HISTORIC SCOTLAND

THE SCOTTISH
BURGH SURVEY

HISTORIC DUNBAR

Archaeology and development

E Patricia Dennison, Simon Stronach and Russel Coleman

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CBA COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY
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Front cover images: Aerial view of Dunbar. *(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown Copyright: RCAHMS)*
Cobbled High Street *(By courtesy of Mr T K Anderson, Dunbar).*

Contents

Figures

Abbreviations

APS	*The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, T Thomson and C Innes (eds) (Edinburgh, 1814–75)
CECAS	City of Edinburgh Archaeological Service
CFA	CFA Archaeology Ltd
DES	*Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*
ER	*The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, 23 vols, J Stuart *et al* (eds) (Edinburgh, 1878–)
GUARD	Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division
NMRS	National Monuments Record of Scotland
NAS	National Archives of Scotland
NSA	*The New Statistical Account of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1845)
OSA	*The Statistical Account of Scotland, 1791–1799*, Sir John Sinclair (ed) New Edition, I R Grant and D J Withrington (EDS) (Wakefield, 1973), 2nd vol. East Lothian
PSAS	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*
RCAHMS	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
RMS	*The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland*, 11 vols, J M Thomson *et al* (EDS) (Edinburgh, 1882–1914)
RPC	*The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, J H Burton *et al* (eds) (Edinburgh, 1877–)
SHS	Scottish History Society
SUAT	Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust (SUAT Ltd)
TA	*Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, T Dickson *et al* (eds) (Edinburgh, 1877–)
TAFAJ	*Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal*

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1 *Use of the Burgh Survey*

The third series of Burgh Surveys is intended as a guide for the general reader to the rich history and archaeology of Scotland's historic burghs and to furnish local authorities with reliable information to help protect and manage the archaeology and historic environment of our urban centres. This Survey provides an accessible and broad ranging synthesis of existing knowledge on historic Dunbar, as well as highlighting research areas that would benefit from more detailed analysis.

In its role as a tool for local authorities to use in the planning process, the first point of reference in this volume is the colour-coded town plan (**fig. 29** and **broadsheet**) which depicts the areas of prime archaeological interest. The general index will enable rapid access to information specific to a site, street or feature within the town.

Further information on the archaeological potential of a site or area within the town can be gleaned from local and national libraries and archives. The PASTMAP website (http://www.PASTMAP.org.uk) can also be consulted. This interactive website, supported jointly by Historic Scotland and The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, allows anyone with internet access to display and search data on Scotland's historic environment, and particularly the legally protected sites - scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings.

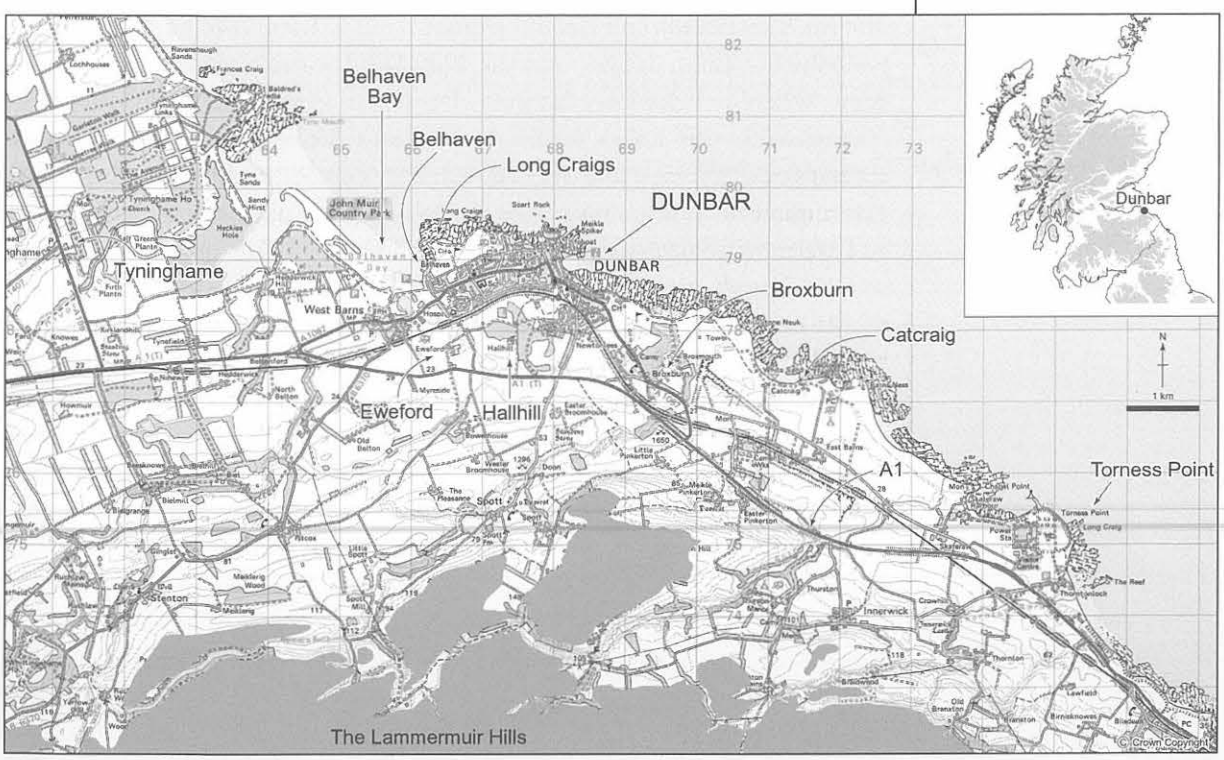
Both this Burgh Survey and the PASTMAP website provide information only. Where development is being considered, in all cases advice should be sought from the Local Authority planning department, and from their archaeology services: for sites in Dunbar contact East Lothian Council, Education and Community Services, John Muir House, Haddington, EH41 3AL; telephone 01620 827158.

2 *Site and setting*

Introduction

The medieval town of Dunbar occupied an exposed headland where the Firth of Forth meets the North Sea and the coast turns southwards towards Berwick-upon-Tweed (**fig 1**). Despite a history of continuous settlement stretching back to the Roman Iron Age (first to fourth century AD) the town did not achieve baronial burgh status until 1370 and became a royal burgh in 1445.[1] The town was focused on the precipitous promontory now occupied by Castle Park (**fig 2**). High Street occupies a north-to-south oriented ridge that ends at the promontory. The ridge's eastern flank slopes steeply to a rocky shore; the western side falls gently to the East Lothian coastal plain.

Towards Berwick, the coast is exposed to rough water and is generally rocky with stretches of impressive sea-cliffs. Towards Edinburgh, the calmer shores of the Forth are characterised by sandy bays. The bay to the east of Dunbar was called Lamerhaven and is surrounded by rocky outcrops and exposed to easterly winds.[2] For these reasons it was unattractive to early mariners, whereas Belhaven Bay, some 2 km to the west, has an easier approach and is sheltered from both westerly and easterly winds. This is the



first substantial natural harbour after Berwick on a northward sea journey and was recorded as a port as early as 1164, when monks from the Isle of May were granted access for one ship.[3] The harbours at Dunbar were built only in the post-medieval period.

With regard to dry land, Dunbar is positioned where the eastern tail of the Lammermuir Hills stretches towards the coast (**fig 1**), marking an end to the rolling coastal plain to the east of Edinburgh. It also marks the end of the Southern Upland Fault which, together with the Highland Boundary Fault, defines the Midland Valley of Scotland.[4] This is the relatively low-lying central section of Scotland between the Grampians and Southern Uplands, which has the form of an ancient rift valley.[5] The eastern land route into Scotland from Berwick and the south passed through this bottleneck at Dunbar.

The strategic importance of the promontory is explained by the convergence of land and sea routes at this point. It is initially surprising that the town did not grow up along the route to Edinburgh, between the protection of the promontory defences and the port at Belhaven. In fact, however, towns did tend to grow up beside the protective presence of a fortified place, which probably accounts for the siting of Dunbar beneath the fort/castle. It was important, also, that the town assume a north-to-south orientation, in all probability to counter the prevailing easterly winds.

Land use and geology

The Midland Valley contains an overwhelming percentage of the country's population and, on the coastal plain from Dunbar to Edinburgh, some of the finest agricultural land in Scotland.[6] The fertile inland soils are derived from thick glacial drifts and are ideal for crops of barley and wheat, while the coastal sandy soils support over half of the vegetable production in Scotland.[7] The climate around Dunbar is beneficial to agriculture, being relatively dry and warm, if subject to strong easterly winds.[8] This has dramatic effects in terms of productivity; for example, the harvesting of barley takes place a month earlier than elsewhere in Scotland.[9] Oak forest and mosses would once have dominated the landscape but these have now been all but cleared and drained, and replaced by a patchwork of large, regular fields dotted with farmsteads and touns.[10] This is characteristic of an 'improved' agricultural system with the traditional Scottish rigs or narrow fields consolidated into more efficient blocks. At the foot of the Lammermuirs the soil becomes poorer and Dunbar's location close to the hills means it does not have as fertile a hinterland as towns further west such as Haddington.

The underlying geology is predominantly a red to pink sandstone, which is reflected in the building materials used in the town.[11] Catcraig limestone and orange ironstone were also available locally (**fig 1**), and used.[12] The craggy headland on which the castle was built is largely a bassanite intrusion.[13]

FIGURE 1
Location of Dunbar.

FIGURE 2
Aerial view of Dunbar.
(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown Copyright: RCAHMS)

Economy

As noted in the section, above Dunbar lies within an area of rich farmland and is likely to have functioned as a local market town throughout its history. Foreign trade through Belhaven was not generally vibrant, with small quantities of wool, skins and woolfells exported (*see* pp. 23).[14] The supplies needed by garrisons at the castle would have boosted the local economy. The importance of fishing, and the herring industry in particular, grew in the post-medieval period and was complemented by new industries such as whaling.

Belhaven Brewery was founded in 1719 and remains one of the town's major employers. In 1846 the railway link with Edinburgh was established and the town became a popular seaside resort. In the later twentieth century the

town suffered from the general malaise afflicting traditional British resorts, possibly hastened by the construction of Torness Power Station which involved the long-term tenancy of much of the town's temporary accommodation by construction workers.[15] The power station remains one of the major employers in the area, as does Blue Circle Cement.

A small fishing industry still survives, mainly dealing with shellfish, but unemployment is a greater problem in Dunbar than elsewhere in East Lothian. The upgrading of the A1, is likely to increase the tendency of commuters, priced out of Edinburgh, to buy property in the town.

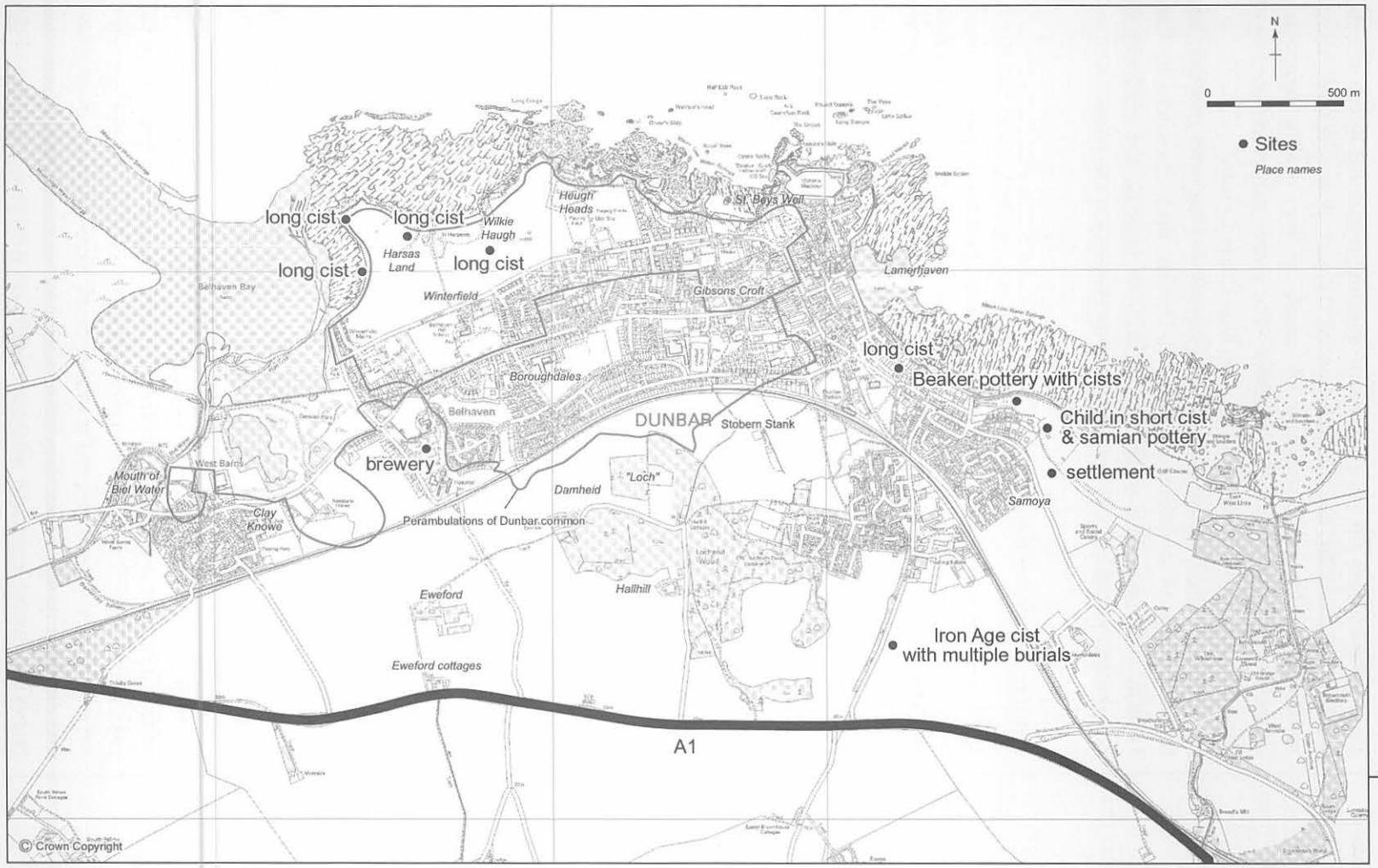
Sources of information

Until recently, information concerning Dunbar's prehistoric past has come from chance finds in and around the town, especially where ground has been disturbed during construction work or ploughing. Details of these finds are held on the database maintained by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). Unfortunately, they are not often accompanied by archaeologically important information concerning the context of the discovery, for example whether it was part of a burial or of a midden.

Dunbar has a wealth of primary documentary sources, available in both the national repositories and in the Local History Archives at Haddington, as the bibliography and endnotes indicate. Restraints on time have meant that all of these sources could not be consulted in full detail. Avenues for further research are, therefore, suggested in chapter 4. The town has some excellent secondary sources and the knowledge of local townspeople has been of invaluable assistance.

Over the last century aerial photography has revealed that the agricultural landscape around Dunbar contains a rich variety of cropmarks, most of which are likely to indicate the locations of abandoned settlements such as the enclosure at Samoya (**fig 3**), protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Modern excavations have now been undertaken on several sites around Dunbar and our knowledge of the prehistory of the area grows considerably with each.[16]

Within the town, a nationally important excavation was undertaken in Castle Park during the 1980s and 1990s and the results have been published in a monograph.[17] This is undoubtedly one of the most important modern Scottish excavations and provides a unique insight into the processes of urbanisation. The sequence of settlement extended from the Iron Age to the post-medieval period, with continuous occupation likely, if not proven.[18] Several smaller evaluations and watching briefs have also been undertaken, and although none of these has led to a lengthy excavation the information retrieved is useful, especially when the results are synthesised. Reports of the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settlement
Iron Age cist with multiple burials
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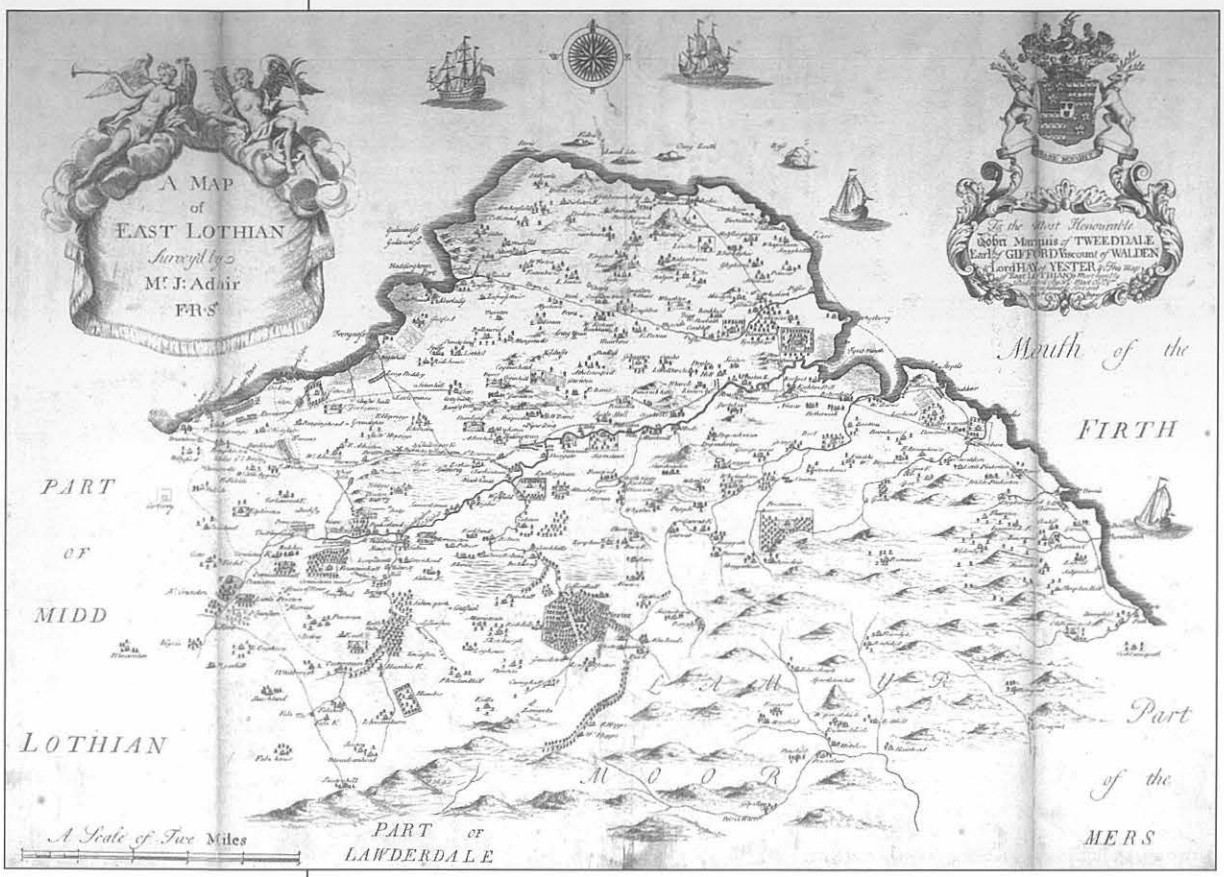

FIGURE 4
J Adair's plan of Dunbar, 1736.
(By courtesy of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

works are held by RCAHMS, which also includes summaries in its Canmore database, which is available on-line.

RCAHMS also holds information on many of the buildings in the town, which can be supplemented from published sources.[19] This information includes a large collection of photographs, which can be used to establish how the town looked prior to modern development.

Representations of the town in historic maps are also an important source of information. An early representation of the town by Pont in the late sixteenth century, part of his survey of Scotland, has not survived. John Adair's plan of East Lothian, dated *c* 1680, indicated the seventeenth-century plot-pattern (**fig 4**). Adair's plan, engraved in 1736 by R Cooper, and General Roy's military survey of 1750 (**fig 5**) are quite detailed depictions of the town. John Wood's plan of 1830 and Ordnance Survey plans of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also provide information on the historic past of Dunbar, once stripped of more modern accretions. Copies of early engravings or paintings are also held in the collections of RCAHMS, although many of these are mainly romantic portrayals of the ruined castle.

FIGURE 3
Dunbar and its environs.
(© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Historic Scotland licence no. 100017509 [2006])

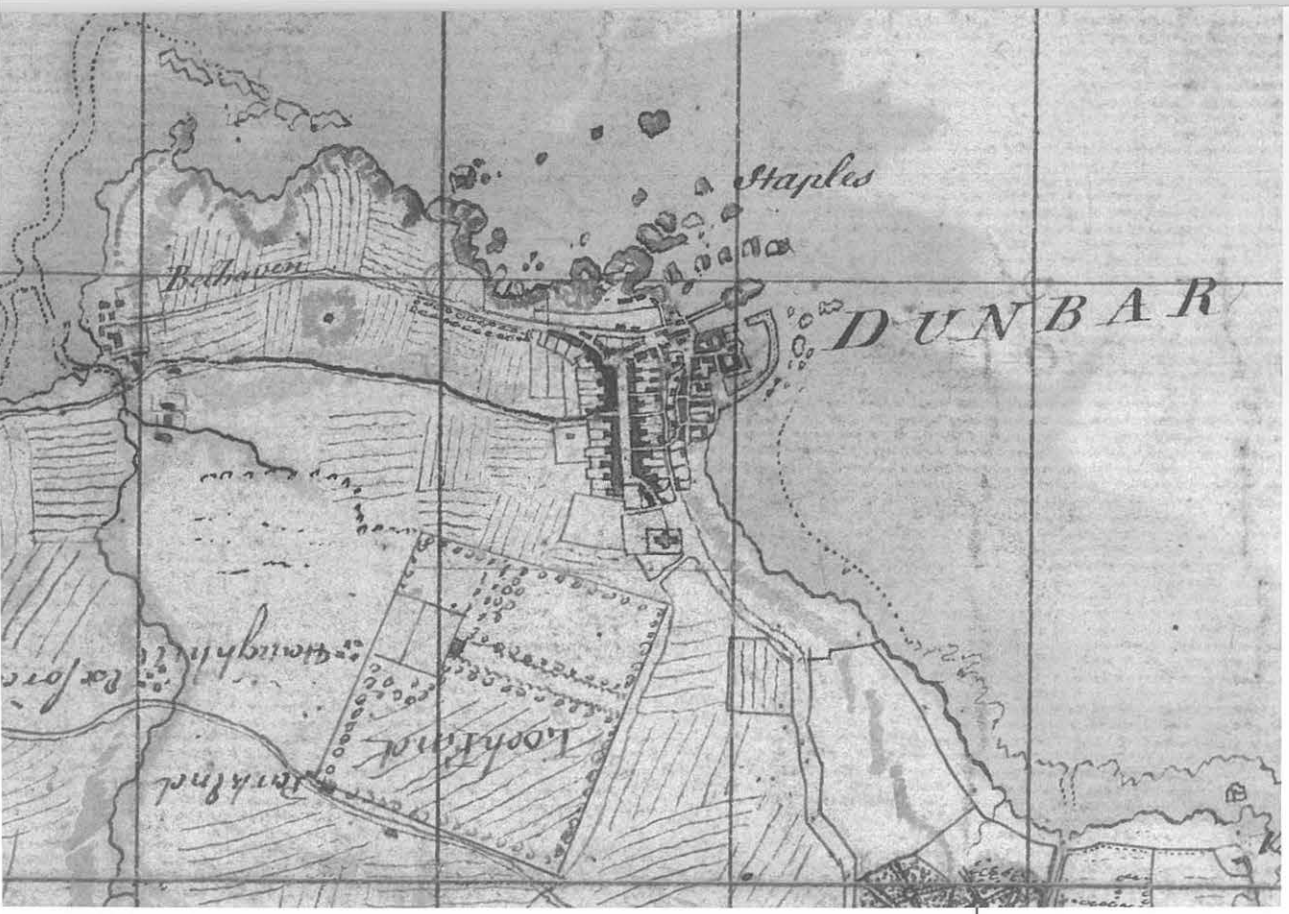

FIGURE 5
W Roy's Military Survey (1747–55); plan of Dunbar. *(By permission of the British Library; Sheet 9, section 2/1)*

Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Dunbar Castle and the surrounding park have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, meaning the archaeological remains within them and their setting have been given statutory protection.[20] The site of the Trinitarian friary, including the structural remains of the friary church, now a dovecot, is the only other Scheduled Ancient Monument within the burgh.[21] Immediately to the south of the town a probable prehistoric enclosure, identified by cropmarks and probably a defended settlement, at Samoya, has been recently scheduled.[22] Slightly further away from the town, there are rectangular and circular enclosures near Eweford Cottages (**fig 3**); both have been protected, and the recent upgrading of the A1 was designed to avoid them.[23]

At the time of writing (2002) one hundred and forty buildings in Dunbar are listed. The list is maintained by Historic Scotland which assesses the buildings and assigns each structure to a category based on their importance. Eight structures in Dunbar are listed category 'A', and are considered to be of national or international importance. This status can be derived from historic or architectural merit, or a combination of the two. Most of the category 'A' listed buildings in Dunbar are historically important, such as the tolbooth,

Belhaven Brewery and the parish church. Other buildings may not have been important originally but are now so because of their survival, such as *no* 34 or *nos* 56–60 High Street. One hundred buildings are listed as category 'B' and of regional importance, most on High Street but with several in Belhaven and around the harbour. Thirty-two buildings are listed as category 'C(S)' or of local importance.

The entire medieval core of Dunbar also lies within a designated Conservation Area. This means the area has been determined by the Local Authority to have a special architectural or historic interest, which it will seek to preserve and enhance.[24]

The archaeology of the area before the town emerged

Prehistory

As noted in the section above, until recently the earliest evidence for settlement in and around Dunbar was provided by several chance finds. Several sherds of Beaker pottery were found beside the East Esplanade (**fig 3**) and from an unrecorded location in the town.[25] Two bronze spearheads were found in the vicinity of Belhaven.[26] Short cists containing crouched inhumations, typically dating from the Bronze Age, were found on the golf course to the south of the town and a little further away at Eweford Cottages (**fig 3**), where a flint knife was found with one of the bodies.[27]

These artefacts and burials suggested that settlement was located in the vicinity by the early Bronze Age but excavations at Eweford Cottages in advance of the dualling of the A1 have uncovered evidence of even earlier activity.[28] Many pots were found filled with cremated remains buried together in a cemetery. From the style of the pots the earliest are thought to have been made in the Neolithic period. They were found buried near to a timber mortuary house, where funerary rituals would have taken place. These excavations have shown that the first farming communities settled the area in the fourth millennium BC. The settlements of the people that used this cemetery have not been excavated. However, several sites identified as cropmarks at Samoya, Hallhill and south of Eweford Cottages seem likely to be later prehistoric in date.[29] The cropmarks seem to indicate small groups of circular houses, sometimes enclosed within a ditch or palisade.

Roman period

These early settlements cannot be viewed as the forerunner of the medieval burgh. The genesis of the modern town is probably best understood in terms of the strategic importance of the promontory at Dunbar. The convergence of both the eastern land and sea routes into the central valley of Scotland at the town seems likely to have been crucial to its early development. Dunbar's

position on an exposed headland rather than at the sheltered port of Belhaven suggests that control and defence of these routes were instrumental in the location of the settlement.

The origins of Dunbar are probably better understood than any other Scottish town, largely due to the extensive excavations undertaken before the construction of the swimming pool in Castle Park (**fig 6**).[30] These showed that the rocky headland on which the blockhouse now stands was defended during the Iron Age, and it was thought that a fairly small area, perhaps only occupied by one farmstead, was protected by ditches, banks and palisades.[31] The exact sequence of defences was not established but a radiocarbon date of first to fourth century AD was obtained from charcoal in a feature pre-dating one ditch.[32] This would mean that the site was occupied in the early part of the Roman Iron Age, and by the end of this period it had been succeeded by two phases of apparently undefended settlement.[33] However, recent work to the south of the earlier excavations uncovered the upper part of a large ditch, which seems likely to have enclosed a much larger area of the headland (over

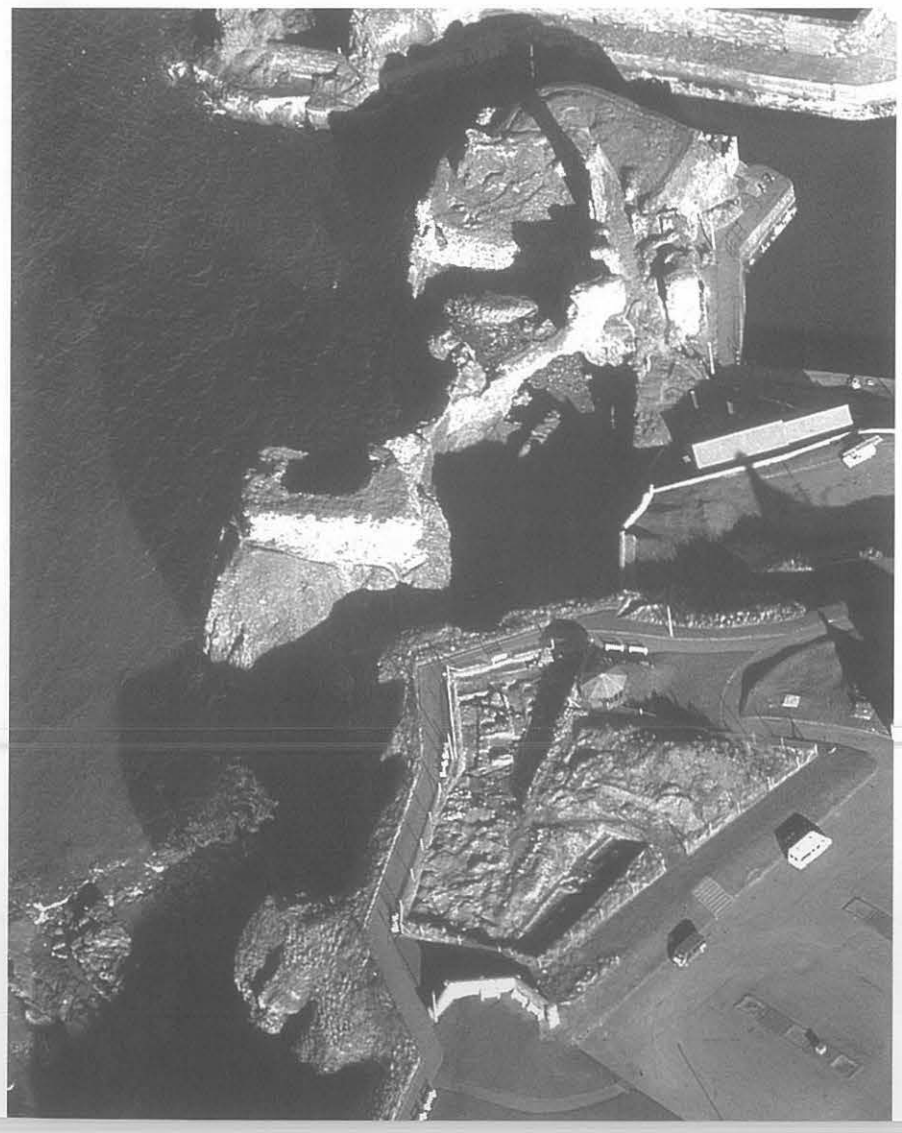

FIGURE 6
Aerial view of archaeological dig of Castle Park by SUAT Ltd.
(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)

2 ha).[34] A radiocarbon determination from charcoal in the upper fill of this ditch returned an Iron Age or Roman Iron Age date. The relationship and sequence of enclosures and settlement remain unclear, but it seems that in the Roman Iron Age a substantial settlement had developed and incorporated much of what is now Castle Park.

