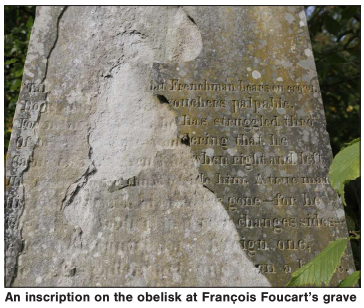
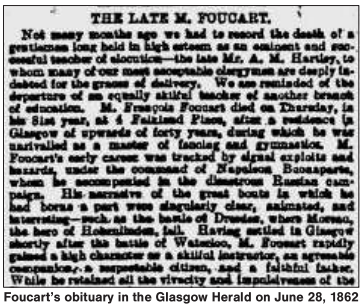


An inscription on the obelisk at François Foucart's grave



Foucart's final resting place in Glasgow



THE LATE M. FOUCART.

Not many months ago we had to record the death of a gentleman long held in high esteem as an eminent and successful teacher of elocution—the late Mr. A. M. Hartley, to whom many of our most acceptable clergymen are deeply indebted for the graces of delivery. We are reminded of the departure of an equally skilful teacher of another branch of education. M. François Foucart died on Thursday, in his 81st year, at 4 Faistland Place, after a residence in Glasgow of upwards of forty years, during which he was unrivalled as a master of fencing and gymnastics. M. Foucart's early career was tracked by signal exploits and hazards, under the command of Napoleon Buonaparte, whom he accompanied in the disastrous Russian campaign. His narrative of the great bouts in which he had borne a part were singularly clear, animated, and interesting—such as the battle of Dresden, where Moreau, the hero of Hohenlinden, fell. Having settled in Glasgow shortly after the battle of Waterloo, M. Foucart rapidly gained a high character as a skilful instructor, an agreeable companion, a respectable citizen, and a faithful father. While he retained all the vivacity and impulsiveness of the

Foucart's obituary in the Glasgow Herald on June 28, 1862

Forgotten knight of Napoleon became 'father of physical fitness'

Donald Erskine



Pictured at Foucart's grave are Gary Nisbet (left), Rupert Eden and Annette Mullen, chair of The Friends of Glasgow Necropolis

"THIS is a story that has been waiting a long time to be told," historian Gary Nisbet informs me as we await the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the life of François Foucart, arguably the most interesting Frenchman ever to settle in Glasgow.

At Foucart's grave in the Necropolis stands a slightly crumbling 15-feet-tall stone monument, carved by J&G Mossman in 1863. Among the 52,000 people buried in the graveyard, he is surrounded by well-known names, including the author of Wee Willie Winkie and others who have shaped Glasgow, while his story has remained a mystery for many years.

Foucart (1793-1862) was a French soldier who survived Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, fought at Waterloo and later transformed sport and physical fitness in Glasgow, and has now been recognised more than 160 years after his death.

A commemorative plaque to Foucart, described as the "father of physical fitness in Glasgow", has been unveiled at the University of Strathclyde's sports centre – the culmination of more than a decade's research by Mr Nisbet, founder of GlasgowSculpture.com and honorary committee member of the Friends of Glasgow Necropolis.

He uncovered the full extent of Foucart's extraordinary story after stumbling across his ivy-covered monument in the Necropolis.

Heads of the sports department at the University of Strathclyde paid tribute at an event unveiling the plaque and commended the representation of the "rich legacy that continues from these important individuals."

Mr Nisbet began researching the monument in 2014 out of curiosity about the carved image of a Légion d'Honneur medal, and it became an investigation involving Napoleonic experts in France and Belgium.

He explained: "No one really knew the extent of the story behind this guy and especially his contribution as a professor of fencing and gymnastics at Strathclyde Uni, and ultimately to becoming what I call the father of physical fitness in Glasgow.

"He's the most fascinating Frenchman who ever settled in Glasgow. What a backstory he's got."

Initial efforts to uncover Foucart's story were stunted until a breakthrough came when, after sourcing his birth certificate, Mr Nisbet established that the birth year engraved on Foucart's monument was wrong. It appeared he had reduced his age by 12 years; the monument states Foucart was born in 1781, while his military and baptismal records state 1793.

"That wrong date prevented me from moving forward until French Napoleonic historians found his baptismal records," Mr Nisbet said. "That was the key to the door, and it opened wide."

Born in Valenciennes, northern France, in 1793, Foucart joined Napoleon's army as a teenager and fought in some of the defining battles of the Napoleonic Wars.

He survived the disastrous Russian campaign of 1812 and was awarded the Légion d'Honneur for bravery.

After Napoleon's defeat, however, Foucart's loyalty to the former emperor led the restored French monarchy to imprison him and sentence him to transportation to Cayenne in French Guiana. Instead, he escaped.

After breaking out of prison, he fled through Belgium and the Netherlands before arriving in Britain as a political refugee in 1816, first in London, then Dublin, and finally Glasgow in the 1820s.

He taught fencing and gymnastics at the Andersonian University, which later became the University of Strathclyde, before founding his own public fencing academy and gymnasium in the 1840s, pioneering public exercise, fencing, and physical education for both men and women.

