THE “CHRONICLE OF PERTH”: AN HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY, VOLUME II

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of St. Andrews

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THE SPINE
The "Chronicle of Perth":
An Historical and Archaeological Study

Jonathan L.M. Eagles

VOLUME 2

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.
Department of Scottish History, Faculty of Arts,
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Editorial Principles

The editorial principles which I have applied in transcribing the "Chronicle of Perth" also apply to the transcriptions of original sources which appear in this volume (See Volume 1, Editorial Principles). I have attempted to represent the contents of all sources quoted as literally as possible; original spelling and grammatical conventions have been adhered to, although some symbols and abbreviations have been replaced by the letters or numbers which they represent. Occasionally, it has been necessary to alter the layout of particular passages, but this has not prejudiced the content or meaning of the texts. A particular group of sources which appear frequently in this volume are the transcriptions made by Rev. James Scott of many of Perth's ecclesiastical records. Most of these papers are unpublished, but have been bound, and are stored in the National Library of Scotland. Scott's handwriting is quite legible, and there are few instances in which his transcriptions are difficult to decipher; nevertheless, I have used the same editorial conventions in transcribing his work as are applied to 17th century manuscript sources.

The following devices - which have been explained more fully in Volume 1 - are used throughout this volume to represent features of manuscript sources:

Brackets ( ) : Applied when a letter appears in the text above its proper place in a word; where a letter or letters appear to be indicated by a flourished stroke from another letter; when a letter is obviously missing from a word, and this has been indicated in the text; when brackets appear in the manuscript.

Underlining: Words or letters which are difficult to read, and for which my transcription is dubious, have been underlined. Where a word or letter has not been transcribed, it is indicated by a single line. Words which have been scored-out are indicated as such. Some words have been written above the text to which they belong, and are represented in this manner.

Blank spaces: These represent gaps within passages of text.

A single dash (/): Where the handwriting changes during the course of a passage, the change is indicated by a dash at the beginning and end of the text written by the new hand.

Two dashes (//): Indicate that a word is broken between two lines of text, and is un-hyphenated. Hyphens and other punctuation marks which appear in the MS sources are naturally shown in my transcriptions.
PART 1 : Textual Analysis
The manuscript which is known as the "Chronicle of Perth" consists of 28 leaves of paper, in an early 19th century hard-binding. The pages have been numbered individually in pencil, presumably at the time of binding; however, the organisation of the folios may not represent the order in which the "Chronicle" was written. The paper is all of one kind, and pp 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 27 all bear the same "pot" type watermark.\(^1\) The manuscript volume has been bound between plain sheets of 19th century paper; these pages bear the watermarks: "C Wilmott 1819", "J Whatman Turkey Mill", "Ruse & Turners", and "Ruse & Turners 1807". It is evident that the volume was bound in, or after, 1819; it was last repaired in 1988.\(^2\)

For convenience, the contents of the manuscript can be divided into four 'sections'. PP 1-2 (hereafter "Section 1") contain a partial transcript of King James VI's second charter in favour of the Hospital at Perth, granted on 29 July 1587, and - in a series of "questions" and "answers" - some of the rights and endowments of the Hospital are detailed.\(^3\) PP 3-19 ("Section 2") contain the bulk of the information which James Maidment entitled "A Register of Remarkable Occurrences" chiefly connected with Perth.\(^4\) This record of both local and national events was composed by several authors, one of whom was almost certainly John Mercer, the town clerk of Perth, whose signature was appended to the entry which recorded the death of his son James in December 1667.\(^5\) Section 2 essentially lists events of the 16th and 17th centuries, although there are a few rogue references to affairs of the 14th and 15th centuries, and the section begins with an account of the "foundation" of the burgh of Perth by William the Lion in 1210. The records of national events of the 16th century are often inaccurate in detail, and these entries are unlikely to be contemporary with the incidents which they describe. The general impression which is given by this section is that it is mainly a work of the middle or later 17th century.

PP 20-22 ("Section 3") contain copies of miscellaneous letters sent to the burgh:
*Ane missiwe direct frome Edr concerning ye Conservatorie 1624*.
*Ane missiwe direct frome Edr concerning the Coseruatorie and Factourie in Flanders. 1625*.

Untitled letter to the Provost, Bailies and Council of Perth from the Provost and Bailies of Edinburgh, 1626.

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\(^1\) All references to the pagination of the manuscript will be given in bold type.

\(^2\) Mrs S. Mackenzie, Department of Manuscripts, National Library of Scotland. Pers. comm. Another member of this department confirmed that "the binding dates from around 1800".

\(^3\) The authors of the "Chronicle of Perth" consistently wrote on both sides of the MS leaves; thus, this first section comprises four sides of text. PP 14, 19 and 23, on which only one side was used, are exceptions to this convention. P 19A is blank.

\(^4\) *The Chronicle of Perth; A Register of Remarkable Occurrences, chiefly connected with that city, from the year 1210 to 1668*, edited by James Maidment (Maitland Club 1831).

\(^5\) See the accompanying transcript of the "Chronicle of Perth", p.63 (19). Hereafter, this transcript will be referred to as "Chronicle". References will give the page number of the transcript in ordinary type, and the pencilled pagination of the manuscript volume in bold type.
"Ane missiue from Edinburt concerning ane most vile fact comittit be the Lord Sanquhair and his men 1612".
"Ane missiue from Sanctandrois concerning the Ministerie of perth." 1614.
"Ane missiue from Edinburgh ____ ____" (To John Guthrie, Minister of Perth, 1621).
The inclusion of these letters within the volume is not explained.

PP 23-27 ("Section 4") form a register of deaths in Perth between 1660 and 1668. These pages have been bound into the volume upside down and back to front. Page 27 has been torn in half, from top to bottom. As in the register of historical events of Section 2, these entries were compiled by a variety of writers; indeed, the hands in this section appear to be the same as some of those in Section 2. Pages 1-2 were probably written by one man; pp. 20-22 seem to be the work of more than one copyist.

The History of the Manuscript after c.1668: A Question of Attribution

The composition of the "Chronicle" appears to have ended, somewhat abruptly, in the autumn of 1668. Section 2 closes with a record dated "Thrid of august jmvjc sextie aucht" which details the death and burial of Isobell Robertsone. The final entry in Section 4 is dated "4 october 1668", and refers to the death and burial of Janet Lawrie; this passage is incomplete, and omits the name of her husband, "ye Inglisman callit". 6 There is no indication in either section that the work had reached completion; the compilation of the records simply seems to have stopped. Although it is possible that all the passages in Section 2 were written retrospectively, the register of deaths may be a contemporary record. There is no obvious indication in the text of the manuscript to suggest that its composition post-dates the late 1660s. When was the "Chronicle" written? Who were its authors? Who owned the manuscript? What purposes did it serve? And what became of the "Chronicle" after the compilers had ceased to add to it? These are the fundamental questions presented to an editor by this document.

John Mercer may have been the owner of the "Chronicle" in the later 1660s. He died in c.1675, leaving one surviving son, John, who lived until 1684.7 In 1879 Fittis conjectured that "After (the elder John Mercer's ed. ) death, the manuscript volume of the Chronicle doubtless passed into the heir's possession".8 But the historical record seems to be blank concerning the whereabouts of the manuscript for over a century after c.1668. The "Chronicle" seems to have been acquired by the Rev. James Scott, minister in Perth, in c.1780, probably from amongst the papers of his late colleague, the Rev. David Black, who died in 1771.9 James Scott was in possession of the manuscript for over thirty years - until his death in 1818 - and he consulted the volume frequently in

6 "Chronicle", 64 (19); 72 (23/23).
8 Ibid., 184.
9 Ibid., 178.
the course of his extensive work of transcribing and editing many of the ecclesiastical records of
Perth.

Scott's first reference to the existence of the "Chronicle" is probably that which occurs in the
second volume of his Authentic Register of the Acts + Proceedings of the Ministers + Elders,
Managers of King James VI's Hospital at Perth... (1780).¹⁰ In notes relating to the family of Ross of
Craigie, following a record dated 1634, he commented that "By means of an old manuscript
Chronicle within these few Days come to Hand, the Death of (Janet Ross), + of Mr Thomas Ross,
may be here more fully related".¹¹ He went on to quote entries in the "Chronicle" which record the
executions of Janet Ross and Mr Thomas Ross, in 1608 and 1618 respectively.¹² It seems that
Scott acquired the manuscript during the compilation of this Register, for later in the same volume
he inserted references from the "Chronicle" concerning the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of 1600, after an
entry in the Hospital register dated 1637, remarking that these particulars "would have been
quoted in their proper place if the manuscript had come sooner to Hand". ¹³

At the end of this volume - which contains numerous references to the "old manuscript Chronicle"
- Scott included a lengthy transcript of many of the passages in Section 2 of the document. He
commented that "It may tend to amusement to subjoin to the fore-going appendix a few
anecdotes from an old manuscript chronicle of Perth".¹⁴ This is the first description of the
manuscript as a "chronicle of Perth" that I have found; the "title" appears to have been Scott's
own invention. Furthermore, in a note following the record of Henry Elder's death in 1623 and the
election of John Mercer to be town clerk, Scott remarked that "This John Mercer seems to have
been the principal compiler of the Chronicle".¹⁵ This is the first attribution of the authorship to
John Mercer that I have discovered. However, it is important to note that Scott described Mercer as
the "principal compiler", thus implying that there were several authors. Unfortunately, Scott did not
record his reasons for attributing the "Chronicle" to Mercer; it may be supposed that his judgement
was based upon Mercer's signature.

Rev. Scott used the manuscript extensively during his transcription of the surviving registers of
marriages, baptisms, and deaths at Perth. In the registers of marriages and of baptisms he referred
to the "Chronicle" simply as an "old manuscript chronicle of memorable occurrences". However, in
the Register of Deaths he included a "List of Deaths" drawn mostly from the "Chronicle". He
introduced this list as being "according to what I find in an old Manuscript Chronicle, which
belonged to John Mercer Clerk of Perth in the last century; but which appears not to have been
wholly written by him, but by different persons, + at different times".¹⁶ James Scott was probably

¹¹ Ibid., 186.
¹² Ibid., 186-7.
¹³ Ibid., 238-40.
¹⁴ Ibid., 427.
¹⁵ Ibid., 442.
¹⁶ NLS Adv. 31.1.6 Register of Deaths at Perth, Rev. James Scott (c.1784), 21.
the first antiquarian to use the "Chronicle of Perth" as a reference source; his extant notes concerning the manuscript certainly provide the earliest commentary which is available to modern researchers. But as such, his work is frustratingly vague; he rarely cited his sources and, in relation to John Mercer, he offered no justification for his assertion that Mercer actually owned the manuscript. Scott evidently appreciated the complexity of the "Chronicle's" composition; but he offered few remarks about the nature and authorship of the text. Nor did he explain how the manuscript came into his possession. Rev. Black's papers were apparently kept by his family after his death, and Scott does not seem to have had access to this material for nearly a decade after 1771, even though he had been Black's close colleague in the ministry at Perth.

In the early 1790s, James Scott gave a series of lectures in Perth about the manuscript. The Transactions of The Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth, published in 1827, record that "Between (June 1790 ed.) and June 1792, there were read, or presented...Chronicle by John Mercer, Clerk of the Town of Perth, containing chiefly remarkable occurrences in Perth. Read at various times by Mr Scott, with remarks and explanations". Unfortunately, Scott's "remarks" have not survived amongst the papers of the society. Scott lived until 1818, but in his later years he became increasingly infirm. Following his death, many of his antiquarian papers and some of his books were sold at a public auction in Edinburgh; the majority of the works offered for sale were acquired for the Advocates Library. The records of this auction introduce particular difficulties concerning the attribution of the "Chronicle of Perth". In the sale catalogue, Lot.9 was described as "An Original Scotish Chronicle, of about 50 folio pages, comprising Remarkable Events, from the beginning of the Sixteenth Century to 1668; also, Some Letters; entitled, on the cover, 'Fleming's Chronicle'". Lot. 9 was almost certainly the manuscript which is now catalogued in the National Library as Adv.35.4.4. Indeed, the full reference in the catalogue of Advocates Manuscripts is: "Fleming's Chronicle". The Chronicle of Perth (Maitland Club. 1831) 35.4.4. However, the manuscript is also cross-referenced in the catalogue to the name of John Mercer. This confusion is compounded by the mysterious item which was listed as Lot.7 in the auction catalogue of 1818. This document was described as a "Folio volume, containing a Transcript of John Mercer's Chronicle, chiefly of Remarkable Occurrences in Perth, from 1210 to 1661; with occasional Notes; 118 pages". Lot.7 was certainly purchased for the Advocates Library - the bill of sale survives, in which it is stated that this item was purchased for £3 -3 -; Lot.9 was slightly cheaper at £3. But there is no reference in the National Library catalogues for a "Transcript of John Mercer's Chronicle".

Maidment may have copied Scott when he described the "Chronicle" as "A Register of Remarkable Occurrences..."

18 NLS Adv. 13.1.2., ii, and Adv. 29.4.2. (vii), 283 v.
Catalogue of Manuscripts which belonged to the Late Rev. James Scott, Senior Minister of Perth, to be sold by Public Auction, in the Sale-Room of the Merchant's Hall, Hunter Square, Edinburgh, on Saturday, 6th June, at one o'clock, Afternoon. 1818.

19 Ibid.

20 NLS Adv. 13.1.2., i. 11 June 1818.
Lot. 7 was probably a transcript of the "Chronicle" (Lot. 9), and was presumably made by James Scott himself. If it were available now, its contents might reveal more about Scott's views on the subject of the authorship and provenance of the "Chronicle" manuscript; in 1879, R.S. Fittis claimed that Scott had actually called the manuscript "Fleming and Mercer's Chronicle". 21 It is particularly curious that there is no mention of the name "Fleming" in any of Scott's surviving notes about the document. The only references which I have found in Scott's works to "Fleming's Chronicle" occur in the second volume of his summary of the Perth Kirk Session Registers, compiled in c.1776. In a note concerning the effects of plague in Perth, Scott commented that "Notice is taken in Alexander Fleming's Chronicle of a remarkable Plague called "Malloch's Pest", which seems to have raged in Perth some Time during the Reign of King James the Fifth".22 This outbreak is recorded in Adv.35.4.4: "Mallochis pest in pth Septe(m)be(r) Im Vo xxxvij yeiris Jhone de(n)ying than provest".23 Scott's reference suggests that either "Fleming's Chronicle" and "Mercer's Chronicle" were one and the same, or that one text may have been a copy of the other; this reference also suggests that Scott had access to the "Chronicle of Perth" before 1780. However, subsequent references indicate that "Fleming's Chronicle" was a separate manuscript. Although King James VI's marriage to Anne of Denmark, and the Queen's visit to Perth in 1591, is recorded in Adv.35.4.4., neither of the extracts quoted by Scott from "Alexander Fleming's Chronicle" correspond with the text of the "Chronicle of Perth":

Alexander Fleming:
"Alexr Fleming's Chronicle says, 'On the 23 of Octor anno 1589, the King's Majesty sailed himself to Norway + Denmark to bring Home the Queen Anna'."
"In Alexander Fleming's Chronicle, it is said, 'The Entry of Anna our Queen in Perth was the tenth of July Anno 1591.' "24

Adv. MS. 35.4.4:
(Margin) Thair arrywal at leithe ye first of may 1590 and crownit quene ye 17 of ye same monethe thar entrie to pert ye 23 of Junij 1591 (Text) kingis mariag / his sacred mateis mariag in denmark be my lo merishall embassador ye xx day of august Im vc lxxxix
(Margin) King + quenes cumyng to leith (Text) King James ye Saxt his blessed arryvell at leyth wt his nobill quene Anna dochter to the king of denmark ye first of maij Im vc lxxx yeiris 25

Without further information, the confusion between Fleming and Mercer is difficult to untangle. Despite the importance of Scott's editorial work, the inadequacy of his surviving notes serves to complicate the questions which need to be asked about the provenance of the "Chronicle of Perth". However, his references to Alexander Fleming also introduce the interesting possibility

23 "Chronicle", 9 (3).
24 NLS Adv. 13.1.3 (ii), 389, 448.
that the composition of the "Chronicle" was not a unique phenomenon; the manuscript may have been part of a genre of historical writing in the burgh.

The sale of the "Chronicle" may have brought the document to the attention of a wider audience than the members of The Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth; in 1831 the manuscript's value was acknowledged by the publication of James Maidment's edition for the Maitland Club of Glasgow. Maidment's volume omitted much of the original text; Section 1 and much of Section 4 were excluded, and the contents of Section 2 were re-arranged, selectively, in chronological order. The letters of Section 3 were incorporated into this text. Maidment made no attempt to identify the different sections of the manuscript, nor did he inform his readers adequately of the complexity of the document. In his introductory notes, Maidment commented that, "Although usually designated as "Mercer's Chronicle", there seems no sufficient authority for its being so denominated, as, from internal evidence, the MS. must have been written at different intervals, and by different persons". 26 Maidment's views in this respect differed subtly from those of Scott; for whereas the latter suggested that Mercer was both the owner of the "Chronicle" and its "principal compiler", Maidment refused to make such a commitment: "John Mercer, who, for a considerable time, was Town-Clerk of Perth, unquestionably appears to have been the possessor of the volume containing this Chronicle, as towards the end of it a few entries, principally of deaths, occur in his hand-writing; but beyond this portion, he seems to have had no further title to the authorship." 27 It is particularly noticeable that although both Scott and Maidment considered the document to have been written by a variety of authors, neither of them could suggest who these men might have been. John Mercer was the only man to sign the manuscript, and this fact clearly associates him with its composition. Maidment's comment that a few entries "occur in his hand-writing" was presumably based upon a comparison of Mercer's autograph with other passages in the manuscript. But it is possible that Maidment was familiar with Mercer's hand-writing from other Perth records; if this was the case, it is disappointing that he does not seem to have tried to identify any of the other hands which appear in the "Chronicle". However, it is apparent from references in the collected papers of the Maitland Club that Maidment's editorial work was influential in suppressing the attribution of the "Chronicle's" authorship to a man by the name of Fleming.

In 1830 or early 1831 it was resolved by the Maitland Club that a list of manuscripts "Illustrative of the History Literature and Antiquities of Scotland" should be printed for the club; this list was duly prepared by John Smith and James Hill. 28 Printed proofs of what became the Registrum Metellanum of 1831 indicate that initially Advocates MS. 35.4.4. was listed as "Fleming's Chronicle - ending with the year 1668". This reference was changed in the course of preparing the Registrum; in the second proof copy, the title "Fleming's Chronicle" was crossed out by one of the editors, and the title "The Chronicle of Perth by John Mercer Town Clerk" was written in above it. In the final proof copy, the full reference reads "The Chronicles of Perth, by John Mercer, Town Clerk.

27 Ibid.
28 Glasgow University Library. Special Collections. See Maitland Club. MS. Gen. 321 "Antiquarian Scraps", c.1834; unpaginated miscellany of papers.
- ending with the year 1668. MS. In the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, 29 The use of the plural form "Chronicles" is presumably a printing error. The Registrum Metellanum was presented to the Maitland Club in March 1831. Maidment's "Chronicle of Perth" was not presented until November of that year 30, but it is a reasonable conjecture that he instructed the editors of the Registrum to amend the attribution of the "Chronicle's" authorship. Their original reference to "Fleming's Chronicle" presumably derived from the catalogue in the Advocates Library.

The Chronicle of Perth was the thirteenth publication issued in the name of the Maitland Club, but very few details concerning Maidment's undertaking appear amongst the papers of the club. The presentation of the volume is recorded in a printed report of the proceedings of the club's annual general meeting of May 1832, and in a handwritten note which lists the club's publications between 1829 and 1834; this states that the presentation was made on 15 November 1831. In the record of the AGM it is simply stated that "The following contributions have been printed by Members of the Club during the course of the year (1831-1832) - The Chronicle of Perth, commonly known by the name of Mercer's Chronicle. By James Maidment, Esq."

This latter reference reflects Maidment's cautious designation of the manuscript's provenance. 31

There are only two brief references to Maidment's work amongst the collected correspondence of the Maitland Club. However, they are of interest, as they suggest that his editorial work occupied several years, and that the project was probably undertaken at his own instigation. In a letter dated 7 March 1832, addressed to the club's secretary, one of the members, James Duncan, complained that copies of the club's publications had not been sent to new members: "...according to a Resolution passed at a Meeting of Council on 29 March last year the members admitted in the course of the year entitled 'to copies of all the works already printed by the Club including a Duplicate of Wishaw.' Besides which, they receive copies of Stewart's, my Father's, and McDowall's contributions. Maidment is exempt, as his contribution was begun when there were only fifty members to provide for."

From this letter it seems that Maidment was engaged in editing the "Chronicle" over a period of several years. The original rules of the Maitland Club, instituted in March 1828, stated that the club should consist of a limited number of members, "at no time to exceed fifty", and that each member would be entitled to one copy of each work printed in the name of the club, free of charge. 33 However, in the summer of 1830 it was resolved at a general meeting to increase the membership to at least seventy members. By the end of 1831 the club comprised 63 members. 34 63 copies of The Chronicle of Perth were printed, 35 but the club

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29 Ibid.
30 Ibid. Handwritten note listing presentations to the club, 1829-1834. anon., n.d.
34 Ibid., 39, 69.
continued to expand in 1832 towards its target of seventy members. James Maidment was elected as a member of the club in December 1828; it is possible that he set about working on his contribution to the club either in late 1828 or early 1829. If Duncan was correct, it was probably underway by the summer of 1830. Maidment was a busy advocate, and his editorial work was presumably carried out on a part-time basis. This would help to explain the lack of a detailed commentary in his edition.

However, the expense of printing The Chronicle of Perth may have prevented the publication of a satisfactory commentary. A letter of complaint which Maidment sent to the club secretary on 9 March 1832, objecting to an increase in the club's subscription fee, indicates that the cost of publishing his work was borne, at least in part, by the editor himself: "...I have expended considerably above £30 in presenting the Club with copies of a work which I think I may venture to say is not altogether uninteresting and I must confess I do not think it altogether equilable that I should be required...to pay this additional sum". Copies of The Chronicle of Perth were printed for the members only, and none were for sale. The books were printed at Edinburgh, rather than at Glasgow, and it is likely that Maidment effectively presented his work as a gift to the club. The decision to edit the manuscript, so recently acquired for the Advocates Library, seems to have been Maidment's alone. In an abstract of the accounts of the treasurers of the Maitland Club between 1828 and 1832, there is no record of any payments being made to Maidment. The hand-written note which details the club's early publications clearly distinguishes between those books which were printed by the club, and those which were presented to the club in its name. Maidment's contribution is listed as a presentation. The rules of the club encouraged members to undertake such work. "XI. If any Member of the Club shall undertake to have printed, at his own expense, particular works or Tracts relative to Scottish affairs, the printer shall be furnished with the necessary supply of paper made for the publications of the Club; it being understood that each Member shall receive one copy of every work or Tract so printed." The bibliography of James Maidment's published works states simply that "This was Mr Maidment's contribution to the Maitland Club, and printed for the Members only. There were Two copies taken off on vellum. - None for sale." The volume is listed as "The Chronicle of Perth (Sometimes but erroneously called MERCER'S CHRONICLE)...

Maidment’s failure to publish an analysis of the "Chronicle's" authorship allowed confusion concerning its provenance to persist. In 1833, Pitcairn attributed the manuscript to "Fleming"; writing of the murder of Toshack of Monzievaird in 1618, he commented that "Fleming, in his MS.

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36 GUL MS. Gen. 313, 86.
37 Ibid., 5.
38 GUL MS. Gen. 295, 10.
39 GUL MS. Gen. 314, 11.
40 See above, note 30.
41 GUL MS. Gen. 313, 1. (Rule no. 11).
42 T.G.Stevenson, The Bibliography of James Maidment...from the Year 1817 to 1878 (1883), 17.
Diary or Chronicle, gives a much more minute detail of this affair”. Pitcairn claimed to have seen the original manuscript, which makes his attribution the more intriguing, as the volume’s cover presumably no longer bore the title “Fleming’s Chronicle”; he may have been influenced by the library catalogue. Three years later, in his rather erratic Traditions of Perth, George Penny quoted extracts of Maidment’s work, under the heading “The following Incidents connected with Perth are extracted from a rare Volume now out of print.”

Maidment’s edition may have become quite well known in educated circles. In 1845, J. Parker Lawson published some of Scott’s extracts from the Kirk Session Register of Perth in the Spottiswoode Miscellany, (a volume which was edited by Maidment). He noted that “Several extracts from these Records are appended to the “Chronicle of Perth”, commonly called Mercer’s Chronicle, formerly in the possession of the Rev. James Scott, and now in the Advocates Library, presented to the Members of the Maitland Club by James Maidment”. In 1857, Maidment received a letter from a correspondent in Edinburgh who had, unsurprisingly, experienced some difficulty in obtaining a copy of the book: “I am very anxious to possess a copy of the Chronicle of Perth, a work which I see you presented to The Maitland Club in 1831, and if you have a copy to spare and will bestow it on me I shall feel most grateful and duly appreciate the gift...”

The question of the “Chronicle’s” authorship, and its original ownership, was directly addressed in the second half of the 19th century by the prominent Perthshire antiquary Robert Scott Fittis. His work provides most of the information which we have concerning the origins of the manuscript, and about the Mercer family. Fittis was not a reliable scholar; he was probably unfamiliar with the original document, and seems to have relied on Maidment’s edition. Nevertheless, his work was a useful contribution to studies of the “Chronicle”, and to some extent compensates for Maidment’s reticence. According to Fittis, James Scott designated the manuscript “Fleming and Mercer’s Chronicle”; unfortunately, Fittis did not quote the reference for this attribution. His own view was that the “Chronicle” was essentially produced by members of the same family: “So far as we can judge, the noting down seems to have been begun, about the end of the sixteenth century, by a citizen named Fleming - perhaps the father of Marjorie Fleming who became John Mercer’s wife, and of William Fleming, Apothecary in Perth, whose copy of the “Rentall Book of Perthshire: 1649”, written in 1654, was printed at Perth, in 1835”. Mercer, he thought, was the principal compiler of the “Chronicle” in the 17th century. It seems that Fittis was unaware of the references in Scott’s papers to Alexander Fleming’s 16th century “Chronicle”.

43 R. Pitcairn, Criminal Trials in Scotland... Vol.III (1833), 443-4.
47 See above, note 21.
Previous editors of the manuscript have generally agreed that it belonged to John Mercer, and was in part written by him. But, although Fittis conjectured that the "Chronicle" was produced by a particular family within the burgh of Perth, there have been no other attempts to identify Mercer's collaborators. Only in confusing references to "Fleming's Chronicle" has the name of an alternative author been put forward. The question of attribution still demands detailed study. Furthermore, although Scott and Maidment gave the manuscript a title, the "Chronicle of Perth", they offered no suggestions as to when the "Chronicle" had been written; nor did they consider the purposes for which it was compiled. It may not be possible to provide full or satisfactory answers to such questions; but clearly they must be addressed. Nevertheless, a modern reading of the text inevitably owes much to the influence of the editors of the 18th and 19th centuries. Apart from providing extensive transcripts of the manuscript, Scott and Maidment have bequeathed two inter-related themes which must be considered in any study of the document. The first is the suggestion that the manuscript is a chronicle, indeed a chronicle of Perth. Secondly, Scott's notes and his extensive transcriptions of Perth's historical records draw attention to the fact that the "Chronicle of Perth" forms a small part of the burgh's archives, and that it may belong to a tradition of historical writing at Perth.

2. Who wrote the "Chronicle of Perth"?

The "Chronicle" is essentially an anonymous work. John Mercer's autograph on page 19 does not necessarily amount to an author's signature - although it is the most significant indicator of the manuscript's provenance. Study of the various handwriting styles exhibited in the "Chronicle" suggests that Mercer played a more substantial part in its composition than Maidment appreciated. But it is quite clear that this document was compiled by several writers, possibly over the course of several decades. The purpose of this section is to illustrate some of the methods by which writers who were at work in Perth in the later 16th and 17th centuries may be identified, and to question whether such men can be associated with the production of the "Chronicle".

Personal References in the "Chronicle":

Although John Mercer was the only man to sign the manuscript, there are a number of passages which record circumstantial information about individual chroniclers. The attribution of the "Chronicle's" authorship to John Mercer appears to be re-inforced by the record of his succession as town clerk in 1623: "5 October 1623 henrie elder clerk depairtit yis lyfe and wes buried on Sunday yairefter and on mononday ye day of october being ye electioun day Jon mersr admittit clerk but ony oppositioun." But it is quite clear that this document was compiled by several writers, possibly over the course of several decades. The purpose of this section is to illustrate some of the methods by which writers who were at work in Perth in the later 16th and 17th centuries may be identified, and to question whether such men can be associated with the production of the "Chronicle".

49 See above, p. 6.
50 "Chronicle", 16 (5).
appears frequently in annotations in Mercer’s protocol books 51) highlights Mercer’s election rather than Elder’s death, the contents of this passage should not be related too closely to the question of authorship.

A more substantive reference occurs in an account of the acceptance by the burgh of the National Covenant in 1638. The author narrates how the strictures of the “Five Articles of Perth” and Charles I’s service book were abandoned by the burgh’s ministers, and “The comunioun wes giwin be ye ministrie in ye auld maner be ye ministrie + elderis”. In the margin it is recorded: “nota george bissett + I buir the bread gregor Jonston and patrik dundie ye coupis yis yeir.” 52 The Perth Kirk Session Register records that John Mercer was one of the elders for the year 1637-8. But more importantly, the register includes a list of “The names of persones yt ar appoynit to ber office this yeir of god 1638 yeirs”; in this record it is stated that the “Cariers of the breid” were John Mercer and George Bisset, and the “Cariers of the coups” were Gregory Johnston and Patrick Dundie. Clearly, this autobiographical marginal note was probably written by John Mercer. 53

A group of records which concern the quartering of troops during the Covenanting wars provide information about the organisation of such billeting, as well as providing certain personal details about one or more of the authors. These entries do not occur in chronological order:

“Monday 16 december 1644 at nyt
My Lord Lindsayis regiment came to Perth being in number Aucht hunder And stayit qll monday the 23 of December and we (my italic) quarterit in the Southgait and West Syde of the Watergait...”

“xj of february 1645
Capitane wachope went to Couper wt lc men

xv of marche 1645 at nyt being setterday he come bak wt his man to my hous”

“Jon persone fra ye 28 of September 1644 ane soilor of maitlandis regiment was quarter(i)t wt me his name Till ye viij of Januar 1645”

“The regiment scrywenar was quartert wt me callit /Dauld Skater/ fra ye secund of December 1644 Till ye nynt of Januar 1645”

“Capitaine Frances wauchop and his man was quarter(i)t wt me fra ye viij of Januar 1645 Till ye 22 of marche in eodem anno 1645 gratis”

51 See below, note 65.
52 "Chronicle", 44 (1 2).
53 Perth Kirk Session Register. Scottish Record Office CH2/521/8 (2), 238, 244-5.
"4 April 1645
Thair come bak to pert of comandit men of (Cassillis ed'.) regiment viijc men qrof quarterit in my quarter W3 men yat come in of ye shyre" 54

The author, (or authors), of these passages appears to have been involved in the process of assigning troops to particular quarters. Captain Wauchop, and his servant, were quartered for two months in a writer's home, and John Pearson stayed for over three. He does not appear to have been an officer, but as he was assigned quarters in a private house, he may have held a position within Maitland's regiment. The occupation of the other guest is of particular interest; it is possible that Maitland's scrivener was quartered with one of the authors because he was a fellow writer. It is apparent that at least one of the chroniclers possessed a house and resources to sustain several visitors over a period of about six months, and that he may have held an administrative post with responsibility for quartering the troops; this would suggest that he was either a quartermaster or one of the baillies.55 One other reference should be noted in the context of the upheavals of the 1640s. There ia a comment at the end of the description of the battle of Marston Moor which reads: *qt number wes killit I knawe not*.56

There are two personal records which are directly attributable to John Mercer. The first occurs towards the end of Section 2, and bears his signature. This autograph can be cross-referenced to other examples in the burgh records, and is undoubtedly the signature of the town clerk. The passage records the death of his elder son:

"The sevintene of december 1667 at Thrie houris in ye momyng James mersor my sone depairtit and wes buried on Thursiday yaireftir being ye - nynetyn day yairof
Jon mersr" 57

The second passage occurs in Section 4, and notes the earlier death of his sister:

*Nynt of Julij 1665 Sonday
mercer
Jonat my sister being sonday buried relict of Jon home elder Depairtit on sett(i)rday ye 8 day* 58

There is no indication as to why Mercer recorded the death of his son in Section 2, and drew attention to the entry by autographing it, but only recorded the loss of his sister in the general register of deaths. However, James Mercer's official position as his father's deputy may have been

54 Chronicle, 52 (15/15), 53 (1 6).
55 The baillies for the year October 1644 to October 1645 were Robert Burrel, John Mercer, Andrew Grant and George Carmichael. See The Muses Threnodie... (Henry Adamson, 1638). New ed. James Cant (1774), 124.
56 Chronicle, 49 (1 4) line 14.
57 Ibid., 63 (1 9).
58 Ibid., 71 (23/23).
significant. As will be seen, James Mercer was a writer, and could have collaborated with his father, and others, in the compilation of the “Chronicle”.

Two other references may also have been written by Mercer; these record the deaths of tenants. On page 63 (19) there is an entry dated to 7 February 1668, which states that “This same day allane spous to Jon Mollat my Tennent buried”; in Section 4 there is an entry dated 10 February 1662 which reads “Alexr pullor skinner his wyf callit // my Tennent”; p.77 (25).

Notaries and Other Writers Mentioned in the “Chronicle”:

Section 4 of the “Chronicle” records the names of several Perth notaries who died in the 1660s, and there is some anecdotal information in Section 2 about writers in the burgh. The register of deaths includes the following names:

xiii maij 1662 wodensday
margaret Andersone spous to
Jon Amot notar buried 15 (78, 25)
24 September 1662
Rot Ray notar depairtit and buried (Ibid.)
Settiiday 21 Andro gray notar depairtit and buried on sonday 22 of februar 1663 (76, 24/24)
(March 1663 ?)
Ane bairne of Jon bonaris noter (Ibid.)
( August 1665) Robert Ray notar depairtit and buried ye 14 (71, 23/23)
27 Julij 1667
Patrik broun sone to henrie broun elder notar buried (Ibid.)

The name of John Tais, who became town-clerk in 1672, appears in Section 2 of the “Chronicle”. In an entry dated 8 August 1667, it is recorded that “Johne Tayes notar mareit with Thomas names dochter” (62, 18/18). References to other writers are similarly anecdotal. The death of Henry Elder, town clerk, at the age of 82, in November 1592, is recorded on p.4/4; special notice is given of this man’s age. The death of his son, Henry Elder, who succeeded the father as town clerk, is noted on page 5. This entry is of particular importance as it is also a record of the election of John Mercer as Elder’s successor, in October 1623. Henry Elder is mentioned in another passage, on p.6/6, where it is recorded that Henry Bannewis and William Jack were forced to make apologies for slandering the town clerk and the minister. Henry Brown, who may have been a rival of John Mercer, is mentioned in the description of Cromwell’s proclamation as Lord Protector in 1654: “The act of gras and sum wyeris paperis also red be patrik ross and henrie broun notar(i)s” (p. 55, 17).

The names of schoolmasters in the burgh are occasionally noted in the “Chronicle”. The death of William Rynd, master of the grammar school, in 1610, is recorded twice, on pp. 4/4 and 8. On p.5 it is stated that John Row was admitted as master of the grammar school in June 1632. In Section 4, there is a record of the death of a son of Henry Anderson, the school master, in September 1661 (p.25/25). In Section 2 there is a curious reference to the death of Adam Shore, writer to the King’s Signet, in 1615 (p.9). The names of two writers - John Sharp and Patrick King (?) - appear at
the end of the "questions" and "answers" concerning the rights of the hospital in Section 1 (p.2/2). These are probably not autograph signatures; Section 1 seems to be a copy of another manuscript, or collection of manuscripts, which were probably compiled at Edinburgh. The names in the "Chronicle" were written by Text Hand no. 1 (see below, p. 24); but it is at least possible that they represent the autographs of Perth notaries or scribes.

John Mercer and his Family:

Most of John Mercer's biographical details have been supplied by Fittis, in a genealogical table compiled in 1865, and in an article of 1879.59 Mercer was born in 1592, the son of a Perth burgess. He was a notary (lawyer) by profession, but was also prominent in the government of the burgh and held several important posts: he was senior baillie in 1647, 1649, 1651, 1652, 1653, and 1654.60 For much of his life he was town clerk. Elected in October 1623, he left the post in March 1642, for reasons which are not clear. He returned to the position in 1654, and remained clerk until 1670, when he was forced by the town council to step down. Mercer was a relatively wealthy man - partly as a consequence of holding such an important office. At the time of his election in 1623, a gift was subscribed by the provost, baillies, council, dean of guild, treasurer, deacons etc., whereby he was to receive all the fees, duties and profits which pertained to the office of clerk. In 1639 the clerk became the owner of the property of Potterhill, in the parish of Kinnoull, which he purchased from his namesake Mr James Mercer. The property was described as "all and whole that piece of land called Potterhill, with the stone quarry of the same, gardens, tofts, crofts, houses, buildings erected upon the same, and pertinents".61 According to Fittis, Mercer lived in a town-house in Perth, on the north side of the North gate. His two sons were not as distinguished as their father, but both were burgesses of the burgh. James, like his father, was a notary and writer, and served as deputy burgh clerk from 1658; according to the "Chronicle", he died on 17 December 1667. John Mercer younger succeeded his father as owner of Potterhill in January 1676, the former town-clerk having died in late 1675. His younger son, also named John, became town clerk in the early 18th century.

The details of John Mercer's retirement from the office of town clerk provide interesting information about the writing profession in late 17th century Perth. Fittis narrates that following the death of his son, John Mercer was unable to cope with the burdens of his office, and he attempted

Note. Perth Burgh Records (B59) have been catalogued into 42 sections. When reference is first made to material in a particular section - in this case it is B59/38 - a note of the number and title of the section is given.  
Fittis, "The Chronicler of Perth".  
60 After the election of October 1652, John Mercer protested against being chosen senior baillie. On 19 April 1653, in obedience to a commission from the Commissioners of the Commonwealth of England, Mercer was elected senior baillie. See Fittis, "The Chronicler of Perth", 181, and The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant (1774), 129.  
to arrange for the appointment of a new deputy. His choice was William Graham, but the council refused to accept such an arrangement, and demanded that he surrender all the papers which were in his possession. Mercer refused to comply, and was suspended for contumacy. Only when he was offered a bond for 1000 marks did the elderly clerk give way. 62 The index to the town council records also suggests that Mercer's replacement was a muddled, acrimonious affair. 63 In May 1669, there were "Proceedings for procuring a Clerk to get acquainted with the affairs of the town and thereby to be qualified to fill up the place of the present Clerk after his death". On 10 May there were "Proceedings as to the Election of a Clerk", against which John Mercer protested; Mercer was requested to appear before the council, but he refused. Towards the end of the month, the provost was nominated to charge John Mercer to produce the papers which were in his possession, and David Ure was appointed "to sit as Clerk until a Depute be chosen to the present clerk". In September, Sir James Mercer of Aldie petitioned that his son, James, should be admitted "conjunct Clerk", and he claimed to have "the Clerks consent thereto". There seem to have been several candidates, as it was decided "that the said James Mercer be put on leet with those formerly on leet for the above office until the Council shall be fully advised thereupon". Later in this month, John Mercer refused to hand over papers in his possession when representatives from the council visited him; he was suspended from office and David Murray, "his servant", was appointed "to officiate in his place".

