HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

PINTS, POLITICS AND PIETY:
the architecture and industries of Canongate

HISTORIC CORE AREA OF TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER
Section 8.1

Alex Adamson, Lynn Kilpatrick and Miriam McDonald
March 2016

Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
John Sinclair House
16 Bernard Terrace
EDINBURGH
EH8 9NX
Tel: 0131 662 1456
Web: www.historicenvironment.scot
www.canmore.org.uk

This document forms part of a larger report: [Pints, Politics and Piety: the architecture and industries of Canongate](.)

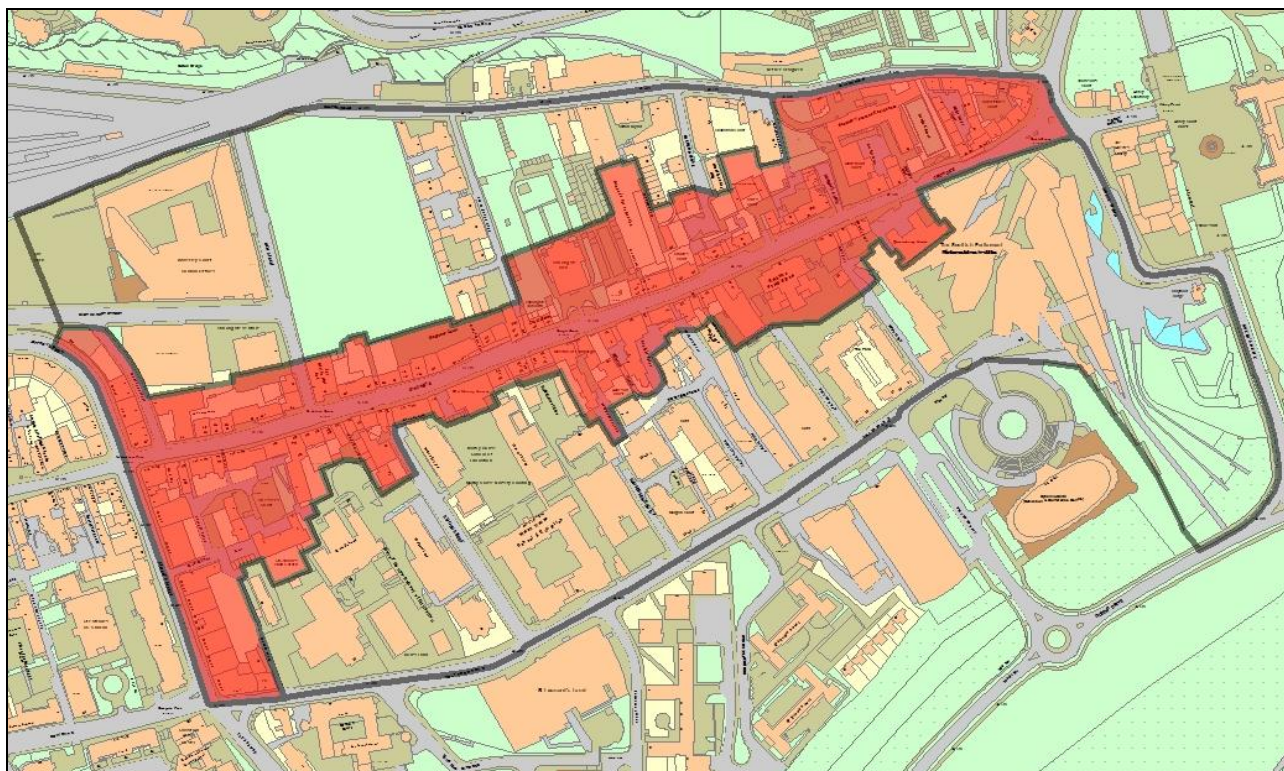## 8.1 CANONGATE HISTORIC CORE AREA OF TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER

Figure 96: *Map showing boundary of Canongate Historic Core Area of Townscape Character*
© Copyright and database right 2016 Ordnance Survey licence number 100057073

The Canongate Historic Core Area of Townscape Character incorporates the original core of the former burgh. It includes those buildings fronting the Canongate itself, plus some of the older remnants of the backlands and closes, as well as the western edge which is Jeffrey Street/Cranston Street, and St Mary's Street. The eastern boundary runs along the southernmost portion of Abbeyhill and skirts the northern frontage of the 21st century Scottish Parliament.

Historically, the south side of Canongate had seen a concentration of wealthier residents and historical figures either residing or visiting lodgings or family here. The names of various buildings and closes in the area are evidence of various Earls and Lords living here (1st Marquis of Huntly, Earl and Countess of Moray, 1st and 2nd Dukes of Queensberry, Lord Milton, Earl of Panmure, Earl of Dalhousie), taking advantage of the south-facing slopes to establish their townhouses and formal gardens. Originally, it was attractive to be close to the seat of royalty at Holyrood Palace. Other notable residents and visitors included: the Scottish poet and author Tobias Smollett (1721-71), who resided with his sister Mrs Telfer at a house at the north of St John Street/Canongate (plaque to rear of building) in 1766; Robert Burns (1759-96), who attended the Masonic lodge, Kilwinning Lodge on St John Street;[1] Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) stayed in the Moray House townhouse on two visits to Edinburgh (1648 and 1650-1);[2] and Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), who is rumoured to have worked in Old Playhouse Close as a secret agent to the English Government at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Union in 1707.[3][4] The loss of the parliament from Edinburgh to London at that

---

[1] http://www.lck2.co.uk/new-Robert_Burns_and_The_Lodge.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[2] http://www.olivercromwell.org/moray_house.htm [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[3] Hazlitt, William, 1840, *The Works of Daniel Defoe: with a memoir of his life and writings, Vol I*, London, p liv [Online] Available from:
https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=6DsCAAAAQAAJ&pg=PP13&lpg=PP13&dq=hazlitt+works+daniel+defoe+1840&s

date, added to the long absence of the monarchy from Scotland from 1650 to 1822, reduced Canongate's attraction to the wealthier reaches of society. The historic affluence of the residents influenced the layout, plot size and development of this section of the Canongate area; the gradual departure of much of that affluence sowed the seeds of the improvement schemes of later centuries.
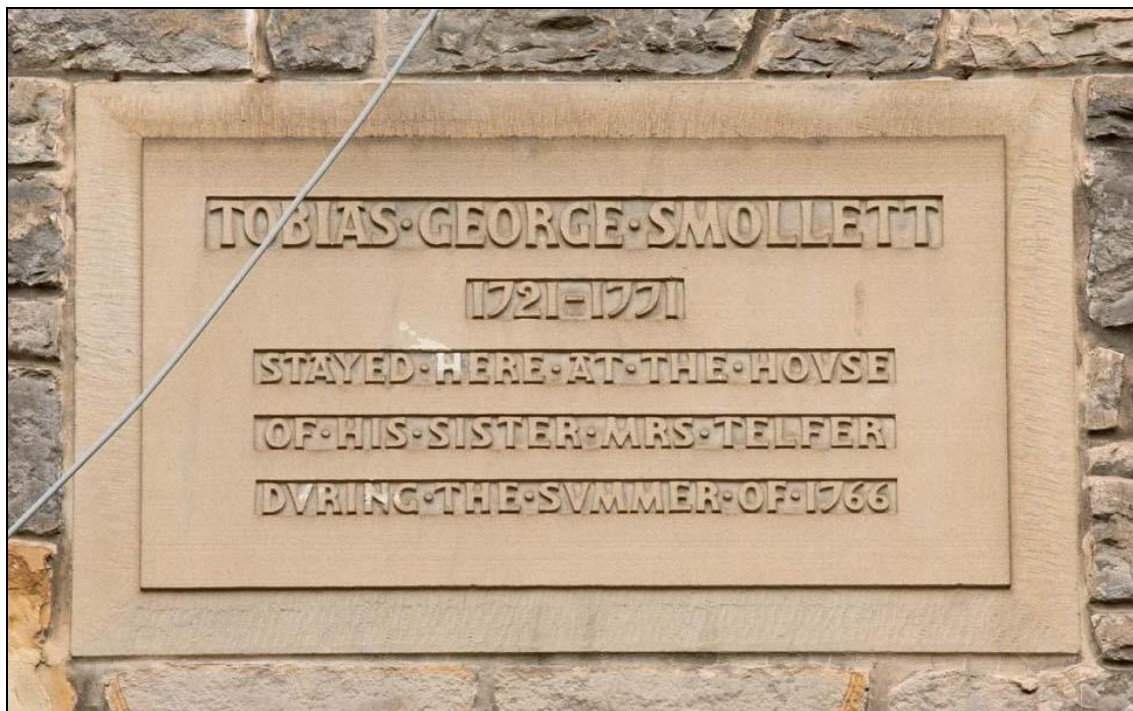

Figure 97: Detail of carved panel above pend at St John's Close, [182 Canongate](#), 2013 (DP158627 ©Crown copyright HES)

All of the oldest buildings surviving on the Canongate lie within this sector, and the majority of these are on the south side of the street, mostly dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. The earliest of these is Huntly House (now Museum of Edinburgh). Three early 16th century, three-storeyed-plus-attic tenements were incorporated into a single residence c.1570 by John Acheson (1559-88). His son, also called John (1583-1655), owned the property until 1609. The property became known as Huntly House after George Gordon, 1st Marquis of Huntly (1562-1636), bought it c.1630. From 1647, the Incorporation of Hammermen owned the property and the front block was extended in the late 17th century by the Master Mason to the Crown, Robert Mylne (1633-1710). The buildings have been restored retaining their original façades comprising a three-storeyed-plus-attic block to the west with rubble ground floor, ashlar first floor with bracketed stringcourse, and jettied timber-framed and harled upper floors. Adjoining to the east is a two-storeyed-plus-attic block which has a timber balcony at the north-east corner and is harled with an ochre coloured harling. An arched pend leads through to Bakehouse Close to the rear containing two 17th century, three-storeyed, rubble-built tenements, one accessed via a stone-built forestair and the southernmost by a square, gabled, timber-clad stairtower.

