



Broughton Tolbooth 1582-1829

# BROUGHTON HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## May Crawford

Society member May Crawford died peacefully on 17th July.  
A celebration of her life was held at Warriston Crematorium, including tributes by  
her son Alan and grandson Damian.

**May Angus** knew May Crawford for about 15 years, through being a member of our Society. She began frequently visiting her at home in more recent years. She remembers that three or four years ago May C had fallen in the house and seemed to lose the confidence to go out on her own much. Later she noticed a breathing problem developing; and eventually there was a supply of oxygen to use when she needed it to keep active. In July 2014 she had another fall, which broke her hip. May was taken into hospital – where she died peacefully a few days later.

She was 'devoted to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren', says May. I (Editor) asked her about the big jigsaw I remember seeing on the wall just inside the street door. Oh, yes, she says, the jigsaws: there are two there, and more throughout the house. She and her husband Alistair did them together. It was Alistair's main hobby – May once told her she did the straight bits round the sides.

**Alice Lauder** remembers May's interest in local history pre-dated the founding of the Society. 'May lived all her life in East Claremont Street, and was well known in the district. She was always very interested in any research we did and enjoyed you putting up a map on the overhead screen at our History Class. We all enjoyed that – looking to see what had changed over the years and trying to identify old buildings.'

**May Angus** showed me the minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Society, held in June 1996, with May Crawford's name included in the list of those who attended. So she was there from the beginning; and still on the membership list for 2013/14. And, says May, she continued going to Society meetings until quite near the end – accompanied by one or more of her friends.



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Renewed thanks to Eileen Dickie for doing the Desktop Publishing, to Alan McIntosh for proof-reading – and to both of them for their advice

### Ideas or contributions for our next edition?

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### **Dorothy Newlands:**

'I first met Mary McIntosh (as she then was) the day we went to Bellevue School to do a Commercial Course, we would be 11/12 years old.

Mary was always a popular girl, full of sound advice and always near the top of the class, if not top. All this happened so long ago it is difficult to recall any particular incident but I do remember one.

It would be our last winter at Bellevue and we had lots of snow. The schools closed for the half day and several of us, boys and girls, decided to climb Arthur's Seat. When we got there we found a piece of corrugated sheeting, possibly part of an air-raised shelter and decided to use it as a sledge to slide down the hill. We had great fun that day and got absolutely soaking wet. If I remember rightly we caught a tram back along London Road and then walked back to Broughton. Come March we would all go our separate ways.

I really lost touch with May and it was good to meet up again when I joined Broughton History Society. In fact she was the only person I really knew and had the knack of introducing and making Ian and I feel very welcome. We still miss her friendly banter at the meetings.'



*Here she is in this photo (centre) taken at the Society's 2006 Exhibition, along with some of the other volunteers who staffed the exhibition. And the two 3-hour slots she filled are duly recorded on the Exhibition Rota I have before me!*

**! 'm sure many of us will want to join  
Alice Lauder in saying:  
'She will be sadly missed'.**

## **Jean and Archie Bell**

**Jean Bell (née Bottomley) and Archie Bell died in July, Jean on the 17th and Archie a week later. A shared obituary was published, and they also shared a service at Warriston Crematorium.**

**Here is a tribute written for us by Gael, one of Jean and Archie's nieces.** 'Jean and Archie met whilst both working for Butterworth's (spectacles/lens manufacturer) in Meadowbank. They married on the 27th October 1956 at Broughton Church and lived their whole married life at 10 Bellevue Street, which was always an open house to family and friends. They went on to have 3 sons – Alan, Leslie and Douglas. Archie had many hobbies over the years including scuba diving, photography and computing. Jean had a talent for knitting, sewing and baking. She also enjoyed tracing her family tree which led her to meet distant relatives from England and further afield. She also enjoyed sharing memories of 'Old Edinburgh' which led her to become involved with the St Ann's Reminiscence Group.

