Playfair from the Clerk; these wooden bridges gradually fell into disrepair, and the west one was the first to be replaced by an iron bridge in 1873 - Minute book 8, October 1873.

Minute book 6; 21 February 1846: the list was made out with the help of various nursery catalogues in Playfair's possession, and stock to the value of £170 was ordered from Messrs Dickson and Sons, Messrs Dickson and Co., Peter Lawson and Son and Mr Cunningham. Details of what the planting consisted of was not given.

Minute book 6, 1 March 1847.

Minute book 6; 15 May 1848: Alexander Brown was employed at 1 guinea a week plus the rent free gardener's house; he did not live for much longer and in October 1851 his son John Brown was appointed in his place. Minute book 6, 24 October 1851.

Minute book 6; Accounts 1847-1848.

Minute book 6; Report by the Committee to the AGM, held on 11 September 1851.

Minute book 6; Report by Alexander Douglas to the General Meeting 1 August 1849; Minute book 6: Report by Committee to the proprietors, 11 September 1851: some of the surplus money was used on a new tool and seed house, on the construction of a retaining wall to the walks on the Castle banks, and a wire fence enclosing the Castle bank.

Minute book 7; 13 May 1856: presumably the bowling green had ceased to be in any great demand but no other references to it have been found in the minutes.

Minute book 7; 22 August, 1855; Report by James McNab dated 22 August 1855 and 21 September 1855.
95. Article found in McNab's manuscript file, Edinburgh Botanic garden library (details of paper not traced). A full account of the Town Council's proceedings relating to this matter, including Dr Sibbald's comment that cutting the trees down was a "... piece of perfect vandalism" was reported in The Courant, 6 September, 1855 and the Scotsman, 5 September 1855.


97. Smaller ornamental gifts had been made at other times. Henry Raeburn, the portrait painter for example then living at St. Bernard's House, Stockbridge, donated some ancient stones from a curious tower built by Walter Ross, W3, the previous owner - a distinguished wit and antiquarian. The tower was demolished during the construction of Ann Street: see Minute book 2, 17 November 1821. In 1822 an ancient Runic monument owned by the Royal Society of Antiquaries was acquired by Skene for the garden and with difficulty (being fully 2 tons in weight) was transported to the Castle bank. Two large vases and pedestals were given by George Makay of Grangemont in 1851 and placed on the central walk.

98. Unveiled in 1865: building costs were paid for by Lord Murray, a descendant of Ramsay.


100. Scotsman, 30 May 1866.

101. The painting was first exhibited in 1866 under the title: "A suggestion for the Improvement of Edinburgh" and thereafter in 1867, 1869, 1870 and 1880. In 1867 it was joined by a companion piece of East Princes Street; see The Royal Scottish Academy 1826-1916. W. D. McKay & Frank Render, Glasgow, James Hachiehose & Sons, 1917.

102. Minute book 6; 5 November 1853.

103. Kinnear was a former pupil of David Bryce and was a member of the Garden Committee from 1861 until 1876.

104. Minute book 8; 3 June, 1868; 2 dozen garden seats to a design by Mr Kinnear were ordered from a firm in Glasgow. Minute book 8, 24 November, 1869: the Railway Company submitted plans and sketches for substituting the central bridge with an iron one - Mr Kinnear made suggestions for some slight alterations. The bandstand which is referred to later in the text was not built until 1880.

105. Minute book 5; 22 October 1836 letter from Skene to John Learmonth, op. cit., Minute book 8, 10 December, 1875, the sum of £9,000 was referred to in a report by the Committee to a general meeting of proprietors. Altogether £2,500 was borrowed from the bank.
106. **Minute book 3; Accounts 1844/5:** These show keyholders drawn from the following addresses: - York Place, Hill Street, George Street, Charlotte Street, Melville Street, Hill Square, Stafford Street, Queen Street, Atholl Crescent, Sandwick Place, Dundas Street, Northumberland Street, Rutland Square, North Charlotte Street, South Charlotte Street, Dublin Street, Hanover Street and Ramsay Gardens.

107. **Minute book 6:** 5 November 1853.

108. **Minute book 3; 16 March 1829:** If the proprietor had transferred the right to the tenant this was acceptable but only after special application had been made to the Management Committee.

109. **Edinburgh Advertiser,** 24 March 1826: The band of the 17th Foot seems to have been much in demand and during the very cold January of that same year their musical performances at the edge of Duddingston Loch, and at Lochend added to the enjoyment of the large skating parties gathered there. See: **Edinburgh Advertiser,** 17 March 1826.

110. **Mrs Storey’s Early Reminiscences,** Glasgow, James Maclehose & Sons, 1911, p.122.

111. **Minute book 6; 14 June 1853.**

112. **Minute book 6, 7 September 1853.**

113. **On Saturdays the staff left early.**

114. **Edinburgh Evening Courant,** 10 May 1875; See also EEC 11 May 1875, 13 May 1875, and 9 June 1875.

115. **EEC,** 9 June 1875.

116. **Memoirs of James Begg DD,** vol. 2, Thomas Smith, Edinburgh. James Gemmill 1888: See in particular Chapter 31, pps. 128-143. His biographer records "... more than once when we happened to cross the Mound together, he informed me that it was to him that the people of Edinburgh were indebted for free access to the East Princes Street gardens, one of the finest parks in the country. Subsequently he took as deep an interest in the opening of the West gardens, and although I do not think that he took so prominent a part in the latter movement as in the former yet as the latter was simply the rolling on of the ball which he had set in motion in the former, it was with pride quite justifiable that he used to say, "Was I that did it" (pps. 131-132) See also the Scotsman, 1 October 1883 for a very detailed and long obituary.

113. How to promote and preserve the true beauty of Edinburgh: being a few hints to the Hon. Lord Cockburn on his late letter to the Lord Provost, James Begg DD, Johnstone & Hunter, Edinburgh 1849. Similar opinions were expressed in another publication by Begg - Pauperism and the Poor Laws, or our sinking population and increasing public burdens practically considered; published by Johnstone & Hunter in 1849; the appendix provides a detailed comment on all the main areas of public ground in the city.

119. Minute book 6; 16 December 1851.

120. Minute book 6; 15 December 1852; 21 December 1853; Minute book 7, 7 November 1854; 26 December; 1855.

121. Minute book 6; 20 October 1852; 29 October 1852.

122. Minute book 6, 8 July 1853; 20 July 1854; 7 August 1854.

123. Minute book 7; 7 November 1854; 27 March 1855; the Counsel consulted were John Inglis, afterwards Lord President of the Court, and Mr Graham Bell, advocate.

124. TCM, 5 September 1854, v. 263; this contains a useful printed report on the various steps taken by the Town Council with comments on the response by the Garden Committee and proprietors.

125. TCM, 29 November 1864, v. 289; TCM 22 May 1866, v. 293.

126. Scotsman, 14 March 1874, Building notes - the feuing of the Dean Estate.

127. Scotsman, 2, April 1874, letter by "a promoter"; Scotsman, 20 April 1874, "The proposed north west park for Edinburgh", and Scotsman, 21 April 1874: proposed west end park, letter by Mitchell and Baxter agents for the promoters. Proposals to form a west end park had in fact been mooted several years earlier. Bartholomew's map of 1867 for example, clearly marks an area of ground owned by the George Heriot Trust to the north of Grosvenor Crescent as the site of a west end park. The Scotsman article of 14 March 1874 refers to an earlier attempt to acquire Learmonth's land in order to extend the public park at Stockbridge: this park had been established sometime during the late 1850s as a recreational and public drying green space serving the populous district of Stockbridge and situated between Dean Park Street and Comely Bank Street. It was put to many different uses - for cricket, drilling of volunteers, clothes drying, general recreation and grazing and remained an open space until the 1880s when replaced by the acquisition of Inverleith Park (in 1889).

128. Scotsman, 17 December 1880.
129. The Edinburgh Courant 18 December 1880, which contained a long obituary on Smith. His many appointments had included - Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant of the City, Brigadier General of the Royal Archers, Church Elder, leading member of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Manager of the Royal Infirmary, Treasurer of the Royal Society, committee member of the Association for the promotion of Fine Art in Scotland and Founder member of the Cockburn Association.

130. Bank Garden: Lord Moray Minute book "No. 2", 1837-1845: Smiths name occurs constantly in the minutes with some of the meetings held in his house.

131. Dean Garden Minute book: 1867-1909: Smith was an active Committee member until his death and frequently took the chair at meetings.

132. The Edinburgh Courant, 23 April, 1875.

133. The Edinburgh Courant, 16 June, 1875; a very long and full account of this meeting is given in the Courant; with a much briefer mention in the Scotsman of the same date. The Requisition to the Town Council to call a meeting of citizens which states the various reasons for setting up the association is contained in Vo. 1, Cockburn Association Reports, 1875-1894.

134. The other suggestions included: the formation of a suitable public park to the north and south of Queensferry Road - belonging chiefly to Trinity Hospital (a further variation on the west end park theme), the provision of a suitable band of music for the city to perform regularly in the various suitable localities; assisting the public authorities in the improvement of the Meadows; Improvement of the walks in the immediate neighbourhood of Edinburgh; and the preservation and planting of ornamental trees in and around the city: vol. 1, Cockburn Association Reports, 1875-1894.

135. Quoted by Lord Moncrieff at the inaugural meeting of the Cockburn Association.

136. Falshaw had been engaged in railway construction work both in England and Scotland; when he joined the Town Council in 1861 his engineering experience proved invaluable when such matters as street improvements, water supply and sanitation were under discussion. He was also involved in the movement for providing better standards of housing for the working classes - see obituary in Glasgow Herald, 15 June 1889; Scotsman, 15 June 1889.

137. Belgrave Crescent Garden Minute book 1 1877-1949: from 1877 - when the records start, Sir James Falshaw frequently acted as Chairman at the Management Committee meetings.

139. The Princes Street Proprietors, David Robertson, op. cit., pps. 57-61.

140. Agreement between the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council, the City Road Trust, and the Proprietors of West Princes Street Gardens 26 April, 1876; Minute book 9. The main conditions of the Agreement were as follows: — that the money in compensation for the transfer of rights in the garden was to be used by the Corporation when fulfilling their obligations under the agreement and the Bill before Parliament; that part of the south side of Princes Street should be widened by at least 10 feet (8.5m) by taking a portion of ground from the garden (this would require the removal of the existing cope and rail and it was specified that the new railing had to be "equally handsome with, and similar in character to that in George Square" — (designed by J. Dick Peddie); a new footpath was to be made alongside the railing on the garden side, and the rest of the gardens preserved and used solely as ornamental pleasure grounds for public recreation; that the existing pavement between Hanover Street and South Charlotte Street should be entirely taken up and relaid uniformly with the best Caithness stone, and should be widened by 4' (1.22m); that the north tramlines should be lifted and relaid on the south of the existing lines; that the cab stances should be removed from Princes Street and additional lamps provided; that the gardens be open on Sundays at the same time as other days; that the building restrictions should be continued; and that the proprietors should grant the necessary deeds to the Corporation.

141. 39 and 40 Victoria, The Edinburgh Improvement Acts 1876, ch. cxxx "An Act for acquisition by the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh of the West Princes Street Gardens there, for the purpose of the same being laid open to the public; and for the acquisition of lands at Inverleith for the formation of an Arboretum and Public Park and Pleasure Grounds; and for other purposes, 13 July 1876."

142. Deed of Acceptance, Conveyance and Renunciation, by the Committee appointed under the Edinburgh Improvement Act, 1876. Minute book 9.

143. Minute book 9, 13 January 1879.


145. TCM, 5 March 1879; the work was undertaken by Mr William Kay.

146. TCM, 21 August 1877, v.319; the cost of the greenhouses came to just over £1,500; TCM, 26 April 1904.

147. £100,000 had been donated to the city in 1896 by Mr Andrew Usher for a new hall - since when controversy had raged as to where it should be built. Various possibilities were considered...
including the West Princes Street Gardens, Atholl Crescent, and the north west corner of the Meadows. A collection of photo montages showing the proposed Usher Hall sited in the Princes Street gardens are to be found in Edinburgh Public Library - EPL YDA 1956.

143. TCM, 18 December 1877, v.320; the legacy was for £1,500. In 1879 Mr Macleod, Head of the Parks Department was granted permission to visit Blackpool and Brighton in order to inspect rock gardens and report back (TCM, 29 July 1879). The possibility of erecting a winter garden was still being considered as late as 1891 (TCM, 17 February 1891).


150. When the garden accounts were finally closed there remained a substantial credit balance of £592; most of this was spent on the bandstand but £83 was also donated to the Royal Infirmary: Minute book 9, 10 December 1878; 24 February 1880.

151. In 1872 the 93 Sutherland Highlanders had offered to pay for the costs of erecting a bandstand - consisting of a light ornamental cast iron dome over a stone platform. The Committee on the advice of Mr Kinnear agreed to contribute £50 in order to secure a bandstand "... of more ornamental and massive design". Minute book 6, 1 April 1872; 18 June 1872.

152. Gifted by Mr William Ross and designed by E. J. Macrae, City Architect. In 1933 a Consolidating Act was passed which allowed the Corporation to put up such bandstands and shelters "... as would be in keeping with the dignity of the garden". Peddie and Kinnear's cast iron structure was removed to the Meadows.

153. First installed in 1902 as a floral tribute to Edward VIII by an enthusiastic parks Superintendent, Mr John Machattie, and Mr J. Ritchie, an Edinburgh Clockmaker. It apparently takes 3 gardeners a total of 5 weeks putting in about 35,000 plants: Evening News 13 May 1983. One of the hazards of increased public use is the colossal amount of litter deposited in the gardens: on a fine summers day - according to the newspaper article just quoted, as much as 3 tons of beer cans, bottles, milk cartons and food wrappings can accumulate although most of it is "... dutifully placed in hundreds of wire baskets peppered around" but still posing a "major problem" for the much reduced gardening staff.

154. The statues and memorials not so far mentioned are as follows:-

Sir James Young Simpson: medical pioneer of the uses of chloroform, sculpted by William Brodie, built by public subscription and unveiled in 1875.
Freestone statue of a woman and 2 children: sculpted by William Brodie 1862. Believed to have been first sited in the garden of the architect Sir James Gowans at Rockville, Merchiston, Edinburgh, and donated in 1891 by Mr John Harrison who bought Gowans’s house. It is thought to represent the Genius of architecture crowning the theory and practice of the art, or rather more mundanely as representative of Motherhood.

The Royal Scots Greys Memorial: equestrian bronze statue on Pardovian stone plinth, sculpted by Birnie Rhind, built by public subscription and unveiled in 1906.

Thomas Guthrie: philanthropist and social reformer best known for his involvement with non-sectarian schools for poor children; pedestrian white freestone statue on granite plinth, sculpted by F. W. Pomeroy; unveiled 1910 and gifted by family.

The Scottish American War Memorial: bronze seated kilted figure on low stone plinth with long bronze bas relief on retaining wall behind. Sculpted by R. Tait Mackenzie (and cast in Brooklyn, U.S.A.); unveiled 1927.


3.1 The development of the second New Town and its open spaces.


2. The 34 acres (13.6 ha) sold by the Trust to the Town Council in 1766 had been part of the same Barony: for further details see Section 1, note 3.


4. The 12 acre (4.8 ha) estate of Meldrumshewing had had several owners before coming into the possession of Francis 9th Earl of Moray in 1782: it was later developed by his eldest son, Francis, 10th Earl of Moray from 1822 onwards. See Lands and houses of Drumsheugh, John Clerk Wilson, OEC vol. xxv.

5. Sometimes spelt as Stewart.


7. Allan and Steuart were both involved in trading in a wide range of primary products including tea. Their corn connections brought them into close relations with the leading distillers of eastern Scotland. The scale on which they granted credits and discounted bills lead them into banking; the firm ceased about 1810: see, Scottish Banking, A History 1695-1973, S. G. Checkland, Collins, Glasgow and London, 1975, p.164. Allan and Steuart both served on the Town Council as merchant Councillors. At the start of his career Steuart was apprenticed to the banking firm of Messrs John Coutts and Co; he was admitted a Burgess and Guild brother on 15 January 1777: see Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses 1460-1700, Hoog Watson.

8. Information from: The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh 1296-1932, T & A. Constable, University Press, Edinburgh 1932, p.80. Steuart was also the moving spirit behind the formation of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce in 1785, as well as first treasurer of the Highland Society.

9. First shown listed in Queen Street: Williamson's Street directory 1780-81. The house had been built for a former Lord Provost - Dalrymple and was advertised for sale (by Steuart?) in 1791: Edinburgh Advertiser, 8 November 1791.

10. GHT Minutes, 8 October 1781, vol.12 p.156; Chartulary 4, p.208.
11. At a stated rate of 3 shillings sterling per foot in front for each house so erected; GHT Minute, 18 May 1785, vol.12, p.363. This minute also gives some useful details about the previous tenancy of the land. Steuart was required to pay an annual feu duty equivalent to 7 bolls of barley per acre. It was also made a condition that any building to be erected had to line up with any the Trust might also have built, and not be closer than 25' (7.6m). A feu charter in favour of David Steuart was made out in October 1785; Heriot Trust Archives, Chartulary 5, 17 October 1785, p.91; GHT Minutes, 17 October 1785, vol. 13, p.29.

12. GHT Minute, 4 August 1785, vol.13, p.9.

13. See also Section 3.4; Steuart seems to have had a house built next door to Allan's, at No.28 Queen Street but there is no record in the street directories of him having lived there.


17. GHT Minutes, 4 June 1792, vol.14, p.175.

18. This dual appointment system continued for several years up until 1819 and demonstrates the close ties between the Trust and the City. Gradually the work load of both increased to such an extent that the posts had to be separately filled. No major conflicts seem to have arisen due to this situation, and indeed the smooth development of both the first and second New Town was probably aided by it.

19. GHT Minutes, 13 December 1792, vol.14, p.196: the minute reports that on the basis of the sketch "... upwards of £15,000 sterling would be expected if the land was feu’d out for building purposes."


22. Youngson in his book: The making of Classical Edinburgh, p.206 states that the earliest plan is one of 1796 but in fact this was a later copy.

23. Presumably Steuart paid Sibbald a fee for the work involved; they would of course have been reasonably well known to each other as Steuart's involvement with the Town Council particularly during the period when he was Lord Provost would have brought them into regular contact. Sibbald was an apt choice as the Heriot Trust were likely to be more receptive to a plan produced by their own Superintendent of Works.
24. Three-quarters of the square were contained within Steuart's feu - hence the earlier reference in the Heriot Trust minutes that the Central area should be treated as common property.

25. GHT Minute, 22 August 1796, vol.15, p.94.

26. He was a descendant of Johnston of Wariston. Apart from being a tenant of the Heriot Trust's ground at Broughton, he also had lands at Restalrig, Stockbridge and Bearford Parks. His farmhouse stood near the centre of the West Queen Street gardens and his duck pond at the middle of the central Queen Street gardens. His eldest son, Alexander Wood, the celebrated Edinburgh surgeon expressed no interest in continuing with the tenancy.

27. GHT Minutes, 10 December 1798, vol.15., p.161.

28. GHT Minutes, 25 February 1799, vol.15., pps.184-185: In his letter Steuart drew attention to the fact that the servitude had already been departed from in the joint plan by the street and buildings which were shown to extend over the north east tip of his garden.

29. EEC, 6 January 1800 and 10 February 1800.

30. A small angle of garden on the north eastern boundary was however, to be included as part of the other area of land up for sale.

31. He had a nursery down Leith Walk, and a shop near the foot of the West Bow.

32. After first being put up for sale the land was readvertised at least 10 times between February and June 1800 in the Edinburgh newspapers.

33. TCM, 30 April 1800, vol.133. The Bellevue property was at this time owned by the Marquis of Tichfield; within the grounds of the house there was a porter's lodge, gardener's house, hot houses, greenhouses, ice house and rabbit house. The furniture of the mansion (excluding the mirrors on the doors in the large livingroom, the pianoforte, all the paintings and prints, and the wine in the cellar) were included in the selling price of £21,000. The house had been advertised in the Edinburgh Evening Courant on 17 August 1799. For further details refer Section 3.6.

34. The pasturage of the Parks of Bellevue was let by Public Roup to George Willoughby, Flesher, for one year at £142 - TCM, 19 November 1800, v.134; the sale of the timber was also done by auction - TCM, 3 December 1800, v.134; likewise the plants and vines (TCM, 28 January 1801, vol.134). Some of the plants were donated to the Botanic Garden at the request of Dr. Rutherford, Professor of Botany (TCM, 4 February 1801, v.134).


37. Sederunt book, Bridges Committee, 26 August 1766: the box and medal were together valued at 25 guineas.

38. Most likely because the information in the Town Council Minutes is rather ambiguously indexed under "lands to the north".


40. See: Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, Howard Colvin, op. cit., p.287.

41. New picture of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, printed by William Whyte & Co., ND, pps.159-160. Baine is similarly referred to as one of the architects Scotland could boast of in Alexander Campbell's Journey from Edinburgh through parts of North Britain, 1802, p. 278.

42. Edinburgh School of Design, John Mason, OEG, vol.27, 1949, p.70 and 75. Baine's name seems to have been spelt either with or without an 'e' at the end.

43. There were 7 applicants for the post left vacant by Alexander Runciman's death, and the engraver David Allan was selected for it.

44. Edinburgh Advertiser, 28 October 1788.


46. Listed in the 1806 street directory as Robert Morison, architect, 28 North Castle Street; he most likely came to Edinburgh some time before this date as an R. Morison, drawing master, head of Middry Street, is to be found in the street directory of 1799: in 1796 he appears to have been one of the candidates for the Mastership of the School of Design following David Allan's death.

47. Numbers 24-30 Howe Street have been definitely ascribed to him.

48. Unclassified drawing, Edinburgh District Council, archival drawing collection. The "Senior" after William Sibbald's name removes any doubt as to which Sibbald might have entered for the competition (refer Section 2.3 note 3).

49. An exploratory memoir to accompany the plan proposed for the Buildings intended to be raised on the Grounds of Bellevue belonging to the City of Edinburgh; and of those to the west belonging to Heriots Hospital and to David Steuart esq. John Baine, EUL Manuscript Room, Laing collection, Div II, No.415.

485.
50. Baine instead relegated the "common people" to the wynds and closes of the old town - which could hardly claim to provide the necessary conditions upheld by him for good living!

51. GHT Minutes, 1 June 1801, vol.16, pps. 36-37.

52. TCM, 16 December 1801, vol.136.

53. The Royal Engineers provided some of the best trained surveyors in the 18th and 19th centuries; officers were allowed to take on outside commissions and were often involved in such tasks as the laying out of roads and streets; they were particularly in demand when the railway era began. Information from Mr Thorburn, National Services Museum.

54. The same age as James Craig when he was awarded the premium for the layout of the first New Town.

55. In 1803 Reid was appointed by the Trustees of Public Buildings to design the new law courts in Parliament Square and this marked the start of his life as a public architect. From 1807-1810 he carried out alterations on the old parliament buildings besides St. Giles, both on the interior and exterior. On the strength of his work on the new law court he obtained a warrant in 1808 authorising him to assume the title of King's Architect and Surveyor in Scotland; this was purely an honorary title with no emoluments to the holder. Two years later he produced plans and elevations to complete the University (not carried out) and also new designs for St. George's Church in Charlotte Square. Both these had originally been designed by Robert Adam, and later Reid was to work on the completion of another Adam building - Register House in 1822. In 1824 Reid succeeded James Brodie as Master of Works and Architect to the King of Scotland at £200 per annum, and in this capacity became involved in the design of St. Andrew's University, Perth prison, and the Customs House in Leith. In 1827 Reid persuaded the Government to set up a Scottish office of works with himself as head (being paid £500 per annum with offices in Parliament Square). This position was finally abolished in 1839 when Reid was 66 years old. Some of his earlier work has been criticised as being rather heavy and dull. He was commissioned by the Heriot Trust and the Town Council to prepare elevations of houses in Heriot Row and Drummond Place. Information from: Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, Howard Colvin, op. cit., pps. 674-676.

56. Edinburgh Street directory, 1797-1798.

57. Once described by Henry Cockburn as a "prominent deformity"; it was extensively altered and added to in 1870 by David Bryce, architect.
58. TCM, 30 December 1801, vol.136: GHT Minutes, 31 December 1801, vol.16, p.61. The north east part would have included the Bellevue Crescent area - for further details see Section 3.8.

59. An Act of Parliament for the extension of the Royalty northward beyond the first New Town to include the area within the new ground plan was not however obtained until 1809, when the town obtained absolute rights to the lands of Bellevue: see - An Act for extending the Royalty of the City of Edinburgh (and other matters including the draining of the Meadows, two new churches etc), George III, 26 April 1809, cap 21.

60. Refer: Memorials of his time, Henry Cockburn, op. cit., p.287.

61. David Steuart had drawn attention to this as far back as 1797. In 1804 the interim owners of Steuart's feu - William Kerr, and John Pitcairn wrote to the Heriot Trust objecting to the crescent on grounds that "it will be most detrimental to our interests": they expressed willingness to sell some of their garden in order to allow the street to be continued in a straight line, and seemed unaware of any servitude existing on the land: GHT Minute, 27 February 1804, vol.16., pps.248-249.

62. His account submitted to the Heriot Trust amounted to £105 (GHT Minutes, 23 January 1804, vol.16, p.239); he would also have received payments from the Town Council and David Steuart's trustees.

63. These were: Rev. John Kemp, Minister in Edinburgh, William Ker, Secretary to the General Post Office, John Pitcairne, Merchant, and James Richardson younger, of Pitfour.

64. TCM, 31 March 1802, v.136, pps.373-74: the Council authorised the Treasurer to sign on behalf of the City. Full details of the contract are not given in the minutes and no separate document has been found. A signed ground plan by Robert Reid was discovered in the Edinburgh District Council archival drawing collection on which is written: "Edinburgh, 23 March 1802. This is the plan referred to in the contract entered into between the City of Edinburgh, the Governors of George Heriots Hospital, and David Steuart for building on the grounds belonging to them". (fig. 117).

65. Changes could be made provided they were an "improvement" and received the consent of the Lord President of the Court of Session, the Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, and the Lord Advocate for Scotland. The Heriot Trust took advantage of this to make alterations to the Royal Circus employing William Playfair to make out revised plans (Section 3.7).

66. The land had been offered to the Town Council for £8,000 but was declined. See: TCM, 12 December 1804, vol.141.
Both the 1802 and 1806 contracts appear to have been wholly concerned with the ground plan: detailed control of the building side was maintained by the various requirements listed in the articles of roup (and usually repeated in the feu charters) common to all the parties involved.

Any such building was not to be higher than 30 feet (9m). Also the ground in the ridge of the roof, nor to rise higher than 5 feet (1.5m) above the level of Queen Street. It was also stipulated that the well-purposing the ground on the north was not to be more than 5 feet (1.5m) above Queen Street.