---

ource=bl&ots=mJwH6-k30L&sig=m9QeiQ2V8f9cJ7Oid8uCP7Bnqbg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi9yOyl88vJAhUBGBQKHf30B1oQ6AEILTAF#v=onepage&q=hazlitt%20works%20daniel%20defoe%201840&f=false [Accessed 01/02/2016]

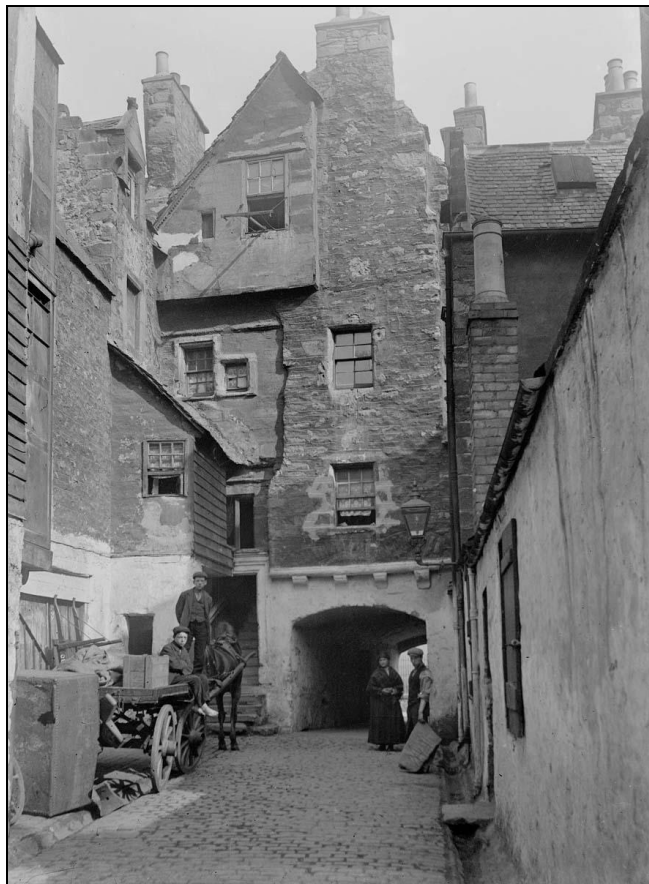[4] http://www.royal-mile.com/closes/close-oldplayhouse.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 98: View of Bakehouse Close, from south, c.1920 (copied 2009) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC862077 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 99: View of Bakehouse Close, from south, 2013 (DP158586 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 100: View of Bakehouse Close, from north, 1900-30 (copied 2009) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC1131421 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 101: View of Bakehouse Close, from north, 2013 (DP158583 ©Crown copyright HES)

Also accessed from Bakehouse Close, to the east of Huntly House, is Acheson House. It dates from 1633-4, and was built for Sir Archibald Acheson (c.1580-1634), a London-based MP and Privy Councillor, in the typical backland burgh style, in this case three storeys, with crowstepped gables, and multi-paned sash and case windows. An opening to the west allows access to Canongate. It would have originally been created in the 16th century with the three plots that make up the close being united within a stone frontage by the Acheson family. Following the restoration of Huntly House and Bakehouse Close tenements, Robert Philip Andrew Hurd (1905-63) restored the adjacent Acheson House in 1936-7, which has resulted in this area being one of the few corners of 17th century Canongate to survive.

Figure 102: View of Acheson House, Bakehouse Close, from south-west, 2013 (DP158589 ©Crown copyright HES)

The oldest building on the north side of Canongate is the former administrative and judicial centre for the burgh, Canongate Tolbooth. Dating from 1591, the Tolbooth was restored by Robert Morham (1839-1912) in 1879 and then again in 1884. Built in a so-called Franco-Scottish style, it consists of a conical-spired square-plan tower with corbelled bartizan turrets flanking the ogee-roofed, bracketed projecting clock, all above a round-arched pend leading to Old Tolbooth Wynd. The burgh cross was originally sited in the middle of the Canongate in front of the Tolbooth (as shown on James Gordon of Rothiemay's map of 1647), before being moved in 1737 to stand against the Tolbooth (noted on Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:1056 map of 1852). It was a meeting place for merchants, and also for public proclamations and major public events such as executions.

Figure 103: *View of Tolbooth with [market cross](#) (centre) and Home Fountain outside Canongate Kirk, c.1907 (copied 2006) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC1016544 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Figure 104: *View of eastern section of [Canongate Tolbooth](#) with forestair, 2014 (DP190171 ©Crown copyright HES)*

The two-storeyed-plus-attic, four-bayed section to the east formerly contained the council chamber. This section has a forestair leading to first-floor level with cast-iron railings, and four pedimented dormers to the corbel-bracketed attic floor, topped with star and thistle stone finials.

Figure 105: Detail of easternmost attic dormers at Tolbooth, 2014 (DP190174 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 106: Detail of westernmost attic dormers at Tolbooth, 2014 (DP190175 ©Crown copyright HES)

Within the eastern section of the Tolbooth is a large metal war memorial on the ground floor. Above this at first floor level is a carved pedimented armorial panel bearing the arms of the Canongate burgh: a stag's head with Latin inscription 'SIC ITUR AD ASTRA 1128' (which translates as 'Thus is the way to the stars').

Within the pediment above is carved 'I R 6 IUSTICIAE PIETAS VALIDE SUNT PRINCIPIS ARCES' translating literally as 'King James VI. Justice, piety, valid(ity) are princely heights'. The conical-spired square-plan tower to the west has a projecting ogee-roofed clock on brackets. This has the arms of the Canongate burgh gilded on the front elevation, and clock faces on west and east elevations. On the east face is the date 1884, which is when the clock was restored. The Tolbooth now houses 'The People's Story' museum, which tells the stories of Edinburgh residents from the 18th century to present day through a variety of displays and objects. The former jail within the building forms part of the museum display.

Figure 107: Detail of war memorial on ground floor of Tolbooth, 2014 (DP190176 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 108: Detail of plaque with Burgh coat of arms and date 1128, 2014 (DP190177 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 109: Detail of clock dated 1884, 2014 (DP190173 ©Crown copyright HES)

Continuing eastwards from the Tolbooth along the north side of the Canongate lies the picturesque White Horse Close. With origins in the 17th century, there is a datestone of 1623 in a gabled dormer on the north block of buildings. Although it appears to be one of the older closes on Canongate, it is in fact a complete re-creation having been restored twice in the last two centuries. James Jerdan (1839-1913) carried out restoration work to create working class housing in 1889, and Sir Frank Mears & Partners undertook a major restoration programme in 1964-5.[5] In spite of, or because of, these major restorations, the close and adjoining tenement still display a range of traditional vernacular architectural features including a mix of harled and exposed rubble, crowstepped gables, jettied timber and plaster bow-fronted gables accessed via a forestair (to the north elevation within the courtyard). There is a three-storeyed-plus-attic tenement facing onto the Canongate, which has a segmental-arched arcaded ground floor with rounded central arch accessing the close via a wide pend. White Horse Close is believed to have been part of the Royal Mews in the 16th century. Mary Queen of Scots' white palfrey (a high value riding horse popular with nobility at the time)[6] is believed to have been stabled here, and so gave the courtyard its name.[7] In 1745, the Jacobite officers' headquarters was within the Close and prior to this, in 1679, John Paterson, Bishop of Edinburgh (1632-1708; Bishop 1679-87), had a tenement here.

The close has also been known as Davidson's Close after brass founder John Davidson, who acquired land here in 1752 from Patrick Tod, a merchant. During the mid-19th century, it was also known as Laurence Ord's Close. Laurence Ord was a merchant and burgess of Edinburgh in the late 17th century, and he rebuilt the tenement here as a courtyard with a hayloft and other houses, along with the late 17th century inn (White Horse Inn) on the Canongate elevation. William Dick (1793-1866), who founded Edinburgh's Royal School of Veterinary Studies in 1823, has a plaque to his residence within White Horse Close.[8]

Figure 110: View of White Horse Close, prior to restoration, c.1950 (copied 2011) (SC1226149 ©Crown copyright HES)

[5] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=208692 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palfrey [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[7] http://www.ewht.org.uk/visit/iconic-buildings/white-horse-close [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[8] Harris, Stuart, 1996, *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, pp 636-7

Figure 111: View of [White Horse Close, 29 Canongate](), from south, 2014 (DP188691 ©Crown copyright HES)

Contemporary with White Horse Close, on the south side of Canongate is the former townhouse of the Nisbets of Dirleton, built in 1624, at 82-4 Canongate. Although rebuilt using some original stonework by Robert Hurd & Partners in 1954, many original features of the three-storeyed-plus-attic property were retained, including the square projecting stairtower to the west and the crowstepped gables onto the Canongate elevation. There are reused inscribed lintels above and beside the entrance to 84 Canongate which translate as: 'Peace to those who enter, good health to those who depart'; and '1619 Except the Lord in vain', from Psalm 127:1, which became the motto of Edinburgh from 1647.

