Inverness: an historical and archaeological review

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ABSTRACT

Since the late 1970s there has been much archaeological investigation in this historic burgh, mostly small in scale, providing insights into its development, occupation and defences, and uncovering timber buildings, occupation waste, industrial pits and midden deposits. Traces of Mesolithic occupation have also been found. The burgh's origins, development and economy merit continued research. The preparation of this paper was entirely funded by Historic Scotland.

INTRODUCTION

The former royal burgh of Inverness lies close to the mouth of the River Ness at its confluence with the Moray Firth. It was one of the burghs chosen for study in the first series of the *Scottish Burgh Survey* (Gourlay & Turner 1977); more recently an archaeological update to the earlier Burgh Survey has been prepared (Hall forthcoming), to take account of archaeological work in the town since 1977. Gordon Ewart undertook a series of seven trial investigations (4–10) in 1978 on behalf of the Scottish Development Department and Inverness District Council, which led to the excavation by the Urban Archaeology Unit of a site in Castle Street (1). Subsequent work has been undertaken by the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust (SUAT) and Inverness Museum. The results of all these investigations are considered in this present overview, commissioned and funded by Historic Scotland. (Letters in brackets in the text refer to illus 2; numbers in brackets refer to the Gazetteer and illus 7.)

LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY (ILLUS 1)

Inverness developed on the east bank of the River Ness, just before it flows into the Moray Firth, at successive crossing points on the river: the site of an early ford (K) at one end of the burgh and a later bridge (T) at the other. The burgh was situated at a junction of major early routes: north to Dingwall, Sutherland and Caithness, east to Nairn, Forres, Elgin and Aberdeen, south-east to Perth, south-west to Loch Ness and the Great Glen, and west to Skye. This junction was dominated by the royal castle (V) on a hill at the southern end of the burgh.

The earliest settlement seems to have been along Kirkgate (now Church Street), which occupied the crest of a slope overlooking the Ness, and extended from the castle at the south end to the parish church (H) at the north end. An access route (now Friars Lane), westwards from the northern end of Kirkgate, led down to a ford (K) across the river at Friars Shot, with another leading northwards to the harbour (B). Subsequently, when a timber bridge (T) was constructed

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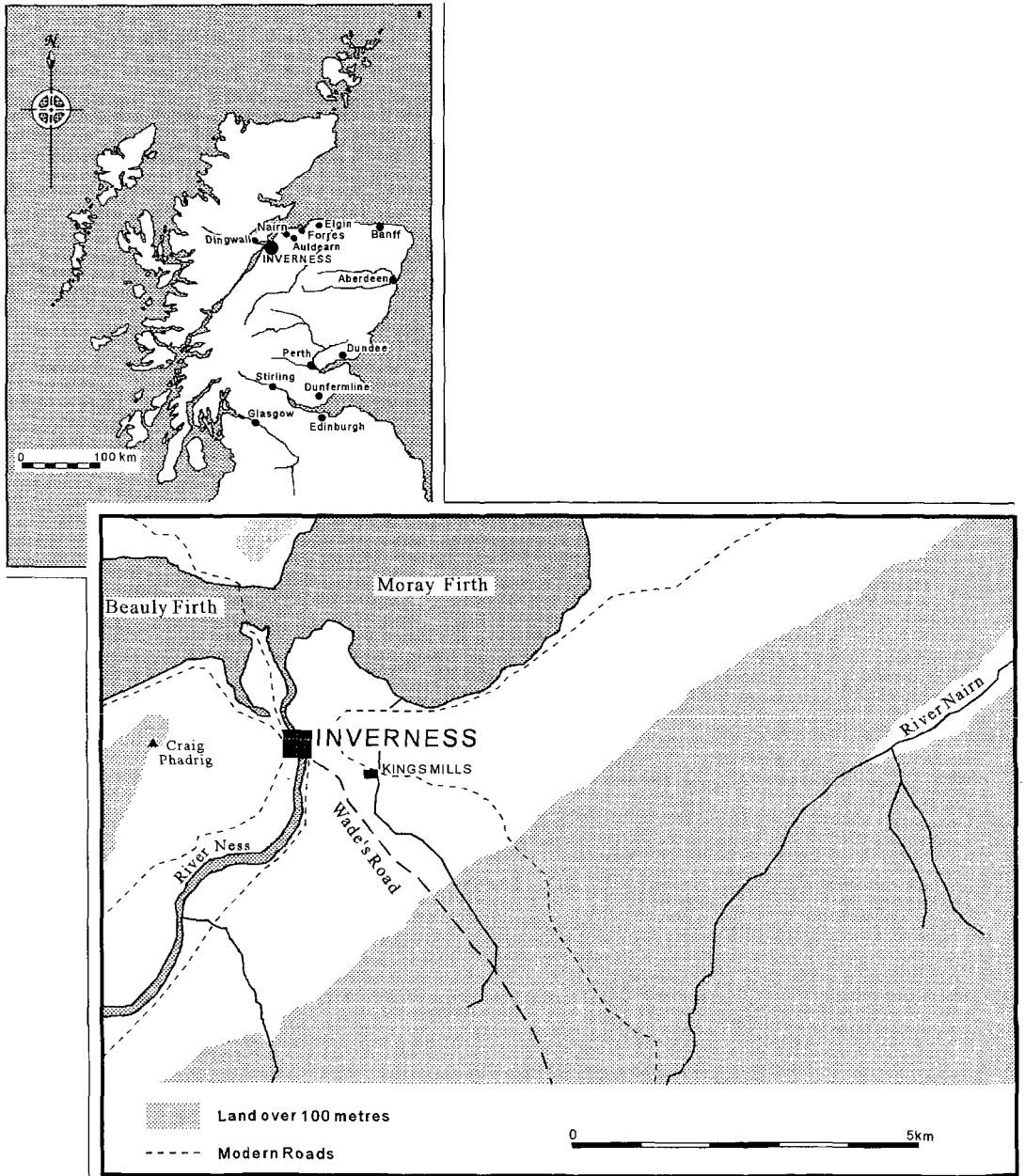
ILLUS 1   Location plan. *(Based on the Ordnance Survey map © Crown copyright)*

across the Ness below the castle in the 13th century, the axis of the burgh seems to have switched from north/south to east/west along Bridgegate (now Bridge Street) and Eastgate (now High Street; the present Eastgate was formerly Petty Street). The southern approach to the burgh was from Doomsdale or Overgate (now Castle Street), which occupied a defile between Castle Hill

and Barn Hill. These two hills, with Crown Hill (not illustrated, but it lies to the east of Barn Hill), sheltered the burgh to the south.

Like other medieval burghs, occupation in Inverness would have been organized in burgage plots. From the built-up street frontage, where houses and booths were situated, the rigs or burgess properties extended backwards, with access to the backlands being provided by vennels or closes. These backlands would have contained sheds, byres and rubbish and latrine pits as well as ground for growing vegetables, herbs and fruit (Ewan 1990, 118).

On the west side of Church Street the rigs were fairly regular and equal, extending to the river, while on the east side the rigs were highly irregular in length and stretched as far as the line of the town defences, being longest at the southern end of the street and shortest at the northern end. The insertion of Bridgegate to provide access to the bridge probably led to a realigning of properties on the west side of Church Street at this end.

Development on the south side of Bridge Street was limited by Castle Hill. Initially it seems that only the frontage was subdivided into properties, the backlands being retained by the Crown until 1379, when Robert II granted to Robert de Apiltona the land on Castle Hill, extending in length from the Ness to the (unlocated) building of Sir William Pilche and in width from the castle wall (building or precinct?) to the frontage buildings (*RMS*, i, nos 649, 683; the latter charter is a copy of the former, but gives the location, erroneously, as Kirkgate). Castle Wynd provided access from the castle to the burgh at the junction of Bridge Street, High Street and Church Street.

High Street, providing access to and from the east, was probably developed by the late 13th or early 14th century: pottery of that date was found in the early phases of occupation at the excavations at Castle Street (1) (Wordsworth 1982, 327, 328, 330). It is possible that Castle Street was a later insertion into the street pattern, as the excavations revealed that it was not until Phase 4 in the early to mid 14th century that properties were laid out fronting Castle Street (*ibid*, 330–3). That street was also 3.5 m wider on its east side than it is today (*ibid*, 330). Later encroachment on an earlier street surface has been observed in other medieval burghs, eg Perth High Street (Moloney & Coleman 1997, 716, 719), Dunfermline Maygate (Coleman 1996, 77), Dumbarton High Street (Coleman forthcoming) and Arbroath High Street (Perry 1998, 262, 274).

On the north side of High Street the backlands were bounded by a back lane, formerly Back Vennel, now Baron Taylor Street (Maclean 1988, 21), leading from Church Street to the town ditch (C). The similarity in the lengths of the rigs on High Street and the west side of Church Street suggests that these were the original areas of settlement in the burgh, with the east side of Church Street being undeveloped. Alternatively, the rigs on the east side of Church Street may have been extended as far as the town ditch subsequent to an initial laying out of these plots and boundaries.

Inverness's settlement remained centred on this basic medieval pattern, of four principal streets forming a cross, until its expansion after 1746. The medieval street pattern has survived to the present day, despite much redevelopment in recent times. A suburb had developed on the western side of the Ness by the mid 17th century (illus 4), and may have originated soon after the construction of the bridge in the 13th century. Similar suburbs developed at the western end of Dervorgilla's Bridge at Dumfries after its construction in the first half of the 15th century, and had developed at the eastern end of Perth Bridge before it was swept away in a flood in 1621.