This was a fairly common method used in a number of fund raising projects including, for example, the setting up of the Oak Company, the Assembly House, the Victorian Bridges and Agent development, and so on.

1802 Act of Parliament, 1st George XV, Cap.52, Local interest.

Scheduled for the third Wednesday after the passing of the Act at 1 p.m. in the National Hotel, or other "suitable" day.

Half of that money was to be drawn from the Queen Street gardens, 6 from owners of houses in Harrot Row and Queen Street (between Harrot and Frederick Street), and 6 from proprietors of houses west of Frederick Street. Proprietors of houses in Queen Street and Harrot Row were so defined if any of their windows faced or opened onto the streets even if their main door or entrance was elsewhere.

For the Queen Street Gardens this was to be an annual payment of £2 per share. In case of the other districts the second was to be based on the rents of the property itself, or according to the width of the frontage. Such an assessment was not to exceed 1% annually of the police rental of the dwelling for the purposes of the road, or 1% annually on such rentals for purposes of maintaining, levelling and laying out.

Each meeting had to be advertised in at least 3 Edinburgh newspapers 20 days prior to being held.

The 1620 was first raised at the annual meeting of all garden proprietors in 1812 (Queen Street garden Minutes book, General Specifications 1822-1825, Minutes 19 May 1825), but the General Commissioners' Report 2 years later was not over enthusiastic: no reply had been received from the General District; the eastern district consisted in "... not expedient at present"; and the western district though the idea presented as their garden was still unfinished although they forecasted the notion of a temple or archway, and also said "... that it ought to be lost altogether" (Queen Street garden Minutes book of General Specifications 1812-1817, Minutes 15 May 1815, Queen Street Act, Clerk's records). In 1822 the General Commissioners of all 3 gardens decided to consult Mr. Brown, City Surveyor et
3.2 THE QUEEN STREET GARDENS: GENERAL INTRODUCTION INCLUDING DETAILS OF THE 1822 ACT OF PARLIAMENT


2. Any such building was not to be higher than 20 feet (6.1m) from the ground to the ridge of the roof, nor to rise higher than 5 feet (1.52m) above the level of Queen Street; it was also stipulated that the wall enclosing the ground on the south was not to be more than 6 feet (1.83m) above Queen Street.

3. This was a fairly common method used in a number of fund raising projects including for example, the setting up of the Gas Company, the Assembly Rooms, the Waterloo Bridge and Regent road development, and so on.


5. Scheduled for the third Monday after the passing of the Act at 1 p.m. in the Waterloo Hotel, or other "lawful" day.

6. Half of that number were to be drawn from the Queen Street gardens, 6 from owners of houses in Heriot Row and Queen Street (between Hanover and Frederick Street), and 6 from proprietors of houses west of Frederick Street. Proprietors of houses in Queen Street and Heriot Row were so defined if any of their windows fronted or opened onto the street even if their main door or entrance was elsewhere.

7. For the Queen Street Gardens this was to be an annual payment of £2 per share; in the case of the other districts the amount was to be based on the rentals of the property itself, or according to the width of the frontages: such an assessment was not to exceed 10% annually of the police rental of the dwelling for the purchase of the ground, or 2% annually on such rentals for purposes of enclosing, levelling and laying out.

8. Such meetings had to be advertised in at least 3 Edinburgh newspapers 10 days prior to being held.

9. The idea was first raised at the annual meeting of all garden proprietors in 1823 (Queen Street Garden Minute book, General Proprietors 1820-1920, Minute 19 May 1823), but the General Commissioners' report 2 years later was not over enthusiastic; no reply had been received from the Central district; the eastern district considered it "... not expedient at present"; and the western district thought the idea premature as their garden was still unfinished although they favoured the notion of a tunnel or archway, and also felt "... that this great object should not be lost sight of" (Queen Street garden Minute book of General Commissioners 1822-1917, Minute 16 May 1825, Queen Street East, Clerk's records). In 1828 the General Commissioners of all 3 gardens decided to consult Mr. Brown, City Surveyor on...
the feasibility and cost of forming underground tunnels
(Minute book of General Commissioners, Minute 9 May 1828)
but there is no record of what transpired. Presumably the cost
was too great for when the matter was next raised in the 1830s
no reference is made to tunnels but access instead by common
keys - a method not favoured by the General Commissioners. The
last reference to the possibility of extending access was in
1855 (see: Queen Street Gardens, Minute book of General
proprietors 1822-1920, Minutes: 21 May 1832, 20 May 1833;
19 May 1834; 21 May 1855).

Buchanan to by Thomas Bevanville in his diary: My Life and Times
1741-1855, excerpts of which are to be found in Minutes of
Queen's Park, Scottish Mortgage and Mortuary 1754-1988,
apples and other exotic fruits would only be successfully grown
with the aid of hot houses, and according to another source -
Alexander Carlyle. Baron.ord at Dees, and Baron, Stewart Munro,ας
were the first to have such facilities in Scotland - which
apparently were not in "present numbers" until 1830. The
proprietors of Queen Street Gardens, Minutes: 21 May 1832, 20 May 1833;
19 May 1834; 21 May 1855).

The annual fair duty on all the tenanted private garden areas
along Queen Street was similarly based on a grain four: this
method of calculation continued until 1830 when it was announced
into a money stipend under the Settling (Scotland) Act of
the same year.

For the first few years after the gardens had been acquired as a
mechanical pleasure ground apples and peas from it were sold off
annually. Although by today's standards this provided a large
garden, later applied to the Hermit Trust for the large of
additional land - 30 acres (0. ha) of the northern part of
Queen's Park, 3 acres adjoining Bevanville Hill - but for
that purpose is not known: QSG Minutes, 30 January 1771, vol.10;
3.3 THE EAST QUEEN STREET GARDENS


2. Robert Ord was the son of John Ord, Solicitor, and under Sheriff of Newcastle from 1685-1703. He inherited Hunstanworth and was MP for Morpeth from 1741-1755, when he was appointed Lord Chief Baron, see: Burke's Landed Gentry, 1856, p.1390.

3. Boswell's life of Johnson, edited G. Birbeck Hill, vol.15, OUP 1850, p.28. Ord regularly entertained a wide circle of friends including Henry MacKenzie (1745-1831), author of "The man of feeling" who had first started to practise law at Ords Court. He and David Hume, the philosopher and historian frequently met there to play whist and piquet. Ord's daughters were considered particularly musical and accomplished; the eldest, Elizabeth married the famous Scottish judge Lord Braxfield. See: Anecdotes and Egotisms, Henry MacKenzie, edited by Harold Thompson, OUP, London 1927, p.170.

4. Referred to by Thomas Sommerville in his diary: My life and times 1741-1814, excerpts of which are to be found in: Diaries of Eminent Scotsmen, Scottish Diaries and Memoirs 1745-1843, edited J. G. Fyfe, Enas Mackay, Stirling, 1942, p.227. Pine-apples and other exotic fruit could only be successfully grown with the aid of hot houses, and according to another source - Alexander Carlyle, Baron Ord at Dean, and Baron Stuart Moncrieffe were the first to have such facilities in Scotland - which apparently were not in "great numbers" until 1780; See Anecdotes and Characters of the Times, Alexander Carlyle, ed. J. Kinsley, OUP 1973, p.255.

5. GHT Minutes, 10 April 1769, vol.10, p.55; the 2½ acres (1 ha) did not however lie "... in a proper manner fronting the area where the house was to be built but off at the east side thereof", so that it became necessary to exchange part of it for ground on the west which the Town Council had a right to: TCM, 26 April 1769, vol.85.

6. The annual feu duty on all the subsequent private garden areas along Queen Street was similarly based on a grain feu; this method of calculation continued until 1924 when it was converted into a money stipend under the Conveyancing (Scotland) Act of the same year.

7. For the first few years after the garden had been acquired as a communal pleasure ground apples and pears from it were sold off annually. Although by today's standards Ord possessed a large garden, he later applied to the Heriot Trust for the lease of additional land - 20 acres (8 ha) of the northmost part of Thomas Wood's farm adjoining Stockbridge Mill land - but for what purpose is not known: GHT Minutes, 28 January 1771, vol.10.


10. The house and garden were advertised for sale together in the Edinburgh Advertiser (15 November 1785) but were in the end sold separately.

11. GHT Minutes, 8 October 1781, vol.12, p.156; Chartulary 4, p.208.

12. This house had been built by former Lord Provost Dalrymple and was advertised for sale in the Edinburgh Advertiser on 8 November 1781: Steuart may have rented it while awaiting the completion of a house he was having built at 28 Queen Street, (refer Section 3.5).

13. From 1788 onwards Steuart's Queen Street address is no longer listed in Williamsons Street directory.

14. Keys portraits, op. cit., vol.1, p.236. Major Aytoun of Inchdarnie in Fife became one of the Lieutenant Colonels of the Royal Edinburgh volunteers - formed in 1794 to help defend the country against possible French invasion. Numbers 9 and 10 Queen Street were demolished in 1844 to make way for the present hall of the Royal College of Physicians designed by Thomas Hamilton.

15. Information from: British family Antiquity: illustrative of the origins and progress of the Rank, Honours and Personal merit of the nobility in the United Kingdom, vol.8, William Playfair, London, published by Thomas Renolds & Harvey Grace 1811. Sir William was twice married and died in 1828: the name is also found spelt Cunningham.


18. GHT Chartulary 5, p.143, Charter dated 17 April 1786.

19. Peters letters to his Kinsfolk, John Gibson Lockhart, ed. William Ruddock, Scottish Academic Press, 1977, p.26. Sir Walter Scott's Character Paul Pleydell in Guy Mannering was partly based "In the external circumstances but not in frolic of fancy" on Adam Rolland (see Scots Journal, 19 June 1830); he was also the subject of a vivid and amusing character sketch by Henry Cockburn. Rolland's portrait was painted by Sir Henry Raeburn.

21. GHT disposition, 13 March and 1 April 1802: the names of all the new owners are listed in TCM, 31 March 1802, vol.136, p.373-4 and were as follows: Rev. Dr John Kemp, Minister in Edinburgh, William Kerr, Secretary to the General Post Office, John Pitcairne, Merchant and James Richardson younger of Pitfour.

22. George Winton (1759-1822) is described as 'architect' on a large monument in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard: his partner, Thomas Morrison (1761-1819) also interred in the same churchyard simply has "builder" after his name. Both men were successful masons and master builders and responsible for building houses in Albany Street, Abercromby Place, Dublin Street, and Northumberland Street (SRO, Edinburgh sasines). Morrison bequeathed his money for the foundation of a school for young people which was finally built at Grief in 1860 and known as Morrisons Academy Boys School (see Morrison's Academy prospectus).


24. GHT Minute, 28 February 1812, vol.19, p.214-7; TCM, 11 March 1812 vol.160, p.181-182. Reference to this roadway has also been found mentioned in an advertisement for a house for sale in Abercromby Place in 1810 - see Edinburgh Advertiser, 19 January 1810 (fig. 118e).

25. Contract between the Governors of the George Heriot Trust, and George Winton and others, April 1807; part of David Steuart's feu disposed in 5 lots to Robert Hill WS and others, proprietors of houses on the west side of Duke Street. (GHT Archives): thus one of the last stretches of Gabriell's Road the ancient way from Silvermills to the old town was finally obliterated. Many years later one of these newly extended gardens became built on (York buildings, Queen Street) although this was contrary to the original servitude placed on the land.

26. Mention of part of the garden as a coal yard is given in: Memorial for the Commissioners of the Eastern district of the Queen Street gardens, East Queen Street Gardens, Minute book 2, 10 February 1855.

27. Discovered amongst the records of the Queen Street Central gardens.

28. On behalf of himself and other owners of David Steuart's feu.

29. This involved the smoothing off of the northern boundary of the 2 gardens into a gentle curve and providing a continuous cope and rail.
30. The Street directory shows him to be in residence at 29 Abercromby Place from 1819 onwards.

31. To such an extent that: "... he could satisfy his craving for reform with scarcely any scheme that fell short of revolution" - see Modern Athenians 1837-1847, Crombie, 1882 edition, op. cit., p.70. Aytoun had moved from 37 Queen Street to 21 Abercromby Place.

32. TCM 20 January 1813, vol.162. The ground "given into the garden" must have been the north eastern angle which formed part of the Duke Street - south side of Abercromby Place development.

33. The sum of money seems to have been later increased to £160. See TCM 16 June 1813, v.163: letter from John Morison WS dated 13 June 1813 accepting £160 plus the angle of the city's ground to be taken into the garden once the enclosure of the ground is completed.

34. This and the following information is taken from the various subscription papers in possession of the Clerk: Queen Street East garden records.

35. At 7½ per cent.

36. The rent paid by the tenant was £72 per annum.

37. William Bell was the third son of Benjamin Bell of Hunthill, the noted Edinburgh surgeon. He ran a busy legal practice and was appointed Crown Agent between 1840 and 1841: see The History of the Society of Writers to his Majesty's Signet, op. cit., p.76.


39. TCM, 11 August 1813, vol. 164. This and the following information is taken from these minutes.

40. Payment to start as soon as the land was feued, and on condition that the Town Council would have the right to transfer one or both shares to any other of their property feued or still remaining to be feued.

41. A copy of this circular, dated December 1813 was found amongst the papers belonging to the Queen Street Central garden records, and held by the Clerk.

42. Sir John Carr, an English traveller who visited Edinburgh in 1809, remarked about Queen Street that "... It is truly delightful to join the evening promenade in this street when the sun is shedding his last light upon this exquisite prospect, and also shining upon a number of well dressed and beautiful..."

43. As described in the various Edinburgh and Leith Street directories of this period. Hay started his life as a seedsman, and became a burgess of the City of Edinburgh in 1807. He had premises in Bank Street off the Mound, but later moved to Catherine Street (part of Leith Walk) - a popular area for nursery firms. He was an active member of the Caledonian Horticultural Society, and a friend of Dr. Patrick Neill. In 1817 he accompanied Neill and James McDonald, gardener to the Duke of Buccleuch on a horticultural tour through part of Belgium, Holland and North France which had been financed by the Society on the suggestion of Sir John Sinclair.

44. Minute Book 1, George Square Gardens (now in possession of Edinburgh University). These gardens were formed between 1814 and 1815 and Hay was paid £150 in fees. He was well placed to provide close supervision for in 1812 he had moved from Bank Street to 35 Nicholson Square - just opposite to the riding school.


46. The Edinburgh Observer or Town and Country magazine, October 11, 1817, pp70cit.

47. An account of the early history of the gardens in relation to administrative matters is to be found outlined in the following document: "Memorial for William Bell WS on behalf of the Eastern district of Queen Street Gardens in cause Lady Ashburton - to prepare condensation 1833" (In connection with Lady Ashburton's 10 years arrears of her share; Queen Street East, Miscellaneous documents.

48. The Trust deed was not formally granted for several years - not until 14 August 1820, and 12 July 1821; and recorded in the books of Council and Session, 11 August 1821. The trustees for the proprietors were as follows: - Sir John Connell, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, John Wauchope WS, Richard Hutchkis WS, Roger Aytoun WS, John Campbell Quartus WS and William Bell WS.

49. He was to receive his instructions from the Committee appointed at a general meeting of proprietors: his main responsibilities were the laying of the annual payments due by subscribers, together with the sum necessary to cover the costs of running the garden - including ground rent, feu duty, gardener's wage, workmen, tradesmen, and so on.
50. One week's notice by advertisement in one of the Edinburgh newspapers, either on the initiative of the Committee or by requisition signed by 7 proprietors: all meetings to be held on a Monday at 2 pm in the garden house, and the annual general meeting on the third Monday in May at 2 pm: resolutions of meetings to be decided by the majority of proprietors present.

51. Memorandum by William Bell, 1 March 1820, entitled: "Proposition respecting Queen Street gardens". Paper in possession of the Clerk to the Queen Street East gardens. This and the following information is taken from this memorandum.

52. Information from: Memorial for William Bell on behalf of the Eastern district of Queen Street gardens in cause Lady Ashburton, op. cit.

53. The Committee had looked in detail at the method of transferring shares and had discovered that the only other comparable establishment in Edinburgh with a similar system was the Theatre - the shares of which were transferred by disposition and seisin; in this case the cost of the deeds was very great and the Committee decided it was not feasible to adopt this method for the gardens.

54. It helped in any case to spread the cost of obtaining the Act: financial outgoing for which amounted to £500. Half was met by the Queen Street east gardens, and the rest equally divided between the Queen Street Central and Western garden. Help with drafting the Bill was also given by John Wauchop, and the Solicitor General Wedderburn - one of the first Commissioners of the Queen Street West gardens, although he died later in 1822.

55. Proprietors were also given the option of making a lump sum payment of £7.50 per share. Sederunt book of General Meetings of the proprietors (1822-1836), Minute 9 July 1822.

56. The materials of the old wall were sold off by auction, one lot being purchased by Messrs Traquair and Dobson, builders for £13, and the other by John Alison, builder for £18.75: Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street Gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836) Accounts, 12 March 1823.

57. The new name given to members of the management committee following the 1822 Act of Parliament.

58. Sederunt book of General Meetings of Queen Street Gardens or The Eastern District (1822-1836) Minute, 19 May 1823.

to about £130. Work on the wall and railing cost £80 — Mr Henry builder, being responsible for the wall and coping, and Mr Forest, blacksmith for the railings.

60. EEC, 11 November 1822.

61. Sederunt book of General meetings of Queen Street Gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836) Minute 18 May, 1829.

62. The Sederunt books however, contain few references to flowers in the garden: the only varieties named are dahlias (1845), pansies (1847) and wallflowers (1870-71).

63. Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street Gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836) Minute 18 May 1829. The walks were reported as being in a very bad state although action had also been prompted by fear that the only gravel pit in the neighbourhood was soon to close.

64. Sederunt book of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens or the Eastern District (1837-1860): Accounts 1839-1840: this Sederunt Book comprises a series of accounts, and lists of proprietors, with no records of any of the meetings held.


67. Graham had suggested that all 3 Queen Street gardens should plant a row of matching trees, and at the same distance on each side of the cross streets, and along Queen Street and Heriot Row - either of limes or elms. This was agreed to by the Commissioners of all 3 gardens with the proviso that the trees should not be placed closer to the railings than 10' (3m); see Queen Street gardens - Minute book of the General Commissioners (1822-1917), Minute 27 February 1837; Queen Street East - Clerk's records.

68. And a new house built on the south side, or else the gardener being allowed a wage increase to cover the cost of renting a house elsewhere. Only 2 other pleasure gardens had gardeners houses within the grounds: the West Princes Street gardens, and the Royal Terrace/London Road gardens.

69. Sederunt book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minutes 26 July 1859; 2 April 1860; McNab advised on the replanting but no details are given in the minutes.

70. Report on East Queen Street Gardens, James McNab, 21 March 1867; Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893).
Although considerable improvements had been made to it in 1860 under the supervision of Charles McGibbon, architect, see Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minutes: 18 October 1860 and 10 April 1861.

This and the previous information was taken from: Statement on behalf of the Commissioners of East Queen Street Garden to the proprietors and others interested, 23 January 1868. Miscellaneous paper in the Clerks records.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893). Minute 8 July 1867.

SRO, RHP 1391: layout for Wester Coates (Grosvenor Crescent and Street, Riccarton Place, and Lifton Terrace). Information on Robert Matheson was obtained from: National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS).

Statement on behalf of the Commissioners 23 January 1868, op. cit.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 1 April 1868.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 11 December 1867.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 11 December 1867. Report submitted by McNab to the Improvement Committee, dated 18 December 1867.

The opportunity for this had arisen on the amalgamation of the former Experimental garden held by the Caledonian Horticultural Society with the Botanic garden. McNab used a lot of the old building material from the high wall which separated the two for the creation of his highly unusual if not rather extraordinary rock garden which was completed between 1870-1871; and bearing little resemblance to the present day one: see The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 1670-1970, Harold Fletcher & William Brown, Edinburgh, HMSO 1970 pp. 159-163, and plate 8. McNab’s somewhat negative response to the idea of a continuous terrace along the Abercromby Place side seems to have led to its abandonment.

Statement on behalf of the Commissioners of East Queen Street Gardens to the proprietors and others interested, 23 January 1868, op. cit.

Sederunt book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 15 June 1868.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 30 June 1868.
83. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minute 9 July 1868.

84. The money spent on forming the terrace was in fact surprisingly little: about £30 was spent on labouring help - some of which was deployed in other parts of the garden - Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East, (1857-1893) Minute 26 February 1869.

85. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Queen Street East (1857-1893) Minutes 13 August 1868; 12 October 1868 and 16 February 1869.

86. The bars of the new railings were placed 5 inches (12.5cms) apart - of sufficient width to allow stray dogs to squeeze through, and this proved particularly troublesome especially on the Abercromby Place side. To overcome this problem wire mesh was eventually added (Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, (1857-1893); minute 24 March 1874) but later intermediate rails were added (Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, (1857-1893), Minute 6 April 1887). In 1942 the railings along most of Queen Street were removed for war purposes, but a new one of plain design was erected in 1948 by special licence after it had been shown that the gardens were being abused, and that a number of police convictions had taken place (Sederunt Book Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 17 November 1947).

Mr Reid, blacksmith, Buccleuch Place carried out the work and the cost was met by a special subscription.

87. Later found impractical because of dampness: its attraction for children as a hideout, and consequent fire hazard has required the entrance to be firmly boarded up.

88. He later lived and ran his architects practice at 25 Rutland Square: Blanc appears to have been a versatile architect, responsible for various churches eg St. Cuthberts (1894), Christ Church Episcopal, Morningside (1875); restoration work - Edinburgh Castle, great hall (1888) and Argyll Tower (1887), and other general commissions.

89. No trace of this plan has been found but it is referred to in: Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893), Minute 12 October 1868.

90. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 3 April 1878. Improvements to the drainage of the lower part of the garden was left until 1877; by this time the existing drains were old and broken, and unable to cope with an unprecedented wet summer. New tile drains were laid, and the Council constructed a new connecting drain across Abercromby Place. The steep east and central walks were provided with clay channels (see Minutes: 6 March 1877; 28 March 1877; 10 November 1877; 14 November 1877; 9 January 1878; 28 March 1878; 3 April 1878, 2 April 1879.)
91. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 29 November 1869.

92. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 3 April 1872; 24 March 1874; 4 croquet boxes were provided with locks and keys which were rented out for a small fee each season.


95. Sederunt Book, Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 4 April 1946: this large, rather ugly nissen hut was bought from the War Department in 1946 for £5 for use as a garden hut and store; it stands in a prominent position on what was once a tennis court on the south side of the garden. McNab no doubt would have described it as "a great deformity".

96. The Cockburn Association (The Edinburgh Civic Trust) Newsletter 27 April 1984, p.11.

97. Provision was made in the 1822 Act for 4 new Commissioners to be elected each year - allowing the opportunity for "new blood" to be added from time to time, but elections have rarely been contested and usually term-served Commissioners willing to stand for a further period have simply been reinstated.

98. Sederunt Book, Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 5 May 1937.

99. Sederunt book of General Meetings of Queen Street Gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836); Minute 10 May 1835; only 3 shareholders attended this last meeting.

100. Sederunt Book, Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 8 December 1949.

101. Sederunt Book, Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 13 April 1955: A number of issues had arisen in the early 1950s on which it was felt that shareholders should be consulted. These included the removal of several old trees, a proposal by the Town Council to build a public lavatory on a piece of ground within the garden adjoining York buildings (abandoned) and the provision of a sand pit. Ian McNarg, now Professor of Landscape at Pennsylvania University and active campaigner on matters concerning environmental pollution participated in some of these general meetings; Minute 6 May 1952.
102. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minutes 3 April 1857; 17 April 1858.

103. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 25 November 1881; Dicksons were engaged at £100 for the first year and £80 for subsequent years. For this sum they undertook to lock and unlock the gates morning and evening, to keep a man in attendance from 8 April until 8 October, for a man to attend in the evenings "when necessary", and the keeping of the ground "in first class order". The firm was allowed to dispose of the grass cuttings (the first lawn mower was not bought until 1886), and the use of the garden's equipment including roller, barrows, ladder and snow plough.

104. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 1 November 1883.

105. To help with the purchase of the land the sellers had proposed that half the total sum of £2,250 be paid outright, and the remainder as a perpetual ground rent - at 7½%. More than half the sum required was raised, and the ground rent therefore based on a lesser amount ie £1,920. The ground rents were originally made up as follows: £28.80 payable to Sir William Cunningham; £14.40 to Roger Aytoun WS; £16.80 to John Morison WS; £16.80 to John Morison as Trustee disponee of Maxwell Gordon WS; £33.60 to George Winton, builder; £16.80 to George Winton, Robert Wright, builder, John Baxter, glazier, and John Young WS as Trustee for James Nisbet, plasterer; and £16.80 to Thomas Morison, builder.

106. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 14 October 1880.

107. For some reason the payment of ground rent to Nisbet's trustees lapsed for several years, and in 1853 an account book records that money owing to the trustees amounted (together with interest) to £584. This was met by levying a special assessment of 50p on all the shareholders, and the debt was finally cleared in 1880; Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens, or the East District (1837-1880); Accounts 1855-1856.

108. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minutes 14 October 1880, and 2 November 1880. This particular ground rent had first been held by Sir William Cunningham but had subsequently been sold.

109. This had been advertised for sale at Dowells; Sederunt Book, Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 29 April 1918.

110. Amounting to about £60 in the 1860s.

111. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Minute 29 March 1867.
112. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 8 June, 1939.


114. Information from the Clerk: only 2 offices in Queen Street contribute, and together hold 5 shares.

115. Sederunt Book, General Meeting of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836); Accounts, 2 March 1823.

116. Part of the ambitious programme of improvement work during the late 1860s was funded in this way; also the cost of adding intermediate railings in 1875-1876 to prevent dogs gaining access. The new railing erected along Queen Street in 1947 was financed in a similar manner.

117. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 4 April 1921; this system seems to have been acceptable to the shareholders for there are no records of anyone having refused payment.

118. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 31 October 1947: it was resolved at this meeting to call a general meeting of shareholders to tell them of the financial situation and to propose an increase in the assessment to a sum not exceeding £5. No separate record exists of the general meeting itself.

119. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 31 March 1964.

120. At present fixed at £2,000 per annum, subject to yearly review.

121. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 13 April, 1955.

122. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893); Report by Committee appointed by the Commissioners of Eastern District of Queen Street gardens to consider the right of parties with reference to the use of doors leading into the gardens from the Duke Street back greens and the regulations to be made in reference thereto, 1867. This provides a useful history of the Duke Street rear garden access and also incidental details relating to the sale of the land, previous proprietors, and early rules and regulations.