The archaeological evidence suggests that around the same time as the Romans invaded and occupied Britain (AD 43) the headland at Dunbar was fortified. The surrounding rich farmland had been settled since the mid-fourth millennium BC and we can assume that there must have been some impetus to move to a coastal, defended location. It is likely that the site became a local centre within the territory of the tribe the Romans called the Votadini and the name Dunbar originated as the British 'din-bar' meaning 'summit fort'.[35] The lack of Roman military sites within East Lothian and Berwickshire has been interpreted as evidence of friendly relations between the natives and Romans and it is unlikely that the site was created to defend against the Roman invasion.[36] The move to a coastal site may indicate the growing importance of trade, most easily carried out by sea. The presence of Roman troops in East Lothian presented an opportunity for the natives to trade food and other necessary supplies in return for rare luxury items.[37] The location may also reflect a need to defend the coast from northern native tribes who remained hostile to Rome and its allies.

The presence of Roman material, such as fragments of Samian pottery in Castle Park, indicates that Roman luxury goods were probably being traded in Dunbar. A short cist containing a child's skeleton, dated to the Roman Iron Age, was found on Dunbar golf course (**fig 3**).[38] This cist was post-dated by several boundary ditches and a fragment of Samian pottery was recovered from the topsoil. The excavator pointed out that several nearby graves, interpreted as disturbed Dark Age long-cist inhumations, may have been part of the same cemetery.[39] A large cist containing at least twenty-one burials was excavated at Lochend (**fig 3**) and dated to the first century AD on the basis of one brooch.[40]

Dark Ages

The town first enters the historical record as 'Dynbaer', the place of imprisonment of Bishop Wilfrid of York in AD 680, as recorded in *The Life of Wilfrid* by Eddius Stephanus.[41] The imprisonment was by the order of King Ecgfrith of Northumbria and it is clear that by this time the area was part of his kingdom.[42] It is not entirely clear when the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria overran the territory of the Votadini, or Goddodin as they were then called, but it seems most likely to have been in the early years of the seventh century AD.[43] Dunbar is described as an *urbs regis*, probably indicating a British royal possession adopted by the Northumbrians.[44] It would not have been permanently occupied by Northumbrian royalty but used periodically as they

travelled round the kingdom to collect food and livestock from their subjects.[45]

The Northumbrian stronghold was in the same location as the Iron Age fort and one of the most significant finds from the Dark Age phases of the Castle Park excavations was a large pit for mixing lime mortar. This would have been used in the construction of a large stone building and is only the third of its kind to have been found in Britain; the others were in Northampton and Monkwearmouth.[46] Unfortunately, the large building the mortar was used in, possibly the central royal hall, lay outside the excavated area. The settlement was a centre for crafts such as weaving, tanning, metalworking, bone- and antler-working, as evidenced by the finds recovered.

It is not known if there was an early church at Dunbar, although there have been many discoveries of Early Christian graves in and around the town. These are recognised by their east-to-west orientation and lack of grave goods, and many are buried within long sandstone slab cists. A group of around twelve disturbed inhumations was discovered on the East Esplanade, and, as noted in the section above, although interpreted as probable long cists it is possible that they are part of a Roman Iron Age cemetery.[47] At least seventeen long cists have been discovered around the coast to the west of the town, usually exposed by erosion (**fig. 3**).[48] A number of these seem to have been laid out with some regularity and may be within a cemetery.[49] However, none of these graves has been dated and their relationship to the settlement at Dunbar is unclear. Isolated cists were found to the south of the town on East Links Road, although these were not excavated archaeologically and are rated only as probable long cists.[50] It is possible that the spiritual needs of the early inhabitants of Dunbar were met by the nearby monastery at Tyninghame (**fig 1**), founded by St Baldred who died in AD 756.[51] There are some indications that the two places were part of one estate, with one the secular centre, the other religious. It has been suggested that the *Aberlessic*, recorded in a twelfth-century account of the life of the sixth-century St Kentigern was situated at the mouth of the Tyne at Tyninghame.[52]

In AD 843 Kenneth MacAlpin defeated the Picts and created a unified kingdom north of the Forth.[53] By the time of his death in AD 858 Dunbar had been seized and burnt. Several campaigns involving the Scots, Northumbrians and more southerly Anglo-Saxons are recorded in Lothian over the next century but by AD 973 Edgar of England had granted Lothian to Kenneth II of the Scots (AD 971–995), although this may have been symbolic, as he may have held it already.[54] It is also recorded that the Danes sacked Tyninghame in AD 941.[55]

The excavations at Castle Park uncovered evidence to suggest that a timber building was built on the headland under early Scottish control, although the most common remains from this period were burials to the south.[56] Some of

these post-dated a Northumbrian grain store and radiocarbon dates confirmed that the cemetery dated to the period between the tenth and thirteenth centuries.[57] Many of the burials were in long cists and some at least seem to have occupied a circular cemetery.[58]

The position of the cemetery over an area previously incorporated within the Northumbrian *urbs* is notable. It does not seem likely to be as a result of depopulation or settlement contraction as the cemetery was intensively used.[59] It may reflect the development of a settlement elsewhere, rather than on the headland. The north end of High Street respects the cemetery and they would appear to have functioned together for at least some time. No church building associated with the cemetery has yet been archaeologically recorded, and it may lie within an unexcavated part of Castle Park. There is, however, a long held local tradition that the remnants of a church were found when Dunbar (Lauderdale) House was under construction. Such a location would line up well with the view of a possible chapel in Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* (**fig. 9**). To further support this, when the engine room of the children's paddle boats was removed, prior to the building of the new swimming pool complex, it was discovered that the engine room had been obscuring an aperture in the rocks. In this aperture were seen what was presumed to be St Bey's Well (**fig 3**) and spring and also the remains of a chapel.[60]

The town today

Nineteenth-century and later development has extended the limits of Dunbar along the coast to the south-east of the medieval town. It has also filled any remaining gaps between Dunbar and Belhaven. Most recently, development has encroached on open land south of the railway line. For the purposes of this study the limits of the town have been set at Broadhaven, Spott Road and the path leading to the Retreat and the playing fields in the south. To the west, the limit has been set at the path running past Countess Park to Belhaven Road and the western edge of Parsons Pool and Lauderdale Park. The coast provides an enduring limitation to the north and east. For ease of presentation, the historic town has been divided into three areas using obvious boundaries: Castle Park, and the areas to the east and west of High Street. High Street has been used because it neatly divides the town in two, the east containing the harbour, the west the friary and parish church. Castle Park was an early focus of the town and has been assigned its own area. These three areas will be discussed after a general account of the town's historic past and significance.

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18 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 312–24
19 The most comprehensive being C McWilliam, *The Buildings of Scotland: Lothian except Edinburgh* (2nd edn, London, 1980), 181–90
20 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 8, 141, 146 and 150
21 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 7
22 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 127
23 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 75, 123 and 124
24 Historic Scotland, *Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas* (1998)
25 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 2 and 67; C S T Calder and R W Feachem, 'Cemetery, Dunbar, East Lothian', *PSAS*, 85 (1950–51), 179
26 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 35
27 J G Caller, 'An earthenware pot found in a grave at Dunbar, East Lothian, three short cists discovered on the golf-course there', *PSAS*, 56 (1921–2), 27–9; NMRS NT67NE 20 and 65
28 J Atkinson, pers comm
29 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 124, 125 and 127

30 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 312; C Moloney, 'New evidence for the origins and evolution of Dunbar; excavations at the Captain's Cabin, Castle Park, Dunbar, East Lothian', *PSAS*, 131 (2001), 283–318
31 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar* 312
32 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 313
33 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 312
34 Moloney, 'New evidence', 283–318
35 G S Maxwell, 'The Roman Period', in C McWilliam, *The Buildings of Scotland: Lothian except Edinburgh* (2nd edn, London, 1980), 28–33; W J Watson, *The Celtic Placenames of Scotland* (2nd edn, Edinburgh, 1993), 11
36 Maxwell, 'The Roman Period', 28–33
37 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 4
38 L Baker, 'An Iron Age child burial at Dunbar Golf Course, East Lothian', PSAS, 132 (2002), 205–212; *NMRS* NT 67 NE 186
39 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 2; Calder and Feachem, 'Cemetery, Dunbar, East Lothian'
40 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 84; I H Longworth, D R Brothwell and R Powers, 'A massive cist with multiple burials of Iron Age date', *PSAS*, 98 (1967), 173–84
41 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 5
42 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 7
43 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 7
44 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 7
45 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 317–18
46 J H Williams, M Shaw and V Denham, *Middle Saxon Palaces at Northampton* (Northampton, 1985); R J Cramp, 'Excavations at the Saxon monastic sites of Wearmouth Jarrow', *The Journal of Medieval Archaeology*, 13 (1969), 21–65
47 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 2; Calder and Feachem, 'Cemetery, Dunbar, East Lothian', *PSAS*, 85 (1950–1), 179
48 *NMRS* NT 67 NE 1, 94 and 134; J Hardy, 'Report of meetings for 1891. Dunbar, Aikengall, Skippath Thurston', *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club*, 13 (1890–1), 312–20
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50 J Close-Brooks, '2 Clyde Villas, East Links', *DES* (1972), 21; *NMRS* NT 67 NE 64
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52 K H Jackson, 'The sources for the life of St Kentigern', in N K Chadwick (ed), *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge, 1958), 273–358
53 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 7
54 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 8
55 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 321
56 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 8; Moloney, 'New evidence', 283–318
57 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 8; Moloney, 'New evidence', 283–318
58 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 291
59 Moloney, 'New evidence', 283–318
60 We are greatly indebted to Mr Stephen Bunyan for this information

3 *History and archaeology*

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the historic past and archaeological significance of the burgh of Dunbar. This will consist of an overview of the town and its site, its life and customs, and its economy, as a whole. The town will then be subdivided into three discrete sections, in which features of particular significance will be considered in greater detail.

Overview

Pre-burghal settlement

Dunbar has a long and significant history. Archaeological investigations have shown that both Britons and, later, Northumbrians occupied the headland overlooking the site of the medieval castle;[1] and during these times a fort stood on the headland. It appears that it was centred on the highest part of this headland, in an area that would eventually be incorporated within the medieval castle's precincts, although there is no evidence that the fort occupied the stacks on which the later castle and blockhouse were built. This highest point was vital for protection and recent excavations are likely to have uncovered part of the royal defended area of an *urbs regis* (**fig 6**) (*see* Area 1 section).

That this was a stronghold of some importance is suggested by the fact that in 680 Ecgfirth, king of Northumbria, imprisoned Bishop Wilfrid of Northumbria at 'Dynbaer'; he was stripped of his possessions and placed in the custody of Tydlin, the local reeve (**fig 7**). Dunbar must have owed its

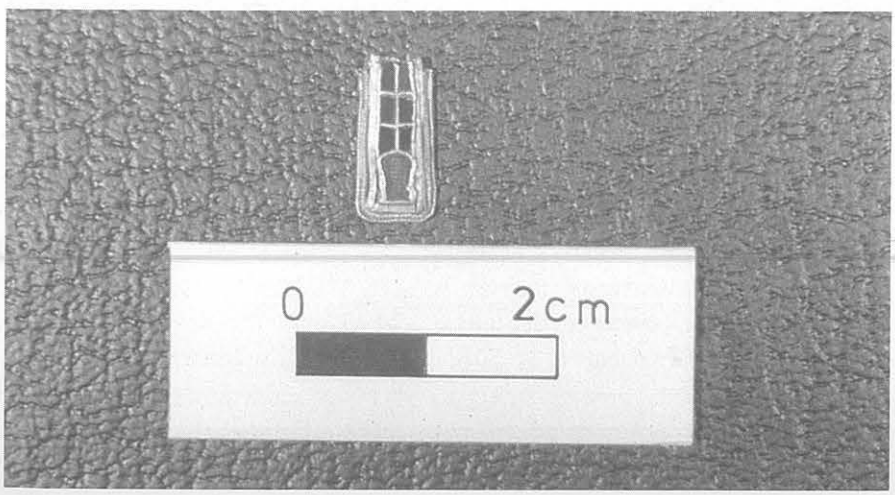


FIGURE 7
Fragment of pectoral cross recovered by excavation.
(By courtesy of SUAT Ltd)

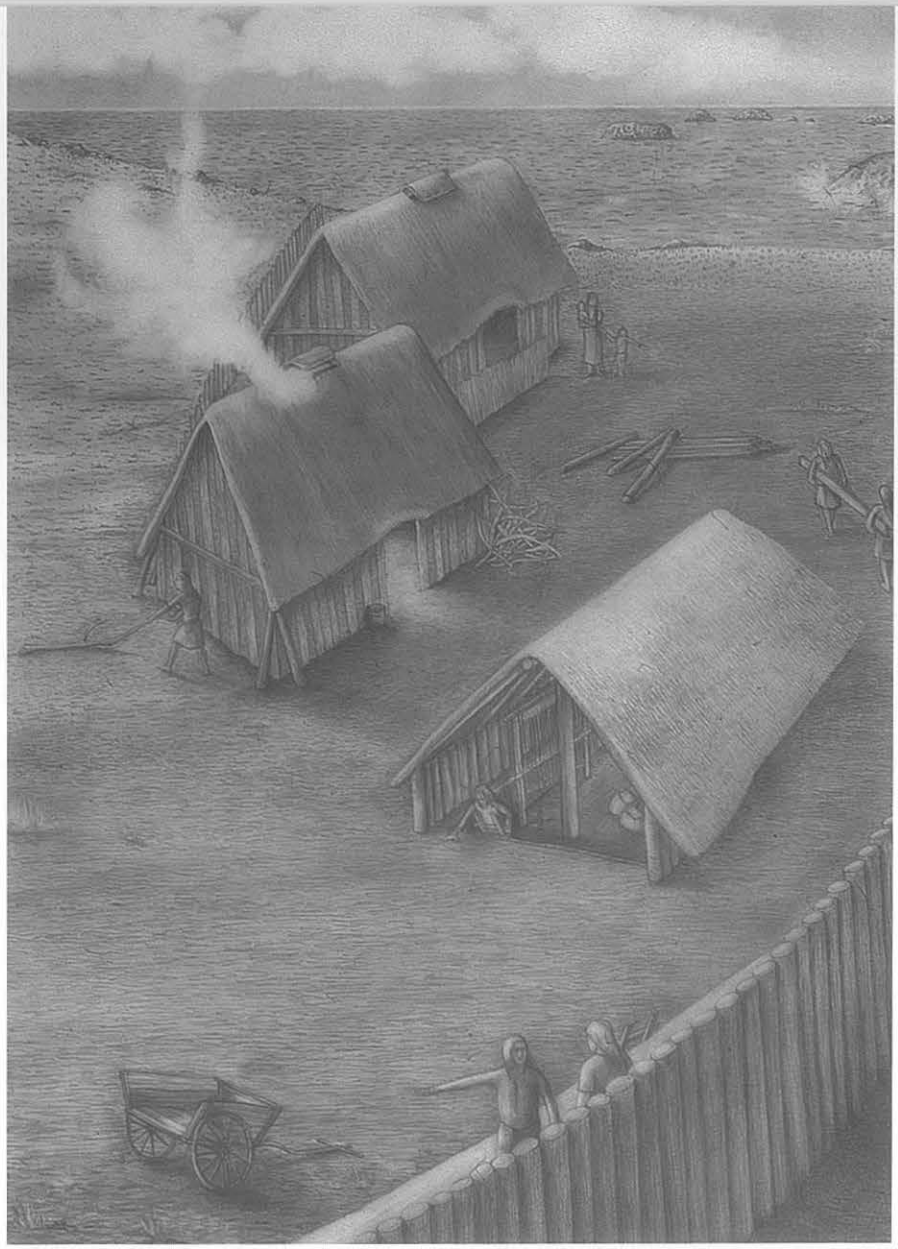


FIGURE 8
Reconstruction of Dark Age settlement in Castle Park. *(Illustrated by David Munro. By courtesy of SUAT Ltd)*

initial importance to its defensive and strategic situation. The site at the north end of where Dunbar developed was the most convenient landing place on the east coast beyond Berwick[2] and Dunbar was the gateway to Lothian; all armies invading by the east-coast route passed through the settlement. By the eighth century the kingdom of Northumbria was governed by provincial ealdormen; one had a stronghold at Dunbar.[3] History would show that holding this fort and the later castle was vital to the defence of eastern Scotland. Losing it could be a major disaster. Such was its significance that medieval Scottish monarchs on numerous occasions would have to face the decision as to whether to garrison and strengthen the castle or simply to destroy it, to prevent it being held by the enemy.[4]

It is known from archaeological digs (*see* Area 1 section) that a small settlement grew up within the early fort, protected by ditches and at other times by ditches and palisades (**fig 8**). The occupants of the fortified stack would need the supplies and services that a local population could offer; and, equally, the fort would offer a measure of protection to the small settlement clustered nearby. This small township is referred to in 849, when it was burnt by Kenneth MacAlpin, king of Scots and Picts (*c* 843–58).[5] Such devastation was not to be a sole occurrence. In January 1216, for example, King John of England raided Lothian, and Dunbar was yet again burned, along with Berwick, Roxburgh and Haddington.[6]

In 1072 the earldom of Dunbar was created when Malcolm III (1058–93) granted it to Cospatrick, the deprived Earl of Northumberland. It has been suggested that Dunbar was, and remained, an administrative centre, or shire-centre, until the twelfth century.[7] The little evidence there is suggests that the area was prosperous: the 1176 Taxio of Lothian shows that the church of Dunbar, together with a chapel at Whittingehame, was assessed at 180 merks.[8] This was an exceptionally high rate, particularly for a burgh church. Charter evidence also suggests that there was a fairly flourishing coastal trade in the twelfth century and that Dunbar, despite not being a burgh, shared in this.[9] Earl Cospatric gave a lodging with a toft in Dunbar and access to the harbour for one ship to the Priory of the Isle of May for the purpose of transporting the necessities of the priory. This grant was confirmed by David I (1124–53), Malcolm IV (1153–65) and William I (1165–1214).[10] This implies a trading centre with its own harbour, where dues were levied, and a settlement already with land divided up into burgage plots or tofts, where the inhabitants might build their homes, rear animals and grow crops. The site of Belhaven was probably chosen as the early harbour as it allowed easier access than the rugged entrance of Lamerhaven, at Dunbar itself.

The Middle Ages

Throughout the Middle Ages, the castle physically dominated, and theoretically protected, the town (**figs 9 & 30**). But, perversely, in many ways the small burgh was to suffer from the very strength and resilience of the castle. The fortification remained vitally important until the late medieval period; especially after the permanent loss of Berwick-upon-Tweed to the English in the 1480s. In consequence, Dunbar often felt the force of invaders. The town appears to have been granted the privileges of a baronial burgh in the thirteenth century, but possibly lost these during the Wars of Independence.[11] In 1296 Edward I of England dispatched the Earl of Warenne to besiege the castle of Dunbar. The Scots army sent to relieve the castle was quickly scattered by the numerically superior and experienced English cavalry; the Scots suffered heavy losses among foot soldiers and large numbers of distinguished prisoners were taken for ransom.[12] Yet again the

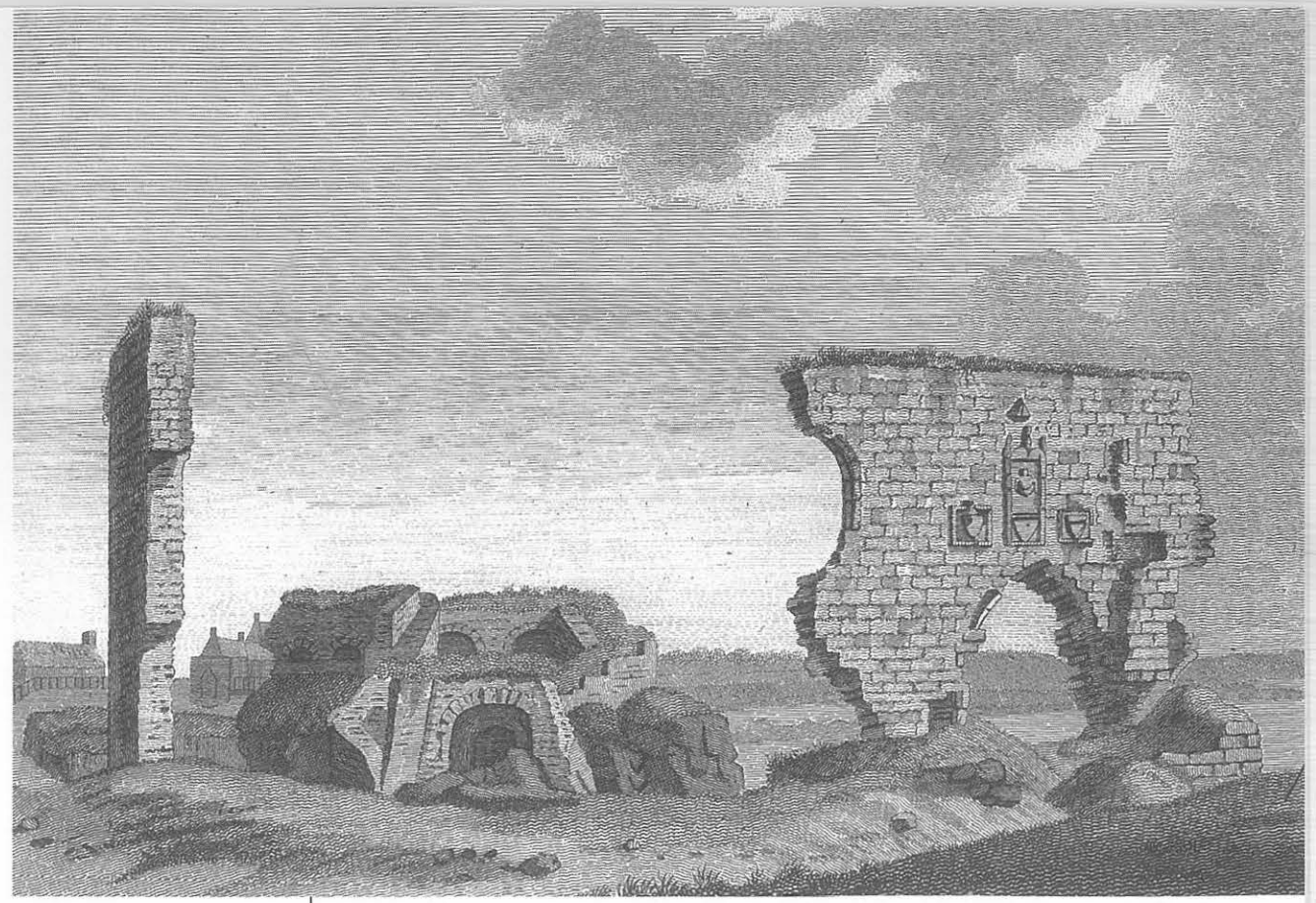


FIGURE 9
View of Dunbar by F Grose, showing ruined castle with possible chapel in background, from F Grose, *The Antiquities of Scotland. (London, 1789) (By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)*

town suffered; and this was not to be the final time. Dunbar would often become embroiled in political events. Following his defeat at Bannockburn in 1314 Edward II of England was chased to Dunbar, where he boarded a small boat and sailed to Berwick.[13] In 1333 the castle was dismantled on the approach of the English army, but Edward III ordered it to be repaired to house an English garrison.[14] It was soon back in Scottish hands and in 1338 'Black' Agnes, Countess of Dunbar, the sister of John, Earl of Moray defended the castle from English siege. For nineteen weeks she held out with flamboyance, mocking her attackers with word and gesture,[15] until relieved by Sir Alexander Ramsay.

The town suffered in the next centuries. In 1407 it was claimed that no goods had been exported from Dunbar in 1401–04 because of war.[16] The town was then burned by the Earl of Northumberland in 1448. The account of the receiver of lands and grain of the earldom of March and the barony of Dunbar in 1486–87 allowed a remission on Dunbar's burghal fermes for the preceding three years 'propter vastitatem burgi de Dunbar per Anglos'. Clearly the town had suffered badly at English hands.[17]

Because of its strategic importance to invading armies or to rebellious lords, there were instructions that the castle was to be demolished in 1488, after it had been annexed to the crown. A dozen years later, under threat of

war, James IV (1488–1513) rebuilt it.[18] Sir Andrew Wood was appointed the castle's governor and reconstruction began in March 1497. The costly rebuilding programme lasted from 1497 to 1501.[19] During the minority of James V (1513–42) the castle was held by the Duke of Albany. He built 'in the samin ane great staine house and insche callit the uttwart blokehouse and garnist with artaillze pulder and bullattis'.[20] A little to the south of the main castle, a second rocky peninsula was fortified with a polygonal block-house designed for cannon on two levels. This was one of the earliest purpose-built artillery fortifications in Scotland.[21]

Not surprisingly, the threat of invasion was always taken seriously. In 1533, for instance, the townsmen were ordered to be ready in 'feir of weir' within twenty-four hours and were to be provided with victuals for twenty days. The coast was to be closely watched for the approach of enemy ships.[22] In spite of this, the town was burned again, by the Earl of Hertford in 1544, an act he repeated, as Duke of Somerset, in 1547. Writing to the English authorities in 1544, he bragged that Dunbar was 'well brent'.[23]

The castle was, however, ultimately doomed. In 1558 it was claimed that 'the castle is old, full of old buildings, and whoever is stronger on land could batter it with ten or twelve pieces and gain it'.[24] Two years later French forces occupied the castle and strengthened it with earthworks. These earthworks were to be dismantled, however, in 1560, in accordance with the Treaty of Leith. But the castle was still fit for Mary, Queen of Scots (1542–67) to visit here in 1563, 1564 and 1566, after the murder of her Savoyard secretary David Rizzio. There is no firm evidence, but perhaps it may be assumed that the apartments in the castle were sumptuous, if the queen chose to stay here. The following year, the Earl of Bothwell brought the queen to the castle after her abduction. The castle itself was ordered to be destroyed by the Regent Moray in 1567 since it might serve as an over-secure base for the deposed Earl of Bothwell, should he return.[25] It was, moreover, considered that the cost of repairs was becoming prohibitive, as it was 'unprofitable to the realm and not able to defend the enemies thereof in case the same were assaulted'.[26] In 1588, however, there was a fear that the Spanish Armada might regroup and try to land on the Scottish east coast. Precautionary measures, therefore, were to be made at Dunbar, the Firth of Forth, St Andrews, Aberdeen and Cromarty.[27]

The people of Dunbar had suffered greatly over the centuries because of proximity to such a strategic castle. Some solace was possibly found in the parish church and other ecclesiastical establishments. Dunbar's parish church was the first in Scotland to receive collegiate status (**figs 10 & 30**).[28] The foundation was instituted by Patrick, Earl of Dunbar and March, patron of the local church, at whose instigation William, Bishop of St Andrews, granted a charter of erection on 21 September 1342.[29] When the Earldom of March was forfeited in 1435, the patronage of the church passed to the crown. During the reign of James III (1460–88), the Duke of Albany enjoyed the patronage. It

again reverted to the king, however, on the forfeiture of his brother in 1483. In 1501 the canonries of Dunbar were appropriated to the Chapel Royal at Stirling when that church was itself given collegiate status. Bellenden's translation of Boece's description of the collegiate church details that 'Nocht far fra it [Dunbar Castle] is ane toune under the same name with ane magnificent and riche college of Channons foundit and honoribily dotat (endowed) be the Erlis [of March]'.[30] The church ceased to be collegiate at the Reformation in 1560, although the fabric remained intact until the nineteenth century.