Figure 112: View of [Nisbet of Dirleton's House, 82-4 Canongate](), c.1950 (copied 2010) (SC1161593 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 113: View of Nisbet of Dirleton's House, 82-4 Canongate, 2013 (DP161362 ©Crown copyright HES)

***Figure 114:** Detail of carved lintels at Nisbet of Dirleton's House, 82-4 Canongate, 2013 (DP161363 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Further west along the south side of Canongate are the tall pyramidal gate piers marking the entrance to Moray House. Dating from c.1625, this townhouse was built for Mary, Dowager Countess of Home (1586-1645), possibly by Scottish Master Mason and architect, William Wallace (d.1631).[9] In 1643 it passed to the Dowager Countess's daughter, the Countess of Moray (c.1610-83). The Countess's arms and monogram are contained in the pediment above the central first-floor window in the original wing to the west. The nine-bayed wing adjoining on the Canongate elevation was added shortly after it passed to the Countess of Moray, in c.1649. The British Linen Bank occupied the building between 1753 and 1790, and the three-storeyed, five-bayed south wing was added 1753-4. The building passed to the North British Railway Company in 1845, before becoming the Free Church Normal School from 1848, when the windows to the Canongate elevation were altered.[10]

---

[9] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=408126 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[10] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28449 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 115: View of Moray House, from north-west, c.1907 (copied 2009) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC932425 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 116: View of Moray House, from north-west, 2013 (DP160520 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 117: View of Moray House, from south, c.1950 (copied 2008) (SC1103824 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 118: View of Moray House, from south, 2013 (DP160519 ©Crown copyright HES)

The townhouse had a formal ornamental garden associated with it leading down from the southern elevation to the South Back of Canongate. Two fragments of this garden survive today: the summer house where the Treaty of Union was signed (see Section 3.2, pages 11-12),[11] which is attached to the western elevation of a former maltings for Commercial Brewery; and an ornamental gateway, which has been re-sited in garden ground between Thomson's Land and the former Montessori nursery building to the north. Dating from c.1625, the gateway may have been moved to its present location, probably originally leading from the grounds of Moray House to the South Back of Canongate (now Holyrood Road). The gateway has square pilastered columns surmounted by a decorative open strapwork pediment with scrolls and swags. The cast-iron gate is a later addition.

Figure 119: View of 17th century garden gateway at Moray House, from north-east, 2013 (DP160523 ©Crown copyright HES)

Queensberry House, at the eastern end of the street, dates from 1667-70. It was built for Margaret Douglas of Balmakelly (possibly 1610-77/8).[12] The building was modified in 1681 by James Smith (1645-1731) for Charles Maitland of Halton, 3rd Earl of Lauderdale (c.1620-91), before being bought in 1686 by William Douglas, 1st Duke of Queensberry (1637-95), from whom it takes its name. James Smith, again, carried out further additions and alterations for James Douglas, 2nd Duke (1672-1711), c.1700. In 1801, the house and land was sold to the Board of Ordnance, who established an army barracks here, adding an extra storey to the house and turning the gardens into a parade ground. In 1834 the newly-formed Board of Health in Edinburgh took over Queensberry House to establish a 'house of refuge' for the destitute. The building became a geriatric hospital in 1949 until its closure in 1995. In 1997, it was acquired to form part of the

---

[11] Grant, James, 1880, *Cassell's Old and New Edinburgh, Vol III*, Ch5, p 33 [Online]. Available from: http://www.oldandnewedinburgh.co.uk/volume3/page45.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[12] http://www.geni.com/people/Margaret-Douglas-Marchioness-of-Argyll/6000000001581003105 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

redevelopment of this part of Canongate in the creation of the new Scottish Parliament (1999-2004).[13] During this conversion, the top floor added in the 19th century was removed, taking the building back to its original three storeys plus an attic.
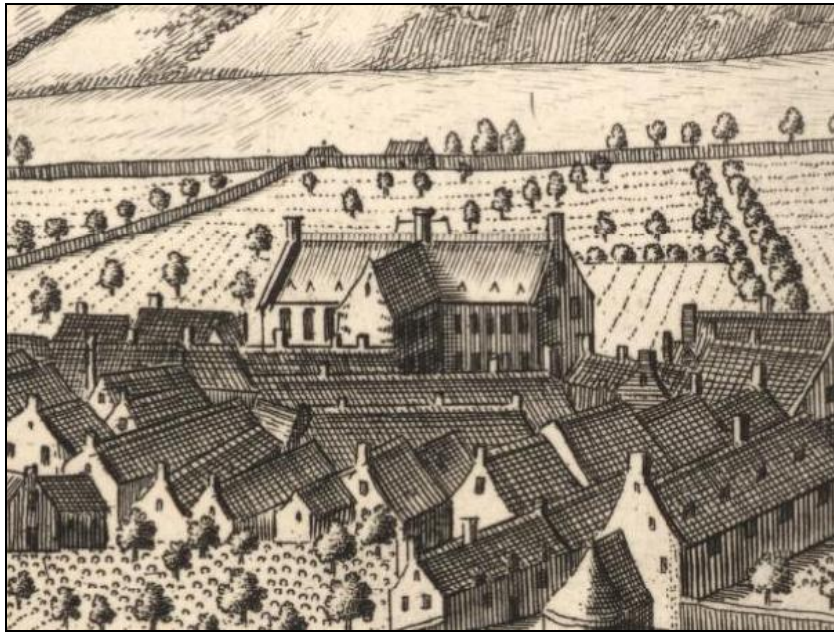

Figure 120: Extract from John Slezer's 'The North Prospect of the City of Edinburgh', 1693, showing T-plan Queensberry House (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Figure 121: View of Queensberry House as part of the Scottish Parliament, 2013 (DP161330 ©Crown copyright HES)

The northern side of Canongate retains much of the tenemented nature of the area. It was home to the less wealthy citizens of the burgh in contrast with the larger townhouses of the gentry on the south side. One of the oldest buildings here is Canongate Kirk (1688-90) and its associated graveyard. Designed by Queensberry House architect James Smith, the Kirk was built as the parish church for residents of Canongate. A new parish church was needed in the burgh because King James VII and II had established the original parish church attached to the Palace of Holyroodhouse as the Chapel for the Order of the Thistle.

---

[13] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28440 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 122: View of Canongate Kirk, from south, 2014 (DP207894 ©Crown copyright HS)

Just outside the Kirkyard, Canongate's Burgh Cross was the meeting place for merchants, proclamations and other major public events. It once had chains and a metal collar, known as 'jougs' attached, which were used to secure criminals for public humiliation. The cross was originally sited in the middle of the Canongate in front of the Tolbooth, before being moved in 1737 to stand against the Tolbooth. The cross was heavily restored in 1888, and was moved again to the west side of the entrance to the Kirkyard, when the Home Fountain was erected just east of the cross. This fountain was a memorial to Daniel Dunglas Home (1833-86), a renowned medium, clairvoyant and psychic.[14]

Figure 123: View of Burgh Cross and Home Fountain, 1948 (copied 1999) (SC487937 ©Crown copyright HES)

---

[14] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Dunglas_Home [Accessed 01/02/2016]

The cross was moved to its present location in a paved enclosure within Canongate Kirkyard in 1953 and in 2004 a statue of the poet Robert Fergusson (1750-74) was erected in its place to the east of the entrance gateway to the Kirkyard. Fergusson's work had a great impact in literary circles in his short life, particularly on Robert Burns (1759-96), who paid for a memorial headstone (erected 1787) for the previously unmarked grave within the Canongate Kirkyard.[15]

Figure 124: View of statue of the poet Robert Fergusson outside Canongate Kirk, 2015 (DP205169 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 125: Detail of plaque at base of burgh cross, bearing arms of Canongate Burgh, 2014 (DP188652 ©Crown copyright HES)
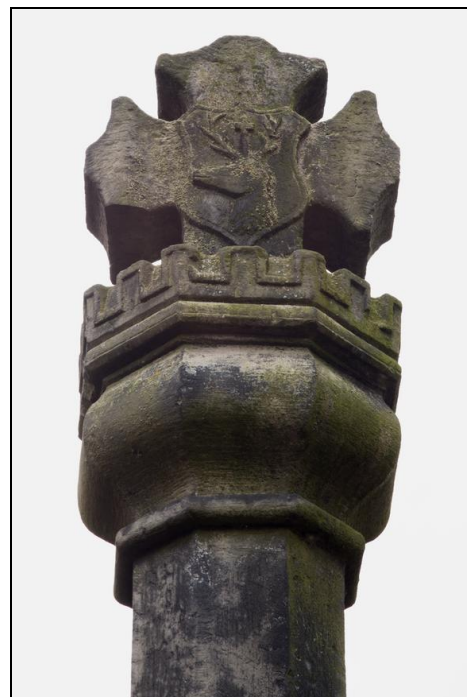

Figure 126: Detail of capital and cross-head bearing arms of Canongate Burgh, 2014 (DP188653 ©Crown copyright HES)

[15] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Fergusson [Accessed 01/02/2016]

The burgh cross is not the only cross of note in the Canongate Historic Core area. At the eastern end of Canongate, a circular pattern of cobbles in the centre of the roadway marks the site of the Girth Cross, demarcating the western limit of the Holyrood Abbey sanctuary or 'girth', which offered protection from arrest for debtors.[16] It was also used as a site of public proclamations, trading and executions.
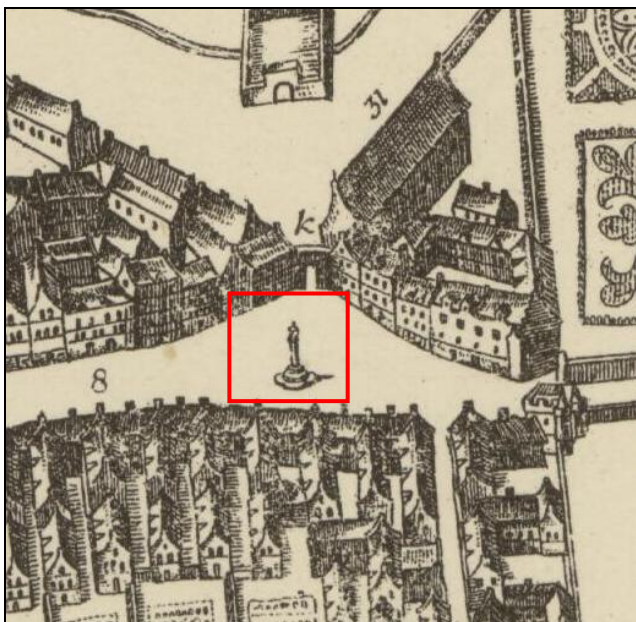