123. Childhood Memories: Reverend William Robertson DD, Scotsman, 5 April 1939.

124. Refer footnote 1.
125. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Queen Street East (1857-1893), Minute, 20 December 1883: 33 shareholders signed the petition.

126. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970), Minute 31 March 1913.


128. Edinburgh Advertiser, 13 August 1822.

129. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute 2 April 1906; the Artillary were allowed access on Tuesday and Friday evenings from 13 March until 15 May from 7.30-9.30 p.m.

130. Sederunt Book of Eastern District Commissioners (1894-1970); Minute, October 1941: the 11th City of Edinburgh Home Guard Battalion were allowed to train from 10-1 p.m. Sundays, with occasional night practice. Any trench digging was forbidden.

131. Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836), Minute 19 May 1828.

132. Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836), Minute 18 May 1829.

133. Pillans was Professor at Edinburgh University for 43 years; he was one of the first men to advocate Government inspection of schools, and promoted humane views on school discipline. While Rector of the High School he abolished corporal punishment in his own class; see Story of the University of Edinburgh, Vol.2, Sir Alexander Grant, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1884, p.321.

134. Sederunt Book of General Meetings of Queen Street gardens or the Eastern District (1822-1836), Minute 16 May 1831.


136. Edinburgh Evening News, 19 February 1971, "Park Plan dropped". Councillor Hugh Macpherson who instigated the idea in Council, did not pursue his motion after an overwhelming vote in his own progressive group against the plan. Labour members of the Highways and Road Safety Committee had also vigorously opposed it.

137. Edinburgh Evening News, 5 March 1971 article by James Gray entitled "We must give them a chance to park cars": Hugh Macpherson's proposals to provide underground car parking beneath the Queen Street gardens is discussed in some detail.


3.4 THE CENTRAL QUEEN STREET GARDENS

1. Reekieana, James Skene of Rubislaw; typescript of manuscript, EPL, 1836, p.10.

2. The Heriot Trust, feu superiors had tacked the land to Rachel Anderson, wife of Robert Robertson, a farmer at Broughton. The couple had entered into a joint sub tack with the Town Council on payment by the latter of £264 for a period of 36 years; the farmer also insisted that as part of the bargain his wife should be given a gown, and consequently the City Chamberlain was authorised to pay a sum "... not exceeding 7 guineas" for this purpose (TCM, 26 April 1769, and 7 May 1769, vol.85 pps. 85 and 97). It would appear that the Town Council via Dr. Webster, a member of the Bridge and Improvement Committee had made the first approach to the farmer for use of his land.

3. GHT Minutes, 17 April 1786, vol.13, p.36.

4. GHT Chartulary 5; Rolland's charter dated 11 April 1786; and Brough's and Blair's charter, 17 April 1786.

5. Part of the 7 acres (2.8 ha) sub tacked by the Town Council also formed part of the eastern end of the West Queen Street gardens, which Robert Allan, banker purchased from the Heriot Trust in 1791.

6. Forbes, Hunter and Co; Sir James Hunter Blair and Sir William Forbes were both apprenticed to the banking firm of John Coutts and Co., founded in the 1730s. They became close friends, and on the death of John Coutts the principal partner in 1763 the two men were admitted to a share of the business; Sir James was then only 22 years old. A few years later they became partners and the name changed in 1773 to Sir William Forbes, J. Hunter and Co. After Sir James' death the business continued as Sir William Forbes and Co. until being taken over by the Union Bank in the late 1830s. The firm financed many New Town projects, including a loan which helped to set up the West Princes Street gardens. Sir William Forbes had a similarly vigorous but longer life, and was closely involved with much philanthropic work: he took an active part in the campaign to keep the East Princes Street gardens as open space. See: Coutts and Co., Bankers, Ralph Richardson, London, Elliot Stock, 1900, pps.106-117; and Kay's portraits and caricatures, op. cit., vol.1, p.62.

7. The foundation stone of which was laid on 1 August 1785. Blair Street and Hunter Square both off the South Bridge were named after him.

8. His wife was the eldest daughter of John Blair of Dunsecy; she succeeded to the estate in 1777 after the death of her several brothers. At this point, Sir James, who was born the second son of Mr John Hunter, a merchant in Ayr, assumed the name of Blair.
9. The harbour was repaired and greatly improved; Port Patrick, 21½ miles (34.6km) from the Irish coast was then the chief port in Scotland for the Irish. However, because of the prevalence of fierce westerly winds at certain times of the year, the coast of Port Patrick was too exposed for a regular ferry service: the harbour improvements eventually fell to ruin and Stranraer took over in importance.

10. **Williamson's Street directories, 1788-1804.**

11. The roads were built between 1803 and 1805: many years later John Bell WS on behalf of Sir David Hunter Blair wrote to the George Heriot Trust pointing out that although earlier complaints had been made the Trust had done nothing to repair the damaged walls; GHT Minutes 24 February 1817, vol.21, pps. 100-101.

12. **Memoirs of a Highland Lady:** Elizabeth Grant, op. cit., p.284: the "long strip of unsightly grass" probably refers to the adjoining feu - a completely neglected wasteland at this time.

13. Disposition Sir David Hunter Blair in favour of James Webster, 1 June 1820, Clerk's papers, Queen Street Central gardens. The Hunter Blair family had originally paid the Heriot Trust £147 for the land - TCM, 21 June 1786, vol.108.

14. GHT Minutes, 9 February 1818, vol.21, pps. 223-4; he also made a further offer in 1819: GHT Minutes 15 April 1819, vol.22, p.32-33.

15. **Tack between James Webster and Robert Winter 1821:** Clerk's papers Queen Street Central gardens. Winter took possession of the land from 19 December 1820.

16. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 30 July, 1822.

17. He also carried on an upholstery and cabinet making business, (refer: The making of Classical Edinburgh, Youngson, op. cit., p.101), but he is simply described as an 'architect' in his obituary notice - see EEC, 5 January 1809.

18. Brough's office was at 4 St. Andrews Street, while he lived at St Anne's Street - a 5 storey tenement parallel to the North Bridge: it was unlikely therefore that he ever intended to use the land as a private garden space.


20. GHT Minutes; 27 February 1804, vol.16., p.263, and 16 April 1804, p.268.

21. GHT Minutes; 3 July 1809, vol.18, pps. 210-211.

22. GHT Minutes; 25 January 1810, vol. 18, pps. 317-321. Perhaps the Trust could be accused of driving rather a hard bargain as they
had bought the land for considerably less: its price however, was carefully calculated on the basis of the cost of purchase in 1804, together with the interest and feu duty up to 1810; the annual feu was to be based on the old grain feu - equivalent to the selling price of 4 bolls, 3 firlots and 3 pecks of barley.

23. John Ferrier WS (1771-1852) was obviously acting as spokesman for the group and was living at this time at 15 East Heriot Row. His wife, Margaret Wilson was the sister of Professor John Wilson, the famous Christopher North of Blackwoods magazine: his unmarried sister Susan Ferrier was authoress of 3 popular satirical novels - Marriage (1813), The Inheritance (1824) and Destiny (1830).

24. GHT Minutes, 7 June 1813, vol.19, pps. 411-412.
25. GHT Minutes, 3 December 1813, vol.20, pps. 91-94.
27. Watson stated in his application to the Trust that he wished to feu the waste ground "for the purpose of a garden" with the right to build a gardener's house: for this he offered to pay £300 (GHT Minute 6 April 1819, vol.22, p.27). He was at this time busy building houses in Drummond Place, and had been granted permission in March 1819 along with other builders, to store materials on the open space at the centre (TCM, March 1819, vol.178).

29. Cunningham and Bell.
32. John Mowbray on behalf of the Heriot Row feuars had raised this possibility in 1813, and also the builder Robert Watson in his application.
33. GHT Minute, 18 February 1820, vol.22, pps.153-156.
34. Circular to the proprietors of East Heriot Row and of Queen Street, between Hanover Street and Frederick Street, 29 February 1820, signed Charles Cunningham, Edinburgh Room, EPL.
35. GHT Minutes, 5 June 1820, vol.22, pps. 226-227; request by Cunningham that the Governors should see to having the street leading from Howe Street to Frederick Street made up and formed,
and that "... this may be done now at a very trifling expense as earth sufficient for the purpose will be got from the foundations of the retaining wall".

36. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 24 June 1822.

37. Corner property in Frederick Street, Hanover Street, and Howe Street with windows directly facing onto the garden area were also included.

38. The other Commissioners included: James Gordon, Advocate, 13 Heriot Row, John Borthwick, Advocate, 16 Queen Street; William Innes, W3, 13 Queen Street; and Thomas Gorrie, 33 Queen Street.

39. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 26 April 1846. Cay held the appointment of Sheriff of Linlithgow from 1822-1865.

40. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 28 June, 1822.

41. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minutes, 3 July 1822; 4 July 1822; 5 July 1822; 8 July 1822; 9 July 1822; 10 July 1822.

42. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 30 July 1822; the final settlement for Webster's ground is mentioned in: Minute 3 October 1822 when a further £43 was demanded by him for the expenses incurred - to which the Commissioners reluctantly agreed to pay.

43. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); George IV visited Edinburgh in August 1822.

44. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 3 July 1822.

45. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 10 July 1822.

46. The police at this time were responsible for many of the duties such as watching, lighting, and cleansing, later taken over by the local authority: they therefore had their own rating list in order to raise sufficient money to cover the cost of these services.

47. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 30 July 1822.

48. Acquired by the surrounding feuars as a pleasure garden (apart from the eastern end - still occupied by Bellevue Mansion) in June 1822; the parapet and iron railing had been erected shortly
before and designed by Thomas Brown (refer Section 3.6). Brown worked for the city from 1819-1847; up until 1825 he also practised privately as an architect and surveyor.

49. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 10 July 1822.

50. A notice of the meeting had been inserted in the Edinburgh Evening Courant, the Caledonian Mercury, the Edinburgh Advertiser, and a printed notice left at every house.

51. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 22 November 1822; this, and the following information is taken from this minute.

52. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 23 December 1822.

53. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 2 April 1823.

54. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute 11 January 1823.

55. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879); Minute of 28 April 1823; which contains a draft printed copy of the Report to the Proprietors; of the same date, which was approved at the meeting.

56. A biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen; originally edited by Robert Chambers; new edition by Rev. Thomas Thomson, vol.3, London, Blackie and Son, 1870, p.536-537; this provides the most detailed, useful and accurate account of Wilson's life so far found. The following quotations used are from this source. An abbreviated version was written by J. L. Cav for the Dictionary of National Biography, vol.21, edited Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, 1909, pp. 77-78; this mistakenly refers to his mother as Elizabeth Shields, instead of his grandmother.

57. The Art Journal, vol. 3, published by George Virtue, London, 1851 p.85: Obituary, Mr Wilson ARSA: this biographical sketch "... by one who knew him intimately" also provides useful detail, and likely to be the most accurate as it was written a year or so after his death; it gives us a clearer picture as to Wilson's own personality.

58. While described as a very old Scottish family it apparently originated from Cumberland - Wilson's grandmother was descended from an old Jacobite family - the Shields of Inveresk; his father practised as a house painter (at the head of Middry's Street) but was not "a fortunate practitioner of this humble branch of art" being without training and educated for another position.
Two based on Tivoli, one of the Valle Piezo, and one "An Italian View"; see The Royal Academy Exhibitions 1769-1904, Algernon Graves, Vol.8, 1906, London, Henry Graves & Co. Ltd., and George Bell and Sons.

A list of accounts kept by Andrew Wilson between September 1803-1805 are preserved in the NLS (Manuscript 3836); the lists give the date of purchase, a brief account of the painting either by subject matter or artist, and the price paid.

The nephew of Rev. William Gilpin (popularist of the Picturesque), water colour painter and later landscape gardener, who for a short period became involved with the East Princes Street gardens (Section 2.5) held a similar post at Sandhurst about the same time; no records remain to verify actual dates of appointments.

His eldest son, Charles Heath Wilson (1809-1882) received some prominence as an architect, painter, and landscape gardener. He became head of the Glasgow School of Design but later, like his father took up permanent residence in Italy.

Paintings of his were displayed in 1811, 1812 and 1813 consisting of a mixture of English and Italian landscapes, with one Scottish subject "... Entrance to Craigmillar Castle", see The Royal Academy Exhibitions 1769-1804, op. cit.

EEC, 1 January 1814; priced at 2 guineas a pair "... early impressions may be had at Mr Wilson's, 12 Broughton Street, for one month from this date".

Lord Kames was also closely involved with the early stages in the development of Edinburgh New Town (Section 2.1). The Board of Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures was set up after the Treaty of Union with England in 1707 with the aim of fostering and encouraging the 2 industries so named "or such other manufacturers and improvements in Scotland as may conduce to the general good of the United Kingdom."

Naysmith had also tried for the post in 1796 on the death of David Allan.

The other applicants were:- William Allan, John Watson, James Howe, Donald McLeod (all from Edinburgh), Alexander Carse (then in England) and Robert Munro (from Montrose). See: The Edinburgh School of Design, John Mason, EEC Vol.27, 1949. Edinburgh T. & A. Constable, pps. 67-96

James Caw, the art historian, for some unknown reason took a somewhat jaundiced view of Wilson, and when writing about him (refer Scottish painting, past and present 1620-1908, Edinburgh T. C. and E. C. Jack 1908) remarked that "... as a teacher he had no very marked success" - an opinion confirmed by no other
critic. Gawn's unfavourable verdict was also reflected in his comments about Wilson's work - that his Scottish scenery were "... wanting in virility and artificial in effect". Wilson in fact painted few Scottish pictures and most are early works in the eighteenth century idealised classical style.

69. The Institution had 24 Directors, headed by the Duke of Argyll. It consisted chiefly of gentlemen, who on payment of £50 became shareholders or life members. The first exhibition was held in York Place in 1819. Professional artists were excluded as voting members and could not be represented on the Committee; this led to the eventual break away of the artists who formed themselves into the Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1826. Annual exhibitions continued up until 1829, and from 1826 onwards were held in the new Royal Institution building at the foot of the Mound.

70. The Art Journal, 1851, op. cit.

71. The King it appeared wished to "judge the state of Art in this country". Three other noted landscape painters took part: the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston, H. W. Williams ("Grecian" Williams) and Alexander Nasmyth; other contributors included Henry Raeburn, Andrew Geddes and George Watson. Wilson in fact helped to mount the exhibition (see, letter dated 12 August 1822 from William Adam, Lord Chief Commissioner to James Skene; and undated letter from Andrew Wilson to Skene: Skene of Rubislaw MSS, micro film copy, SRO).

72. Another matter brought the 2 men closely together at this period: namely the proposal to provide a building at the foot of the Mound capable of accommodating the Trustees Academy, the Royal Society, the Institution of Fine Arts, and the Society of Antiquarians, all of which were in need of larger and more permanent accommodation. Either Wilson, or Skene, or both were key figures in each of the bodies mentioned: Wilson in particular was dissatisfied with the Trustees Academy's cramped space - at the top of a tenement in Picardy Place which in addition suffered from the penetration of smoke and dust from a bakers shop and tavern beneath (the premises had been purchased in 1803 - see: The Edinburgh School of Design, John Mason, op. cit., p.80).

Preliminary plans for a joint building (which became known as the Royal Institution and later the Royal Scottish Academy) had been drawn up in 1820 by William Playfair and revised 2 years later. Wilson, with the help of Thomas Hamilton, Architect, also appears to have drawn up some alternative plans rather to the annoyance of Playfair (see: W. H. Playfair; letter book, Vol.4 1830-1833, letter dated 20 January 1831 to the Lord Provost, EUL Manuscript Room). In 1822 the Board of Trustees agreed to fund most of the cost of the building which was also to provide office accommodation for themselves. Wilson did not stay long enough to enjoy the new and spacious surroundings as he resigned

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from the Mastership just before the rooms were completed in March 1826. After Wilson had gone to live in Italy permanently he remained in contact with Skene, and when 2 of his sons - Charles and John visited Edinburgh both received hospitality from the Skene household. Wilson in his letters however, appears conscious of his humbler status, always addressing Skene as "Dear Sir", and ending with "Your very obedient Servant" (Skene of Rubislaw manuscripts, micro film copies, SRO).

73. This was made possible by the death of his wife's brother - one of the judges of the Supreme Court in Calcutta who left a large fortune to them. In Italy the family lived at different times in Rome, Florence and Genoa, and he remained an active painter both in oils and water colours. During his first years abroad he continued to send paintings for exhibition in Edinburgh, and also to purchase and give advice on works of Art to various collectors in this country (including Sir Robert Peel, the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Hopetoun, Sir Joseph Hawley, Sir John Sebright, Sir Archibald Campbell and others). He also advised and bought paintings for the Royal Institution - laying the foundations of what was to become the National Gallery of Scotland. His successor at the Trustees Academy was William Allan, the historical painter.

74. The Royal Scottish Academy had earlier arranged to hold a dinner in his honour but Wilson had to decline the invitation because of ill health.

75. **Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)**
   Minute, 7 March 1823.

76. **Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)**
   Minute 2 April 1823: the pond would originally have been supplied from a natural spring: as its catchment from the higher land in the Queen Street and George Street area became built over it would have become less and less reliable, hence the need, as today for its level to be maintained from a piped main.

77. **Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)**
   Minute, 30 March 1823.

78. **Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)**
   Minute, 7 March 1823.

79. **Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)**
   Minute, 30 March 1824; and the following information.

80. Its use (largely due to problems of dampness) has long since been superseded by an ugly but functional army nissen hut inherited from the Second World War. The stonework of the original tool house is showing progressive signs of decay and urgently requires attention.

512.
Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute, 20 February 1823.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 7 March 1823 from which the preceding information is also taken. One pump well (no longer in use) still stands close to the eastern entrance on the Heriot Row side.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 2 April 1823. Later accounts show that nearly £36 was spent on plants from Sand's nursery at Kirkcaldy, and £15 from the Dalkeith nursery.

In fact well justified: between the years 1823-1829 the Commissioners bought goods to the value of £89 from Eagle and Henderson's nursery.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute, 17 May 1823.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
8 shillings (40p) a week had been paid to the most experienced labourers.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 21 July 1823; 8 December 1823.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 30 March 1824.

The restoration work was carried out by the nursery firm of Messrs Young and Thomson at the cost of £417; the railings were erected by Thomas Bogle and Sons; a special assessment of 1 shilling (5p) in the pound upon the rental was levied to cover the cost of £568: see Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1820-1853), Minutes 26 November 1847 and 7 December 1848.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute, 23 February 1829.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 17 February, 1875.

Memorials of his time, Henry Cockburn, op. cit., p.411.

Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879)
Minute 2 March 1837.

Moray Bank Minute book "No.2": Minute 24 July 1838; Moray feuars, Clerks records: see also drawing by James Jardine, signed and dated 28 June 1838, entitled 'Design of Piers, Arches, Parapets, etc proposed to be erected on the westward of Moray Place and of Ainslie Place: RH: 6793/1.
95. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Minute, 23 February 1829.

96. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Accounts 31 March 1842.

97. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Circular dated 1 May 1847.

98. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Minute 26 April 1846: changes to the railings had first been considered in that year, and agreed to at a general meeting when James Jardine had presented a specification and estimate for an additional full length rail. A contract, dated 10 May 1848 was entered into with William Syme, Ironmonger, to carry out the work for £150, and to the satisfaction of James Smith, architect. Portions of this railing can still be seen along Queen Street, and the west and east sides.

99. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Letter from Dickson and Sons, 32 South Hanover Street, dated 5 August 1848.

100. Minute Book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Minute 7 November 1854.

101. This programme of work is being carried out in consultation with Dr. John Byrom, landscape advisor.

102. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) Accounts from 1877-1878: Carmichael for 2 ducks - 6 shillings (30p). Food for poultry is first mentioned in the accounts for 1873.


104. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1880-1953) Minute 16 November 1895: the cost of the work came to £22.

105. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1880-1953) Minute 27 November 1933; the cost of this was paid for by 2 of the Commissioners - Lord Sands and Alexander Maitland.

106. At present 4p in the pound on the Rateable value.

107. Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879) View of total expense of gardens from commencement to 31 January 1829: the cost of levelling and laying out the grounds - including plants and seeds was put at £1,033; Eagle and Henderson were paid £89 for supplying plants and seeds, and Dickson and Co. £49.

109. Minute Book of the District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879). Minute 3 March 1829. Dr. Johnstone was paid 4% interest.

110. Minute Book of the District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879). Minute 10 June 1833.

111. A Child's garden of verses, Robert Louis Stevenson, first published 1885. The poem is entitled "The Gardener" and is not based specifically on the Central Queen Street gardens although the first verse – the one quoted could well be.

112. See article: Under a wide and starry sky, Daily Telegraph colour supplement No.519, November 8, 1974; and based on extracts from Robert Louis Stevenson, James Pope-Hennessy, Jonathan Cape 1974.

113. Minute Book of the District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879). Letter from Dickson and Sons, dated 17 August 1848.


115. Minute Book of the District Commissioners, Central District (1880-1953). Minute 17 November 1888, which includes a report given by the Clerk to the Commissioners.

116. Minute Book of the District Commissioners, Central District (1880-1953); Minute 3 May 1918; application by Mr Simpson, 18 Heriot Row, for leave to bring in some overseas soldiers occasionally to play tennis and clock golf.
3.5 THE WEST QUEEN STREET GARDENS

1. Extracts from the journal of Jessy Allan wife of John Harden, 1801-1811. OEC XXX 1959, entry for 27 July 1802. Alexander Nasmyth the landscape painter lived not far away in York Place.

2. op. cit., entry for 27 July 1803.


4. The street directories are not very helpful at pinpointing the dates as the father's business address is mostly the one given. The family appear to have lived at 17 St. Andrews Square during the early years of the 1780s.

5. The Caledonian Mercury was published between the years 1736-1816.

6. He was elected junior deputy Chairman in 1791. His friend David Steuart was one of the founder members of this society.

7. GHT Minutes 19 April 1790 vol.14, pps.16-19.

8. Alexander Rockville, affectionately nicknamed "Lang Sandy Gordon" was the third son of William, second Earl of Aberdeen. He was admitted an advocate in 1759, and became Sheriff Depute of Kirkcudbright in 1764. Twenty years later he was raised to the Bench under the title of Lord Rockville - named from an estate he had bought in the County of Haddington. For a long time he lived in the close called Castle Hill, later renamed Rockville's Close. He was a member of the Crochallen Fencibles (instituted in 1778 when bands of citizens came to be formed as fencible men or volunteers against dangers of invasion during the American war. He was married to Anne, Countess of Dumfries and Stair. See Kay, vol.1, p.72.


10. GHT Minute, 4 August 1785, vol.13, p.9.

11. GHT Minute, 19 April 1790, vol.14, pps.16-19; the following information is taken from this minute.

12. Not long after being granted this area of garden in Queen Street, Rockville put in a further request to the Heriot Trust for a lease of 24 acres (9.6 ha) of ground "of the lands of Broughton" in the event of the tenant's - Thomas Woods death; or failing that just one of the fields (11 acres 4.4 ha). GHT Minutes, 12 September 1791, v.14, p.131. Maybe this was to provide pasturage for his several horses or maybe he was acting true to Lockhart's observation that - "If was looked upon as quite inconsistent with the proper character of an Advocate, to say nothing of a Judge, to want some piece of land, the superintendence
and the cultivation of which might afford an agreeable no less than profitable relaxation from the foils of the profession" (quoted in Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier 1782-1854, edited John Doyle, London, John Murray, 1898, p.17). Alternatively Rockville may of course simply have wished to ensure an open aspect from his house in common with several other residents along Queen Street.


14. GHT Minute, 18 April 1791, v.14, p.113. After the sale the land was accurately measured and found to be just over one acre (0.4 ha): the purchase money was consequently adjusted and fixed at £74; the annual feu amounted to 6 bolls, 3 pecks of barley.

15. Allan & Stewart & Co. Founded in the late 1780s combining Allan's banking experience (his firm of Robert Allan & Son was founded in 1776) with Stewarts merchant background. Contrary to general private banking practice they were involved in trading in a wide range of primary products including tea. They were brought into close contact with the leading distillers of eastern Scotland through their corn connections and the scale on which they granted credits and discounted bills led them into banking. The joint Company of Allan & Stewart disappeared in 1810 and Robert Allan and Son failed in 1834. See Scottish banking: A history 1695-1973, S. G. Checkland, Collins, Glasgow and London 1975, p.165.


17. The purchase price was consequently increased to include the extra land and cost Mr Allan £54.

18. Alexander Young of Harburn was the only son of the Rev. William Young, Minister of Hutton - See: The History of the Society of Writers to the Signet, op. cit.

19. See the remarks quoted by James Skene at the head of the Section on the Central Queen Street gardens (3.4); the stable, byre and pump well were referred to in the conveyance of the land by Sir R. Dundas and Mr Murray in favour of the General Commissioners, and quoted in the Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners of the Western District (1822-1837): Minute 21 December 1835; this and other sederunt books are in possession of the Clerk to the Queen Street gardens.

20. GHT Chartulary 5, p.360; Feu disposition dated 28 April 1796.

21. Afterwards rented to Professor Steuart and then put up for sale in 1797; it must have been relet as it was once more advertised for sale or letting in 1799 (Edinburgh Evening Courant 21 September, 1799).

22. There appear to be two rather different versions of the accident: according to Kay, Lord Rockville slipt and fell outside his own door in St. Andrews Square and broke his leg (Kay, A Series of portraits and caricature etchings, op. cit., p.72); Grant on the other hand states that he fell and broke his arm when
walking down the High Street one winter's day: on being conveyed back to Queen Street the Chairman also slipped causing the sedan to overturn and causing further injury to the arm (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh, v.2., p.194).

23. Another corps known as the 97th or Strathspey Regiment was raised almost immediately afterwards for more extended service, and consisting of 1800 men. Grant was appointed Colonel of both regiments (see Kay, vol. 1., p.277, op. cit.).

24. He still however, became involved with Edinburgh life, becoming one of the founder members of the Highland Society of Edinburgh (instituted in 1784), and an active Vice President (David Steuart, ex Lord Provost was likewise a founder member and its first treasurer). Grant no doubt also kept in contact with Edinburgh's social life through his brother-in-law Henry MacKensie (the man of feeling) who a little later moved close by to No.6 Heriot Row.

25. Grant engaged Robert Robinson, the architect and landscape designer from England to lay out his grounds at Castle Grant in Morayshire in 1764; see The landscape garden in Scotland 1735-1835, op. cit., pp.75-76.

26. This probably provided useful pasturage and fodder for the household's horses: the 1795 advertisement for the sale of 64 Queen Street refers for example, to stabling accommodation for 6 horses together with a coach house.

27. Grant, Old and New Edinburgh, vol.2, p.194, op. cit., the wall was removed in the 1820s after the land was acquired as a communal garden.