A monastery of Red or Trinity friars had been founded between 1240 and 1243 by the Countess of Dunbar.[31] Pilgrims would have been accommodated by the Trinitarians at Dunbar on their way to the North Berwick to Elie ferry, established in the mid-twelfth century by Earl Duncan, on their journey to St Andrews.[32] By 1529, however, the Trinitarian friary had declined to such an extent that a secular priest was granted possession. The grant implies that the original chapter had died out. This is surprising since a hundred years beforehand it was sufficiently rich and vigorous to be able to build a new floor with tiles imported from the Netherlands.[33] There was also a *maison dieu* in Dunbar. Exactly who had authority over this hospital is unclear. It could have fallen within the remit of the collegiate church; but it is likely that the Trinitarians were responsible for this hospital: the lands of the hospital were

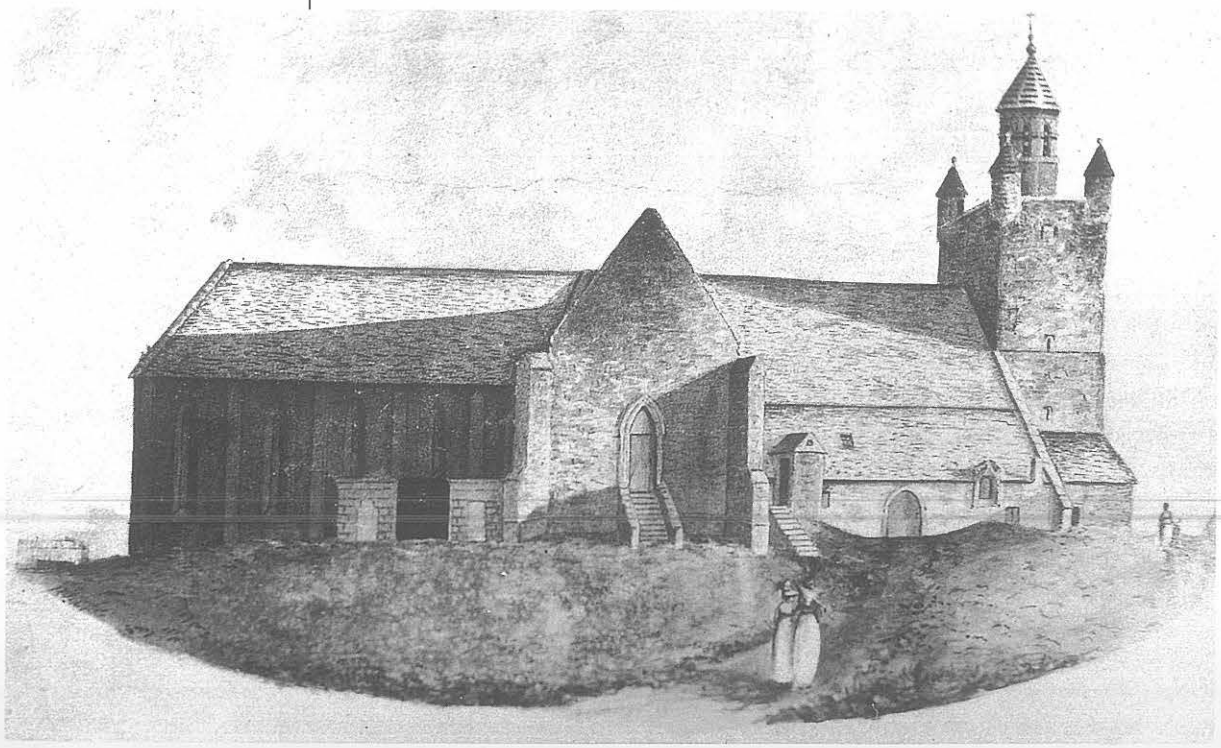


FIGURE 10
Dunbar Old Collegiate Church in the early nineteenth century. *(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)*

FIGURE 11:
Surviving part of the Trinitarian Friary, 1961, prior to redevelopment.
(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)

in the hands of the Trinitarian church at Peebles by the Reformation, and they had gained control of the lands of the Dunbar Trinitarians by 1529.[34] It has been claimed that the hospital was erected for receiving strangers or maintaining poor people. The Trinitarian friary disappeared at the Reformation. All that now remains visible above ground is the dovecot or tower and possible remnants behind *nos* 40–44 High Street, which may be associated with the friary complex (*see* p 74) (**fig 11**).

Other traditions still pose questions and await answers. There was a cemetery at Castle Park, but no apparent associated chapel. One possibility is that the cemetery was attached to a chapel that served the castle, but this is unproven. Interestingly, an eighteenth-century plate included in Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* appears to show a roofless chapel to the south of the castle, within the castle walls (**fig 9**). It is possible that this was a remnant of

a chapel with associations with both the castle and the cemetery.[35] Tradition of there being found remnants of a church or chapel at the time of the building of Dunbar House, and the recent viewing of potential remains of a chapel at the demolition of the engine room that powered the children's paddle boats, prior to the redevelopment and construction of the new swimming pool complex, all suggest the existence of a chapel in this locality (*see* p 64).

A Carmelite foundation reputedly stood near Bamburgh Close, but firm proof of its existence has proved elusive.[36] A nunnery is said to have stood on the west side of High Street, near the site of the old Post Office, but nothing has emerged to substantiate this.[37] There was also said to be a chapel down near the harbour – 'St Anne's upon Dunbar sands'. This chapel of St Anne's was claimed to have been washed into the sea, but of this also there is as yet no conclusive evidence. It is interesting, however, that it was as recent as the end of the nineteenth century, probably in 1899, that the East Beach of Dunbar came into existence. A very old lady recalled that at the same time a tenement called St Anne's was destroyed by the sea. This was possibly the site of the old chapel with the name having lingered in popular memory.[38]

Following the temporary loss of Berwick-upon-Tweed to the English in the middle of the fourteenth century the valuable wool trade was routed through more northerly ports. Edinburgh was the main beneficiary, but Dunbar also profited. In 1370 the crown complained that merchants from Berwick, Roxburgh (then under English control) and England exported wool, hides, and other goods without paying customs duties, because the custumars of Haddington were too far removed from the Marches. To remedy this abuse, Dunbar was created a 'free burgh', 'with limits as extensive as the Earldom of March, with a market-cross, with power to buy and sell, with a cocquet and trone, and with a free port at Belhaven'.[39] Customs officials were appointed to custom these goods exported from within the Earldom of March, the burgh's liberty. The burgesses of Dunbar were given the privilege of trading in wool, hide and skins within the Earldom of March. Haddington burgesses were allowed to trade within Dunbar in return for reciprocal rights.[40] Prior to the creation of the jurisdiction, exports from the earldom would have been customed at the Haddington jurisdiction or exported illegally. It is known, for example, that wool was exported from Dunbar before the creation of Dunbar's custom jurisdiction in the 1370s. Edinburgh's 1359 custom account included custom of wool loaded at Dunbar at 37s 6.5d – 'medietatem custum 5 sacks wool, carcatorum apud Dunbar, ut patet per tria paria liberarum comities Marchie'.[41]

The first surviving custom accounts show that the volume of wool exported from Dunbar was impressive. In 1373, 372 sacks of wool and woolfells were exported, including fairly substantial quantities of 'English' wool. This trade contracted sharply, however, and in 1385 the Earl of Dunbar

wrote to Danzig requesting the resumption of trade with his burgh of Dunbar.[42] The decline in trade could also partly be explained by the high level of wool smuggling from the burgh in 1393 to 1397, especially by the Earl of March. By 1421 exports were a fifth of the 1373 level. This fall was, however, roughly in line with the decline in total Scottish wool exports.

During the fifteenth century wool exports continued to fall; from 75.5 sacks in 1421 to 10 sacks in 1450. Thereafter, the quantities exported were negligible. Performance was bad even in a Scottish context. In the period from 1372 to 1421 Dunbar's wool exports were 3 per cent of Scottish wool exports; this fell to 1.5 per cent in 1420 to 1450, and 0.3 per cent in 1450 to 1505. Moreover, goods were increasingly sent to Edinburgh to be exported.[43] Even by the end of the sixteenth century no other commodity came anywhere near compensating for this decline, although stray references indicate a modicum of trade. In 1575, for example, there was a dispute between English merchants and a burgess from Haddington and a burgess of Dunbar concerning the sale of English malt and wheat. Hide exports reduced and were generally insignificant, cloth was only occasionally customed, and small quantities of corn appeared in two accounts only. It is little wonder that at the close of the sixteenth century Fynes Moryson wrote 'I came to Dunbar, which they said to have been of old a town of some importance, but then it lay ruined, and seemed of little moment, as well for the poverty, as the small number of inhabitants.'[44]

Dunbar exported herring and, to a lesser extent, cod from the late 1470s to the early sixteenth century. The quantities were, however, small. They peaked in 1492–98 at 416 barrels of herring per year, but this was equivalent, in custom values, to fifteen sacks of wool. The collapse was such that Dunbar's custom jurisdiction ceased to be in operation for most of the sixteenth century.[45] There are a few references to herring being fished. In 1523 and 1533, for example, the inhabitants of Dunbar and other ports on the south coast of the Forth were ordered to supply fish to army camps.[46] In 1557 proclamations were issued at various places, including Dunbar, to protect those participating in the herring fishing from having their nets cut or stolen.[47] However, Dunbar is not referred to in the remainder of the sizeable amount of fishery legislation in the sixteenth century.[48] In the late sixteenth century Dunbar began to be a rendezvous for the Dutch and Scots fisheries. But the burgh is likely to have remained insignificant compared to Crail and Leith, chosen to be the short-lived staple herring ports in the 1580s.[49] A minister's claim that a storm in 1577 wrecked 1,000 fishing boats off the coast is either wildly exaggerated or mistaken.[50]

By the middle of the sixteenth century harbour facilities for Dunbar's trade had switched to Lamerhaven.[51] This was then probably no more than a natural tidal anchorage precariously sheltered from the north by Lamer Island. Certainly, there appear not to have been any significant artificial

harbour works since Jean de Beaugué, a French traveller, in 1548–49 stated that a harbour could easily be constructed at little cost.[52] In the final quarter of the century building work was undertaken. In 1574 the burgh was authorised to charge duties for the building of a haven under the town and to the east of the castle (**figs 9 & 3**). In 1591 it was, moreover, excused from attending the Convention of Royal Burghs, in order to divert these expenses to repairing the 'decayit harberie'.[53] It is probably from this time that the East Pier or 'bulwark' dates.[54]

Dunbar had probably been forfeited to the crown along with the rest of the earldom in 1434,[55] but became a royal burgh by charter on 16 August 1445; this was confirmed in 1555 and, again, in 1603.[56] It was represented at parliament regularly from 1469.[57] Such status did little to improve the economy of the burgh. Tax assessments in the sixteenth century testify to its poverty. Dunbar paid 0.7 per cent of burgh assessments in the period 1535 to 1563, and sustained two attacks by English troops in 1544 and 1547. This fell to 0.4 per cent in 1579, possibly after the destruction of the fishing fleet, and stabilised at 0.5 per cent from 1583 to 1612.[58]

A study of the few surviving testaments of Dunbar burgesses at the close of the sixteenth century suggests their livelihood was largely agricultural.[59] Certainly Dunbar had extensive commons. The Outer Common, or Dunbar Common, situated on the slopes of the Lammermuir Hills, was spread over parts of the parishes of Spott, Stenton and Whittingehame and covered 4,397 acres (**fig 3**). But these rights were of servitude only and even into the eighteenth century the townspeople rarely pastured animals on it. Of more importance would have been the 50 acres of Inner Common adjoined to the burgh, which included Gallowgate and Kirkhill.[60] By a decree of the Court of Session on 21 June 1567 the boundaries of the royalty of the burgh were fixed and remained unchanged thereafter until the nineteenth century. The common lands to the west of the town are mentioned in this decreet, but not Dunbar Common itself. It was not until a confirmation was granted in 1618 that Dunbar's rights of servitude on the common were specifically given.[61]

What is less clear is exactly where the medieval town was laid out. The original nucleus would have probably been close under the protective gates of the castle. It has been argued that the most ancient part of the burgh lay towards the harbour, under the cover of the castle, from which it appears to have gradually extended southward.[62] This could potentially imply that the Church Street/Castle Street axis was the original principal street alignment, with the majority of the street now called High Street being a later addition. A nineteenth-century tradition that an old tenement called Bamburgh Castle, which was sited at the head of the High Street, but which at one time probably stood in isolation, might support this theory.[63] Another nineteenth-century commentator speaks of a different main alignment: 'From the gates of the castle on the west, it [the main street] stretched eastward along the

bank facing the sea, though to what extent we are now ignorant.'[64] It is possible that this is rather a reference to the street running down to the harbour once Lamerhaven began to function as such. Archaeological evidence, however, has shown that the most northerly end of the thoroughfare now called High Street was of medieval origin (*see* p 57).

Early travellers who came to Dunbar offer little or no clarification on the main thoroughfare of the time. The Frenchman, Jean de Beaugué, who visited in 1548/9 offers one insight into the built fabric of the town. He expressed the view that Dunbar was 'accommodated with so many of the good things which profit the life of man, that if the town were enclosed with walls ... we might reckon it to be among the most beautiful of towns in the isles of the oceans'.[65] The lack of town walls in Scotland was a feature often commented upon by foreign visitors. It was not the norm in Scotland to have large, defensive stone walls such as might be found in Carcassone, York or Carlisle. Most Scottish burghs enclosed themselves with merely a ditch and palisading, sited at the end of the burgage plots. This was not meant to be truly defensive, but rather a psychological barrier. It functioned, at least, to channel those attending the burgh market through the official town gates, or ports, where tolls, or dues, for attendance at the town market might be collected; as well as acting as a minimal barrier, along with the closed ports, to danger, such as the arrival of visitors carrying disease such as plague (*see* p 27). It is quite probable that Dunbar had such slight 'walling'; a section has been discovered archaeologically (**fig 12**). But it would not have been recognised by a Frenchman as a wall.

The records tell us little of how the townspeople conducted their everyday lives. Medieval burghs were close-knit, often introspective, communities, with a certain mistrust of strangers. Fishing and the dangers that this way of

FIGURE 12
Friars' Walk and walls to the rear of burgage plots, 2002.

life brought often reinforced these attitudes. With a strong ecclesiastical presence, Dunbar life probably centred on the church (**fig 10**) and its annual ritual cycle; even the time of day would be dominated by the tolling of the church bell – the earliest mention of a town clock in the council records comes in 1595.[66] And church festivals were the few holy days or 'holidays' that brought not only religious worship, but also secular jollities and freedom from toil. The church controlled the education of the young, although very few Dunbar children would have benefited from learning to read and write in the Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century this monopoly of teaching was gradually devolved to the secular authorities, but after the Reformation the local minister was often also the schoolmaster, as for example was the case in 1564, when Mr Andrew Simpson held the office of minister and schoolmaster.[67] Even though parents were exhorted to send their children to school,[68] many would not have any formal education, being a more useful asset as a mini-workforce at home.

Equally obscure are the living conditions in the Middle Ages. Many towns made superficial, but genuine, attempts to keep the thoroughfares clean, and there is evidence that some people sought a level of hygiene within the homes, but this was not always simple, with lack of adequate sanitation, the closeness of wells and cess pits in the rear of gardens, the proximity of man and animals, and the use of straw for flooring and sometimes bedding. Various diseases were rife, some chronic and endemic. It is known from other towns that medieval townspeople suffered from diseases such as leprosy, smallpox, tuberculosis, dysentery and spina bifida. Ringworm and other parasitic diseases were commonplace. And by the end of the medieval period spatial mobility introduced, if not new diseases, at least variants on them. One to hit Scotland in epidemic proportions at the end of the fifteenth century was syphilis. It is unlikely that Dunbar, being a seaport in contact with other communities, was not hit.

The greatest fear was, however, plague, or 'pest'. This was technically not one disease, but several, bubonic being the most noted. Plague is clearly identifiable in medieval town records, including those of Dunbar. It was kept virulent by rats and other rodents carrying infected fleas, which passed on the infection by biting the new human host.[69] It is not clear whether the 1538 instruction that all vessels were to be prevented from approaching the harbour successfully isolated Dunbar from the plague.[70] In 1584 there was a fear that plague would spread throughout the country. Among other measures it was stated that none was to go to 'cryit fairis and mercattis', especially the fairs of Crief [*sic*], 'Foullis', Dunbar, Haddington, Ayr, Dunning, Leslie, St Andrews and such other fairs. Whether Dunbar actually had been hit by plague at this point or whether it was merely being excluded as a seaport at risk is unclear.[71] In 1618 a ship from Norway, skippered by Robert Hoig of Montrose, docked at Dunbar. Because it was infected with plague no

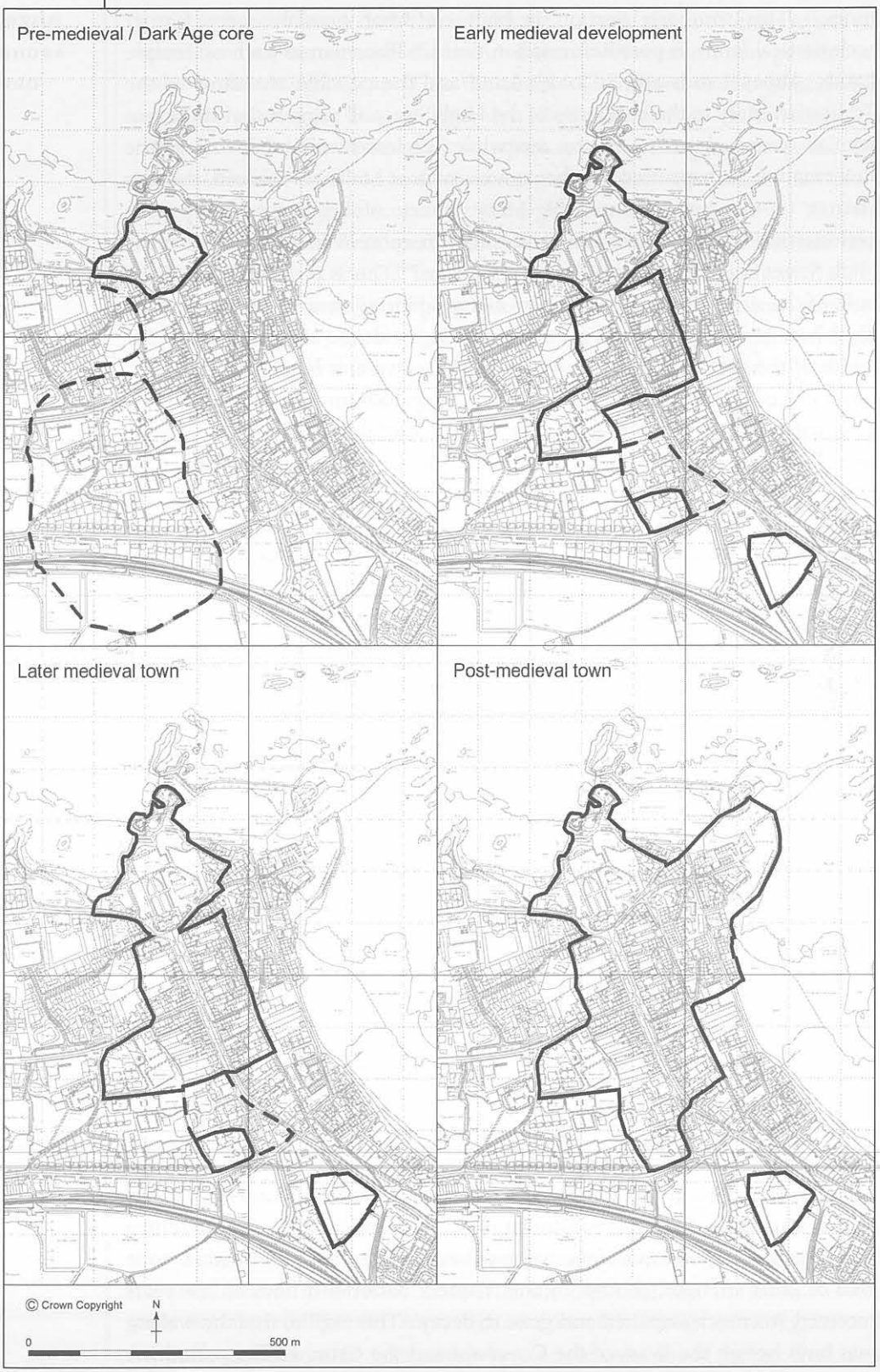
FIGURE 13
Dunbar tolbooth in the nineteenth century.
(By courtesy of Mr T K Anderson, Dunbar)

one was allowed to come ashore and the ship was ordered to return to Norway.[72]

The seventeenth century

The layout of the town was to be radically different from the late sixteenth and seventeenth century onwards (**fig 14**). The most significant change from the medieval topography was the emergence of High Street, running from north to south on the ridge above the Castle Street/Church Street axis. Cartographic evidence, which shows the sizes of burgage plots, indicates that High Street to the more southerly end was formally laid out in post-medieval

FIGURE 14
Dunbar: suggested sequence of its development.
(© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Historic Scotland licence no. 100017509 [2006])


Pre-medieval / Dark Age core
Early medieval development
Later medieval town
Post-medieval town
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and France and a little to Spain;[110] or it might provide for a more local population. The Old Road through the Lammermuirs, from Dunbar to Lauderdale, was for long called the 'Herring Road'. It was used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the inhabitants of Lauderdale for bringing home their winter supplies of herring.[111] Such was the importance of the fisheries that there was a heavy investment in the infrastructure and building of packing and curing houses. Edinburgh merchants invested significant capital: three purchased the monopoly to make red herring (curing and drying herring of reddish appearance) from Tweedmouth to the Pentland Firth in 1615. They established a curing and packing factory in Dunbar and brought in skilled foreign workers. It flourished into the 1620s. William Dick purchased the factory from the consortium in 1642 for 60,000 merks.[112] Presumably Edinburgh merchants were also involved in exporting the herring.

The rise in the fisheries at the end of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries coincided with building development in the burgh and a rise in the burgh's tax assessment. Imposts on the fisheries were levied to help repair the harbour, although the mandate was often exceeded. Merchants, fishermen, coopers and consumers were attracted from a wide area to the Dunbar fisheries. Housing, curing yards and related buildings were erected. Salt and

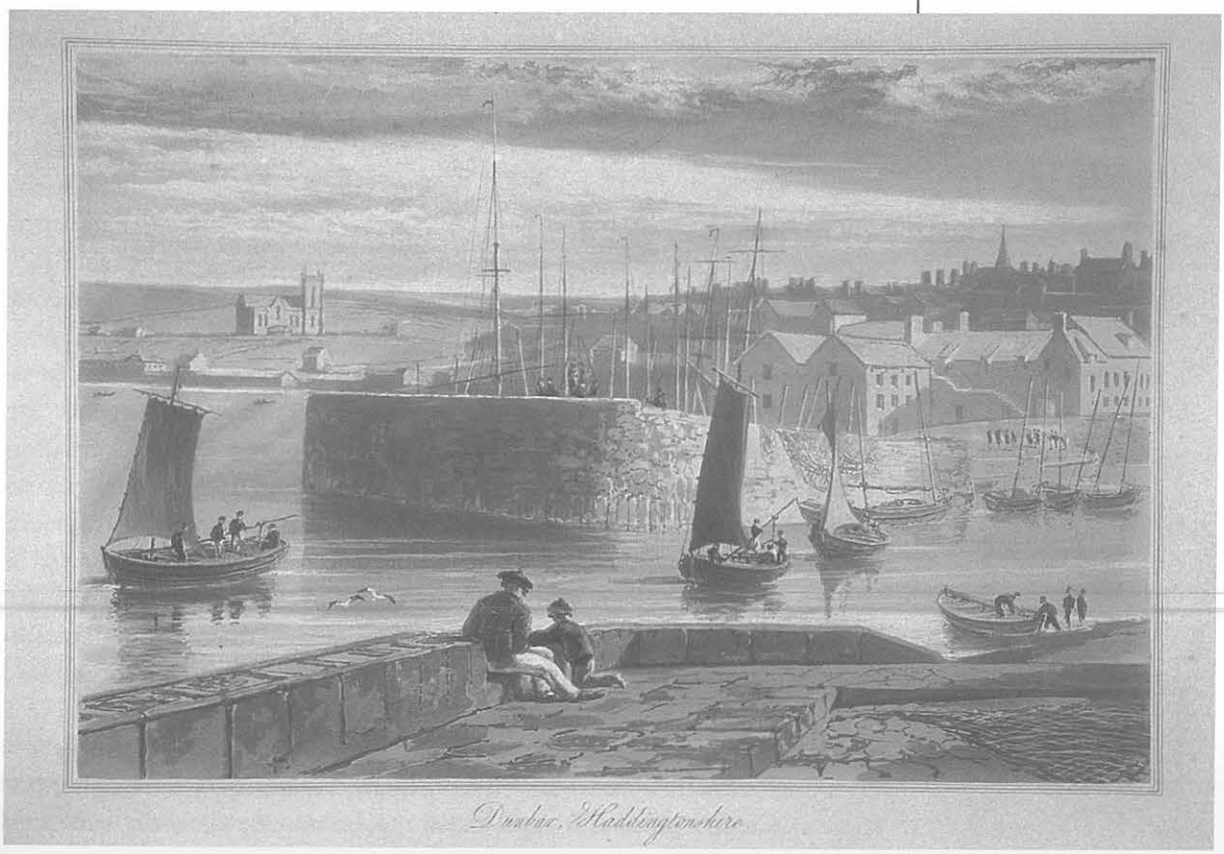


FIGURE 15
View of Cromwell Harbour and parish church sitting in isolation in the nineteenth century.
(By courtesy of Dunbar and District History Society)

timber were imported from abroad (it is not clear if it came directly to Dunbar or via other Scottish ports). And provisions were needed for the influx of people. But a lot of the gains must have accrued to outsiders, in particular Edinburgh merchants, who would have been the principal beneficiaries of the herring exports.

The potential of Scotland's fisheries did not escape the notice of others. In 1625 there were complaints that fishing vessels from the Low Countries were encroaching into Scottish fishing grounds from Shetland to Dunbar. They were approaching within three to four miles of land, in a manner not previously attempted.[113] The attraction of Dunbar's fishing grounds brought people from various parts of Scotland. In 1637 it was stated that great numbers of lieges resorted to the herring drave annually. These included 'necessitous' and poor persons from the sheriffdoms of Roxburgh and Selkirk, but because of plague in these areas they were not to be admitted. Herring from the Dunbar herring drave was both purchased and caught by merchants, fishermen and coopers from Musselburgh, Crail, Anstruther, Pittenweem [114] Edinburgh,[115] Linlithgow,[116] Haddington,[117] Glasgow and Rutherglen.[118]

Visitors to the town attest to the importance of the herring fisheries. Thomas Tucker, an English agent, wrote in 1656 that:

> the towne of Dunbar, or village rather, is a fisher towne, famous for the Herring fishing, who are caught thereabout, and brought thither and afterward made, cured, and barrelled up either for merchandise, or sold ... to the country people, who come thither fare and neere at that season, which is from about the middle of August to the latter end of September, and buy greate quantities of fish, which they carry away, and either spend them presently or els salt and lay up for the winter provision of theyr familyes. The trade here is little els except salt, which is brought hither and layd up, and after sold for the fishing; the people of these parts are not fishermen, employing themselves in tillage and in affaires of husbandry.[119]

In 1661 it was said that 'there is a great confluence of people at Dunbar to the herring fishery; and they told us, sometimes to number of 20,000 persons; but we did not see how so small a town could contain, indeed, give shelter, to such a multitude'.[120] In fact, many people would not be staying in the town at the same time, but coming and going according to their business. At certain times, however, a vast number was congregating down by the harbour (**fig 15**) and along Lamer Street, where the curing premises were laid out (**fig 20**).

The prosperity of the fisheries did not last throughout the century, and by the 1660s the fisheries were in decay. In 1661 a petition by the shire mentioned that the herring fishing at Dunbar 'is failed'.[121] Three years later a supplication in the name of 300 families of oyster-dredgers on the coasts of Lothian and Fife stated they had earned their livelihood for many years past by fishing

herring at Dunbar and other places thereabout. However, since it had pleased God to take away that means of subsistence, they had, by necessity, to keep themselves from starvation, to dredge and sell oysters. This, they noted, was the meanest of all trades and was being rendered ineffectual as a result of a ban on oyster exports.[122] By June 1688, it was minuted in the Burgh Records that Dunbar owed four months' cess as of Whitsun, but a want of herring fishing and 'decay of trade', along with the fact that the inhabitants had been 'often employed in the comon warke of the harbour' means that the cess is to be paid 'out of the comon good of this burgh' and collected from the 'Inhabitants, unfrie persones, outland liberties and outland burgesses'.[123] This situation was to continue into the eighteenth century, exacerbated at times by the billeting of troops on the town.[124]

Dunbar's records in 1699 reveal that there were twenty-one poor, with bairns in addition, in the burgh, supported by the town. In Belhaven three required financial support, as well as John Hewatt's bairns, who were probably orphans.[125] Contemporary travellers also noted the decline. Thomas Kirk in 1677 noted that Dunbar 'has been famous for herring fishing'.[126] In 1692, when the assessment was made of the burghs of Scotland, it was claimed that the town had only sixteen or seventeen herring boats which were 'extraordinarie unprofeitable by the decaying of the hering fishing'.[127]

There were other commodities to which the town might turn, however. Corn was one such. In 1690 the English traveller William Salkeld commented that 'granaries for corn and herring are the finest and the greatest part of the town; the other houses are all of them either ruinous or empty'.[128] In the late seventeenth century corn was not exported on a routine basis, although some grain went to the Netherlands,[129] and Dunbar regularly supplied Edinburgh[130] and, on occasion, Newcastle.[131] By the second half of the seventeenth century the town's grain industry was supported by two mills at West Barns, which were set out to feu.[132] The townspeople might also at times diversify. In 1635 various persons from Dunbar, as well as Haddington and Edinburgh contravened acts by selling unlicensed tobacco.[133] Politics could, moreover, threaten to intervene in Dunbar's trade. In 1650 attempts were made to prevent the export of victual. Orders were sent to Dunbar, along with Bo'ness, North Berwick and Eyemouth to stop all victual from going out of the country. Any exporters caught were to be censured, punished and fined.[134]

Dunbar was also from the seventeenth century a noted brewing centre. The local hard water was ideal for brewing. James Bothwell, the famous author, considered the local beer the 'best small beer I ever had'. On the strength of this excellent water Belhaven Brewery would be founded in 1719.[135]

Dunbar's 'free ports and sea places of Belhaven, Lamerhaven and Lamercraig, and all bulwarks made or to be made together with all the other "craigs ilands landing places and creeks" between the ports of Belhaven and Lamerhaven and also other sea places and parts within the bounds and

territory of the jurisdiction of the burgh; all the lands called "Burrowdailles" and all lands belonging to the burgh with all mills, mylnelands, pastures, tennants and tennendries etc; [and] all the tolls, customs, impositions, anchorages, duties, casualties, liberties, commodities and privileges' of a free burgh were confirmed in 1618 by royal charter; and again in 1641.[136]

One asset the town was determined to protect was the town's common lands. Regular perambulations, attended by the magistrates and burgesses,[137] ensured that the town's property was kept in good order and that encroachment was kept to a minimum. The minute of the perambulation of the common on 6 June 1698 gives clear indication of necessary repairs which were required. The 'Nether Miln' needed new hoops; the midden heap in front of James Stewart's house was to be removed; and the Back Water needed to be cleared and the rubbish that was stopping the flow of water taken – this alone would require twenty cartfuls of stones. The following year, it was noted that the smith at West Barns had thrown turf onto the common, at the back of his yard; William Kirkwood had dug out a stank on the east of the 'Cornikdykes' and tilled out four or five ells of the common at the west end, as well as digging another stank and tilling the common there.[138]

Political events did not always assist the town's well-being. Dunbar was to suffer greatly at the time of the Wars of the Covenant, when David Leslie, fighting for Charles II (1649–79), opposed the anti-Royalist, Oliver Cromwell. Hearing of the approach of Cromwell's forces in 1650, the town council sent the burgh's records by boat to the Bass Rock for safe-keeping. The boat sank, it is said, and with it much evidence of the life of the town in previous generations.[139] Interestingly, an inventory of the town's writs, kept in the charter chest, was made on 15 October 1646, by James Lauder. It included:

> ane charter be king James 2 to the toun of Dunbar, 1445; ane charter be quein marie under ye grit seall, 18 June 1555; ane ratification be king James ye saxt ratifeing ye dereit given in favors of ye burgh of Dunbar against ye leard of wauchtoun, 15 Novemberı570; ane charter be king david ye first to ye toun of Dunbar daitit 8 of Feb 1370 [mair a copie yrof]; ane charter be king James to ye toun of Dunbar dait 16 of Aug 1445; ane gift be quein marie to ye toun of Dunbar of all chapiltries belong to ye kirk of Dunbar datit ye last of merche 1567; ane gift be king James ratifeing ye gift given be quein marie to ye toun of Dunbar of ye merks out of ye comon teinds daitit 20 Nov 154ii[sic]; ane protestatioun to ye baillies of Dunbar to present ser James leirmonth chaplar to ye ldie alter dait 3 maii 1522; ane contract betuixt ye toun of Edinburgh and ye toun of Dunbar, 1605.