Over the years Archie and Jean taught a number of children to swim at Broughton School baths which they hired out on a Friday night. Archie

went for sub aqua diving lessons with Alan and Leslie and he took a life saving course, to enable him to hire the pool. This was in the '70s/'80s. It's here I learnt all about a 'shivery bite' (and to this day insist on always getting a bite to eat after swimming, just a biscuit or bar of chocolate!!)





They fell in love with Dunbar (or Sunny Dunny as they lovingly nicknamed it!) after renting a chalet there and soon bought a caravan pitched at Kirkpark in Dunbar. Family members all have fond memories of weekend breaks and school holiday weeks there, and enjoy chatting about adventures they went on whilst there – the bridge to no-where (Belhaven beach), the Cannon, fishing of the harbour, gold ball hunting in the evening on Winterfield Golf Club whilst taking their dog Lady for a walk. And some nights if we had been good we would be treated to fish and chips!!!

Archie and Jean will be sorely missed by their boys, Jean's brothers, sisters, their vast number of nieces and nephews and two grandchildren, and the countless number of friends they made over the years.'

*Gael, her Mum Elizabeth, her Auntie Marion and other members of the family have also contributed information for the rest of this article.*

#### **Archie**

Years after he emigrated to New Zealand, Archie's brother Bert sent Jean some of his childhood memories, including the Bell family's home in London Street – and 'Bell's Hand Laundry' therein. Archie's niece Gael confirms that 'the family rented a basement flat from Hope the Undertakers (at the corner of the bottom of Broughton Street) until 1938, when they moved to Bellevue. Mrs Bell did take in washing and ironing but stopped when she went to Bellevue – we can't confirm it was called Bell's laundry, we're not sure about that.' This flat was where Archie lived for the first five years of his life.

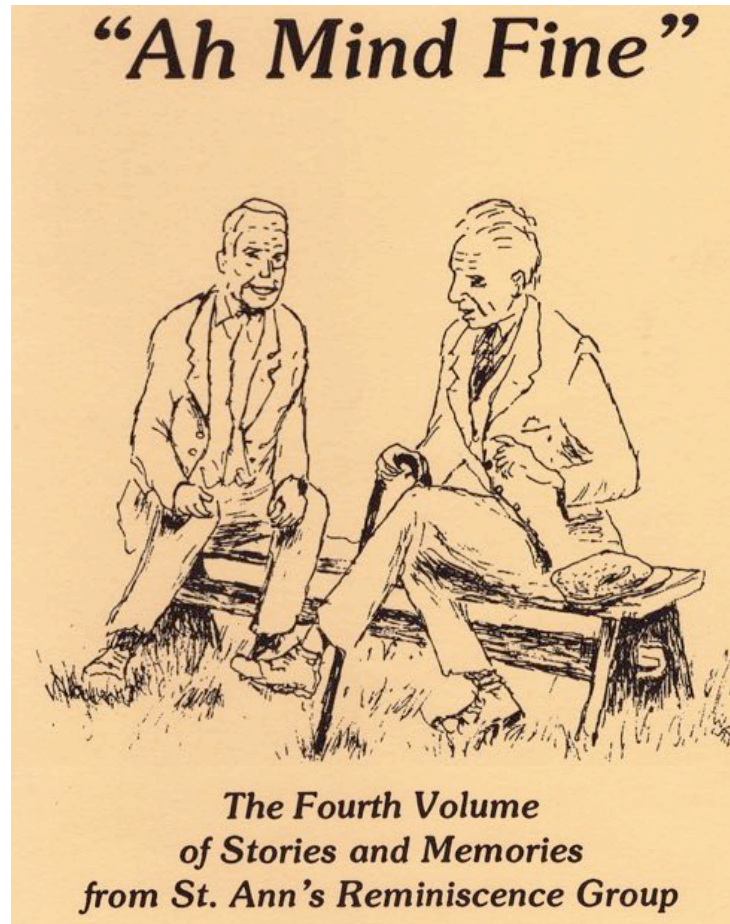
In 1995, Archie wrote *WW11 Evacuation, An experience by Archie Bell aged 62*. It includes vivid descriptions of his days as a Second World War evacuee – first to Dirleton, and later to Aberdeenshire. But before that: 'I was a pupil at Broughton Primary School at the tender age of 6. I recall the first air raid on the Firth of Forth – German bombers trying to bomb Rosyth Naval Dockyard and ships on the Forth. I recall picking up bent and squashed bullets from Bellevue (now Drummond) School playground. Not German bullets, but Spitfire and Hurricane bullets, because the bombers were flying so low over the City the R.A.F. was shooting down at them from above.'

