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At the unveiling: James Wills, Brian McGrath (Regional Chairman), Jean Leslie, Douglas Oakervee, Quentin Stevenson and Roland Paxton

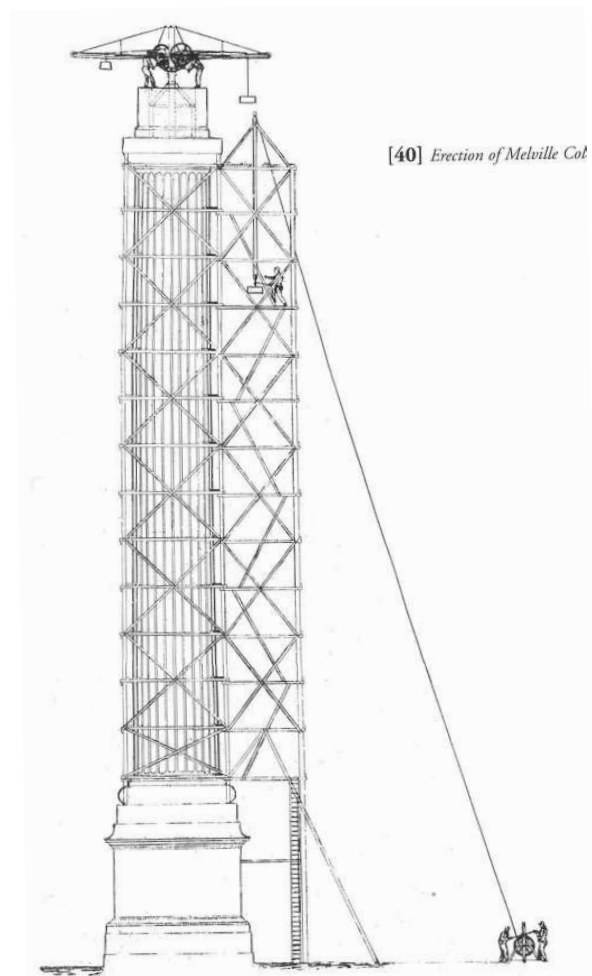
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ICE President Unveils Robert Stevenson Plaque in Edinburgh

by Roland Paxton

At the end of last year the Institution honoured the memory of one of Scotland's great civil engineers, Robert Stevenson, with the unveiling of a bronze plaque on the Melville Monument in Edinburgh's prestigious St. Andrew Square by President Douglas Oakervee. The President commented, in the presence of invited Stevenson descendants, 'I am delighted to have been asked to perform this ceremony today celebrating the work of the great Robert Stevenson. This commemoration will hopefully remind people of how civil engineering has benefited society for almost 200 years'.

The plaque was initiated by the ICE East of Scotland Region Committee with the Scottish Group of PHEW providing the wording and organising its manufacture. Unusually, the plaque acknowledges the contribution of a civil engineer to a structure usually promoted solely as the work of an architect, in this case, William Burn. Stevenson used the technology and experience he had developed in building the Bell Rock lighthouse, to finalise and direct the erection of the 43m high, 1,500 tonne column in 1821, using what is believed to be the world's first iron balance crane. It was invented under Stevenson's direction by his assistant Francis Watt.



Erection of monument in 1821

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