

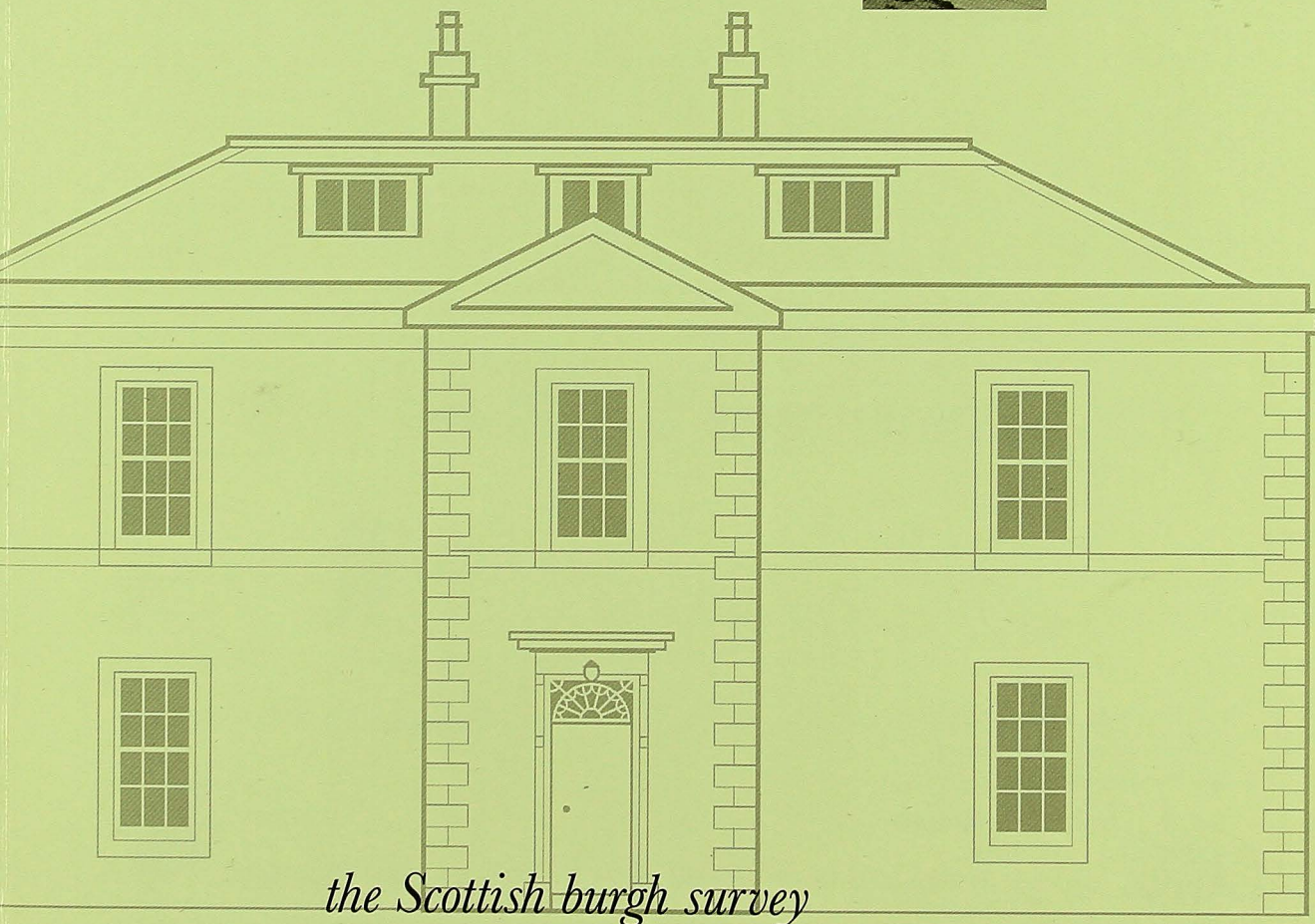
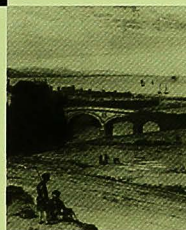
SCO(N).N

Historic Nairn

E Patricia **Dennison**

Russel **Coleman**

THE Bridge over the River Nairn



the Scottish burgh survey

the Scottish burgh survey

titles in print

Historic Kirkcaldy
Historic Stranraer
Historic Cumnock
Historic Hamilton
Historic Musselburgh
Historic Aberdeen
Historic Stornoway
Historic Dunblane
Historic Coupar Angus
Historic Dalkeith
Historic Melrose
Historic Nairn

forthcoming titles

Historic Dumbarton
Historic Forfar
Historic Linlithgow
Historic North Queensferry

cover note

A detail of W Daniel's acquatint of a view of Nairn, dating to 1821, looking towards the bridge.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND
LONGMORE HOUSE
LIBRARY
CONTROL No. 1898218 528.
DATE 12/11/02 PRICE
SHELFMARK Sc(N).N

Historic Nairn

the archaeological implications of development


E Patricia **Dennison**

Russel **Coleman**

the Scottish burgh survey

HISTORIC  SCOTLAND

in association with

SCOTTISH CULTURAL PRESS 

CENTRE FOR SCOTTISH URBAN HISTORY
Department of Scottish History
University of Edinburgh


The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd
SERVING The Highland Community



publication	Historic Scotland <i>in association with</i> Scottish Cultural Press First published 1999
copyright	© Historic Scotland 1999 <i>The moral right of the authors has been asserted.</i>
editorial	Olwyn Owen
design	Christina Unwin
printing . binding	The Cromwell Press, Trowbridge
ISSN	1358 0272
Scottish Cultural Press ISBN	1 898218 52 8
all distribution and sales enquiries Scottish burgh survey	Scottish Cultural Press Unit 14 . Leith Walk Business Centre 130 Leith Walk Edinburgh EH6 5DT telephone 0131 555 5950 . facsimile 0131 555 5018

- all other enquiries**
- The Highland Council
Planning and Development Service
Headquarters
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
IV3 5NX
 - Historic Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH
telephone 0131 668 8600 . facsimile 0131 668 8699

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

**British Library cataloguing
in publication data**

*All rights are reserved.
No part of this publication
may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system,
transmitted or utilised
in any form or by any means
electronic, mechanical
or by photocopying,
recording or otherwise,
without the written permission
of Historic Scotland
and the Scottish Cultural Press.*

contents	v	figures	
	vi	abbreviations	
	vii	acknowledgements	
	viii	foreword	
1		how to use this survey	
3		Nairn: its site and setting	
		geography	3
		geology	3
		the Ice Age	5
		the post-glacial period	5
		climate, soils and agriculture	7
		the topography of the burgh	7
9		archaeological and historical background	
		early prehistory	9
		later prehistory	11
		the early historic period	12
		medieval Nairn	14
		the sixteenth and seventeenth century	18
		the eighteenth century	26
		post-script—'the Brighton of the North'	33
47		area by area assessment	
		introduction	47
		area 1	47
		<i>River Nairn/Queen Street/Wellington Road/Academy Street/Viewfield House grounds/ Marine Hotel/the Links/St Ninian Road/Bridge Street</i>	
		area 2	59
		<i>the Links/St Ninian Road/River Nairn/harbour</i>	
		the archaeological potential of Nairn a summary	65
67		historic buildings and their archaeological potential <i>(with Robin Macpherson)</i>	
73		suggested avenues for further work	
		historical research objectives	73
		archaeological objectives for the future	73
77		street names	
83		glossary	
87		bibliography	
93		general index	

1	Location of Nairn	4
2	The physical setting of Nairn	6
3	Nairn from the air in 1946, before major reconstruction works	8
4	Bronze Age cist, Mains of Balnagowan	11
5	Prehistoric settlement and square barrow, Kinchyle	12
6	Prehistoric settlement, Nairn	13
7	<i>Map of Murray</i> , by Timothy Pont, c 1590	15
8	<i>View of Riverside Kirk and the Townhouse</i> , by James Clark, 1832	24
9	Town house of Roses of Kilravock c 1860	29
10	The market cross	30
11	The parish school, built in 1762	31
12	The Seceders' Church, Castle Lane	32
13	Nairn harbour c 1886	33
14	<i>Plan of the Town of Nairn</i> , by John Wood, 1821	34
15	Fishertown houses	35
16	<i>Aquatint of Nairn</i> , by W Daniel, 1821	36
17	Rose's Academical Institution c 1882	37
18	Royal Hotel, High Street	38
19	Collector's Close	39
20	Area location map	46
21	Viewfield House, with Dr Grigor's statue	47
22	Area 1	48
23	Area 2	60
24	Sheriff Falconar's house, 79 High Street	71
25	The archaeological potential of Nairn colour-coded	foldout at back

abbreviations	<p><i>APS</i> <i>The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland</i>, edd T Thomson & C Innes (Edinburgh, 1814–75).</p> <p><i>CDS</i> <i>Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland</i>, ed J Bain <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1839–1986).</p> <p><i>GSP Scot</i> <i>Calendar of the State Papers relating to Scotland</i>, 13 vols, edd J Bain <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1878–1969).</p> <p><i>DES</i> <i>Discovery and Excavation in Scotland</i>.</p> <p><i>ER</i> <i>The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland</i>, 23 vols, edd J Stuart <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1878–1908).</p> <p>Groome, <i>Gazetteer</i> <i>Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland</i>, 6 vols, ed F Groome (Edinburgh, 1885).</p> <p>HS Historic Scotland.</p> <p>NMAS National Museum of the Antiquities of Scotland.</p> <p>NMRS National Monuments Record of Scotland.</p> <p><i>NSA</i> <i>The New Statistical Account of Scotland</i>, ed The Committee of the Society for the Benefit of the Sons and Daughters of the Clergy (Edinburgh, 1845).</p> <p><i>OSA</i> <i>The Statistical Account of Scotland, 1791–1799</i>, ed J Sinclair. New Edition, edd I R Grant & D J Withrington (Wakefield, 1973).</p> <p><i>PSAS</i> <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland</i>.</p> <p>RCAHMS Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.</p> <p><i>RCRBS</i> <i>Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland</i>, 7 vols, edd J D Marwick & T Hunter (Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, 1870–1918).</p> <p>RIAS Royal Institute of Architects in Scotland.</p> <p><i>RMS</i> <i>The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland</i>, 11 vols, edd J M Thomson <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1882–1914).</p> <p><i>RPC</i> <i>The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland</i>, edd J H Burton <i>et al</i> <i>I</i> First Series, 14 vols, (Edinburgh, 1877–98). <i>II</i> Second Series, 8 vols, (Edinburgh, 1899–1908). <i>III</i> Third Series, 16 vols, (Edinburgh, 1908–).</p> <p><i>RRS</i> <i>Regesta Regum Scottorum 1153–1406</i>, edd G W S Barrow <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1960–).</p> <p><i>RSS</i> <i>Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland (Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum)</i>, edd M Livingstone <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1908).</p> <p>SBS Scottish Burgh Survey.</p> <p>SHS Scottish History Society.</p> <p>SRO Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh.</p> <p>SUAT Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust.</p> <p><i>TA</i> <i>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland</i>, 13 vols, edd T Dickson <i>et al</i> (Edinburgh, 1877–).</p> <p><i>TSA</i> <i>The Third Statistical Account of Scotland: the Counties of Moray and Nairn</i>, ed H Hamilton (Glasgow, 1965).</p>	v
---------------	---	---

The Centre for Scottish Urban History is indebted to a number of people for their assistance and advice.

Especial thanks go to the people of Nairn who so kindly gave their time to discuss many interesting aspects of the town's history, archaeology and standing buildings. We would, in particular, like to thank **Mr David Ellen**. His knowledge of the fishertown; the numerous pamphlets, publications and photographs he loaned us; and his fascinating tour of the fishertown gave us an understanding of the area that would have been impossible for us to gain in our too brief visits. **Mr John Lawson** also willingly shared with us his deep knowledge of the town. Both David Ellen and John Lawson read sections of our first draft for this Survey; and we are indebted to both of them for their helpful comments. **Mrs Sheena Baker**, proprietor of Pristine Dry Cleaners and chairwoman of Nairn Business Initiative very kindly gave access to the ground floor of Kilravock House; and we are indebted to **Mr Fraser Macpherson** for checking through the town valuation rolls.

We could not have coped without the generous assistance and advice of Mr Robert Steward of **Highland Council Archive**. Our visits to the archive both at Nairn and at Inverness were highly productive, revealing some very interesting new information, and we would like to thank all the staff at Highland Council Archive for their helpful co-operation. We also benefited from the assistance of Ms Gillian Ellis, **Nairn District Museums Service**.

Mr Jim Harbison and Mr Bob Cameron, **Department of Planning, Highland Council**, kindly updated us on current development proposals affecting Nairn. Mr John Wood and Ms Dorothy Low, **Highland Archaeology Service**, Highland Council, gave us access to the Highland Sites and Monuments Record. To all of these we give our thanks.

Colleagues at the **University of Edinburgh** have given support and advice. In particular, we would like to mention colleagues in the **Centre for Field Archaeology**. The **Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland** has been, as usual, very supportive; as have staff of **Historic Scotland**. The staff of the **Scottish Record Office** and of the **National Library of Scotland**, at both George IV Bridge and the Map Library at Causewayside, have been very helpful. Editorial assistance has been provided by Mrs Melissa Seddon and Mr Matthew Ritchie, and the volume was indexed by Mrs Hilary Flenley.

For permission to reproduce photographs and illustrations, we wish to thank the following:

figures 3, 5, 18 & 21 are reproduced by kind permission of the **Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland**. © Crown Copyright: RCAHMS

figure 4 is reproduced by kind permission of **Mr Ian Shepherd**, Aberdeen.

figure 6 is reproduced by kind permission of **Dr Ian Ralston**, The University of Edinburgh.

figures 7 & 14 are reproduced by kind permission of **The Trustees of the National Library of Scotland**.

figures 8, 9, 11–13, 15 & 19 are reproduced by kind permission of **Mr David Ellen**, Nairn.

figure 10 is reproduced by kind permission of **Historic Scotland**. © Crown Copyright: Historic Scotland.

figure 16 is reproduced by kind permission of **Fishertown Museum**, Nairn.

figure 17 is reproduced by kind permission of **The Trustees of Nairn Museum**.

figure 24 is reproduced by kind permission of **The Isobel Rae Trust**.

figures 1, 2, 20, 22, 23 & 25 are based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 scale and the Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map series, with the permission of the **The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office**. © Crown Copyright, Licence number GD03032G/1997.

The royal burgh of Nairn (originally known as Invernairn) was established probably around the end of the twelfth century, as a quite deliberate plantation of burgh and associated castle. Somewhat intriguingly, Timothy Pont's *Map of Murray* figure 7, c 1590, depicts a ruined castle surrounded by the waters of the Moray Firth. The coastline is notoriously unstable in this area, and the River Nairn dramatically moved its course many times. Is there here an isolated clue that early Nairn was inundated with water? Early settlements normally clustered near or immediately beside a bishop's fortification or royal castle. If so, the classic burgh plan of medieval Nairn, still to be seen today, may not be the first burghal lay-out, but a later plan, perhaps of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. This late sixteenth-century map may indicate that Nairn, like some other coastal burghs, was forced to change its early focal point for a more protected site.

The medieval burgh was laid out formally in burgage plots and also contained a mill, parish church and possibly a bridge, as well as the castle which dominated the townscape. But, by the seventeenth century, the burgh was in a precarious financial position and unable to maintain its public buildings. The people of Nairn made determined efforts to improve their town in the eighteenth century—not only were improvements made to the physical townscape, but also the Nairn Fishermen's Society was established for the mutual benefit and welfare of local fishermen. Nairn achieved prosperity in the nineteenth century, when it was able to capitalise on the growing popularity of sea-bathing, assisted by the arrival of the railway which brought visitors all the way from the south of England to enjoy 'the salubrity of its climate, its extensive links along the sea-shore, and its gradually sloping sandy beach, so suitable for bathing'. Scarcely recognisable as the small medieval burgh with its burgage plots and castle, or the small seventeenth-century town which could not meet its taxation dues, or the early eighteenth-century garrison town beset with billeted troops, by the nineteenth century Nairn had emerged as one of the premier resorts in Scotland.

Historic Nairn is one of a series of reports on the historic burghs of Scotland—known collectively as the **Scottish Burgh Survey**—all of which have been commissioned by **Historic Scotland** and its predecessors. The main aim of the survey is to identify those areas of the present and historic burgh which are of archaeological interest and therefore require sensitive treatment in the event of any proposed development or other ground disturbance. It is designed primarily as a manual for the use of local authorities and archaeological curators. However, as an essential prerequisite to this assessment of the archaeological implications of development, it also describes and illustrates the geography and topography of the town, its known archaeology and history, its historic standing buildings and the origins of its street names—all of which will be of interest to the wider public, be they inhabitant, visitor or student.

Historic Nairn was prepared for Historic Scotland within the **Centre for Scottish Urban History**, under the supervision of its Director, Dr E Patricia Dennison. The Centre is part of the Department of Scottish History, University of Edinburgh. Dr Dennison and Mr Russel Coleman, of the **Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust**, are co-authors of the report, with the assistance of Mr Robin Macpherson on the section on historic buildings. Mr Kevin Hicks, of the **Centre for Field Archaeology**, University of Edinburgh, is cartographer and illustrator. Mr Robin Macpherson of the Scottish History Department acted as Research Assistant to the project; assistance was also received from Mr Jim MacCormack and Ms Susan Gillanders, both postgraduates in the Department of Scottish History. We are also grateful for the assistance of Mr David Perry and Mr Simon Stronach of the **Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust**. The project is supervised by the Head of the Department, Professor Michael Lynch, and managed for Historic Scotland by Ms Olwyn Owen, who is also general editor of the series.

The research on historic Nairn was carried out during Spring 1996. This survey was entirely funded by Historic Scotland with help from the Centre for Scottish Urban History. The report has been published with financial assistance from **Highland Council** and Historic Scotland. Further copies may be obtained from **Scottish Cultural Press**, Unit 14, Leith Walk Business Centre, 130 Leith Walk, Edinburgh, EH6 5DT.

the Scottish burgh survey

N

- 1 Use the colour-coded map **figure 25** (foldout at the back of the book) and/or the **general index** to locate a particular site (normally the site of development proposal).
- 2 **Green areas** are designated as potentially archaeologically sensitive. If the site is in a green area, it is possible that a proposal involving ground disturbance may encounter archaeological remains. Seek appropriate archaeological advice as early as possible.
- 3 Use the map on p 46 **figure 20** to determine into which area of the burgh the site falls (one of Areas 1–2), and turn to the relevant area in the area by area assessment for a fuller account (pp 47–64).
- 4 Use the **general index** and, if appropriate, the listing of **street names** (pp 77–82) for rapid access to information specific to a site, street or named feature of the town.

step 1

As a working manual, the first point of reference is the colour-coded map on the foldout at the back of the book **figure 25**.

The **green areas** are **potentially archaeologically sensitive** and may retain significant sub-surface archaeological information. *Consultation should take place with the local authority archaeologist, where any development proposal or enquiry involving ground disturbance is being considered*, including car parks, road schemes, environmental improvements, landscaping and drainage schemes, as well as the usual range of development and re-development proposals in built-up areas. There is no necessity for a consultation where ground disturbance is not in prospect, such as applications for change of use of a building. There may, however, be a requirement to obtain *planning permission* or, in the case of a listed building, *listed building consent* or, if demolition works are proposed within a conservation area, *conservation area consent*. In such instances, early consultation with the staff of the local authority planning department will always be helpful.

If in doubt whether consultation is necessary, please refer to the local authority archaeologist and the local authority planning department. It is important to note that sub-surface disturbance within historic standing buildings may also affect archaeological remains, and that some standing buildings may retain archaeological features within their structures. Please seek advice as required.

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the historic core of Nairn, but there are some within a few kilometres of the town. Under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 all development proposals which affect Scheduled Ancient Monuments require the prior written consent of the Secretary of State for Scotland (Scheduled Monument Consent) in addition to any planning permission required. These provisions are administered on behalf of the Secretary of State by Historic Scotland. *All applications for planning permission which affect either the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument must be referred to Historic Scotland, acting for the Secretary of State in terms of Section 15(j)(v) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure)(Scotland) Order 1992 and Section 5(e) of its Amendment (No 2) Order 1994. All enquiries regarding prospective development proposals in or adjacent to Scheduled Ancient Monuments should be referred to Historic Scotland for advice as early as possible.*

step 2

In this new series of burgh surveys, each survey has been organised locationally, in order to assist speedy consultation on any proposed development site. In the case of Nairn, the historic core of the town has been divided into two arbitrary areas, Areas 1–2, which are

shown on the plan on p 46 **figure 20**. The second step for the user, then, is to consult this plan and to determine into which area a specific enquiry falls.

step 3

Each area is assessed individually in the **area by area assessment** (pp 47–64). The commentary for each area is prefaced by a detailed plan of that area. Archaeological, historical, geographical and geological factors of particular relevance to the area are all discussed, and an assessment of the archaeological potential is made. For ease of reference, even if a dividing line between areas is shown as the middle of a street, discussion of the area includes any elements within the street up to the opposite frontage. The importance of an integrated approach to the historical and archaeological information is implicit in the design of this report: the history and archaeology are presented together on each page rather than consecutively.

This integrated, area-based approach has involved some repetition of information in the area by area assessment, in order that users are not required to cross-reference more than necessary when dealing with a specific enquiry. Although such repetition would not be normal in a work of interest to the general public, it was felt that it would be permissible here in order to facilitate the work of primary users: local authority planners and other curators of the archaeological resource.

historic standing buildings

historic buildings reinforces the above sections by providing basic historical and architectural information about the historic standing buildings of the town; where relevant, it also provides the area location and an assessment of the archaeological potential of specific buildings. *It should always be borne in mind that historic standing buildings may also contain archaeological remains, both beneath their floors and within their structures.* Some of these buildings may be listed and consequently subject to listed building control. Where listed buildings contain, or may contain, architecturally or archaeologically significant building fabric, the planning authority is obliged to make efforts to ensure that this is preserved and not adversely affected by proposed building works.

objectives for future fieldwork and research

Any report of this nature cannot be definitive. During its preparation, a series of archaeological and historical objectives for future fieldwork and research have been identified; these are listed at pp 73–5. They will be of particular interest to urban historians and archaeologists, and to those responsible for management of the archaeological resource in historic Nairn.

referencing

The report contains a comprehensive **general index** as well as a listing of **street names** giving basic historical information and, where relevant, area location. A **bibliography** and a **glossary** of technical terms have also been included.

The data accumulated during preparation of this survey and draft copies of the completed work, as well as all unpublished reports of any small-scale excavations and watching briefs, are housed in the National Monuments Record, John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh, EH8 9NX, telephone 0131 662 1477/1499.

full reference to this report

Dennison, E P and Coleman, R 1999 *Historic Nairn: the archaeological implications of development*, published by Historic Scotland in association with Scottish Cultural Press, Edinburgh. (Scottish Burgh Survey 1999.)

Situated approximately 26 km north-east of Inverness, the town lies at the mouth of the River Nairn, on the west bank **figure 1**. One of the earliest of the royal burghs in the north-east of Scotland, its ancient name was Invernairn, probably meaning 'mouth of the river of alders' (*see* p 14) **figure 2**. The burgh appears to date to the time of William the Lion (1165–1214), who may have abandoned his castle and attendant burgh at nearby Auldearn in favour of Nairn.¹ Unlike Auldearn, where the motte can still be seen, nothing survives of the castle that was built at Nairn. It was burnt on the orders of Robert I (1306–29) during the Wars of Independence.² It was, however, still in existence in the sixteenth century. Similarly, little remains of medieval Nairn, largely due to major rebuilding in the nineteenth century, in response to a booming tourist industry. Fishertown, a small enclave centred around the harbour, is a reminder that Nairn was once a busy fishing port **figure 3**. The collapse of the herring industry in the 1920s and 1930s and the silting of the harbour mouth led to its demise. A museum, dedicated to preserving the history of the fishing industry and of the community, is located in the Fishertown itself.

A fashionable Victorian health resort, the self-styled 'Brighton of the North', Nairn's reputation was enhanced by the arrival of the railway. In 1855, the Highland Railway's Inverness to Nairn line opened, for which a grand station was built. By the 1880s, more than half of the visitors to Nairn came from London and the south of England.³

Prior to 1975, Nairn was the county town and only burgh of Nairnshire, a small county of 42,221 hectares, bordered by Inverness-shire to the west and south and Moray to the east.⁴ Under the 1929 Local Government Act, the shire was merged with Moray for administrative purposes, but, in the local government reorganisation of 1975, the former county was incorporated into Highland Region as Nairn District.⁵ In 1996, Highland Regional Council became Highland Council.

Today, Nairn is a bustling holiday town on 'Scotland's Riviera', offering excellent beaches and championship golfing links. The busy A96, the main arterial route connecting the towns along the Moray Firth, still passes through Nairn. To cater for visitors, caravan parks now supplement the numerous Victorian villas, hotels and boarding houses. The harbour, built by Thomas Telford in 1820, has since been upgraded and can now berth up to one hundred pleasure craft. The indoor swimming pool, built on the site of the Victorian pool (*see* p 39), was opened in 1983.

McDermott's off-shore fabrication yard, at nearby Ardiersier, was until recently a major employer in the area. Tourism, however, continues to draw large numbers of visitors to Nairn and the Moray Firth. Within easy travelling distance of Nairn are the prehistoric Clava cairns, Brodie, Cawdor and Kilravock castles, Culloden battlefield and Fort George. A more recent addition to the tourist industry is a school of dolphins resident in the Moray Firth.

geology

Scotland has a long and complex geological history with a wide variety of rocks and physical features. Tectonic movements along two major dislocations of the earth's crust, the Southern Uplands Fault and the Highland Boundary Fault, created three principal structural and physiographic divisions, the Highlands, the Midland Valley and the Southern Uplands.⁶ Nairn lies in the northernmost division—the Highlands—which comprises extensive areas of high-level wet moor developed on ancient rocks (gneisses, schists, granites and quartzites). The numerous steep-sided glens afforded shelter and protection to isolated communities, as well as natural routes of communication. In particular, the Great Glen Fault, a wrench fault between the north-west Highlands and the Grampians, has long provided the major lowland route from coast to coast.⁷

The dominant rock type found in the Highlands and Islands is metamorphic—ancient rocks which have been altered by great pressures. The surface rocks are in fact the roots of

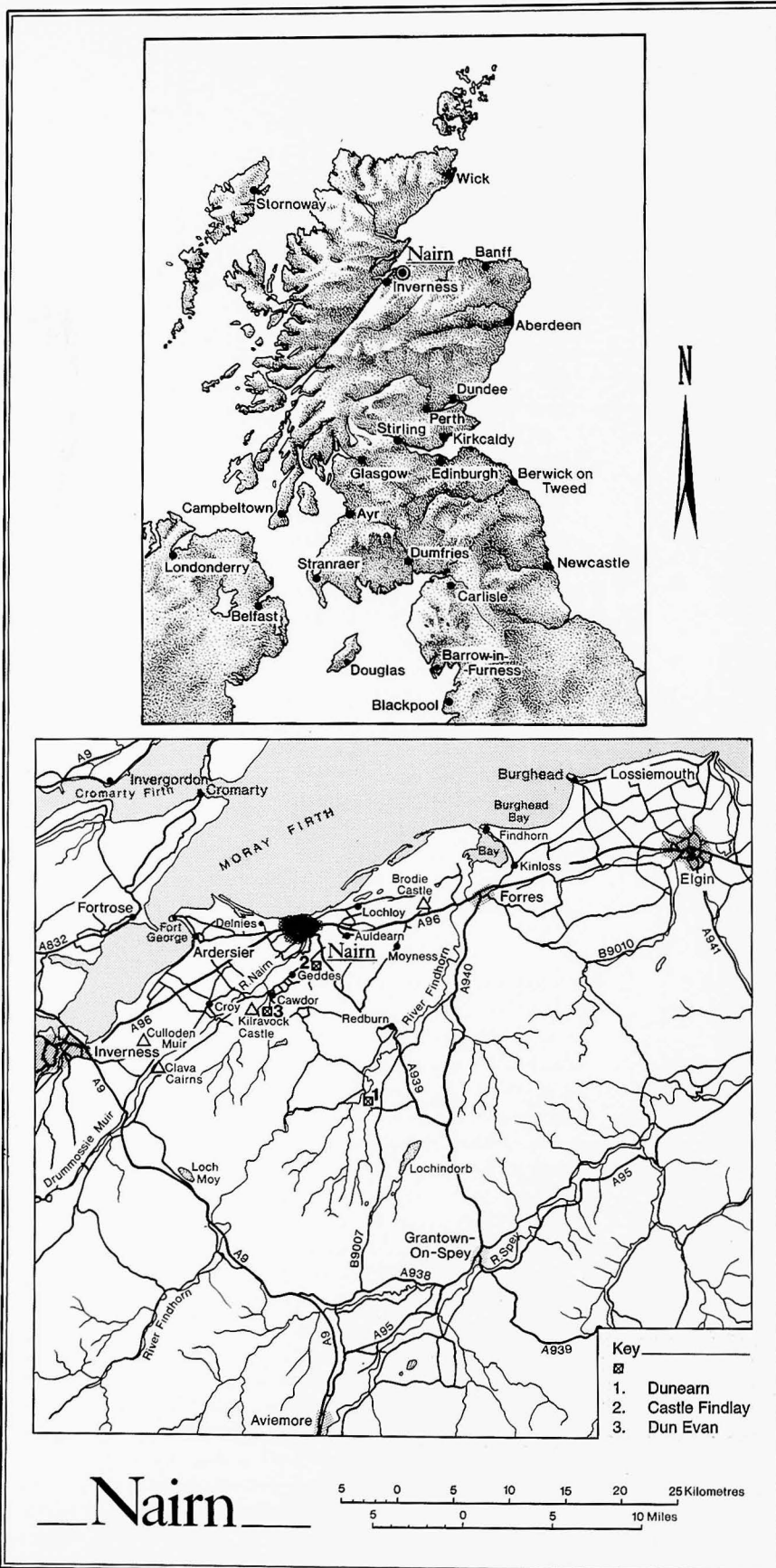


figure 1
Location of Nairn

ancient mountain systems which have been largely eroded by later events.⁸ On the basis of their age and structural history, the metamorphic rocks on the mainland can be divided into two groups.⁹ The older group is known as the Moines and comprises largely schists and granulites. The younger group occupies the south-east Highlands in a zone from Kintyre to Buchan and is known as Dalradian; this consists primarily of schists, grits, quartzite and limestone—the constituents of the Grampians.

The basic grain of the Highlands was established during a period known as the Caledonian mountain building episode, which ended about 400 million years ago. Rocks experienced great upheavals during this period and many of the north-east to south-west aligned structures, such as the Great Glen and the Highland Boundary fault, were formed.¹⁰

Sedimentary rocks occupy a much smaller area of the Highlands and Islands. On the mainland there are two main areas, a coastal zone 16–32 km wide, stretching from Cape Wrath to the Sound of Sleat and an east coast area, extending from around the shores of the Moray Firth through Caithness to Orkney, within which lies Nairn.¹¹ The two areas are very different, with the western area comprising sandstone and limestone, approximately 800 to 500 million years old, and the eastern area consisting of sandstone and shales 400 to 350 million years old. The western region is characterised by great mountain glens and valley systems; the eastern area by lowlands.

the Ice Age

About three million years ago, a deterioration in climate led to the build up of glaciers and ice sheets. Fragments of rock embedded in clay or silt (glacial till) were laid down by the ice across much of the Highlands; and rivers of glacial meltwaters, flowing off the ice, also deposited sands and gravels. These latter originally covered the valley floors, but thousands of years of erosion have largely removed all trace of them. In response to expanding and retreating glaciers, the sea level fluctuated. As a result, sands and gravels have been left stranded up to 39 m above present sea level. Raised beaches, as they are known, are common features around the Inner Hebrides, in Argyll and around the Moray Firth.

the post-glacial period

The period after the Ice Age has also resulted in some major changes to the coastlines of the Highlands and Islands; and it was this environment that the first human settlers encountered. Just over 10,000 years ago there was a sudden warming of the climate and within a few hundred years the ice had completely melted. The sea level, which had fallen by about 100 m during the Ice Age when water had been locked up as ice, began to rise as glacial meltwater streams poured out. The loss of the great weight of the ice sheets, however, caused the land to rise, and for a long time there was a complex interplay between the rising land and the rising level of the sea. About 8,000 years ago the sea level was rising faster than the land was rising in Scotland, but for the last 6,000 years the sea level has been falling relative to the land. Evidence of these changes can be seen as raised beaches that lie up to 9 m above the reach of the sea, around the coast of the Moray Firth.

The environment opened up to a climatic optimum some 8,500 years ago; and from then on Scotland offered an attractive base for year-round human occupation.¹² Rising temperatures brought changes in flora and fauna, with tree growth extensive throughout Europe. Conifers were the first to arrive, followed by birch and hazel. These gave way to oak and elm, with areas of scrub gradually replacing the coniferous forest. Reindeer were replaced by roe deer, red deer, elk and wild cattle. A climatic deterioration to cooler, wetter conditions from about 3,000 BC onwards, however, saw the decline of the elm and the rapid spread of blanket peat, heath and grassland over previously forested areas. Early farming communities also played a part in this deforestation (*see* p 9).

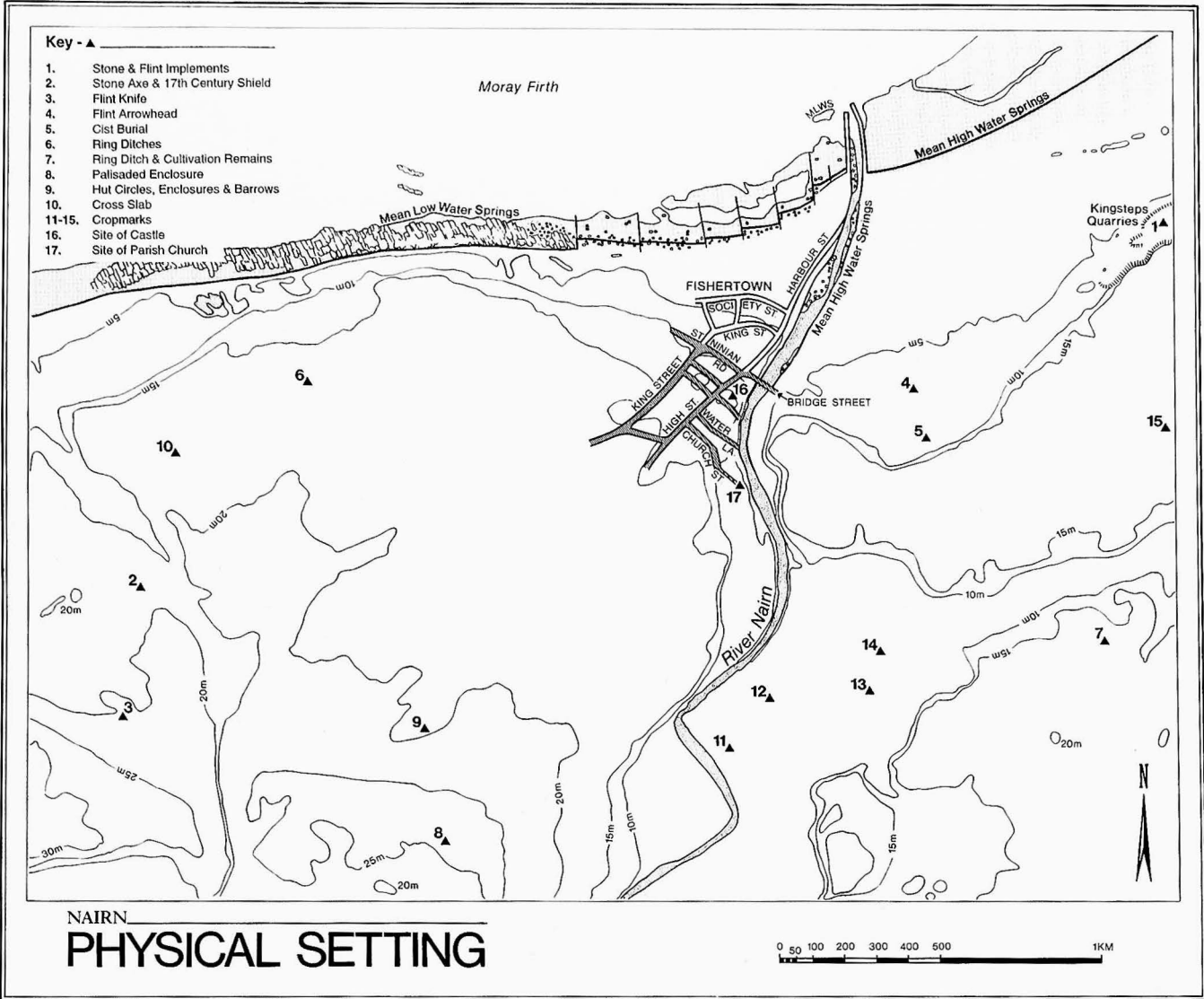


figure 2
The physical setting of
Nairn

climate, soils and agriculture

The Old Red Sandstone rocks around the shores of the Moray Firth and in Caithness provide the most extensive areas of low altitude anywhere in the Highlands. Here, a coastal zone is backed by low mountains with rounded summits of between 300 m and 450 m height. The valleys leading down to the firths are characterised by wide terraces cut into fluvioglacial sands and gravels.

A lowland belt of agriculturally rich land some 5 km wide, broadening to about 13 km around Elgin, extends along the coast for about 64 km. Arable farmland is broken by heathland and forest on the heavier glacier soils and glacial hummocks and, along the coast, by afforested dunes.¹³ Well sheltered in the milder conditions of the Moray Firth, the area enjoys low rainfall and much sunshine. The mountains of the Highlands remove much of the moisture from the Atlantic winds, giving Moray and Nairn climates much drier (95 cm of rainfall per year, on average) than other places of similar altitudes near the west coast.¹⁴ Mists are so infrequent that two large military airfields have been sited here.¹⁵ The light and fertile soils support grain-growing, arable roots and livestock feeding, as well as vegetable and soft fruit production. The soils, however, tend to dry easily and blown sand is a problem (*see* p 21 & 33). The poorer uplands and the glacial hummocks have been left as heathland and forest or used as grazing.

