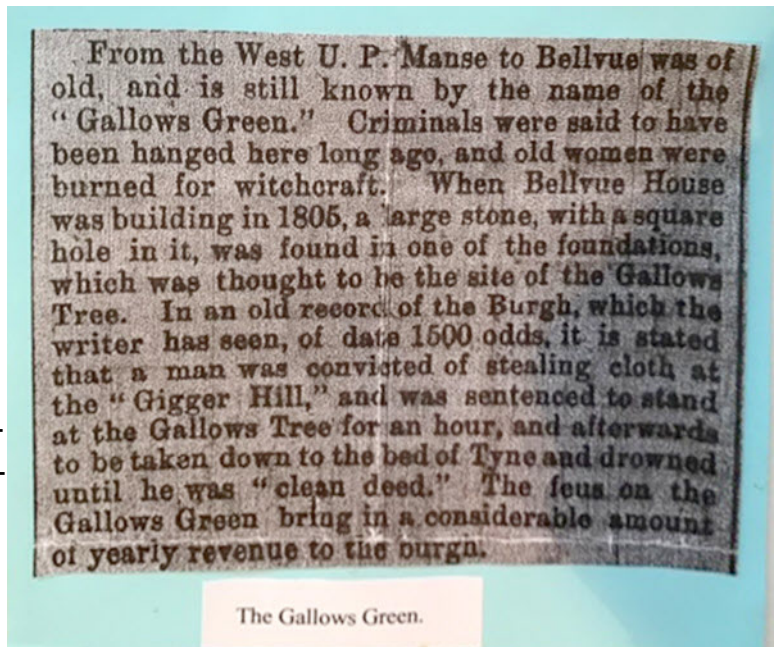


History of Mansefield, Station Road, Haddington



The house was built in 1817 on the 'East most lot of the East Gallow Green park of Haddington, held in feu of the Town of Haddington, situated to the Westward of the West Port of Haddington'. The Gallow Green was, according to local legend, the site of the Town gallows.

The house was built as the manse of the recently established Haddington West, New Licht, Antiburgher church. Following a split in the Anti-Burgher congregation, the church, now the former library in Newton Port, and manse had been sold to the other faction (Auld Lichts). The cost of building the new manse was £400, paid for by the congregation.



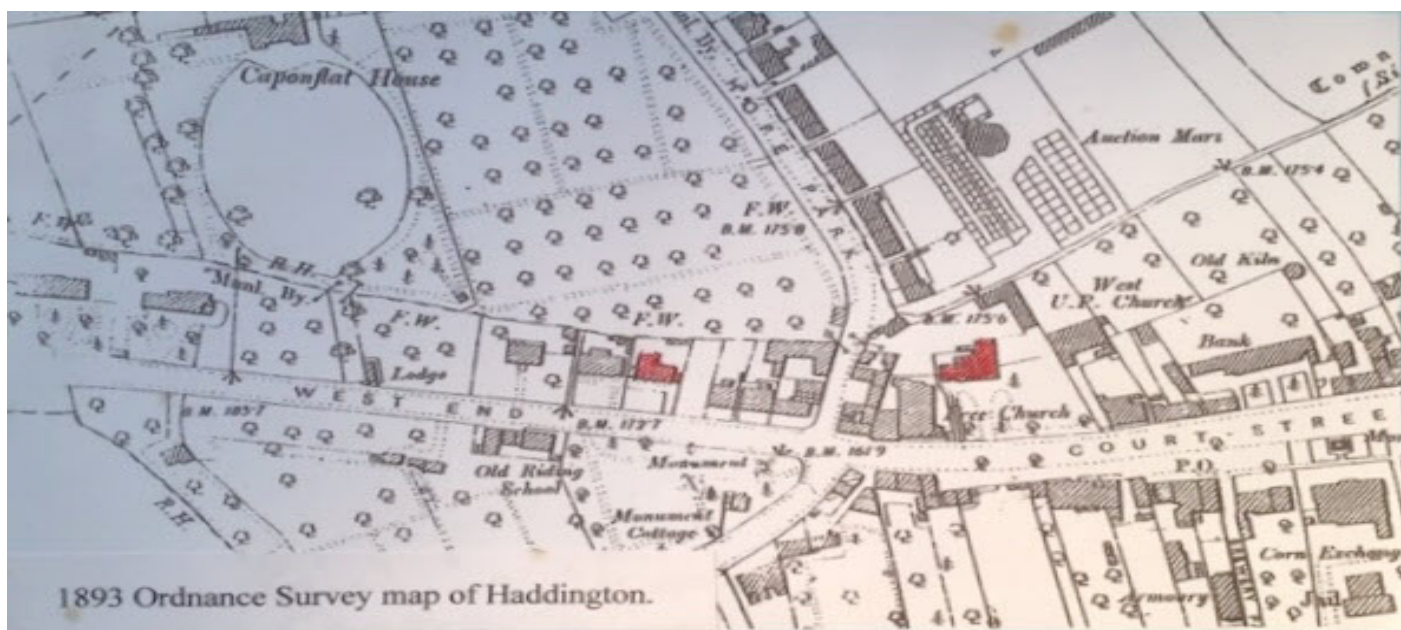
'In April 1817 a meeting of the congregation was held to consider how the £400 required for the manse was to be got. £81 was subscribed on the spot, and a proposal was adopted that a society be formed to take in subscriptions of one penny or two pennies each week from such members who are willing to give until the debt be paid'.