PRE-BURGHAL SETTLEMENT

St Adamnan, in his Life of St Columba, narrates that the saint visited the Pictish king Bridei (died 584) at his *munitio* (fortress) near the River Ness (Anderson & Anderson 1961, 40a; 79b–82b,
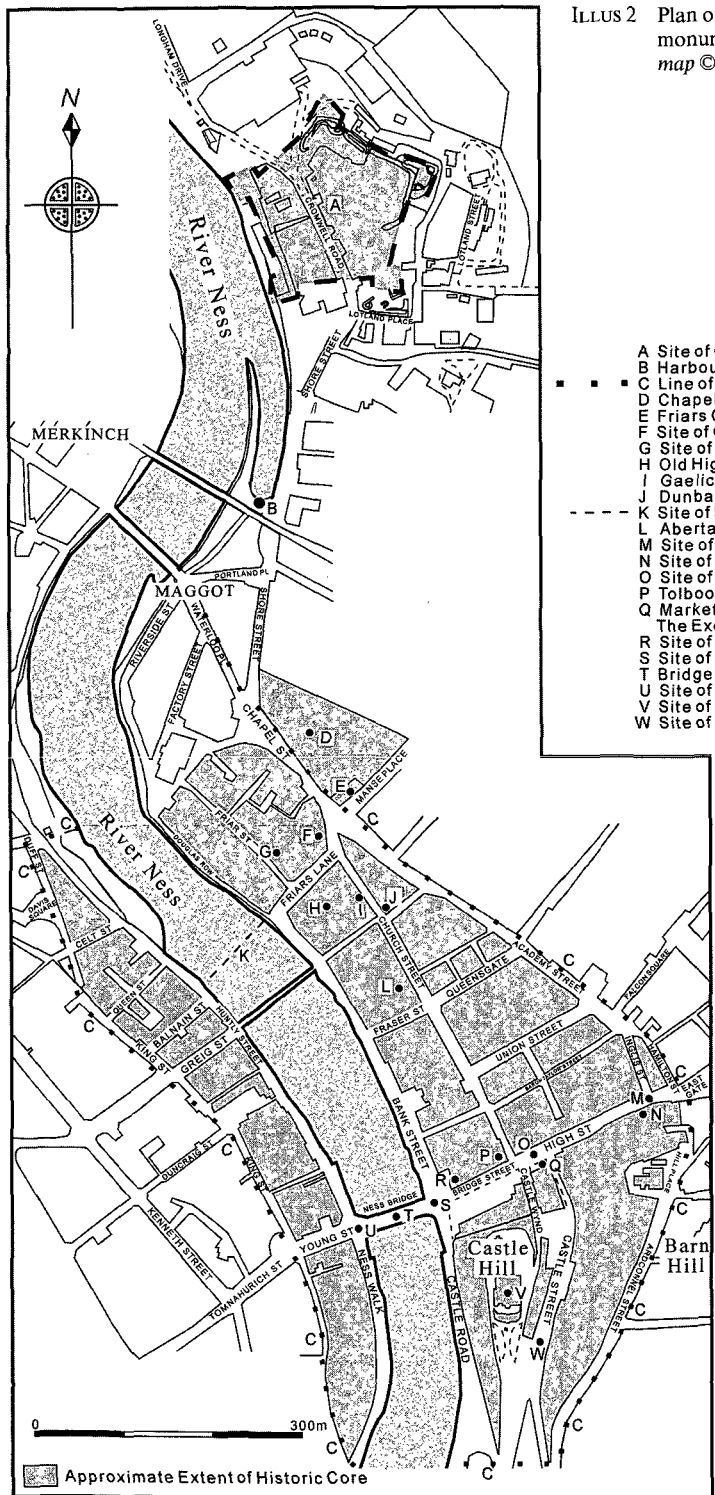
ILLUS 2   Plan of Inverness with historic sites and monuments. *(Based on the Ordnance Survey map © Crown copyright)*

A Site of Cromwell's Citadel
B Harbour
C Line of Town Defences
D Chapel Yard
E Friars Croft
F Site of Grammar School
G Site of Dominican Friary
H Old High Church on site of St Mary's Church
I Gaelic Church, now Greyfriars Free Church
J Dunbar's Hospital
K Site of Ford
L Abertarff House
M Site of Port (approx)
N Site of Fish, Meal & Green Market
O Site of Market Cross
P Tolbooth
Q Market Cross, Clachnacuddin, The Exchange & Town House
R Site of Queen Mary's House
S Site of Bridge Port
T Bridge
U Site of Port
V Site of Castle
W Site of Overgate Port

ILLUS 3   Air photograph of Inverness from the south. *(Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland © Crown copyright)*

cited in Alcock & Alcock 1992, 242). In the past this has been identified with the vitrified hillfort of Craig Phadrig to the west of Inverness, but is now considered to have been situated at Castle Hill, Inverness (Alcock & Alcock 1992, 265; Foster 1996, 48). Unfortunately, no archaeological evidence to support this claim has been found and, as the site was later occupied by two medieval castles and subsequently by the present buildings, erected in the 19th century, it is unlikely that much remains of any Pictish royal centre. Such a centre would have contained a royal hall and house as well as other domestic, industrial and storage structures, probably of timber (*ibid*, 48), similar to those found in excavations at Yeavering in Northumberland (Hope-Taylor 1977), Dunbar (Perry forthcoming:a) and Doon Hill (Hope-Taylor 1980) in East Lothian, and identified from aerial photographs at Sprouston in Roxburghshire and Whitekirk in East Lothian (Smith 1991). It is unclear whether any subsidiary settlement developed at the foot of the hill outside

Bridei's centre, which may have formed a nucleus for the burgh in the 12th century. Pictish Class I stones have been found around or near Inverness, although only two fragments have been found in Inverness itself (Jackson 1984, Table 2A, nos 45–6; Table 2B, nos 12–13). No Class II stones are known from Inverness, so that continuity between the sixth century and the 12th century is uncertain.

THE BURGH (ILLUS 2)

Inverness is first mentioned between 1165 and 1171, when King William I, the Lion (1165–1214), granted an endowment of one ploughgate of land (104 acres) to the church of St Mary of Inverness (H); but the *burgh* of Inverness is not recorded before 1179–82 (Barrow 1971, 199, 262). Nevertheless, it is clear from a later charter of William, reserving to the burgesses of Inverness a privilege they had held in the time of David I (1124–53) (*ibid*, 357), that the burgh owes its foundation to David. In all probability, the burgh was founded by David I after the death of Angus, Earl of Moray, in 1130, when Moray was annexed to the Crown. As part of his scheme to maintain royal control in that rebellious province, burghs with royal castles were founded at Elgin, Forres, Auldearn and Inverness (*ibid*, 11).

Trouble in the province continued on various occasions until 1230. King William himself twice led an army north to deal with the situation, in 1179 and 1187, and is recorded as staying in the castle at Inverness on the latter occasion when Donald MacWilliam was killed in battle (*ibid*, 11–12). William had previously stayed in Inverness when he issued his only known charter there between 1172 and 1174 (*ibid*, 214). In 1196 and 1197 more trouble, fomented by a son of the Earl of Caithness and Orkney, caused the king to lead at least two, and possibly three, expeditions to the north, during which the earl's son was repulsed at Inverness (*ibid*, 16). The peace was broken again by the rebellion of Guthred, Donald's son, in 1211, when the king again led an army north. In the reign of Alexander II, Inverness was burned in 1228.

The restoration of order seems to have led to a period of prosperity in the 13th century, when the timber bridge across the River Ness at Inverness was built, possibly as early as the reign of Alexander II (1214–49), who is claimed as the founder of the Blackfriars' or Dominican monastery (G) in the town (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 7, 8). The construction of a ship at Inverness for the Count of St Pol in 1249 is proof both of the contacts between Inverness and the Low Countries and of the importance and reputation of the burgh as a ship-building centre (*ibid*, 3). It appears that Inverness reached its maximum medieval limits at this time, from which it was not to expand until the 18th century.

Inverness's prosperity presumably suffered as a result of the Wars of Independence after 1296 and the unsettled conditions of the 14th and 15th centuries. The castle changed hands three times before its final capture and demolition by Robert I in 1307 or 1308. In 1312 the king concluded a treaty with Norway at Inverness (Duncan 1988, 161). In the same year Robert granted to Sir Thomas Randolph the earldom of Moray, comprising most of the sheriffdoms of Inverness, Nairn and Elgin (*ibid*, 633–5). Included in the grant were the burghs of these sheriffdoms, with the exception of Inverness, the place of its castle, the burgh lands and the petty customs (levied on goods entering the burgh for sale in the market), although the great customs of the burgh (levied on the staple exports of wool, woolfells and hides as well as on fish) and its cocket seal (with which a custumar certified that customs on exports had been paid) were granted to Randolph.

Warfare was renewed with England in the 1330s, but Inverness seems to have been spared English attention, despite the march by Edward III through the Highlands in 1336, when he

burned Forres, Kinloss, Elgin and Aberdeen (Nicholson 1978, 133–4). It appears, nevertheless, that Inverness was in David II's own hands in 1342 as a result of the dislocation of burgh administration due to the war (ibid, 141). In 1369 David II granted the burgh a feu-ferme charter, whereby all the king's revenues from the burgh, except the great customs, were granted to the community of burgesses in perpetuity in return for a fixed annual payment of 80 merks sterling (£53.33) (RMS, ii, no 804). Effectively, in future the community held their burgh and its endowments collectively as a tenant-in-chief of the Crown, not as individuals (Nicholson 1978, 108).

In the 15th century, Inverness suffered in the conflict between successive Lords of the Isles and the Crown over the earldom of Ross. Donald, Lord of the Isles, captured Inverness in 1411 and burned the oak bridge, prior to his advance on Aberdeen and defeat at Harlaw by the Earl of Mar. James I himself held court in Inverness Castle in August 1428, and possibly a parliament as well, when he seized some 50 Highland chiefs, including Alexander, Donald's son and successor. After his release, Alexander burned Inverness and besieged the castle in 1429, but was defeated. For much of the period after 1411, the Earl of Mar had acted as royal lieutenant in the Highlands, with Inverness Castle, of which he was keeper, as his base. On his death in 1435 (he was buried in the Black Friars' monastery at Inverness), Alexander of the Isles, now recognized as Earl of Ross, acquired control of Inverness, where he was able to hold a Council in 1444 (Brown 1994, 160; Bannerman 1977, 223). Alexander's son, John, fourth and last Lord of the Isles, seized the castle in March 1451 or 1452 and his father-in-law, James Livingston, became its keeper in 1454 (McGladdery 1990, 62). In 1462 John again occupied Inverness, although he submitted to royal authority in 1464 (Nicholson 1978, 402, 407). John's illegitimate son, Angus Og, threatened Inverness where he was assassinated in 1490. The following year Inverness Castle was captured and destroyed by an ally of the claimant to the Isles (ibid, 541–2).

