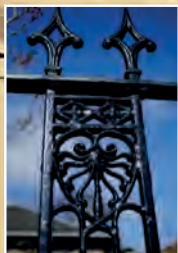


Duddingston

its story in 50 objects



Edited by Jacquetta Megarry on behalf of Duddingston Conservation Society



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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.