The "Differences" between the clerk and the council had reached a climax, and in January 1670 Mercer requested that intermediaries be appointed to adjudicate between the two parties. These men offered their report at the end of February, and in May the clerk produced an inventory of the writs, books and registers in his possession. At the end of May, Mercer, who was by now referred to as the "late Clerk", was offered a financial settlement; he was to receive a bond for the sum of 1000 merks, to be paid by the new town clerk. This arrangement seems to have satisfied Mercer, who returned the papers and books which were in his possession and submitted his "dimission". The council's anxiety to retrieve these papers is understandable, for his enormous inventory reveals that Mercer was in possession of burgh documents dating back over four decades. 64 In June, Alexander Orme was nominated to be the new clerk, and was instructed to choose a deputy. But it was here that trouble began again. David Murray was now ordered to deliver the papers in his

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62 Ibid., 182-3.
63 See B59/17/1, Index to the Records belonging to the Magistrates and Council of the Burgh of Perth of Acts and other proceedings relative to the Burgh... (1500-1699) (Perth 1831), 533-552. (B59/17... Indexes to Council Minutes, etc.) This index is a 19th century work, but all of the entries in it summarise the content and tenor of the documents to which it refers.
64 B59/24/1/4. Inventory of the town's papers which were in the hands of John Mercer, writer, when he demitted the office of town clerk of Perth in May 1670. The reference in the catalogue of the burgh records reads: The documents comprise writs, tacks, by the town, discharges to the town, contracts decreets, town treasurers' accounts and vouchers, books and registers, "principal" bonds, dispositions, contracts and discharges (warrants, details of each being given within a bundle arrangement; dates given are those of subscription and not of registration; from 1621, with some for earlier years), processes (general reference only). (lengthy roll). (B59/24/ Documents relating to the administration of the burgh, 1421-1902: 1. general, 1602-1889).
possession to Mr Orme; however, in July a report was submitted by "those appointed to receive the Registers from David Murray, that he had peremptorily refused to deliver up the same". Consequently, Murray was ordered to comply, "failing which he to be put in prison until he delivers them". It appears that in October Murray was still trying to collect his fees from inhabitants in the burgh, and in January 1671 a supplication by Murray is recorded "for consideration to be allowed him for his pains while he acted as clerk". He was granted 100 merks. He finally returned the papers "belonging to the clerks office" in mid-February.

Alexander Orme died in 1672, and was replaced by John Tais; ironically, he appointed William Graham as his deputy, with the consent of the council. Thus, stability was eventually restored to the clerk's office, but for nearly two years between 1669 and 1671, the council's attempts to displace John Mercer sowed confusion and bitterness. The affair introduces the names of prominent writers in the burgh: William Graham, David Ure, David Murray, perhaps the son of James Mercer of Aldie, Alexander Orme and John Tais. John Mercer's son, young John, was still alive, and it appears to have been the death of his brother which undermined his father's position. To these names may be added the unknown men who were "on leet" for the office of clerk in 1669. Clearly, there were several men who were qualified - or who claimed to be qualified - to carry out the town clerk's duties. It is also apparent that James Mercer was not the only man to assist the elder John Mercer in his work; David Murray is described as a "servant", but he must have been educated and skilled in the art of writing. There may well have been other writers who acted as Mercer's subordinates - men such as William Graham, Mercer's preferred choice as successor to his son.

Clerks and Scribes in Perth: The evidence from Mercer's Protocol Books:

In his dual capacity as a notary and clerk of the burgh, John Mercer, like his predecessor Henry Elder, was responsible for recording legal transactions - primarily property transactions - in Perth and the sheriffdom; his "protocol books" are effectively registers of sasines, spanning almost fifty years. These registers are stored in the Scottish Record Office, and have been bound in nine volumes. The present bindings are (probably) 19th century in date, but appear to respect the original organisation of the manuscripts. In general, the protocol books are in a good state of repair, and were written with greater care than the "Chronicle of Perth". The sasines and other transactions which are recorded are all "fair copies", and although most bear the autographed "signature" of the town clerk, they were transcribed by numerous writers. These men were presumably John Mercer's colleagues and subordinates. It is unclear whether the clerk presided over a "writing office" in the burgh, a formal "secretariat"; but the sheer size of the volumes and the diversity of handwriting styles which they display demonstrates that several skilled writers were associated professionally with John Mercer. If the "Chronicle" was in Mercer's possession, even for just a short period at the end of his career, his colleagues would probably have known of the document, and might have made contributions to it.
The protocol books introduce some new names, and support the suggestion that men such as David Murray and William Graham worked alongside John Mercer and his eldest son. However, it is important to note that work appears to have continued on the compilation of these registers after the retirement of John Mercer himself. The task of organising and indexing some of the books may have been carried out by his successors, and perhaps also by his surviving son. Even in the case of formal legal records such as these, the attribution of authorship is still a complicated affair. As most of the property records in the protocol books bear Mercer’s autograph, (or at least were signed in his name), the most helpful sources of information about other writers who worked with the town clerk are the indexes which appear at the beginning, and sometimes also at the end, of each volume. The information which they supply is a little suspect - some of the indexes appear to have been compiled after 1670, and have been annotated by at least one later editor; but as this man also annotated parts of the “Chronicle”, his contributions are certainly relevant to a study of that manuscript. Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to identify this writer. His handwriting is very distinctive but has not been found in many of the burgh records; a matching signature does not appear in any of the protocol books. 65

The first protocol book covers the period 1620-1625, but does not bear the signatures of any of Mercer’s colleagues; the date of this book’s compilation is not stated. 66 The second volume, which covers the years 1625-1633 is more interesting. 67 On the frontispiece is a note declaring the volume to be "my secund buik", written at Perth. The "signatures" of "Jon Mersr" and "James Mersr his sonne" appear on this page, but so does the signature of "G. Broun Scriptor". This man appears to have written the frontispiece, and may have been responsible for compiling the table of contents. This work could have been carried out at some stage in the 1630s; if so, it is possible that Mercer employed subordinate scribes at an early stage of his career. However, as the volume is signed at the end by James Mercer - "Confuntur Tabular Jamies mersr notarius" - it is more likely that this volume was put together at some stage in the 1650s or early 1660s, and at least by the time that James Mercer had reached adulthood. Volume 3, (1633-35), is labelled simply as "3 buik", volume 4 (1635-37) is numbered "4 buik", and volume 5 (1637-41) is noted as the "Fyft buik". 68 The latter volume is the first to contain notes inserted by the anonymous annotator "8". The table of contents is divided between the beginning and end of the volume; "8" added an explanatory note, "goe to ye end of this regre wher ye will find ye rest of the table."

The sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth protocol books are by far the most interesting of these volumes, as well as the most complicated. The frontispiece of the sixth volume (1641-1655) appears to be a dedicatory page written by John Mercer. 69 The rather florid handwriting which is

65 This author will hereafter be referred to as "8". See below, p. 24.
66 SRO B59/1/11. (B59/1... Protocol Books, stored at the SRO )
67 SRO B59/1/12.
68 SRO B59/1/13, B59/1/14, B59/1/15.
69 SRO B59/1/16.
featured on this page may be that of the town clerk himself; the style is at least comparable with examples of his signature. The frontispiece is difficult to transcribe, and some of its meaning is unclear:

Prothogollum vnum mei Joannis mersar
notarii publici ac scriba communitativa burgi de perth pront incipit et sunt continens sasine re-signationis Terrarum et annualium reddituum instrumenta tantum
Joannes mers()r notarius publicus
Acscriba communitatis burgi
de perth Manu Sua
Notanda Auctario seu tabellione publico
Requisitus parebit secreta celabit fidelis erit
Ab illicitis contractibus abstinebit, prothocolla seruabit

Quatuor effectus remonebit
viz cupidatem dilectionem
Odium et timorem

John m m

Boith hatred lowe and yair awin proffeit
Causs judges oftymes the truth for to forget
Purge all these wices yairfoir fra thy mynde
So sail rycht reule ye and yow ye Treuqhe fynde

extractum de libro protocollorum quondam henrico elder notariij publici ac scriba comunitatus burgi de perth universaliter et integraliter Ac in vinco conceput collationat recognitorum transumptorum publice et autentice auctoritate prepositi et bullinorum dicti burgi pro tempore Judicialiter pro tempore seden Ac registratorem de ipsorum in auctato in libris dicta curia ad fidem plenam faciendum omnibus quorum interest Iter me Jm clericum principalem communtatus eiusdem Ac custodem dictorum registri et protocollorum in Teste manu mea

However, a comparison between the handwriting on this page and other examples of Mercer's hand which occur in the "Chronicle" indicates that an individual's handwriting can vary significantly. This serves to complicate the identification and classification of unattributed handwriting.
Mercer identifies himself as the successor of Henry Elder as town clerk, and appears to describe this book as his first protocol book. It could be that this was the first register to be compiled by him during his period in office; however, as this book spans the period during which Mercer did not act as town clerk (1642-1654), it is more likely that this was the first volume to be assembled after his return to office. Although the circumstances of his lengthy absence from this post are not known, the moralising tone of the verses which appear on this page seems to be an expression of righteous anger against those who replaced him.

However, the table of contents does not seem to have been compiled by John Mercer alone. The first half is written in a style which displays some italic features; this is possibly a hand which appears in the “Chronicle”. 8 made several marginal notes, but the most important feature of the table is the signature at the end, which seems to read:

“In anno Im vijc bxiiij yeir
Johne mercer prouest andro mercer his sone
John Scot Thomas Rynd and Johne duged baillies”.

By 1673 the elder John Mercer was no longer town clerk; neither he nor his son ever served as provost of the burgh; and there is no mention of an Andrew Mercer in Fittis’s genealogy of the elder John Mercer’s family. Indeed, none of the baillies listed held the office at this date. However, a closer reading of the text suggests that the date given is actually 1373 - “Im iijc bxiiij”, or possibly 1376. The author seems to be making an allusion to the distinguished merchant burgess of Perth John Mercer, an ambassador for King David II, who in 1376 was imprisoned in Scarborough Castle. He was released without payment of ransom, but his son Andrew attacked and burnt Scarborough with a combined fleet of Scottish, French and Spanish ships. His father died in 1380, and was buried in the Mercer vault in St. John’s Church. This note was presumably intended to illustrate the proud ancestry of the Mercer name; at the very least, it reveals an interest in the recording of historical details on the part of a Perth scribe. However, there may well be a connection with the “Chronicle”, where a record dated 1363 concerning John Mercer appears for no obvious reason in between records dated 1614. The authors of these respective notes were different; but one may have been inspired by the other.

The marginal notes inserted by “8” provide some information about the lengthy period 1642-1654 when John Mercer did not hold the office of town clerk. (Some of these notes are difficult to read due to the tightness of the binding):

“The haill saisines which insrt in this prothocoll fra 7 Junij 1642 to ye 12 maij 1651 are all given be Jon Mercer as ane ordinar not(ary), But not as toun clerk, They Being of lands (annual)rents et__ in the cuntrie, And as for the saisines given during ye fds nyne yeares of lands wtin this brugh, Johne elder wes not(ary) yrtto, he Being clerk ye fd space, But the regre cannot be f(o)und...
henrie Broun wes toun clerk about two yeares eftir Jon elder(’s) death even till aug(ust) 1654. and

71 This may be the hand of text hand no.12. See below, p. 24.
73 “Chronicle”, 29 (8/8).
The notarial profession required a high level of education and skill in handwriting; in comparison with other professions and trades, there would have been relatively few notaries at work in Perth in the 17th century. However, it is important to note that there were men who could challenge John Mercer for the position of clerk. Mercer's work as a notary was not interrupted by his loss of the clerkship, but it may be supposed that neither John Elder nor Henry Brown were his colleagues; they may well have been rivals, who deprived Mercer of business within the burgh for a lengthy period.

The seventh volume, which covers the years 1655-1666, appears to have been the subject of later editing, and was probably put together after Mercer had demitted his office. Notes by "8" appear at various points in the table of contents, indicating where certain sasines had been inserted out of sequence at the back of the volume. The frontispiece appears to have been signed by another writer, "Georgicus (dec)". However, there is no other information concerning the authors. The eighth and ninth volumes, in contrast, provide the names of several important contributors; these are certainly the most interesting of the volumes which are registered in the name of John Mercer, although it is unclear whether he had much involvement with their compilation. The most striking features of these books are the mass of signatures and scribblings which appear on the fly-leaves at the beginning of each volume. For the most part, these seem to be "practice jottings" rather than formal autographs; the inclusion of these pages may well have been accidental, and it is quite possible that similar fly-leaves were removed from the other volumes. The information which these pages provide is ambiguous.

The eighth volume covers the short period 1666-1668, the later years of John Mercer's clerkship, during which his son died. The signature of a Mercer does appear on the fly-leaf, but it is subsumed within the scrawl of several hands, some of which are virtually illegible. Mercer seems to have signed himself "Jm"; this could have been the town clerk, or his son James; it is possible that John Mercer younger signed this page. A signature which may be that of "Jmercer" can be extracted from the scribbling, but the identity of this man is still unclear. One of the most frequent names to emerge is that of William Graham; other legible signatures are those of Thomas Blair, James Bisse(m?), and John Reddie(?). John Tais also signed these pages; it may be that work on this volume continued into the period of his clerkship, but it is possible that he was closely associated with Mercer's notarial work towards the end of the 1660s. On the reverse of the fly-leaf, the only signatures to appear are those of Tais and J.Gray. John Tais's signature suggests that he

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74 This book is housed at the SRO. B59/1/20.
75 See below, Appendix 1, for a table of the trades and professions mentioned in Section 4 of the "Chronicle".
76 Henry Brown, notary, signed the 1631 Rental Book of the James VI Hospital. See Rental Books of King James VI Hospital, Perth, ed. Rev. R. Milne, (1891), 171.
77 SRO B59/1/17.
78 See illustrations, nos 1-4, pp.90 - 93.
79 SRO B59/1/18.
was town clerk at the time of writing: "John Tais clerk with my hand pen and inck att gods comand". However, the complexity of these volumes is emphasised by the signature which appears on the final leaf of the volume: "And I henrie Broune not publicit and Borrow Clerk of pth to ye ____ (testifies) ye samen to be of werity". It seems that even in the late 1660s, Brown still claimed to be the town clerk; the incorporation of his work into Mercer’s protocol book may mean that the two men worked together; alternatively, Mercer’s successors may have added this page to the volume as an after-thought, or even as an over-sight.

The final protocol book is registered at the SRO in the names of John Mercer, Alexander Orme, and John Tais; it covers the years 1668-1673, and there is an indication in this volume of the disorder in the clerk’s office which followed Mercer’s retirement.\(^{80}\) Mercer’s “signature” appears on sasines between October 1668 and October 1669, although a line tends to be scored through his name. A note in the volume states that from 9 October 1669 “Another Register interveens here”, that of William Graham. However, notes by “8” record that David Murray was acting as clerk at this time; “ye sasines yt wer given betuixt ocr 1669 and augt 1670 are in ane regre Be ymseiffis, maid be dauid murray he Being clerk During yt tymne”. Alexander Orme’s signature appears from 3 August 1670, and that of John Tais takes over in 1672. The signatures on the fly-leaves at the front and back of this volume suggest the names of other writers involved in notarial work in Perth during the confused transfer of office from John Mercer to his several successors. James Gray’s signature appears again; Robert Blair may have been related to the Thomas Blair who signed the previous volume; Charles Tais was presumably related to John Tais, whose signature also appears. James Jackson and Robert (McGregor) are new names, as is that of “J. John”. At the back of the volume, John Tais signed his name as clerk and possessor of the volume. It is clear that the book passed through several hands after Mercer’s retirement, but more importantly, it seems that the work was at least underway while John Mercer was still clerk. Other names to appear are those of Mr Alexander Nairn and (Grahame?) Fleming. Did this man have some involvement with “Fleming’s Chronicle”? Of greater interest are the several signatures of Issobell Mercer. Fittis records that the elder John Mercer’s only daughter was called Isabella;\(^{81}\) she was married to David Smith of Barnhill, a burgess of Perth, and died without children in October 1679. It is possible therefore that the Issobell Mercer who autographed the fly-leaf of this book was the daughter of the former town clerk. It is surprising to find the name of a woman associated with such a book - indeed, it is notable to find a woman who was able to write her name. Furthermore, the signature is written in a mixture of styles; the name Issobell is written in a large “Secretary” hand, but the signatory seems to have experimented with “Italic” when writing her surname.\(^{82}\) The daughter could have learnt the art of writing from her father. It is an open question as to why Issobell should have signed the book on the same page as John Tais; but this may show that the Mercer family maintained a connection with the clerk’s office despite the acrimonious fall of the elder John Mercer.

\(^{80}\) SRO B59/1/19.  
\(^{82}\) For another example of a signature which employs both of these styles, see G.G. Simpson, *Scottish Handwriting 1150-1650*, (1986), 27.
The names of eighteen writers who were probably associated with John Mercer in the later years of his clerkship have been introduced during the course of this paper. In addition, two notaries - John Elder and Henry Brown - may have been his rivals; it is unclear whether Alexander Orme actually worked with Mercer, and the status of Issobell Mercer is ambiguous. The "Chronicle" provides the names of other Perth notaries; the status of John Sharp and "Patrick King" is unclear. The participation of the eighteen either in the compilation of Mercer's protocol books or in the protracted wrangling which characterised his dismissal of the office of town clerk has been used to suggest their close involvement with Mercer's work; however, such association does not of itself imply an involvement in the production of the "Chronicle of Perth". Indeed, although Mercer's connection with this manuscript was far stronger than previous editors suspected, the nature of the town clerk's role in the composition of the document remains somewhat enigmatic.

The presence of marginal notes by "8" in both the "Chronicle" and several of Mercer's protocol books provides a strong link between these several works, and demonstrates that at least one contributor to the protocol books was also involved in the production of the "Chronicle". Unfortunately, "8's" notes were almost certainly added to the manuscripts after their completion. Furthermore, "8's" handwriting is uncommonly distinctive, and in general it is far harder to make comparisons between the various forms of "Secretary Hand" and "Italic" which appear in the protocol books, in the "Chronicle", and indeed in most of the Perth burgh records of this time. A detailed comparative study of the palaeography of the "Chronicle" and other Perth records might be useful in identifying the hands of individual writers, although in most cases it would still be very difficult to establish the names of such men. The ecclesiastical records of Perth also need to be acknowledged in this context. The work of the session clerks, ( particularly John Davidson ), is easier to attribute and it is notable that the layout of the "Chronicle" is similar to some of the Kirk Session records. Such a wide-ranging comparative study lies beyond my competence, but the principle should not be ignored, and it is clearly an area in which other researchers could concentrate.83 However, there are other means by which the composition of the "Chronicle" can be analysed. Fittis thought that the manuscript was begun at some point in the later 16th century, and was then added to during the 17th century; but this seems to have been mere conjecture. When was the "Chronicle" written ? If the date-range of its composition can be discovered, perhaps the candidates for its authorship may be identified with greater confidence.

3. When was the "Chronicle of Perth" written ?

Detailed study of the palaeography of the "Chronicle" provides some indication of the time-span in which the manuscript was written, but also throws into sharp relief the complexity of the text. Maidment complained that "the chronological order had been entirely disregarded, the writers having evidently noted down their information without any regard to dates..." 84 Whilst he was right to comment about the disorganised state of the text, Maidment exaggerated this point; perhaps

83 The Rental Books of the King James VI Hospital, which are kept at the Scottish Record Office, could also be consulted in this context.

84 The Chronicle of Perth, introductory notes (unpaginated).
the most perplexing feature of the manuscript is the fact that although some parts were composed sequentially, with events listed in chronological order, these units are interrupted by pages on which the information is more eclectic and the construction appears to lack discipline. It is apparent that some writers added information to pages which had already been used by others; this tendency of particular authors to enter seemingly random information onto various leaves of the volume complicates the task of untangling the sequence in which the folios were written. This section discusses several methods by which the provenance of the “Chronicle” may be examined. The various handwriting styles have been analysed, and each hand has been allocated a number. Using this criteria, I have attempted to identify the likely number of writers who were involved in the composition of the “Chronicle”, the records for which they were responsible, and the years in which they appear to have worked.

Handwriting Styles in the “Chronicle”:

The majority of the handwriting styles displayed in the “Chronicle” are forms of late “Secretary Hand”. 85 This general style had a number of variants, but was essentially the accepted business script in Scotland and England from the early 16th century until at least the middle of the 17th century. Because the script was so common, it was inevitably written in many forms by a wide range of educated people. During the 17th century, italic letter forms became incorporated into the “Secretary” style, and some writers employed “mixed hands” - handwriting which used both forms in a single piece of work. Italic was largely used by the well-educated, and its clarity was useful for signatures, headings, and marginal rubrics. It is important to note that early-modern handwriting was continually changing and developing during the 16th and 17th centuries; the idiosyncracies of individual authors also account for the many variants which exist within the overall “Secretary” style. There is relatively little information about how handwriting was taught in Scotland in the early modern era, but there are instances of English and writing being taught together by the schoolmasters of Stirling and Perth, in 1620 and 1633 respectively. Copy-books were imported from England and the continent. By the 17th century, the ability to write was not confined to an elite in Scottish society, but was probably accessible to many of the inhabitants of the larger towns. Simpson has listed some of the general characteristics of the “Secretary Hand” style. 86 These include: attacking strokes, for example on the letters ‘a’ and ‘c’; a backward curl on the last letter of a word to indicate an abbreviation; a ‘p’ which looks like an x, written in one continuous action; an ‘s’ which looks like a Greek sigma, also written in a continuous action. In standard form, the style might feature many fine “hair-strokes”. The hand may be found in a formal style, or written in a free, ‘careless’ manner in which conventions of the hand may be abused.

A change of writing implement, or even of ink, may alter the character or appearance of an author’s handwriting, and although there were clearly several authors at work on the text of the “Chronicle”, the distinctions which I have drawn between the various hands may be misleading. It is important to note that when viewed on black and white photocopies, many of the handwriting distinctions which

85 This paragraph derives from the ‘Introduction’ in Simpson, Scottish Handwriting, 3-36.
86 See Simpson, plates and notes, nos.11-20, 22-30.
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23a
are apparent on the original manuscript disappear. However, in general terms, the handwriting styles which I have identified within the "text hands" of the manuscript may be categorised as follows:

1: Secretary hand, free and a little careless in letter forms. See Simpson, plates 15, 18, 27.
3: Secretary hand. A large script, but similar to 2; see above and Simpson, plate 19.
5: See below, 6
6 (and variants thereof): Secretary hand. The above references apply, but this hand is possibly significantly later than the examples given by Simpson. This is the hand in which John Mercer's signature appears, and is presumably that of the town clerk himself.
7: Ibid. Secretary Hand. Compares with 3 and 4, and strongly with 6. See also Simpson, plate 16. Both 6 and 7 exhibit many of the standard features of competent Secretary Hand.
8: Secretary Hand. See Simpson, plate 28; "a speedily written secretary hand" 87
9 (and variants thereof): Secretary Hand. Generally a much larger script than those above, and freer in style. It is often badly smudged and blotted.
10: Italic. Set. This is the most attractive and disciplined hand to be found in the manuscript.
11: A mixture of Secretary and Italic styles. See Simpson, plates 28 and 30.

At first sight, the text of the "Chronicle" - particularly that of Section 2 - appears to have been composed by a bewildering assortment of authors; the various shades of brown or black ink which were used add to the impression that many writers contributed to the text. However, the difference in character between many of the passages in the manuscript may be more apparent than real. Closer analysis of the document suggests that thirteen different hands may be identified across the length of the "Chronicle"; some of these hands have several variants. Marginal notes appear in sections 1 and 2 in eight different hands, although all of these "margin hands" are probably the same as certain "text hands". It is important to note that individual authors could have employed more than one handwriting style when making entries in the "Chronicle"; the number of variations in handwriting styles is not necessarily indicative of the number of writers who worked on the manuscript. Examples of the palaeography are shown in the illustrations, nos 5-10, pp. 94-99.

Table 1 illustrates the palaeographic structure of the "Chronicle" in its present form, (see facing page). The "margin hands" have been numbered separately from the "text hands", as it is unclear whether the marginal notes are contemporary with the text, or were added to the manuscript at a later date. Margin Hand 1 = Text Hand 8; MH 2 = TH 1 (?); MH 3 and 4 = TH 2(?); MH 5 is associated with MH 6; MH 6 = TH 7; MH 7 = TH 1; MH 8 = TH 7. It is noticeable from this table that the majority of marginal notes are associated with MH no.6, (TH no. 7).

Table 1 demonstrates the complexity of the "Chronicle"s composition; nevertheless, it suggests that the manuscript may be subdivided into groups of pages, for which particular hands may have been responsible. It is clear that pages 1 and 2 form a distinct unit; the text was written by

87 This hand is referred to above as "8".
text-hand no.1, and the margin notes were contributed by TH no.8. Pages 3, 3/3, and 4 differ in character from this unit (Section 1), being the first pages of the register of historical events, but the hand of TH1 continues, with occasional additional notes by TH2 - the same hand which was used for the marginal notes on these pages. The handwriting on pages 4/4, 5, and 5/5 is clearly distinct from that of the previous pages; these leaves are slightly more complicated, exhibiting three text hands and four margin hands; their subject matter is far later in date than on the foregoing pages. Pages 6, 6/6, 7, 7/7, and 8 form a clear unit, written in the same style by text hand no.7, with entries organised, predominantly, in chronological order; the margin notes were probably written by the same hand, though not necessarily at the same time. Pages 8/8, 9 and 9/9 present a reversion to the style of TH1, though the later material on page 9/9 is in the hand of TH7. After page 9, the margin notes tend to be less regular than before. Pages 10-12 were written in the style of text hand no.7, with additional material by TH8. Pages 12/12, 13 and 13/13 were composed by several text hands - 9, 1, 7 and 8. But between pages 14 and 16/16, the text was compiled almost exclusively in TH9 - a hand which appears in several variants; other entries were written in a fine italic hand - TH12. Pages 17-19 clearly form a distinct group; although several text hands contributed to these pages, those of nos.6 and 7 predominate, and the entries in these pages share characteristics of pp. 23/23-27/27, the register of deaths. This register (Section 4) features the handwriting of TH nos. 6, 7, and 9, although these hands appear in several variants; text hand no.8 seems to have added a few entries at a later date. Pages 20-22/22 (Section 3) were composed by text hands nos.1 and 13.

On this reading of the manuscript, the pages of the “Chronicle” may be subdivided into the following groups:

PP 1, 1/1, 2, 2/2; 3, 3/3, 4; 8/8, 9, 9/9.
Pp 4/4, 5, 5/5.
PP 6, 6/6, 7, 7/7, 8; (9/9), 10, 10/10, 11, 11/11, 12.
Pp 12/12, 13, 13/13.
Pp 14, 15, 15/15, 16, 16/16.
Pp 17, 17/17, 18, 18/18, 19; 23/23, 24, 24/24, 25, 25/25, 26, 26/26, 27, 27/27.
Pp 20, 20/20, 21, 21/21, 22, 22/22.

This rather artificial categorisation does have some advantages; it is clear that sections 1 and 3 form neat units, and it confirms that pp. 6-8, and pp 10-12, in which many of the records were entered in chronological order, and in a similar style, belong together; these folios could be the products of one author. However, although pp. 17-19 and Section 4 share certain characteristics, they may have been compiled in tandem, rather than as a sequence or unit, and may have originally belonged to separate volumes. More particularly, pp. 4, 5, 8, and 12 bear significantly different material on folio and versa, written in significantly different styles. The characters of pp.9/9 and 13 change markedly when the entries of text hand no.7 in the bottom half of these pages succeed those of text hand no.1 in the top half. Categorising the pages in this way, according to handwriting styles, clarifies some aspects of the “Chronicle’s” construction, but also highlights its ambiguities. Although this catalogue provides an indication of the order in which some pages were
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<td>1624 (1637x 68, see 4), p.4/4</td>
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<td>1580, p.4/4</td>
<td>1637(x 1668, see below, 7) p.9/9</td>
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<td>4 (See TH2 ?)</td>
<td>1572, p.3/3</td>
<td>1597 (1637x 68, see TH4), p.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (See TH7 ?)</td>
<td>1590, p.6</td>
<td>1668, p.23/23</td>
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<td>6 (See TH7)</td>
<td>1590, p.6</td>
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<td>7 (See TH1)</td>
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<td>1626, p.21/21</td>
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<td>8 (See TH7)</td>
<td>1590, p.6 (1643, p.13/13)</td>
<td>1668, p.23/23 (1643, p.13/13)</td>
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</table>
composed - (for example the composition of p.6 in all probability pre-dates that of p.7) - this analysis cannot be used to date the composition of the manuscript as a whole, nor of particular units within the volume.

The Dating of Individual Hands:

To suggest dates of composition, the periods in which the chroniclers were at work need to be identified. However, this cannot be achieved with accuracy, and only a general indication can be given of the time-span in which the manuscript was compiled. (It is important to note that the identification of particular handwriting styles may be used as a guide to the likely number of authors who worked on the text of the "Chronicle"; but, although it is difficult to maintain a distinction, in this study the words "hand" and "author" should not be interpreted as being co-terminous). Table 2 lists the date-ranges of each handwriting style; (see facing page).

Although passages relating to events in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries appear in the handwriting style of TH1, the majority of records in this hand concern events of the 16th and 17th centuries. The latest information recorded in this hand is dated to 1626 and, given that material written in this form stretches back to 1513, it is likely that the author(s) was at work in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. It is quite possible that these entries were compiled after 1626, but there is no internal evidence for this, and in this case, as in all others, the date of the latest entry indicates the approximate period in which the author(s) was at work. Thus it is possible that the text of pp.1-2/2, 3-4, 8-9 and the upper portions of 9/9 and 13, as well as 20-21/21, were written, at least in part, by c.1626. The text entries by text hand number 2 span the years 1572-1597; these appear on pp 3/3 and 4, and would fit into the above period. This author(s) was probably the compiler of most of the margin notes on pp 3-4, and of a note on p.5 which relates to an event of 1636. The sole text entry by TH number 3 is dated 1624, but this hand may be the same as TH4; entries in the style of no.4 span the years 1580-1637. The entry by text hand no.5 (which is closely related to the style of TH6) is dated 1655; p.4/4 may have been written at some time in the 1620s or 1630s, and the entry of 1655 was presumably entered in that year or shortly after. Page 5 presumably belongs to the 1620s or 1630s as well. Page 5/5 may have been written between 1656 and late 1668, or perhaps shortly after 1668. However, it is unlikely that the chronicler(s) who wrote in the style of text hand no.6 wrote the first two entries on this page in or after 1656, and then returned to it in or after 1668 to write the final note.

Records in the hand of TH7 appear between the dates 1590 and 1668. There are several variants of this style, but it is likely that one man was responsible for all of the passages which have been labelled with this number; it is particularly important to note that strong stylistic similarities have been recorded between text hands 7 and 6. The author(s) who used text hand no.7 was still at work on the manuscript in or after 1668, but his contributions could have been made over several decades. (The same does not seem to apply to the author(s) who used TH6, most of whose entries are concentrated in the years 1656-1668). Given the large number of entries which were made in the hand of TH7, it is quite likely that these contributions were compiled over the space of
several years; however, it is possible that this work - in effect much of the "Chronicle" - was composed during the 1660s. The similarities between the hands of nos. 6 and 7 indicate that this may have been the case.

Text hand no. 9 appears in several variants, and entries in this style occur dated as late as 1663. However, most of this work is concentrated in the 1640s, at the time of the Covenanting Wars, and the writer(s) may have been an eye-witness to many of the events which are recorded. The same applies to the author(s) of TH12, whose work is mostly dated between 1644 and 1646, though with one entry dated 1657. The author(s) who wrote in the style of TH13 was responsible for making fair copies of letters which date between 1612 and 1621. This work first appears on p. 21 beneath material in the style of text hand no. 1; it is thus likely that the copyists were at work in the 1620s. The most enigmatic hand is that of TH8 (margin hand 1); this writer's entries are interspersed throughout the "Chronicle", and often seem to have been added to completed pages. His work spans the dates c.1635 to c.1667; but, as has already been stated above, this man may well have appended his notes to John Mercer's manuscripts after the town-clerk's retirement, by which time other work on the "Chronicle" had presumably stopped.

"Personal References":

It is necessary to reconsider the "personal references" in the manuscript in the light of this study. The close relationship between most of the hands - (only TH1, 12 and 13 stand out as being clearly distinct from other hands) - means that many of these entries could have been written by the same man. If the author of TH6 was John Mercer, it is clear that he was responsible for at least four of the personal entries - those describing the deaths of his sister and of his son, in 1665 and 1667 respectively, the record on page 19 of the burial of the wife of his tenant Jon Mollat in 1668, and an entry in Section 4 which describes the death of the wife of another tenant in 1662 (77, 25). The impression of close stylistic similarities between text hands 6 and 7 is re-inforced by the identification of Mercer with the record of the communion which was held in March 1638; if Mercer was responsible for all the entries which I have classified as being written in these handwriting styles, then it is clear that much of the "Chronicle" was his work. The record of Mercer's election to the office of town clerk in 1623 was made in the hand of TH4; it is conceivable that the author of this passage was also Mercer - (the marginal note was entered by "8"). Most of the passages which concern the quartering of troops between September 1644 and April 1645 were written in the style of TH9/11. It is harder to judge whether this handwriting should be attributed to Mercer, but he was one of the bailies at this time. An entry in the style of text hand no. 12, in fine italic, is clearly distinct from these passages; it may be the work of one of the bailies, or of a quartermaster.

From this it is clear that, as Maidment pointed out, John Mercer was in all probability responsible for the composition of entries in the later stages of the "Chronicle" which mostly related to deaths. His role in the writing of some parts of the manuscript is more ambiguous; but Maidment clearly

88 See above, n.55.
89 The Chronicle of Perth, introductory notes (unpaginated).
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Page Number</th>
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<td>52</td>
<td>1660 ?</td>
<td>c. 1660 - c.1668</td>
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underestimated the extent of Mercer's participation in the compilation of the volume. However, it is also clear from the preceding study that it is extremely difficult to define the parameters within which the "Chronicle" was compiled, or to establish conclusively the number of authors who were responsible for its production. The name of John Sharp may be associated with the handwriting of TH1, but there are few clues as to the identities of Mercer's fellow chroniclers.90

The Dating of Individual Pages:

Perhaps the best method of untangling the compilation of the "Chronicle" is to analyse the construction of each page, with reference to the categorisation and dating of the handwriting which has been set out above. (See facing page, and over, Tables 3 and 4). Pages 1-2/2 (Section 1) were written by one hand (TH1); the parameters for the composition of these pages are c.1597(8) - c.1626, and it is likely that they were written in the last years of the 16th century, or in the opening decades of the 17th century. The material certainly post-dates 1587 - the year in which James VI's second charter to the Hospital at Perth was ratified - but it is more likely that the whole of this section was written after 24 January 1597(8), the date which is noted in the margin on p.1/1. Marginal notes were added by TH8, presumably at a later date; the known parameters of work in this style are c.1635 - c.1667. The text on page 3 was all compiled in the style of TH1, within the date-brackets 1513x97(8) - 1626. The margin notes seem to have been written in the style of margin hand number 3 (TH2), between the years c.1572 and c.1637. The same date-brackets apply to the marginal notes on p.3/3. The text ranges between 1519x97(8)-c.1637x 68. Additional notes were appended in hand no.2 to the text entries which concern the execution of the archbishop of St. Andrews in 1572 and the falling of the bridge of Tay in 1573. The date-ranges which apply to page 4 are 1580x97(8)-c.1637x 68; several headings above passages in the text were added in the style of TH no.2.

The character of the manuscript changes on page 4/4, with the introduction of new handwriting styles. The first passage, dated October 1624, was written in TH3, but this handwriting may well be the same as that of TH4, the overall parameters of which are 1580 -1637x c.1668. TH3 and 4 are also similar in style to numbers 6 and 7, and thus the parameters for the composition of this page may extend into the 1660s. The penultimate passage on this page was completed in text hand no.5; this style bears strong similarities to that of number 6. The material is dated to May 1655, but

90 It is worth noting in this context that one of the Rental Books of the James VI Hospital, edited by Milne, was written, in 1606, by a man called Fleming, one of the masters of the Hospital. As has been noted above (p. 9), Fittis thought that the composition of the "Chronicle of Perth" was started in the late 16th century by a man called Fleming. Section 1 in the "Chronicle" is a record of Hospital business, but there is unlikely to be a connection between these two works, as the handwriting of the Rental Book bears little resemblance to TH1. However, handwriting of a very similar appearance to that of TH1 does appear on a few folios in two of the other Rental Books - in those of 1631 and 1655. Indeed, "TH8" appears in some margin notes in the 1619 volume. These examples suggest that some of the authors of the "Chronicle" were also contributors to the Hospital Rental Books; but, the "Fleming connection" remains unproven. See Rental Books of King James VI Hospital, Perth, ed. Rev. R. Milne, (1891), 141. The original volumes are kept at the SRO : See GD79/ 7/31, (1612-1640); GD79/ 7/32, (1619/ 1631); GD79/ 7/ 33, (1655); GD79/ 7/36/ 1, (1606). The 1606 volume was signed by Thomas Fleming - not, as Milne thought, by Patrick Fleming.
<table>
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the parameters for this note extend between 1655 and 1668. The margin notes were all written by margin hand no.4; this hand bears similarities to that of text hand number 2. The text hand throughout page 5 is that of no. 4, but the margin notes appear in several forms: margin hands nos. 4, 5, 1 and 3. The overall parameters for these entries are 1623-c. 1668. It is possible that these notes were not added to the manuscript in the order in which they appear, but that several authors (perhaps three in total) appended marginal notes at various times. Only three records, with two marginal notes appended, appear on page 5/5. The text was written in TH6, for which the overall parameters are (1590)x1655 - c.1668. The margin notes are both in the style of margin hand no. 5; this may have been the author of the text. The parameters for this margin have been catalogued as 1656 - c.1668.

Pages 6 - 8 form a clear unit. All of the text was composed in TH7, and the margin notes were probably written by the same author(s). The passages record events between 1590 and 1618, often in chronological order, and these pages could bear a contemporary record. The parameters of work in this style are c.1590 to c.1668. The character of the "Chronicle" changes on the reverse of page 8. The text on pages 8/8 and 9 was compiled in TH1; on page 8/8 the margin notes were also written in this style (MH7), but on page 9 the margin notes were written by margin-hand no. 5. The events which are recorded on page 9 all date to 1615; the text could be contemporary with the events described, but the margin notes were probably added later.

The first three entries on page 9/9 are also dated to 1615, and were written in text hand number 1. However, in the second half of this page occurs a rather eclectic record of deaths, ranging in date between 1622 and 1638. There are no margin notes. The record of the death of John Drummond, deacon of the skinners in Perth, was written in TH4; the following entries are in the style of TH7. Thus it seems that the compilation of this page was started in the second or third decade of the 17th century, but was abandoned for some reason, and later resumed by new writers who added material without particular reference to the subject matter of the existing passages. Although most of the entries concern the deaths of prominent figures, the later entries are less detailed than those dated to 1615, and are not as strongly connected with the burgh of Perth.