Inverness also suffered from other attentions of neighbouring Highlanders. In March 1546, the town council passed an ordinance claiming that the burgh's prosperity was suffering through the acquisition of property by clansmen from outwith the burgh marrying widows of townsmen. They were able to purchase the freedom of the burgh through the influence of their chiefs and neighbouring landowners, but had no interest in its commercial activities, being interested only in the revenues from the townsmen's pasture and arable lands, which they spent outside the burgh. The consequence was that children of townsmen, who had commercial interests and skills, were forced to leave the burgh to earn their living (RMS, iii, no 3233).

The council seems to have had little success in preventing Highlanders from settling in the burgh. In 1655 it was reported by Thomas Tucker, a Cromwellian customs official, that half of the inhabitants spoke Gaelic and could not understand the other half, who spoke English — surely an exaggeration, and more a reflection of the English Tucker's inability to understand Gaelic. Indeed, one wonders to what extent he understood the 'English' (ie Scots) of the other half? Tucker also recorded that there was only one merchant in the burgh (Hume Brown 1978, 174). In the late 17th century there were two churches, one for English-speakers, the other for Gaelic-speakers (Maclean 1988, 23).

The burgh faced another threat from the neighbouring clansmen. In 1679 it was reported that, after a Macdonald had been slain in Inverness, his chief descended on the town with 1500 clansmen and threatened to burn it. The inhabitants, however, bought their security for £2000 (Hume Brown 1978, 262; see also Pollitt 1981, 144–5). Such practices had surely happened many times before.

During the Cromwellian occupation, a citadel (A) to overawe the Highlands was built to the north of the burgh in 1652; and the Hanoverians garrisoned the castle after 1715, when it was
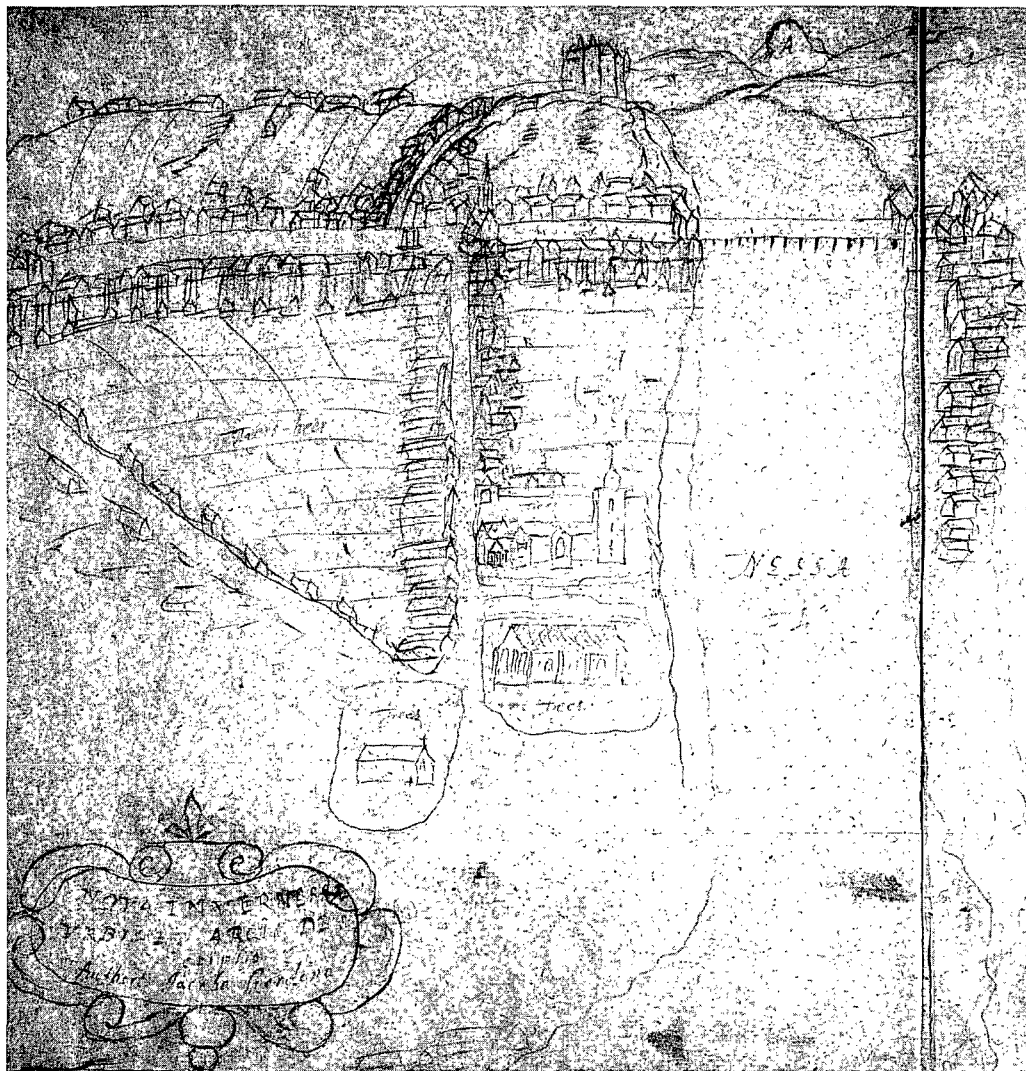
ILLUS 4 'A new description of the town and castle of Inverness' by James Gordon of Rothiemay [c 1650] (Adv.MS.15.1.1, f.173r), from the north, showing St Mary's Chapel, the Dominican Friary and the parish church in the foreground, the market cross and the tolbooth with its steeple in the background, and the castle in the distance. *(Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)*

renamed Fort George (not to be confused with the present Fort George at Ardersier). These military occupations would have brought some prosperity to the burgh through the need to supply the garrisons and through the soldiers' own spending. But it was not till the second half of the 18th century that the burgh's economic prospects significantly increased with the agricultural improvements, manufacturing expansion and increased overseas trade.

ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

The main purpose of a burgh was to act as an economic centre through which internal and external trade could be conducted under royal control. To stimulate this activity, a royal burgh

was granted a trading monopoly over its hinterland for domestic and overseas trade, as well as other trading privileges. For Inverness that hinterland was defined by William I about 1179 as the sheriffdom of Inverness (and of course the burgh itself), within which no one was allowed to trade unless he was a burgess or stall-holder of that burgh, or else had the permission of the burgesses (Barrow 1971, 261–2). This prohibition within the 'bailiwick' of Inverness was later confirmed by William between 1205 and 1207, when no one was allowed to buy or sell outside the burgh anything contrary to the assizes (statements of the law) of David I and himself (*ibid*, 437).

Among the trading privileges granted by the king to his burgh of Inverness was a monopoly on the manufacture of dyed or shorn cloth; the sheriff of Inverness was to seize any such cloth made outwith the burgh and deal with it according to the custom and assize of David I, unless the king had granted anyone such a privilege by charter. He also prohibited any tavern in any landward village outside the burgh, except where the lord was a knight and resident, in which case he could have a tavern in accordance with the assizes of David I and himself (*ibid*, 437). The significance of these privileges lay in the importance of the cloth industry in Scotland in the 12th century and in the importance of the wine trade as a 'quality' import (MacQueen & Windram 1988, 209).

William also granted or confirmed other privileges to the burgesses of Inverness and other northern burghs. The burgesses of Inverness were exempted from toll and custom throughout the kingdom and no one was to demand toll or custom on the burgesses' own chattels (Barrow 1971, 261–2). The burgesses of Aberdeen, Moray and north of the Mounth were confirmed in their right to have a free guild as their predecessors held it in the time of David I (*ibid*, 223). The burgesses of Moray were granted the privilege that no one could poind them except for his own debt (*ibid*, 237). Finally, the burgesses of Inverness were exempted from trial by combat among themselves, and no burgess from elsewhere or any man in the kingdom could compel any of the burgesses of Moray to undergo trial by combat, only trial by oath, and then only half the oath and half the penalty incurred by the other burgesses of the kingdom (*ibid*, 379).

These privileges secured the burgesses' status and their livelihood. The right to a guild enabled the burgesses to control admission of non-burgesses to the freedom of the burgh and its trading monopolies, there being little discrimination before the 15th century between the merchants, engaged in buying and selling the goods of others, and craftsmen, who made and sold their own goods (Ewan 1990, 59). Exemptions from payment of tolls and customs on his goods and from his goods being poinded for debt indiscriminately would have been a great benefit, since his stock of goods would have been a merchant's source of income. The exemption from trial by combat may have been a recognition that burgess status required different legal treatment from that of those who provided military service or held land by military tenure. Alternatively, it may reflect the Flemish origins of the burgesses of Inverness (see below) (Barrow 1971, 380).

Burgesses were normally identified with a particular burgh (the burgesses of Aberdeen, the burgesses of Inverness), but the references to the burgesses of Moray or beyond the Mounth (Inverness, Auldearn and its successor Nairn, Forres, Elgin and possibly Banff) suggests that the northern burghs were regarded differently. The burgesses of Moray must have had an unusual common interest and identity, possibly caused or heightened by the various uprisings in that area by MacHeths, MacWilliams and Earls of Orkney, and the consequent need for common security. It is possible that the northern burghs, including Aberdeen, were inhabited by settlers from the Low Countries, parallel to the Flemish landowners settled in Moray after 1130 (eg Freskin of Duffus, ancestor of the Murrays, and Berowald of Innes) (Duncan 1992, 138, 477).

