

Monumental guidebooks ‘in State care’

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SUMMARY

A new series of guidebooks to Scottish monuments in State care is being produced by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Directorate of the Scottish Development Department. The origin and progress of Government-sponsored guidebooks in Scotland are considered chiefly from the point of view of the non-expert user or casual visitor.

INTRODUCTION

Five years is not a long time in the history of an ancient monument, but in that period there has been a transformation in the way by which visitors to historic sites now in Government care are helped to understand what they see. A new series of guidebooks and guide-leaflets is part of the continuing process of improved ‘presentation’ which has been carried out over the years successively by H M Office of Works, the Ministry of Works (later of Public Building and Works), the Department of the Environment, and finally by the Secretary of State for Scotland acting through the Scottish Development Department.

One does not need to be particularly ‘ancient’ to have seen that rather bewildering procession of office, ministry and department pass in rapid order across the bureaucratic stage. Only since 1978 has the Scottish Office had the full responsibility for what has been called ‘our monumental heritage’ – a useful blanket term which appears to cover the definitions of ‘monument’ and ‘ancient monument’ enshrined in the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* of 1979 (MacIvor & Fawcett 1983, 20). Those now held in trust for the nation by the Secretary of State are cared for on his behalf by the SDD through a directorate named ‘Historic Buildings and Monuments’. The change-over to the new-style guides dates from 1982, and those already issued are part of a ‘rolling programme’ to bring all the relevant guide-literature up to date, which will take several years to achieve.

The decision on what constitutes an appropriate ‘monumental guidebook’ is not an altogether simple one. Government research is said to have come up with a ‘meaningless statistic’ that visitors have an average reading age of 13, and the planning and conservation officer who quoted it wrote of meeting the needs of the ‘ordinary visitor wanting a day’s enjoyment amid pleasant ruins’ (Baker 1983, 62). The new-style guides now being produced by the directorate are aimed at ‘folk who find a general interest in, for example, abbeys or forts’, rather than experts in medieval or bastioned artillery defences; people looking at a monument, it is assumed, ‘want first to know what it is, who built it, and when it was built’ (MacIvor & Fawcett 1983, 27).

How then do those who are responsible for producing the new-style guides see their task?

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Speaking at a conference held at St Andrews in September 1983, Mr Iain MacIvor, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland since 1979, said:

Guidebooks must always have an important role to play in informing the visitor and are particularly important as they are frequently the only tangible record he will have of his visit. For many years the guide-book provided a detailed history and description of the monument, but hardly acted as a guide to it. For some time the division [at that time the Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings Division, Scottish Development Department] has been altering the thrust of its guidebooks by turning them into usable guides rather than academic treatises, making much more use of illustrative material (MacIvor 1983, 15).

This policy was more recently repeated by Dr David Breeze, the series editor and himself one of the Inspectors, who wrote in the first issue of a newsletter for the 'Friends of the Scottish Monuments' set up in April 1985:

'For many years the guidebook was in reality a handbook, providing a detailed history and description of the monument, but hardly acting as a guide to it. For some time, the Directorate [Historic Buildings and Monuments, SDD] and its predecessors have been altering the composition of the "guidebook", turning it into a guide rather than an academic work. This process started in 1970 with the introduction of a new guide to Fort George. Another major step forward was the revamping of the "guidebook" into a modern, two-column format, making much more use of illustrations' (Breeze 1985, [4]).

The 'guided tour' is of course no new concept of what the visitor requires, even if some writers have tended to wander from it. 'Having thus mastered the main features in the architectural development of the castle', wrote Dr Douglas Simpson in a typical passage on Hermitage in 1957, 'we are now in a position to inspect it. Let us begin by walking round outside. . . .' To appreciate the background to the process described by Mr MacIvor and Dr Breeze, and for the record, it is worth looking more closely at the beginning of Government sponsorship of official guidebooks to monuments in its care, which does not seem to have been noticed at least in published form.