Pages 10-12 form a unit which is very similar to pages 6 - 8, but there are some notable differences. There are far fewer marginal notes, and those which were made were entered by several hands. All of the text was written by hand no. 7, but on page 12 a record was inserted by TH8; this entry is dated to 19 August 1635 by a margin note in the same hand. The overall parameters of the text on these pages accord with those of text hand no. 7; the material spans the years 1618 - 1638. There are no margin notes on p.10, but on page 10/10 four notes were added by margin hand 6; similarly on page 11. On the following page marginal notes were added by margin hands 1, 5 and 6, although those of MH5/6 should be compared with earlier entries.

91 There are nine marginal entries on this page; the sequence of authorship is: (MH) no.4, no.5, no.1, no.5, no.4, no.4, no.5, no.3, no.4.
made in MH3. Two margin notes were made in the style of MH6 on page 12, in addition to that made by MH no.1.

Page 12/12 follows the general chronological development of the previous pages, but the records of events in 1638 and 1639 are written in the hand of TH9; the overall parameters of work in this style are 1638-1663. Page 13 is similar in character to page 9. The first three entries were made by TH1, and concern events in 1618; however the following entries are all in the style of no. 7, and concern events in 1638 and 1643. These records appear to have been entered either in or shortly after 1643, for the marriage of Lord Car in 1638 is recorded in the fourth entry on the page, and his death in February 1643 is recorded in the penultimate passage. The entries in text hand no.1 concern a notorious murder, an execution and the marriage of the son of the earl of Errol; those made in TH7 concern prominent local marriages and deaths. Margin notes were appended by margin hand no.6 to the first five entries on this page. The chronology is continued on page 13/13, where events between 1643 and 1645 are noted. The first three records - which deal with a burial, a marriage, and the acceptance by the town of the Solemn League and Covenant - were written by TH no. 7; the following entries were written by text hand no. 9, and concern an execution, a marriage and a burial. It is possible that all of these passages are near-contemporary records; they were clearly composed between 1643 and c.1668. Two margin notes appear, in the writing of margin hands 8 and 1.

Pages 14-16/16 deal with events of the civil war, at both local and national levels, between 1644 and 1646. Most of the entries were written by text hand no. 9, although this style shows several variants. These passages include several personal references. Other passages were added by text hand no.12; the parameters of entries in this style are 1644 - c.1657. These pages - which are often very messy - could be near-contemporary accounts; they were certainly written between 1644 and c.1663. There are three margin notes on page 15; two appear in the hand of MH6 - ( but bear close similarities to the style of TH 9/10 and relate directly to the text ); the other was added by MH no.1.

Page 17 exhibits a wide assortment of handwriting, and the events described range in date from 1646 to 1662. The page is dominated by a lengthy description of the proclamation of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector in 1654; this entry was written by TH7, together with a margin note in MH6/5. There are two entries in the hand of TH12, relating to events in 1646 and 1657 respectively. Text-hand no. 8 supplied three entries, two at the base of the page concerning marriages in 1657 and 1658, and one towards the head of the page concerning a storm in December 1655, to which is appended a marginal note in the same style. Text hand no. 7 recorded the arrival of General Monck at Stirling in 1654, a marriage in 1656 and a burial in 1657. Other entries - mostly concerning burials in 1657 - occur in the hand of TH6. The last entry to occur on the page in this style is dated February 1662. The sequence in which this page was compiled is unclear, but it seems that contributions were made occasionally over a number of years, between c.1646 and c.1662. It is apparent that entries by the author(s) "8" probably post-date the other contributions.
Pages 17/17-19 were written almost exclusively by text hand no.6 - (the hand of John Mercer?)
The entries range in date from 1658 to 1668, but are not recorded in strict chronological order.
These pages are closely related in character and style to Section 4, the register of deaths,
although there are a few anecdotal entries as well as records of deaths. Three entries were
appended to the bottom of page 17/17 by "8", and two entries in the same style were inserted on
page 18. Pages 18/18 and 19 were written entirely by TH6, except for a margin note by text hand
no.7 which appears on page 18/18. Margin notes in the hands of MH6/5, MH6, and MH1 (TH7
and TH8) appear on page 18, and a margin note by MH6 (TH7) also appears on p.17/17. The lack
of chronological order suggests that these pages were written retrospectively. Pages 17/17 and
18 could have been compiled between 1658 and 1665, but were probably written in or shortly
after 1665; pp 18/18 and 19 may have been written between 1665 and 1668, but were probably
written in or shortly after 1668. Section 4, the register of deaths, also seems to belong to the
1660s. It features the hands of TH6, 7, and 9, with additional notices by TH8, and may have been
written as a contemporary record of deaths and burials. The record is mostly in chronological order,
relating to the years 1660-1668, with a preponderance of entries for 1660-1662, but no records
for 1664. Section 3 features letters copied by text hands 1 (?) 92 and 13. These copies were
probably made in the middle years of the 1620s.

The Manuscript Paper:

The age of the manuscript can also be assessed by examining the paper itself. As has been noted
above (p.1), the paper on which the "Chronicle" is written is of the same kind throughout the
volume; if the date of the paper's manufacture could be ascertained, this would at least indicate a
time-after-which the compilation of the "Chronicle" must have commenced.

The paper is almost certainly not of Scottish origin, for the domestic paper industry did not really
develop until the second half of the 17th century. Although a paper mill was in operation at Dairy on
the Water of Leith by 1590, this mill failed in c.1605, and paper production in Scotland was not
resumed until c.1652, when a new mill was established at Canon Mills. From this time forth, paper
was probably made continuously, but at the end of the 17th century, paper-making was still a small
industry in Scotland. Thomson has estimated that there were, at most, nine vats in operation, the
output of which may have been 150-200 reams a week; but Scottish mills are unlikely to have been
in operation throughout the year, due to adverse weather or mechanical failure.93 Paper

92 This hand bears strong similarities to TH1, but also contains some italic features which may
distinguish this style from the handwriting of pp.1-2/2, for example.
93 For information about the beginnings of the Scottish paper industry, see:
E. Heawood, Monumenta Chartae Papyraceae... General Editor E.J.Labarre, Vol. I
production in England was far more substantial; 63 mills are known to have existed by 1675. However, according to Heawood, "It is only about 1700 that the common use of English-made paper is definitely proved by the watermarked names Elliston + Basket, or their initials E.B..." Even at the turn of the century, England continued to import large quantities of paper from abroad.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, England was largely dependent upon foreign imports for its paper supply; Scotland was presumably supplied from the same sources. According to Coleman, "Britain drew her supplies of various sorts of paper from the Continent to meet the increased demands for wrapping, writing, and printing. Most of these supplies came into London and were consumed in England". France was the main supplier of paper to England until the last quarter of the 17th century, when the powerful Dutch market became dominant. The chief French export centres were Rouen, Caen, Morlaix, Bordeaux, and La Rochelle. For much of the 17th century, the French paper industry was the largest in Europe, but England also imported Swiss, German and Italian paper. Much of these supplies were channelled through Holland, which acted as an international distribution centre for paper. In the later 17th century, new Dutch paper mills challenged French supremacy in paper production.

The paper of the "Chronicle" was almost certainly imported from the continent before the onset of decline in the French industry; the paper may well have been of French manufacture, imported into England from Holland. Alternatively, Dutch or Scottish vessels could have brought paper supplies from the Low Countries to the ports of the east coast of Scotland. The paper bears a "pot" type watermark. Such marks were peculiar to French manufacturers. Between c.1450 and 1600, the pot design was prominent in paper from the north and north west of France. Between 1600 and c.1750, many of the older forms of watermark were replaced. The pot gradually became larger and more ornate, with one or two handles, a large crested cover, and the maker's initials on the bulb. Most of the French paper which was marked in this way was destined for the English market. According to Heawood, pot-marked paper in English documents of the 17th century was particularly associated with Caen, Morlaix, and La Rochelle.

The watermark on the pages of the "Chronicle" bears most of the standard features of French - perhaps Norman - pot-type marks of the 16th and 17th centuries. (See illustration no. 11) The bowl of the pot is divided by three bands (or fesses). Within the first band there is a crescent design; beneath this in the second band appear the initials 'P I', and in the third band is the initial 'G'. The bowl is supported by a rounded base of two segments, and surmounted by a crown of

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94 Hills, 52.
95 'Watermark' by E. Heawood in E.J. Labarre, Dictionary and Encyclopaedia of Paper and Papemaking, (2nd ed. 1952), 346.
97 For details of the continental paper industry, see: Heawood, Monumenta, 26-7; 'Watermark', 346; Coleman, 18-23; Thomson, 2-4; Hills, 52.
eight petals. This is topped by a crescent on a thick stem. The pot has one handle. This watermark is not as ornate as many of the later French pots, but it is well-formed and relatively sophisticated in design. The pot displays several important distinguishing marks - most significantly the initials of the manufacturer. But although there is a substantial reference literature for this subject, it has proved to be extremely difficult to find published examples of pots which have these distinguishing marks. The use of three initials (a "triplet") suggests that the pot design may be relatively late in date - belonging to the second half of the 16th century or the 17th century. The crescent device suggests that the paper may be of Norman origin.

The most comprehensive study of European watermarks of the period remains that by Briquet (1907); but there are few firm comparisons to be found between the pot designs which he catalogued and the watermark on the pages of the "Chronicle". The selection of pots from Briquet's catalogue which is shown in the illustrations below, demonstrates that the "Chronicle's" watermark bears characteristics which appeared on pots throughout the 16th century; in the absence of a clear example of the "Chronicle's" pot-type, it is impossible to suggest a narrow date-range for the manufacture of the paper. Furthermore, because the initials "PI G(C?)" do not appear in the literature which I have consulted, the manufacturer or place of manufacture cannot be securely identified. (See illustrations, no. 12).

No. 12.513 bears some general stylistic similarities with the "Chronicle" pot. In particular the shapes of the bowl and single handle are akin to those of the Perth manuscript's watermark. 12.513 is dated to 1517. 12.516, dated to 1558, has little in common with the Perth pot, except that the bowl is decorated with a crescent. 12.526 features a thin stem above a crown of petals, and a single handle of similar design to that on the "Chronicle" watermark. 12.526 is dated to 1567. No. 12.722 also dates to 1567. This watermark is more elaborate than that of the "Chronicle", but bears important similarities. A five-petalled crown is surmounted by a crossed stem and crescent; the "cover", or perhaps the rim of the crown, is depicted by two semi-circular lines, and the single handle is of a similar shape; there are two fesses on the bowl, which bears the initials 'DR'. Thus, although this pot differs from that of the "Chronicle" in terms of detail, the general style is very similar. No. 12.803 is also far more elaborate than the Perth pot, but it features a crescent on a stem, a single handle of similar shape, and a bowl of comparable design. It also features the initials 'PO', and dates to 1586. No. 12.804, which dates to 1588, bears the same initials, but notably features a crescent on the bowl, as well as above the crown. All of these pots were discovered in French sources; 12.513 is from Noyon, 12.516 from Neubourg, 12.526 from Sens, 12.722 from Paris, 12.803 from St. Pol, and 12.804 is from Evreux. Briquet's work does not encompass watermarks of the 17th century; but it is apparent from these references that the "Chronicle" watermark could date to the second half of the 16th century. The initials "PI G(C)" do not appear in

99 Examples of similar pot-type watermarks do occur in other Perth sources; see esp. Perth Kirk Session Register SRO CH2/521/8 (2), which displays a slightly more elaborate version of the pot; the initials on this pot seem to be "TPO".

Briquet's "Index of Letters", but Stevenson warns that it may be difficult to identify names on the basis of such initials: "It is...a dangerous game to allocate initials in this manner, even after the Norman makers, to avoid ambiguity, began to use triplets as Heawood called them, to stand for names." 101

Examples of 17th century pots have been catalogued by Churchill (1935) and Heawood (1950). 102 (See illustrations, no. 13). Churchill's examples are useful for comparison in general terms with the "Chronicle" watermark. No.458, dated to 1618 and of French(?) manufacture, bears similar fesses, although the characters on the bowl differ from the Perth example; the initials are 'P D' and '16'. No.460 has a bowl and base of similiar shape to the "Chronicle" pot, and similar fesses, one of which contains a form of crescent; the initials are 'P O'. This paper, also French, is dated to 1611; both of these examples are more elaborate than the Perth watermark. Nos. 470 and 472 are notable as they both bear the initials 'P I', and are surmounted by crescents. However, these double-handed pots do not resemble the "Chronicle" pot in any other details. They date to 1648 and 1649 respectively, and are both of French (?) origin.

Heawood provides a wider range of examples. No. 3553 bears little resemblance to the "Chronicle" pot, but the bowl is divided into three segments, and in the middle segment are the initials 'I P'; this pot is dated to 1598 (London). (Note. Heawood does not list places of paper manufacture, but instead provides a catalogue of the locations in which the watermarks were found.). No.3565, dated to 1611 (no provenance), is very similar in style to the "Chronicle" pot. A crown of petals, atop a similar ringed cover, is surmounted by a crescent on a thick stem. The internal divisions of the bowl differ, but it contains a crescent and the initials 'P O'. Nos. 3580, 3581 and 3582 all feature two crescents, although the crowns are more elaborate than that of the Perth watermark. The shapes of the bowls and their bases correspond to the "Chronicle" example. No.3580 is undated (England); the others are dated 1618 and 1619 (England) respectively. No.3590 bears the initials 'PD C'; those on 3581 are 'IB', and on 3582 'I (?) PO'. Nos. 3604-3616, which date to between 1630 and 1659 (London), all display certain features found on the "Chronicle" pot, but are generally far more elaborate in appearance. A crescent surmounting an ornate crown is a feature common to all of these examples. The initials on No.3632 are 'I P'; this pot is surmounted by a crescent, but bears little other relation to the "Chronicle" pot. It is dated to 1662 (London).

Without being able to make a direct comparison between the "Chronicle" watermark and any other examples, it is difficult to identify the place and date of manufacture of the paper. However, it is apparent that the Perth pot bears closer similarities to French designs of the second half of the 16th century than to the far more elaborate watermarks of the 17th century. If the paper was produced in the 16th century, this would support the impression gained by study of the

101 Ibid., Vol. I, 35.
102 W.A. Churchill, Watermarks in Paper In Holland, England, France, Etc. in the XVII and XVIII Centuries and their Interconnection, (1935); Heawood, Monumenta.
handwriting of the "Chronicle of Perth" that work began on this document in either the last years of the 16th century, or the first decades of the 17th.

It should be apparent by now that the simple questions when? was the "Chronicle" written and by whom? cannot be answered in full. With regard to the dating of the manuscript, certain patterns can be discerned in the composition of the text, and date-ranges suggested for particular handwriting styles. As the text progresses, the potential date-ranges for the composition of the contents narrow, and in the later stages of Section 2 many of the entries were presumably written during the 1660s. But the general conclusion must be that the "Chronicle" was probably compiled at intervals over the space of several decades, between the late 1590s and the late 1660s. In this respect, Fittis's suggestion that the manuscript was begun in the 16th century and continued during the 17th was a fair conjecture. Given the length of time over which the "Chronicle" seems to have been compiled, it is difficult to offer realistic suggestions about the identity of its several authors. The most helpful indicators of authorship are the "personal references" which appear occasionally in the text. These passages demonstrate that Maidment's opinion that John Mercer had relatively little to do with the writing of the "Chronicle" was misjudged. Study of the handwriting in the "Chronicle", together with the 'personal references', indicates that Mercer was involved in the composition of much of the manuscript. This is the most notable theme to arise from the preceding pages, and it suggests that an appropriate date-range to apply to the writing of the "Chronicle" may be that of the working lifetime of John Mercer.

My attempts to analyse the construction and dating of the pages of the manuscript have highlighted the complexity of the document, and the limitations of certain dating techniques. But some clarity can be achieved through indicating the dates by which the compilation of each page is likely to have been completed. The texts of Sections 1 and 3 were not necessarily compiled in tandem, but both seem to have been completed by the mid-1620s. In Section 2, the texts of pp.3, 8/8, and 9 were probably finished in that period as well. PP.3/3, 4 and 5 belong to the same period, but may not have been completed until the late 1630s. Page 4/4 may not have been completed until the 1660s. Pages 9/9 and 13 were started in the early years of the 17th century, but may not have been finished until the late 1660s. Although the writing of the text on the other pages of the "Chronicle" was started at varying times, the clearest statement which can be made about the date of their composition is that they were probably all completed by some time in the 1660s. The marginal notes are even harder to date; most were probably written either by the late 1660s or shortly after. On pp.1/1 and 8/8 notes were written by the late 1620s; these rubrics are clearly contemporary with the text. On pp. 3, 3/3, 4 and 4/4, the notes seem to have been completed by the late 1630s.
4. Why was the “Chronicle of Perth” written?

There are no introductory or explanatory comments within the “Chronicle” manuscript. The volume seems to be incomplete, and it is conceivable that a dedicatory page which explained the purpose of the “Chronicle” has been lost; but even so, the chroniclers left little or no indication in the surviving folios as to why they compiled this record. I have found no mention of the manuscript amongst the Perth burgh records - certainly no record of commission. Without such material, we have no direct information which might explain why the “Chronicle” was written. Nevertheless, the purpose of the manuscript must be considered; quite simply, the question must be asked: What did the authors intend this work to be? Many permutations arise from this problem: Was it intended to be a ‘chronicle’? Was it consciously composed as a piece of historical writing? Or was it conceived as an administrative record? For whom was it written? Was it intended as a reference work, for public consultation? Was it intended to be published as a book? There can be no definitive answers to such questions; but the nature and possible purpose of the manuscript must be discussed if historians and archaeologists are to use and interpret this source. In this chapter I will consider the question of why the “Chronicle” may have been written from two angles; firstly, from a technical perspective, examining the structure and contents of the manuscript, and secondly in terms of its place amongst other literary works which were produced in 17th century Perth.

Is Adv. MS. 35.4.4 a “Chronicle of Perth”?

The concept of a “Chronicle of Perth” appears to have been the invention of the Rev. James Scott; there is certainly no indication within the pages of the manuscript that it originally bore this - or any other - title, although it seems to have been known both as “Fleming’s Chronicle” and as “Mercer’s Chronicle”. By the time the volume was sold at auction in 1818, it was “entitled, on the cover, ‘Fleming’s Chronicle’”. However, the manuscript has never been securely attributed, and even after Maidment published the document as “The Chronicle of Perth” in 1831, this title did not achieve immediate currency. Scott described the volume variously as “an old manuscript Chronicle”, “an old manuscript chronicle of Perth”, and “an old manuscript chronicle of memorable occurrences”, until he spoke about the manuscript at meetings of The Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth, apparently describing it as a “Chronicle by John Mercer, Clerk of the Town of Perth, containing chiefly remarkable occurrences in Perth”. When the volume was sold at auction, it was clearly identified as a “Chronicle”, although its provenance was uncertain, and it is unclear from the sales catalogue whether the manuscript was considered to be a chronicle of remarkable Scottish events, or of remarkable events chiefly concerning Perth.

Maidment described “The Chronicle of Perth” as “A Register of Remarkable Occurrences, chiefly connected with that city”, and in 1845 John Parker Lawson followed suit by referring to the “Chronicle of Perth”. Parker Lawson added that the document was “commonly called Mercer’s Chronicle”, but in his bibliography of Mercer’s works Stevenson later wrote that the “The Chronicle
of Perth" was "sometimes but erroneously called Mercer's Chronicle". Furthermore, shortly after the publication of Maidment's edition, Pitcairn referred to the manuscript as a "Diary or Chronicle", by Fleming. Similarly, in 1906 Crawford Smith referred to "another kind of literature in which Perth figures - that of Diaries, such as Mercer's Chronicle and Dundee's Diary". Thus, although there was a general consensus in the late 18th and 19th centuries that the manuscript was a 'chronicle', there was also an alternative view that the work should be described as a 'diary'. The correct terminology has not yet been discussed; but it is necessary to question whether the manuscript should be described as a 'chronicle' and, if so, whether its contents indicate that the authors were primarily concerned to make a record of events which related to Perth 103

i/ A Chronicle ?

Note. The reader is advised to consult the transcript of the "Chronicle of Perth" (Volume 1) while studying this essay.

This thesis is not a work of literary criticism, and I am not competent to discuss in detail the nature of historical writing in early modern Scotland; nor am I going to attempt to discuss the general nature of Scottish early modern chronicles. For the purposes of this research I am going to consider whether or not the structure and organisation of the manuscript conforms to a standard definition of the term 'chronicle'. The Collins Dictionary of the English Language defines a 'chronicle' as "a record or register of events in chronological order".104 (The authors of Adv. 35.4.4 may not have recognised such a definition; but a modern understanding of the term 'chronicle' derives from literary tradition.). To what extent did the authors of the manuscript record events in chronological order? The folios may not have been bound in the order in which they were compiled, and it is obvious from a cursory study of the manuscript that the events recorded do not form a clear chronological continuum from the head of page 1 to the base of page 27/27. The preceding discussion of the "Chronicle's" authorship has emphasised that the document was probably compiled and amended at intervals over a lengthy period, and this process in itself suggests that the "Chronicle" was not conceived as a continuous record or narrative. However, despite the complexities of composition and the slightly muddled organisation of the volume in its present form, it is valid to examine whether or not chronological frameworks can be identified within the four distinct "sections" of the volume, rather than across the document as a whole. From page to page, can elements of a 'chronicle' design be discerned?

Section 1 seems to be incomplete, for much of the Hospital's second charter is missing from the copy which appears on pp 1 and 1/1; indeed, the text at the head of page 1 begins half-way through a sentence. Clearly, some material has been lost from this section, even if it is only the rest of the transcription of the Hospital charter. The surviving pages deal exclusively with Hospital

103 See above for references for the quotations given in these paragraphs, pp. 2-9.
104 Collins Dictionary of the English Language (2nd ed., 1986), 284. A 'diary' differs from a 'chronicle' in being a daily record of events; a 'chronicle' might be less comprehensive, and less personal, but should encompass a wider time-scale than a 'diary'.

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business and, strictly speaking, the material does appear in a chronological order. The second charter is dated 29 July 1587; reference is then made to the ratification of the charter at a parliament held on 5 June 1592, and the "Questions and Answers" which follow appear to be dated, collectively, to the 24 January 1597(8). All of these dates were written in TH1, and it seems that these pages (1 - 2/2) were compiled retrospectively. It is an open question whether these pages were ever intended to be bound with the other material in the "Chronicle" volume; but as an individual unit, they do have a chronological structure.

Section 2, which spans the years 1210 - 1668, is far more complicated, but detailed analysis of the structure of pp 3 - 19 reveals a surprising degree of organisation. The first three entries in the text on page 3 (lines 1-20 on page 8 of the transcript) appear in chronological order, recording events between 1210 and 1513. However, the order is broken in the second part of the third passage by a note relating to 1414 (lines 18-20). From line 21 on page 8 to line 4 on page 9, records appear in order, concerning events between 1523 and 1546, although events in the year 1542 are slightly misplaced. On page 9, lines 5-7 concern the birth of Mary Queen of Scots in 1542, but from lines 8-22 (the bottom of page 3), events are recorded in order from 1537-1559. All of these entries were written in TH1. At the head of page 3/3, there is a record dated to 1543(4); thereafter, all the entries on this page occur in chronological order, from 1519-1582(3). It is noteworthy that, even though there is no chronological continuation between pages 3 and 3/3, the compilation of entries, on the latter page in particular, was quite disciplined. Entries on page 4, which were made in TH1 with additions in TH2, range in date between 1580 and 1597, but this page is less ordered than the preceding two. The first entry (lines 1-2 on page 12) is dated to 1585; thereafter, from lines 3-20, events are recorded in order between 1580 and 1597. The entry from line 21-30 is dated 1594, but the next two records (line 31 on page 12 to line 9 on page 13) are dated 1592/3 and 1597 respectively. The latter passage concerns events in August and September of that year, but it is followed by a record dated to June 1597. Thereafter (lines 13-23) events are recorded between the years 1550 and 1596.

There is a clear break in the character of the text between pages 4 and 4/4; there are changes in the handwriting styles, subject-matter, and the time-scale which is recorded. The text on page 4/4 is mostly written in TH4, but the opening passage on the page is in TH3, and there is also a note in TH5. Whilst there is a strong thematic cohesion between the passages, there is little sense of a chronological structure. The first passage is dated to 1624, but the second passage records an event in 1592. The third passage ranges between 1591 and 1634; the fourth passage relates to 1580, and the fifth passage follows neatly, ranging between 1581 and 1589(90). However, the following record ranges between 1585 and 1618. The seventh and eighth entries range in date between 1617 and 1655, but the final record is dated to 1610. Page 5 is similar in style and content; all of the entries were written in TH4. The first two passages are dated to October 1634; but whilst the first passage is dated "Penult of october 1634", it is followed by a record of "4 october 1634". The third passage relates to 1623, and the fourth to 1632; the order is then disrupted by a passage dating to 1631, although this is followed by a record of 1637. The final two passages on this page are dated 1636 and 1637 respectively. Thus, although all the passages on
this page are closely related in date, little attempt was made to order the entries chronologically. Page 5/5 differs markedly from all other pages in the volume, as there are just three passages on this page. Each one seems to have been written in TH6, and they appear to follow chronologically - the first two belong to May 1656, and the third passage is dated to May 1668. However, given the paucity of material, it would be imprudent to draw firm conclusions from the structure of this page.

The character of the text changes again on page 6, where the organisation of the manuscript becomes more formal. All of the passages are written in TH7. The text of page 6 is not, however, entered in strict chronological order. The first entry is dated August 1597, and the second passage is dated to February 1597(8). Two entries follow in order, relating to April 1598, but the next record is dated to March 1597(8); the next passage is dated to September 1598, the following passage is undated, and thereafter two passages follow dated to February 1598(9) and April 1598 respectively. The structure of the page then becomes progressively more complicated. On page 20 of the transcript, the records fluctuate in date almost continuously: 1597, 1592, 1599/1600, 1598, 1599, 1599, 1598, 1599, 1590. The contents of page 6/6 are also written in TH7, but on this page there is a strict chronological structure. The entries range in date between May 1600 and December 1603, and only at the foot of the page is the chronological sequence disrupted; the penultimate passage is dated to December 1603, whereas the final note records the death of Elizabeth I in March of that year. The text of page 7 is also written in TH7, and is similarly chronological in structure, although it is not quite as regular as that on page 6/6. The first five entries run in order from April 1603 to July 1603, but the next passage appears to cover events between June 1603 and February 1604. Two entries follow which are dated 26 December 1603 and 24 January 1604, but the subsequent passage is dated 20 January 1604. Thereafter, seven passages follow in chronological order, from March 1604 to August 1605, but the sequence is disrupted by the penultimate record on the page which is dated to June 1605. The final entry simply refers to "This yeir".

Page 7/7 continues in the same style as the foregoing pages, and from line 1 to line 35 (page 25) the records occur in chronological order, from November 1605 to May 1607. Lines 33-35 record an outbreak of the "pest" which lasted from August 1606 until May 1607. The subsequent record, however, is dated 20 March 1607; the juxtaposition of these records indicates that lines 1-35 were written retrospectively. But it is also important to note that although the chronological sequence is disrupted in lines 33-40, the author(s) do seem to have been applying a chronological framework to their composition; the dates which appear in the headings above each passage form a continuous sequence: 5 November 1605, 1 July 1606, 29 August 1606, 20 March 1607. From line 36 on page 25 to line 14 on page 26, the entries appear in sequence, but this is interrupted again by one short entry dated 21 February 1607, (lines 15 to 18). Thereafter, the chronological sequence resumes and continues to the end of the page. The text on page 7/7, which is written in TH7, ranges in date from 5 November 1605 to 10 January 1609. All of the entries on page 8 were entered in chronological sequence, from 2 October 1609 to 29 August 1618. Indeed, from the entry dated 21 February 1607 on page 7/7 to the base of page 8, there are no interruptions in the chronological order of the entries; this is one of the longest chronological sequences in the
manuscript. All of page 8 is written in TH7. There are two noteworthy features of the text on this page. The first entry is apparently retrospective, as it records that James Adamson was elected provost of Perth in October 1609, and that he continued in this post for three years thereafter. Furthermore, some of the information may have been copied from another source; line 8 on page 28, which states the date of James VI's return to Scotland in 1617, has been crossed through, and a passage dated to 1616 inserted before the account of the king's arrival at Edinburgh. Pages 6-8 form a clear unit by virtue of the fact that all of the text on these pages is written in the same handwriting style, and the lay-out of each page is very similar. But further to this, it is apparent that some effort was made throughout the pages to arrange the records chronologically; page 6 is far less organised than the pages which follow, but overall, this unit covers the years 1597-1618 in an ordered and generally disciplined manner.

The character of the section changes significantly on page 8 /8, where all of the text is written in TH1. The contributions on this page differ from previous material in this style, in that most of the entries are relatively lengthy narrative passages, and the majority concern events of 1613-1614. The first two entries refer, principally, to events of January 1614; the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh entries all refer to events of 1614, apparently in chronological order. However, the third entry concerns the setting of a tack in 1363; it is a curious anomaly, for which there is no obvious explanation. Nevertheless, despite this interruption in the chronological sequence, it is apparent that the page has been carefully constructed, and it is unlikely that this rogue record was inserted without reference to the other entries on the page. All of the entries on page 9 are also written in TH1, and each refers to events of 1615. The style of the passages indicates that they were written retrospectively, and the chronological order is broken on two occasions. There is a reference to the execution of the earl of Orkney which is undated, but which from another reference on page 8 may be dated to 16 February 1615 106; this reference follows an account dated to 21 February 1615. At the foot of the page, the penultimate passage is dated to 7 May 1615, whereas the final entry is dated 6 May 1615. This page shares similar characteristics to page 8 /8. Page 9 /9 is a curious mixture; it begins in the same style as the preceding page, written in TH1, but the passages in the second half of the page are far shorter, and written in TH4 and TH7. The first three entries, all written in TH1, refer to events of 1615, presumably in chronological sequence, although the first two records are not precisely dated. Thereafter, the structure of the page is less disciplined, with records dated to 1637, June - July 1622, July 1622, December 1626 - January 1627, February 1626, and February 1638.

On page 10 there is a return to the style of pages 6-8. All of the records are written in TH7, and have been carefully organised, with dated headings. The first three entries are clearly retrospective, as they refer to events in September, December and November 1618 respectively. Thereafter, all of the passages appear in chronological sequence, from April 1619 to October 1621, although the style of many of the contents indicates that the whole page was probably written retrospectively. This page is dominated by the account of the inundation of October 1621,

105 For a discussion of this entry, see above p. 19, and below p. 50.  
106 See below, p.78.
one of the longest narrative passages in the volume. Page 10/10 is similar in style, with all of the
records written in TH7. The passages appear to be in chronological order, dating between June
1622 and June 1624, until the sequence is broken near the foot of the page when an entry dated
10 May 1624 (lines 25-32 on page 38) follows that of June 1624. The final two entries are dated to
November 1624 and December 1624. The ordered presentation in the style of TH7 is continued
on page 11, but the chronological structure is less rigid. Lines 1-33 on page 39 concern the death
and burial of James VI, and the accession and marriage of Charles I, but the sequence of events is
a little confused, veering between March and June 1625, and it is clear that these lines were
compiled retrospectively, possibly from another source. Thereafter, passages relating to June and
July 1625 are interrupted by a passage dated to 28 December 1625. From line 6 to line 20 on page
40, the noting down is a little confused, and the material seems to have been copied from
elsewhere; but the passages may be arranged chronologically. From line 6 to the foot of the page
(11), events are recorded which date between 1626 and 1627. The text on page 11/11 is written
in TH7, and is well organised, with all the passages appearing in chronological order. The records
date from October 1628 to July 1631. The work in TH7 continues on page 12, where all the
records are again entered in chronological order, dating between 1633 and 1638. However, a
record dated to 19 August 1635 appears in the sequence in the style of TH8 (lines 49-50 on page
43); this entry was presumably inserted after the page was written in TH7, and it is notable that the
author of this particular passage placed his additional entry according to the chronological structure
of the text.

Pages 10-12 form a unit in which it is clear that the text has been carefully structured, and
although there are breaks in the chronological format, such blemishes do not seriously disrupt the
composition. The records do not form a continuous narrative, although these pages do contain a
relatively substantial amount of narrative information; but between line 9 on page 40 (page 11)
and the foot of page 12, the records do seem to form a continuous chronological sequence.
There is a significant change in the handwriting style on page 12/12, where all the entries appear
in TH9, but the chronology of the preceding pages is continued. The first sequence of entries
describe the general assemblies and parliaments of 1638-1639, ranging between 21 November
1638 and the end of August 1639. Thereafter, there are two entries in the same style, but relating
to March 1639 and October 1639 respectively; these passages both record naval conflicts.

Page 13 bears striking similarities to page 9/9, in that the first three entries appear in the style of
TH1 but thereafter the records were entered in TH7. This page also presents a significant break in
the chronology of the text. The passages in TH1 all concern events of 1618; these records appear
to be in chronological order. The first two entries in TH7 concern marriages in February 1638, but
the following passage refers to a marriage in January of that year. Thereafter appears another entry
dated to February 1638, and two entries relating to February 1643, all of which seem to be in
chronological order. The passages on page 13/13 form a chronological sequence, ranging
between 3 February 1643 and 19 December 1645; the first three entries all relate to 1643, and
were written in TH7; the following records were in TH9.
Pages 14-16 are not as ordered or as tidy as pp. 6-8, but they do form a clear group both in terms of the handwriting displayed, and more particularly concerning the style of the record. The material in these pages comes close to forming a continuous narrative, as almost all of the entries concern the effects on Perth of the Covenanting crisis; there is also a discernible chronological format. On page 14, the text is written in a variant of TH9-9/10, and concerns events of July 1644: the battle of Marston Moor, and the taking of York and Newcastle. The records on page 15 seem to have been composed retrospectively, rather than as eye-witness accounts, for although the events recorded took place in September 1644, the dating of the first two passages was corrected from "August" to "September". The final two entries on this page were certainly written on or after the 14th of September, and may have been composed at some remove from the events which they describe. A slight change seems to occur in the handwriting style on this page, where the final three entries appear in TH9/11, rather than 9/10. Although this variation does not seem to be significant in terms of the organisation of the material, the later notes are noticeably shorter than the initial records on the page. The chronological structure is disrupted at the head of page 15/15, where the record reverts to 10 September 1644; the next two entries are dated 19 and 13 September 1644 respectively; thereafter there is a relatively sound chronological format between line 13 on page 52 and line 11 on page 53 (16), in which the dates range between 28 September 1644 and 22 March 1645. However, a reference to the 2 March 1645 in line 17 of page 52 indicates that this sequence was compiled on or after that date. From line 11 on page 53 to the foot of page 16, the records are listed in a chronological sequence. The entries on page 16/16 continue the chronology; these passages were seemingly written retrospectively, but were carefully organised. The first record ranges between the dates 2 October and 20 December 1645. The second entry is dated between 13 and 19 December 1645, the third entry ranges between 18 December 1645 and 10 March 1646, and the final passage relates to 10-19 March 1646. Thus, there is a clear chronological continuum between the earliest dates recorded in each passage, even though the dates of the first, second and third passages overlap. The handwriting on pp.15-16 is mostly in TH9/11, but some entries appear in TH12. The different handwriting styles do relate to some discrepancies in the chronological structure. On page 16, lines which refer to the third of April 1645 have been added in TH9/11a - ( lines 31-33 on page 53 ) - to a passage dated to the last day of March 1645; the next passage, written in TH9/11, is dated 2-3 April 1645. On page 16/16, lines in TH12 - which include the dates 19 and 20 December 1645 - have been added to the first passage, which is written in TH9/11; the next passage begins at 13 December. This second passage is written in TH12, but lines which include the date 19 December 1645 have been added to it in TH9/11. The next passage, written in TH12, begins at 18 December. Thus, it seems that at least two authors contributed both original material and supplementary notes to these pages.

The appearance and character of the manuscript changes again between pp 17-18; these folios seem to be closely associated with the composition of Section 4, and include many records of deaths and burials; but although there is a discernible chronological framework in these pages, it is not as regular as the organisation of Section 4. The records on page 17 range in date between 1646 and 1662, and were entered by several hands. The first three entries appear in TH12, TH7
and TH8, and date to 1646, 1654 and 1655 respectively. The next entry, in TH7, is dated to May 1654, and thereafter the records on this page are in chronological order, until lines 25-34 on page 56; the final passages on the page were entered in TH8, and relate to 1657 and 1658, following a record dated to 1662. Most of the entries on this page are in the styles of TH6 and TH7. On page 17, the majority of entries appear in TH6, in chronological order, ranging in date between 1658 and 1663; the final entries on this page, however are written in TH8, and concern events of November, March, and November 1661 respectively. It is likely that this material was appended to a page which had been compiled by another author, or authors, in strict chronological sequence. Most of the text on page 18 is written in TH6 and ordered chronologically, although there are two entries in TH8 and another in TH7/9. Entries appear in sequence between the dates 1658 and 1664, although it is apparent that two entries between lines 25 and 40 (page 59) were written retrospectively; the first of these describes events in the last week of February 1663, and concludes with a reference to the last day of that month; the following passage is dated 27 February - 1 March 1663. From line 4 on page 60 to the bottom of page 18, the records are in chronological order, although the dates of the final two entries overlap. The chronological sequence on page 18 is only broken by the first entry in TH8, which is dated to October 1664; the other record in this style is dated to January 1655, and is placed correctly in the text. All of the text on page 18/18 is written in TH6, or a variant thereof - TH6b. The material ranges in date between 1665 and 1668. There is a break in the chronology between lines 34 and 37 on page 61, where a passage dated to April 1668 is followed by an undated entry, and then a passage dated to May 1667; but thereafter, the records all appear in order. On page 19, the records are almost all written in TH6, with just one example of TH6b, and all of the entries appear to be in chronological order, dating between August 1667 and August 1668. This page includes the passage which was autographed by John Mercer; he appears to have been responsible for the composition of large sections of the manuscript in which there seems to have been a deliberate attempt to organise the text as a 'chronicle'.

It is difficult to judge whether or not Section 3 was originally conceived as an integral part of the manuscript; but the contributions in each of the handwriting styles which are exhibited on pages 20-22 are at least presented in chronological order. The first three letters in this section are written in TH1, and dated to 1624, 1625 and 1626; the remainder are written in TH13, and are dated to 1612, 1614, and 1621 respectively.

Section 4, the register of deaths, may originally have been part of another volume; it is the most structured of the four sections in the "Chronicle" volume. However, it shares important characteristics with the later pages of Section 2, and the handwriting is predominantly in the styles of TH6 and TH7. The events recorded range in date between 1660 and 1668, and, in the later stages of this section, the register could be a contemporary record. Because folio 27 has been torn in half, it is difficult to judge whether all of the early entries occur in chronological order. Almost all of the dates on p.27 are now missing, except that "September" appears twice. On p.27, the entries appear to be in order, dating between January and October 1660. If the references on
page 27/27 are for September 1660, then it seems that there is not a strict chronological sequence between the two pages; however, the references could be for September 1659.