It was recognized that a burgh could not support its inhabitants by commerce alone, despite its trading privileges and, therefore, attached to each burgh at its foundation was common land

where the townsmen could grow crops and pasture animals, as well as gather fuel and timber. As early as David I's reign the burgesses of Inverness had the right to gather timber and fuel from the king's forest around Inverness (Barrow 1971, 356–7). The extent of the common land granted to Inverness by David is unknown, but William I granted the burgesses the land of Burgh Haugh for the support of the burgh about 1179, and forbade anyone to cultivate or use it for pasture without the burgesses' leave (*ibid*, 262). In the charter this land is stated to lie between the Hill (of the castle) and the River, although the district of Haugh lies to the south of Castle Hill. Alexander II in 1236 granted the burgesses the land of Merkinch on the west side of the River Ness for the support of the burgh (*RMS*, ii, no 804). These two additional grants of common land to the burgh suggest that in its first century of existence it was prospering, expanding and attracting more settlers. A subsequent grant by David II in 1369 of the land of Drakies increased the common land (*ibid*, ii, no 804). Why the burgh should have required more common land at this time is not clear, as its population had surely declined as a result of the Black Death. Perhaps it was to compensate for any economic decline caused by the disease, or it may have been part of a deal whereby the burgh secured *feu-ferme* status in the same charter. By 1592 the burgh's common lands, in addition, included Woodpark, Barnhills, Claypots, Milnfield, Carse and Carn Laws (*ibid*, v, no 2001).

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The creation of a burgh led to the development of specialist craft industries providing goods for sale in the market. These crafts involved both food production by bakers or baxters, fleshers and maltsters, and processing of raw materials, animal, vegetable and mineral, by skinners, glovers, shoemakers, weavers, tailors, dyers, wrights, smiths and masons. Inverness had six incorporated trades by the late 18th century: hammermen (including smiths, tinsmiths, coppersmiths, silversmiths, watchmakers, braziers, cutlers and saddlers), wrights (including house-carpenters, cabinet-makers, wheel-wrights and coopers), weavers, tailors, shoemakers and skinners. In addition, there were unincorporated trades: masons, cart-wrights, bakers, butchers and barbers (*OSA* 1981, 96n). The crafts of weavers and fullers or walkers were specifically excluded from membership of the merchant guild (*RMS*, v, no 2001). The burgh had a mill at Balloch Hill, to the south of Castle Hill, which had been pulled down by 1589 on the instructions of James VI's predecessors, and possibly a long time before (*ibid*, v, no 1645). There were other mills at Kings Mills to the south-east on the Mill Burn (illus 1).

In the 17th century the burgh's wealth was derived from commerce in corn and skins. Many malt kilns and granaries were situated in the town, the malt being supplied to the northern counties, Western Isles and Orkney. The malt trade collapsed as a result of the imposition of a duty on exported corn in 1688, with the result there were many ruined kilns, granaries and houses in the town in the 18th century (*OSA* 1981, 95). Inverness was the chief market for the inhabitants of the north of Scotland and the Western Isles and Orkney, who supplied skins in exchange for meal, malt, dye-stuffs, salt, coarse linen and iron. However, the skin trade also collapsed as the Highlanders and Islanders turned to the markets of Glasgow (*ibid*, 95).

By the late 18th century, prosperity had revived and the burgh was largely rebuilt and expanding. Two tanneries supplied local customers, while a ropework sent taw to London. There were also two tallow chandlers and a soap boiler. Manufacturing of hemp and thread was supplied by hemp and flax imported from the Baltic. A brickwork operated in the neighbourhood of the town and a bleachfield was newly established by 1791. There were also four stills and 12 brewers, of whom two were major suppliers of ale (*ibid*, 97, 104). In the early 19th century,

however, the local thread and linen industries were superseded by competition from the south, although there was a woollen factory and a carding-mill for preparing and spinning wool, as well as three tanneries (*NSA* 1845, 22–3).

Inverness had a harbour (B) on the river, beyond the parish church, from which trade was carried on. Throughout the medieval period there was apparently no quay, ships simply lying close to the shore; the first quay was not built until 1675 (Pollitt 1981, 111). Imports are largely unrecorded, not being taxed, although the import of spices is attested by Alexander II's grant of Merkinch to the burgh in 1236 in return for one pepper (*RMS*, ii, no 804) (hence peppercorn rent, although, presumably, peppers were originally a luxury import). The burgh's export trade, as recorded in customs accounts, underwent drastic restructuring in the period between the 14th and 16th centuries, in parallel with the Scottish economy as a whole (McNeill & MacQueen 1997, 244). Its principal exports in the period 1375–80 were wool (62%) and hides (34%) with a few woolfells, but by 1425–31 it was exporting virtually nothing but hides (92%), with a little cloth and skins and only a tiny amount of wool. Some 50 years later, in 1475–9, hides amounted to only 22% of the burgh's exports, the rest consisting of salmon. By 1535–9 salmon accounted for almost 96% of exports from Inverness, the rest being hides. As measured in customs returns, Inverness declined from being sixth burgh in the kingdom in the 13th century, to 12th in the kingdom by the 16th century (Wordsworth 1982, 322–3).

Boece, writing in the early 16th century, recorded that German merchants formerly used to visit Inverness annually to trade, presumably during a fair, bringing their own manufactures in exchange for skins and other local products. However, as a result of the frequent burnings and plundering of the town this trade had declined, much to the detriment of the burgh's prosperity (*NSA* 1845, 23). By the mid 17th century, Inverness's trade seems to have been minimal: it had only a coastal trade and one merchant who sometimes brought home a little timber, salt or wine, and the harbour had only one vessel (of 10 tons) (Hume Brown 1978, 174, 176). The civil wars of the mid 17th century may have had a part in the decline of trade at this time, as Inverness apparently had an export trade in the 17th century with France, the Low Countries and Scandinavia/the Baltic (*OSA* 1981, 95).

By the late 18th century, the prosperity of Inverness had revived. The harbour was in excellent repair and had seven vessels of 400–500 tons as well as nine boats. The trade was chiefly in carrying to London local goods — including fish, skins of goat, deer, roe, fox, hare, rabbit and otter, with other articles, returning with luxuries and materials for local use.

MARKET AREA

A market area was an essential component of a medieval burgh, where the inhabitants of the burgh and its hinterland, as well as some from other burghs or merchants from overseas, could buy and sell their wares. In Inverness the market was held at the intersection of the four streets of the medieval burgh, called The Exchange. It was in that area that the symbols of civic government, the tolbooth and market cross, were located. The market cross (O) was situated there from 1456, in the middle of High Street, until 1768 when it was removed to its present position in front of the Town House (Q). At its base is the Clachnacuddin ('stone of the tubs'), which formerly stood in the middle of High Street and on which women are said to have rested their washing tubs (Pollitt 1981, 80). The tolbooth (P) was located at the corner of Bridge Street and Church Street from 1436 to 1670, where the present steeple stands. In 1670 the burgh acquired the former town house of Lord Lovat for its own use. This building was demolished in 1708 and replaced on the same

Prospectus Civitatis INNERNESS. *The prospect of y̆ Town of INNERNESS.*

ILLUS 5 'The Prospect of the Town of Innerness' by John Slezer, 1693. (*Trustees of the National Library of Scotland*)

site by a new Town House, which in turn was demolished in 1878 and replaced, again on the same site, by the present Town House (Q).

William I granted the burgh the right to a weekly market on Saturday, and granted his firm peace to all who frequented it (Barrow 1971, 437). By 1592 a second market was established on Wednesday. Although no mention is made in William's charter of an annual fair, by the latter date, Inverness had eight fairs, each lasting a week : Palm Sunday; 7 July (Sanct-Andro-the-Boyes-fair, formerly held at 'Rudecastell'); 15 August (the Marie-fair on the feast of the Assumption); Holy Rood in autumn (Rud-day-in-harvest or Ruid-fair); 10 November (the Mertymes-fair, formerly held at the church of St Martin in Ardmannoch); St Thomas before the Nativity of the Lord in December (Sanct-Thomas-fair); 1 February (Legavrik); and Sanct-Markis-fair (*RMS*, v, no 2001). By the mid 19th century the markets were held on Tuesday and Friday, and specialized markets had developed by then. The general and dairy market was held at the market cross (Q) and the fruit and vegetable market in Academy Street. The fleshmarket was formerly held at the foot of Stephen's Brae, although butchers' shops in the town had largely replaced it by then and it was ultimately used for slaughter. There was also a cattle market at the top of Stephen's Brae (Pollitt 1981, 75–6). The fish market, formerly held in Market Brae at the junction of High Street and Eastgate (N), was later held at the former fleshmarket in Stephen's Brae. A meal and green market was formerly situated by the old fish market at the foot of Market Brae (Wood 1821). There were by now only five fairs, each lasting three days: Candlemas Fair in February; Whitsuntide Market in May; St Andrews Fair in July; Marymas Fair in August; and Martinmas Fair in November (Pollitt 1981, 77). A Wool Fair was also held in July.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Archaeology has provided evidence of some of the burgh's medieval industries. The excavations at Castle Street (1) uncovered the remains of four furnaces of varying design and, consequently, varying function (Spearman 1982), although all were stone paved. Three had stone superstructures and were dated to the 15th century; the fourth was undated but was probably from the later 15th or 16th centuries. The two earlier furnaces employed natural draught to heat the working chambers and both made use of sinkage into earlier pits to provide at least some of the necessary deep foundations and flue footings. No material providing evidence of function was recovered from them, although one may have been used for heating crucibles or for boiling a dyer's vat, and the other may have been a malt- or corn-drying kiln. A third furnace, of forced draught design, was associated with a quenching tank and may have been used for smithing as hammerscale waste was found nearby. The latest furnace was a large open fire, enclosed by a low clay wall. Lead was found in it but no evidence of lead liquation, unless it had been undertaken in crucibles, or of lead smelting; possibly the lead was being warmed prior to working (*ibid*, 352). The evidence from the furnaces indicated a specialized industrial rather than domestic use, demonstrating a significant concentration of industrial working in the later medieval period.

In addition to the furnaces, evidence of iron-working was recovered from most of the occupation phases, including bloomery waste. It is possible that the iron debris may have been imported to the site from bloomeries outside the burgh, as no evidence of iron furnaces was found on the site (Spearman & Slater 1982, 355).

Other evidence of industrial activity was recovered from the Castle Street excavations in the form of horn cores of cattle, sheep and goats, suggesting industrial or commercial refuse from a horner's workshop (Hodgson & Smith 1982, 377). These came from phases dated to the 13th and 14th centuries. Antler working and butchery practices were also evident.

