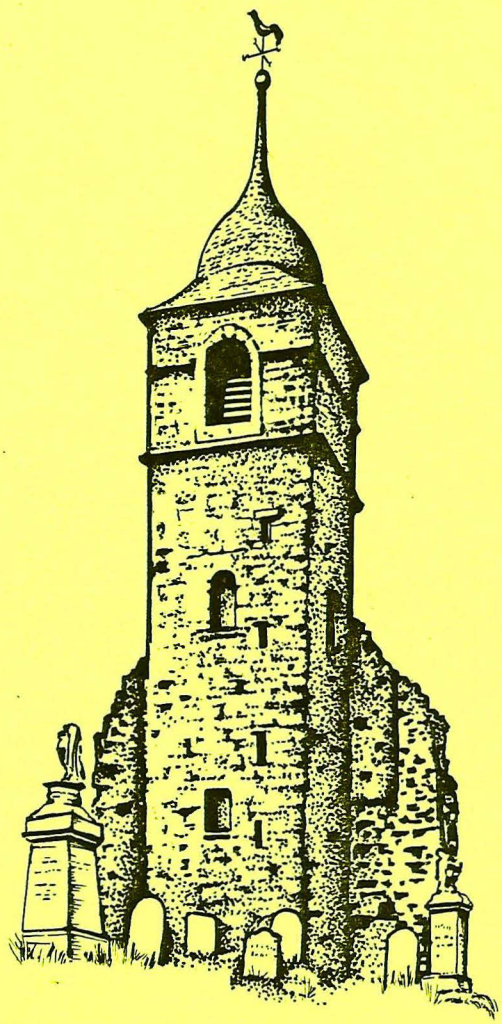
Historic

ALLOA

the archaeological implications of development



Anne Turner Simpson
Sylvia Stevenson

Scottish Burgh Survey
1983

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Scottish Burgh Survey
1983

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PREFACE

This report of the history and archaeology of the former burgh of Alloa is one of a series of such reports on the historic towns of Scotland. The reports have been commissioned by the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate of the Scottish Development Department with a view to providing the necessary background information upon which to base a policy for urban research in the future. They are also aimed at providing local authority planning departments with the historical and archaeological information necessary to enable them to assess the archaeological implications of any planning applications.

Each report contains an historical report compiled by Anne Turner Simpson with an archaeological report and a series of illustrative plans compiled and drawn by Sylvia Stevenson. The reports attempt to identify those areas within the burghs which were developed at various periods of their history up to approximately 1800, and to locate within those areas sites which are of particular historical importance. Areas of 19th century growth and modern suburbs have not been examined.

The survey team would like to acknowledge the help and support of Mr. G. McLennan, Depute Director of Planning, Clackmannan District Council; the staff of the Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey, Edinburgh; and the Historic Buildings Branch of the Scottish Development Department; also Mrs. U. Sweet and Miss I. Stewart for their valuable help. The survey team would also like to thank Professor Leslie Alcock and Mr. Eric Talbot who supervised the project at Glasgow University.

Note:- The views expressed herein are those of the survey team, freely given, and do not necessarily represent official policy.

Cover:- Old Church, Alloa.

History

INTRODUCTION

Site: Alloa is located on the River Forth about seven miles (11·26km) overland from Stirling. A fine natural harbour enhances the site.

Place Name: Alway, Alloway or Alloa derives its place name from a Gaelic compound almhagh which is found in other names such as Alva, Alloway or Alvah. The name Alloa itself means 'rock plain' (Nicolaisen, et al, 1970, 38).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Burgh Status: Alloa by 1497 was recognised as a burgh of regality in favour of Lord Erskine. In 1620 it was erected de novo as a burgh of regality under the jurisdiction of the Earl of Mar (Pryde, 1965, 54).

Pre-1700: The origin of the town is obscure. Alloa is first mentioned in authentic historical record in a 1398 charter of Robert III giving Sir Thomas Erskine the barony of Alloa and the Forest of Clackmannan (Gordon, 1937, 6). The town itself is not mentioned until 1497 in the year that Alloa Tower was reputedly built (Drummond, 1953, 5). The town owes its origin and development to the patronage of the Erskine family, residents of Alloa Tower, although the community itself has only risen to pre-eminence since the Industrial Revolution which barely touched Clackmannan, the nearby county town (Gordon, 1937, 1). Trade in the pre-1700 town was slight. There is mention of timber being supplied for James III's artillery in the late fifteenth century (Gordon, 1937, 14). Moreover, coal was an important commodity for export in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Gordon, 1937, 23). Thomas Tucker, a Cromwellian government official, writing in 1651, noted the presence of a thriving trade in coal which was exported in Dutch ships 'there being not one vessel belonging to the place' (Murray, 1825, 29).

Eighteenth Century: Alloa's economic fortunes began to 'turn the corner' in the eighteenth century. Trade and manufacture increased. Coal throughout the century continued to be an important commodity for export, the vast bulk of it being shipped overseas to Holland (Geog. Coll. 1906, i, 309; Sinclair, 1793, viii, 638).

Trade developed with several other European countries including Denmark, Norway, Germany and Portugal. A large-scale coasting trade was in evidence as well. Manufactures were varied. The early eighteenth-century

community boasted a ropework and sail-cloth manufactory (Geog.Coll. 1906, i, 309), while at the end of the century there was a tile and brick work, a tannery, glass house and a shipbuilder. The reporter in the Statistical Account observed that formerly the parish was known for manufacturing tobacco but that it had 'long since lost its reputation for that article' although snuff was still made (Sinclair, 1793, viii, 621).