In 1905, a survey showed Moray and Nairn as the most densely wooded counties of Scotland. More recently, in one of Britain's greatest afforestation achievements, 6,000 acres (2,428 hectares) of the Culbin Sands, Scotland's 'miniature Sahara', were planted.¹⁶

the topography of the burgh

The medieval burgh comprised a single thoroughfare—High Street. Aligned north-east to south-west, it skirts the edge of a ridge which slopes down to the west bank of the River Nairn **figure 2**. There were two fords across the river: one at the north end of High Street, at approximately the position of the present bridge; and the other at the south end, by the church, which is now in ruins.

One of the most notable and dominant features of the medieval townscape was the castle. Probably first established some time in the twelfth century (*see* p 14), it stood at the north end of High Street, on the east side. It was probably of earthen construction, which was later, at least partially, replaced in stone (*see* p 19). The site of the present-day Constabulary Gardens is thought to mark its location. A medieval chapel, also of twelfth-century date, lay near the castle, but some distance back from the High Street frontage. The tolbooth is thought to have stood on the site occupied by the present council offices, centrally placed along High Street, on the west side. The market cross and tron stood nearby, although the former was moved on several occasions. A mill is also on record, but its location is unknown. The flattish terrace where the ruins of the parish church stand may be a candidate for the site of the mill. Numerous vennels provided access between the properties laid out on the burgh plots, extending eastwards to the river and westwards to outlying fields. Many of these vennels have been renamed, or disappeared altogether.

The harbour works **figure 3**, which today attract numerous pleasure craft, are an early nineteenth-century creation which provided a huge impetus to Nairn's fishing industry. Prior to that, the course of the river had changed regularly, making it difficult to establish a harbour anywhere other than at the estuary itself. At times, the river had cut north-westwards across the links, where Fishertown stands today, and at other times, north-eastwards towards Kingsteps (*see* pp 16, 27, 31 & 35).



figure 3
Nairn from the air
in 1946,
before major
reconstruction works
© Crown Copyright:
RCAHMS

notes

- 1 G W S Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland, 1000–1306* (London, 1981), 89. For further discussion of this point, see p 14.
- 2 R Nicholson, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974), 77.
- 3 E Simpson, *Banff, Moray & Nairn* (Edinburgh, 1992), 150.
- 4 J Keay & J Keay, *Collins Encyclopaedia of Scotland* (London, 1994), 726.
- 5 *Ibid*, 726–27.
- 6 C J Brown & B M Shipley, *Soil Survey of Scotland: South East Scotland. Soil and Land Capability for Agriculture*. (The Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, Aberdeen, 1982), 2. The three major land divisions (Highlands, Midland Valley and Southern Uplands) are according to J B Sissons, *The Geomorphology of the British Isles: Scotland* (London, 1976).
- 7 E Edmonds, *The Geological Map: Anatomy of a Landscape* (London, 1983), 16.
- 8 R Price, *Highland Landforms* (Aberdeen, 1991), 15.
- 9 *Ibid*, 15.
- 10 *Ibid*, 15–16.
- 11 *Ibid*, 17–18.
- 12 C Wickham-Jones, *Scotland's First Settlers* (London, 1994), 45–6.
- 13 *TSA*, 21.
- 14 *Ibid*, 29–30.
- 15 *Ibid*, 27.
- 16 *Ibid*, 36.

Little archaeological work has been undertaken within the historic core of Nairn to date, and most of the stray finds that have been reported are prehistoric. The area around Nairn, however, is rich in sites and finds from all periods of prehistory and history. A basic introduction to the prehistory and early history of the area is included here, in order to place the sites and finds in context and provide a broader framework within which to study the origins of the medieval burgh.

early prehistory

The earliest settlement of Scotland occurred around 7,500 BC, when much of Scotland was covered in dense woodland which supported a rich variety of game, particularly red deer. The few Mesolithic (literally meaning Middle Stone Age) settlements known in Scotland tend to be found along the coastline and river banks. These communities were ‘hunter-gatherers’, who ate fish and shellfish, followed herds of woodland game through the seasons, and supplemented their diet with wild plants and berries. Their semi-nomadic existence has left few archaeological traces, although shell middens and flint tools are common finds along former river and coastlines.

It used to be thought that the north of Scotland was settled relatively late—perhaps not until the arrival of the first farmers (3,500–4,000 BC). One Mesolithic settlement site, however, has been discovered in the Moray Firth area, at Castle Street, Inverness.¹ Interestingly, the excavation had been designed to recover evidence of the medieval town, but buried beneath the medieval levels were the remains of a flint-working site. Nearly 5,000 lithics were recovered, virtually all of flint derived from beach pebbles, as well as a possible hearth. Charcoal from the hearth produced a radiocarbon date of *c* 5,800 BC, making this one of the earliest settlement sites in Scotland. Flint tools were also discovered at Kingsteps Quarry **figure 2**, encased in a layer of peat, radiocarbon dated to *c* 5,500 BC. Shell middens (often called ‘kitchen middens’) have been recorded in and around Inverness and the Moray Firth coastline, but few have been investigated archaeologically. These middens comprise layers of bone, shell and other domestic refuse, and can provide an invaluable insight into the diet and lifestyle of these early hunter-gatherer communities. A number of such middens were recorded between Delnies and Fort George in the nineteenth century, but no trace survives today. In short, although Mesolithic sites and finds are scarce in the north of Scotland, early peoples were clearly present here and more evidence will probably come to light in time.²

Around 3,500 BC, people began to live a more settled existence in response to changes in the environment and to ideas introduced from continental Europe. Large areas of woodland were cleared by burning and the felling of trees with stone tools, livestock was kept and the land was farmed for crops. Two stone axes, of the sort which would have been used to clear woodland, have been found in Nairn, at the Links and at Tradespark.³ The transition was gradual, with both ways of life—that of hunter-gatherers and of farmers—probably occurring together for some time.

Few traces of the Neolithic (New Stone Age) settlements survive, but the landscape still bears testament to the presence of these people in the form of their ritual enclosures (including henges) and burial mounds. These early farming groups buried their dead in communal stone-built chambered cairns or in barrows of wood and turf, which sometimes contained large numbers of burials.⁴ The considerable regional variation in the types and styles of these monuments no doubt reflects local traditions and perhaps the origins of the societies which used them.⁵ The tombs probably became a focus for ritual where elaborate ceremonies took place, perhaps in celebration of the ancestors; ancestry is thought to have been of central importance to early agricultural communities, for group identity, power structure and claim to land.⁶

The study of chambered tombs in Scotland has identified several distinct groupings, of which the Clava type passage graves and ring cairns are unique to Inverness and adjacent counties. At Balnuaran of Clava **figure 1**, near Culloden, a ring cairn separates two passage graves. This monument, which has on-site interpretation, is in the care of the

Secretary of State for Scotland and is open to the public throughout the year. Recent excavations are producing a fuller understanding of the origin and character of the monuments at Clava. With no roofed central chamber, but with massive inner and outer kerb-stones instead, ring cairns did not require passages. Of the dozen or so known examples, most have an outer circle of standing stones. The kerb stones and outer stones were often graded in height, with the largest on the south-west. The passage graves have round chambers at the centre of substantial circular cairns, approached by long passages. Ten of the eleven known examples have an outer circle of standing stones. Most passage graves elsewhere in Scotland face east, but the Clava tombs face south-west, on a line that points to the midwinter sunset. Three distinct features set the Clava tombs apart from the main passage grave tradition and suggest that here is a locally evolved group⁷—they appear to have been constructed as a single event, with no hint of any secondary building or alterations; the stones are graded in height; and there are cup-markings on the stones. Unfortunately, excavations have so far produced little dating evidence.

Henges—circular spaces or platforms, defined by an inner ditch and surrounded by an outer earthen bank, within which timber posts, or occasionally standing stones, were erected—may have been the meeting places of these early farming communities. They may also have been the venue for a variety of rituals and ceremonies. Henges are much rarer than funerary monuments and, again, few have been examined in any detail. Excavations at Balfarg, at Glenrothes in Fife, show this henge to have been in use for a period of nearly 1,500 years, beginning around 3,000 BC. There are two possible examples of henges in and around Nairn—at Lagnagreishach Wood (NH 8096 5558) and Lochside (NH 8124 5239).⁸

By about 2,500 BC, society was gradually changing again. Stone circles were erected, apparently incorporating in their design an awareness of the rising and setting of the sun and moon.⁹ The discovery of Bronze Age burials within these circles shows remarkable longevity and demonstrates the respect in which they were held by later generations. In the Nairn area, robbed-out Clava-type cairns can be mistaken for stone circles, but possible sites include Auldearn (NH 9247 5530) and Flemington (NH 80 53).¹⁰

The tradition of monumental tombs containing large numbers of burials waned in favour of a new trend for single grave burials. These Bronze Age peoples developed metalworking and new styles of pottery, and began to live in unenclosed settlements. Inhumation and cremation were both practised during the Bronze Age. In both traditions the body, or an urn containing cremated remains, is usually contained within a small stone-lined cist beneath a stone cairn, although some cremation urns were placed in a pit. Very often the cairn has been robbed away, leaving only the cist. Some were single, isolated burials but others were part of larger cemeteries. Cairns were often re-used, and can contain a number of later burials inserted into the flanks or top of the mound. Personal possessions, such as pottery vessels, flint blades and arrows, were often placed in the grave. Cremation burials have been found at Nairnside (NH 829 502) and Lochside (NH 8113 5237), but more recent discoveries have provided an insight into prehistoric burial practices. At Lochloy, on the east bank of the River Nairn, just north of the railway line, a cist was discovered in which the body was buried sitting up, possibly tied, in a foetal position.¹¹ The grave comprised a box-like structure of sandstone flags, set on edge. At Mains of Balnagowan (NH 8109 5465), the grave of a female was discovered within a cist of red sandstone, set in a pit. The body was placed on its right side and was accompanied by a beaker placed behind the head and a flint flake which lay beneath the pelvis **figure 4**. Interestingly, the floor of the grave was formed of a bed of coloured pebbles.¹²

Discoveries of Bronze Age metalwork—both single items and hoards—are also fairly common. The more elaborate of the axes, often found in pristine condition, may have been for prestige or ceremonial purposes rather than for purely functional use, indicating widening trade links and a growing elite in society. Two flat axes have been found in and around Nairn, and a spearhead was found at Balnagowan.¹³ At Woodend (NH 9465 5774), a hoard of metalwork was found, comprising a socketed spearhead, a socketed hammer and an anvil, all of bronze.



figure 4
Bronze Age cist,
Mains of Balnagowan

Evidence for Bronze Age settlement is as elusive as for the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Of the few settlement sites that have been discovered, most are found in the islands and on the higher moorlands of Perthshire, Sutherland and Peeblesshire. Groups of unenclosed hut circles are often found in association with field systems, linear stone banks and clearance cairns. Groups of hut circles have been identified locally at Balnagowan Wood (NH 817 551) and Geddes House (NH 8884 5238), but without excavation their dates remain uncertain.¹⁴

later prehistory

Whereas knowledge of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement is rather poor,¹⁵ by the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, settlements begin to dominate the archaeological landscape. These include numerous fortified settlements, ranging from large hill forts to enclosed villages and isolated single family dwellings. The end of the Bronze Age, around 600 BC, was a time of considerable change. Iron tools begin to appear in the archaeological record. Society seems generally to have been more competitive, with the emergence of tribal groups perhaps competing for territory and natural resources,¹⁶ although less defensive types of settlement also existed. It was this perhaps more fragmented society which the Romans encountered in the first century AD. The north-east of Scotland was never fully part of the Roman empire, but it was the scene of several military campaigns.

The increasing use of aerial photography as a survey technique in recent years has led to the identification of a huge number of previously unknown archaeological sites, the vast majority of which survive only as cropmarks. Without excavation these sites are often difficult to ascribe to any particular period, but they have greatly increased our awareness of the complexity of prehistoric settlement patterns. A broad range of settlement types

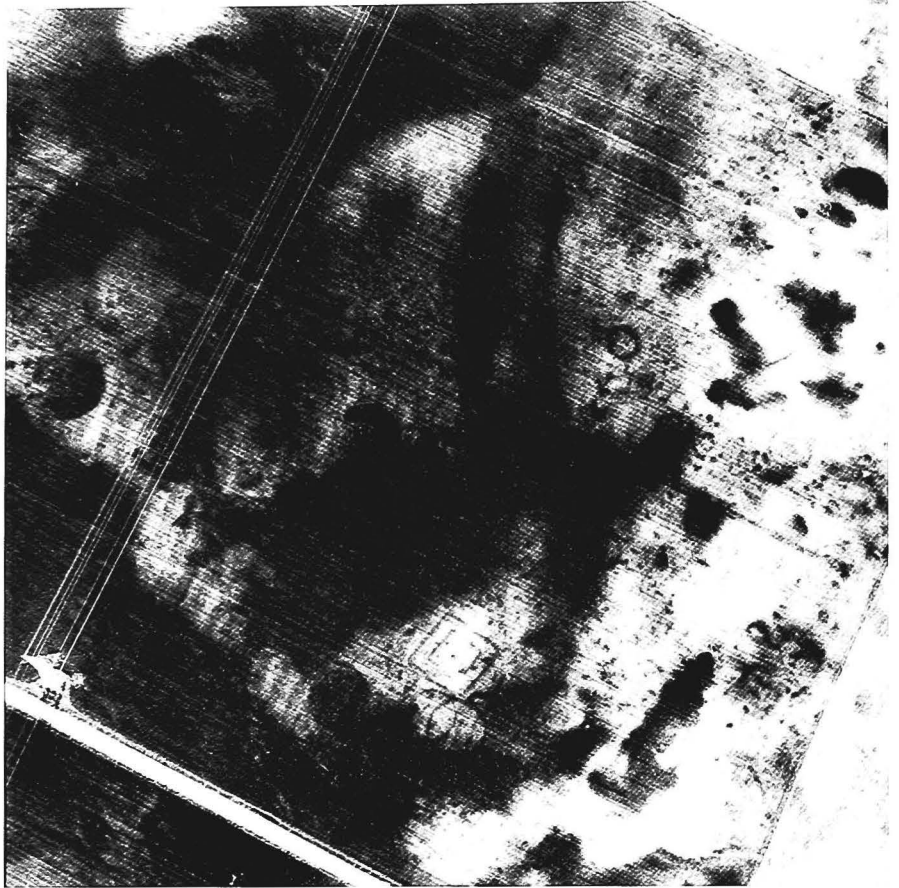


figure 5

Prehistoric settlement
and square barrow,
Kinchyle
© Crown Copyright:
RCAHMS

has now been recognised—forts, palisaded homesteads and settlements, brochs, duns, crannogs, souterrains and wheelhouses, some of which have a wide distribution throughout Scotland, while others are more regional. There are several forts in the Nairn area, three of which can be visited: Dun Evan, Castle Findlay and Dunearn.¹⁷ All three show signs of vitrification, suggesting that the ramparts were timber-laced and had been set on fire at some point, either deliberately or accidentally.

Iron Age burials are comparatively rare but, again, aerial photography is proving useful in identifying new sites. In particular, increasing numbers of square barrow cemeteries, commonly found in Yorkshire, are now being discovered in Scotland. The barrow, which is surrounded by a ditch, overlies a centrally-placed grave pit. The burial would probably have been contained within a wooden coffin. In the Nairn area, a square barrow has recently been identified at Kinchyle (NH 859 531) **figure 5**, within a larger complex of circular enclosures, ring ditches and a double-ditched square enclosure. It is not possible to assign a definite Iron Age date to this barrow without excavation. Square barrows dating to the early historic period have also been found in Scotland. At Nairn itself, a complex of huts, a large defended enclosure and barrows stretches for 3 km south-west of the town **figure 6**.

the early historic period

Major changes occurred in the political organisation of Scotland in the period after the withdrawal of the Romans. By the third century AD, the numerous tribal groups recorded in Ptolemy's *Geography* were coalescing into larger confederacies; and, by the fourth century, these confederacies seem to have merged into an even larger grouping known as the Picts. By around the middle of the first millennium AD, the Pictish kingdom dominated Scotland north of the Forth and Clyde estuaries, attested to by a startling heritage of carved stones, spread throughout the north-east. The exception was Argyll, occupied by the Dál Riata Gaels originally from north-east Ireland, whose name *Gaedil*



figure 6

Prehistoric settlement,
Nairn
© Crown Copyright:
RCAHMS

became translated into Latin as *Scoti*. Eventually, of course, the *Scoti* came to dominate and gave their name to Scotland, but not until the mid ninth century AD, when Kenneth mac Alpin (c 843–58) established royal, political and cultural supremacy over the Pictish kingdom.

This period also saw the introduction of Christianity to Scotland. From his base at Whithorn, Wigtownshire, St Ninian is reputed to have led the first Christian mission to southern Pictland in the early fifth century AD; but monks from the monastery of Iona, founded by St Columba in AD 563, undoubtedly had more impact in most of Pictland. The conversion of Pictland was completed possibly before the end of the seventh century AD.

The Picts spoke a Celtic language, closely related to Old Welsh. At first sight, they are easy to identify in the archaeological record, as their stone sculptures make them the best known historical people of early Scotland. But they also remain the least understood and their sculpture, of which new examples are found regularly, mask the difficulties that archaeologists face when identifying the rest of their material culture.

Pictish stones fall into two main categories—symbol stones and carved cross-slabs.¹⁸ The underlying geology of the Moray Firth (Old Red Sandstone) provided a convenient medium for these carvings, and it has been suggested that they originated from this area. Symbol stones, known as Class I stones, are the earlier of the two and were probably erected all over Pictland in the later seventh century and the first half of the eighth century AD. Symbols, such as animals (boar, bull, eagle, snake, fish), or objects (mirror, tongs, comb) were cut into one face of an unworked slab or boulder. More abstract designs are also common, such as the double-disc and Z-rod and the crescent and V-rod. The purpose of these stones and their siting can only be guessed at, but they may have been grave stones, land boundaries or memorial stones. Cross-slabs (Class II stones) with symbols overlap the Class I stones in time span. The symbols are found in pairs or in multiples. They are carved on both sides of the stone and many stand adjacent to churches or in graveyards. A third category, cross-slabs without symbols (Class III stones), may have

been contemporary and probably continued after the absorption of the Pictish kingdom into that of the Scots after AD 843. Again, these crosses served a variety of purposes, such as preaching crosses, a focus for processions and prayer and grave-markers.¹⁹

Two Pictish stones have been found in the Nairn area. One small, unweathered fragment of a Class III stone was found at Achareidh House (NH 868 564) in 1891. A key-pattern is carved on one face.²⁰ The second stone, the Kebbuck Stone (also referred to as Kebach or Keubbock), stands as an upright cross-slab to a height of *c.* 1.7 m. Sculpted in relief on one side (although no longer visible) was a cross with a circle. The back of the stone was heavily eroded but traces of deeply scored hollows and a later inscribed circle could be discerned.

The digging of the foundations of a block of kennels in 1896, immediately adjacent to the Kebbuck Stone, uncovered the grave of a male. The body had been laid out east to west with the feet at the east end. The grave lay at a depth of *c.* 0.75 m, cut into hard gravel, with square blocks of stone laid over the body in the form of an arch. No grave goods were found.²¹

medieval Nairn

The name of Nairn is believed to mean ‘the mouth of the river of alders’, which aptly describes the situation of the town **figure 2**;²² although an alternative theory is that it derives from the Indo-European root ‘ner’ meaning dive, cave or submerge, from the river name Narenta in Illyria, as is the case in a number of other European towns, such as Narais in France and Narasa in Lithuania.²³ When first founded, the burgh’s name was Invernairn. This was in use until at least the reign of Robert I (1306–29), after which time the preferred nomenclature was Nairn,²⁴ although the name ‘Invernarne’ appears in a rental account due to the Knights of St John as late as 1540.²⁵

Invernairn was established as a royal burgh probably sometime towards the end of the twelfth century. A charter of Alexander II (1214–49), dated between 1215 and 1226, refers to his predecessor, William the Lion (1165–1214), setting aside lands, with the purpose of founding a castle and burgh of Invernairn.²⁶ Nairn Castle was certainly built by 1196, when King William stayed there in the autumn and received hostages from Harold, earl of Caithness and Orkney.²⁷ It has been argued, however, that the king was merely re-establishing or enlarging an existing castle at Invernairn which, during the twelfth century, had belonged to the bishops of Moray.²⁸ This ancient castle was reputedly captured by the Danes in the reign of Malcolm I (943–54).²⁹ The chronicler Fraser, writing in 1666, maintained that the castle of Nairn was standing in the reign of Alexander I (1106–24).³⁰ In the nineteenth century, there was a local tradition of an older castle nearer the shore, the ruins of which remained standing.

Somewhat intriguingly, Timothy Pont’s *Map of Murray* **figure 7**, *c.* 1590, depicts a ruined castle surrounded by the waters of the Moray Firth—the sole reference found by the authors to a castle so far to the north of the town. Were the ruins those of the supposed twelfth-century bishop’s residence, or those of Nairn Castle? Or is this a rare error on the part of the usually reliable Pont? The coastline is notoriously unstable in this area, and the River Nairn also moved its course dramatically many times during the historic period under discussion. Is there here an isolated clue to the fact that early Nairn, as other settlements along this coast, was inundated with water? It is normally the case that early settlements clustered near (if not immediately beside) a bishop’s fortification or a royal castle. If this were the case with Nairn, the classic burgh plan of medieval Nairn, still to be seen today, may not be the first burghal lay-out, but a later plan, perhaps of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, the earlier burghal settlement having been abandoned. Such a possibility can not as yet be proved or disproved, but this late sixteenth-century map may be an indication that Nairn, like some other burghs, was either forced or chose to change its early focal point and elect for a town on a more protected site.

The burgh was sufficiently well established by 1204 for there to be a royal sheriff of Invernairn;³¹ and sometime between 1211 and 1214, probably in 1211,³² William the Lion



figure 7

Mapp of Murray

by Timothy Pont, c 1590

issued a charter from the burgh.³³ This implies that Invernairn was not only established, but was also capable of offering accommodation and services fitting for the presence of the royal court.

Some three miles away there was another early burgh, Earn (Auldearn), which had been established by at least 1179x82, when William the Lion granted a toft (burgage plot) there to Kinloss Abbey.³⁴ This was a quite separate burgh from Invernairn; some believe, however, that Earn and its castle were deliberately abandoned when the new castle and burgh of Invernairn were established.³⁵ In 1187, William I was based in Inverness, during an attempt to quash the rebellious activities of Donald MacWilliam, a claimant to the throne. It was at this point that the castle of Earn was betrayed to the rebels by one of the king's servants; and possibly this factor persuaded the king to set up or extend the castle at Nairn and establish a burgh beside it at the mouth of the River Nairn.³⁶ Whether or not the castle and burgh of Invernairn were intended to replace Earn, a confirmation charter of Alexander II of 1226 is the last reference to the earlier burgh, until the burgh of Auldearn appears on record again in 1511. This might confirm a late twelfth/early thirteenth-century desertion of Earn in favour of the new burgh.

What is certain is that this new burgh of Invernairn was a quite deliberate plantation of a burgh and associated castle. It is very probable, however, that there was some settlement here before the founding of the burgh. The mouth of the River Nairn probably offered a safe haven for small boats in the early historic period and before. The River Nairn, however, has altered its course over the years, at one time flowing over the Links to the north-west of the town and in the eighteenth century entering the sea at the 'Water Mouth', near the Kingsteps quarries, to the east of the town. The river was readily fordable, and this would also attract settlement. From here, there was also an easy crossing to Cromarty and the far north. Whether, however, this was the site of the ninth-century *burg* of Earl Sigurd of Orkney is less clear.³⁷ It has been claimed that Nairn was one of the fishing ports on the Moray Firth that were involved in the 'hanse', that is trading partnership, in the early twelfth century;³⁸ and also that Nairn was first mentioned in 1008.³⁹ Certainly, the confirmation by King William to Richard, bishop of Moray, sometime in the 1180s, possibly 1187x9,⁴⁰ of the 'capella de Inuenaren' indicates an already existing chapel at Invernairn, which would presuppose at least a little settlement nearby.⁴¹ It is, however, unclear precisely when this area was first settled.

As a deliberate plantation, it is safe to assume that the burgh would have been laid out formally in burgage plots. It was claimed in the eighteenth century that the town was originally in a different place from its eighteenth-century position;⁴² though whether this claim held any truth is unclear. It is a strong possibility, however, that the burgage plots were laid out along the line of the present High Street, running back in a herringbone pattern from the main thoroughfare. The burgage plots to the west of the High Street probably terminated at a back lane, part of which, centuries later, became King Street. The plots to the east may have run down to the river. There is no documentary evidence to confirm the original lay-out of the town; and only archaeological research will throw further light on this. The planning of the burgh would have been effected by burghal officers, known as liners; in all probability a senior liner would have been brought from another burgh to supervise, as happened, for example, in Glasgow and St Andrews.⁴³

The indigenous people would have had their numbers swollen by others in the vicinity, some possibly from Earn, and by incomers from further afield. To encourage burgesses to settle in a new burgh, a period of time, called *kirseth*, was set aside, during which the burgess was permitted to set up his dwelling on the allocated burgage plot without payment of burghal dues. The normal period of *kirseth* was one year and a day, although in some burghs, such as Dingwall, which proved more difficult to attract incomers, up to seven or ten years might be granted. There is no record of Invernairn's *kirseth* period.

There were advantages to be gained by becoming a member of the burgess community. Although subject to its overlord, which in Invernairn's case was the king, the burgh gained the right to have burghal officers who were appointed to deal with the routine running of the burgh. At first, these were probably royal appointments, but in

time the bailies were chosen from, and by, the community. The chief officer of the burgh was the *prepositus*, later called the provost. From the fifteenth century, starting with John Rose of Broadley in 1450, until 1782, this position became monopolised by the various Rose families, whose ancestral seat was at Kilravock Castle.⁴⁴ All burgesses had a duty to attend the head courts, held three times a year, where major decisions concerning the burgh were taken. This was supplemented by the regular meetings of the burgh council and burgh court, both of which—by the time records are extant—were controlled by the burgesses. As well as this potential for self-government, burghs received a further powerful advantage: the right to hold fairs and markets, at which they could raise tolls, or market dues, from those who attended. Allied to this was the bestowal by the crown of a hinterland on the burgh. All within this hinterland were to attend the burgh's market and were forbidden to sell produce or goods elsewhere. This gave a new burgh not only a source of income, but also a potentially strong hold over the surrounding rural area.

The rights gained by Invernairn when it was founded as a royal burgh probably changed little, if at all, when it became, for a period of time, a baronial burgh. In 1312, Robert I bestowed the burgh on Thomas Randolph, earl of Moray.⁴⁵ A little later, it was granted by Robert I to his brother-in-law, Hugh (later earl) de Ross, to be held by the earls of Ross of the earls of Moray.⁴⁶ This close connection of Nairn with the earldom of Ross was to last into the fifteenth century.⁴⁷ The men of Nairn were, for example, summoned to support Donald, Lord of the Isles, sheriff of Nairn and claimant to the earldom of Ross in 1411.⁴⁸ In 1462, after the treaty of Westminster-Ardtornish, John, fourth Lord of the Isles demanded rents and revenues from both Nairn and Inverness and appointed his son, Angus, as his lieutenant over the two burghs.⁴⁹ By 1475, however, there came the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles. The following year, with the restoration of the lordship, the earldom of Ross was not included and the burgh remained as it had become the previous year, a royal burgh.

Little is known of Nairn in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but there are one or two pointers. In 1292, the payment by the burgesses of Nairn of 50 shillings as their Pentecost farms (dues to the crown), compared with those of Inverness (45s) and Forres (26s 8d), suggests that the town was not insignificant in the north of Scotland.⁵⁰ By 1483, however, when Nairn participated in a taxation levy for burghs north of the Forth, it was taxed at £2, compared with Elgin's £3, Forres's £6 and Inverness's £10.⁵¹ The Knights Templar held four roods of land in the town, as did the abbots of Arbroath, in an area between Kildrummie Road and the river. It is known, also, that the earls of Ross occasionally resided in the town.⁵² The thanes of Cawdor held land within Nairn: at Balmakeith, Millbank (two roods), Gallowslands (six roods) and Skateraw (two roods).⁵³ The presence of such personages, albeit on an irregular basis, would imply that the town itself, as opposed to the castle, was of sufficient standing to house persons of importance.

The castle would have continued to dominate the townscape. By the thirteenth century, the sheriffs of Nairn were the *ex officio* keepers of the castle; and there is reference to Alexander de Moravia, the keeper in 1264, being repaid his expenses for plastering the hall, placing locks on the doors of the keep and supplying cables for the drawbridge.⁵⁴ In 1291, the keeper was one Thomas Braythoft. He received six merks sterling as his fee from Alexander Husband, the *prepositus* of the burgh, which was raised from burghal funds. He was also keeper of Cromarty Castle, and his fee for keeping both was half a merk per day. The constable of Nairn Castle at this time was Sir Gervase de Raithe [Rait], who was also responsible for some of the keeper's fee.⁵⁵

Nairn Castle was to play a strategic role in campaigns in the north of Scotland during the Wars of Independence. English commissioners, on their way to meet the young Margaret of Norway in Orkney, took horse and coach as far as Nairn in August 1290. They probably rested overnight in the castle. Two weeks later, on hearing of her death, they returned to the town, where they paid for fifteen days forage for their horses, had their horses shod and the carriage repaired with iron. The struggle for control that resulted after the death of Margaret brought Edward I of England (1272–1307) to

Scotland; Nairn Castle was handed over to him in May 1291, which would imply that it was not totally destroyed, as has been suggested.⁵⁶

The presence of the castle, as well as offering protection to the local people and making demands on them for services and supplies, could also bring hardship to them and to the town. This occurred with some regularity during the early years of the Wars of Independence. Nairn was attacked sometime around 1296 by Andrew Moray of Petty, in rebellion.⁵⁷ This must have brought some devastation to the town. It was, however, in Edward I's possession once more in 1303; but in the autumn of that year Climes of Ross recaptured it. On this occasion, he burned the thatched roof of the cottage next to the castle; whether deliberately or not is unclear. The following year, William Wallace probably passed through Nairn on his way to Cromarty via Ardersier.⁵⁸ The castle was burned by Robert I in 1307, during his campaigning in the north.⁵⁹ Some of the small wooden houses with thatched roofs must, inevitably, have been destroyed in the conflagration.

It is known that there was a mill in the township by at least 1232, as in this year four merks of its revenue were annually assigned to the Chapel of St Nicholas on the Spey.⁶⁰ The mill was acquired by William, thane of Cawdor, perhaps by purchase, sometime between 1469 and 1475.⁶¹ There were close links between the thanes and the town in the fifteenth century. Heritable constables of the castle for some time, they chose to live in it in the fifteenth century.⁶² An interesting reference in 1292 speaks of a burgher of Nairn who was called Adam of the Bridge.⁶³ There may, here, be an indication that a bridge was already in existence in the town, supplementing the ancient fords; and perhaps Adam was so named since he lived beside it. Alternatively, his home might have been beside the drawbridge of the castle.

The records also indicate that by 1492 the church of Nairn was functioning in a parochial capacity; and that the church was, at times, the place used for arbitration.⁶⁴ This was, in all probability, the church dedicated to St Thomas (*see* p 20),⁶⁵ although there was a Holy Rood Kirk, which stood near the castle and had an altar dedicated to St Modain.⁶⁶ This latter may have been a church or chapel associated with the castle.

the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

Nairn's status as a burgh was confirmed by a charter of James VI (1567–1625) in October 1589. The king was, in effect, approving all the grants of privileges made by his predecessors to the 'provost, bailies, council and community of the burgh of Nairn'. These included rights to hold burgh tenements and lands, to draw rentals from the same, to function with burghal officers and have a burgh council and enjoy 'all and sundry liberteis privelidges commodities affirmed and rightous pertinents pertaining or in any manner of way is known to pertain to the burgh', which included the authority to hold markets and fairs.⁶⁷ This ratification did not alter Nairn's status as a royal burgh, but merely confirmed how the town was already functioning. Nairn had been, for example, represented in parliament from 1567.⁶⁸ In February 1589, Nairn, as the head of the sheriffdom, had been chosen as one of the seats for a justiciary court, along with the sheriffdoms of Banff, Elgin and Forres.⁶⁹

In 1581, the provost and bailies of Nairn could be witnessed in one of their traditional roles: ensuring the peace. They were made responsible, along with the sheriff of Nairn, for the protection of red fish and the fry of all fish in the water of Nairn.⁷⁰ Fishing was an important part of the economy in the Nairn area. Some of the fishings were in private hands, the rights to fish salmon in the water of Nairn in 1574, for example, being held by Hugh Rose (Ross) of Kilravock.⁷¹ The previous year, the crown had transferred its rights to all fishings in the sea from the mouth of the Water of Nairn to John Hay of Lochloy's fishings, opposite his lands of Lochloy **figure 7**.⁷² Co-operation of the burgh authorities was deemed an essential part of the surveillance of protection of fishings in Nairn waters, possibly because it was the townsmen themselves who were fishing illegally.

There is further evidence of unlawful action in the town. In 1583, John Campbell of Cawdor, heritable constable of the castle of Nairn and sheriff of the shire of Nairn,

received a commission from James VI. The castle, which was the property of the crown, was reported to be 'ruynit and cassin down to the ground by certane inhabitantis of the burgh of Narne, and utheris his subjectis, and the hail materiallis thairof, lyme, stane, and tymmer, transportit, awaytakin and convertit to thair useis'. Campbell of Cawdor was given full authority to search out the miscreants and gain financial retribution from them.⁷³ Whether the extent of destruction of the castle was exaggerated is not known, but it would suggest that the castle was little used and, possibly, somewhat neglected by the constable. The implication, however, is that building works were on-going within the town.

Lack of documentary evidence makes it difficult to judge how much trade was being conducted through Nairn's market and port, or harbour, in this century. The customs of the burgh—the monies collected at the town's port and market—were granted, in 1505, for a space of five years to Andrew Aytoun, captain of the castle of Stirling, along with those of Elgin, Forres, Inverness, Dingwall, Tain and all other burghs north of Banff to Orkney. For this honour, he was to pay £50 annually.⁷⁴ The fact that James IV (1488–1513) wished to favour his captain at Stirling with financial reward would suggest that the combined total of all these customs was more than £50; but it also suggests that the customs of the individual burghs were possibly not unduly significant. In 1545, Mr Thomas Marjoribanks, a burges of Edinburgh, and his heirs were made, for a space of seven years, the custumars of the burgh of Inverness, and within all the bounds of Ross, Caithness and Sutherland, and other parts within the sheriffdoms of Inverness and 'Narne'.⁷⁵ He, also, would have expected to make a profit from this position; but the payment of £40 a year for the right to gather in the customs from an extensive area implies not only that the revenues of individual burgesses were slight, but also possibly declining. This might be confirmed by Nairn's consistent failure to attend the Convention of Royal Burghs and to pay its allocated dues to the appointed commissioners. Attendance could be costly, and Nairn pleaded poverty. This may have been exaggerated, but on 12 April 1589 the Convention did forgive Nairn its fine for failure to attend the previous convention, held in Glasgow in July 1588, which might suggest that Nairn's pleas were genuine.⁷⁶ Indeed, a further concession was made two days later. Nairn was to be exempted from attendance for three years, as long as it sent an agent from another burgh to represent it.⁷⁷ Nairn, however, was not alone in such exemptions, which continued into the seventeenth century (see pp 22–3). Many other small burghs were similarly dealt with, although checks were maintained to ensure that poverty was not exaggerated. In 1611, for example, Nairn was forced to produce 'ane perfytt rental of thair commoun landis and common gude'.⁷⁸ The fining of the town for failure to pay its £10 annual dues to the Exchequer in 1555, 1556 and 1599 would reinforce the view of the poverty of the burgh.⁷⁹

The little evidence that may be gained from stent rolls confirms that Nairn was not a wealthy town. In 1550, for example, it was to pay eight crowns, compared with Forres's twenty and Inverness's forty.⁸⁰ The stent for the marriage of Mary, queen of Scots (1542–67) in 1557 found Nairn rated at £34 10s, compared with Forres at £84 18s and Inverness at £168 15s.⁸¹ The end of the century brought little change. In 1597, Nairn was stented at 4s, while Forres was 6s and Elgin 13s 4d.⁸² Natural disasters might also add to hardship. In 1561, for example, the deanery of Moray suffered 'be reasoun of the evill growth of the cornis and the rying of the watter of Narne the said yeir'.⁸³ Although Nairn appears not to have been a large, prestigious town, it was expected to play its part in the defence of the realm. In 1594, for example, it was called, along with the sheriffdoms and burghs of Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin, Forres, Inverness and Cromarty, to meet with James VI in Aberdeen 'for the repression of the chief authors of...treasonable conspiracies': Francis Stewart, fifth earl Bothwell and the northern Catholic earls.⁸⁴

Little is known about the townscape in the sixteenth century. James VI noted the differing tongues in the town, the south-west end speaking Gaelic and the north-east fisher settlement speaking English. This was accounted for by the fact that the town stands across the line marking the division between the Highlands and the Lowlands, which was claimed to be near Rose Street.⁸⁵ The Scots tongue had gradually spread up the east coast

from Lothian and had probably reached Nairn by as early as the twelfth century.⁸⁶ While this gives no indication of the size of the town, the two settlements that effectively made up the burgh of Nairn were sufficiently distinct as to each have a character of their own.

When Mary, queen of Scots visited Nairn in the early 1560s, the town was still basically one long street, although certain topographical features, such as the 'Galois Field, Myll Bank, Skaytrawe, Balmakeith, King Steps and Househill' appear in the records by the early sixteenth century.⁸⁷ Its tolbooth, the visible expression of the lay community, was merely a low thatched building, jutting into the highway.⁸⁸ It was here that the burgh court and burgh council meetings were held; it probably also functioned as the town jail; and it was also where the weights for use at the market were retained for safe-keeping. It is safe to assume that the market cross and the tron, the public weigh-beam, stood nearby. There are references to the market cross from the early sixteenth century, but it was in all probability of much greater age.⁸⁹ The tolbooth was also the collection point for market dues, or tolls, from all those attending Nairn's market. Other collection points were often the town ports, or gates. These were usually placed at main entrances to the town and were more in the nature of psychological than genuinely defensive barriers. They were, however, closed at night at curfew; and they would be shut whenever plague was thought to be in the vicinity, for the protection of the townspeople. There is no mention of ports in Nairn; but as the medieval and sixteenth-century records are sparse, it should not be presumed that they did not exist. In all probability, there were two, each enclosing one end of the main street. The tenements on the west side of the road probably terminated at the back lane with some form of fencing or barriers at the 'heid dykes'. Entrance to the back lane and the common lands of the burgh beyond would have been gained by small gates.

