

Duddingston

its story in 50 objects



Edited by Jacquetta Megarry on behalf of Duddingston Conservation Society



Contents

Preface	4	26 Sheep Heid memorabilia	56
Introduction	6	27 Old Church Lane	58
Duddingston's place in Scotland's story	8	28 Wall plaque	61
Reverend John Thomson	12	29 12 Old Church Lane	62
1 Duddingston Kirk	15	30 The Home House	63
2 Norman arches	20	31 The Causeway	64
3 Stained glass	22	32 Bonnie Prince Charlie house	68
4 Gatehouse	24	33 Charlescote and its wall	69
5 Graveyard entrance	26	34 Hawthorn Brae	70
6 Graveyard	27	35 Lochside Cottage	71
7 Manse and garden	30	36 Community Land	72
8 Garden Room & Millar Hall	32	37 The field	74
9 The glebe	33	38 The byre	76
10 Dr Neils Garden	34	39 Vegetable garden	77
11 The Telford Bridge	36	40 Duddingston House	78
12 The Physic Garden	37	41 Courtyard	82
13 The Thomson Tower	38	42 The pleasure gardens	83
14 Duddingston Loch	40	43 The temple	84
15 Bawsinch Nature Reserve	42	44 Duddingston Golf Club	85
16 Reedbeds and Duddingston Hardings	43	45 War memorials	86
17 Holyrood Park	44	46 Lady Nairne's Lodge	87
18 Arthur's Seat	46	47 Cauvin's Hospital	88
19 Dunsapie Crag and Loch	48	48 Duddingston crossroads	89
20 Duddingston Hoard	49	49 Prestonfield House	90
21 Miniature coffins	50	50 The Innocent railway	92
22 Park entrance	51	Practical information	93
23 The Sheep Heid	52	Glossary	94
24 The snuff box	54	Further reading and credits	95
25 Skittles alley	55	Index	96

Preface

This is the story of Duddingston, told through people who lived long ago and by those who live today; of buildings, a volcano, gardens, lochs, a golf course, a pub, a kirk, a railway, a minister's love affair, parties long ago and aristocrats and kings – a unique mix, and a microcosm of human society.

Edinburgh contains a number of villages, but Duddingston stands out. It has spectacular geographical features, and Holyrood Park separates it from the centre of Edinburgh – but surprisingly it has no guidebook. As Chairman of Duddingston Conservation Society, I wanted us to produce a book about our area to celebrate our 60th anniversary. Back in 1975 we had helped our neighbourhood to achieve Conservation Area status: the map opposite shows its extent as extended in 2007 to include the entire Innocent cycleway and footpath.

Telling our story through objects was inspired by Neil MacGregor's book and broadcasts *A History of the World in 100 Objects*. Duddingston has been occupied for a few thousand years, and we have told our stories mainly from a human angle. The area has attracted more than its fair share of characters, eccentrics and a few buffoons.

Duddingston has a strong sense of community, and our members have been involved in this book, both in selecting the objects and in documenting their stories. Our objects are extremely diverse: you will find things ranging in antiquity from the Bronze Age Hoard to the 21st century vegetable garden on our Community Land. Objects vary in size from a famous snuff box to the broad expanse of 650-acre Holyrood Park. Welcome to the story of Duddingston in 50 objects.

*Malcolm Windsor, Chairman,
Duddingston Conservation Society
October 2019*





Introduction

This book is for anybody who is interested in Duddingston – residents, daytrippers who stumble upon the village by accident, and holidaymakers from afar who plan for their time in the capital to include its best-kept secret.

It is a remarkable place: within a small area stand several outstanding Grade-A Listed Buildings*, notably Duddingston Kirk and Duddingston House, dating respectively from the early 12th and mid-18th centuries. It claims Scotland's oldest pub, the Sheep Heid, and Edinburgh's oldest railway, the Innocent. Visitors can wander around the plants and trees of secluded Dr Neils Garden, enjoy wildlife in the nature reserve of

Duddingston Loch or take a meal in the attractive surroundings of Duddingston Golf Club. They can even climb Arthur's Seat, the extinct volcano in Holyrood Park that provides Edinburgh's highest viewpoint: see pages 46-7.

In telling Duddingston's story we chose our objects carefully, and struggled to keep the number down to 50. All can be seen and enjoyed by any visitor, albeit in some cases you need to check opening hours before setting out. Also, some objects are private homes and although you can see these houses from the pavement, please respect the residents' privacy. And Object 43 is in the middle of a golf course so you cannot safely or responsibly approach it unless certain that no golf is in play.

North-west over Duddingston village



We focus mainly on objects inside the official Conservation Area, with a handful just outside. Only two Objects (20 and 21) are a couple of miles from Duddingston, on display in the National Museum of Scotland: see page 95. We didn't feel constrained by slavish rules: our criterion for inclusion was whether the object tells an interesting story and has relevant images. Most stand alone, but in a few cases a couple of objects are juxtaposed on a single page. Eight are important enough to justify the inclusion of associated objects – either inside them or nearby.

All the main locations are identified on the map inside our back cover. We have included practical information about getting here, with opening times and refreshment options: see page 93.

We want to encourage readers to explore Duddingston on foot, and when visiting these objects to reflect on their stories, many of them strange and remarkable. Collecting and illustrating them has led us to notice details, to investigate puzzles and to keep our eyes wide open.

We begin with an essay that establishes Duddingston's place in Scotland's story, then introduce its famous painting minister, John Thomson, whose name crops up throughout the book. The 50 Objects then follow in what we intend as a logical sequence, but some people may prefer to dip in at random. For readers unfamiliar with architectural or religious terminology, and for those who may struggle with Scottish vernacular, we provide a Glossary as well as an index.

* See Listed Buildings entry on page 94.

