

Decimus's profile grows

The current issue of the Georgian Group's magazine *The Georgian* (Autumn/01/2023) reports on Decimus Burton:

. . . the posthumous reputation of Decimus Burton has been unfairly neglected since his death in 1881. However the Decimus Burton Society aims to re-establish the architect to his rightful place as perhaps the greatest neoclassical architect of the 19th century. A new museum and research centre in Calverley, Tunbridge Wells, and . . . plans will be presented to the Council in the coming months. The institution will be based in the remaining two houses of a terrace built by Burton in 1828 and, it is hoped, will bring together many of his drawings and papers, dispersed after his death (many to the RIBA), of which Burton was a founding Fellow and Vice-President), providing the nation with a central archive of Burton's work. . . . Final funding is awaited, including a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Burtons' St Leonards Society (BStLS)

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Annual membership: Singles – £20
Couples – £35

The Society welcomes payment by standing order or bank transfer, to account name: **Burtons' St Leonards Society Limited (The)**

Sort Code: **40-40-09**, and

Account: **01215248**

including your name as payment identification.

If necessary, the Society can accept payment by cheque or cash, but please note our bank now levies a charge to process cheques.

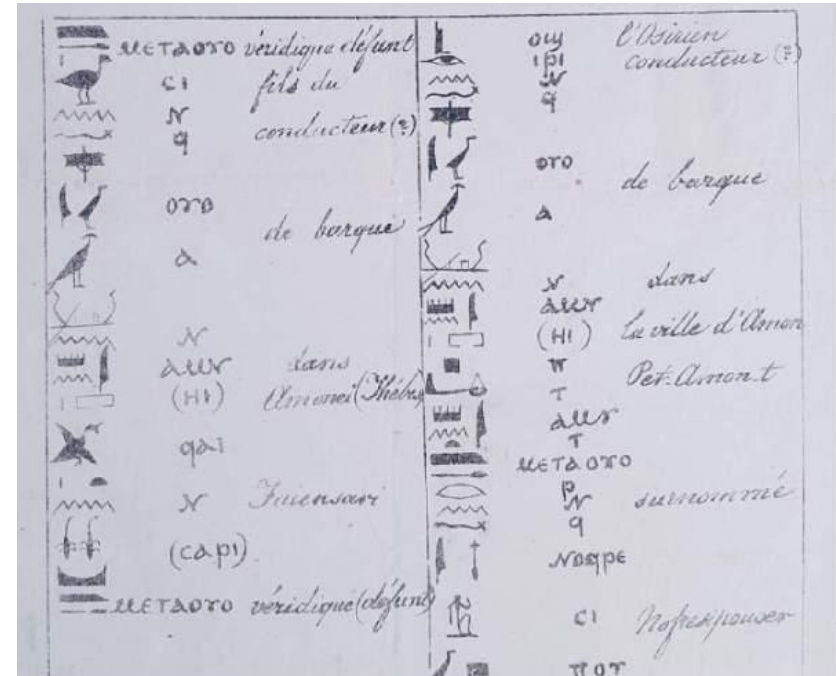
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BURTONS' ST LEONARDS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER Summer 2023

Burton's Mummy

James Burton junior (*London, 1786 – †Edinburgh, 1862), the second of the six sons of James and Elizabeth Burton, dallied in succession with architecture, mathematics, law and geology until smitten with Egyptology in 1824. Despite the risks of tropical illnesses and raids by marauding tribes, he remained in Egypt until 1833 bringing back with him a notable assembly of antiquities which were auctioned by Agnew & Sons in 1837. Most of the items were purchased by Trustees of the British Museum. Of the items not committed to the Agnew sale, the most notable was Pandiamun's Mummy.



Greenough prior to Lepsius' departure to lead the Prussian Egyptological Expedition in 1842 (5).

The sale failed to elicit an offer which Greenough was prepared to accept. Greenough then resorted to offering the Mummy as the prize in a raffle following a dinner for a gathering of his rich friends at his sumptuous Grove House, Regent's Park (designed by Decimus Burton in 1823). The winner was the banker Edmund Hopkinson — husband of Octavia Burton, eighth child of James and Elizabeth Burton (1).

The Hopkinsons returned to Gloucestershire and the Mummy was donated to Gloucester Museum. It was later acquired in stages by Liverpool Museum (6).