Although a small town, Nairn still had the town houses of local gentry, which would have been more prestigious than the dwellings of the ordinary burghesses and indwellers. The Roses of Belivat, for example, had a house near Millbank; and the thanes of Cawdor held extensive holdings (*see* p 17).⁹⁰ The lands of the abbey of Arbroath and of the Knights Templar (*see* p 17) had passed into secular hands by the Reformation.⁹¹

In post-Reformation years, the church in the town was dedicated to St Ninian; it stood near St Ninian's Well.⁹² Its relationship to the late fifteenth-century church, possibly dedicated to St Thomas, is unclear (*see* p 18). The church of the town certainly appeared to have quasi-parochial rights at the time of the Reformation and was served by a vicar.⁹³ After the Reformation, the church dedicated to St Ninian was served by a number of exhorters and readers, such as John Young, possibly a canon from Fearn who was exhorter from 1567–68, and Nicholl Howieson, possibly a monk from Arbroath, who functioned as minister of Auldearn and had oversight of Nairn church from 1574 to 1580, assisted by John Ross in 1574, William Ross in 1576 and James Smyth from 1578 to 1580, as readers.⁹⁴ By 1571, it is known that repair work was to be effected on the choir of the church.⁹⁵ Whether the cause of damage was natural weathering, neglect or wilful harm is not clear.

More is known about Nairn when the records become a little more expansive in the seventeenth century; but the overall impression is still of a small town, and one that was increasingly struggling to keep its head above water, suffering from the Wars of the Covenant and their aftermath and domineering neighbours, in addition to the establishment of nearby burghs of barony, which were to be potential threats to the Nairn economy.

The town, with its market cross, tron and tolbooth set in a single street, was much as it had been in the sixteenth century. The tolbooth, as the most important secular building, was a major upkeep for the townspeople. It seems, however, to have been in constant need of repair, even before the Convention of Royal Burghs granted funds for its upkeep in 1698 (*see* p 24).⁹⁶ In 1667, timber was brought from Rothiemurchus to repair it; but three years later, it was deemed not able to offer shelter to a prisoner 'for want of roof and repairing'. One Thomas Ross, a preacher, was, therefore, removed to Tain for safekeeping. There seem to have been numerous occasions when security was so inadequate that it was broken into. The tolbooth had, by this time, a steeple, which suggests some improvements

over the previous century (*see* p 20). There were reputedly two bells in it by the turn of the century, one of which was given in 1707 to the parish church, which had none. One of these was probably that imported by the bailie, for which he was owed £78 in 1692 (*see* p 24). The outside staircase to the council chamber and prison projected over merchant booths at ground level.⁹⁷ The burgh council records refer to a weigh house in 1677. This may have been one and the same as the tron. The town weights at this time were a one stone weight, a half stone, a quarter weight, two pounds weight and a one pound weight. The weigh house was set to John Dallas, town treasurer, along with the shore dues. The mill and fishings were similarly feued; and a smithy was also rented out for £9 6s 8d.⁹⁸

The town's harbour and bridge also needed maintaining. Of the former, there is no detail; although when Sir Hugh Campbell of Cawdor arranged for barley to be transported to vessels sitting off Nairn in 1673, the water front was described as the 'port and shoar of Nairne'.⁹⁹ This suggests that there were no formal harbour works. The bridge was said to have been erected at the expense of Provost William Rose of Fleenas, in 1631. It has been claimed that this was the first bridge at Nairn,¹⁰⁰ but it is possible there was an earlier one (*see* p 18). In 1658, a new church was built on the site of the earlier one; it continued in use until 1808 (*see* pp 36–7).¹⁰¹ A new manse was built in 1659, but of this there is no detail.¹⁰² In 1661, the High Street was causeyed for the first time, although dung hills continued to be placed on it into the following century (*see* p 30).¹⁰³ There was a school in existence by at least 1663, when Hutcheson Tulloch and John Mill were each fined 16s for having put 'a stragglng cow into the school-house for some nights'.¹⁰⁴ The castle may still have been standing, albeit in a ruinous state. In 1622, there is mention of the 'precinct of the auld castle', which may imply that the actual building had disappeared.¹⁰⁵ It is referred to, again, in 1678 in the feuing of five roods of 'bigged' or built-upon land 'lying upon the south syde of the burgh betwixt the vennel leading to the castle and from there to the Wat of Nairn at the east syde...and the common street or calsa...at the north'.¹⁰⁶ There are known to have been other ruined properties in the town. In 1688, acting on a act of parliament anent ruinous houses in royal burghs, the council set in motion an inspection of dilapidated houses in the town and ordered their repair by local craftsmen, with a report on completion.¹⁰⁷

One potential danger for the town lands was drifting sands. Robert Gordon of Straloch, writing some time before 1661, commented that 'time has changed the appearance of [Nairn] and the sea has partly destroyed with sandbanks and partly washed away a good part of the highly productive land'.¹⁰⁸ In 1663, Alexander Brodie of Brodie wrote in his diary, 'Nairn was in danger to be quitt lost by the sand and by the water'.¹⁰⁹ The bridge was severely damaged, but funds did not permit repair for six years. The town council, however, wisely prohibited turf cutting on the sea shore in future, to prevent sand drifting. It is uncertain how successful this ruling was. In 1694, the Culbin estate of 3,600 acres, to the east of Nairn, was completely covered with sand.¹¹⁰ It is difficult to imagine that Nairn was not also affected.

The burgh roods amounted in 1657 to some 309.5 roods. Of these, 107 belonged to Rose of Clava and eighty to Rose of Broadley.¹¹¹ The Rose family dominated local politics in this century, as they had in the past. In 1692, to cite only one example, two persons were voted to fill the position of provost: Alexander Rose of Clava and his father Hugh Rose of Broadley. The final decision was to be left to the council, but the family's grip on Nairn's local government was clear.¹¹² The minister from 1659 was also one of the Rose contingent, Hugh Rose.¹¹³

In 1633, the position of Nairn in comparison with other towns becomes clearer. According to the tax roll for this year, Nairn's assessment was, termly, £33 6s 8d. Other towns in the north were rated more highly, for example Aberdeen at £1,333 6s 8d, Inverness at £333 6s 8d, Elgin at £166 13s 4d and Forres at £50. Only five towns in Scotland which were assessed for national taxation—Lochmaben, Sanquhar, Annan, Kilrennie and New Galloway—were deemed to be less financially significant than Nairn.¹¹⁴ The prosperity of Nairn could not have been improved by the erection of nearby burghs of barony (all within a radius of ten kilometres *see* figure 1), which drew

away some of Nairn's trade. Geddes was made a burgh of barony in 1600, with certain mercantile rights, such as to sell wine and ale. In 1623, Cawdor became a burgh of barony, with the rights to a town house, a market cross, a weekly market on a Wednesday and a fair on 15 July. Twelve years later, Moyness was erected into a burgh of barony, it, too, having the right to a weekly market, on a Saturday, and a fair at Christmas.¹¹⁵

The monies requested for the support of militia in 1645 give some indication of the relative wealth of northern towns. Nairn was to support four men, at a monthly cost of £36, compared with Forres at £6, Elgin at £20, Inverness at £40 and Aberdeen at £160.¹¹⁶ By May 1648, when Elgin, Nairn and Inverness south were to furnish 1,500 foot and 120 horse, Nairn was exempted two thirds of its portion.¹¹⁷ The following year, the costs of maintenance for the month of February were: Nairn sheriffdom, 315 merks; Nairn burgh, 36 merks; Elgin shire 1,890 merks; Elgin burgh 135 merks; Aberdeen shire 6,543 merks; and Aberdeen burgh 1,260 merks. Figures for Forres are not available, but Nairn had clearly been slipping well behind Elgin over the four years since 1645.¹¹⁸ The explanation was given at the same meeting of parliament. A decision was taken that, in spite of the above apportionment, Nairn should be exempted its share of maintenance, since it had been 'wasted and burned by James Graham [duke of Montrose] and his adherents' and the town 'disabled to pay their monthly maintenance'.¹¹⁹ Montrose had chased Covenanters, after the Battle of Auldearn, as far as Nairn, taking no prisoners. The town was burned, including the Cawdor town house.¹²⁰ In spite of its destitution and further exemptions from payment of maintenance, Nairn was billeted, in September 1649, for a month, with a number of Irish officers.¹²¹ In the 1650s, it also had Cromwellian troops quartered in it.¹²²

In August 1656, Nairn was represented in the Cromwellian parliament at Westminster, along with Dornoch, Tain, Inverness, Dingwall, Elgin and Forres, by one member, Robert Woolsey, commissary of Ayrshire,¹²³ which might suggest that the interests of the town would not be a priority. A closer watch was kept on burghs in Scotland by the Convention of Royal Burghs, however. Two years previously, Nairn, along with Cullen and Rothesay, had been ordered to report to the Convention on how diligent they were in prosecuting unfree traders, that is those who had not paid for the privilege of trading. Nairn, however, seems to have been exonerated. Whether or not it became over-diligent, thereafter, is unclear. There was certainly an appeal to the Convention by one Andrew Makkie, a merchant from Dundee. He complained that the burgh of Nairn had fined him for selling six firloths of salt to fisheries. The case was remitted to trial by the burghs of Inverness, Forres and Elgin, but the outcome is unknown.¹²⁴

That same year, in July 1660, the town had cause to make an appeal on its own behalf, even though in 1659 ex-bailie William Murray had been fined for non-attendance at the Convention.¹²⁵ They sought that the adjacent burghs should 'concur and assist them in recovering of their common markets to be at their burgh, detained from them by certain gentlemen'.¹²⁶ Who these 'certain gentlemen' were became clear in the following year.

The year 1661 saw a second ratification of the rights of Nairn as a royal burgh. It confirmed that the provost, bailies, council, community and the inhabitants of the burgh had the rights to the grounds, houses and tenements of the burgh, both within its immediate townscape and all its marches. It also confirmed that the community had all rights to burghal rents, burgh farms and burghal dues, with the privilege of a market cross and a weekly market that was to be 'holden weekly on the sabbath day'. Two fairs had also been granted, each to last for eight days, one beginning on 25 March, Our Lady Day, the other on the penultimate day of September, at Michaelmas. The privileges of the port and harbour and all its due customs were noted, as was the right to fish within the sea mark with a tug net, on the payment of £4 to the crown, in two equal portions, at Whitsun and Martinmas. These, on the surface, would appear to have been at least the basis for an adequately healthy burghal economy. The ratification, however, continued to comment that since the granting of the market in 1589, all markets on the Lord's Day had been banned. Moreover, the burgh's fairs were 'very useless and unprofitable', as the Laird of Kilravock had the right to two fairs, within three miles of Nairn, which were held on

the same days as those of Nairn 'whereunto all the country about doth frequently resort so that the burgh of Nairn ... have not for the present any mercat or fair at all. Notwithstanding that they keep still all meetings of parliaments and conventions of burghs and pay cess and all other duties according to their ability as any other burgh and have their tolbooth and prison to maintain and their bridge (which is very useful to passengers) to uphold, and have no other common good to maintain the said works but annually the custom of the mercats now unprofitable.' It was, therefore, proposed that Nairn should have its markets on a Friday and the two fairs on 8 February on Rude Day and 12 July on St Midian's Day. To further assist the burgh, the sheriff of Nairn, Sir Hugh Campbell of Cawdor was to hold his sheriff courts in the town.¹²⁷ In spite of the good intentions, there was an immediate objection from Hugh Campbell of Cawdor to the necessity to hold his courts in Nairn.¹²⁸ He then succeeded in gaining an act of parliament changing the new summer fair day of Nairn. The burgh of barony of Cawdor had its own fair on 15 July. Potential competition from Nairn was to be avoided, so Nairn's fair was changed, again, to an unspecified date in June 'so as not to prejudice any of the town's neighbours'.¹²⁹

There is little evidence that the town's fortunes prospered after this. In 1668, for example, Nairn, along with Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin, Ross, Cromarty and Sutherland, was warned that if it did not pay up in full all its arrears of cess, excise dues and taxation, it would have troops billeted on it, from the time when the tax commissioners made their return journey from Caithness until full settlement was made. This negligence could, however, have been deliberate avoidance, rather than inability to pay.¹³⁰

Whatever its financial hardships, Nairn was still expected to play its part in the defence of the realm. In 1683, for example, the Nairn militia was to muster with Elgin and Inverness south of the firth at Elgin.¹³¹ Two years later, in April 1685, all fencible men between sixty and sixteen in Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin, Nairn, Ross, Sutherland and Caithness were called to be in readiness. The troubles were such by the August that the peace of the Highlands was destroyed by 'theives, sorners and robbers [which] do infest, rob and spoil and trouble [the] people'. The shires of Ross, Inverness, Cromarty, Nairn and Elgin were to meet on 1 September at the head of Loch Ness and set up courts to deal with the disturbances.¹³²

By 1690, when called upon to make financial support for supply for government, Nairn's quota was £18, compared with Aberdeen's £840, Inverness's £216, Elgin's £120 and Forres and Fortrose, both at £30.¹³³ Six years later, Nairn was assessed at merely £9, with Aberdeen at £726, Inverness £180, Elgin £138, Forres £24 and Fortrose £18.¹³⁴

By the following year, on 10 January 1691, there was a petition from the shires of Aberdeen, Banff, Moray, Nairn and Inverness to the Privy Council, complaining that several abuses were being perpetrated by their Majesty's forces. These included 'illegal and arbitrary exactions in imposing great and exorbitant quantity of meal, malt, salt, plaids, wedders, candle, peats and others exacting the same without payment'. These goods were sometimes sold on at exorbitant prices, and troops quartered on the aggrieved locals until payment was made. Nairn seems particularly to have been in distress. The burgh maintained that it was 'reduced to a penurious condition by their losses through transient and local quartering and through a destruction of their corn by the rebels in their march towards Inverness'. The town believed that they had served the government with all readiness; but that now the time had come for them to be excused all further exactions, as their common good did not even amount to £40 Scots per annum. Certainly the Privy Council records of this year suggest that Nairn was functioning in the nature of a marching post, with troops passing through on a regular basis.¹³⁵

The claims of hardship supported by Nairn in the 1690s seem to be confirmed by the *Records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland*. An assessment in these records of the common good of Nairn in 1692 was that, over the previous five years, feu duties had amounted to a mere £13 10s. The rest of the income was simply casualties, that is not necessarily regular payments, and raised only £27. The town was in debt for certain unpaid duties and cesses. These came to £234; the bailie was due £78 for a bell he had

brought to Nairn for the use of the town; and £140 was owed to the town's commissioner for attending the Convention of Parliament. Nairn had also suffered from the non-payment of troops' accounts, the bill for which had been sent twice to the Exchequer; and the Highland army, with 500 troops, had grazed their horses on the town's corn for a full twenty-four hours, at a cost, they claimed, of £833 6s 8d.¹³⁶

Four years later, in 1696, Nairn, along with Pittenweem, Kirkwall and Forres sent representation to the Convention regarding their great poverty and unduly heavy proportion of the tax roll. Their pleas were considered to be potentially genuine; and the following year a committee was appointed to visit Nairn and inspect the tolbooth and the bridge, both of which the town had to maintain, even though poverty-stricken. The outcome was that the poor condition of the town was such that Nairn was granted 400 merks towards the repair of its tolbooth and bridge.¹³⁷

The whole of the north was suffering at this time. Scotland was facing a major famine crisis, particularly in the years from 1695 to 1699, and starvation brought not only death for many of the poorer people, but would also have an impact on the size of the population until well into the eighteenth century. For Nairn, the oat crop had been poor and Highland rebels stole meal as it became scarce. The supplies in Aberdeen, Banff, Moray, Nairn, Inverness, Ross, Sutherland and Caithness, which were 'the ginnells of the north', were almost all bought up by private persons. There was a genuine fear that 'the country people will famish for want of bread', as, indeed, many did, both in the country and towns. An embargo was, therefore, placed on all vessels exporting oats or meal and special warrants were authorised for the transportation of meal, flour or oats.¹³⁸ The full impact of this crisis on the town is not recorded, but if Nairn suffered as did Aberdeen, the effect must have been devastating: in Aberdeenshire the population fell by 21%, a decline that was not made good even by 1755.¹³⁹

Other events were making their mark on the town during this century. Lord Spynie retained the patronage of the parish kirks of Nairn and Auldearn in 1621.¹⁴⁰ The minister at this time was John Sanders; he was succeeded in 1638 by David Dunbar, who held the post until 1660.¹⁴¹ Commemorated on a tablet on the south wall of the now ruined parish church, the inscription is 'with the highest character for fidelity, discharged during twenty years as pastor in the church of Nairn' **figure 8**. The town and heritors were pro-Covenant

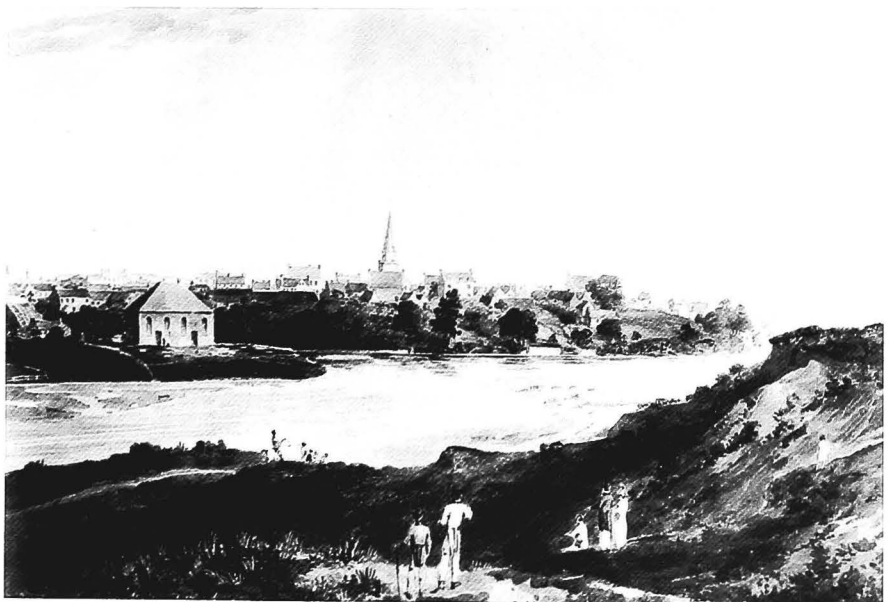


figure 8

*View of Riverside Kirk
and the Townhouse*
by James Clark
1832

during much of this time,¹⁴² one of the reasons behind Montrose burning the town in 1645 (*see* p 22). In both 1629 and 1642, the provost of Nairn, along with those of Elgin, Forres and Banff, was commissioned to apprehend within his sheriffdom all 'Jesuits, seminary and mass priests, excommunicated persons and trafficking papists', showing that not all were conforming to the new faith.¹⁴³

Nairnshire became, in the latter half of the century, an asylum for non-conformist ministers, who did not accept the restoration of episcopacy. This was highlighted in Nairn by a number of cases. In 1677, for example, one Mr John McKillin was captured and imprisoned by the Earl of Seaforth for keeping conventicles and, thereby, encouraging the populace away from the parish churches. The Privy Council instructed that McKillin should be transferred from the safekeeping of sheriff to sheriff until he reached the tolbooth at Edinburgh. According to instructions, Seaforth delivered the captive to the next sheriff, that of Nairn. The word came to Edinburgh, however, that the sheriff of Nairn entertained McKillin as his chaplain and permitted him to keep conventicles. The sheriff of Nairn was instructed to appear before the Privy Council, but the outcome is unknown.¹⁴⁴ Four years later, the magistrates of Nairn, Elgin and Forres were ordered to appear, to prove their loyalty to the new religious ordinances by taking the Test Oath, an oath imposed by the Test Act on all who held office in central and local government, as well as all MPs, bishops, ministers and teachers, with the intention of excluding both Roman Catholics and Covenanters.¹⁴⁵

There are instances of a number of ordinary people being suspected of attending conventicles. Evasion of attendance at the established parish church was such that in March 1683 the Privy Council was informed that 'there are many diverse persons in the shire of Nairn guilty of withdrawing from the public ordnances in their own parish kirks'.¹⁴⁶ Margaret Innes, the spouse of William Sutherland of Kinsterie, may have received rough justice. She was imprisoned in Nairn tolbooth and fined, on admitting to withdrawing from her parish church since 1679. In February 1685, she was examined again on the same charges, but claimed that since her imprisonment she had never attended a field conventicle nor listened to an outed minister, whether indoors or out.¹⁴⁷ The burgh records for the 1680s make it clear that several of the town's inhabitants were unwilling to take the oath of allegiance in matters religious, as laid out in the Toleration Act of 1681;¹⁴⁸ and Alexander Brodie of Leath was instructed to compare in the tolbooth of Nairn to answer to the charge that he was a frequenter of conventicles.¹⁴⁹

Another 'crime' to be avoided at this time was the charge of witchcraft. In June 1662, Agnes nic Ean Vane and Agnes McGillivorioch, wife of Alexander McCormie, both of Nairn, confessed to witchcraft. The next month, two women from Auldearn, Isobel Gowdie and Janet Breadhead, were tried for witchcraft in Nairn. The likelihood of the latter two being found innocent is slight; in all probability, all would have suffered the death penalty.¹⁵⁰

There were a number of places where punishment might take place in Nairn. Public humiliation was an important aspect of punishment. Janet Simpson, for example, was caught for stealing. She was, therefore, scourged publicly on market day (when the town's numbers would be swelled) from one end of the town to the other. Her ear was then nailed to the tron; and, thereafter, proclamation was made that she should be banished from the town. The gallows stood near Lodgehill. When an execution took place here *c* 1660 all inhabitants of the town were ordered to attend, with arms.¹⁵¹

The records do not permit more than a glimpse into the occupations and townscape of Nairn in the seventeenth century. Obviously, a number of the inhabitants were employed in agricultural pursuits and fishing (*see* pp 21–4). Possibly some engaged in smuggling; and there would always be a need for those pursuing essential crafts or involved in food or ale production. There was at least one inn keeper, as well as weavers, glovers, hosiers, tanners, coopers, maltmen, leather merchants and chapmen. In 1669, there is reference to a sword slipper and in 1662 two burgesses were given a licence by the town council to improve the trade of snuff making in the town and its environs. The records suggest that the council was at pains to protect the town's wellbeing. In 1663, the shoemakers were ordered to

produce sufficient shoes at every market and barkers were forbidden to export leather out of the town, and to provide adequately for the local shoemakers.¹⁵² Flax was grown around the town. An instruction that no lint should be dried in houses, because of fire risk, indicates not only the flammable nature of the Nairn dwellings, but suggests also a number of people involved in the textile trade. By 1670, the town had a medical practitioner, one Dr Savage.¹⁵³

On 12 July 1695, an assessment was made of the number of hearths in the town, for the purposes of a national taxation. Unfortunately, the records for Nairn do not give details of the number of hearths in individual properties, merely an overall total. Given that there were a number of prestigious houses in the town, these would be expected to have had multiple hearths. A number of other properties would have had more than one hearth, as hearths for smithies were also included in the total. The majority were probably single hearthed, as the town appears not to have been prosperous. Even allowing for the above factors, there were merely 140 hearths in the town.¹⁵⁴ It is difficult to say how many dwellings this represents, but, using the evidence from other towns, this may account for somewhere in the region of only eighty houses in the town. There had probably been little expansion over the previous century.

Interestingly, two other factors may be gleaned from this record. Campbell, laird of Cawdor and Rose, laird of Kilravock, the two local important landowners, who both had the financial benefits of fairs or markets, were 'deficient' for the payment of their dues in the parish of Nairn. They had not paid. There is, also, beside the list of those who were deficient, the comment that there were no poor in Nairn town or parish. Probably an optimistic statement!

the eighteenth century

The eighteenth century did not begin auspiciously for Nairn. Having received financial support from the Convention of Royal Burghs in 1698 (*see* p 24), its financial state was still sufficiently unstable for a committee to be instructed to visit the town and report on its common good, trade, pier, harbour and bridge, in 1701.¹⁵⁵ Repair of the tolbooth was considered, at least, in 1703. The tradesman hired by the council to effect this work was granted permission to buy timber from the Cawdor market.¹⁵⁶ Given that in the past the town had imported timber from Rothiemurchus (*see* p 20), this might suggest a lack of wood in the Nairn area. In 1707, the town's bridge was considered to be in such disrepair that the Synod of Moray provided £34 for its repair. The bridge and tolbooth (the latter having been burned in 1716 (*see* p 28)) were again in need of repair in 1719; but some remedial work was probably effected, £34 1s 6d being given to a mason.¹⁵⁷ There is evidence, also, that by 1715 the harbour was in a state of extreme neglect.¹⁵⁸

How much poverty there was in the town is not specified in the eighteenth-century records, although there were complaints in 1719 that there were 'vagabonds and strong beggars harboured and lodged in and about the burgh to the hazard and danger of the burghers'.¹⁵⁹ The significance of the 'strong' was that the council considered them fit to work, but there is evidence of genuine poverty in 1721, when William McPhail, a burghess and a surgeon, requested, from the council, a piece of waste land at the back of the houses and kiln on the south side of the burgh, near the river, with the Cawdor land to the east. He wished to cultivate this into a herb garden for the benefit of the poor.¹⁶⁰ By 1729, conditions were such that Nairn petitioned the Convention setting forth both its inability to 'build' (probably meaning repair) its tolbooth; it also complained of the decay of its trade. The petition was found to be valid and the following year the town was excused £100 of its dues to the Convention.¹⁶¹

Improvements to the townscape, however, might be achieved by unpaid labour. On 18 October 1720, a decision was made in council 'taking to consideration the advantage it will be to the burgh to causs the river runn in a straight channell to the sea'. Two burghesses, with a squad of forty-eight men 'with shovells and spades' were to set to work on the 24th of the month, a similar group on the 25th, and, again on 26th; and,

thereafter, 'to continue the said work by turn till finished'.¹⁶² How long this mammoth task took is undocumented. Fourteen years later, the river had resumed its earlier route, westwards along the Links, which was considered a 'loss' to the burgh.¹⁶³ The river then escaped to the east and a group was appointed to see how the run of water could be put right. Interestingly, a year later the Laird of Brodie took out a writ against the town, that it should return the course of the river to its original bed.¹⁶⁴ Litigation continued for several years. A 1794 map shows the river flowing into the sea beyond Kingsteps quarries.¹⁶⁵

An indication of the continuing smallness, both numerically and politically, of the town is the fact that in January 1707 Nairn was grouped with Fortrose, Inverness and Forres for its burghal representative at Westminster. The following month, it was decided that Nairn and Cromarty were to share a shire commissioner in alternate parliaments. Nairn, however, did have a representative to vote on the crucial matter of the clauses of Union, John Rose. He was for the proposals.¹⁶⁶

The town council was dominated by the Rose family throughout much of the eighteenth century, so prompting the comment that 'the town council was like that wonderful bird the Phoenix: it expired for a few minutes every year and then rose again triumphant from its ashes'.¹⁶⁷ In 1720, for example, eleven of the seventeen councillors bore the name of Rose. The difficulties of providing men of substance to sit on the town council from within the town meant that, sometimes, Nairn looked to men from outwith the burgh boundaries. This might have suited the local lairds, however, as they could bring in their own friends. In 1784, however, a Court of Session ruling in a case concerning Nairn decided that non-resident councillors were illegal. Three years later, this was overturned by the House of Lords.¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, it was not until the twentieth century that the people of Fishertown had a representative councillor.¹⁶⁹

One pursuit that continued to be successful in the town was fishing. Indeed, there was a complaint to the town council, in 1711, that the fishers were carrying their catches out into the countryside, where they found a ready market. As a result, the townspeople were obliged to go to the fishers' houses, at the north end of the town, to purchase supplies. It was deemed that this was 'to the great prejudice of the town' and, thereafter, no fish was to be sold until it had first been put up for sale at the market cross.¹⁷⁰ The following year, 1712, the Nairn Company of Herring Fishers was constituted by Rose of Clava. In their first year, they prepared to cure 120 lasts of herring. In fact, 167 lasts were cured. Soon, the shore was lined with fish houses and stores, which probably also stored haddock, skate, flounder and cod.¹⁷¹ Salmon fishing was also highly productive,¹⁷² the catch from the River Nairn being sent to Aberdeen to be cured; and thence to London and 'foreign parts'.¹⁷³ The fishing was by net and coble, or stell fishing.¹⁷⁴ There was, however, a complaint in 1767 that when the fishers of Nairn worked on the west coast they had no skill in draughting the rivers, because they were used to sandy-bottomed rivers, while those on the west coast were rocky.¹⁷⁵ It is interesting to note that the fishing industry was encouraged to the extent that the council was petitioned in April 1712 that land should be feued for the building of fisher houses.¹⁷⁶ The council minutes, throughout, highlight the importance of the fishing industry to the town, a decision being made in 1725, for example, that the right to make oil from the town's fish should be put out to roup.¹⁷⁷

Although the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century records speak of Nairn's harbour, there was not one in the real sense of the word. It was used largely for shipping barks and travellers to Cromarty and Dornoch firths, as this was the shortest crossing point. Occasionally, vessels trading with Inverness would sit off Nairn Bay, but would not come close in shore. A measure of how little trading was done from Nairn's port may be seen in August 1706. The *Providence of Alloa* and *Jane of Burntisland* arrived with cargo. Such was the enthusiasm and pleasure of the townspeople at such unusual events that the officers of the two ships were made honorary burghesses of Nairn.¹⁷⁸

It is clear that the town's market continued to function, albeit on a small scale. In 1750, those who wished to have a booth at the market paid between £8 and £10. The booths were of the nature of shops, often wooden, attached to the front of the properties lining the market street. Those nearest the market cross, the focal point of the market, would

pay most. Stalls were free-standing open counters, very often with wheels for ease of transport. For the right to hold a stall a few pence only was paid.¹⁷⁹ Cattle were sold on the Links and agricultural produce at the Shambles Yard, now the site of the Congregational Church. The highlights of the year were the fairs or 'Michael markets'.¹⁸⁰

At the end of the eighteenth century, there were sixteen merchant shops, but of these only between six and eight were of any size; and the trades of the town were still sufficiently modest that the tradesmen joined together as only one incorporation. There had, however, been a gild merchant in the town for some time. Fishing was still the major occupation. The council minutes also indicate that the authorities were eager to promote the welfare of the town, if not always successfully. In 1726, for example, it was decided that every encouragement should be made to improve the fishery, to sow hemp and lint and to set up a spinning school.¹⁸¹ There were, however, signs of a developing textile industry earlier in the century. In 1716, James Cumming, a dyer, sought permission from the council to erect a waulmill. Three years later he was once again petitioning council, this time with a complaint about the number of people in the town pursuing the dyeing craft without a licence and contrary to former acts of the council.¹⁸² The previous year, the council had noted the 'burdensome people' who had arrived in the burgh, but paid no taxes; and, in 1723, there were still complaints about unfree traders spoiling the living of Nairn burgesses, as was the case in many other burghs.¹⁸³ Consideration was being given to the establishment of linen and woollen manufactures (although a number of glovers and weavers featured in the burgess roll as early as 1750),¹⁸⁴ and one Walter Dallas, 'linen manufacturer', lived in the town in 1759.¹⁸⁵ Lint was grown in abundance around Nairn and then steeped in the pools along the links of Nairn, the 'lint pots'.¹⁸⁶ There was a gunsmith and a wigmaker in the town by 1720. Manufacture of snuff was regularly let out and fetched annually £8 or £10.¹⁸⁷

Situated as it was, Nairn inevitably was drawn into the two Jacobite risings. In September 1715, Inverness, which was reinforced with two garrisons, fell to the Jacobites. Nairn's political loyalty became very clear: the townspeople posted a guard on the town against the 'Highlanders', for fear they might be 'assaulted'; and arranged to gather intelligence as to the movements of the Highlanders that had 'infested Inverness'.¹⁸⁸ In spite of the town's allegiance, government forces burned Nairn's tolbooth the following year, but this was in all probability accidental as troops were billeted there.¹⁸⁹

Nairn was to see further action during the 'Forty Five. On 4 September, Sir John Cope, leader of the government troops, left Inverness with his men and passed to Nairn, where he spent the night. From there, he moved to Elgin, while Prince Charles Edward Stuart was at Perth. The council minutes of 13 January 1746 make it clear that the town was hard pressed. Troops were not only constantly passing through the town, but also lodging there. This was causing considerable upset as no quartermaster had been appointed. One of the town's glovers, James Taylor, was unfortunate enough to have this role bestowed upon him. To sweeten the pill, however, council decreed that he should be free of billeting in his property and that he need pay none of the taxation towards the troops' upkeep.¹⁹⁰ On 19 February 1746, Prince Charles Edward was joined by Lord George Murray at Culloden House. The latter had marched westwards through Elgin and Nairn, which he garrisoned. On 14 April, the prince moved out of Inverness, where he had been a fortnight, and passed the short distance back to Culloden. That night, the Jacobite Balmerino regiment was at Nairn, but 'out of which [they] were next morning driven; the whole English army entering the town at one end, whilst [they] marched out at the other'.¹⁹¹ The following day, 15 April, having marched from Aberdeen, the Duke of Cumberland, commander of the government forces, reached Nairn, where he stayed in the town house of the Roses of Kilravock, in the High Street **figure 9**. The Jacobite force set off on a night march to surprise Cumberland and his men in the town, probably in the knowledge that Cumberland was preoccupied with celebrating his twenty-fifth birthday. Unnecessary delays and the arrival of dawn, however, found the prince's supporters three miles from Nairn. The attack was abandoned. This was to have a disastrous effect on the Jacobite cause. With troops weary from an abortive night march, only 5,000 of the 8,000



figure 9
Town house of
Roses of Kilravock
c 1860

Jacobites could make the field at Culloden.¹⁹² The site was totally unsuitable for the traditional, feared charge of the Highlanders; and the Jacobite forces were no match for the government troops. The victors showed no clemency. The Jacobite rising was over.

The presence of troops and demands for cess for their support was not over for Nairn, however.¹⁹³ In the following August the town council was actively preparing for the imminent arrival of four companies for winter quartering. Accommodation had to be found for officers, as well as the private soldiers, suitable premises for a hospital had to be arranged and the townspeople were to be stented to defray the expense of provision of coal and candles to the troops.¹⁹⁴ The companies having arrived by 2 September, the demands continued. Not only were coal and candles required, but peat as well. The commanding officer indicated that he had a number of sick men in his charge and coal and candles were to be supplied for the hospital. Blankets were also demanded; but the council was of the opinion that all the beds and bedclothes that could be spared were already requisitioned.¹⁹⁵ The following winter, the troops were back again;¹⁹⁶ as, indeed, they had been from 1715 and were to continue until at least 1751. As a garrison town, on the frontier of the Highlands, Nairn suffered considerably through the influx of a large number of non-local men and their support services. The male population of the town would have been greatly outnumbered by the military although, following the completion of Fort George (nine kilometres west of the town) in 1748, the situation would have improved slightly. Nairn, however, would have remained well aware of the presence of locally garrisoned troops.

