

## THE FRIENDS OF GLASGOW NECROPOLIS



**c/o St Mungo Museum, 2 Castle Street, Glasgow G4 0RH.**  
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# Grave Matters

**Number 7**

**Spring 2019**

As usual I need to start by thanking my small band of indexers for their work and am delighted to welcome Sharon and Scott to our team. I haven't been in the habit of reporting actual number of records indexed up until now but thought maybe I should start –

January 2019            470 records

February 2019        350 records

March 2019            344 records

This brings our database of persons buried or commemorated in the Necropolis to 27974 entries at the end of March.

### **Some addresses aren't what they seem**

Some of the addresses given in the later burial registers are somewhat misleading. How many readers know what can be found at the following addresses?

- 121 Hill Street, Garnethill
- 2 Lorraine Road
- 1055 Great Western Road
- 133 Balornock Rd, Springburn

The burial registers which have been indexed from 1950 onwards show the start of the trend for people to die in nursing homes and hospitals rather than at home. We seem to be able to identify two nursing homes so far from the addresses given. The McAlpin Nursing Home was located at 121 Hill Street before its premises were incorporated into the Royal Beatson Memorial Hospital and the Kensington Nursing Home could be found at 2 Lorraine Road.

In the 1950s and 60s six seemingly unrelated persons died at 1055 Great Western Road so it didn't seem to be a house address. It turned out that this was (and is) the postal address for Gartnavel Royal Hospital. Glasgow Royal Lunatic Asylum moved from its original city centre site to Gartnavel in 1843; in 1931 its name changed to Glasgow Royal Mental Hospital and in 1963 to Gartnavel Royal Hospital. It is

interesting that 'Gartnavel' is only found in the name of the hospital after 1963 but from our first known burial in 1857 the term found in the burial registers is 'Gartnavel Asylum' or a variation thereof for thirty persons buried from there between 1857 and 1965. It seems to be only from the 1950s that some people preferred to conceal the fact that their relative died in Gartnavel Asylum by substituting an anonymous street address. Just to complicate things further next door at 1053 Great Western Road is Gartnavel General Hospital which was built beside it in 1973.

Records for Gartnavel Royal Hospital are available at

<https://wellcomelibrary.org/collections/digital-collections/mental-healthcare/gartnavel-royal-hospital/>



Glasgow Royal Lunatic Asylum

Patients from Woodilee Asylum which was the Barony Parochial Asylum at Lenzie, and Murray's Asylum, Perth are also buried in the Necropolis.

The final address is that of Stobhill Hospital built as the poor law hospital for City and Barony parishes in 1903-4. It later became a general hospital serving the north of Glasgow and districts immediately to the north. There are many birth and death certificates (some in my own family) with the Balornock Road address.

## **John Blacklock**

In the Morning Post of 27 August 1846, copied from the Glasgow Courier the following appeared:

DREADFUL CASE OF SUICIDE. – On Monday, an elderly man named John Blacklock, a clerk in a writer's office in this city, committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor in a most deliberate and shocking manner, at his lodgings,

Guildry-court, Bridgegate. The unfortunate man, it appears, had been confined to the house for a few days with illness, but not apparently of a serious nature, and there had been nothing in his manner during that period which could afford the slightest indication to the inmates of the house of his meditating an attempt on his own life; nor were his circumstances such as could be considered likely to produce depression of mind. Yesterday morning he seems to have intimated to his landlady a desire to be served with a cup of tea about eleven o'clock; and on her entering his room about that hour to supply him with the beverage, in accordance with his request, he (being then in bed) manifested some irritability of temper at being disturbed. In about an hour afterwards the attention of the people of the house was attracted by a noise in the room, and on entering, the unhappy man was found extended on the floor in the midst of his blood, which streamed from a dreadful wound across his throat, evidently inflicted by means of a razor which lay beside him. Medical aid was immediately procured, but life was quite extinct. The motive which had impelled the unfortunate man to the act of self-destruction appears quite inexplicable to every one with whom he was in any way connected here. We understand he was a married man, but living separate from his wife, whose place of abode is in Ayrshire.

John Blacklock died on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August and was buried in common ground in the Necropolis on 26<sup>th</sup> August.

## **Andrew Donaldson, Landscape Painter in Water-colours**

1790-1846

Andrew Donaldson died at 112 West George Street, Glasgow on 21 August 1846 and was buried in the Necropolis in compartment Eta on the 24<sup>th</sup>. There is no longer a stone on the lair and it is not yet known whether other members of the family are buried with him.

The following is based on "A dictionary of Irish artists" by Walter G Strickland published in 1913.

Andrew Donaldson was born at Comber south of Belfast where his father was a weaver. Andrew and his father moved to Glasgow when Andrew was a child and there he initially worked in Houldsworth's Mill, Hutchesontown as a piecer. His health was affected by an accident and led to him being apprenticed to a haberdasher. He loved drawing and sketching and eventually devoted himself wholly to art as a teacher and painter working chiefly in water-colour.