A local pottery industry developed in the 14th century, possibly as a result of the disruption to trade by the wars with England, although the location of any pottery kilns is unknown. This local pottery largely superseded foreign imports and other Scottish wares (MacAskill 1982, 366).

Elsewhere in the burgh, a possible oven was found at Friars Street (11). Two large clay-lined pits at Church Street (6), 5 m long, 2.5 m wide and up to 4.52 m deep, may have been associated with the woollen or leather industry. A stone-lined pit and a clay-lined pit, found in Hamilton Street (3), may have been used for tanning purposes, tanning waste being discarded into the nearby defensive ditch, which was known as the 'foul pool' (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 6).

Archaeological evidence of foreign trade is confined to pottery imports. Despite the possible Flemish origins of the original settlers in Inverness and the close contacts with the Low Countries indicated by the Count of St Pol ordering a ship to be built at Inverness, only two pottery sherds from the Low Countries were recovered from the excavations at Castle Street (1), and then not until occupation dated to the 14th century, although slightly earlier copies of Rouen ware may have been of Dutch origin. Later in that century German stonewares were being imported. The bulk of imported pottery was English, from Scarborough/Yorkshire and the east of England, and the only pottery recovered from the earliest occupation was English. Post-medieval pottery included sherds of delftware (MacAskill 1982). Medieval pottery recovered from the trial excavations conducted in 1978 (4, 5, 6, 9) also included Scarborough ware (Haggarty 1978).

DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

Excavated remains of a number of structures were recovered from the Castle Street excavations, despite considerable damage by cellars (1). Ten of these structures fronted Castle Street; five different types of walling were found (Wordsworth 1982, 327–33, 382–5). The earliest, dated to the late 13th or early 14th century on pottery evidence, was of an unusual type: a clay wall was supported by vertical oak planks or staves, with associated organic or silt floors. Oak timbers from this building have recently been subjected to dendrochronological analysis. Unfortunately only heartwood survived, no sapwood or bark, resulting in estimated felling dates between 1131 and 1179, which are clearly too early (Crone forthcoming). Contemporary with this stave-built wall was a double stake-and-wattle wall, although this may have not been part of a building as no large posts to support a roof were found. The latter double wall was replaced by another stake and wattle structure with organic and sand floors. Subsequent buildings were at least partly constructed of oak sillbeams (one sillbeam was of alder) laid directly on the ground or in a trench; only one sillbeam was set on a low foundation of stones. The sillbeams evidently held plank walls rather than wattle work. Wattle walls, with clay daub, continued to be used throughout the 14th century, with three successive clay-and-wattle buildings in the middle property on the street front. Hazel, ash, birch and willow were identified among the wattles, with oak probably used for uprights. One building seems to have had a front wall built of vertical planks set into the ground, although as the plank was observed only in section, it might have been an upright for a stake-and-wattle wall. Ultimately, the buildings were destroyed by fire, though whether accidentally or deliberately during any of the burnings of the town (see above) is unknown.

Early in the 14th century the site was divided into three properties fronting Castle Street, the properties being about 7 m wide (*ibid*, 332). The reconstruction of the frontage buildings shows that they were parallel to the street, except in the southern property, which was subdivided and had two parallel buildings gable-end to the street (*ibid*, 387). The buildings seem to have had a width of about 4.5 m. The plank-in-sill and stake-and-wattle constructions are comparable to buildings found in excavations in Aberdeen and Perth (Murray, H 1982, 225) and Perth (Bogdan

1992, 6). Traces of three phases of burnt timber buildings and of a plank-in-sill building, probably contemporary with those at Castle Street, were also located at Raining's Stairs to the east of this excavation (2).

THE CASTLE

The castle (V) probably owes its origins to David I, the founder of the burgh, but it is not mentioned until 1179 when his grandson, William the Lion, stayed there during one of his campaigns in the north (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 7). With the Wars of Independence in 1296, the castle was first garrisoned by the English, then captured by Sir Andrew Murray, a colleague of William Wallace. The English again occupied it until Robert I recaptured it in 1307 or 1308 and demolished it (*ibid*, 3, 7). The castle was refurbished or rebuilt in 1362, and again in 1412–15 by the Earl of Mar, after it may have been damaged by Donald, Lord of the Isles, in 1411. The castle suffered in the course of the conflicts between the Crown and the Lords of the Isles in the 15th century, and was destroyed in 1491 during another uprising (Nicholson 1978, 542). In 1509 the Earl of Huntly was appointed hereditary sheriff of Inverness and keeper of the castle, and ordered to build at his own expense on the Castle Hill a hall upon vaults of stone and lime, in length 100 ft (30.48 m) and in breadth and height 30 ft (9.14 m), with a roof of tiles or slates and a kitchen within; he was also directed to build a chapel and defences to enclose the tower and chapel (*RMS*, ii, no 3286). In fact it was not until 1540 that the project was carried out. Mary, Queen of Scots successfully besieged the castle in 1562, after she was refused admission, and hanged the keeper, Alexander Gordon, a son of the Earl of Huntly (Pollitt 1981, 53). In the early 18th century the castle was converted into a Hanoverian barracks as Fort George, but was blown up by the Jacobites in 1746. The site is now occupied by court-houses built in the 1830s and 1840s (*ibid*, 53). All that remains of the former castle is a well, nearly 50 ft (15.24 m) deep, and some walling at the top of Castle Wynd (Maclean 1988, 16). In 1932 a landslide destroyed part of the wall built by General Wade (Pollitt 1981, 73, illus 12 & 13). It is not clear how much survives of any archaeological remains of the medieval castle.

PARISH CHURCH

The parish church (H) is first recorded between 1165 and 1171, when William the Lion endowed the church of St Mary and its parson, Thomas the priest, with a ploughgate of land (104 acres) (Barrow 1971, 199). It was granted by the same king to his abbey at Arbroath between 1189 and 1194 (*ibid*, 353–4). The church was situated within its cemetery to the west of the north end of Kirkgate, now Church Street. It contained a number of altars in addition to the high altar; these were dedicated to the Holy Cross, St John the Baptist, St Michael the Archangel and St Katherine. There was also a 'new aisle' by 1567 (presumably built before the Reformation) with an altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but is not clear whether a chapel of St Thomas was within the parish church or a separate building in the town (*RMS*, iv, no 2760). The medieval church was replaced in 1770 by the present Old High Church (H). Only the lower part of the west tower, possibly dating to the 16th century and topped by a 17th-century steeple (Close-Brooks 1993, 21), survives of the earlier church.

In 1641 a second congregation was formed for Gaelic speakers, whose church was situated at the edge of the cemetery on Kirkgate. The church was rebuilt in 1840 and is now Greyfriars Free Church (I). (The name Greyfriars is simply a misconstrued reference to the former Dominican house, or Blackfriars). When the floor of its hall was recently relaid, human remains,
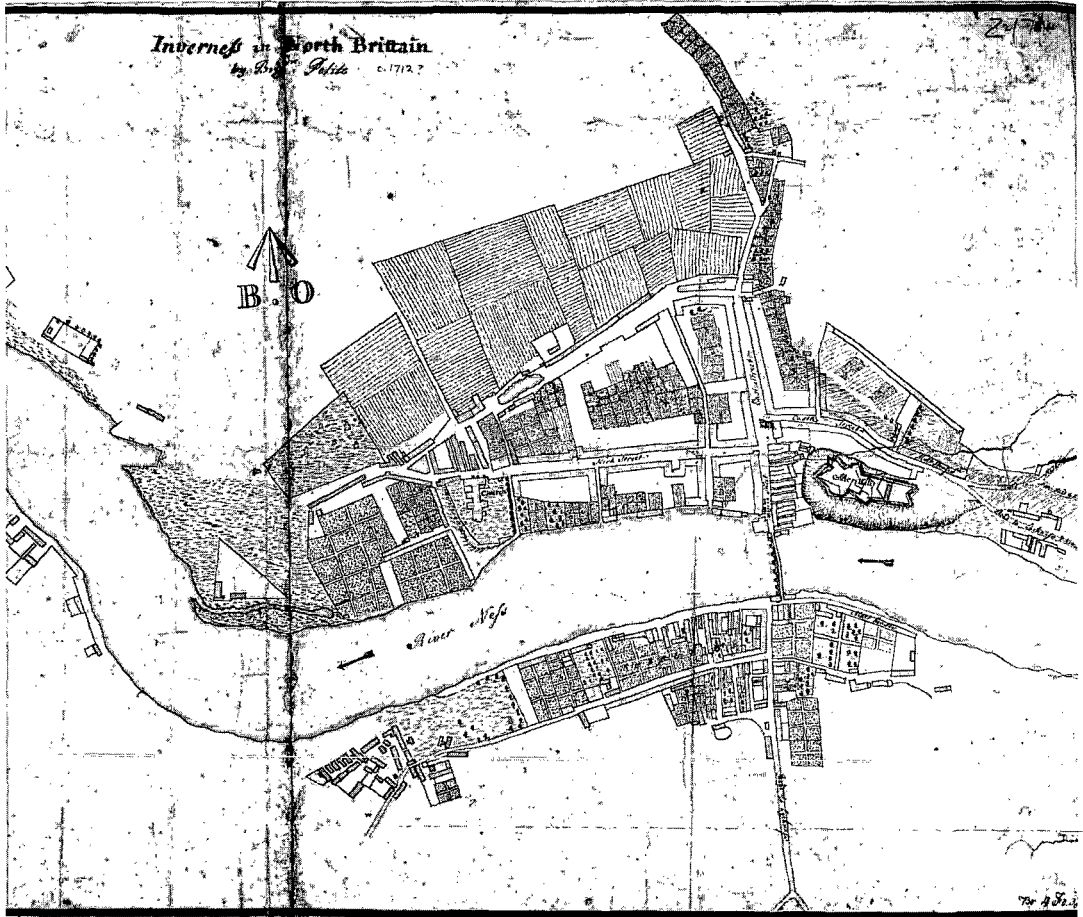
ILLUS 6   'Inverness in North Britain' by Brigadier Petite [?1718] (Board of Ordnance Z.2/78). *(Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)*

probably from the medieval cemetery, were found (19). Similar burials are likely to lie under the present Old High Church and Greyfriars Free Church. It is possible that structural remains of the medieval parish church still exist under the present church or in the cemetery.