Population in the second half of the eighteenth century varied. The rise in the number of bakers from four in 1763 to fourteen in 1793 (Sinclair, 1793, viii, 623) might indicate an increase in the total populace, but according to the reporter in the Statistical Account, this was not the case. Assuredly, between 1788 and 1791, there was a growth in the number of houses in the town, although total population declined from 3522 to 3132 (Sinclair, 1793, viii, 636). Be that as it may, Alloa's see-sawing population outclassed that of the nearby county town of Clackmannan which was steadily becoming a backwater. In 1822 the Sheriff Court was transferred to Alloa and it became the county town (Drummond, 1953, 5).

BURGH MORPHOLOGY

Street Layout: It is widely assumed (Sinclair, 1793, viii, 594; Drummond, 1953, 14; Archibald, 1911, 8) that the oldest part of Alloa grew up under the protection of Alloa Tower and the site nowadays lies largely under modern factory premises. The town in the era of John, the sixth Earl of Mar (1675-1732), was supposed to have consisted of a 'few narrow streets near the Tower and on both sides of the Brathie Burn' (Saunders and Wright, 1957, 9). The Earl purchased all the houses on the south east side of the burn, demolished them and made a public green. One of his noted projects was the construction of a street leading to the Shore, first called John Street after him, but soon named Broad Street, 'to show how broad a street should be' (Saunders, 1957, 9). The Earl also built a new highway to Clackmannan on which in later years arose the buildings of Mill Street and Shillinghill (Saunders, 1957, 9). Further eighteenth century 'New Town' development was marked by the laying out of Mar Street (originally Cowie's Loan) and Lime Tree Walk.

Nineteenth-century development which spread over the west side of the Brathie Burn was largely sporadic (Drummond, 1953, 16). However, it

was in the middle of that century that Alloa lost a large section of its medieval core. In 1867 an application was made by Messrs John Paton Son and Co., and Messrs George Younger and Sons, Brewers, to 'deviate one street up Old Market Street and to substitute a new street, therefor'. Town commissioners thought the proposal would be a great improvement to the town and to the sanitary condition of the locality. The two firms indicated that the 'whole properties' between the Trongate and New Entry and between the Tabernacle and Brathie Burn belonged to them and that block embraced the old street proposed to be closed and 'the ground on which we offer to make the new street'. The new street would be a continuation of New Entry northward to Trongate and Old High Street (originally High Coalgate) and would form a much more convenient access than the present circuitous route round by Old Market Street'. Underlining the very narrow state of the present thoroughfare, the applicants promised that the new street would be from twenty-one to twenty-four feet wide 'being about the same as Greenside Street and the lower part of Candleriggs, and fully one half wider than Old High Street and Trongate'. Ruinous houses on both sides of Old Market Street were to be removed and replaced with stores and similar buildings, thus providing the town with extra revenue. In a separate meeting the town's commissioners agreed that the 'Solum' of Old Market Street on completion of the new street be allowed to be taken possession of by Messrs John Paton Son and Co., 'to be built on as proposed by them' (I am grateful to Miss Isobel Stewart of Alloa for the above information).

Market Area: The market area of the town reputedly ran along the north side of the churchyard (Drummond, 1953, 14). Around the town's market cross was sold yarn, cloth, butter, bread and meat. The street name Trongate (now vanished) indicates the one-time presence of a tron.

Harbour: The harbour at Alloa may pre-date written records (Graham 1968-69, 212). It has two natural advantages which would have attracted shipping: The Pow, a sheltered creek at the mouth of the Brathie Burn which cut through the town, and the fact that Alloa was located at the highest position on the Forth accessible to larger vessels (Graham, 1968-69, 212). The first mention of the harbour occurs in 1502 (Graham, 1968-69, 212), and in 1722 it was described as 'commodious' (Geog. Coll. 1906, i, 308). In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the harbour supported by the Pow and a quay fronting the river west of the Pow. In

1757, another quay was added to the north side of the Pow and the harbour facilities were further enhanced by the addition of a third quay linking the two existing ones (Graham, 1968-69, 213). Another harbour was opened to the north of the existing one in 1778 (Graham, 1968-69, 213).

Ferry: A ferry, mentioned in 1620, and in operation until the present century, plied the river between NS 881 922 and NS 898 918 (Ordnance Survey Record Cards, Reference NS 89 SE (M).

BUILDINGS

Tower: Alloa Tower is probably of late fifteenth-century date and has been greatly altered externally and internally. The structure contains four storeys and an attic floor with several symmetrically-placed windows of a seventeenth century date. A Renaissance style doorway dating only from the late eighteenth century, is located at the north front.

Church: Alloa was not a recognised parish until 1600. Before that time, residents worshipped at a chapel dedicated to St. Mungo which swallowed up the mother church of Tullibody when they united in 1600 (Buchan, 1920, 2-3). A new church was erected in 1680: a 1673 entry in the Kirk Session Minutes mentioned the need to mend the ruinous structure. All that remains of the late seventeenth-century church is the west gable with the bell tower situated near the present church. The present parish church was erected in 1819.

Mill: The first notice of a mill at Alloa occurs in a 1489 charter to Lord Erskine (Gordon, 1937, 15).

Archaeology

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Little now remains of medieval Alloa. Fragments of the early street plan survive in Kirkgate, Greenside Street, New Entry, Old High Street and Bridge Street, but the early buildings associated with these thoroughfares have long been removed to make way for industrial development. The commercial and retail focus of the burgh moved west and north in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the establishment of the New Town, and the expansion of the mills and breweries east and west of the Old High Street. Mill Street and High Street were redeveloped from 1861 onwards, and many old houses were removed at this time. In this century, it is only in the last twenty years that major changes have been effected in the townscape. The north side of Drysdale Street and Shillinghill has been completely redeveloped (see map 2). The new buildings here are well back from the original frontages; the roads have not been widened noticably, and it is possible, therefore, that earlier building foundations survive beneath the present pavements. Back O'Dykes, King Street and Jamaica Street have all vanished in the course of the re-planning of this part of the town. Property between the new ring road linking Whins Road and Mor Place, and Drysdale Street and Shillinghill, is scheduled for environmental improvement, but is currently in use as a car park. Property at the junction of Mor Place and Marshill has been cleared to develop the junction of these two streets with the new ring road (NS 885925). South of Mill Street, the brewery buildings between East and West Vennel and Greenside Street and New Entry were cleared in the 1960s. A large tarmac car park now occupies the westmost site (NS 886922), and south of East Vennel, the old brewery site has been partially rebuilt and a new access road constructed (NS 887923). Street fronting property on Mill Road has been cleared, and a car-park constructed on this site and the associated backland area. The property at the junction of Coalgate and Kirkgate has been cleared, and the site landscaped.