29. The fruit trees may well have been planted by farmer Wood.


31. GHT Minutes, 22 February 1803, v.16, p.170-173; 18 April 1803, p.189; no compensation was in fact ever claimed which must indicate that little or no damage occurred. Mr Young, however, seems to have regarded his right to claim as an open issue for when he was negotiating the sale of his land to the Queen Street Commissioners in 1822 he placed a value on it of around £1,000 and assigned the right to the Commissioners (Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 16 November, 1822). They in turn continued to state this right in their official dealings with the Heriot Trust, but eventually in 1834 it was abandoned (Sederunt Book of District Commissioners Western District (1822-1837), Minute 18 December 1834.
For example, he was President of the Society of Arts for Scotland - see Edinburgh Almanack, 1826.

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute, 21 December 1835: this fact is referred to in these Minutes but without any detail.

For example, 60, 62 and 65 Castle Street, and 64 and 66 Frederick Street.

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 24 June, 1822.

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 1 July 1822 from which this and the following information is taken.

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 1 July 1822 and 16 November 1822: one idea to reduce the initial cost was to offer Mr Young an annual ground rent of £150, but he was advised by his solicitors that this was "... an impractical measure".

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 2 December 1822.

Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 10 December 1822.

Mr Bell had first calculated the probable value of the ground at £5,345 (Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 2 May 1823). The £5,000 offered was less than the rate paid for Mr Young's garden; Mr Bell reasoned however, that this was justified by the fact that Mr Young had assigned the claim of damages to the Commissioners from encroachments in Heriot Row against the George Heriot Trust and estimated as worth £1,000; the claim however turned out to be unsupportable and proved valueless.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute, 17 May 1823.
44. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 3 March, 1823

45. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 23 February, 1823.

46. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 3 March 1823.

47. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 22 March 1823.

48. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 29 May 1823: one along the Queen Street side, 2 in Heriot Row - one of these being a double one; this latter was later dispensed with in favour of an extra gate at the western end of the Queen Street side.

49. To a design by William Playfair. A fragment of these railings still exists at the west end of Hillside Crescent gardens; the same design was adopted for the west side of the Queen Street East gardens and the Central gardens. The original railings can still be seen on the north and west sides but the rest were removed during the second world war. In 1879 the low upright was replaced by a continuous balluster up to the underside of the octagonal panel to prevent stray dogs from gaining access. This work was supervised by a member of the Committee, John Lessels, Architect, see Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minutes: 5 March 1879 and 25 March, 1879.

50. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 27 March 1823.

51. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes: 25 April 1823, 7 May 1823.

52. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes: 15 May 1823; 26 May 1823; 29 May 1823; the work was carried out by the same contractor, Mr Buchan.

53. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 23 December 1823.

54. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 15 April 1824.

55. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 3 March 1823: the following information is taken from this minute.

56. The mound itself which came to divide the East Princes Street gardens and the western ones was formed in such a way. Also, the embankment formed along the East Queen Street gardens in the late 1860s was possible because of free earth and rubble from other parts of the New Town.
57. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 10 September 1823: we learn from this minute that Walker also had charge of the Royal Circus gardens (north and south sides) as well as the Drummond Place gardens.

58. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 10 March 1823.

59. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 23 April 1823.

60. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 22 March 1823; this and the following information is taken from this minute.

61. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 25 April 1823.

62. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 29 May 1823.

63. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 20 June, 1823.

64. Based on a report by Patrick Brodie, accountant in 1843 and lodged in the Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879). The detailed accounts by William Bell, the Clerk having survived, but it was due to some disarray in them that Brodie was later consulted to go through them with the primary aim of establishing when the gardens would become solvent.

65. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 10 September 1823. The letter is dated 19 July and at the end Walker names 2 referees: Alexander Wood, Advocate, 1 Royal Circus and William Dallas WS, Drummond Place - Walker having charge of both these gardens.

66. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 23 December 1823.

67. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes 8 December 1834 and 17 March 1835.

68. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 16 January 1824.

69. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 15 April 1824.

70. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 19 November 1824.

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71. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 2 July 1824.
72. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 19 November 1824.
73. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 11 February 1825.
74. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 15 December 1824.
75. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 8 January 1825.
76. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 25 January 1825.
77. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 11 February 1825: which gives details of the draft report to be presented to the proprietors at the general meeting.
78. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 19 February 1825.
79. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes 23 February 1825 and 1 April 1825.
80. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 21 April 1825.
81. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 9 July 1825.
82. Edinburgh Street Directory 1825: Richard Niven, gardener, Allanfield, Ferry Road, North Leith.
83. Refer footnote 64.
84. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 6 March 1826.
85. Sixty new keys were ordered: the cost of renting a key was put at 4 guineas, the letter R to be stamped on them, and to be made available on application to the Clerk.
86. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute, 26 December 1826.
87. These were probably existing trees from other parts of the garden.
88. **Trees for towns, 24 November 1856:** source of article not traced but found included in James McNab’s miscellaneous cuttings file; Edinburgh Royal Botanic garden library; we can assume from this that McNab was the author.

89. **Our town gardens and trees, Scotsman 1 July 1867,** op. cit.

90. After its demolition the gardener moved to rented accommodation paid for by the Commissioners.

91. RHP 211, dated 1818: this plan was not carried out; instead it would seem that David Scott liaised with the Earl of Moray and agreed to James Gillespie Graham drawing up a common ground plan to include his angle of ground.

92. The Earl of Wemyss, James Hope WS, and Francis Walker led the opposition and after placing an advertisement in the newspapers arranged a joint meeting with the Lord Provost and magistrates in August 1818. Although hopeful that a right of servitude in their favour existed over the land this turned out not to be the case, and while some of the Queen Street proprietors expressed willingness to raise money as compensation to Mr Scott should he agree to abandon development, this too came to nothing, see TCM 5 August 1818 vol.176, 31 January 1821, vol.182, and 25 April 1821, v.182.

93. TCM 5 August 1818, op. cit.

94. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837). Note of settlement dated 10 July 1827 - later followed by a Bond of Servitude dated and signed 27 January 1829 (Register of Sasines, 1225 book of new particulars). All the property in Wemyss Place was included in the settlement apart from the first flat in the corner tenement belonging to Mr Fraser WS who had bought it from Mr Scott before negotiations had been completed. Also included in the settlement were No 1 and 2 Darnaway Street, and No. 1 Albyn Place. It was several years before Wemyss Place was finished and assessments on the property were not levied until about 1837.

95. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 17 April 1832.

96. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 21 December 1835.

97. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 18 January 1836.

98. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Report by Patrick Brodie 1843; note of payment recorded 12 September 1837.
99. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 24 December, 1855.

100. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 24 December 1855. McNab's report is dated 24 January 1855.

101. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 18 February 1856.

102. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 31 March 1856.

103. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); the dates of McNab's reports are as follows: January 1856; November 1858; August 1861; January 1866 and February 1872; copies of all these reports apart from the 1866 one are contained within the above Sederunt Book.

104. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); 24 July 1878; McNab for example, was consulted over the appointment of a new gardener.

105. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 20 December 1875.

106. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 19 December 1876.

107. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minutes 26 January 1931 and 12 October 1931.

108. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minutes: 23 January 1933, 22 October 1934; 21 January 1935; 26 October 1935; the bird bath was rejected on grounds of insufficient space.

109. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 16 May 1939.

110. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 4 October 1939.

111. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minutes 18 December 1939; 5 February 1940; 1 April 1940; the job was eventually done by the Royal Engineers on behalf of the Scottish command.

112. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 21 March 1941.

113. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 6 October 1942.
114. Sederunt Book of the District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 29 January 1951.

115. Particularly the loss of railings and such additions as ammunition huts, shelters, and static water tanks.

116. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 24 January 1941.

117. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 21 March 1941.

118. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 18 May 1943.

119. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute, 9 October 1944 and 26 March 1945; it transpired that permission for these activities had not been formally sought from the Commissioners as the battalion who had taken over the Territorial Army's former headquarters in Wemyss Place assumed they had similar rights as their predecessors: their use of the garden prompted some complaints from proprietors, but after meeting with the Commissioners the Colonel in charge was allowed use of the garden on Wednesday and Friday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30 p.m., and on Sunday between 2.30-4.30.

120. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 1 February 1942; the Merchant Company were already keyholders to the gardens but agreed to pay an additional £15 towards the cost of upkeep.

121. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 27 August 1943; the Commissioners had suggested that use be made of the garden cellars in Wemyss Place but they were found to be too damp.

122. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 6 October 1942; a privet hedge was later planted along the Heriot Row side (Minute 1 February 1943).

123. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 1 February 1943.

124. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 9 October 1944; the ranger was employed from June until the end of October.

125. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 18 May 1943; garden assessments continued to be levied although key renters had their annual due reduced from £3.3 to £2.2.

126 Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 1 April 1946.

127. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minutes: 14 May 1945; 18 February 1946; 1 April 1946; 31 January 1947; 23 February 1948; 3 May 1948; 28 June 1948;
8 November 1948. The contract for the railings was carried out by Alexander and Sons.

128. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 23 October 1950: the west side was left as no drainage duct could be found.


130. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 20 January 1964.

131. He was supplied under contract from a nursery firm.

132. Commencing in 1971 and being carefully carried out under the guidance of David Skinner, Consultant landscape architect.

133. The 8 include: the 3 Queen Street gardens; the eastern end of Drummond Place; Randolph Crescent; the eastern section of Douglas Crescent, Eton Terrace (Dean Gardens) and Belgrave Crescent gardens.

134. Eton Terrace cost £2,439; and Belgrave Crescent gardens were bought for £4,000.

135. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes 10 December 1822; 26 February 1823; 27 March 1823. By the 1822 Act of Parliament the Commissioners were entitled to levy a 10% assessment (based on the Police rental) towards the cost of purchasing the land, 2% towards the cost of laying out and enclosing; and 2% for annual upkeep.

136. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 22 March 1823; 17 May 1823.

137. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute, 15 April 1824.

138. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 9 July 1825. In a memorial to the George Heriot Trust the cost of enclosing, levelling and laying out the whole area of garden was given as £2,756; this did not include the £428 paid for the boundary wall and railing erected along Wemyss Place in 1837.

139. In addition interest had to be paid on the Bank loan which was charged at 4½%.

140. The Central gardens cost £6,000 in total; figures for the East Queen Street gardens are incomplete, and there is no information on the cost of laying out the first section of garden; the total cost of the land together with the formation of the second stage amounted to £6,545.
142. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 28 December 1825.

143. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 6 March 1826.

144. Although not in fact of much significance: the later accounts compiled by Patrick Brodie and previously referred to indicate that only 3 or 4 non proprietors rented keys at about this time.

145. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 21 May 1838.

146. His father was Archibald Scott, solicitor at law and Procurator Fiscal for Midlothian; who lived at 33 Heriot Row.

147. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minutes: 4 June 1838; 11 July 1838; 13 December 1838; 21 December 1838; 2 May 1839; 21 June 1839; 13 December 1841; 21 December 1841.

148. On the death of this last Scott as Clerk, the Commissioners expressed "deep regret", and placed on record how "... his firm, his family and himself had given to the Commissioners for a long term of years their faithful and efficient service". (Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971). Minute 26 January 1931.

149. Report by Patrick Brodie, Accountant in Edinburgh, to the Commissioners of the Western District of the Queen Street Gardens, 1843, op. cit.

150. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 26 December 1843.

151. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 22 February 1855.

152. At first based on the Police Rental Lists.

153. Refer for example, to the first list of elected District Commissioners.

154. The 6 District Commissioners also function as General Commissioners to the Queen Street gardens, a body in whom the title of all 3 gardens is vested: (refer Section 3.2 for details).

155. The Commissioners for the Western gardens still remain all male.

156. In 1930 the rules were changed to allow dogs under the control of their owners into the gardens during August and September although the ban on the months of June and July continued. Another meeting held 5 years later relaxed the ban a little by allowing dogs into the gardens during these 2 months but only after 6 p.m. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971). Minute 19 March 1930, and 24 June 1935.
Sederunt Book of District Commissioners
Western District
(1822-1837); Minute 26 December, 1826.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners
Western District
October 1838.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners
Western District
(1838-1879); Minute of Agreement, dated 7 November 1838.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District
(1838-1879); Minute 24 July 1878.

Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District
(1927-1971); Minute 2 February 1942; the contract was with Mr Dewar, nurseryman.

174. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 3 July 1829.

175. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 10 August 1829; the letter was signed by a substantial number of proprietors as follows: - R. Dundas, Queen Street; John Stein, Heriot Row; W. Balfour, Heriot Row; E. Douglas Sandford, Heriot Row; Misses Stewart, Heriot Row; James Melville, Heriot Row; Misses Macqueen, Heriot Row; Alex Young, Queen Street; Andrew Clason, Queen Street; J. A. Robertson, Queen Street; Misses Houston, Heriot Row; Misses Mitchell, Heriot Row; Rob Stodart, Queen Street; A. McCheyne, Queen Street; William Bennet, Castle Street and Queen Street.

176. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 24 December 1868.

177. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 23 February 1825: Leslie lived in Lord Jeffrey's former residence at 62 Queen Street from 1811 onwards. He was responsible for inventing the differential thermometer in 1800; His election to the Chair in 1805 had been strongly objected to by certain members of the Presbytery who felt that views expressed by him in a published article on 'Heat' invalidated the argument for the existence of God. In the year of his death he was created a Knight of the Guelphic order; see Edinburgh in the Nineteenth Century, edited W. M. Gilbert, J & R Allan, Edinburgh 1901, p.38; and Old and New Edinburgh, Grant, op. cit., Vol.2, p.157.

178. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 19 November 1827.

179. EEC, 11 August 1825; no name is attached to the letter; it was simply initialled "DC".

180. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1927-1971); Minute 24 October 1935.

181. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 23 April 1838.

182. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minutes 23 April 1831 and 19 April 1832: on the first occasion a Miss Lyon "lame with rheumatism" was allowed access by chair, and later a Mrs Stack was granted permission to use a light carriage.
183. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); Minute 4 July 1831.

184. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837); letter by William Bell, Clerk to A. Murray, dated 8 March 1836.

185. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1838-1879); Minute 14 June 1839.
3.6 DRUMMOND PLACE GARDENS

1. Memorials of his time, Henry Cockburn, op. cit., p.171.

2. She was the widow of a prosperous London merchant.

3. GHC Chartulary 2: Lettice Milne Rae in her booklet "The story of Drummond Place", T. & A. Constable 1952, speculates that the house dated back to the sixteenth century, but a contemporary description of the building (when it was advertised for renting in 1969) makes this doubtful.


5. Heriot Hill house still stands - now in use as a Club at the bottom end of Rodney Street. For a short period it was the home of Sir James Hunter Blair's son - (see Section 3.4).


7. Sederunt book of the Bridge Committee, Minute 19 February 1767: reference to correspondence with Dr. A. Drummond of Bristol re his late father's feu. The eldest son was called James.

8. The feu disposition granted by the Heriot Trust to Major General John Scott was dated 21 November 1774.

9. He was apparently one of the most noted gamblers of his time both at home and abroad - see Grant, Old and New Edinburgh, vol.2, p.191. Scott first appears in the army lists in 1755 as Captain of the 3rd Footguards (the Scots Guards); entry into the Footguards was reserved to those of wealth and noble background. Duties were not onerous and the individual had plenty of free time to pursue his own interests. Scott's gambling experience abroad probably took place while the Footguards were serving in Flanders during the Seven Years War; usually however, they were based in London. In 1763 Scott was appointed Colonel of the 26th Regiment, and Major General in 1770 - both honorary appointments and not requiring actual service (information from Mr Thorburn, United Services Museum, Edinburgh Castle.

10. Referred to in Kay's, Original Portraits, vol p.75.

11. Edinburgh Street directory: in 1773-4 General Scott is listed as living in George Square; and in St. Andrews Square one year later.

12. The origins of this story have not been traced beyond an account given in Mary Steuart's; The Romance of Edinburgh Streets, first published in 1925. Sir Laurence Dundas had been Commissary General and contractor to the army from 1748-1759. When he died in 1781 he left an estate of £16,000 a year and a fortune of £900,000 in personalities and landed property. The Scott's and the Dundas's were certainly on friendly terms (see Boswell's London Journal 1762-1763, edited Frederick Pottle, William Heinemann, 1950, p.75 and 267) but what truth there is in this tale is not known. Dundas had certainly started life with little, and by skill and hard work had amassed it own fortune - so one might have expected him not to have acted quite so rashly.
13. Mrs Scott is first recorded as living at Bellevue in the 1776-7 Street Directory. Major Scott died at his seat in Balcomie, Fife.

14. These daughters were by his second wife - Margaret Dundas, daughter of Sir Robert Dundas of Arniston, Lord President of the Court of Session. His son who died in infancy was probably by his first wife - Lady Mary Hay, daughter of 15th Earl of Errol.

15. GHT Chartulary, 4, Charter of Adjudication in favour of Henrietta Scott, 7 June 1779, p.156.

16. The Edinburgh Advertiser, August 11, 1795.

17. On marriage he assumed the name of Scott in addition to his own of Bentinck; he later became 4th Duke of Portland.


19. See Edinburgh Street Directory 1796-97; he continued to rent Bellevue House until Whitsunday 1801 by which time it was owned by the Town Council; during his stay there he took rather a fancy to the white marble chimney piece in the drawing room which he thought would make an attractive addition to his Tapestry room at Inverary: his offer to replace it "with a plain handsome one together with £100" was however declined - see TCM 10 September 1800, v.133.

20. When the lands and mansion house of East Coates (Palmerston Place and surrounding area) - a not dissimilar kind of property was advertised for sale in 1785 its feuing potential was certainly well emphasised - see Edinburgh Advertiser, 28 June 1785.

21. At the time negotiations were taking place James Stirling was Lord Provost but whether he, or some other member of the Town Council were the driving force behind this move is not known. Stirling was chosen Lord Provost on 3 separate occasions so must have proved a popular man well suited to the post.

22. Due to an abysmal oat harvest both at home and abroad.

23. The feu was payable twice yearly at Whitsuntide and Martinmas, full payment to be commenced at Whitsuntide 1803; the Duke of Argyll was allowed possession until the end of his lease, although the Town Council agreed to an extension, see TCM, 10 September 1800 v.133.


25. TCM, Minute 30 December 1801, v.136.
26. GHT Minutes; 31 December 1801, v.16.

27. TCM 3 March 1802, v.136; 3 members of the Town Council bought stances—Deacon Thin, Dean of Guild Henderson, and Convenor Law; among the builders buying stances were Winton and Morison who later became part owners of David Steuart's feu.


29. TCM Minute 24 March 1802, v.136.

30. The Excise office had moved to Sir Laurence Dundas's former mansion, 36 St Andrew Square in 1794. In 1825 it was sold to the Royal Bank of Scotland when the Excise office moved to Bellevue House following the amalgamation of the two Boards in 1823.

31. In a somewhat similar fashion the Governors and officers at Edinburgh Castle were granted free access to the West Princes Street gardens as part of the contract whereby the Castle banks on the north, south and west sides were rented to the Princes Street proprietors in 1818 (Section 2.6).

32. Information obtained from Chartulary 21, Disposition Bellevue House to Commissioners of Customs dated 8 October 1808, which contains details of the Minute of Sale 2 October 1802 (no longer traceable). The minute also stipulated that no other building was to be allowed within the central area of Drummond Place. The formal disposition of the house to the Board of Customs was not effected until 1808 due to the delay in obtaining the feudal right from the Marchioness of Tichfield, EDC archives.

33. TCM, 10 August 1803, v.138.

34. TCM, 24 July 1805, v.143.


36. TCM, 6 June 1810, v.156.

37. TCM, 26 February 1817, v.173; the quarry seems to have been worked during Drummond's ownership of the land—see The story of Drummond Place, op. cit., p.9.

38. TCM Minutes, 13 October 1819, v.179; 27 October 1819, v.179; 17 November 1819, v.179; 1 December 1819, v.179; 8 December 1819; 15 December 1819; 29 December 1819; 5 January 1820; 12 January 1820.

39. See, Edinburgh in the nineteenth century, edited W. M. Gilbert,
The Committee for the relief of workmen out of employment had over 1,600 men on their lists.

40. *TCM Minutes, 7 January 1818, v.175; 25 February 1818; 29 December, 1819, v.179.*

41. *Edinburgh District Council, Archival drawing collection: 2 elevations of north and south sides of Drummond Place dated 1804, and one of the west side, all by Robert Reid; presumably his services were discontinued because of the delay in building.*

42. *TCM, 31 March 1819, v.178: Mr Watson had applied for permission to "lay down building materials on the quadrant of Drummond Place". His request was granted but also extended to other builders who had taken up feu's. Two interlopers - Mr Robert Wright and Messrs Jameson & Dodds were however, asked to remove their saw pits.*

43. *Feu Charter in favour of James Greig WS, 28 March 1821, Chartulary 21, p.134; City archives.*

44. *TCM, 27 March 1822, v.184; a little later on the Central Queen Street garden committee asked Thomas Brown to supply them with a design and cost details for a surrounding wall and railings "... in a style the same or similar to Drummond Place" - see Minute book of District Commissioners, Central District (1822-1879), Minute 10 July 1822.*

45. *TCM, 17 April 1822, v.184.*


47. *TCM, 24 April 1822, v.184; those present at the meeting included 5 WS's, 3 Advocates, and 3 of the builders (Caldwell, Henry and Wallace).*


49. *TCM 29 May 1822 v.184; the Committee included David Munro Binning, Advocate, Duncan McFarlane, Advocate, 18 Drummond Place, William Douglas WS, 15 Drummond Place, John Dick, Advocate, 38 Drummond Place, William Dallas WS, Thomas Caldwell, builder and William Wallace, builder.*

50. *TCM, 5 June 1822, v.184, this and the following material is taken from this minute.*

51. *Drummond Place feu charter, dated 9 April 1823, and recorded in the Register of Sasines on 26 April 1823.*
52. Subsequent proprietors of these houses could apply to become annual key holders.

53. A school run by a Miss Blackstone, 25 Drummond Place made frequent use of this privilege during the early years of the present century.

54. The Secretary could also be a member of the Committee, and his or her duties included acting as cashier, collecting assessments, and arranging the necessary meetings.

55. If a proprietor failed to pay his assessments within one month of the notice being sent out he was liable to pay additional interest; long term debts could lead to prosecution by the Secretary if approved by the Committee.

56. Extraordinary general meeting of proprietors, 1 December 1949; by this time much of the property had become subdivided into flats and under these circumstances the new system seemed a simpler and more appropriate one to administer; the opposition came mostly from residents of basement flats who felt in their case that a reduced rate might have been justified as their view of the gardens was so limited (miscellaneous papers in possession of the writer).

57. Extraordinary general meeting, 26 May 1952.

58. The Clerkship changed hands in that year when a Mr Watson who had previously held the post moved from Drummond Place; he was succeeded by John Pen who seems to have started a new minute book - maybe because the old one was not handed over or even thought redundant.

59. A section of these railings still exist at the west end of the garden and show the popular fleur de lys pattern at the head of the ballusters.

60. TCM, Minute 4 September 1822, v.184.

61. The cast iron pump well can still be seen in the south west corner of the garden and still supplies water although now supplied with pipe and tap.


63. TCM, 8 December 1824, v.191.

64. GHT Minutes, 2 November 1824, v.23.

65. GHT Minute, 18 July 1826, v.24.

66. Chartulary 36, Charter of confirmation in favour of John Clayton Freeling, Secretary of Excise, 31 January 1843, EDC archives.
Previously he had lived at 11 Fettes Row. During the latter part of his life he spent the greater portion of his time at Prior Bank, near Melrose formerly the property of his brother-in-law, William Tait, also a publisher.

Scotsman, 26 January, 1874.

The following information is based on material from several newspaper articles and in particular:- "A railway in retrospect", Scotsman, 19 February 1946; The Waverley Story, Edinburgh Evening News, May 13, 1961; Our first Railways, Edinburgh Evening News, 11 March 1939; Edinburgh lead in underground railway enterprises, Weekly Scotsman 11 December 1937; Scotland Street tunnel, weekly Scotsman 21 May 1932; A Railway Retrospect from ELNR to LNER, Trinity to Granton, Scotsman, 19 February 1946, Evening Dispatch, March 16, 1945.

Scotsman, 19 May 1847.

At Canal Street Station horses were used to pull the trains forward the short distance to the tunnel entrance, and from there they made their way by their own momentum regulated by powerful drags attached to each vehicle.

TCM 25 June 1844, v.242; the Excise office moved in 1845 to 12 Picardy Place. In 1849 Excise, together with Assessed taxes and Stamp Offices were amalgamated to become the Inland Revenue with offices in Waterloo Place.

It had been Adam Black who when city treasurer in the late 1830s had presented a detailed report on the town's bankrupt state and had initiated action to remedy it: the detailed arrangements were continued by his successor Duncan McLaren who like Black went on to be Lord Provost and also M.


TCM, 6 May 1845, v.243

TCM, 18 November 1845, v.243.

This was modified in the 1846 Feu charter to allow provision for a tool shed following a request made by John Stodart, member of the garden Committee: he had pointed out to the Town Council that the existing tool house (in the north east corner) "will be in an offensive position after the additional ground is included" and would require resiting at the eastern end, TCM 17 February 1846, v.245.

Apart from helping to effect improvements to the City the Council also stood to gain by the removal of Bellevue House as the various public burdens effecting the property would thus be terminated.
In addition the proprietors were to pay an annual feu duty of 1 penny sterling to the town: a requirement long since defunct.

Feu Charter in favour of the proprietors of Drummond Place, 17 March 1846, Chartulary 38, City archives: each proprietor must have contributed around £30.

Those proprietors excluded from the second feu charter could, however, be allowed access "by resolution of a general meeting of proprietors or a majority thereof and upon payment of a suitable composition towards the expense of keeping the grounds".

Several years later one of the excluded proprietors (house No.42) did apply for full rights to the gardens: the Committee decided that a contribution of £15 should be made together with the annual assessment but this offer was declined - Drummond Place Garden minute book (1856-1936), Minute 6 July 1868.

Over the years the original 6 shrub plots became amalgamated to form 2 crescent shaped areas on the north and south sides.

Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936). Minute 10 March 1856, Finlay resigned in 1879 due to increasing ill health. Although employed full-time in the gardens he was allowed in his contract to keep in order the back greens of the proprietors in Drummond Place and vicinity, provided it did not interfere with his garden duties (Minute, 18 March 1856). He started work at £40 per annum rising to £52 by the time he retired.

To begin with 1 court was marked out - and moved at intervals to reduce damage to the turf. At its peak however, there seems to have been 3 courts in use (information from Miss Grace Milne Rae, 23 October 1971).

Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936), Minute 4 January, 1898.
93. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936), Minute 9 November 1899.