It is important to remember that these folios have been bound upside down and back to front, and that the pagination needs to be read in reverse. The entries on page 26/26 are dated between November and December 1660, and appear to be in chronological order. Most of the entries on page 26 follow suit, being dated between December 1660 and February 1661. At the base of the page, however, there is an interruption in the apparent chronological sequence; the penultimate entry is dated to 24/25 February 1661, whereas the final entry is dated 23 February in the same year. This is the first clear interruption in the chronology since the head of page 27. There are no interruptions on page 25/25, where the records run in sequence between March and December 1661. Similarly, on page 25 the records extend between January and October 1662, and all appear to be in chronological order. The strict compilation of the register is disrupted on page 24/24. The first two entries overlap, and whereas the left column concludes with a record of 29 March 1663, the right-hand column begins at January of that year. The interruption in the chronology which occurs is the first major break in the sequence of entries since the foot of page 26. The entries in the right-hand column are entered sequentially, and date between January and March 1663. The chronology is disrupted again on p. 24; the left-hand column begins at January 1663 and extends, chronologically, to May 1663. Mid-way down the right-hand column, the chronological sequence is interrupted again by a reference inserted in TH8, dated to February 1665; this record appears between entries dated to March 1665 and April 1665 respectively. In other words, the passage written in TH8 appears to disrupt a page which is otherwise constructed in chronological order; from this passage to the base of the page, there is no break in the chronological sequence, which concludes with a record dated to 21 June 1665. Entries in TH8 also disrupt the chronology of the left-hand column on page 23/23. The records in this column date between July 1665 and November 1667, and would be in chronological order were it not for insertions dated to 20 June 1666 and 1 June 1667. The head of the right-hand column begins at September 1667. The second and third entries in this column are presumably retrospective, as they are dated to the last of October 1667 and the penultimate of October 1667 respectively; otherwise, the passages appear in chronological order.

Thus, although there are interruptions in the chronological structure of this section, it is clear that most records were entered sequentially, according to their dates. The dating of page 27/27 is uncertain, but between pp.27 and 26 there is a block of entries in chronological order, dating from January 1660 to February 1661. This is followed by a sequence which extends to the foot of the left column on p.24/24 which runs from February 1661 to March 1663. The right-hand column on this page extends from January to March 1663. The next chronological block, on p.24, extends from January 1663 to March 1665, and then on to page 23/23, from April 1665 to September 1665. Interruptions in the left-hand column mean that there are two short chronological sequences of February 1666 to June 1667 and June to November 1667; in the right column, there is a sequence dating from October 1667 to October 1668.
Clearly, there are chronological frameworks within the manuscript volume. The material in Section 1 appears to have been copied with a view to the chronology of the events described. It is specified in the text that the second Hospital charter was ratified in parliament on 29 July 1587; that the charter was ratified again on 5 June 1592; and that the "Questions" and "Answers" which are listed post-date ratification. Perhaps the order in which these events occurred was perceived to be important. This might have been because the material was compiled as a legal record, rather than as an historical account. But technically, even if these pages were not conceived as a piece of historical writing, they conform to the definition of a 'chronicle' which I have adopted. It is important to remember that the process of writing a 'chronicle' is somewhat different to the composition of a narrative history.

The character of Section 4 is clearly distinct from that of Section 1. The section seems to have been deliberately produced as a chronological record of deaths, and the principal interruptions in the chronological scheme in this section are the result of later insertions into the text. This section is certainly a register, and could be labelled as a 'chronicle'. In Section 3, the copies of letters addressed to various authorities at Perth are apparently organised as two groups, in each of which the material is presented in chronological order. The character of this section is similar to that of Section 1, in that the material comprises copies of official records relative to Perth; but one should question whether these sections can be considered as 'chronicles' independently of the other material in the volume.

Section 2 is noticeably different from the other sections, in terms of its length and structure. It is this section which forms the bulk of Maidment's edition, and to which he applied the term "Register". Section 4 perhaps has greater claim to be defined in terms of "a record or register of events in chronological order"; but there are substantial sequences in Section 2 which also seem to conform to such criteria. In particular, pages 6-8, 10-12, and 14-16/16 seem to have been consciously constructed as registers of events. In the case of pp 14-16/16, there is a sense of a sustained narrative structure as well. Throughout this section there are chronological sequences, and although these are frequently disrupted, much of the composition seems to respect the basic criteria of a 'chronicle'.

However, the manuscript is notable as much for its complexity as for its organisation. The four 'sections' could have been bound together accidentally, and the binding of some of the folios may be incorrect. Though it can with some fairness be termed a 'chronicle', it is important to question whether the manuscript, either in whole or in part, can also be termed a "Chronicle of Perth"?

ii/ A "Chronicle of Perth"?

To what extent do the contents of the volume concern affairs at Perth, or events which affected life in the burgh? The manuscript was almost certainly written in Perth, and much of the text was the work of the town clerk. But was the volume compiled as a local record? Maidment and other editors, notably James Scott, believed that it was - a register of events relative to Perth. Systematic
study of the text seems to confirm this judgement and, in addition, suggests that particular themes were deliberately pursued by the various authors. Later in this thesis I will discuss how archaeological themes can be drawn from the contents of the "Chronicle"; but in the following pages, I will simply identify those aspects of the text which concern Perth, and particular features of life in the 17th century burgh to which the authors seem to have given special consideration.

The contents of sections 1 and 3 clearly relate directly to Perth, and although copies of legal instruments and official correspondence do not necessarily illustrate the daily lives of the inhabitants of the town, this material does draw attention to significant issues which affected the functioning of the burgh. Section 1 illustrates that the rights and properties of the masters of the King James VI Hospital extended throughout Perth and its suburbs, and that the masters could exert influence over both ecclesiastical and secular affairs in the post-Reformation burgh. A glance at the marginal rubrics on these pages indicates the potential wealth and influence of the foundation: "anent lands of tullielum", "anent charterhous", "anent ye hospitals holding of courts". Similarly, as the section refers to events which appear to span a decade, it is apparent from this source alone that the foundation was a complicated creation. The "Question and Answer" format on pp.1/1-2/2 may have been taken from another source, but it strongly suggests that the rights of the Hospital were disputed by property holders and the authorities of the burgh. Legal affairs are often described at length in Section 2; however, the affairs of the Hospital are not referred to directly in the rest of the volume.107

The letters of Section 3 concern a wider range of affairs than the Hospital material, and the letters seem to have been copied to illustrate passages in Section 2. The first three letters concern affairs of the Convention of Burghs in the mid-1620s. As will be seen, Section 2 presents these years as times of hardship and disruption at both local and national level; a spate of natural disasters coincided with the death of King James VI. These letters emphasise that the burgh authorities played their part in national administration; but they also evoke the local difficulties which Perth faced at that time. Mention is made in the second letter ( dated 11 February 1625 ) of the need to control the duties paid on imported victuals; on p.1 0, the "Chronicle" records inflated prices of grain at a time of scarcity in 1621. The fourth letter is directly associated with a record in Section 2. This letter contains the instructions which were sent to Lord Scone, in May 1612, by the Privy Council, for making an inventory of the disgraced Lord Sanquhar's property within the Sheriffdom

107 Antiquarians and historians of Perth have paid considerable attention to the papers of the King James VI Hospital. Most recently, Dr Mary Verschuur used the rental books of the Hospital during her doctoral research, and the reader's attention is drawn to her thesis, Perth and the Reformation: Society and Reform 1540-60 ( M.B. Verschuur, unpub. Glasgow University PhD. 1985. Hereafter referred to as "Verschuur" ). The standard reference source is: Rental Books of King James VI Hospital, Perth, ed. Rev. R. Milne, (1891). Rev. James Scott used the Hospital papers extensively; attention is drawn in particular to NLS Adv. 13.1.4 Perth Hospital Register, (i and ii), (1780). ( These volumes cover the years 1577-1655 ). Amongst other sources which also provide information about the Hospital's affairs is Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no.310, "Acts Anent the Hospital from the Session Books". For details of the original volumes, see above n.90.
of Perth. Sanquhar's execution is recorded on p. 8. The letter has a broad application: the material is legal in its nature, serves to illustrate how Perth might indirectly become associated with national affairs, and indicates the prominence of the nobility in the life of the burgh. The letter may well have been included in the volume to serve such a purpose.

The concluding letters concern the ministry at Perth, and demonstrate that the burgh operated within a national ecclesiastical context, as well as contributing to secular politics. The fifth letter in the section, dated April 1614, was sent by the archbishop of St. Andrews to the brethren of the Perth kirk session, and it emphasises the need to appoint a new minister at Perth, in succession to William Cowper. Cowper's departure is described on p. 4/4. The final letter in the section concerns the efforts of the council of Edinburgh to prize John Guthrie away from the ministry of Perth; they were successful, despite his apparent reluctance, and his transportation is noted on p. 4/4. Thus, in many ways, the letters of this section develop particular records which are found in Section 2. If this was the intention of the authors of these sections, then clearly Section 2 and Section 3 belong together in a single volume. Furthermore, the letters are illustrative of Perth's role in national contexts.

Can the character of Section 2 be summarised in such terms? It is the longest and most complicated of the sections. Any assessment of the construction and possible function of this section is hindered by the variety of its contents, the paucity of obvious eye-witness accounts, and the generally brief character of individual records. But from folio to folio, a general character does emerge. The section 'begins' very formally, with accounts of the "foundation" of Perth, and the foundation of the Charterhouse. 108 Thereafter, page 3 consists of a mixture of notable national events - many of which may have impinged upon life in the burgh - and notable local events of the first half of the 16th century. Given that this page (and several of those which follow) was almost certainly compiled retrospectively, the reader must bear in mind that these records represent a significant effort of research by the author(s). It is an open question as to why this research was undertaken. But themes are introduced on p. 3 which recur throughout the manuscript: for example, the burgh's close connections with the Crown; the enactment of justice; and the debilitating effects of disease.

Recollection of 16th century events continues on p. 3/3, where there is a long catalogue of the turbulent political affairs of the reign of Mary, Queen of Scots. The character of the section changes on p. 4, where entries concerning James VI, and his visits to Perth in the early years of his reign, are juxtaposed with narrative accounts of the influential role played by the local nobility and gentry in burgh life. (A peculiarity of this page is the repetition of a record of James VI's marriage

108 There is an interesting entry in the index to the town council records, dated c.1657, which reads: "Entry respecting Inventory of the Towns Writs and containing as follows 'King William foundit the Burgh of Perth anno domini Im ic ten years with divers privileges and deceast within four years after he rang fourtie nyn yeares fra the Incarnatione Im ic fyttie six yeares - and which Inventary mentions 1st Charter by King William (before referred to) to the Town of Perth after the destruction thereof by the great inundation of waters and describing the privileges granted thereby as also other charters, by King Robert II K. James II being twelve in all and which are severally described.." B59/ 17/ 1, 454.
and the arrival of his queen at Perth. The character of the manuscript changes again on p. 4/4, with a change of handwriting as well. Pages 4/4 and 5 are dominated by relatively lengthy records of the careers and deaths of Perth ministers, and of other public appointees in the burgh, in the late 16th and 17th centuries. It is to these pages that the fifth and sixth letters of Section 3 seem to be related. These passages were all written in TH4, and clearly form a particular group of records. The distinguished careers of some of Perth's ministers emphasise the impression given in the letters that Perth operated within a national ecclesiastical context. On p. 5/5, however, references to communions held in Perth in 1656 and 1668 concern events which were particular to the Perth presbytery. These entries occur together, but the page is headed by an account of the destruction of part of the citadel on the South Inch in 1656. The juxtaposition of these passages seems to be fairly random, although all were written in TH6 - the same style in which a note was appended to the account on page 4/4 of John Robertson's admission to the ministry of Perth: "and deposit an ye 25 may 1655."110

The text on pages 6-8 is written in the same style, and these pages share a common format. There is little sense of a chronological structure on page 6, which was presumably compiled retrospectively. But all of the entries concern events in the last decade of the 16th century, and reflect the themes of the earlier pages; royal and noble connections, the enactment of justice, and disease all feature on this page. Two references to the reparation of public buildings stand out; these represent a theme of local administration and building works within the town which is often implied in the "Chronicle", but not overtly stated. This theme will be explored in Part 2. For the present purpose, it is important to note that although pp. 6-8 are written in a hand which differs significantly from the opening pages in the volume, the general character of the early text - a register of notable events which often have both a local and a national application - is continued.

Most of the text on p. 6/6 forms a continuous narrative describing the infamous "Gowrie Conspiracy" of 1600, and its aftermath. This is a clear instance of a significant local event which was also of major importance on a national level. Other material on this page principally concerns unusual local affairs - slander against the minister, a public execution for murder, an accident on the bridge of Tay, and the death of a baillie - until the final entry on the page records James VI's accession to the English throne. A great deal has been written - much of it of dubious critical merit - about the so-called "Conspiracy"; in this account the author's priority seems to have been to exonerate the burgh community from any complicity in the Gowries' alleged plot to assassinate the king. It is a characteristic of the "Chronicle" that the authors rarely express any opinions about the events which they have recorded, and in the passages on page 21 it is apparent that the language is carefully phrased. The lines which stand out emphasise the burgh's loyalty to the king: "praisit be god ye king wes saiff fra yair intendit treason"; "praisit be god The king knew ye toun of pthis part to be frie". The words "conspiracie" and "treasone" are used without apparent qualification. The fact that over 300 inhabitants of Perth were interrogated after the Gowrie killings is not mentioned; but the king's suspicion and the extraordinary nature of the events in Gowrie

House are enough to explain the humble tone of the "Chronicle". It is recorded that when the king returned to the burgh in April 1601, he "wes maid burges at ye mercat croce Thair wes ane punscheone of wyne sett yair + all druckin out he ressauit ye banquet fra ye toun + subsuit ye glide buik". 111

Both Maidment and Scott recognised the importance of this record. 112 Maidment appended to his edition of the "Chronicle", "An Examination of the Alleged Descent of John Earl of Gowrie From Margaret Queen of Scotland, Widow of James The Fourth". Scott wrote extensively about the "Conspiracy", and produced a pamphlet on the subject in 1813. He was a keen defender of the Gowries, and was convinced that the affair had been staged by a deceitful king. His interpretation of the "Chronicle's" record is more generous than mine: “How could the king immediately know that the Town of Perth was free of any traiterous combination, if he was persuaded of the Guilt of the Earl + his Brother ? The Expressions in the Chronicle seem to be artful + ambiguous.” I would agree with Scott that the wording of these passages was chosen with caution; but I suspect that the principal aim of the compiler was to express clearly in written form the innocence of the burgh community. This record was probably written at some remove from the events which it describes; but the affair must have been traumatic for the burgh community, and it presaged a decline in Perth’s national standing which resulted from the transfer of the royal court to London in 1603.

The contents of page 7 do not feature such a narrative, although the comparatively dense chronology of this and the following two pages provides a continuity between some of the passages. The material on page 7 gives the impression of an alternating sequence of records of national and local events (particularly on page 23). Familiar themes of disease and scarcity, the often controversial influence of the local nobility in burgh affairs, and damage to buildings of the town, recur. However, although it is recorded that Perth was the setting for a parliament in July 1604, other records on this page illustrate that the royal court was now far removed from Perth. The material on page 7 begins with an account of the "Gunpowder Plot" in London, and continues with an account of the "Red Parliament" which was held in Perth in July 1606. Thereafter, the entries concern familiar topics, although it is noticeable that fairly detailed passages are interspersed between shorter entries. Relations between the burgh, its neighbours, and the local nobility, were often fraught and sometimes violent; this is reflected in the tone, as well as the content, of many records of local political events.

Page 8 is notable for two accounts in particular: A record of the town’s debts in 1613, which suggests that the author of the passage at least had access to the town council’s minutes; and an


Page 8/8 features a significant change in the appearance and style of the text. The handwriting reverts to that of TH1, and the records on this page are far more anecdotal and informative than much of the preceding material. However, the passages - which mostly relate to 1614 - do concern established themes: there are accounts of the the birth of a son to Princess Elizabeth; the unusual death of a local man; suspicious deaths in Dundee, a relatively detailed, technical account of the inadequate construction of the Brig of Earn. There are also references for two "earthquakes" in the Perth area, which occurred in quick succession in March 1614. Previous entries in the "Chronicle" record such phenomena, and there was evidently some structural damage in the town; but there seems to be no independent means of assessing the veracity of such reports. The most curious feature of this page, however, is an entry dated to 1363 which appears between records of 1614. This concerns a tack set by Alexander Abercrombie of Murthly to John Mercer, burgess of Perth, of the lands of Obney, for eight years, for the sum of £40 (sterling), "for releif of ye said baronie off Murthlie payit ad fabricationem pontis de pth". This record relates, in part, to the previous entry, which refers to the Brig of Tay. However, the focus of the passage seems to be on the name of John Mercer.

Page 9 is dominated by records of flooding and snow at Perth in the spring of 1615. The passages are anecdotal, and could be eye-witness accounts. These entries contain some of the more memorable images in the "Chronicle": "men rowing wt boats in ye same north inche taking furth scheip that war in perrell of drwnyng"; "the cobillaris quha rowit on the vat being yrby prudg(i)t of yr comoditie in the nicht tyme brak the Ice at the entrie and stayit ye passage". The concluding record details a dispute between the burgh and William Moncreiff over fishing rights at Friarton; the tone of this entry suggests that it may have been written by a member of the town council. The entries on this page chiefly concern events in Perth and the surrounding shire, but there are two further entries which concern national events - the death of the Clerk of the King's Signet, and the execution of the earl of Orkney. The latter record repeats information entered in TH7 on page 8.

Page 9/9 continues in a similar manner to p.9, although the passages which are entered in TH1 concern events of 1615 which were clearly of both local and national significance. The first record deals with the imprisonment of Alexander Jackson on a charge of murder, and his transfer to Edinburgh for trial and execution. This is followed by an account of the death and funeral of the diocesan bishop, George Galloway, and then by an account of the funeral procession of Sir Harry

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113 The incidence of "earthquakes" is discussed below, Part 3, Section 1. i) "The Incidence of Natural Disasters".

Lindsay, which passed through Perth on the way to Coupar Angus. This passage may have been composed by an eye-witness, for the imagery is quite striking: “the magistratis of pth c(o)unsall (an)d cOtie met thame on fute at pathewlis + convoyit tha(m)e to the town the morne yefter ye magistratis of pth + ane gude nu(m)ber of ye inhabita(n)ts of the town on hors convoyit the corps to coop in angous. M() lord of scone than puest wt quhome yey raid The corps vas convoyit in the coishe throw the vat() of tay at ye haid of the north inche”. Thereafter, with changes in the handwriting style, shorter entries concern the deaths of notable nobles and local gentry. The account of the death of John Drummond in December 1637 is typical of many entries for its understatement: “Jon drumond deacone of ye skynners depairtit yis lyfe intestat suddanelie and buried on fryd(y) ye 29 of december”.

Pages 10-12 feature a return to the style and construction of pp. 6-8, although it is noticeable that the passages become progressively longer and more informative in these pages. Entries on p. 10 initially mix affairs of national and local significance, but the page is dominated by the lengthy account of the inundation of Perth in 1621. This is the last such disaster to be recorded in the "Chronicle", but it was clearly the worst in memory, and the text is necessarily dramatic: “IT semit ye wandowis of heawin and funtanes of ye deip wer opponit”. The passage combines such apocalyptic imagery with details of the structural damage which the town suffered; but there is also an indication of the difficulties which affected Scotland in general at this time: “This yeur a great skairstie of comes wes throu all ye kingdome And yat be ye ewill harwest and inwnda(o)n”. Page 10/10 is notable for a consistent balance between records of local and national affairs; furthermore, most of the "national" records on this page relate closely to affairs in Perth. The second entry speaks of "ane vniuersall seiknes in all ye cuntrie" in the autumn of 1622, but it was especially severe "in yis burt". There are further references to the effects of "ane great mortalitie" in the following year. An account of the rebuilding of Loweswork in 1623 demonstrates that a close relationship existed between the Crown and the burgh, despite the transfer of the royal court to London; it also highlights the potential strains in the burgh’s relationships with local nobles: "Lowswark wes buildit in stone ffor building qrof ye kingis matie payit 2000 m()ks This burt payit 1000 lib The laird of Balhoussie sould haue payit iij c mks as yit restand”. Another reference to the burgh’s debts reinforces the impression that at least one of the authors ( presumably John Mercer ) had access to the town council’s papers or was actually a member of the council: “we fand ye toun to be 20 m mark in debt and ten yeir of the tak of ye mylnes Inches + fishingis to run”. Reference to severe frost in the winter of 1624 applies primarily to Perth and the surrounding country, but this is followed by a passage which records the burgh of Dunfermline’s request for aid in the wake of serious fire damage there in June 1624; this record has both a national and a local application: “wpone yair supplicaoun voluntar contribution wes grantit yame throothout ye kingdome Thair wes collectit abouve lxx mok”. Perth was the venue for a justice court in May of that year; in early December 1624 the Chancellor brought his family to Perth from Edinburgh to escape the plague there.

Page 11 is conspicuous for a preponderance of notices concerning the royal court. The early entries on this page form a narrative which records the death and funeral of James VI, the
accession of Charles I, and his marriage, in 1625. However, the passage which describes the new queen's arrival in England in June 1625 is curiously constructed, for joined to this paragraph (lines 25-46 on page 39) is an account of the efforts of a burgess of Perth to clear his name after being wrongly accused of murder. There are other references to events in London in 1625 and 1626—including a severe outbreak of plague—and the page concludes with an account of the levying of troops to fight in "ye germane warris" in 1627. However, there are also brief notices—written in TH7 and MH6—of the deaths of John Crichton of Kinvaid and John, earl of Montrose, in 1626; these passages duplicate material written in the same style on page 99.

On page 1111 the emphasis of the text returns to local events, with lengthy accounts of the proceedings of justice courts held in Perth in October 1628 and 1629. The author of the passages (written in TH7) may have been present at these airs. A paragraph is devoted to a rather strange juxtaposition of accounts of the birth and baptism of Prince Charles in 1630, and meteorological information: "yis maij wer 5 setterdays v monondayis Tua changes of ye mone Tua ecclipsis of ye sone ane wyer of ye mone all in or horizone". The most interesting passage concerns the uses to which the fines collected at the justice air of 1629 were put; several important public building works and repairs were carried out. There is also an ambiguous record of the building of a summer house at Monk’s Tower by Sir George Hay; the chronicler states that this was built with "tolerance yit I think they gau no tolerance be writt". The page concludes with an account of "ane great counsall day hauldin at Perthe wt ane conuentioun of ye burrowis", emphasising that the burgh still played an active role in national politics.

Page 12 begins with a lengthy account of Charles I's only official visit to Scotland as king, in 1633, for his coronation at Edinburgh, and then his subsequent journey to Perth. The account of his reception at Perth—indeed, of events in Edinburgh as well—may have been made by an eye-witness. There can be little doubt that the burgh regarded the king's presence as a major event—it was, after all, sixteen years since a king had come to Perth. It is worth comparing the "Chronicle's" account of the king's visit to the burgh with that which appears in the "register kept by the Glover-calling".115 The "Chronicle" records that Charles I arrived on 8 July, and was received by a guard of "Ten scoir", who wore white doublets and red breeches, and carried long spears. William Bell delivered a speech, and William Wischart, minister at Leith, preached in the kirk. A sword dance was given the next morning on a raft on the Tay, and verses were spoken by a boy representing the river, and by Andrew Wilson representing Perth. The Glovers' record states that the king was received at the South Inch Port by the Provost, Bailies and 'Aldermen', where he received a speech in his praise. He was then conveyed to his lodging (Gowrie House) by a guard dressed in red and white and carrying spears. On the following morning he heard a sermon in the kirk and then watched, from the wall of the Gowrie House garden, thirteen of the Glovers perform a sword dance on the Tay. The dance was apparently quite intricate, but "(GOD be praisit) wes actit and done without hurt or skaithe till any". The Glovers expended 350 merks on this entertainment. This source then states that a poem was acted by David Black and George Powrie, two taylors; Black spoke in the name of Tay, and Powrie answered for Perth. It is only in the detail of the names of

115 See The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 118-119.
these readers that the two accounts differ significantly. Otherwise, the sources do not contradict each other; although the Glover record is longer, each contains particular details not to be found in the other. The one discrepancy could be the result of a copying error; it is clear that the respective authors were reasonably well informed about the events, although some doubt must be cast on whether these records are actually eye-witness accounts.

This page also contains the last record of a severe winter which appears in the "Chronicle": "In Januar 1635 from ye 26 day yairof till ye 16 day of februar Thair fell furt suche ane hudge snow That men nor women could not walk wpone or streitis". This passage includes perhaps the most pathetic comment to be made by any of the authors: "Thair wes great skairstie of wictuall + elding mylnes gaid not and yair wes no passage nor travelling to bring any in AT yat tyme aill wes waige skant They knokitmall in knoking stones". A later hand (TH8) added a notice of the death and burial of Chancellor Hay in August 1635; Sir George Hay was probably the most distinguished nobleman to be associated with Perth in the first half of the 17th century, and his name appears on several occasions in the "Chronicle". Thereafter, the text on this page deals with the build-up to the declaration of the National Covenant in 1638, and in particular records the process by which the Covenant was subscribed in Perth. This account seems to have been written by John Mercer, and is quite personal in tone; "george bissett + I buir the bread gregor Jonston and patrik dundie ye coupis ys yier".116 The "Chronicle's" allegiance to the Covenanters is clearly expressed in the passages which relate to the civil war years, and at the end of this page it is recorded that the "Five Articles of Perth" were ignored by the burgh community after the Covenant had been signed: "on sunday ya(i)refter being ye first of Apryll 1638 The comunioun wes giwin be ye ministrie in ye auld maner be ye ministrie + elderis The ministrie at ye littill tabill and ye elders at ye tua burdis being peopill at both the sydes yrof euerie ane tuik the bread first of ye plait wt yr awin hand + fine the coup".

The handwriting changes to TH9 on page 12/12, but the theme is continued in the opening entries, which record the general assemblies of 1638 and 1639 at which the king's authority in Scotland was decisively challenged. These passages essentially record the general background to the outbreak of hostilities, but the author(s) were always careful to mention the names of the Perth commissioners who were present on these dramatic occasions. However, the records only extend to the middle of the folio, which seems to be incomplete, and there is a change of emphasis in the final passages which record conflicts at sea in March and October 1639 between the Dutch and the Spanish; the concluding entry tells a curious tale of an armada called the "Holy League" which was prevented from landing in Britain by Dutch intervention.

The material on pages 13 and 13/13 serves as an interlude in the records of the Covenanting years. Written in several hands (TH1, 7, and 9), entries on these pages range in date between 1618 and 1645. The first three entries on page 13 are written in TH1 and concern a murder on the streets of Perth, the execution of Thomas Ross of Craigie, and the marriage of the eldest son of the earl of Errol to the daughter of the late earl of Kinghorn, all in 1618. The second passage is

116 See above, pp. 11.
notable as the story has already been recorded on page 10. The rest of the entries on page 13 concern marriages and deaths of prominent local nobles and gentry, between the years 1638 and 1643. The character of this page is similar to that of page 9, and it may have been incorrectly bound into the volume. Sadly, a record of the marriage in 1638 of Lord Car to the daughter of the late earl or Errol, (lines 37-46 on page 46), is followed by a record of Lord Car’s early death, “after ane great drink”, in 1643 (lines 22-28 on page 47). There are few entries on page 13, but they concern a prominent burial in St. John’s Kirk, a local marriage, the subscribing by the burgh community of the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, an execution, a noble marriage, and a burial in the Mercer vault in St. John’s. The records of burials in St. John’s are of interest, for kirk burial was supposedly discouraged by the reformed kirk. The notice of the adoption of the new covenant is similar in tone to the records of 1638, but is more anecdotal: “The new coueuanent read sworne + subscryuit be the toun of pth be standing wp + euerie mane wphalding yr hands The women also wer mowitto stande and suear”.

From page 14 to page 16, the “Chronicle” deals almost exclusively with events of the civil war years, and in particular with the effects on the town of troop movements and billeting. The sequence, which is written mostly in variants of TH9, begins with a record of events in England in 1644 - the battle of Marston Moor and the sieges of York and Newcastle. It is specified that the Scots were poorly treated by Fairfax after the taking of York. Page 14 seems to be incomplete; the records only occupy half the page, and there is no material on the reverse of the folio. The writing is badly smudged, and this may have been why this particular leaf was abandoned. However, although page 15 is even messier, on this leaf the text - including several corrections - extends to the foot of the page. From page 15 onwards the records of the Covenanting years relate almost exclusively to events which directly affected the burgh. The author(s) may have intended to add further information relating to the war in England to page 14. Page 15 is dominated by an account of the battle of Tibbermore, in September 1644. This account may have been copied from another source - a space is left at the end of the first paragraph where the names of “The speciall gentill men yat wer killit namit” have for some reason been omitted. The “Chronicle’s” account is fairly circumspect, but the burgh’s opposition to Montrose is clearly expressed, as is the author’s disgust at the behaviour of the troops from Fife who abandoned the Covenanters’ ranks: “The battell begane about Tuelfh houris lor anel efter _____ and lestit not half ane hour qn the fyff peopill bothe fute + hors fled beastlie did nauer discharge all togidder ance yea not ane Thrid yrof”. Following this account, there is a long sequence, extending to the end of page 16, in which the movement of troops to and from Perth is catalogued, between September 1644 and March 1646. Several of the entries are personal and refer to the quartering of troops in an author’s house, and several of the records were amended or revised. It is apparent that the burgh became an important military base, for both Covenant and Royalist forces, but there are only two complaints in the text about the strain which this imposed on the community. It is recorded that Montrose’s brief occupation of Perth after the battle of Tibbermore “wes ane dear quartering to this burt and ye countrie about”; similarly, the town was “gretatie Damnefeit in yair meanes and ye countrie about” as a result of Argyll’s short stay later in September 1644.
The sequence concludes with just four passages on page 16/16, and thereafter the character of the "Chronicle" begins to alter again. Pages 17-19 are very similar in appearance to Section 4, and to a significant extent the contents are similar too, for the concluding pages of Section 2 are dominated by notices of deaths and burials. The initial entries on page 17 are anecdotal, and the most important passage gives a detailed description of the ceremony held at Perth in May 1654 whereby Oliver Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector. This could be an eye-witness account; but it is a curious feature of the "Chronicle" that although events of the Covenanting crisis are recorded at length, there are comparatively few references to the Cromwellian occupation which followed. Perth was a garrison town during the Cromwellian years, but there is little indication in this text of how the burgh might have been affected by the pressures of entertaining a hostile army. The record of Cromwell's proclamation is detailed, but very formal. This is followed by a series of notices which record local marriages and deaths. The records on page 17/17 deal with similar material, most of which is written in TH6, but the notices are more informative. There is a comparatively brief record of the proclamation of Richard Cromwell as Lord Protector in 1658, but this is followed by a passage which describes the peaceful death of the brother-in-law of the Governor of Perth. The transportation of the body of Hunter of Balgay to Dundee for burial is noted, and thereafter there are a series of shorter records of marriages and deaths. Although many of the notices on pages 17-19 concern marriages and deaths in the burgh, there are also records of such events from outside Perth. Some additional material has been added to the pages in TH8.

Most of the marriages and deaths recorded concern prominent people in burgh society and the sheriffdom. Virtually all of the entries on page 18 concern notable deaths, and details are given of some unusual circumstances - several drownings and a suicide. Two passages link this page with Section 4: an account of the drowning of John Bennet in February 1663 which is also noted on page 24/24; and a list of names (Rot Schioche, James Loge and Elizabeth Brown, dated "25 1660") which also appear on page 26/26. In the latter case, the handwriting styles of the two versions seem to be slightly different. Page 18/18 begins with a description of the funeral in Perth of the bishop of Dunkeld in April 1665. But although most of the records on this page concern deaths and burials, there are also references to the admission of ministers at Perth in 1665 and1668, and to the marriage of the notary John Tais in 1667. It is an interesting feature of page 19 that most of the deaths recorded are those of women. But the most striking feature of the page is the record of the death of John Mercer's son, James, in 1667, a notice which the town clerk signed. This is the most personal record in the "Chronicle", and it suggests that Section 2 is not just a record of events chiefly relating to Perth; in some respects these pages may be read as the personal perceptions - of several writers - of what constituted the significant events in the life of the post-Reformation burgh.

Previous editors seem to have defined the "Chronicle" volume in terms of the character of Section 2, and this is a fair approach, for this section is a work of original composition in a way that the records of burgh affairs in sections 1 and 3 are not. Much of Section 2 is thematic in content.

117 On page 18 (59), lines 17-19, the handwriting is TH7/9; on page 26/26 (82), the handwriting is TH6/7.
and carefully structured. The text tends to be cautiously phrased; the various authors were often
circumspect in their judgements, and concentrated on the relation of information, rarely venturing
comments or opinions. One of their considerations seems to have been to record the affairs of the
royal house of Stuart, and to emphasise Perth's royal connections, despite the departure of the
royal court to London in 1603. Their stress on royal events contributes to a general theme which
illustrates Perth's role as a leading burgh in national affairs (although it was clearly the subordinate
of Edinburgh); but it is also striking that the burgh community joined the Covenanters against the
supporters of Charles I. Local events are recorded which affected both the burgh and the shire,
and although two of the most prominent themes to emerge are those of severe weather conditions
and disease, it is notable that most entries tend to be quite sober. References to "earthquakes"
are suspicious, but otherwise there seems to be relatively little hyperbole, and there are few
outrageous or supernatural stories in the text. The formality of the first entry on page 3, which
records the "foundation" of Perth, suggests that these folios were indeed written to illustrate affairs
at Perth. Given that one of the authors was almost certainly the clerk of the burgh, it is reasonable
to describe Section 2 - and, by association, sections 1 and 3 - as a "Chronicle of Perth".

Section 4 is also associated with Section 2, by the handwriting styles and the general contents -
notices of deaths and burials. It is unclear whether or not this section is complete, and there may
have been other folios detailing deaths in the 1650s, or perhaps even the 1670s. There is some
evidence within this register to suggest that it was intended to be a companion piece to Section 2.
The fact that some passages occur in both sections strengthens the tie which is immediately
obvious from the similarity in handwriting styles. But there are occasionally narrative passages
which add further details to the text of Section 2. On page 26/26 there is a note which states: "12
december 1660 being wodensday parliament sat doun in edr". On page 24/24, as well as the
reference to the drowning of John Bennet, there is a record that on 28 March 1663 "dougall grame
sone naturall to ye marqueis of montrois brunt in James Youngis baxteris". On page 24 there is a
note dated to 29 May 1665 which seems to record the anniversary of Charles II's restoration: "ye
day of ye kingis hapie restora(o)un to thir 3 kingdomes".

Most of the deaths recorded in this section are of inhabitants of the burgh; these pages serve, in
part, as an index of trades and professions of mid-17th century Perth.118 The places of residence
of the deceased in the town are occasionally mentioned, although only two of these references
can be used to indicate the locations of crafts: "Ane webster in ye southgait", "ane Inglis barrarr in
the Southgait". As in Section 2, there are also references to deaths and burials in the surrounding
countryside: Aberdalgie, Keillour, Kinfauns, Friarton, Airlie, Kinnoull, Muirton, Craigie, Fowlis and
Balhousie are all mentioned. There is even a personal notice, probably by John Mercer again; at
the head of page 23/23 there is a record of the death of his sister:

118 See below, Appendix 1, pp.150-153.
"Nynt of July 1665 Sunday
mercerc
Jonat my sister being sonday
buried relict of Jon home elder
Depairtit on sett(i)rday ye 8 day"

It is questionable whether or not Section 1 should belong in this volume; but it is linked to Section 2 by its handwriting styles. In general terms, the material is local in application, but derives from parliaments held in Edinburgh and judgements given by the Crown. Such a juxtaposition of local and national affairs is reflected in sections 2 and 3, and is the most readily identifiable theme of the manuscript. Parts of the volume are clearly missing and some of the binding and organisation of the folios is probably wrong. But in its present state the manuscript as a whole contains a variety of material - much of it apparently deriving from other sources and some of it plainly copied from elsewhere - which provides an overview of affairs at Perth and of national affairs which affected Perth. It is not exclusively a "Chronicle of Perth", but this title is a fair reflection of the contents of the text; and, given the nature of the "Chronicle's" construction, it is reasonable to suggest that the compilers of the manuscript intended that it should be read in these terms.

The Local Literary Context

A cursory study of the catalogue of the Perth Burgh Records reveals that voluminous papers and manuscripts survive relating to affairs at Perth in the 16th and 17th centuries.119 This was a society in which written records were perceived to be important. The inventory of papers which were in the possession of John Mercer at the time of his dmination of the office of town clerk not only illustrates the sheer quantity of written material which was generated by the public business of the council and the private affairs of the citizens, but also suggests that, as clerk, John Mercer was surrounded by papers which could have served as source materials for some of the "Chronicle".120 If the manuscript developed in the clerk’s office, it is possible that the composition was inspired by the more mundane secretarial work for which the clerk was responsible.121 However, it is apparent that there was a tendency towards ‘historical writing’ amongst the literate inhabitants of the burgh in the late 16th and 17th centuries, and it may be to this context that the "Chronicle" properly belongs.

Of the manuscript ‘histories’ which are associated with Perth, the "Chronicle" is the most substantial to have survived. But it is an open question as to whether it was the most substantial composed in the early modern period, or indeed whether it was the first such register to be compiled in Perth. Perhaps the most interesting of the other ‘chronicles’ and ‘diaries’ which date from this period is that known as "Mr Dundee's Diary". The manuscript has been lost since at least

119 See catalogue to Perth Burgh Records, A.K. Bell Library, Perth.
120 See above, n.64.
121 The author (TH7) of the account of the justice air which was held in Perth in October 1629 was certainly familiar with some of the legal papers of the burgh: "instrumentis wer taikin + extractit extant among the tounes writtis". "Chronicle", 42 (11/11), lines 1-3.
the turn of this century, but many antiquarians referred to this source, and some of the more notable of Perth's historical writers did have access to the original. From their references it is clear that some of the passages in "Dundee's Diary" complement entries in the "Chronicle", whilst others are similar in content and in style. The earliest reference which I have found for this manuscript is in Cant's edition of The Muses Threnodie of 1774. There he remarks that "A considerable citizen of Perth called Dundee has recorded several events with their dates, in a miscellaneous manuscript, in my possession, begun A.D. 1570, and continued by his son to A.D. 1636". In further notices, Cant describes Dundee as "a man of reputation in the town", an eyewitness when James VI visited the burgh in 1601. Cant's phrasing is ambiguous; but his description of the "Diary" as a "miscellaneous manuscript" in which "several events with their dates" had been written down suggests that the volume was not simply an historical work, but may have included other material as well. In c.1784, the Rev. James Scott described "a small manuscript Chronicle which seems to have belonged to Mr Patrick Dundie Merchant in Perth in the Beginning of the last century". If this manuscript was "Dundee's Diary", Scott's description suggests that the volume was similar in character to the "Chronicle of Perth". In another reference, Scott stated that he had seen a "small Manuscript Chronicle" by the name of "Alexander Dundie's Chronicle". This would appear to have been the same volume as that to which he had already referred. He specified the name of the author, or perhaps of one of the owners, and it is possible that Patrick and Alexander Dundee were father and son, in keeping with Cant's reference. However there is clearly a problem with the definition of the manuscript, which cannot be resolved now that the original has been lost. In 1906, Crawford Smith dismissed both "Mercer's Chronicle" and the Dundee manuscript as "Diaries": "these might with advantage have been noticed, although they are a somewhat scrappy description of literature".