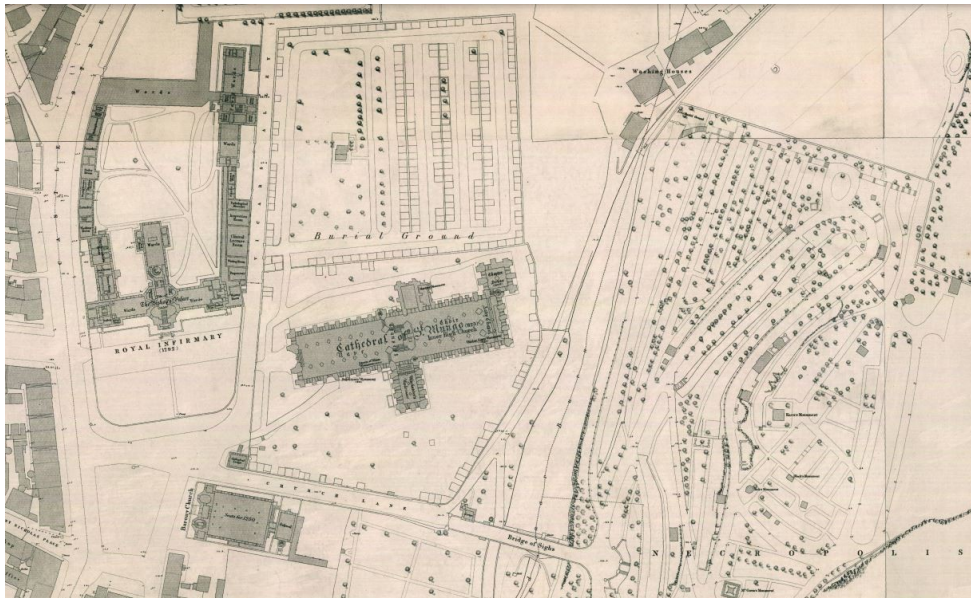
He painted a number of views of old Glasgow including a view of the *Old Theatre Royal, Queen Street, after the fire in January 1829* which is in the collection of Glasgow Museums. According to the Government Art Collection website two of his Scottish landscapes are hanging in the British embassy in Ankara.

## North Parish Washing Green Society

On 28<sup>th</sup> August 1846 Angus McKay of North Quarter Washing Green was buried in Compartment Lambda.

It turned out that in 1792 the heritors of the northern quarter of Glasgow laid out a washing green equipped with water boilers, tubs and all equipment necessary for housewives to do their washing on land they owned beside the Molendinar Burn. The washing green was rented to a tacksman who managed it and the rent he paid was distributed to local poor. In the middle of the nineteenth century the washing green was sold to the trustees of the Royal Infirmary who wanted to build an extension and the sale money was invested. The society is still in existence and still fulfils its original purpose of supporting the poor.

Unfortunately it is not known what connection Angus McKay had with the society, whether he was the current manager or not.



This 1857 large scale town plan of Glasgow shows the washing houses of the society on the west bank of the Molendinar opposite the Jews Burial Ground. [maps.nls.uk]

## Two more old soldiers

More military pensioners have turned up in the burial registers.

Thomas Dobie served in the 42<sup>nd</sup> or Royal Highlanders Regiment for nine years. He was wounded in the left leg on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1801 in Egypt and discharged to pension on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1802 at Edinburgh Castle aged 26 years. On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1801 the 42<sup>nd</sup> were involved in the Battle of Aboukir in which a British force landed in Aboukir Bay under fire from the French and defeated them. In spite of his wounds Dobbie did not die until December 1846 so drew his pension for forty four years.

Gunner and driver James McLeish enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Artillery at Glasgow in 1823, aged 18 years. He served until January 1835 during which time he

spent over six years in the Ile de France (Mauritius). The record of the medical board which considered his case in December 1835 and held at the Royal Ordnance Hospital, Woolwich survives. It turned out McLeish had suffered two injuries during his service which made him unfit to continue. In May 1833, while serving in Dublin, he received an injury while riding which resulted in his testicles becoming permanently enlarged and by August 1834 he was no longer able to ride on horseback. Soon after this his right thumb was dislocated by an accidental explosion of a gun. He didn't live to enjoy his pension for nearly as long as Thomas Dobbie dying in December 1846 aged 41 years.

## **Neighbouring burying grounds to the Necropolis.**

Many of the enquiries received through our website turn out not to relate to the Necropolis. One reason for this is that the FOGN is the most active cemetery Friends group in Glasgow with a website which offers research facilities and, as a result, draws many general enquiries about Glasgow cemeteries. The only cemeteries known to me with Friends groups are the Southern Necropolis and Cathcart.

Friends of Southern Necropolis <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348288065741/>  
Friends of Cathcart Cemetery <https://en-gb.facebook.com/cathcartcemetery/>

A second reason we receive unrelated enquiries is that non-local enquirers can be confused by the number and names of cemeteries in the Townhead area of Glasgow. In the last few months we have had enquiries about the High Church Burial Ground and also the New Burial Ground. The oldest burial ground in the area is that round the Cathedral or High Church. The original is to the south of the building and the New Burial Ground (1801 onwards) is to the north. Immediately to the east of the cathedral, on a hill on the far side of the Molendinar burn, is the Glasgow Necropolis. This arrangement shows up clearly on Google maps.

The crypt of the cathedral served as the parish church of Barony parish for many years (1596-1801). When the congregation finally moved to its own building the crypt was filled with earth to a depth of five feet and used for burials between c1805 and 1835. I do not know where these burials were removed to when the crypt was emptied and restored. There was a third burying ground, now demolished, just to the north of the Royal Infirmary called St Mungo's.

The best list of Glasgow's cemeteries is *Burial grounds in Glasgow: a brief guide for genealogists* by June A Willing and J Scott Fairie, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition, 1997 which can be bought from the Glasgow & West of Scotland Family History Society ([www.gwsfhs.org.uk/content/publications.aspx](http://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/content/publications.aspx)).

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Anyone who would like to help indexing the Burial Registers is very welcome to join us by contacting me at [morag.fyfe@glasgowneecropolis.org](mailto:morag.fyfe@glasgowneecropolis.org)