Archie enlisted in the Royal Scots Greys from 1951 to 1954, serving in Egypt and Jordan. From there he returned home to work at Butterworth's, Meadowbank, where Jean was also working – and they married in 1956. Later Archie worked with high precision measuring machines in Ferranti's in Edinburgh, and then Dalkeith. When at Dalkeith he

was a member of the Ferranti's drama group from 1975 to 1977.

#### **Jean**

Jean grew up a South Sider, in Dumbiedykes, moving to Broughton when she married Archie. She had a fund of folklore from her earlier years, which she then developed as a member of the St Ann's Reminiscence Group from the late 1980s into the 1990s. Group members contributed their memories, and the result was a series of booklets



*In this booklet, published in 1993, Jean was thanked for her typing and patience*

Fortunately for us, Jean did some Broughton interviews for the booklets too: Mr Hope, the London Street Undertaker; Ella Brodie of Broughton Court and East London Street; and Harriet Barr, whose family owned 'Kidd's Dairy' and general store at 2 Bellevue Street. Some of Jean's work has also featured in Broughton History Society's Exhibitions and Newsletter.

**As reflected in our local monthly paper *Spurtle*, Archie and Jean both also took a keen interest in Broughton current affairs. Their earliest contribution appeared in No. 13, March 1995, about two new offices at 2 and 4 Bellevue Street. Princess Anne came to open the one at No.1 – VOCAL, Voice of Carers Across Lothian.**

'Bellevue Street and Melgund Terrace were cleared of cars for the Princess's visit – a sight not seen for many, many years! The Lord and Lady Provost were in attendance, arriving in their official car, whilst the Princess drove her own Range Rover.'

Both Archie and Jean are listed as contributors to this article; but in the other contributions to *Spurtle* that I've traced Jean is the only contributor named. However I know from informal conversation with them that his interest continued – and quite recently he was hassling the powers-that-be about a local issue.

**Jean on The Bellevue Maze, *Spurtle* No.34 February 1997:**

Perhaps like me you are frequently asked directions from people confused about the numbers in Bellevue Place, which extends from the junction at the foot of Melgund Terrace, right round to the main street.

I have been in touch with Mr Mossman of City Development who is to arrange for a survey to be carried out to assess their obligations, as I had suggested that they make the Street/Place signs clearer, with house numbers included. However, they point out that their planners would not be keen to see directional plates added to the front elevations of the listed buildings. They did, however, paint the rather dirty black sign above the area at 1a Bellevue into a nice white with black lettering. Much to my son's disappointment – he wanted to take the old black one back to Australia! The statutory address of Drummond School is 31 Bellevue Place (across the street from the other odd numbers). Even numbers start at the stair after the two offices opposite the foot of Melgund Terrace. Some houses are clearly identified by their numbers, but what do you think? Are we being kind to our visitors to Bellevue? Is Bellevue Place, Street, Road, Gardens, Grove easy to find?



**Jean's tribute to Billy Crockett 1920 - 2001, *Spurtle* No.79 March 2001:**

Billy Crockett, a much-loved entertainer in our theatres, billed as 'Crotchett, the Mad Musician'.

Billy lived at Canonmills all his life, and learned his musical skills while attending the Boys Brigade under the leadership of Captain Tom Curr. Whilst still at Broughton School he got a

job at the Lyceum Theatre focusing the spotlights, which gave him a taste for the theatre. He eventually built up an act, playing 12 different instruments.

