
3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Tron Kirk was established to provide a church for the dispossessed congregation of St Giles', which had previously been converted to a cathedral by Charles I (Holmes 1975, and see **Documentary Evidence** below). It was built between 1637 and 1655 (Holmes 1975, 137). Between 1785 and 1787 the east, south and west wings of the church were removed to aid the construction of the South Bridge and Hunter Square, forming a more rectangular building. A heating chamber and a timber gallery were added to the interior in the 19th century. As a result of subsequent phases of development within the building, the only surviving elements of the

original structure are sections of the south wall, north façade, tower and the hammer beam roof.

At the time of the construction of the Tron Kirk, the High Street still retained its medieval layout, with long, narrow burgage plots lying at right angles to the main thoroughfare (Coleman 2004; Tait 2006). The decision to build the Tron Kirk would therefore have required the demolition of a series of closes and wynds and their associated tenement buildings, and the earlier excavations in the Tron Kirk substantiated this, revealing a series of buildings on either side of a narrow passage, subsequently identified as Marlin's Wynd (Holmes 1975; 1986).