Unless this 'diary' or 'chronicle' was very short, the full contents of the volume cannot be known; however, an impression of its character can be gained from occasional quotations, most of which are to be found in The Muses Threnodie. The earliest dated entry records "The falline doune of the three bowis of the brig of Tay be the greit wattir and of Lowis Vairk on the 20 of Decembir in anno 1573". This event is recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth", in similar terms, on page 3/3 (11, lines 11-16): "The / first / dow falling of twa bowis of the brig of tay and off lowis wark be inundatio(u)n of wat onye xx day of decembe(r) Im vc Lxxij yeris / at midnyt /". The language is not exactly the same, and there is a discepancy in the record concerning the number of arches which actually fell; but, clearly, these accounts are very similar. Why? is an open question. The Dundee MS also records "The downe falling of 5 bowis of the brig of Tay on the 14 day of Janeveir in anno

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123 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 81, 164-165.
125 ibid., 54.
126 D. Crawford Smith, The Historians of Perth, (1906), xiii.
127 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 81.
1582 zeiris”. In the “Chronicle”, this event is recorded as “The down falling of fywe bows of the brig of tay on the xiiij day of Januar Im vc Lxxxij yeiris” (3/3,11, lines 26-28); these records are almost exactly the same.

Scott quoted two references to the Gowrie family. The first concerns “The Execution of William Earl of Gowrie Lord Ruthven at Stirling”, on 4 May 1584; there is no such record in the “Chronicle of Perth”. In chronological order, the next record describes “The doune falling of the bra trein pillaris of the brig of Tay on the 29 day of Decembre in anno 1589 zeiris”, and this damage is not recorded in the “Chronicle of Perth” either. However, Scott noted that “Alexander Dundie’s Chronicle” contained a short account of the death of the earl of Gowrie in 1600: “The Earl of Gowrie, + his Brother the master of Ruthven, were slain in Perth in anno 1600, in his own Lodging, by the king’s page John Ramsay, in presence of the king, + the Duke Stewart, + the Earl of Mar, + Tullibardin, + the Laird of Balthayock made to keep the yett of the Lodging till the king couped on”. This account is significantly different to the lengthier record in the “Chronicle of Perth” (6/6, 21). Although both accounts agree that the earl was slain in the Gowrie House, and that one of the assailants was John Ramsay, there is no mention of treason in the “Dundee” version, and no sense that the burgh community was threatened by these events. “Dundee” adds to the “Chronicle’s” account by mentioning the names of other nobles who were present in Gowrie House, but intimates that the circumstances of the killing were different to those set out in the “Chronicle of Perth”. “Dundee” states that the killing took place in the presence of the king - a factor which may be inferred from the “Chronicle”, but which is certainly not stated. Furthermore, although the meaning of the phrase “couped on” is unclear, the text seems to imply that the laird of Balthayock kept the gates of Gowrie House closed until the king was ready to leave. If this is the meaning of the passage, then perhaps “Dundee’s” diary supports Scott’s view that the “Gowrie Conspiracy” was a plot hatched by the king rather than by the earl.

“Dundee” is presumably a Perth source, and may be contemporary with the events described; it seems far less equivocal than the “Chronicle of Perth”. However, the “Dundee” account of the king’s arrival in the burgh in April 1601 is similar in tone to that of the “Chronicle” (6/6, 21). According to Cant, this passage states: “Item, On the XV Aprill in anno a thousand vi hundred ane yeir the Kingis Majestie came to Perth, and that same day he was made provost with ane great scerlane (shout) of the courteoures, and the bancait was meid at the crois, and the Kingis Maiistie wes set downe thereat, and six dozin glasses brokine, with many owdir silver pissis and pewdir vesicles; and thair the King maid ane Breit solleime aith to defend the hail libertie of this brouche”. It is only this final sentence which suggests that the visit might have been an

128 Ibid.
130 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 81.
131 NLS Adv. 31.1.6. Register of Deaths at Perth, (c.1784), 54.
132 See above, p. 49.
133 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 164. The “Chronicle” records that the king was made a burgess, rather than the provost of the burgh.
occasion for the king to make his peace with the burgh; otherwise, the passage is similar to that in the "Chronicle", in that it simply records a celebration.

It is not possible to draw direct comparisons between the "Chronicle" and "Dundee", for without the manuscript of the latter one cannot compare the construction and character of the documents. Indeed, the researcher can only assess the Dundee MS on the basis of a few short excerpts transcribed in the later 18th century, and although both Cant and Scott appear to have seen the original, we cannot know how accurately they recorded its contents, or whether the manuscript can be satisfactorily described as either a 'chronicle' or a 'diary'. However, if Cant was correct in believing that "Dundee" was written in the later decades of the 16th century and the early decades of the 17th century, by at least one eye-witness to some of the events described, then it is possible that the authors of the "Chronicle of Perth" used the Dundee manuscript as a reference source. The strong similarity between accounts of damage to the Brig of Tay in these sources may be an indication that some of the chroniclers did indeed consult the earlier(?) source. It can be inferred from the differences in tone and content between the respective accounts of the "Gowrie Conspiracy" that the authors simply held contrasting views about the nature and effects of the controversial events in the Gowrie House. The contrast between the two records is useful, as this confirms that the contents of the "Chronicle" are not exclusively a dry record of events, but that some passages have been carefully worded, and indeed address difficult political themes.

Although little of the text seems to remain, the references to "Dundee's Diary" are the most straightforward evidence which survives concerning the composition of manuscript histories in 17th century Perth. There are many other references to handwritten volumes which may have been similar to the "Chronicle of Perth", but both Cant and Scott have left ambiguous comments and notes. There may have been another manuscript chronicle known as "Fleming's Chronicle". The problems concerning this document have already been discussed, but it is important to re-iterate that whilst this manuscript may actually have been the "Chronicle of Perth", references in James Scott’s papers suggest that he thought that it was a separate volume.134 The subject matter of the three extracts which he gives from "Alexander Fleming's Chronicle" can all be found in the "chronicle of Perth", but the wording in the passages is slightly different. Whether or not "Fleming's Chronicle" did exist as a separate volume, there is an interesting general point to be made about such 'Chronicles'. The "Chronicle of Perth" seems to have been known by antiquarians as "Mercer's Chronicle", the Dundee MS was associated by Cant with a father and son, and "Fleming's Chronicle" was associated by Scott with an Alexander Fleming. In other words, these manuscripts were perceived - at least by the antiquarians who studied them in the 18th century - to be the personal compilations of individuals or families. My analysis of the composition of the "Chronicle of Perth" has suggested that this volume can be closely associated with John Mercer, and perhaps with other members of his family. Mercer's position as town clerk also raises the strong possibility that his colleagues contributed to the manuscript, and the range of handwriting styles indicates that several hands compiled the volume. Without the other manuscripts, we cannot judge whether the "Chronicle of Perth" was unusual in this respect; but it

134 See above, pp. 5-6.
is worth noting that 'historical writing' in early modern Perth may have been, to some extent, a family
pursuit.

However, other manuscripts to which Scott and Cant had access appear to have been anonymous
works. Both men referred to a source, or sources, by "a citizen of Perth". Scott recorded two
accounts. The first was from "an old manuscript Diary of a Citizen of Perth, now in the Hands of Mr
James Cant", in which "Henry Adamson is said to have been murdered on the street of Perth by
Thomas Peblis on Good Friday 1598". 135 This notable killing is also recorded in the "Chronicle of
Perth", were it is stated that on the "16 day of apryll 159 benig gude fryday henrie adamsone deane of
gilde slaine be Thomas peblis and wes buried on peax day The executio(u)n of Thomas peblis for ye slauchter of ye said umqll henrie on Tuysday ye penult of maij 1598 at ye mercat croce" (6 ,19). Scott may have paraphrased the account in the manuscript of the
"Citizen of Perth", and it is possible that his source was actually the "Chronicle of Perth". However,
on the basis of the text he has provided, it seems that the account in the "Citizen" manuscript was
shorter than that of the "Chronicle", although the contents were similar. The second reference,
from "an old manuscript journal wrote by a Citizen of Perth", states that "In the year of God 1600
years, my Lord Gowrie came Home out of France in the month of may on the 20th Day at eleven
Hours at Even to this Town, with sundry Barons + others". 136 Scott's transcription could be faulty,
but it seems clear that this source was not the "Chronicle of Perth", where it is stated that on the 20
May 1600, "The eril of gowrie come to pert efter sewin yeiris pe(r)egrina(o)un in wyer cuntreis".
(6 / 6, 21).

Cant's source, "a manuscript by a citizen of Perth", was certainly not the "Chronicle", and may not
have been the source, or sources, noted by Scott. Cant quoted a lengthy account of the battle of
Tibbermore in 1644.137 The passage describes Montrose's abandonment of the Covenanters,
and his campaigns on behalf of the king. There is anecdotal information about the taking of
Dumfries, followed by an account of the arrival of Alistair Macolla from Ireland in August 1644, and
his campaigns in the west and the Highlands before he allied with Montrose at Blair. The account of
the battle at Tibbermore is very detailed in comparison with that given in the "Chronicle of Perth",
and it is a pity that Cant tells us so little about the source. Cant's version of the account reads:
"Upon Sunday the first day of September 1644, an army of all this country forces of Perth and out
of Fyffe, both horse and foot, amounting to the number of 6000 or thereby, and Montrose and
Colcatochies forces, consisting of three or four thousand or thereby. This being a terrible day not
to be forgotten they fought on the Muir above Cultmalindy, called Lamerkin Muir, betwixt twelve
and two afternoon, or in the space of an half hour, Montrose's forces with MacLeod's Irish being
one (join) they got the victory and many of our people and of Fife were killed, and the dead
bodies were stripped naked and left on the ground, about three or four hundred. Among them,

1598. Scott's system of page numbering is inadequate for reference purposes, and as all of the
entries in this volume - and Volume II - occur in chronological order, the reader is referred to
passages according to their dates.
136 Ibid., May 1600.
137 *The Muses Threnodie ...* ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 124-127 n.
the young laird of Rires in Fyfe, Patrick Oliphant younger of Bachilton, George Hamilton of Keilor in Angus, David Grant Captain for the burgh of Perth, Alexander Ramsay, John Duf and Andrew Anderson, with many brave men from Fyfe, the burghs of St. Andrews, Cupar, and Kirkcaldy and other towns and sundrie from the landward parishes of the shire of Perth. In which Battle were from the glover calling, Patrick Watson, Thomas Dundee, Henry Paul, Andrew Kinnaird, Alexander Hutton, Alexander Nairn, Patrick Ingles, George Auchinleck, Andrew Mortimer, Andrew Gall, Robert Lamb, John Measone Andrew Anderson Ensign, and Alexander Drummond Lieutenant, who were al safe."

With regard to the occupation of Perth, which is also recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth", Cant’s source states that, "After the battle, our people fled to all quarters, and these who fled into the town were made prisoners and forced to march with Montrose, the town was surrounded that night, and surrendered because not able to sustain a siege for want of commanders. Upon Tuesday and Wednesday thereafter the 3d and 4th of September, they marched over Tay to Angus, and took all the Cannon, Magazine, and spoil of the town with them to the north. Thereafter upon Tuesday the tenth of September, the Marquis of Argyle came from Stirling to Perth with about 1000 men who marched through the town all that week in pursuit of Montrose, and went over the river Tay in boats left undestroyed by Montrose. James Stewart of Ardvorlich on the 6th of September slew Lord Kilpont at Colace, because he had joined Montrose." 138

This writer appears to have been far better informed about the participants in the battle than the author of the passage in the "Chronicle”. 139 The chronicler probably intended to list the names of the prominent men who died in the battle - "The speciall gentill men yat wer killit namit" - but a gap occurs at this point in the manuscript, and for some reason the list was omitted (1 5, 50, lines 30-31). In other respects, the accounts are broadly similar. Cant’s source is more anecdotal in style than the "Chronicle", but the outline of events which it describes is consistent with the "Chronicle’s" account. Both sources state that the battle took place on Sunday 1 September 1644, that it began at about midday, and that victory was achieved by Montrose’s army in about half an hour. The "Chronicle" states that Montrose's forces amounted to 3000 men, whereas Cant’s source suggests that the number was three or four thousand. According to his source, the Covenant army was drawn from Perth and Fife, and amounted to 6000 men, of both horse and foot; the "Chronicle" concurs with this description. The "Citizen" source describes the battlefield as the muir above Cultmalundie, the “Lamerkin Muir”; the "Chronicle" describes the muirs beside Tibbermore and "besyde luderin + the burrow mure”. Both sources agree on the general location - the muirs to the west of Perth. The "Chronicle" records that “above viijc” men were killed in flight, and that 800 men of Fife were captured, whereas Cant’s source tells of three or four hundred dead bodies which were stripped naked on the battlefield. The only significant difference between the two sources concerns their respective judgements of the behaviour of the Covenant army. The "Chronicle" blames their defeat upon the cowardice of the men of Fife, who “fled beastile” and "did

138 See below, Part 3, Section 3, “War and Occupation” for a discussion of the civil war years.
139 The account in the “Chronicle” may be found on 50 (1 5).
nawer discharge all togidder ance". The "Citizen of Perth" comments that it was a terrible day, "not to be forgotten", but refers to "many brave (men) from Fyfe".

The "Citizen" adds to the "Chronicle's" complaint that Montrose's short occupation of the burgh "wes ane dear quartering" by stating that his forces "took all the Cannon, Magazine, and spoil of the town with them to the north". The details of the aftermath of the battle and occupation of the burgh differ in the two accounts, but the tenor of these records is still broadly similar. It is interesting that whilst the "Chronicle" suggests that Argyle's forces stayed in the burgh for about four days, and caused great damage, the "Citizen" manuscript records that Argyle's men "marched through the town all that week in pursuit of Montrose". Both of these sources may represent eye-witness accounts; the authors seem to have held contrasting opinions about the outcome of the battle, but both were sympathetic to the plight of the local forces. The "Citizen of Perth" may well have been a glover, as special mention is made of the glovers who survived the battle.

Other unattributed Perth manuscripts have simply been described as "old". Scott mentioned an additional record of the destruction of the Brig of Tay and Lowswork in 1573, in an "old manuscript". This source describes the inundation which washed away the bridge and the weir as "the great water solliter". Scott commented that this probably referred to "the breaking, dissolving, or loosening of the Ice on the River". The New Statistical Account (NSA) includes a note, taken from "an old manuscript volume", which describes the severe outbreak of plague in the burgh in 1645. It is questionable whether this old volume was 17th century in date, and indeed whether it was actually written in Perth. The editor of the NSA commented that, "It is remarkable that no historian of the time attempted to give any circumstantial account of this devastating pestilence. The engrossing political condition of the country may have in some measure occasioned that". The account was certainly written after the crisis had abated; it describes widespread mortality in the burgh and the surrounding parishes, over the course of several years, and the author noted that the remains of the huts on the outskirts of the town where victims were required to live could still be seen at the time of writing. The account is one of the best surviving records of the effects of plague on the burgh community, but its style is unlike the other records which have been considered, and it could well derive from an 18th century source.

A late 17th century volume known as "Provost Blair's Book", which forms part of the Perth Burgh Records, is of greater importance in the context of local literature. This is a relatively short volume of about 40 folios, handwritten and bound in leather. It has been dated to c.1665 - 1694, and may thus be nearly contemporary with the "Chronicle of Perth". At the front of the book there is a note which records that "This Book pertained to Alexander Blair And wreatten Be himself in anno 1665". The contents of this volume do not form a narrative history; instead, the book appears to have been Blair's personal record of important burgh papers and information. It contains a translation of King James VI's charter of confirmation to Perth, the "Golden Charter", dated 15
November 1600; a copy of an extract from a decreet obtained by the burgh of Perth against the burgh of Dundee, dated 30 December 1602; a list of the principal burgh charters; and a list of the magistrates of Perth for 1364, 1461, and 1465 -1694. Technically, the latter material may conform to the definition of a ‘chronicle’ which I have adopted; but the volume is chiefly of interest because it bears comparison with the contents of sections 1, 3 and 4 in the "Chronicle of Perth" - an apparently private record of public business. It is difficult to judge whether or not Blair’s volume survives in full. It is far messier than the "Chronicle of Perth", and may not have been intended to be seen by others. But it is important to note that the inclusion in the "Chronicle" of copies of official papers was not unique.

Provost Blair’s Book was re-discovered in an attic in Perth, in 1897. The town clerk at that time, William Macleish, sent the book to be studied by a Mr David Marshall (FSA Scot.). Marshall judged that the list of magistrates was “the most valuable feature” of the book, “and was doubtless partly drawn from the ‘Great Council Book’ extant in his time and now lost.” Was any of the “Chronicle of Perth” drawn from this source too? It is possible that, as town clerk, John Mercer would have had access to such a book; and even if the chroniclers did not consult this particular source, Marshall’s comment emphasises that volumes such as Blair’s Book and the “Chronicle” may duplicate material that can be found elsewhere in the burgh archives. However, Marshall appended a cautionary note, commenting that “This List I now find differs considerably from the ‘List of the Magistracy of Perth’ given by James Cant in his edition of ‘The Muses Threnodie’”. It would seem that amongst the voluminous burgh archives, there were some contradictory records.

One of the most important secular registers produced in late medieval and early modern Perth was the “Perth Guildry Book”. 143 This substantial volume has recently been edited and published by Mrs M. Stavert for the Scottish Records Society. It is a far larger work than the “Chronicle of Perth”, and its contents span the years 1452 - 1620. Essentially, it records the business affairs of Perth’s merchant guild, and is primarily in the form of an ongoing record. It was written by many scribes over the course of nearly two centuries. Unlike the “Chronicle”, there was no consistent method of recording, and although entries are generally consecutive, Verschuur comments that “there is very little regularity of form”. The guild book was not conceived as an historical work, nor indeed as a ‘chronicle’; essentially, it was an administrative record. But although the book differs substantially from the “Chronicle of Perth” in terms of its length, contents, and the manner of its composition, the researcher must note that such manuscripts were produced in the town, and that it was not just the town council which produced administrative records.

The ecclesiastical authorities were also responsible for the production of a large number of administrative records. The business of the kirk session in post-Reformation Perth lay at the heart of burgh life, and the Kirk’s papers must be considered in this context as the "Chronicle of Perth" includes a register of deaths which fills a gap left by the loss of the official list. Furthermore, the ministers of the parish of Perth were responsible for producing short books and pamphlets; it is interesting to consider these works, as they represent part of the literary scene in 17th century

143 For comments on the Perth Guildry Book, see "Verschuur", 665-667.
Perth. The references which I have found for such works all occur in James Scott’s papers. William Cowper and John Malcolm seem to have been the principal authors of independent religious tracts. In the 1770s, when Scott produced his transcriptions and commentaries on the Perth kirk session registers, many of the books and tracts which had survived were in the possession of James Cant. Mention is made of a short autobiography by Cowper, a treatise concerning the “Five Articles of Perth”, and a treatise on the genealogy of Christ which was dedicated to John Graham, earl of Montrose. Scott also recorded that “There is presently in the possession of Mr James Cant, a manuscript collection of some works of Mr Cowper, containing besides his Treatise “On Jacob’s wrestling with God”: His Treatise on the 51st Psalm : and his Treatise on the Baptism of Christ.

2. A Discourse on Isaiah 6. 5-8.
3. A Discourse on I Samuel. 4.17. etc.
4. A Discourse on I Samuel. 5.1 etc.
5. A Sermon on Math. 11.28. “Come unto me all ye that are weary + laden + I will refresh you”.
6. Ane Sermon, taught at the Communion, upon the History of the woman with the bloody Issue. Mark. 5.25.”

Another “Manuscript Book” in Cant’s possession, containing some of Cowper’s sermons, is of particular interest as it appears to have been copied from Cowper’s originals. Scott noted that “The Book bears that it is in the Hand writing of Donald Greigor, who probably copyed it from Mr Cowper’s own manuscripts. It belonged once to George Adamson, who has wrote on the last Leaf, “George Adamson aught this Book, Perth December 7th 1629. Lord, I have loved the Habitation of thy House; the place where thine Honour dwelleth”. However, John Malcolm’s principal work seems to have been far more distinguished, and as part of an obituary notice Scott remarked: “I have formerly mentioned his Latin Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles printed at Middleburg in the year 1615. I have by me at present the copy which belonged to his own Library, with some Emendations or References written on the Margin with his own Hand. It was last in the Libraries of Mr Thomas + Mr David Blacks Ministers at Perth.”

Rev. David Black’s library also contained the “Chronicle of Perth”, and it is possible that the “Chronicle” was part of a collection handed down from minister to minister. It is interesting that a manuscript volume such as the “Chronicle” might have been kept with printed books.

Extracts and comments in Scott’s editions of the kirk session registers illustrate the part played by the Kirk authorities in the development of administrative records - and, by extension, of forms of historical writing - within the burgh. Extracts from the kirk session registers for 1581(2) and 1587(8)

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145 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 23 October 1615.
146 Ibid., August 1600.
147 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume II, (1775), 1634.
148 See above, p. 2.
detail that the session ordained "James Sym to make a Book for Baptisms, of the Depth of 7 Quair of paper, + deliver it to the Reader Mr William Cock", and that the Masters of the Hospital were ordained "to make an Book of ten Quair of Paper, to contain + hold the compts of the Hospital yearly". These records indicate how a register might be initiated, and give some intimation of the size and length of certain volumes. (Unfortunately, the term "Quair" does not seem to describe a specific quantity of paper: "a literary work of any length, orig one that might occupy a quire of paper"). There is some evidence that the session and presbytery were careful to store their records securely; an entry from June 1630, for example, states, "Whilk Day delivered the Book of the Presbytery which was in Mr Henry Adamson’s Hands, to be put in the almarie within the Revestry, the key of which almanie is in the Hands of Mr John Robertson minister of Perth". In an assessment of the condition of the surviving 17th century volumes at his disposal, Scott decided that "From the view now taken of the state of the Registers, it appears that they have not been carefully preserved..." However, he acknowledged that "Revolutions + Times of great public Disorder" accounted for the loss of certain volumes. It is remarkable just how much written material has survived.

There is an interesting connection between the "Chronicle of Perth" and the ecclesiastical records of the burgh, for in 1624 John Mercer became Clerk to the Session, as well as town clerk, "for holding of their Hospital accompts". It is recorded that on February 9th 1624, "Compeared John Mercer Burrow Clerk, + produced an great number of foundations of altarages founded within the Parish kirk of this Burgh, with divers Transumpts of the same. Whereof he gave therewith an Inventary of the same. Which were put into the chest containing other writts belonging to the Hospitality". Mercer’s relations with the Kirk authorities were not always cordial, but it is clear that he was familiar with the records of the Kirk as well as of the town council. His employment by the session may be reflected in the register of deaths in the "Chronicle", the short biographies of Perth’s ministers in Section 2, and the copies of letters addressed to the Kirk authorities which appear in Section 3. It is hard to associate Mercer with the handwriting of "Section 1"; but the record of the hospital affairs which it contains might indicate that he was connected with this section as well.

The development of historical literature in early modern Perth owed much to the members of two related families, the Adamsons and the Andersons. In 1618, John Adamson published at Edinburgh a book called The Muses Welcome, a record of James VI’s return to Scotland in 1617; and in 1638, Henry Adamson’s metrical history The Muses Threnodie was published

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149 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 26 February 1581(2); 26 February 1587(6).
152 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume II, (1775), 5 February 1624, 9 February 1624.
153 John Mercer and his wife were summoned to appear before the presbytery in 1625. See ibid., 1625.
posthumously.154 The latter book was innovative and influential, and both publications suggest
that poetry and historical writing were relatively popular in Perth. Neither work is referred to in the
"Chronicle of Perth"; indeed, there are no references to any other literary works in the volume.
However, both of these books were probably known to the chroniclers, and there are passages in
the "Chronicle" which relate to these authors and their subject matter.

*The Muses Welcome* records the itinerary of James VI on his progress through Scotland in 1617,
and the welcoming speeches which he received at the various burghs and houses which he
visited. The book includes the poems which were addressed to the king by several local men on
his arrival at Perth in July. The poems were written in Latin - (one of them being an address from
the ruined bridge of Tay) - by Henry Anderson, Alexander Adamson and John Stewart, merchants,
Henry Adamson, Adam Anderson, and George Stark. John Adamson, the publisher of the book,
was the "principall of the college of Edinburgh", brother of the poet Henry Adamson, son of a
former provost of Perth, and a nephew of the poet Henry Anderson. Several of Henry Anderson's
Latin poems were published in a collection called "De Litice Poetarum Scotorum"; and there is "an
Eulogium" of Henry Anderson in a poem prefixed to *The Muses Threnodie*, entitled: "To Perth
anent two of her sons, her two suns Mr Henry Anderson, + Mr Henry Adamson his nephew". This
poem was probably written by John Adamson; Scott commented that Henry Anderson was
"represented as...having brought much Learning with him from Italy". 155

Henry Anderson was known as a poet beyond Perth, and John Adamson's book was printed at
Edinburgh, where he may have been better known than in his native burgh. However, these men
were writers of distinction, and certainly contributed to the local literary scene. The deaths of Henry
Anderson and James Adamson - the father of John and Henry Adamson - are recorded in the
"Chronicle of Perth": "1623 I In yis yeir deit wtin sextene weikis James adamsone quha wes puest
mr henrie andersone quha wes bailyie dauid sibbald wm wmsone James bannewis quha hed bene
baillies Andro andersone quha wes baillie yat same yeir" (10/10,37). Henry Adamson's work
seems to have been more original than that of his relatives, and includes one of the first serious
accounts of distinguished buildings and monuments of the burgh. His work has been interpreted
as being "antiquarian"; whilst this term can only be applied rather loosely by historians, it is fair to
say that *The Muses Threnodie* differs significantly from manuscripts such as the "Chronicle of
Perth" not only because it deals with the history of Perth in poetic form, but also because Adamson
deliberately set out to praise the buildings of the burgh and its environment.

The poem is also known as the "Mirthful Mournings on the Death of Mr Gall", and ostensibly the
poem presents the "mournings" of Mr George Ruthven over the death of his close friend James
(or John) Gall. This man was a friend of Adamson, described by Scott as a "famous antiquary".

154 NLS RY.III.C.12. *The Muses Welcome* - To the High and Mighty Prince James... Published By
John Adamson (Edinburgh 1618).
155 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume II, (1775), 30 April 1623.
See also Crawford Smith, 40.
Whether or not this was the case, Henry Adamson’s dedicatory poem celebrates Gall’s life in a
guide to the environment in which he lived. The work is a fictional drama, but one which highlights
aspects of Perth’s history, such as the “Battle of the Brig of Tay” in 1544. According to
Crawford-Smith, “His work is the earliest, and for long it was the only, account of the antiquities of
Perth and its neighbourhood”. 156 Strictly speaking, the poem - which is divided into nine verses
or “muses” - cannot be considered as an archaeological study. But in the context of the other
literature which was produced in 17th century Perth, The Muses Threnodie was unusual in that it
concentrated on the physical surroundings which were known to Gall and Ruthven. The style of
the piece does not appear to have been copied, and the nature of the poem’s influence amongst
the literate members of Perth society is open to debate. However, published in 1638, the poem is
contemporary with the “Chronicle”; and although their styles are very different, they both describe
the same environment.

Lowswork features prominently in the “Chronicle”, and it is described in Adamson’s first “muse”:
“We went a shooting both through plain and park,
And never stay’d till we came to Lows wark;
Built by our mighty Kings for to preserve us,
That thencefurth waters should not drown, but serve us…” 157
These lines may have been written, perhaps in a first draft, before the inundation of 1621, and
Adamson goes on to praise the lade system which channelled water to the burgh. The “Chronicle”
records that the waterworks were extensively damaged in the flood.158 The third “muse” contains
a lengthy description of the Brig of Tay - the bridge which was destroyed in 1621:
“Just by this time we see the bridge of Tay,
O happy sight indeed I was it that day;
A bridge so stately with eleven arches,
Joining the south and north, and common march is
Unto them both, a bridge of squared stone,
So great and fair, which when I think upon,
How in these days it did so proudlie stand,
O’erlooking both the river and the land,
So fair, so high, a bridge for many ages
Most famous; but, alas I now through the rages
Of furious swelling waters thrown in deep...
...In the year threescore thirteen,
The first down-fall this bridge did e’er sustain,
By ruin of three arches next the town,
Yet were rebuilt, thereafter were thrown down
Five arches in the year fourscore and two
Re-edified likewise, and who doth know

156 Crawford Smith, 58.
157 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 26.
158 Chronicle, 36 (10), 37 (10/10).
Monsier, but ah, mine heart can scarcely sober I
Even that great fall the fourteenth of October,
Six hundred twenty one, repair'd may be?" 159
The details of this passage can be checked against other sources - including the "Chronicle" - and it is fascinating that Adamson chose to catalogue the troubled history of the bridge in verse. But what sources did he use?

In the third "muse" Adamson also describes the palace at Scone; there are only brief references to the abbey and palace in the "Chronicle", although the significance of the estate is apparent.

"As we thus talk'd our barge did sweetly pass
By Scone's fair palace, sometime Abbay was;
...But palace fair which doth so richly stand,
With gardens, orchards, parks on either hand..." 160
The former religious houses of the burgh and the bridge of Tay feature prominently throughout the poem, and the concluding "muses" concentrate on important sites and buildings in the burgh's environs. In the sixth "muse", Adamson imagines the pre-Reformation prospect of Perth:

"...Then gan I to declare
Where our old Monasteries, with churches fair
Sometime did stand, placed at everie corner
Was one, which with great beautie did adome her,
The Charter-house toward the southwest stood,
And at south-east the Friers, who weare gray-hood.
Toward the north the Blackfriers church did stand;
And Carmelites upon the westerne hand..." 161

The Adamson family seem to have leant a certain vitality and originality to the literary scene in Perth in the early decades of the 17th century. The "Chronicle of Perth" is not a literary work to compare with The Muses Threnodie, but it does belong to a genre of historical writing in early modern Perth. Henry Adamson's work was clearly intended to be read as a celebration of the burgh and its environs, as well as a lament for James Gall. Adamson's interest in Perth's history and the prominent buildings of the burgh - those which had been destroyed as well as those which were standing - is expressed with poetic exuberance, but his subject matter is clearly "historical", and in a sense "archaeological" as well; in these terms, it is understandable that some historians have considered him to be an "antiquarian". More importantly, his poem would have been known amongst the literate inhabitants of the burgh, and could well have inspired other works - including the "Chronicle of Perth". The chroniclers adopted a form of composition which could have been copied from works such as "Dundee's Diary", and embraced a wide range of subject matter which reflects interests in ecclesiastical, as well as secular, business. Some of the authors obviously had

159 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), 79-82.
160 Ibid., 78.
161 Ibid., 153.
access to letters addressed to the council, and the register of deaths could have been drawn up on behalf of the kirk session or presbytery. This short survey of literature - both published and unpublished - which was produced in early modern Perth indicates that whilst most written works were administrative in purpose and in style, the authors of the "Chronicle" may have consciously tried to develop earlier 'chronicles'. The text is not of great literary merit, the poetic tradition is merely alluded to, and only occasionally is it narrative in style; but the volume does incorporate a variety of materials, in several forms. There is a register, fair copies of selected letters and legal documents, and a substantial historical miscellany which relates the mixed fortunes of the burgh during the course of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Whilst the particular reasons which prompted John Mercer and his fellow authors to compile the "Chronicle of Perth" cannot be known, it can at least be argued that the volume was intended to be a 'chronicle' - in the sense that we can define such a work. Perhaps more importantly, the contents of the manuscript certainly relate very closely to affairs at Perth; if it is a 'chronicle', it is certainly a "Chronicle of Perth". Much of the manuscript was probably written by Perth's town clerk, and much of the material could derive from administrative papers of the burgh; in these circumstances, it would be perverse to suggest that the volume was written anywhere other than in Perth. Furthermore, it is clear that there was a genre of historical writing at Perth, and perhaps even a genre of 'chronicle-writing' to which the "Chronicle of Perth" may have been a contribution. Fundamentally, literature and written records were important to sections of the burgh community and, in this admittedly general context, it is not surprising to find a manuscript such as the "Chronicle".

The purpose of the manuscript is particularly hard to determine. Section 4 could well have been composed as an official deaths register, or perhaps as a spare copy for the Kirk authorities. It is possible that Section 2 was conceived either as an official record of important events in Perth's recent history, or as a personal chronicle or diary. The latter is doubtful, given that several hands worked on the text. A general answer to this problem may be found in a comparison of the "Chronicle" with "Provost Blair's Book". This was apparently a private volume, compiled over the course of several decades, containing a mixture of official records and documents. Its purpose is not clear - but Blair signed the book, and it may well have been a work for personal reference, or indeed a collection to be used by his colleagues and successors. Similarly, the "Chronicle of Perth", signed by John Mercer, may have been intended as a work of historical reference, perhaps for the use of the clerks and officers of the town council. However, by the second half of the 18th century the manuscript was in the possession of the senior minister at Perth, and given its relevance to ecclesiastical matters, it is certainly possible that the volume was actually handed down from one minister to another from the late 17th century onwards. Although parts of the document have been lost, one of the most significant factors to be considered is that it survived for well over a century before it was acquired for a major library. This fact alone suggests that the
volume was cared for, and perhaps valued. It may have been the property of a family, or of the local
civil or ecclesiastical authorities; presumably it was read. 162

5. Is the "Chronicle of Perth" accurate?

Is the "Chronicle of Perth" a reliable source of evidence? This question has to be asked of the
manuscript, but in some senses it is not easily answered. In this chapter I will discuss the factual
accuracy of a range of passages in Section 2. For historians and archaeologists the accuracy of the
historical record, and of anecdotal information about Perth, is a prime consideration in any
assessment of the value of the "Chronicle". But, as will be explored during the course of this
thesis, factual accuracy should not be taken as the only index of the "Chronicle's" veracity; after all,
large sections of the volume may have served as a personal record of events for John Mercer and
his family. In this respect it is necessary to bear in mind that there may be occasions when the
"Chronicle" is useful precisely because its record is not strictly accurate or betrays the prejudices of
an author. However, I have already stated that the manuscript - in particular the early pages of
Section 2 - represents the result of a considerable amount of research by the chroniclers, and the
reliability of this work clearly needs to be assessed.163 The passages which are discussed in this
essay were selected more or less at random, but provide a reasonable representation of the variety
of the contents of Section 2. The historical accuracy of these passages is analysed mostly by
reference to other contemporary sources - notably the Registers of the Privy Council of
Scotland.164

162 There are, of course, many Scottish histories, diaries and chronicles - both published and
unpublished - surviving from this period. It would require a separate thesis to assess the possible
influences upon historical writing in Perth of the literature which was produced elsewhere in the
country, and it is outside the scope of this study to try to place the "Chronicle of Perth" within a
wider Scottish literary context. A glance at R. Chambers's Domestic Annals of Scotland, (2nd ed.
1859), in which the "Chronicle" is often cited, will give the reader an impression of the character of
Scottish historical writing in the early modern period. At several stages in this thesis, I will refer to
two "chronicles" which were produced in Aberdeen in this period: a miscellany which has been
published as "The Chronicle of Aberdeen", dating between 1491 and 1595, and John Spalding's
History of the Troubles... , which covers the period 1624 to 1645. Comparisons between these
works and the "Chronicle of Perth" are instructive.
163 See above, p.47.
164 The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, 1st Series Edited and Abridged by D.Masson;
2nd Series Edited and Abridged by P. Hume Brown (from Volume 2 onwards).
The "Chronicle's" account of the birth of Mary, Queen of Scots, on page 3, can be compared with a similarly brief notice in "The Chronicle of Aberdeen". The Perth manuscript records that "Quene Marie dochter to James ye Fyft berne in Striviling ye viij day of in a(n)no Im vc xlij yeiris". The Aberdeen source was probably written during the 16th century, and was certainly finished by 1610, for by that time the author, Walter Cullen, was dead. This source simply records that "Marre, Queyn of Scotland, doithar to Kyng James the Fyft, was borin the xxv day of Nowember, the yeir of God 1542 yers". The precise date of birth is missing from the "Chronicle of Perth", but clearly the sources differ over the day, and possibly the month, of Mary's birth. The Perth source is partially accurate, for Mary was actually born on 8 December 1542; however, she was born in Linlithgow, not Stirling.

Both of these sources record the battle of Pinkey. The notice in the "Chronicle of Perth" reads: "Pinkie on the latter lady day ye 3 of Septembe(r) Im vc xlvij yeiris". Cullen's account is much more detailed; he provides a record of the members of his family, and other Aberdonians, who were killed in the battle. However, he gives two slightly different dates for the battle: "The fedyll of Pynke was strekin betuix Scotland and Ingland, the sext day of September, the yeir of God 1547 yeris"; "The feidill of Pynke, betuix Scottland and Ingland, was strikin be James Earl of Eran, gouernar of Scottland for the tyme, and the Dwik of Northock, in Ingland, and wyn be the Inglis men, the tentt day of September, the yeir of God 1547 yeris". There is a clear discrepancy between these sources, but in this case Cullen's record - at least his second record - is correct; Pinkie was fought on the 10 September 1547.

In both of these examples, the manuscript sources are shown to be inaccurate in some details, but the inaccuracies are not particularly significant. Documents such as the "Chronicle of Perth" can still contribute to the historical record, despite such errors. On page 3/3 an entry records "The randering of hamilito(u)n and draffin in apryle Lxxix". The passage appears to refer to the occupation of these castles by the forces of the Hamiltons, in defiance of the king. This episode is mentioned at some length in the printed editions of the Register of the Privy Council (RPC), but

165 "The Chronicle of Aberdeen" consists of a series of notes and comments inserted into the registers of baptisms, marriages, and deaths at Aberdeen by Walter Cullen, Vicar and Reader of Aberdeen (1526 - post 1595). The "Chronicle" was printed in The Miscellany of The Spalding Club, Volume II (1842). The editor commented that: "The Diary and Obituary to which the perhaps too ambitious title of "The Chronicle of Aberdeen" has been given, have been selected, and arranged according to their dates, from the earliest volumes of the registers of baptisms, marriages, and deaths, preserved in the charter-room of the City of Aberdeen. They are scattered at utter random over these records, and have obviously been inserted, when and where any casual incident recalled an event to the writer's thoughts, and a blank page invited his pen..." (xxi-xxii). In the context of my comments concerning 'historical writing' at Perth, it is interesting to note the editor's remarks about Cullen's record: "The keepers even of public and official registers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so often inscribed verses on the spare pages of their records, that there need be no surprise at the miscellaneous contents of Walter Cullen's register, designed as it was for his own private use..." (xxix - xxx). For the reference to Mary's birth, 33.

166 G. Donaldson, Scotland, James V-James VII, (1965), 63.
167 "Chronicle", 9 (3); "The Chronicle of Aberdeen", 33-34; Donaldson, 76.
the material therein relates to the levying of royal forces to besiege the castles in May 1579.  

The first passage, dated to 11 May, begins: "Another order for proclamation against the Hamiltons. Escaping hitherto, the two traitors 'hes stuffit the castellis and houssis of Hammitloun and Draffen againis his Hienes and his authoritie..." Two proclamations to levy troops for the sieges are given, and later in the Register, following the defeat of the Hamiltons, there is an order for the partial demolition of Draffen Castle: "...considering the oft rebellion and defection schawin and maid be the keiparis of the castell and fortificie of Draffen, als weill to his Majestie's predecessouris, of worthie memorie, as to his Hienes self in his awin tyme". Whilst the notice in the "Chronicle" is brief, it is interesting in that it appears to provide a date for the initial occupation of the castles in the uprising, a detail which is merely referred to in the RPC source. The accuracy of the "Chronicle's" notice remains open to question, but clearly it can be useful in at least indicating aspects of particular episodes which are not really dealt with in other sources.