Who bore the burden of the debt until it was paid off, how long it took and at what interest rates is not recorded.

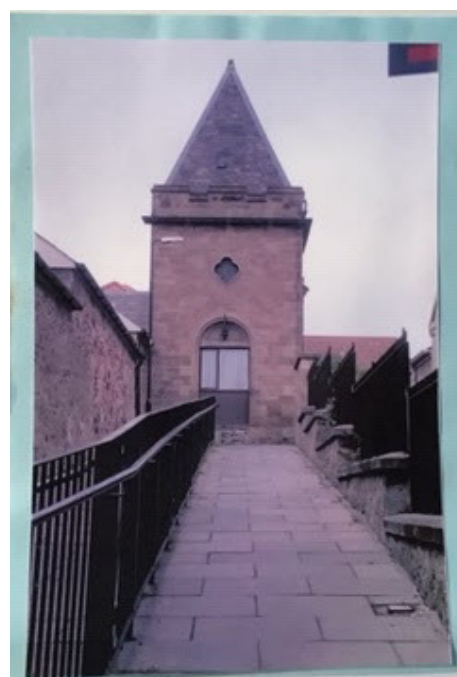
In 1869 'additions and alterations were made at the manse involving an expenditure of £224'. With a £150 donation from Mrs Thomson garden ground was purchased in 1893. After the union of the West United Free Church and St John's Church in 1929, it was decided to sell the West UP Church and manse and rename St John's Church the West Church.

In 1932 James Hendrie of Hope Park, Haddington, bought the redundant manse by private bargain for £710 and renamed the house, Mansefield.

In 1974 Andrew and Sue Robinson bought Mansefield from the Estate of Jessie Hendrie, and negotiated the purchase with her son, Andrew (Drew) Hendrie, then living in Alloa. The Robinsons occupied the house with their two small sons, Paul and Stuart, from early 1975.



West United Presbyterian Church, Haddington



Remaining tower of West UP Church, now part of Hilton Lodge sheltered housing.

The history of Mansefield can be told through its former occupants – five Ministers of the Church from 1817 -1932, and two private owners from 1932 to the present.

1st Minister – Rev. William Hogg 1817 -1849

Memorandum that the Rev William Hogg, Minister of this Congregation, after a severe illness of several weeks, died on Father's Day, June 16th1849, deeply lamented by the whole Congregation and also by the inhabitants of Haddington and a large circle of acquaintances. He nearly attained this 40th year of his Ministry having been settled in August 1809.

[Death of William Hogg - CH3/1362/8/65]

2nd Minister – Rev. John Stevenson 1851 – 54

John Stevenson – from Kilmarnock (Princes Street) a cousin of Mr James Stevenson, the object of their former choice. Called also to Lilliesleaf, but accepted Haddington, and was ordained March 1851. The call was signed by 164 members and the stipend was to be £150, with the manse.