Figure 127: Extract from James Gordon of Rothiemay's 'Bird's Eye View of Edinburgh', 1647, showing representation of Girth Cross (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)
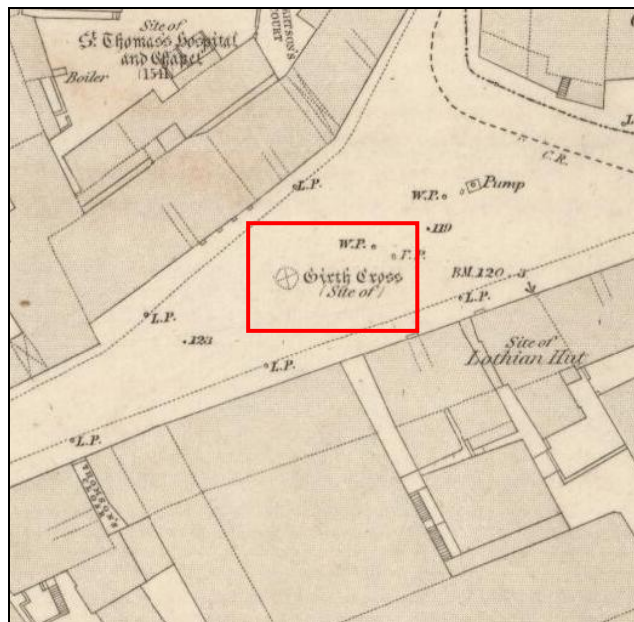

Figure 128: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:1056 map, 1852, showing site of Girth Cross (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Figure 129: View of cobbled marker for site of Girth Cross on Canongate roadway, 2014 (DP207844 ©Crown copyright HES)

---

[16] Chambers, Robert, 1833, *Minor Antiquities of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, p 263 [Online] Available from: https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=gZ0HAAAAQAAJ&pg=PR37&lpg=PR37&dq=girth+cross+robert+chambers+minor +antiquities&source=bl&ots=hTvyQDB5xr&sig=oZH4yzIS2PA2y02OqaIYNI6edZ8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiqwsy6- OfKAhXDchQKHcZBCZIQ6AEIHzAA#v=onepage&q=girth%20cross%20robert%20chambers%20minor%20antiquities&f= false [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Further up the Canongate, a Maltese cross painted on grey cobbles surrounded by red setts, inset into the road surface outside 196 Canongate, represents the site of the original standing cross of St John. This cross marked the original boundary between Edinburgh and Canongate. As the plaque on Canongate states, the Order of St John is believed to have owned land and property near this site in the medieval period. St John's Priory, dating from c.1768, is located in St John Street, just to the south-east of this marker, and is the head office for the Order in Scotland. The Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem installed the marker and the accompanying plaque in 1987, marking the 40th anniversary of the re-establishment of the Order in Scotland.

Figure 130: View of St John's Cross on the Canongate roadway, 2013 (DP160532 ©Crown copyright HES)
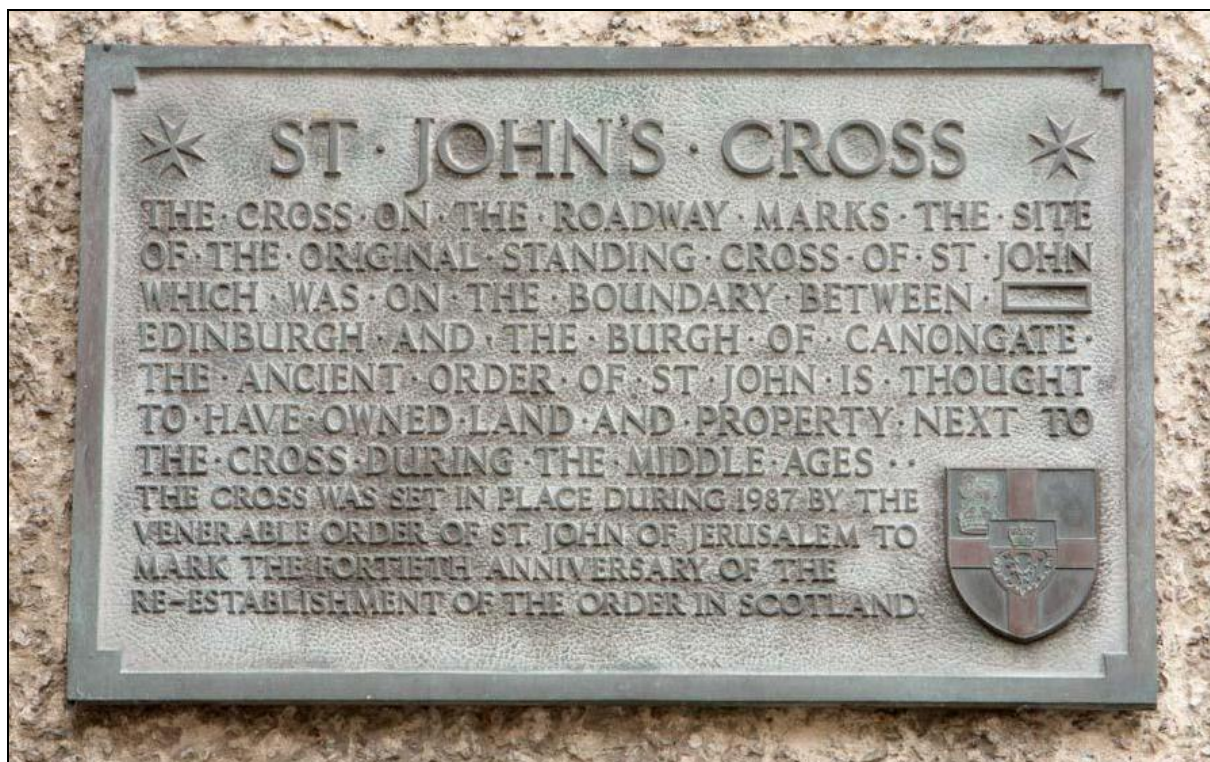

Figure 131: View of plaque about St John's Cross on tenement at 196 Canongate, 2013 (DP160533 ©Crown copyright HES)

Throughout this area of the Historic Core there are several visible references to former eminent residents of the Canongate: the economist and philosopher Adam Smith (1723-90) spent the last twelve years of his life at Panmure House, a building previously owned by members of the Scottish gentry such as the Earls of Panmure and the Countess of Aberdeen.[17] There is also mention of the Earls of Morton owning lands on the north side of Campbell's Close during the 17th and 18th centuries.[18] A plaque at Galloway's Entry notes that Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley (1545-67) stayed at George Seton (1531-86), 7th Lord Seton and Earl of Winton's townhouse, which stood on the site now occupied by Whitefoord House, prior to his marriage to Mary Queen of Scots (1542-87).[19]

Figure 132: View of Panmure House, 129 Canongate, from south-east, 2008 (DP039169 ©Crown copyright HES)

As map evidence demonstrates, the Canongate burgh continued to grow during the 18th century, and there was much infilling of plots on both sides of the thoroughfare. Set back from the main thoroughfare and dating from the early 18th century, 95 Canongate is a two-storeyed, five-bayed Classical former coaching inn and laird's house forming the north side of a courtyard, Reid's Court, enclosed by Russell House on the east, and formerly tenements, now part of Sir Basil Spence's Canongate housing development of the 1960s, on the west side. Comprising a large main block, with late 18th century piended-roof wings on the east and west sides, stretching south, the whole building is whitewashed with original timber-framed, multi-paned sash and case windows. The building became a manse for the nearby Canongate Kirk in 1951.[20] The building was restored in 1958 by Ian Gordon Lindsay (1906-66) and George Hay (1911-86) including creating separate dwellings within the later wings. Reid's Court takes its name from James Reid, a coachmaker who had land 'opposite Milton's Lodging' (Milton House, where Royal Mile Primary School now stands) during the late 17th century.[21] A drawing of this property can be seen in the Edinburgh Dean of Guild archives

---

[17] Grant, James, 1883, *Old and New Edinburgh, Vol III*, London, pp 20-1 [Online] Available from: http://www.oldandnewedinburgh.co.uk/volume3/page33/spread [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[18] http://www.royal-mile.com/closes/close-campbells.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[19] http://www.royal-mile.com/closes/close-gallowaysentry.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[20] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/hes/web/f?p=PORTAL:DESIGNATION:::::DES:LB28429 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[21] *Williamson's Directory for the City of Edinburgh, Canongate, Leith and Suburbs, 1773-4*, Edinburgh, p 67; *Ibid*, *1774-5*, p 78; *Ibid*, *1775-6*, p 78

dated 22nd March 1786. At this time it was owned by a Mrs Ann Miller of Wakenshaw (Northumberland), who was looking to extend the existing building.[22] It is also suggested in several sources that an Andrew Reid, brewer and magistrate lived here c.1770, but this may refer to Reid's Close opposite.[23]

