

CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE PARK ROCK FORMATIONS AND QUARRIES

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Sandstone was extracted from several quarries close to Craigmillar Castle from the 14th century and used for building stone around Edinburgh and beyond. The type of sandstone is from what are known as Kinnesswood Formation rocks, from the early Carboniferous era.

Small local quarries supplied much of the pink and red rubble used in the old boundary walls on the south side of the city, particularly in the Grange - Blackford area. This included stone from Craigmillar.

There were many quarries on Craigmillar Castle Hill and the neighbouring Hawkhill. It would appear that most of these have been filled in, but a few remain showing the nature of the rock which was quarried. Craigmillar rock which is a compact, pebbly quartzose sandstone was mainly red and pale brown in colour. That of Hawkhill was of a more yellow or even purple shade and was regarded as the best building stone.

STREETS AND BUILDINGS WHERE CRAIGMILLAR STONE IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN USED

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- 14th century, Quarries at Craigmillar
- were providing stone for the building of Craigmillar Castle. The castle sits on an outcrop of the same stone and one of the quarries was very close by.
- 1532, Stone from Craigmillar quarries was used in the building of the Palace of Holyrood including corbels, ashlar, kitchen serving hatch and flagstones for water conduits.
- 1555 Fourteen large stones were dug for the gate at the Priestfield side of the King's Park.
- 1636 Craigmillar stone was brought into town for the Parliament House



Craigmillar Castle - note colours of the stone

- 1639 for work on Edinburgh Castle
- 1628-60 source of rubble for the courtyard interior of George Heriot's School
- 1760s Rubble again used in construction of West side of George Square (see backs of older houses), Tenements on the north side of the Lawnmarket and in Mound Place.
- 1845 - the quarries had closed but intermittent quarrying did continue
- 1892 some quarrying done - when the stone's use was restricted mainly to that of kerb stones
- 1894-96 The stone quarried at Craigmillar was considered relatively impermeable to water which led to its use in the construction of the Edinburgh Reservoirs and in Leith Docks
- 1901-02 and then in 1908, by which time six men were employed
- 1906 another quarry was worked at Craigmillar and continued in operation intermittently until 1914 but latterly with only one man



George Square

STONE FROM HAWKHILL QUARRIES:

- 1920s Hawkhill Wood Quarry provided stone for villas on the south side of Edinburgh, for example at Mayfield Road, Esslemont Road and Ross Road
- 1929-33 A fine example of rubble from Hawkhill Wood can be seen at the Reid Memorial Church
- 1937 21 men still working in the Hawkhill Wood Quarry
- 1937-38 Stone from an unspecified quarry at Craigmillar (probably Hawkhill Wood) was used at Fairmilehead Parish



Reid Memorial Church, West Saville Terrace

Bridgend Farmhouse Local Events Fund Spring-Autumn 2019