Ordination & Soiree

“The ordination of the Rev John Stevenson is to take place in the West W. P. Congregation Haddington on Tuesday First at half past 12 o'clock noon. The Rev Dr John Brown of Edinburgh is to Preach and the Rev Mr Sandy of Gorebridge is to Ordain.

A fruit soiree will be held in the evening of the same day in the Church. The Rev Joseph Young of Haddington will take the Chair at 7 o'clock. Addresses on interesting and important subjects will be delivered and a Pulpit Game of Cassock will be delivered from the ladies of the Congregation to the Rev Mr Stevenson.

Music will be introduced at intervals.

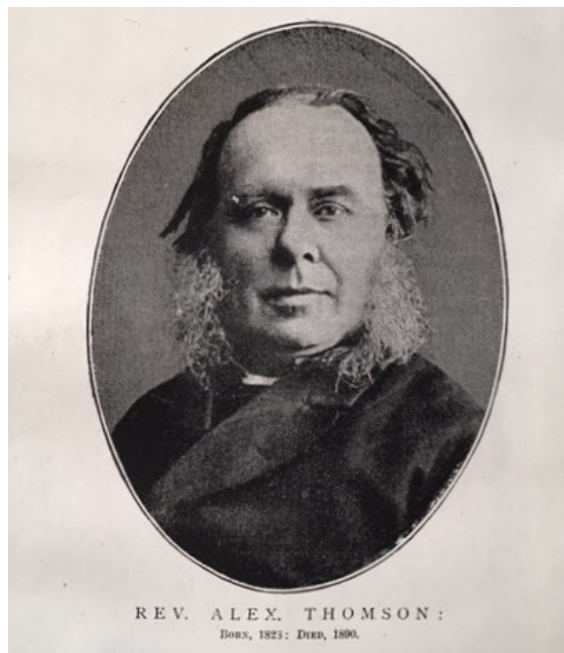
Tickets for the Soiree 1/- each may be had at the shops and Mrs Smith Nungate, Mrs Bell, Mrs John Brown, Mrs Smith and Mrs Neill – Messrs Yuill – Hogg – Smith – Maltman & Gray – Haddington”

Finding himself unable for the strain involved Mr Stevenson resigned in August 1854 and the resignation was accepted on 5 September. After a time his name appeared in the probationer list and, believing himself restored to vigorous health, he was admitted to Wigtown in 1856

3rd Minister – Rev. Alexander Thomson 1855 – 1890

Alexander Thomson, from Aberdeen, (Charlotte Street). Had been previously called to three churches in Northumberland – Swalwell, Hexham and Newcastle (Zion Chapel). Ordained, 26 September 1855.

In 1864 Mr Thomson was called to Glasgow (Regent Place) but the position had its difficulties and he remained in Haddington. That year the stipend was raised from £150 to £180 and in 1875 to £200. In the latter part of 1866 the congregation memorialised the Presbytery to appoint a committee to visit Haddington with a view to union with the East Church. There had been a movement in that direction two years before, Mr Thomson being especially favourable, and though his was the larger and abler congregation he spoke of the two ministers sharing alike. Now the East Church was vacant, so that there were fewer difficulties to be overcome. The Presbytery's committee found that both congregations had been declining for years, that in the case of the East Church it was down now to 120, while the West had about double that number and as the population of the town and neighbourhood was stationary decided increase was not to be looked for. But the position taken up by the East Congregation barred further procedure, and all the more so that they meant to continue self-supporting. Perhaps the very earnestness of the stronger congregation to secure union helped defeat its own ends. After lengthened conference with both parties the committee recommended the Presbytery to take no further action in the matter. On the day that this affair ended the congregation resolved either to have the present church completely remodeled or to arrange for the building of another. The former alternative was adopted, and the outlay of nearly £1100 was met - £400 by subscriptions and £700 by a bazaar. In the early part of 1890 Mr Thomson's health gave way, and he died suddenly on 9th July, in the sixty second year of his age and thirty fifth of his ministry.



Rev Alex Thomson was born in Marnoch near Banff in 1838 and died in Haddington on 9 July, 1890.

