



Fig. 1 Murray Dickie presents the results of the Craigrie lade investigation

The forgotten power of water and its impact on shaping Clackmannan in the early days of the industrial revolution was retold by well-known local historian Murray Dickie at a meeting of the Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society on Monday (October 24).

Murray was giving an update on the Two Estates project which is a joint partnership with the Inner Forth Landscape Initiative to undertake a four year research project on aspects of the development of the Erskine family's estate at Alloa and the Bruce family's estate at Clackmannan. Grants from the National Lottery allowed local volunteers to be

trained to carry out research and field surveys and for this part of the project they turned their attention of two lade systems of Craigrie and Gartmorn.

Murray explained that they were initially built in the latter part of the 17th century to supply water to mine drainage engines of the Clackmannan and Alloa estates respectively. The Craigrie Lade ran 3.27 kilometres from the Black Devon at Lynmill to the Craigrie Farm to feed a water-powered drainage engine at a colliery to the south west of Clackmannan village. A second engine was built just to the north at Speedwell.

Following the bankruptcy of David Bruce in 1704, the Clackmannan estate was taken over by Col William Dalrymple and in 1711 he made an agreement with the 6th Earl of Mar who was developing Gartmorn Dam regarding guarantees for water to be supplied from the Black Devon at Forestmill to the Craigrie lade. The two men reached an agreement whereby that when water was taken for Gartmorn there would always be



Fig. 2 Group at sluice in the valley of Tullygarth burn

sufficient to meet the needs downstream of the Craigrie lade. Over its life span of some 150 years, the lade provided power for mine drainage engines, a distillery and a wauk mill. Water from a dam at Tullygarth (also call the Gartstank or Garrison dam) also fed into the Craigrie lade.

However, by 1866, as the Craigrie lade was no longer used to power mine drainage or supply local industrial concerns, the 2nd Earl of Zetland, proprietor of the Clackmannan estate, used its water to gift a new clean water supply to the village of Clackmannan (pop 1,300), He also put in drainage for the village. The supply system was designed to deliver 14,000 gallons of



Fig. 3 Group at sluice in valley of the Black Devon

roughly filtered water each day to a 20,000 gallon storage tank in Tower Park, just below Clackmannan Tower. From there the water was pumped throughout the village to a number of street taps. The supply was officially opened on Dec 13, 1866.

Locals expressed their gratitude to the Earl at a special dinner in the Royal Oak Hotel. In a citation they said that his name would be remembered "by those for whose comfort

and health he has done so much." The system lasted some 30 years until it was replaced by a much larger supply from Alloa Burgh's Gartmorn Water Works.

It was around this time that the entire Craigrie lade was abandoned. But a surprisingly large proportion of it has survived. Murray said that the survival of so many different elements and historical sources have enabled all the different periods of use to be examined, surveyed and recorded.

*Do you have an old picture of the street water pipes in Clackmannan? If you do, Murray would be delighted to hear from you. Contact CFSS (cfssec@gmail.com) and we will pass on the details.