He joined E.N.S.A. and entertained the troops at Scapa Flow with Jack Radcliffe, Bob and Alf Pearson and others. Later he joined the White Heather Club, and the Black and White Minstrel Show, and travelled all over the world with them. He will be much missed by his friends in Edinburgh, and his colleagues and fellow artistes in the theatrical profession.

**Jean's tribute to Lorimer Hope, *Spurtle* No. 166 January 2009:**

It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of Mr Hope on 13th November. My husband Archie's family rented their home from the Hope family, and Lorimer was a great friend of Archie's eldest brother Tommy. They were keen cyclists and often explored the surrounding countryside together.

When I was assisting with the St Ann's Reminiscence Group in the Cowgate I asked Mr Hope if he would come and talk to us. He declined, but agreed to come to our house and have tea and a chat. I put the tape recorder on the table, and he told me all about his childhood, schooling and work in Broughton in his Father's business of J.D. Hope Funeral Directors on London St.

Mr Hope was a very kindly, courteous man who always raised his hat on meeting you. He had a pawky sense of humour, and many anecdotes of local people – including Mr Mackie, the "bobby" with the moustache in Garioch's poem "Fi'baw in the Street".

**And an item in the *Spurtle's* Moreover column, No.198 September 2011:**

'Jean Bell and others on Bellevue St are celebrating the removal of scaffolding on tenement flats after 3+ years. "No more being wakened at 8am by the sound of generators starting up and workmen shouting to each other." No such luck for Melgund Terrace residents where extensive work continues. Jean suggests a street party when it's all over. Any takers?'

**John Dickie on Jean and Archie's contribution to the recording of Broughton's history**

In 1993 Jane Meagher of Drummond Community High, having seen the wee booklet I had put together for visitors to our guest house a couple of years earlier, asked me if I'd be interested in tutoring an adult class about Broughton's history. The result was a 10-week course starting on 26th January 1994, at St Paul's and St George's Church's community flat in Broughton Street, 10-12 noon. I had just 5 students, one of whom was **Jean Bell**. The handout for 'Discovering Old Broughton' explained: 'Starting with old maps and plans of your area you will move on to look at how ordinary people lived as well as the rich and famous. Course members will be helped to explore



any areas of their own interest and then encouraged to bring along their own photographs and memories.' The results featured in a week-long exhibition in The Flat at the beginning of May 1994 – so, our first course and our first exhibition!

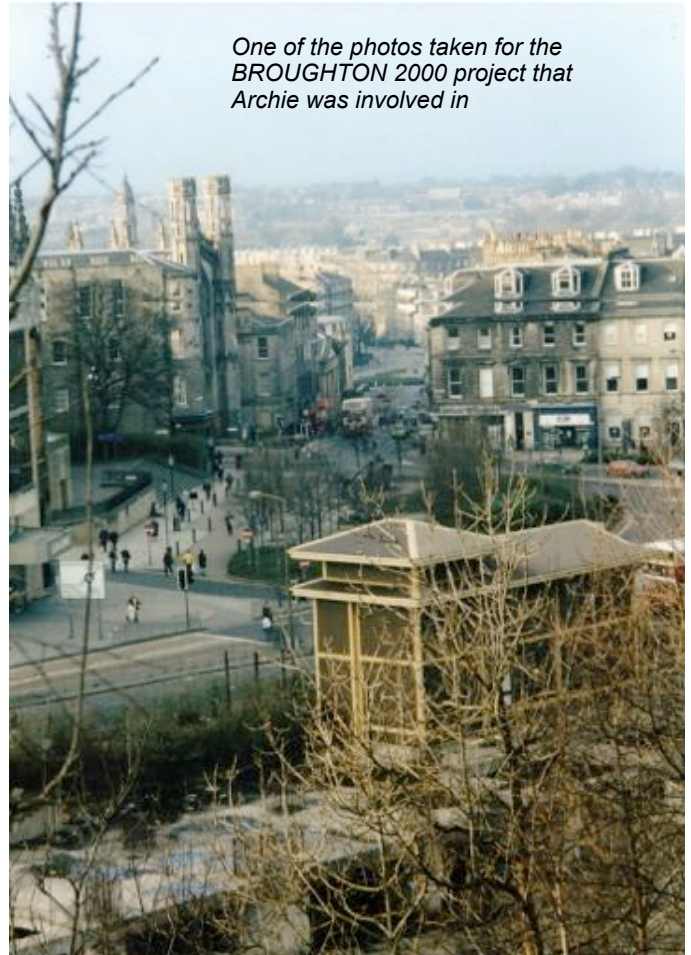
a valuable resource for future generations who have an interest in the history of Broughton. Imagine how we would have appreciated a similar collection of photos taken in 1900! Meanwhile the Society will be able to use the photos in exhibitions, alongside old photos and drawings – to compare past and present.'