In 1751, a petition was sent to the Convention of Royal Burghs, pleading the extreme poverty of the town. The common good, it was stated, scarcely amounted to £50 Scots. The assets had been reduced for a number of reasons, not least the fact that town treasurers had 'borrowed' from the burgh's funds and subsequently died in debt to the burgh. There was insufficient to cover the cost of town servants. One of this number was the public drummer who aroused the inhabitants and sounded the curfew at night. The council minutes for 21 October 1717, for example, noted that the drummer was to 'beat the taptoe and revalzie as also the officer to ring the bell'. The revalzie was the morning drum and the taptoe the evening call. In 1723, the drum appears to have been stolen and a burgh officer was instructed to get a warrant and search party. Whether these endeavours were successful is not minuted. If not found, it was certainly replaced, the drummer and town drum featuring throughout the town records in the eighteenth century. Whether the town drum now in Nairn Museum is one and the same is equally unclear.¹⁹⁷ Funds were so slight that other costs could not be covered, such as the repair of windows in the tolbooth and the coal, candles and many other demands put upon the town by the military that had winter quartered there since 1715. The streets, harbour and most of the buildings in the town were decayed, as was the state of the town's trade. An

inspection by Convention representatives from Inverness, Forres and Elgin, in 1751, found the petition to be 'just and true'.¹⁹⁸

The 1750s, however, marked a real turning point for the town. The council records show clearly that, within a few years of the troops leaving, the town was making a determined effort to improve the locality. The bad state of the street and irregularity of the houses was noted in August 1756. In particular, the stretch of street from Lady Clava's house on the west and the new house of Hugh Falconer on the east down to the bridge, and the section from the 'dial' to the west end of the town caused concern. An inspection party was set up to note which houses should be demolished, either in whole or in part, and to obtain estimates of costs from pavers.¹⁹⁹ Later in the same month, an evaluation of all the windows and lights in the town was undertaken.²⁰⁰

By 23 December, the road from Bailie Falconer's house to the ford at the bridge had been completed. Some properties still caused concern, mainly because of encroachment onto the thoroughfare. In future, if there was rebuilding, the foundations were to be inspected by the council before wall building commenced; and any house that became unthatched or fell down was to be demolished and set back eighteen inches from the vennel. The comment that it was in particular the forestairs that were causing a nuisance suggests that housing in this area was larger than small, single-storeyed thatched cottages. Fire was a constant hazard, not only for the tolbooth (*see* p 28) but also for the townspeople's houses, most of which were thatched. The tolbooth was under repair in 1735, having lain dilapidated since it was burnt, and the owner of the neighbouring property, Hugh Rose of Clava, younger, craved permission to build two chimneys on the west gable of the tolbooth. Significantly, while agreeing to this, the council also insisted that whenever Rose or his successors added a building to this west gable, the roof was to be of slate and not thatched.²⁰¹ Not all those living in Nairn in the eighteenth century appreciated their location, however. Mistress Elizabeth Rose, in a letter written *c* 1777, complained that she was 'doomed, by narrow circumstances, to live in a place ever detestable to [her]...a place where not a single bird or blossom marks the change of seasons'.²⁰² Writing about a decade later, Dr Robert Forbes seemed to agree, as he called the town 'one of the poorest dead places upon earth'.²⁰³

Clearly, however, there were many houses of much poorer quality than those owned by such as the Roses. Those at the west end of the town were described as 'hutts' and they were so 'shamefully laid down' that the council decreed in December 1756 that they were to be demolished by the next Whitsunday.²⁰⁴ Pococke, writing in 1760, stated that the town consisted of one long street, about a quarter of a mile long, with about one hundred houses.²⁰⁵ It was the second section of this 'one long street', the main route out to the west, that was upgraded in 1757, assisted by a donation from Major Clephane of the second battalion of Highlanders.²⁰⁶ It was not until 1794 that Bridge Street was paved.²⁰⁷

The council also recognised that 'the streets [had] been brought to ruine and become a publick nuisance by laying dung and dunghills upon and near them'. From 1756, anyone placing rubbish or dung on or within ten feet of the street and leaving it longer than a week was to be fined. The manure was not to be wasted, however. Any person willing to remove the waste was at liberty to sell it, at a reasonable price and only to 'occupiers and for the use of lands holding of the town' since the 'town lands [had] a preferable title to dung made and gathered about the town'.²⁰⁸

Sufficient funds were also found for the market cross to be replaced in 1757 **figure 10**.²⁰⁹ The old one was of stone and lime, which required pointing and liming. The horloge stone dial stood at the corner of the Pole Road (later called Leopold Street). It was probably at the time of these road improvements that the 'dial' was removed. The sundial that was placed on the new market cross was probably the old horloge stone.²¹⁰

The cross, horloge stone or 'dial', tron and bridge featured in public punishment, as they had done in the previous century (*see* p 25). In April 1742, for example, one William Mackay was in the tolbooth for stealing a grey mare. He was taken from prison, had his hands tied to Nairn Bridge, stripped and received twelve lashes from the common hangman, then taken to the tron where his right ear was nailed and he received a further



figure 10

The market cross



figure 11

The parish school,
built in 1762

twelve lashes, from there he was taken to the dial for twelve more lashes, and then to Gallowhill for another twelve, before being permanently banished from the town. Four years later, a woman who was deemed to be a common thief was imprisoned in Cawdor jail, after having been in the jousts at Nairn. She was then brought to Nairn tolbooth for two weeks, had her right ear nailed to the tron, then had it cut off. She was then branded on the left cheek, taken to the bridge, where she received six lashes, then to the cross for six lashes, to the horloge stone for six, to the gallows for six and then banished.²¹¹

Having reinstated the main road of the town, the council next, in 1759, determined to fully extend the road to the harbour. Although it had been laid out in plan for some time, the pathway had been encroached upon by dykes, refuse and water from the river and high tides. Every inhabitant of the 'town and territory' was instructed to spend up to three days of their own time, along with horses, to effect this work. It was felt reasonable to insist on this work, as the harvest was nearly over and no other personal labour on public work was being demanded. Those who were not protecting their land from the overflowing river were to remedy this within fifteen days; after this time the town would take action at the expense of the recalcitrant.²¹²

Other public works were effected during this decade. Bailie Hugh Falconar spent £22 1s 9d of his own money on mason and wright work to the steeple and other buildings. This was subsequently reimbursed by the council.²¹³ Some of this funding may have gone to the building of a new school. The earliest school on record stood in Church Street. By 1751, it was claimed, the school had long been vacant, probably through the lack of a school master; but in 1762, a decision was made to move it to between Gallowgate and Kildrummie Gate **figure 11**. The 'stance of the old school being thought sufficiently fit for a house and school-room to a schoolmistress for teaching girls sewing and other necessary branches of education', it was resolved that it should be set aside for such a use 'how soon a fund necessary for executing the same in a proper manner [could] be established'.²¹⁴ Five years later, the work on the new boys' school was already completed and a piece of waste ground to its south-west was set aside as a small garden 'as an additional encouragement' to the schoolmaster.²¹⁵ In 1770, a further £24 3s 3d was expended on the school house.²¹⁶ In October 1785, the town paid £1 2s 6d for an advertisement for a schoolmistress, placed in Edinburgh newspapers.²¹⁷

The parish church of St Ninian continued to serve both the fisher settlement and the Gaelic-speaking south-west of the town. George Dunbar, son of David Dunbar (*see* p 24), as well as being schoolmaster at Auldearn, was minister in Nairn from 1687 to 1730. He did not preach in Gaelic, but his successor, Alexander Rose, did. Patrick Dunbar, however, who succeeded Alexander Rose in 1759, received his appointment after a presbytery decision, on 6 February 1759, that Gaelic was not a prerequisite of the charge.²¹⁸ When Doctor Samuel Johnston and James Boswell visited Nairn later in the century, they

figure 12
The Seceder
Church,
Castle Lane



remarked on Nairn being the beginning of the Highlands, because it was here that they first saw peat fires and heard the Gaelic tongue.²¹⁹ In 1753, a Seceder church, that is one that dissented from the established Presbyterian Church and had strong links with the Covenanted past, had been built at Boghole. A petition was set up that the Nairn people should have their own Seceder congregation. By the late eighteenth century, the church stood in Castle Lane **figure 12**. Preaching here was solely in Gaelic.²²⁰

From the late 1760s, many of the common lands of the burgh were feued out or sold. Certain areas, such as the Calf Ward, had been feued out since the seventeenth century,²²¹ but at this time there is clear evidence of escalation of this practice: for example, in 1767 waste land beside the school; two years later, waste land beside the last fisher houses and land to the west of the Auldton (Alton) Burn; in 1771, a piece of land in the north field of the Links; and in the 1770s, further large tracts of the Links.²²² The resultant rental was of benefit to the community, which had by now a number of public properties to maintain, including the bridge, which needed constant repair work (for example £11 7s in 1770);²²³ stone was probably brought from the town's quarry, just west of the 'water mouth'.²²⁴ The bridge was swept away in floods in 1782.²²⁵ The records, however, show that land was being diverted from town use some time before, although not for profit. In 1719, for example, Rose of Broadley requested of the council a piece of waste land, on which he had actually already built houses. The Laird of Kilravock craved an adjoining piece of waste land. A committee, including the provost, who was Kilravock's son, was appointed to consider these requests. They were found to be reasonable, since the land was waste and useless.²²⁶

There were not only considerable improvements to the townscape at this time. In 1767, a far-sighted venture was established—the Nairn Fishermen's Society. The foundation of this society, for mutual benefit and welfare, was detailed as 'the seamen of Nairn, having already paid in their respective moneys of a crown each man, and the same being safely deposited in a Chest or Box made for that purpose, they further unanimously agree to the subjoyned artickels...' The society raised its funds by the members' payment of 'quarterpenneys' four times a year, sixpence in May, November and February and one shilling in August when the weather was milder and the fishing better. Further revenue was gained by the hiring out of the society's mortcloth, purchased in 1769. Members paid one shilling and non-members 2s 6d. The funds were used to assist the widowed, fatherless and needy and, in the event of the loss of a boat, loans were given to replace it. The average rate of interest was 10 per cent, although 23.5 per cent was charged on one occasion, but this was to a man from Forres. If a member died, the widow was exempted her dues until her eldest son could take his father's place. If there was no son, the widow might dispoise her husband's right to the Box to another member 'providing such member be a seaman, all others being excluded'.²²⁷ A committee, originally called the Managers of the Box, was appointed to run the society, under the guidance of a Preses, chosen for life from the patriarchs of the community. All meetings began with prayer, and misdemeanours within the society were punished with a fine. By 1771, the society had sufficient funds to acquire land from the town, on which fishermen could build, paying feus to the society. The Fishertown which, according to cartographic evidence, already rivaled the 'upper town' in size, began to expand further.²²⁸ The option, however, of purchasing, for a further £5, all the land as far west as the present Marine Hotel was turned down as it was deemed to be useless, being all bushes and sandhills.²²⁹

By the 1790s, there were probably about 1,100 people living in the town.²³⁰ There were two inns, one of some antiquity, which implies some visitors to the town, although the inns would also be used by locals as their drinking establishments. As well as these two inns, it was claimed that there 'were so many alehouses and whisky shops in the town, that to mention their number, might, to strangers, perhaps appear incredible'. This report, however, was written by the local minister.²³¹

There were two hopeful notes at the turn of the century. It was noted that 'Nairn was remarkably well calculated for sea bathing'. There was already a salt bath; and one of the innkeepers had a bathing machine.²³² And, on 10 June 1797, when the grass of the Links was being roused for three years, the condition was laid down that this was to 'not prohibit the gentlemen of the town or others from playing golf'.²³³

post-script—'the Brighton of the North'

By 1841, there were 2,318 people in the burgh, although it was claimed that over the previous twenty years only the Fishertown had expanded.²³⁴ This was testimony to the success of the fishing industry. Some 150 men and fifty boys were employed in the haddock and cod fishings; there was also some salmon fishing at the mouth of the river and along the shore. The 'principal source of wealth', however, was the herring fishing. The fishers went to Caithness for six weeks every year, returning with between £50 and £100 each. This, it was claimed, 'constitutes a great source of wealth to the town'.²³⁵

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, there was considerable pressure to improve the harbour. Although work did not begin until 1820, under the supervision of Thomas Telford, it may be that his work was improving on some earlier harbour works. The Nairn fishermen had always been supplemented in their numbers by the fishers of Mavieston and Lochloy in the east and those of Delnies in the west. The fact that a number of Delnies families moved to Nairn in the 1790s suggests that the harbour at Nairn was functioning to some extent.²³⁶ At the time of the building of the Telford harbour, there was no foreland as today, there now being an accumulation of sand on the east beach as the harbour works prevent material flowing west.²³⁷ Telford, in 1820–25, altered the course of the River Nairn to some extent, and completed the quay on the western bank by 1826 **figure 13**. Financial assistance of £75 and a further £150 was given



figure 13
Nairn harbour
c 1886

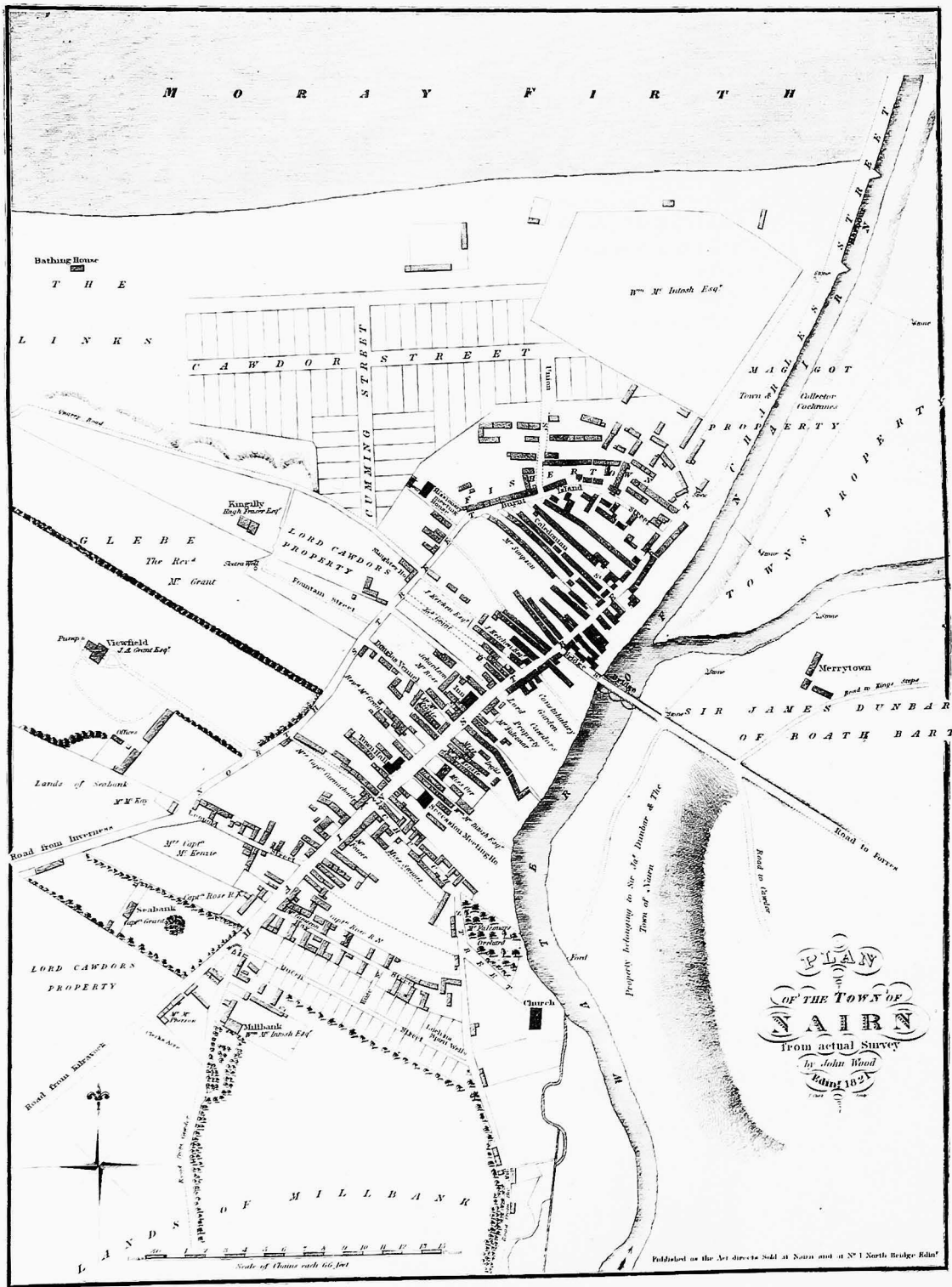


figure 14
 Plan of
 the Town of Nairn,
 by John Wood, 1821

to this work by the Nairnshire meeting in London; and the Nairn Friendly Society donated £20.²³⁸ The great flood of 1829, however, caused tremendous damage. The harbour itself was undermined, the bulwark broken and the land shifted. Two acres of washing green were swept away and the year's grain crop was wasted. Repairs to the bridge cost £500 and to the harbour, £2,500.²³⁹

To fund the original work and the repairs, the town was forced to sell large parts of the common good, even though private subscriptions were made. Some of what had originally been the burgh lands were now, in effect, small private estates. Newton, Ivybank, Viewfield, Seabank, Firhall, Househill and Millbank were amongst these **figure 14**. The upgrading of the harbour, however, encouraged more movement from Delnies and also from Maviestown. The fishers were able to build larger boats in Nairn harbour, which meant they could extend their regular fishing grounds beyond the Moray Firth.²⁴⁰ It also meant that, now that the river was effectively contained, Fishertown might expand; until the end of the eighteenth century, it seems that Fishertown could not develop beyond the intersection of King Street and Harbour Street, for fear of flooding.²⁴¹

There was a suggestion that there might be a steam ferry-boat service from this new pier to Cromarty. Most of the correspondents to the *Inverness Courier* thought this an excellent idea; but one letter dismissed it as an 'absurd project'.²⁴² An additional quay was added to the east bank in 1830. This was to have a profound effect on accessibility to the town and from 1840 Nairn was a regular stopping-off point for the Inverness–Edinburgh steamers.²⁴³ In 1838, moves were afoot to upgrade the harbour and an appeal was made for funds, £967 having been already subscribed. Fourteen years later, there were proposals for a new breakwater. A writer in the *Inverness Courier* commented that 'ever since he could remember anything anent this snug burgh, seaport and bathing place, the natives therein have been devising all manner of ingenious schemes to effect an amicable amalgamation between their river and their sea'.²⁴⁴

One of the most important sites in the Fishertown was the barking yard. It was here that nets and sails were boiled in large kettles containing Indian or Burmese cutch as a preservative. Oilskins were canvas coveralls coated in boiled linseed oil, thus making a waterproof protection.²⁴⁵ The Nairn Fishermen's Society Minute Book indicates that a fee was taken for the use of a kettle. Income was also still made from house rentals **figure 15**. The funds thus gathered in were still used for the benefit of widows and to assist those who could not afford necessary repairs to their homes.²⁴⁶ Another well-known feature was



figure 15
Fishertown houses



figure 16
Aquatint of Nairn,
by W Daniel, 1821

the 'Black Shed', which stood on the east pier. The wall in front of it was known as the 'Tarry Dyke' as it was here that ropes were tarred in a large boiler. The Black Shed, however, had another function to perform in 1832. Cholera had broken out in India in 1826, gradually spreading westwards and arriving in Scotland in trading ships. The epidemic hit Nairn and the Black Shed was put into use as an isolation ward. Such measures, however, were not successful and the disease spread throughout the town, hitting the fishing community most harshly.²⁴⁷

Fishtown retains, to this day, a distinctive character, quite different from the rest of Nairn. Although few net stores, smoke sheds, salt stores and houses with the keystones awaiting extension remain (*see p 72*), there are still clues to the important role that this part of Nairn played in the local economy; and the Fishtown Museum gives a fascinating insight into this crucial part of Nairn's past.²⁴⁸

The town had many other necessary improvements to make. In 1817, a former chief magistrate of Nairn was convicted of assaulting a lawyer in Elgin 'to the effusion of blood and the danger of life'. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but the court would not permit incarceration in Nairn, because of the 'notorious insufficiency' of the jail. It seems that little improvement was made by 1821, when four persons convicted of theft and awaiting transportation broke out of Nairn jail.²⁴⁹ It was decided that revenue might be raised for this and the harbour works by feuing out further land on the Links and the sea beach.²⁵⁰ As well as the court house being upgraded, the all-important bridge also had to be replaced **figure 16**.

The *Inverness Courier* reported a near disastrous collapse of the parish church in October 1808. A loud crash was heard and:

It is impossible to convey an idea of the scene of terror and confusion that instantly ensued. The access to the fishers' loft, which is by one door only, was immediately choked by people in their endeavour to escape from the threatened calamity, which induced several persons in the front of the loft, to throw themselves down to the ground pews in hopes of getting out with greater expedition. The consternation was further agitated by hearing of a second crash. Those next to the windows broke immediately through them, and nothing was heard but the most piercing shrieks mixed with the groans of numbers who were trodden down and were suffering under weight of pressure of the crowd.

Amazingly, no one was killed.²⁵¹ Some rebuilding of the church was effected, but it partially relied on existing unstable foundations and the renovation was never entirely

satisfactory. This church had 902 sittings; whereas the Congregational Church, which had been set up in 1801 as the 'Independant Chapel' in Fishertown, at what is now 52 King Street, could seat 416.²⁵² In 1816, the Secession Church moved from Castle Lane to a site opposite the County Buildings. 730 families favoured the Established church, and there were one hundred Dissenting or Seceding families, one Episcopalian and one Roman Catholic.²⁵³ By 1845, St Ninian's Church of England Chapel would be built on the east side of the bridge.

From 1839, there was concern that the parish church was proving inadequate. There was only one service in English on a Sunday, the evening service being in Gaelic. Although there were around 500 fisherpeople, there were only thirty sittings for those in Nairn and thirty for Delnies. Some maintained also that the riverside access caused problems. A committee and fund was set up to build a new one and, in spite of differences of opinion between the convener (the minister) and the rest of the committee, a new building was started in King Street. By September 1842, this project was abandoned; and a decision was taken to build a separate parish church, rather than an 'extended' church to the original. Significantly, it was determined that this church would reject interference by the state and also patronage, whereby local lairds could place ministers in charges. In effect, Nairn had established a free church a year before the Free Church was set up by the Disruption. By the time of the Disruption, on 18 May 1843, Nairn's Free Church was almost finished. For the first two Sabbath meetings, those who had come out of the Established church met in the Independent Chapel; but on the third Sabbath the service was held in the new church, albeit pitch was still dripping from the roof and the windows were not yet glazed. At least 800 people attended, all seats being taken and many standing or being turned away. Thus started the oldest, purpose-built, Free Church in Scotland.²⁵⁴

In 1834, Inverness upgraded its street lighting to gas. The old lamps were thrown away. It was reported in the *Inverness Courier*, however, that 'the good folks of Nairn have purchased part of the disused illuminants, and thirty more have been sent to enlighten the inhabitants of Tain'.²⁵⁵ It was not until four or five years later that gas was supplied to the town.²⁵⁶ Not only could the smokey whale oil lamps, which were never put out, but allowed to run out, be replaced; but private premises and shops were soon to receive a supply.²⁵⁷ There was, however, still no water supply to the town, water being collected from wells, such as the one in the High Street or the Sketra well at the far end of Bath Street. Many of the larger houses would have had their own wells.

The Academy was built by public subscription on land donated by Captain James Rose **figure 17**. Subscriptions had been drawn in from 1830; a Mechanics Institute was also proposed.²⁵⁸ By 1832, one classroom had been fitted up and opened and a second was



figure 17

Rose's Academical
Institution c 1882

built but not equipped; there was an appeal for funds in 1835.²⁵⁹ In 1841, the Academy was renamed Rose's Academical Institution, in the grounds of Ivybank. As well as the Academy, with which the parish school merged, there were, by 1842, two other subscription schools—one sessional (meaning it was maintained by the church session) and the other monitory.²⁶⁰ The Minute Book of the Directors of the Nairn Sessional School in 1836 sets down the purposes of the subscribers.

*The designation of the Institution shall be 'the Sessional School of Nairn' and its object shall be the establishment, by subscription, of a school in the lower end of the town of Nairn for the benefit particularly of the seafaring classes and others resident in that district; and so far as possible, provision shall be made for the education of very poor children gratuitously, or at reduced rates. A Sabbath School, free to all, shall form part of the object.*²⁶¹

By 1851, the Links School (*see* p 71) was established by the Free Church, to educate the fisher children. From here, the pupils went to the Monitory School, so called because teachers were helped by senior pupils called monitors. They would return for one year to the Links School to be educated under the headmaster.²⁶²

By 1842, there were three banks in the town: the British Linen company, the Caledonian and the National, as well as two savings banks. There was also a newspaper established, the *Nairnshire Mirror*. A further measure of Nairn's growing importance and town improvements was the visit of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg to one of Nairn's inns in 1819. He was welcomed by the freemasons of the town, who had their lodge in an upstairs room of the inn;²⁶³ and was also bestowed with the honour of burgess-ship and guild brother. Pole Road became Leopold Street as a result (*see* p 80). By 1842, there were three daily coaches visiting the hotel, 'Andersons' (now the Royal Hotel) **figure 18** on the High Street.²⁶⁴ The mail coach from the south would also make regular visits. -



figure 18
Royal Hotel,
High Street

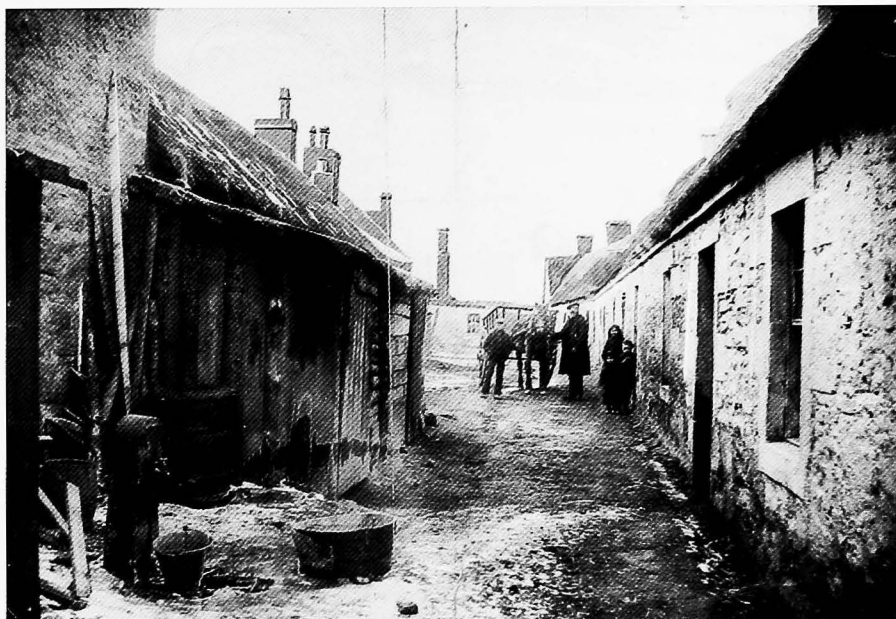


figure 19
Collector's Close

Sometime between 1833 and 1836, during the provostship of Isaac Ketchen, the High Street was macadamised. This aided traffic, being a smoother surface than the old paved or causeyed roads, as did the lowering of the steep ascent at the top of the High Street. Dry weather, however, did mean an increase in the dust level.²⁶⁵ The many small vennels, such as Weavers' Lane, McPhersons Close, Collector's Close **figure 19** and Barbour's Close, most of which have now disappeared, still ran back from the main streets.

1855 saw the first stretch of railway in the Highlands, with the Inverness to Nairn run.²⁶⁶ The rail link with Aberdeen was completed three years later. Nairn was becoming increasingly accessible. One of the attractions was clear even in the late eighteenth century: 'Nairn is remarkably well calculated for sea bathing'.²⁶⁷ It was here, also, that 'gentlemen' came to play 'golff' (*see* p 33).

Bathing had become fashionable in the middle of the eighteenth century; and, before the turn of the century, 'for the accommodation of persons who require the benefit of the salt bath, Mr James Brander, one of the inn-keepers, has a bathing machine provided'.²⁶⁸ Nairn was soon to introduce further innovations. By 1821, baths had been built at the west end of the Links, just above high water mark. A plain building of red sandstone, part of its walls may now be seen incorporated into a private dwelling.²⁶⁹ The Nairn authorities, in the 1820s, had embarked on so many improvements in the town, at great cost, that a decision was taken to feu out the land on the sea shore and Links on which the baths stood. The joint stock company which took over this half acre of land was assured 'free access and egress to and from the same for carriages and passengers as presently used and enjoyed' and also given the 'liberty to construct all necessary pipes and tunnels to conduct salt water from the said baths in any direction northward of the bathing house now erected'. In the same agreement, recorded in the Cartulary of the Burgh of Nairn, is an important piece of information. While the corporation and community of Nairn were prepared, for financial reasons, to dispose of 'the baths tenement', they wished its original function to continue. The half-annual feu duty was to be 2s 6d, 'so long as the same should continue to be appropriated for these purposes'. A feu duty of 10s 6d would be imposed, 'in the event of the premises being converted or alienated to any other purpose than those of baths for the use of the community and public at large'.²⁷⁰ These were not baths for the elite, but for the use of all.

In the next few decades, vast improvements were made to these sea-side facilities. Visitors came from as far afield as the south of England, taking advantage of the new rail and sea links. The baths were advertised in 1849:

Salt water baths and open sea bathing at Nairn. The baths are now open, under the superintendence of Miss Mary Fraser, every lawful day from 7am until 8pm. The rooms are provided with every requisite for delicate invalids, and connected with the establishment are two bathing, or rather dressing machines, which can be rolled to the water-edge, and affording much comfort to delicate parties who prefer bathing in the open sea.

Nairn has long stood high as a bathing quarter, on account of the salubrity of its climate, its extensive links along the sea-shore, and its gradually sloping sandy beach, so suitable for bathing, and sufficiently distant from the town. The lodgings in the town are numerous and comfortable; some are already occupied, but several are still to let. Bread, butcher-meat, fish, butter, eggs and all the other requisites are always in abundant supply, and in good quality. There is also a comfortable reading room, open to visitors at a very low charge, where are to be seen a London daily paper and various Scotch papers.

The baths were to be improved still further, by 1856 having six bath rooms and two dressing rooms, hot and cold showers and open sea bathing. It was 'the only establishment of the kind in the north'; and was to see even more innovations. Many of these improvements, as well as a general enhancement of the town, were the result of the vision of the local doctor, Dr Grigor.²⁷¹ Increasing numbers were attracted by facilities such as seaweed and mustard baths and horse-drawn bathing machines, which were advertised: 'the comfort of dressing and undressing under cover is tangibly felt to supersede the system of stripping on the beach, and thereby having the clothes uncomfortably impregnated with sand.'²⁷²

In the second half of the century, new salt water baths were opened, both Nairn Golf Club and the Nairn Artisans' Golf Club (later Nairn Dunbar Golf Club) were founded, the upgrading of the Links, by the removal of quarry holes and the provision of public seating, was effected and a band stand and several prestigious hotels were built. The Fishertown continued its own self-contained and successful fishing life, distinct from the rest of the town. Its expansion, which had begun in the eighteenth century, progressed rapidly. Scarcely recognisable as the same burgh as the small seventeenth-century town which could not meet its taxation dues, or the early eighteenth-century garrison town beset with billeted troops, Nairn had emerged as one of the premier resorts in Scotland.

notes

- 1 J Wordsworth, 'The excavation of a Mesolithic horizon at 13–24 Castle Street, Inverness', *PSAS* (1985), cxv, 89–104.
- 2 C Wickham-Jones, *Scotland's First Settlers* (London, 1994), 73–4.
- 3 For further information, see RCAHMS NMRS Card Nos NH85 NE16 & NH85 NE33.
- 4 The funerary monuments of these early agricultural communities are the only class of field monuments to have been studied in detail. See A S Henshall, *The Chambered Tombs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1972), *passim*.
- 5 T Darvill, *Prehistoric Britain* (London, 1987), 63–4.
- 6 G Ritchie & A Ritchie, *Scotland: Archaeology and Early History* (Edinburgh, 1991), 184.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 30–31.
- 8 For further information on these sites see RCAHMS NMRS Card Nos NH85 NW1 & NH85 SW6.
- 9 Darvill, *Prehistoric Britain*, 75.
- 10 For further information, see RCAHMS NMRS Card Nos NH95SW2 & NH85SW8.
- 11 For further information, refer to Highland Sites and Monuments

- Record Card No NH 85 NE41, The Highland Council, Inverness.
- 12 I A G Shepherd, A N Shepherd & M M Bruce, 'A beaker burial at Mains of Balnagowan, Ardersier, Inverness District', *PSAS* (1984), cxiv, 560–66.
- 13 For the latter, see NMRS Card No NH85 NW8.
- 14 For further information, see NMRS NH85NW4 & NH85SE18.
- 15 Darvill, *Prehistoric Britain*, 103.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 133.
- 17 R Feachem, *Guide to Prehistoric Scotland* (London, 1977), 140.
- 18 S Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots* (London, 1996), 71–9.
- 19 For a guide to visiting some of the finer examples of these stones, see J Close-Brooks, *Exploring Scotland's Heritage: The Highlands* (Edinburgh, 1986), 121–31.
- 20 For a fuller description of this stone, see J R Allen & J Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland: A Classified Illustrated Descriptive List of the Monuments with an Analysis of their Symbolism and Ornamentation* (Edinburgh, 1903), pt. 3, 117.
- 21 For a detailed description of the stone, see Allen & Anderson, *Early Christian Monuments*, pt 2, 51 & pt 3, 117–18.
- 22 G Bain, *History of Nairnshire* (1st edn, Nairn, 1893), 78.
- 23 W H F Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names* (London, 1989), 188.
- 24 *Registrum Episcopatus Moraviensis*, ed C Innes (Bannatyne Club, 1837), 344 & 221.
- 25 *The Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland*, edd I B Cowan, P H R Mackay & A Macquarrie (SHS, 1983), 31.
- 26 *Registrum Moraviensis*, 18.
- 27 *RRS*, ii, edd G W S Barrow & W W Scott (Edinburgh, 1971), 16.
- 28 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 119.
- 29 L Shaw, *History of the Province of Moray*, 3 vols, (Glasgow, 1882), iii, 88.
- 30 J Fraser, 'Polichronicon Seu Policratia Temporum', in W MacKay (ed), *Chronicles of the Frasers*, 916–1674 (SHS, 1905), 43.
- 31 *Sheriff Court Book of Fife, 1515–1522*, ed W Croft Dickinson (SHS, 1928), 358.
- 32 *RRS*, ii, 29.
- 33 *Registrum de Dunfermelyn*, ed C Innes (Bannatyne Club, 1842), 32.
- 34 *Records of the Monastery of Kinloss*, ed J Stuart (Society of Antiquaries, 1872), 124.
- 35 G S Pryde (ed), *Burghs of Scotland: A Critical List* (London, 1965), 12.
- 36 *RRS*, ii, 12; G W S Barrow, *Kingship and Unity* (London, 1981), 89.
- 37 Groome, v, 91.
- 38 I Hustwick, *Moray Firth – Ships and Trade* (Aberdeen, 1994), 45.
- 39 Shaw, *Moray*, iii, 71.
- 40 *RRS*, ii, 300.
- 41 *Registrum Moraviensis*, 7.
- 42 *OSA*, xvi, 742.
- 43 A C Lawrie (ed), *Early Scottish Charters prior to 1153* (Glasgow, 1905), no 169; J D Marwick (ed), *Charters and Other Documents relating to the City of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1894–7), i, pt ii, 5.
- 44 D M Ellen, *Nairn in Old Picture Postcards* (Zaltbommel, 1987), 1.
- 45 *RMS*, i, App i, no 31; *Registrum Moraviensis*, 344.
- 46 *RMS*, i, App i, no 8; *RMS*, i, 428.
- 47 *RMS*, ii, 460; iii, 49, for example.
- 48 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 162.
- 49 E Linklater, *The Royal House of Scotland* (London, 1972), 51.
- 50 *CDS*, ii, 438.
- 51 *RCRBS*, i, 543.
- 52 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 134, 135, 158.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 174.
- 54 Groome, *Gazetteer*, v, 92.
- 55 *CDS*, ii, 132; 133; 138; 144; 149.
- 56 MacKay, *Chronicles of Frasers*, 67.
- 57 E M Barron, *The Scottish War of Independence* (Inverness, 1934), 22.
- 58 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 101–2, 104, 109, 113, 119.
- 59 R Nicholson, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1989), 77.
- 60 *Registrum Moraviensis*, 123.
- 61 J R N MacPhail (ed), *Highland Papers* (SHS, 1914), i, 124 believes the date to be 1471.
- 62 C Innes (ed), *The Book of the Thaness of Cawdor, 1236–1742* (Spalding Club, 1859), 17, 53.
- 63 *CDS*, ii, 149.
- 64 *Registrum Moraviensis*, 242.
- 65 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 135.
- 66 Innes, *Book of the Thaness*, 12; 108.

- 67 *APS*, iv, 153.
 68 *Ibid*, iii, 4.
 69 *CSP Scot*, ix, 631.
 70 *APS*, iii, 217.
 71 *RSS*, vi, no 2441.
 72 *Ibid*, vi, no 2050.
 73 *Ibid*, viii, no 1675.
 74 *Ibid*, i, no 1129.
 75 *Ibid*, iii, no 1295.
 76 *RCRBS*, i, 301.
 77 *Ibid*, i, 302.
 78 *Ibid*, ii, 316.
 79 *ER*, xviii, 296, 342; xxiii, 512.
 80 *RCRBS*, i, 519.
 81 *Ibid*, i, 526.
 82 *Ibid*, ii, 10.
 83 G Donaldson (ed), *Thirds of Benefices, 1561–72* (SHS, 1949), 133.
 84 *CSP Scot*, xi, 311.
 85 Groome, *Gazetteer*, v, 92.
 86 D E R Watt, 'Education in the Highlands in the Middle Ages', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed L Maclean (Inverness Field Club, 1981), 80.
 87 Innes, *The Book of the Thaness*, 118; 153.
 88 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 228.
 89 Innes, *The Book of the Thaness*, 110, 121.
 90 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 237.
 91 *Ibid*, 134.
 92 *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotiae*, 10 vols, ed H Scott (Edinburgh, 1915–1981), vi, 442.
 93 I B Cowan (ed), *The Parishes of Medieval Scotland* (SRS, 1967), 89.
 94 C H Haws, *Scottish Parish Clergy at the Reformation, 1540–74* (SRS, 1972), 114; *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotiae*, vi, 442.
 95 *Registrum Moraviensis*, 409.
 96 *RCBRS*, iv, 265.
 97 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 312–13.
 98 BN1/1/1, 1 October 1677.
 99 Innes, *Book of the Thaness*, 328.
 100 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 255.
 101 Ellen, *Nairn in Postcards*, np.
 102 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 314.
 103 BN1/2/1 Burgh Court Book & Register of Decrees, 1657–1673, 18 April 1661.
 104 G Bain, *Nairn in the Seventeenth Century* (Nairn, 1890), 47.
 105 Innes, *Book of the Thaness*, 257–8.
 106 BN1/1/1, January 1678.
 107 BN1/1/1, 2 April 1688.
 108 A Mitchell (ed), *Macfarlane's Geographical Collections*, 3 vols (SHS, 1906–8), ii, 459.
 109 D Laing (ed), *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie and of His Son, James Brodie of Brodie, 1652–85* (Spalding Club, 1863), 293.
 110 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 290.
 111 *Ibid*, 314.
 112 BN1/1/1, October 1692.
 113 BN1/1/1, October 1688; H Rose (ed), *A Genealogical Deduction of the Family of Rose of Kilravock* (Spalding Club, 1848), 83.
 114 W Purves (ed), *Revenue of the Scottish Crown, 1681* (Edinburgh, 1897), 200. These five towns all are situated in the south-west of the country.
 115 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 247.
 116 *APS*, vi (1), 171.
 117 *Ibid*, vi (2), 55.
 118 *Ibid*, vi (1), 360.
 119 *Ibid*, vi (2), 156.
 120 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 268; E Cowan, *Montrose. For Covenant and King* (Edinburgh, 1977), 201–6.
 121 *APS*, vi (2), 535.
 122 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 275.
 123 *APS*, vi (2), 782.
 124 *RCRBS*, iii, 372, 410, 514.
 125 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 314.
 126 *RCRBS*, iii, 516.
 127 *APS*, vii, 108.
 128 *Ibid*, vii, 109.
 129 *Ibid*, vii, App 96.
 130 *RPC*, III, ii, 397.
 131 *Ibid*, III, viii, 101.
 132 *Ibid*, III, xi, 30 & 170.
 133 *APS*, ix, 136.
 134 *Ibid*, x, 27.
 135 *RPC*, III, xvi, 100, 669, 670.
 136 *RCRBS*, iv, 649.
 137 *Ibid*, iv, 213, 234, 265.
 138 *RPC*, III, xv, 260.
 139 R Tyson, 'Famine in Aberdeenshire, 1695–1699', in D Stevenson, *From Lairds to Louns* (Aberdeen, 1986), 50.
 140 *APS*, iv, 654.
 141 *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotiae*, vi, 443.
 142 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 257.
 143 *RPC*, II, iii, 239; II, vii, 289.
 144 *Ibid*, III, v, 104.
 145 *Ibid*, III, vii, 204.
 146 *Ibid*, III, viii, 108.
 147 *Ibid*, III, x, 500.
 148 BN1/1/1, Nairn Burgh Council Records, 1674–1704.