For the future, housing redevelopment and improvement schemes are proposed for the town centre under the local plan. Some of these measures have already been carried out, but the proposals involve improvement at 10-14, High Street, 16, 30, and 31-45, Primrose Street, 3,9 & 11, Candleriggs, 6, 7, Mill Street, and require 2-12a Kirkgate to be demolished. Kirkgate has undergone temporary landscaping, though in the long term it is scheduled

for housing redevelopment (see map 2 and page 7).

The developments described above all lie within the area of archaeological interest, and it is regrettable that opportunities have here been lost to examine the sites concerned for surviving archaeological deposits. However, clearances along Kirkgate and between East and West Vennel and Old High Street, may provide future opportunities for archaeological investigation.

Future Investigation

The core of the early burgh now lies beneath the extensive mill complex of Paton and Baldwin, and for this reason, heavy reliance must be placed on the surviving documentary evidence in conjunction with any opportunity to investigate the fringes of early burgh development which are still free of building. Future archaeological investigation in Alloa must, therefore, be largely seen in terms of documentary research, with the reservation that the as yet un-redeveloped periphery of the medieval burgh off New Entry, East Vennel and Kirkgate, should be investigated to assess the survival of archaeological deposits as opportunities arise.

The policies outlined below are not listed in order of importance but are intended to provide guide lines for future research as opportunities arise through renovation and redevelopment (see page 9 ff for full discussion).

1. To attempt, through excavation to recover the earliest possible date for the initial settlement of the burgh and to provide evidence of the nature of its economic and social development. Much of the medieval burgh now lies beneath a modern industrial complex, Therefore, attention must necessarily be concentrated on the peripheral area recently cleared of nineteenth century development.

2. To reconstruct, with the assistance of documentary and cartographic evidence, the street plan of the medieval burgh and to attempt with the aid of excavation to determine the date of first development northwards from the medieval core.

3. To establish again, largely through documentary and cartographic sources, the early physical nature and commercial and industrial usage of buildings other than dwelling houses.

4. To confirm the site of the earliest church of Alloa, and to determine the plan and date of successive churches.

5. To examine the site of the present Alloa Tower in order to determine the site of any earlier defensive structures here, and the extent of

the property occupied for this purpose.

6. To re-assess the surviving harbour records, in the hope of building up a more complete history of the development of the port.

Areas of Archaeological Priority

In recent years, the remaining area of medieval Alloa has been subject to extensive clearance and re-planning. Part of the area of potential interest has been rebuilt or sealed beneath tarmac. That part of the medieval burgh east of Old High Street, beneath Paton's Kilncraigs factory, is likely to remain inaccessible, and in all probability has in any case been largely destroyed by late nineteenth century levelling prior to the construction of the present mill buildings.

The burgh has been divided into two areas of potential interest with priority given to the area of known medieval settlement. It should be pointed out, however, that, the lack of artifactual and structural evidence capable of providing some indication of the chronology and physical development of the town, does make it impossible to make value judgements of one site or area in relation to another, and the divisions marked on Map 2, and discussed below, are dictated solely by the current level of archival knowledge in relation to future proposed development.

1. Area one is enclosed on the east by the Paton mill complex, the graveyard of the old parish church to the south, and Coalgate, West and East Vennel to the north-west. This area has been cleared of nineteenth century brewery buildings and housing, and partially rebuilt (NS 887 923). The site resulting from these clearances has been partially converted to tarmac parking facilities and the subject of environmental improvement. The Kirkgate frontages are listed for future housing development in the local plan, and currently provide the best opportunity for investigating the underlying deposits. The degree of disturbance which has taken place here, and the degree of survival of archaeological deposits is indeterminate. Cellarage is visible on the cleared site on the west side of Old High Street but the extent to which the remaining sites in this area are affected is not now determinable. This area has priority because it is a known area of early settlement.

2. Area two is confined by the eighteenth century tramway, Drysdale Street, and Mill Street. Some limited redevelopment has been carried out within this area, and under the local plan, several sites (see map 2) will be subject to housing improvement. A new housing development is scheduled for a site at the rear of Bank Street (NS 885 923) at present a works yard.

The date at which the shift in focus of the commercial centre of Alloa took place is not known, though it was certainly before the eighteenth century. Development other than on the frontages of the existing streets, i.e. High Street, Mar Street and Mill Street, was limited until the late nineteenth century. The chief priority in this area is to establish the date at which the town first expanded northwards, a question perhaps best answered by trial trenches on frontage sites along the aforementioned streets as they become available. Unbuilt backland areas may provide some evidence of local industry before the eighteenth century, and a watching brief on future disturbance on such sites may prove profitable.

Recommendations

The medieval burgh of Alloa has been largely destroyed by nineteenth and later development. The recent clearance of old brewery buildings between New Entry and East Vennel and Greenside Street and West Vennel has opened up the last remaining fragments of the medieval plan for possible investigation. There are no proposals in the local plan for redevelopment in these areas, apart from some environmental improvement (see page 5 for details). Much new development has now been carried out on the north side of Mill Street and future investigation into the origins of the northward expansion of the town will be confined between Drysdale Street the waggonway and Mill Street. The following recommendations are made in the hope that they will enable the maximum amount of information to be extracted from the minimum of disturbance.

a. Any proposed road improvements, repairs to and extension of existing services such as gas, electricity and water involving soil disturbance could profitably be monitored to assess the survival of archaeological deposits in the area indicated on Map.2.

b. A programme of documentary research could usefully be carried out to gather together all available information on the medieval burgh.

c. A programme of selective trial trenching could usefully be adopted in the face of any future proposed redevelopment in the archaeologically sensitive areas listed above.