Notes:

- 1 Neil Cooke, 'Burton's Mummy' *Minerva*, Vol 7, No 6 (November/December 1996)
- 2 Blaž Zabel and Jan Ciglencečki, 'The Early Explorers of the Eastern Desert and the History of Monasticism: Sir John Gardner Wilkinson and James Burton'. ASTENE Seminar, Duns Castle, April 2022
- 3 Neil Cooke, 'Burton and KV5', *Minerva*, Vol 7, No 3 (May/June 1996)
<https://victorianweb.org/history/letters/jburton.html>
- 4 Neil Cooke, 'The Forgotten Egyptologist: James Burton': contribution to the 1995 Durham University symposium *Travellers in Egypt* (Taurus Press, 2002)
- 5 Private communications between Neil Cooke and Christopher Maxwell-Stewart, 2022
- 6 Luca Miatello, *Birmingham Egyptology Journal* 4 (2016), pp10-61. PDF of 'Texts and Iconography of Padiamun's Coffin in the Liverpool Museum': Inventory No 1953.72.

https://www.academia.edu/30358150/Texts_and_Iconography_of_Padiamun_s_Coffin_in_the_Liverpool_Museum_Birmingham_Egyptology_Journal_4_2016_10_61

It is with great regret that I learned of the death of Neil Cooke shortly after I established email communications with him in 2022.

Christopher Maxwell-Stewart
Burtons' St Leonards Society
July 2023

George Bellas Greenough (1778-1855) was a rich bachelor, Fellow of the Royal Society and first President of the Geological Society. He was a close friend of James Burton senior, and it was he who arranged for James Burton junior to be employed in 1822 by the Pasha of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, to search for coal deposits. This was part of the Pasha's drive to progress the strategic importance of Egypt by steam trains operating between the Nile Delta and Suez and later coal-bunkering for steam ships. James' early discoveries of ancient Egyptian, Roman and Coptic sites in the Eastern Desert were recorded in a paper submitted to the ASTENE Seminar at Duns in 2022, in the paper by Blaž Zabel and Jan Ciglencečki (2).

James, and the geologists and mining engineer recruited by Greenough to assist him, found no coal deposits. However James' discoveries of antiquities fired his interest in Egyptology. He resigned (or possibly was dismissed from) his commission with the Pasha in 1824, and spent the next 9 years in Egypt accompanied by his friend Charles Humphreys, visiting various sites on the Nile up to the second cataract, as summarised in Neil Cooke's, 'Burton and KV5' (3) and 'The Forgotten Egyptologist'(4). For the next 5 years he (and Humphries) relied on an allowance provided by his father, James senior. His father became dissatisfied with the reports of his son's achievements and ceased funding him. James then turned to Greenough for a loan to fund his final four years in Egypt. The security of that was the income to be forthcoming from James selling a substantial parts of his collections of antiquities and animals on his return to Britain.

In the event a series of disasters on the journey to England resulted in the greater part of his menagerie having to be sold in France to pay for expenses incurred *en route*, and a catastrophe when the prize Nubian giraffe broke a leg in Calais.

That setback was compounded by the bankruptcy of Agnew & Sons following its 1837 sale of the greater part of James Burton's antiquities. Despite the British Museum and Lord Proudhoë significantly enhancing their Egyptological collections, James received no income from this sale.

Greenough then accepted Pandiamun's Mummy in lieu of the repayment of the debt James Burton owed him. The annotations in French made on the copy of the sale notice were made by Karl Lepsius following dinner with [>6]



Founder steps down

Christopher Maxwell-Stewart has stepped down as Chair of our Society, and also from its Council of Management. Christopher has done a prodigious amount for the Burtons' St Leonards community and will be much missed as Chair. He will now concentrate on researching and recording our town's history. (See also pp1-3, 6 &c.)

We plan a fuller tribute to the work done by Christopher at the Society's AGM & social event in December. The date will be advised shortly.

Guided Walks of Burtons' St Leonards

On summer weekends and Bank Holidays, the Burtons' St Leonards Society offers 'turn up & go' guided walks of 90 minutes duration around Burtons' St Leonards. No booking required, and dogs on leads are welcome. Meet on the St Leonards seafront (high level) opposite the Royal Victoria Hotel. Check for upcoming walks at Burtons' St Leonards Society Events:

<https://burtonsstleonardssociety.co.uk/events/>

Additionally the walk can be offered to organized groups, by arrangement & a donation to the Society. Contact via our website:

<https://burtonsstleonardssociety.co.uk>

More BStLS News

Stephen van Dulken was elected as the new Chair at the recent Council of Management meeting. Robert Millington will be the new Vice-Chair. In addition, Louisa Sington was co-opted as a new member to the Council. Like the other members of the Council, they are happy to be approached at events by anyone interested in getting more involved in the Society's activities. Alternatively, Society members are welcome to email info@burtonsstleonardssociety.co.uk to volunteer.