Conversely, it is important to note that the brevity and understatement of many passages in the "Chronicle" obscures the complexity of some events. The record on page 3/3 of a justice air held at Perth by James VI tells us nothing else other than the date, 6 July 1582. The RPC records that the Council were in Perth between the 11th and 28th July, and contains a lengthy reference to a dispute at the time of the justice air: "Complaint of James, Lord Innermeith as follows: - He and his predecessors, 'past memor of man, hes been heritable infell in the office of coronelschip of the Schirefdome of Perth with the proffites and feis of the same.' In the month of June last, however, 'Patrick, Lord Drummond, hes stoppit the said James, Lord Innermeith, his officiaris and servandis, in the execution of his rollis dirct to him to be execute upoun personis indytit to this present justice court of Perth..." The passage continues to demonstrate that Drummond did have some right to the office, but concludes that "without prejudice of ayther of the saidis parteis rychtis and titillis', they remit the matter to the Lords of Session or other judges competent".

Several passages record great mortality in the burgh as a consequence of outbreaks of plague. The accuracy of the death statistics which are given in the "Chronicle" cannot be checked satisfactorily, but the severity of the outbreak in 1584 and 1585, recorded on page 4, is reflected in other sources. The "Chronicle" states that there was "Pest in pth the xxiiij day of Septembe(r) Im vc Lxxxiij yeris continiewit to august Lxxxv yens quhari(n) at the plesor of god deptit this lyff xiiij cc xxvij persones young and auld thby". The index to the town council records notes the "Deprivation of James Hepburn and Patrick Inglis" on 4 October 1585, "by the Old Council, of their offices by reason of their passing 'of ' the burgh the time of the visitation thereof by God".

There are several references in the RPC to this lengthy visitation. On 4 November 1584, "The King and Council 'being credibillie informit that, notwithstanding his Hienes former proclamation, inhibiting the commoun passage of the ferreis ower Forth, in respect of the pestilence quhairwith

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168 The Register of the Privy Council (RPC), Ist Series, Vol. III (1880), 153, 156, 189.
169 Ibid., 491.
170 The incidence of serious disease at Perth is discussed below in Part 3, Section 1. ii).
171 B59/ 17/1,114.
divers pairtis in Fyfe and within and besyde Perth ar presentlie at the pleasour of God infectit, yit ceissis not continewall transporting of persons at the Quenis ferry', the following new orders are to be proclaimed..." Plague was still affecting Perth and Fife in April 1585, and despite the government's efforts to prevent its spread south of the Forth, plague broke out in Edinburgh in May. Clearly, the "Chronicle of Perth" provides the correct time-frame for this outbreak, and the mortality figures which are recorded are credible, particularly given the length of this visitation and the fact that Perth seems to have been particularly affected by the disease.

Pages 4/4 and 5 are dominated by biographical details of Perth's ministers and other officials. The contents of these short biographies can be compared with a list of the ministers of Perth in the 16th and 17th centuries provided by J. Parker Lawson at the end of his edition of the Perth kirk session registers. There is a relatively detailed account in the "Chronicle" of the career of John Malcolm: "The admissioun of mr Johne malcolm to be minister at per(r)t ye 7 of novermb(r) ye 1591 ye(ar)s be impositiou(u)n of handis of mris Wm rynde Mr Archibald moncreiff mr Alexr young + mr Jon abercrombie And yairefter tuik ye baillies counsall and elders be ye hand Mr Patrick galloway preachit yat day / he deceissit minister of pth wpone ye Sext day of october In anno 1634 yeiris sua he wes minister buried ye 8 day yairof he taucht on Sonday befoir none ye 28 of September preceding in eodem anno his executoris crawit ane ane, bot gatt none he was ane naikit stipendar".173 The dates given in Lawson's brief notes differ slightly from this account: "Mr John Malcolm, Principal of St Leonard's College, St Andrews, was inducted minister of Perth, 4th November 1591. He died at Perth on the 3d of October 1634".174

One of Perth's most distinguished, and controversial, ministers at this time was William Cowper. The "Chronicle" records that he was "admittit minister at pert the fyft of october 1585 be impositiou(u)n of handis of mris Wm rynd Ar moncreiff + James hering Mr patrik gallowaye preachit And wpone ye fourt day of october lm Vic and Tuelff yeiris he wes maid + consecrat bishop of galloway at glasgow The first of nouembe(r) 1615 he was transportit fra pe(rt) to ye chappell royall efter he haid bene 30 yeiris minister at pe(r)t and wpone ye 25 of februar 1618 he depairtit yis Lyffe + it wes thocht for greiff that the wyffes of edr cam in to him and schewe to him his awin buikis Aganes freiris buikis".175 There is no hint of such controversy in Lawson's biographical note: "Mr William Cowpar, minister at Bothkennar in Stirlingshire, was admitted colleague to Mr John Malcolm on the 23d of June 1595. He was nominated or consecrated Bishop of Galloway on the 31st of July 1614, resigned his charge at Perth on the 22d of October 1615, afterwards appointed Dean of the Chapel-Royal of Holyrood at Edinburgh, where he died on the 15th of February 1619. Bishop Cowpar, while minister at Perth, was often employed by the Magistrates to negotiate matters affecting the interests of the "Fair City" with James VI., who seems to have held him in great regard".176 The broad outline of Cowper's career is the same in both records, but all of the dates

176 Lawson, "Extracts", 311.
given differ. In this particular context, the doubts which a researcher must hold concerning the "Chronicle's" accuracy in matters of detail may not be too significant; the most interesting feature of the "Chronicle" passage is the characterisation of Cowper. However, as will be seen, there are occasions when the "Chronicle" is the sole source of information for events, and in such cases the historian must bear in mind that dates and other details given in the manuscript may be incorrect.

On page 5 there are two important obituaries, for the provost Andrew Gray and the dean of guild Andrew Wilson. According to the "Chronicle", Gray died on Friday 22 July 1636, and was buried on the following Sunday, and Wilson died on Sunday 3 September 1637. At both funerals, the bells of St. John's Kirk were rung. These details are supported by the index to the town council records, which relates the "Notification of the Death of the Provost and ringing the Bells thereafter" in July 1636, and an "Order for the Bells during the funeral of Andrew Wilson Baillie" dated 5 September 1637, the day on which the "Chronicle" states that he was buried.\textsuperscript{177} The record on page 5/5 of the partial destruction of the Citadel at Perth in May 1656 is also of particular interest, partly because of the characteristic ambiguity of the passage, but also because this is one of the few contemporary accounts of the burning of the Cromwellian fortress. The fire was described by Colonel William Daniell in a letter to General Monck in that year, in which he expressed a suspicion of arson. (There is also some archaeological evidence to complement these accounts - a seam of charcoal, containing the remains of wheat, has been observed in the area of the Citadel ).\textsuperscript{178}

On page 6 there is a record of "mirk setterday", 25 February 1597(8), on which day occurred "The eclips of ye sone ... at half hour to 10 in ye morning". This account is remarkably restrained in comparison with the notices which were recorded by the editor of the RPC: "... on Saturday the 25th of February 1597-98, there had been a great eclipse of the sun, noted in the old records with even more than the usual attention given then to such phenomena. It began between nine and ten in the forenoon, and continued about two hours. 'The whole face of the sunne', says Calderwood (v. 681, 682), 'seemed to be covered and darkened about half a quarter of an houre in suche measure that none could see to reade on a booke. The starres appeared in the firmament. Sea, land, and aire, was still, and strucken dead as it were... men and women were astonished, as if the day of judgement had beene comming..." \textsuperscript{179} These sources agree about the date and time of the eclipse, but it is an open question as to why the chronicler (TH7) seems to have been unmoved by this supposedly portentous event.

Another event of national importance is recorded towards the foot of the page, where it is stated that in December 1599 "The new calcula(o)un and change of ye yeir of god wes published to begin on ye first of Jar and not on ye xxv day of marche as it wes of befoir". The RPC contains a

\textsuperscript{177} B59/ 17/ 1, 374, 377.

\textsuperscript{178} This information was provided by Mr M.A. Taylor of Perth Museum and Art Gallery, in a public lecture given at the museum on 2 November 1992, entitled: "Cromwell's Citadel: Perth's Vanished Monument".

\textsuperscript{179} RPC, Ist Series, Vol. V, (1882), 446n.
record of the proclamation: At Holyroodhouse, 17th December 1599, "The Kingis Majestie and Lordis of his secret counsell understanding that in all utheris weill governit commoun welethis and cuntreyis the first day of the yeir begynis yeirlie upoun the first day of Januare, commounlie calit new yeiris day, and that this realme onlie is different fra all utheris in the compt and reckning of the yeiris; and his Majestie and Counsall willing that thair salbe na disconformitie betuix his Majestie, his realme and leigis, and utheris nictbour cuntreyis in this particular, bot that thay sal conforme thameselfis to the ordour and custum observit be all utheris cuntreyis, especiallie seing the course and seasoun of the yeir is maist propir and ansuerabill thairto, and that the alteration thairof importis na hurt nor prejudice to ony pairtie: thairfoir his Majestie, with advise of the Lordis of his Secret Counsall, statutis and ordanis that in all tyme cuming the first day of the yeir sal begin yeirlie upoun the first day of Januare, and thir presentis to tak executioun upoun the first day of Januare nix to cum, qhilk salbe the first day of the jm and six hundreth yeir of God...

The change to New Years Day did not affect the composition of the "Chronicle" - it is only a modern editor who must take note of the discrepancies between winter dates of the 16th century and those of the 17th. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that the chronicler included this reference because the change was a significant event, and not because it had a specific bearing upon a reading of the manuscript. In the present context, it should be noted that the "Chronicle's" information is accurate.

The "Chronicle's" account of the "Gowrie Conspiracy" has already been mentioned, but it is worth considering some of the material which is printed in the RPC concerning this affair. The editor confirms that the Gowries were killed on 5 August 1600, as the "Chronicle" records: "The famous and mysterious incident in Scottish History known as 'The Gowrie Conspiracy' had occurred at Perth ... on Tuesday, August 5, 1600. The news, with a letter from the king to the Council, had reached Edinburgh from Falkland before ten o'clock on the morning of the 6th. It is of particular interest to compare the 'Chronicle's' protestations of the burgh's innocence in the affair - and the king's confidence in the loyalty of the community - with a charge issued by the king which asserted that the inhabitants had demonstrated against him: "...it is of truthe that his Hienes wes of new assailayt and persewit be a grit nowmer of the communitie and inhabitantis of the burgh of Perth, all in armes, qaha environed his Majestis hous on all pairtis, assegeit and persewit his Hienes within the same, uttering maist irreverent and undeutifull speiches aganis his Majestie, his nobilitie, and certane of his servandis and guid subjectis qaha accompaneit his Hienes for the tyme, and could nauayis be moved to forbeir thar tumultous and insolent behaviour, bot did quhat in them lay, be crying for fyre and poulder, and running with justis at the yettis of the said hous, to have blawin up the yettis of the said hous and to have exponed in hasard the lyfes of his Majestie and his guid subjectis: Qhilk attempt being sa publict and manifest, and assisted with sa grit a force of the inhabitantis of the said burghe and of certane of speciall rank and credit within the

180 RPC, Ist Series, Vol. VI, (1884), 63. For further details, see the Editorial Principles at the beginning of Volume 1.
181 See above, pp. 48-9.
182 RPC, 1st Series, Vol. VI, 142n.
same, his Majestie can tak him to nane bot to the magistratis and counsell of the said burgh, quha representis the body of the same; and thairfoir ordanis letteris to be direct chairging the baiyels of the said burgh, representing the hail bodie of the same, to compeir personallie befoir his Majestie and his Counsell at Linlithgow upoun the sxtain day of September Instant, to answer to the premissis and to the contempt and indiguitie done to his Majestie in manner foirsaid, and to underly sic ordour as salbe tane thairanent, under pane of rebellioun". 183

If this version of events is correct, then it is clear that the account in the "Chronicle" attempts to cover-up a controversial and dangerous incident in which the community of the burgh as a whole was implicated. The "truth" of the affair has puzzled some historians, but the important point to notice here is that factual accuracy - providing the correct date, for example, or correctly identifying the killers of the Gowries - is an insufficient index of the reliability of this account. The reader must judge whether or not the record accurately represents the events which took place - it is a matter of interpretation. The "Chronicle" tends to be circumspect in its treatment of James VI, emphasising his close association with the burgh prior to 1603. It is fair to say that the obituary notice for the king on page 1 1 "he wes ane learned and religious wyss prince" has been carefully worded, and the meaning of this phrase is open to debate. In contrast, the passage on page 6/6 which records James I's proclamation as King of England is not ambiguous - it is a factual statement: "Thursday 24 of me(r)ch 1603 / The quene of Ingland depairtit and king James ye sext pclamt king y(r)of and bone fyre sett furt in all Scotland". 184 The RPC records that "The first proclamatioun maid in Ingland in his Majesties favour" was on the 24 March 1603. 185

On page 7 there is a record of strife at Perth's great rival, Dundee: "17 Julij 1604 / A great intestine discentioun in dundie The prinll pairteis opposeitis mr Alexr wodderburn clerk and Robert flescher ballie". The RPC indicates that there was an ongoing dispute within the burgh community during 1604: (Acta) "10th April 1604. Dundie. / The magistratis of Dundie aganis certane communes thairof: the first contention betuix the saidis pairties"; (September 1604), "The magistratis contrare the commonis of Dundie: (Act) annulling the pretendit election of magistratis laitlie maid be the saidis commones and dischairgeing the saidis new elected magistratis to use the said office, and chairgeing thame to enter in severall wairds"; 28th Sept. 1604. "Warrand for breking up the toubith dur of Dundie. Denunce the deaconis of Dundie. Proclamation for obeying the magistratis of Dundie". 186 The "Chronicle" seems to make reference to a particular incident within a prolonged period of internal unrest; Torrie notes that "between 1600 and 1610, radical dispute broke out between merchants and craftsmen". 187

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183 Ibid., 159-160.
184 *Chronicle*, 39 (1 1), lines 1-8; 22 (6/6), lines 41-45.
185 RPC, 1st Series, Vol. VI, 549.
186 RPC, 1st Series, Vol. VII, (1885), 1, 12, 14, et.al.
There is an interesting juxtaposition of references on page 7/7. There is an account of plague in Perth between late August 1608 and May 1609, during which time 500 people died. The following note records the excommunication of William earl of Angus and Frances earl of Errol, "for papistrie", in October 1608. In the RPC there is a record of a supplication by the earl of Errol to be permitted to leave Perth on account of the plague: Edinburgh 1st September 1608. *Supplication by Frances, Earl of Errole, as follows: - Conform to the charge given to him, he has kept ward in the burgh of Perth; but, as 'it hes pleasit God in his mercie to visite the said burgh with the contagious seikneis of the pest, and a grite nowmer of houssis ar infectit thairwith, and the said infectioun is spred throughout all the quarteris of the toun, and mony of the speciall inhabitanits thairof ar removit of the toun and reteirit thameselff is to some placeis of grittair suirtie', he prays that his place of ward may be changed. The Lords, having considered two certificates produced in the name of the said Earl, one subscribed by Mr Alexander Lindsay, Bishop of Dunkeld and moderator of the presbytery of Perth, and the other by the bailies and clerk of Perth, testifying that the said burgh is visited as aforesaid, change the Earl's ward from Perth to Errole, as a place 'ewest and neir to the moderatour and bretherine of the presbiterie of Perth, unto whose censure he standis presentlie subject', and declare that this change shall not be prejudicall to the procedingis and censuris of the kirk and presbiterie of Perth aganis him*. 188 It is unlikely to be a coincidence that the chronicler (TH7) chose to describe Errol's eventual excommunication immediately after an account of the plague which forced the presbitery to change his place of detention. It is apparent that an editor must sometimes attempt to read between the lines of the "Chronicle" to elucidate its meaning, and the veracity of its record.

On page 8 there is a record of the execution of the earl of Orkney. As with a few other entries, this information is duplicated later in the manuscript - on page 9 - although in the second note the date of the execution has been omitted. 189 The first entry gives the date as 16 February 1615, but the RPC gives the date as 6 February 1615. 190 Such slight errors could well be accidental mistakes by a scribe copying information from another source, or simply be the result of information being incorrectly passed on to the author from a third party. In contrast, the entry on page 8/8 which records the partial collapse of the Brig of Earn in January 1614, is important because it describes technical details of the bridge; as will be discussed later, this description is a little ambiguous, but undoubtedly valuable. 191

The final entry on page 9 describes in detail a dispute between the burgh and the laird of Moncreiff over fishing rights in the Tay near Friarton. 192 The text records that on 6 May 1615, Moncreiff erected stakes in the "Little Inch" near Friarton, and claimed fishing rights in the "hellocch hoill" beside the fishing of Perth known as the "veill off waist". The burgh authorities reacted

188 RPC, 1st Series, Vol. VIII, (1887) 159.
189 "Chronicle", 28 (8), lines 5-7; 31 (9), lines 40-42.
191 The Brig of Earn is discussed in Part 3, Section 2. i).
192 This incident is discussed below, Part 3, Section 2. i).
swiftly, and cast these stakes into the Tay, "quharupoun ye town and ye lard rasit lau souertie aganes vyris". The index to the town council records supports this account, but indicates that the affair was drawn out over several weeks. On 24 April 1615 there was an "Appointment by the Laird of Moncrieff and the Town to visit the Weill of West"; on 6 May, there was an "Order to remove the stakes put in by the Laird of Moncrieff in the little South Inch with the little timber bridge at the head of the South Inch", and there is a further record of "Proceedings as to Lawborrows against the Laird of Moncrieff", dated to 22 May. 193 From these references it is apparent that the account in the "Chronicle" is a useful, and reliable, summary of events, even though the author (TH1) condensed the time-scale over which the dispute occurred.

At the head of page 9/9 there is an entry of similar length, written in the same style (TH1) as the previous passage, which records the arrest and trial for murder of Alexander Jackson of Waterybutts. Dates are omitted from the account - apart from the year, 1615 - but in other respects the passage is quite detailed. Jackson was arrested by the laird of Inchmartine, brought to Perth, and imprisoned in the tolbooth. The account states that Jackson's friends purchased a letter from the Privy Council "cherging the puest + bailyeis of pth vpo(u)n his auin cherges to transpot him to edr to suffer tyell fo the said fact(s) befoir ye iustice". Jackson was taken to Edinburgh, convicted, and beheaded. The RPC suggests that the transfer to Edinburgh was an awkward process. There is an entry dated 15 June 1615 which records a "Charge aganis the Provest and Baillies of Perthe for exhibitioun of Alexander Jacksoun of Watterybutis". A lengthier record of 22 June provides further details of Jackson's crime, but also records that the authorities of Perth had failed to answer the initial call for Jackson's transfer: "Alexander Jaksoun of Wattery Buttis having cruelly slain Patrik Cok in Newbigging at his own door, and having been apprehended "with the bloodie hand" and committed to the tolbooth of Perth, where he now remains, Charlis Rollog, Andro Gray, Constantine Malice, and Andro Andirsoun, bailies of Perth, had been charged to exhibite the said prisoner this day. - The said magistrates not appearing, and the said prisoner not having been produced, the Lords order the said bailies to be denounced rebels".194 This was a severe punishment, and a detail which the chronicler presumably chose to omit from his account. In the index to the town council records there is a note, dated 20 June, for the "Nomination of persons to convoy Alexander Jackson of Wattrie butts to the secret council on Thursday next".195 The bailies may simply have been unlucky in missing the Privy Council's deadline; the Perth authorities do seem to have been trying to organise Jackson's transfer at the time of the denunciation of the bailies.

Page 10 is dominated by the account of the flood of 1621, but there are several interesting records on this page, including two references to the implementation of the "Five Articles of Perth", which were concluded at the general assembly held in the burgh in August 1618.196 There is a record of the observation of Christmas Day - 25 December 1618 - when "mr Jon guthrie

193 B59/ 17 / 1, 267-8.
195 B59/ 17 / 1, 269.
196 "Chronicle", 28 (8), lines 36-40.
Page 10/10 opens with an account of a naval engagement at Leith in June 1622. This passage tells of a "dunkirk" ship which was chased into the harbour "be ye holland(r)is"; there was a fight which lasted "fra xij at nyt till four in ye morning". A year later "yis schip wes brunit be the holland(r)is". This passage, though essentially accurate, simplifies what would appear to have been a controversial incident, which provoked unrest in Leith and a difficult diplomatic situation for the government. The RPC mentions this affair at length. There is a detailed record, dated 14 June 1622, of the account of the sea-fight which was given to the council by one of the Dutch captains: "Monsieur Hautaine, admirall of Zeland, according to the ordour and directioun gevin unto him, presentit himself this day befoir your Majesties Counsell and exponed the caus of his repair within thir watteris; to wit, That, he having ressaved warrant and commandment from the Estaitis of the United Provinces under quhome he served to attend upoun the fleit of merchand shippis and to defend and protect thame frome the violence and invasioun of thair enemieis, as thay wer upoun thair dew course tawardis thair port, he wes advertised that thair wes some Holland shippis persewite be the Dunkirkaris, thair equippage takin prisonaris, and thair vessells suckin that thay wer bound tawardis the coast of Scotland; quhairupon he maid his addresse hither, and immediatlie after his arrival, quhilk wes in the evening, he wes boordit by a shallop direct frome ane other wauchter quhilk wes lyand in this roade, quho acquainted him that thair wes ane Dunkirkair neir by in that same roade quho had sindrie Flemingis prisonaris within hir, quhome scho wald not delyver, and thairfoir required him according to the dewtie of his office to foirsee and provyde for thair enlargement. Quhairupoun he send his boate unto the Dunkirkair, and in a verie courteous and gentle maner solicited thame that thay wald mak restitution of thair prisonaris, and that the Spaniard, disdaneing to harken to any such propositioun, ansuerit that gif thay had a purpoise to haif thair prisonaris releivit thay behoovit to come aboarde of thame and do it..." In reaction to this response, Hautaine "gaff ordour to haif all thingis in preparatioun and readines, and without ony forder capitulating charged the Dunkirkair and enterit in a most cruell and eager combat with him; lykeas he wes quicklie secondit and backit by tua other wauchters quho wes lyand in the roade, quho undelaydlyie come to his secours; and that this fight continewed fra twelff of the cloke at night quhill three houris in the morning..." 198

The editor of the RPC noted that the ships in Leith harbour represented an ongoing problem for the government, which at this time was attempting to establish good relations with Spain by means of the proposed marriage between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta. "Through most of these entries, indeed, there is evidence of the desire of the Council, under instructions from his

Majesty, to observe the neutrality prescribed by international law in the treatment of the ships of the two belligerents. In the latest of the entries, however, one can discern that, while the leaning of the authorities was generally in favour of the Spaniard, the popular feeling was all in favour of the Dutch.\(^{199}\) The "Chronicle's" account of this protracted episode is misleading in one important respect, for it states that the Dunkirk ship "was burnt by the hollander(is a yeir yairefter quha stayit + keipt hir in". However, the RPC reveals that the ship was attacked by crowds from Edinburgh and Leith. There is a record dated 9 May 1623 which describes "a verie great barbaritie and violence committit upoun Sunday and Mononday last against the poore strangeris and souledeouris being in the Dunkirk ship lyand at the harbourie of Leith be a number of rude, uncivile, and mischeant people..." \(^{200}\) The ship was attacked again in August; a letter of 6 November 1623, written to the Lord Chancellor, states: "...in the moneth of August last, the Kingis Majestie haveing recommendit unto us the trying and punisheing of the insolence and misbehaviour of his Majesties subjectis in that mater of the Dunkirk ship brynt at Leethe according to the nature and qualitie of the severall offensis concurring in that eand, we by our ansuer returnit unto his Majestie excuisit oure selff is anent oure not proceding thairin at that tyme irrespect of the importance of the bussynes, whilk requirit the presence and heirig of a frequent number of the Nobilitie and Counsell, and that the Seasoun of the yeir wes suche that it threatened a laite and bruckle harvest...we haveing considerdit that this persuite and tryall will stryke cheiffly aganis the magistratis and bodie of the burgh of Edinburgh...Your Lordship knowis that thair wilbe a verie gite difficultie in the discoverie of the principall actoris and offendaris in this bussynes, seing we half nane to gif us ony light or informatioun thairin, and these who wer agentis, and thairby pretendit to half Interesse in the same, hes never troublit thame setffis thairwith, nor never dilaitit nor gaff up to us the names of ony one guittie persone, and thay ar now at Courte". \(^{201}\) The "Chronicle" glosses over the political dilemma which the government faced and, it would appear, falsely attributed the burning of the ship to the Dutch, rather than to gangs of locals. It is quite possible that the chronicler (TH7) was misinformed; but as the account is acceptable in other respects, it is likely that the author sought to shift the blame for the ship's destruction away from the Scots.

The penultimate entry on page 10/10 concerns an outbreak of the plague in Edinburgh in November 1624; this record is accurate in its essential details, and adds interesting anecdotal information as well. The RPC, in a passage dated 30 November 1624, records, "Forsamekle as it hes pleasit God to visite the burgh of Edinburgh with some litle infectioun of the fearfull plague of the pestilence, and the concurse of his Majesties subjects in all rankis and from all the corners of the kingdome to the said burgh of Edinburgh for attending of thair adois in Counsall and Sessioun may be ane occasioun of the forder spreading of that seeknes throughout the kingdome if all laughfull meanis be not used quhils by the mercifull assistance of God may praevent the same; and thairfore the Lordis of Secret Counsall hes thought it mete and expedient that the Privie Counsall, Sessioun, and Colledge of Justice, and that all dyetis befoir the Privie Counsall and Justice Generall, in this meantyme sail desert, and all other inferiour judicatories within the burgh of

\(^{199}\) RPC, 1st Series, Vol. XIII, (1896), lvi.
\(^{200}\) Ibid., 218.
\(^{201}\) Ibid., 377-8.
Edinburgh, such as the Commissariat, the Admiralitie, and Shirefship, shall rise this present day and shall not convene again for matters of justice till the sevent day of Januar next year... 202 The passage in the "Chronicle", which is dated "ultimo nouembris 1624", is difficult to transcribe, as there are some omissions from the text. However, it does suggest that there was an exodus of high-ranking officials from Edinburgh at this time; it states that "ye sessione rais and ye chancellor and his familie came to perthe thrie dayis yairefter". Furthermore, the account suggests that the plague was brought to Edinburgh by a man "qua hed brocht money wt ye infectioun from danskyne"; this information is unlikely to be true, but the story may have been current at the time.

There is another notable reference to the plague on page 11 where it is recorded, under the date of July 1625, that "Thair wes yis yeir ane great pest at Londoun so yat yair deit wtin ye citie 1200 in an weik". This mortality figure may be exaggerated, but the account does reflect the tone of references in the RPC, where it is recorded that this outbreak was particularly severe. The plague spread northwards in the autumn, despite the efforts of the Scottish authorities to prevent the infection being transported into the country. In a proclamation of the precautions to be taken by all ships arriving at Scottish ports from London, issued at Edinburgh in July 1625, the outbreak is described as being of "suche a violent and rageing maner as a grite nomber of the streittis of the said citie are infectit thairwith..." 203

The text of page 11 is dominated by accounts of the death of James VI and succession of Charles I, but there are several interesting records, including an account of a "weaponshow" at Perth on 28 December 1625. This passage relates that there were "Tua new ansenyeis maid be the toun", and lists the captains and "beararis of ye ensenyeis". The index to the town council records suggests that preparations for this event began at least a month in advance, and indicates that there was another weaponshow shortly afterwards in January 1626. There is a note dated to 6 December 1625 which records an "Order to produce the Holy Lamb at the Weaponshawing", and the "Nomination of Captains for the Weaponshawing, and Serjeants for the same meeting at the North Inch..." Another note of 20 December records an "Entry as to the ancient colours (or standard)", the "Nomination of persons to be Drummers", and "Other particulars respecting the colours". Two further notes, dated to 9 January and 16 January 1626, refer to a "weaponshawing". This may actually be the same event. 204

Page 11/11 contains lengthy accounts of justice airs which were held in Perth in October 1628 and October 1629, together with information about the use of revenue which was raised through fines set at these courts. These passages complement the records in the RPC of commissions which were given to the justices. The "Chronicle" details the proceedings of these courts, and such information is lacking in the RPC; nevertheless, aspects of the "Chronicle's" accounts can be corroborated by reference to the commissions. The "Chronicle" states that the first justice court began on 6 October 1628, and was held by "Wm eril of Menteithe as justice general". At the end

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202 Ibid., 652.
204 B59/17/1, 323-325.
of the passage it is stated that "This same tyme Andro wilsone being deane of glide wer enterit my Lord Kilcruich The Justice Sir Jon houp + his brother + wyers burgess(s)". In the RPC it is stated, in a record dated 8 August 1628, that "the Lords of Privie Counsell hes appointed his Majesteis courts of justiciarie to be haldin and keepe d throughout the severall shirefdomes of this kingdome upoun the dayses particularie underwritten and by the persouns following, justices and commissioners nominat be his Majestie for keeping and halving of the saids justice courts they ar to say, by Willame, Erle of Monteith, and Mr. Alexander Seatoun of Kilcreuche, for halving of justice courts at the burgh of Perth for the shirefdome thairof and Stewartreis of Stratherne and Monteith upoun the sevint day of October nixto come with continuatioun of dayes..." There is a slight discrepancy between the date given in the "Chronicle" and that in the RPC, but the names of the justices correspond. Similarly, the "Chronicle" records that the second justice court began on 6 October 1629, and was held by "Sir george auchinlek of balmano and mr of kilcruich justices deputt Sir Thomas houp the kingsis advocat being pnt". The RPC includes an "Order from his Majesty specifying the times and places where Circuit Courts are to be held and the persons who are to hold them", dated 21 July 1629, which relates that William earl of Monteith, Sir George Arefleck of Balmano and Mr Alexander Seatoun were to hold the Justice Court at Perth "for the shirefdome of Perth, Kinroscher, and Clackmannen, upon Tuisday the saxt day of October nixto come with continuatioun of dayes..." The "Chronicle" fails to mention the earl of Monteith, but in other respects the two sources agree. 205

The "Chronicle's" comparatively detailed record of the Covenanting crisis begins on page 12 with descriptions of protests against Laud’s service book in February 1638, and the subscription of the National Covenant in March. The passage which records opposition to the new service book is difficult to transcribe, being written in a scrappy hand with several corrections. However, it records that on 21 February (1638) there was a proclamation at the Cross of Stirling "for ressawing of the s(ervice buik + ptestates tane be the erll of home + my lord Lyndesay at ye croce of edr stirling and At ye counsell tabil". The same proclamation was made in Edinburgh on the following day, "qlik wes impedit be sewin erllis And nyne lordis". The editor of the RPC notes that the Privy Council was forced to leave Edinburgh, to escape from popular opposition to the king’s measures: "it sat at Holyrood from January 6 to February 4, 1638; at Stirling, from February 15 to March 24; and at Dalkeith, from May 16 to June 8, 1638. On June 12, as the result of a petition from the town of Edinburgh, it resumed its sittings in Holyrood..." 206 The RPC includes several references to the opposition which was voiced against the service book, even at Stirling: On 19 February 1638, a proclamation was issued "forbidding convocation of the lieges for the purpose of protesting against the service book", and on the following day "The whilk day the Act abovewritten, being presentit to the Lords of Secret Counsell and read in thair audience, they allowed and approved of the act, and in tokin thairof subscryved the same with thair hands". The Council were unable to prevent the convocation of their opponents, and on 3 March virtually admitted defeat: "Finding of Council that, proclamations having failed to prevent the convocation of the lieges, nothing further can be done by means of the said proclamations". A previous notice records the "Unanimous

finding of the Council that the present commotion in the country is due to the introduction of the Service-book, Book of Canons, and the Court of High Commission contrary to the laws of the kingdom*. 207 The passage in the "Chronicle" is, as usual, a summation of events; but it seems to give an adequate reflection of the disruption of the period.

On page 12/12 there are accounts of the tumultuous general assemblies which were held in Glasgow and Edinburgh in November 1638 and August 1639. The account of the first assembly implies that a confrontation occurred between the Crown and the Covenanters by recording, "The marques of hamiltoun comission for the king quha depairtit befoir ye assemblie raise. The record of the second assembly is more direct: "The episcopall gouernament is abiurit The fywe articlis of pth and sindrie wyris noua(o)uns". There is also a mention of the parliament which was convened after the assembly, and which was controversially prorogued by the king. The descent into civil war has been written about extensively; it is sufficient to note here that the few factual details given in the "Chronicle's" accounts are accurate, and the author(s) of these passages (TH7 and TH9) almost certainly inclined towards the Covenanters. 208

The subject matter changes at the base of page 12/12, with two accounts of naval conflicts in 1639. At the head of page 13 there is a detailed account of the murder of Toshack of Monzievaird on the South Street of Perth, in June 1618. The text states that Toshack was attacked by a group led by Laurence Bruce of Cultmalundie, on 20 June, at two o'clock in the afternoon - in other words in broad daylight. Two of Toshack's associates were seriously wounded in the affray, "the ane deidlie hurt bot deit not the uther his richt hand clene strukin fra him". The assaulters fled from the town "befoir any of ye tounis men hard of ony suche thing". This murder is recorded in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, where the author cites both the "Chronicle's" account and another by Sir James Balfour. 209 Pitcairn commented that "The case which follows, affords one among numerous other instances, of the unhappy consequences resulting from the deadly feuds, which occurred almost daily; and strongly points out their prevalence in Scotland, to a very lamentable extent". Balfour's account is less informative than the "Chronicle", and does not provide a date for this incident; but the accounts agree in the essential details of the case: "the Young Laird of Cultmalindie-Bruce, in Perthshyre, killed Toshohe Laird of Minewaird, sister sone to Sir James Campbell of Lawers, in the toune of Perth. Cuitmalindy, the committer of slaughter, fled". Pitcairn's own researches add details to the "Chronicle's" account, but also dispute the actual date of the murder: 'Jul. 29. - Peter Blair, brother-germane to Andro Blair of Gaidrump. Dilaitit of airt and pairt of the ffelloun and crewall slaughter of umqle David Toscheoche, younger of Monyvaird; and Demembring of David Malloche, his Seruand, of his richt hand; committit within the burgh of Perth, upone the xxiiiij day of Junij last." Peter Blair was denounced as a rebel for failing to appear before the justice to answer the charges against him. On the same day "Lawrence Bruce, appeirand of Cultmalundie; Alexander Bruce, his brother; William Oliphant of Gask; Laurence Oliphant his brother; Alexander Fleming of Moness; 207 Ibid., 3, 5, 8-9.
208 See Ibid., vii-xx; B59/ 17/ 1, 378-382.
William Douglas of Annatroche; Johne New, servand to my Lord Oliphant; Donald Patersone, servand to the Maister of Oliphant, and George Tyrie, messinger in Perthe.

Dilaitit of airt and pairt of the above slaughter, &c.

Eduard Toscheoche, elder of Monyvaird, as ffather o vmqle David Toscheoche, younger of Monyvaird, produced the Letters execute and indorsate vpoun Peter Blair, brother-germane to Andro Blair of Gairdram; be vertew quhairof the saidis Laurence, &c. ar denuncet rebellis and put to the horne, for nocht finding of caution for their compeairance this day and place, in the hour of caus, to haif underlyne the law, &c. Vpoun the productioun of the quhilkis Letteris, the said Eduard, with Archibald Campbell, brother to the Laird of Lawers, askit instrumentis; and Protestit for releif of George Bischope of Orknay, cautioner*. The "Chronicle" may be slightly inaccurate in respect of the date of the murder, but otherwise it provides a useful summary of the events; it is not clear from the text that Bruce of Cultmalundie's followers included so many local noblemen, but it is apparent that this assault was the result of a feud, and that it was an embarrassment to the town.

The contents of page 13 consist of records of marriages and deaths, and this is mostly the case on the reverse of the leaf, page 13/13. The first entry on this page records the burial of "Issobell wentoun relict of wmgll Johnne creichtoun of kinved", in 1643, "in ye kirk of pert wnder ye scollaris seat nixt auldeis buriall wpone ye 8 of februar payit yairfoir jc lib qlk wes ordanit be ye counsall and sessioun to by ane coup to ye comunium". Communion cups are mentioned in the New Statistical Account, although it is unclear whether this new cup is included in the list: "the session of the Middle Church are in possession of four communion cups of singularly antique workmanship, chased. They are silver gilt, and have each an unique cover. In 1632, there appears to have been only two. In the session register of that year, we find the following entry: 'May 21, the two silver overgilt goblets with gold, with the covers for the communion, and two basins pertaining to the session, are put within the charter kist in the revestry, there to be kept.' Another of them seems to have been purchased about the year 1639, or soon after, for in a minute of session for that year, April 29, it is 'ordained that the hundred pounds (Scots) paid for permission to bury Lady Stormont in the kirk, shall be employed for the buying of an cup for the use of the communion.' In the following year it is mentioned, that Mr John Robertson gave L.20 'to help to buy the cup'." 210 It may be that the money from Wentoun's funeral was used to supplement Robertson's gift, and that the cup mentioned in the "Chronicle" was the fourth on the list.

Page 13/13 also includes a brief notice of the subscription of the Solemn League and Covenant by the burgh on 5 November 1643; "The new coueuant read sworne + subscryuit be the toun of pth be standing wp + euerie mane wphalding yr hands The women also wer mowit to stande and swear". The RPC includes several passages relating to the new covenant: an order dated 8 October 1643, "ordaining that the Solemn League and Covenant be signed by the Council and all the lieges"; confirmation that the Council had signed the Covenant on 2 November 1643, and a further notice dated 4 November 1643 which states that "the Council acquainted the Committee of Estats with the letters they had reseaved frome the noblemen who were written to to come in

210 NSA, Vol.X. Perth. (1845), 60.
and subscriye the Covenant*. 211 Strangely, there is no notice in the index to the town council records of the subscription of the covenant at Perth.

