

JEMIMA WEDDERBURN'S PAINTING OF

# THE FIRST GRAND CURLING MATCH

ORGANISED BY THE  
ROYAL CALEDONIAN CURLING  
CLUB IN 1847



“...the dawn of our modern game...”

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As described in 'The History of Curling' by John Kerr, "It was on the beautiful loch embosomed among trees in the grounds of Sir George Clerk Bt, in the presence of Lady Clerk and family and many spectators from the adjoining district who came to witness the bloodless conflict, that the first Grand Match, North v South of Scotland, took place".

"The 15th January 1847", says the Annual of the Royal Club for that year, "will be marked with a white stone in the chronicles of curling. The day throughout was one of unmingled pleasure and, saving the absence of a barrel of exhilarating ale

which was unfortunately omitted among the items of preparation, there was nothing but universal satisfaction felt and expressed." The Annual also states that "... a fair artist, who was present as one of Lady Clerk's guests, sketched the scene...", and that the painting was "...to be an heirloom in Penicuik House". The "beautiful loch" described above was the High Pond in Penicuik Estate; the "artist" was Jemima Wedderburn; and limited edition prints of the "painting" are now available from Penicuik Curling Club.

## THE ARTIST - JEMIMA WEDDERBURN

Jemima Wedderburn (1823-1909) was a cousin of Sir James Clerk Maxwell. She married the mathematician Professor Hugh Blackburn in 1849. Her father was Solicitor General for Scotland and her mother was a member of the celebrated Clerk of Penicuik family ([www.penicuikhouse.co.uk](http://www.penicuikhouse.co.uk)). She became one of the most popular illustrators in Victorian Britain,

illustrating 27 books, and although best known as a painter of birds, she was also a prolific artist, producing large numbers of works of personal and social significance, many of which have only recently come to light. Her watercolours are to be found in galleries throughout the world.



Jemima was residing at Penicuik House on 15th January 1847 and sketched the historic, first Grand Match of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, ([royalcaledoniancurlingclub.org](http://royalcaledoniancurlingclub.org)), played on the High Pond that day. Her painting was presented to Sir George Clerk and it has been hanging in Penicuik House ever since. The significance of that painting in the history of our sport was lost on the young, twenty-four years old Jemima, but one hundred and sixty-six years later it provides a unique window on the dawn of our modern game.

## THE PAINTING

Look through this unique window to the dawn of our modern game..... This pivotal moment in the history of our sport is captured exquisitely through the young eyes of the artist, Jemima Wedderburn, in her beautiful painting. Previously, curling had been particular to small communities, rules differing greatly from hamlet to hamlet, village to village, but on 15 January 1847, at the call of the infant Royal Caledonian Curling Club, that all changed. Three hundred curlers from all four corners of Scotland braved the bitter winter frosts to battle their way to Penicuik and take part in the very first national tournament; the first Grand Match and a turning point in world sport. On that cold, wintry day friend and foe, lord and servant, met as equals on the ice and established the tenets of our game:

fraternity, kinship and camaraderie, values that we hold firm today. This is your exclusive

opportunity to extend a hand back in time and join our forefathers on that momentous occasion.

Only two hundred, limited edition, Giclee prints are being made available. Each numbered print will be individually signed by Sir Robert Clerk of Penicuik, Bart.



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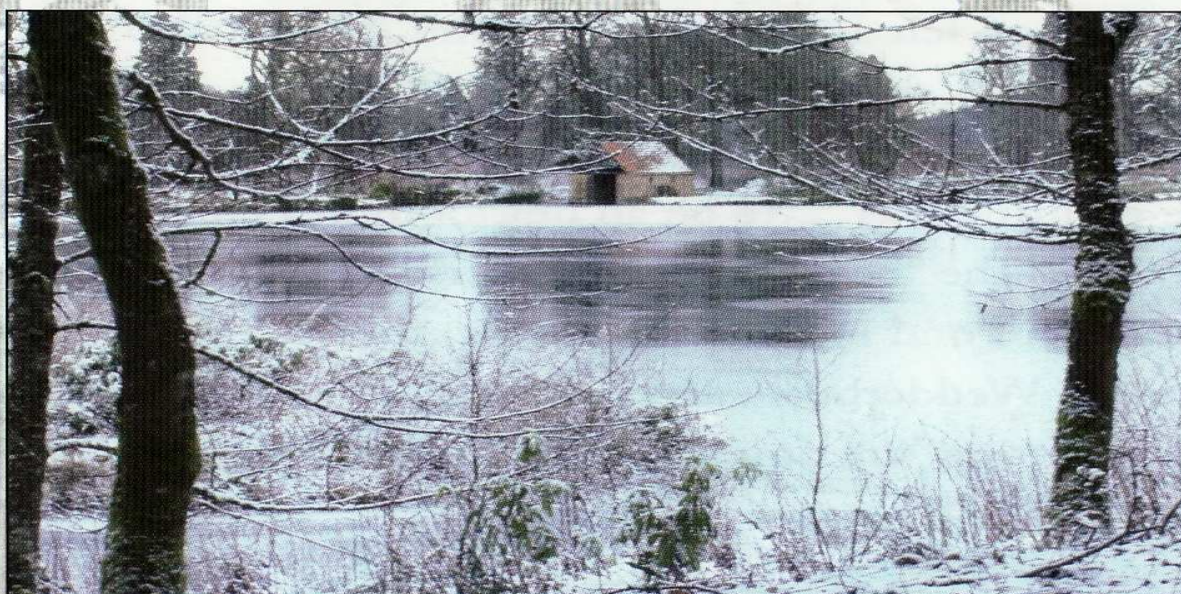
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## PENICUIK CURLING CLUB

Records show that Baron Sir John Clerk, one of the commissioners of the union between Scotland and England, played the game of curling during the seventeenth century. The Clerk family has been embedded in the history of Penicuik Curling Club ever since. The club was constituted on 20 January 1815 and three of its members, most noteworthy Dr John Renton, were instrumental in forming the Grand Caledonian Curling Club, the forerunner of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, in 1838.

When conditions allow, the club still plays on the Low Pond, only a stone's throw from the location of the historic first Grand Match. Penicuik Curling Club ([www.penicuikcurlingclub.co.uk](http://www.penicuikcurlingclub.co.uk)) will celebrate its bicentenary in 2015. To mark that historic milestone, the present descendent of Sir George Clerk, Sir Robert Clerk Bt of Penicuik, has kindly permitted the Jemima Wedderburn painting to be reproduced, to raise funds for this special occasion and provide a legacy for the future of the sport in Penicuik.



*The High Pond, Penicuik House.*