ENTER THE 'KING'S ANTIQUARY'

The first guidebook to an ancient monument in Scotland published by a Government agency seems to be that for the abbey and palace of Holyroodhouse, written by Sir Herbert Maxwell of Monreith, who was president of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland from 1900 to 1913. Its first appearance in 1906 was hailed as a major event. In a long notice in the *Scottish Historical Review*, J H Stevenson wrote:

'A guidebook by a writer of eminence is by no means unknown. Nevertheless it is a large step in advance when H M Office of Works produces an Official Guide to a Scottish Royal Palace, written, at its direction, by the President of the Society of Antiquaries. Hitherto we have been familiar with the almost regal titles of Historiographer Royal, King's Limner, and Poet Laureate; enter now King's Antiquary. In no better hands . . .'

and so on. But Mr Stevenson had some reservations about the historical sketch from Sir Herbert's 'facile and engaging pen', while Dr Thomas Ross (in an annotated copy of the guidebook) found fault with some of the structural details.¹ But this does not detract from the importance of 1906 as a landmark in State-sponsored guidance, and the offending passages continued to appear as the booklet went through successive editions (all still priced at 6d, with revenue from advertisements), right up to Sir Herbert's death in 1937, when it had just been superseded by a new guidebook written by Dr J S Richardson. Despite its blemishes, the work must have stimulated many visitors to take a deeper interest in Scottish history as a result of their visit to Holyroodhouse.

The Commissioners of Woods and Forests, who preceded the Office of Works in the preservation of some ancient monuments in Crown ownership, do not seem to have embarked on any printed 'presentation' of them. Regular arrangements for visitors to the palace had been made from 1854, and as early as 1818 an 86-page *Historical Description of the Monastery or Chapel Royal of Holyroodhouse, with a short account of the Palace and Environs*, was printed for John Petrie and sold by him at the Chapel Royal; a new and enlarged edition, to 'meet the wishes of the inquisitive tourist and visitant', was printed for Mrs John Petrie and sold 'for behoof of herself and family' in 1819 (the name of Mr James Bland appears in the text as 'Beadle', with Mr John Petrie as deputy). In 1834, we learn from a later guidebook, Mr Henry Courtoy was appointed, under commission of the privy seal, sole Beadle and Keeper of the Chapel Royal of Holyrood; 'with an ardour and zeal rarely displayed, and scarcely to be expected from one not a native of Scotland, though long an enthusiastic admirer of its antiquities and traditions', he began to form collections relating to the chapel-royal, palace and adjoining royal domain, resulting in the publication in 1837 of a new guidebook, dedicated to the wife of the hereditary keeper of the palace. Other 'histories' followed, with illustrations including two by George Meikle Kemp, architect of the Scott monument.

Returning to the Office of Works, however, its next Scottish publication did not appear until 1928. This was a modest 28-page booklet on Whithorn Priory, issued by His Majesty's Stationery Office in London with a preface by C R Peers (later Sir Charles), Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments. With the appointment of Peers as Inspector in 1910, and as Chief Inspector in 1913, a new works organization had been produced to deal with the increasing number of monuments in State care; James S Richardson was appointed Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland in 1914, and John Wilson Paterson became architect in charge of ancient monuments and historic buildings in Scotland. Peers regarded the publication of guides as an essential part of his work, and in the *Whithorn* booklet a section on the early monuments by W G Collingwood was followed by a history and architectural description by R C Reid.

The next guidebooks, written by two men notable in the history of ancient monuments in Scotland, and published in 1929, launched a series of which the 'new-style' guides may be considered a modern projection. Parts of Edinburgh Castle, which was under the control of the military authorities, were officially regarded by 1877 as of special historical interest, and the Crown Room had been 'opened for public inspection' soon after the rediscovery of the regalia in 1818. Sir Walter Scott wrote and published his *Description of the Regalia of Scotland* in 1819, but it was not issued under Government auspices; a very slight *Guide* to the castle by George Oliver appeared in 1853; and it was not until 1929 that H M Office of Works produced an 'official guide', in which the buildings were described by Dr J S Richardson and the history written by Dr Marguerite Wood, Keeper of the Burgh Records.

The other booklet, by Mr J Wilson Paterson, described the ruins of Inchcolm Abbey in the Firth of Forth. It owed its origin to special circumstances which afford an interesting parallel with modern 'rescue archaeology'. Inchcolm had been 'disfigured by the fortifications erected during the war', and when in 1924 the earl of Moray placed the abbey ruins under the Commissioners of Works it became possible to remove the accretions by which the larger portion of the monastic buildings had been converted into a dwelling house, and to make an exhaustive study of the remains. Mr Paterson presented the results of his investigations in a paper to the Society of Antiquaries in March 1926, in which he traced the development of the monastery with the aid of a series of plans based on actual evidence found on the site, and in 1929 his official guide to the abbey was published for the Office of Works by HMSO.