Pages 14-16/16 contain the bulk of the "Chronicle's" account of the years of civil war in the 1640s, and this material will be discussed at length later in the thesis. Most of the information relates directly to Perth, but one of the most interesting passages which concerns events elsewhere records the sack of Aberdeen by Montrose on Friday 13 September 1644. The "Chronicle" states that "The Toun of aberdene tape in be montroiss great blude shede on both sydes god help it and amend it in his awin gude tyme". 212 Stylistically, the "Chronicle of Perth" has little in common with The History of the Troubles... by John Spalding of Aberdeen, but it is instructive to compare the brief notice in the "Chronicle" with the lengthy account of the sacking which appears in Spalding's history; the phrasing in the "Chronicle" reflects the lamentations of the eye-witness record. Spalding was loyal to the king, and an opponent of the magistrates of Aberdeen; however, despite this bias, it is clear from his account that Montrose's forces ravaged Old and New Aberdeen, in a four day period beginning on Friday 13 September: "The Livetennand followis the chais in to Abirdene, his men hewing and cutting don all maner of man thay could overtak ( within the toune, upone the streites, or in thair houssis, and round about the toune, as oure men wes fleing, ) with brode suordis but mercy or remeid. Thir cruell Irishis, seing a man weilt cled, wold first tyr him and saif the clothis onspoylit, syne kill the man. We lost thrie peice of cannon with muche goode armour, byesidis the plundering of oure toune houssis, merchand buithis and all, whiche wes pitifull to sie...Aluayes Montrois follouis the cheas in to Abirdene, leaving the bodie of his army standing clois unbrokin whill his returne, except such Irishis as faucht the feild. He had promest to them the plundering of the toun for thair good service. Aluaies the Livetennand stayit not, bot returnit bak fra Abirdene to the camp this samen Frydday at nicht, leaving the Irishis killing, robbing and plundering of this toune at thair plesour. And nothing hard bot pitifull houling, crying, weiping, muming, throw all the streittis". 213

The final folios of Section 2, from p.17 to p.19, are dominated by records of marriages and deaths, and it is usually difficult to compare such material with other sources; the "Chronicle" is virtually the only extant source of information about deaths in Perth in the 1650s and 1660s. However, some of the anecdotal information in these pages appears in other material. The most detailed passage on page 17 concerns the proclamation of Cromwell as Lord Protector on the "Duodecimo maij 1654". This record is preceded by a note that General Monck arrived in Stirling on the 'penultimo Aprilis 1654'. At Cromwell's proclamation, "The act of gras and sym wyeris paperis also red be patrik ross and henrie broun notar(i)s Proclamit be Andro he___ baxter Be sound of Trumpetis". This took place "wpone ane stage of tymber rigt beneath ye court of guaird being hungin wt tapestrie". The index to the town council records adds further details 214: Monck

211 RPC, 2nd Series, Vol. VIII, (1908) 6, 10, 11.
212 "Chronicle", 52 (15/15), lines 7-12.
213 John Spalding, The History of the Troubles...1624 to 1645, Bannatyne Club, Volume II, (1829), 264-5.
214 B59/ 17/ 1, 425.
seems to have been in Perth by 9 May 1654, and an entry dated 11 May records "Acts in reference to ("affixing of certain papers on the most public places" ed.) and that the place where the printed papers are to be exhibited being decorated with tapestry of such can be found within the burgh and that with all due solemnity... Appointment of Andrew Henry to be proclaimer of said papers and James Corbie to be Reader thereof". Corbie's name does not appear in the "Chronicle" passage. The papers which were published and read are listed as:
*Act as to proclamation of the above the first being proclamation of Oliver Cromwell to be Protector dated at Whitehall 16th September. 1653.
Ordinance for uniting Scotland into a commonwealth.
Ordinance of Pardon and Grace to the people of Scotland.
Ordinance for settling the Estates of Several excepted persons -
Ordinance for Erecting Baron Courts in Scotland.
Act by the Commander in Chief for pardoning such as will come off."

Although this material is dated to 12 May, the index states that the public reading of these documents took place in Perth on 22 May: "Reading of the above in presence of the Regiments and officers and Council of the Burgh, with firing of cannon". This information corresponds with that given in the "Chronicle", although the date "Duo decimo maij" seems to refer to the 12th of that month rather than the 22nd.

Amongst the records of deaths, one of the most interesting occurs at the head of page 18/18, where the death and burial in Perth of the bishop of Dunkeld, in April 1665, is noted. The "Chronicle" states that the bishop died on 5 April, and was buried on the 17th. However, preparations for the funeral are noted in the index under the date 3 April. 215 Another record on p. 18/18 records the admission of Mr Mungo Law as minister at Perth on 1 June 1665. The index notes Law's admission, but in a note dated to 24 July 1665. A subsequent passage, dated 27 May 1667, records "Proceedings on the Report as to the vicarage to be given to Mr Mungo Law as enjoyed by the late Bishop of Dunkeld". 216 The index also provides information about the minister Mr William Lindsay. The "Chronicle" records that on 7 April 1668, "mr williame lyndsay mister at Transportit yairfra Admittit yis day mr williame barclay maid sermon ye chapter of Isay vers many of ye presbiterie wer pnt" (18/18, 61). The index states, in a record dated to 13 April 1668, "Order to pay for the dinner at admitting Mr William Lindsay to be Minister". 217 This material relates quite straightforwardly to that given in the "Chronicle"; However, it is noticeable that there are some discrepancies between the sources in the records cited here.

215 Ibid., 479.
216 Ibid., 483, 512.
217 Ibid., 524.
Conclusion:

This survey suggests that factual inaccuracies in passages of Section 2 tend to be relatively innocuous. Whilst a researcher must cross-reference information cited in the "Chronicle" with other extant contemporary material, and be aware of flaws in the quality of the "Chronicle's" information, nevertheless, the text is well informed and often provides useful syntheses of events. The tone of this text is rarely radical - the authors' opinions tend to be implied in the style and contents of their reports, rather than openly expressed. This is certainly a problem for an historian, as the brevity and understatement of some passages can be misleading if they are not read with caution. The researcher is often left to interpret the authors' meaning - a subjective process which can lead to false conclusions. In instances where the "Chronicle" is the only source of information, an historian - or an archaeologist - must qualify his use of the text. Some of the chroniclers' prejudices can be identified - for example, it seems clear that the authors of pp.14 -16/16 were sympathetic to the cause of the Covenanters. But when the language of the "Chronicle" is circumspect - particularly in regard to the burgh's relationship with the Crown - it is harder to discern the authors' meaning, and consequently the veracity of the source. It must be stressed that it is often difficult to separate questions of factual accuracy from considerations of the intended meaning of passages; I have identified several examples of the omission of important information from particular passages. It may not be possible to judge whether such omissions were deliberate, but they colour the quality of parts of the "Chronicle".

However, in conclusion, it is apparent that the "Chronicle of Perth" is a valuable source, composed by authors who had a broad range of interests, and access to a wide variety of information. The material often compares favourably with other contemporary sources in terms of the basic accuracy of its factual content; and although a researcher must constantly question the reliability of the record, the text can often be challenging.
Illustrations, pp. 90 - 102:

Illustrations 1 - 4 are reproductions of the fly-leaves in John Mercer's eighth and ninth protocol books:

1. B59/1/18A
2. B59/1/18B
3. B59/1/19B
4. B59/1/19A

Illustrations 5 - 11 are photographs of pages in the "Chronicle" manuscript, Adv. MS. 35.4.4.

5. Page 2. The Text Hand on this page is TH1; the margin notes are written in MH1 (TH8).
6. Page 3. The text is written in TH1, the margin notes in MH3.
7. Page 8. The text on this page is all written in TH7; the margin notes are in the same hand, MH6 (TH7).
8. Page 13. The first three entries are written in TH1; thereafter the text is in TH7. The margin notes are all in MH6.
9. Page 15. Most of the text on this page is in TH9/10. The last three paragraphs are in TH9/11. The margin notes are in MH6, apart from the note "battell of Tipper-moor", which is in MH1 (TH8).
10. Page 19. The text is in TH6, with one passage (concerning Andro blaknes) in TH6b. The signature of John Mercer can be clearly seen beneath the third paragraph.
11. The watermark on the leaves of the "Chronicle of Perth".

Illustrations 12-13 are drawings of various "pot" type watermarks, reproduced from:
[Handwritten text from a historical document, likely in Latin, with no clear legible content due to the style and quality of the handwriting.]
WATERMARKS

1. After Briquet

2. After Churchill
3. After Heawood

3553 3565 3580 3581 3582

3604 3605 3606 3607 3608 3609

3610 3611 3612 3613 3614

3615 3616 3632
PART 2: History *and* Archaeology
Three Readings of the "Chronicle of Perth":

The "Chronicle of Perth" is a challenging historical source, but how might it be used by researchers? The manuscript can be read and interpreted in a variety of ways. The interests and prejudices of an urban historian may differ significantly from those of an urban archaeologist; but a source of such diverse character should be of use to both types of researcher. This thesis is intended to examine the potential of the "Chronicle" as an archaeological source. It is the contention of my approach that historical sources can be used in advance of archaeological investigation to pose archaeological questions, to provide guidelines for research, and indeed to provide archaeological information. The purpose of this section is to examine the value of the "Chronicle" in the context of the work of an historian (Professor Michael Lynch), and of an archaeologist (Mr Geoffrey Stell), and then to indicate how the manuscript may be used to initiate archaeological enquiry. Thus, the third chapter seeks to suggest new perspectives from which historians and archaeologists may study this source - and, perhaps, other original material.

1. The "Chronicle of Perth" and Recent Historiography

Note: In this chapter, a survey of the work of Prof. Michael Lynch concerning the Scottish Early Modern Town is juxtaposed with material from the "Chronicle".

In a series of articles written over the course of the past ten years, Dr Michael Lynch has attempted to set a new agenda for the study of Scottish urban history. His call for detailed work on the "Early Modern Town", and for the integration of urban history into revisionist studies of "the changing balance of power between centre and localities", has remained largely unchanged since it was first made in 1984. At that time Lynch posed the fundamental question, "Whatever Happened to the Medieval Burgh?"; in 1991 he declared that this question had yet to be answered. However, he has suggested that it may be addressed by an examination of the stresses experienced in the institutions of the medieval burghs, in the era prior to 1660. Lynch has tried to lead historians away from studies of the "Pre-Industrial Town" - "in which interest concentrates on the rapid abandonment at some point in the later seventeenth or the eighteenth century of the restrictive features in the institutions and structure of the medieval burgh" - towards the "Early Modern Town" which preceded it. However, such labels can raise artificial boundaries for historians, and Lynch has been concerned to examine the notion of continuity in urban history, rather than selective periods of radical institutional change.1

Lynch has argued strongly for reappraisal of the source material. In comparison with the medieval period, documentary evidence increases significantly for the 16th century, but "is usually too incomplete to give a detailed or all-embracing picture of urban society before the later seventeenth century".\(^2\) Despite such restrictions, new questions can be asked of the material; Lynch has drawn particular attention to how "understanding of the twelfth century burgh has been transformed by rigorously applying to it the notion of the market. The same has yet to be done for the sixteenth or early seventeenth-century burgh".\(^3\) Lynch has identified five central problems which together form "the backdrop against which urban history in this period was shaped": the market economy; urban population increase; price inflation; politics and patronage; taxation increases.\(^4\)

Furthermore, urban history has to be set in the general context of social and political history; the early modern period encompasses the Reformation, the covenanting crisis, the Cromwellian occupation, and further upheavals as a consequence of the Restoration.

The effects of the Covenanting crisis and the Cromwellian occupation upon individual burghs have not been examined in detail, and Lynch comments that this has had the effect of "obscuring the relationship between the Scottish economy in the first and second halves of the century as well as disguising the reasons behind the changing fortunes of the major burghs".\(^5\) It is at least clear that the Covenanting and Cromwellian regimes introduced great strains upon burgh finances. But Lynch questions whether the revolution years also brought new opportunities and, if so, were they met by new groups within urban society? In general terms, Lynch argues that the early 17th century witnessed a greater volume of overseas trade than the later decades of the century. The 1640s and 1650s may be seen as an interlude in the growing confidence which characterised the economies of many towns in the early 17th century; in the Restoration period there was a partial recovery after the mid-century crises.

**The Economy of Perth**

According to Lynch, the economy of early modern Perth was unusual in the Scottish context. Several themes emerge from his work: the role of Perth as one of the "Four Great Towns of Scotland" in the medieval period, and its gradual fall in the wake of the rise of Glasgow; the relatively small part played by the burgh in overseas trade, together with the predominantly inland character of its trading activities; and the difficult relationship between merchants and craftsmen in the town. Perth was essentially a "craft town"; "it was pre-eminently an inland town dominated by its manufacturing trades. These served both its own population, which was probably growing at a modest rate in the sixteenth century, and a rural hinterland which extended beyond the sheriffdom".\(^6\) In this respect it had more in common with English towns than with its Scottish rivals.

\(^2\) Lynch 1988, 262.
\(^3\) Lynch 1986, 1.
\(^4\) Lynch 1984, 12.
\(^5\) Lynch 1986, 7.
\(^6\) Lynch 1988, 271.
Although Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee and Perth held sway as the leading towns of Scotland for over three centuries, Perth's position in this hierarchy seems to have become increasingly unstable during the 16th century. In the 1590s the combined share of customs revenue of the four leading towns was 80% of that collected by all Scottish towns, compared with 58% in the 1370s. But if these figures represent a tightening of the leading burghs' economic control, Lynch's analysis also indicates that Perth's contribution to this total was relatively modest.

Edinburgh was the foremost burgh, with an average customs revenue in the period 1460-1599 of over 59% of the national total. Aberdeen's average was nearly 12%; Dundee averaged 6.5%. Perth's average was just 2.86% of all revenue. Similarly, in the average of total taxation raised by the burghs between 1535 and 1594, Edinburgh raised 26.81%, Dundee 11.54% and Aberdeen 9.02%. Perth raised 6.9% of the national total; it was resolutely the fourth of the "leading burghs" of 16th century Scotland.7

Lynch offers a brief analysis of Perth's economic decline in the 17th century. In the early decades of the century there seems to have been a growth in trade - both overseas and domestic - followed by at least partial collapse during the mid-century crises. Perth and Dundee may have suffered particularly as a result of war and plague, but more research is required into this matter. The economic fortunes of the burghs in the first half of the 17th century are "masked" by the continued use of the 1612 roll as the basis for taxation on the burghs until 1649. But despite the problems with the evidence, it is clear that Perth's economic status declined against the rise of Glasgow. That burgh was fifth in the economic ranking from 1594 until 1649, when it finally displaced Perth; by 1670 it had overtaken Aberdeen and Dundee. In the last quarter of the 17th century the Scottish urban economy was dominated by just two towns - Edinburgh and Glasgow - rather than by four.8 Perth's staple industries declined throughout the second half of the 17th century, and the burgh's relative fall in terms of national status and prosperity may have had a profound effect upon burgh life.9 The "Chronicle of Perth" was written in a period of local economic recession, when the burgh was also deprived of the national prominence to which it had been accustomed. The later 17th century may have marked a fundamental change in the fortunes of Perth and in the character of burgh life. Is such an upheaval represented in the text?

Perth suffered in severe outbreaks of plague and subsistence crises, but the town did not suffer economic hardship alone. All towns had to compete with the dominance of Edinburgh in overseas markets; this led to specialisations - in trade or in manufacturing - which gave each of Edinburgh's rivals their distinctive characters. The larger burghs were well placed to profit from their status as regional markets. Interaction with their rural hinterlands gave the urban centres "a broad economic structure with a base in the food, drink and clothing trades which was not easily affected by temporary shifts in trade patterns".10 In order to maintain their superiority over burghs such as

7 Ibid., 268-9.
8 Lynch 1986, 4.
9 Ibid. 12.
10 Lynch 1988, 270.
Haddington and Montrose, Aberdeen, Dundee and Perth sought to consolidate their economies by paying particular attention to domestic markets.

Perth was the most inward-looking of the leading burghs. Whilst Aberdeen and Dundee, as coastal ports, continued to profit in some overseas markets, Perth was increasingly restricted from engaging in export trade by the silting-up of the Tay. Although the harbour at Perth was developed in the early modern period, international shipping at the port apparently diminished. In 1560 the craftsmen of the town claimed that Perth was a "dry town", "far from the sea”.11 But does the "Chronicle of Perth", or known archaeological evidence, corroborate this claim? Lynch - who has considered archaeological evidence - emphasises that Perth was primarily a manufacturing centre which served a large domestic market. The hammermen were the largest craft incorporation, producing domestic utensils for the local market and agricultural tools which were purchased as far away as Inverness. The leather workers also had a wide market, and some bakers may have acted as wholesalers, supplying grain and flour to noble households. The local market probably lay "within fifteen miles' range", but it is evident that the burgh's trading connections extended throughout the Lowlands. Perth appears to have been the most vigorous domestic manufacturing centre in 16th century Scotland and, possibly in common with Glasgow, was "to some extent immune to the shifts in foreign trade and accordingly prospered modestly".12 The concentration on manufacturing secured Perth's ranking amongst the leading burghs until 1649. However, in the later 17th century even the crafts fell into decline: "it is difficult to find in Scotland before the eighteenth century examples of towns - outside Edinburgh or Glasgow - which grew because of specialisms in manufactures... It is a good deal easier to find towns - like Perth, or Linlithgow and Stirling, which both complained in 1692 of the collapse of their inland trade - whose staple industries, usually in metal or cloth, had fallen into long-term decay".13

Perth's economic character was reflected in its social and political make-up. Because Perth was a "craft town", the craftsmen sought parity of status with the burgh's merchants and representation on the town council. In the mid-16th century Perth experienced one of the most dramatic confrontations of the period between Scottish merchants and craftsmen. The craftsmen paid as much tax as the merchants, and had infiltrated the merchant guildry by at least the middle of the 15th century; in the mid-16th century they became the first craftsmen in any of the major burghs to gain direct representation on the town council. The merchant community of Perth was unlike that of other major burghs; it largely comprised "inland merchants", as a result of the long-term decline of Perth's overseas trade. There was a much narrower differential between merchants and craftsmen in Perth than elsewhere; indeed, there was "a distinct blurring in Perth of the traditional boundaries between craftsmen manufacturers and merchant retailers; the craft documents even talk of "merchant craftsmen", especially amongst the leading trades, metal workers, goldsmiths, baxters and skinners".14 The craftsmen's success in their political campaigns reflected a general -

11 Ibid., 271.
12 Ibid., 271-2.
13 Lynch 1986, 12.
14 Ibid., 10; Lynch 1988, 271.
if short-lived - economic trend which temporarily favoured manufacturers rather than retailers. But in
the second half of the 16th century the fortunes of some Perth crafts seem to have waned. The
hammermen and baxters claimed precedence in civic ritual, but after 1550 these crafts entered a
long period of decline. By the 1690s, just 4% of the Perth manufacturing labour force were
hammermen; "Perth was a craft town whose leading crafts gained political power before 1550 but
lost economic status thereafter". 15

Section 4 of the "Chronicle" - the "Register of Deaths" - lists many of the occupations of
the townspeople. Appendix 1 (See below, pp. 150 - 3) indicates the predominance of
craftsmen in the register. 9 merchants are listed, 5 notaries, 1 advocate and 1
schoolmaster. Amongst the craftsmen are 18 maltmen, 13 skinners, 13 tailors, 4 glovers,
3 millers, 3 fleshers and 2 masons. There are 2 hammermen and 5 baxters recorded in
this list of the 1660s. The influence of the craftsmen in Perth may be inferred from the
entry in the "Chronicle" dated 12 December 1613 which records that, "The four comoun
myltnes The south and north Inches and hall fishingts belonging to ye toun of pthe set to
taktsmen merchants + craftsman for xbx yeirs to ye 1631 yelr of god for defraying ye 40 m
mark of debt". 16 In this instance, a clear distinction was drawn between merchants and
craftsmen; but these groups seem to have held equal status, and members of both were
prosperous enough to hold tacks of the burgh's property.

Perth experienced mixed economic fortunes in the period leading up to its displacement by
Glasgow as a "leading burgh". After 1649, the prevailing economic climate in the town and its
locality was one of recession. Lynch has characterised the second half of the 17th century as a
period of general upheaval within burgh society; the effects of growing domestic competition and
increasing national taxation were compounded by periodic subsistence crises and outbreaks of
disease. Lynch - who has used Maidment's edition of The Chronicle of Perth as a reference
source - suggests that the burgh of Perth suffered particularly from the competition of rival market
centres, and from natural disasters. Are his ideas borne out by the "Chronicle"? Conversely,
should his work influence a reading of the manuscript?

General Economic Trends

Population:

The five main problems which Lynch has identified as the means to investigate the fate of the
medieval burgh lie at the heart of a study of the early modern Scottish economy. Increase in urban
population was an important cause of change within burgh society. The evidence for population
levels is largely unsatisfactory until the hearth and poll tax records of the 1690s: "In practice
sixteenth and seventeenth century tax rolls probably reveal, at best, only 40% of the male working
population". Some social groups conspicuously fail to appear in the records - notably the poor and
lawyers - and the occupational structure of burgh societies may be difficult to establish.

15 Lynch 1986, 10.
16 "Chronicle", 27 (8).
Furthermore, Lynch is wary of associating population growth with economic growth; in Edinburgh there appears to have been only a modest population increase prior to 1500, in a period of unrelenting economic development.17

Despite the limitations of the evidence, Lynch suggests that there was at least a doubling of population in many of the royal burghs during the course of the 16th century. Population growth on such a scale inevitably provoked change in the institutions and working practices of the burghs. Lynch asks wide-ranging questions: what were these changes, and how did they affect burgh life and the urban economy?18 The era of change was symbolised by the gradual break-up in the larger towns of the single-parish; the corpus christianum of the burgh became subdivided between several burgh kirk.

The "Chronicle" only provides information about the population of Perth in relation to crises. The manuscript records that between September 1584 and August 1585, 1427 people died in an outbreak of plague in the burgh; between August 1608 and May 1609, 500 died during another outbreak. Without details of the number of households in the burgh, it is difficult to suggest an overall population total from such figures, but they clearly represent significant mortality rates. The "Chronicle" also records that between midsummer and Michaelmas of 1623, during a period of dearth, "x or xij deit ordinarlie euerie day...wtin yis burt"; if this account is correct, then upwards of 1000 inhabitants died from hunger or associated disease. The only information in the text concerning households appears in the account of the inundation of 1621, when the residents of the Castle Gable area were threatened with drowning, "about iijc soules".19

Inflation:

The era of dramatic population increase also witnessed severe price inflation. The dimensions of this inflation, like the scale of population increase, are difficult to determine, but Lynch suggests a fourfold increase in general prices between 1550 and 1625, and a tenfold increase in grain prices between 1535 and 1635. In a period of recurrent food shortages in many areas, as well as rising population, there were winners and losers in burgh society, for there was no correlation between wages and prices. There was consistent opposition to the establishment of a compulsory poor rate, and burgh authorities tended to use a cheap food policy as an alternative. Curiously, although food shortages caused hardships, there was little urban unrest.20

17 Lynch 1988, 263. 
Medieval Town, 4.
Lynch 1991, 75.
19 "Chronicle", 12 (4), 26 (7 /7), 37 (10/10), 36 (10).
Information in the "Chronicle" about prices is given in relation to subsistence crises. During the "deir" summer of 1525, "ye boll of maill gaiff xxvij_ 8_; in 1612 there was "great dearthe" from Michaelmas to November, "The wictuall at 10 lib ye boll". In 1621, the failure of the harvest and the inundation of October caused "great skairstie of cornes"; the situation was remedied by "abondance of eforane wictuall...yit it galff 12 lib 20 mok ye boll bear and peass meall 16 m[ ][k].\textsuperscript{21}

Taxation:

The medieval burghs were unused to heavy national taxation; the reformed Church was under-funded partly because of the burghs' reluctance to raise taxes on its behalf. However, from the later 16th century onwards, the Crown began to exert increasing pressure on townsmen, notably in the form of taxation. Such pressure gained momentum during the course of the 17th century; if finance "lay at the root of the burghs' grievances with the Caroline regime", the towns were subjected to even harsher exactions during the Covenanting period and Cromwellian occupation. Lynch argues that the burghs' closer involvement with central government in the early modern period hastened the "reshaping" of the medieval burgh; "One of the most important factors in bringing to an end the distinctively medieval burgh community was...the pressure exerted upon it by the crown".\textsuperscript{22}

Lynch asks two fundamental questions of the evidence for an increase in the urban tax burden: what was the size and distribution of the burghs' taxable population, and what steps were taken to accommodate burgh government to more regular taxation? The evidence is often incomplete and unsatisfactory, but "The phenomenon which most clearly distinguishes the characteristically medieval burgh of the late fifteenth century from the early modern town emerging by the late sixteenth century was the size of its taxable population".\textsuperscript{23} By charting the process of transformation from medieval burgh to pre-industrial town, Lynch has identified patterns of change within the institution of the burgh, despite his professed concern to study "continuity"; however, the overall effect is to emphasise the dynamics of urban development - a constant feature of town life.

Urban Society:

The state of the economy shaped the structure and make-up of burgh society. The prominence of manufacturing or retail defined the character of certain burghs, and in a sense separated towns from the countryside. The evidence is, as usual, partial and restrictive, but it is apparent that economic diversification led to significant differences between some burghs, in terms of their occupational structure and, consequently, in the shape of their merchant guilds. Lynch urges that

\textsuperscript{21} "Chronicle", 10 (3 / 3), 27 (8), 36 (1 0).
\textsuperscript{22} Lynch 1986, 17; Lynch 1991, 78.
\textsuperscript{23} Lynch 1984, 10-11.
closer attention should be paid to under-studied groups in urban society - lawyers or the poor - and to crafts which went into decline, such as metal-working and textile manufacture.24

Craftsmen rose to prominence in the larger burghs - particularly in Perth and Edinburgh - during the 16th century. Lynch writes of a "craft aristocracy" - including tailors, goldsmiths, skinners and surgeons - which emerged, and which necessitated the enlarging of the burgh oligarchies to accommodate craft representation. Relations between different crafts could be strained; but Lynch seeks to dispel the notion that there was recurrent strife between urban merchants and craftsmen - although in the mid-16th century there was a bitter power struggle between Perth's manufacturers and retailers. Instead, he directs attention to "shifts in status of one craft against another"; "The craft aristocracy which had been moulded in the circumstances of the late fifteenth century was itself being refashioned and that was as much at issue in late sixteenth-century controversies as political rivalry between craftsmen and merchants".

In a period when the boundaries between wholesalers and retailers were changing there was, nevertheless, an identifiable "Scottish mercantile community" by 1600, "with wide-ranging contacts between different towns and established patterns of business practice". Once again, however, Perth was a little unusual, for there the boundaries between merchants and craftsmen became less distinct during the later 16th century than before the political crises of its middle years.25

An Overview of Economic Changes

Lynch portrays the history of the Scottish economy in the late medieval and early modern periods as being characterised by short eras of decline in both manufacturing and trade, contrasting with the steady enlargement of the leading burghs. Away from the largest towns, the later medieval period witnessed general stagnation in the urban economy; recovery did not arrive until the last quarter of the 16th century. In this period, the four great towns distanced themselves from their rivals in terms of economic diversification and social structure. Edinburgh was the dominant economic power, principally as a result of its control of overseas trade. The "middling" towns of Scotland appear - from the evidence of tax rolls - to have been subjected to recurrent, short-term crises during the 16th century, whereas the leading exporters were protected, to a certain extent, from weakness in the domestic economy. The significance of the export markets is reflected in the relative fortunes of merchants and craftsmen in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the late 15th century there was a decline in exports and a fall in merchants' profits; consequently urban craftsmen enjoyed increased influence and prosperity. In the later 16th century, the trend was reversed; the export trade grew again and the wealth of overseas merchants increased.

24 Lynch 1986, 3. Note. John Mercer was a lawyer.
25 For merchants and craftsmen see:
Lynch 1984, 12-17.
significantly, at a time of sluggish demand for manufactured goods, rising food prices and outbreaks of plague which combined to depress the craft economy.

The leading burghs experienced mixed fortunes during the 17th century. By the last quarter of the century the urban economy was dominated by Edinburgh and Glasgow, although the former faced numerous difficulties as a result of the Revolution, which "dealt a telling blow to Edinburgh's growing monopoly of trade and credit, which had so characterised the first forty years of the seventeenth century". Glasgow rose to prominence at the expense of Perth and Dundee in particular. The collapse of the Dutch trade compounded the problems of these burghs, and in the Restoration period they failed to benefit from new patterns of trade with Spain and the Americas, whilst trading routes to the Baltic, Netherlands and France were concentrated on Edinburgh's port of Leith.

The mid-century crisis of the Revolution led to "The break in the stranglehold of the four east-coast regional centres over the Scottish urban economy". In the early 17th century, the economies of many towns developed amidst "widening patterns of investment and opportunity". Lynch argues that the early 17th century saw "a volume of overseas trade and a concentration of wealth and credit in the hands of the urban merchants which was greater than later in the century". The Revolution disrupted the development of the export trade; the Restoration heralded a period of partial recovery, although one in which the relative fortunes of the leading towns varied considerably. Perth displayed few signs of recovery before the 1690s. It is important to note that the Revolution crisis effectively lasted for two decades, and that war brought subsistence problems and disease to many burghs and their hinterlands; Dundee and Aberdeen were both sacked.

The "Chronicle" records that between September 1644 and March 1646, fourteen different regiments and companies quartered at least once within Perth. The chroniclers complain only about the armies of Montrose and Argyll, which occupied the burgh in September 1644 and caused great damage to both town and country; these were possibly the largest forces to be stationed at Perth during the Covenanting wars. Perth was permanently occupied during the Cromwellian period, and the "Chronicle" gives some impression of the disruption which this caused. The text does not describe the building of the citadel on the South Inch, but does record its partial destruction by fire in 1656. The citadel was the most visible sign of the Cromwellian presence, but descriptions of the ceremonies held in 1654 and 1658 to proclaim the Protectorate indicate that Perth - now controlled by a military governor - was garrisoned by parliamentary infantry and cavalry. The burgh was also garrisoned in the Restoration period, as indicated by the record of a curious case of manslaughter: "fyftene of may 1667 being wodensday Ane capitane boyd of the Comissionars law guard buried in the grayfreiris deid of scutt of ane bullet in his

28 Lynch 1986, 8.
27 Ibid., 4.
29 Lynch 1986, 3.
Government and Society:

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the governmental structure of the Scottish medieval burgh was gradually transformed. The increase in population, which many burghs experienced, provoked change; so did the rise of the craft aristocracy. However, the Reformation may not have marked a watershed for burgh government; Lynch suggests that, except for the case of Perth, the urban Reformation was "a respectable bourgeois revolution which confirmed power in traditional hands". The most significant catalyst of change seems to have been the Crown, not the Church. The customary institutions of the burgh - the parish church, merchant guild and head court - survived the upheavals of the mid-16th century; but by 1600, the interference of central government in burgh affairs had radically altered the perspectives of urban governing bodies. In the late 16th and 17th centuries these urban elites underwent far-reaching changes, as new social groups gained prominence within the old institutions. The rise of lawyers symbolised the new relations between the Crown and the burghs, for contact between the two was increasingly conducted by lawyers. The reshaping of the "corpus christianum" of the burgh - which had been represented by numerous altars set up in urban parish churches by the powerful craft guilds - reflected the social complexity of post-Reformation burgh society. The break-up of the single parish burgh was symbolic of general changes in the structure of the medieval burgh during the early modern period.

References in the "Chronicle" to the "new" and "west" kirks indicate that the parish kirk of St. John ceased to serve a single congregation. However, there is still a strong sense of community worship in some passages of the text. At Easter 1619, shortly after the passing of the "Five Articles of Perth", the minister, John Guthrie, conducted the communion according to the new liturgy: "The sacrament of ye supper gewin...by mr John Guthrie minister out of his awin hand to all ye peopill and they ressault it on yr knees". Nevertheless, the Five Articles were unpopular in the burgh, and in March 1638 "The confessioun of ye fayt and band of ye new covenant wes subscryuit be ye puest baillies counsalei deaconels and hall inhabitantis of pt and gentrie resident yairn, by sindrie nobillmen barrones commisionarts of burrows and wyers yat subscryuit at edr". Town and country seem to have been joined in affirmation of the National Covenant, and the "Chronicle" provides an impressive - though partisan - portrait of the burgh community acting in unison. On Easter Sunday the covenant was read out in the kirk, "and ye haill kirk + congre(sa)un tane suorne yrto be wphaulding of yair hands". On the following Sunday communion was given "be ye minstrie in ye auld maner"; the chronicler (TH7) (John Mercer) was probably one of the servers. Although it is unclear whether these

30 "Chronicle", 50-1 (1 5), 18 (5/5), 55 (1 7), 57 (17/17), 61 (18/18).
31 Lynch 1991, 80.
32 For references to the "new" and "west" kirks see "Chronicle", 25 (7/7) line 43; 60 (1 8) line 23. For community worship, see ibid., 35 (1 0), 44 (1 2), 48 (13/13).
passages refer to the whole community of the burgh, or to one congregation in particular. It is notable that a strong sense of community - perhaps of the "corpus christianum" - remained, despite changes in the organisation of the church. Similarly, the "Chronicle" records that the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 was subscribed "be the toun of pth be standing wp + euerie mane wphalding yr hands The women also wer mowit to stande and suear". In general, the "Chronicle" suggests that preaching and public worship were significant features of burgh life.

However, although general themes may be found in the history of burgh government, Lynch describes a period of upheaval and diversity. No two burghs were the same, and their social history could be radically different. It is apparent that the consequences of the Reformation in the craft town of Perth were not matched in the experiences of its rivals. There was a general drift towards oligarchical government, but "different routes could be taken towards oligarchy". Indeed, even though burgh governments changed to accommodate new social groups, Lynch argues that power remained "within the inner circles of the urban elite". However, he has also suggested that "power in the burghs rested in a real sense on consent. Head Courts continued to act as a regular re-expression of consensus". The overall picture of burgh society is unclear, and burghs need to be studied individually. But burgh authorities were certainly striving to establish a sense of order in a period of general political uncertainty. Authoritarian and secretive government - on the part of both civil and ecclesiastical bodies - does seem to have been effective; there was less popular disorder in the 17th century than in the 16th.

**Town and Country**

Although the population of most burghs increased steadily, Scottish society remained predominantly rural in character. The burghs were all set within agricultural hinterlands, upon which they were dependent for food supplies, materials and labour. In turn, towns acted as markets and administrative centres. The interaction between town and country is a prominent theme in Lynch's work; it is perhaps the most important social and economic context in which to place a study of the early modern burgh.

Lynch makes some uncompromising claims about the importance of the town and country relationship. It was "a factor which, outside of the rarified atmosphere of the capital, affected almost every aspect of urban life, including its politics". The structural changes in the burghs, from the later 16th century onwards, were partly the result of "the shifting boundaries between town and country". Lynch also makes the rather enigmatic comment that "if there was a fundamental pattern which lay behind the crisis of identity which the burgh community went through in the

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33 Lynch 1986, 13.
34 Ibid., 16.
35 Lynch 1984, 17.
36 Lynch 1986, 25.
37 Lynch 1988, 280.
course of the sixteenth century it probably lay in the shifting relationship between town and country. However, he presents the essential questions which need to be asked of the "intimate and many-sided relationship" in this period. There were, unsurprisingly, marked variations in the relations between different burghs and their hinterlands. Essentially, it is necessary to assess the relative dependence of town upon countryside, and vice versa; some towns - notably Aberdeen and Perth - had more complicated contacts with the countryside than others.

The zones of influence of many royal burghs were subjected to the challenge of rival market towns and burghs of barony during the course of the 17th century, particularly after 1660; regional economies thus became increasingly complicated. Not only does the historian need to identify the extent of the regional influences of the leading burghs, but he also has to chart "the shifting boundaries between provincial or regional centres and the various types of smaller market towns around them". Lynch comments that "More knowledge is needed of the markets they (the burghs of barony and licensed market centres ed.) supplied as well as of the lairds who ran them, their contacts and their provenance". It is also necessary to examine the consequences of disease, crop failure and war upon town and country; in a culture of mutual dependence, the failure of one partner entailed grave consequences for the other.

The only direct reference in the "Chronicle" to a rival market centre concerns the "Raid of Carpow" of 1607, where the townsmen of Perth and Newburgh fought a skirmish. The manuscript does not explain the circumstances of this confrontation, but the burgh community's resort to violence indicates how poor relations could be with its rivals. In 1604, the Burghmuir was the scene of a skirmish between townsmen and villagers from Black Ruthven and Huntingtower, who had infringed the burgh's rights by attempting to cut turfs on its land. In this instance, the urban and rural communities lived in close proximity, but it is an indication of the determination with which the town defended its rights in the local area that "The toun raiss viijc men in armes...and patt yame aff".

The influence of towns and townsmen in the countryside is an under-studied aspect of this topic. Lynch draws attention to the question of investments in rural properties by townsmen. He comments that "The direct investment of urban capital in rural estates, which had been a feature of Aberdeen's history since the fourteenth century, was unusual elsewhere before the eighteenth century". However, although merchants were not generally attracted to purchase rural property, Lynch has identified different aspirations amongst the rising class of lawyers, many of whom did invest their new wealth in the countryside in the 17th century. But if the extent of economic

39 Lynch 1988, 1.
40 Lynch 1986, 5.
41 Ibid., 25.
42 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7), 24 (7).
contact between wealthy townsmen and the countryside is still unclear, there is plenty of evidence of the political interaction which also characterised and influenced the town and country relationship.

During the 15th century, a number of burghs became engaged within the patronage networks of local noblemen or lairds. According to Lynch, "by the sixteenth century the relationship between burghs and landed men had become one of the most important issues in urban politics, perhaps the key relationship which affected all the others". As crown intervention in burgh affairs increased during the 16th century, so towns began to rely more and more on the influence and protection of local lords. For the nobles and lairds who were attracted to the burghs, such association could impart status, and the towns acted as "market places for food, credit and wives; they had schools to attend, tailors to frequent, and collegiate churches with shrines to patronise and be buried in". The nobility could also be influential in promoting the spread of Protestantism within towns. Lynch argues that although burghs were the "growth points" of the reformed church, they "took their cue" from the encouragement of nobles and lairds. In this context, it is important to note that there was an ecclesiastical interaction between town and country too: "Urban parishes emerged within a parochial system that was essentially rural in character, and they remained closely associated with their landward areas".

Although Perth was a firmly Protestant burgh, it is noteworthy that the "Chronicle" records that some of the local nobility continued to worship as Roman Catholics. In April 1604, a mass was said in George Boswall's house in the town, "my lord Inchaffray duelling yair The ladle oliphant pnt h(l)r Tua sisteris Alexr mcbrak burges of pe(r)t pnt The priest wes abercrombie To his name". In 1608 the earls of Angus and of Errol were excommunicated for "papistrie". The local nobility were largely responsible for maintaining traditions of kirk burial; several nobles and lairds were buried in St. John's Kirk.

Numerous records of the marriages or deaths of local nobles and lairds indicate that Perth served as a focus for the propertied men of the countryside, in the manner described by Lynch. However, there are only occasional references to co-operation between the town and landowners. The community of the burgh gathered in numbers in 1615 for the procession of the body of Sir Harry Lindsay; in 1662 the earl of Morton and his brother were both made burgesses of Perth; in the same year the earl of Perth died at Drymen, but was probably buried in Perth; John Paterson of Benchillis, a former provost of Perth, died on his estate in 1665, but his body was returned to Perth, "and putt in ye west kirk and buried on mononday ye Tuentle of nouember 1665".