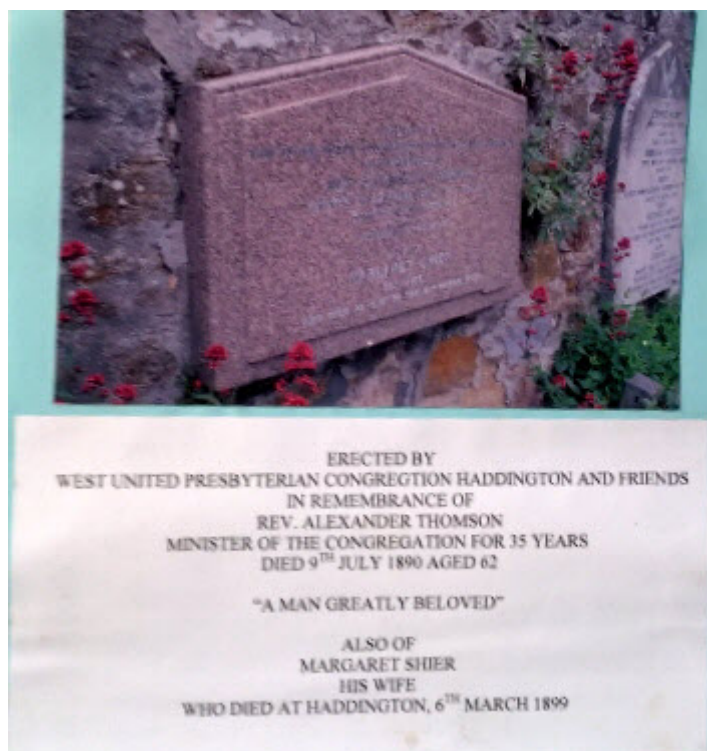
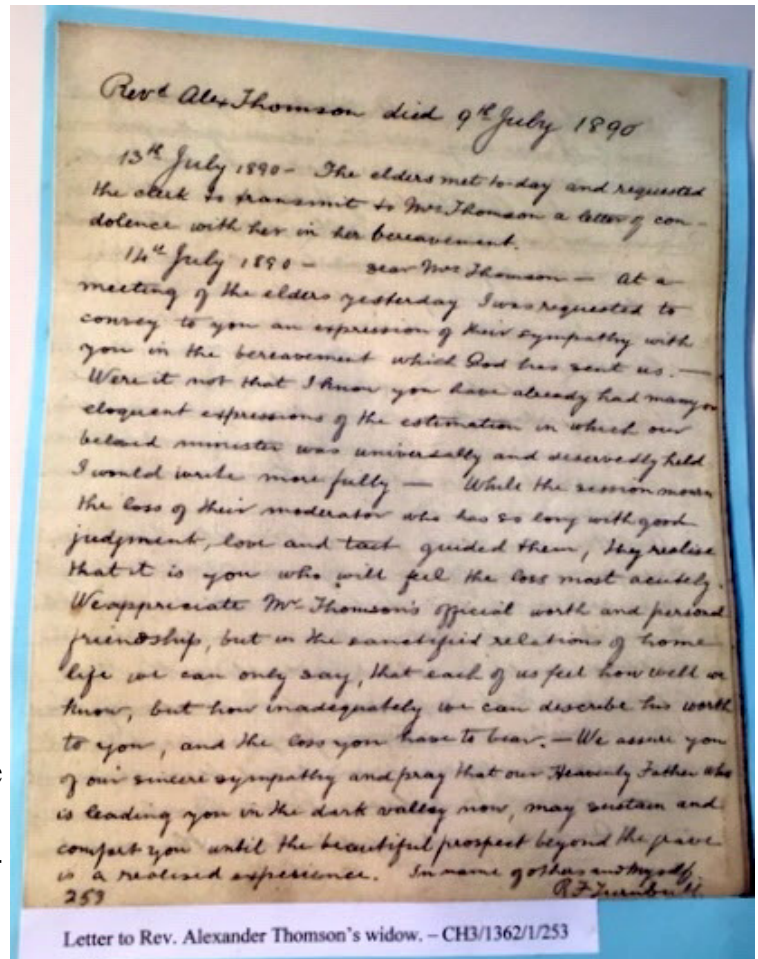
13th July 1890 – The elders met today and requested the clerk to transmit to Mrs Thomson a letter of condolence with her in her bereavement.