When inventoried in 1710, the list included the charter in favour of the burgh by James II dated 1445; the charter of Queen Mary of 18 June 1555; the charter

and gift of 31 March 1567; charter and ratification of 1570; 'precept under privie seall 1603'; the burgh's charter of October 1618; a sasine of 19 April 1619; an act of ratification in favour of the burgh, dated 17 October 1641; and the registration of a contract between the burgh and George Home.[140] If the recording was accurate, this would imply that some of the town's papers were certainly lost.

The town was occupied by Cromwell and his troops, local tradition saying that he stayed at The Old Ship Inn, now the Cuckoo Wrasse, it and neighbouring houses still standing, reminiscent of the old harbour scene. *No* 5 Shore Street still retains wooden panelling, a fine staircase and fireplaces, which, if Cromwell ever stayed on this street, would have been typical of the interior of the Old Ship Inn at the time.[141] It is possible that Cromwell did stay close to the harbour at the time of the disembarkation of his troops; but it is known that, during the preparations for the ensuing battle with the supporters of Charles II, Cromwell was resident at Broxmouth House. David Leslie's men hemmed in Cromwell's starving army, bounded as they were by the sea and the Lammermuirs. But with Leslie's authority undermined by a committee of zealot ministers, the Scots unwisely vacated their position of advantage. The battle ended with the slaughter of 4,000 Scots and over 10,000 prisoners taken.[142]

Although it is said that he did not damage the burgh, Cromwell did commandeer most of its shipping.[143] And the costs of the garrisoning of his troops and the supply of provisions on the townspeople were extremely severe for a town that was not wealthy. Accounts were drawn up in 1651 in an attempt to detail the deficits and individuals placed claims for recompense. The likelihood of the latter was slight. There were three main types of financial loss: the burgh had to accommodate the troops and horses with free quarterings; garrisons had to be provisioned; and there were individual losses from pillage to destruction of crops and livestock. Some claims might appear slight. Maus Ferguson requested £31 0s 0d for the loss of twelve hens, some sheets and meal.[144] Janet Dunbar had a deficit of £40 1s 0d for the theft of £3 and all her 'wearing clothes'.[145] Edward Muir claimed a little more for the loss of one swine.[146] These were possibly the only important items owned by these individuals. Others lost considerably more. William Cockburn's deficit of £3,282 3s 0d and Thomas Purves's staggering £12,020 are a comment not only on the suffering imposed on the town but also an indication that there were some extremely wealthy residents, if they could entertain such losses.[147] The town estimated that the total losses, quarterings and cess amounted to £134,638 2s 8d. This is such a large figure that there must be a suspicion that it was somewhat inflated; but whether or not, the town suffered greatly. Cromwell served the town well with one gesture, however. In December 1655 a storm damaged the harbour so severely that the town petitioned parliament for aid in repairs the following year. They stated that there was a

great damage and prejudice to the whole country from Berwick to Leith and the great part of the nation of Scotland as a result of the demolishing of the harbour by a great and tempestuous storm. This left no safe shelter for herring fishing which was the only livelihood for many persons of the nation. While they had been granted some ease in their assessment for repairing the harbour, this was ineffectual due to the greatness of the work. Additional help was essential.[148] Cromwell's government awarded £300 towards the cost of a new harbour (**fig 15**).[149] Hence its name.

All manner of trade was to some extent hampered by the condition of Dunbar's harbour in the seventeenth century, in spite of the input of Cromwell's government. William Brereton, visiting in 1635, had summed up succinctly the problems of Dunbar's topography. The town, he said

> ... is not improperly called Dunbarr [dun barr (Gaelic) means 'fort on the point'], because it is so environed with shelfs [*sic*], bars and sands, as there is no manner of haven, though the main sea beat upon the town, which indeed is not seated upon any river, which might furnish it with an haven or a navigable channel; only here is an haven made of great stones piled up, whereinto at a spring tide a ship of one hundred ton may enter, but not without much hazard.[150]

In 1658 when the 'outer head' and 'cross dike' were demolished the town applied to the magistrates and town council of Edinburgh for financial help.[151] Eight years later, Dunbar complained to the Convention of Royal Burghs that they had obtained an act of Privy Council for the voluntary contribution towards repairing the harbour, but several burghs had not made a contribution. The Convention was sufficiently convinced of this necessity and recommended payments be made.[152] Thomas Kirk's comment in 1677 that he considered the harbour safe enough, if only ships could get into it, speaks volumes.[153]

The council minutes give further clues as to the effect of national politics on the burgh. It was recorded on 18 June 1688 that eight days previously, 'solemne and publict thanksgiving' had been given for the birth of the Prince of Wales; the baby would be the Old Pretender. By the September of that year, however, it was minuted: 'suspending the electione of the magistrats and counsell of that burgh untill his matties pleasure be knauen'. Clearly the town council did not know which way to move or which king to support. By the following April, however, affairs had become clearer. There was proclamation of 'King William and Queen Mary, King and Queen of Scotland' with usual 'bonfyres and ringing of bells'.[154]

The eighteenth century

As the records become more expansive it is easier to gain an impression of the urban setting. The town entered the eighteenth century with inherited

debts from the previous. But routine life had to continue, such as the repair of the town's steeple (**fig 13**), the upkeep of the town mills, one of which it was decided should have a marble stone for grinding flour,[155] the inspection and running of the town's grammar and English schools,[156] the perambulation of the marches and the removal of middens on a regular basis.[157] Even by 1705 it was claimed that the streets were mere tracks of mud and filth,[158] suggesting little improvement from the Middle Ages. In fact, the first mention of the streets being causewayed is in 1737.[159]

The poor were ever present and in 1725, in particular, strenuous efforts were made to ensure that the poor of the parish received proper support, that outsider beggars were banned, and that proper arrangements were made with the kirk session, which also provided financial assistance for the destitute. The council felt that 'those beggars, after having received the Charitie apointed by the Ma[gistrates] and Coun[cil], Doe apply to and receive from the kirk session a second Charitie, and are thereby Encouraged to be Idle, To continue their trade of begging, and to return more frequently to this Burgh to the great dammage of the Inhabitants'. It was decided to suggest a common fund for the support of the needy to avoid 'Idleness and other Immorallities of some who are a great burden to the community' and to help the 'trewly necessitous, without giving att the same time anie Encouragement to Idle Vagrant persons'.[160]

The poverty of the burgh is mentioned in an assessment of 1712 when, because of 'the decay of this city and trading therein', the burgh was forgoing the luxury, and expense, of a provost; the burgh council consisting of three bailies, one treasurer and fifteen councillors.[161] The council must have been feeling more robust, however, by 1728, when it was minuted that there had been discussion about:

> giving to the chiefe magistrate the style and title of Provost, and finding by their Charter that the Title of Provost is given to the chiefe magistrate and by their records that the magistracy of this Brugh did formerly consist of a Provost and thrie Baillies, they have appointed, and hereby appoints the same number of magistrates and with the same title and style to be chosen at the ensuing election for the Government of this Brugh [*sic*], the administration of justice, and the management of the common gude.[162]

Vast improvements were soon afoot, however; but not all proposals were welcome. In 1710 and following years Dunbar sought financial support from the Convention of Royal Burghs in an action against the Duke of Roxburghe. He intended to 'inclose' a highway leading to and from the burgh of Dunbar through the links of Broxmouth. The burgh claimed that it had been in possession of the road past memory of man. They added that the enclosing would be very prejudicial to the fishing of the town. The Convention allowed

FIGURE 16
Dunbar Customs House, prior to demolition
(By courtesy of Dr D Anderson and Dunbar and District History Society)

the burgh £100 Scots for expenses in the action before the Lords of Session, which rather suggests sympathy for the townspeople.[163]

Much was achieved by the town. The quality of the town's custom-house, established in 1710,[164] is regrettably recognisable now only from early photographs, having been demolished in 1954; but this evidence is proof of the quality of Dunbar's buildings and increasing importance in terms of trade (**fig 16**). Indeed, James Ray, a medical officer in the Duke of Cumberland's army, in 1746 noted with approval that Dunbar's houses were built with stone and covered with slate, and the town markets were well supplied with provisions.[165] Evidence of early eighteenth-century houses possibly viewed by the medical officer may still be seen in Victoria Street at the Creel Restaurant and nearby the old well which supplied water to the harbour area is still standing; at West Port *nos* 7, 9, 11 and 13, some pantiled, and one, *no* 13, with scrolled skewputs, are fine examples of domestic architecture of this period. Nearby, a range of eighteenth-century farm buildings and an early horse-mill designed by Andrew Meikle (1719–1811) are testimony not only to the local architecture, but are also an indication that Dunbar was becoming an important agricultural centre.

The main street was still High Street, a broad street, as noted by the

FIGURE 17
Dunbar from the west by Clerk of Eldin, *c* 1780.
(By courtesy of the National Gallery of Scotland; © National Gallery of Scotland)

traveller Pococke when he visited the town in 1760,[166] and as it is to this day. This was commented upon by one Alexander Wilson in 1789, who also referred to the several narrow lanes that led from High Street down to shore, which were inhabited mainly by fishers. At the harbour, he viewed the recently erected battery of stone. He felt that High Street contained the only buildings of any note;[167] an opinion shared by Marc de Bombelles, visiting in 1784, who considered that the roads 'qui conduisent au port sont miserables'.[168] One notable building, erected towards the end of the eighteenth century is Port Lodge, of dark stone and with an Ionic portico. *Nos* 21, 23 and 25 are also fine examples. The New Inn was built towards the end of the century by the Earl of Lauderdale, in competition to the St George Hotel. It has a Roman Doric porch and still existing side archway giving access to a coach-house. One of the major changes on the townscape was the construction of a new road leading westwards – West Port and Delisle Street. John Adair's map, engraved in 1736, shows clearly that until this time, at least, the route westwards departed from the top of High Street and followed a line approximately that of what became called Back Road (**fig 4**). By about 1780, however, when John Clerk of Eldin drew the view of Dunbar from the west, the new thoroughfare had been inserted (**fig 17**). Another road to appear was Silver Street. Architectural remnants still to be seen on the south wall of the tolbooth indicate the likelihood that a building once stood to the south of the tolbooth, perhaps with a pend, as there appears to be a blocked window in the south wall of the tolbooth (**fig 18**).

With two inns, Dunbar was in a fine position to accommodate visitors. Even by the end of the eighteenth century sea bathing was becoming popular. It was reported in 1792 that 'at some distance [from the town], among the rocks, there is a retired place for sea-bathing, with a room to undress'. Another facility offered was alehouses – there were forty-six licensed in 1792. The local minister, George Bruce, considered these to be dens where 'low-priced spirits are retailed and where the execrable custom of dram-drinking is

practised. This we justly pronounce to be the bane of all good, and the source of all ill; the ruin of health and morals, and of all domestic duty and comfort; the reproach of man, and the disgrace of woman'.[169] With 3,700 men, women and children in the parish at this time,[170] it may be guessed that there were fewer than 3,000 in the town. Even if there were as many as 3,000, approximately 1,800 would have been adults. Of these, probably a maximum of about 800 would have been men. There was, then, a drinking establishment for every seventeen men, if not fewer. Perhaps the minister was justified in his complaints!

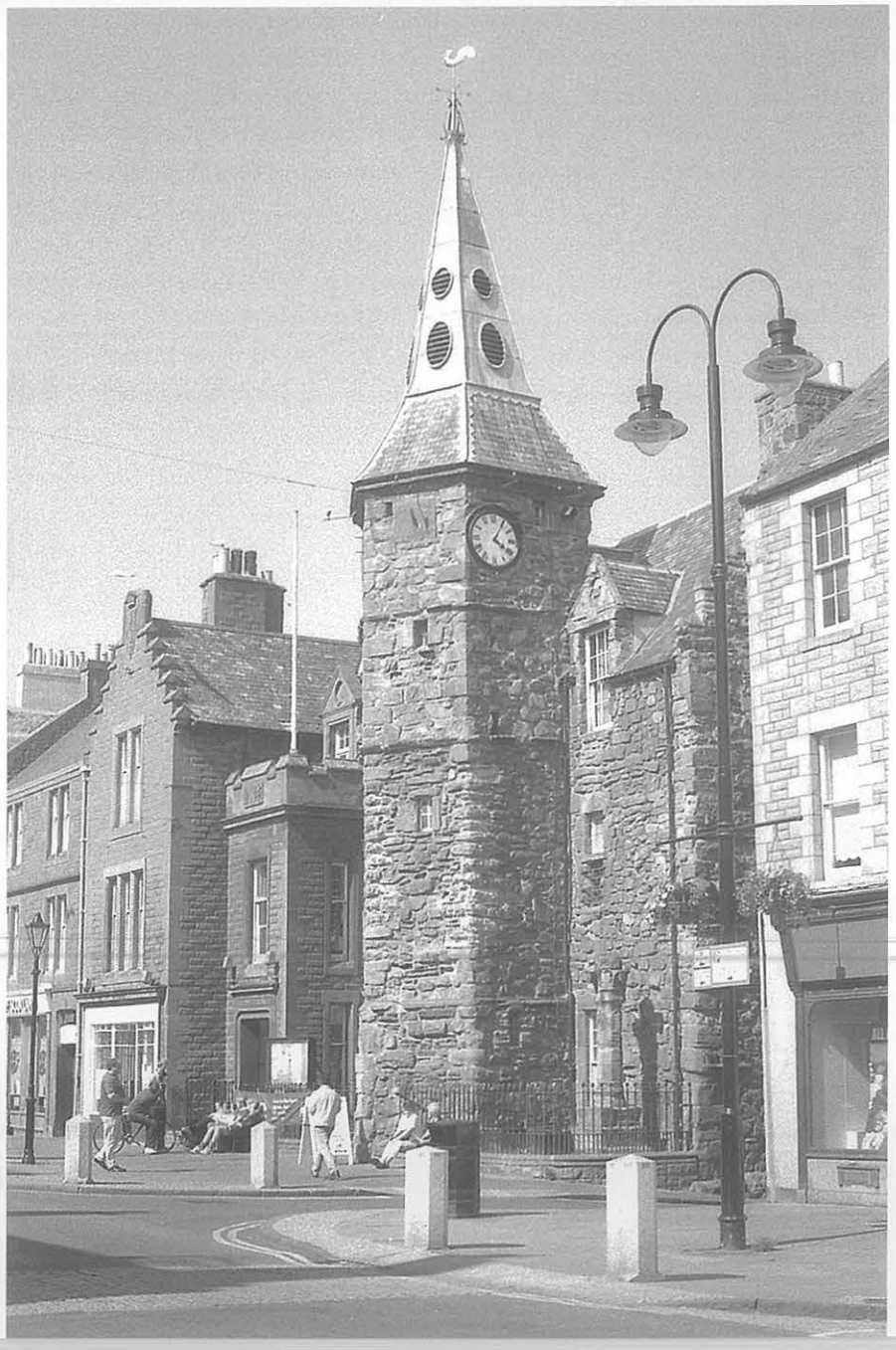


FIGURE 18
The tolbooth, 2002.

The New Inn is merely one of several Georgian buildings in High Street, one of the most notable being *nos* 58–60, with an impressive frontage and a pair of bull's-eye lights.[171] The most prestigious of these houses, was, however, Dunbar House (or Lauderdale House), standing imposingly at the north end of High Street (**fig 19**). This had been built by James Fall, a wealthy merchant trading with the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and for some years a member of parliament.[172] The Fall family were, however, obliged to sell the property in 1788; it was then handsomely altered and enlarged by Robert Adam for the Earl of Lauderdale,[173] with such features as two wings added to the original block, a new entrance with semicircular portico facing north and a sphinx gracing the south side. So large and impressive was the house that one tourist mistook it for a hospital.[174] Another visitor, in the same year, 1795, while commenting favourably on the house and the alterations effected by Lauderdale, added somewhat acidly 'from his Lordship Head being so full of Politicks he has only been once in it'.[175] One of the more important legacies of the time of the Falls was that in 1766 water was brought to the town, by lead pipes, from St John's Well and Smithy Well, springs near Spott, about two miles south of Dunbar (**fig 3**).[176] Street lighting was also introduced as early as 1785, well ahead of many other towns in the vicinity.[177] Surprisingly, given the improvements to the built fabric of the town, it was as late as 1765 that the magistrates considered that 'in the case of fire happening, the consequences might be very dreadful, as there [was] no water engine in the

FIGURE 19
View of Dunbar House from the north, 2002.

town. It was therefore resolved to order one and twelve leather buckets'.[178]

Further evidence of Dunbar's status was established by the opening in 1788 of a branch of the British Linen Bank.[179] Croft House, on Delisle Street, with its classical lines and Ionic columns, housed the bank and is yet another fine remnant of Dunbar's historic past. The first printing press in East Lothian was set up in Dunbar seven years later. Dunbar also housed the first Methodist congregation in Scotland, which was established in 1752, the first Methodist society in Dunbar reputedly having been formed by dragoons billeted in the town.[180] Their chapel, built in 1764 of stone with hood mouldings over the windows, still stands. It was opened by John Wesley himself and he and his brother Charles were its first trustees.[181]

One visitor, David Loch, made an interesting assessment in 1778, which was to be very much a harbinger for the future. He said of Dunbar that 'it may be called the Brighthelmstone of Scotland for sea-bathing, the salt water being pure and strong, with excellent conveniencies and good lodgings'.[182] Ten years later, Joseph Farington stayed in the town. He was equally complimentary, but mainly because of the cost of living. Dunbar was 'a place where many luxuries are to be had upon very cheap terms'. He dined on 'fresh cod; a quarter of lamb; pease; colyflower [*sic*]; cream in plenty to strawberrys [sic]' and had a 'good fire'. The dinner cost a mere 3s, with a further 9d for two quarts of strawberries. He had a newspaper at a cost of 1d and completed his meal with port (2s 3d), brandy (1s) and porter (2d).[183] The Duke of Rutland was also impressed when he arrived in Dunbar to stay at the New Inn; it was here that the army officers billeted in Dunbar had their quarters. He was 'ushered into a spacious room, where ... a ball [was] held once a week, under the patronage of Sir James Stewart who commands an encampment in the neighbourhood'. The military he noted again before he left; he 'passed a cavalry camp, consisting of four regiments, the Cambridge Fencibles, the Windsor Foresters, the East Lothian Cavalry, and another whose name [he] could not obtain'. But the growing wealth and status of Dunbar came at a cost: Rutland 'found the smell of the whale-blubber extremely offensive'.[184]

Other necessities of life might also cause offence. The town had two slaughterhouses. One stood at the foot of Flesh Market Close, to the west of Castlegate. In 1745 there were complaints that the houses ought to be paved, as the cattle were rendering the close impassable at the time of slaughter. 'This [was] especially so because the south wall [was] too low and the cattle leap[ed] over it'.[185] The resultant chaos in the central area of the town is well imaginable.

From the 1740s, the government imposed a 'windows duties tax'. This window tax was a duty charged on windows, or lights, in each inhabited dwelling house. Initially it was levied on houses with ten or more windows, but later it was reduced to seven. The number of houses with ten (later

seven) or more windows is shown in the table below. These figures suggest that there were a number of seemingly commodious houses in Dunbar, Dunbar House and the George Hotel being among the largest, but what, of course, is not included are those more menial properties which had fewer windows than rated taxation. The table suggests that the number of inhabited houses with ten or more windows fell between 1753 and 1793. But this was not necessarily the case: the inhabitants may have been better at evading the tax and it was a common practice in Scotland to board up windows to avoid the tax.

Number of Windows per House, 1753–93

Windows	1753	1773	1793
5–9	–	39	18
10–14	16	8	11
15–19	8	2	5
20–24	3	0	1
25–29	2	1	1
30–34	0	1	0
+35	3	1	2

Source: NAS, E326/1/148

From 1758 house duty was levied. This was a tax of 1s per year on an inhabited house with more than five windows. It is possible to determine the houses with five or six windows by counting all the houses charged with house duty. The number of houses liable for this tax is shown in the table below. Again, it suggests that there were some substantial houses in the town, but also that there was a decline in the number of houses liable for this tax. But, again, changes in accounting procedure and tax evasion should not be ruled out.[186]

Year	No of houses over 5 windows
1759	82
1760	89
1761	75
1762	72
1763	70
1764	68
1765	66
1766	63
1767	60
1768	56
1769	50

1770	48
1771	51
1772	54
1773	52
1774	45
1775	47
1776	44
1777	43
1778	44
1779	46
1780	43
1781	45
1782	47
1783	40
1784	57
1785	N/A
1786	70
1787	68
1788	67
1789	67
1790	70
1791	68
1792	58
1793	40
1794	41
1795	38
1796	N/A
1797	N/A
1798	43

By 1792, there were 3,700 in the parish, compared with 3,281 in 1755.[187] New businesses reflected this growth. The town diversified into linen manufacture; and in 1758 a piece of ground was laid out in the corner of the Inner Common as a washing-green or bleachfield, and a drying-house was built.[188] The Fall family, according to one visitor, greatly encouraged local manufacturing. David Loch reported that 'Mrs Robert Fall, much to her honour, employs many people in the spinning of wool, and manufacturing it into carpets and other goods'. He continued by commenting on the trade in red herrings, malt, barley, flour 'and sundry other branches'. Moreover, 'Messrs Charles and Robert Fall and Company, besides the extensive trade they carry on in most branches, are just now [1778] erecting about sixty looms, to manufacture canvas of all sorts, and have taken into trade with them, in that and the roperie branch, Thomas Bryant, from Great Yarmouth, who is a person of

twenty times what the same business would have cost at many English ports.'[206] But there was also to be a natural decline in the fishing industry, sometimes dramatic. In 1819 Dunbar could boast of 280 boats with 2,000 men. The following year, there were only 200 boats.[207] By 1949, this was reduced to eight.[208]

But, as the herring fisheries went into decline, Dunbar moved into whaling. In 1742 Dunbar merchants owned sixteen coasters and two ships trading with Greenland. Ten years later a whale fishing company was formed by local traders with two ships and a crew of fifty.[209] For a time, also, the East Lothian & Merse Fishing Company, which was financed by local landowners, operated out of Dunbar and exploited the waters around Greenland.[210] James Fall, the most notable of the Dunbar merchants, as well as others, made a considerable fortune from the whale fisheries.[211] A measure of the importance of this trade is seen by the fact that, in 1765, three ships of 295, 316 and 344 tons burden and crews numbering 41, 40 and 42 respectively, departed for whaling in Greenland.[212] Pennant, four years later, noted that ships were sent annually to Greenland.[213] Such a thriving trade had an inevitable impact on the townscape. A description of the burgh in 1792 stated that the town was engaged in the Greenland Fishery to such an extent that the smell of the whale-blubber was extremely offensive.[214]

Dunbar dealt in other commodities also. In the middle of the century Dunbar had a thriving smuggling trade in wine, spirits, tea, silk and tobacco from French, Dutch, German and Swedish ports. Tunnels and underground vaults still said to survive in old properties beside the harbour would have been invaluable in hiding the illicit goods. The vaults that may still be viewed beside the harbour could also have functioned as useful secret repositories. There were also legitimate imports of wood, iron, flax and naval stores from the Baltic.[215] In addition to this, Pococke, in 1760, noted the import of hemp and the export of corn.[216] Pennant, nine years later, stated that corn exports were relatively considerable.[217] The granaries and maltings around the harbour, which date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are standing evidence of this trade (**fig 20**).[218] However in 1765, at least, only one of the four vessels departing from Dunbar with exports contained barley and rye; the others chiefly consisted of re-exports.[219]

Trade and manufacturing relied heavily on the harbour facilities. Some years before 1735 the harbour became almost ruinous, so much so that burgh funds were insufficient to repair it.[220] Part of the pier was then wrecked by a storm in 1744.[221] But renovations and enlarging and deepening meant that the old harbour had reached its present form by the mid-eighteenth century, with an extension to the east pier, dividing the inner harbour from Broad Haven.[222] Even with these improvements, Pococke argued, in 1760, that the harbour was rather difficult to enter, and it was not at all practicable when the wind blew a little hard from the north-east; it could, however, hold a ship of 300

tons, and shipping could enter and seek haven when they could not sail into the Firth of Forth.[223] Fisher, an American Quaker visiting Scotland in 1775 was very complimentary about Dunbar's harbour: 'The pier here is a nice piece of work. The vessels come in at a very small passage but the basin could contain a vast many. The walls built to defend them from the sea are forty feet high. One side of the pier is the work of art entirely, the other chiefly of nature.'[224] In 1785 there was further deepening of the harbour, a new pier was constructed and a dry dock was added shortly after.[225]

Dunbar's harbour, as in the previous century, could be both a blessing and a liability. It was here that Sir John Cope, leader of the Hanoverian forces against the Jacobites, landed his army on 15 September 1745, prior to his defeat at Prestonpans.[226] Steps at the old harbour are still named after him. The report of the medical officer, James Ray, attached to the Duke of Cumberland's forces, suggests, however, that not all the townspeople were sympathetic to the Jacobite cause. He claimed that 'the magistrates here [Dunbar] made a great entertainment to every regiment that passed through; the private soldiers had all a certain quantity of bread, meat and drink, allowed them'. He continued, however, that:

> the officers were treated in their town-house, where we had many kinds of their most curious dishes, but some of them very oddly cooked up, that it was but few many of us could eat of; we also had claret and punch in great plenty; but, with all these, they had a table-cloth so dirty, that, at other times, I should with great reluctance have wiped my hands on it; the sight of which alone, would have certainly turned many of our stomachs, had we not been greatly fatigued and hungry with travelling.[227]

Ray was, as an English medical officer, somewhat biased against the Scots. Whether this is a fair reflection of Dunbar's eating habits is unlikely. Dunbar decided to not display its loyalties in October 1745. On the occasion of the king's birthday it was decided not to have 'bonfires and illuminations' as usual; there might be 'bad consequences' and the occasion could be used to muster Jacobite support. Instead of a public display the magistrates and council agreed to meet at six in the evening, to drink quietly to the health of the king and his family.[228]

In 1779 John Paul Jones, later the American Revolutionary sea commander, appeared as a French privateer off Dunbar with a squadron of five ships, but did not enter the harbour. It was reported, however, that he 'came so near this place with some of his ships, as to demolish some of the chimney tops, and put the inhabitants in a terrible consternation'.[229] In 1781 another adventurer, Captain Fall, tried to carry off a vessel from the mouth of the harbour.[230] It was in this year that the Battery was built at the head of the harbour to afford greater protection.[231]

Court of Session records of 1842. Litigation against the town was brought by Colonel Robert Anderson, currently in St Helena, over his right of property in the Shores along the links of Winterfield. These included quarrying rights, rights to carry away sand and to a mineral spring within the pursuer's property. A settlement was finally reached: the old road through the links was to be advertised at an upset price of £70. If he wished, Colonel Anderson might buy it, but any purchaser was to construct and maintain a footpath at least four feet broad. It was established, however, that the Winterfield estate and shores belonged to the town.[252]

The town council did spend a fair degree of time discussing the upgrading of the roads. There was, for example, a request to build a bridge across Belhaven Burn on the road leading to the beach; in June 1835 there was a proposal 'to see if the Dawel Brae [Danielle Brae; the Double Brae] could be got Macadamised, or all the Street from the entry into the Town down to the Shore by it'. The following month, it was suggested that the town should macadamise 'below the port'. By the September, subscriptions for 'Macadamising the street below the Port' raised more than £26. Two months later, subscriptions had also been obtained for the macadamising of the Dawell Brae, and suitable materials had been located at the Castle Haven.[253]

The council was under pressure from many sides when upgrading and building new roads, or when the closing of old roads was being undertaken. A letter of 1839, for example, stated that part of the old road at West Barns would be rendered useless when improvements were finished on Great Post Road; it was requested that the magistrates offer no objections and be present when the old road was shut and sold. There were often objections to old roads being closed, even though new ones had been built. In 1850 the tenant of West Barns mill wrote that he would 'not shut it up [the road] but keep it as privit as possable [*sic*]'.[254]

When visiting in 1833, William Cobbett found the road from the south of Dunbar 'covered with carts ... all loaded with sacks of corn. For several miles it appeared to be a regular convoy of carts ... and all going to Dunbar.[255] Dunbar's corn exchange was built on High Street in 1855, a sign of the importance of this local trade;[256] and confirmation of the continuing role of Dunbar as a centre in a prosperous agricultural area.