PREVIOUS WORK

There has been no recorded archaeological investigation in Alloa. Finds and structures dating from the Bronze Age and Roman period have been recovered from the immediate environs of the town, but no finds relevant to the medieval burgh have been recorded.

The artifacts described briefly below serve simply to provide a framework

for the environmental and social history of the immediate vicinity of the town. Although it is possible to provide a provenance for most of these objects, the stratigraphical context of many is unknown.

1. A flint flake was discovered during the excavation of the foundations of the museum in Church Street Alloa (NS 8847 9268) (Anderson and Black, 1887-88, 355).

2. Animal remains, including those of Bos primigenius and Red Deer, were found in the course of excavating a new dock at Alloa in the late nineteenth century (Anderson and Black, 1887-88, 355).

3. A Roman Coin of unspecified denomination was discovered in 1876 at the foot of a tree in the Tree Walk between Broad Street and the shore. No further information (Gordon, 1937, 3).

4. A Roman Coin was excavated on Mars Hill (NS 886 929) about 1837. The coin was inscribed with the letters SC on one side, and the words AUGUSTUS TRIBUNIS on the other. No further information (Gordon, 1937, 2).

5. Cist cemetery. In 1828, workmen repairing the road between Tontine and the Alloa Academy at Mars Hill (NS 886 929) discovered 1' (0·30m) below ground surface 22 burial urns, and two cist burials. Two gold penannular armlets were also found in the course of investigation, These were sold by the workmen, but subsequently recovered and donated, together with one of the burial urns, to the National Museum in Edinburgh. There is now no surviving record of the excavation at Mars Hill. In 1850, another burial urn inverted over a quantity of incinerated bone was discovered on the same site (Anderson, 1882-83, 447-448; Crawford, 1874, 25-32).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Early Settlement

The pre-burghal origins of Alloa are obscure. The lands of Alloa are mentioned in 1365 in a property transaction, but the town is not referred to until 1497 (see page 1). Settlement before this date must, however, have existed. The reputed presence of an early chapel in Alloa in the late twelfth century, and the suggested strategic importance of the site of the burgh in the thirteenth century, lying as it did between the lowest bridging point of the Forth at Stirling, and the ferry at Kincardine, implies early settlement.

Certain factors can therefore be isolated as most probably contributing

to the growth of the burgh. The fact that the river could be conveniently forded at this point provided an early incentive to settlement. This, coupled with the presumed presence of a fortification from some early but unspecified date (see page 15) would have provided some stability protection, and economic stimulus to the colony. In the post-medieval period, the industrial hinterland, the local production of coal and salt, and the possession of a harbour convenient for ships of burden, have all contributed to the development of the burgh since the seventeenth century. Undoubtedly, the stronghold of the Erskines on the south of the town, was an important factor in the growth of the town. Certainly, members of this family in the eighteenth and nineteenth century developed the town plan (see page 11) and provided for the industrial expansion of the later burgh.

A large proportion of the medieval burgh now lies beneath modern industrial buildings and there is little prospect of examining this site. It is necessary, therefore, to concentrate on the area peripheral to the medieval core, much of which has recently been cleared of nineteenth century development (see map 2). Exploratory excavation would certainly be valuable in these cleared areas, to establish the degree of survival of archaeological deposits and to follow on from this, to recover the earliest possible date for the initial settlement of the burgh and to provide evidence of the nature of its social and economic development.

The Town Plan

Recent housing redevelopment apart, the buildings of Alloa date almost entirely from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There appear to be at least three identifyable stages in the development of the plan of the burgh. Of the medieval town, little now remains. In the nineteenth century much of the old property was absorbed into the industrial development which took place on each side of the Old High Street. Paton's Mill was begun about 1813, and the considerable expansion of the mill buildings took place between 1850 and 1911 leading to the absorption of at least 50% of the area of old town into the mill complex. Not only were buildings destroyed at this time, but subsoil disturbance took place over a considerable area. The old jail had stood on a rocky precipice which was blasted and levelled. Kilncraigs house, which held a similar position also founded on rock, was taken down and the underlying rock levelled. At the burnside, an expensive system of piling was carried out to facilitate a secure foundation for works expansion. On the east and south sides of the burn, the ground forming the adjoining park policies fell away. This was levelled up, the burn culvetted and a new range of dyehouses and drying

sheds erected on the prepared site (Archibald, 1911, 23-24). This late nineteenth century development, destroyed part of Old Bridge Street, the bridge itself, Trongate and property east of the old Market and New Entry. To all intents and purposes, any ambition to examine the underlying deposits in this area must be postponed for some considerable time to come , and in any case, in the light of the extensive levelling and clearance programme detailed above, it seems very unlikely that the archaeological potential of this area is very high.