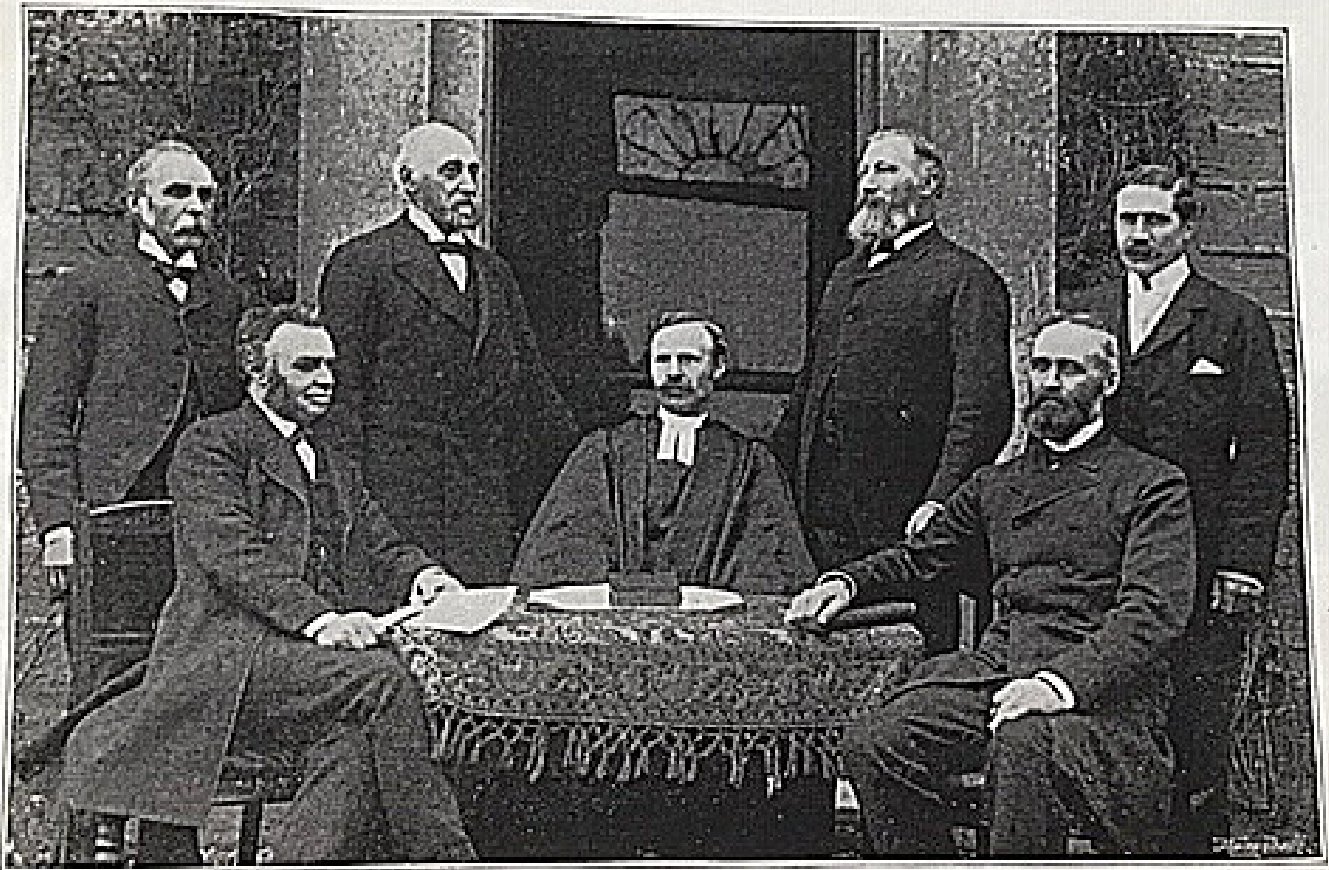
14th July 1890

Dear Mrs Thomson

At a meeting of the elders yesterday I was requested to convey to you an expression of their sympathy with you in the bereavement which God has sent us. Were it not that I know you have already had many eloquent expressions of the estimation in which our beloved minister was universally and deservedly held I would write more fully. While the session mourns the loss of their moderator who has so long with good judgment, love and tact guided them, they realise it is you who will feel the loss most acutely. We appreciate Mr Thomson's official worth and personal friendship, but in the sanctified relations of home life we can only say, that each of us feel how well we know, but how inadequately we can describe his worth to you, and the loss you have to bear. We assure you of our sincere sympathy and pray that our Heavenly Father who is leading you in the dark valley now, may sustain and comfort you until the beautiful prospect beyond the grave is a realized experience.