Meanwhile, in 1993 Jean's interview with Harriet Barr (née Kidd) had been published in St Ann's Reminiscence Group's *Fourth Volume of Stories and Memories*. In 1995 her interviews with Eilla Brodie and Mr Hope the Undertaker were published in the fifth volume. A few years later visitors to Society exhibitions were able to listen to excerpts from two of the interview tapes – we still have the tape-recorders labelled 'HARRIET BARR interviewed by JEAN BELL' and 'ELLA BRODIE interviewed by JEAN BELL'.

In her tribute to Jean and Archie at the beginning of this article their niece Gael describes how 'they taught a number of children to swim at Broughton School baths which they hired out on a Friday night. Archie went for sub aqua diving lessons, and he took a life saving course to enable him to hire the pool. This was in the '70s/'80s.' Sometime later this changed to a regular weekly swimming session with a few older people on Monday evenings – at Dr Bell's swimming pool in Leith, the family thinks. Certainly by 1996, when our newly established Society chose Monday evenings for their meetings, Monday swimming was already a firm fixture for Archie and Jean and they didn't become signed-up members.

But they continued to be involved, and were amongst a small number of non-members on the distribution list for the Newsletter for various reasons. **Archie** was one of the three lead photographers who brought the Society's BROUGHTON 2000 project to fruition – 800 photos (the other two were Eileen Dickie and the late Martin Lauder). The aim was 'to create a visual record of our area as it was at the start of the new millennium. In the long-term, we believe this will be



*One of the photos taken for the BROUGHTON 2000 project that Archie was involved in*

Archie and Jean each contributed to the **SPECIAL FEATURE: Place nicknames in Broughton**, Newsletter 25 Summer 2009.

**Archie:** 'Puddocky was where we used to catch minnows just under the bridge at Canonmills'. And: 'Cockie Dodges as we called it in days gone by was a big yard off East London Street always full with old vehicles, mainly army if I remember correctly. We used to play among them. Where the name originated I know not. The entrance was at the gable end of the tenements on the north side.'

**Jean** remembered 'Rumbling Bridge', across the Water of Leith into St Mark's Park; which was demolished in 2008 and replaced by a hardwood bridge – no more rumbling as you cross! 'I used to work on the Tote booths at Powderhall Dog Racing. Overlooking the racing circuit was St Mark's Park, and at the end opposite the Tote Board, which gave odds betting on the dogs, there used to congregate a collection of unlicensed bookies and punters who preferred to bet illegally than pay the entrance fee to the Stadium. This was commonly known as the "Jews' Gallery".'

Both Archie and Jean had a great sense of humour. Archie's is illustrated in the tramcar story (see insert below). Jean's surfaced in her contribution (entitled 'Church Clangers') to the 2007 booklet *Once Upon a Time...Childhood Memories of Yesteryear*, published by Broughton St Mary's Parish Church. Here's an extract which combines local history with Bell family history:

'A club for children was run by American missionaries in the basement of Mansfield Place Church, and my youngest son Douglas, and niece, Linda, attended. My sister, Marion, collected them and asked what they had been doing that day. Linda said, "Oh, we had all about the gas bill". We were a bit bemused until we realised that the American gas bill was our Gospel!'