As there is some confusion about the dating of the guidebooks published between the wars,² it is perhaps worth setting out the sequence of what may be called the 'grey guides' as follows:

1906	<i>Palace and Abbey Church of Holyroodhouse</i>	Sir H Maxwell
1928	<i>Whithorn Priory</i>	W G Collingwood & R C Reid
1929	<i>Edinburgh Castle</i>	J S Richardson & M Wood
1929	<i>The Abbey of Inchcolm</i>	J W Paterson
1931	<i>Huntingtower</i>	J S Richardson
1932	<i>Dryburgh Abbey</i>	J S Richardson & M Wood
1932	<i>Melrose Abbey</i>	J S Richardson & M Wood
1932	<i>Tantallon Castle</i>	J S Richardson
1933	<i>Skara Brae</i>	V G Childe
1934	<i>Dirleton Castle</i>	J S Richardson
1934	<i>Elgin Cathedral</i>	J S Richardson & H B Mackintosh
1934	<i>Linlithgow Palace</i>	J S Richardson & J Beveridge
1934	<i>Sweetheart Abbey</i>	J S Richardson
1935	<i>Dunkeld Cathedral</i>	M E B Simpson
1936	<i>The Palace of Holyroodhouse</i>	J S Richardson
1938	<i>The Castle of Stirling</i>	J S Richardson & M E B Simpson

In addition to these, a simple form of unillustrated leaflet guide was introduced, including *Hailes Castle* (1931).

The years between the Second World War and the 1978 reorganization (referred to earlier) were a prolific and innovative period in guidebook production, which was proceeding alongside a more thematic and regional approach. More than 25 new titles appeared, and even a bald and incomplete summary will serve to link the old series with the new. Mr Stewart Cruden, who was for 30 years the Inspector (latterly Principal Inspector) of Ancient Monuments for Scotland, appreciated the importance of putting archaeological information to the general public in a clear and interesting way, writing the guidebooks to St Andrews Cathedral and Castle (1950 and 1951), the brochs of Mousa and Clickhimin (1951), Castle Campbell (1953), and Arbroath Abbey (1954). The leaflet guides were continued, and he also introduced 'card guides' and experimented with more attractive formats which gave distinction to the outside as well as the inside of the 'blue guides' (Laing 1984, 481). The driving energy of Dr W Douglas Simpson contributed *Threave* (1948), *Edzell* (1952), *Huntly* and *Craigmillar* (1954), *Kildrummy* (with *Glenbuchat*), *Crichton* and *Hermitage* (1957), *Bothwell* (1958), and *Urquhart* (1964); although some of his tenets are not accepted, his influence remains, and *Dunstaffnage Castle* (1981) includes much of his original draft. Dr M R Apted, of the Inspectorate, undertook *Claypotts* (1957) and *Aberdour* (1961), while Mr Iain MacIvor wrote on *Dumbarton* (1958) and led the way towards a new range of 'site guiding' booklets with his *Fort George* (1970); this was a useful basic framework for a monument which was designed as a unity and survives outwardly little altered, and his *Craignethan Castle* (1978) showed that the pathfinding method could be adapted to a very different kind of structure.

THE 'NEW-STYLE' GUIDEBOOKS

In the main stream of guidebooks now being produced by the Historic Buildings and Monuments directorate, the chief outward sign of change is the double-column layout of the pages and the improved quality of paper, which together allow greater integration of text and illustrations. They fall into two categories, of which the first are reissues or revisions of guides which were already in print:

1982	<i>Arbroath Abbey</i>	R L Mackie & S Cruden, adapted R Fawcett	first published 1954
1982	<i>Caerlaverock Castle</i>	B H St J O'Neil, rev C J Tabraham	1952
1982	<i>Dirleton Castle</i>	J S Richardson, rev C J Tabraham	1934