Figure 133: View of west wing of Canongate Manse, Reid's Court, 95 Canongate, from south-east, 2014 (DP190190 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 134: View of east wing of Canongate Manse, Reid's Court, 95 Canongate, from south-west, 2014 (DP190191 ©Crown copyright HES)

---

[22] https://sites.google.com/site/edinburghdeanofguild/home/january-to-december-1786 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[23] Harris, Stuart, 1996, *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, p 525

Perhaps the most substantial development of the early to mid-18th century took place in the backlands to the south of 240 Canongate. Two four-storeyed-plus-attic-and-basement tenements at 1 and 2 Chessel's Court were built in the early part of the century, with the central three-storeyed-plus-basement block of 3-6 Chessel's Court to the south-east built 1742-8 by wright (master-carpenter) and merchant Archibald Chessel (c.1700-c.1770) to provide 'mansion flats' for relatively wealthy citizens. The east and west wings at 3-6 Chessel's Court were added c.1765. By 1769 the buildings were operating as the Canongate's Excise Office, and it was here that the infamous Deacon (William) Brodie (1741-88) attempted one of his armed robberies in 1788, a raid which led to his capture and execution by hanging.[24] The restoration by Hurd's practice retained the traditional features of the 18th century buildings including the harled façades in traditional colours, and the multi-paned sash and case windows. No 1 has a canted stairtower projecting in the fourth bay, while No 2 has a central wallhead gable on its front elevation. Internally at Nos 3-6, a range of 18th century decorative features such as Rococco chimneypieces and painted panelling has also been preserved.[25][26]

Figure 135: View of 1 and 2 Chessel's Court, 242-4 Canongate, from east, 2013 (DP160537 ©Crown copyright HES)

[24] http://www.scottish-places.info/people/famousfirst1161.html [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[25] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28454 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[26] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB51171,chessel [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 136: *View of Chessel's Court, 240 Canongate, from north, c.1900 (copied 2002) (SC716142 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Figure 137: *View of* 3-6 Chessel's Court, 240 Canongate*, from north-west, 2013 (DP160535 ©Crown copyright HES)*

During the early 19th century, 3-6 Chessel's Court operated as the Institution for Education of Deaf and Dumb Children. This is noted on various historical maps including Robert Kirkwood's 'Plan of the City of Edinburgh and its environs', 1817, as well as an engraving by James & Henry Sargant Storer from 1819. This institution was founded in 1810 and moved to a site in Henderson Row in 1823, before being merged with Donaldson's School in 1938.[27]

---

[27] http://www.donaldsons.org.uk/media/20118/Donaldsons%20Background%20History.pdf [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 138: Extract from Robert Kirkwood's 'Plan of the City of Edinburgh and its environs', 1817, showing 'Deaf & Dumb Institution' in Chessel's Court (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Figure 139: Engraving by J & H S Storer showing 'Deaf and Dumb Institution' in Chessel's Court, 1819 (copied 2011) (DP094907 ©Crown copyright HES)

The pioneering town planner, Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) bought the properties at 1 and 2 Chessel's Court in the late 19th/early 20th century to prevent them from being demolished as part of a scheme of slum clearances. As part of this, he and his wife, along with the pioneering Lileen Hardy (n.d.) created one of several children's gardens in the Old Town of Edinburgh: the St Saviour's Child Garden Nursery which was opened in 1906 in Brown's Close, and moved to Chessel's Court in 1908.[28] The garden continued to provide access to fresh air and schooling to kindergarten age children until 1977, having been taken over and run by Old St Paul's Church in nearby Jeffrey Street. The restoration of the court in the 1960s provided a range of residential and commercial premises, whilst maintaining the nursery school with its associated garden and schoolhouse.[29]

Another mid-18th century addition to the Canongate townscape was Cadell House, lying in a long burgage plot to the north of Canongate. This three-storeyed, six-bayed former merchant's house is built of rubble stonework with a piended or hipped roof and a central chimneystack. Along with many other properties in the vicinity, Cadell House was restored in 1954 as flats. This was built as the Edinburgh residence for the Haddington merchant William Cadell (1668-1728). Cadell was a journeyman glazier (skilled artisan glassworker) to trade, and the family had several industrial ventures in East Lothian. His third son, William (1707-77) founded the Carron Ironworks in Falkirk in 1759 with two partners. His son in turn, also William (1737-1819) managed the Carron Ironworks and set up the family seat nearby, establishing the Cadells of Grange.[30]


Figure 140: *View of Cadell House, Panmure Close, 129 Canongate, from north-west, 2014 (DP188668 ©Crown copyright HES)*

---

28 http://www.greenyondertours.com/documents/NaturePlayNotes.pdf [Accessed 01/02/2016]
29 Bareham, Jean, 2013, *Hidden Gardens of the Royal Mile: unexpected green gems in Edinburgh's Old Town*, Edinburgh, pp 80-4
30 http://www.cadell.com/ [Accessed 01/02/2016]

To the east of Cadell House, set back from the main street, is Whitefoord House, which had been built 1768-70 by architect Robert Mylne (1733-1811) for Sir John Whiteford of Blairquhan and Ballochmyle (1734-1803), was subsequently owned by Sir William MacLeod Bannatyne (1743-1833).[31] However, it was extended and put to use as a type foundry operated by Duncan Sinclair & Sons in 1839, producing type for the printing trade, which was prolific throughout Canongate and neighbouring Edinburgh at that time. Sinclairs ran the foundry until 1857.[32] A 'Miss Sinclair' is noted in Post Office Directories as residing at 'Whiteford House, 53 Canongate' from 1858 to 1867.[33] However, in 1861-6, John Milne & Co, type founders, ran the type foundry from here.[34] The contents of the foundry were 'dispersed by public auction' in 1870, and Marr Typefounding Company were believed to have taken on the premises.[35] Not until 1875-6 does James Marr & Co appear in the Post Office Directories, first under New Street, then in 1876-7 Marr Typefounding Company are listed against 'Whiteford House', and remain there until moving to new premises in McDonald Road in c.1900.[36]
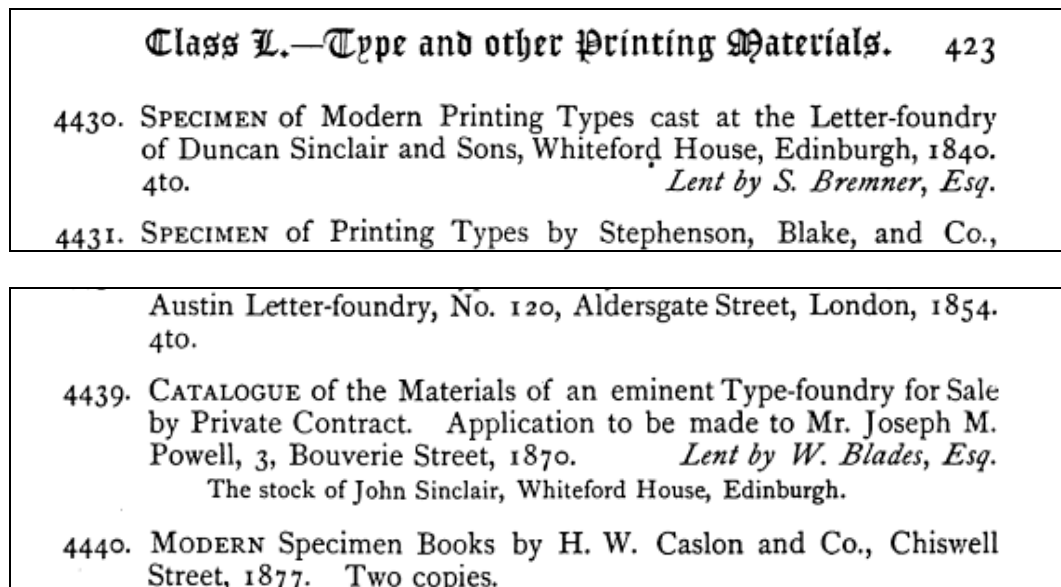
Figures 141 and 142: Listing referring to catalogue of items for sale from Sinclair's foundry at Whitefoord House (copied from George Bullen (2014) 'Caxton Celebration, 1877', Cambridge University Press, via Google books[37])

[31] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/hes/web/f?p=PORTAL:DESIGNATION:::::DES:LB28428 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[32] Reed, Talbot Baines, 1887, *A History of the Old English Letter Foundries*, London, pp 265-6 [Online] Available from https://archive.org/details/historyofoldengl00reed [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[33] *The Post Office Annual Directory, 1857-8*, Edinburgh, p 195; *Ibid, 1866-7*, p 180

[34] *Ibid, 1860-1*, p 215; *Ibid, 1865-6*, p 138

[35] Reed, Talbot Baines, 1887, *A History of the Old English Letter Foundries*, London, p 266 [Online] Available from https://archive.org/details/historyofoldengl00reed [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[36] *The Post Office Annual Directory, 1875-6*, Edinburgh, p 136; *Ibid, 1876-7*, p 140; *Ibid, 1900-1*, p 234