- 149 Innes, *Book of the Thanes*, 362–3.
- 150 *RPC*, III, i, 221, 243.
- 151 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 325, 322, 323.
- 152 Bain, *Nairn in the Seventeenth Century*, 19, 32, 33, 97.
- 153 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 320, 321, 329.
- 154 SRO, E69/17/1, Moray and Nairn Hearth Tax. At this time, Forres had 150 hearths, Elgin 228 and Inverness 1,099.
- 155 *RCRBS*, iv, 319.
- 156 BN1/1/1, 12 June 1703.
- 157 BN1/1/3, 31 December 1719.
- 158 Bain, *History*, 1st edn, 313.
- 159 BN1/1/3, 30 September 1719.
- 160 BN1/1/3, 1 August 1721.
- 161 *RCRBS*, vi, 492 & 508.
- 162 BN1/1/3, 18 October 1720.
- 163 G Bain, *History of Nairnshire*, (2nd edn, Nairn, 1928), 258.
- 164 BN1/1/3, 10 March 1735.
- 165 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 259.
- 166 *APS*, xi, 421, 425, *passim*.
- 167 We are indebted to Mrs A Turner-Simpson for this reference.
- 168 W Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh, 1987), 246.
- 169 We are indebted to Mr John Lawson for this information.
- 170 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 319.
- 171 *OSA*, xvi, 748.
- 172 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 317.
- 173 *OSA*, xvi, 748.
- 174 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 247.
- 175 SRO, GD 427/198/7.
- 176 BN1/1/3, April 1712.
- 177 BN1/1/3, 29 November 1725.
- 178 C Sellar, *A Glimpse of Old Nairn* (Inverness, 1969), np.
- 179 D M Ellen, *Nairn. Faces and Places* (Zaltbommel, 1995), np.
- 180 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 261–2.
- 181 BN1/1/3, 16 October 1726.
- 182 BN1/1/3, 8 October 1716; 30 September 1719.
- 183 BN1/1/3, 10 May 1718; 5 April 1723.
- 184 BN1/1/3, October 1750.
- 185 BN1/1/3, 21 June 1759.
- 186 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 250.
- 187 *Ibid*, 262.
- 188 BN1/1/3, 12 September, 1715.
- 189 BN1/1/3, 16 October 1726.
- 190 BN1/1/3, 13 January 1746.
- 191 J Daniel, 'A true account of Mr John Daniel's progress with Prince Charles Edward', in W G Blaikie (ed), *Origins of the 'Forty-Five'* (SHS, 1916), 210.
- 192 W G Blaikie (ed), *Itinerary of Prince Charles Edward Stewart, 1745–6* (SHS, 1897), 12, 40, 44, 97.
- 193 BN1/1/3, 30 May 1746.
- 194 BN1/1/3, 18 August 1746.
- 195 BN1/1/3, 2 September 1746.
- 196 BN1/1/3, 3 September 1747.
- 197 Ellen, *Nairn. Faces and Places*, np.
- 198 BN1/1/3, 3 July 1751.
- 199 BN1/1/3, 5 August 1756.
- 200 BN1/1/3, 23 August 1756.
- 201 BN1/1/3, 9 June 1735.
- 202 Rose, *Genealogical Deduction*, 488.
- 203 SRO GD171/421.
- 204 BN1/1/3, 23 December 1756.
- 205 D W Kemp (ed), *Pococke's Tours in Scotland, 1747, 1750, 1760* (SHS, 1887), 182.
- 206 BN1/1/3, 20 April 1757.
- 207 BN1/5/1, 1795.
- 208 BN1/1/3, 23 December 1576.
- 209 J Gifford (ed), *The Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands* (London, 1992), 281.
- 210 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 327.
- 211 *Ibid*, 325–6.
- 212 BN1/1/3, 1 June 1759.
- 213 BN1/1/3, 1 June 1759.
- 214 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 429.
- 215 BN1/1/3, 20 April 1767.
- 216 BN1/5/1, 1770.
- 217 BN1/5/1, 1784–5.
- 218 *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotiae*, vi, 443.
- 219 Ellen, *Nairn. Faces and Places*, np.
- 220 Bain, *History*, 2nd edn, 519.
- 221 BN1/1/1, 30 September 1678.
- 222 BN1/1/3, 20 April, 1767; 16 October 1769; 29 April 1769; October 1771; 3 September 1772.
- 223 BN1/5/1, 1770.
- 224 BN1/1/3, July 1777.
- 225 BN1/1/3, August 1782.
- 226 BN1/1/3, 14 September 1719.
- 227 H Wilson, *The Society* (Elgin, nd), 1–7.
- 228 'Plan of the Water of Nairn, Stell Fishings in the Sea, and Lands Adjacent', by George Brown, 1794.
- 229 Anon, Typescript, in possession of Highland Council Archives. We are indebted to Mr R Steward for alerting us to this document.

- 230 OSA, xvi, 747, 748, 752, 743.
 231 *Ibid*, xvi, 747, 748, 752, 743.
 232 *Ibid*, xvi, 753.
 233 Ellen, *Nairn. Faces and Places*, np.
 234 NSA, xiii, 3, 5.
 235 *Ibid*, xiii, 5.
 236 We have benefited from discussions with Mr John Lawson on this point.
 237 J A Steers, *The Coastline of Scotland* (Cambridge, 1973), 215.
 238 J Barron (ed), *The Northern Highlands in the Nineteenth Century (Extracts from the Inverness Courier)*, 3 vols (Inverness, 1903–13), i, 70, 78, 130.
 239 T D Lauder, *The Great Flood of August 1829* (Elgin, 1873), 14, 16, 17.
 240 Pers comm, Mr D M Ellen.
 241 Pers comm, Mr D M Ellen.
 242 Barron, *Northern Highlands*, ii, 61.
 243 Hustwick, *Moray Firth*, 33, 57.
 244 Barron, *Northern Highlands*, iii, 267.
 245 Wilson, *The Society*, 7.
 246 D124/1 Nairn Fishermen's Society Minute Book, for example, 1803–5 *passim*.
 247 Pers comm, Mr D M Ellen.
 248 For full details of the life of the fishermen and women of Nairn, see M Bochel, *The Story of the Nairn Fisher-girls at the Gutting* (np, nd); M Bochel, *The Fishertown of Nairn* (Nairn, 1983); A Mackintosh (ed), 'Diary of Blind Saunders' in *Nairnshire Telegraph*, 30 January 1895; M Bochel, *Nairn Fishertown Weddings* (Nairn, 1977) and M Bochel, *Seaman's Victoria Hall, The Life and Times of the Nairn Fishing Community, 1887–1987* (Nairn, 1987). We are indebted to Mr David Ellen for the loan of many of these books, for his guided tour of the Fishertown and visit to the Fishertown Museum.
- 249 BN1/1/5, 10 September 1821; Barron, *Northern Highlands*, i, 120, 197.
 250 BN1/1/5, 10 September 1821.
 251 Barron, *Northern Highlands*, i, 17.
 252 Groome, *Gazetteer*, v, 92.
 253 NSA, xiii, 5.
 254 A G McGillivray, 'Nairn and the Disruption' (unpublished). We are grateful to Mr John Lawson for bringing this manuscript to our attention, and to Mr Gordon McGillivray for allowing us to read it.
 255 Barron, *Northern Highlands*, ii, 144
 256 Groome, *Gazetteer*, v, 93.
 257 I Rae & J Lawson, *Dr Grigor of Nairn* (Nairn, 1994), 79.
 258 Barron, *Northern Highlands*, ii, 78,
 259 *Ibid*, ii, 169.
 260 NSA, xiii, 5.
 261 D/231, Minute Book of the Directors of the Nairn Sessional School, 22 January 1836.
 262 Pers comm, Mr D M Ellen.
 263 R Southey, *Journal of a Tour in Scotland in 1819* (Reprinted, Edinburgh, 1972), 105, 107.
 264 NSA, xiii, 5.
 265 Rae & Lawson, *Grigor*, 54.
 266 Gifford, *Buildings of Scotland*, 60.
 267 OSA, xvi, 753.
 268 *Ibid*, xvi, 753.
 269 Rae & Lawson, *Grigor*, 101.
 270 BN1/4/1, 11 & 30 April, 1827.
 271 For a full account of his work, see Rae & Lawson, *Grigor*.
 272 Rae & Lawson, *Grigor*, 101.

area by area assessment

pp 47-66

N

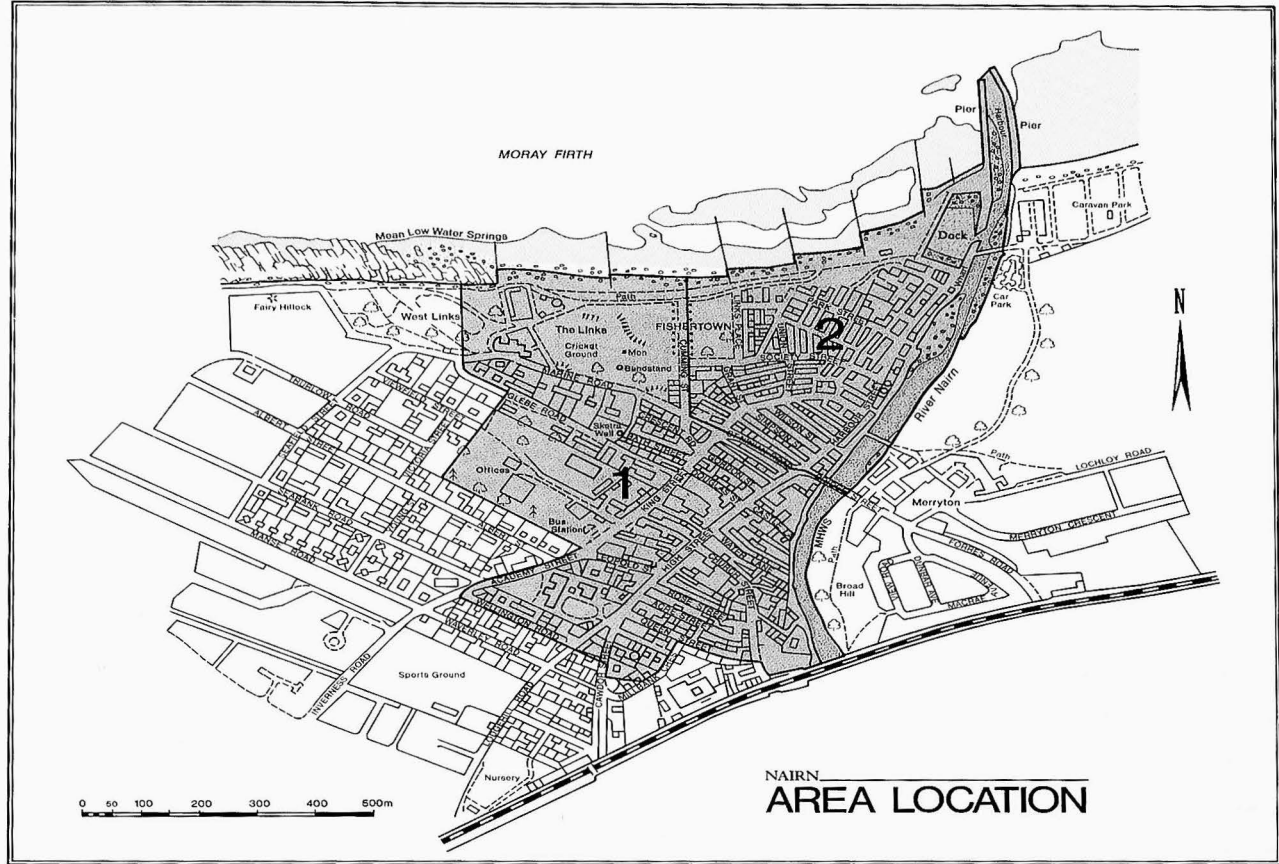


figure 20
Area location map

Nairn has been divided into two areas for the purposes of this study. Area 1 comprises the historic (medieval) core of the burgh, while Area 2 contains the Fishertown. The River Nairn provides a natural eastern boundary to the area under study; the Moray Firth provides the northern boundary. The southern and western boundaries are more arbitrary in their definition, but more or less follow the extent of the early nineteenth-century town as mapped by Wood **figure 14**.

area 1

*River Nairn/Queen Street/Wellington Road/Academy Street/Viewfield House grounds/Marine Hotel/the Links/St Ninian Road/Bridge Street **figure 22***

description

High Street is still the main thoroughfare of the town and is lined with shops on either side, more or less continuously from the bridge over the River Nairn (Bridge Street) in the north-east, to its junction with Leopold Street in the south-west. The Council offices **A** sit approximately half way along High Street, outside which stands the market cross **figure 10 & 22.B** Behind the frontages, the picture is very different. On the west side, between Leopold Street and Douglas Street, and as far west as King Street, there has been considerable development. Much of this area is now open, with a supermarket and a petrol station breaking up large expanses of car park. North of Douglas Street, villas and gardens fill the townscape.

On the east side of High Street, the former medieval burghage plots have seen much infill, with small cottage-style housing lining many of the numerous small vennels that once provided access between the High Street properties. The gardens at the very eastern end slope steeply down to the River Nairn. Perhaps the single largest undeveloped space within the limits of the medieval town is Constabulary Gardens **C**. Here, the offices of Cawdor Estates stand back from the street behind an ornate metal gateway, on what may be the site of the medieval castle.

To the west of King Street, a grand avenue leads to Viewfield House **D**, the local museum **figure 21**. Flanking the entrance on King Street are the fire station and the police station. Neat rows of small villas (for example *nos 8 & 9 Bath Street j*) flank the grounds of the museum and sports club. King Street (essentially the A96 Inverness to Forres road) continues north cutting across St Ninian Road into Fishertown (Area 2).



figure 21

Viewfield House,
with Dr Grigor's
statue



figure 22
Area 1

In the south-west corner of this area is Rosebank Primary School **E** and, at the end of High Street, the monument to John Straith **F**, a celebrated local teacher whose reputation attracted pupils from as far away as England. In the south-east corner, almost beneath the Victorian railway viaduct, are the ruins of the parish church **G**. Set on a grassy knoll by the river, the ruins stand within a walled graveyard **figure 16**.

historical background

the early layout of the burgh and castle

Invernairn was established as a royal burgh probably sometime towards the end of the twelfth century. A charter of Alexander II, dated between 1215 and 1226, refers to his predecessor, William the Lion, setting aside lands, with the purpose of founding a castle and burgh of Invernairn. Nairn Castle was certainly built by 1196, when King William stayed there in the autumn and received hostages from Harold, earl of Caithness and Orkney. Some argue that it was even older (see p 14). It was reputedly sited in the present Constabulary Gardens **C**.

This new burgh of Invernairn was a quite deliberate plantation of a burgh and associated castle, although there was almost certainly some settlement here before the founding of the burgh. It is unclear, however, precisely when and where this area was first settled. The ruined castle depicted on Timothy Pont's *Mapp of Murray* **figure 7**, c 1590, stands surrounded by the waters of the Moray Firth; it may be that early burghal settlement was abandoned in favour of a more protected site, and settlement relocated to the present site of the town. The mouth of the River Nairn probably offered a safe haven for small boats from an early date. The River Nairn, however, has altered its course over the years, at one time flowing over the Links to the north-west of the town and in the eighteenth century entering the sea at the 'Water Mouth', near the Kingsteps quarries, to

future development and archaeological potential

The Local Plan for Nairn (1983) is some years out of date (a new Plan will be adopted by the summer of 1999). A study of housing stock by Highland Regional Council in 1994 identified a projected shortfall in land available for new building, but all sites proposed for development lie outwith the medieval burgh. When this survey was carried out, in 1996, there were five vacant shop units or properties boarded up, on High Street: Royal Hotel (no 70) **V**, Highland Hotel (no 10) **b**, and nos 55 **c**, 45–47 **d** and 77 **e**. Several others have become vacant subsequently.

This area comprises the core of the medieval town. Notable features of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century townscape include the castle, chapel and mill, of which no traces are now visible. The tolbooth and tron are thought to have been located on or close to the site of the present council offices **A**.

The street frontages and associated backlands offer the most archaeological potential, with deposits likely to be concentrated in a band either side of High Street. The west side of High Street, between Leopold Street and Douglas Street, has seen considerable development in recent years with a supermarket, petrol station, housing and extensive car parking established over the former medieval burgage plots, immediately behind the street frontage. The area behind the frontage is now largely open space, with little evidence of past use, but medieval deposits may still survive beneath the modern ground surface. North of Douglas Street, there has been some infill, but the numerous small gardens here may also still preserve medieval levels.

On the east side of High Street, however, the picture is very different. In marked contrast with the west side, the property boundaries **H** still survive here. These may have 'fossilised' earlier, medieval plot boundaries. Although there has been considerable infill within these plots, they date mostly to the nineteenth century. Cottage-style housing and small businesses also line the numerous vennels that once provided access between the

the east of the town. The fact that the river was readily fordable would also attract settlement. From here, there was also an easy crossing to Cromarty and the far north.

As a deliberate plantation, the burgh would almost certainly have been laid out formally in burgage plots. The burgage plots were laid out probably along the line of the present High Street, running back in a herring-bone pattern from the main thoroughfare. To the west of the High Street, the burgage plots probably terminated at a back lane, part of which, centuries later, became King Street. The plots to the east may have run down to the river—as is suggested by a number of remnants of burgage plots, still visible **H**. There is no documentary evidence to confirm the original layout of the town, and only archaeological research will shed further light on this.

Little is known of Nairn in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The presence of such personages as the Knights Templar, the abbots of Arbroath and the thanes of Cawdor, however, albeit not on a regular basis, would imply that the town itself (as well as the castle) was of sufficient standing to house persons of importance. The Knights Templar held four roods of land in the town, as did the abbots of Arbroath, in an area between Kildrummie Road and the river; and the thanes of Cawdor held land at Balmakeith, Millbank (two roods) **I**, Gallowslands (six roods) **J** and Skateraw (two roods).

The castle would have continued to dominate the townscape. By the thirteenth century, the sheriffs of Nairn were the *ex officio* keepers of the castle, and the castle was to play a strategic role in campaigns in the north during the Wars of Independence. In 1583, the castle, which was the property of the Crown, was reported to be 'ruynit and cassin down to the ground by certane inhabitantis of the burgh of Narne, and utheris his subjectis, and the haill materiallis thairof, lyme, stane, and tymmer, transportit, awaytakin and convertit to thair useis'. Whether the extent of destruction of the castle was exaggerated is not known; but it would suggest that the castle was little used and, possibly, somewhat neglected by the constable. The implication, however, is that building works were on-going within the town.

history

archaeology

plots to the river. There has been less infill north of Church Street, and here the potential for archaeological deposits may be high. In particular, some burgage plots still stretch unbroken from the frontage down to the River Nairn (*see*, for example, Bank of Scotland, 73–75 High Street **f**).

King Street probably marks the end of the medieval burgage plots. The area to the west of King Street is nineteenth-century development, and is of no archaeological interest.

the castle

Gardens within medieval towns are increasingly rare, but where they do survive they often preserve archaeological levels. A number of small gardens are preserved within medieval Nairn, but the one which offers the highest archaeological potential is Constabulary Gardens **C**, perhaps the largest single undeveloped space in the burgh. In particular, it may contain one of the earliest and most notable features of medieval Nairn, the royal castle itself. Constabulary Gardens would have been the ideal site for a castle because, from here, the ground begins to slope sharply down to the north and east. No finds were reported when offices were built here earlier this century; and exactly where the castle would have stood is uncertain. The topography of the area, however, suggests that it might have stood in the south-west corner of the gardens, which would provide the most commanding position. The castle dates to around the late twelfth century, when castles were normally of timber and earthen construction.

Around 300 mottes are known in Scotland, mostly in the north-east and south-west of Scotland; few have been excavated. They typically comprised an earthen mound, often using material excavated from an outer defensive ditch. A central keep or tower stood on the top of the mound, with a timber palisade around the edge of the mound. Often attached to a motte was an outer enclosure known as a bailey, again protected by a ditch.

An interesting reference in 1292 speaks of a burghess of Nairn who was called Adam of the Bridge. This may be an indication that a bridge was already in existence in the town, supplementing the ancient fords, and perhaps Adam was so named since he lived beside it. Alternatively, his home might have been beside the drawbridge of the castle. There was also a mill in the township by at least 1232, as in this year four merks of its revenue were annually assigned to the Chapel of St Nicholas on the Spey.

The records indicate that by 1492 the church of Nairn was functioning in a parochial capacity, and was the place used for arbitration. This was probably the church dedicated to St Thomas (*see* p 18), but there was also a Holy Rood Kirk, which stood near the castle and had an altar dedicated to St Modain.

Little is known about the townscape even into the sixteenth century. When Mary, queen of Scots, visited Nairn in 1562, the town was effectively still one long street, although some other topographical features, such as the 'Galois Field, Myll Bank, Skaytrawe, Balmakeith, King Steps and Househill' appear in the records by the early sixteenth century.

Nairn's tolbooth—the visible expression of the lay community—was merely a low thatched building, jutting into the highway. It was here that the burgh court and burgh council meetings were held, and it probably also functioned as the town jail. It was also where the weights for use at the market were kept for safe-keeping, and it is safe to assume that the market cross and the tron, the public weigh-beam, stood nearby. There are references to the market cross from the early sixteenth century, but it was in all probability of much greater age **figure 10**. The tolbooth was the collection point for tolls from those attending Nairn's markets, but market dues may also have been collected at the town ports, or gates. There is no mention of ports in Nairn but, as the records are sparse, it should not be presumed that they did not exist. There were probably two, each enclosing one end of the main street. The tenements on the west side of the road probably

history

archaeology

A nobleman's entourage would have lived within this enclosure and, in times of unrest, livestock would have been corralled here. Since the castle at Nairn was the king's castle it probably had a bailey. Again, Constabulary Gardens themselves may define the approximate limits of the bailey. The fact that no stone foundations, other than a cellar, have ever been reported at Constabulary Gardens suggests that the earthen and timber defences of the motte were never fully replaced in stone; sixteenth-century documentary evidence, however, refers to the stonework of the castle (*see* p 21 & 50). The remains of the motte and bailey, particularly the ditches, may be preserved within this area.

chapel

Virtually nothing is known of the Holy Rood Kirk, traditionally thought to have stood close to the castle, and perhaps beneath the eighteenth-century Seceder Church N. Contemporary with the castle, or perhaps earlier, the remains of this small chapel may have been discovered by workmen during the construction of the telephone exchange at Castle Lane. Little else can be said about this church, and whether any traces have survived the building of the two secession churches and the exchange can only be guessed at.

standing buildings

Buildings situated in the core of the medieval burgh were almost certainly constructed on the site of, or directly over, earlier buildings, in a sequence going back possibly to the medieval period and continuing up to the present day. Although there has been no opportunity for archaeological examination of any of the street frontages in Nairn, evidence of earlier, possibly medieval, structures may be expected to survive, sealed beneath some of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century standing buildings along the High Street and the vennels leading off it.

terminated at the back lane with some form of fencing or barriers at the 'heid dykes'. Entrance to the back lane and the common lands of the burgh beyond would have been gained by small gates.

James VI noted the differing tongues in the town, the south-west end speaking Gaelic and the north-east fisher settlement speaking English. While this gives no indication of the size of the town, the two settlements that effectively made up the burgh of Nairn were sufficiently distinct as to have a character of their own. Although a small town, Nairn still had the town houses of local gentry, which would have been more prestigious than the dwellings of the ordinary burgesses and indwellers. The Roses of Belivat, for example, had a house near Millbank; and the thanes of Calder owned extensive holdings (*see* p 17 & 20). The lands of the abbey of Arbroath and of the Knights Templar (*see* p 20) had passed into secular hands by the Reformation.

the struggles of the seventeenth-century town

More is known about Nairn when the records become a little more expansive in the seventeenth century, but the overall impression is still of a small town. In 1645, the town was burned by the Duke of Montrose, who had pursued Covenanters as far as Nairn after the Battle of Auldearn, taking no prisoners. By 1691, Nairn was functioning almost as a marching post, with troops passing through on a regular basis. In 1696, Nairn sent representation to the Convention regarding their great poverty and unduly heavy proportion of the tax roll. The following year a committee was appointed to visit Nairn and inspect the tolbooth and the bridge, both of which the town was obliged to maintain, even though it was poverty-stricken. The town was deemed to be in such poor condition that Nairn was granted 400 merks towards the repair of its tolbooth and bridge.

history

archaeology

In other Scottish towns, archaeological excavations have revealed street frontages as promising for the preservation of archaeological deposits, although cellarage has sometimes destroyed the evidence. Recent excavations in Perth, Dunfermline and Arbroath have shown also that the width and alignment of the main streets in the burghs have changed over the centuries. Earlier cobbled street surfaces and contemporary buildings may be preserved up to three or four metres behind the line of the modern street frontage. At 80–86 High Street, Perth, for example, the medieval street lay some four metres back from the present-day High Street. At the Abbot House, in Dunfermline, recent excavations uncovered a whole section of the medieval street itself, inside and sealed below the floor of the standing building. Up to six phases of street surfaces were revealed, each separated by thick dumps of midden containing broken pottery, leather and oyster shells. Here, archaeology clearly demonstrated how street frontages can shift dramatically over time, and revealed the potential for important archaeological deposits to survive, buried beneath later buildings.

At least one building in Nairn has demonstrated the potential for standing buildings also to preserve important archaeological and architectural evidence within their structures—36 High Street L, the townhouse of the Roses of Kilravock. This house is known to have been repaired in 1722. In 1893, a Latin inscription on the front of the building and an oak-panelled backroom were all that was thought to have survived. In 1961, the Ordnance Survey visited and noted that the building was entirely modern and that the panelled room had gone. In fact, the building is largely intact, at ground level at least, with a large and impressive cellar at the rear. Essentially, the seventeenth-century (or earlier) building has been encased within a more modern structure. This is a good example of how historic buildings can survive life on a modern High Street.

Whether the same can be said for the tolbooth—thought to have stood on or near the present local council offices—is uncertain. A tolbooth is recorded in the late sixteenth century, but suffered burning in 1716, and rebuilding and alterations in 1750 and 1811.

Given this poverty in the seventeenth century, the townscape probably saw little improvement. The impression is of a small town, with its market cross, tron and tolbooth set in a single street, much as in the sixteenth century. The tolbooth, as the most important secular building, was a major upkeep for the townspeople. It seems to have been in constant need of repair, even before the Convention of Royal Burghs granted funds for its upkeep (*see* p 24). In 1667, timber was brought from Rothiemurchus to repair it; but three years later, it was deemed not able to offer shelter to a prisoner 'for want of roof and repairing'. The tolbooth had by this time a steeple, which suggests some improvements over the previous century (*see* p 20). The burgh council records refer to a weigh house in 1677; this may have been one and the same as the tron.

The town's harbour and bridge also needed maintaining. The bridge was said to have been erected at the expense of Provost William Rose of Fleenas, in 1631, but it is possible there was an earlier one (*see* p 18 & 21). One potential danger for the town and the bridge was drifting sands. In 1663, Alexander Brodie of Brodie wrote in his diary, 'Nairn was in danger to be quitt lost by the sand and by the water'. The bridge was severely damaged, but funds did not permit its repair for six years. The town council, however, wisely prohibited turf cutting on the sea shore in future, to prevent sand drifting.

In post-Reformation years, the church in the town was dedicated to St Ninian. Its relationship to the late fifteenth-century church, possibly dedicated to St Thomas, is unclear (*see* p 18 & 20). By 1571, it is known that repair work was to be effected on the choir of the church, although whether the cause of damage was natural weathering, neglect or wilful harm is not clear. One well loved minister was David Dunbar, who held the post from 1638 until 1660, and was commemorated on a tablet on the south wall of the now ruined parish church. This tablet is now worn and scarcely legible, having deteriorated rapidly over the last decade. The parish church **G** was built on the site of the earlier one in 1658; it continued in use until 1808, when it was largely rebuilt, using the

history

archaeology

How much of this structure, or structures, survives encased within the fabric of the present building, or beneath it, can only be surmised. The tolbooth probably had a cellar, often used as a prison, and the staircase would originally have been on the outside of the building.

The High Street itself has always been a centre of activity in the burgh, and its archaeological potential should not be forgotten when considering, for example, environmental improvements to the street or the insertion of new services. Evidence of medieval street levels may be preserved, either as metalled surfaces or as accumulated midden deposits (as was the case at Abbot House, Dunfermline). The remains of other important features of the medieval townscape may also be sealed beneath the present road surface—the market cross, the tron (which stood outside the tolbooth) and wells—of which no archaeological evidence has yet been found. Similarly, the smaller streets and wynds should also be monitored routinely. There have been later additions to the town plan, notably St Ninian Road. The remains of both Collector's Close **X** & **figure 19** and Barbour's Close, and the adjacent properties that were swept away in advance of the construction of St Ninian Road about 1890, may be preserved beneath the present road.

burgage plots

Behind the High Street frontage were the backlands of the burgage plots. Over time, these were gradually built over as pressure for space within the town increased and the frontages became filled up (a process known as repletion). Evidence of burgage plots, however, does survive buried beneath modern buildings and car parks. They are an extremely valuable source of information to the urban historian and archaeologist, because they often document the activities and conditions of everyday life in a medieval town; for this reason, all development in them should be monitored. Excavations in other medieval towns in Scotland, such as Perth, Aberdeen and St Andrews, have revealed

earlier foundations (*see* p 24–5) **figure 16**. A new manse was built in 1659, but of this there is no detail.

In 1661, the High Street was causeyed for the first time, although dung hills continued to be placed on it into the following century (*see* pp 36–7). There was a school in existence by at least 1663. The castle may still have been standing, albeit in a ruinous state. In 1622, there is mention of the ‘precinct of the auld castle’, which may imply that the actual building had disappeared. Other ruined properties are known to have been in the town. In 1688, acting on an act of parliament anent ruinous houses in royal burghs, the council set in motion an inspection of dilapidated houses in the town and ordered their repair by local craftsmen.

Nairn’s finances remained unstable, even after receiving financial support from the Convention of Royal Burghs in 1698, and another committee was instructed to visit and report on the town’s common good, trade, pier, harbour and bridge in 1701. Repair of the tolbooth was considered in 1703. In 1707, the Synod of Moray provided £34 for repair of the town’s bridge. The bridge and tolbooth (the latter having been burned in 1716 (*see* p 28) were again in need of repair in 1719; but some remedial work was probably effected, £34 1s 6d being given to a mason. By 1729, conditions were such that Nairn petitioned the Convention setting forth both its inability to ‘build’, probably meaning repair, its tolbooth.

It is clear that the town’s market continued to function, albeit on a small scale. In 1750, those who wished to have a booth at the market paid between £8 and £10. The booths were of the nature of shops, often wooden, attached to the front of the properties lining the market street. Those nearest the market cross, the focal point of the market, would pay most. Stalls were free-standing open counters, very often with wheels for ease of transporting. For the right to hold a stall only a few pence was paid. Cattle were sold on the Links, and agricultural produce at the Shambles Yard **K**, now the site of the Congregational church **P**. At the end of the eighteenth century, there were sixteen merchant shops, most of them small.

eighteenth-century repairs and improvements

The council records show clearly that within a few years of the ‘Forty-Five rising the town was making a determined effort to improve the locality. The bad state of the street and irregularity of the houses was noted in August 1756 (although the town house of the

history

archaeology

middens, rubbish pits, cess pits and vegetable plots to be common features of medieval backlands, alongside craft workshops and kilns. A series of three excavations at Canal Street, in Perth, for example, showed that the boundaries of these plots were not fixed but, instead, shifted regularly. A fascinating sequence was revealed, of continually changing plot boundaries and properties being amalgamated and sub-divided throughout the medieval period. The end of the burgage plots was sometimes marked by small walls, wooden fences or ditches, beyond which may have been a back lane. In Nairn, King Street probably marks the end of these plots on the west side of High Street—and the limit of the medieval town.

There has been only one opportunity, so far, to examine archaeologically burgage plots in Nairn. The redevelopment of the garage on King Street **g** offered the chance to investigate a plot stretching from King Street to the rear of the Royal Hotel, High Street. Unfortunately, there had been considerable scarping of the site, and only one of the twenty trenches excavated produced deposits that could have been medieval, although no dating evidence was recovered.

One recurring archaeological problem encountered in coastal burghs is the accumulation of wind-blown sand. Excavations at Star Garage in Montrose, Forth Street Lane in North Berwick and several sites in Ayr all revealed that medieval archaeological levels had been sealed by thick deposits of wind-blown sand. This should always be borne

Roses of Kilravock **L figure 9** was deemed good enough for the Duke of Cumberland, commander of the government forces, who stayed there on the 15th of April 1745). In particular, the stretch of street from Lady Clava's house on the west and the new house of Hugh Falconar on the east (*see* p 30) down to the bridge, and the section from the 'dial' at the corner of Pole Road (now Leopold Street) to the west end on the town caused concern. An inspection party was set up, in August 1756, to note which houses should be demolished, either in whole or in part, and to obtain estimates of costs from pavers. Later in the same month, an evaluation of all the windows and lights in the town was undertaken.

By 23 December, the road from Bailie Falconar's house to the ford at the bridge had been completed. Some properties still caused concern, mainly because of encroachment onto the thoroughfare. The comment that it was in particular the forestairs that were causing a nuisance suggests that housing in this area was larger than small, single storeyed thatched cottages. The tolbooth was under repair in 1735, having lain dilapidated since it was burnt.

Clearly, there were many houses of poor quality; those at the west end of the town were described as 'hutts' and were so 'shamefully laid down' that the council decreed in December 1756 that they were to be demolished by the next Whitsunday. Pococke, writing in 1760, stated that the town consisted of one long street, about a quarter of a mile long, with about one hundred houses. It was the second section of this 'one long street', the main route out to the west, that was upgraded in 1757, assisted by a donation from Major Clephane of the second battalion of Highlanders. It was not until 1794 that Bridge Street was paved.

The 1750s, however, had marked a real turning point for the town. Sufficient funds were found for the market cross to be replaced in 1757. The old one was of stone and lime, which required pointing and liming. The horloge stone dial stood at the corner of the Pole Road (later called Leopold Street). It was probably at the time of these road improvements that the 'diall' was removed. The sundial that was placed on the new market cross was probably the old horloge stone and may be seen in the High Street **B & figure 10**.

Other public works were effected during this decade. The earliest school on record stood in Church Street (*see* p 31). By 1751, it was claimed, the school had long been vacant probably through the lack of a school master; but in 1762, a decision was made to move it to between Gallowgate and Kildrummie Gate **M & figure 11**. Five years later, the work on

history

archaeology

in mind when excavating in coastal burghs, such as Nairn, particularly when working to a pre-determined level (ie determined by the planned depth of disturbance of the development), rather than to the undisturbed subsoil.

parish church and mill

One individual site which offers archaeological potential is the Riverside Kirk **G**. Situated on the outskirts of the medieval town on a grassy knoll, the present ruins date to 1810; but an earlier church built around 1650 is known to have stood here. Recent archaeological work **h** has established that burials may lie outwith the kirkyard wall, on the south side at least. The recorded alignment of these burials was north to south, rather than the more usual east to west; and it seems likely that the burials had been disturbed previously, by workmen digging the foundations for the south wall of the kirkyard in the early 1800s, and promptly reburied a short distance away. It does prove that the south kirkyard wall, if not the full circuit of wall, is associated with the later church and not the original one, which never appears to have had a formal boundary. The mid seventeenth-century church is likely to lie beneath the present ruin, which was finally abandoned in the late 1890s.

There is a documentary reference to a mill in Nairn in the early thirteenth century. Its location is unknown, but the meandering course of the river gives some guidance. It is

the new boys' school was already completed and a piece of waste ground to its south-west was set aside as a small garden 'as an additional encouragement to' the schoolmaster.

The parish church of St Ninian continued to serve both the fisher settlement and the Gaelic-speaking south-west of the town. In 1753, a Seceder Church (that is, one that dissented from the established Presbyterian Church and had strong links with the Covenanting past) had been built at Boghole. A petition was set up that the Nairn people should have their own Seceder congregation; by the late eighteenth century, this stood in Castle Lane N & figure 12. Preaching here was solely in Gaelic.

From the late 1760s, many of the common lands of the burgh were feued out or sold. The resultant rental was of benefit to the community, which had by now a number of public properties to maintain, including the bridge, which needed constant repair work (for example £11 7s in 1770). The bridge was swept away in floods in 1782.

the nineteenth-century 'renaissance'

After a near disastrous partial collapse occurred in the parish church in October 1808, some rebuilding was effected, but partially using existing unstable foundations and the renovation was never entirely satisfactory figures 8 & 16. This church had 902 sittings; whereas the Congregational Church P, which had been set up in 1801 as the 'Independent Chapel' in Fishertown, at what is now 52 King Street, could seat 416. In 1816, the Secession Church moved from Castle Lane to a site opposite the County Buildings Q. From 1839, there was concern that the parish church was proving inadequate. By September 1842, a decision was taken to build a separate parish church, rather than an 'extended' church to the original. Significantly, it was determined that this church would reject interference by the state and also patronage, whereby local lairds could place ministers in charge. In effect, Nairn had established a free church a year before the Free Church was set up by the Disruption. By the time of the Disruption, on 18 May 1843, the construction of Nairn's Free Church was almost finished (see pp 36–7).

In the 1790s, there were probably about 1,100 people living in the town. By 1841, there were 2,318 people in the burgh, although it was claimed that over the previous twenty years only the Fishertown had expanded—testimony to the success of the fishing industry. The earlier part of the nineteenth century had seen extensive upgrading of the

history

archaeology

unlikely that it stood anywhere to the north of the main bridge, as the river is known to have changed direction radically on a number of occasions. The first (nearest) suitable site is approximately where the parish church stands. A bend in the river here has created a flattish terrace (although the church stands on a grassy knoll), where there was enough space to have drawn water from the river to power a mill, before returning it further downstream. The church was not erected here until some time after the Reformation, and could have been built on or close to an earlier mill, perhaps re-using building materials from the mill.