Meiklejohn's Vennel, previously connecting Old High Street and Candleriggs. represents another casualty of nineteenth century expansion. In 1856, Younger's Brewery in the Vennel occupied only a half of the north side. By 1911, however, the brewery had expanded to cover both sides of Meiklejohn's Vennel, the vennel itself (which then formed the entrance to the brewery), a good proportion of the south side of East Vennel, and a portion of West Vennel. According to Archibald (1911, 25), the property in West Vennel consisted of a large cellar, entered from Candleriggs. The Brewery was modernised and extended at the turn of the century, when a new granary and cellars were added, and it is only comparatively recently that the site has been cleared. Partial rebuilding has taken place on the south side of East Vennel, but property flanking New Entry, Candleriggs, Greenside Street and West Vennel is presently in use for car parking. Even subject to its availability, it is doubtful if the brewery site would prove profitable archaeologically (see page 7). The Thistle Brewery situated at the east end of East Vennel had by the turn of the century expanded to absorb most of the west side of Old High Street, the back property associated with the south frontage of Mill Street and the west side of Old Bridge Street. Back Vennel survived this redevelopment, and separated the two brewery complexes until the clearance of the works buildings adjacent to Old High Street (NS 888 927) and the redevelopment of the Younger's brewery site (NS 887 927). A new access road has now been formed only partially on the line of Back Vennel. The core of medieval Alloa was therefore destroyed by the late nineteenth century, but the reorientation of the business centre of the burgh focusing on the High Street (NS 886 928) certainly pre-dates the eighteenth century, and may have developed as a result of the increasing industrial importance of Alloa in the seventeenth century. The street plan of Alloa north of Coalgate, Mill Street and Shillinghill has remained unchanged since the early nineteenth century (Wood, 1925).

The Erskine family was largely responsible for the westward expansion of the burgh in the late eighteenth century. According to the Old

Statistical Account (1793,vol.VIII,595), they were responsible for the construction of Broad Street which connects the town with the harbour, and also initiated the feuing and planning out of ground for a new town on hitherto undeveloped land between Broad Street and the ferry (O.S.A. 1793, vol. VIII, 596; Wood, 1825).

In 1861, building replacement began in the east half of Mill Street when the National Bank replaced old houses at the corner of Mill Street and High Street. In the 1870s building replacement continued on the High Street, and the town began to expand for the first time since the late eighteenth century. The ground between Bedford Place and Castle Street, in the mid-nineteenth century,cultivated fields were laid out with North Castle Street, Ward Street, a goods station and malt barns. By 1911, Smithfield Loan, Dirleton Gardens, Grange Place, and Alexandra Drive were constructed, and the Glebe lands between Mars Hill and Bedford Place saw villa development (Archibald, 1911, 151).

Recent changes to the plan have affected largely the area between Drysdale Street and Shillinghill. The former street has been widened east of the High Street, and Back O'Dykes (NS 887 929) and King Street have disappeared beneath the Maple Court development. A new ring road linking Mar Place and Whins Road has cleared property on the north side of the town and truncated Primrose Street. At the Whins Road, Shillinghill junction , new access has been provided to serve the new estate above Paton and Baldwin's Kilncraigs Factory. In the older part of the burgh, Greenside Street has been cut through pre-existing property to link with Coalgate (NS 886 926).

There are no immediate plans for any further alterations to the town plan, and future work should be directed towards the determination of variations of street alignment and width and any other detectable features of the early plan.

EARLY BUILDINGS AND MATERIALS

The core of the medieval settlement was taken over for industrial purposes in the nineteenth century and subsequent housing improvement and industrial expansion has since removed those buildings which remained (see map 3). The Erskine family was responsible for both residential and industrial growth on the west side of the town in the eighteenth and nineteenth century (see page 11).

The Old Statistical Account (1793, VIII, 594 ff) provides a description of the burgh at the close of the eighteenth century. The tower still dominated the town, with the old town houses clustered around it. It was claimed that in the middle of the eighteenth century, the town buildings

had almost surrounded the tower. Slezer's illustration titled the 'Prospect of the House and of the Town of Alloua' (Slezer, 1693, plate 8) does not suggest intensive urban development in this area, the tower is visible with attached outhouses, and the settlement in the late seventeenth century appears compact, well built and apparently largely thatched. Investigation of the early burgh buildings is largely dependent on cartographic and photographic sources, with some assistance from engravings, and the accounts of local historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Drummond (1953, 14) describes two old photographs which illustrated the old Bridge over the Brothy Burn at NS 889 927 and the adjacent houses, and a number of high, three storeyed tenements which skirted the old market place (NS 888 926), both sites are now covered by mill buildings. Virtually the only building to have survived the nineteenth and twentieth century clearance of the old town is the house of Tobias Bauchop in Kirkgate (NS 8861 9261). This building maintains the original frontage line of the street, it was built in 1695 as the townhouse of master mason Tobias Bauchop. It is oblong in plan, two storeys in height and the 2' (0·6m) thick walls are of ashlar, with rusticated quoins (RCAHMS, 1933, 313). The gables are crow stepped with tabled skewputs enriched with scroll ornament. At the end of the last century, the roof was pantiled, but later, (Drummond, 1953, 32) slated. At the rear of the house was a paved courtyard, and the remains of a gateway. This house has been renovated and stands alone in Kirkgate. This, with the exception of the remains of the old parish church, is virtually all that remains of the old town.

There has been a burgh mill at least since the fifteenth century. In 1489, the lands of Alloa, with the forest of Clackmannanshire and 'the mill of Alway' were conceded to the second Lord Erskine by the King. This mill stood on the bank of the Brothy Burn, probably in the vicinity of the present mill (NS 889 928) though no trace of the earlier building survives today. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, despite its favourable situation for commerce, Alloa had no particular commercial significance other than a limited trade in coal. The industrial expansion of Alloa was initiated in the late eighteenth century by the Erskine family. In 1750, Lady Frances Erskine established a glass works on the foreshore at Alloa (NS 881 924) (Carvel, 1953, 6). By 1793, these glassworks had expanded to cover four acres, with houses and other associated buildings. Further industrial development was established to the north-west of the glasshouse including, a large scale tile and brick works and a tan works (OSA, 1793, VIII, 596). John, sixth Earl of Mar, prepared the way for the expansion of Alloa as a trading port by encouraging the development of the

industrial hinterland through the construction of Gart Mor Dam and Forestmill Aqueduct, which provided the motive power of a waterwheel to drive a chain pump to drain the collieries. Lady Frances Erskine was also responsible in 1768 for developing a tramway to carry coal to the harbour.