1982	<i>Edzell Castle</i>	W D Simpson, rev R Fawcett	1952
1982	<i>Hermitage Castle</i>	W D Simpson	1957
1982	<i>Huntingtower</i>	J S Richardson	1931
1982	<i>St Andrews Castle</i>	S Cruden	1951
1983	<i>Dryburgh Abbey</i>	J S Richardson, rev C J Tabraham	1932
1983	<i>Linlithgow Palace</i>	J S Richardson, rev F Stewart	1934
1983	<i>The Brochs of Mousa and Clickhimin</i>	J Hamilton	1970
1983	<i>Skara Brae</i>	V G Childe & D V Clarke	1933
1983	<i>Urquhart Castle</i>	W D Simpson, rev C Lindsay & M. Reynolds	1964
1983	<i>Fort George</i>	Iain MacIvor	1970
1984	<i>Whithorn</i>	C A R Radford & G Donaldson	1953
1984	<i>Inchcolm Abbey</i>	J W Paterson	1937
1984	<i>Tolquhon Castle</i>	W D Simpson & C J Tabraham	1948
1985	<i>Aberdour Castle</i>	M R Apted	1961
1985	<i>Bothwell Castle</i>	W D Simpson, rev D J Breeze & J R Hume	1958
1985	<i>Cairnpapple</i>	S Piggott	1951
1985	<i>Huntly Castle</i>	W D Simpson & C J Tabraham	1954

Concurrently with these, there have appeared at the time of writing the following new guidebooks in the same series:

1982	<i>Blackness Castle</i>	Iain MacIvor	16pp
1983	<i>New Abbey Corn Mill</i>	J R Hume & C J Tabraham	16pp
1983	<i>Threave Castle</i>	C J Tabraham	16pp
1984	<i>Bonawe Iron Furnace</i>	G P Stell & G D Hay	32pp
1984	<i>Lochleven Castle</i>	N Q Bogdan	16pp
undated	<i>Duff House</i>	A A Tait	28pp
1985	<i>Glasgow Cathedral</i>	Richard Fawcett	32pp
1985	<i>Smailholm Tower</i>	C J Tabraham	16pp

While no Government department is likely to be associated with anything 'cheap and nasty', there may have been a feeling in some quarters that a 'revamping' of the old-style guidebooks might carry popularization too far. Any such fears should disappear with the reissues and revisions now published. Sometimes nothing more than new paragraphing and a word or phrase in bold type can have an immediate impact on the visitor using a guidebook 'on site'.

The texts of *Fort George*, *Cairnpapple* and *Aberdour* have been left largely undisturbed by the authors, but the new format and layout add greatly to their effectiveness – especially in the case of *Cairnpapple*, where Professor Piggott's was previously an unillustrated leaflet guide. If there is room for criticism, it would be that more prominence might have been given to the reasons and effects of the choice of a maritime site for Fort George, with its implications for defence from the sea and supply. In the historical portion of *Aberdour* the rather dry recital overburdened with detail and exact dates might have been revised, and the obvious misquotation of more than one document, and the introduction of too many printing errors, suggests overhasty production. In *Inchcolm*, already improved by the addition in 1950 of Monsignor David McRoberts' 'history', the descriptive portion keeps closely to Mr Wilson Paterson's original text.

Three of the late Dr Douglas Simpson's guides have been reissued. In *Bothwell* the revisers' task seems to lie almost entirely in the 'presentation' of the author's self-confident, robust and sometimes even majestic prose (but unfortunately not correcting his slip over a title involved in the famous 'Douglas cause', which determined the ownership of the Bothwell estates); *Huntly* borrows from rather than follows its original, remodelling and extending the description with further details of decoration and furnishing; *Tolquhon* lends itself particularly to the pictorial treatment denied to it in the old guide-leaflet (the old gremlin is back, saying it was 'first published 1984'), but in proclaiming it



ILLUS 1 The 'new-style' guidebooks

'a feudal display of pride', with an illusory impression of defensibility, more might have been made of the Forbes family who created it, and references to squires, lairds and lords may leave some readers in doubt about their status as minor Scottish barons.

How far, then, can it be said that these 'new-style' guidebooks combine the role of 'usable guide' and 'tangible record' of the monuments in State care, answering where possible the questions that visitors are likely to ask?

Rather than beginning from any generalization, it is probably better to cite examples, without fully reviewing any one booklet. They can be considered together under their own chosen section headings – adopted in most but not all in the series – Introduction, History (including building history and family history where appropriate), and Tour of site, before the illustrations and details of format which are essential to the whole purpose are discussed. The viewpoint should always be that of the *user*, and not simply the *reader*, although there will be plenty of temptations to stray, and it must be supposed that most users (unlike other readers) will have neither wish nor opportunity to 'contrast and compare'.