Little is known about medieval mills in Scotland, as few have been excavated. The remains of a flour mill were found three metres below the present ground surface at the Saracen Head Inn in Glasgow. A timber-lined channel drew water from the old Poldrait Burn to power a vertical mill wheel, an impression of which survived in the stream bed. One of the paddles and a stone socket for the axle were also found in the stream. The mill itself was timber-built with a porched loading bay for carts. Where there are mills, there are also weirs, leats (lades) and mill races. A weir was required to divert water from a river or stream to a channel, or leat. A 'tail race' returned the water that had been through the mill to the river, to prevent 'back-water' impeding the mill-wheel. The tail race of a medieval mill was found during excavations of a Bronze Age henge monument at Balfarg, Fife. In Nairn, if the parish church is also the site of the mill, then the weir and leat of the mill must have stood somewhere to the south of the Riverside Kirk, and the tail-race to the north. The foundations of the mill, and of the backfilled leats and tail

burghal property. The town was forced to sell large parts of the common good to fund the original work and repairs, even though private subscriptions were made. Some of what had originally been the burgh lands were now, in effect, small private estates. Newton, Ivybank **O**, Viewfield **D** & **figure 21**, Seabank, Firhall, Househill and Millbank **I** were amongst these. In 1834, Inverness upgraded its street lighting to gas and the old lamps were thrown away. It was reported in the *Inverness Courier*, however, that ‘the good folks of Nairn have purchased part of the disused illuminants, and thirty more have been sent to enlighten the inhabitants of Tain’. It was not until four or five years later that gas was supplied to the town. Not only could the smokey whale oil lamps (which were never put out, but allowed to run out) be replaced, but private premises and shops were soon to receive a supply. There was, however, still no water supply to the town, water being collected from wells, such as the one in the High Street or the Sketra well **R** at the far end of Bath Street. Many of the larger houses would have had their own wells.

The oldest house in Nairn is reputed to be 79 & 79a High Street, Sheriff Falconar’s House **k**, which dates from the eighteenth century and would have been a significant feature of the High Street of the time. The nineteenth century saw a range of new domestic and commercial properties being built along the High Street. Some, for example, nos 61 **l** and 69 High Street **m** remained with their gable end abutting onto the High Street; others, such as nos 109 & 113 **n**, no 117 High Street **o**, and nos 1, 2 & 3 Gordon Street **p**, were reoriented and faced onto the main thoroughfare.

The Academy was built by public subscription on land donated by Captain James Rose **E** & **figure 17**. Subscriptions had been drawn in from 1830; and a Mechanics Institute was also proposed. By 1832, one classroom had been fitted up and opened and a second was built but not equipped; funds were appealed for in 1835. In 1841 the Academy was renamed Rose’s Academical Institution, in honour of Captain James Rose, in the grounds of Ivybank. As well as the Academy, with which the parish school merged, there were by 1842 two other subscription schools, one sessional (meaning it was maintained by the church session) and the other monitory (*see* p 38).

By 1842, there were three banks in the town, the British Linen Company **S**, the Caledonian **T** and the National **U**, as well as two savings banks.

history Sometime between 1833 and 1836, the High Street was macadamised. This aided traffic, being a smoother surface than the old paved or causeyed roads, as did the lowering

archaeology

races may be preserved below the present ground surface. The area has seen some small-scale development. Equally, it is popular with tourists visiting the church, and so environmental improvements may be envisaged. Any episodes of ground disturbance here should be carefully monitored.

swimming baths

Finally, the swimming baths on the Links **Y** would merit further study. Built by 1821, fragments of the original plain red sandstone building can be seen in an adjacent modern building. A system of pipes and tunnels was planned, but little else is known. These would have supplied the baths with fresh seawater, and returned old water to the sea; they may also be preserved below the present ground surface.

previous archaeological work and chance finds

King Street, Nairn NH 8835 5660 g

structural remains

In advance of a housing development, a site assessment was commissioned by Highland Archaeology Service. Trial trenching revealed structural remains derived from nineteenth-century buildings set into natural sands. Of the twenty trenches excavated,

of the steep ascent at the top of the High Street **W**. The many small vennels, such as Weavers' Lane, Collector's Close **X** and Barbour's Close, most of which have now disappeared, still ran back from the main streets.

Nairn was soon to introduce further innovations. By 1821, baths had been built at the west end of the Links, just above high water mark **Y**; part of its walls may now be seen incorporated into a private dwelling. In the next few decades, vast improvements were made to these seaside facilities. The baths were improved still further, by 1856 having six bath rooms and two dressing rooms, hot and cold showers and open sea bathing. It was 'the only establishment of the kind in the north'; and was to see even more innovations.

In the second half of the century, new salt water baths were opened; both Nairn Golf Club and the Nairn Artisan Golf Club (later Nairn Dunbar Golf Club) were founded; the upgrading of the Links, by the removal of quarry holes and the provision of public seating, was effected; and a band stand **Z** was built. The town continued to expand: elegant Victorian villas and prestigious hotels were erected on areas such as the former glebe **a**. Nairn had become 'the Brighton of the north'.

history

archaeology

only one revealed possibly medieval features, but no dating evidence was recovered. Robins, 1995.

Church Road, Nairn, NH 884 563 i

modern deposits

Trial excavations at Higgins Warehouse, Church Street (now Tower Court), near the ruins of the old parish church, revealed modern topsoil and undateable small features cut into the subsoil. *DES* (1989), 29.

Old Parish Church, NH 8853 5625 k

burials

Skeletal remains were found in 1995 during building works immediately to the south of the kirkyard wall, in an area that had been in use as a garden nursery. An archaeological evaluation was then commissioned by Highland Region Archaeology Service, and a further six burials were discovered. Unusually, the burials were recorded as lying on a north to south alignment and appear to have cut into the natural subsoil. The burials most probably represent graves disturbed during the building of the kirkyard wall in the early nineteenth century. Farrell, 1995.

area 2*the Links / St Ninian Road / River Nairn / harbour* **figure 23**

description

Fishertown is an atmospheric place, which seems a world away from the rest of Nairn. A crush of houses line a maze of narrow streets and lanes, with neat little gardens. The main thoroughfare is Harbour Street, which connects High Street and the main bridge over the River Nairn at the south end, with the harbour at the north end. Shops and public houses are concentrated along the southern end of Harbour Street, with shops on the east side and pubs on the west side.

The story of the fishing industry is told in the seasonal Fishertown Museum at the junction of Wilson Street and King Street **A**, and by notice boards and plaques scattered around the area. The Seaman's Victoria Hall **B** is one of the reminders of Nairn's sea-going past. The west bank of the river, once the scene of furious activity, has been upgraded as a public walkway, the worn stones along the edge of the river wall a clue to former use. At the south end of the walkway, a footbridge **C** spans the river just below the main road bridge, and leads to the Nairn Dunbar Golf Course on the opposite bank.

The harbour **D** is now a busy marina catering for up to one hundred pleasure craft—the only vessels with shallow enough draft to navigate the silted-up river mouth. A new complex of shops and apartment flats overlooks the marina. The Links, which starts just west of the harbour, is unusual in not being the town golf course, but instead the venue for games, shows, picnics and, interestingly, cricket, a game introduced to Nairn by the labourers from Yorkshire and Lancashire who built the railway in the 1850s.

historical background

The new burgh of Invernairn was a quite deliberate plantation of a burgh and associated castle, although there was almost certainly some settlement here before the founding of the burgh. As with the castle, some argue that the burgh was of earlier than late twelfth-century date (*see* pp 14–16). Certainly, the confirmation by King William to Richard,

 archaeological potential

Fishertown, designated a Conservation Area, is largely a nineteenth-century development. The historic potential of this area is probably greater in terms of its architecture than its archaeology. Many of the fisher families' houses still survive, although there are few examples left of the outbuildings that were used as smokehouses **K**, salt stores **L** or net stores **J**. These were most likely built of timber, but where they were of stone they have probably been converted into house extensions or garages (*see* p 72 **historic buildings**).

A fishing community in Nairn is on record by the sixteenth century, but exactly where it was sited is not clear. The course of the River Nairn changed regularly and, as late as the nineteenth century, it cut across the Links somewhere to the north of Society Street. If an earlier core settlement is to be found in Fishertown, it is likely to be defined by King Street, St Ninian Road and Harbour Street.

The riverside, now a walkway, was the centre of the later fishing industry. There is, however, little evidence of former use except for the worn stones along the edge of the river wall, where boats were tied up and catches landed. The river itself may offer archaeological potential. Timbers from jetties or from the hulls of fishing boats may be preserved within the silts and mud of the river bed, and may be visible at low tide. Given the frequent changes of course of the river, it is even conceivable that traces of earlier settlement might survive underwater.

No chance discoveries or archaeological investigations have so far taken place in Area 2.



figure 23

Area 2

bishop of Moray, sometime in the 1180s, possibly 1187x9, of the 'capella de Inuenaren' indicates an already existing chapel at Invernairn, which would presuppose at least a little settlement nearby. The ruined castle depicted on Timothy Pont's *Map of Murray* figure 7, c 1590, stands surrounded by the waters of the Moray Firth; it may be that early burghal settlement was abandoned in favour of a more protected site, and settlement relocated to the present site of the town. The mouth of the River Nairn probably offered a safe haven for small boats. The River Nairn, however, has altered its course over the years, at one time flowing over the Links to the north-west of the town, and in the eighteenth century entering the sea at the 'Water Mouth', near the Kingsteps quarries, to the east of the town. From here, there was also an easy crossing to Cromarty and the far north. It is unclear, however, not only precisely when this area was first settled, but also exactly where, given the shifting nature of the Water of Nairn, particularly as it entered the sea.

the harbour and fishings

In consequence of this erratic movement of the river and the original water-logged nature of much of Area 2, it is reasonable to presume that there was little settlement here during much of the middle ages. Indeed, because of the fear of flooding, there was little or no development beyond the junction of King Street and Harbour street until the end of the eighteenth century.

By the sixteenth century, at least, fishing was an important element of the economy in the Nairn area. Some of the fishings were in private hands, the rights to fish salmon in the water of Nairn in 1574, for example, being held by Hugh Rose (Ross) of Kilravock. It is difficult to judge, through lack of documentary evidence, how much trade was being conducted through Nairn's market and port, or harbour, in this century. Documentary sources, however, have illustrated how natural disasters could affect the economy. In 1561, for example, the deanery of Moray suffered 'be reasoun of the evill growth of the cornis and the rysing of the watter of Narne the said yeir'.

One potential danger for the town lands was drifting sands. Robert Gordon of Straloch, writing some time before 1661, commented that 'time has changed the appearance of [Nairn] and the sea has partly destroyed with sandbanks and partly washed away a good part of the highly productive land'. In 1663, Alexander Brodie of Brodie wrote in his diary, 'Nairn was in danger to be quitt lost by the sand and by the water'. The bridge was severely damaged, but funds did not permit its repair for six years.

The year 1661 saw a second ratification of the rights of Nairn as a royal burgh (see p 22). These, on the surface, would appear to have been at least the basis for an adequately healthy burghal economy; but how far, in reality, Nairn had a fully functioning 'port and harbour' with its 'due customs' must be questioned. Occasional references suggest that the 'port and harbour' were not totally defunct. When, for example, Sir Hugh Campbell of Cawdor arranged for barley to be transported to vessels sitting off Nairn in 1673, the waterfront was described as the 'port and shoar of Nairne'. There is no evidence, however, that the 'port' was sited within Area 2; with the shifting nature of the river, there was probably no river harbourage as such, but rather mooring along the shoreline.

Although the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century records speak of Nairn's 'harbour', there was not a harbour in the real sense of the word. It was used largely for shipping barks and travellers to Cromarty and Dornoch firths, as this was the shortest crossing point. Occasionally, vessels trading with Inverness would sit off Nairn Bay, but would not come close in shore. A committee of the Convention of Royal Burghs visited the town in 1701, to report on its common good, trade, pier, harbour and bridge. This one reference suggests that there might have been a primitive pier in the town by now, up to which small boats might moor. There is evidence, also, that by 1715 the harbour was in a state of extreme neglect. A measure of how little trading was done from Nairn's port may be seen in August 1706. The *Providence of Alloa* and *Jane of Burntisland* arrived with cargo.

Such was the enthusiasm and pleasure of the townspeople at such unusual events that the officers of the two ships were made honorary burghesses of Nairn.

On 12 July 1695, an assessment was made of the number of hearths in the town, for the purposes of a national taxation. Unfortunately, the Nairn records do not give details of the number of hearths in individual properties, merely an overall total. There were a number of prestigious houses in the town, which would be expected to have had multiple hearths; and some other properties would have had more than one hearth, as hearths for smithies were also included in the total. The majority were probably single hearthed, as the town appears not to have been prosperous. Even allowing for the above factors, there were only 140 hearths in the town. It is difficult to say how many dwellings this represents, but, using the evidence from other towns, this may account for somewhere in the region of only eighty houses in the town. There had probably been little expansion over the previous century; and clearly the land within Area 2 was the least desirable for development.

Improvements to the townscape, however, might be achieved by unpaid labour. On 18 October 1720, a decision was made in council 'taking to consideration the advantage it will be to the burgh to causs the river run in a straight channell to the sea'. Two burghesses, with a squad of forty-eight men 'with shovells and spades', were to set to work on the 24th of the month, a similar group on the 25th, and, again on 26th; and, thereafter, 'to continue the said work by turn till finished'. How long this mammoth task took is undocumented. Fourteen years later, the river had resumed its earlier route, westwards along the Links, which was considered a 'loss' to the burgh. The river then escaped to the east and a group was appointed to see how the run of water could be put right. Interestingly, a year later the Laird of Brodie took out a writ against the town, that it should return the course of the river to its original position. Litigation continued for several years. A 1794 map shows the river flowing into the sea beyond Kingsteps quarries.

One successful pursuit in the town was fishing. In 1712, the Nairn Company of Herring Fishers was constituted by Rose of Clava. In their first year, they prepared to cure 120 lasts of herring; in fact, 167 lasts were cured. Soon, the shore was lined with fish houses and stores, which probably also stored haddock, skate, flounder and cod.

improvements to the townscape

Having reinstated the main road of the town, in 1759 the council determined to extend the road fully to the harbour. Although it had been laid out in plan for some time, the pathway had been encroached upon by dykes, refuse and water from the river and high tides.

From the late 1760s, many of the common lands of the burgh were feued out or sold. Certain areas, such as the Calf Ward, had been feued since the seventeenth century, but at this time there is clear evidence of escalation of this practice: for example, in 1767 waste land beside the school; two years later, waste land beside the last fisher houses and land to the west of the Auldton Burn; in 1771, a piece of land in the north field of the Links; and in the 1770s further large tracts of the Links. The resultant rental was of benefit to the community, which had by now a number of public properties to maintain.

There were not only considerable improvements to the townscape at this time. In 1767, a far-sighted venture was established—the Nairn Fishermen's Society. By 1771, the society had sufficient funds to acquire land from the town, on which fishermen could build, paying feus to the society. Thus was Fishertown expanded. The option of purchasing, for a further £5, all the land as far west as the present Marine Hotel was turned down, however, as the land was deemed to be useless, being all bushes and sandhills.

By 1841, there were 2,318 people in the burgh, although it was claimed that over the previous twenty years only the Fishertown had expanded. This was testimony to the success of the fishing industry. 150 men and fifty boys were employed in the haddock and cod fishings.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, there was considerable pressure to improve the harbour. At the time of the building of the Telford harbour, there was no foreland as today (there now being an accumulation of sand on the east beach, as the harbour works prevent material flowing west). Telford, in 1820–25, altered the course of the Nairn to some extent, and completed the quay on the western bank by 1826. The great flood of 1829, however, caused tremendous damage. The harbour itself was undermined, the bulwark broken and the land shifted. Two acres of washing green were swept away and the year's grain crop was wasted. Repairs to the bridge cost £500 and to the harbour, £2,500 **figure 13**.

The upgrading of the harbour encouraged movement from Delnies and also from Maviestown. The fishers were able to build larger boats in Nairn harbour, which meant they could extend their regular fishing grounds beyond the Moray firth. Now that the river was effectively contained, it also meant that Fishertown might expand: until the end of the eighteenth century, it seems that Fishertown could not develop beyond the intersection of King Street and Harbour Street, for fear of flooding. A house, reputedly the oldest one in the Fishertown and dating from before the re-building of the harbour, still stands at 46 King Street **O**. Many houses from the later period of development are still standing, although most have been renovated and modernised. A good example of the style of houses built during this expansion of the Fishertown can be seen at nos 1 & 2, 6 & 8 and 10 & 12 Cumming Street **P**.

An additional quay was added to the east bank in 1830 **E**. This was to have a profound effect on accessibility to the town and, from 1840, Nairn was a regular stopping off point for the Inverness–Edinburgh steamers.

One of the most important sites in the Fishertown was the barking yard **F**. It was here that nets and sails were boiled in large kettles containing Indian or Burmese cutch as a preservative. Oilskins were canvas coveralls coated in boiled linseed oil, thus making a waterproof protection. The Nairn Fishermen's Society Minute Book indicated that a fee was taken for the use of a kettle. Income was also still made from house rentals **figure 15**. The funds thus gathered were still used for the benefit of widows and to assist those who could not afford necessary repairs to their homes. Another well-known feature was the 'Black Shed' **G**, which stood on the east pier. The wall in front of it was known as the 'Tarry Dyke' as it was here that ropes were tarred in a large boiler.

As well as the Academy, built by public subscription on land donated by Captain James Rose (see **area 1**), there were by 1842 two other subscription schools—one sessional (meaning it was maintained by the church session) and the other monitory. The Minute Book of the Directors of the Nairn Sessional School in 1836 sets down the purposes of the subscribers.

The designation of the Institution shall be 'the Sessional School of Nairn' and its object shall be the establishment, by subscription, of a school in the lower end of the town of Nairn for the benefit particularly of the seafaring classes and others resident in that district; and so far as possible, provision shall be made for the education of very poor children gratuitously, or at reduced rates. A Sabbath School, free to all, shall form part of the object.

By 1851, the Links School **H** (see p 38 & 71) was established by the Free Church, to educate the fisher children. From here, the pupils went to the Monitory School **I**, so called because teachers were helped by senior pupils called monitors. They would return for one year to the Links School to be educated under the headmaster.

Fishertown retains to this day a distinctive character, quite different from the rest of Nairn. Interestingly, it was not until the twentieth century that the Fishertown people had a representative councillor, so removed did they feel from Nairn town politics. Although few net stores **J**, smoke sheds **K**, salt stores **L** and houses with the keystones awaiting extension **M** remain (see p 72), there are still clues to the important role that this part of

Nairn played in the local economy—and the Fishertown Museum **A** gives a fascinating insight into this crucial part of Nairn's past.

In 1852, there had been proposals for a new breakwater. A writer in the *Inverness Courier* at that time perhaps summed up the overriding characteristic of Area 2: 'ever since he could remember anything anent this snug burgh, seaport and bathing place, the natives therein have been devising all manner of ingenious schemes to effect an amicable amalgamation between their river and their sea'.

history

archaeology

future development

The Local Plan for Nairn (1983) is some years out of date (a new Plan will be adopted by the summer of 1999). Fishertown, however, is a designated Conservation Area, but has seen considerable redevelopment in recent years. The harbour, in particular, is the centre-piece for a small marina-style development of shops and apartment flats. The former gas works **N**, on the east side of Harbour Street, has also been redeveloped for housing. Elsewhere in Fishertown, small-scale refurbishment and alterations to existing properties is ongoing, notably along the southern sections of Harbour Street.

the archaeological potential of Nairn a summary **figure 25**

an overview

On present evidence, there is potential for the survival of archaeological deposits within the medieval core of Nairn, but the extent to which deposits survive is difficult to predict. Nevertheless, routine monitoring and excavations in many other Scottish towns, especially Perth and Aberdeen, but also in some smaller burghs, has demonstrated that medieval and later archaeological remains often survive beneath the modern town. Therefore, the site of any proposed ground disturbance or development along the main street frontages in the historic section of Nairn must be accorded a high archaeological priority and arrangements made for the site to be assessed, monitored and, if necessary, excavated in advance of the development scheme. Similarly, any proposed ground disturbance of the surviving streets and wynds themselves (for instance, for essential repairs, access to services, or environmental improvements) should also be monitored routinely, because the remains of important features of the medieval townscape may be sealed beneath them—the original site of the market cross, tolbooth, tron, ports and wells—of which no archaeological evidence has yet been found.

To date, little archaeological work has been undertaken within Nairn. Thus, the conclusions and recommendations expressed here should be regarded as provisional; this survey will require periodic review in the light of results from any future campaigns of archaeological fieldwork (assessment, monitoring and excavation) and from other types of sub-surface investigations.

It is important to stress that the survey was limited to the core of historic (medieval) Nairn and Fishertown. There is a recognised, though unquantifiable, potential for the discovery of prehistoric and early historic archaeological remains (*see* pp 9–14), both within and outwith the confines of the historic burgh. It is important to note that this potential is *not* included in **figure 25**.

Finally, the potential for archaeological features and deposits to be preserved both beneath the floors and within the structures of historic standing buildings in Nairn must not be forgotten (*see* pp 67–72). The archaeological potential of Nairn's standing buildings is also *not* shown on **figure 25**, but the potential of individual buildings is considered in the next section.

Turning to the specific areas of Nairn (as identified in this survey), previous archaeological work and both documentary and cartographic evidence have demonstrated the archaeological potential of Area 1, the core of the medieval town, and, perhaps to a lesser extent, Area 2, Fishertown. It should be borne in mind that the limits of the medieval burgh remain uncertain.

figure 25 distinguishes between areas of known potential (shaded green) and unknown potential (shaded lighter green). **All green areas should be treated as potentially archaeologically sensitive.** There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments (monuments protected by law) within the historic core of Nairn. Effectively redeveloped areas (shaded blue) are probably archaeologically sterile.

area 1

This area comprises the core of the medieval town. The street frontages and associated backlands offer the highest archaeological potential, with deposits likely to be concentrated in a band on either side of High Street. The west side of High Street, between Leopold Street and Douglas Street, has seen considerable development in recent years, but to what extent it might have disturbed medieval levels is difficult to predict. North of Douglas Street there has been much infill, but some of the small gardens may still preserve medieval deposits.

The archaeological potential on the east side of High Street is probably higher, but large-scale development here is unlikely. In contrast with the west side of High Street, the

property boundaries still survive here. These may have 'fossilised' earlier, medieval plot boundaries. There has been considerable infill within these plots, mostly dateable to the nineteenth century; and the numerous small vennels have also been developed as frontages. The occasional plot stretches unbroken from the frontage down to the River Nairn and, here, the archaeological potential would seem to be highest. One garden in particular, Constabulary Gardens, may contain one of the earliest features of medieval Nairn, the royal castle itself. An early chapel is also thought to lie close by.

Recent archaeological work around the parish church has established that the kirkyard wall is associated with the later phase of the church, as burials have been found outwith the graveyard, on the south side. Burials may lie elsewhere around the kirkyard wall. The earlier church, built around 1650, is likely to lie beneath the present ruin of the nineteenth-century church, which was finally abandoned in the late 1890s. The west bank of the river, near the parish church, is also the most likely location for the medieval mill, of which little else is known.

area 2

Fishertown, designated a Conservation Area, is largely a nineteenth-century development, but perhaps with an earlier core settlement defined by King Street, St Ninian Road and Harbour Street.

The potential of this area is probably more in terms of its architectural history than its archaeology. Many of the fisher families' houses still survive, but there are few examples left of the outbuildings that were used as smokehouses or net stores. These were most likely built of timber, but where they were of stone they have probably been converted into house extensions or garages.

The riverside, now a walkway, was the centre of the fishing industry. There has been much development in recent years in Fishertown, particularly along the east side of Harbour Street and around the harbour itself, now a busy marina. The Seaman's Victoria Hall, a late nineteenth-century building, is one of the few buildings that stands as a reminder of the fishing industry.

Medieval and early modern Nairn was a royal burgh, a county town, a fishing port, a market town, the seat of the local presbytery, a communications centre and, for a time, a garrison town. To this day, the buildings of the town tend to reflect its many, varied and changing roles. The *market cross* was at the heart of burghal life. It was a symbol of the trading privileges granted to a burgh; and it was here that royal proclamations, legal decisions and general news were announced to the population. Nairn's market cross **figure 10 & 22.B** can still be seen: a red sandstone pillar which stands outside the County Buildings. This cross, dated to 1757, is a comparatively recent version of a much older structure which would have existed within the town from medieval times. Local tradition asserts that the present market cross may be, in part, the Horloge Stone which stood for years at the junction of the High Street and Pole Road (now Leopold Street). The Horloge Stone was of great importance within the burgh as it was not only a marker used in the administration of justice, but also the town sundial. At some point, a ball finial was attached to the top of the market cross but is now sadly missing (as is much of the decoration of the cross, with only a small trace of moulding on the cornice remaining). In its heyday, the total structure was reputed to stand over two metres in height. The market cross has known several sites—it has stood in its present position only since 1968. Prior to that, it stood outside Royal Hotel **figure 18** in the middle of the High Street—the logical place for town gatherings. Where exactly the cross was positioned in the medieval and early modern period is uncertain, but it was probably outside the tolbooth. It is possible that, at some time, a market cross may also have existed at the junction of King Street and Gordon Street, the site of the Shambles cattle market.

The *Courthouse* (or Town and County Buildings) dates from the early nineteenth century but stands on the site of a much older tolbooth. The current structure, built in 1818, with additions in 1848 (the prison block) and in the 1860s (a replacement steeple), has a central two-stage tower with four recessed flanking bays. Its large central doorway, polished ashlar dressings, corner gargoyles and crenellated parapets perfectly define the modern, forward-looking aspect of nineteenth-century Nairn High Street. The building operated as the town's council chamber, prison and law court, and occasionally as its schoolhouse. The Courthouse has recently had much of its stonework repaired and cleaned and, despite local government reorganisation, still represents the administrative focus of the town. The immediately previous structure also possessed a prominent steeple, which housed the two town bells until 1707, when one was transferred to the parish church. The council chamber was reached by an external stairway from the High Street which extended over merchants' premises. Outside was the tron, or public weighing-beam. Frequently, on market days, convicted prisoners would be displayed and publicly flogged outside the tolbooth; occasionally their ears would be nailed to the tron or the courthouse door. An earlier structure on the same site is known from the time of Mary, Queen of Scots—this was a low thatched building which stood out into the High Street, the foundations of which may survive beneath the present street surface.

Nairn developed as a strategic and defensive strong point by a river crossing. Nothing now remains of the castle, although its site reputedly lies somewhere beneath Constabulary Gardens off the High Street. The topography of the area suggests that it would have stood in the south-west corner of the gardens, as this is the most commanding position (*see pp 55–6*). The remains of the motte and bailey, at least parts of which were replaced in stone, may still be preserved within the buildings in Constabulary Gardens, and those which front onto High Street. Virtually nothing is known of the Holy Rood Kirk, traditionally thought to have stood close to the castle.

The ancient crossing point is still in daily use by the heavy traffic on the trunk road between Inverness and Aberdeen. The current *Nairn Bridge* **figure 16 & 23**, constructed by George Burn of Haddington, dates from 1803–4 and replaced one of 1631–32 which fell into the river in 1794. An earlier structure, presumably wooden, may have existed from the thirteenth century when a burgess is described as 'Adam of the Bridge', but it is unclear as to what exactly this refers (*see p 18*). The present bridge has three unequal spans and has been repaired and widened several times, either after severe flooding (for example

following the 1829 Moray Floods), or for practical reasons (as in 1936–7 when it was widened to cope better with motorised transport). The bridge could be said to mark the eastern extremity of the town, as it crosses the physical boundary of the river. The construction of Nairn Bridge in the seventeenth century meant easier communication for people and transport alike.

Nairn had always been a vital link in the communications network from the Highlands to Aberdeen and Edinburgh; it was just one in a chain of royal burghs which stretched from Wick in the north to Aberdeen in the east. Evidence of this can still be seen in the town's central coaching hotel, the *Royal Hotel* **figure 18 & 22.v** (previously Anderson's Hotel), which dates from the early nineteenth century and is sited on the High Street. Recently damaged by fire, it retains a prominence and importance demanded by its site. The blocked-up entrance to the stables at the rear of the building can still be seen. Some of the hotel's more notable features however, such as its 'art deco' glazing, are now obscured.

Other hotels in Nairn, such as the *Waverley Hotel*, *Royal Marine Hotel* and *Highland Hotel* **figure 22.b** (previously the Station Hotel and now badly neglected despite its prominent site and matchless internal tiling) date from the later Victorian period when Nairn witnessed an influx of tourists wishing to witness the long white beaches and the medicinal waters of the 'Brighton of the North'. Two further examples of buildings used as hotels are testament to an earlier mini-boom in Nairn's status, at the start of the nineteenth century. Originally built as dwelling houses, the *Victoria Hotel*, on the corner of High Street and Church Street, and the *Havelock Hotel*, down by the old cattle market in Crescent Road (the public bar of the Braeval Hotel, in the same area, is still known as the Shambles), demonstrated a growing confidence in Nairn as a resort town. The Havelock Hotel is the more ornate of the two, with a seven-bay cast-iron loggia running the full length of its ground floor and a large central doorway. The Victoria Hotel has recently been converted into residential flats.

Buildings situated in the core of the medieval burgh, such as the grand hotels, were almost certainly constructed on the site of, or directly over, earlier buildings, in a sequence possibly going back to the medieval period and continuing up to the present day. Although there has been no opportunity to examine archaeologically any of the street frontages in Nairn, evidence of earlier, possibly medieval, structures may be expected to survive, sealed beneath eighteenth- or nineteenth-century standing buildings along the High Street and the vennels leading off it. In other Scottish towns, archaeological excavations have revealed that street frontages are promising for the preservation of archaeological deposits.

Recent excavations in Perth, Dunfermline and Arbroath have also shown that the width and alignment of main streets changed over the centuries. Earlier cobbled street surfaces and contemporary buildings may therefore be preserved up to three or four metres behind the line of the modern street frontage. At 80–86 High Street, Perth, for example, the medieval street lay some four metres further back from the present High Street. At the Abbot House, Dunfermline, recent excavations uncovered a whole section of the medieval street itself, inside and sealed below the floor of the standing building. Up to six phases of street surfaces were revealed, each separated by thick dumps of midden, containing broken pottery, leather and oyster shells. Here, archaeology has clearly demonstrated how street frontages can shift dramatically over time, and that important evidence of the past may well lie buried beneath later buildings.

The buildings behind the properties fronting onto High Street are also of archaeological interest, as they have been constructed over what had been the backlands of the medieval burgh plots. Evidence of burgh plots does survive buried beneath modern buildings and car parks. They are an extremely valuable source of information to the urban historian and archaeologist, as they often document the activities and conditions of everyday life in a medieval town, so all development in them should be monitored. Excavations in other medieval towns in Scotland, such as Perth, Aberdeen and St Andrews, have revealed middens, rubbish pits, cess pits and vegetable plots as common features of medieval backlands, alongside craft workshops and kilns. A series of three excavations at Canal Street, Perth, for example, showed that the boundaries of these plots were not fixed, but instead shifted regularly—revealing a fascinating sequence of continually changing plot

boundaries, and properties being amalgamated and sub-divided throughout the medieval period.

The Victorian period saw a massive programme of public works in and around Nairn. The High Street was flattened and widened, new streets were opened up and various new public and private buildings were erected. One of the most striking of the new buildings was the old parish church built at the corner of Academy Street and Seabank Road (an A-listed building). A large Gothic structure with seating for over 1,000 people, it replaced an earlier and much simpler structure by the riverside. The *Riverside Kirk* **figure 8 & 22.G** had served as the parish church for over a hundred years and possibly since the time of the Reformation. It is likely, however, that this was not the original site of the church within the parish—an older site still may have existed nearer the castle. Documentary and physical evidence is slight on this matter. The current ruined structure dates from 1808–10 and was built following the near collapse of the previous church (dating from 1658) on the same site. Stones from the earlier building were used to construct the current building, the only part of which still standing to its full height is the south wall. The three remaining walls are not of full height but still show the compactness of a building designed to seat more than 900 parishioners.

This site also has archaeological implications. Recent work here has established that burials may lie outwith the kirkyard wall, on the south side at least. It is likely that these burials were disturbed by workmen digging the foundations for the south wall of the kirkyard in the early 1800s, who promptly reburied them a short distance away. It does prove that the south kirkyard wall, if not the full circuit of the wall, is associated with the later church, not the original, which never appears to have had a formal boundary. The mid seventeenth-century church is likely to lie beneath the present ruin, which was abandoned in the late 1890s.

There is a documentary reference to a mill in Nairn (Invernairn) in the first part of the thirteenth century. The meandering course of the river gives some guidance as to its location (see pp 55–6). The first (nearest) suitable site is approximately where the parish church stands. A bend in the river here has created a flattish terrace (although the church stands on a grassy knoll), where there was enough space to have drawn water from the river to power a mill, before returning it further downstream. The church was not erected here until the early modern period, so it could have been built on or close to an earlier mill, perhaps re-using building materials from the mill.

The Victorian reconstruction of the town has meant that only a few older commercial and domestic properties remain in and around the High Street. With little pressure for land in the medieval town, the classic herring-bone structure of the main street—with its closes, lanes and vennels leading to the backlands of the burgage plots—is still largely visible. At least one (and possibly two) eighteenth-century properties remain within the urban core. *No 61 High Street* **figure 22.i** (The Ganges Restaurant) stands gable-end on to the street and has its original door to the south side down a small lane. This door, which is enriched with a step-moulded architrave, betrays the date and original purpose as a dwelling house. A comparable property (also gable-end on to the street) exists slightly further north at *no 69 High Street* **figure 22.m** (McBean's & Chips Fish Restaurant) and, although plainer, it exhibits many of the features of the companion building.

The early nineteenth century witnessed not only an increase in the number of visitors to the town, but also a growing confidence and wealth amongst the local gentry and dignitaries. Nairn had always played host to the town houses of the county lairds—most notably the Roses of Kilravock, whose Kilravock town house **figure 9 & 22.L** was situated at the south end of the High Street on a site still marked by a curious plaque. The Latin motto on the plaque displays a resigned acceptance of fate

*All earthly things by turns we see
Becomes another's property
Mine now, must be another's soon
I know not whose, when I am gone
An earthly house is bound to none*

This building (now *36 High Street*) has demonstrated the potential for standing buildings also to preserve important archaeological and architectural evidence within their structures. The house is known to have been repaired in 1722. In 1893, the Latin inscription on the front of the building and an oak-panelled backroom were all that was thought to have survived. In 1961, the Ordnance Survey visited but noted that the building was entirely modern and that the panelled room had gone. In fact, the building is largely intact, at ground level anyway, with a large and impressive cellar at the rear. Essentially, the seventeenth-century, or earlier, building has been encased within a more modern structure. This is a good example of how historic old buildings can survive life on a modern High Street.

Around 1800, several striking town houses were erected on the outskirts of the settlement. One, *Millbank House* **figure 22.1** (now the Royal British Legion), is a single-storey building with a raised basement and attic sited on Cawdor Street. It is reached by an external stair and retains many of its original features such as corniced and moulded architraves and urn finials. Two gate piers still stand in place and a further two are incorporated within the War Memorial Garden a little to the south. Another, *Viewfield House* (now the Literary Institute Museum) **figure 21 & 22.D**, stands in extensive grounds to the west of the town on land which was previously used for crops. Viewfield is a strongly classical building from the Regency period and is still approached through a long avenue of trees. Although extended and altered in the later nineteenth century and, again, in fairly recent times (with three dormer windows) it retains much of the character and impact for which it was designed. A third dwelling, *Newton House* (now the *Newton Hotel*), was significantly altered during the Victorian era with the addition of two further storeys, canted bays and angle towers to an original two storey design. The building displays an extensive range of Scots baronial architecture and stands testament to a confidence and affluence now sadly missing in many of the buildings of Nairn.

The turn of the nineteenth century also saw new commerce coming to Nairn; this brought with it money. The **Royal Bank of Scotland** **figure 22.U** (originally the National Bank of Scotland) is a classical, two-storey building with giant outer pilasters and a modillioned cornice. It stands in extensive grounds and represents a confident and forward-looking period in Nairn's history, as do the **Bank of Scotland** **figure 22.T** offices further north along the High Street. Built by MacKenzie and Mathews in 1848 and slightly altered by William Mackintosh twenty-six years later, this building was formerly the Caledonian Bank offices. It is externally decorated with tetrastyle porches, moulded architraves, half pilasters with scroll bases and a panelled frieze. The third bank in the town during the nineteenth century was the British Linen Bank (now *Barron House* at no 88 *High Street* **figure 22.S**). This building, built around 1840, is another classical gem with fine external pilasters, an aproned balustrade, segmental pediment and prominent frieze. All three banks fit well into the reconstructed High Street, and externally and internally have many fine features.

Both sides of the High Street by the nineteenth century exhibited a light, highly classicised and opulent character which would have been out of place only fifty years earlier in the eighteenth century. The buildings combine both commercial and domestic dwellings, a good example of which is nos 109 and 113 *High Street* **figure 22.n** (the latter being above the former). This is still used for its original purposes—the lower level being an opticians and the upper level a domestic dwelling. The building has four symmetrical bays and an elliptical arched pend. Across the road nos 1, 2 and 3 *Gordon Street* **figure 22.p** (also numbered as 94–98 *High Street* in the past) is another two-storeyed building with classical details and giant pilasters. At first floor level and attic level, the windows have cast iron balustrades and there are also two Provost's lamps still *in situ* at first floor level. Further down the brae, at no 117 *High Street* **figure 22.o** (now *Cafe Nairn*), an early shop front from the nineteenth century still survives in a two-storey building with five bays and a central segmented arched pend. On the same side of the street, nos 79 and 79A *High Street* (Department of Employment) demonstrate another early nineteenth-century building. On the corner of Castle Lane, this is, reputedly, the oldest house in Nairn **figure 22.k & 24**, once the property of Sheriff Alexander Falconar. His marriage and its twenty-fifth



figure 24
 Sheriff Falconar's
 house,
 79 High street

anniversary are commemorated in a gateway, dated 1867, and carved with the initials A F and A B M D, and the motto: *vive ut vivas*.