Much of the prosperity of Alloa therefore, appears to have been based on the products of its immediate hinterland, and its position adjacent to a good natural harbour. There is at present little evidence for industrial pursuits in the burgh before the eighteenth century. Brewing and the woollen industry developed in the late eighteenth century, and expanded considerably through the nineteenth century. There are two possible sources of information. The recently cleared sites along Greenside Street, New Entry and Kirkgate may provide future opportunities to examine stratigraphy for evidence of early industry. Additionally, research into sasine's recording property transfer in the old part of the town, cleared in the nineteenth century, may shed some light on building and property usage.

The Church

Traditionally, a shrine to St.Mungo existed in Alloa at an early date. Bryson (1902, 8) claims that the chapel at this shrine was served by clerics from Cambuskenneth Abbey founded by David I in 1147, but it is not until some time after 1329, that there is reasonably certain evidence of the dedication of a chapel to St.Mungo here. This chapel was certainly served by a monk from Cambuskenneth Abbey. It was small in size, about 47' (14·3m) by 30' (9·1m), more of a private chapel than a parish church, and was affiliated to the church of Clackmannanshire in 1401 (Gordon, 1937, 7). The old parish church of Alloa stands on the south side of Kirkgate (NS 886 9258) on the southern edge of the present burgh, and west of the medieval core of Alloa. Bryson (1902, 13) claimed that the walls and steeple of the fourteenth century church had survived the seventeenth century rebuilding, a view not shared by Gordon (1937, 8).

Bryson (1902, 8) suggests that this fourteenth century chapel was erected on the site occupied by the ruin in the churchyard. At the Reformation, the presbytery at Tullibody declared in 1599, that the chapel at Alloa was to be the parish church. The fabric of the building survived this period of turmoil, but in 1645, the small building with its steeple was repaired and enlarged (Crawford, 1874, 111). In 1680, a visit by the Heritors recorded in the session records for that year, found the fabric 'ruinous and in danger of falling to the ground' (Crawford, 1874, 127). As early as 1673, the church had been felt to be too small, and the state

of its repair was giving cause for concern. The resolve to rebuild it was, however, hampered by financial considerations, and despite the recommendations made in 1680, no action was taken until 1682. In this year, Bryson (1902, 11) claims the church was taken down to the ground, rebuilt and enlarged. There is some controversy as to whether the tower, although much altered, is contemporary with the pre-Reformation building. Gordon (1937, 8) argues that there is no evidence to support an early date, and the Royal Commission (RCAHMS, 1933, 308) comment on the similarity of the tower architecturally, to that of the tolbooth at Clackmannan, which would suggest a seventeenth-century date for the structure. On the other hand, there are numerous entries in the Session records referring to repairs to the tower in the seventeenth century, and in 1710, timbers are recorded as having to be replaced in the steeple. The present tower shows at least two distinct phases of building, the lower walls being composed of rubble, and the upper of coursed ashlar terminating in a slated spire of ogival form. By the late seventeenth century, the church was approximately 65' (19·8m) long, by 30' (9·1m) broad. Through further extensions and galleries, its capacity increased until in 1793, it was able to accommodate 900 people. However, by 1815, the old church had become unsafe and it was decided to construct a new building on a site in Bedford Place (NS 883 926). The foundation stone was laid in 1817, and the seventeenth-century church was largely demolished to provide materials with which to construct the new building. Only the tower and west gable of the earlier church remained together with the Erskine aisle. Today the church tower and gable are in good repair, the Erskine aisle, however, stands derelict. The site of the body of the church remains as a levelled area dropping away steeply on the south side through the graveyard to the burn. There have been many interments here through the nineteenth century, the latest gravestone dating from 1932, and it may be expected that from this cause and from the quarrying of masonry, the underlying deposits are likely to be very disturbed.

The site is not under threat from redevelopment, and interments are no longer carried out here. Future work should the opportunity arise, might be directed towards establishing the depth of surviving undisturbed deposits on the site, and the sequence of buildings which have stood here. Closer inspection of the session records may provide a clearer picture of the appearance of the pre-Reformation church, and its hypothetical fragmental survival in the extant tower and west gable.

Alloa Tower

The tower of Alloa stands on the left bank of the Forth (NS 8889 9252).

It is a large, four storey oblong building, probably dating from the fifteenth century, and considerably altered in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (RCAHMS, 1933, 309). The site of the tower was important strategically, lying between the lowest bridging point of the Forth at Stirling and the ferry at Kincardine, the north and south ferry landings having considerable importance from the seventeenth century onwards. (Graham, 1968-69, 257, 274). In the thirteenth century, the line of the river between Stirling and Kincardine had military importance. The bridging points, ferries and fords along its length represented points of weakness and as such were defended by castles at Stirling, Clackmannan and Tulliallan. It follows that the ferries and ford at Alloa would be similarly defended. There is, however, no substantial evidence for the fortified site which pre-dated the tower. Gordon (1935) claimed a motte and bailey was built at Alloa by King Alexander II. Dickie, Mackay and Kennedy (1978, 2), however, claim that the first defences were built by Alexander III. The history of this fortified site at Alloa is obscure. In 1365, the lands of Alloa were exchanged by David II for the lands of Strathgartnay on Loch Katrine, and the site became the holding of Sir Robert de Ereskyne'. This Erskine stronghold was re-possessed by James II between 1442 and 1446. However, the Erskines had regained possession by the late fifteenth century, and it is Alexander, third Lord Erskine to whom the present building is attributed. There are apparently no existing documents which describe the building of the tower. Its immediate predecessor is not termed a 'castle' in an instrument of sasine dated September, 1448, though a 'manor' is mentioned. A royal charter of 1489, which details the Erskine possessions, similarly does not mention a castle (Gordon, 1937, 17). However, by 1497, a charter is placed 'apud maneriem sive castrum de Alway', and another of James IV in 1502 describes Alway, 'cum castro fortalicio'. These references imply the greater strength of the late fifteenth century coursed rubble building than its predecessor. In more peaceful times, the Erskines added to the tower a mansion house of comfortable proportions. This was destroyed by fire in 1800 and another mansion constructed to the east of the tower in 1830-32 (Drummond, 1953). Both buildings have not been cleared and the tower stands empty.