[37] Bullen, George, 2014, *Caxton Celebration,* 1877, Cambridge University Press [Online] Available from https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=XGcZAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA423&dq=sinclair+whiteford+foundry+catalogue&hl=en &sa=X&ei=_x2HVNWFFsb9UrjSg4gB%23v=onepage&q=sinclair%20whiteford%20foundry%20catalogue&f=false#v=sni ppet&q=sinclair%20whiteford%20foundry%20catalogue&f=false [Accessed 01/02/2016]
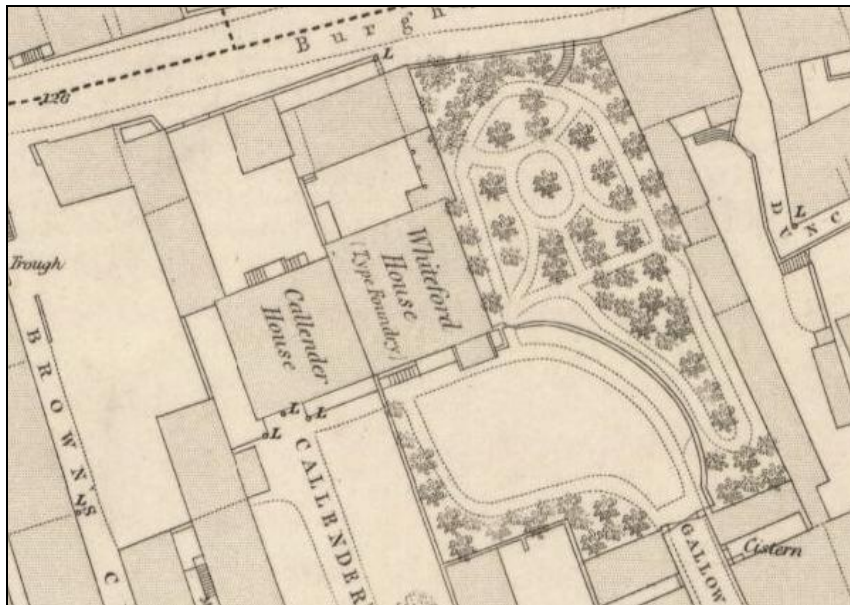
Figure 143: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:1056 map, 1852, showing Whiteford House as Type Foundry (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Whitefoord House was converted to a veterans' residence in 1911, and in 1926, Lady Haig's Poppy Factory was established in one of the rooms in Whitefoord House.[38] This proved to be a short term arrangement with a purpose-built factory being constructed in 1927 to provide work for resident veterans. The factory operated here until moving to new premises at Marryat Hall, 24 Calton Road (within Panmure Close) in 1931, and in 1965 moved to larger premises at Logie Green Road/Warriston Road, where it remains today.[39] The original factory at Whitefoord House has been converted into a hall as part of the residences complex, while the later factory off Calton Road has been demolished.

Figure 144: View of former poppy factory at Whitefoord House, from south, 2014 (DP190206 ©Crown copyright HES)

---

[38] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/hes/web/f?p=PORTAL:DESIGNATION:::::DES:LB28428 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[39] http://www.ladyhaigspoppyfactory.org.uk/factory-history/ [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 145: *Extract from Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (Plans NT2673NE and NT2673NW), 1946, showing Lady Haig's Poppy Factory (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)*

Following the incorporation of Canongate burgh into the larger adjacent burgh of Edinburgh in 1856, major improvement schemes were implemented to ease access around the newly expanded city, and to improve living conditions for some of the residents. The first, and perhaps most dramatic in terms of impact on the townscape, of these was when St Mary's Street was built in 1867-9 as a result of the Edinburgh City Improvement Act 1867. More or less following the line of St Mary's Wynd, the tenements built on the east side replaced smaller-scale houses which were severely overcrowded. Designed by architects David Cousin (1809-78) and John Lessels (1809-83) in a Scots Baronial style, they feature turrets, crowstepped gables and carved stone finials, with much improved facilities internally.[40] [41] [42]

[40] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB30166,st%20mary's%20street [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[41] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB30167,st%20mary's%20street [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[42] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB30168,st%20mary's%20street [Accessed 01/02/2016]
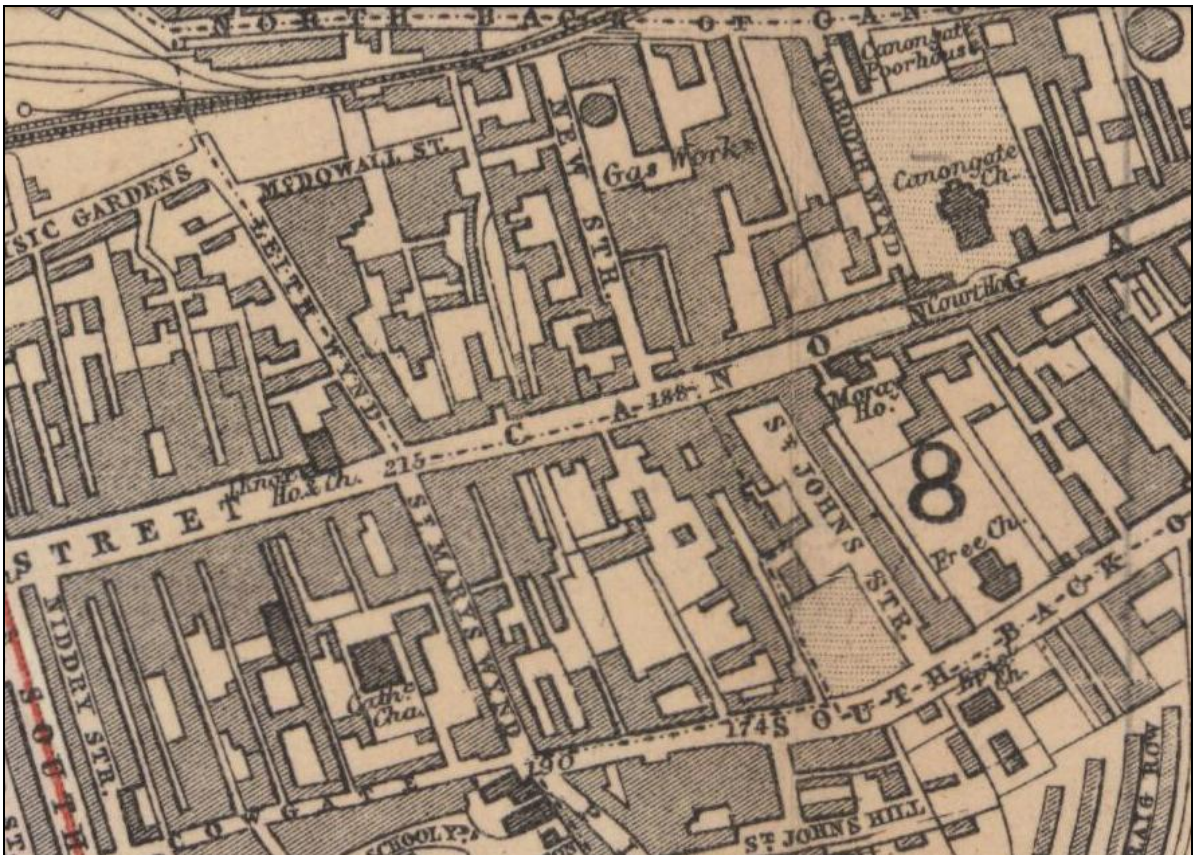
Figure 146: Extract from John Bartholomew's 'Hislop's New Plan of Edinburgh & Leith', 1865, showing Leith Wynd and St Mary's Wynd (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Figure 147: Extract from Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 1:1056, 1877, showing Jeffrey Street, Cranston Street and St Mary's Street (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Figure 148: Copy of drawing showing St Mary's Wynd from Cowgate, 1868 (copied 2010) (Jane Stewart Smith Collection, DP158544 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 149: View of west side of St Mary's Street, 1900-30 (copied 2009) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC1131309 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 150: View of 2-4 St Mary's Street and 274-8 Canongate, from south-east, 2013 (DP161312 ©Crown copyright HES)

Jeffrey Street was built as a continuation of St Mary's Street north of the Canongate/High Street junction. The southern section of Jeffrey Street and the northern section of Cranston Street to the east roughly followed the line of Leith Wynd up to Calton Road/North Back of Canongate. These improvements to the north of Canongate were built between 1873 and 1891, again in a Scots Baronial style. The corner block at 287-9 Canongate, 1 Cranston Street and 2 Jeffrey Street were designed by architects' firm George Beattie & Sons, while 4-18 Jeffrey Street were built in 1891 to designs by James Lessels (c.1834-c.1905) and Henry (Harry) Ramsay Taylor (1863/4-1922).[43] [44]

---

[43] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28439,jeffrey%20street [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[44] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB29192,jeffrey%20street [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 151: *View of [2-18 Jeffrey Street](), from south-west, 2014 (DP190127 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Further improvements to facilities in the area continued with Royal Mile Primary School built in 1886 as Milton House Public School to designs by Robert Wilson (1834-1901).[45] It stands on the site where Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, Lord Milton (1692-1766), had a large townhouse, Milton House, built in 1755-8 to designs by John Adam (1721-92), located in the garden of John Ker, 5th Earl and 1st Duke of Roxburgh's (c.1680-1741) house.[46] [47] The building was later (1835) used as a Catholic School under the Sisters of

[45] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=224469 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[46] Black, Adam & Charles, 1843, *Black's Picturesque Tourist of Scotland*, Edinburgh, p 49 [Online] Available from: https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=mJsLAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA49&lpg=PA49&dq=black+picturesque+tourist+milton+house&source=bl&ots=WzhxkL5H8U&sig=fKr3gIPDUlNyzDlb6ycW_xq36Zw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiopf2I9uzKAhXIqxoKHZe_DGwQ6AEILjAF#v=onepage&q=black%20picturesque%20tourist%20milton%20house&f=false [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[47] Gifford, John, McWilliam, Colin, Walker, David & Wilson, Christopher, 1991, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh*, Yale, p 184

Charity.[48] It subsequently operated as a school for deaf and dumb children and a temporary maternity hospital before becoming the property of brass founders, James Milne & Co by 1854-5, who remained there until moving to larger premises c.1885 when the site was taken over to build the school.[49] [50] The school retains four large painted landscape panels from Milton House by the French artist William Delacour (1700-67), dating from 1758.