Education within Nairn has a somewhat chequered past. A school existed within the town from at least the seventeenth century, and from 1762 it was sited at the junction of Kildrummie Gate and Gallow Gate **figure 11 & 22.M**. One of the most respected schoolmasters at this school was Mr John Straith, and in 1809 the London-Nairnshire Society raised a subscription in order to commemorate him with a public monument. The *Straith Monument* **figure 22.F**, a squat ashlar obelisk on a square corniced plinth, still stands to this day in front of the site of the old school. In 1832, Captain James Rose donated land to found a new academy **figure 17 & 22.E** within the town and in 1841 this was renamed Rose's Academical Institution (now *Rosebank Primary School*) in his honour. In 1848, education within Nairn was further improved by the opening of a Free Church School (*nos 4 and 6 Court House Lane*). An Italianate building of single-storey design, it is constructed in tooled ashlar with polished ashlar dressings and has an open square campanile above its central doorway. The town also had two schools which serviced the fishing community to the north of the town. The first, the *Links School* **figure 23.H**, was established in 1851 and maintained by the Kirk Session of the Free Kirk of the town. All the children from the Fishertown passed through the Links School for part of their education, although during busy fishing seasons attendance was less regular. The other, the *Monitory School* **figure 23.I**, stood at the junction of Society Street and Harbour Street.

Nairn was and, to some extent, still is two separate communities. The 'upper town', based along the High Street, was in many ways distinct from the Fishertown, focused around the *harbour* **figure 13**. At the turn of the eighteenth century there were very few buildings to the north of the junction of King Street with Harbour Street, as this area of links-land was both the course of the River Nairn in an easterly wind and liable to more general flooding during winter storms.

In 1820, the engineer Thomas Telford was employed to straighten the course of the river and construct a new pier. This construction work was rapidly completed, but the new structure existed for less than a decade before it was swept away by the Moray floods of 1829. Following these floods, the pier was reconstructed and a new east breakwater was built. These constructions still define the river channel today although further improvements have been made over time (most notably the opening of the harbour basin in 1932). The River Nairn has always suffered from silting and sand-banking. Despite a number of improvements to the channel and regular dredging, the river and harbour are now inaccessible to all but the smallest of pleasure craft.

Following the construction of the new pier by Thomas Telford in 1820–21, a massive building programme was instigated on the newly secured links. New streets and houses were planned to the north and north-west of existing settlement. Although the planned dwellings were not all constructed, the layout of today's Fishertown is largely derived from this time. Many of the houses are built back to back with each other, as most of the occupants were

employed in fishing and had little need for excess land other than to store equipment **figure 15**. Although most of the houses in this area have been redeveloped in recent times, a significant number of clues still exist to the area's past.

A house at *no 46 King Street* is reputedly the oldest dwelling within the Fishertown and probably dates from the eighteenth century—a period before the rebuilding of the harbour in 1820. Some *net stores 23.J*, *salt stores 23.L* and the chimneys of a *barking yard 23.F* (where nets and sails were boiled with Burmese or Indian cutch as a preservative in preparation for trips to sea) still remain, as does the 'Keystone House', on *Union Street 23.M*. This structure displays a long-standing tradition amongst the fishing community of building a house to suit a family's needs. When a couple first got married, they would build a dwelling of sufficient size but leave the keystones abutting, in order that an extension could be added on should it be required and should funds become available. An area of the Fishertown is known locally as 'the bagnet' (a reference to the confusing street layout) and part of the east pier, opposite the harbour basin mouth, is still known as the *Tarry Dyke*. This is an area of pier wall about 100 metres long which is still blackened from years of tarring fishing ropes on the site. The Fishertown was always a very close-knit community and, in the later nineteenth century, the *Seaman's Victoria Hall* was constructed, following public subscription. It was built in order to provide a central place for seamen and their families to meet and hold public functions—most notably Fishertown weddings which took place in the hall until the middle of the twentieth century.

On the edge of the 'new', planned Fishertown, at its western junction with the 'Upper town', Cumming Street was laid out. *Nos 1 & 2, 6 & 8 and 10 & 12 Cumming Street figure 23.P* all exhibit similar features. All are paired cottages of single-storey design, with attics, which stand gable end onto the street. Although, over the years, some external changes have been made to make each house distinct, such as harling, painting and extensions, they still demonstrate a similarity and cohesion which marks them out as a planned development.

Many of the fisher-folk attended the parish church at the riverside, sitting in a loft specifically set aside for them. They were, however, also served by the other churches of the town, for example, the *Secessional Church* which was first sited in Castle Lane and then, from the 1820s, opposite the Court House. The other churches of the town remain to this day, such as the *United Presbyterian Church* on Academy Street. It is a massive Romanesque structure, but now is without a congregation and sadly neglected. Although B-listed, it has rotting woodwork and broken windows. The Free Kirk on King Street (now the *Community Centre*) was the first purpose-built Free Kirk in Scotland, being dedicated only three weeks after the Disruption of 1843. An *Independent Chapel* (now part of *no 52 King Street figure 23.Q*), sited close by Links School, was erected in 1801 and used until 1861 when it was replaced by the new *Congregational Church figure 22.P* on King Street.

The domestic dwellings in the 'upper town' exhibit a range of designs and architectural styles which contrast with the simple and highly functional houses of the Fishertown. Both areas, however, reflect, in their own ways, the growing prosperity of nineteenth-century Nairn. During this period, housing slowly spread away from the urban core to the west and south-west onto available land. Early examples, such as *nos 8 and 9 Bath Street figure 22.j*, are of relatively simple design with two storeys and attics and share a common working yard. They are, nonetheless, elaborate in their decoration, with polished ashlar dressings, rusticated quoins, cornices, pilastered doorpieces and architraved windows.

Following the coming of the railway from Inverness in 1855, an increasing number of tourists came to Nairn to witness the silver sands and bathing waters. The four-span *railway viaduct* was constructed in 1856–7, although the station and continuation of the line to Aberdeen was not completed until the 1880s. With the tourists came money and with money came renewed building projects. The new streets of the west end (*Albert Street, Victoria Street, Seabank Road, Manse Road*) were developed along a grid plan and exhibited houses and gardens which were huge in comparison to earlier developments. Nairn as 'the Brighton of the North' had, after centuries of deprivation and poverty, finally arrived.

Extensive use has been made in this survey of primary sources. From the late seventeenth century until the present day, Nairn Burgh Records are largely extant and easily accessible in the Highland Council Archive. It was from this source material that evidence came to light, for the first time, of a number of interesting facets of Nairn's historic past: for example, the prolonged and extensive role Nairn played as a garrison town; the enlightened attitude of the town authorities to the provision of baths for the use of all the community; and, reinforced with cartographic evidence, the expansion of Fishertown, so often considered a nineteenth-century settlement, in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, it was not possible to study the wealth of records in their entirety and so a great deal of material remains to be more fully analysed, for example, the Burgh Cartulary, 1780–1850 (BN1/4/1). Bain, in his *History of Nairnshire* (1893), makes extensive use of records from earlier periods, which unfortunately are not fully referenced. These records are no longer

archaeological objectives for the future

Preparation of the Nairn burgh survey has highlighted a number of directions for future archaeological work. These can be broadly divided into management objectives, priorities for future fieldwork, and other areas which merit further research. Any such list cannot be exhaustive but it should cover the main areas of concern in the foreseeable future.

management objectives

- 1 Wherever possible, it is important to monitor the impact of any development (in its broadest sense) on the potential archaeological resource (the **green** areas on **figure 25**). This will require the routine provision of site-specific desk-based assessments, through to watching briefs, trial excavations and, where necessary, controlled excavation, post-excavation analysis and publication. Over time, the cumulative results will 'calibrate' this assessment of the archaeological potential of the burgh, providing evidence about the burgh's origins, and its physical, economic and social development through the centuries.
- 2 Developments should similarly be monitored to shed more light on the prehistory of the Nairn area, a period for which there is a growing body of evidence.
- 3 The degree and nature of cellarage along the main streets, notably High Street, were not systematically examined during the preparation of this report. More accurate information would be most useful to managers/curators of the archaeological resource in assessing the archaeological potential of these and other main street frontages in the burgh.
- 4 Engineers' boreholes offer a convenient glimpse of the depth and nature of sub-surface deposits, man-made or not, ancient and modern. It would be useful if the results obtained from engineers' boreholes in and around the core of the historic burgh could be gradually collected and collated. Borehole results, especially those in the hands of private contractors, have proved difficult to access, and it might be worth considering mechanisms by which such information could more easily (and preferably routinely) be made available to managers/curators of the archaeological resource.
- 5 Opportunities should continue to be taken to increase public awareness of the potential archaeological interest of Nairn, both generally and within and beneath historic standing buildings.

part of the Burgh Series within the Highland Archive (if they ever were). It could be that these records have been lost entirely, but it is perhaps more likely that they exist among private papers elsewhere or are gathering dust in some forgotten loft or cupboard. The re-discovery and interpretation of any such records would greatly assist further research into Nairn and its past. Unfortunately also, the Kirk Session records for Nairn exist only from the nineteenth century onwards.

Little is known, or recorded, of the early topography of Nairn. Although the town is mentioned in early records, it is rarely described and the prominent features of the medieval townscape remain uncertain. One local tradition, for example, is that the current line of the High Street does not follow the original orientation. It is the view of the authors, however, that the High Street is probably the medieval alignment, with burgage plots running off, in herringbone pattern, to the west to a back lane (now King Street) and to the east to the river. Archaeological and historical interpretation could, in future, combine to give a clearer picture of the layout of the early burgh.

A great corpus of work still exists on Nairn and its history in the family records of the various families associated with the town—the Roses, Campbells of Cawdor, Grants and Brodies. Although a wide selection of these papers was printed by the Spalding Club in the last century, it has been possible to study them only briefly. They would benefit from further analysis and interpretation. Also, papers not already in print, but available through the Scottish Record Office Gift and Deposits, or the National Register of Archives (Scotland), or in private hands would provide a great amount of material for further study.

The vast body of sasines and records of births, deaths and marriages has remained largely untouched. The national censuses, from 1801, and town valuation rolls provide a great deal of detailed information which is only summarised within this survey.

Cartographically, Nairn is comparatively well off for the later period. First mapped in the eighteenth century, it benefits both from a survey by John Wood in 1821 and a large scale Ordnance Survey mapping in 1870. Although considerable work is ongoing at a local

history

-
- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| archaeology | vi | Periodic review and updating of this survey would be desirable to take account of the results of any future archaeological work, and of the comprehensive collection and collation of other types of sub-surface investigations, such as engineers' boreholes, and the systematic survey of cellarage on the main street frontages. In particular, the colour-coded map figure 25 should be revised and re-issued at regular intervals. |
|-------------|----|--|

priorities for future fieldwork

Little archaeological work has been undertaken within the medieval core of the town. The priorities for future archaeological fieldwork within the burgh are, therefore, fairly rudimentary. However, the following priorities should be borne in mind during preparations of future project designs:

- i Locate the site of the early castle, thought to lie within Constabulary Gardens. Probably constructed as a motte and bailey-type, earth and timber castle in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the central tower or keep may have been replaced in stone.
- ii The intriguing notion that early Nairn might have been inundated by the Moray Firth deserves considerably more documentary, geological and geographic research.
- iii Define the limits of the medieval burgh and the character and date of any burgh boundaries. Did the burgage plots extend westwards as far as King Street; and, on the east side, did they extend as far as the river?
- iv Locate important features of the medieval townscape—the earliest tolbooth, market cross, tron and wells for example—of which no archaeological evidence has yet been found.

level in terms of etymology of street names, a general research programme into the development of certain areas of the town (specifically the Fishertown and the Victorian 'West End') might prove exceptionally rewarding.

The nature of the Scottish Burgh Survey is to look at the town and its medieval urban core. This means, in consequence, that the town's relationship with its hinterland and the surrounding villages and towns has not been fully examined. Undoubtedly, there would be valuable references to Nairn and its commercial network in the records of Forres, Elgin, Inverness and maybe even of Aberdeen. A greater general understanding of medieval Moray is also long overdue and this would help to set medieval Nairn within a wider context.

Another area which would benefit from further research is the intellectual history of the town and its society. It is extremely unusual to find examples of public works being built 'for the public good' as early as is found in Nairn. The provision of the baths in the early nineteenth century may be a catalyst for a major re-assessment of social attitudes.

The Fishertown of Nairn, whilst not unique in Scottish terms, certainly exhibits features and evidence which are unusual within the sphere of urban studies. Considerable work has been undertaken on the Fishertown in recent years. It was not felt necessary in this survey merely to duplicate these studies; but full references to the various books available on this fascinating area of Nairn are provided. Some of these would greatly benefit from publication in a more nationally accessible form.

The repositories of local newspapers (such as the *Nairnshire Mirror and Telegraph*, the *Inverness Courier* and the *Aberdeen Press and Journal*) hold much information on the town. These represent a body of knowledge rich with possibilities for further study.

Nairn was and, to a certain extent, remains a town that prospered on tourism. The study of leisure and leisure provision would find a wealth of information in Nairn, be it with reference to bathing, golf, pleasure sailing or a host of other activities which were based in the town from the eighteenth century and can still be found in the town to this day.

history

-
- | | | |
|-------------|----|---|
| archaeology | 5 | Identify the site of the early chapel, thought to lie close to the castle, on the west side of Constabulary Gardens. |
| | 6 | Assess the nature of the burgage plots in the burgh. The plot boundaries on the east side of High Street may have 'fossilised' earlier, medieval boundaries. |
| | 7 | Recover any evidence for medieval industry. |
| | 8 | Identify any sequence of planning in the layout and expansion of the burgh, and infill within the burgage plots. Determine any variation in street alignment and width. |
| | 9 | Ascertain the nature and date of the earliest fishing community at Fishertown. King Street may define the limit of this first enclave. |
| | 10 | Survey and record the last remaining examples of net stores and curing sheds. |

areas for further archaeological research

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A reconstruction of the layout, extent and physical setting of the burgh would be useful for our understanding of the development of the burgh. This would be particularly useful when assessing the impact of future development and in presenting the current state of knowledge. |
| 2 | Marine archaeology may bring some light on the ruined castle depicted by Pont figure 7 , and help to ascertain whether the early burgh was situated nearby. |

street names

pp 77-82

N

street names

Academy Street

Area 1

Rose's Academical Institution (initially Nairn Academy and now Rosebank Primary School) was founded on land gifted to the town by Captain James Rose in 1832. This school replaced one situated at the junction of Kildrummie Gate and Gallowgate. Academy Street is part of the trunk road from Inverness, through Nairn, to Aberdeen.

with Robin Macpherson

Acre Street

Area 1

Shown on Wood's Map of 1821 as Hay Street. This represents one of the earliest expansions of the town dwellings, to the south-east of the existing settlement. The derivation of Hay Street is, however, uncertain. The street's current name is derived from the Clerk's Acre, the area of land on which the new street was laid out and from which the town clerk drew part of his salary in the form of feus.

Albert Street

Area 1

Part of the major development of Nairn as a tourist resort and spa in the late nineteenth century. Prince Albert was consort of Queen Victoria.

'Bagnet'

Area 2

A local name for an area of the Fishertown between King Street and Society Street. It is derived from a fishing term and describes an area with many ways in but only one way out. The street pattern leads to people becoming disoriented and so they get 'caught' within the Bagnet.

Balvenie Place

Area 1

A street name which owes its existence to the family connections of Dr Grigor, the town general practitioner for nearly fifty years in the later nineteenth century. Dr Grigor's family originally came from Balvenie.

Bath Street

Area 1

Previously known as Fountain Street. The Sketra Well at the west end of the street was one of several sources of water for the town. Its current name, however, is reference to the fact that, when the public bath was built in 1822, this was the main route from the town to the bath.

Bridge Street

Areas 1 & 2

The River Nairn was crossed, in medieval and early modern times, by a variety of fords. The lowest of these was sited just below the castle at Brocher's Brae. It was here in 1631 that a bridge was built with funds provided by Provost William Rose of Clava. This bridge has been repaired at various times, most notably after the Moray flood in 1829 and in 1936, when it was widened to facilitate motorised transport. The bridge could be said to mark the eastern boundary of the town proper, although the lands of Merryton, east of the river, were within the boundaries of the royal burgh.

- Burntisland Street** *Area 2*
Local tradition asserts that in the eighteenth century a group of Nairn fishermen began travelling further afield than the local fishing banks. They found very profitable catches off Burntisland, in Fife. The houses built along this street are reputed to have been built with the resultant 'Burntisland money'. Wood, in 1821, seems to confuse Burntisland Street with the north end of King Street (which he calls North Street); he, therefore, places this street in the wrong position.
- Caledonian Street** *Area 2*
The derivation of this name is now uncertain. It could simply be an expression of national pride.
- Castle Lane** *Area 1*
The actual site of Nairn Castle is uncertain. It is reputed, however, to have been situated on the site now occupied by Constabulary Gardens. This lane, which leads down to the riverside, was formerly known as Constabulary Close.
- Cawdor Street** *Area 1*
The thanes, and later earls, of Cawdor were major landowners within the town. They were also hereditary constables of the castle and sheriffs of the county. Cawdor Street, which was previously known as Kildrummie Gate, leads directly to the village of Cawdor and Cawdor Castle (as it does to the farm of Kildrummie). According to Wood's map of 1821, a Cawdor Street was planned at the north end of the town as part of an intended extension to the Fishertown.
- Charles Street** *Area 2*
This was the name given by Wood, on his 1821 map, to the road which ran north-east along the side of the River Nairn to the sea. It started at the foot of the High Street and continued until it reached the harbour. Local people consider this street name an error of John Wood.
- Church Road** *Area 1*
Effectively a continuation of Church Street, the change of name marks a change of direction and a drop in elevation. Wood, on his 1821 map, fails to differentiate between the two names and calls the whole thoroughfare Church Street.
- Church Street** *Area 1*
The parish church of Nairn was moved to the riverside at an unknown date, probably sometime after the Reformation. The site was certainly in use prior to 1658 when a new church was erected on the site of an older one. The kirk by the riverside remained the parish church until a new site was acquired in the 1890s. The street name derives from the building.
- Court House Lane** *Area 1*
The courthouse is on the site of the old tolbooth. Court House Lane runs north-west from the High Street, past the prison block at the back of the building, to the Free Church (now the Community Centre) on the corner with King Street. It was previously known both as Gaol Close and Free Kirk Vennel.

- Crescent Road *Area 1*
As far as is known, the name derives from its shape.
- Cumming Street *Area 2*
The Cummings were a prominent family in Nairn history. This street name is in honour of Alexander Penrose Cumming MP, sometime provost of the town. It is shown at the planning stage on Wood's map of 1821.
- Douglas Street *Area 1*
The derivation of this street name is uncertain but it is most likely that it derived from a prominent family resident in this area sometime in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. It is shown on Wood's map of 1821 as Douglas Vennel.
- Falconers Lane *Area 1*
The Falconers were another prominent Nairn family. It would seem most likely that this lane was named after one of them, possibly Robert Falconar, who rose to become provost of Nairn in 1838. The family name changed from 'Falconar' to 'Falconer'. Another opinion is that the street was named after a commercial property which stood at the junction of the lane and the High Street.
- Firth Street *Area 2*
Named after the nearby Moray Firth.
- Glebe Road *Area 1*
The minister's glebe extended north-west from King Street, bounded on the north by Lord Cawdor's property and on the south by Viewfield.
- Gordon Street *Area 1*
This street was named after a Councillor Gordon who, as well as his civic duties, found time to be a tin-smith and a poet. One local tradition asserts that all his election addresses were delivered in verse.
- Grant Street *Area 2*
The Grant family, and particularly the Grants of Viewfield, played a significant role in the development of Nairn. This street, however, is locally reputed to have been named after a local builder in the nineteenth century.
- Harbour Street *Area 2*
Running from the junction of Bridge Street, High Street and St Ninian Road, Harbour Street is the main route to the Fishertown and Nairn harbour. Wood, in 1821, simply notes the thoroughfare as the north end of the High Street. The rebuilding of the harbour from 1820 onwards must have led to the separate designation.
- High Street *Area 1*
This was, and is, the main street in Nairn. It originally ran from the junction of Kildrummie Gate and Gallow Gate in the south

to the junction with 'Charles Street' in the north. Now considerably shorter, parts of it were flattened and widened in the nineteenth century. Along the High Street were the majority of important buildings of the burgh—the market cross, the castle and the tolbooth. The area of the High Street to the north of Constabulary Gardens (the supposed site of the castle) was originally known as 'Red Hill' and, although significantly flattened around 1873, is still known locally as 'the brae'.

King Street	<p><i>Areas 1 & 2</i></p> <p>Called North Street by Wood on his 1821 map (on uncertain authority), this represents the 'back lane' of medieval and early modern Nairn. It is unclear whether this street was named with any specific monarch in mind. It now is part of the trunk road from Inverness to Aberdeen.</p>
Leopold Street	<p><i>Area 1</i></p> <p>Initially the 'Pole Road' (due to a pole pointing the route to Inverness standing at its end), it was renamed following the visit to the town of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg in 1819. There were great celebrations during the visit, with at least one ceremonial arch, a grand dinner and the creation of Leopold as a freeman burgess and guild brother of Nairn. Leopold, who was uncle to Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, was elected King of the Belgians in 1831.</p>
Links Place	<p><i>Area 2</i></p> <p>The Links was originally an area of scrub ground to the north-west of the town. It was the mustering point for the Nairn militia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and a training ground for the D-Day landings in 1944; at some earlier time the River Nairn flowed across the north part of the links, parallel to the sea, until it formed a mouth below what is now the Invernairne Hotel.</p>
Lodgehill Road	<p><i>Area 1</i></p> <p>Previously known as Gallow Gate, it led to the site of public executions and could be seen to mark the southern boundary of the town.</p>
Marine Road	<p><i>Area 1</i></p> <p>Shown on Wood's map of 1821 as the road to the quarry (now the municipal putting green), it was renamed Marine Road sometime following the construction of the Marine Hotel in 1860.</p>
Mill Road	<p><i>Area 1</i></p> <p>From the seventeenth century onwards, the town mill was sited on the river below Whinnieknowe. Local tradition asserts that an earlier medieval mill existed higher up the river, possibly on the site later occupied by the parish church. Mill Road could derive its name from either foundation.</p>
Millbank Street	<p><i>Area 2</i></p> <p>The name derives from an area of the town known as Millbank, sited above the town mill.</p>

- Park Street *Area 2*
 This area of town was available for building only following the construction of the new pier in 1820–21. Shown at the planning stage as early as Wood's map of 1821, it was not until later in the century that houses were actually built. Previous to the construction of the new harbour, the land was frequently under water at high tide. The street is named after Black's Park, a designation from the late eighteenth century.
- Queen Street *Area 1*
 This name is of uncertain derivation. Local tradition claims that the street was named after Queen Victoria. As it is clearly shown on Wood's map of 1821 (when Princess Victoria was aged two), this is extremely unlikely. On Wood's map the street is only at the planning stage with no houses yet being built—this might indicate that the queen intended was Caroline, the wife of George IV. She died in 1821 but had been separated from her husband for a quarter of a century. Again, this street may derive its name from a general concept rather than a specific monarch.
- Rose Street *Area 1*
 The Roses are, perhaps, the family most associated with Nairn's history. From 1450 until 1782 various scions of the Rose family monopolised the office of town provost and many of the positions on the town council. Their domination led one local wit to comment that 'The town council was like that wonderful bird, the Phoenix: it expired for a few minutes every year and then rose again triumphant from its ashes'. Rose Street was built on land previously belonging to Captain James Rose (*see* Academy Street).
- St Ninian Road *Areas 1 & 2*
 St Ninian is the patron saint of Nairn. This road was opened up in 1891 to link King Street to Bridge Street. This reconstruction meant the demolition of Collector's Close (so called because the town's collector of taxes resided there) and Barbour's Close.
- Society Street *Area 2*
 The Nairn Fishermen's Society was founded in 1769. It was supported by contributions from the fishing community and was responsible for any families left destitute following losses at sea. The society supplied a mortcloth for fisher funerals and also lent money for house and boat building. This street, which was built on land which belonged to the society, recognises the contribution of the society and fishing to the town and its economy.
- Union Street *Area 2*
 Part of the planned Fishertown on Wood's map of 1821, it was to be an extension of an already existing street. It would be tempting to state that the name of the street derived either from the parliamentary union of 1707 or of 1801. It may be the case, however, as in other towns, that it was the concept of union which was being celebrated and not one specific event.

Water Lane	<i>Area 1</i> One of several closes which run off the High Street to the backlands. Others included McPherson's Lane, Ketchen's Lane, Skene's Close, Cock's Lane and Post Office Street. All of these names relate to local features, landowners or tenants. Most disappeared when the street names of the town were regularised in the middle of the nineteenth century, but Water Lane remains.
Watsons Place	<i>Area 2</i> This area of the town had a resident family of Watsons until the twentieth century, though for how long is uncertain.
Wellington Road	<i>Area 1</i> Named by Dr Grigor in commemoration of the Duke of Wellington.
Wellington Square	<i>Area 2</i> It would seem likely that the derivation for Wellington Square is similar to that of Wellington Street but proof (and even local tradition) is lacking on this matter.

backlands	The area to the rear of the burgage plot behind the dwelling house on the frontage. Originally intended for growing produce and keeping animals; site of wells and midden heaps. Eventually housed working premises of craftsmen and poorer members of burgh society.
baillies	Burgh officers who performed routine administration.
barrow	An artificial earth mound.
beaker	A distinctive type of Bronze Age pottery.
boundaries	<i>see</i> burgage plot
broch	A circular, dry-stone thick-walled tower.
burgage plot	A division of land, often of regular size, having been measured out by liners, allocated to a burges. Once built on, it contained the burgage house on the frontage (<i>see</i> frontage) and a backland (<i>see</i> backland). In time, with pressure for space, the plots were often subdivided—repletion. Plots were bounded by ditches, wattle fences or stone walls.
burgess	Person who enjoys the privileges and responsibilities of the freedom of the burgh.
cairn	Mound of stones, often covering Bronze Age burials.
cists	Stone-lined graves.
close	<i>see</i> vennel
craft	Trade.
crannog	A timber-framed structure built on artificial foundations in water, or occasionally on a natural island.
cropmark	Crops which grow over buried archaeological sites ripen at differing rates and show up as marks on aerial photographs.
cross slab	Sculptured stone bearing a cross in relief.
documentary sources	Written evidence, primary sources being the original documents.
dun	A prehistoric fort, or fortified dwelling-place.
façade	Finished face of a building.
fluvioglacial	Combined action of water and ice.
frontage	Front part of burgage plot nearest the street, on which the dwelling was usually built.
gap sites	Burgage plots not built up or 'biggit'; in a modern context, undeveloped space between two buildings.

guild	Organisation or fraternity for mutual support, whether economic, religious or social.
henge	A Bronze Age ritual enclosure.
hinterland	Rural area around a burgh, to which the burgh looked for economic and agricultural support; hinterland likewise dependent on burgh market.
hoard	A collection of metalwork, normally coins, deposited in the ground, often buried for safe-keeping but never recovered.
indwellers	Unprivileged, non-burgess dwellers in a town.
infilled	Open area that has later been developed.
inhumation	A burial of a human corpse.
<i>in situ</i>	An archaeological term describing layers of soil or features undisturbed by later activity.
lithics	Worked stone tools, usually of flint or chert, and waste material from their manufacture.
metamorphic	Rock that has undergone transformation by natural agencies.
merk	13s 4d, two-thirds of £ Scots.
midden	Rubbish heaps consisting of mainly food debris and other waste products, often found in the backlands of medieval properties.
motte	An earthen and timber castle.
natural	A term used by archaeologists to describe the undisturbed sub-soil.
palisade	Timber fence.
prehistory	Period of human history before the advent of writing.
provost	Principal burghal officer.
radiocarbon	Technique used in archaeology to date organic materials.
rampart	An artificial earthen or stone bank.
repletion	<i>see</i> burgage plot
rig	<i>see</i> burgage plot
souterrain	Stone-built underground passage dating from between the late first millennium BC and the early first millennium AD.
tectonic movements	Displacements in the earth's crust.

terracing	Cutting into a slope to level the ground surface.	85
toft	<i>see</i> burgage plot	
tolbooth	The most important secular building; meeting place of burgh council; collection post for market tolls; often housed town gaol.	
tolls	Payments for use of burgh market.	
townhouse	Principal modern civic building.	
tron	Public weigh-beam.	
urban nucleus	Original site(s) from which town developed.	
vennel	Alley; narrow lane.	
vitrification	Stone subjected to intense heat fuses into a glassy mass; this is known as vitrification.	
£	£ Scots.	

bibliography

pp 87-91

N

Highland Council Archives, Nairn

- BN1/1/1 Nairn Burgh Council Minutes, 1674–1708.
 BN1/1/3 Nairn Burgh Council Minutes, 1711–1784.
 BN1/1/4 Nairn Burgh Council Minutes, 1784–1816.
 BN1/1/5 Nairn Burgh Council Minutes, 1816–1836.
 BN1/2/1 Nairn Burgh Court Book and Register of Deceets, 1657–1673.
 BN1/4/1 Chartulary of the Burgh of Nairn, 1780–1850.
 BN1/5/1 Nairn Treasurers Accounts, 1762–1806, including Rent Roll 1759.
 D231 Minute Book of the Directors of the Nairn Sessional School.
 D231 Nairn Parish Heritors Minute Book, 1841–1891.
 D124/1 Nairn Fishermen's Society Minute Book, 1767–1874.
 D124/7 Anonymous typescript relating to the History of Nairn Fishermen's Society.
 Nairn Local Plan, 1983.
 Nairn Housing Plan, 1994.

Nairnshire Telegraph

- 30/01/1895 'The Diary of Blind Saunders', ed A Mackintosh.

Scottish Record Office

- CH2/1413 Kirk Session Minutes.
 E69/17/1 Moray and Nairn Hearth Tax.
 GD2 British Records Association.
 GD124 Earls of Mar & Kellie.
 GD128 Fraser-Mackintosh.
 GD171 Forbes of Callendar.
 GD176 Mackintosh of Mackintosh.
 GD427 Gillanders of Highfield.
 PS1/60/82 Register of the Privy Seal (manuscript).

printed primary sources

- Aberdeen Council Letters*, 6 vols, ed L B Taylor (Oxford, 1942–61).
Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, 13 vols, edd T Dickson *et al* (Edinburgh, 1877–).
 Adamson, D (ed), *West Lothian Hearth Tax, 1691, with County Abstracts for Scotland* (Scottish Record Society, 1981).
The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, 12 vols, edd T Thomson *et al* (Edinburgh, 1814–75).
 Anderson, A O (ed), *Early Sources of Scottish History, 500–1286*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1922).
 Barron, J (ed), *The Northern Highlands in the Nineteenth Century (Extracts from the Inverness Courier)*, 3 vols (Inverness, 1903–13).
 Blaikie, W G (ed), *Itinerary of Prince Charles Edward Stewart, 1745–6* (SHS, 1897).
 Blaikie, W G (ed), *Origins of the 'Forty-Five* (SHS, 1916).
 Brown, C J & Shipley, B M, *Soil Survey of Scotland: South East Scotland. Soil and Land Capability for Agriculture*. (The Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, Aberdeen, 1982).
Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, edd J Bain, G G Simpson & J D Galbraith, 5 vols (Edinburgh, 1881–1986).
 Cowan, I B (ed), *The Parishes of Medieval Scotland* (SRS, 1967).
 Cowan, I B & Easson, D E (edd), *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland* (London, 1976).
 Cowan, I B, Mackay, P H R, & Macquarrie, A (edd), *The Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland* (SHS, 1983).
 Croft Dickinson, W (ed), *The Sheriff Court Book of Fife, 1515–1522* (SHS, 1922).
 Daniel, J, 'A true account of Mr John Daniel's progress with Prince Charles Edward', in W G Blaikie (ed), *Origins of the 'Forty-Five* (SHS, 1916).
 Donaldson, G (ed), *Thirds of Benefices, 1561–72* (SHS, 1949).

- Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, ed H Scott, 10 vols (Edinburgh, 1915–1981).
- Fraser, J, 'Polichronicon Seu Policratica Temporum', in W MacKay (ed), *Chronicles of the Frasers, 916–1674* (SHS, 1905).
- Gifford, J, *The Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands* (London, 1992).
- Groome, F H, *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland: A Survey of Scottish Topography*, 6 vols (Edinburgh, 1886).
- Haws, C H (ed), *Scottish Parish Clergy at the Reformation, 1540–74* (SRS, 1972).
- Heron, R, *Scotland Delineated* (Edinburgh, 1799).
- Hume Brown, P, (ed), *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891).
- Innes, C (ed), *The Book of the Thanes of Cawdor, 1236–1742* (Spalding Club, 1859).
- Innes, C (ed), *Origines Parochiales*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1854).
- Innes, C (ed), *Registrum de Dunfermelyn. Liber Cartarum Abbatie Benedictine S S Trinitatis et B Margarete Regine de Dunfermelyn* (Bannatyne Club, 1842).
- Innes, C (ed), *Registrum Episcopatus Moraviensis, e Pluribus Codicibus Consarcinatum circa MCCCC. Cum Continuatione Diplomatum Recentiorum usque ad AD MDCXXXIII* (Bannatyne Club, 1837).
- Kyd, J G (ed), *Scottish Population Statistics, including Webster's Analysis of Population, 1755* (SHS, 1952).
- Laing, D (ed), *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie and of his Son, James Brodie of Brodie, 1652–85* (Spalding Club, 1863).
- Lawrie, A C (ed), *Early Scottish Charters prior to 1153* (Glasgow, 1905).
- Lewis, S, *A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland*, 2 vols (London, 1843–6).
- MacFarlane, W, *Geographical Collections Relating to Scotland*, 3 vols, ed A Mitchell (SHS, 1906–08).
- MacKay, W (ed), *Chronicles of the Frasers, 916–1674* (SHS, 1905).
- MacPhail, J R N, *Highland Papers*, 4 vols (SHS, 1914–34).
- Marwick, J (ed), *Charters and other Documents relating to the City of Glasgow*, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1894–7).
- Marwick, J (ed), *Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society* (Scottish Burgh Records Society, 1881).
- Marwick, J (ed), *Extracts from the Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland*, 7 vols (Edinburgh, 1870–1918).
- Nicholaisen, W H F, *Scottish Place-names* (London, 1989).
- Pococke, R, *Tours in Scotland: 1747, 1750, 1760*, ed D W Kemp (SHS, 1887).
- Pryde, G S (ed), *The Burghs of Scotland: A Critical List* (Oxford, 1965).
- Ptolemy's Geography*, edd C Müller & C T Fisher (Paris, 1883–1901).
- Purves, W (ed), *Revenue of the Scottish Crown, 1681* (Edinburgh, 1897).
- Regesta Regum Scottorum*.
- vol i *The Acts of Malcolm IV, King of Scots, 1153–1165*, ed G W S Barrow (Edinburgh, 1960).
- vol ii *The Acts of William I, King of Scots, 1165–1214*, edd G W S Barrow & W W Scott (Edinburgh, 1971).
- vol v *The Acts of Robert I, King of Scots, 1306–1329*, ed A A M Duncan (Edinburgh, 1988).
- vol vi *The Acts of David II, King of Scots, 1329–1371*, ed B Webster (Edinburgh, 1982).
- Rose, H (ed), *A Geneological Deduction of the Family of Rose of Kilravock* (Spalding Club, 1863).
- Southey, R, *Journal of a Tour in Scotland in 1819* (Edinburgh, 1972).
- Steers, J A, *The Coastline of Scotland* (Cambridge, 1973).
- Stuart, J (ed), *Records of the Monastery of Kinloss, with Illustrative Documents* (Society of Antiquaries, 1872).
- The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, 14 vols (Edinburgh, 1845), vol xiii, ed Committee of the Society for the Benefit of the Sons and Daughters of the Clergy.
- The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland*, 11 vols, edd J M Thomson *et al* (Edinburgh, 1882–1914).
- The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, edd J H Burton *et al*
- First Series, 14 vols (Edinburgh, 1877–98)
- Second Series, 8 vols (Edinburgh, 1899–1908)

- Third Series, 16 vols (Edinburgh, 1908–).
- The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland (Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum)*, 8 vols, edd M Livingstone *et al* (Edinburgh, 1908–).
- The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791–9*, vol xvi, ed J Sinclair. New Edition, edd D J Withrington & I R Grant (Wakefield, 1978).
- The Third Statistical Account of Scotland: The Counties of Moray and Nairn*, ed H Hamilton (Glasgow, 1965).

secondary sources

- Abercromby, J, *A study of the Bronze Age Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland and its Associated Grave-goods*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1912).
- Allen, J R & Anderson, J, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland: a Classified and Illustrative Descriptive List of the Monuments with an Analysis of their Symbolism and Ornamentation* (Edinburgh, 1903).
- Bain, G, *Guide to Nairn and its Neighbourhood* (Nairn, no date).
- Bain, G, *History of Nairnshire*, 1st edition (Nairn, 1893).
- Bain, G, *History of Nairnshire*, 2nd edition (Nairn, 1928).
- Bain, G, *Nairn in the Seventeenth Century* (Nairn, 1890).
- Barron, E M, *The Scottish War of Independence* (Inverness, 1934).
- Barrow, G W S, *Kingship and Unity* (London, 1981).
- Bochel, M, *The Fishertown of Nairn* (Nairn, 1983).
- Bochel, M, *Nairn Fishertown Weddings* (Nairn, 1977).
- Bochel, M, *The Story of the Nairn Fisher-girls at the Gutting* (Nairn, nd).
- Bochel, M, *Seaman's Victoria Hall: The Life and Times of the Nairn Fishing Community, 1887–1987* (Nairn, 1987).
- Campbell, R H, *Scotland since 1707* (Oxford, 1971).
- Close-Brooks, J, *Exploring Scotland's Heritage: The Highlands* (Edinburgh, 1986).
- Cowan, E, *Montrose. For Covenant and King* (Edinburgh, 1977).
- Darvill, T, *Prehistoric Britain* (London, 1987).
- Dunbar, J G, *The Historic Architecture of Scotland* (London, 1966).
- Edmonds, E, *The Geological Map: an Anatomy of a Landscape* (HMSO, 1983).
- Ellen, D M, *Nairn. Faces and Places* (Zaltbommel, 1995).
- Ellen, D M, *Nairn in Old Picture Postcards* (Zaltbommel, 1987).
- Feachem, R, *Guide to Prehistoric Scotland* (London, 1977).
- Ferguson, W, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh, 1987).
- Foster, S, *Picts, Gaels and Scots* (London, 1996).
- Harrison, W (ed), *Photographic Album of Nairn and Vicinity* (Nairn, nd).
- Henshall, A S, *The Chambered Tombs of Scotland*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1963–72).
- Hustwick, I, *Moray Firth—Ships and Trade* (Aberdeen, 1994).
- Keay, J & Keay, J, *Collins Encyclopaedia of Scotland* (London, 1994).
- Lauder, T D, *The Great Flood of August 1829* (Elgin, 1873).
- Lawson, J, *Nairn Heritage Trail* (Nairn District Council, 1988).
- Linklater, E, *The Royal House of Scotland* (London, 1972).
- Nairn District Council, *Nairn Naturally: Official Guide and Street Plan* (Nairn, 1995).
- Nicholson, R, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1989).
- Price, R, *Highland Landforms* (Aberdeen, 1991).
- Rae, I, & Lawson, J, *Dr Grigor of Nairn* (Nairn, 1994).
- Ritchie, G & Ritchie, A, *Scotland: Archaeology and Early History* (Edinburgh, 1991).
- Rose, A, *Newspaper Cuttings of Old Nairn* (Elgin, 1912).
- Sellar, C, *A Glimpse of Old Nairn* (Inverness, 1969).
- Shaw, L, *The History of the Province of Moray: Comprising the Counties of Elgin and Nairn, the Greater Part of the County of Inverness, and a Portion of the County of Banff—all called the Province of Moray before there was a Division into Counties*, 3 vols (Glasgow, 1882).
- Simpson, E, *Banff, Moray & Nairn* (Edinburgh, 1992).