94. The Committee had previously bought plants from this firm and they had supplied an interim gardener at one time - Minute 7 February 1896.

95. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); report by A. Mackenzie 74 March 1901.

96. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); Minute 27 May 1912.

97. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); Report by Mr McHattie, dated 13 June 1912.

98. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); Minute 13 January 1913.

99. Other estimates obtained had included one from Thomas Methven and Sons, 15 Princes Street, for £59, and Dickson & Co., Waterloo Place for £88 - Minute 22 October 1912. The proprietor of the Osbourne Nursery was David King.

100. Magdala Crescent from 1896-1927, and Douglas Crescent from 1910-1922; information from the garden minute books of the 2 gardens.

101. Drummond Place garden Minute book (1856-1936); Minute 25 June, 1917; advice on tree removal was given by Methven and Son, the nursery firm.

102. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); See, for example, Minute 25 June 1917.

103. The initial plan was drawn up by Mrs Morris and was later modified by Frank Clark, the landscape designer who served on the Committee.

104. The work was carried out in 1962 by Mr Collet, nurseryman and landscape gardener, Polton at a cost of £235.

105. Drummond Place garden minute book (1856-1936); minute 23 October, 1934.

106. Mr Christopher Fyfe, RIBA.

107. The money was loaned from a bank and repaid over a 3 year period.

108. Dr John Byrom, RIBA, AILA.

109. The AGM is now held in one of the proprietor's houses.

338.
110. Changes have nevertheless occurred. Much of the property is now subdivided into flatted accommodation: in addition 2 former houses are now used as hotels, 4 for University hostel accommodation, 2 as nursing homes, and there is also a club.

111. A member of the Committee from 1909-1910; his architect brother made some alterations to his house at No. 4 Drummond Place which later became the home and studio of another eminent artist - Sir William McTaggart.

112. Meconopsis Baileyii; Colonel Bailey was on the Committee in 1909.

113. This occurred most forcibly in 1945 when a change in assessment was made from the foot frontage principle to a standard rate for everyone: as already pointed out some proprietors felt quite strongly that this was unfair to basement dwellers who were deprived of a view of the garden.


115. Drummond Place garden Minute book (1856-1936), Minute 4 April, 1868.

116. Ranging from 8 to 20.

117. For details of this study see: - Studies of Local open space in British Housing, J. B. Byrom, thesis submitted for degree of PhD, University of Edinburgh, April 1976.

118. Interview held with Miss Grace Milne Rae, 8 Drummond Place, 28 October 1971.

119. The Henderson family had long associations with the gardens: Mr Kenneth Henderson of Dingwell, Peden and Henderson who was appointed Secretary in 1909 had spent his childhood at 25 Drummond Place where his widowed mother had run a successful girls school (access to the gardens was allowed during the girls mid morning break). On his death in 1940 his nephew Mr Gordon Henderson CA became the garden Secretary.
3.7 ROYAL CIRCUS GARDENS

1. Edinburgh's Child: some memoirs of 90 years, Eleanor Sillar, op. cit., p.90; Eleanor (then aged 6 years was describing her first day at her new school.

2. Madame Kunz's School, Number 19 Royal Circus was situated on the south side of the Crescent.


5. Begun in 1754 by John Wood the Elder and completed by his son; the ground in this case was more nearly level. The plane trees now so much admired, but in declining years were a later addition. For detailed comments on the Circus at Bath see: North Somerset and Bristol, Sir Nickolaus Pevsner, Penguin Books, Buildings of England series.

6. Steuart was Lord Provost from 1780-1782.

7. EEC, 11 April 1781; the matter would also have been discussed at the general Half Yearly meeting of the Feuars in the Extended Royalty held on Saturday 18 June 1781 at the Princes Street coffee house when items of "general importance" were under consideration. EEC 13 June 1781.

8. TCM, 20 June 1781, v.101: presumably the meeting referred to above had given a favourable response to the idea of a circus.

9. No further reference to a circus has been traced either in the Town Council minutes or any of the Edinburgh newspapers.

10. GHT Minutes, 22 January 1819, v.21: the acquisition of Spring Gardens is referred to in these minutes but the actual date of purchase is omitted.

11. GHT Minutes, 8 January 1819, v.21, offer by Robert Watson (one of the builders of the north side, Drummond Place) to feu the whole of the circus for 6 shillings sterling per foot in front.

12. GHT Minute, 23 March 1819, v.22: Bonnar's revised layout drawing has not been traced.

13. GHT Minute, 23 March 1819, op. cit.

14. The joint Committee consisted of representatives of George Heriot Trust, Trinity Hospital, and others.

15. Minute of Committee for feuing Calton Hill grounds; 13 February 1818; 8 May 1818 - containing a detailed report by Playfair on the new London Road. City Archives.
16. GHT Minutes, 27 July 1819, v.22.
17. According to the mutual contract first drawn up in 1802 between the George Heriot Trust, the Town Council and the owners of David Steuart's former feu, the contract was renewed in 1806 when Steuart's feu once more changed hands.
18. GHT Minute, 3 December 1819, v.22.
19. No further references have been traced to this suggestion so it must have been abandoned either on cost grounds or as being impractical.
20. The notice appearing in the Edinburgh Advertiser of 31 December 1819 was dated 8 December, and refers to the ground plan and elevations being available for perusal; the detailed drawings took longer to prepare and were not submitted to the Governors until 4 days before the sale: GHT Minutes, 14 January 1820, v.22.
22. GHT Minute 18 February 1820, v.22: the following builders purchased lots: James Ritchie, Alexander and George Fowlers, Jamieson and Dodds, Robert Wight, Peter Dickson; John Inglis; Traquar and Dobson; James Ritchie, John Drysdale; George and John Forsyth.
23. Playfair drawing collection; general feuing plan with names and purchasers of lots and the prices paid. On the North side the amount ranged from 12/6d (62½p) per foot in front to 15/- (75p) and on the south side from 12/- (60p) to 13/- (65p).
27. GHT Minute, 11 January 1822, v.22.
28. Sederunt Book of District Commissioners, Western District (1822-1837), Minute 10 September 1823.
30. This fact is referred to in the first minute (27 November 1893) of the second garden minute book of the North and South gardens.
31. Royal Circus Minute Book (1893-1947): Minute 27 November 1893: the gardener’s wages must have been on average about £17 per annum and there were 28 proprietors at that time with the legal responsibility for the upkeep of the gardens.


33. Rather as McNab had suggested in his article on the Royal Circus gardens in 1868, op. cit.


36. Royal Circus Minute book (1893-1947): Minute 13 June 1907 - attended by Sir Henry Littlejohn, Gerald Crole KC, and Mr McIntosh Clerk: the Committee met on this occasion to discuss a letter from a resident enquiring whether young children were allowed to play in the gardens.


40. This information, and the following quotations are taken from an interview with Miss Irvine, 3 Royal Circus, one time Secretary of the Management Committee for the southern portion of the gardens (12.12.1974).

41. Royal Circus Minute Book (1893-1947): Minute 14 July 1942; this is the last recorded meeting of all the Royal Circus proprietors.

42. Colonel Usher was one time director of Physical Education at Edinburgh University.

43. The original footpath around the eastern end has disappeared altogether.

44. In its place a rather insignificant rose plot has been formed.

45. No other problems due to the change have emerged and interest in the gardens by the proprietors is said to have increased in recent years.

46. Providing in similar fashion to St. George’s Church in Charlotte Square a suitable focal point and termination to the westerly vista along Great King Street.

47. GHT Minute, 11 January 1822, v.22, op. cit.
47. GHT Minute, 28 February 1822, v.22.

48. Estimates for the church had ranged from just under £19,000 to over £24,000; Young and French who had submitted the lowest tender were appointed as building contractors. *Edinburgh Advertiser*, 26 January 1827.

49. The town trees of Edinburgh, No.12, Royal Circus gardens, James McNab, *op. cit.*

50. GHT Minute, 7 June 1883, vol.47; Mr Crichton may have been the David Crichton listed in the Edinburgh and Leith directory of 1880-81 as residing at 5 North West Circus Place.

51. This private school occupied the premises of 4 North East Circus Place.

52. GHT Minute, 3 April 1884, vol.48; and 1 May 1884.

53. GHT Minute, 18 August 1884, vol.48.

54. *Edinburgh Municipal and Police Act 1872* (42 and 43 Vict c 132); see also *TCM* 18 September 1900; 17 October 1900, and 14 December 1900.

55. GHT Minute, 12 November 1900.

56. GHT Minute, 10 December 1900.

57. Such a leasing system has never operated for the western section of garden although technically the land is still owned by the Heriot Trust.


59. *TCM* 3 March 1927 and 7 April 1927; the proprietors in this instant had allowed the lease to lapse; the George Heriot Trust agreed to convey the ground to the Corporation as a garden area but negotiations were halted when the feuars decided that it was in their best interests to try and continue keeping the gardens. The next most recent occasion was in 1963 when the Trustees (with the approval of the Heriot Trust) approached the Town Council to see if the Parks Department might take over the garden under Section 153 of the Corporation Order 1958. By then it had been found increasingly difficult "... to carry out the upkeep of the garden in view of rising costs and the difficulty in collecting subscriptions". The Trustees wished to uphold certain conditions such as the preservation of the railings, maintaining a similar balance and type of tree planting, and the locking of the gate at night. As the Council were not prepared to
accept these conditions, the garden proprietors decided to carry on the gardens as at present" - information from miscellaneous papers, George Heriot Trust.

Thomas Brown, Superintendent of Works when writing to Carlyle Ball & Co, City Clerk, in 1893 about land still to be faced in this area refers to the space behind Balleymore Crescent as follows: "The only part I have not included in the stable ground behind Balleymore Crescent, this the feuars were anxious to acquire an pleasure ground, and only the stable has been faced and built. The stable or pleasure ground was valued at some £130 per annum. Since Balleymore Church was built, however, an opening has been made through it to Portland Arcot which daylies it into the and may lessen its value - in the present time I would not be disposed to value it above £100 per annum". Thomas Brown's letter book 3, letter dated 12 March 1893, City Archives.

The club has 3 hard surfaced courts and a wooden pavilion. According to the Club's Secretary it was not up before the First World War by former pupils of Mary Stevenson School, becoming known as Grange Tennis Club in the 1920s. The lease also includes the right to the beam land behind the courts and pavilion but it is not used by the Club. Some tree planting has recently been carried out in this area.

The lease for the allotment ground (.42 acre (.29 ha)) is leased to one individual who has overall responsibility of keeping the allotment area in good order. He then sublets the plots to whomever he chooses.

3.8 BELLEVUE CRESCENT GARDENS

1. TCM, 13 March 1811, v.158: in this instance for example, the lease of Bellevue Parks and sandpit was settled by public auction when the highest bid was made by John Kirkham, builder in Edinburgh at £226 per annum.

2. TCM, 30 December 1801, v.136; details of the 2 plans are not given but presumably one followed the earlier proposals of an oblique line of terrace housing, and the other a crescent.

3. By public auction on 29 July 1818 together with stances in Dublin Street, Dundonald Street, Great King Street, Pitt Street, and Pettes Row. In the first newspaper advertisement Bellevue Crescent is mistakenly described as Melville Crescent (EEC, 9 July 1818) but was corrected by the time of its second appearance (EEC, 23 July 1818).


5. TCM, 20 November 1822, v.185.

6. As listed in the various feu charters granted for Bellevue Crescent.

7. Thomas Brown, Superintendent of Works when writing to Carlyle Bell WS, City Clerk, in 1833 about land still to be feued in this area refers to the space behind Bellevue Crescent as follows: "The only part I have not included is the stable ground behind Bellevue Crescent, this the feuars were anxious to acquire as pleasure ground. And only the stable has been feued and built. This stable or pleasure ground was valued at some £150 per annum. Since Bellevue Church was built, however, an opening has been made through it to Scotland Street which divides it into two and may lessen its value - in the present time I would not be disposed to value it above £100 per annum". Thomas Brown's letter book 3, letter dated 12 March 1833, City Archives. Even as late as this no real pressure was being exerted to have the land developed.

8. The club has 2 hard surfaced courts and a wooden pavilion. According to the Club's Secretary it was set up before the First World War by former pupils of Mary Erskine's school, becoming known as Drummond Tennis Club in the 1930s. The lease also includes the right to the rough land behind the courts and pavilion but is not used by the Club. Some tree planting has recently been carried out in this area.

9. The lease for the allotment ground (.33 acre (.24 ha)) is leased to one individual who has overall responsibility of keeping the fencing and area in good order; he then subleases the plots to whoever he chooses.


11. EEC, 18 August 1823.
12. **Scotsman, 22 August 1822.**

13. The United Presbyterian Church, Infirmary Street, 1822.

14. **GHT Minutes, 18 March 1841, vol.29;** this and the following information is taken from this minute. The 4 proprietors present at the meeting were - William Crawford, Captain Tait, RN, William Mackersy W3, and William Macdonald.

15. It is doubtful in fact whether many proprietors living opposite in Bellevue Terrace or Place ever took advantage of this right to use the garden for although just about adequate for small children's play and for sitting in they were separated from it by a busy main road, added to which the gardens northerly aspect made it rather sunless.

16. **GHT Minutes, 2 July 1841, vol.30; 2 September 1841, vol.30.**

17. **TCM, 8 November 1842, vol.238.**

18. **GHT Minutes, 18 March 1844, vol.31; 15 April 1844; 13 May 1844.**

19. Our town trees: "Hope and Bellevue Crescent gardens" James McNab. The Scottish Farmer, September 13, 1865: the following information is based on this article.

20. He is recorded as being one of the Council members - see New Edinburgh Almanac, 1845.

21. **TCM 5 January 1950:** this minute refers to such usage without giving any details. It may have accommodated storage or de-contamination huts, or even air raid shelters - although none are shown on the map (fig.18), but they may have been added at a later stage.

22. **TCM, 30 March 1965.**

23. Unlike the whole houses making up the first part of Bellevue Crescent, the northern wing consisted of flatted accommodation, and therefore the task of co-ordinating a larger number of proprietors to have the garden formed might have proved somewhat formidable.

24. **TCM, 22 May 1883.** Now the Edinburgh District Council, Recreation Department.

25. **TCM, 19 November, 1895.**

26. **TCM, 21 January, 1896.**

27. **TCM, 5 January 1950;** the fencing cost £175, and £60 was spent on the interior.
APPENDIX 2

A short outline of the other pleasure gardens within the Edinburgh New Town.

Miscellaneous gardens - contemporary with those of the second New Town

- Coates Crescent
- Atholl Crescent
- Rutland Square
- Saxe Coburg Place
- St Bernards (St Bernards Crescent, Dean Bank and Raeburn Gardens)

The Moray Development

- Randolph Crescent
- Ainslie Place
- Moray Place
- Moray Bank

Calton Hill Development

- London Road/Royal Terrace Gardens
- Hillside Crescent
- Regent Gardens
- Regent Terrace

Later Victorian Developments

- Grosvenor/Landsdowne Crescent
- Magdala Crescent
- Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent
- Douglas Crescent
- Drumsheugh Gardens
- Rothesay Terrace/Rothesay Place
- Clarendon Terrace
- Oxford Terrace
- Eton Terrace/Dean Gardens
- Belgrave Crescent

This outline has been a change from residential use to solely office use with modern accommodation. In 1926 a committee of council and representatives approached the Town Council to see if they would be willing to make the garden over for public use. During the last war the railings were removed, and air-raid shelters built - a fate similarly shared with Atholl Crescent. After the war, both gardens
Coates Crescent Garden (.03 acres, .12ha)

The first crescent shaped garden to be formed in Edinburgh and probably constructed by the curve of the old road to Glasgow along whose boundary was a row of elegant elms (some of which were carefully preserved in the garden space). William Walker (1778-1816) Attorney in Exchequer and descended from an old Aberdeenshire family strong in the Episcopal faith had purchased the manor house and lands of East Coates in the 1780s and subsequently added further adjoining areas. The Edinburgh Courant advertised the ground for development in May 1800 making reference to a plan containing, "...Two new streets 80' wide" together with "...the intended crescent". Nothing materialised maybe because of uncertainties over the proposed Glasgow to Edinburgh canal (a projected link between Kirkbraehed and Leith would have come close to the south-east corner of Walker's grounds and the Earl of Moray's estate at Drumsheugh) as well as the launching of the ambitious second New Town beyond Queen Street in 1802. The feuing of Melville Street, Walker Street and Coates Crescent was delayed until 1810 when Robert Brown (? - 1834), surveyor and architect, drew up a common ground plan. Coates Crescent which included 18 spacious family houses was completed by 1823.

In terms of their feu charters the proprietors in the Crescent were granted "...the right of servitude and use of the pleasure ground lying betwixt the crescent street and the high road... with the trees growing therein... for the pleasure or other accommodation of the several feuers and families but nowise to be converted into a common thoroughfare". It was also specified that the ground "...with the parapet walls, railing, entries, gravel walks, trees, grass ground shall be made, preserved, and kept in order and repair at the common and rateable proportion of the whole feuers", paying annually or oftener as maybe required "a portion of the expense which the majority of feuers may find necessary".

The garden was formed sometime between 1816-1817 (Fig 7) although curiously the land itself belonged to the Heriot Trust. Walker had attempted to purchase it in 1807, but it was left to his son, Sir Patrick Walker to negotiate matters in 1820; eventually after William Playfair had been employed to make an independent valuation the Walker family agreed to purchase it for £1,150. A feu charter for "...the angle of ground in front of Coates Crescent, now enclosed with an iron railing and possessed for several years past by the said Sir Patrick Walker and his feuers as foreground to Coates Crescent", was granted in 1823. No management records have survived but the garden was probably laid out by a nursery firm following a simple design of an outer border of trees and shrubs with pathway, and a grassed inner area.

This century has seen a change from residential use to mostly office and business accommodation: in 1926 a committee of feuers unsuccessfully approached the Town Council to see if they would be willing to take the gardens over for public use. During the last war the railings were removed, and air-raid shelters built - a fate similarly shared with Atholl Crescent. After the war, both gardens
Main sources of information:

Minutes TC, GHT and Walker Trust Chartularies.

The wedged shaped piece of land on which Atholl Crescent was built was owned by the George Heriot Trust: plans for its development seem to have been first considered in 1811 but at this point no crescent was envisaged. With the erection of Coates Crescent opposite the Trust appear to have revised their ideas and Thomas Bonnar (? - c1836) their Superintendent of Works went on to design a complimentary crescent - but in one continuous curve. A drawing of the crescent by Bonnar (Fig 4) shows an enclosed pleasure garden, planted with trees and shrubs around the edges, and featuring at the centre a large basin or fountain. Feuing commenced in 1823, and the garden dates from about 1825.

By the terms of their feu charters (identical almost to the ones for Royal Circus drawn up slightly earlier) the proprietors were required to enclose the front ground "...with parapet wall and iron railing in a suitable and handsome manner according to drawings and directions to be given and furnished by Thomas Bonnar", in return for which they were to have "...the exclusive privilege of using the same as ornamental pleasure ground". Arrangements for later management and upkeep were not mentioned. Bonnar's jet d'eau never materialised, and the garden was laid out in a similar manner to Coates Crescent. No garden minute books survive although reference is made to them in the Rutland Square minutes of 1838 when a connecting passage-way between the Square and the Crescent was mutually agreed to.

After many uneventful years the gardens suddenly hit the headlines in 1896 as the site favoured by the Corporation for a new hall financed by a gift of £100,000 from Andrew Usher: the north west corner of the Meadows and the West Princes Street gardens were also considered as possibilities. By 1900 municipal opinion had settled for a portion of Atholl Crescent as the best location but controversy raged as to whether to include part of the Crescent as well as the garden. In 1901 the Council in face of strong opposition from the Heriot Trust and the Cockburn Society promoted a parliamentary bill to acquire Atholl Crescent and the adjoining
garden ground. Happily their plans were defeated, and a more suitable site for the Usher Hall was found in Lothian Road.

The subsequent history of the garden followed a similar course to Coates Crescent: a gradual dwindling of interest as the surrounding property became converted to offices, and a domestic science college. During the Second World War the ground was opened for air-raid shelters and further deterioration was unavoidable. In 1949 the garden was made over to the Town Council as a public ornamental space, being redesigned by the Parks Department in the early 1950s: a large hard paved area (with seating) now forms the central core of the garden, flower plots have been added, together with the planting of smaller ornamental trees, particularly cherries. Little of the original planting remains - just a few elms and an elderly poplar (Fig 10b).

Main sources of information:

Minutes TC, GHT, Cockburn Association, feu charters.

Rutland Square (.35 acres, .14 ha)

Part of the Barony of Coates, known as Kirkbraehead this was a small development opposite the west end of Princes Street and sandwiched between Erskine Place to the north (completed by 1817) and the former Princes Street Caledonian Railway to the south (built in the 1860s - the hotel premises of which required the destruction of more than half Rutland Street). The site had accommodated the residence and pleasure gardens of James Stuart, or Stewart, (? - 1777), of Dunearn, great-grandson of the Earl of Moray, merchant and twice Lord Provost, at a time when plans for the first New Town were being launched (1764-66; and 1768-70). It was advertised for sale after his death, and again following his wife's death, and was then described as suitable for buildings "...either in streets, rows, or a small square", or for a "large public building" (EEC 3 January 1814). In 1818 the land passed to James Stuart, WS (1775-1849), ardent Whig, and grandson of the original owner; he engaged Archibald Elliot, architect (1760-1823) to draw up a layout plan - his only known involvement with an urban housing development (his brother James had however, been one of the prize-winners for the design of the second New Town in 1801 - Section 3.1). Elliot's "elegant design" consisted of a street leading into a small square with railed central enclosure: the main access to be via an ornamental gateway attended by lodge keepers (EEC 4th February 1819). The plan was, however, doomed: calamity struck Stuart in 1822 when he became embroiled in a duel following a violent and unjustified political attack by Sir Alexander Boswell (son of James Boswell - Dr Johnson's biographer). By freak chance, Boswell was killed but Stuart although honourably acquitted of murder by the High Court withdrew to France for a time; in 1823 Elliot himself had died.
It was not until the 1830s that Rutland Square and Street were feued for buildings following its purchase by John Learmonth of Dean in 1825. He was a partner in a coach-making business whose premises were on the south side of Princes Street - and the last Lord Provost of the old Council before the Burgh Reform Act of 1832. He commissioned John Tait (c1797 - 1856) architect, who lived nearby in Maitland Street, to draw up revised plans - although Elliot's initial concept of a street and square were adhered to. Up until the early part of this century the square remained mostly residential but by the 1920s clubs, offices, and a hotel had made their encroachments: much of the property is now subdivided and several law firms have accommodation there, as well as the headquarters of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland and the Edinburgh Architectural Association.

The garden is one of the smallest in the New Town - almost half the size of Saxe Coburg Place its closest equivalent. Formed in the late 1830s it was kept as an ornamental enclosure accessible only to the gardener employed by the committee. Rights and obligations to the garden had been stated in the feu charters for each house in the street and square: the feuers were made responsible for enclosing the ground with parapet and iron railing, for laying it out in an approved manner as pleasure ground, and for its perpetual upkeep: the cost to be based on the extent of the individual building plots "per foot in front". In return the feuers were given "...the exclusive privilege of using the same as ornamental pleasure ground". A simple design was adopted - consisting of an outer border of shrubs and trees (elm, plane, hawthorn and lime) with a grassed central area: most of its life it has been looked after by jobbing gardeners (from 1858-63 John Brown, Head Gardener of the West Princes Street gardens was responsible). Not until 1872 was a strong but plain iron railing with spiked heads erected - replacing a rather flimsier one which had ill survived the regular assaults from boys attending school at No.12 who were "...constantly standing on and jumping on the rails and damaging the grass in the square" (1871). This railing was removed in World War II (when six public air-raid shelters were erected in the garden), and afterwards one of shorter height similar to those surrounding Charlotte and St. Andrews Square gardens was added.

In 1838 the garden committee on behalf of the proprietors took on the rental of an additional area of land in the rear corner of the square originally intended for stables and coach-houses (a notion wholly objectionable to the residents), and formed it into a shrubbery and bleaching green, with a pathway through to Atholl Crescent. In 1856 the proprietors bought the land but in 1929 the Town Council took possession (on payment of £100 in compensation) in order to form a roadway through (of dubious benefit). An experiment in 1864 to allow residents access to the garden (on payment of the price of a key) proved a disaster: it apparently led to great disorder, and damage and gave the square: "...a disreputable appearance". With all access once more banned the garden quickly recovered, and did not come under threat again until the upsurge of lawn tennis in the late 1870s. Then in response to pressure from proprietors the management committee permitted tennis and badminton play provided the games were regulated by a separate committee who undertook to preserve the grassed area and to limit access to
subscribing club members. This arrangement continued until the I st World War. In 1881 the rules were relaxed to allow children under seven years of age into the garden but only under strict control (an adult had to accompany them, no games were allowed, and the central area was reserved for the tennis club). Not until 1899 was the garden made open to residents or tenants on payment of an additional subscription, but no dogs were allowed. The garden today remains an attractive space, well looked after, and maintained by the surrounding proprietors: two of the original trees survive - an elm and plane.

Main sources of information:

GHT Chartularies 4, p151 and 19, p106;

Instrument of Sasine of John Learmonth (lot No.44) between him and James Paterson, 1 November 1836, recorded Scottish Records Office, 26th May 1837;

Rutland Square Minute Books 1875-1922; and 1926-41;

Miscellaneous loose Minutes for 1850s and 1860s: in possession of Clerk to the Garden Committee.

Saxe Coburg Place garden (0.60 acres, .24 ha)

Saxe Coburg Place (named after Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg who visited Edinburgh in 1819 for the official opening of Regent Bridge) was developed on ground which had formerly been part of the Stockbridge Mill lands: it had passed from the ownership of the Heriot Trust, to various farmers, and eventually to one James Rose, Depute Clerk of Session, who lived in almost rural seclusion with his family at Dean Bank House (an attractive 18th century dwelling which still stands at the north west end of Saxe Coburg Street). Sometime before his death in 1823 Rose had initiated plans for a residential development on a section of his ground lying between the Water of Leith on the west side, and the ancient Gabriels Road on the east. His chosen architect was James Milne (? - 1844?), teacher of drawing, and author of a book published in 1812 on, "The elements of architecture". Most of Milne's work seems to have been concentrated in this part of Edinburgh for he was not only consultant to Sir Henry Raeburn and his St Bernards scheme, but was also responsible for St Bernards church, as well as Lyndoch Place.