There is plenty of scope (and, trying to fill Christopher's shoes, we would like as much help as we can get).

New website

The Burtons' St Leonards Society (BStLS) new website is attracting interest:

<https://www.burtonsstleonardssociety.co.uk/>

Now that it is operational, it is expected that more material will be added steadily. The site is well illustrated and easy to navigate, and includes an entirely new Blog — on news and matters relevant to the Society and its membership.

Events

There will be a Members' Garden Party – weather permitting – on Sunday 27th August 2023, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. (Venue to be notified.) There will be no charge for this Members-only event. (Any members with food allergies/intolerances are advised to bring their own nibbles or stick to clearly labelled pre-packed items.)

Save the Date

On the afternoon of Sunday 8 October the Society will be holding an Exhibition: **St Leonards: A Moment in Time**. More information to follow but, as a little early inducement to keep the date free, we can reveal that it may also include a cream tea.



Bicentenary Festival

In June a non-BStLS meeting was held locally to discuss possibilities of a bicentenary festival for St Leonards on Sea. The Society was well represented and participated in the discussion on whether such a Festival should be in 2025, 2026 or 2028. Another meeting is likely in the autumn on the form, requirements and name of such a Festival. Email JasB200@outlook.com for further details.

I commence with the a transcription of the text and a photograph of a part of lithographic print of a flyer in Hastings Museum pasted into a scrapbook of one the daughters of Jane Wood *née* Burton:

To be Sold

A highly interesting Unrolled Mummy

If the number of cases in which a mummy is preserved is presumed to be of any criterion as to its value as well as the rank and consequence of the deceased, we are fairly warranted to believe that the present Mummy to be of considerable importance. It was formerly in the collection of Mr Haliburton and was taken out of a tomb in Thebes which was opened up by the Traveller in 1824. The sarcophagus was found standing on a mat, upon which as well as on top of the Sarcophagus itself, were strewn wreaths Herantheum and leaves which it has been asserted were only placed on the bodies of unmarried persons. The Mummy is enclosed in its Carbonage or cemented cloth case fitted to the shape of the body and is protected by three cases of wood, ornamented throughout with hieroglyphics and characters and emblems, the massy exterior case measuring 8 feet in length 3 feet in breadth and 4 1/2 feet in height at the ends. Professor Lepsius furnished the accompanying interpretation of the Hieroglyphics, designating the names of the deceased.

Address to AB, 6 Spring Gardens, Westminster

AB was Alfred Burton, the youngest of the six sons of James and Elizabeth Burton. He was an architect pupil of his brother, Decimus Burton. His then workplace was Decimus's Office/Studio — 6 Spring Gardens, Westminster (near the future Admiralty Arch). Decimus, also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, had his own collection of antiquaries at that address. So it was a prime location from which to sell the Mummy.

Research by Neil Cooke (1) established that this was an attempt by its then owner, George Bellas Greenough, to sell Pandiamun's Mummy.

As a preliminary to recounting the ensuing history of this Mummy, it is necessary to establish why it was then owned by Greenough.

PLANNING NEWS (current cases, with references)

- St Anne's Church by J L Denman in Hollington (shown below) is again proposed for demolition: Hastings Borough Council planning application **HS/FA/23/00448**. Whereas previously the HBC Conservation Officer found substantial harm, and recommended conditions, this time a different Conservation Officer does not object and has no comments on the latest application.

Such a change in opinion on a virtually identical application to demolish the church is odd. The Council seem unwilling to seek Listing, and unprepared to consider designation as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) or consider a local listing. Suggestions that the church (1956) is 'thought to be too recent to meet the tests for statutory listing' are unpersuasive.

In September 2022 the BStLS objected to the previous application (**HS/FA/22/00028**), which was later refused by the Planning Committee. The 20th Century Society also wrote to HBC on the protection of this heritage asset.



- 44 Pevensey Road, St Leonards (**HS/FA/23/00328**). The application is for: Construction of single family home, gardens and parking and landscaping. Repair and retention of remaining sandstone front wall and use of existing access to Pevensey Road which can be improved to necessary standard.

The 'in fill' site is on the curve of Pevensey Road west, near the bottom of Albany Road, and the application is more like garden-grabbing. The site is in the Markwick Terrace Conservation Area, and the proposed building is higher than neighbouring ones, a contravention of guidance and good practice. Detail of the 'optional' basement lacks clarity. There will be also be a degree of overlooking.