The confused early history of this site, and its acknowledged early strategic importance attributes to it a certain degree of archaeological importance. The potential of the site is, however, something which will have to be considered in relation to the available documentary evidence and the degree of disturbance of the site.

The likelihood of continuity of occupation on this site, should be considered. Is this the site of the earliest defensive structure?. A trial excavation would in this case be justified on the one hand to establish the degree of survival of archaeological deposits in the immediate vicinity of the tower, and on the other hand, to confirm continuity of occupation here at least from the fourteenth century if not earlier.

The Harbour

The earliest published mention of a 'port' of Alloa dates from 1502 when the victualling of a ship bound there was financed by the King. Thereafter, coal is recorded as being transported from Alloa to Inchkeith in 1558, and indeed, this trade was probably established well before this date. One of the earliest references to coal occurs in the records of Cambuskenneth Abbey in 1510, and from this reference it is obvious that coal was being worked contemporaneously in the district of Sauchie (Gordon, 1937, 23) the most convenient distribution point being Alloa. No reference in the sixteenth century refers directly to the existence of artificial harbour works. Even in the early seventeenth century, a grant to the Earl of Mar of the 'portum marinum de Alway et lie Pow ejusden cum privilegio litoris et anchoragii consueto...' refers to the 'shore and anchorage' (Graham, 1968-69, 213). However, in 1655, mention is made of the 'herberie' of Alloa implying that by this date either a jetty had been established to provide greater convenience of loading, or at least some improvement of the foreshore had been made. John Slezer (1693, 14 and plate 8) at the end of the seventeenth century refers to 'a convenient harbour for ships of burthen' the accompanying illustration, however, provides no clear indication of the harbour works at that date.

By 1722, Alloa possessed a 'commodious harbour' and the survey made by General Roy between 1747 and 1755, marks a pier on the north-west side of the sheltered creek known as the Pow of Alloa at the mouth of the Brathie Burn (Graham, 1968-69, 213). A fairly complete record survives of the harbour works carried out in the eighteenth century in the minutes of the Harbour Trustees, but there are no recorded illustrative plans, and the points of the compass which are referred to in the minutes are vague. The majority of the eighteenth century works were subsequently destroyed in the nineteenth century improvements and recent clearances, and it is now extremely difficult to reconstruct the appearance of the eighteenth-century harbour on the sole basis of the Harbour Trustee minutes. However, some attempt can be made to establish the phases of the harbour development in the eighteenth century.

The quay fronting the river west of the Pow, already mentioned, was most probably the first harbour work to be erected. Vessels before the late seventeenth century beached on the foreshore at high tide. In 1757, substantial improvements and additions were made. A quay 265' (80·7m) long was constructed on the north bank of the Pow. The detailed contract for this work is preserved in the minutes of the Harbour Trustees, and is worth reproducing here in edited form. The contractor undertook to excavate a foundation trench 10' (3·0m) wide down to water level to accommodate a supportive wooden frame of Copenhagen red wood. In front of this frame, piles 12' to 14' (3·6m to 4·2m) long were to be driven in, and the new pier built on this foundation, 9' (2·7m) thick at the base, 3'6" (1·0m) wide at the tope, and the front to be finished in battered squared and jointed dry set freestone, and the whole filled with dry rubble and rammed clay and filled with rubbish to the level of the building (Graham, 1968-69, 214). In 1761, another quay 118' (35·9m) was added to link those already existing. The minutes are confused regarding development in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but some important work was evidently carried out in 1778, and the Pow was widened to 70' (21·3m) in 1791. The Old Statistical Account (1793, VIII, 595) provides a limited description of the harbour at that time. The account, written in 1792, describes a substantially built quay of rough, hewn stone which 'runs within the land, and forms a pow or small creek' (at the mouth of the Brathie Burn)...' and this last year (1791) the trustees ...have considerably widened the pow'. The account goes on to describe 'a little above the harbour is an excellent dry dock'. This apparently was capable of receiving vessels of some size, the depth of water at spring tides being 16' (4·8m) and the width of the gates 34'6" (10·5m). This dock, according to the reporter, had no connection with the harbour and 'was not situated near any buildings'. One of the main features of the eighteenth century harbour was the 'Little Pow', infilled in 1848, but which previously discharged into the river south-east of the Mar Inn. John Wood's plan of Alloa (1825) shows a basin about 120' (36·5m) long by 85' (25·9m) wide, with a sluicing pond at the head. The construction of this pond was determined upon in 1768, and may have been connected with the construction of the waggonway skirting the then western perimeter of the town from the local collieries. Wood (1825) illustrates this waggonway as crossing a bridge between the Pow and the pond.

Alterations and improvements continued through the nineteenth century, particularly at the wet dock infilled in the 1960s. In the 1950s, the harbour was closed, and little survived of the early harbour works by the 1960s, as a result of the nineteenth century improvements and the

clearance which followed the closure of the port. In 1967, (Graham, 1968-69, 213) the harbour consisted of a quay 465' (141·7m) long on the river front, and a length of quay ran east for about 200' (60·9m) forming the north side of an inlet at the head of which was the infilled wet dock. These structures represent the remains of the Pow of Alloa. Graham (1968-69, 213) identified some coursed stonework on the quay wall facing the river which probably dated from the work carried out about 1756. He also indicated the section of quay inserted at the point at which the West Pow was infilled in 1848, but these two features apart, little appears to have survived.