Figure 152: *Extract from William Edgar's 'Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh', 1765, showing Milton House as 'Lord Milton's' (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)*

Figure 153: *Extract from Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 1:1056 map, 1877, showing Milton House incorporated into Brass Foundry (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)*

---

[48] Fullarton, A, 1842, *The Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland: A-H*, Glasgow, p 468 [Online] Available from: http://digital.nls.uk/gazetteers-of-scotland-1803-1901/pageturner.cfm?id=97444266 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[49] Grant, James, 1880, *Old and New Edinburgh, Vol III*, London, p 34 [Online] Available from: http://www.oldandnewedinburgh.co.uk/volume3/page46/single [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[50] *The Post Office Annual Directory 1854-5*, Edinburgh, p 135

Figure 154: View of Royal Mile Primary School (Milton House Public School), from north-west, 2013 (DP161364 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 155: Detail of carved pediment datestone at Royal Mile Primary School, 2013 (DP161365 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 156: *View of one of four large painted landscape panels from Milton House, relocated within Royal Mile Primary School, 1983 (copied 2003) (SC801734 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Following his participation on a Department of Health tour looking at housing estates across Europe, City Architect Ebenezer James MacRae (1881-1951) brought back ideas which influenced the design of local authority housing across Edinburgh in the 1930s. One of the projects was the Canongate Improvement Scheme which he instigated in 1930-1. As part of this, he implemented redevelopment work at Nos 100-110, 206-8 and 221-9 Canongate.[51] Each of these displays several features of the vernacular architecture expected in a traditional Scottish burgh, but are in fact recreations designed to maintain the scale and appearance on the streetscape. These tenements are three-storeyed with gabled dormers lighting the attic floor, have rusticated rubble stonework to their main elevations and traditional sash and case multi-paned windows, some with relieving arches above them.

As noted earlier, the firm of Gordon & Dey (Alexander Esme Gordon (1910-93)[52] and William Gordon Dey (1911-97)[53]) carried out work at Moray House during the late 1940s and early 1950s, as well as restoration and reconstruction works at several tenements: St John's Land, 176-184 (1955); 194-8, Old Playhouse Close and 200 Canongate (1956-7).[54] Like MacRae's tenement improvements, Gordon & Dey also used the traditional vernacular style in recreating the main street elevations, with rusticated stonework (176-184) or harling (194-8), multi-paned sash and case windows, and gabled attic and garret dormers (194-8). In both cases, the original close entrances were also retained, helping preserve the medieval plot layout.

---

[51] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200699 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[52] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=203479 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[53] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=204378 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[54] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=202411 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 157: *View of* 176-182 Canongate, *from north-west, 2013 (DP158629 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Old Playhouse Close was the site of the first theatre in what is now the city of Edinburgh, which means Canongate had a theatre before its neighbour, the much larger burgh of Edinburgh. The Playhouse was established here in 1747 by a well-known London actor, Mr John Ryan.[55] It is believed that the dormers which still remain in the attic and the garret originally lit the dressing rooms for the theatre.[56] The theatre continued to operate until 1769, falling out of use soon after the Theatre Royal was built in 1767 at the northern end of North Bridge within Edinburgh. There was a great deal of opposition to theatres in the 18th century from the Church of Scotland and the City Magistrates of Edinburgh who believed they were a bad influence on the townsfolk. As noted earlier, the close was also home to Daniel Defoe at the time of the Treaty of Union in 1707.[57] Gordon & Dey retained much of the original façade and window arrangement in their restoration work, but replaced the ground floor shops with more living accommodation, and installed traditional multi-paned sash and case windows throughout.

---

[55] Grant, James, 1883, *Old and New Edinburgh, Vol III*, London, pp 23-5 [Online] Available from:
http://www.oldandnewedinburgh.co.uk/volume3/page35/spread [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[56] *The Book of The Old Edinburgh Club 1908 Vol I*, Edinburgh, p 16 [Online] Available from:
https://archive.org/details/bookoldedinburg00clubgoog [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[57] Hazlitt, William, 1840, *The Works of Daniel Defoe: with a memoir of his life and writings, Vol I*, London, p liv [Online] Available from:
https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=6DsCAAAAQAAJ&pg=PP13&lpg=PP13&dq=hazlitt+works+daniel+defoe+1840&source=bl&ots=mJwH6-k30L&sig=m9QeiQ2V8f9cJ7Oid8uCP7Bnqbg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi9yOyl88vJAhUBGBQKHf30B1oQ6AEILTAF#v=onepage&q=hazlitt%20works%20daniel%20defoe%201840&f=false [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 158: View of James Souter's shop, (Old) Playhouse Close, 194-200 Canongate, 1935 (copied 2008) (SC1103837 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 159: View of Playhouse Close and Old Playhouse Close at 194-200 Canongate, from north, 2013 (DP160529 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 160: Detail of plaque on gate at Old Playhouse Close, 194-8 Canongate, 2013 (DP160531 ©Crown copyright HES)

Robert Hurd & Partners undertook reconstruction work at numerous sites along and behind Canongate: Chessel's Court (1956-7, 1958-66 and 1963-4); 171-97, Tolbooth area (1953-8); Nisbet of Dirleton's House at 82-4 (1954); 246-8 and 250-4 (1955); Bible Land, 183-7 and Shoemakers' Land, 195-7 (1956); 189-91 (1957); 202-54 (1958); Morocco Land at 265-7 (1960); and Ian McKerron Begg (b.1925) of R A Hurd & Partners restored Russell House, 3 Canongate (1976).[58] Again, all these schemes recreated the frontages using traditional materials and features.

Of Robert Hurd & Partners' work, the stretch from 185 to 197 Canongate has long associations with the Incorporation of Cordiners (shoemakers). The 17th century tenement at 195-7 Canongate, known as Shoemakers' Land, was rebuilt and added to in 1725 by the Incorporation. The restoration of this five-storeyed, six-bayed block retained the traditional features of the tenement, including rusticated rubble stonework, timber-framed multi-paned sash and case windows and a carved panel in one of the central bays between first and second floors. This panel contains the date '1725' along with the emblem of the Incorporation and the inscription 'Blessed is he that wisely doth the poor man's care consider', taken from Psalm 41.1.[59]

Figure 161: Detail of datestone on Shoemakers' Land, 195-7 Canongate, 2014 (DP190119 ©Crown copyright HES)

---

[58] http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=202914 [Accessed 01/02/2016]
[59] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28437 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 162: *View of Shoemakers' Land, 195-7 Canongate, from south-west, 2014 (DP190118 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Continuing with the practice's work, just east of Shoemakers' Land, at 185-7 Canongate, is the restored front elevation of Bible Land. This 17th century tenement, dated 1677, was also built for the Incorporation of Cordiners (shoemakers). Their work on this four-storeyed-plus-attic, five-bayed block again retained the traditional features of the tenement, including rusticated rubble stonework, timber-framed multi-paned sash and case windows and a pedimented panel above the timber door accessing the upper floors. This panel bears the shoemakers' knife with flanking cherubs above an open book which is inscribed with a quote from Psalm 133.1: 'Behold how good a thing it is and how becoming well, Together such as brethren are in unity to dwell'. There is an ogee-capped dome above the stairway bay.[60]

---

[60] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28434 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 163: View of [Bible Land, 185-7 Canongate](), *from east, 1900-30 (copied 2009) (Francis M Chrystal Collection, SC1131442 ©Crown copyright HES)*
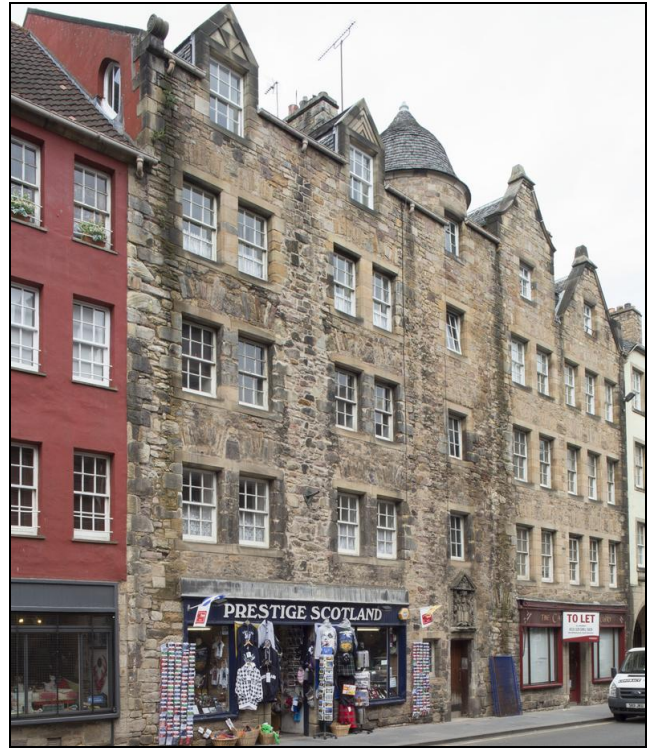

Figure 164: View of Bible Land, 185-7 Canongate, *from south-west, 2014 (DP190121 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Figure 165: Detail of decorative panel above doorway at Bible Land, 185-7 Canongate, 2014 (DP190122 ©Crown copyright HES)