Milne's layout was for a rectangular shaped square (Fig 8) with central enclosed garden, and stable accommodation sited behind the western end: the square was approached by one long street - Claremont Street (later re-named West Claremont Street). Feuing commenced in 1823 but was slow to get underway: early in the 1830s the plan was revised to make the western end crescent shaped - thereby providing a central roadway connection to a projected long terrace lying between what is now Glenogle Road and Inverleith Terrace (never realised: the land remained undeveloped until the
Although one of the smaller of the New Town gardens, Saxe Coburg Place gives the impression of greater size and importance by being raised 3' (1m) above street level (no doubt the result of soil and earth dumped from the foundations of the houses). The right to the ground as an ornamental pleasure garden was conferred in the feu charters of all the houses in the Place, the proprietors being made responsible for its enclosure, layout, and perpetual upkeep. While still retaining its residential character much of the property has since been subdivided, and in recent years a flat rate system of assessment has been adopted. Residents from neighbouring streets are allowed access on payment of an annual subscription. The north side of Saxe Coburg Place was not completed until the 1850s and the forming of the gardens seems to have been delayed until then: Johnston's Plan of Edinburgh 1851 shows for example, a bare enclosure, but by the time of the first ordinance survey map of 1853 the ground had been planted with a border of trees (several of the original elm, lime, ash and sycamore still survive), an outer footpath formed, with a shrub bed at either end, and the remainder grassed. Later in 1882 a central shrubbery was added with connecting footpath.

During the early years the garden was run on a fairly ad hoc basis - the first drafted regulations of 1859 for instance took four years to implement because of a lapse in meetings - these occurring as and when circumstance required rather than on any regular basis. Upkeep, has mostly been supplied by jobbing gardeners: in 1866 this responsibility fell to a Mr Thomson, gardener at Canon Mills bridge, who also had charge of the Royal Circus gardens - most likely he was also the Peter Thomson, first keeper of the East Princes Street gardens. When he resigned two years later he was replaced by Mr McCrosbie - the newly appointed head gardener of the Princes Street gardens. Their pay was £3.25p per annum. Since 1957 the Edinburgh Corporation Parks Department (Edinburgh District Council) has been under contract to cut and maintain the grass - a duty they carry out while looking after the area of public open space adjoining Glenogle Lane.

But what singles this garden out as being of particular interest must surely be the extraordinary number and varieties of use to which it has been put during its lifetime, bearing in mind its limited size: handball, shuttlecock, bowling, foot racing, leaping, football, cricket, shinty, (rounders), pole vaulting, and lawn tennis (a court at either end) have all been played with relish and enthusiasm, and accepted with much tolerance and goodwill on the part of the committee and other residents. Although on occasions the more boisterous games were banned (particularly football and cricket), strict enforcement was rare. Such intensity of use did lead to damage, and when this occurred the garden had to be closed to allow for re-seeding and recovery. Greater disarray was caused during the Second World War when the garden was largely broken up to form 12 vegetable plots; these remained under cultivation until 1945 after which the garden was restored by Dobbie.
& Co. the nursery firm. The railings, however, remained intact, and
have since been repaired. Some new tree and shrub planting has been
undertaken in recent years, but the proposals by a landscape
architect (Edward Hilliard) to redesign the garden and allow
provision for a games lawn, sitting area, and play space gained
insufficient support to develop further.

Main sources of information:

Saxe Coburg Place garden Minute Book 1863 -; held by the
Secretary to the Garden Management Committee

St Bernards Development, Stockbridge
(Dean Terrace, St Bernards Crescent and the Raeburn Gardens)

Until the early years of the 19th century, Stockbridge -
situated to the north west of the New Town and beside the Water of
Leith, was a rural hamlet sustained by its flour mills, tan pits and
surrounded by farmland. There were two large houses in the
locality - the oldest, Deanhaugh House set in 2 acres (0.8 ha) of
ground, and St Bernards - surrounded by an extensive garden of 10
acres (4.0 ha), "...laide out in shrubbery, strawberry banks, kitchen
garden, and grass grounds including a neat greenhouse, a fine
mineral well and an elegant summerhouse decorated with paintings,
prints, busts etc" (EEC, 13th February 1794). Fine orchards were
situated in the vicinity of Danube Street, the kitchen garden and
hot houses - close to where St Bernards Crescent now stands, and
the approach from the Dean Road was along a fine avenue of stately
elms: along the banks of the Water of Leith stood a handsome row of
beech trees.

The name most closely associated with the development of this
whole area (Deanhaugh and St Bernards) is that of Sir Henry Raeburn
- a successful portrait painter and son of a Stockbridge yarn
boiler. After marriage to Ann Edgar - a widow whose previous husband
John Leslie had bought Deanhaugh House in 1774, he removed there,
but later the family rented St Bernards House from the widow of
Walter Ross, WS, a rather eccentric gentleman - well known for his
wit and humour and love of the fine arts; during his lifetime Ross
had assiduously collected innumerable ancient carved stones
(including the derelict old cross from the High Street) which he
incorporated into his house, garden and summerhouse (known as Ross's
folly). Cart loads of these stones were later removed to Sir Walter
Scott's new mansion at Abbotsford (James Skene acting as go-between)
and some were gifted as ornaments to the West Princes Street
gardens (Section 2.6). On Mrs Ross's death in 1809, Raeburn
purchased the property - which as a keen gardener, enthusiastic
florist, and much given to hospitality must have suited him well.
It is perhaps a little odd therefore that from about 1811 onwards
was paying a proportion towards the cost of engineering, laying out,
Raeburn began to consider proposals for the speculative development of his land even when allowing for his own amateur propensities for architecture and planning. The decision was probably linked with the distressing business failure of his one surviving son, Henry, in 1808 which had also involved Raeburn and other family members; the feuing of St Bernard's was a means of providing the son with a steady income, financial security, and a useful but not over-strenuous role in life.

Feuing began first in Raeburn Place (1813), followed by Dean Street (1816) and then Ann Street. The distinctive feature of the first ground plan (Fig 7) were the three parallel streets (Ann, Charlotte and Elizabeth - the names of Raeburn's first three granddaughters) with terrace housing on either side, each with front and rear gardens; no communal open space was included apart from the narrow wooded bank along the Water of Leith. James Milne probably acted as Raeburn's architect from the beginning (both were members of the Society of Arts for Scotland and served on its committee); he was certainly involved from the early 1820s and was responsible for revising the initial plan. This had received certain criticism in the press - particularly by one individual who considered "...the formal unbroken row of buildings not altogether suited to the situation" and who advised instead that a site so romantic, picturesque and well wooded was better adapted to detached villas or else "...a crescent formed of 20 or 30 houses... with a shrubbery or an extensive garden in front" (The Edinburgh Observer or Town and Country Magazine, September 27th 1817). Such comments combined with the respected views of his good friend, the celebrated artist, David Wilkie - that the fine avenue of elms should be preserved by forming a double-sided crescent - appears to have convinced Raeburn that an alteration to the plan was well justified. The grand, massive and impressive St Bernard's Crescent, with central garden and two connecting streets leading into Dean Terrace was consequently designed by Milne, and feued from 1824 onwards (Fig 8) - shortly after Raeburn's death (the south west wing was not completed until the 1860s). Subsequent advertisements for the sale of property highlighted the special landscape qualities of the site, drawing attention to "...the fine old elm and beech trees, and young shrubbery interspersed through the grounds" providing "...a novelty and beauty not to be met with elsewhere in this city", and for those in the crescent "...the privilege of walking in a beautiful shrubbery in front" (The Scotsman, 3rd February, 1827).

Under Clause 7 of the Articles and Conditions of Feu (published in 1824 following the adoption of the new ground plan), the feuars rights and responsibilities to two areas of pleasure ground were clearly stated. In the first place - all the feuers were required to pay 10 guineas towards the cost of building the retaining walls, cribstone and iron railing along the south side of Dean Terrace; the necessary work to be undertaken by the Raeburn family, who also, at their own expense agreed to plant the bank with trees and shrubs (this strip also contained the row of beech trees). Thereafter, it was to be kept as pleasure ground, the Dean Terrace feuers having a common right to the property and responsible for its upkeep. In the second instance all the feuers in St Bernard's Crescent were given "...a common right of property in the large elm trees and pleasure ground in front of said crescents", each paying a proportion towards the cost of enclosing, laying out,
as well as for its perpetual upkeep. It was further specified that the railings enclosing both areas were to be of the same pattern as those used in West Heriot Row (refer Fig 144): these still survive along Dean Terrace.

Dean Bank - opposite Dean Terrace

Although too narrow and steep for laying out into walks or terraces the bank has formed an important visual amenity. No records exist to show that the land has ever been regularly maintained by the Dean Terrace proprietors - the majority today being unaware of their rights or responsibilities. It remains a thickly wooded bank, containing many elms, and self-sown seedlings - a neglected but still attractive strip whose progressive decay will eventually force it to the attention of someone.

St Bernards Crescent Garden (0.5 acres, .20 ha)

No Minute books survive to tell us of the subsequent history of this small garden: already stocked with mature trees probably little was done initially apart from enclosing, levelling and grass seeding the ground. New tree planting - particularly of ash and elm appears to have been carried out in the 1880s when some of the old elms were removed, and further trees have been added round the borders during the present century - consisting mostly of lime, sycamore, and whitebeam. The last of the Raeburn stately elms was felled in 1980 having fallen victim to the Dutch Elm disease. In the early days several legal and military gentlemen had residences in the Crescent (the Raeburn family lived at No.19 - after St Bernards House was demolished in 1826) but much of this property has since been subdivided. About 60 proprietors now contribute to the upkeep of the garden - on a flat rate basis: it is run on informal lines, with a small committee who engage a jobbing gardener to cut the grass during the summer months. Over the winter the residents watch the space themselves - periodically removing litter and wind blown paper. During the Second World War the railings were removed, and the ground used for public air raid shelters: afterwards chain linked fencing was erected but this was replaced in 1968 by a plainly designed but durable iron railing - the result of a determined effort by one resident who successfully raised the substantial sum required by persuading other proprietors to contribute.

The Raeburn Garden

Early plans (for example, Kay's map of 1836) showed a triangular area of shrubbery at the north western end of Ann Street, but this was never made over to the feuers. In 1852 it came into the possession of the Caledonian Insurance Company (Raeburn had once been one of their directors), but it was never regularly looked
after. Gradually over the years some of the Ann Street residents began to take care of the ground - which contained trees, shrubs, bulbs and woodland flowers, in semi-wild surroundings: in 1973 after being approached by the Ann Street Society the Insurance Company gifted the gardens to them and it has since been further protected by a tree preservation order.

Main sources of information

St Bernards Articles and Conditions of Feu 1824 (EPL)

Feu Charters

Historical memorials and reminiscences of Stockbridge, the Dean, and Water of Leith, Cumberland Hill 1887
MORAY DEVELOPMENT:

Moray Bank, Moray Place, Ainslie and Randolph Crescent Gardens

Part of the lands of Drumsheugh or Meldrumshieugh to the west of the first and second New Town. Developed by Francis, 10th Earl of Moray (1771-1848) from 1822 onwards to a plan by the architect James Gillespie (later Gillespie Graham) (refer Figs 7 & 8). The family had previously lived at Drumsheugh House (demolished 1822) and their new town house was 28 Moray Place. A strip of ground opposite Douane Terrace (originally part of lands of Stockbridge) was bought in 1823 by the Earl from the deceased estate of R. Raeburn - (father of Henry Raeburn, the portrait painter) and added to the Bank garden. All the ground was cleared before building commenced (much to the regret of Henry Cockburn) apart from the ancient rookery in Randolph Crescent and the trees on the steep bank down to the Water of Leith. The layout initially contained three pleasure gardens - Moray Place, Ainslie Place and the Moray Bank gardens: Randolph Crescent remained in the possession of the Moray family who had ideas of building a church or chapel in the central space. The 1822 feuing conditions only relate therefore to the first three gardens mentioned: these briefly were as follows:

1. The Bank Gardens: all the feuers of whole houses had a common right to these grounds on payment of a share towards the cost of forming the gardens, together with an annual contribution towards their upkeep. Owners of property abutting the ground were not allowed to erect any buildings on it nor to build a boundary wall higher than 3' (92cms). In practice those houses adjoining the Bank Gardens pay a separate assessment (on the basis of rateable value) and make the most use of them.

2. Moray and Ainslie Place Gardens: all the feuers of whole houses were obliged to enclose the two garden areas with parapet and retaining walls and iron railings "...in a suitable and handsome manner" according to drawings made out by James Gillespie ("...which shall not be more expensive than those adopted in Royal Circus"); and to form them into shrubberies and walks as shown on the ground plan. They were made responsible for their perpetual upkeep.

3. Flats: proprietors of flats were excluded from the gardens unless they had permission from the Earl "...and his foresaids": the right was then only extended if they contributed towards the original expense incurred, together with the annual due. Flat dwellers are now accepted as subscribers but outwith any legal sanctions.
Moray Bank Garden (5.2 acres, 2.0 ha)

Shortly after being formed in 1825 an extensive and serious slipping of the bank occurred caused by the addition of large quantities of earth heaped on the upper reaches to raise up and form the gardens; and aided by the slope and substructure of the bank (resting on a strata of slatey clay rock or shale). Considerable damage was caused, and many of the old trees lost. The banks were remodelled at great expense and retaining walls and arches built at the top behind Moray and Ainslie Place. A further slippage occurred in 1837 and the gardens closed for three years while remedial work was undertaken by Lord Moray's agents. This involved: further remodelling of the bank; restoration of the walks; the removal of some of the older trees; and the construction of arches, piers, and parapets further westwards from Moray Place, to a design by James Jardine, engineer. James McNab advised on tree removal and pruning in the 1860s. The layout has changed little since the 1840s and consists of a woodland park, traversed from north to south by a series of winding footpaths; and containing a mixed species of trees—mainly sycamore, elm, ash, lime, birch, beech, hawthorn, and holly; together with some ornamental trees, shrubs, and hedges.

Moray Place Gardens (3.6 acres, 1.44 ha)

The layout is based on the one shown in Gillespie Graham's plan, i.e. a large circular garden, with a broad outer border of shrubs and trees, outer footpath, four gated entrances with connecting footpaths to a tree and shrub planted central plot, the space in between grass planted. In 1832 James Hope, WS, 31 Moray Place (son of Dr Hope, Professor of Botany) commissioned Robert Brown, architect, to draw up plans to improve the gardens (to provide a level and shaded walk, a greater area of level play space, extended flower borders, and by adding mounds and shapes for evergreens to add to "...the picturesque effect") but the plans came to naught. During the 1860s and 1870s James McNab advised on considerable tree and shrub pruning and removal but the feuers resisted any widespread changes. At this time work was done to make the lawns more level which proved of benefit when tennis was introduced in the 1880s. The main varieties of trees consist of thorn (including one known as Queen Mary's Thorn), elm, lime, sycamore, birch, ash with some ornamental hedges and shrubs.

Ainslie Place Garden (0.9 acres, 0.36 ha)

A small oval shaped garden following the same layout as shown on the ground plan, having an outer border of shrubs and trees, an encircling footpath, and an east to west footpath linked to a central planted area (a north to south footpath was added later). The majority of trees (about 45 altogether) consist of elm, hawthorn and sycamore. In the late 1860s extensive tree thinning and removal was undertaken on the recommendation of James McNab which aroused much hostility, many of the feuers complaining of the bare and "desert" like appearance of the gardens. New trees were
subsequently added. In the 1970s new drains were laid and the area re-grassed.

**Randolph Crescent Garden (0.9 acres, 1.36 ha)**

Said to be on the site of an old plague pit and latterly the rookery attached to Drumsheugh House, it remained in the possession of the Moray Estate until 1866 when it was purchased by the Randolph Crescent feuers as ornamental pleasure ground for £200. A small enclosed semi-circular raised garden it is simply laid out and contains about 63 trees, mainly of elm, lime, hawthorn, sycamore, birch and cherry. The Randolph Crescent feuers are separately assessed for its upkeep but the garden's maintenance is included as part of the Moray Gardens. In 1958 the Corporation had proposals to remove the garden and replace it with a roundabout in order to improve local traffic flow but after much local opposition the plans were rejected following a public enquiry.

**Main sources of information:**

- Articles of Roup, 7th August 1822
- Bank Garden, Lord Moray Minute Book No.2 1837-45
- Front Garden and Bank Garden Minute Book No.4 1857-71
- Minute Book, Lord Moray’s feuers 1871-1881
- Minute Book, Lord Moray’s feuers 1881-1892
- Minute Book, Lord Moray’s feuers 1892-1907
- Minute Book, Lord Moray’s feuers 1907-1925
- Minute Book, Lord Moray’s feuers 1944-1953

All Minute Books held by the Clerk to the Garden Committee.

Playfair's two reports of 1819 and 1821 (Fig 5) convincingly re-affirmed Stark's principal of harmonising the new building development with the site's natural flow features. In particular, the main portions of open space were to be created - one along the London Road (subsequently evolving into Hillside Crescent), and the Royal Terrace gardens, and another, even more considerable, area to the east of the Long Terrace bordering Carlton Hill. These latter "magnificent gardens" were to act as "...the conservatory by which this whole city may be set in motion" - a means of encouraging wealthy and fashionable families may from the midst means of Moray and Ainslie Place at the eastern end of the New Town. Playfair's plan, with a few minor modifications, was approved and published in December 1819 when he himself was appointed architect for the project. In 1820 the first houses were advertised for sale in Royal Terrace, followed by those in Carlton and Regent Terrace, but demand for new housing was already on the wane and fewing became slow and protracted; several houses in Royal Terrace were not completed until...
CALTON HILL DEVELOPMENT:

London Road/Royal Terrace gardens, 
Hillside Crescent, Regent gardens & Regent Terrace gardens

Originally part of the ancient Barony of Restalrig this land came eventually into the ownership of the Heriot Trust, Trinity Hospital, and certain other individuals. Proposals to build a new town between Edinburgh and Leith stretching from Calton Hill in a triangular shape along the eastern side of Leith Walk began to mature once access from the south had been opened up by the construction of Regent Bridge (completed in 1819). A joint committee for feuing the grounds had been formed as early as 1811 and in response to a widely advertised competition 35 designs were submitted by the closing date of January 1813. Several eminent architects helped to assess the entries - including Robert Reid, William Burn, John Paterson and John Baxter junior; other people of "taste" were also consulted - such as Sir John Hay (banker), Baron James Clerk, and the wealthy and influential Gilbert Innes of Stow, Deputy Governor of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Three plans were placed equal first and shared the 300 guinea prize: one by William Reid of Glasgow; one by Alexander Nasmyth - the portrait and landscape painter; and one by Richard Crichton. James Milne and Mr Bell of Edinburgh were awarded the second prize of 100 guineas. None of the plans however, were thought good enough for adoption, and the printing and circulation of an incomplete report by the deceased William Stark (one of the architectural assessors) in 1814 was to have significant bearing on the land's subsequent development. Stark had been not only an outstanding architect but one well versed in 18th century picturesque landscape theory, and his concern that the site's natural features, contours and existing foliage should not be compromised to any artificially regulated plan caused him to seriously question the appropriateness of the majority of designs submitted. He was particularly concerned that the upper reaches of Calton Hill should be reserved as ornamental ground, laid out in public walks and shrubbery. His views were to have an important effect on his former pupil - William Playfair, who in 1818 was employed to advise on the levels of a new road (London Road) to be built between Leith Walk and Easter Road, and subsequently with the layout for the whole area.

Playfair's two reports of 1819 and plan (Fig 5) convincingly re-affirmed Stark's principals of harmonising the new building development with the site's natural fine features. In particular two main portions of open space were to be created - one along the London Road (subsequently evolving into Hillside Crescent, and the Royal Terrace gardens), and another, more considerable area, to the rear of the long terraces bordering Calton Hill. These latter "magnificent gardens" were to act as "...the mainspring by which the whole may be set in motion" - a means of encouraging wealthy and fashionable families away from the rival charms of Moray and Ainslie Place at the western end of the New Town. Playfair's plan, with a few minor modifications, was approved and published in December 1819 when he himself was appointed architect for the project. In 1820 the first stances were advertised for sale in Royal Terrace, followed by ones in Carlton and Regent Terrace: but demand for new housing was already on the wane and feuing became slow and protracted: several houses in Royal Terrace were not completed until
the 1850s and 1860s. Hillside Crescent took even longer: the western portion owned by the Allan family was feu'd in the 1820s but the greater part - owned by the George Heriot Trust - not until the 1860s, 1890s. All this was to have consequences for the way the pleasure gardens developed. Most of Playfair's grand plan was never realised, but the part that was (all Heriot Trust land apart from Allan's small section) constituted the most important area.

London Road/Royal Terrace Gardens (10.8 acres, 4.32 ha)

The Articles of Roup and the individual feu charters for Royal Terrace gave a servitude over the ground fronting the terrace and extending to the London Road - protecting it from any building development: but no rights or obligations were placed on the feuers for making it into an ornamental pleasure garden. Several quarries existed in this area and in 1824 Messrs Henderson and Currer were given rights to quarry stone for £130 rental per annum - a useful source for all the new construction work then underway in the locality. But within two years the new feuers in Royal Terrace were lodging complaints with the Heriot Trust on account of the associated danger and loss of amenity. With cheap labour to hand the Trust decided this was an appropriate time to have the quarries filled in, and in 1826 the Committee for the Relief of Distressed Manufacturers offered to carry out the work for £100 using "...the earth now lying around". Two years later the feuers together with Mr Allan of Hillside made further complaints - requesting that the ground be properly enclosed and laid out into ornamental gardens as shown on the ground plan. The Trust acquiesced and in 1831 the necessary work was completed in consultation with William Playfair: he staked out the required walks and made provision for a footpath especially requested by the exiled ex-King of France, Charles X, then resident in Holyrood Palace. Thereafter the Trust, having paid for the greater part of this work (Allan had contributed a third towards costs) they resolved to recoup some of the outlay by letting the ground for nursery or garden purposes - the tenant to be responsible for upkeep, and to have the right to issue keys to anyone in the neighbourhood wishing access on payment of a small charge. To make it a more attractive proposition the Trust agreed to add a small cottage to the western end, and this was built in 1836.

The first tenant was John Niven (lately gardener at Dunnikeir) who took a ten year lease in 1838 at 15 guineas per annum; the Trust also erected a greenhouse for his benefit. He proved however, an unsatisfactory tenant, neglecting the grounds, allowing his horse to be pastured there, failing to lock the gates at night, and allowing children to run wild; and was replaced in 1841 by James Turner - the former gardener at Heriot's Hospital. To exert firmer control, the Trust drew up a list of rules and regulations for the guidance of the tenant and keyholders (payment of one guinea per year "...shall entitle any respectable family residing in the neighbourhood to use a key and the privilege of walking in the grounds"). The tenant on the other hand was sternly warned that no horses, cattle, or sheep or other animal were to be brought within the ground "on any pretence". Turner's lease continued until 1859 by which time the ground had once more slipped back way. Some tree thinning by the Trust had, however, been carried out in 1843, and 1852, and later in the 1860s - under the advice of James McNab.
The next tenant was George Wood (gardener, Catherine's Lodge, Inveresk), who held a lease from 1859–71. In 1859 the Royal Terrace proprietors approached the Trust about the possibility of erecting a parapet and rail along the Terrace in place of the wooden fencing; they agreed to contribute £500 towards the cost and a new railing, designed by John Chesser, Superintendent of Works, was placed there in 1860: their petition for a bowling green was however, refused. Further signs of deterioration (the tenant was allowing certain families in Windsor Street, Leopold Place and Blenheim Place to dry and bleach their clothes in one part) caused the Trust to consider letting the ground for sheep pasturage; knowledge of this threat may have prompted several of the Royal Terrace feuers to consider purchasing the grounds when they were re-advertised for letting in 1871. The Trust decided against such a proposition and instead relet the grounds to another tenant.

In 1891 the Town Council (then engaged in forming a public footpath along the south side of London Road) requested that a cope and iron railing be erected by the Trust along the length of their ground, and that consideration be given to the acquisition by the town of the Royal Terrace gardens for public use. The Trust agreed to carry out the necessary work, and to offer the gardens on a long term lease to the city (for 25 years from 1893 at £40 per annum). Pearing a loss in amenity the Royal Terrace and Carlton Terrace feuers also petitioned for a lease, but their anxieties were allayed by the protective conditions added to the Town's lease: the whole grounds were to be maintained in good condition, to be used solely as ornamental pleasure gardens, the lime tree walk along London Road was to be preserved (Fig 11b), the gates along Royal and Carlton Terrace were to be restricted to keyholders in the two terraces; a park-keeper was to reside in the cottage, and the grounds were to be generally run under the same rules as those operating in the East and West Princes Street gardens.

The Town has continued to lease the ground ever since (due for renewal in 1988), and in 1955 acquired a small portion at the eastern corner for a public convenience. In 1974 a public outcry was sparked off by the Parks Department's move to form a small private car park - finally overruled by the Secretary of State. Stripped of the boundary rails during the Second World War - this has encouraged the indiscriminate use of the gardens for short-cutting and rougher use although the standard of upkeep is probably higher than at any other period. The lower lime tree avenue still remains an attractive feature, as well as the winding footpaths traversing the banks, and the outlines of the old quarries.

Hillside Crescent Gardens (1.80 acres, .72 ha)

A crescent shaped garden which never adopted the rather formalised layout (with ornamental figures) as envisaged by Playfair (Figs 5 & 6). It is now best known for its several handsome horse chestnuts, as well as elm and lime trees (Fig 11). Although intended as an ornamental pleasure ground for the use of the surrounding residents - who were required by the 1823 Articles of Roup to enclose it in a "suitable and handsome manner with parapet wall and iron railings" these clauses were never written into any of
the individual feu charters. To further complicate matters about one-third of the Crescent and garden area was owned by the Allan family and the rest by the George Heriot Trust - the latter not feuing their portion until the 1880s and 1890s. It was not a propitious beginning but with neighbouring open space already being improved, and in the hope of stimulating feuing the Trust took the initiative in 1836 and engaged first James Crof's followed by Charles McCaul (he contracted for the Hope Crescent gardens) to level the ground; Eagle & Henderson the nursery firm, were then employed to carry out the planting. For a brief period it was cared for by the tenant of the Royal Terrace/London Road gardens opposite but by the 1860s it had become neglected, overgrown and misused. Some remedial work was carried out by the Trust who then considered letting it out for sheep grazing. As the century wore on it fall into further disarray. Meantime, the Allan Trustees had assigned their rights and obligations in the gardens to their feuers, a move which prompted the Trust to investigate the possibility of leasing their portion to the city. In 1896 the Trust employed Methwen and Sons to put the gardens into good order, and offered it to the Town Council at 10/- (50p) rent a year - on similar terms to the lease held by the Council for the Royal Terrace gardens which had been negotiated in 1893. This move came to naught: likewise a similar one in 1935. Finally as a result of increasing deterioration and complaints by the public, and after the feuers had failed to carry out an order to put the grounds into good condition they were taken over by the Town Council in 1952 as an ornamental pleasure garden for the benefit of the city.

