

The Town Centre map (above) shows the town centre after 60 years of managed development by Sir John Clerk. The location of Valleyfield Mill is at 1 and the Low Mill at 2. The Burgh Map of 1930 (right) shows Penicuik expanding out from the town centre and the much enlarged Bank, Valleyfield and Low Mills.

Penicuik in 1796 - part of the John Ainslie Maps of Penicuik Estate



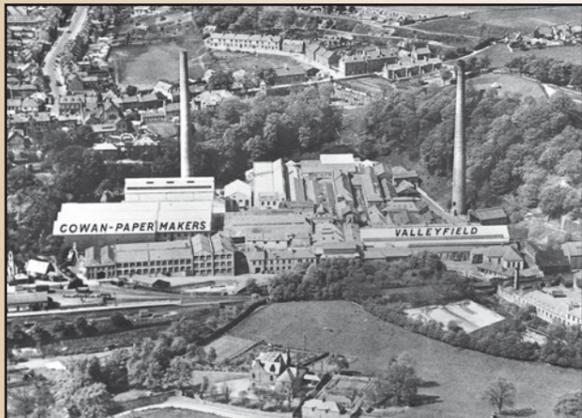
Burgh of Penicuik - 1930



The maps show the development of the town from 1796 until 1930. Papermaking was the main stimulus in the growth of the town. During this time Kirkhill was a separate village. Valleyfield Mill was taken over by Alexander Cowan in 1779 and eventually became the largest papermill in Scotland. During the Napoleonic Wars the mill was sold to the government and used to house thousands of prisoners of war. Bank Mill was converted from a corn mill in 1803 and specialised in producing bank notes for the British Linen Bank and the Bank of Scotland. Low Mill was converted from a walk mill in 1749 and bought by the Cowans in 1815. Pomathorn Mill, built as a new mill in 1959, was closed with the rest of the Cowans mills by the Reed Group in 1975. Eskmills started life as the first cotton mill in Scotland, in 1775, employing 500 people. It quickly converted to making paper and under James Brown it developed to become the second largest papermill in Scotland. It closed in 1968. Dalmore Mill, the last mill on the River Esk closed in 2004.

Penicuik made Paper Paper made Penicuik

Valleyfield Papermill



Papermaking Machine



Eskmills



Penicuik... The Papermaking Town

Papermaking in Midlothian dates from 1709. The first mill on the Esk was established by the widow of the 'King's Printer', Agnes Campbell, who leased land at Valleyfield from Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, with the right to build a paper mill and to extract water from St Mungo's Well. Despite poor roads, the site was a good one for the purpose. It had:

- Adequate water power
- Clean spring water
- A large flat site for the mill buildings
- An abundant supply of rags from the nearby city of Edinburgh
- A market: not only was Agnes Campbell a printer, Edinburgh was home to merchants, lawyers and a growing printing industry.

Within 100 years, ten mills were established between Penicuik and Lasswade, mostly producing fine quality writing and printing papers.

For nearly 300 years, Penicuik was known as 'The Papermaking Town'.

Produced by Penicuik Historical Society to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the start of papermaking on the River Esk.



Heritage Walk



Papermaking Tercentenary Project Sponsors



www.penicuikpapermaking.org

Heritage Walk

This short walk 3.5Km (2 Miles) is on roads and good tracks. It is mainly on the flat but there is a long climb up to Kirkhill from Eskbridge.

Start at Town Hall (Cowan Institute) go down the High Street. See On Left Vennell leading to Delft Brae (now closed), the original route to Valleyfield. On Right the Old Well, the original piped water supply to Penicuik.

Turn Left into Bridge Street.

On Right Thorburn Terrace where French prisoners of War shouted 'Bawbee Penicuik, Cauld Kale and Soor Dook' as they left the town.

On Left down hill ornate Parkend, designed by Pilkington to house single girls working at Valleyfield. Known locally as "The Nunnery".

Before the bridge, cross Bridge Street to see the original Bank Mill buildings now Loanhead Engineering Works. Look up to see Pomathorn Mill.

Go down Valleyfield Road.

See Left Valleyfield School (private house) built in 1822 for Mill children.

Visit On Left French Prisoner of War Memorial and Interpretation Board.

Return to route.

See the Railway Walk Interpretive Board at the footbridge.

Continue with the river on your right, passing the old sewerage works then onto the Eskmills mill lade. See Interpretive Board at the Railway Bridge.