The factor that probably most affected the harbour and seaborne traffic was, however, the opening of the Great Northern Railway in 1846. Much of the seaborne traffic was captured by this innovation. Dunbar, as a railway town, developed into a seaside holiday resort. Capitalising on the fact that it was one of the driest and sunniest places in Scotland, holidaymakers were encouraged to visit for day trips or for longer periods. The St George Hotel, first built in 1625, was rebuilt in 1826, even though it was reported in 1801 by one traveller that he found 'the St Andrew and George Inn – Lorimer's – a very tolerable Scotch House'.[257] Where it had once been the resting place of

mail-coaches which ran between Edinburgh and Berwick,[258] it now became a commodious holiday residence. The Assembly Rooms had also been built in Church Street, in 1822. A plain, but gracious, building of ironstone rubble with Catcraig dressings, its supper room and ballroom attest to the pretensions and confidence of the people of Dunbar in the early nineteenth century. English visitors also built houses for occupation during the summer months. These, together with the hotels built outside the confines of the old town, well illustrate the growing prosperity.[259]

Other facilities soon followed. In 1815 a subscription library had been set up, followed ten years later by a mechanics' institute; and Savings Societies, Bible Missionary and Tract Society, Sabbath Schools and Ladies' Destitute Sick Society were all indications of the growing gentility and desire for education, moral or otherwise.[260] The 1814 regulations laid down by the council for the police are a good indication of what was considered desirable behaviour at the time. Carpets were not to be shaken out after 7 am in the summer and 9 am in the winter; fines were laid down for 'wanton cruelty' while driving animals; a magistrate and a constable were to perambulate the streets during Sabbath Divine Service, to apprehend 'disorderly persons' and note shopkeepers and publicans with open doors; boys were forbidden from driving hoops or girds on the streets, or from playing shinty, making slides in the winter, throwing stones, or collecting in groups on the streets to be rude to passers-by; horses were to be restrained from drinking at the well and people were not to wash their dirty linen or fish there; and wheeled transport and wheelbarrows were not to be used on the pavements.[261]

FIGURE 21
Cobbled High Street, with shops' baskets awaiting collection for transportation by railway.
(By courtesy of Mr T K Anderson, Dunbar)

Dunbar Golf Club was established in 1856.[262] And in the late nineteenth century, bathing pools began to be constructed; these were vital as the rocky nature of the coast prevented Dunbar being a true bathing resort without such amenities.[263] Wealthy townspeople also built commodious new dwellings. At the south end of High Street, Barnlea, an ashlar-built house, is an attractive example of early nineteenth-century build. Delisle Street provides many examples of fine Georgian housing, a little removed from the overcrowded town centre. Castellau House, with its Ionic pillastered doorway is probably one of the grandest (**fig 30**). The *Haddington Courier* reported on the sale of two properties in November 1861. Its column is an interesting contemporary comment on property values: 'The sale has been rather a good one for the late properties, and it shows at the same time in what light property in Dunbar is now regarded as an investment.'[264]

Even though not all housing was grand, the records throughout make it clear that the town council took care with the built environment. In 1814, for example, the town council set up an assessment and decided that there was room for twelve fishermen's houses down by the shore.[265] Ground at Danielle Brae [Dawel Brae] also was set up for roup in 1858. This consisted of a tenement of land at the north end of High St, currently occupied by the Infant School, bounded by a tenement and yard belonging to the Earl of Lauderdale on the south, Castle Gate on the east, a yard belonging to the Wesleyan Methodists and part of the street leading to the shore on the north and High Street on the west. Secondly, there was garden ground on the south side of Seaport leading to the shore, bounded by the property mentioned above on the south, by the dyke of the lands sold to the Wesleyans by the Earl of Lauderdale, on part of which their chapel was erected on the east, and by the street called Seaport on the north and west. These subjects belonging to the town of Dunbar, the council set them up to roup as one lot, failing which they would sell in seven separate lots. What is particularly interesting are the precise conditions imposed on their development: 'Each person preferred shall be bound within the space of two years ... to build on each lot a dwelling house of two stories ... numbering of the houses and gables to be mutual, all to be of same height'. Excavation details are included and retaining wall fronts were to be of well-burned brick, with freestone round windows and doors; building materials were to be removed by a specified date. Such particulars did not deter the prospective buyers. Four lots sold for £100 each and three for £60 each.[266]

In January 1835, it was indicated at a council meeting that a number of inhabitants on High Street were willing to pave the side path before their doors. By April the council considered it 'desirable that the front pavements in the Main Street and West Port should be improved by being laid with Arbroath or other suitable stone' and plans were drawn up to this effect. Unfortunately, however, the council could not provide any money for this as

'in the present state of the town's funds this [was] entirely out of the question'.[267] They were hopeful that a 'numerous body' of the proprietors and other townspeople would fund it.[268] A contemporary photograph shows the new paving and guttering of the roadway. Interestingly, it reveals also the baskets, in which goods were transported, placed outside the shops awaiting uplifting to the railway station (**fig 21**).[269]

Other improvements about the town were mooted and achieved. A well was to be erected in Delisle Street 'for the convenience of the inhabitants in that quarter'.[270] There was a proposal to fill in the old quarry under the Kirkhill;[271] and, more daring, a motion that 'it would tend much to the Beauty of the Town and the comfort of the Inhabitants were the streets of this Burgh lighted with Gas'. Investigations were to be made, and comparisons with the 'yearly average expense of lighting the Town with Oil for the last ten years'. In 1836, steps were made by the council towards a real innovation. The east end of Galla Green was set in feu to the Gas Light Company; gasworks were to be built.[272]

Not all were accommodated in comfort, however. John Gurney, the brother of Elizabeth Fry, visited the town gaol in 1818. He recounted that 'you ascend up a narrow dirty staircase into two small rooms ... one of which is for debtors, the other for criminals of all descriptions ... [the prisoners are] kept in a state of extreme filth, and are severally furnished with a little straw, and a tub for every dirty purpose'.[273] The external fabric appeared little better. The town council minuted in that year that the building was so insecure that it was 'often necessary to remove criminal prisoners for capital offences to the neighbouring burgh of Haddington',[274] even though one of the two lean-to booths attached to the front of the tolbooth served as the police station (**fig. 13**). The records do not suggest, however, a total disregard for the health of the less desirable elements of society. Attempts to care for the poor had continued since the previous century (*see* p 31). An account, for example, was noted in the council records of 1815 'for medicines to the Poor of the Town'.[275]

One facility the town needed to upgrade was the slaughterhouse. In 1806 the town council entered into a contract with Mr John Young, mason of Belhaven. Already the previous year the council had minuted the necessity to remove the slaughterhouse to the outskirts of town; and a site 'near the quarry below the Church Hill' had been mooted.[276] The town gave very precise details as to thickness of walls, roof structure, paving of stones, type of glass for windows and measurements of shutters, sizes of lintels and gates, and even specifications of the 'dung pit' and 'crosstrees' for hanging the carcasses. Butchers were to pay an annual rent of £16, although their first year was to be free, on account of the inconvenience of moving from the old slaughterhouse to the new one. Outsiders who wished to use the facility were to pay 1s per bullock, 6d for a hog or swine, 3d for a calf and 2d for a sheep or lamb. The site chosen was the East Links and the total cost was £321, payable

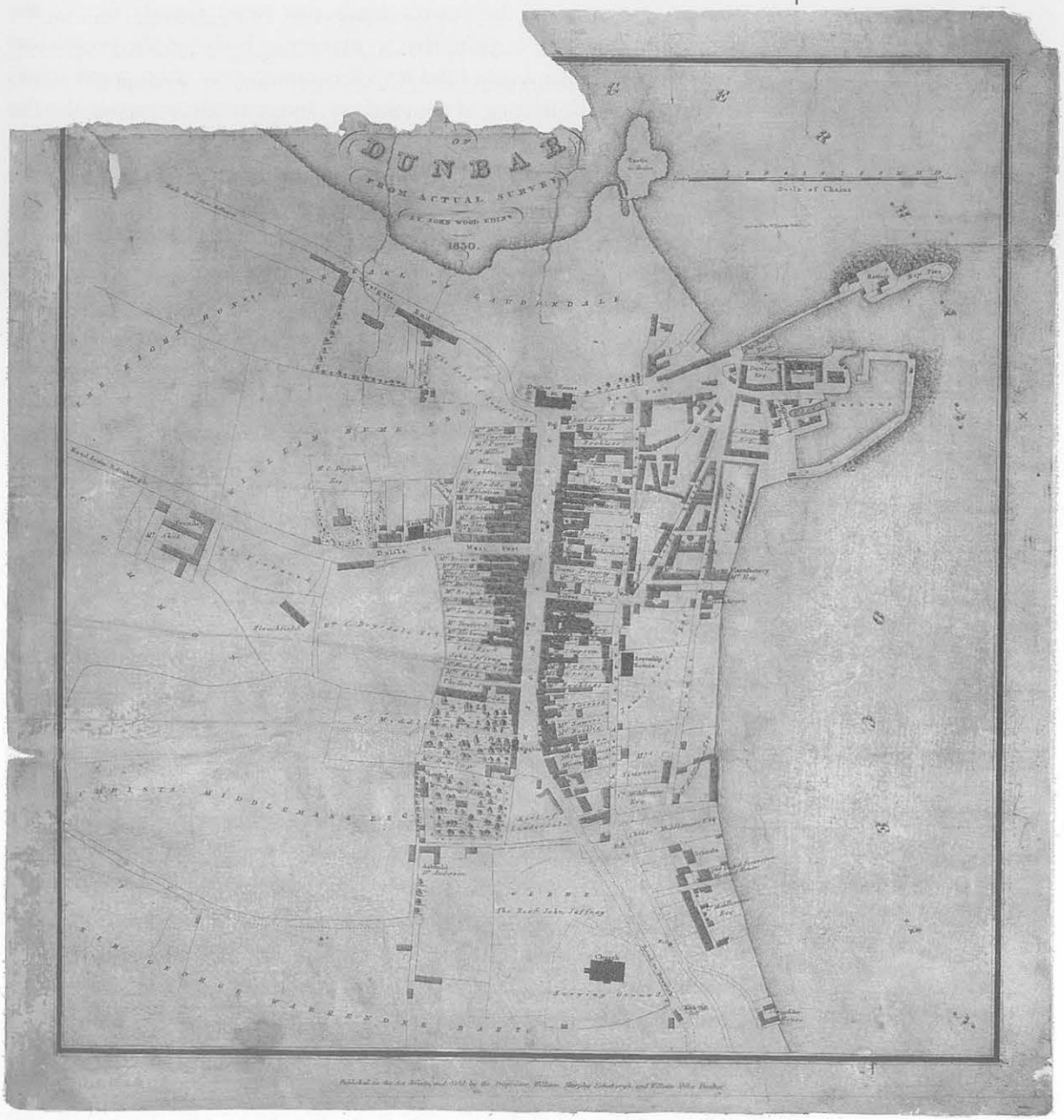


FIGURE 22
John Wood's Plan of Dunbar, 1830.
(By courtesy of East Lothian Council)

in instalments.[277] The setting up of a new and efficient slaughterhouse was probably one of the reasons that the town council in 1832 converted the grain market, held on a Thursday, to a stock market, held on a Tuesday.[278] There had been complaints for some years about the lack of an adequate butcher market.[279] The precise detailing for the slaughterhouse is typical of the caution of the town council of the day. Other animals also needed to be dealt with. Even the common had to be cleared of moles; Christopher Brown was

appointed as molecatcher in 1806 for seven years at a guinea per annum.[280]

Although the character of the town was changing, traditional industries, such as the Belhaven Brewery, continued. The town, for example, renewed in 1837 the lease of ground near Belhaven, which had been set in 1805 to Andrew Kellie, for erecting a spinning mill with the use of waters running through the common. He had also been given the liberty to erect a mill dam to be cleaned at his own expense. Any associated houses that were to be erected were to be wind and water tight, on the penalty of £10; the only exception was a pipe of ¾ inch bore above the mill wheel, for the use of George Johnston's brewery.[281] This is merely one example of the many matters, both within the town and its environs, that fell within the remit of the town council.

In 1814 the town was given permission to let the site of the barracks at Belhaven. One George Goudie of Rutherglen responded on 17 November 1814 that he had a weaving factory about three miles from the proposed site, which he might let, and he might consider these new premises, if he could be satisfied as to certain matters. One of his queries was whether the population was such that a hundred boys and girls of about eleven or twelve years of age could be found for weaving.[282] By January 1815 a lease was drawn up between the town and the 'intended Company of Manufacturers at Belhaven'. Messrs Goudie and Borthwick, partners, were to set up 'a Cotton Manufactory'on a lease of twenty years. Terms were stipulated, including the need to establish a bleachfield and dye works.[283] The gentlemen moved with some speed, it seems, for on 20 April Bruce Borthwick requested to be admitted as a burgess, since 'they have now established a very extensive Manufactory'.[284] A further request was made in September of that year. Mr Borthwick wrote to the council that as his manufactory was to be employing children, 'we find it absolutely necessary with a view to instill good morals into them to insist on their attending Divine Worship every Sunday. We are devoting every possible care and attention to their education and it is our wish that they should be also sent regularly to church under the management of the school master'. He requested that a certain number of seats be reserved in the church 'for the use of the Factory'. This caused a real problem for the council: it was minuted that 'the portion of seats allotted to the town is already occupied'.[285] In spite of such philanthropic gestures, it seems that the manufactory did not succeed as hoped.

It was reckoned that there were nearly 4,000 in the parish in 1801 and a little over that ten years later. By 1821 this figure had risen to a surprising 5,272, which dropped back by 1831 to 4,735. This was because the numbers were inflated by the influx of approximately 500 Irish workers to the new cotton factory in Belhaven; the decrease in 1831 was due to the factory's failure.[286]

The character of the town and the townscape were both being transformed (**fig 22**). But perhaps one of the most significant events for the local people

was that in 1819 Dunbar's ancient church was demolished and the present parish church was built.[287] By the end of the eighteenth century the fabric of the church was described as 'very old' and the inside as the 'worst and most inconvenient perhaps in Scotland'.[288] The minutes of the heritors' meetings from early in 1816 reveal in detail the real concern the parishioners and heritors had over the state of the fabric of their church and also the depth of emotion that arose over the decision as to whether attempts should be made to upgrade the building or to totally demolish and rebuild. Indeed, feelings may at times have got out of hand. Meetings of the heritors were held in Mr Lorimer's Inn (the St George Hotel); the Heritors' Minutes noted that Mr Lorimer 'has had a considerable degree of trouble'.[289]

By 1818 a decision had been made that the best way forward was to rebuild the church; problems then arose, as although the current site of the church was the most convenient location for the new one, rebuilding might impinge on the vaults and burial aisles already in existence. Sir George Warrender wished to protect his family vault; Mr Hay of Belton wished the Belton Aisle and burial ground untouched.[290] A site further east was then considered. By October of that year, however, Sir George Warrender agreed that the new church might be built over the family vault, as long as the heritors arched over the burying ground at their expense and of such a height to allow access from outside. The Duke of Roxburghe wished the same, and that the monument presently standing in the Duke's Aisle should be preserved, along with the entrance to the family vault from the outside of the church. This monument, still in the parish church, commemorates George Home, Earl of Dunbar, who died in 1611. He had been knighted in 1590 and acquired the lands of Spott in 1592. In great favour with the king, he became High Treasurer of Scotland in 1601, and then Chancellor of the Exchequer in England to James VI & I, who created him Earl of Dunbar in 1605 and one of the commissioners on the Borders the following year.[291] Mr Hay of Belton was, perhaps not surprisingly, persuaded to agree also.[292]

After a competition the plan of Mr James Gillespie, architect of Edinburgh was chosen for the new building. The site was to be that of the old church, but it was to be built at a much higher level, the old collegiate church having latterly been approached by steps leading down to the entrance, such was the accumulation of earth over the centuries (**fig. 10**). The favoured stone for the majority of the new church was that of Boorhouses Quarry, which Gillespie considered was 'of a brownish colour to which [he] had no objection ... as it will from the beginning produce an ancient and solemn appearance so very desirable in ecclesiastical structures'.[293] By the following year the heritors were considering an addition to the building work – a watch-house.[294] This was built in 1822; grave robbers were making an impact in their search for newly dead bodies to sell for medical research.[295]

The Heritors' Minutes also reveal in detail their concern, real or otherwise,

FIGURE 23
Cat's Row in the nineteenth-century.
(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)

for the parochial school, built in 1790 at West Barns 'where it was much wanted, to accommodate the inhabitants of the west end of the parish, which is populous, containing about 800 inhabitants'. The town and parish were relatively well provided for educationally, there being a private school at East Barns, and within Dunbar itself three further schools – a grammar school, a mathematical school and an English school.[296] In March 1816 the town council decided that the east part of Galla Green was to be the site for building a new school, by subscription. The following month there were minuted 'Proposals for Erecting an Academy for the Education of youth within the Royal Burgh of Dunbar and for its management'. This was to be built by public subscription, with the town providing suitable ground, to encompass four or more schools. The directors of the academy, that is the provost, bailies and treasurer as well as persons or bodies subscribing more than £50 sterling, were to be responsible for the government of the academy.[297]

The council does seem to have had a genuine concern for the education of the young. It is interesting to note, however, that in 1860 £34 was spent on the schools, but the town received £170 in selling street dung.[298] Dung, whether animal or human, was an important commodity and money-maker, sold as manure for the fertile fields that surrounded Dunbar.[299] In 1815 the council advertised 'a sale of the Town's Dung to take place in the Council house'. Exactly forty-five years later the 'tacksman of the street dung' was complaining that people were 'keeping up dung'. Business was not as thriving as it had been. Indeed, in 1887, at a roup of street dung of the burgh collected by the town's scavengers, which was to be laid down at a depot on Spott Rd, with the town being paid half yearly, no one was prepared to pay the upset price of 2s 6d per ton; after the meeting 2s 3d was offered and accepted.[300]

Throughout the century the council continued to repair and upgrade the built fabric (**fig 23**). A gas lighthouse was erected at the old pier head; the sea wall at Lamer Street was destroyed and repaired; wells were inspected; and streets were repaved. Even with all this activity, the council, on 8 April 1872, had the time to consider certain papers concerning 'women's rights' and, to their credit, opted unanimously to petition parliament that women should be given the vote.[301] They were well ahead of many other councils.

The nineteenth century was to see a proliferation of new churches. Belhaven Free Church was opened for worship in 1840. The congregation was, however, evicted in 1850 and reopened eight years later as a quoad Free Church. Having been evicted from Belhaven, the congregation built a church at the south end of Dunbar High Street. Now named the Abbey Church, it is an imposing building by Thomas Hamilton. The Episcopalian church came to Dunbar as a mission from Haddington in 1874; St Anne's was opened for worship in 1890, having been built by H M Wardrop and Sir Robert Rowand Anderson.[302]

Many of the traditional features of town life continued into the nineteenth century. The *Haddington Courier* reported on 25 November 1859 on the half-yearly fair which had taken place 'with its usual accompaniments of festivity and holiday enjoyment'. It continued that 'although now-a-days shorn of much of its ancient glories, the "fairs" still [continued] to attract large numbers of people from the surrounding country and [proved] a gathering point for public entertainment for the itinerant showmen and similar caterers for the public entertainment. As usual the fair brought a large accession of business to the merchants of the town, particularly those dealing in feminine "gear".'[303] Perambulation and ridings of the common lands also continued for a while. That in 1823 resulted in the pulling down of a rick of turfs and the hounding off of sheep. Four years later, some parts of the common were found to be enclosed with a stone dike, with wheat being grown; another had wheat, barley and oats; stooks were found standing near to a pathway called 'Beggars path'; a paling was discovered running into the common which was

destroyed; hay had been cut down and built into hay-cocks; and the tenant of Hartside had ploughed round the putting stone. The bailies then trampled the corn where they found it growing on the common, chased off pasturing sheep and pulled up potatoes growing upon an angle of land belonging to the common. Tenants were required instantly to remove all illegal erections and enclosures.[304] Encroachment was commonplace, one of the most notorious instances coming in 1849, when one Dr Kellie erected 'Kellie's Dyke' across the East Common.[305]

Dunbar continued to maintain and upgrade its built environment into the twentieth century. Many of the issues that had taxed the burgh remained, but in a different, more modern guise. Streets, tolbooth, harbour and churches needed upkeeping on a regular basis; the gentlemen's bathing pool was storm damaged in 1906, for example; the tolbooth was to be lime-washed in light cream in 1907 to conform with fashion; and three years later, in place of the roughcast stone formerly agreed upon, it was decided to substitute a dressed stone frontage.[306] Interestingly, the sense of the town being divided into two separate communities continued into the twentieth century; the Shore still had its own shops and Mission Hall; and there was a distinction between those in the harbour area and the 'tounies', who frequented the High Street region.[307]

Standards of manners and morality had still to be maintained; there was a complaint to the council in 1906 against Francesco Ranaldi, 'Ice Cream Dealer', for carrying on a 'chipped potato business' at *no* 141 High Street; the possibility of restrictions on the speed of motor cars needed consideration in 1907; and in 1914 the clerk to the council had instructions printed and circulated throughout the town that, as per the appeal of Lord Kitchener, the townspeople were 'to avoid treating the men who had joined the Colours to drink'.[308]

As from earliest times, Dunbar's site left it vulnerable to attack. True to its old traditions, the town prepared in 1914. Eight districts were set up. Special constables were appointed 'to instruct and advise the inhabitants what to do in the event of an invasion taking place, and to assist in their removal when such an event does take place.[309] For once, the burgh that had withstood so many onslaughts was spared.

Area 1: Castle Park and Dunbar (Lauderdale) House

Sites and locations mentioned in this area are shown in figure 30. Archaeological excavations undertaken between 1987 and 1993 have shown that the headland at the north end of the High Street, now occupied by Castle Park, formed a focus for settlement during Dunbar's early development.[310] The area has now been scheduled in order to protect the archaeological remains which survive beneath the surface of the park.

Iron Age

By the time of the Roman occupation of southern Scotland in the first century AD land at the end of the promontory had been settled. The location was chosen because it was naturally defensible and several ditches were cut across the approach to the headland. The ditches were probably not all open at the same time, and are likely to have been accompanied by turf ramparts, possibly topped with timber palisading.

Within the area protected by their defences the inhabitants lived in circular, wooden huts and there was a yard, possibly for gatherings or markets. Discoveries of a piece of gold wire, ideal for producing leaf, and debris from working shale suggested that the settlement was home to skilled craftspeople. They are likely to have produced prestigious jewellery under the patronage of the local aristocracy, who must have traded widely to obtain the raw materials needed.

The day-to-day economy of the settlement revolved around domesticated livestock and crops. Unusually for Iron Age people, they relied more on cattle than sheep, perhaps suggesting that the settlement was relatively wealthy. Some hunting did take place, although this was of a scale which suggested that it was a sporting or social activity rather than an economic necessity. Fishing also seems to have been a peripheral activity, confirming that settlement on the headland does not necessarily indicate a marine economy.

Northumbrian control

During the sixth or seventh century AD the Angles took over Northumbria and much of East Lothian, including Dunbar. The Castle Park excavations uncovered the foundation trenches for several rectangular wooden buildings (**figs 6 & 8**), and a *Grubenhaus*, a large rectangular pit roofed in order to function as a simple underground shelter. The example in Dunbar contained loom weights, and was used probably for spinning flax in damp conditions. The buildings are likely to have been part of a royal enclosure.

Dunbar was recorded as an *urbs regis* and as such it would have been an important settlement, second only to the large *civitates* of England that had grown out of former Roman walled towns such as York.[311] It would have been occupied by Northumbrian royalty for more of the year than lesser estate centres and abundant animal bone found during the excavations reflects the large amount of meat eaten, probably during feasts. Craft activities such as metalworking were also undertaken. The settlement seems to have developed over time and a rampart and palisade were erected to defend it. Later these were replaced by a ditch and a stone building was constructed. This was probably a rectangular royal hall and would have been a very impressive sight, stone buildings being very rare in Scotland at this time. Imported finds discovered during the excavations included a Viking comb and an eighth-century AD Danish coin featuring a mythical beast. The most

spectacular artefact was the arm of a gold cross inlaid with garnets (**fig 7**). A similar example was found in the tomb of St Cuthbert in Durham, and the find is likely to have belonged to a senior ecclesiastic, possibly even St Wilfrid himself.

Analysis of animal bones from the site indicates that its basic economy did not change with the arrival of the Northumbrian Angles. It has been suggested that this indicates a continuity of practice, and perhaps a takeover of the local system rather than a wholesale replacement with an incoming population.[312] It should certainly not be assumed that the local population was all of Northumbrian stock; the takeover may have been limited to replacing the local aristocracy.

Early Scottish control

Around the middle of the ninth century AD Kenneth MacAlpin burnt Dunbar, although it is not stated in historical documents when the area fell under Scottish control. The excavations established that the stone Northumbrian hall was probably replaced with a timber one. It is clear that the headland was not abandoned during this period; although it is not clear what the nature of the settlement now was. The greatest likelihood is that it continued as an estate centre under Scottish lordship.

The cutting of trenches for several modern drainage pipes led to the discovery of a large cemetery to the north of Dunbar House.[313] Radiocarbon dates have indicated that it was used from the tenth to the fourteenth century. Later excavations beneath a former shop found several more skeletons; many were children and it seems the cemetery was zoned.[314] A large number of the burials were in stone cists or had stones arranged around their skulls. Whether an early church accompanied these burials is not proven, although the eighteenth-century engraving included in Grose's volume (**fig 9**) does seem to indicate a ruined chapel, which may have been associated with both the castle and the cemetery (*see* p 13). Local tradition and reports of possible remains of a chapel exposed during the demolition of the engine room for the children's paddle boats prior to the development of the new swimming pool would seem to support the theory that there was an early chapel here. Archaeological work has established that the burials extend as far as Westgate and the junction with Castle Street to the east. If they are all part of the same cemetery, then it is extensive and must have served a wider community than resided on the headland. There may have been a peripheral settlement somewhere in the vicinity.

Much of the cemetery remains unexcavated and it is possible that it contains earlier graves in unexamined areas. Certainly it seems that a large circular mound once existed in front of Dunbar House and during its removal in 1801 several long cists and later medieval graves were discovered. It is often the case that mounds or knolls formed the focus of Early Christian

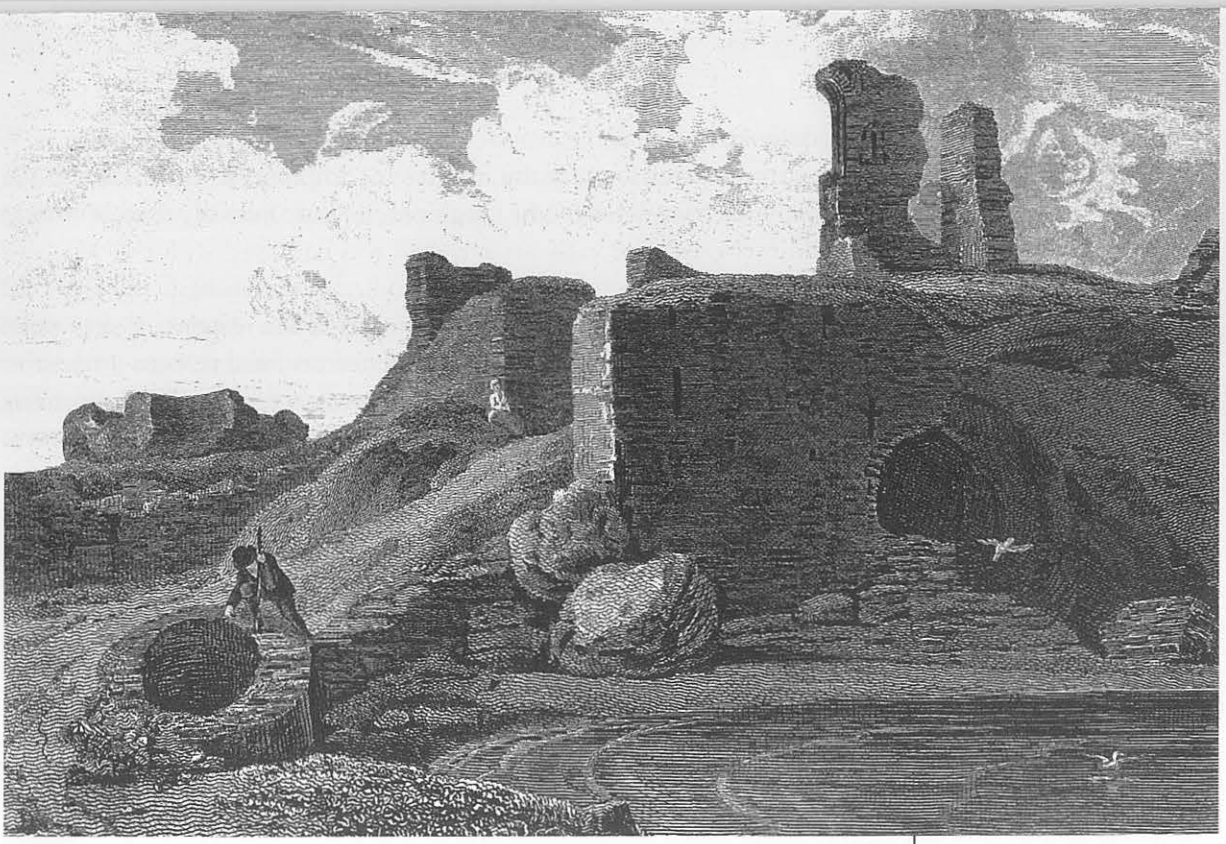


FIGURE 24
View of Dunbar Castle showing possible opening into vaults; taken from a painting by G Arnald, engraved by J Greig
(By courtesy of RCAHMS; © Crown copyright RCAHMS)

cemeteries, such as at Hallow Hill in Fife.[315] Given the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century date of some of the interments it is not surprising that the graveyard and the north of High Street respect one another and they must have functioned together for a time. It is possible that the cemetery was replaced by the parish church graveyard to the south of town.

Medieval castle

The Castle Park excavations found evidence that in the medieval period a courtyard, followed by the castle's curtain wall, was constructed in the Park. The curtain wall was very important defensively as it cut off access to the headland on which the blockhouse now sits; it is actually higher than the castle itself and would have been crucial to withstanding sieges. The date the castle began to be constructed is not known but it was certainly in existence by the end of the thirteenth century.[316] It was largely destroyed towards the end of the fifteenth century after it had been annexed to the crown and the remains that now survive are mainly from a rebuild shortly afterwards, although earlier fragments do survive. The ruins are perched on top of 15 m high sea cliffs and indicate that the castle was of a courtyard plan, with buildings and towers set round a space entered through a gatehouse and forework, constructed across the neck of the rock on which the castle stands. The Castlegate was depicted on an 1841 sketch plan for the Victoria Harbour and was broadly as marked on modern maps.

Later defences

In the early sixteenth century the massive blockhouse, the first of its type in Scotland, was constructed by the king's cousin, the Duke of Albany.[317] It was designed exclusively for early artillery and was equipped with two levels of guns.

In 1548 a French garrison took over the headland as a response to continued hostility from England and they commissioned an Italian, Piero Strozzi, to construct a 'motte' in front of the castle.[318] In 1560 the castle was noted as being weak and the French started construction of a new fort; the remains of the massive ditch surrounding this were discovered as part of the Castle Park excavations.[319] The fort was immediately subject to demolition as part of the terms of a peace treaty, although a remnant earthwork is shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey plan of the area.[320] A series of chambers and a cistern were discovered near Castle Park by local builders in 1989.[321] This exciting discovery, at the edge of Victoria Harbour, consists of two mortared sandstone chambers with vaulted roofs, a cistern for storing water and culverts.[322] The date and function of this structure are currently unknown. However, at the time of writing, Dunbar Harbour Trust are proposing further investigations. It is possible that an open shaft depicted on an early engraving (**fig 24**) fed the cistern.

James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, used the castle as a stronghold during the reign of Mary Queen of Scots and following her overthrow it was ordered to be demolished.[323] In the post-medieval period the castle became less important because of more peaceful relations with England and a sizeable proportion of it, including the north tower, was destroyed when Victoria Harbour was built in 1842.