INTRODUCTION

If the Tour normally becomes the main feature which a visitor is expected to read on the site, it follows that the Introduction should include the salient points which will be necessary to a proper or at least preliminary understanding of it. So long as it is clear where the itinerary will be found in the booklet (and some care has been taken to ensure that it is), historical matter not essential to such an understanding can be given separately, with an occasional cross-reference to prevent the significance of some important feature being missed. More detail can then be included on the families, ecclesiastics or others involved, and if justified a separate section on building history can be given.

In the series, the Introduction usually emphasizes the historical, architectural or social importance and significance of the monument, and sometimes all three. As this and the tour section may be the only parts read while visiting a monument, attention should also be focused (without too much detail) on features which are special to it – for example, the vaulted cloister buildings at Inchcolm are mentioned in introducing the description of the abbey, but although the completeness of Glasgow Cathedral is stressed at the very outset in its new guidebook, enough emphasis is hardly given to the survival there of the stone screen or *pulpitum* between the nave and the choir. Where the Introduction begins by setting the scene, as it may well do if a site dictates the plan and purpose of the building, it would be kinder to the visitor to avoid burdening the first paragraph which he reads with kilometres and hectares, as in *Lochleven Castle*.

HISTORY

It is not the purpose of this article to assess the information given in these guidebooks, on which an inexpert opinion would be valueless, but rather to concentrate on the way it is presented. Some passing comments on the historical content may be in order, however, from an inveterate user and hoarder of such publications old and new.

Generally speaking, a good idea is given of the men who built these monuments, or rather who caused them to be built. Dr Simpson set a fine example, by his appreciation of the importance of family history in their creation and continuation. The influence of the great Douglas houses runs through the story of Bothwell and Threave, Aberdour and Lochleven, as it does also at Tantallon and other properties in State care. *Aberdour* has a Morton family tree, and there is a short illustrated 'appendix' on other Douglas properties in it and *Bothwell*. This feature is probably designed to engage the visitor's interest in more than a single property, but it prompts the thought that it would be instructive if the relationship between the Douglas builders, and also the geographical spread of the monuments associated with them, could be shown graphically, by means of trees or maps, with the pictures of 'related' properties somewhat reduced so as not to compete with the main subject of the guidebook. Family influence on architectural patronage, of course, can be found among the Setons and their Huntly and Eglinton collaterals, but they are not so widely represented among monuments in State care.

In writing the history of a building, there is some risk that stone and lime will overlay or obscure the human factors by which alone the process was carried on. This tendency is not always sufficiently resisted. The visitor is told, for instance, that Duff House served as an 'administrative and social centre for the vast landed estates' of the earls of Fife, and its contents 'supported the style of a highland [*sic*] nobleman'; but the rise of William Duff of Dipple to an Irish earldom is more clearly sketched in a few paragraphs of Burke's *Peerage*, and the extent and location of his estates is only indirectly touched on in the guidebook, and not explained as an essential part of the story.

To avoid overlapping, building history is not usually treated separately (the exceptions are Bothwell Castle and Glasgow Cathedral, where there is a lot to be said about their evolution). At Threave, which is said to have the 'most complete vestiges' of the kind of wall-head defence known as

'hours' or wooden galleries (Stell 1981, 21–2), one might expect to find more than a casual reference to the significance of the put-log holes there which had puzzled the writer of the guidebook now replaced. Is it being captious to suggest that, while talk of a 'building-campaign' is not inappropriate at Blackness, the word may sound less seemly to a reader in the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral?

Bonawe has a full and clear account of the iron industry in the Highlands and the process used there. The working of New Abbey Mill is fully explained and unusual features pointed out; but the opportunity has not been taken to place corn mills in the context of the communities which they served, or to indicate to a visitor the factors which led to the steady decline in their numbers.