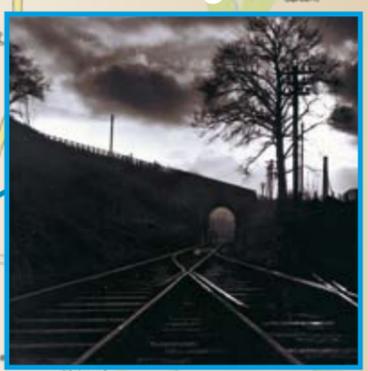
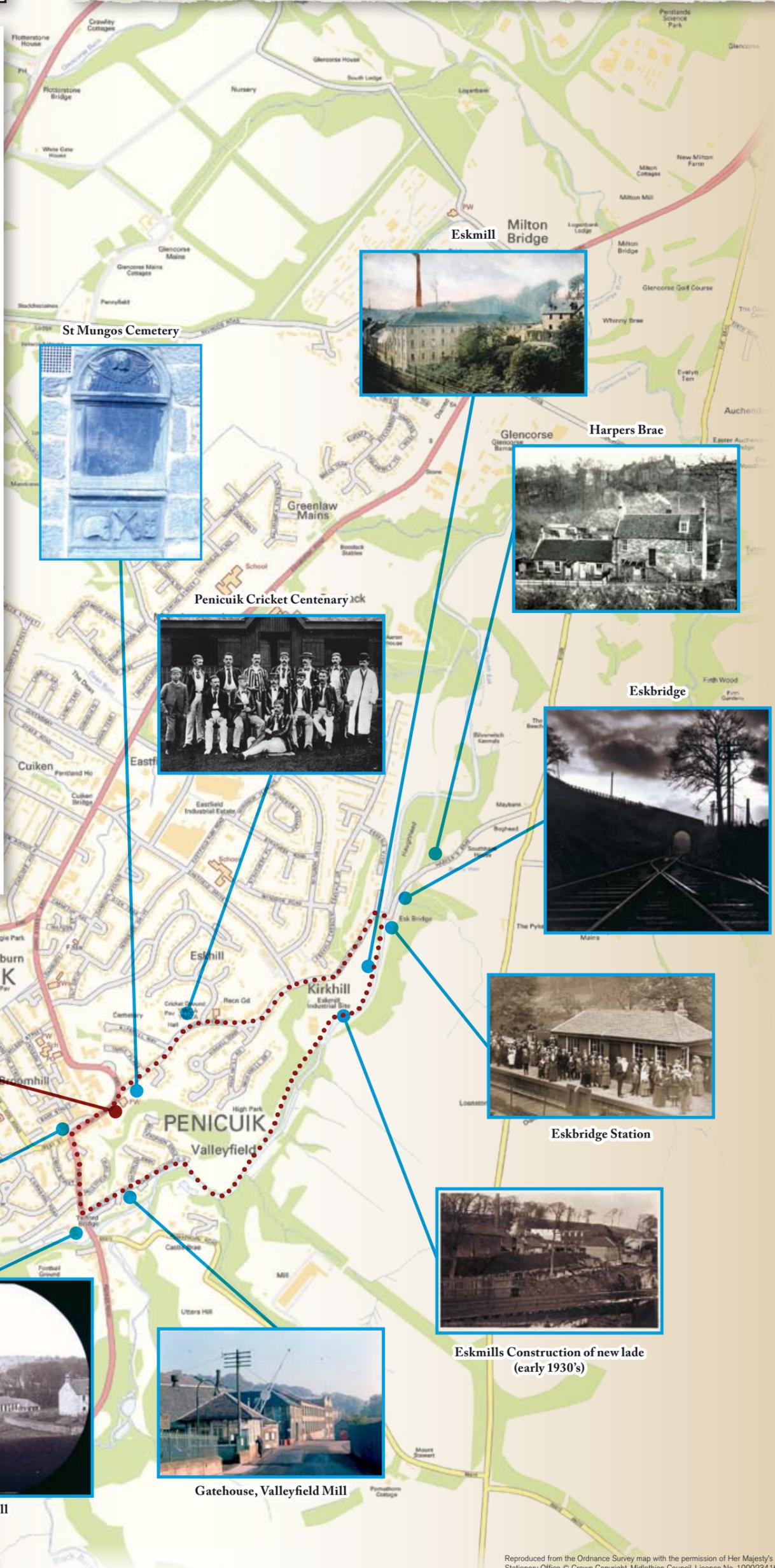
Continue along the railway track, opened in 1872 with Eskmills site on your left.

At the site of Eskbridge Station look ahead to see Harpers Brae, the birthplace of the Bertrams brothers who founded Bertrams (Sciennes), **leave the railway walk and cross the Esk Bridge** (1770s)

Climb up Eskmill Road and Kirkhill Road, See former weaver's houses, later used to house Eskmill workers.

At the top of Kirkhill, See On Right Penicuik Cricket Club, founded in 1844.

Continue down Kirkhill Road. Visit On Left, graveyard. See the crypts of the Clerk family and the papermaking dynasties Cowan and Brown. See, earliest papermaking gravestone on rear wall of Church.



View from Valleyfield Chimney toward the High Street

Bank Mill

Gatehouse, Valleyfield Mill

Eskmills Construction of new lade (early 1930's)