The fencing club he founded still operates today through Strathclyde University, while his son, Dr Louis Foucart, went on to establish some of Australia's first fencing academies and gymnasiums after emigrating to Sydney, where the city now has its very own Foucart Street in his honour.

Mr Nisbet's research also reunited the story with Foucart's descendants, the Eden family, who live in Portugal and still possess family heirlooms including his Légion d'Honneur medal and testimonial silverware presented by Glasgow pupils.

> "He's the most fascinating Frenchman who ever settled in Glasgow

Foucart's great-great-great-grandson, Rupert Eden, was also in attendance at the plaque's unveiling and said the experience felt surreal, but also like the start of a journey that may uncover more family history, like a picture of Foucart which has yet to be discovered.

Mr Eden, who lives in Portugal but was partly raised in Scotland, visited the Necropolis monument for the first time and praised Mr Nisbet's work, saying that, without him, his family would be none the wiser about Foucart's importance in Glasgow and their deeper connection to the city.

Speaking at Foucart's grave, he said it was a "magical environment".

For Mr Nisbet, the file can finally be closed after an 11-year journey which fills him with immense pride.

First joint visit for Harry and Meghan

THE Duke and Duchess of Sussex will next week step out for their first joint engagement since returning to the UK.

Harry and Meghan are expected to visit Nottingham, which is where they made their first joint appearance after announcing their engagement in 2017, on Thursday.

Since the pair and their children Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet returned to the UK in August after living in the US for six years, they have been involved in a public spat with Buckingham Palace about their status and security detail.

They have reportedly settled in the Cotswolds and their children have moved schools after issues were raised by their security team.

Harry and Meghan's joint visit to Nottingham will be their first royal-style engagement together since they arrived back.

The city is said to hold a special place for the couple, and the itinerary appears to resemble the type of visit they would conduct before stepping back from royal duties in 2020. They are expected to visit a number of organisations, including a community recording studio which Harry has been to before, most recently in 2025.

Last month, a letter sent on the King's instruction insisted that Harry and Meghan should be viewed as "private citizens".

Hepworth sculpture on sale

A DAME Barbara Hepworth sculpture is expected to sell for up to £8 million when it goes up for auction this month.

Titled Sculpture with Colour (Eos), the piece will be the leading highlight of Christie's modern British and Irish art evening sale.

The auction house has estimated the piece could sell for between £5m and £8m on October 21.

Christie's has described the piece, carved in 1946 from a single piece of pale Hopton Wood stone, as rising from its base as an organic ovoid form, balanced delicately on its narrowest point.

It added the sculpture also illustrates Dame Barbara's commitment to "truth to materials", producing works that came solely from tools she wielded herself.

Tennant delivers the performance of his TV career

Review: TV

Time, BBC One, Sunday
****

Alison Rowat



Custodial manager Bobby Bailey (David Tennant) and colleague

GIVEN the lighter roles David Tennant takes on, it can be easy to forget his astonishing range.

Watch him hamming it up as a quiz show host, or bombarding celebrities with 500 Miles at the BAFTAs, and he makes Alan Cumming look shy and retiring.

But then there is the other Tennant. Not the stage one; we know he's at home there, but the TV drama Tennant of Broadchurch, Des, and Litvinenko. Even when the role calls for comedy, as in Rivals and There She Goes, a comedy-drama about life with a disabled child, he can shift up and down the gears with ease.

Time, set in a Young Offender Institution, has to be Tennant's most impressive television performance yet.

Jimmy McGovern's prison trilogy set the bar high with Sean Bean and Stephen Graham in the first series, followed by Jodie Whittaker and Bella Ramsey in a women's prison.

The third finds Tennant alongside the actor who links all three – Siobhan Finneran as chaplain Marie-Louise.

At first, the focus is on Marie-Louise on her first day at the YOI. Other new arrivals include four young men straight from court. For prison officer Bobby Bailey (Tennant), settling them all in is just another chore to be ticked off before he can go home and get sozzled in front of the telly.

McGovern carefully rations details about the young men's offences until later. If we knew at the start what they were in for, it would be harder for the viewer to connect. Enough to say their crimes are far from petty.

Marie-Louise starts to question the postcode segregation of inmates and keeping them locked up for most of the day with little to do. For Bailey, it's about safety. He is a dour, by-the-book sort of guy, but he still cares, just about.

Though the chaplain and Bailey are on different sides, they both weigh in to help one lad connect with his mother. Another learns to read so he can write stories for his baby son. Here and there are glimpses of sunlight, but they are rare.

No-one rocks up to a Jimmy McGovern drama expecting too much in the way of laughs, but this truly is a grim place to spend time. A constant barrage of shouting is interrupted by shocking violence. Bullying is rife. In Adolescence, the drama most readily called to mind by Time, there was just one harrowing case; here there are several.

The misery can feel relentless, which is presumably what was intended. McGovern tries to balance things out but occasionally over-corrects.

There is no faulting the performances though, from youngsters and adults alike. Finneran is excellent (even if her story is rather rushed), but Tennant is the standout. Lit harshly to pick up every shadow and crease, the toll of the job is evident in his face. If nothing else, this stunning performance will see him back at the BAFTAs, this time as a nominee.

The show continues today, or all episodes on BBC iPlayer now.

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