Later associations and even the present use of a monument for exhibition purposes are prominent in the guide to Smailholm, although its fascination for the 'wee sick laddie' who became Sir Walter Scott lays more stress on the two-year-old than on the growing boy who stayed there for several years thereafter. An example of how more might be made of monumental associations with human beings is Blackness; as the guidebook points out, the castle occurs periodically from 1449 to 1707 as a State prison, where 'men of rank and consequence had some degree of comfort in confinement', but only Cardinal Beaton is named. The very shortness of the stay within its walls of such men as Mackenzie of Kintail and Huntly (1586 and 1592) may show how Blackness was regarded by great men warded there. The author is rightly concerned with expounding the castle's real significance as an artillery fortification, and its role as a place of confinement for 'prisoners of conscience' is ignored; yet it produced a not inconsiderable 'prison literature', a neat play on the words 'blackness of darkness' and 'darkness of Blackness', and a report that the devil was seen sitting on the walls when Monck bombarded it. A prisoner was transferred to Stirling in 1704 'by reason of the bad air att Blackness', and in 1708 it was 'reckoned worse than a common gaol'. The blank page at the end of this 16pp booklet might be used to inform visitors of some of these facts and others well known such as James III's association with Blackness just before his fall; some mention of the practice of holding important men 'in ward' until they complied with some government requirement might not be thought too 'academic'.

TOUR

As has been mentioned, the descriptive tour or itinerary is not a completely new feature, although now it is accepted, in the more complicated or comprehensive sites at least, as the main 'thrust' of the series. The best recent example of this is a well thought-out and clearly presented tour of Glasgow Cathedral, which recommends an itinerary with six exterior and seven interior viewing points. This tour may take at least one hour to assimilate even superficially – a reckoning made after a preliminary perusal of both the numbered sections and the general and building histories, which a casual visitor might have to postpone until after a visit. By following this procedure it was noticed that some discreet cross-referencing would have been useful; photographs in the 'history' sections help towards the recognition and understanding of such features as the modifications made c 1200 in the south-eastern corner of the south-western compartment of the crypt (pp 9, 25), the *pulpitum* and flanking altar platforms (pp 13, 18, 31), and the varied window tracery in the choir (pp 5, 7, 28). How different parts of the building were used by clergy and laity is clearly explained, with an 'unbroken round of daily prayer', and access by lay folk to aisles and ambulatory as well as to the nave. In the caption to Slezer's drawing, which includes the demolished archbishop's castle, attention might have been drawn to the armorial stones from the castle doorway placed in the crypt, where they are easily missed by the visitor, as is the damaged bishop's effigy (traditionally of the militant patriot Wishart). The ground plan was inconveniently placed in the first printing, as will be noticed later.

Such an itinerary is not, of course, required in the simpler monuments, but it made one visitor

realize what had been missed in the past through lack of such a 'guided tour' to read at Glasgow Cathedral and indeed elsewhere. The rain which was falling may have made the guidebook less attractive as a 'tangible record' of the visit, but it was worth it.

ILLUSTRATIONS

In the matter of illustrations the new style achieves its most impressive improvements. Their complete absence from the leaflet-guides was inevitable, but it is only with the more flexible printing techniques now available that one fully realizes how awkward was the old method of bunching them together, divorced from the text. Complete integration is now possible, and an intelligent use of captions allows further information to be conveyed without breaking into the main text. Illustrations are usually placed to match the text; too complicated a mixture—as in *Echoes of Stone*, for example—can distract the reader and make reference back in the text a tedious and frustrating business, but in this series it has been successfully avoided. Photographs of buildings are used not only to illustrate architecture and construction: *Duff House* has a house party group including King Edward VII, an amenity bazaar in progress in 1907, and a sample of its later chequered use as hotel, nursing home and army billet.

There is a much greater variety of illustrations than in the past. The reproduction of drawings and paintings made by earlier artists and antiquaries (eg Slezer, Grose, Sandby and Nattes, and some unfortunately unattributed, and perhaps unknown) often shows the monuments in a more complete state. The development of air photography has made it possible to illustrate the layout and setting of some monuments more effectively, especially when combined with adjacent ground plans (as in *Tolquhon*) or labelled perspective drawings (*Inchcolm*). Overall ground plans are given in all the guides, and are indeed essential to their purpose. In several they are conveniently placed on the inside back cover, or across a 'centre spread', and so are easily referred to while the visitor reads the text and follows the recommended itinerary; here exceptions unfortunately include *Glasgow Cathedral*, where plans appear on page 4 (at the beginning of the 'tour' section, but easily 'lost'—corrected on reprinting), with a numbered route rather too coyly indicated.