Regent Gardens (11.70 acres, 4.6 ha)

Although the only reference made in the Articles of Rouph and feu charters to the space between Royal, Carlton and Regent Terrace, and the public walks on Calton Hill related to a servitude whereby no building was to be allowed except as shown on the ground plan (slightly over one acre (0.4 ha)) had been reserved on the western boundary to a public building or church) its destiny as "magnificent gardens" had been assured by Playfair's design. For many years previously it had been used for cow pasturage. Just over one-third the size of West Princes Street it became the second largest pleasure garden within the New Town, and is now the biggest of all the ones still in private ownership.

Regent Gardens were formed between 1830 and 1832 after the feuers of the three terraces had successfully negotiated a feu charter for the land with the Heriot Trust. This was granted in 1829 after various meetings between the two sides had taken place - and rather as in the case of Drummond Place several of the builders took an active role in promoting the gardens; one in particular - William Henry was an energetic Chairman of the Garden Committee for many years. Various conditions were stated in the Charter - the ground was restricted for use only as pleasure gardens, no buildings were allowed apart from those necessary for a garden, rights of access and responsibility for upkeep were vested solely in the owner of individual stances - who had to abide by the rules and regulations drawn up by the majority (meetings of feuers could be held anytime provided 10 days notice was allowed, and due
advertisement given in any two Edinburgh newspapers). An annual feu

duty of £93 was payable to the Trust, and the stipulation made that
the maximum annual assessment for upkeep was not to exceed £10 per

stance.

Prior to the gardens being formed the feuers appointed a

special committee who were authorised to "...make an arrangement with

any nurseryman for laying out and planting the ground", with the

further recommendation that they "...should take the advantage of

the advice of Dr Graham and Mr Patrick Neill who have already very

kindly given, and still offered to give their assistance". Was

this in connection with the already planted bank fronting Regent

Terrace, or with preliminary discussion about the Regent gardens?

This we do not know, but both men were in a good position to offer

practical experience and sound knowledge: Dr Robert Graham had

already master-minded the setting up of two botanic gardens - in

Glasgow and Edinburgh (shortly after being appointed Regius

Professor of Botany and Keeper of the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden

in 1820, Graham became involved in the transference of the garden

from Leith Walk to Inverleith) as well as being a Commissioner of

the Queen Street central gardens: while Neill had recently worked

unsparingly to create the East Princes Street gardens. The Garden

Minutes do go on to state that Neill was responsible for drawing up

a detailed planting list, that plants were supplied by a local

nurseryman - Alex Wright, 1 Greenside Place (with nurseries in

Pilrig Street), and that the work was undertaken by Edwin Neilson,

the gardener appointed in December 1831 at 10/- (50p) a week,

together with help from assistants. By May 1832 over £1,100 had

been spent on the gardens, with a projected further outlay of £400.

Few changes have occurred to the gardens structure since it was

first laid out: the design consists of an upland lawn planted with

specimen trees in an early and uncluttered gardenesque style

strongly reminiscent of the late Repton. It has many of the

attributes of a scaled-down country gentleman's seat, a miniature

improved park of a kind then much in vogue in the lowlands. The

lawn is traversed along the contours by a number of footpaths

leading to a mount footpath at the top of a ha-ha (formed in two

portions and connected by a rustic bridge erected in 1842). This

was thrown up with spoil from the basement excavations of the houses

and to screen a high shone perimeter wall (lined originally with

horse chestnuts - the lime trees being added later) with the public

ground of the hill: an idea which may well have been suggested by

Playfair. Flanking the lawn are hedged walks, with steep wooded

slopes beyond, so that the building mass is set picturesque after

the manner approved by Gilpin with a broad canopy of large trees.

The main varieties of trees grown are elm, sycamore, lime, horse

chestnut, and ash.

Advice on the condition of the trees and planting has been

sought periodically from nursery firms, staff at the Royal Botanic

Garden and from landscape consultants. A 15' (4.57m) well was

formed close to the centre in 1832, and in 1882-83 two tennis courts

were levelled and marked out at the foot of the slope on the north

west side. Before then the grass had been out by scythe but the

advent of tennis prompted the purchase of a lawn mower. In 1889 a

brick dust tennis court was made close to the tool house. Summer

tournaments - both of tennis and putting became a highlight of the

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summer months during the latter years of the last century (Fig 19d), and the early years of the present one. Other entertainments have included military bands (from 1838-43) and the celebration of Queen Victoria's birthday with a firework display. Fund-raising garden fetes are now held from time to time (Fig 20, b, c, and d), and have proved very successful and popular, allowing the general public an opportunity to visit the gardens.

In 1970 it became necessary to obtain a private Act of Parliament in order to increase the maximum permitted assessment from £10 to £20, with powers to increase further on consent of three-quarters of the individual stance holders. Much of the property is now subdivided, with no rights to the gardens although access is usually granted to flat owners or others living locally on payment of an annual due.

Regent Terrace Gardens (1.3 acres, .52 ha)

This is a narrow wooded strip containing about 140 open grown hardwood trees - mainly elm, sycamore, ash, horse chestnut, lime and laburnum, and with 60 or so mixed ornamental trees and shrubs - holly, yew, rhododendrons and some hedging. All the feu charters for Regent and Carlton Terrace (first named Place) referred to the feurs' obligations to enclose the strip of ground fronting Regent Terrace and to the eastern side of Carlton Place at joint expense, and according to drawings and directions given by W.H. Playfair; they were also to be responsible for its upkeep and to have the sole use of the space as ornamental pleasure ground. In practice the ground has been tended by the same gardening staff employed by Regent Gardens, but they are separately assessed and have their own small committee. The standard of care is somewhat scant.

Main sources of information:

Minutes of Meetings of the Joint Committee of George Heriot's Hospital, the Trinity Hospital, and others representing the feuing of the lands called Quarryholes 1811-1822: City Archives.

Minutes of George Heriot Trust, Articles of Roup, Feu charters of the houses and for Regent gardens

3 Minute books of the general meetings of feuers of Regent, Carlton and Royal Terrace 1825-41; 1842-57; 1876-1922

3 Garden Management books 1392-1912; 1912-35; 1936-50: all held by the Clerk to the Garden Committee
LATER VICTORIAN DEVELOPMENTS

Robert Matheson's Grosvenor/Landsdowne Crescent Gardens (1.20 acres, 48ha)

Part of a square shaped area of land lying to the west of Palmerston Place, extending to some nine acres (3.6 ha) and purchased by Robert Matheson, architect, from the Heriot Trust in 1863. He was responsible for the ground plan with its central street (Grosvenor Street) leading into a double-sided crescent with oval shaped garden. Wester Coates House (demolished in 1869) had stood close to the centre of the garden and some of the fine mature trees attached to the house were preserved and incorporated into the enclosure. The two crescents were completed by the early years of the 1870s—Grosvenor Crescent being more ornate and Victorian in character, and Landsdowne rather plainer in detail: these were substantial family houses affording comfortable residences for the prosperous, well-to-do business and professional classes; some flatted accommodation was also provided at the ends and corners. A lot of property is now subdivided.

All the proprietors in the two crescents were obliged in terms of their feu charters "...to maintain the garden ground in good order in all time coming", the necessary money to be raised according to the extent of their property (the foot frontage principle); in recent years this has been replaced by a flat rate system of assessment. The garden dates from 1870, and was most likely laid out by the nursery firm of Downie and Laird, Frederick Street, who were responsible for supplying a large quantity of trees and shrubs during the following year—many of which still survive. These were planted around the outside border with a shrubbery at the east and west ends to reduce the discomforts of cross winds: a large oval shaped lawn was formed on the east side, with a smaller raised one on the west, and the central area grassed and tree planted (some of the older trees stood in this part): the various sections linked by looping pathways. In 1882 on the advice of Mr Macleod, Superintendent of City Parks, two large old beech trees were removed, and 20 new trees planted to gradually replace the other older specimens.

The garden's history has been mostly uneventful and management problems sufficiently rare for it to have happily functioned without any set regulations until 1903—and then only prompted by an irate gardener exasperated by the boisterous and uncontrollable antics of children and dogs (the latter have theoretically always been banned from entry). Various methods of upkeep have been tried—including jobbing gardeners, contracts with nursery firms, and from 1950 the shared use of the gardener attached to the neighbouring Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent gardens—a successful practice which lasted 14 years. During the Second World War the railings were removed, and the space occupied by public air raid shelters; the garden was not restored until 1948 when a chain link fence (now in a deteriorating state) was also erected and paid for by a special assessment. Early in the 1970s the extensive programme of tree and shrub planting was initiated under the guidance of a landscape consultant: by then some of the outer edges particularly on the south side had become patchy and sparse. Tennis was introduced into the garden in the 1890s and was played up until the early years of the present century.
Main sources of information:

GHT Chartulary 41, pp206-214: disposition of land in favour of Robert Matheson, architect

Grosvenor/Landsdowne Crescent Garden Minute book 1870-1963: in possession of the Clerk to the Management Committee

Heriot Trust lands at Wester Coates
(Magdala Crescent gardens, Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent gardens, and Douglas Crescent gardens)

Closely following Matheson's Grosvenor/Landsdowne Crescent scheme the Heriot Trust began to draw up proposals for feuing their remaining land at Coates: the central portion had already been sold for the building of Donaldson's School; the land further westwards was scheduled for villa development, leaving the eastern wedge between the school and the Water of Leith to be laid out in a style complimentary to the surrounding streets. John Chesser (1820-1892), Superintendent of Works to the Trust from 1858-89, was responsible for the ground plan and elevations and after various revisions his layout came to include - one double crescent (Eglinton/Glencairn) and two single crescents (Magdala and Douglas), each of which faced onto private pleasure gardens. Chesser was to have a strong influence on the Victorian additions to the western end of the New Town for he was also employed as architect to the Learmonth family and designed for them Buckingham Terrace, Belgrave Crescent and Place, as well as revising earlier plans for Lennox Street and Eton Terrace.

Magdala Crescent Garden (1 acre, 0.4 ha)

Magdala Crescent was the earliest part to be feued - in 1869, and by 1874 the 24 houses, each with small front gardens were complete. By the terms of the feu charter each proprietor was bound to enclose the strip of land opposite the Crescent, to plant and maintain it "in all time coming", in return for which they were granted a common right to the ground "...so far as it may be capable of being used for walking thereon". The garden was formed in 1874 by Downie and Laird the nursery firm to a simple design of grass, trees, and shrubs: no footpaths were made but the northern end was levelled for use as a croquet or tennis lawn, or for children's play. Along the whole of the western side runs the high stone boundary wall of Donaldson's Hospital providing shelter and additional opportunities for growing climbing plants - ivy, roses and virginia creeper. The row of lime trees skirting the Crescent were planted later in 1887: other trees include sycamores, hawthorn, horse chestnut, and cherry, together with various ornamental shrubs. Attempts to cultivate herbaceous flower plots did not succeed for very long.

The garden is essentially a decorative strip, with moderate use by children and dog walkers (two sandpits are provided for the
latters benefit). It is run on fairly informal lines (small committee plus hardworking, unpaid secretary and jobbing gardener) with an annual flat rate assessment being levied on all proprietors: special outlays - for example the iron railings erected in 1963 in place of the rather inferior ones put up after World War II were met by a special assessment.

Main sources of information

Magdala Crescent Garden Minute books: 1874-1911; 1912-39; 1948- : held by the secretary to the Garden Committee

Eglinton and Glencairn Crescent Gardens (1.9 acres, .75 ha)

The ground making up this double crescent was put up for sale in 1872, and nearly half the plots were bought by a local builder - James Steel - who was also responsible for much of the building in Douglas Crescent, as well as Belgrave Crescent and Belgrave Place - on the Learmonth's lands further to the south. Building continued until the early 1880s - each side being different from the other: Glencairn Crescent contained smaller three-storied houses while Eglinton had wider frontages, and an extra storey, and consequently appeared rather more heavy and bulky in style.

It was stated in the feu charters that the pleasure ground in the front of the houses in the two crescents was to form "...a pro indiviso inseparable part and pertinent of each of the separate stances", the feuers or proprietors to be responsible for the cost of enclosing and laying out the ground "...in a suitable and handsome manner" and thereafter to be responsible for its upkeep. They were to have the sole right to the ground subject to such regulations agreed to by a majority following a general meeting (called by any two proprietors, prior notice being given at least three days beforehand by notice in any two Edinburgh newspapers, or by handbill delivered to each house). All matters concerning the garden could be decided at such a meeting, together with the necessary assessment for maintenance, based on the size of the property (foot frontage) and not to exceed £2 annually.

The garden dates from 1885: it is not known who was responsible for the design but John Chesser's suggested layout featuring one large central croquet lawn, surrounded by trees and shrubs was not adopted. The first plan was, however, very simple, consisting of a border of trees and shrubs around the outer border, the rest grassed with a shrub bed at the centre and at either side. By the end of the 1890s a rather more elaborate design had been incorporated - not dissimilar to Grosvenor/Landsdown Crescent - having an outer pathway, with two other curving pathways which met at the centre and enclosing two distinct areas of lawn: one on the western side reserved as a tennis green, and the eastern one for croquet: the latter also doubled up as a putting green (in 1931) and for tennis quoits. Two shrub beds were formed opposite the central gateway in Eglinton Crescent (closed up in 1921 to provide a more sheltered seating area). In recent years a small toddlers' play area has been added to the eastern end.
Few management problems have arisen over the years and professional advice has been readily taken when required. In 1934 for example, the garden benefitted from the sound experience of Robert Scarlett, a nurseryman from Musselburgh, who was critical of the "...decidedly unattractive condition" of the grounds; he pointed out that most of the large trees had become overgrown, many of the shrubs beneath - straggly, the lawns neglected, and the paths rough. Extensive pruning followed together with additional planting of evergreens and shrubs selected from a list prepared by one of the staff at the Royal Botanic Garden. The committee has always been concerned to create a well-sheltered garden and the outer borders are noticeably more thickly planted than in the neighbouring Grosvenor/Landsdowne Crescent gardens. They were however, spared the upheavals of having to accommodate public air raid shelters during World War II and although the railings were removed - new ones were added soon afterwards (in 1948), the substantial cost being met by voluntary contributions.

The garden still caters for a mainly residential population - many of them now flat dwellers. Some anxiety and frustration has arisen due to the original condition which imposed a £2 upper limit on each individual assessment: this figure was reached by 1925 but any crisis was averted by the fortuitous increase in income arising from the growing number of proprietors as property became subdivided (all charged the full assessment on a flat rate basis). By 1949, however, the £2 proved wholly inadequate to meet the considerable cost of refurbishing the gardens after the war years, and the system was then adopted, and continued ever since, of asking each proprietor for an additional 'voluntary' contribution over and above the £2. This works reasonably well but is dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of the proprietors. A small number of subscribers from neighbouring streets also make use of the gardens.

Main sources of information:

Articles of Roup, dated 21st May 1872, GHT Archives

Minute book, Eglinton and Glencairn Crescent garden, 1916-65: held by the Treasurer to Garden Management Committee

Douglas Crescent Gardens (4.10 acres, 1.64 ha)

Had Gillespie Graham's 1825 plan for Coates been adopted, the whole of the available south bank along the Water of Leith would have been made into pleasure ground (Fig 12c): instead only one part was formed, and that along Douglas Crescent. Its picturesque qualities seem to have been recognised early on by the owners - the Heriot Trust: in 1839, two years after the land eastwards had been feued to the Trustees of Donaldson's Hospital, the governors accepted a recommendation by their Works Committee to enclose the ground with a 6' (1.83m) high wall, plant it with trees, and to build a cottage...
at the eastern end for a farm servant "...which would be an additional protection to the ground" (GHT Minutes, 26th October 1835). These proposals were not implemented and the ground remained "in its natural state" for many years (GHT Report by John Chesser and John Tawse, February 1885) - crossed by various tracks and footpaths leading from Coates to the old Queensferry Road, and to the hamlet and milling centre at Bells Mills.

John Chesser’s plan for Douglas Crescent included a pleasure garden along the banks which he showed tree planted and laid out in a series of pathways looping across the ground: a further wedge shaped area of land fronting the eastern angle of the crescent (named as part of Palmerston Place, but later changed to 23-28 Douglas Crescent) was reserved by the Trust for stable accommodation. In May 1872, 103 lots of land - including Douglas Crescent, Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent and Magdala Place were advertised for sale. Under the Articles of Roup, the pleasure ground lying above the Water of Leith in front of Douglas Crescent was to "...belong to and form a pro indiviso inseparable part and pertinent" of all these 103 lots: Douglas Crescent feuers were however, required to take sole responsibility for enclosing the ground along the street side, but otherwise all the feuers were to share the cost of enclosing and laying out the garden, and for its future maintenance: the details relating to calling meetings, levying assessments were identical to those governing the Eglinton/Glencairn Crescent gardens (the same £2 maximum annual assessment was also upheld). Further, a similar and equal right to these same pleasure gardens was conferred on the feuers or proprietors in Magdala Crescent and Coates Gardens (both sold earlier) - provided application was made "...five years after the term of Martinmas 1872" and on condition that those desiring such rights agreed to pay a fair and equal proportion of the expense already incurred. Why the right to Douglas Crescent gardens was extended to all the Heriot Trust feuers is not known - maybe it was to spread the burden of upkeep, or perhaps to tempt would be purchasers with this additional amenity.

Building along Douglas Crescent started in 1873, and the 22 houses completed by 1878: the six houses in the eastern angle were not begun until 1879. These were all large houses - similar in appearance to Eglinton Crescent but with rather plainer detailing. The open bank opposite however, proved too tempting to the builders and contrary to their agreement a large quantity of earth and rubble from the house foundations was tipped over the edge "...filling it up to a steep slope, thereby entirely altering its natural gradient" (John Chesser's Report, 1885). Not only was the bank rendered unstable but it effectively prevented that portion being formed into terraces and walks as envisaged by Chesser.

A cope stone and iron railing (round headed spiked design matching Chesser's pattern for the house frontages) was erected by the Douglas Crescent proprietors soon after the Crescent was completed. Further improvements to the grounds were discussed at a meeting of proprietors in 1878 (Minute, 8th February 1878): it was agreed initially to clear the top bank, to grass over the ground, and to plant a double row of lime trees and shrubs - the work being undertaken by Mr Daniel MacKay, of Cameron and Echo Bank nursery. A management committee was elected, and a £2 assessment levied on all the Crescent proprietors. Some attempt was also made to tame the
weeds covering the rest of the bank. In 1879 the committee was joined by an energetic and practical gentleman - one Major-General James Forlong (1825-1904) a retired general of the Madras Staff Corp who lived at 11 Douglas Crescent: first secretary, then for 24 consecutive years, chairman, he more than anyone helped to transform the ground "...from the exceedingly rough waste, unprotected state ... to its present well planted, protected and cared for condition" (Garden Minute, 25th May 1904). Another stalwart was Mr Bennet Clark, WS. The next project was to plant the whole bank with trees: in 1881, 355 trees - horse chestnut, sycamore, elm, beech, ash, together with quick growing varieties such as poplar and willow were added: to discourage damage from youthful trespassers large notices were displayed giving stern warning of penalties to be incurred (Fig 21a). More alarming however, was the first landslip in the middle area in 1881, followed by a more severe one in 1883 (reminiscent of the Moray Bank slippage). Remedial action was necessary - the committee considered a strong retaining wall at the base essential, but although a reasonable estimate of £80 was submitted by Mr Steel, builder, (which included filling and packing the bank to a more gentle slope) this was well beyond available funds.

Now was the time maybe to extend the burdens and responsibilities of the pleasure gardens to all the 103 feuers as specified under the 1872 Articles of Roup. Consequently the Douglas Crescent committee was dissolved, a general meeting of all the feuers called, and a new general committee formed. But the plan failed. The only proprietors with any real interest in the ground were the Douglas Crescent feuers themselves (Eglinton /Glencairn Crescent residents were already preoccupied with forming their own pleasure garden), and the Heriot Trust's insistence that no general assessments could be levied until a plan was available showing the area laid out as pleasure gardens and not simply as an inaccessible bank however ornamental; or unless all the feuers gave their written consent proved insuperable. There was no option but for the Douglas Crescent proprietors to re-appoint their committee and to assume total responsibility.

Far from being discouraged however, fresh activity was quickly underway. An encounter with the hospital Superintendent of Works, John Chesser, over the addition of some topsoil (the committee had obtained a free supply - and while spreading it over the eastern end had inadvertently covered part of the Trust's property) prompted the suggestion that it would be in the interests of the proprietors to acquire the ground and make it part of the Crescent garden rather than for stable accommodation. Shortly afterwards a formal offer was made by Mr Bennett Clark and Messrs Watherstons and Sons on behalf of themselves, and the six feuers at the eastern angle of the Crescent to purchase the grounds for £550: none of the other Crescent proprietors appear to have contributed, and the ground although joined to the rest was separately named as the Belford Bridge gardens (a title which persisted up until the beginning of this century). It was a worthwhile addition, and provided the greatest potential for recreational use.

By May 1886 the newly acquired portion was laid out to plans produced by Ireland and Thomson of Craigleith nurseries, the cost being met by a special assessment of £4 levied on all the proprietors at the eastern end. It was a simple but effective design -
transforming a fairly steeply sloping site into a series of grassed terraces - thus providing two lawns suitable for tennis (a very popular activity - Refer Fig 19a) and a third smaller one for such games as croquet and put golf. In 1891 a small portion of ground at the north east corner by the bridge and owned by the city was conveyed to the proprietors in exchange for a strip of garden ground at the south east corner (necessary readjustments due to the construction of a new road - Douglas Gardens).

Improvement work still continued on the rest of the gardens: in 1886 tile drains were laid in a bed to stabilise the bank (Garden Minute, 17th May 1886) and a series of pathways formed across the top and bottom of the bank, extending to the new Belford Bridge gardens, and with intermediary walks connecting the upper and lower levels. In 1889 a further substantial planting programme was embarked upon - this time Methven's nursery firm were employed to plant 4,000 trees and shrubs along the bank (Garden Minute, 5th November 1889). The stone retaining wall 8'6" (2.59m) was not built until 1893 - and then largely the fortuitous outcome of an agreement struck with the Commissioners for the purification of the Water of Leith: they had earlier negotiated with the committee for a strip of garden ground at the base of the bank, as well as the right to tunnel and build a sewer under Belford Garden - offering £300 in compensation. With a little gentle persuasion "...the Bank can neither be considered perfectly secure, nor can it be protected or improved, as the plantations are invaded by boys and sheep, and the shrubs and trees and grass are burnt down, broken and even bodily uplifted", (Memorandum to Douglas Crescent proprietors, 21st November 1890) the rest of the required money was raised from the proprietors.

The following years have seen the gradual maturing of the gardens: complaints about the dense growth of the lime trees along the crescent occurred as early as 1894: several then were removed and others thinned. Considerable thinning of the bank trees took place in 1907, and between then and 1916 over 200 trees were removed following advice from Mr Seth of Morningside nursery, and Mr McHattie, City Parks Department. Such work could then be undertaken relatively cheaply but it is now such a major item of expense that it tends to be neglected. While attractive in its wilderness state, the bank is in need of better maintenance, and the footpaths too, are in poor condition. Money and manpower are severely overstretched. The maximum assessment of £2 is still adhered to (a little nonsensical as the Articles of Roup were never properly adopted), and this is supplemented by an additional voluntary assessment. For many years outside subscribers were limited to those within the Heriot Trust feu but this no longer applies.

Main sources of information

Heriot Trust Minutes
1872 Articles of Roup
Douglas Crescent Gardens Minute Book 1878 - held by clerk to the Garden Committee
The later development of the Walker Estate
(Drumsheugh Gardens, and Rothesay Terrace/Rothesay Place Gardens)

After the death of Miss Mary Walker, the last member of the Walker family in 1870, the remaining lands of Coates and Drumsheugh (to the west and north of Melville Street) were put up for feuing (money from the estate having been left for the building of St. Mary's Cathedral in Palmerston Place, and for the endowment of the Scottish Episcopal Church). James Gillespie Graham's comprehensive ground plan for the lands of Coates - drawn up much earlier in 1825 (refer Fig. 120) had included this portion but although the layout was shelved it focussed attention on the obstacle presented by the building of Lyndoch Place which had effectively cut off ready communication with Queensferry Street from the northern end. As a result the Walkers were prompted to reconsider their own development, and in the same year - 1825 - an extended plan was produced by Robert Brown, their architect (Fig 8) which included a crescent with a garden to the north west (the future Rothesay Terrace/Place), and a triangular shaped open space to the east (Drumsheugh Gardens) - the latter a direct outcome of making the best of a somewhat oblique entry into Queensferry Street. This plan was adopted in principle although John Lessels who later succeeded Brown as architect to the Walkers made some revisions. The south side of Drumsheugh Gardens was the first section to be feued - in 1870, the plots being purchased by the building firm of John Watherstons and Sons, a prosperous company who with their offshoot - the Scottish Lands Building Company were responsible for most of the building in the district. Drumsheugh Gardens was completed by the early 1880s but Rothesay Terrace was still not finished by 1903.

The feuing conditions relating to both gardens were identical, and similar to the earlier ones drawn up for Coates Crescent gardens. All the property immediately surrounding the open space was given a common right to the ground which was to be kept as pleasure garden and regulated under such conditions agreed to by the majority of proprietors: payment for upkeep was to be based on the amount of feu duty payable on each property.

Drumsheugh Gardens (1 acre, 0.4 ha)

John Watherstons and Sons, the building firm, took on the responsibility for having this triangular area enclosed, laid out and for its initial upkeep. It was formed in 1877, probably by the nursery firm Downie and Laird, who were involved at this time with a number of New Town gardens at the western end. The design consisted of an outer border of trees and shrubs (mostly English elm, wych elm, sycamore, hawthorn, lime and plane), a surrounding footpath, with three further footpaths from the centre of each side leading to a circular walk in the middle - ornamented with a belt of shrubbery and flower beds; a few specimen trees were planted within the grassed interior. In the spring of 1878 the feuers first met together to discuss arrangements for taking the garden over, and to appoint a management committee. Since then the garden's history has been mostly uneventful: its care has for the most part been in the hands of jobbing gardeners, and the rather fussy early design has become simplified over the years: in 1895 the circular pathway at the centre

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was turfed over. Although various attempts have been made at flower growing (three flower beds were formed in 1905) since 1950 the policy has been to concentrate solely on the display of spring bulbs. The garden benefits from a small but dedicated committee who are guided by a management programme drawn up by a member of the Royal Botanic Garden, which is being systematically implemented. In its day the garden has had to cope with the demands of cricket, football, and tennis play (two courts) but the pressures have decreased as surrounding property has been taken over for office accommodation. The ground is well looked after and attracts a small number of outside subscribers: dogs are allowed but a shovel system operates for the removal of droppings. The railings are post-war.

