

## The Buttercup Dairy Denny

The Fruit Basket on Stirling Street was once the premises of The Buttercup Dairy Company.

The Buttercup Dairy Company was started by Andrew Ewing in 1904 with its headquarters in Leith. He was born at Inner Blair Farm near Stonykirk in the south west of Scotland in 1869. His father was a tenant farmer who died when Andrew was four, the family having to move into smaller accommodation.

He founded a string of grocer's shops all over Scotland and the north of England. The shop windows were distinctive with eye-catching displays. The pristine "Gleaming clean large white tiles on the walls and counters with the green tiled borders enhanced the effect" and the ornate buttercup design drew people to the shops.



The young girl in the design with the white pinafore giving the friendly looking cow some of the buttercups from her pocket, was a typical scene on the shop fronts.

The tiles were made by T and R Boote Ltd of Burslem the designs by James Duncan Ltd of Glasgow.

By 1929 a poultry farm was begun at Clerminston Mains Farm just outside Edinburgh locally known as Hen City, destroyed by fire in 1936.

Originally the shops sold seven products only. Butter, eggs, cream, margarine, cooking fat, tea and condensed milk but that list expanded over time.

The man himself was a devout Christian using his beliefs throughout his life "When you give to

the needy do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Do it in secret".

In 1940 there were 209 stores across Scotland competing with Maypole, Lipton's, Home and Colonial, Templeton's, Andrew Cochrane and A, Massey & Sons.

There are examples of the tiles and designs in The Peoples Palace Glasgow.

**The Buttercup Dairy sign is still at the Fruit Basket in Denny, Stirlingshire. It is the only store to have retained its original unusual shelving with the buttercups design carved into the wooden uprights.**

*More can be read in the book, Buttercup Dairy Co Ltd written by Bill Scott 2011 published by Leghorn Books Ltd.*

***Moira R Martin***