

CROCKETT MEMORIAL

To be Erected at Laurieston

DISCUSSION IN GLASGOW

THE memorial to Samuel Rutherford Crockett, the famous Galloway author, is to be erected near the village of Laurieston. This decision was come to after a discussion at a meeting of the General Committee and subscribers held in Glasgow yesterday. Three sites were voted upon—Laurieston, Heston Island, and Clatteringshaws—and the vote showed a substantial majority in favour of the site chosen.

The question of a site had been under consideration by those with whom the proposal originated, and after a careful review of the matter from all aspects, including personal inspection of the various sites suggested, it was recommended that the memorial be erected overlooking the Laurieston-New Galloway road on a site outside the village. A grant of the proposed site had been offered by the proprietor of the ground.

Mr J. M. Wilson presided at yesterday's meeting, and in his opening remarks said he owed his position as chairman that day to the fact that he happened to be Chief of the "Glasgow Galloway Raiders" for the current year. The movement for preserving in some suitable form the memory of Galloway's distinguished literary son originated during their "raid" in the summer of last year, in the course of which a visit was paid to Balmaghie Kirkyard. The only tribute to Crockett's memory was the engraving of his name on the family tombstone, and it was there and then resolved that a movement should be set on foot for some worthy commemoration of the novelist by the erection of a stone in some suitable spot in his beloved Galloway.

The response to the movement had been exceedingly gratifying, contributions having come not only from Galloway and other parts of Scotland, but from England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America. Mr Wilson referred specially to the fact that H.R.H. the Duchess of York, on learning of the proposal, very graciously sent a contribution, and with it gave an expression of the keen pleasure which she had derived from reading Crockett's stories.

He added that Mr J. Jeffrey Waddell, the well-known Glasgow architect, had shown his interest in the proposed memorial, and had prepared a design.

Mr J. B. Ramsay submitted the report of the joint treasurers. The subscriptions received amounted to £221.

Mr Jeffrey Waddell explained that the design was prepared before he actually knew of the site or the sum of money available for the purpose. He put forward the design as something to start with, and before going any further he would like to see the site, and make a design to suit it.

OUT IN THE OPEN

In the discussion which followed, Mr James Dalrymple, one of the joint treasurers, referred to the initiation of the scheme, and said that when they decided to make a start, it was agreed that the maximum contribution should be 5s. The secretary had mentioned that a great many places had been suggested, and each one had its own claim; but he was satisfied in his own mind that the most suitable spot was at the Upper Bridge of Dee. He wanted to see Crockett out in the open, out amongst the whaups and the peewits, amongst the bog myrtle and peat of his own native land. Going through Galloway they passed many memorials commemorating local events. Crockett was in a different category. They wanted him away from mere village interest.

A proposal that the memorial should be erected on Heston Island, the Rathan Isle of "The Raiders," was put forward by Mr J. W. Herries, who said that his suggestion had a very wide support in the Solway district and among a great many warm admirers of Crockett. He did not think that it was exactly appreciated what was implied and what was behind the Heston scheme. To him there was a very vital objection against the landward sites proposed. A memorial on one of these sites would be in the nature of one of the numerous war memorials scattered all over the country, and while the people in the immediate vicinity would know of the memorial, it would not be known to the greater world.

They could not imagine the motorist stopping his car at such a memorial and investigating what its purpose was. If he did so he would be stopping on nearly every mile of the road. Motorists did not do that. The Heston site was most appropriate. The Isle of Rathan was situated in the centre of Galloway's most popular seaside area, and every year many new people gathered there. On going there they could not overlook such a memorial as he had in view if it was put on Rathan Island. He suggested a tall white pillar that would catch the eye along a seaboard of something like 20 miles. Nobody seeing that could fail to ask what it was; and in that way, year after year, they would be attracting the attention of great numbers of new people to Crockett. The only adequate memorial they could have to an author like Crockett was one which would interest people in his works and impel them to read them.

Mr M'Chlery said that in the whole circumstances he thought they would be coming to a proper conclusion in having the memorial at Laurieston.

In the course of further discussion, Mr Dalrymple said to place the memorial on some of the sites proposed would be belittling Crockett. The two best proposals were undoubtedly the Upper Bridge of Dee and Heston Island. They were the only two reasonable proposals that had been made.

On a vote being taken, only two voted for Clatteringshaws and Heston Island, the Laurieston proposal being carried by a large majority. Mr M'Chlery then moved that a sub-committee, including local representatives, be appointed to carry out the scheme in conjunction with Mr Jeffrey Waddell. Also, that the design submitted by Mr Waddell be approved, that he be thanked for his services, and that he be authorised to obtain estimates. In addition, Mr M'Chlery moved that the offer of ground by Mr Peter Erskine of North Quintinespie be accepted, and he be thanked for his generosity. This was agreed to.