Another welcome feature is the provision of more and better 'reconstructions'. Government policy on the preservation of ancient monuments still adheres to the principle laid down by Robert Reid during his brief period as Scotland's 'first inspector of ancient monuments' 150 years ago—that repairs should be solely for their protection, 'the less appearance of interference with their present state and construction the better'. This tallied with Scott's diary entry of the same year (1829)—'a ruin should be protected but never repaired' (both quoted in Ogle-Skan 1984, 349). But fortunately this wise limitation need not apply to the depiction of such ruins on the printed page, so long as the freedom is exercised with knowledge and discretion. Even informed and imaginative 'reconstructions' were at one time frowned upon, but the new series shows how fully they are now accepted as part of official thinking. The 1950 edition of *Inchcolm* displayed six outline sketches showing the development of the church buildings from the 12th to the 15th century; in 1978 these were separated and placed in their context—a method made easier by the double-column format of the fourth edition in 1984.

One of the leading artists in this field was Alan Sorrell, whose conjectural restoration drawings of Caerlaverock and Dirleton and the Border abbeys won official approval. Now in the third edition of *Bothwell*, another of Sorrell's drawings (probably based on MacGibbon and Ross) is given prominence, with due caution to the reader that for reasons explained 'Bothwell would never have looked like this', but with an approving comment on the 'marvellous impression' which it gives of that splendid medieval castle. The inclusion of an earlier reconstruction, that of Lochleven Castle from Burns-Begg's book of 1887, is also to be welcomed, even with its warning that the artist failed to

include the outer courtyard and walled garden (which in fact figure rather inadequately in the present text, and are completely missing from the ground plan). Cutaway drawings have been used to illustrate complicated developments, such as the south tower of Blackness, and diagrams are frequently introduced to explain working machinery.

Portraits, other than royal ones, are usually unobtainable of the key figures in 'ancient monument' history. Heraldry can sometimes offer a decorative substitute, especially when it is actually incorporated in the building, as in Huntly's magnificent 'frontispiece'; drawings are instructive but less effective, and in *Bothwell* one looks in vain for the Moray and Douglas armorial stones illustrated in Sir William Fraser's account of the castle in *The Douglas Book* (1885), and also by MacGibbon and Ross.

FORMAT AND LAYOUT

The guidebook covers are generally attractive and arresting, usually including a picture of the monument by photograph or other medium. Presumably by intention, there is no uniformity in colour, typography or positioning, although the page-size is uniform (A4 folded to A5). HMSO bookshop addresses and a price code³ are placed in a panel on the outside back covers, sometimes accompanied above or below by a suitable 'embellishment' – the 1584–9 building plaque at Tolquhon, 1753 lintel at Bonawe, 1757 royal cipher at Fort George, Glasgow's episcopal seal, and the Huntly monogram. Such features might be sought out as a distinctive 'signature' for the series, as it was on the front cover in the old 'blue guides'.

Title-pages are also varied in layout and type. The guidebooks are all published by HMSO, but the name and logo of 'Historic Buildings and Monuments, Scottish Development Department' are also included in the most recent. In naming authors, a proliferation of designations and degrees may be expected to promote instant confidence (and sales) by being given prominence on the title-page – although they are entirely omitted in *Blackness* and *Inchcolm* – rather than relegating them to the introduction or inside front cover. Each section, as well as its formal heading, is set off by a boldly-quoted phrase either from a previous writer or from the author of the text. Thus Smailholm is 'standing stark and upright like a warden' (a happier choice from Scott than 'that mountain'd [*sic*] tower', said on the title-page to be a reading from *Marmion* – in fact from the original manuscript, later amended). But apt and flashing phrases cannot always be at hand, and lacking them such headings can degenerate into insipid labels. *Duff House*, which understandably avoids singling out the phrase 'a monstrous House' used by its builder in a letter to William Adam, dubiously dubs it 'a classic castle'.

Useful notes on 'further reading' are nearly always included, and the citing of excavation reports published in the *Proceedings* and other journals echoes the precedent set by the first publication on *Inchcolm* more than 50 years ago. Detailed references would obviously be out of place in such booklets, but *Glasgow Cathedral* manages to indicate unobtrusively in the course of narrative how sources such as the *Melrose Chronicle* and the papal records have shed light especially on the building history. Technical jargon, shunned whenever possible, is sometimes necessary; a glossary of military engineering terms is conveniently added in *Fort George*, where their use is unavoidable. The visitor to Smailholm may be surprised to learn that the Scots word 'barmkin' (defined as 'a defensive perimeter of middling strength' in Mr MacIvor's *Craignethan*) means literally 'a barrier for kine (cattle)'.