On the detailed plan of Dunbar made in 1750 (**fig 5**), as part of General Roy's military survey, several small buildings are shown in the area now occupied by Castle Park and Dunbar House.[324] These are likely to have sprung up in the later sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries when the area fell out of military use. Early depictions of the castle, dated 1789, show buildings in the background (**fig 9**).[325]

Castle Park

Perhaps the most imposing building in Dunbar is the category 'A'-listed Dunbar House, situated prominently at the end of High Street. Captain James Fall, MP, commissioned the core of the house, but his son was declared bankrupt in 1788 and he was obliged to sell the land to the Earl of Lauderdale. He commissioned Robert Adam to add two wings and the northern entrance portico.[326] The surrounding grounds of Castle Park were landscaped to complement the house (**fig 19**).

In 1855 the house was sold to the War Office and converted into barracks. This led to much of the interior being stripped out and the insertion of new

windows and a staircase-well in the eastern end of the building.[327] The military constructed new barracks and gun platforms within the park. As a result of defence cutbacks in the 1950s the barracks were sold back to the county council. Dunbar House was converted into residential flats and the new barracks were demolished.

Area 2: East of High Street including the Harbours

Sites and locations mentioned in this area are shown in figure 30.

The medieval harbour at Belhaven

Documentary evidence shows that Belhaven (**fig 1**) was the town's main harbour from the twelfth until the sixteenth century.[328] The twelfth-century account that mentions *Aberlessic* referred to earlier (*see* p 12) does so in connection with an account of the punishment of St Kentigern's mother.[329] It describes how fish were so plentiful at the town that it was named after their stench. Saint Kentigern's mother was set adrift in a coracle and the fish followed her out into the middle of the Forth, where seamen came from foreign parts to harvest them. The story is clearly not factual but it does show that extensive fisheries in the middle of the Forth were known about in the twelfth century and that they attracted foreign vessels.

The harbour at Belhaven lay on the eastern side of the bay within an area reclaimed by the construction of a sea wall in the nineteenth century.[330] A natural rock breakwater and a line of posts were still visible in 1841 and at this time local residents also remembered the remains of a stone jetty. The harbour seems to have been in the area directly west of the village to the north of Edinburgh Road.

Post-medieval harbours at Dunbar

It was possible to land at the castle's seagate, as Alexander Ramsay demonstrated during the siege of 1338.[331] It would also have been possible to beach a small boat on the sandy shore to the east of the promontory at Lamerhaven, but the approach was dangerous and exposed. A French visitor to Dunbar in 1548 commented that a harbour could easily be built but one was not provided until 1574, when revenues from imported goods, which were already being taken ashore there, were requisitioned for the purpose.[332] It is likely that the earliest harbour consisted of a causeway between Lamer Island and the shore to provide protection from northerly winds, and the curved east pier, which would have been essential to provide protection from easterly winds.

Following his victory at the battle of Dunbar in 1650, Cromwell's parliament donated £300 towards the building of a new harbour.[333] This resulted in the construction of Broad Haven and the Old Harbour, largely as we see them today and as surveyed by Roy in 1750 (**figs 5 & 15**).[334] Several

types of masonry are evident in the 'B'-listed harbour walls relating to these two phases of construction. Numerous repairs have also been conducted, usually following storms.[335] A lower wharf inside the curved pier was built in 1761 for unloading coal.[336]

A battery was built on Lamer Island in 1781, principally to protect the town from privateers during the later stages of the American War of Independence.[337] It has a rounded seaward front designed to deflect artillery and is fitted with several embrasures for heavy guns. In later times the structure was used as an isolation hospital and for invalids returning from the First World War.[338] The structure has been listed category 'B'.

Victoria Harbour was constructed from granite in 1842 by building a sea wall that linked the two rocky outcrops with a quay along the shore. An entrance was later created to the Old Harbour and is spanned by a hand-operated wrought-iron, two-leaf bascule bridge.[339]

Victoria Street, which runs from the northern end of High Street to the Old Harbour, was formerly called Cat's Row (**fig 23**) or Sea Port and the buildings lining it are relatively late.[340] Number 1–2 is of early to mid-nineteenth-century date and further south is a mid-nineteenth-century terrace with carriage pends.[341] All these buildings have been listed category 'B'. Towards the harbour are three twentieth-century developments, including one by Sir Basil Spence, the architect of Coventry Cathedral.[342] Some earlier buildings survive amidst these; such as the 'C(S)'-listed nineteenth-century Volunteer Arms.[343] There are still some light industrial yards as there were in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as a herring curing yard depicted in the plan for Victoria Harbour.

The eighteenth-century Customs House (**fig 16**) formerly stood at the foot of Victoria Street, until it was demolished in 1954 to make way for the modern Custom House Square development.[344] It would seem that the demolished building was founded directly onto terraced rock.[345] Adjoining is a redevelopment of a former granary. No archaeological excavation has been undertaken around the harbours or along Victoria Street.

High Street plots

High Street has formed the main axis of Dunbar from the time of the earliest map and narrow rectangular plots were laid out on either side (**fig 2**).[346] Castle/Church Street would have originated either as a back lane running behind the plots, or may possibly have functioned as an early thoroughfare in its own right. This organisation ensured that the plots were substantial, with room for growing vegetables, keeping animals, constructing buildings or light industry to the rear, but also had access to the street. Examination of historic maps (**fig 22**) shows that the plots on the east side of the street are constricted in length towards the south, where High Street turns towards Church Street. The sequence of development of a town can be deduced from such

observations, as it suggests that Church Street was laid out before these plots. Another method of establishing a sequence of development from maps is to measure the width of plots. Plots were usually laid out in groups at the instigation of the burgh superior. Plots within the same group have the same width; later groups will vary slightly due to the lack of standardisation of the unit of medieval measurement, the perch or pole.[347]

To the east of High Street, the first block of plots was created at the northern end, next to Castle Park (**fig 14**). These were around 7 m wide, comfortably within the range seen in most Scottish medieval towns (for example, from 5 m in Perth to 10 m in St Andrews) and around 80 m in length. The width persists until the currently vacant 'B'-graded St George Hotel (*no* 69 High Street), where the plots increase to around 11 m.

The rears of these plots are markedly more developed than their counterparts on the opposite side of the road, a trend that was already apparent by 1750 (**fig 5**).[348] The creation of the harbour in the sixteenth century would have created demand for land in the closest backlands, on which to build structures such as warehouses and workshops.

The second phase of plot creation can be seen to stretch from *nos* 69–41 High Street (**fig 14**). Many of these plot frontages had been subdivided by 1830, although the backlands still exhibit the original layout.[349] The plot at *no* 41 High Street is irregular and contains a row of buildings running at right angles to the street. This arrangement commonly occurs at the edge of plot development and implies the presence of a lane here at some point. The 'B'-graded frontage building is likely to be eighteenth-century.[350]

The next group of plots stretched from *nos* 39 to 21 High Street (**fig 14**), which is bordered by a wide lane to the south, again corroborating that this was the edge of the town at some point.[351] As High Street curves to the east the plots are shortened due to the presence of Church Street, which must have existed before they were created. They were around 8 m wide, although the plots are not so well preserved as further north.

Further south, as the available room between High Street and Church Street decreases, the plots widen to over 21 m. Further development along the East Links occurred between 1750 and 1799.[352]

High Street buildings and excavations

Most of the buildings on High Street appear to be eighteenth-century, although the villas at the south end and a few others are of later date.[353] However, most are harled or refaced and it is difficult to ascertain whether any may be, at least partly, older. Certainly the category 'A'-listed townhouse or tolbooth is likely to be late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century, as are many small simple buildings which survive in the backlands.[354] The category 'B'-listed frontage of *nos* 137–39 High Street consists of a possibly seventeenth-century building set some 4 m back from the usual line and obscured by a

single-storey extension added in 1916.[355] Encroachment into the street is a ubiquitous feature of post-medieval development in Scotland's towns and this building's concrete facing may mask aspects of an even earlier structure.

To the immediate north, the buildings from *nos* 141 to 157 High Street have been refaced as part of last century's Dunbar Improvement Scheme, but are likely to be modern.[356] An inscription dates the bank at *no* 95 High Street to 1907, and the building at *nos* 101–03 High Street is very similar in style. Neighbouring 'C(S)'-listed *no* 105 High Street appears to be nineteenth-century in date, and is currently occupied by a bank. A plaque at *nos* 119–25 High Street indicates that these buildings were 'improved' in the 1920s.

There has been no archaeological work within the area of primary development on this side of High Street. An evaluation at *nos* 37–39 High Street encountered up to a metre of midden deposits containing later medieval pottery, shellfish remains and butchered animal bone at the rear of the plot. A subsequent watching brief recorded the foundations of post-medieval buildings on the High Street frontage.[357] A little to the south at *no* 19 High Street an evaluation encountered medieval deposits.[358] Remains of buildings were also recorded but these all dated to the post-medieval period. The excavator concluded that this area lay outside the medieval town, and was developed only in the post-medieval period. At *no* 5 High Street an evaluation encountered only modern deposits above subsoil.[359]

The townhouse or former tolbooth (**figs 13 & 18**) at the junction of Silver Street and High Street is well preserved and thought to date to the early seventeenth, or just possibly late sixteenth century.[360] The market cross has been relocated to the front and is something of an amalgam, with four carved

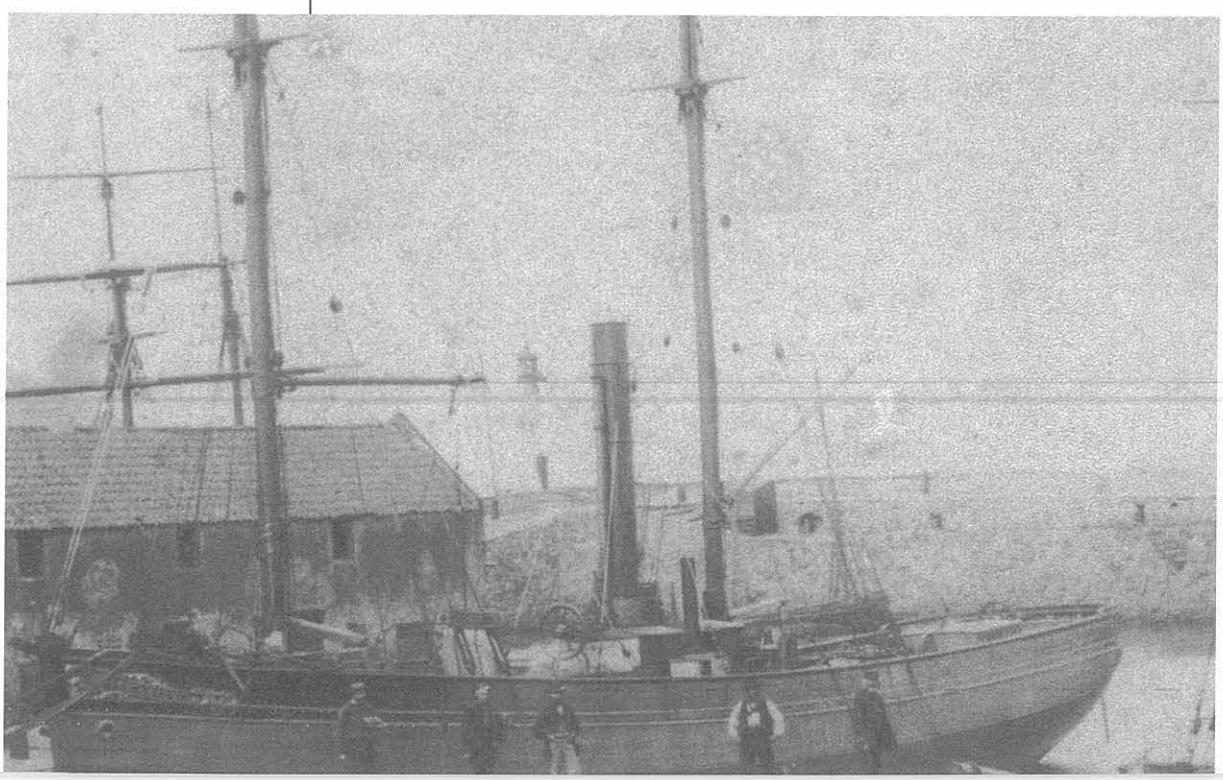


FIGURE 25
MacArthur's Store in the nineteenth century.
(By courtsey of Dr D Anderson and Dunbar and District History Society)

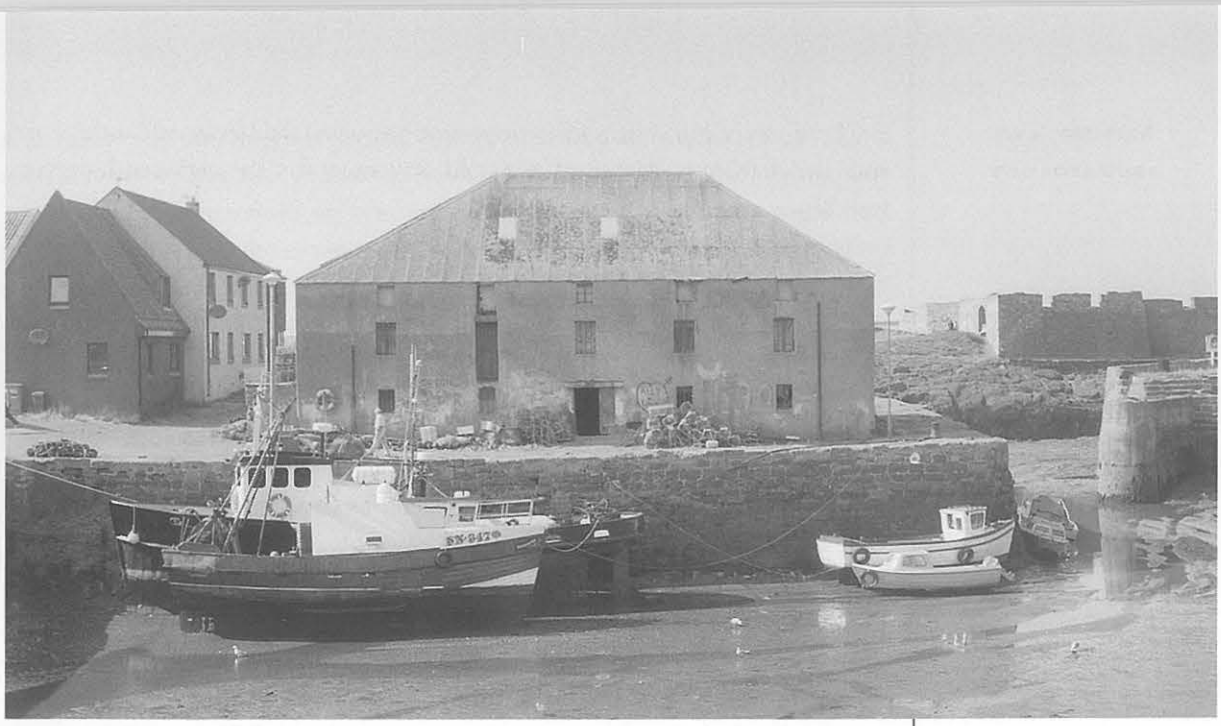


FIGURE 26
MacArthur's Store, 2002.

heads rescued from a demolished building elsewhere in town and stuck onto its shaft.

The exposed southern wall of the townhouse on Silver Street is rough and irregular compared to its rear, eastern face; suggesting that a building originally hid it from view. It seems likely that the street was created by the clearance of a former plot. This would have occurred after the survey for General Roy's map in 1750 (**fig 5**), which shows a route to the harbour on the line of Cossar's Wynd rather than Silver Street.[361] From the same plan it appears that Colvin Street was created after this date. Both these streets are apparent on Wood's plan of 1830 (**fig 22**) and they may have been formed at the same time.[362] Cut diagonally across the seaward slope, Colvin Street would have made it much easier for heavily laden carts to reach and leave the harbour. That Silver Street meets it suggests that the two functioned together. On Wood's map Colvin Street is referred to as Coffin Street, and Cossar's Wynd as Crow's Wynd.

East of Castle Street

Development to the east of Castle Street does not exhibit the medieval plot pattern. The harbour was not built at Dunbar until the sixteenth century and it is likely that all the development portrayed on early maps of this area dates to the post-medieval period. Lamer Street is not depicted on eighteenth-century maps but is on the plan produced by Wood, although much of its southern length remained undeveloped. Modern development has now intruded onto the line of Colvin (Coffin) Street and it has been diverted to meet Lamer Street at a right angle.

Much twentieth-century development has occurred between Castle Street and the harbour. Many of the old seventeenth- or eighteenth-century warehouses and industrial buildings must have fallen into disuse as Dunbar's traditional industries declined. One of the best preserved is the 'B'-listed three-storey Spott's Granary, also known as MacArthur's Store (**figs 25 & 26**), built in the early eighteenth century and latterly a warehouse.[363] It is now used by local fishermen and enjoys a prominent position overlooking the Old Harbour. Other old buildings have been renovated and converted into flats. At the Dreadnought Warehouse on Lamer Street (**fig 20**) this was accompanied by archaeological building recording.[364] The work uncovered evidence suggesting that the building was constructed as a maltings in the eighteenth century and used as a warehouse in the nineteenth century. It was converted into a lodging house by the turn of the nineteenth century, which was dilapidated by 1929 and then it was used as a theatre to service Dunbar's growing tourist population. The history of this individual building reflects the changing fortunes and industries of the town as a whole.

A stable and warehouse to the north of the Assembly Rooms were recorded prior to development and trial trenching was carried out to the rear.[365] This established that some buildings existed in the area prior to Wood's map of 1830. Work in the backlands encountered a drystone wall beneath around a metre of loam containing modern finds. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map shows a planned garden comprising square planting beds in this area and it is possible that the wall defined one of these.[366] It was faced on one side and the interior would have been filled with soil and planted. The results are consistent with this site being at the fringes of post-medieval development associated with the harbour. The 'B'-listed Assembly Rooms were built in 1822.

Further south on the frontage opposite *no* 18 Church Street an evaluation was carried out in 1996.[367] This established that pre-fifteenth-century midden tips were present. The excavators concluded that this was probably the result of rubbish disposal on the fringes of the medieval burgh. No evidence of post-medieval development was encountered and correspondingly on Wood's plan of 1830 the area is shown within a field. A watching brief on the excavation of a sewer trench in Woodbush Brae recorded the presence of a preserved ground surface but no medieval remains.[368] The fact that no early remains survived, but an old ground surface did, confirms that this area was outside the boundaries of the medieval town.

Although most of the buildings in this area were at least originally built for industrial purposes there are some dwellings, such as the 'B'-listed eighteenth-century row of buildings at *nos* 1–7 Shore Street, also known as Old Harbour.[369]

Area 3: West of High Street including the church and friary

Sites and locations mentioned in this area are shown in figure 30

Early settlement

As discussed in Area 2, the northern plots on either side of High Street are the earliest in the town (**fig 14**). On the west side of the street these are only 65 m in length and appear to have been constrained to the west by a boundary. There is no reason topographically why this should be the case and it suggests that an earlier boundary must have existed here. It is likely that the first block of properties developed in tandem with those on the other side of the street and they are also around 7 m in width. Further south the plots are constrained to the west by the curving precinct boundary of the Trinitarian friary (**fig 2**), which should therefore be of earlier date. There is a considerable drop in height between the back of the High Street plots and the friary grounds but it appears from the examination of old photographs (**fig 11**) that this has been much exaggerated by modern development. Again it seems that this curving boundary was not influenced by natural topography and must therefore predate the laying out of High Street plots.

The examination of maps suggests that this earlier boundary may extend further to the south. Beyond the possible boundary of a medieval hospital (*see* p 21) the precinct may continue as a rounded field boundary (**fig 14**). The modern street plan also contains fossilised boundaries that suggest a western edge. This, combined with the constrained plots at the northern end of High Street, suggests that earlier settlement existed immediatly west of the medieval plots. The somewhat illogical position of High Street itself, on the very edge of a steeply sloping ridge and therefore in an awkward position with regard to building on its eastern plots, also suggests that existing features may have constrained its position and forced it closer to the shore than practical. Given Dunbar's history, this early settlement seems likely to have been part of the Dark Age *urbs regis*. The circular nature of the larger suggested boundary has most in common with Early Christian monastic enclosures found throughout the British Isles; examples in Scotland include Whithorn and Hoddom, both in Dumfries and Galloway.[370] The size of the suggested enclosure at Dunbar is some 14 ha, which is larger than both the Scottish examples but is smaller than some Irish sites.[371] These enclosures characteristically have several levels of division, with progressively smaller inner boundaries defining increasingly sacred spaces.[372] The inner enclosures contain the church and cemetery; the surrounds housed settlement and industrial areas. The discovery of an Early Christian enclosure associated with the royal centre at Dunbar would be of national importance and highlighting this possibility is a key feature of this study. However, only new archaeological discoveries could confirm its existence or otherwise.

The friary

The only extensive archaeological works within this putative early settlement were evaluations within the Trinitarian friary. The friary is thought to have been founded in 1240–48 by Countess Cristiana de Brus.[373] It was a small house probably with one prior aided by three priest-brethren.[374] All that remains is the central tower of the church (**fig 11**), converted into a dovecot following the Reformation and now protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Other remnants in the backlands of High Street may also relate to the friary (*see* p 21). The dovecot was probably used as part of the eighteenth-century Friarscroft Steading, which survives to the north-west and also contains an octagonal horsemill, originally used to thresh grain (**fig. 30**). Modern supermarkets, flats, car-parks and landscaping now occupy the area.

The boundary between the former precinct and High Street plots is maintained by two sandstone rubble walls roughly 1 m apart, creating a lane formerly called Friars' Walk. However, the walls contain several different builds and the stretch likely to have the greatest antiquity is visible between the two supermarkets (**fig 12**). The eastern wall forms the rear of the High Street plots and has regular blocked doorways. The western wall is in a fairly ruinous state and has a rounded projection to the west. It was not possible to examine these closely but it is worth noting that the build and style of the eastern wall was similar to a wall fragment seen to the rear of *no* 148 High Street (*see* below), and it could be a substantial fragment of post-medieval town wall. It is certainly earlier than a wall to the rear of *no* 34 High Street, which abuts it, and this is also the proposed southern limit for the second phase of plot creation (**fig 14**).

Trial excavations were carried out in 1981 and again in 1987 in advance of supermarket and housing developments respectively.[375] The former uncovered a largely intact fifteenth- or sixteenth-century ceramic tiled floor inside the church and a cemetery, but none of the ancillary buildings that would be expected. This led the excavator to suggest that the friary was founded within an earlier church, a suggestion that offers an explanation for the relationship between the plots and the friary grounds. If this were the case it might imply that the parish church was constructed on prominent ground (**fig 15**) to the south of the town following the foundation of the friary in the thirteenth century. There is, however, a tradition that the parish church was founded on the site of a pre-existing church. The situation of churches in prominent places is a feature of Scottish towns and may provide a rationale behind this decision.[376] The location of the friary is the antithesis of this preference as it is located in a dip overshadowed by High Street. Later excavations were undertaken to the west of the friary church and established a likely boundary for the cemetery in this direction.[377]

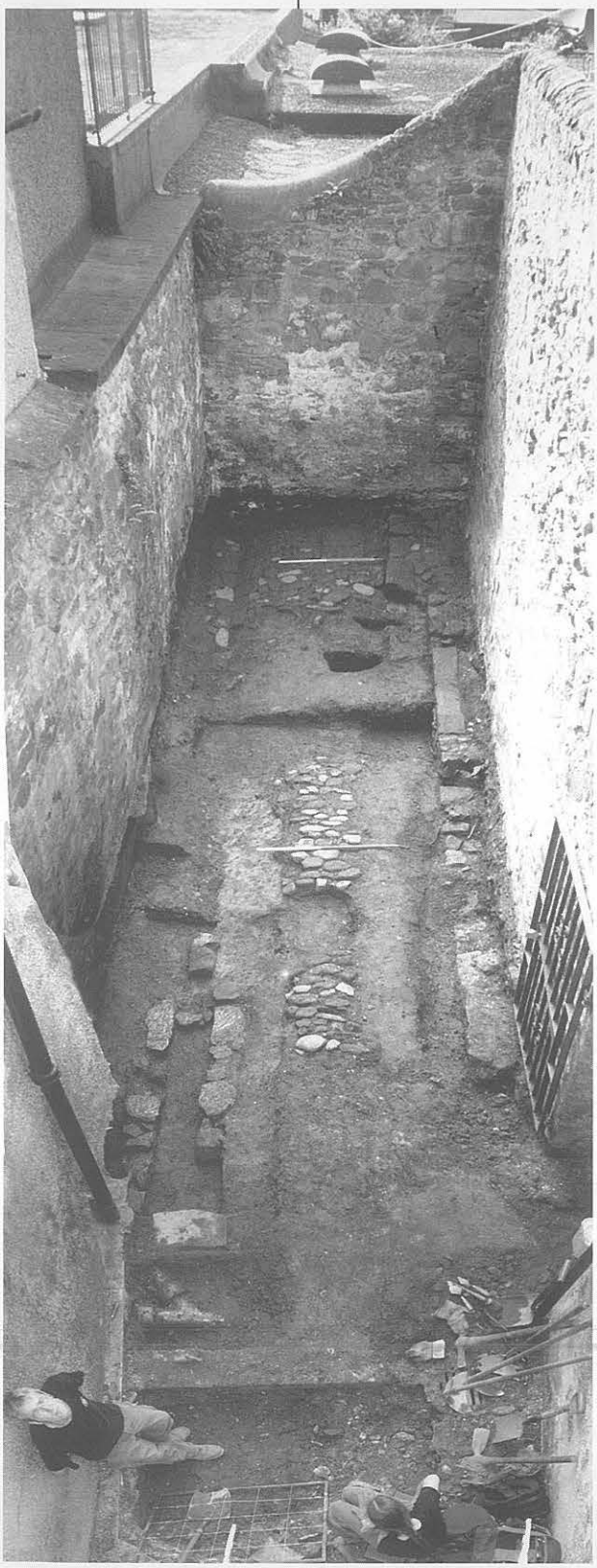
High Street plots and excavations

The primary block of medieval plot development stretches from the northern end of High Street to *no* 62 High Street (**fig 14**). Excluding the 'B'-listed St Anne's Church, designed by R Rowand Andersson and built in 1889–90, the majority of buildings within this are of eighteenth-century date, with a small number dating to the earlier nineteenth century.[378] However, several backland structures are likely to be of seventeenth-century origin, for example a 'B'-listed structure to the rear of *nos* 102–04 High Street. In general, the backlands are much less developed than those on the harbour side of town, although some modern development has occurred to the rear of *nos* 106–20 High Street. The rear wall of the plot at *nos* 146–48 High Street appears to be older than those to both north and south. It has a blocked doorway and its build is consistent with a post-medieval date. It stands to a height of around 3 m and it may be a remnant of the town wall. That none of the properties aligned along West Port have associated backlands suggests that this frontage did not develop until relatively late.

Trial excavations were undertaken to the rear of *nos* 136–40 High Street in 2002.[379] Towards the rear of the plot the sequence began with an old ground surface, which had been sealed by 0.2 m of clean sand. No finds were recovered from either of these deposits. A shallow ditch was cut into the sand to define the edge of a medieval burgage plot. In the trench closest to Lawson Place a large ditch respecting the line of the present road cut through the clean sand. The surviving part was only 0.2 m deep and over 0.8 m wide. The foundation for a wall on the same alignment was seen 1 m to the east. A human skull, found in the base of the ditch, may originally have come from the tenth- to fourteenth-century graveyard located a short distance to the north. Up to 1.3 m of loam sealed both ditches and was found to contain frequent medieval pottery in its upper part but very little in its lower. A possible later town wall was built at the rear of the plots on top of this deep medieval layer. Towards the front of the plot the deep layer thinned out considerably as the underlying sand and gravel subsoil rose. Here, the remains of early floor surfaces and the bases of pits were discovered directly under modern tarmac. One of the early pits contained unglazed white gritty pottery dating to the twelfth or thirteenth century.

Deep medieval soils have been recorded in many of Scotland's towns and the origin of these has recently been discussed in relation to St Andrews.[380] They have traditionally been viewed as a 'garden soil', imported in bulk into cultivated backlands and increasing through the addition of manure. However, it is equally possible that they represent the remains of turf-and-timber buildings in formerly developed areas of a town, rendered visually homogenous by the processes of decay and biological mixing. The observation that pottery was more common in the upper part of the deep deposit encountered during this evaluation suggests that it is more likely to

FIGURE 27
Excavations to the rear of John Muir's House, 2002. *(By courtesy of Headland Archaeology Ltd)*



have accumulated gradually rather than being the result of deliberate dumping. In this model, the preservation of stratified deposits at the frontage would be predicted because of the presence of stone structures such as floors, preventing the normal processes of biological mixing. This conclusion leads to a very different picture of the medieval town, as a tightly packed and developed area with buildings infilling the backlands rather than being occupied by vegetable plots and stock-pens.

In the post-medieval period many of the plots did become gardens, as shown by 0.5 m of topsoil containing finds dating to the eighteenth or nineteenth century sealing the medieval deposits. This is confirmed by historic maps. The origin of the sand deposit near the bottom of the sequence is unknown, and it did not appear to be a natural accumulation. It is possible that it originated as upcast from the digging of the ditch or could even be the base of an associated rampart. The early town wall was cut into this sand and it is not known if it accompanied the ditch. The discovery of this wall is a surprise as it is not mentioned historically, and it has always been assumed that Dunbar had no wall until the post-medieval one mentioned in documents was built (*see* p 30).

Immediately to the west a watching brief was undertaken on the excavation of service trenches in the grounds of the Day Centre on Lawson Place.[381] These did not extend very deep but the presence of a lower loam beneath modern topsoil was established. To the north at *no* 2 Westgate a watching brief on the excavation of foundation trenches encountered a cultivation soil, with pottery ranging in date from late medieval to modern.[382] Within the grounds of the manse on Bayswell Road two evaluations encountered evidence for medieval cultivation.[383] These results are consistent with all of the sites formerly occupying cultivated land on the fringes of the medieval town.

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken

beneath the floor within *nos* 126–28 High Street, the category 'B'-listed mid-eighteenth-century birthplace of John Muir.[384] This established that no archaeological remains survived beneath the building's modern concrete floor. The level of the building had been lowered by cutting into the underlying sand and gravel, removing any earlier remains. However, to the immediate rear of the frontage building around 0.5 m of medieval deposits survived. These comprised the walls of buildings, a cobbled surface and a boundary ditch (**fig 27**).