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### Tram 226 – by Jean Bell

I found a copy of Jean's typed account of a family holiday in my local history archive, and have chosen some excerpts to use below.

'On glancing through our "Evening News", I read an article about an old tramcar which had been found in a field in the Borders, and which was being restored to its original glory by some enthusiasts in the local garage. Could this be "OUR" tramcar? A phone call to Mr McKenzie of the Lothian Regional Transport office confirmed that this was so.

Around 1971, being the mother of Douglas, Leslie and Alan, and desperately needing a "wee holiday" I spied in the "News" an advert for a tramcar holiday home in Hume, Kelso, and there and then wrote off to see if we could have it for a week. I think it was a lady called Mrs Goodfellow who wrote and confirmed we could have the tramcar for a week in the Trades holiday.'

Then there is a detailed description of their accommodation – I can almost hear Jean's voice as I read it!

'The interior was still in the old varnished wood painted as bright green. Upstairs, there were two beds across the breadth of the caravan, and one along one side. This meant that when making the beds, I did the one at the

one side, and then ran downstairs, through the bottom half, and up the other stairs to make the other beds! There were still the sliding doors at each end...

'A built in extension to the tramcar housed a bath and toilet...

'When my husband, Archie, came up with my cup of tea, there was a big grin on his face, as he opened the curtains which, of course, ran all round the tramcar. There was I, sitting up in bed with my feet practically sticking out of the opposite window, sipping my cup of tea, with a grandstand view of the local motor racing enthusiasts tearing round the road beyond our field – at half past six in the morning! The boys were out and dressed, cheering them on and having a whale of a time!

We had a really nice time in our tramcar. The boys had to collect milk in a pail from the farm. My husband enjoyed pretending to change the "points", and would insist on shouting "Any more fares" when going through the sliding doors. We visited Mellerstain House with them, and – oh, nostalgia – that was the last time I swam in a river, the River Tweed at Kelso.'

*Later this story was published in Auld Reekie Memories, Volume Five of Stories and Memories, by St Ann's Reminiscence Group, 1995.*

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## Arthur Woodburn: First World War Conscientious Objector

**Newsletter reader and local resident Ken Duffy introduces his remarkable great-uncle.**

**Ken was brought up at 11 Bellevue Street from the age of eight.**

**His mother Nettie was a Woodburn who married James Duffy.**

**Her father was George Woodburn – an elder brother of Arthur.**

Arthur Woodburn (1890–1978), Labour politician, writer, and educationalist, was born on 25 October 1890 at Dundee Street, Edinburgh, the youngest of the eight children of Matthew Woodburn (1842–1900), born in Kilmarnock, and his wife Janet Brown (1847–1918) from Edinburgh. His father founded a small brass foundry that operated near Walker Bridge, Yeaman Place, Edinburgh, until the early thirties.

By the time Arthur arrived as the last born of a large family, the family had been reduced to seven by epidemics and diseases. The high rate of infant mortality common at that time had sadly claimed the life of another thirteen infants. Woodburn recollected that the first thing a new mother did was to insure her baby for funeral benefit. This was how

he came to be named: the family had exhausted all the family names and in the midst of discussing what to call the new arrival the insurance collector called, and his name was Arthur.

He went to Bruntsfield Primary before transferring to Boroughmuir Higher Grade in the building now occupied by James Gillespie's. Much to his surprise, he found himself considered something of a prodigy. Before school, he helped out daily in the family foundry which became his second home. His main task was to clear out the furnace ashes and make other preparations for the start of the foundry day. Woodburn often stressed the importance and advantage of his early manual crafts experience to him in his political life when talking to industrial representatives.

Page 555.