In the name of others and myself, R J Turnbull





MR. JAS. PRINGLE.

MR. W. F. MACHRAY.

REV. W. B. TOUGH.

MR. W. HUNTER.

MR. W. H. GIBSON.

MR. H. F. TURNBULL.

MR. J. M. JAMIESON.

4th Minister – Rev. William B Tough 1891 – 1914

Photograph of the Members of the Session 1896 taken outside the front door of the manse: Rev W B Tough, Mr Jas Pringle, Mr W F Machray, Mr W Hunter, Mr H Gibson, Mr J M Jamieson.

[West UP Church – Rev William Tough's speech at his Ordination Dinner January 1891. Haddington Courier 31st January 1891]

Mr Tough on rising to reply was received with applause. He wished first, he said, to acknowledge the very hearty manner in which they had responded to Provost Brook's toast, and also express the satisfaction and pleasure which it gave him to receive a call from Haddington. Had he been allowed a personal preference in the choosing of his own sphere, Haddington would have been the place he would have selected, because it seemed to him to be an ideal place for a young minister to begin his work. It had the quietness and seclusion of the country, and almost invited a man to intellectual study and meditation, and the development of whatever powers he might be possessed of in an intellectual way; and still it was large enough not to be a temptation to a man to take an over amount of leisure. The congregation was large enough to fully occupy a man's whole powers and yet not so large as to be over-exerting, and of such a character as to shorten unduly one's career (Applause) Since becoming a minister in Haddington he had also become a member of the premier Presbytery of the Church – the Edinburgh Presbytery. Already he had formed many friendships there, which he hoped would deepen and strengthen in the years to come (Applause).....

5th Minister – Rev. Alexander Duncan 1914 – 1929



Alexander Duncan, born 3 April 1874 at Aberdeen, son of Alexander D and Janet Sangster; educ at Aberdeen Robert Gordon's College, and Grammar School, Univ of Aberdeen MA ((1895), Aberdeen F.C. College (Hons. Dip in Theology), licen. By Presb. of Aberdeen May 1902 1902-4; assist Strathbogie (1902-4); ord and ind Mortlach 20 April 1904; trans. and ind. 9th July 1914. Marr 7th July 1905, Margaret Helen Hendry.

1st Private Owners – Mr James and Mrs Jessie Hendry 1932 – 1974

Mr James Hendry of Hope Park, Haddington, bought the West Manse in 1932 for £710. The purchase was recorded in the Register of Sasines on 22 March 1933. His wife, Jessie Matthew Hutchison, continued to live in the house, renamed Mansefield, until about 18 months before her death in November 1974. They had one child, Andrew (Drew).

2nd Private Owners – Andrew and Susan Robinson 1974 –

In 1974 the accommodation comprised, on the ground floor, a dining room, Mrs Hendrie's bedroom, breakfast room, an unused reception room, a small kitchen and, in a single storey lean-to, the maid's bedroom. On the upper floors were a drawing room, four bedrooms and a bathroom. Externally there was a wash house, complete with copper, glazed sinks and mangle, and an external store. The store had been built as a stable for the Minister's pony.

The extension of 1869 had converted the original rectangular house of 4 rooms on each floor into the current L shape. Fortunately, in most respects, the house remained much as it must have been following the alterations of 1869. Almost all the windows had functioning shutters; in the dining room the mantelpiece, dado and architraves remain unchanged.

The gas piping for the gas lighting remained, with sagging lead piping festooning the walls. The house did have electricity, date of installation unknown. The wiring was fixed to the surface of walls and had wooden covers.

The initial renovations comprised re-wiring, replumbing to replace lead water piping, removal of lead gas piping, installation of central heating, a new kitchen, utility room, bathroom, shower room and downstairs cloakroom.

Later work involved replacing the roof, building a garage and incorporating the wash-house into the house to form a larder. Subsequently the garage was changed into an office/library/breakfast room.

31 March 2020