The second block of medieval plot development runs from *nos* 62 to 36 High Street, with a probable original width of around 11 m, although, like those on the opposite side of the street, many have been subsequently subdivided. Further south the properties are irregular and their backlands are shown as an undivided area occupied by trees on Wood's map of 1830.[385]

An evaluation behind the property at *nos* 40–44 High Street revealed up to 3 m of homogenous soil containing twelfth- to fifteenth-century pottery at the rear of the plot.[386] A drystone plot boundary wall associated with twelfth- to fourteenth-century pottery was also discovered. The excavators suggested that the deep soil had been dumped rather than accumulated and represented levelling. However, as discussed above, an alternative explanation is possible.

Further south on the site of a former garage to the rear of *no* 32 High Street an evaluation encountered around 3 m of deposits.[387] The upper 2 m comprised sandstone rubble, probably representing levelling prior to modern construction. The lower metre comprised a homogenous loam, which contained only one sherd of twelfth- to fifteenth-century pottery. The lack of medieval artefacts compared to the sites further north suggests that the site was not incorporated in medieval backlands and lay outside the town.

High Street

The orientation and position of High Street itself is worthy of note. As it appears today it occupies the flat summit of a north-to-south aligned ridge with a fairly gentle slope to the west, except where exaggerated at the old friary grounds, and a more pronounced one to the east. Of course, the topography as seen today masks the original slopes. This is particularly obvious in the vertical drop between the High Street plots and the friary. The division and occupation of the western High Street plots seems to have led to a general levelling of ground within them, with deep deposits either accumulating or being dumped at the rear and eventually reaching the approximate level of the frontage. To the east of the street little archaeological work has been undertaken in the backlands but a more pronounced slope still survives. The street has not been laid out to lead from castle to church in the classic medieval manner. In fact, the street strikes towards the headland that was the focus of the earlier Iron Age and Anglian forts.

Beneath High Street itself only one piece of archaeological work has been

FIGURE 28
Excavation of gravestones under High Street, 1998. *(By courtesy of the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service)*

undertaken.[388] During pavement-widening works, fragments of decorated medieval gravestones were noticed and a limited programme of excavation and recording was carried out (**fig 28**). It was discovered that clay road surfaces containing medieval pottery survived at a depth of 0.5 m below the modern tarmac. One of the medieval surfaces was flush with the top of a large sandstone grave marker incised with crosses and swords. The marker had been laid within a shallow trench running at right angles across the street and there was no associated grave. The trench had been cut into dark red silty sand and a lower hard, dark black silty clay, which had the appearance of midden, although no artefacts were recovered from it. The shallow trench was seen to continue across the road to the west, where another grave marker was visible. A line of grave markers running across the street has not been recorded in any other medieval town but seems most likely to have functioned as a boundary marker; this interpretation is strengthened because

it occurs at the predicted edge of primary plot development (**fig 14**). The presence of undated midden deposits at a depth of 1 m below the modern street level is surprising.

The Maison Dieu or medieval hospital

At the south end of High Street the place-name Maidendew is a corruption of *Maison Dieu*, which was the name of the town's medieval hospital.[389] This is likely to have been run by the Trinitarian friars, whose Order was founded with the principal aim of raising funds for the release of Christian hostages captured during the Crusades.[390] The discovery of a hoard of 'medals' bearing the inscription 'Judea Captiva' during eighteenth-century construction of the Freemasons' Lodge immediately to the north supports this connection.[391] The hospital had previously been thought to lie within Ashfield to the west of the parish church.[392] However, on early maps of the town a sub-rectangular area to the north occupied by trees seems a more likely candidate in terms of shape (**fig.22**). It also contains the house known as Viewfield, again a corruption of 'Dieu', and the modern Maidendew.[393] Apart from Viewfield the major buildings within the precinct are of recent construction. A small derelict structure located in the north-western corner of the area, within the Viewfield gardens and visible from the driveway to the west, may be earlier as it predates boundary walls to the north and south. It is a rubble-built sandstone structure with a pitched roof and window. Unfortunately, only one side was visible and close inspection was not possible. However, the form of the building is consistent with a lectern dovecot. A medieval hospital may well have included a dovecot to provide a cheap source of food.

The status of the area to the north is also open to question. It stretches from Viewfield to the edge of secondary plot development and was shown as undivided by Wood in 1830. The opposite side of the street was divided into the expected plots and it must be assumed that this area could not be divided into properties. The area is still known as Abbeylands and it may be that the Trinitarians also owned this ground. In this event the 'Judea Captiva' medals noted above would have been found in part of the friary grounds.

The parish church

The parish church is visible throughout the town from its elevated position on a slight knoll (**fig 15**). A parish church is first documented toward the end of the twelfth century and it was granted collegiate status in the first half of the fourteenth century.[394] Extensive repairs were carried out towards the end of the eighteenth century but by 1818 it was decided to demolish the old church entirely (**fig 10**) and build a replacement on the same site (*see* p 60 for details).[395] Following a fire in 1987 the interior was completely refurbished and little remains of the earlier interior apart from an impressive tomb built for George Home around 1610.[396] It was recorded that during the nineteenth-

century alterations several sculptured stones were found in the building's foundations, which were thought to relate to a 'Saxon church of the eleventh century'.[397] Several tombs were also said to have been disturbed near the communion table and in the body of the church. One in particular is of considerable interest. During the most recent rebuilding works within the church, a tomb was found in front of what was the location of the Hume memorial until 1877, on the east wall of the church. The tomb was empty except for a disturbed female body covered in lead. This was seen by a number of interested parties and deemed to be medieval. In all probablility, the tomb had been made for a person of significance, but was not used. On the moving of the memorial in 1877 the medieval body was probably disturbed and subsequently placed in the empty tomb. It remains there still.[398]

The graveyard of the church has been expanded to the south. It was decided in 1872 that the graveyard was becoming overfull. Five years later, Dunbar Cemetery controlled the expansion and supervision of the cemetery.[399] The former boundary can still be seen, although it was in effect demolished around 1898, its position most obviously indicated by a building once used as a watch house against potential grave robbers, and photographed intact in 1955. On its west side, a seventeenth-century roll-moulded doorway into the cemetery can still be seen.[400] The demolition of the old wall was followed by extending the graveyard southwards, as the New Cemetery. The oldest memorials are within the original graveyard to the north of the doorway and the most notable is a late seventeenth-century wall tomb for William Edington in the western boundary, with Ionic columns and an angel blowing the last trumpet.[401] The effects of weathering on the mainly sandstone headstones can be seen throughout the graveyard. Immediately south of the example noted above is a much smaller memorial of probable seventeenth-century date with its skull and crossbones *memento mori* barely visible. A photograph in NMRS shows two parts of a medieval calvary cross-slab re-used as headstones, one dated to 1604. The entrance to the graveyard was moved in the nineteenth century and blocking at the north-east corner near the roadway marks its original position.[402]

During grave digging near the south-west corner of the church a sandstone long cist was discovered in the 1920s.[403] The body was accompanied by a complete pot of local white gritty ware. This appears to be of thirteenth- or fourteenth-century date, and it was noted that the practice of burying pots, frequently containing holy water or incense, was common in France from the twelfth to seventeenth centuries.[404] The first recorded French presence in Dunbar was in 1385 when an expeditionary force landed there and at Leith to assist the Scots against the English, and it is tempting to connect the two. During the Castle Park excavations it was noted as surprising that no identifiably French artefacts were found in association with the forts they occupied and their presence, although documented, could not be established

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396 McWilliam, *Lothian*, 181

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398 We are greatly indebted to Mr John McNie and Mr Stephen Bunyan for their discussions on this point

399 We are indebted to Mr Stephen Bunyan for this information

400 McWilliam, *Lothian*, 183

401 McWilliam, *Lothian*, 183

402 Wood, *Plan of Dunbar from actual survey*; Ordnance Survey 1854 (surveyed 1853) *Haddingtonshire*, Sheet 6, 1:10560

403 J G Callander, 'An earthenware pot found in a grave at Dunbar, East Lothian, and three short cists discovered on the golf-course there', *PSAS*, 56 (1921–22), 27–9

404 Callander, 'An earthenware pot', 27–9

405 Perry, *Castle Park, Dunbar*, 321

4 *Archaeological potential of Dunbar*

Area 1: Castle Park and Dunbar (Lauderdale) House

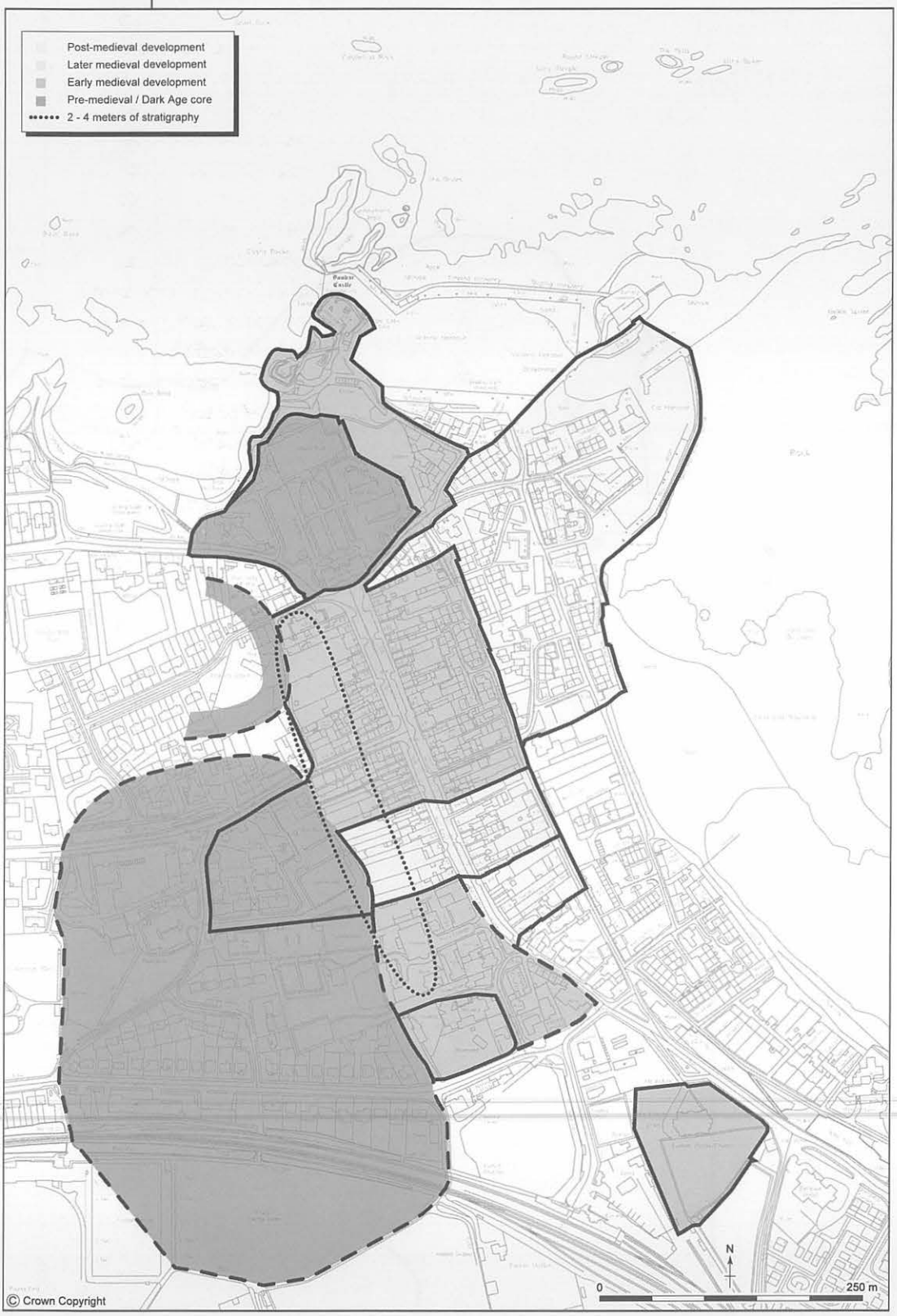
Castle Park occupies the promontory immediately north of High Street. Archaeological investigations (**fig 6**) have shown that it contained a settlement from the Iron Age to the Dark Ages. From the tenth century the southern part was used as an extensive cemetery. The medieval castle was located at the very edge of the promontory, although its outer works enclosed the headland occupied by the Iron Age and Dark Age forts. Thus the headland has remained largely free from urban development. The lack of later disturbance has resulted in a remarkably complete sequence of development preserved in sub-surface archaeological remains and the fabric of standing buildings.

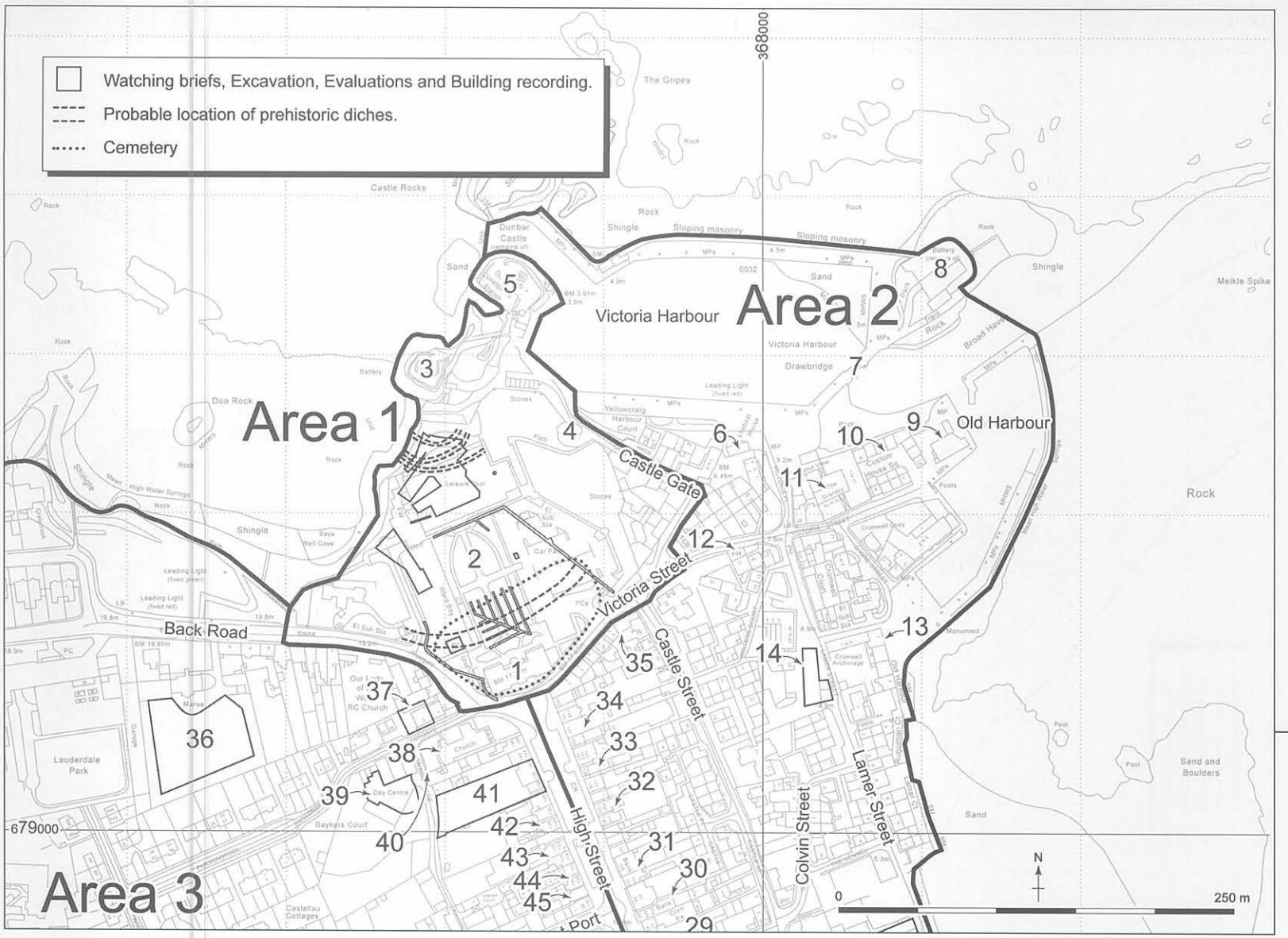
It is unlikely that archaeological remains survive beneath Dunbar House (**fig 19**) as it is cellared, and there has been extensive landscaping associated with it. The construction of barracks and other army activities will have destroyed or damaged remains elsewhere. The archaeological excavations preceding the construction of the swimming pool from 1987 to 1989 did not entirely remove all the remains here, and more survive beneath the current building, as is the case with the toilets to the south. Much of this area is now part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument in recognition of the national importance of its archaeological remains. These will comprise the infilled bases of defensive ditches, house foundations, drains, courtyards and burials.

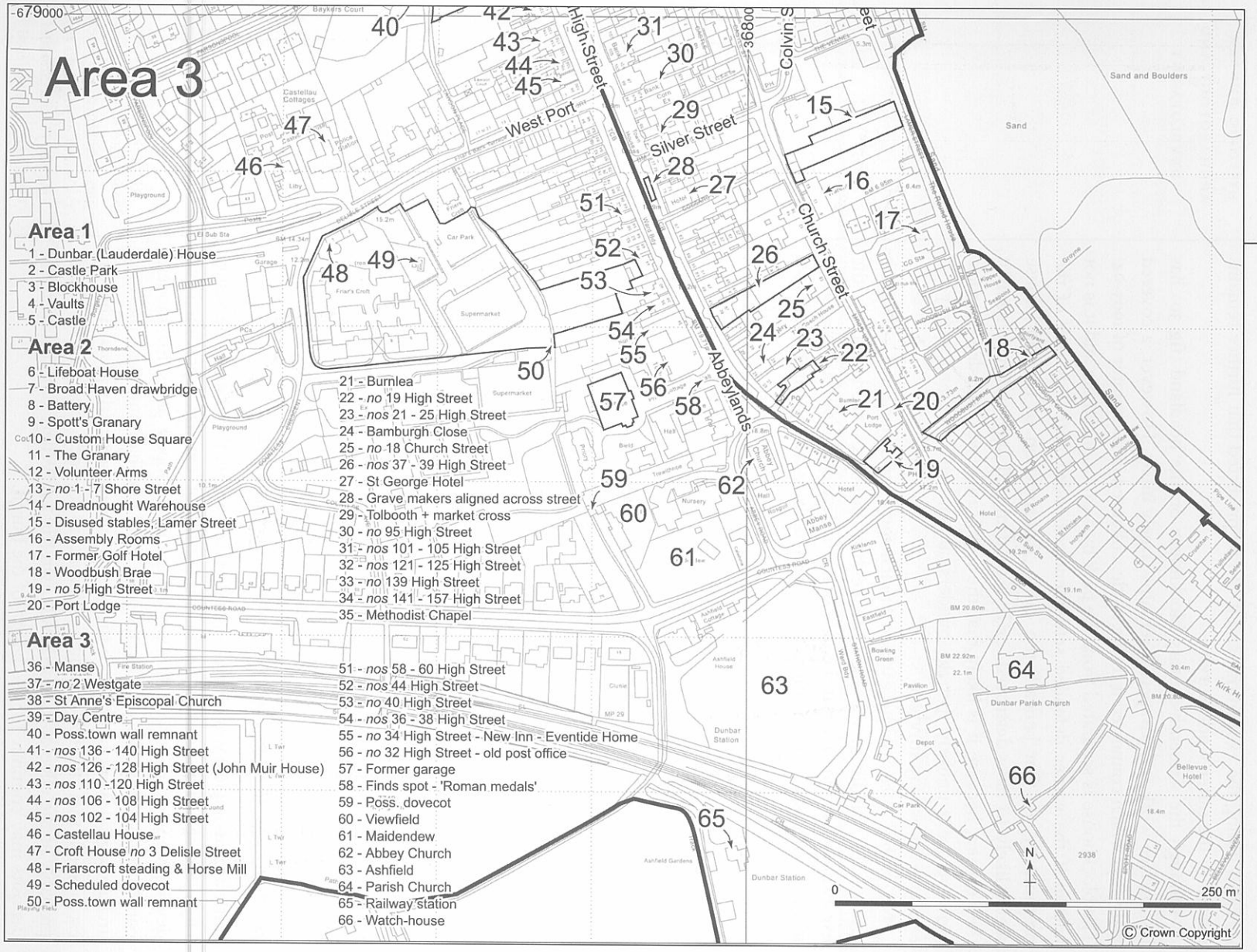
It was noted during the excavations that midden material was not common and it seems likely that it was tipped over the edges of the promontory. As a result, midden accumulations may be preserved around the foot of the slope to the west and east. Much disturbance has been caused by the construction of Victoria Harbour and buildings to the east, but pockets of archaeology may survive. There is no obvious source of disturbance to the west, but here the slope is steeper and any accumulations may have been subject to sea erosion. This would not be the case within the pronounced dip between the blockhouse and Castle Park, which appears a likely spot for the survival of tipped deposits.

The ruinous remains of the castle (**fig 9**) are not accessible and are in a precarious position. Although most relate to the rebuilding of 1500, earlier fragments do survive. In particular, a large section of masonry can be seen built into a cleft in the rock behind the Harbour Master's Office in Victoria Harbour, which has been recorded as pre-fourteenth century in origin. The base of the medieval curtain wall, ancillary buildings and courtyards were

FIGURE 29
Colour-coded town plan, indicating the archaeological potential of Dunbar


Post-medieval development
Later medieval development
Early medieval development
Pre-medieval / Dark Age core
2 - 4 meters of stratigraphy
N
0
250 m
© Crown Copyright


Watching briefs, Excavation, Evaluations and Building recording.
Probable location of prehistoric diches.
Cemetery
368000
679000
Area 1
Area 2
Area 3
Victoria Harbour
Old Harbour
Castle Gate
Victoria Street
Castle Street
High Street
Back Road
Lamer Street
Colvin Street
Dunbar Castle (remains of)
Doo Rock
Lauderdale Park
Baykers Court
Castellau Cottages
Sand and Boulders
Meikle Spike
0
250 m
N


Area 3
679000
368000
High Street
West Port
Silver Street
Church Street
Abbeylands
Colvin S
Sand and Boulders
Sand
Dunbar Station
Dunbar Parish Church
Bellevue Hotel
Abbey Manse
Ashfield
Ashfield House
Ashfield Cottage
Ashfield Gardens
Castellau Cottages
Baykers Court
Friar's Croft
Countess Road
Kirk Hi
Area 1
1 - Dunbar (Lauderdale) House
2 - Castle Park
3 - Blockhouse
4 - Vaults
5 - Castle
Area 2
6 - Lifeboat House
7 - Broad Haven drawbridge
8 - Battery
9 - Spott's Granary
10 - Custom House Square
11 - The Granary
12 - Volunteer Arms
13 - no 1 - 7 Shore Street
14 - Dreadnought Warehouse
15 - Disused stables, Lamer Street
16 - Assembly Rooms
17 - Former Golf Hotel
18 - Woodbush Brae
19 - no 5 High Street
20 - Port Lodge
21 - Burnlea
22 - no 19 High Street
23 - nos 21 - 25 High Street
24 - Bamburgh Close
25 - no 18 Church Street
26 - nos 37 - 39 High Street
27 - St George Hotel
28 - Grave makers aligned across street
29 - Tolbooth + market cross
30 - no 95 High Street
31 - nos 101 - 105 High Street
32 - nos 121 - 125 High Street
33 - no 139 High Street
34 - nos 141 - 157 High Street
35 - Methodist Chapel
Area 3
36 - Manse
37 - no 2 Westgate
38 - St Anne's Episcopal Church
39 - Day Centre
40 - Poss.town wall remnant
41 - nos 136 - 140 High Street
42 - nos 126 - 128 High Street (John Muir House)
43 - nos 110 -120 High Street
44 - nos 106 - 108 High Street
45 - nos 102 - 104 High Street
46 - Castellau House
47 - Croft House no 3 Delisle Street
48 - Friarscroft steading & Horse Mill
49 - Scheduled dovecot
50 - Poss.town wall remnant
51 - nos 58 - 60 High Street
52 - nos 44 High Street
53 - no 40 High Street
54 - nos 36 - 38 High Street
55 - no 34 High Street - New Inn - Eventide Home
56 - no 32 High Street - old post office
57 - Former garage
58 - Finds spot - 'Roman medals'
59 - Poss. dovecot
60 - Viewfield
61 - Maidendew
62 - Abbey Church
63 - Ashfield
64 - Parish Church
65 - Railway station
66 - Watch-house
N
0
250 m
© Crown Copyright

revealed during the excavations and it can be predicted that further remains related to the outer works survive.

Although the sixteenth-century blockhouse on the headland (**fig 30**) has lost its face-work and parapets it remains largely intact. However, a covered walkway, which connected it to the castle, collapsed in the winter of 1993–94. The blockhouse is separated from the park by a pronounced dip and it is not known if the earlier defended settlements extended onto this part of the promontory, or that beneath the castle. Construction of the blockhouse seems likely to have destroyed, or at least damaged, any earlier remains if they existed, because it is likely that the fortification was founded on rock. However, it is unlikely that the builders cut into the rock and deeply cut earlier features may survive.

No visible traces of the earthen French fort constructed in Castle Park around the middle of the sixteenth century now survive. However, the excavations have shown that the base of its massive ditch does survive. Other features such as wall foundations and drains likely to date to this period have also been discovered.

The site seems to have been used sporadically in the post-medieval period as attested by the remains of a structure and possible lime kiln discovered during the excavations. These would seem to represent industrial activity, perhaps located away from other development because of noxious smells or the risk of fire. Other post-medieval remains are likely to survive elsewhere within the Scheduled Area.

Dunbar House (**fig 19**) dominates the views north from High Street. Its eighteenth-century exterior has been much altered by army use, probably most extensively by the insertion of extra windows, but most dramatically by the insertion of a stairwell in the east side. Any original interior features are also likely to have been removed at this time and residential flats now occupy the building. It would be possible to ascertain the original exterior appearance of the building but it is unlikely that many interior features survive. Aspects of the surrounding gardens, for example planting pits, are likely to survive within the Scheduled Area of Castle Park.

Area 2: East of High Street including the Harbours

Little archaeological work has been undertaken within the plots to the east of High Street. This is likely to be the result of extensive post-medieval development of backlands leaving fewer undeveloped areas for modern construction. This is especially the case near the harbours and the only archaeological work has been in the less developed southerly plots. This has established that twelfth- to fifteenth-century midden tips survive here, probably at the edge of the medieval town (**fig 14**). Where not disturbed the deposits may continue for the length of the burgh.

FIGURE 30
(previous page) Dunbar divided into three areas, with sites mentioned in the text. *(© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Historic Scotland licence no. 10001709 [2006])*

The lack of archaeological work means it is difficult to predict what depth of deposits are likely to survive within the medieval burgh on this side of High Street. Given that the street occupies a ridge the deposits may be roughly equivalent to those on the other side of the road. Here, the depth of deposits decreases markedly towards the street frontage as the underlying subsoil rises, with a corresponding increase towards the rear of the plots. The slope is always likely to have been steeper on the seaward side and material from the plots, such as midden, would always have been liable to move down the slope. If a town wall existed on this side of town, as seems to have been the case on the west, deep deposits are likely to have accumulated against it. However, there is no sharp drop between the plots and Castle Street to corroborate such a suggestion.

The closest archaeological investigation to the street frontage on this side of High Street was outside *no* 75 (**fig 30**), where a minimum of 0.5 m of medieval deposits was preserved. The original topography of the town is now masked by development and it is not clear if these substantial deposits survive within a localised dip or will be present for the length of the street and also beneath the street frontage. Further work is required before these issues can be resolved.

What is easier to assess is the above-surface remains, comprising structures and buildings dating to the post-medieval period. Although these will have damaged or destroyed earlier medieval features they constitute an important resource in their own right. Most of the buildings on High Street have been obscured by harling or facing but most appear to be eighteenth-century (**fig 21**). However, earlier seventeenth-century buildings are common in the backlands and it is possible that at least parts of the frontage buildings are earlier. In particular, the small building behind the modern extension at *no* 139 High Street (**fig 30**) maintains a frontage line, which must be close to that of the medieval period.

The ground floors of many buildings have been altered into modern shop-fronts but in general the medieval form of Dunbar has been well preserved. The appearance of High Street today is similar to that of a medieval burgh with many plot boundaries and closes surviving, although not always accessible (**fig 2**). Post-medieval development is likely to have created Silver Street and the area of High Street at the south of the town beyond *no* 41 High Street (**fig 14**).

Within the High Street plots considerable disturbance is liable to have been occasioned by modern development around Castle Place and to the rear of *no* 147 High Street. It is difficult to predict the amount of disturbance beneath these developments without knowing their foundation plans and the depth of deposits likely to be present. Given the deep deposits, which are known to have accumulated within medieval plots elsewhere in Dunbar, it should not be assumed that destruction has been total, especially on level areas or at the

foot of slopes. The former George Hotel (*no* 69 High Street), *nos* 27–29 High Street and the former Assembly Rooms at *nos* 9–13 Church Street are all cellared and any archaeological remains beneath them will have been destroyed. There are no gap sites within High Street awaiting redevelopment at the time of writing.

Between High Street and the shore is a collection of seventeenth- to nineteenth-century buildings built as workshops, stables, granaries, maltings, inns and warehouses with some dwellings. Several standing building surveys have been undertaken on individual structures in advance of conversion (**fig 20**). These often illuminate several phases of use and alteration. The adequate recording of these can reveal not only a building's individual history but also the fortunes of the town as a whole.

There has been much twentieth-century development between the harbour and High Street plots, which will have cleared post-medieval buildings prior to construction. Given that they are located on a slope, unlikely to have supported deep accumulations of soil, it seems likely that any earlier remains have been destroyed. It is possible that pockets survive between structures or under new roadways, although this would depend on the scale of clearance works employed.

The harbour walls (**fig 15**) contain several different builds of masonry relating to phases of construction and repair beginning in the sixteenth century. The surviving structure contains evidence that would allow at least a partial reconstruction of its development. It would seem that the demolished Customs House (**fig 16**) was founded directly onto rock and this is likely to be the case for all the buildings close to the shore. Most if not all of the archaeological remains around the harbour are likely to survive as or within standing structures.

Area 3: West of High Street including the church and friary

In contrast to the more developed east side of town the backlands of the plots to the west of High Street are relatively undeveloped (**fig 2**). For this reason very recent development has been concentrated here. It is only during the last decade or so that archaeological work has usually preceded development in sensitive areas and most of our information concerning archaeological deposits in the town comes from this area.