BLACKFRIARS

This house, dedicated to St Bartholomew, is supposed to have been founded by Alexander II about 1233, although it is not mentioned before 1275. In that year it had a confirmation of land granted by Arbroath Abbey (Friars Croft (E), between Manse Place and Chapel Yard: Pollitt 1981, 20), as well as grants by Alexander III of the king's road between the cemetery of the parish church and the wall of the friary (ie Friars Lane) and of the king's island to the north (ie Maggot) (*RMS*, iii, no 962). The friary was burned in a dispute with Arbroath Abbey in 1372 (Pollitt 1981, 21–2) and in 1436 was said to be almost ruinous in its structure and buildings (Cowan & Easson 1976, 119). The previous year the Earl of Mar was buried there, and a tomb effigy in the graveyard on the site is said to be his (Pollitt 1981, 19). In 1559 there were five friars, including a prior, when

their valuables were entrusted to the magistrates of Inverness. The friary buildings, or at least some of them, were still standing in the mid 17th century (illus 4) but the convent was disbanded before 1567, when its property with other church property in Inverness was granted by Mary, Queen of Scots, to the burgh to support a hospital for the poor; this later became Dunbar's Hospital (J) (*RMS*, v, no 2001; Pollitt 1981, 27). Stones from the buildings were used in the construction of Cromwell's citadel (A). Of the friary itself, all that remains is an octagonal pillar.

Attached to Blackfriars there may have been a school, as in 1574 the grammar school (F) was situated just outwith its walls, at the corner of Friars Lane and Church Street (Pollitt 1981, 19).

CHAPEL YARD

The history of this site (D) of the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Chapel of the Green, is confusing, as the parish church was dedicated to St Mary (H) and there was a chaplainry of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the high altar of the parish church. It may have existed as early as 1359 when David II confirmed a grant to the Chapel of St Mary by John Scott, burgess of Inverness (*RMS*, i, App 2, no 1327). The chapel had a burial ground in 1361 (Pollitt 1981, 109). The stones of the chapel — like those from Blackfriars — were used to build Cromwell's citadel (A). The Chapel Yard was used by Lord Lovat (died 1576) for games (*ibid*, 109) in the 16th century, but was granted to the burgh as a burial ground in 1680, and enclosed in 1784 (*ibid*, 110). Formerly, there was an arched entrance crowned with ornaments and inscribed *concordia parvae res crescunt* (small things grow in harmony) (*NSA*, 15).

THE CROMWELLIAN CITADEL

In 1652 construction began on a citadel (A) to overawe the Highlands. It took five years to build, stone being brought from St Mary's Chapel and Blackfriars in Inverness, but also from Beauly Priory and Kinloss Abbey (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 8). The citadel was a pentagon, capable of holding 1000 troops, with three-pointed bastions at each corner, enclosed by a wet ditch supplied by the Ness. A contemporary plan shows that to the south of the main ditch was an enclosure and on the west side of the river was an outpost, both defended by a rampart and ditch (Firth 1899, illus ii). A contemporary account describes the citadel in some detail:

> breastwork, three storeys high, built all of hewn stone, limed within, and a brick wall; centinel houses of stone in each corner; a sallyport to the south, leading to the town; and on the north the great entry or gate, called the port, with a draw-bridge of oak, called the blue bridge, and a stately structure over the gate, well cut with the Commonwealth's arms and the motto *Togam Tuentur Arma* [arms protect the civil state] . . . The entry from the bridge into the Citadel was a stately vault about 70 ft (21.34 m) long, with seats on each side, and a row of iron hooks for pikes and drums to hang on. In the centre of the Citadel stood a great four-square building, all hewn stone, called the magazine and granary; in the third storey was the church, well furnished with a stately pulpit and seats, a wide bartisan at the top, and a brave great clock, with four large dials and a curious ball. South-east stood the great English building, four storeys high, so called, being built by English masons; and south-west the Scotch building of the same dimensions, built by Scotch masons; north-west and north-east lower storeys for ammunition, timber, lodgings for manufactories, stables for horses, provision, brewing houses, a great long tavern . . . A cinquoport or conduit ran under ground from the one to the other side, with grates of iron at ends, which at flowing and ebbing carried away the filth and odor of all the Citadel (Pollitt 1981, 16).

After the Restoration, in 1664, the citadel was erected into the burgh of regality of Kingsburgh in favour of the Earl of Rothes and Lord Bellenden. Soon after they disponed it to John Air, ironsmith, and John Semple and Alexander Barrie, indwellers in Leith, for themselves and the artisans of Scotland as compensation to the Scottish masons, carpenters and ironsmiths for the expense of building and furnishing the citadel of Leith (*RMS*, xi, no 897). The full establishment of this burgh seems never to have been a serious proposition, although the citadel does seem to have been used as an industrial and manufacturing base, possibly as a rival to Inverness itself. The Cromwellian citadel at Ayr was also erected into a separate burgh of regality to rival the royal burgh of Ayr, but seems only to have housed a brewery for much of the 18th century (Perry forthcoming:b). Of the citadel at Inverness, all that survives is the north-east bastion. Within the citadel is a clock tower, formerly a windmill, built in the 18th century (Maclean 1988, 25).

THE BRIDGE

The Ness was originally crossed at a ford at the end of Friars Lane, until a bridge of oak (T) was built at the end of Bridgegate (now Bridge Street). The grant to the Blackfriars by Alexander III in 1275 of the king's road leading to the Ness, between the cemetery of the parish church and the Friary wall (above), must mean that it was no longer necessary as a public right of way: presumably, therefore, the bridge had been built by that date. In 1411 the oak bridge was burned by Donald, Lord of the Isles. A replacement was swept away in a flood in 1620. The new wooden bridge was built four years later, but in 1664 it, too, fell down. It was replaced by a stone bridge of seven arches, constructed of material from the Cromwellian citadel, and was opened in 1685, but this stone bridge was swept away in a flood in 1849. Its successor, opened in 1855, was replaced by the present bridge in 1961 (Pollitt 1981, 57–62).

Recent investigation on the site of Stirling Bridge has revealed remains of stone piers of the wooden bridge, which preceded the present Auld Brig, but which was built on a different location (Page & Main 1997). It is possible that similar remains are preserved in the Ness of the earlier bridges which spanned the river at Inverness, although in this case successive stone bridges were built on the same site as the earlier timber ones.

DEFENCES AND PORTS

In his charter to the burgh about 1179, William the Lion stated that the burgesses had agreed that, when he had made a ditch around the burgh, they would erect a stout palisade on the ditch, maintain it and always keep it strong and complete (Barrow 1971, 262). It is not known if this ditch was the same as the defensive ditch (C), which followed a line from the Ness at Waterloo Bridge, along Chapel Street, Academy Street, Hamilton Street (where it was known as 'foul pool') and Ardconnel Street to the Ness south of Castle Hill. On the west side of the river a continuation ran along the course of King Street and Duff Street (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 6). Excavations in Hamilton Street (3) located the possible inner edge of this ditch, but as it cut some pits, it must have been of late medieval date or a re-cut, and not William's original ditch. This later ditch was 6 m wide and 1.14 m deep at the centre, its deepest point. It had been backfilled with rubbish. It is not known how long the original ditch and palisade lasted, or indeed this later ditch. Gordon of Rothiemay's view of the burgh in the mid 17th century (illus 4) shows not a ditch but rather the site of Academy Street as a route partly lined on both sides with buildings. A defensive ditch was dug around the burgh against the Marquis of Montrose in 1644 (Pollitt 1981, 72) and it may have been this which was exposed by the excavations in Hamilton Street. Excavations at Castle Street

(1) revealed one side of a pit or ditch, over 4m wide by 1.5 m deep, which may have formed part of a defensive circuit around the castle and early burgh (Wordsworth 1982, 327, 389).

Entry to the burgh was through ports or gateways. Their function was to serve as collection points for the payment of tolls and dues on goods entering the burgh for sale in the market, and to provide security for the townsmen by being closed at night or during trouble, or in time of plague to keep infected persons from entering the town. Four ports are illustrated on Gordon of Rothiemay's view (illus 4). There was a port at each end of the bridge (S & U); the Overgate Port (W) stood in Castle Street, formerly Overgate or Doomsdale (Maclean 1988, 18); and there was a port at the east end of High Street (M). There does not seem to have been a port at the north end of Church Street.

CONCLUSIONS

The layout and development of Inverness can be compared to those of other medieval burghs in Scotland. Its situation, where important land routes met at the lowest fording and bridging point and highest navigable point of a river, is comparable to Perth, Stirling, Ayr and Dumfries (in the last three towns late medieval bridges still survive). Its development along a route between the castle at one end and church at the other is similar to its neighbour Elgin, which seems to have initially developed between the castle and parish church, before extending eastwards towards the cathedral. Also, like its neighbours, Forres, Elgin and Auldearn (later replaced by Nairn), it seems to have been founded as a royal castle and burgh as a result of David I's annexation of the province of Moray in 1130, in his attempt to control that rebellious area. Initially a successful and growing burgh, it seems to have reached its medieval limits by the 14th century, from which it was not to expand until the second half of the 18th century. By the mid 17th century, the trade through its harbour seems to have declined from international commerce with the Low Countries, France and the Baltic, to a merely coastal trade. This was possibly a result of dislocation caused by the wars with England and the unrest caused by the Lords of the Isles. A slight recovery in foreign trade is recorded in the 18th century.

Much archaeological investigation has taken place in the confines of the medieval burgh, almost all of it in the form of trial excavation or watching briefs. Only two extensive excavations have been undertaken, both in the same area, at Castle Street (1) and Raining's Stairs (2), each providing evidence of timber buildings. At the former site a unique construction style, the stave-and-clay-built wall, was uncovered. Of the other excavated wall types, stake-and-wattle and plank-in-sill, on the ground or on a stone foundation, had parallels in Perth and Aberdeen, in both domestic buildings and byres or sheds and workshops. Occupation at the site was continuous from the 13th to the 15th centuries. Although some leather and textile fragments did survive, unfortunately, organic preservation was generally poor, and environmental evidence (eg plants and insects) was almost nil. There were, however, a few deposits of carbonized seeds, representing bramble, rye and flax (Wordsworth 1982, 328, 338, 341).