Main sources of information:

Coates Chartulary, Vol.2, 10th March 1885 - 2nd November 1889: various charters for property in Drumsheugh Gardens:
Walker Trustees

Minute book of Drumsheugh Gardens 1878-1974

Rothesay Terrace/Rothesay Place Gardens (.30 acres, .12 ha)

Not only one of the smallest but also one of the last of the New Town gardens to be formed. As in the case of Drumsheugh Gardens responsibility for enclosing and forming the space was taken by the builders - John Watherstons and Sons. It was laid out well before the terrace itself was complete (Bartholomew's plan of 1891 shows a neatly formed enclosure but with just two houses built at the eastern end). No changes have been made to its basic design - the main feature being a raised central bed planted with trees and shrubs and surrounded by an attractive stone wall. The rest of the interior is grassed, with a rose bed and row of privet at either end: around the perimeter is a thick privet hedge with trees (sycamore, lime, whitebeam, hawthorn and rowan) at intervals. Almost all the larger trees were heavily pollarded several years ago leaving them badly mutilated and unsightly. Much of the surrounding property has been converted to business and office use with a subsequent breakdown of interest and concern with the garden. The management committee is now defunct, and a firm of chartered accountants, which once supplied the secretary to the committee, continues to shoulder, without recompense the cost of a jobbing gardener: but the garden is deteriorating and in urgent need of a planned programme of felling and replanting.

Main sources of information:

Coates Chartulary Vol.7, 1885-89: feu charters for property in Rothesay Place

All these gardens - which include the two largest to border onto the Water of Leith, lay within the Barony of Dean, or the Dean Estate. This was rich agricultural land, used for grain crops, the banks of the river supplying rough pasturage, and the site of several corn mills - the best known being Bells Mill. For many years it had been in the ownership off the Nisbet family - portions being gradually sold off, and around 1819-20 more serious consideration was given to developing the area between Dean Village and Stockbridge for housing: Sir John Nisbet, the last descendant lived in America and died without issue in 1827. Sometime beforehand he instructed his legal agents in Edinburgh (Messrs Smith and Findlay) to have plans prepared with this in mind and for providing a connection by means of a new bridge to the west end of Edinburgh. James Gillespie Graham was appointed architect and he produced a distinctive plan for an extensive villa development (Fig 8) - each house occupying a sizeable plot of land but the whole of the left sloping bank adjoining the Water of Leith (the old poultry lands of Dean) reserved as ornamental space, crossed by paths and serpentine walks. Alexander Nasmyth also appears to have been consulted but details as to his commitment remains obscure.

Recognising the importance of the bridge to the successful opening up of the lands of Dean, Nisbet's agents approached the Cramond Road Trustees in 1825 for financial assistance towards its construction; this was agreed to on condition that the bridge was made freely accessible to the public. With this backing assured the agents felt confident to put the land on the market, and in October 1825 readers of "The Scotsman" were informed that "a spirited individual" had purchased the Dean Estate "...measuring nearly 140 acres" (56 ha), and that "...the buildings to be erected there may be considered as forming a third New Town fully equal in magnitude and probably surpassing the splendour, of each of the other two divisions" (Scotsman, 12th October 1825: also reported in "Edinburgh Advertiser", 1 November 1825). Gillespie Graham's villas were scrapped in favour of a much more intensive development containing a large elliptical circus with a square at either end, a long terrace at the top of the bank stretching from Ann Street to Bells Mills, and with a crescent adjacent to the new bridge (author of this new design is not named: it may of course have been a revision made out by Graham). The spirited purchaser was John Learmonth (1789-1858) a wealthy and successful business man (coach builder and army contractor), and a man much devoted to public affairs (the last Lord Provost before the Burgh Reform Act of 1833). He had the courage, ability, and financial means to take on such an enterprise for as part of the bargain he was required to erect "a handsome and sufficient bridge over the Water of Leith". In 1832 one such bridge - designed by Thomas Telford, with James Jardine as associate engineer (some delay had been caused initially due to wrangles about its design) was opened to traffic.

But the feuing of the Dean Estate did not commence immediately:
Learmonth by this time was involved with the development of Rutland Street and Square (purchased just after the Dean lands): feuing was taking place slowly: the demand for new houses was beginning to dwindle and the building trade entering a period of depression. It was certainly not opportune to embark on new projects. For many years, therefore, the roadway leading from the bridge to Queensferry Road passed through open ground. Once the economic climate improved, however, Learmonth responded quickly, and in 1850 John Tait (the architect for Rutland Street/Square) produced plans for the area of land lying between Ann Street and Queensferry Road. His layout took maximum advantage of the space by using linked terraces which followed the outline of the site and provided mostly substantial self-contained houses with flatted accommodation at the corner ends. The rather heavier style Victorian architecture was softened by the strips of open space surrounding it on three sides: a tree planted bank along Oxford Terrace, a crescent shaped garden in front of Clarendon Crescent, and the more extensive bank - now known as Dean Gardens stretching down to the Water of Leith (reminiscent of Graham's proposal to leave this as ornamental space - complimentary to Moray Bank): a short row of terrace housing - Cambridge Terrace (almost opposite Holy Trinity Church) was also included at the western end. The first section to be built was Clarendon Crescent (completed by 1853), followed by Eton Terrace (begun in 1855), Oxford Terrace, and lastly Lennox Street.

Neither Learmonth nor Tait lived to see the scheme completed: that responsibility fell to his only son - Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Learmonth (1829-1887): he employed John Chesser to design a layout for a slightly larger area of ground on the opposite side of Queensferry Road. Chesser's familiarity with the west side of Edinburgh proved helpful as Learmonth himself lived away from the city. Feuing plans for Buckingham Terrace, Belgrave Place and Crescent (Fig 9) were made out between 1863 and 1865, and building started soon afterwards and continued well into the 1870s. One modest sized pleasure garden was included in front of Belgrave Crescent with the vacant ground beyond intended for the continuation of Belgrave Place. No other open space was provided apart from two narrow strips fronting Buckingham Terrace - mostly to serve as a visual and noise barrier to the busy road beyond. The latter are still privately maintained by the residents whose property overlooks the ground.

In 1874 proposals to feu off a further large area of the Dean Estate (60-70 acres, 24-28 ha) - opposite the west end of Buckingham Terrace and stretching between Queensferry Road and Comely Bank Road were announced (Scotsman, 14th March 1874). John Chesser was also responsible for this ground plan which was to have consisted of a series of "...tastefully designed terraces and crescents with intervening pleasure gardens" - the 400 or so houses being similar to Belgrave Crescent. The terrace of adjoining Queensferry Road but separated from it "...by a tastefully laid out shrubbery" was to be particularly fine: Learmonth Terrace - itself never completed was the only part of Chesser's plan to be built. West end residents responded negatively to the notion of further encroachments onto surrounding areas of open space, and tried instead to harness support for the creation of a west end park to occupy this site (refer also Section 2.6). Their efforts in this direction came to naught but it postponed the lands development, and brought together a group of
people committed to preserving and enhancing Edinburgh's open spaces who formed themselves into the Cockburn Association. One of the founder members was David Smith who himself helped to set up the Eton Terrace/Dean Gardens. The rest of the Dean Estate was not feued until long after Lt. Col. Learmonth's death, and to an inferior design, bearing little relation to the rest of the New Town; only Learmonth Gardens (built between 1900-06) shows vestiges of the former concept of housing linked to some private open space, the one complimenting the other.

Main sources of information:

- Sculptured Stones of Edinburgh, The Dean Group, John Geddie, OEC VI 1908
- Dean Bridge, Edinburgh, Roland Paxton, Our Engineering Heritage
- The Origins of the Dean Bridge project, Basil Skinner, OEC V 30, 1959
- Minute Books, Cockburn Association

Clarendon Crescent Garden (0.60 acres, 0.24 ha)

The feuing conditions relating to this garden are similar to Rutland Square's, i.e. - the proprietors being made responsible for the perpetual upkeep of the parapet walls, railing and ground "in good order and repair": the annual assessment based according to "foot frontage" (house widths varied from between 21' and 36' (6.40m - 10.98m)). Nothing is known about the garden's formation but it was probably laid out in the late 1850s or early 1860s, to a simple design of grass and trees. Like most of the smaller gardens it has been run on fairly informal lines: most of the 22 houses in the Crescent are now converted into flats and while the same overall method of assessment is still used, this is further split according to the number of subdivisions. During the Second World War, the railings were removed, and two ARP shelters erected (Figs 18, d and e): a rather evil smelling and unsightly bin for pig food was also placed on the grass near the lower end of the garden and attracted a lot of adverse criticism (Minute, 37 May 1945). After the War the garden was levelled and resown; a chain link fence was added to the wall on the Queensferry Road side and a privet hedge planted, but the section along the Crescent was left open. Unfortunately this has attracted a number of anti-social dog owners who have been known to bring their pets "...considerable distances for exercise in the gardens" (Minute, 1 June 1950). On the whole the garden is well cared for, is financially secure, but lacks the benefit of a tree maintenance programme. The main varieties of trees are sycamore, elm, lime, poplar, ash, yew and whitebeam.

Main sources of information

Clarendon Crescent Garden Minute book 2, 1906-58
Oxford Terrace Gardens (.35 acres, .14 ha)

The same feuing conditions apply as in Clarendon Crescent above - but with only half the number of houses to take responsibility for upkeep it has fared less well, and for most of its life this tiny strip of woodland has received infrequent and at best only cursory attention. Due to its neglected and deteriorated state the Town Council threatened to take it over in 1908 as a public garden but this so alarmed certain residents that approaches were made to the Trustees of the Dean Gardens to see if they would assume responsibility thus: "..preserving the amenity of the Dean feuers in the district" (Dean Garden Minute Book 1, 24th February 1908). This resulted in a formal agreement (dated 7th June 1908) whereby the Oxford Terrace proprietors promised to pay a fixed sum of 10/- (50p) each year to the Dean Gardens in return for the management and upkeep of their strip of garden; an arrangement which has never proved satisfactory. Subsequent proprietors along the Terrace, unaware of such an agreement have shown a natural reluctance to pay their dues which in any case have been irksome to collect and no longer bear any relation to actual maintenance costs. Within more recent years the Dean Trustees have on two occasions been in contact with the city to see if the ground might be taken over - but without success; hence the garden continues to receive scant care with occasional blitzes, and relying on the goodwill of the proprietors to contribute more whenever a major outlay is incurred.

Main sources of information

Minute Books of the Dean Gardens

Dean Gardens (7.20 acres, 2.9 ha)

A correspondent - "Edinensis" writing in the Courant in 1858 remarked on the abysmal contrast between the cultivated bank of the Water of Leith behind Moray Place, and the "neglected aspect" of the one below Eton Terrace which presented "...nothing but chaos of stunted grass, overlaid with heaps of rubbish", and "...an eyesore to everyone crossing Dean Bridge", (Courant, 22nd November 1858). For years this wild unkempt bank had been used as rough grazing for sheep but since building work had commenced it had also become a convenient tip for rubble and spoil. To convert this tangled wilderness into a pleasure garden (the largest of the four bordering onto the Water of Leith, and now the second biggest of all the privately owned gardens) proved almost as great a challenge as the setting up of the Queen Street and West Princes Street Gardens: it certainly took time, careful negotiation and quite a lot of money.

The new Dean feuers were granted a servitude over the ground lying between Eton Terrace and the Water of Leith restricting its use "...for occupation as pasture, nursery, garden or pleasure ground": this however, excluded the west portion shown in Tait's plan as the site for Cambridge Terrace. Some protection was therefore provided (rather as happened in the case of the Queen Street, Royal Terrace and Regent Gardens) but without any responsibilities being placed on
the feuers themselves. By 1867 the first stage of the Dean development (Oxford Terrace, Clarendon Crescent, Eton Terrace and Lennox Street) was complete, and stage 2 including Buckingham Terrace well underway. In this same year two new proprietors moved to Eton Terrace and almost immediately became immersed in the task of setting the gardens up. One was David Smith, WS (1802-80), 10 Eton Terrace, formerly partner in the firm Smith and Kinneir and since 1858 manager of the North British and Mercantile Insurance Co. and the other, James Balfour, WS (? - 1912), 13 Eton Terrace. Both had a useful background of legal and committee work with a keen interest in worthwhile causes. Smith in particular, a man of "...very kindly disposition, of courteous manner and goodness of heart" (GG, 17th December 1880) was already well versed in the management of pleasure gardens having proved an able and dedicated convener of the Moray Feuers pleasure gardens from 1837-56. He was soon to become convener of the Dean gardens with Balfour as secretary (the latter held this post with great efficiency and tact, and without remuneration for over 20 years).

Smith and Balfour's first move however, was to arrange a meeting with Lt. Col. Learmonth, the feu superior "...to consider the propriety of improving and dressing the bank between Eton Terrace and the Water of Leith" (Minute Book 1, 12th November 1867); this took place in November 1867 attended by two other Dean Feuers - Mr Farquharson, (5 Eton Terrace) and Mr Dick Peddie, architect, (33 Buckingham Terrace) and was the only occasion both sides had direct contact. Lt. Col. Learmonth had travelled up from Melrose and returned shortly afterwards to his London residence at Eaton Place. His life, first as a soldier (he served in the Crimea, followed by service in India), then as a Member of Parliament removed him from Edinburgh. While sympathetic to the feuers wishes, and anxious to implement his father's plans, Learmonth nevertheless considered that the time was not yet opportune "...for making permanent alteration on the bank in case these might possibly affect the street of Eton Terrace which was partly composed of travelled earth": however, he looked forward to doing this "...in the course of a year or two" and meantime proposed "...to plant the bank pretty extensively". More pertinent still, was his desire to retain the use of the bank as a convenient soil dump. As a compromise the feuers decided instead to ask for the temporary use of the ground. Diplomacy was rewarded and Lt. Col. Learmonth agreed to grant the Dean feuers a 10 or 12 year lease "...of such part that may not be required to be retained as a deposit for earth" at a nominal rent of £1 per annum (the sum paid when in use for pasturage) and on condition that the feuers "...be at the whole expense of enclosing and laying out the ground as pleasure garden and keeping and leaving the same in proper order", (Minute Book 1, 11th December 1867).

The area of ground had still to be negotiated: the portion allocated by John Chesser was considered "too limited", but before making further approaches to Learmonth, the feuers wisely sought the expert opinion of "one of their number", the architect John Dick Peddie, and asked him "...to make out a sketch of how he would propose to lay out the grounds and to take estimates of the expense of doing that, and of enclosing them". It was singularly fortunate that such a well known and respected designer was so readily to hand, and one who had demonstrated a concern with environmental matters: Dick Peddie's "architectural taste" combined with James McIlnab's
planting skill had just transformed the St. Andrew Square gardens (Section 2.2), and he had also recently stimulated public interest in the East and West Princes Street Gardens by his fine watercolour paintings of suggested improvements (Section 2.6; Fig 101). On receiving Dick Peddie's sketch plan, Lt. Col. Learmonth agreed to increase the area to include the whole bank fronting Eton Terrace down to the Water of Leith. This part subsequently became known as the Eton Terrace Gardens. At a general meeting of feuers held in January 1868 (attended by 15 people - six from Eton Terrace, five from Buckingham Terrace, and the rest from neighbouring streets) approval was given for a 12 year lease, and it was left to a newly elected committee of nine to raise the necessary funds for forming the gardens (by voluntary subscription amongst the feuers, and "such other parties as may be interested" i.e. the Earl of Moray's feuers whose property overlooked the bank). The committee was also given power to negotiate with the Raeburn Trustees for a corner area of land at the south end of Ann Street reaching down to the Water of Leith (this proved a straightforward transaction as both parties were anxious to form a means of communication between the two estates); a £2 annual feu duty was offered and accepted, and agreement reached that a suitable boundary wall would be constructed at the south east end of Ann Street which would allow gated access to and from Dean Terrace.

Construction work started in February 1868, the contractors being Daniel Mackay and Co, Cameron Bank Nursery: Dick Peddie acted as supervisor and James McNab offered detailed planting advice. The Dick Peddie-McNab partnership presented a masterful combination of talents and this picturesque site was developed to full potential creating one of the finest and most attractive pleasure gardens in Edinburgh. A detailed description of the layout and planting was fully reported in "The Scotsman" one month later (13th March 1868):

"The plan exhibits two terraces, extending along the whole length of the ground, and dividing the space lying between Eton Terrace and the Water of Leith into three nearly equal portions. The ground is very steep, but by means of these terraces it will be made level to about 30' (9m) in the one case, and to about 40' (12m) in the other. The centre of each terrace will be a broad walk with a turf margin ornamented with shrubs of various kinds. To connect the terraces a series of winding walks will be formed along the face of the slope. These will be somewhat steep, but the gradients are to be made as easy as the natural activity of the grounds will admit of. On the ground between the lower terrace and the Water of Leith, forest trees are to be thickly planted, and the slopes between the two terraces will be studded at intervals with clumps of trees of the same kinds, with shrubs at intersections of the various walks. The slope from the upper terrace to Eton Terrace will be kept clear of trees in order that the view from the houses may not be interrupted, but the whole surface will be closely planted with shrubs of various colours of leaf, and flowering plants, set in masses so as to give variety and richness of effect at all times of the year". (refer also Fig 16a)
By the end of 1868 most of the major work had been completed and the lowest slope planted. The banks were allowed time to consolidate before the rest of the planting was carried out: in 1870 an avenue of limes was added along the lower terrace walk. By now approximately £376 had been spent on the garden - nearly three-quarters of this being paid to the contractor. It had been hoped that subscription from the Dean feuers together with contributions from the Earl of Moray's feuers would have covered the outlay but even after reminders had been sent out the total amount raised was only £277 (£186 from the Dean feuers who had been encouraged to donate £10 if resident in Eton Terrace and £5 for elsewhere, and £91 from the Moray feuers). The deficit had to be met by a long term bank loan. All subscribers were given a right to the garden - on payment of an annual due, and others outwith the Dean Estate were allowed access on a key rental basis.

By 1875 the gardens were becoming established - already tree thinning had been carried out along the lower terrace and much of the surplus stock planted "pretty freely" throughout the rest of the grounds: some of the walks which had proved "most inconveniently steep" had had their gradients reduced (Minute, 10th February 1876). But the waste land to the west, reserved for Cambridge Terrace which now contrasted so unfavourably with the new gardens continued a source of anxious concern particularly since 1874 when Lt. Col. Learmonth began feuing off further areas of his estate. As already described (refer also Section 2.5) the increasing threat to Edinburgh's open spaces from new building encouraged the formation of the Cockburn Association of which David Smith was the first convener. It is significant that during its first year of existence one of the important subjects considered by the Association was the future of the wilderness area to the north east of Dean Bridge: their support for the proposal to convert the land "...into one of the finest parterres in that part of the city", and their stated opposition for any plans to build on the site provided strong backing to the Dean feuers approaches to purchase the ground. In 1876 Lt. Col. Learmonth agreed to sell the land for £2,250, and the garden ground held on lease for £189 (Minute, 30th June 1876): compared to the cost of some of the other New Town gardens this was a fair and reasonable sum. Nevertheless it was still considerable. Lord Moray's feuers on the south side generously subscribed £1,125 (half the cost of the waste land), but the rest, including former debts, and the expense of having the portion laid out had to be met by the Dean feuers (Scotsman, 3rd July 1876). Rising to the challenge were the ladies of the district who in order to assist "in defraying the expenses of constructing the Dean Gardens" organised a three day Bazaar in the Masonic Hall, George Street during April 1877 (SEC, 31st March 1877, and Scotsman, 3rd April 1877). It was run with great style, "somewhat different from those at which ladies work alone is sold", and included works of art (with photographs of Rome), china from Dresden and Valleria, Genoese jewellery, Pyrenees work, fancy and lawn tennis tables, African goods, Parisian chocolate and French coffee: entertainment included Punch and Judy shows, and the bands of
the 78 Highlanders, and the Queens Own Hussars. Although successful – just under £500 profit was made, money had still to be borrowed and the garden was not free of debt until 1891.

John Jeffrey and Son, gardeners, were responsible for forming the new section of garden to their own plan - which had received prior approval from James McNab. The work was carried out in 1877, and created an attractive area of lawn (a useful recreational space), with linking footpaths to those already in existence, and extensive planting of trees and shrubs along the banks. From this time onwards the whole area became known as the Dean Gardens and the land vested in five trustees, and managed by a committee of seven. All those who subscribed £10 towards the purchase of the grounds (or £25 after November 1876) and paid their annual dues became proprietors, the rights and privileges being attached to their property - including those who had contributed from the Earl of Moray's estate. But while proprietors have certain constitutional rights (there are about 100 altogether) unlike most other proprietors of New Town gardens they are under no obligations to pay annual assessments - and there are now many 'lapsed' proprietors. Without an assured source of income the gardens existence is more precariously balanced, and becomes more and more dependent on outside subscribers. At present, the gardens are being reasonably well cared for but lack any overall management plan.

Main sources of information

Dean Garden Minute Book 1 1867-1901
Dean Garden Minute Book 2 1910-1958

Belgrave Crescent Garden (6.0 acres, 2.4 ha)

Belgrave Crescent garden started life as a small enclosed area fronting the Crescent - as shown on John Chesser's plan of 1865 (Fig.9). The land beyond, then covered with kitchen gardens, ruinous buildings, and broken down fences (Grant, Old and New Edinburgh) while an attractive stretch sloping down to the Dean Village was destined for a row of terraced houses - the continuation of Belgrave Place. Rights and responsibilities respecting the small portion of garden were contained within the feu charters of houses within the Crescent, and were identical to those for Clarendon Crescent.

When a number of Dean feuers took the initiative in 1876 to acquire the wilderness area in front of Eton Terrace and to put the rest of their pleasure garden on a more permanent footing the Belgrave Crescent proprietors also grasped the chance to start negotiations with Lt. Col. Learmonth to enlarge their existing garden. No one wanted their view blocked by a row of houses, and as public opinion was sympathetic to such improvements the opportunity was too good to miss. Moreover, resident in the Crescent was one James Falshaw, Lord Provost, a man of "indomitable energy and firm purpose" (Scotsman, 15th June 1889): he was already committed to
securing two other major open spaces for the benefit of Edinburgh citizens (West Princes Street gardens, and Inverleith Park – refer Section 2.6), and under his leadership the feuers successfully concluded a contract with Lt. Col. Learmonth in 1877. The adjoining area of land to the south (amounting to about 5 acres - 2.0 ha) was purchased for £8,000 as pleasure gardens with the provision that other Dean feuers living in Buckingham Terrace, Clarendon Crescent, Learmonth Terrace, and Belgrave Place should have rights to the grounds on contributing to their purchase, cost of formation and upkeep (Learmonth had reduced his asking price of £5,000 on this understanding).

Unlike the slightly earlier feu charter drawn up for the Dean Gardens, the Belgrave Crescent one contained more specific clauses as to how the gardens were to be administered (somewhat akin to the Drummond Place charter which was put together by a committee of feuers with similar care). Briefly, the trusteeship of the land was vested in six proprietors from Belgrave Crescent and a management committee appointed (of between 5-7 elected proprietors from the Crescent) who were to have full responsibility for having the grounds laid out, for levying assessments and with powers to negotiate with Dean Gardens on their possible future integration. In contrast too was the response of Belgrave Crescent proprietors to appeals for money towards the cost of the land: substantial contributions were made without apparent difficulty - the smallest amount was £35 (1 feu er), others gave between £100-150, but the majority donated £250 each. The gardens financial security was assured from the start by the feuers obligation to pay an annual due for upkeep being equally applied to the enlarged area. Income further increased when the rights and responsibilities of the gardens were extended to other properties: four more houses were built at the west end of the Crescent (the builder - Mr Steel paid £850 for these rights, and the money was used to buy another strip of land between the garden and Dean Path), and in 1880 a further £750 was paid for the transfer of rights to 15 houses in Belgrave Place (a reduced sum in recognition of Mr Steel's useful work done in the garden - enclosing, embanking, soiling and wall making). All this has allowed the gardens to receive above average care as shown in their consistently high standard of upkeep.

James McNab drew up plans for the new garden in which he aimed to create a park-like appearance - composed mostly of grass, with free standing specimen trees scattered within the interior, and the banks thickly planted with forest trees. The railing along the north side of the original garden was retained but extended slightly eastwards while the southern section was completely removed: the border of the lime trees and holly was also kept and added to along the Crescent side, and the pathway continued westwards to loop round the lower reaches of the garden before rejoining the top path at its eastern end. John Jeffrey and Son the contractors for stage 2 of the Dean Gardens were employed to do the work - making the new walks, levelling and turfing the western half for use as a tennis lawn or bowling green, and planting trees - all under the careful supervision of William Moubray (7 Belgrave Crescent), Captain in the Royal Navy, and enthusiastic member of the management committee. The Jeffreys were a local firm - their nursery ground adjoined Dean Path and formed part of the land purchased from Lt. Col. Learmonth; they were given a new lease in 1877 and also appointed to take charge of the

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gardens. This arrangement continued until 1881 when John Anderson was taken on as the first full-time gardener at £55 per annum. For a time he lived in part of Grove Cottage - which stood in the lower part of the grounds nearly opposite to Lindsay's Mill: the cottage was in poor condition, and gradually deteriorated to such an extent that eventually it was boarded up. In the late 1940s it was demolished and the stone used to build a rockery and sheltered sitting area at the top of the slope.

Belgrave Crescent gardens marked the end of McNab's long association with the New Town gardens for he died shortly afterwards. His role was taken over by Mr McLeod, Superintendent of the City Parks and Gardens who was able to offer practical advice on the completion of the walks, further planting, and the forming of an embankment on the west side, and additional levelling and spreading of soil. Some of this work had been generated by Mr Steel who was now busy with the construction of Belgrave Place, and had been given permission to deposit good earth in the garden.

In recent years other small improvements have been made - the sheltered sitting area already referred to, the extension of certain pathways, and the clearing of the lower bank at the south eastern end - creating an attractive picnic area. Still mostly surrounded by residential property the garden continues to be well used both by proprietors and subscribers. Like other of the larger garden spaces it has accommodated a wide range of activities in its time - lawn tennis golf, military bands (the Black Watch in 1881), home guard practice, cadet drilling, vegetable growing to help the war effort, and the occasional scene of marquees and wedding receptions. Now and again trouble has been experienced with vandalism, and children from the Dean Village end trespassing into the grounds and causing damage: but mostly it is a well cared for and loved space providing a delightful and spacious area for walking and sitting, and for childrens' play.

Main sources of information

Belgrave Crescent Garden Minute Books:  
in the possession of the clerk to  
the management committee

Book 1 1877-1927

Book 2 1928-1949

Book 3 1949-1966

Book 4 1967-

The centenary of the Belgrave Crescent Gardens:  
Kenneth Sanderson, Edinburgh 1977