The harbour works have been discussed in some detail here as the site is now largely no longer accessible. The area previously covered by the harbour complex is now included in recent industrial development, and has been altered out of all recognition. Under proposals in the local plan (C.D.C. 1981, fig.6), the harbour area is reserved for the expansion of established industry, and some future opportunity may arise to observe any surviving remains. It does, however, seem doubtful that this would be worthwhile taking into account the alterations which are known to have taken place to the early harbour structure.

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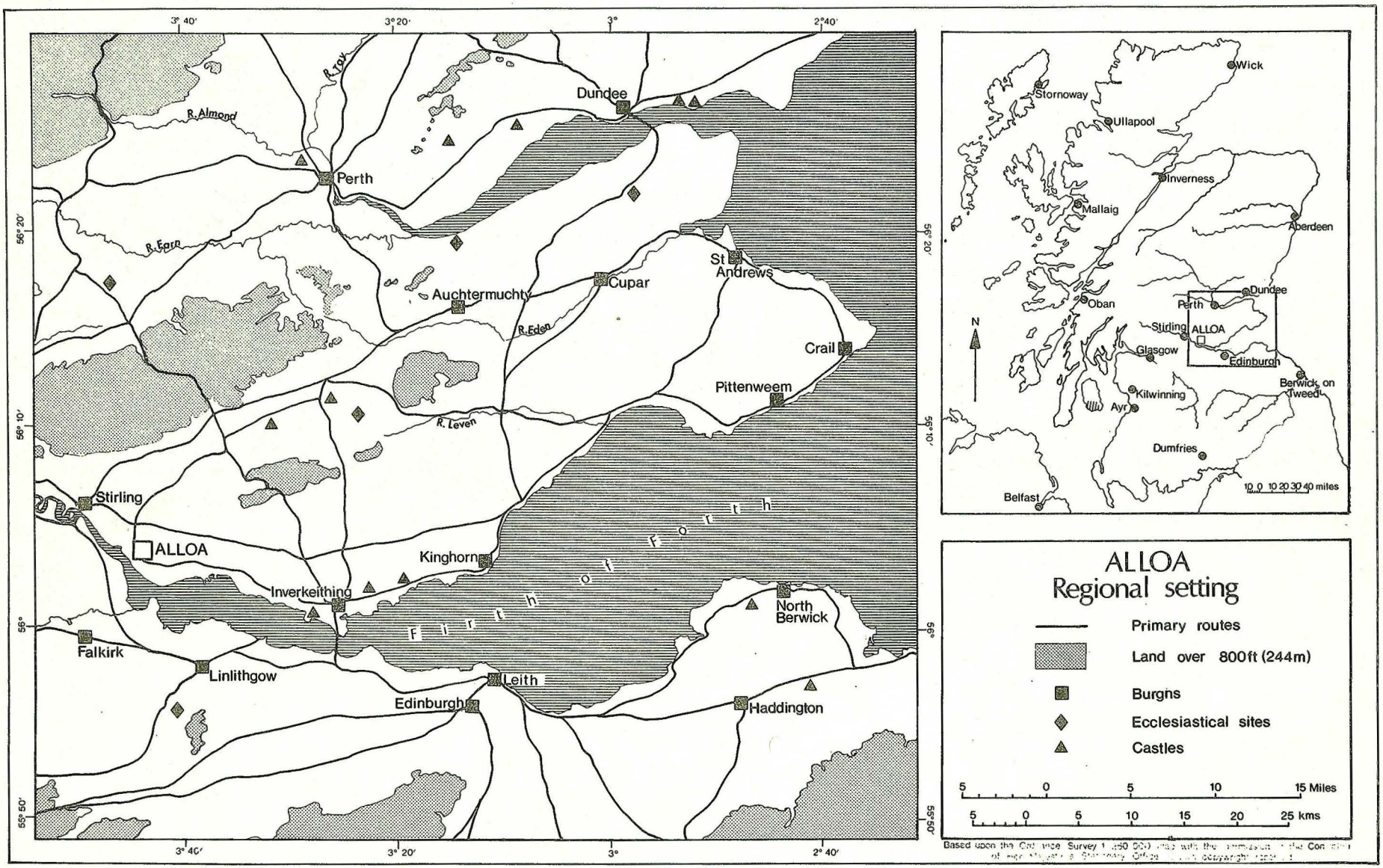
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R. Tay
R. Almond
R. Earn
R. Eden
R. Leven
Dundee
Perth
Auchtermuchty
Cupar
St Andrews
Crail
Pittenweem
Stirling
ALLOA
Kinghorn
Inverkeithing
Falkirk
Linlithgow
Leith
Edinburgh
North Berwick
Haddington
Firth of Forth
Wick
Stornoway
Ullapool
Inverness
Mallaig
Aberdeen
Oban
Dundee
Perth
Stirling
ALLOA
Glasgow
Edinburgh
Berwick on Tweed
Kilwinning
Ayr
Dumfries
Belfast
N
10 0 10 20 30 40 miles
ALLOA
Regional setting
Primary routes
Land over 800ft (244m)
Burgns
Ecclesiastical sites
Castles
5 0 5 10 15 Miles
5 0 5 10 15 20 25 kms
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Map 1

ALLOA Map 2

1–2	Areas of archaeological priority
	Sites effectively re-developed
	Sites proposed for re-development
■	Proposed housing improvement
	Demolished property
	Car park
	New road
▼▼▼▼▼	Property cut into sloping ground
▽▽▽▽▽	Visible cellarage
●	Renovated property
○	Derelict building

50 0 50 100 150 metres

50 0 50 100 150 yards

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ALLOA Map 3

- Boundary of conservation Areas
- Proposed extension to conservation area
- Listed buildings, all categories
- 19th century frontages (site of)
- Site of well, 19th century or earlier
- Site of early church
- Site of old bridge
- Old jail (site of)
- 19th century pottery (site of)
- Alloa tower

50 0 50 100 150 metres

50 0 50 100 150 yards

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