As well as publication or edition dates (only once omitted), a formal statement on the ownership and care of the monument is given, and usually also the location (with national grid reference) and where necessary, as at Threave, a note on accessibility.

PICTORIAL AND 'CONCERTINA' GUIDES

Scottish Medieval Churches (1985), by Dr Richard Fawcett, is the first of the more general publications which the Directorate intend to publish. Though not itself a guidebook, it is likely to help visitors to seek out examples of ecclesiastical architecture in State care, to which it is an introduction.

The two most popular monuments in Scotland, Edinburgh and Stirling castles, have been provided with handsome full-colour pictorial guides (1980; 1983). The introduction on the chronological development of the Edinburgh site particularly is a model of pleasing and instructive presentation. The numbered tours, comprising 28 points of interest and importance at Edinburgh, and 16 more widely scattered at Stirling, will test the mental and physical stamina of any less agile visitor attempting them without a break. The illustrations and panoramic displays are both practical as aids to understanding and attractive to the eye, but the complicated itinerary proposed at Stirling might have been simpler to follow if a more straightforward black-and-white ground plan rather than a tinted semi-pictorial one had been used to illustrate the recommended route.

Not all the monuments in State care are capable of supporting a full guidebook. Wherever there is a custodian, and usually where there is a key-keeper, 'concertina' guide-leaflets are being provided to meet the needs of visitors. About 20 of these have been published since 1982; some are adaptations from the old guide-leaflets, but others are completely new, such as that on the Roman bath-house at *Bearsden* first discovered in 1973. This series – convenient to use, although those with more than five segments require careful handling – now also includes the abbeys of Culross, Deer, Glenluce, Jedburgh and Kelso; Torphichen preceptory and the collegiate churches of Lincluden and Seton; Cardoness, Crookston, Elcho, MacLellan's and Newark (Renfrew) castles, and Scotstarvit tower; Ruthven barracks, and Jarlshof (where a new guidebook is due).

Unmanned sites present a different problem, but at the Bearsden bath-house there is an 'interpretative panel' on the site, and the guide-leaflet is available at local museums and at other monuments along the line of the Antonine Wall (Breeze 1983, 29–32).

CONCLUSION

Many of the features and techniques mentioned here have been widely adopted, and are not, of course, confined to Government-sponsored guidebooks. There has been, in fact, a spate of such material in recent years, to satisfy tourist demand, although not all of it stands up so well to close examination. Some points of criticism have been made or implied, but it would be hard to find a more practical and authoritative series, upholding the scholarly standards of the past, fulfilling its present aim to inform the 'inquisitive visitant' with assurance and imagination, and showing every sign of being ready to take advantage of further technical advances in the future.

NOTES

- 1 Stevenson's review is in *Scot Hist Rev*, 4 455–61. Ross's annotated copy of Maxwell's book is in Edinburgh Central Public Library (Edinburgh Room).
- 2 The sequence of Government guidebooks must be something of a bibliographer's nightmare. *Inchcolm* was published in 1929, a slightly amended version in 1937, but the 1950 edition is called the 'second'; similarly *Dryburgh* 1932 and 1937 editions were followed by a 'second' edition in 1948. *Melrose* was published 1932, but its second edition (1949) gave 1936 as the date of the first (subsequently corrected). First editions of *Tantallon* (1932), *Elgin* (1934), and *Stirling* (1938) were in their second editions (1950, 1950, 1948) dated 1937, 1938 and 1936 respectively. The gremlin has not ceased its operations in the 1980s.

- 3 Guidebooks up to a maximum of 16 pages cost 45p, while those up to 32 pages cost 75p. The 'concertina' leaflets retail at 35p, except those on Deer Abbey and Skelmorlie Aisle which cost 30p. The full-colour guides to Edinburgh and Stirling castles cost 80p and £1 respectively, and *Scottish Medieval Churches* £3.50. (*Scottish Castles and Fortifications* is a worthy successor.) *Echoes in Stone* was priced at £4.50.

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