1890. BIRTHS in the District of *St George* in the Burgh of *Edinburgh*

No.	Name and Surname	When and Where Born	Sex	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Station or Service of Mother, Date and Place of Marriage	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Address, if not at the same to which the Birth returned	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar
1763	<i>Arthur Woodburn</i>	<i>1890, Craighall, Edinburgh</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Matthew Woodburn, Iron Worker, Janet Woodburn, do. do.</i>	<i>Mr A Woodburn, do. do.</i>	<i>1890, November 29<sup>th</sup>, at Edinburgh, John Aitchison, Registrar.</i>

At the tender age of fourteen, he was headhunted by the Free Church of Scotland and with the approval of his mother left school to work in their office for an annual wage of £16. Here he was plunged into the lawsuit between the Free Church and the United Free Church over disputed titles to church assets. This battleground gave him valuable early experience of campaigning and public relations in the political arena. Curiously enough, Woodburn's religious connections at the time were with the opposing camp, the United Free Church. About two years later, he found employment as a clerk at Miller's London Road Foundry and spent twenty-five years working with them in engineering and foundry administration, assisting costing and international contracts. From the age of fourteen, he attended evening classes 4 to 5 nights a week for twelve years studying French, German, Spanish and Italian. Miller's also encouraged him to study these languages during spare time in office hours. After reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last* he enrolled at once to study Economics at a WEA evening class tutored by William Graham

who later became a close friend and President of the Board of Trade in a future Labour government.

In spite of his antagonism to the whole background of the war, he was naturally stirred by the great emotional appeal of Kitchener. However, treatment for a kidney stone and domestic problems kept him from enlisting. Woodburn was left in sole charge of the family foundry and the family home after his elder brother had volunteered for the war. In addition, he and his sister were left to support their elderly mother.

As opposition grew and the extent of the carnage became clear, Woodburn began to see the war in a very different light. Work at Miller's also gave him first-hand experience of the way powerful armament firms could manipulate smaller firms to defend their monopoly. He was infuriated that men were losing their lives while behind the lines the war was being made the occasion for amassing easy fortunes. He joined the Independent Labour Party and the Anti-Conscription Union in 1915. His first public speech was delivered at the Mound and made an appeal for an immediate end to the war. This took place only yards from a meeting addressed by Major Robertson VC. Hecklers were advised by Woodburn that they were attending the wrong meeting.

Conscription was introduced in January 1916. Everyone working at Miller's was occupationally exempt. But Woodburn declared publically, and in writing to the authorities, that he would oppose conscription. Major Robertson thought, mistakenly in Woodburn's view, that he was the 'brains' behind all the opposition in the area.

NAME & Address		Date		Ref.	Information in letter	Camp or Prison
<i>Woodburn, A</i>						<i>Edinburgh</i>
<i>28.1.16</i>	<i>Ref: 3</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>11/1/16</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>56 days at</i>	<i>Glencorse, Edinburgh, Warriston</i>
				<i>23.11</i>	<i>Released from</i>	<i>Carlton, Edinburgh</i>
					<i>after Hunger strike.</i>	

Woodburn's record from the Society of Friends Visitation Committee, held at the Friends' Library Euston, records his CM (Court Martial), his first sentence of 56 days hard labour in 1916 and his release in in March 1919 only after a hunger strike.



After his application for absolute exemption from military service on the grounds of his conscientious objection was refused in February 1916, Woodburn appealed:

*"I am conscientiously opposed to taking human life, and to taking part in war. I also object on principle to the government or any section of the people attempting to force me into such military service."*

His appeal was refused. Pressure was brought to bear on Miller's and his occupational exemption was rescinded. He was arrested in September 1916, sent to the army and court-martialled a month later at Glencorse Barracks for disobeying an order to wear army uniform.