- Sissons, J B, *The Geomorphology of the British Isles: Scotland* (London, 1976).
 Wickham-Jones, C, *Scotland's First Settlers* (London, 1994).
 Wilson, H, *The Society* (Elgin, nd).

articles, journals and book chapters

- Bruce, M F, 'Short cist human skeletal material housed in the Anthropological Museum and the Department of Anatomy, University of Aberdeen', in I A G Shepherd, *Powerful Pots: Beakers in North-east Prehistory* (Aberdeen, 1986).
Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (Edinburgh, 1962, 1978, 1986, 1989).
 'Donations and purchases for the Museum', *PSAS*, v (1862-4), xiv (1879-80), xciii (1959-60) & xcvi (1964-6).
 Edwards, A J H, 'Short cists in Angus and Nairnshire', *PSAS*, lxxv (1930-1).
 Guido, M, *The glass beads of the prehistoric and Roman periods in Britain and Ireland* (Society of Antiquaries Research Report, xxxv, 1978).
 Macdonald, G, 'Roman coins found in Scotland', *PSAS*, lii (1917-8), pp 203-76.
 Mercer, R J, 'The excavation of a Late Neolithic henge-type enclosure at Balfarg, Markinch, Fife, Scotland, 1977-78', *PSAS*, 111 (1981), 63-171.
 Mercer, R J, Barclay, G J, Jordan, D and Russell-White, C J, 'The Neolithic henge-type enclosure at Balfarg—a re-assessment of the evidence for an incomplete ditch-circuit', *PSAS*, 118 (1988), 61-67.
 RCAHMS, *The Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Nairn District, Highland Region* (The archaeological sites and monuments of Scotland series, v, RCAHMS, 1978).
 Robertson, A S, 'The circulation of Roman coins in North Britain: the evidence of hoards and site finds from Scotland', in R A G Carson & C M Kraay (edd), *Scripta Nummaria Romana* (London, 1978).
 Shepherd, I A G, Shepherd, A N & Bruce, M N, 'A beaker burial at Mains of Balgowan, Ardersier, Inverness District', *PSAS*, cxiv (1984).
 St Joseph, J K, 'Air reconnaissance: recent results, 22', *Antiquity*, xlv (1970).
 Tyson, R, 'Famine in Aberdeenshire, 1695-1699', in D Stevenson, *From Lairds to Louns* (Aberdeen, 1986).
 Walker, I C, 'An unpublished beaker from Nairnshire', *PSAS*, xcv (1961-2).
 Walker, I C, 'The counties of Nairnshire, Moray and Banffshire in the Bronze Age: part I', *PSAS*, xcvi (1964-6).
 Walker, I C, 'Some objects from Nairnshire, Moray and Banffshire in the British Museum', *PSAS*, xcvi (1964-6).
 Walker, I C, 'The counties of Nairnshire, Moray and Banffshire in the Bronze Age, part II', *PSAS*, civ (1972).
 Watt, D E R, 'Education in the Highlands in the Middle Ages', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed L Maclean (Inverness Field Club, 1981).
 Wordsworth, J, 'The excavation of a Mesolithic horizon at 13-24 Castle Street, Inverness', *PSAS*, cxv (1985).

unpublished reports and volumes

- Farrell, S, 'Report on investigations at Nairn old parish church: August 21-September 7 1995' (Highland Sites and Monuments Record, Highland Council).
 McGillivray, A G, 'Nairn & the Disruption'.
 RCAHMS, National Monuments Record of Scotland.
 Robins, G, 'The Garage Site, King Street, Nairn: trial trenching project 23rd-25th May 1995' (Highland Sites and Monuments Record, Highland Council).
 Bowler, D, 'Trial excavations at Nairn: Higgins Warehouse, Church Street' (Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust, 1988).

cartographic sources

- Moir, D G (ed), *Early Maps of Scotland*, 2 vols, (Edinburgh, 1973).
- 'The Mapp of Murray', T Pont, c 1590.
- 'Map of the coast at the Head of the Moray Firth', R Gordon, 1650.
- 'Moravia', in John Blacu *Atlas Novus*, (Amsterdam, 1654).
- 'Plan of the Water of Nairn, Stell Fishings in the Sea, and Lands Adjacent', G Brown, 1794.
- 'Plan of the Town of Nairn', J Wood, 1821.
- 'Nairn and Elgin', J Thomson, 1830.
- 'Nairn', Ordnance Survey 1:500, 1861.
- 'Nairn', Ordnance Survey 1:2,500, 1904.
- 'Nairn', Ordnance Survey, 1:10,000, 1994.
- 'Nairn', Ordnance Survey 1:2,500, 1995.

general index

pp 93-101

N

a		Balmakeith	17, 20, 50, 51
Aberdeen	19, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 39, 53, 65, 67–8, 72, 75	Balnagowan Wood	11
tax rate	21	Balnuaran of Clava	10
<i>Aberdeen Press and Journal</i>	75	Balvenie Place	77
Academy	37 figure 17 , 57, 63	Banff	18, 19, 23, 24, 25
Academy Street	47, 69, 72, 77	Bank of Scotland	50, 70
Achareidh House	14	banks	38
Acre Street	77	Barbour's Close	39, 53, 58
Adam of the Bridge	18, 51, 67	barking Yard	35, 63, 72
aerial photography	8 figure 3 , 11, 12	barley	21, 61
agriculture	7	Barron House	70
Albert Street	72, 77	barrows	9, 12, 83
ale	22, 25	square, at Kinchyle	12 figure 5
Alexander I, king of Scots	14	Bath Street	37, 57, 77
Alexander II, king of Scots	14, 16, 49	nos 8 & 9	47, 72
altars	18, 51	baths	39–40, 58, 73, 75
ancestry	9	Battle of Auldearn	22, 52
Anderson's Hotel	38 figure 18 , 68	Beakers	10, 83
Angus, heir to the Lordship of the Isles	17	bells	21, 24, 67
Annan	21	billeting	28–9
anvil	10	Black Shed	36, 63
<i>Aquatint of Nairn</i>	36 figure 16	Boghole	32, 56
Arbroath	52, 68	booths	21, 27, 54
abbey of	20, 52	Boswell, James	31
abbots of	17, 50	Braeval Hotel	68
monk of	20	Brander, James, inn-keeper	39
archaeological potential	65–72, figure 25 (foldout)	Braythoft, Thomas, keeper of the castle	17
Ardersier	3, 18	Bridge Street	30, 47, 55, 77
Argyll	12	bridges	7, 18, 21, 23, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 61, 63, 67–8
arrows	10	'Brighton of the North'	3, 33, 58, 68, 72
Artisan Golf Club	58	British Linen Bank	57, 70
Auldearn (Earn)	3, 10, 16, 20, 24, 31	British Linen company	38
castle	16	brochs	12, 83
witches	25	Brodie, Alexander	
Auldton (Alton) Burn	32, 62	of Brodie	21, 53, 61
axes	10	of Leath	25
Ayr	54	Brodie castle	3
Aytoun, Andrew	19	Brodie family	74
		Brodie, Laird of	27, 62
		Bronze Age	
		burials	10, 11 figure 4
b		Late	11–12
backlands	49, 53, 54, 65, 68, 69, 83	metalwork	10
'Bagnet'	72, 77	burgage plots	7, 16, 47, 49–50, 53– 4, 68, 69, 74, 75, 83
baillies	17, 18, 21, 24, 83	burgesses	16–17, 18, 19, 28, 38, 51, 62, 83
Bain, G	73	burgh records	73
Balfarg			
henge	10		
medieval mill tail race	56		

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| burghs of barony | 20, 22 | Charters | 18 |
| burial mounds | 9 | cholera epidemic | 36 |
| burials | 55, 58, 66, 69 | Christianity | 13 |
| prehistoric | 10–12 | Church Road | 58, 78 |
| Burn, George, | | Church Street | 31, 50, 55, 68, 78 |
| of Haddington | 67 | cists | 10, 11 figure 4 , 83 |
| Burntisland Street | 78 | Clava, Lady | 30, 55 |
| c | | Clava cairns | 3, 9–10 |
| Cafe Nairn | 70 | Clephane, Major | 55 |
| cairns | 10, 83 | climate | 5, 7 |
| Caithness | 5, 19, 23, 24, 33 | Climes of Ross | 18 |
| Caithness and Orkney, | | coaches | 38 |
| earl of | <i>see</i> Harold | coal | 29 |
| Caledonian Bank | 38, 57, 70 | cod | 33, 62 |
| Caledonian mountain | | Collector's Close | 39 figure 19 , 53, 58 |
| building period | 5 | Community Centre | 72 |
| Caledonian Street | 78 | Congregational Church | 28, 37, 54, 56, 72 |
| Calf Ward | 32, 62 | Conservation Area | 59, 64, 66 |
| Campbell family, | | constables | 17–18 |
| of Cawdor | 74 | Constabulary Garden | 7, 47, 49, 50–1, 66,
67, 74, 75 |
| Campbell, John, | | Convention of Parliament | 24 |
| of Cawdor | 18–19 | Convention of | |
| Campbell, | | Royal Burghs | 19, 20, 22, 26, 29–
30, 52, 53, 54, 61 |
| laird of Cawdor | 26 | coopers | 25 |
| Campbell, Sir Hugh | | Cope, Sir John | 28 |
| of Cawdor | 21, 61 | Council | 17, 18, 20 |
| sheriff | 23 | council chamber | 21 |
| candles | 29 | council records | 21 |
| 'Capella de Inuenaren' | 16, 61 | County Buildings | 37, 67 |
| caravan parks | 3 | Court house | 36, 67, 72 |
| carved stones | 12 | Court House Lane | 78 |
| Castle Findlay | 12 | <i>nos</i> 4 & 6 | 71 |
| Castle Lane | 32, 37, 51, 56, 70,
72, 78 | courts | 17, 18, 20, 23, 51 |
| cattle | 28, 54 | Covenanters | 22, 24–5, 32, 52 |
| cattle market | 68 | crafts | 54, 68, 83 |
| causeying | 21, 52, 54, 68 | crannogs | 12, 83 |
| Cawdor | 22, 74 | cremation | 10 |
| burgh of barony | 22 | Crescent Road | 68, 79 |
| Campbells of | 74 | cricket | 59 |
| thanes of | 17, 20, 50, 52 | Cromarty | 18, 27, 35, 50, 61 |
| William, thane of | 18 | Cromarty Castle | 17 |
| Cawdor castle | 3 | Cromarty Firth | 27, 61 |
| Cawdor Estates offices | 47 | Cromwellian parliament | 22 |
| Cawdor Street | 70, 78 | cropmarks | 11, 12 figure 5 ,
13 figure 6 , 83 |
| Cawdor town house | 22 | crops | 9 |
| cellarage | 51, 53, 73, 74 | cross-slabs | 13–14, 83 |
| chambered cairns | 9–10 | Culbin sands | 7, 21 |
| Chapel of St Nicholas | | Cullen | 22 |
| on the Spey | 18, 51 | Culloden | 29 |
| chapels | 7, 16, 51, 61, 66, 75 | battlefield | 3 |
| chapmen | 25 | Culloden House | 28 |
| charcoal | 9 | Cumberland, Duke of | 28, 55 |
| Charles Street | 78 | | |

Cumming, James, dyer	28
Cumming Street	79
<i>nos</i> 1 & 2, 6 & 8,	
10 & 12	63, 72
curfew	20, 29
customs	19
d	
Dal Riata Gaels	12
Dallas, John,	
town treasurer	21
Dallas, Walter,	
linen manufacturer	28
Dalradian rocks	5
Danes	14
deer	5, 9
deforestation	5
Delnies	9, 33, 35, 37, 63
Dingwall	16, 19, 22
disruption	37, 56, 72
ditches	12, 50–1
dolphins	3
Donald, Lord of the Isles,	
sheriff of Nairn	17
Dornoch	22
Dornoch Firth	27, 61
Douglas Street	47, 49, 65, 79
drummer, public	29
Dun Evan	12
Dunbar, David, minister	24, 31, 53
Dunbar, George,	
schoolmaster	
and minister	31
Dunbar, Patrick, minister	31
Dunearn	12
Dunfermline,	
Abbot House	52, 53, 68
dunghills	21, 30
duns	12, 83
dwellingings	11, 20, 26
dyeing	28
e	
Ean Vane, Agnes nic	25
Earn	<i>see</i> Auldearn
Edinburgh	19, 25, 31, 35, 68
Edward I, king of England	17–18
Elgin	7, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23,
	25, 28, 30, 75
tax rate	21
Exchequer	19
exhorters	20
exports	24

f	
fairs	17, 18, 22, 23, 26,
	28
Falconar, Alexander,	
sheriff	70–71 figure 24
Falconar, Hugh, bailie	30, 31, 55
Falconers Lane	79
famine	24
Fearn, canon from	20
ferms	17, 22
ferry	35
fire	30
Firhall	35, 57
Firth Street	79
fish	18, 27
fish oil	27
fisheries	22
Fishertown	3, 7, 27, 32, 33, 35,
	36, 37, 40, 47,
	56, 57, 59, 62,
	63, 64, 65, 71–2,
	73, 75
houses	35 figure 15
Fishertown Museum	36, 59, 64
fishing	27, 28, 33, 59
fishing rights	22
fishings	18, 21, 61
flax	26
Flemington	10
flint tools	9–10
flint-working site	9
flounder	62
flour mill	56
food production	25
Forbes, Dr Robert	30
ford	7, 16, 18, 30, 51, 55,
	67
forestairs	30, 55, 67
Forres	17, 18, 19, 22, 24,
	25, 27, 30, 32,
	47, 75
tax rate	21
Fort George	3, 9, 29
Fortrose	23, 27
forts	12
Fraser, J, chronicler	14
Free Church	37, 38, 56, 63, 72
Free Church School	71
Freemasons	38
frontages	49, 51, 52, 53, 65,
	66, 68, 74, 83
fruits, soft	7
g	
<i>Gaedil</i>	12

- | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| Gaelic | 13, 19, 31–2, 37, 52,
56 | Havelock Hotel | 68 |
| Gallowgate | 31, 55, 71 | Hay, John, of Lochloy | 18 |
| Gallowhill | 31 | Hay Street | <i>see</i> Acre Street |
| gallows | 25, 31 | hearths | 9, 26, 62 |
| Gallowsland | 17, 50 | hemp | 28 |
| Galois Field | 20, 51 | henges | 9, 10, 84 |
| Ganges Restaurant | 69 | herb garden | 26 |
| gas | 37 | herring | 3, 33, 62 |
| gas lighting | 56 | Higgins Warehouse | 58 |
| gas works | 64 | High Street | 7, 16, 21, 28, 37, 38–
9, 47, 49–50, 51,
53, 54, 55, 58, 59,
65, 67, 68, 69, 70,
73, 74, 75
no 36 70
no 61 57, 69
no 69 57, 69
no 79–79a 57, 70
no 88 70
nos 109 & 113 57, 70
no 117 57, 70 |
| Geddes | 22 | Highland Boundary Fault | 3, 5 |
| Geddes House | 11 | Highland Council | 3, 49 |
| gentry | 20 | Highland Council Archive | 73, 74 |
| <i>Geography</i> , Ptolemy's | 12 | Highland Hotel | 49, 68 |
| gild merchant | 28 | Highland Railway | 3 |
| glacial till | 5 | Highland Region | |
| glaciers | 5 | Archaeology Service | 58 |
| Glasgow | 16, 19 | Highland | |
| Saracen Head Inn | 56 | Regional Council | <i>see</i> Highland Council |
| Glebe Road | 79 | hill forts | 11 |
| Glenrothes | 10 | hinterlands | 17, 84 |
| glovers | 25, 28 | <i>History of Nairnshire</i> | 73 |
| golf | 33, 39–40, 75 | Holy Rood Kirk | 18, 51, 67 |
| Golf Club | 58 | Horloge Stone | 30, 31, 55, 67 |
| Gordon, Robert, | | hosiers | 25 |
| of Straloch | 21, 61 | hotels | 40 |
| Gordon Street | 67, 79 | House of Lords | 27 |
| nos 1, 2 & 3 | 57, 70 | Househill | 20, 35, 51, 57 |
| Graham, James, | | Howieson, Nicholl | 20 |
| duke of Montrose | 22, 25, 52 | Hugh, earl of Ross | 17 |
| grain | 35, 63 | hunter-gatherers | 9 |
| Grampians | 3, 5 | Husband, Alexander | 17 |
| Grant family | 74 | hut circles | 11 |
| Grant Street | 79 | | |
| gravels | 5, 7 | i | |
| Great Glen | 5 | Ice Age | 5 |
| Great Glen Fault | 3 | Independent Chapel | 37, 56, 72 |
| Grigor, Dr | 40, 47 figure 21 | Indian or Burmese cutch | 35, 63 |
| gunsmith | 28 | inn-keeper | 25 |
| | | Innes, Margaret, | |
| h | | non-conformist | 25 |
| haddock | 33, 62 | inns | 33, 38 |
| hammer | 10 | Invernairn | 14, 49, 59, 69 <i>see also</i>
Nairn |
| hangman | 30 | | |
| 'Hanse' | 16 | | |
| harbour | 3, 7, 19, 21, 22, 26,
27, 29, 31, 33
figure 13 , 35, 53,
54, 59, 61, 63, 64,
71 | | |
| Harbour Street | 35, 59, 61, 63, 64,
66, 71, 79 | | |
| Harold, earl of Caithness
and Orkney | 14, 49 | | |

Inverness	3, 16, 17, 19, 22, 24, 27, 28, 30, 35, 37, 39, 47, 57, 67, 72, 75
Castle Street	9
tax rate	21
<i>Inverness Courier</i>	35, 36, 37, 57, 64, 75
Inverness-Edinburgh	
steamers	63
Inverness-shire	3
Ireland	12
Iron Age	11-12
iron tools	11
Isles, Lords of	17
Ivybank	35, 38, 57
j	
Jacobite risings	28, 54
James IV, king of Scots	19
James VI, king of Scots	18, 19, 52
John, fourth Lord of the Isles	17
Johnston, Dr Samuel	31
jougs	31
k	
Kebbuck (Kebach, Kebbock) Stone	14
keep	50, 74
Kenneth mac Alpin, king of Scots	13
Ketchen, Isaac, provost	39
Keystone House	72
Kildrummie Gate	31, 55, 71
Kildrummie Road	17, 50
kilns	54, 68
Kilravock	17 <i>see also</i> Rose
castle	3
Laird of	22-3, 32
Kilrennie	21
King Steps	51
King Street	16, 35, 37, 47, 50, 54, 57-8, 59, 61, 66, 67, 71, 72, 74, 75, 80
no 46	63, 72
no 52	37, 56, 72
Kingsteps	7, 20
Kingsteps quarries	9, 16, 27, 49, 62
Kinloss Abbey	16
Kirk Session records	74
Kirkwall	24
kirseth	16
kitchen middens	<i>see</i> middens

Knights of St John	14
Knights Templar	17, 20, 50, 52
I	
lades	56
Lagnagreishach Wood	10
leather	52, 68
leather merchants	25
Leopold Street	30, 38, 47, 49, 55, 65, 67, 80 <i>see also</i> Pole Road
lights, evaluation	30
linen	28
links	3, 9, 16, 27, 28, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 47, 49, 57-8, 59, 61, 62
Links Place	80
Links School	38, 63, 71, 72
linseed oil	35
lint	28
drying	26
Literary Institute Museum	70
lithics	9, 84
livestock	9
Local Government Act 1929	3
Lochloy	10, 33
Lochmaben	21
Lochside	10
Lodgehill	25
Lodgehill Road	80
London	3, 27, 35
London-Nairnshire Society	71
m	
McBean's & Chips Fish Restaurant	69
McDermott's off-shore fabrication yard	3
McGillivorioch, Agnes	25
MacKenzie & Mathews	70
McKillin, John, Covenanter	25
Mackintosh, William	70
McPhail, William, burgess and surgeon	26
McPhersons Close	39
MacWilliam, Donald	16
Mains of Balnagowan	10, 11 figure 4
Makkie, Andrew, merchant of Dundee	22
Malcolm I, king of Scots	14
maltmen	25

- Managers of the Box 32
- Manse 21, 54
- Manse Road 72
- Mapp of Moray* 14–15 **figure 7**, 49, 61
- Margaret of Norway 17
- Marina 66
- Marine Hotel 32, 47, 62
- Marine Road 80
- Marjoribanks, Thomas 19
- market 61
- market cross 7, 20, 22, 27, 30
figure 10, 31, 47, 51, 53, 54, 55, 65, 67, 74
- markets 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 51, 54
- Mary, queen of Scots 19, 20, 51, 67
- masons 54
- Mavieston 33, 35, 63
- meal 24
- Mechanics Institute 37, 57
- medical practitioner 26
- meltwaters 5
- Mesolithic settlements 9
- metalwork 10
- metamorphic rock 3, 5, 84
- Michael markets 28
- Michaelmas fair 22
- middens 9, 52, 53, 54, 68, 84
- military airfields 7
- militia 22, 52
abuses 23
Cromwellian 22
garrison 73
Irish 22
non-payment of accounts 24
- Mill, John 21
- Mill Road 80
- Millbank 17, 19, 20, 35, 50, 52, 57
- Millbank House 70
- Millbank Street 80
- mills 7, 18, 21, 51, 55–6, 66, 69
- ministers 20, 33, 37
non-conformist 25
- Moine rocks 5
- Monastery of Iona 13
- Monitory School 38, 63, 71
- Montrose, Duke of *see* Graham
- Star Garage 54
- Moravia, Alexander de, keeper of the castle 17
- Moray 3, 7, 24, 75
Andrew, of Petty 18
bishops of 14, 16
deanery of 19, 61
earl of *see* Randolph
- Moray Firth 3, 5, 7, 9, 14, 16, 35, 47, 49, 61, 63, 74
geology 13
- Moray Floods 68, 71
- motte and bailey 50–1, 67, 74, 84
- Moyness 22
- Murray, Lord George 28
- Murray, William, ex-bailie 22
- Museum *see* Viewfield House
- museum of fishing 3
- n**
- Nairn *see also* Invernairn
burgh cartulary 39, 73
castle 7, 14, 17–18, 21, 49, 50–1, 54, 59, 66, 67, 74, 75
from the air **8 figure 3**
Local Plan 49, 64
location of 3, 4 **figure 1**
militia 23
physical setting 3–7, 6 **figure 2**
royal burgh rights 22
Nairn Artisans' Golf Club 40
- Nairn Bay 27, 61
- Nairn Bridge *see* bridges
- Nairn Company of Herring Fishers 27, 62
- Nairn Dunbar Golf Club 40, 58, 59
- Nairn Fishermen's Society 32, 62
Minute Book 35, 63
- Nairn Friendly Society 35
- Nairn Golf Club 40
- Nairnshire Mirror* 38
Nairnshire Mirror and Telegraph 75
- Nairnside 10
- National Bank 38, 57
- National Bank of Scotland, later Royal Bank 38, 57, 70
- National Register of Archives (Scotland) 74
- Neolithic settlements 9
- net stores 59, 63, 66, 72, 75
- nets 35, 36, 63
- New Galloway 21
- newspaper 38
- Newton 35, 57

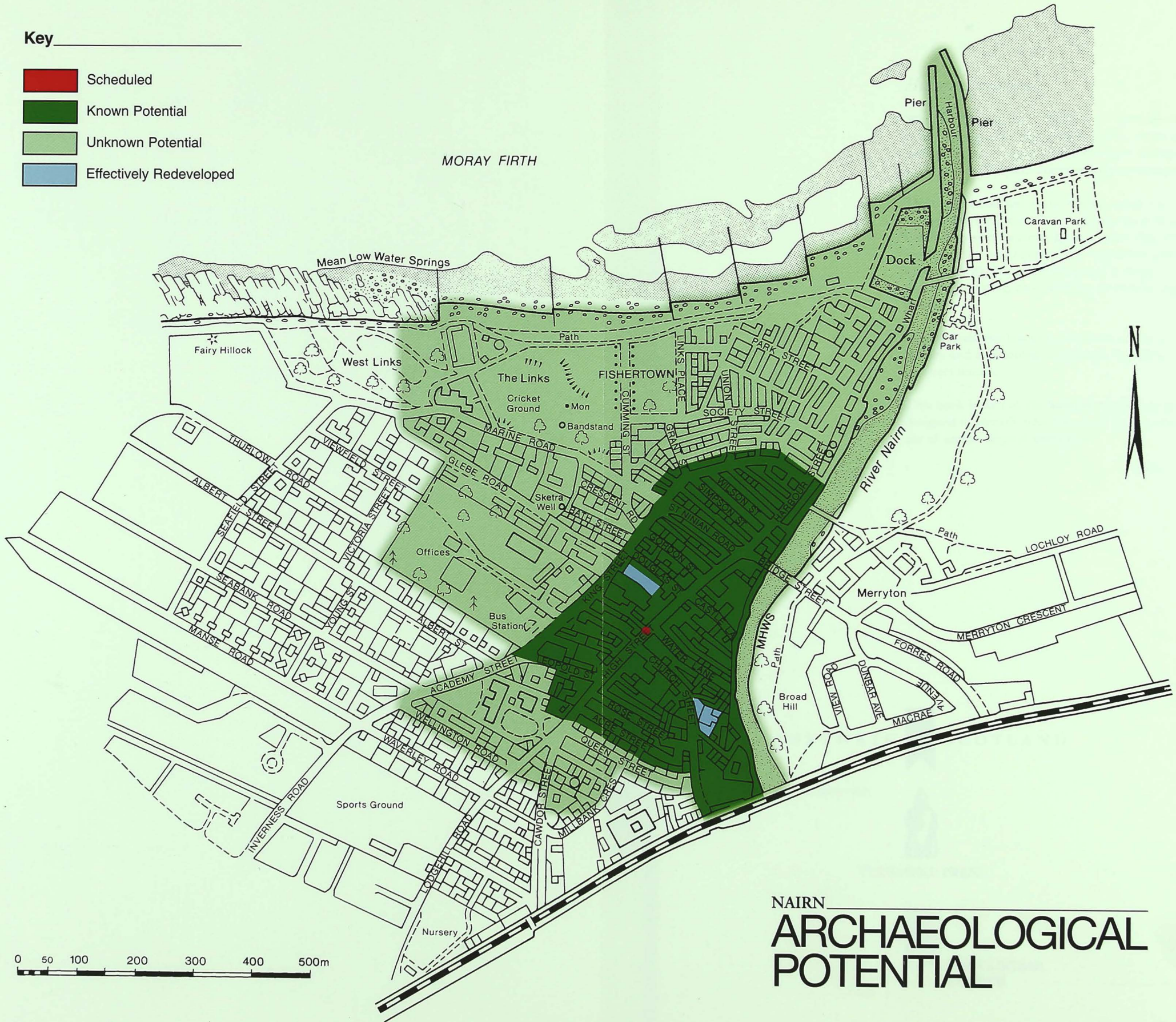
- Newton House,
later Newton Hotel 70
- North Berwick,
Forth Street Lane 54
- o**
- oats 24
- oil lamps 37, 57
- oilskins 35, 63
- Old Red Sandstone 7, 13
- Ordnance Survey 52, 70, 74
- Orkney 5, 17, 19
- Our Lady Day fair 22
- oyster shells 52, 68
- p**
- parish church 7, 18, 21, 24, 25, 31,
36, 37, 53–4, 55–
6, 58, 66, 69, 72
- ruins 49
- Park Street 81
- Parliament 18
- peat 29, 32
- pebbles, coloured 10
- Peeblesshire 11
- Perth 28, 53, 65, 68
- nos 80–86 High Street 52, 68
- Canal Street
excavations 54, 68–9
- Perthshire 11
- Pictish stones 13–14
- Picts 12, 13
- pier 54, 61, 71
- Pittenweem 24
- plague 20
- Pococke, R 30, 55
- Pole Road,
later Leopold Street 30, 38, 55, 67
- Pont, Timothy 14–15 **figure 7**, 49,
61, 75
- population 24, 33, 62
- pottery 10, 52, 68
- poverty 19, 26, 29, 52
- prehistory 9–11, 84
- Presbyterian Church 32, 56
- presbytery 67
- prisons 20, 21, 23, 31, 36,
51, 53, 67
- Privy Council 23, 25
- provosts 17, 18, 25, 32, 53,
84
- provost's lamps 70
- Ptolemy 12
- q**
- quarries 32
- Queen Street 47, 81
- r**
- radiocarbon dating 9, 84
- railway viaduct 49, 72
- railways 3, 39, 59, 72
- raised beaches 5
- Rait, Sir Gervase de,
constable of the castle 17
- Randolph, Thomas,
earl of Moray 17
- Rathe *see* Rait
- Records of the
Convention of Royal
Burghs of Scotland* 23
- Reformation 20, 52, 56, 69
- refuse 9
- repletion 53, 84
- Richard, bishop of Moray 16, 59, 61
- ring cairns 9
- ritual enclosures 9–10
- River Nairn 7, 10, 14, 16, 18, 26–
7, 33, 47, 49–50,
50, 55–6, 59, 61,
62, 63, 66, 69, 71
- Riverside Kirk 24 **figure 8**, 69
- roads 3, 68, 69
- Robert I, king of Scots 3, 14, 17, 18
- Roman Catholics 25
- Romans 11
- ropes 63
- Rose, Alexander
of Clava 21
minister 31
- Rose, Captain James 37, 57, 63
- Rose, Elizabeth 30
- Rose family 27, 74
- of Belivat 20, 52
- of Broadford 32
- of Broadley 21
- of Clava 21, 27, 62
- of Kilravock 28, 52, 55
- town house 29 **figure 9**, 69
- Rose, Hugh
of Broadley 21
of Clava 30
of Kilravock 18, 61
minister 21
- Rose, John 27
of Broadley 17
- Rose, laird of Kilravock 26
- Rose Street 19, 81
- Rose, William,

- Provost of Fleenas 21, 53
 Rosebank Primary School 49, 71
 Rose's Academical Institution 37 **figure 17**, 38, 57, 71
 Ross 19, 23, 24
 earls of 17
 Ross, John, church reader 20
 Ross, Thomas, preacher 20
 Ross, William, church reader 20
 Rothesay 22
 Rothiemurchus 20, 26, 53
 Royal Bank of Scotland 70
 Royal British Legion 70
 Royal burghs 14, 16, 17, 18, 61, 67, 68
 Royal Hotel 38 **figure 18**, 49, 54, 67, 68
 Royal Marine Hotel 68
 Rude Day fair 23
- s**
 sails 35, 63
 St Andrews 16, 53, 68
 St Columba 13
 St Midian's Day fair 23
 St Modain 18, 51
 St Ninian 13, 31
 St Ninian Road 47, 53, 59, 66, 81
 St Ninian's church 20, 53, 56
 St Ninian's Church of England Chapel 37
 St Ninian's Well 20
 St Thomas, church possibly dedicated to 18, 20, 51, 53
 salmon 18, 27, 33, 61
 salt stores 36, 59, 63, 72
 Sanders, John, minister 24
 sands 5, 7, 33, 53
 drifting 21, 54, 61
 Sanquhar 21
 Savage, Dr 26
 Saxe-Coburg, Prince Leopold of 38
 Scheduled Ancient Monuments 65
 schoolmaster 31, 55
 schoolmistress 31
 schools 21, 31 **figure 11**, 32, 37-8, 54, 55, 57, 63, 71
- Scoti* 13
 'Scotland's Riviera' 3
- Scottish Record Office Gift and Deposits 74
 sea bathing 33, 39-40, 75
 sea level 5
 Seabank 35, 57
 Seabank Road 69, 72
 Seaforth, Earl of 25
 Seaman's Victoria Hall 59, 66, 72
 Secession Church 32 **figure 12**, 37, 51, 56, 72
- Sessional School 63
 Directors' Minute Book 38, 63
 settlements 14
 fortified 11, 12
 prehistoric 12 **figure 5**, 13 **figure 6**
- Shambles cattle market 67, 68
 Shambles Yard 28, 54
 shellfish 9
 sheriffs 14, 17, 25, 50
 ships 21, 27, 32
 shoemakers 25-6
 Sigurd, earl of Orkney 16
 silt 5
 Simpson, Janet, thief 25
 skate 62
 Skateraw 17, 20, 50, 51
 skeletons 58
 Sketra well 37, 57
 slate 30
 smithies 21, 26
 smokehouses 36, 59, 63, 66
 smuggling 25
 Smyth, James, church reader 20
 snuff making 25, 28
 Society Street 59, 81
 soils 7
 souterrains 12, 84
 Southern Uplands Fault 3
 Spalding Club 74
 spearhead 10
 spinning school 28
 Spynie, Lord 24
 stables 68
 stalls 28
 standing stones 10
 station 3
 Station Hotel 68
 steeples 20, 31, 53, 67
 Stewart, Francis, 5th earl of Bothwell 19
 Stirling 19
 Stirling Castle 19
 stone circles 10

- stone tools 9
- Straith, John,
 schoolmaster 49, 71
- Straith Monument 71
- street lighting, gas 37
- Stuart, Prince
 Charles Edward 28
- Subscription schools 38
- sundial 30–1, 55, 67
- Sutherland 11, 19, 23, 24
- swimming baths 3, 39–40, 57–8
- sword slipper 25
- symbol stones 13
- Synod of Moray 26, 54
- t**
- Tain 19, 20, 22, 37
- tanners 25
- Tarry Dyke 36, 63, 72
- tax roll 52
- taxation 17, 21, 23, 62
- Taylor, James, glover 28
- Telford, Thomas 3, 33, 63, 71
- tenements 18, 20, 22
- Test Oath 25
- textiles 28
- thatch 18
- timber 26
- tofts *see* burgage plots
- tolbooth 7, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26,
 28, 30, 31, 49, 51,
 52, 52–3, 54, 55,
 65, 67, 74, 85
- Toleration Act of 1681 25
- tolls 17, 20, 21, 22, 26, 51,
 85
- tourism 3, 72, 75
- Tower Court 58
- town ports 20
- townhouse 24 **figure 8**, 85
- trade 10, 19, 22, 26, 28,
 29, 54, 61
- Tradespark 9
- Treasurers 29
- Treaty of Westminster–
 Ardornish 17
- trees 5
- tribal groups 11, 12
- tron 20, 21, 30, 49, 51,
 53, 65, 67, 74, 85
- Tulloch, Hutcheson 21
- u**
- Union Street 72, 81
- United Presbyterian
 Church 72
- v**
- vegetables 7
- vennels 7, 21, 30, 39, 47, 49,
 51, 66, 69, 85
- Victoria Hotel 68
- Victoria Street 72
- Viewfield 35
- Viewfield House 47 **figure 21**, 57, 70
- villages, enclosed 11
- vitricification 12, 85
- w**
- Wallace, William 18
- War Memorial Garden 70
- Wars of the Covenant 20
- Wars of Independence 3, 17–18, 50
- Wat of Nairn 21
- Water Lane 82
- Water Mouth 16, 49, 61
- Water of Nairn *see* River Nairn
- water supply 37, 57
- waterproofing 35
- Watsons Place 82
- Waulkmill 28
- Waverley Hotel 68
- weavers 25, 28
- Weavers' Lane 39, 58
- weigh-beam 51
- weights 20, 21, 51
- weirs 56
- Wellington Road 47, 82
- Wellington Square 82
- wells 20, 37, 53, 57, 65, 74
- Westminster 22
- wheelhouses 12
- Whithorn 13
- Wick 68
- wigmaker 28
- William the Lion,
 king of Scots 3, 14, 16, 49, 59
- Wilson Street 59
- windows, evaluation 30
- wine 22
- witchcraft 25
- Wood, John,
 cartographer 34 **figure 14**, 47, 74
- Woodend 10
- woollen manufactures 28
- Woolsey, Robert,
 commissary of
 Ayrshire, MP 22
- y**
- Yorkshire 12
- Young, John 20

Key

- Scheduled
- Known Potential
- Unknown Potential
- Effectively Redeveloped



Historic Nairn

Nairn has had many roles through time: from a small medieval burgh with its burgage plots and associated castle; to a small seventeenth-century town which could not meet its taxation dues; to an early eighteenth-century garrison town beset with billeted troops; and emerging in the nineteenth century as one of the premier resorts of Scotland. The classic burgh plan of medieval Nairn is still visible today; but was this the original 'Invernairn'? Some clues suggest that twelfth-century Nairn became inundated with water and was forced to relocate to a more protected site in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

This book is part of the **Scottish burgh survey**—a series designed to identify which areas of Scotland's historic burghs are of archaeological interest.

ISBN 1 898218 52 8

ISSN 1358 0272



Viewfield House

HISTORIC  SCOTLAND

in association with

SCOTTISH CULTURAL PRESS 

**The Highland Council**
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd
SERVING The Highland Community

CENTRE FOR SCOTTISH URBAN HISTORY
Department of Scottish History
University of Edinburgh