It is possible, with due care, to link the evidence from the Castle Street excavations (1) to the historical record. The laying out of Doomsdale (now Castle Street) in the 14th century can be seen to have taken place after the demolition of the castle by Robert I in 1307/8. At this time, the area would have become available for development, as the need to secure the approaches to the castle had ceased to be a priority. Also, it is tempting to ascribe the rise of the local pottery industry in the 14th century to the dislocation of trade during the wars with England, when imported wares from England and the European mainland became scarcer (MacAskill 1982, 366). It must be noted, however, that local pottery industries in Aberdeen and Perth were already

in existence by the 13th century (Murray, J C 1982, 124, 126; MacAskill 1987, 91), although not dominant until the 14th century. The identification of the two phases of burning on the site with specific dates, 1411 and 1429, is more tenuous, as Inverness was captured on 14 occasions between 1163 and 1500 (although it was not burned on the occasion of every capture) (Wordsworth 1982, 322). Consideration must also be given to accidental burning, which may not always have been chronicled.

Archaeological field work on both sides of Church Street has revealed that the depth of deposits above natural subsoil is about 0.5 m (6, 7, 15), although some 0.7 m of stratified deposits were revealed beside Abertarff House (9). Deep pits (2.5–4.5 m) were revealed on one site (6). Archaeological remains, dating to the medieval period, in the form of floors, occupation layers, middens, pits and burnt deposits, have also been found on both sides of High Street (17, 18, 20), to a depth of over 1 m. The work at 26–30 High Street (20) suggests that the original southern edge of the street surface of Eastgate (now High Street) lay further north than it does now. Also found at three sites was evidence of a prehistoric *tsunami* (volcanic tidal wave) which resulted in the formation of a thick sand deposit at the southern end of Inverness (1, 18, 20). This sand deposit sealed Mesolithic occupation at Castle Street (1).

Alterations to street frontage lines are evident at Castle Street and High Street (1, 20). Castle Street originally extended some 3.5 m eastwards from its present frontage, before the buildings encroached on it in the 15th century; the location of the original High Street frontage is unknown. Similar encroachments on the street frontage are known from other burghs in Scotland (Perth, Dumbarton, Dunfermline and Arbroath; see above). The encroachment of buildings may be the result of the incorporation into a frontage building of a stall or booth for displaying wares for sale: Elgin High Street still contains arcades at street level, probably the result of incorporating frontage booths into the main building, similar to Gladstone's Land in High Street, Edinburgh, and the Earl of Glencairn's 'Greit House' of 1623 in High Street, Dumbarton.

Archaeological work in Inverness, while throwing light on the development and craft industries of the medieval burgh, has provided no evidence of its origins, apart from revealing possible cultivation soils pre-dating the development of Castle Street/High Street (1). No trace has been found of any occupation pre-dating the 12th century. This is still a matter for future investigation. The likeliest location for any such occupation is on Castle Hill. The later occupation of this site by two medieval castles and the present buildings erected in the 19th century may have resulted in the removal or extensive disturbance of much of the earlier remains. Nevertheless, the finding of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Dark Age remains at Edinburgh Castle (Driscoll & Yeoman 1997, 26–45) is a hopeful sign that pockets of pre-medieval remains could yet survive on Castle Hill.

Further work is also needed to clarify the original layout of the burgh, which seems to have been along Church Street, rather than nestling below Castle Hill in the shadow of the castle. Archaeological survival seems to be good in this area (6, 7, 15), and future investigations along this street could prove fruitful. Likewise, the course of William's ditch needs to be traced to determine to what extent, if at all, it was followed by the later ditch uncovered in the first archaeological investigation in Inverness, at Hamilton Street (3). This latter feature may have been the ditch dug in 1644 to defend the burgh against the Marquis of Montrose. The fill of the ditch provided evidence of one of the major industries of medieval and early modern Inverness — tanning. Metalworking furnaces were found at Castle Street (1), clay-lined pits (for steeping?) were found near 43–47 Church Street (6) and an oven at Friars Street (11). Other remains of medieval or early modern industries could still await discovery.

The burning of timber buildings at Castle Street (1) in the 15th century (Wordsworth 1982, 389), may have been representative of events which stimulated the burgesses to build in stone, the earliest reference to a stone house being in 1452 (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 9). A stone structure dating to around 1300 was excavated at Perth High Street (Bogdan 1992, 6), while the earliest documentary reference to a stone house in Perth is from the reign of Alexander II (1214–49) (*ibid*, 6). The earliest surviving domestic stone structure in Inverness is Abertarff House (L), dating from the late 16th century (Gourlay & Turner 1977, 9). The vaults of Queen Mary's House (R), where she is supposed to have stayed during her siege of Inverness Castle in 1562 and which was demolished in 1968, have been incorporated into offices built on the site (Pollitt 1981, 91).

Further excavation, together with documentary research on published and unpublished sources (ie, sasines, charters, town council records), is needed to clarify the origins and development of medieval and early modern Inverness, and any future redevelopment within the historic core of the burgh should be monitored archaeologically. Its crafts and industries and the transition from timber to stone construction would also be worthwhile subjects for a combined research programme. Documentary research, rather than archaeology, is more likely to establish the locations of the ports at the entrances to the burgh, as the remains of such structures are likely to have been cleared away in road widening and digging of services (although in Perth the remains of the tolbooth were found to survive in the middle of High Street). Documentary research may also clarify the origins of the Chapel Yard burial ground and the tangled skein of references to the church, chapel and chaplainry of St Mary; a geophysical survey may locate the foundations of any chapel, if anything remains of them after constant digging of graves. It would also be worth investigating by geological analysis the sources of clay for the local medieval pottery industry and the 18th-century brickworks.

Overall, archaeological work within the area of the medieval burgh has established the good survival of deposits, up to 2 m in Castle Street, over 1 m in High Street and over 0.5 m along Church Street, as well as the survival of deep features cut into natural subsoil; the future of Inverness's past is, therefore, a matter of concern, and a subject worthy of continuing investigation.

GAZETTEER

EXCAVATIONS

1 **13–21 Castle Street**   (NH 6673 4518) Excavations in 1979 located c 2 m of medieval deposits relating to four properties and dating from the early 13th to the mid 15th centuries. On two occasions the properties had been destroyed by fire. A series of metalled surfaces, presumably of the medieval Doomsdale (now Castle Street), were also located. Some Mesolithic occupation, sealed by a possible *tsunami* sand deposit (the result of a volcanic tidal wave), was also located (Wordsworth 1982, 322–82; Wordsworth 1985).

2 **Raining's Stairs**   (NH 6676 4516) A rescue excavation was undertaken by Inverness Museum, following a watching brief in 1993 on developers' test pits. The watching brief had located layers of burnt daub and charcoal lenses associated with a possible stone floor surface, possibly from medieval structures terraced into the hillside to the rear of the Castle Street frontage. The excavation produced evidence for a timber building terraced into the slope of Barn Hill. It had been destroyed by burning, and a spread of charred planking, perhaps oak, indicated probable plank-in-sill beam construction. It was sealed by redeposited gravels, a probable cultivation soil, and deep hillwash deposits. Associated pottery suggests that it was constructed in the 14th or 15th century (Hanley 1993, 43–4; Hanley 1994, 35).
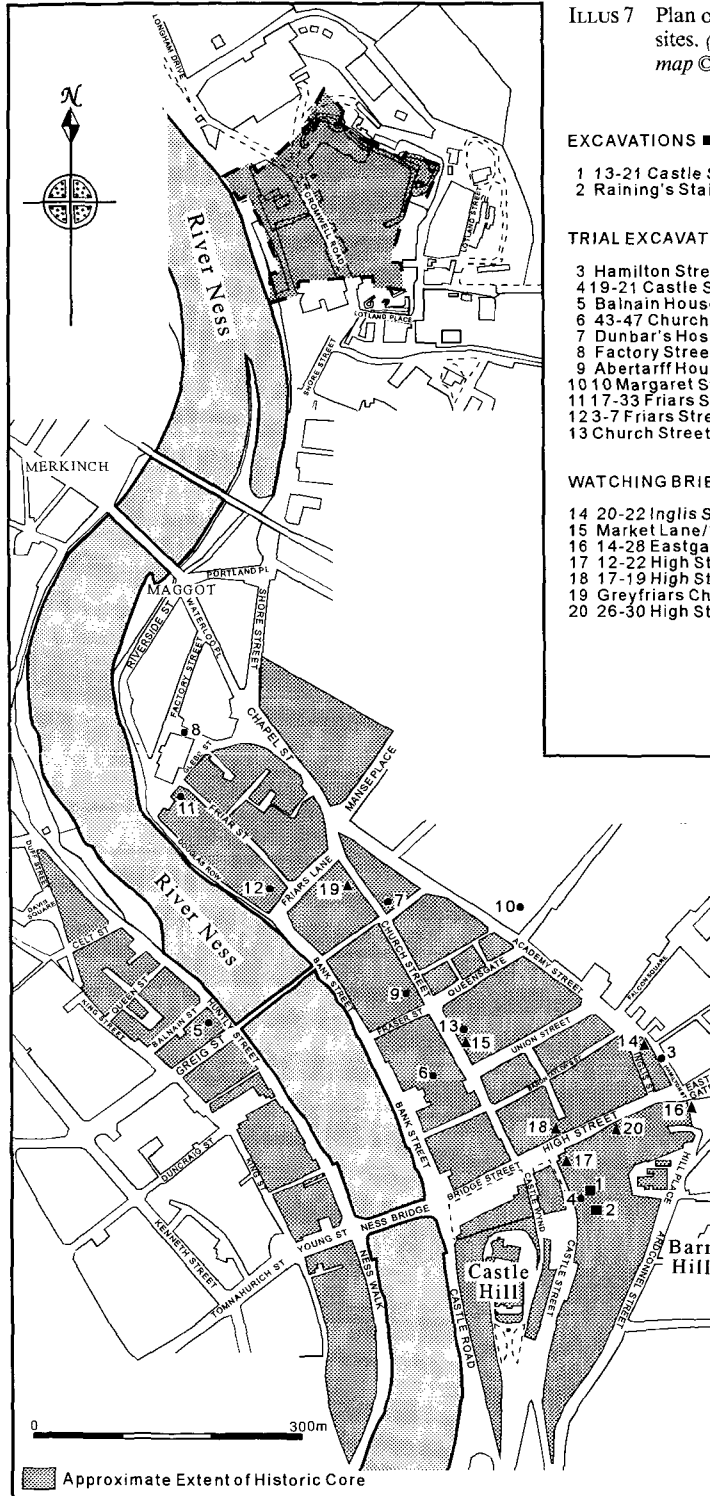
ILLUS 7 Plan of Inverness with archaeological sites. *(Based on the Ordnance Survey map © Crown copyright)*