Further west on the north side at 265-7 Canongate is Morocco Land, a four-storeyed-plus-attic, four-bayed tenement dating from the late 17th/early 18th century. Again, Hurd & Partners retained the traditional features of this tenement, including rusticated rubble stonework, timber-framed multi-paned sash and case windows and a carved effigy just left of the western bay between first and second floors. The carved effigy, wearing a turban and beads, is said to represent the Emperor of Morocco, who was a royal patron of Andrew Gray (d.1663), a resident of the tenement. In 1633, Gray had been involved in a riot which ended up setting fire to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh's house (Sir Alexander Clerk of Pittencrieff). He was convicted and sentenced to execution but escaped and fled the country. He was sold as a slave in Morocco, where he rose in rank, impressing the Emperor of Morocco, before winning his freedom and returning to Scotland. On his return during the height of the plague in Edinburgh in 1645, Gray cured the Lord Provost Sir John Smith of Groathill's daughter of plague then married her. They lived in this tenement on the Canongate.[61] [62]

Figure 166: Copy of 'Knox Series' postcard showing Morocco Land, 265-7 Canongate, c.1900 (copied 1999) (SC426767 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 167: View of Morocco Land, 265-7 Canongate, from south-west, 2014 (DP190154 ©Crown copyright HES)

[61] Harris, Stuart, 1996, *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, pp 442-3
[62] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28438 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 168: Detail of carved Moorish figure between first and second floors of Morocco Land, 265-7 Canongate, 2014 (DP190155 ©Crown copyright HES)

Reid's Close and Vallance's Entry lie directly across Canongate from Reid's Court, which may explain some confusion in the naming history of the two. In 1962 Reid's Close and Vallance's Entry were redeveloped when Ian G Lindsay & Partners built what is now 70-80 Canongate in a contemporary style. This block along with other interventions by Hurd & Partners and other practices replaced large areas of tenements which had fallen into disrepair. At the same time, Lindsay & Partners began restoration work at a 17th century tenement being incorporated into Huntly House (1962-5) and Bakehouse Close, as well as restoring the area around Reid's Court and 95 Canongate.

Figure 169: View of Reid's Close and Vallance's Entry, 70-80 Canongate, from north-west, 2013 (DP161360 ©Crown copyright HES)

The section to the west of Queensberry House contains the most post-war infill in the Canongate. As well as Lindsay & Partners' 70-80 Canongate, on the north side of the street there are the Basil Spence & Partners/Sir Basil Spence, Glover & Ferguson's developments at 1-3 Brown's Close/65-71 and 97-103 Canongate (1961-9). While the Spence development appears out of character with the rest of the street, several elements of the design mimic the historic nature of the area. The proportions of the buildings' window and storey height blend in with neighbouring properties, while the rubble stonework and beige and red coloured rendering reflect the mixture along the length of Canongate. The arcading at entrances to back courtyards and communal stairways is reminiscent of arcading found at Robert Hurd & Partners' 1956-7 rebuilding of 249-61 Canongate and elsewhere on the Royal Mile (in particular at Gladstone's Land, 481-9 Lawnmarket).

Figure 170: View of 1-3 Brown's Close/65-71 Canongate, from south-west, 2014 (DP188678 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 171: View of stairway to rear of 1-3 Brown's Close/65-71 Canongate, 2014 (DP188682 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 172: View of 97-103 Canongate, from south-east, 2014 (DP188670 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 173: *View of arcaded entrance at 97-103 Canongate, from south-west, 2014 (DP188672 ©Crown copyright HES)*

The last few decades of the 20th century saw Canongate fall into a decline once again, with little development work being carried out. One of the few larger schemes carried out during this period was at the east end of Canongate, which involved restoration of the 17th century tenement at 5 Canongate in 1972-6 by Robert Hurd & Partners. The tenement was named Russell House after Sir Robert Russell (1890-1972), one of several individuals who campaigned for the building to be saved from demolition.[63] The tenement retains a harled frontage, three crowstepped gables at attic level, along with timber-framed, multi-paned sash and case windows throughout. There is an inscribed lintel reading 'WL MA 1697' above the entrance door, probably a fragment from an original building on the site.

---

[63] http://portal.historic-scotland.gov.uk/designation/LB28426 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

Figure 174: Detail of crowstepped gables on front elevation of [5 Canongate](), 2014 (DP188699 ©Crown copyright HES)

Figure 175: Detail of carved lintel above entrance doorway at 5 Canongate, 2014 (DP188701 ©Crown copyright HES)

As part of earlier work commissioned in 1894 by Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) to improve the Watergate area at the eastern end of the Canongate, one tenement was restored and another completely rebuilt in a 16th/17th century vernacular style with jettied gabled dormers, crowstepped gables and corbelled turrets, subsequently replaced by the present structure in a 1972 redevelopment scheme. The 18th century tenements on this site replaced the former St Thomas's Hospital and Chapel, which comprised a chapel and an almshouse built in 1541 by George Crichton (d.1544), Bishop of Dunkeld from 1526 to 1544.[64] Canongate's magistrates bought the chapel and its lands in 1617, and converted it into a hospital for the

---

[64] Harris, Stuart, 1996, *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, p 530

poor of the burgh.[65] The hospital in turn was converted to a coachhouse in 1747 before being demolished in 1787 to make way for new tenements.[66]
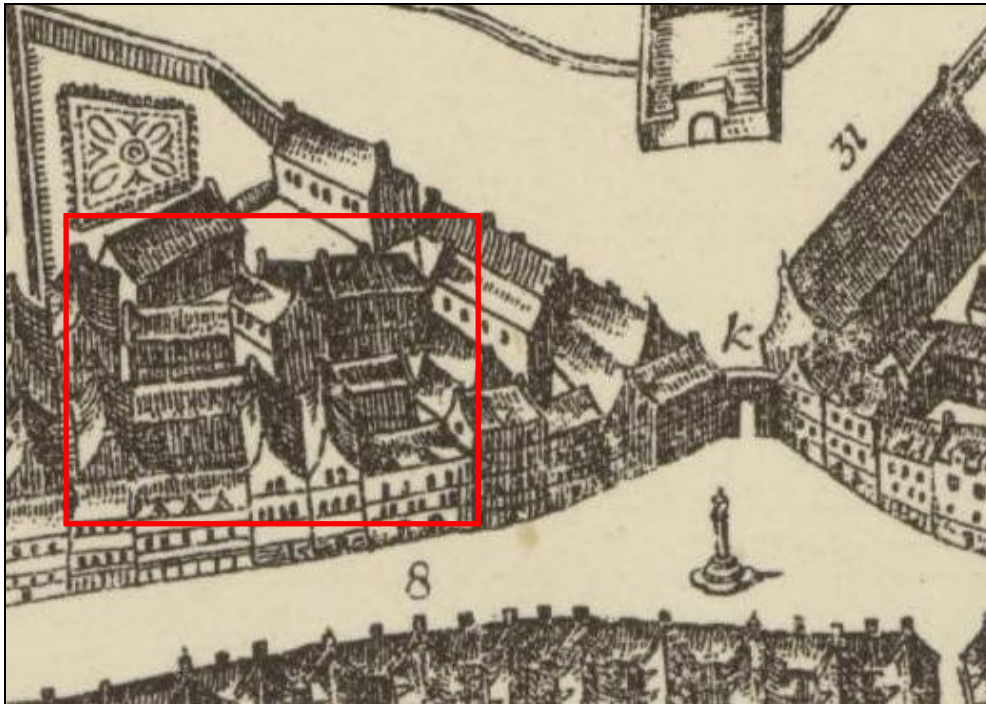

Figure 176: *Extract from James Gordon of Rothiemay's 'Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh', 1647, showing a depiction of* St Thomas's Hospital and Chapel *(Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)*

Figure 177: *Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:1,056 map, 1852, showing site of St Thomas's Hospital and Chapel (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)*

---

[65] Fullarton, A, 1842, *The Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland: A-H*, Glasgow, p 454 [Online] Available from: http://digital.nls.uk/gazetteers-of-scotland-1803-1901/pageturner.cfm?id=97444266 [Accessed 01/02/2016]

[66] Coghill, Hamish, 2012, *Lost Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, p 39

Figure 178: *View of [Robertson's Court and 11-15 Canongate](#), from east, 1965 (copied 2010) (SC1205829 ©Crown copyright HES)*

Adjoining Russell House on both sides are blocks of flats built in 1971 by Frank C Mears & Partners, as part of the same redevelopment scheme that included the restoration of Russell House. These flats have a mixture of cream, beige and brown harling and varying roof levels. The flats carry on into Calton Road, to enclose the land previously known as Robertson's Land, and Robertson's Court. The Court takes its name from William Robertson, a cowfeeder at Croft-an-Righ, who acquired a bakehouse and dwellings here in 1797.[67]

Figure 179: *View of [5 Canongate](#) and [11-15 Canongate](#), from south, 2014 (DP188697 ©Crown copyright HES)*

---

[67] Harris, Stuart, 1996, *The Place Names of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, p 530

Figure 180: *View of 5 and 11-15 Canongate/Robertson's Court, from east, 2014 (DP188702 ©Crown copyright HES)*

More recently, in 1996-8, Richard Murphy Architects designed a new-build property at 112 Canongate, which again reverted back to incorporating some of the features seen in the Bakehouse Close area of Canongate, with timber cladding to jettied upper storeys.

Figure 181: *View of 112 Canongate, from north-west, 2013 (DP161410 ©Crown copyright HES)*

SUMMARY

This sector is dominated by the Canongate itself. As it has done for centuries, this road serves a crucial function as the spine of the burgh, but also as the major artery linking Edinburgh with Holyrood Palace, and now to the Scottish Parliament. Though it has retained much of its urban form, it has also seen a remarkable amount of improvement and redevelopment since the late 19th century, notably immediately after WWII when a traditionalist approach to conserving existing buildings and building new ones was implemented. At lower levels, the buildings on the main street are largely commercial, and in particular retail. At upper levels and off the main street, there is a substantial amount of residential property.