*'My turn came to put on the boots. They produced what appeared to me size 12s. I was ordered to put on the boots."I'm sorry," said I, " I must refuse" Witnesses had been duly posted to view the crime so that evidence would be sound. I was marched back to the guardroom ...*

*'After a few days I was told to get ready for sentence. The detention room door was opened and I had to fall in between two soldiers with a corporal in charge. I was then marched out by the escort who had their rifles at the slope and bayonets fixed. We marched to the barrack square. Of course I had never in my life put on uniform and was still dressed in civilian clothes – just as I had been arrested. I must have looked an incongruous figure in a bowler hat, black suit and raglan coat. 'The whole regiment had been paraded to form the sides of a square. I was marched to the centre of the vacant side. My hat was plucked from my head by the escort corporal behind me and the parade was drawn to attention. The adjutant then read out the charges of disobedience in face of the enemy and the judgement of the court that I was guilty. I then received my first sentence of 56 days' hard labour.'*

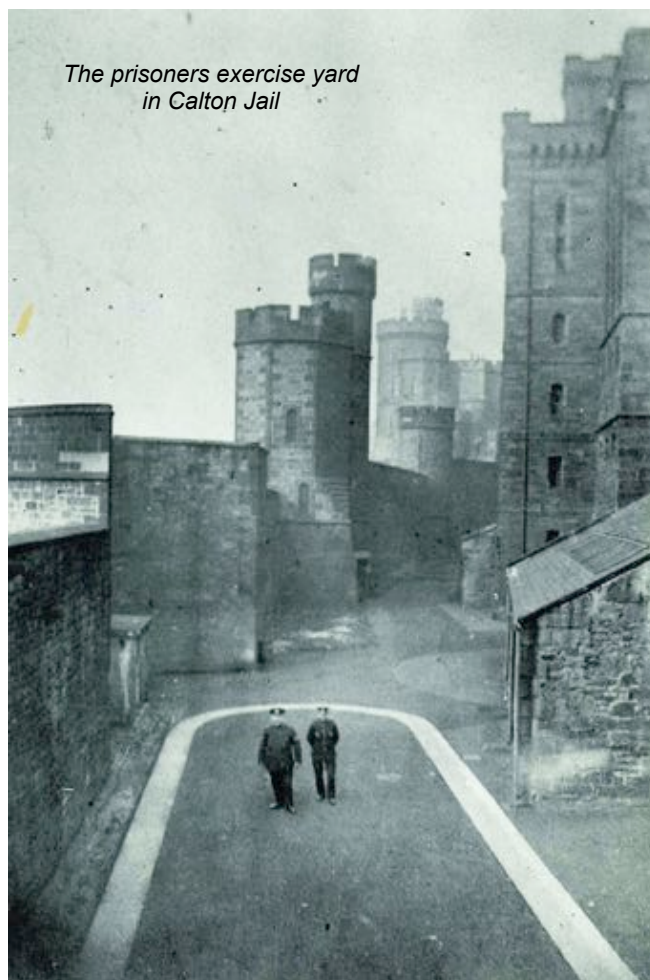


Calton Jail - collection date 1900

©RCAHM

Arthur Woodburn endured solitary confinement for much of his two-and-a-half year imprisonment served at Glencorse, Wormwood Scrubs, The Tower of London, and Calton Jail. He refused, throughout, to work in any capacity for the military and was court-martialled five times. He and his fellow conscientious objectors were finally released from Calton Jail in March 1919 after going on a short hunger strike.

Woodburn described Calton as, *"the poorhouse of all prisons with the cold chill of a grim fortress"*. Conscientious Objectors were kept isolated and he could only exchange furtive whispers and glances in the narrow exercise courtyard with fellow pacifists like James Maxton, Willie Gallagher and John McLean.



*The prisoners exercise yard in Calton Jail*

Woodburn's mother died at the end of 1918 while he was still imprisoned. After his release he returned to work in Miller's London Road Foundry and in July 1919 married Barbara Halliday, a teacher and fellow labour activist.

**Editor:**  
***But that's not the end of Arthur Woodburn's story or his acquaintance with Calton Hill.***  
***More in our next edition***