EXCAVATIONS ■

1 13-21 Castle Street 1979
2 Raining's Stairs 1993-4

TRIAL EXCAVATIONS ●

3 Hamilton Street 1976
4 19-21 Castle Street 1978
5 Balnain House, Huntly Street 1978
6 43-47 Church Street 1978
7 Dunbar's Hospital 1978
8 Factory Street 1978
9 Abertarff House 1978
10 10 Margaret Street 1978
11 17-33 Friars Street 1985-86
12 3-7 Friars Street 1987
13 Church Street/Market Close 1989

WATCHING BRIEFS ▲

14 20-22 Inglis Street 1985
15 Market Lane/32a Church Street 1986
16 14-28 Eastgate 1986
17 12-22 High Street 1987
18 17-19 High Street 1993
19 Greyfriars Church Hall 1994
20 26-30 High Street 1994

3 **Hamilton Street** (NH 6682 4533) Trial excavations in 1976 possibly located part of the line of the town ditch. It was 6 m wide and 1.14 m deep at the centre, its widest point. Its fill contained pottery, leather and bone. In one of the trenches the ditch was seen to cut three pits, one stone- and one clay-lined, possibly for tanning leather (Duncan 1976, 37).

4 **19–21 Castle Street** (NH 6672 4517) Trial excavations in 1978 revealed about 2 m of stratified deposits, the earliest dating to the 13th century. Two burnt deposits with associated areas of cobbling and a possible post-hole were cut by a modern coal cellar (Ewart 1978, 2–3).

5 **Balnain House, Huntly Street** (NH 6632 4537) Trial excavations in 1978 located no archaeological deposits (Ewart 1978, 4–5).

6 **43–47 Church Street** (NH 6656 4531) Trial excavations in 1978 located three pits (two clay-lined) cut into the natural gravel (Ewart 1978, 6–8).

7 **Dunbar's Hospital** (NH 6652 4550) Trial excavations in 1978 located no archaeological deposits (Ewart 1978, 9).

8 **Factory Street** (NH 663 457) Trial excavations in 1978 located no archaeological deposits (Ewart 1978, 10).

9 **Abertarff House** (NH 6654 4539) Trial excavations in 1978 located occupation material up to 1 m thick, badly affected by post-medieval foundations (Ewart 1978, 11–12).

10 **10 Margaret Street** (NH 6665 4552) Trial excavations outside the line of the town ditch in 1978 located no archaeological deposits (Ewart 1978, 13).

11 **17–33 Friars Street** (NH 6635 4558) Trial excavation and a subsequent watching brief were carried out in 1985–6. The excavation located a pit containing dumped architectural fragments; the lower part of a pot-quern decorated with a face mask (illus 8); an incomplete 15th-century, glazed jug; and a Henry III short cross penny. In the watching brief, a large feature, possibly an oven, filled with clay, sand, charcoal, burnt clay and stones was located in a new foundation trench. Further excavation revealed a stone-lined flue associated with this feature. The pit into which this possible oven was set contained sherds of medieval pottery and burnt bone (Ross 1985:a, 25–6; Harden 1986:a, 17).

12 **3–7 Friars Street** (NH 6638 4554) Trial excavations in 1987 by SUAT located natural sandy subsoil at c 0.7 m below modern ground level. Nothing relating to the Dominican Friary was located (Hall 1987).

13 **Church Street/Market Close** (NH 6660 4536) Trial excavations by SUAT in 1989 located a boundary or drainage ditch running back from Church Street (Bowler 1989, 26).

WATCHING BRIEFS

14 **20–22 Inglis Street** (NH 6680 4535) A watching brief in 1985 located no archaeological deposits (Ross 1985:b, 25).
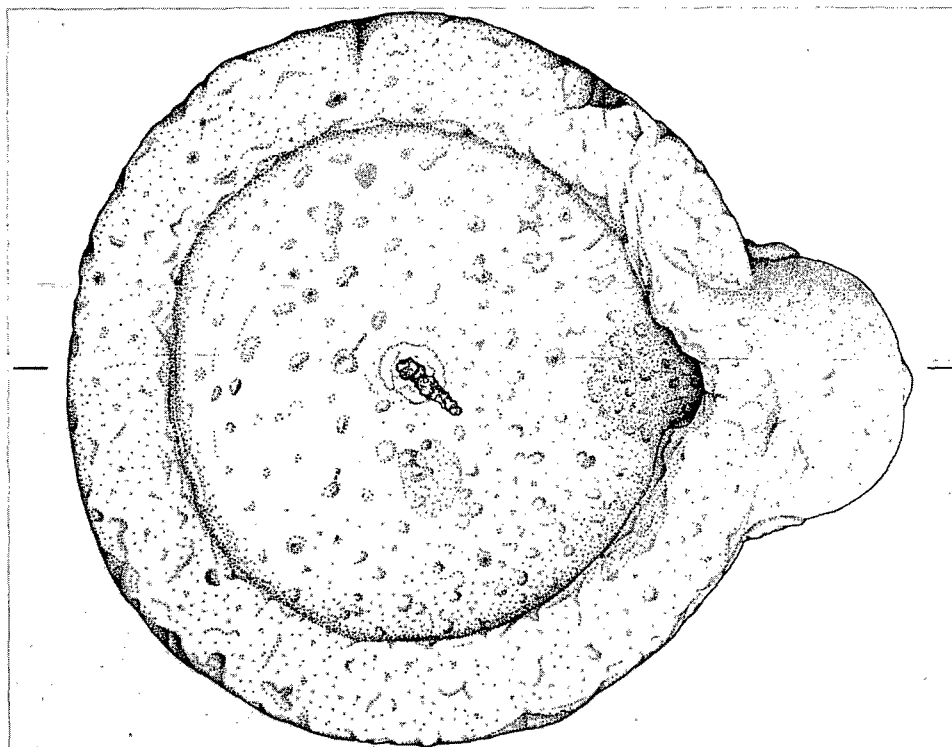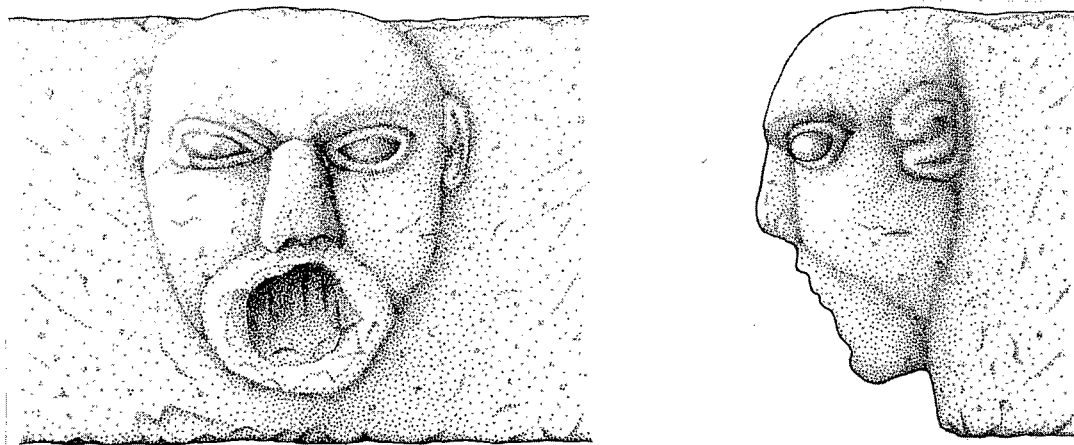
ILLUS 8   The quern from 17–33 Friars Street; width 400 mm (*drawn by Frank Moran*)

15   **Market Lane/32a Church Street**   (NH 666 453) A watching brief in 1986 located layers of charcoal, burnt clay, sand and gravel to a depth of 0.6 m, similar to those recovered from excavations at Castle Street in 1979 (Harden 1986:b, 17).

16   **14–28 Eastgate**   (NH 6685 4529) A watching brief in 1986 located no archaeological deposits (Harden 1986:c, 17).

17 **12–22 High Street** (NH 6671 4524) A watching brief in 1987 located c 2 m of deposits preserved in the sides of deep Victorian cellars. These deposits were of sand and gravel interspersed with burning, burnt clay and midden, and contained sherds of medieval pottery (Harden 1987, 25).

18 **17–19 High Street** (NH 6671 4525) A watching brief by SUAT in 1993 located up to 1.15 m of archaeological deposits over sandy subsoil. Medieval occupation was represented by pits and clay floors, sealing a clean yellow sand which in turn overlay an old ground surface. This sand may represent further evidence for a *tsunami* of Mesolithic date (6000–3000 bc), previously recognized in excavations in Castle Street in 1979 (1) (Hall 1993, 43).

19 **Greyfriars Church Hall, Church Street** (NH 6647 4553) A watching brief in 1994 located human remains during the laying of a new floor (D Low, pers comm).

20 **26–30 High Street** (NH 6674 4525) A watching brief in 1994 located medieval midden deposits, 1.5 m deep, suggesting that the High Street frontage was laid out not till the 15th century or later. A buried soil horizon, of possible Mesolithic date, was also found (Wordsworth 1994, 35).

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