It would appear that the original slope from the ridge occupied by High Street down to the rear of the plots has been levelled: around 3 m of visually homogenous loam is present at the rear of the plots. This thins out toward the street and closer to the frontage stratified deposits relating to structures survive (**fig 27**). On the street frontage itself, an evaluation undertaken, at *nos* 126–28 High Street, found that the modern floor directly overlay subsoil. However, this was due to the insertion of a concrete floor and truncation has

probably not been as severe in other plots. Even where modern deposits directly overlie clean sand and gravel, features such as pits and postholes cut below the level of subsoil may survive.

It is likely that the original surface of the ridge occupied by High Street was not as level as it appears today and where it was lower levelling up may have preserved frontage deposits. Conversely, where the ridge was originally slightly higher truncation is likely, perhaps as seen at *nos* 126–28 High Street. It should also be noted that although the depth of deposits will decrease and disturbance increase towards the frontage, the medieval street front is likely to have been several metres further back than today's. The early building at *no* 139 High Street suggests that this may be 4 m or more. This increases the chances of survival for early frontage buildings.

Despite having the appearance of a dumped or imported deposit the differing amounts of pottery from the upper and lower parts of the deep loam present at the rear of plots suggest that it is a more complex deposit. Following recent analysis of deep medieval soils in St Andrews it seems more likely that this loam has derived from the decay of organic material used for the construction of backlands structures, such as wood, turf and thatch, and subsequent mixing by natural processes. The presence of stone structures closer to the frontage has prevented biological mixing and stratified deposits such as floor surfaces survive.

The depth of deposits to the rear of the plots means early features, such as the wall and ditch at Lawson Place, have been protected from later disturbance. The earliest phases of development should be well preserved and have the potential to establish when the town rather than the fort was founded. Given the dearth of evidence for twelfth-century or earlier medieval settlement in Scotland the good preservation of early deposits within the first block of plots at Dunbar is of great importance. Only evaluations have been undertaken on these to date (2002), but those involved in any further work should regard the deep loam deposits as important in themselves. Although it does not retain its original stratigraphy the horizontal and vertical distribution of artefacts within this layer has the potential to illuminate the organisation and origins of the town.

Archaeological work has established that medieval road surfaces survive around 0.5 m beneath modern High Street. These will have been disturbed by the insertion of services, as were the medieval grave-markers found aligned across the street (**fig 28**), and the original height of the ridge will determine the degree of survival. With only one archaeological intervention beneath the street to date (2002) it is not possible to determine whether deposits survive for the length of the street or only in occasional pockets. Beneath the gravel surfaces was a dark anaerobic midden deposit. This was not excavated and it is not known how deep or old it was, but it highlights the possibility of pockets of well-preserved archaeological

material surviving within dips in the original topography throughout the medieval town.

The medieval town probably did not extend as far as Abbeylands (**fig 30**), although these lands may have been part of the friary or hospital grounds. The precincts of both the friary and hospital have been fossilised as part of later development but neither are really apparent on the ground, although the inaccessible part of Friars' Walk may be an exception (**fig 12**). The precinct of the Trinitarian friary has been subject to much modern development, namely housing, car parking and two supermarkets. The only part of the friary buildings to survive above ground, the central church tower now a dovecot (**fig 11**), is scheduled. During evaluations in advance of development it was established that the tiled floor of the church survived. To the south was a cemetery defined by a large ditch, which was waterlogged at the base. Waterlogging is important archaeologically because it leads to the preservation of organic material such as leather and cloth, which do not normally survive. There are no other reported examples of waterlogged deposits in Dunbar and the friary is likely to be exceptional in this regard because it occupies a low-lying area of ground, which will naturally collect water. The natural topography of High Street plots and the underlying sand and gravel mean that waterlogging is unlikely to have occurred elsewhere in the town. The remains of the church and cemetery have been preserved *in situ* beneath the modern development and the archaeological potential of this area remains high. However, new drains are likely to have been inserted as part of the development and the deposits may no longer be waterlogged.

Irregularity in the western limit of the burgh (**fig 2**), and the position of High Street, suggest that its position may have been constrained by an earlier settlement to the west. Maps suggest that the friary church may occupy the northern part of a large sub-circular enclosure, which extends beyond the railway to the south (**fig 14**). The size and shape of this is not inconsistent with an Early Christian foundation. The plots at the northern end of High Street also appear to be constrained by an earlier circular boundary to the west. As an *urbs regis* Dunbar may not have comprised solely a fort or royal enclosure, as supposedly lesser sites, such as the rural centre at Yeavering in Northumbria, contained many timber buildings, stock enclosures, churches and more exotic structures such as a possible grandstand.[2] In light of these observations the area to the west of the medieval core should also be viewed as of archaeological potential.

No building foundations relating to the medieval hospital have been recorded archaeologically, although the discovery of 'medals' in the eighteenth century (**fig 30**) does suggest that the area has potential (*see* p 80). Whatever remains are preserved are likely to be largely intact beneath gardens but not beneath the foundations of modern structures. The possible dovecot surviving in the north-west corner of the site predates the boundary

wall associated with Viewfield, a later seventeenth-century house. It was possibly associated with the hospital and suggests that at least the foundations of other buildings, such as the infirmary, may survive elsewhere.

The parish church was rebuilt in the early nineteenth century. Accounts of sculptured stones found in the foundations of the replaced church (**fig 10**) suggest that it was removed entirely and there is not a high potential for early structural remains. As shown by the discovery of a medieval cist, early graves probably survive in places. However, the continual use of the graveyard for several hundred years is likely to mean that disturbance is extensive. The interior of the church has recently been refurbished and little evidence of even the rebuilt nineteenth-century church is evident. The exception is the impressive seventeenth-century tomb of George Home, although it has been moved at least once.

Future Research

The compilation of material for this Burgh Survey has identified several obvious research avenues. Inevitably in a town of Dunbar's archaeological and historical importance these are only an indication of profitable lines of enquiry.

There are a number of excellent secondary sources that introduce the reader to the town. These have been used. Several local people have a deep understanding of the town's history and we have benefited greatly from their advice. The town has an excellent cache of primary documentary sources, even though some have gone missing (*see* p 37). The bibliography and endnotes give an indication of the breadth of these sources. It was regrettably not possible to utilise all sources in depth; and many were merely scanned. A systematic trawl through all the extant records is highly desirable, but will take a longer period than the time allocated to this survey. The endnotes indicate those used. The Kirk Session records were not used as much as desired; these might have offered a greater insight into the lives of the townspeople. The nineteenth-century Heritors' Minutes were assessed, for example, in particular for details of the discussions prior to the demolition of the old collegiate church and its replacement building. But it was not possible within the scope of this survey to detail the concerns, highlighted in this source, for the education of the young and maintenance of schools. Indeed, a number of potentially interesting facets of Dunbar life, through lack of time, had to be sidelined. No use was made of the potential records associated with the breweries and other manufactories. These would have given a greater insight into the economy of the town and its industrial features. Local newspapers were assessed, but here, too, time prescribed that this was very much an overview. Many local societies have records. It was not possible to assess these sixty-plus records, which range from the Shipwrecked Fishermen

and Mariners Benevolent Society to Belhaven Factory Weavers First Friendly Society, to the Total Abstinence Society and Band of Hope to the School Children's Clothing Society. The Ramsay (Town Chamberlain) papers are unpublished, but manuscript copies exist; these would be worth analysing. To fully understand the development, customs and economy of the town a systematic assessment of all sources should be made. Dunbar has a long and significant past; it had a strategic role to play in Scotland's safety; and the town deserves a fuller assessment than that given here.

It is known that the fort was founded in the Iron Age period, taken over by the Northumbrians and recorded as one of their royal centres in the seventh century AD, but it is not known if other settlements or enclosures were situated around it. Comparison with other Anglian sites suggests that it is a distinct possibility. The town plan suggests the most likely location for further early remains is to the west of the burgh and it has been suggested that what became the friary was an earlier church reused. Further archaeological work, particularly across the boundaries of the putative early enclosure (**fig 14**), is likely to be the only way to resolve these questions.

Dunbar was not recorded as a burgh until the fourteenth century but the results of archaeological work and documentary evidence show that the town was created earlier than this. Excavations have shown that the promontory was probably an estate centre under early Scottish control from the later tenth century. A large number of early burials, from the tenth century onward, in Castle Park confirm the possibility that there may have been a peripheral settlement in the vicinity of this centre. That northern High Street and its plots respect both the possible earlier boundaries to the west and the cemetery to the north suggests that there may have been a continuous sequence of development. In any event, the development of these elements is of great importance not only in terms of the history of Dunbar but within studies of Scottish urban growth.

Priorities for future work

On present evidence, Dunbar is a rare example of a Scottish medieval town with much earlier documented origins and a well-preserved archaeological sequence extending back to the Iron Age. The town offers considerable scope for historical and archaeological research. The following are offered as priorities for further work:

- Establishing the reason behind the irregularities in the western boundaries of High Street plots (**fig 2**). Do these relate to enclosures, further to that on the headland, associated with the Northumbrian *urbs regis*?
- Archaeological investigations in Castle Park (**fig 6**) have suggested continuity of settlement from Northumbrian to early Scottish control.

Additionally, the presence of a large cemetery dated to some time between the tenth and fourteenth centuries implies the presence of an associated settlement. How did the cemetery and the estate centre of Castle Park relate to both the possible enclosures to the west, mentioned above, and the development of High Street? Is there an early Scottish settlement at Dunbar, and if so where?

- There are several outstanding and related problems concerning early religious foundations in Dunbar. Was there an early chapel associated with the cemetery? Is this, in fact, displayed in Grose's view (**fig 9**)? Was there also an early church, possibly Early Christian in origin, on the site of the medieval friary, and/or beneath the parish church?
- The presence of undated midden under medieval road surfaces and grave markers below modern High Street is intriguing (**fig 28**). What is the origin of this midden and do the grave markers aligned across the road mark the edge of the burgh?
- There have been few opportunities for archaeological research in the area to the east of High Street and, as a result, we understand very little about the nature and development of this part of the medieval burgh. What was this area like in the Middle Ages and did Church/Castle Street develop as the back lane of High Street properties or as a thoroughfare in its own right?
- The construction date and extent of the medieval castle are not known. Can more be determined?
- Many of the buildings on High Street appear to be of eighteenth-century date but are covered with harling or concrete. Earlier buildings survive in the backlands. Do earlier buildings survive on High Street hidden beneath these later exteriors?

Notes

1 S Carter, 'A reassessment of the origins of the St Andrews "garden soil"', *TAFAJ* 7 (2001), 87–92

2 M Welch, *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1992), 43–6

Appendix 1

NAS, B18/27/1 (Miscellaneous Legal Papers)
Perambulation of the Marches, 1550s/1560s (**fig 3**)

1a)[faded and torn] Williame Bunkle ane of baillies of D shown by Johnne Kellie younger burges sd burt & procurator fiscall constitut ye sd burt of D being toun for ye tyme in frie burt wt frie port & havin at belhavin ... be losing and lading of schips[?]and botis cumand and gangand furt of the said havin and uptaking of the dewteis yrof of auld be wyning carying and loding of stanis furt of the said havin and watering[?] yrof for bigging of yr houses dykis and wallis – at ye mouth of beil water eastward levand ye oustend of w[illiam] lauders malingand otheris houses and ye dyk as it standis to ye sandie stop on ye sowt yan passand up ane certane space of ye wynd gait at ye clay know of ye kingis lands abave grene dyklyis till it cum to ane merche stane standand and thair dewydand passand est at ye stanis standis at ye fut of ye said clay know till it mete ye salterloche passand up ye samyn to ane merche stane and passand yairor ye samyn to ye fute of ye cramakeris[?] and bromehill as ye stanis standis and yan certane butts of land callit spensis lands liand on ye est merchit wt stanis and yrefter merchand nort to ye akeris of land callit ye cruikis of belhavin liand in sindrie partis wtin ye said commoun dykit and merchit about wt stanis of auld tyme all gers and pasturage wtout ye saids dykis and merchis pertening to ye said commoun burghma[?] at ye nort syd of ye nort croft of ye saids crukis passand est and syne sowt upoun ye sowt syd of belhavin toun merchand over wt ye dykis of ye saids crukis on ye sowt and efer passand sa up to ye fute of ye brewr[?] park new[?] merchis yair tending to ye dam heid of ye loche passand est fra ye dam heid as ye deip of ye cleir water gangis endlang ye cast cassin in ye loche or wods of ye burnis and yrfra siclik passand up ye deip of ye water of ye loche of ye lochend as ye cast gangis to ye dyk of ye nord of lochend and yairefteras ye dyk gangis to ye fute of ye stank callit ye stobron dyk on ye sowt rinning yan fyrst west and yan est levand ye dykis of ye paderlandis[?]gibstonis and sanct Johnnis land on ye sowt unto ye hiestreit at ye est end of ye redeloche and yair returning west merchand wt ye dykis fyrst at ye croft of potakkis syn of lang west and yan est ye dykis of all ye arable land liand on ye richt hand till it cum to ye port of ye said burt callit ye port of ladywynd returning west fra yee said port levand ye dykis of gibsonis croft gammilschiks west slyddrinestanis and yr gangand wt ye dykis of ye burrodalis on ye richt hand and yan passand or ye estreit to ye dyk of ye kigis lands callit cyrag[?]yan enterand at ye preistis fauld nixt yrefter ane grene dyk merchand wt ye lands of quhiltenfeilds and ane peir[?] grene dyk on ye nort part of ye havin hill on ye richt hand yan

passand doun ye face[?] of ye tenementis of belhavin to ye merche & yrefter nortwart to ye lon or passage fra ye said havin syd crystallskodds andyan passand est levand ye croft of ye said crystall on ye sowt & richt hand unto ye lands of quhiltenfeild and returning west levand ye dyk of Johnne krasland cellar walls on ye richt hand unto ye land of quhiltenfeild callit knokers lynkis and yan passand as ye full see gangis to ye bykkin and initoche[?] or entrie of ye port and havin of belhavin and this on ye west syd of ye said burt the est merchand as followis yt is [hole] ... port and gangand west to ye kirkward levand ye dyk of ye masondieurpreist[hole] on ye west gangand est levand ye knokyard dyk and merches of all other arable land[torn] ... passand sowth levand ye dyk about ye wairds ye knoklands of newtounleis ye landis of newtoun on to ... and yan passand sowt as ye waterfall ... ever upon ye west and at ye merche of warldisend passand or ye burn to ye merche of orisden qlk is merchit wt ane dykwest & sowt and yrefter passand doun ye heid or hicht of ye brayis as it is merchit to ane dyk levand ye landis of a litle pincartoun[?] quhitrig upon ye sowt est and est partis unto ye newton of broxburn[?] and passand or ye said burn yair ane dyk of stanis on ye est and yrefter certane merchestanis set on ye est at ye merche of ye lands of broxmouthe tillit in to ye dyk yt is on ye westsyd of ye maisletts hill and ye said dyk on ye est unto ye hope and yan levand ye lands of broxmouth callit philpis aker on ye est passand nortward to ye havin callit ye lammehavin[?]ye see on ye est and nort of ye croft of freyerland callit ye knokhill croft and ye dykis foirsaidis wtout ye said arablelands paroftis[?] on ye sowt & west partis yan passand for ye said havin to smit[?] bayes well levand ye foirseis & pasturis of ye cassil upon ye nort comprehending all ye pronds[?] wtout ye dykis of ye arable lands sa far as ye lands quhilkis haldis of ye fredome of ye said burt gais unto wolfis balk and yan returning est levand ye dyk of ye fluris akeris croftlands yrof or delvis on ye sowt callit sallcum[?] to ye tenement of ye west end of ye said burt [?]lisrihill[not at all clear] ... xix day august 1556 maister george hepburne parsoun of haucht be himself complices etc wt assistance of patrick H of wauchtoun his brother com to ye havin of belhavin wtin bounds foirsaids ... efter [list] nytbouris and burgesses of said burghusand ye libertie of auld observit and joysit be ye inhabitantis ... had won certane stanis furt of ye watergang of ye said havin of belhavin and had ladin ye samen on ye cairtis to have carryit and convoyit away to ye bigging of ane myln callit ye westmyln pertening to ye said burt ye said maister george etc stoppit ye saids cartis ... kaist doun ye saids stanis in ye way and hie passage betuix ye bulwark and ye pere ... chasit away ye quariors quhilkis war wirkand and wynand in ye names of ye saids toun burgesses ... wald not suffer ye saidis quariors wark or wan ony stanis ... divers tymes sensyn hes stoppit and as yit stopppis daylie and makis impediment to ye tounschip ... and yrthrow wranguslie molestit etc ye said burt baillies ... n yair bruiking of ye said havin wtin ye bounds merchis etc foirsaids yis my precept ... ye pas

and lauchfullie sowmand warn charge etc at ye instance of Johne kellie procurator fischall foirsaid etc

[on reverse] 1566 I Johnne Osett officiar and servand past at command of yis precept to ye merkat croce of Dunbar and yair be oppin proclamatioun lauchfullie summond warnitt and chairgit patrik hepburne of wauchtoun ser patrick hepburne his sone and maister george hepburne parsoun of haucht thomas diksoun and williame crie[?] to compeir befoir williame Bonkle baillie of dunbar ... to anser at ye instance of ye pror fiscall to all heids etc and past to maister george hepburne at his dwelling place at haucht and affixt ane copy upoun his yet eftir I had knokit sex tymes

b) [scrap] ?1565 – the toun of D c the laird of waucht[?] for wrangous molesting and trubling of ye said burt baillies counsall and communitie and inhabitantis of ye said burt ... likas yai and yair predecessors war in continuall peceable possessioun of ye samen past memorie of man –seems to be from a warrant

c) [scrap] warrant to summon to william bell [?] throw pasturing certane scheip on yt part of ye said severale commoun callit ye gallogrein 23 Jar 1566

Appendix 2

NAS, B18/13/7, Town Council Minute Book, 1799–1818
7 Jan 1817
Description of the Boundary of the Burgh (**fig 3**)
'Beginning at the mouth of Bell water at the full sea passing eastward leaving the House stead of William Lauders mailling and those houses and the dyke as it stands to the sandy slope on the south then passing up a certain space of the common gate at the clay know of the Kings Lands as a sheer dyke till it come to a march standing and then down and passing east as the stane stands at the foot of the said clay Know till it come till ?salter bath passing up the same to a march stane and passing over the same to the foot of the ?crumacres and Brumhill as the stand stands and then certain Butts of land called Spens' land lying on the east marked with standes and thereafter going north to the Acres of Land the Cruiks of Belhaven lying in sundry parts within the said Common dyked and marked about with stands of auld ?Fyne all grass and pasturing without the said dykes and marches pertaining to the said community of the said Burgh Beginning at the north side of the North croft of the said cruiks passing east and syne south upon the south side of Belhaven Burne marching over the Dykes of the said cruiks on the south and east passing south up to the foot of the Burne park meddow to a green Dyke on the south and thereafter going south and syne east marching to the dyke of the said Burne park on the south till the east end of the same then passing to a green dyke south of the stopping stanes of the ?Heark which marches then tending to the damhead of the Loch passing east from the damhead as the deep of the seas water gangs end langs the east ending in the loch or meadow in the Barns and therefrom such like passing up the deep of the water of the Loch of Lochend at the east gangs to the dyke of the meadow of Lochend and then east as the Dyke gangs to the foot of the sank called stopburn dyke on the south returning then first west and then east leaving the Dykes of the Panderlands Gibson's and St John's land on the south untill the high Street at the east end of Redebath and there returning west marching without the Dykes of Peatcore croft and the lang crofts and thereafter the Dykes of the arable land lying on the right hand till it come to the Port of the said Burgh called Lady wind returning west from the said Port leaving the Dykes of Gibson's croft ?Gemmelscheills croft, Sliddrie Stanes, and the rig on the right hand and passing over the Street at the east side of the clay pots southward to the Loch then west to the ?Heark and thereafter to the west end of the ?Sau acres and east to the clay pots over leaving and marching

without the dykes of the ?Burieur dales upon the right hand and then passing over the Street to the Dyke of the Kings Lands called the rig then entering at the Priest fauld ner to thereafter a green dyke marching without the lands of the Winterfield and a puce green dyke on the north part on the haven hill on the right hand then passing upon the face of the tenements of Belhaven to the cumrie and thereafter northwards to the Lone or passage of the Lau haven beside Chrystal Sked's and then passing east leaving the croft of the said Chrystal on the south and right hand into the Lands of Winterfeild and returning west leaving the dyke of John Kerrs Lands seller walls on the right hand and the Lands of Winterfield called Harker's Links and then passing as the full sea gangs to the braken and mouth or entries of the Port and Haven of Belhaven and then on the west side of the said Burgh the East Marches as follows viz Beginning at the east Port and gang south towards the Kirk leaving the dyke of the ?Massinden and Prists Croft on the west passing east leaving the Kirkyard dyke and the dyke of all other arable lands to the Horse?loup on the south then passing south leaving the Dyke above the Waird the Kirk lands of Newtonlees and the yairds of Newtonlees unto Broxburn and then passing as the Water full upon the Brai head gangs the March of Broom house called the warks lands over upon the west and the March of Warld's end passing over the Burn to the March of Wals dean which is marked without a Dyke west and south and thereafter down the head of height of the Braes as it is marked without a dyke leaving the lands of little Pinkerton and ?Luscetrig upon the south east and east parts unto the Newtoun of Broxmouth burn and passing over the said Burn there a Dyke of Stanes on the east and thereafter certain march stanes set on the east at the lands of Broxmouth till it came to the Dyke that is on the west side of Maisleites hill and the same Dyke on the east unto the Houp and then leaving the lands of Broxmouth called Phillips Acre on the east passing northwards to the Harbour called La[m]ber-haven the Sea on the east and north east the croft of Freirlands called the Kirkhilll and the dykes foresaid without the Croftes and the arable lands on the south and west parts then passing from Lamberhaven to St Bayes Wall leaving the full Sea and Castle forth upon the north comprehending also the ground the dykes of the arable land so far as the lands which hold of the freedome of the said Burgh goes unto Wolfs Baulk and returning east leaving the Dyke of the Floars Acres and the ?Delfes on the South till it shall come to the tenements on the west end of the said Burgh including also passages Streets and Gates used and wonts leading to and from the said Burgh on all parts

Glossary of technical terms

Aerial photography	Identifying and recording sites that are not clearly apparent on the ground from the air. For example, sites can become obvious because of shadows in low light and especially through cropmarks (*see* below).
Anaerobic	Lacking oxygen, so well-preserved.
Anglo-Saxons	People who settled in Britain from the Low Countries and Germany in the fifth or sixth centuries. They are also described as Angles and Anglian.
Artefacts	Anything modified or made by people, including pottery, objects made from bone, wood or metal, carved stone etc.
Backlands	The area of a burgage plot (*see* below) behind the frontage sometimes accessed through a close. 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.
Bailies	Burgh officer-bearers who performed routine administration.
Barilla	Impure sodium carbonate got by burning certain seaside plants.
Beaker pottery	A distinctive type of prehistoric pottery, dating to the Bronze Age (*see* below) and with banded decoration. Thought to have been used as drinking vessels.
Biological mixing	The mixing of soil by roots and animals.
Blockhouse	An artillery fortification.
Boundaries	*See* burgage plot.
Bounty	Gratuity.
British	A term used to describe the people living throughout Britain under Roman occupation, and who often fought the incoming Anglo-Saxons (*see* above). In Dunbar they belonged to a tribe called the Votadini by the Romans or the Goddodin by the Angles.
Bronze Age	The prehistoric period between the Neolithic and the Iron Age (*see* below) or around 2000 BC–500 BC. Named because of the introduction of bronze-working.
Building recording	A specialised branch of archaeology involving the analysis, recording and interpretation of buildings.

Burgage plot	A division of land, often of regular size and forming a long rig, allocated to a burgess. Once built on, it contained the house on the frontage (*see* frontage) and a backland (*see* 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 enjoyed the privileges and responsibilities of the freedom of the burgh.
Calvary cross-slab	A slab of stone inscribed with a cross with a multi-tiered base, usually covering a grave.
CANMORE	A computerised database maintained by RCHAMS. Covers the whole of Scotland and contains information on many standing buildings, chance finds and archaeological works.
Cess	Tax raised to support the military.
Cist	A stone-lined grave; two types are common (*see* short cist and long cist) although variations occur.
Civitas	A Latin term used by early historians such as Bede and taken to mean an early town, usually within the walls of an earlier Roman town.
Close	*See* vennel.
Cocket (cocquet)	Custom house seal or certificate.
Common good	Property and revenues of a burgh.
Cropmarks	Crops growing over archaeological sites can mark them out because of differing rates of ripening. For example, a buried wall will cause the ground above to be drier and plants will ripen more quickly. The plants above the wall will form a line with a slightly different colour.
Curtain wall	A wall placed in front of a castle as an additional line of defence and protecting outlying buildings.
Dark Ages	The period between the collapse of the western Roman Empire and the establishment of the feudal medieval system, around AD 400–1000.
Debentures	Written acknowledgement of a debt.
Documentary sources	Written evidence, primary sources being the original documents.
Embrasures	Small openings out of which artillery fired.
Evaluation	A programme of site investigations often comprising desk-based research, trial trenching, and building recording.
Excavation	The controlled removal and recording of archaeological deposits; often following an evaluation (*see* above) which has established their presence.

Fermes	Rentals.
Frontage	The part of a burgage plot (*see* below) nearest the street. Usually occupied by a frontage building.
Finds	A term used to refer to artefacts but also including food waste, for example seeds and bones.
Goddodin	*See* British.
Grubenhaus	A German term meaning literally 'pit-house'. A large hole, roofed to form a simple structure, and built by the Anglo-Saxons (*see* above).
Homogenous	Appearing all the same.
In gross	In bulk.
In situ	In its original position and undisturbed.
Iron Age	The final prehistoric period in Britain named because of the introduction of iron working. Running from around 500 BC–AD 400, although the latter half is often termed the Roman Iron Age.
Lectern dovecot	A structure used to house doves with a roof sloping towards the front.
Lime kiln	A structure to heat rock and obtain lime.
Loam	A soil comprising sand, clay and silt well mixed together. Cultivation soils are usually loams.
Long cist	A grave lined with stone slabs and containing an extended inhumation, thus longer than a short cist (*see* below). Most are Christian burials but some Iron Age examples have been found.
Maltings	An industrial building where malt (germinated grain) was made and stored.
Memento mori	Literally a reminder of death, typically a skull and crossbones accompanied by an hourglass.
Midden	Used by archaeologists to describe soils thought to have accumulated through the disposal of domestic waste. Through the processes of decay much of the waste will not have survived except for durable items, especially fragments of pottery.
Mortuary house	A building within a cemetery used to perform rituals associated with burial.
Neolithic	The prehistoric period beginning with the introduction of farming around 4000 BC until the Bronze Age, around 2000 BC.
Old ground surface	A layer once supporting turf but now buried under archaeological deposits.

Palisade	A timber fence used as a defensive barrier; could also be termed a stockade.
Peil, to	To unpack (bulk goods); separate into smaller packages for retailing.
Picts	The confederate tribes occupying northern Scotland from the late Roman period until the ninth century AD.
Plot	*See* burgage plot.
Post-medieval	The period from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.
Precinct	Enclosed space.
Prehistory	The period of human history before the advent of writing.
Radiocarbon determination	A scientific method of dating organic or burnt material that depends on radioactivity. Usually accurate to within a few hundred years.
Rampart	A defensive bank.
Repletion	*See* burgage plot.
Rig	*See* burgage plot.
Roll-moulded	A type of stone-masonry typically used as a decoration round a window or door.
Roman Iron Age	*See* Iron Age.
Roup	To sell by auction
Samian pottery	Shiny red pottery often highly decorated and found throughout the Roman Empire.
Scheduled Monument	A monument protected under the terms of the Ancient Monuments Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
Servitude	Obligation attached to a piece of property limiting the proprietor's use of it, or permitting others to exercise specified rights over it.
Short cists	Graves lined with stone slabs and containing a crouched body, thus shorter than long cists (*see* above). Dating to the Bronze Age (*see* above).
Stratified	Layered archaeological deposits, for example several successive floor surfaces (see above).
Subsoil	Usually taken to mean a layer of clean clay, silt or sand beneath topsoil (*see* below) and deposits made by people such as midden (*see* above). In most parts of Scotland this comprises undisturbed glacial deposits.
Toft	A burgage plot.
Tolbooth	The meeting place of the burgh council, collection point for market tolls and often the town jail.
Tolls	Payments for use of burgh market.

Topography	The physical characteristics of land.
Topsoil	The upper part of a natural soil profile, the layer of dark earth above subsoil (*see* above).
Trial trenching	The archaeological excavation of small trenches to establish whether any remains survive, often part of an evaluation (*see* above).
Tron	Public weigh-beam.
Truncation	The removal of archaeological deposits by later (although possibly still archaeologically significant) development.
Unfree persons	Those not holding the rights and privileges of burgess-ship.
Urbanisation	The development of settlements into towns. In Scotland little historical evidence exists for towns prior to the reign of David I (1124–53), but this does not mean that they were not already on the landscape; their origins are poorly understood.
Urban nucleus	Original site(s) from which town developed.
Urbs regis	A latin term used by early historians such as Bede to describe a settlement that was owned by a royal family. The *urbs* singularly refers to a settlement.
Votadini	*See* British.
Watching brief	The archaeological monitoring of excavation works conducted by others.
White gritty pottery	A very common form of medieval pottery with a white or pink colour except when glazed. Can date from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.

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Index

Page numbers in italics refer to illustrations and/or their captions.

This survey provides an accessible and broad-ranging synthesis of existing knowledge on historic Dunbar, as well as offering conservation guidance for future development.

Strategically positioned on the coastal strip between Berwick and Edinburgh, Dunbar has had a colourful history, with a sequence of fortification and settlement from the Iron Age onwards. Deriving its name from the British 'dyn-baer', meaning 'summit fort', the military value of Dunbar Castle meant that the town was hard hit by successive wars and feuds and its eventful history included a period as a French army garrison in the 16th century. Dunbar's importance as a market town, however, is reflected in its elevation to the status of a royal burgh in 1445. Its port and fishing fleet brought additional prosperity in succeeding centuries.

Dunbar's rich past is reflected in the diversity of its surviving archaeology – prehistoric enclosures to the south of the town, Iron Age and Anglian settlement in Castle Park, the medieval castle, its friary, tolbooth, parish church, as well as later buildings such as the Belhaven Brewery and the harbour warehouses. The authors look at the archaeological potential of key sites in the town, to direct more detailed research and further the conservation of Dunbar's heritage.

This book is part of the Scottish Burgh Survey – a series designed to identify the archaeological potential of Scotland's historic towns.

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