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44 Medieval Town, 10.
46 Lynch 1984, 8.
47 Medieval Town, 5.
48 "Chronicle", 23 (7), 26 (7/7).
49 Ibid., 33 (9/9), 57 (17/17), 59-60 (18).
The "Chronicle" is more forthcoming in the matter of disputes and conflicts. In 1605, when Lord Drummond was created earl of Perth, the burgh protested "and wer miscontent". In 1615, the burgh authorities acted decisively to prevent William Moncreiff from claiming a fishing of Friarton; in 1592 a band of townsmen stormed the house of Gasconhall in the Braes of Gowrie to free two craft deacons who had been abducted by the laird of Clackmannan. Relations between the town and local nobles and lairds rarely reached such straits; but in 1623 the laird of Balhousie delayed payment of his share of the costs for repairing Lowswork, and in 1630 Sir George Hay, the Chancellor of Scotland, seems to have ignored convention when he built a "summerhouse" on the town wall: "... I think they gaue no tollerance be writt". Perth was the setting for a number of violent confrontations between propertied men. In 1598(9) William Hay was murdered in Andrew Gibb's house in the Kirkgait by the laird of Craighall Rattray; on midsummer day 1618, Toshack of Monzievaird was killed in the Southgait by Laurence Bruce of Cultmalundie. The "Chronicle" records further conflicts beyond the burgh; in 1608 the brother of the laird of Balhousie, heir to the lairdships of Craigle and Kinfauns, was murdered by his wife and her lover; in June 1611 "my lord olphant biggit ane dame to bring in water to ane miln at dupline wpone erne And quhen It wes perfytt ye erll of Tullibardin wt his freindis in ye nyt dang all doun".50

The close association between burghs and lords entailed certain drawbacks, and Lynch questions how the burghs' notions of independence were affected by the attentions of the nobility and of the Crown. During the 16th century, some town councils and kirk sessions were planted with royal nominees - Edinburgh and Perth were the most notable examples. Dundee and Aberdeen, however, escaped the close attention of the Crown. Aberdeen was situated furthest from the capital and, in this context, perhaps benefited accordingly. The burgh also had a particularly intricate relationship with its hinterland. Lynch writes that the Aberdeen patriciate was largely composed of "merchant-lairds", men who had invested in rural estates and married into the local gentry. He also suggests that Aberdeen fared better than most other burghs in the early modern period because it remained "in contact both with the rural craftsmen in its hinterland and its traditional overseas markets".51 Perth, on the other hand, faced the consequences of a direct clash between the trends of Crown intervention and noble patronage.

Court and Country Factions in Perth:

In the late 16th century Perth was the scene of dramatic conflicts between the Crown and the local nobility. The burgh also experienced complicated internal strife in the middle of the century, when the craftsmen of the town clashed with the merchants, and with the Crown. The dispute of the 1540s and 1550s - which centred on the crafts' desire for representation on the town council - was referred "to all the agencies of central government - the Court of Session, privy council, parliament, Convention of Royal Burghs and the court itself". According to Lynch, the dispute "showed the new questioning of burgh authority, by discontented insiders as well as by outsiders, which

50 Ibid., 24 (7), 32 (9), 12 (4), 37 (10/10), 42 (11/11), 19 (6), 46 (13), 26 (7/7), 27 (8).
51 Lynch 1986, 11-12.
accompanied the re-emergence of the burghs on the national stage. He argues that the first half of the reign of James VI witnessed an intensification of a long-term process of "gentrification" of burgh government; in contrast, the second half of the reign saw the retrenchment in burgh government of urban interests at the expense of rural. The pivotal change occurred in 1609, when parliament passed an act against landed outsiders holding burgh offices. Theoretically, this act "brought to an end - at least until the Restoration - the age of noble provosts". However, Perth elected Lord Scone as provost on a regular basis after 1613 and, in general, noble influence in the burghs was not wholly curtailed.

In the middle ages, Perth was an important place of royal residence, and consequently royal involvement in burgh life was not unusual. The "Chronicle" indicates such activity in accounts of the foundation of the Charterhouse by Queen Joan in 1430, and of the burial of James V's mother, Queen Margaret, in that monastery in 1541. To some extent, the royal presence was an ordinary feature of life in the medieval burgh. In this context, James VI's involvement with affairs in Perth was unremarkable. The manuscript records a number of visits made to the burgh by the young James, although the full circumstances of his appearances at Perth are rarely explained. The text states that the king entered Perth in May 1580, and that he held a justice air in the burgh in 1582. It is also recorded that he came to Perth with his new queen, Anne of Denmark, in 1591. The author's sympathies are sometimes a little ambivalent; an entry dated June 1592 records "The read of Faulkland be ye erll bothwall quha assalley(i)t ye king The toun of pert went doun for his defence in feir of weir". It is unclear from this account whether the town supported the king or the earl, although to write of "assault" does suggest that Perth defended the king. The "Chronicle's" epitaph to James VI, that he was "ane learned and religious wyss prince", reveals respect, if not affection. As has already been discussed, the account of the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of 1600 is conspicuously loyal to the king; the reconciliation between the king and the burgh in April 1601 is accorded particular attention.

After 1603 the burgh rarely received a royal visitation. The hand of national government may have been felt within the town, but the royal presence virtually disappeared. James VI's final visit in 1617 is barely recorded in the "Chronicle", although details of his reception at Edinburgh are given. There is a fuller account of Charles I's entertainment in Perth in 1633, following his coronation; but Charles II's presence, and his coronation at Scone in 1651, is not recorded. The letter of 1612, sent to Lord Scone from the Privy Council, requiring that he make an inventory of the disgraced Lord Sanquhar's property in and around the burgh, indicates that the royal will was still present in burgh life. However, the "Chronicle" also records the passing of the act of 1609 which was intended to prevent the election of outsiders as provosts - an act which seems to have been largely

52 See ibid., 60-1, 64-5, 66-7.
53 "Chronicle", 8 (3).
54 Ibid., 12 (4), 11 (3/3), 12-13 (4), 20 (6), 39 (1 1).
56 Ibid., 28 (8), 43 (1 2), 68-9 (21/21 - 22).
ignored in Perth: "In ane pliament haldin at edr It wes ordenit yat ilk burt sould hawe puestis wtin yameselfis Actuall tradismen So the burt of pth chusit James adamsone puest + wes continuelt 3 yer(s)".57

David Murray was created Lord of Scone at a parliament held in Perth in 1604. He appears in several entries in the “Chronicle”, and clearly was one of the most prominent local noblemen associated with Perth in the early 17th century. In June 1604, as “capitane of his malestets guarid + or puest ye tyme”, he led the townsmen of Perth against men from Black Ruthven and Huntingtower. In April 1607, however, he was unsuccessful in an attempt to break-up a synod which was being held in the “new kirk” (probably the nave of St. John’s). In 1612 he “tuik Inuentar of my lord Sangris hous”, and the letter from the Privy Council makes clear that Scone was not provost at that time. But in June 1615, when the body of Sir Harry Lindsay was conveyed from Perth to Coupar Angus, Scone led the community of Perth in the procession as provost. The “Chronicle” records his death in 1631, and his burial at Scone.58

The battle between the Crown and the Gowrie family in Perth symbolises the pressures and uncertainties in burgh government in this period. The Arran regime of the 1580s attempted to secure noble placemen as provosts in seven of the leading burghs of the realm - Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth, Glasgow, Stirling, Dumfries and Cupar. But the earl of Gowrie’s entrenched position in Perth - where his family had held the provostship almost continuously for forty years - prevented his replacement until his fall in 1584, when the earl of Montrose was installed as provost. In the 1580s a succession of royal nominees were used as provosts of Perth, but the burgh elected the 2nd earl of Gowrie as provost in 1590, despite the fact that he was still a minor - and elected him continuously from 1593 onwards, despite his absence abroad. Lynch describes these years as a period in which there was “a vacuum in local power” in Perth. The fragmentary town council records seem to indicate that two opposing factions - court and country parties - developed in burgh politics. Such an “explicit” confrontation was unusual before the troubles of the 1640s, but it is indicative of the complex political relationship which existed between town and country, and between town and Crown.59

The “Chronicle’s” circumspect account of the “Gowrie Conspiracy” suggests that in an open confrontation between the Crown and the local noble patron, the burgh’s support lay with the king. As has already been mentioned, this diplomatic version of events seems to be at variance with other accounts; but it is notable that the chronicler (TH7) chose to side with the king. The earls of Montrose - whose Perthshire estate lay at Kincardine - continued to play a part in burgh life after the fall of the Gowries, and appear in several references in the text. There are three records of burials in the family vault at Aberuthven: In 1597(8), the countess of Montrose was “Conuoyit threu perthe To Aberruthuen”; in 1618 Elizabeth, countess of Montrose, was buried there, followed in 1627 by John, earl of

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57 Ibid., 27 (8).
58 Ibid., 24 (7), 25 (7/7), 27 (8), 68-9 (21/21 - 22), 33 (9/9), 16 (5). For further details concerning St. John’s, see R. Fawcett, A History of St. John’s Kirk Perth (1987), 11-12.
Montrose. This earl is recorded as the convenor of two parliaments at Perth — in 1604 and 1606 — the latter being the “Red Parliament”. James, 1st marquis of Montrose, is recorded in the text as the victor of the battle of Tibbermore in September 1644; his occupation of the town thereafter was unpopular, and the “Chronicle” records that it was a strain upon both town and country. Later in that month Montrose sacked Aberdeen; the record of this period may be contemporary, for the chronicler (TH9) lamented, “god help it and amend it in his awin gude tyme”. It is unusual for the “Chronicle” to express sympathy for a rival burgh; it seems that the marquis was no friend to the burgh of Perth.

Conclusion

The contents of the “Chronicle of Perth” support some of Lynch’s arguments, and his studies can influence the interpretation of certain entries. But is the agenda for urban studies which he has proposed an appropriate context in which to study the manuscript? This essay suggests that in the important sphere of “Town and Country” it is productive to compare Lynch’s studies with analysis of the “Chronicle”. In other respects, however, the results of this survey are more ambivalent.

The Crafts:
The “Register of Deaths” provides some statistical support to Lynch’s portrayal of Perth as a “craft town”, but there is little evidence of the power of the craftsmen within the pages of the “Chronicle”. Similarly, although the unusual relationship between merchants and craftsmen may be inferred from parts of the text, manufacturing and retail industries do not feature in the manuscript. Many craftsmen appear in the “Chronicle”, but the text does not depict Perth as a “craft town”.

Population:
The “Chronicle” contains useful descriptions of some of the crises which were faced by the inhabitants of the burgh; but mortality figures quoted in the text cannot be used on their own to extrapolate credible estimates of the overall population of Perth. Neither is there any information relating to the progressive population increase which Lynch has identified elsewhere.

Inflation:
It is clear from the occasional food prices which are recorded in the “Chronicle” that the recurrent food shortages described by Lynch caused serious difficulties in Perth in the early 17th century. Unfortunately, the “Chronicle” describes inflated prices, and does not give comparative figures for more normal times. The reference to “eforane wictuall” is tantalisingly vague; were these supplies sent from England, or from the continent, by land or by sea? In general, the manuscript provides anecdotal information about the local economy, unlike the detailed customs and taxation records upon which much of Lynch’s analysis is based. National taxation is not mentioned in the “Chronicle”.

60 “Chronicle”, 19 (6), 28 (8), 34 (9/9) and 40 (1 1), 24 (7), 25 (7/7), 50 (1 5), 52 (15/1 5).
Changes in the 17th century:

The "Chronicle's" record of the occupation of the burgh during the Covenanting wars gives a strong impression of disruption. It is reasonable to infer from this source that the mid-17th century crises profoundly affected the wealth and quality of life of the townspeople. But an historian must look elsewhere for details of the changes which were wrought upon the urban economy. Nevertheless, the text does suggest that a sense of community - of the "corpus christianum" - survived as a unifying force in a period of structural change within burgh society. This paradox reflects the curious balance between aspects of "change" and "continuity" which characterise Lynch's studies.

2. The Value of Perth's Buildings

Mr Geoffrey Stell's study of the collapse of Scottish medieval buildings suggests several archaeological perspectives from which the "Chronicle of Perth" may be read. In the context of a survey of the causes of contemporary damage to medieval and early modern buildings, Stell has introduced the notion that, in their day, historic buildings were valued and maintained, or neglected and destroyed, in a similar manner to modern manifestations of the preservation ethic or the wilful destruction of redundant structures. The agencies of destruction, he argues, have remained constant through the centuries; changes in the perceived value of buildings are harder to understand. Stell summarises the "potential agencies of destruction" as: natural phenomena; military activity; vandalism; fire; inadequate planning and construction; poor maintenance, and neglect.

It is instructive to study the "Chronicle" with this list in mind, and to assess the values which the townspeople of Perth - or at least the chroniclers - placed upon aspects of their built environment. Furthermore, Stell writes of "the architecture of landownership in town and country". This phrase encourages a consideration of the expression of the "Town and Country" relationship in the buildings owned by the propertied elite of Perth's hinterland.

Destruction

The "Chronicle" records many instances of damage to buildings of the burgh and its environs; many of the agencies of destruction which have been catalogued by Stell may be found within these entries. Natural disasters - floods, winds and even earthquakes - account for much of the structural damage which is described in the manuscript. Several serious fires are recorded, including the destruction of Dunfermline in 1624, and human error is implied in accounts of the collapse of major bridges. Deliberate destruction is recorded in reference to the Reformation and the Covenanting wars.

62 Ibid., 59-60.
63 Ibid., 67.
Of all the accounts of natural disasters, the most detailed is the description of the inundation of Perth in October 1621. The flood affected both the burgh and its "enceinte*, and the inhabitants were robbed of key buildings. The new Brig of Tay was swept away, and Lowswork on the Almond was also wrecked; within the burgh the gable of the tolbooth collapsed. The inundation appears to have lasted for a week, although the most dramatic damage was sustained at its height, during the week-end of 14-15 October. The chronicler (TH7) commented that "ye lyke in no manes remembrance wes sene". Although this is probably not an eye-witness account, it is clear that the flood was of unusual strength and had a profound effect upon the townscape of Perth.64

Other entries in the manuscript suggest that in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the burgh was plagued by flooding. The "Chronicle" records that two bows of the Brig of Tay and Lowswork were destroyed in an inundation in 1573; in 1607, "The trie bridge wes Tane away". There are also records of the collapse of five bows of the Brig of Tay in 1582(3), and of the falling of "a reik of ye tymer bridge of Tay" in 1601. By 1621, the inhabitants of Perth would have been accustomed to the difficulties of bridging the Tay; a succession of bridges had either been destroyed or inadequately built, and the delapidated condition of the brig was a normal feature in burgh life. Similarly, flooding was a well-known hazard, and the townspeople would have been familiar with its effects. In this context, it seems that the scale of the flooding in 1621 was remarkable; its effects would have scarred the appearance of parts of the town and the surrounding land for many years thereafter.65

The most prominent public buildings of the burgh - the kirk and the tolbooth - were vulnerable to high winds and "earthquakes". Private houses in the burgh were particularly vulnerable to fire, although there is also a notable record in the "Chronicle" of the partial destruction by fire of a prominent building - the burning of "The great hous in ye citidail" in 1656.66 However, the manuscript also intimates that human error, or negligence, was the underlying cause of damage to a number of buildings; furthermore, the chroniclers were particularly sensitive to the effects of war upon the burgh.

The monasteries of Perth were destroyed during the Reformation riots of 1559, and St. John's Kirk was despoiled, but the "Chronicle" abruptly notes "The reformatioun of the chart(er)hous + Freiris besyde pth ye x day of May Im vc Lix yeiris". There is no mention of the riot which followed John Knox's inflammatory sermon in St. John's, nor is there any comment upon the damage which was wrought to the religious properties which surrounded the town - even though these sites were still features of the burgh in the 17th century. A subsequent reference to "The burnyng of Scone" in the summer of 1559 is similarly vague. There is no indication that it was the abbey of Scone which was destroyed, nor that people from Perth took part in the attack. The author's (TH1) opinion...

64 The account of the flood which appears in the "Chronicle", 35-6 (1 0), may derive from the record of "God's Visitation of Perth" which was entered in the kirk session register. This record is reprinted in NSA, Vol. X (1845), 47-8. The flood is discussed below in Part 3, Section 1, i).
66 Ibid., 18 (5/5).
of these events cannot be discerned, but all of the chroniclers were probably adherents of the reformed faith, and these brief notes may simply have been intended to record fundamental change in the life of the kirk and burgh. The destruction of the Reformation, and the changes which these events brought to the townscape of Perth, may be interpreted as a subtext of these entries. In a later passage, it is recorded that in January 1604, "The stepill of Stone fell". Scott decided that this passage should be read as "The stepill of Scone fell"; this transcription is plausible. If so, was this a part of the abbey ruins, or the steeple of the parish kirk? If it was a part of the old abbey, was this collapse a result of neglect and spoliation following the attack of 1559? If it was part of the kirk, had it deteriorated as a result of human error?

There are perhaps three accounts of poor construction work leading to the collapse of important bridges. The Brig of Tay collapsed in 1582(3) and 1601; the "Chronicle" does not record the reasons for these set backs, but as flooding is not mentioned, it is possible that human error was to blame. It is clearly stated in the case of the collapse of the Brig of Earn in January 1614 that this was due to inadequate construction: "the north west pend + bow of the brig of erne fell down being evill biggit fra the begying fillit onlie wt clay and yeard + but ony blind pend as the brig of tay hes bene in ye sam(e) mane(r) founeit + biygit of awld".

Some of the chroniclers experienced the upheavals of the Covenanting crisis, and several passages imply that damage was inflicted by Covenant and Royalist forces during the 1640s; the most poignant account relates to the sack of Aberdeen by Montrose in September 1644. A few days before, following the battle of Tibbermore, Perth had been occupied by troops of Montrose and Argyle, and the chroniclers complain of the strain of these quarterings. But the town was spared the fate suffered by Aberdeen, and descriptions of material damage are confined to accounts of the burning of the castles of Kincardine and Aberuchill in March 1646. The destruction of these important houses - the seats of the Grahams and Campbells respectively - and the occupation of their estates, was representative of the serious disruption which the wars brought to the rural landscape of Perth's environs. Despite the burgh's opposition to Montrose, the Grahams had a long-standing association with Perth, and these events could have been keenly felt in the town.

Maintenance

The "Chronicle" indicates that the prominent buildings of the town were often in a state of disrepair, but it is also apparent that the burgh authorities consistently attempted to provide for the maintenance of the structures which were most at risk. The manuscript records a variety of methods which were employed to raise funds for these projects. In January 1599 (possibly

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67 Ibid., 9 (3), 23 (7). For notes concerning the transcription of the "Scone" record, see Volume 1, p.88.
68 "Chronicle", 29 (8/8).
69 Ibid., 50-1 (1 5), 52 (1 5/1 5), 54 (1 6/1 6).
1600)70, "The toun begane yair voluntar contributioun for repara(o)un of ye brige of pert and left in
august 1600", whereas in 1623 the burgh entered into a joint project with the Crown and the laird
of Balhousie to rebuild Lowswork after the inundation of 1621; "Lowswark wes buildit in stone ffor
building qrof ye kingis matie payit 2000 m(ks This burt payit 1000 lib The laird of Balhoussie sould
haue payit iiij c mks as yit restand". 71

Other reparation work following the inundation had to wait until 1630, when the burgh was able to
use funds raised at a justice air. Provision was made against future flooding: "The fynes yat wer
gottin fra or ny(t)boris at ye preceeding justice air wer bestowit on ye redding of ye rwynes of ye fallin
brig of Tay bigging of croyis for saiftie of ye toun + Inches from ye violence of ye water, And on ye
bigging of ye front of fyne stone aislar wark at mounkis tour on ye tounes expens(s) And for
casting of ye dok for crearis and boattis in ye winter tyme from danger*. The term "redding"
probably refers to the clearing away of rubble and debris from the ruins of the bridge, though some
attempt could have been made to save the remains of the structure with a view to rebuilding it. A
croy or "crue" was a "mound or quay to protect a riverbank", and these were presumably
constructed on the inches. The "front" of fine ashlar stone was probably a new buttress or casing
wall designed to give further protection to Monk's Tower on the riverside. The new dock for
"crayers" - small trading vessels - and other boats was presumably built into the existing harbour.
The dock would be of little help in the event of a massive inundation such as that of 1621; but
given the severity of the winters which are recorded in the "Chronicle", it must have been an
important addition to the shoreline.72

The reparation of local bridges was a persistent burden for the burgh - although little work seems
to have been carried out on the Tay crossing after 1621. In the early 17th century, construction
work on the Tay bridge was frequent but largely unsuccessful. At the same time, a new bridge was
built over the Almond. The "Chronicle" records that this bridge was completed on 2 August 1619,
but there is no indication of whether or not the bridge survived the subsequent inundation.
Emergency repair work was swiftly carried out at the Brig of Earn in January 1614, when "the burgh
of Pth wt all diligence causit dauid Jak and dauid millie craftsmen put vp ye same wt tyber vark".
There is only one record in the text of reparation work being carried out on the Kirk of St. John,
although several passages tell of serious damage to the fabric which must have been attended to.
It is unsurprising that the burgh authorities were willing to transfer responsibility for the upkeep of
some of the burgh's property to private individuals, when the need arose. Reparation and
maintenance work on the major buildings of Perth must have placed a significant burden upon the
burgh's finances. This may have been a factor which influenced the decision to set the mills,
inches and fishings of the burgh to tack in 1613. Interestingly, there is no record of repair works

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70 See above, pp.75-6.
71 Ibid., 20 (6), 37 (10/10).
72 Ibid., 42 (11/11).
For definitions, see CSD, 548, 125, 122.
being carried out after the occupations of the Covenanting years; nor is there any record of maintenance work carried out upon private properties. 73

The Value of Particular Buildings

The authorities' attempts to maintain the public buildings of the town suggest that some buildings were valued for their intrinsic worth, and not just for their functional status. Some structures, such as the local bridges, were necessary, and hence valuable; other buildings acquired particular meaning for the townspeople. St. John's Kirk was a functional building and a focal point for the burgh community, but as a place of burial it seems to have been the exclusive preserve of the propertied elite. In 1603 the body of the laird of Ballindean was brought to Perth from Dundee, and buried in St. John's, under "a blew stone of ye Ryne". The manuscript does not explain why the laird was entitled to be buried in St. John's, but his grave was evidently unusual. In 1643, Issobel Wentoun was buried "wnder ye scollaris seat nixt auldeis buriall", but for this privilege the town council and kirk session required payment of "jc lib", which was used to buy a communion cup. Such entries imply that the internal organisation of the kirk reflected the hierarchical structure of burgh society, with certain areas of the kirk being reserved for certain social groups. Burials within St. John's were unusual - and presumably highly prized privileges - but not all prominent townspeople aspired to such memorials. In 1665 the bishop of Dunkeld was buried in the "cmoun buriall place callit ye grayfreiris". The use of the old Greyfriars property as a burial ground indicates that the site was still respected, despite the unpopularity of the old religious orders in the town. Although the Greyfriars contained prestigious plots, its description as the "cmoun buriall place" highlights the importance which some of the local nobility would have attached to the right of kirk burial. The continued practice of kirk burial indicates that some vestiges of pre-Reformation custom still influenced members of the local community. The burial of the bishop of Dunkeld in a common graveyard was more in keeping with reformed practice.74

In 1644, eight hundred Fifemen who had been captured by Montrose at Tibbermore were imprisoned for a short time in St. John's. The "Chronicle" does not explain whether or not this procedure met with the burgh's approval. Although Haikerston's Tower served as a gaol, the use of the kirk in this manner appears as a striking contrast to its role as a place of public worship and assembly. It is possible that Montrose sought to emphasise his authority in the burgh by treating the community's most important building with disdain. However, the manuscript also contains a salutory reminder of the comprehensive destruction which was perpetrated by the Reformation mob in Perth. The text records that the Charterhouse was a royal foundation, and that in 1541 the dowager Queen Margaret was buried there: but such royal associations did not protect the monastery from the rioters. The "Chronicle" indicates that, in extremis, the sanctity of prestigious churches did not protect them from abuse.75

73 "Chronicle", 35 (10), 29 (8/8), 20 (6), 27 (8).
74 Ibid., 23 (7), 48 (13/13), 61 (18/18).
75 Ibid., 50 (15), 8-9 (3).
The mercat cross was destroyed by Cromwellian troops to provide stones for the building of the citadel on the South Inch. This was a controversial act of destruction, for the cross held a unique position in burgh life. As the symbol of Perth's burgh status the cross was distinct from all other public buildings, and its value lay in its symbolic presence. Some properties of the town - such as the inches - could be set to tack; but the cross was the secular focus of the community, and a site at which burgh ceremonial could be performed. The most striking example of this recorded in the "Chronicle" is the occasion in 1601 at which James VI was made a burgess of Perth.

Town and Country

The most prestigious buildings of town and country were the properties of the nobility and landed men, and the manuscript mentions some properties which expressed both the wealth of such men and the close association between certain families and the town. Burial in the parish kirk was a clear expression of such a relationship. The Mercers were especially favoured, as the family had its own burial vault in the north transept; the "Chronicle" records the burial of Laurence Mercer of Meikleour "in his awin burrial place wtin ye kirk of perth" in 1643. In the countryside, churches and mausolea also stood as symbols of landed wealth; the Grahams of Kincardine were buried at Aberuthven, the Murrays of Balvaird at Arngask. Sir George Hay of Kinnoull, Chancellor of Scotland, was buried in the kirk of Kinnoull, on the east bank of the Tay overlooking Perth. The "Chronicle" also records the burial of the countess of Kinnoull "in hir husband Tomb" in 1667.

Hay of Kinnoull's strong ties with the burgh were emphasised by the building of an unusual "summer- house" in Perth, in 1630. The "Chronicle" states that "george hey chancellar of Scotland wicount of dupline did big ane turret or somerhous wpone ye head of ye round of monkis tour on ye tounes comoun wall for his ples(i)r, wt ouersyt of ye toun and tollerance yt I think they gaue no tollerance be writt". Among the town houses of the nobility this structure, built with "ouersyt " of the town, would have stood as a clear demonstration of Kinnoull's prestige. After the fall of the Ruthvens in 1600, men such as David Lord Scone and Hay of Kinnoull held considerable authority in the Perth area; this was expressed architecturally in the buildings of their rural estates, and in their properties in the town.

The most detailed record in the "Chronicle" of the urban and rural property of a leading landowner concerns the confiscation of the possessions of Lord Sanquhar in 1612. In the letter sent to Lord Scone by the Privy Council, requiring him to make an inventory of Sanquhar's properties, Scone was instructed to go "to the saidis lordis ludging in Perth cause the dooris yroff be mad patent and oppin, and thair tak ane perfit and exact count and inventorie of the haill gudis geir plenisheng hingings siluerwork and quhat else is within the said houss or in anie vther part of the burt perteining to the said lord...As also yt ye tak not of all qtsumeuer fermes and dewties dew into the said Lord in that Shyre com-manding the personis in whose hands the samin ar to keip and reteine

76 Ibid., 48 (1 3/1 3), 43 (1 2), 63 (1 9).
77 Ibid., 42 (1 1/1 1), 16 (5) lines 30-34. See below, Part 3, Section 2, ii). "Prominent Features".
the samin for his majesties wse". The "Chronicle" also illustrates that many lesser nobles and lairds owned impressive town houses. Accounts of skirmishes in the burgh indicate that a concentration of propertied men in an urban setting could exacerbate the inherent tension which existed between rival landowners. In contrast, accounts of wedding feasts held in the town houses of the propertied elite depict Perth as a focal point for wealthy families and their associates.

3. The "Chronicle of Perth" as an Archaeological Source

The "Chronicle of Perth" can provide some supporting material for Professor Lynch's thesis, although it is doubtful whether any of his arguments could have been initiated from a study of this text alone. Lynch's work has been used in this section to establish an essential historiographical setting for a study of the "Chronicle"; but features of his research which do not bear significantly upon the contents of the manuscript - such as the details of taxation or structural changes in burgh government - will not be pursued further. Other aspects of his work, however, indicate important themes for further research which are relevant to both historical and archaeological enquiry: the complicated interaction between town and country, and between town and Crown; the concept of community; the occupational structure of the burgh; economic hardship and the strains of war.

Numerous passages in the "Chronicle" can be used to enhance Mr Stell's survey of dilapidated buildings. But of greater interest is the idea that buildings and other features of the environment were valued by the local inhabitants. Many passages in the manuscript can be interpreted as conveying value judgements, and it is in this context that the "Chronicle" may be particularly useful as an "archaeological" source. At heart, archaeology is the study of man's material surroundings. The "Chronicle of Perth" can be used as introduction to the quality of life which was experienced within and without Perth in the late 16th and 17th centuries. The text does not provide detailed technical descriptions of the buildings of 17th century Perth, nor of the everyday practicalities of burgh life; ordinarily, information from this source might be used to supplement other documentary material. But - directly and indirectly - the contents of the "Chronicle" represent the authors' perceptions of their society, and of their environment. By identifying themes from within the text, historians and archaeologists may pursue the perceptions of the chroniclers. If the "Chronicle" is to be read and used as an archaeological source, it is necessary to identify the authors' interests - to notice what they noticed about their surroundings and their way of life - and then to use this information as the basis for a study of the environment of their time.

This methodology does have some drawbacks. It must be borne in mind that some of the information contained in the volume is incorrect, or misleading. The chroniclers' perceptions of their surroundings were conditioned by bias and, inevitably, a researcher's interpretation of the chroniclers' "perceptions" will be subjective. However, by means of an historical study of the manuscript I have considered the veracity of its record; only with the addition of an archaeological approach can the urban and rural environment which the "Chronicle" appears to describe be properly assessed.

78 "Chronicle", 68-9 (21/21-22), 27 (8).
The archaeological themes which can be drawn from the text of the "Chronicle of Perth" could be used to initiate archaeological investigations and excavations. In the "real world" of urban archaeology, where so many projects are initiated on a rescue basis, it may be difficult to apply the broad research objectives which the "Chronicle" inspires. Nevertheless, in theory, and hopefully in practice, the manuscript can be used to contribute to the archaeological record of early modern Perth. For an urban archaeologist, the text contains anecdotal information concerning the condition of the major buildings of the town, and scattered references provide some indications of the nature of private properties. The layout of Perth cannot be reconstructed from the text, but it does provide substantive information about the environs of the town - the inches, Burghmuir and local waterways - and reveals that "Perth" comprised far more than a walled town; the burgh encompassed a large area of agricultural and open land, as well as the residential and trading nucleus on the banks of the Tay. Furthermore, the manuscript illustrates a complicated relationship between Perth and the rural landscape which lay beyond its immediate sphere of influence.

The Townscape

The "Chronicle" raises questions about the architecture and functions of both public buildings and private properties within Perth, but the text is ambiguous concerning the relationship between the built-up area of the town and the land which lay around it. That there was an important distinction between the residential area and the inches, Playfield and Burghmuir is revealed by references to the town walls, and to the ports which controlled access to the main streets of Perth. When trouble broke out within the burgh in August 1597, between "certane of the Suroodeofye dru(m)onds an(d) Oliue(r) Yowng than ane of bailyeis of pth", the combatants escaped by "leaping* the town walls; and when Toshack of Monzievaird was murdered in the Southgate in 1618, the killers "escheuit out of ye toun" to safety. Most public executions seem to have taken place at the Cross of Perth; but when the condemned were burnt to death, such executions were performed beyond the town walls, on the South Inch or the Playfield, presumably on account of the danger of fire in a built-up area, and perhaps in respect of public health as well. After the execution of James McNair - by hanging and burning - in 1608, his head and one of his arms were set up on the Castle Gable Port, one of the entries into the burgh.79

Incidental references to the Cross of Perth indicate that it was a focal point within the burgh. There is no description of the appearance of the cross; the only possible information concerning the structure occurs in the account of the inundation of 1621, when the water "wes wtin ane Pute in hicht frum ye croce of pth".80 The tolbooth Is another public building which features in the "Chronicle"; it served several functions, as a gaol and as a meeting house, although it appears to have been in a generally poor state of repair. Of the other public buildings which are mentioned in the manuscript, the most significant - apart from St. John's Kirk - would seem to have been the citadel and "Court of Guard"; the latter was the setting for ceremonies held to proclaim Oliver Cromwell, and later his son Richard, as Lord Protector.

79 Ibid., 12-13 (4), 46 (1 3), 26 (7/7).
80 Ibid., 36 (1 0).
The mercat cross is first mentioned in an account of the funeral procession of the earl of Atholl, who died at Perth in August 1594. The queen watched the procession from "williame hallis for chambe(r) beneth ye croce". The phrase "beneth ye croce", which is repeated in subsequent references, suggests that the house in question was situated either adjacent to the cross, or between it and the banks of the Tay. There are four references to executions at the cross; the "Chronicle" simply refers to criminals who were "hangit" or "headit" "at the croce".\(^1\) The tolbooth is first mentioned as a place of assembly, in a record dated 1597. After a street brawl, "the greatest nu(m)ber of ye dpsewaris leap ye t_____ valls and so few nu(m)ber of tha(s) as remaint come to the tolbuth". A record dated 8 November 1608 provides some details about the fabric: "Ane earth quak at 9 horis at ewin yat schoak ye tolboth the battels end yat yair fell many stones aff it". There is no mention of damage to any other buildings, and the tolbooth may have been in a state of disrepair prior to the earthquake. It is evident that the shell of the tolbooth was built of stone. The reference to the "battels end" seems to provide more technical information; the term "battels" may derive from the Scots word "batt", which in the 17th century referred to "an iron batten or bar; a staple or loop of iron". In 1615, Alexander Jackson of Waterybutts was jailed within the tolbooth on a charge of murder, "comittit to the Irenes wtin ye tolbuth of pth". In 1621 the tolbooth suffered serious damage; the "Chronicle" records that the October flood waters "tuik doun ye gawill of yr tolbuith". It is notable that the tolbooth was unable to withstand this inundation, but that the cross apparently escaped serious damage. The tolbooth was built in a vulnerable situation on the banks of the Tay; but it may be inferred that the fabric was already delapidated before the onset of the flood.\(^2\)

The Court of Guard - the location of which is unclear - is referred to in a lengthy description of the ceremony held in May 1654 at which Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector. The proclamation was made from "ane stage of tumber rigt beneath ye court of guaird being hungin wt tapestrie...Ane troup of hors and some troupis of drawgunonis stude beneath ye court of guaird foinent the stage And eftir the pclama(t)ms endit gaif fyre Thryss The hail! fute regiment stude in armes aboue the meane guaird gaf fyre". The stage of timber was presumably a temporary structure, and seems to have been erected at ground level in the shadow of a tall building from which banners had been hung; the term "meane guaird" could refer to a courtyard or precinct of this building. The Court of Guard may have been a new building, raised by the Cromwellian garrison.\(^3\) The citadel was certainly built for the occupation force. The only mention in the manuscript of this fortification records the major fire of 1656 which engulfed the "great hous". This building was apparently being used to store provisions, but it could have been a residence as well. This passage raises questions about the impact of the citadel upon the South Inch; for example, did the whole Inch become out-of-bounds to the citizens of Perth? The account also draws

\(^1\) Ibid., 12 (4), 19 (6), 21-2 (6/6), 48 (13/13).
\(^2\) Ibid., 12-13 (4), 26 (7/7), 33 (9/9), 36 (1 0).
\(^3\) CSD, 32.
\(^3\) 'Chronicle", 55 (1 7).
attention to the perils of fire, and suggests that much of the "great hous" was of timber construction.\textsuperscript{84}

In 1624 the burgh of Dunfermline was extensively damaged by fire. Perth did not suffer such a fate, but the inundation of 1621 was a comparable disaster. Indeed, the "Chronicle" demonstrates that buildings of the town were extremely vulnerable to fire, strong winds, and floods. In August 1606, "The foirland of andro Ray nixt James drumondis land tuik fyre + brunt all Ane". In the following spring, "Thair raiss ane great extraordinarie winde yat blew ye lead yt ze steepill to mr Jon malcolmes bak yet callit the bischope of murrayis hous". In the first case it is possible that Andrew Ray's workshop caught fire; the "foreland" was a "piece of land next to the street" and could have been an industrial site, although the term also described "a Tenement facing the street". The passage which records damage to the kirk may be a little misleading, for the steeple would have been peculiarly vulnerable to strong winds, and the weather may not have been "extraordinarie"; there is no mention of damage to any other properties. However, this record does indicate that falling masonry from such a substantial building posed a threat to other properties, as well as to residents in the burgh.\textsuperscript{85} A particularly dangerous fire occurred in October 1619: "Thair wes ane lugeing all brunt in the sout syde of ye hie gait of pth pteing to Constantene Malice The fyre cruell to behold". Such a fire, in the centre of the burgh, would have threatened all the buildings of the High Street. That the damage was apparently limited suggests that either Constantine Malice's property was bounded by open - possibly derelict - land, or that the townspeople were able to contain the fire. Such events were probably a common feature of town life.\textsuperscript{86}

The inundation of 1621 principally affected the Castle Gable area. The "Chronicle" states that "The peopill of ye castel gawill hed died about iiic soules gif a boatt hed not bene borne be men from ye spay tour to it". The residents of the Castle Gable and West Port "wer wat in yair beddes and walikint wt water to ye waist in yair flores". This reference is a little ambiguous. The flood waters may have risen to the first floor levels of properties in this area, but it is also possible that the roofs of these houses leaked under the force of the rain and that the residents were "wat in yair beddes" by this means. Similarly, it is unlikely that the residents walked with water up to their waists on the first floors of their homes, but rather that the ground floors were submerged. However, residential properties may have been single storey, and many inhabitants may have slept at ground floor level. Clearly, this passage raises questions about the nature of private houses within the burgh. It also provides an indication of the density of the population in the Castle Gable, and suggests that certain areas within the burgh were distinct entities or districts.\textsuperscript{87}

The "Chronicle" refers to a variety of private properties within Perth. Some town houses were owned by noblemen or prominent landowners from outside the burgh; others were the property of

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 18 (5/5).
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 38 (10/10), 25 (7/7).
\textsuperscript{86} CSD, 207.
\textsuperscript{87} "Chronicle", 35 (1 0).
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., 35-6 (1 0).
merchants and artisans. There are no references to terms of tenure, although some of the people listed in Section 4 are described as “tenants”. The locations of some properties are specified, but there is relatively little to suggest that particular areas of the burgh were inhabited by particular social groups. Nevertheless, the varied character of properties may be inferred from references to gardens, back yards, and forelands; these terms indicate that whilst some properties were simply residential, others acted as industrial sites or shops. It is unclear from the text whether there were distinct industrial and residential sectors in Perth; this is a matter in which excavation can be instructive.

References in the text to private houses tend to be incidental. For example, the burgh residence of the earl of Gowrie - Gowrie House - is only mentioned in passing in the account of the “Gowrie Conspiracy”. The killing of the earl and his brother took place “in ye erliis auin ludgeing in pert”; there is no description of the building. The laird of Aldie’s house is one of those properties described as being “beneth” the cross. In August 1605 it “fell on ane setterday at nyt”. The “Chronicle” does not explain why this happened, nor does it describe the extent of the damage. As the property was situated “beneth” the cross it may have been close to the Tay, and perhaps built on unstable, shifting land. It is reasonable to infer from this passage that some residential buildings in the burgh were unstable; even the properties of wealthy men were liable to collapse without warning.88

The text refers to the town houses of several prominent men. The social status of William Hall is unclear, but he appears to have been of sufficient rank to entertain the queen in 1594. John Malcolm, the minister of Perth in 1607, lived in a property near St. John’s known as the “bischope of murrayis hous” - probably the parsonage, and former residence of John Guthry. In 1665 the bishop of Dunkeld “deapairtit in his awin hous / in perth /”. Mention is also made of Lord Sanquhar’s town house, the earl of Errol’s lodging, and Lady Stormont’s house. In 1630 Sir George Hay of Kinnoull built a summerhouse on the town wall at Monk’s Tower. This building must have been unusual in Perth, and indeed uncommon in Scotland; Perth was one of the few walled burghs in medieval Scotland. The walls of Perth seem to have been of a substantial height at this time, at least in the area of Monk’s Tower.89

One part of the town which does emerge as a residential area is the Watergate. The earl of Errol’s house was situated there, and served as the venue for a marriage feast in February 1638; in the preceding month a marriage feast had been held at Charles Rollock’s house in the Watergate. In December 1644, some of Lord Lindsay’s regiment were quartered in the “West Syde of the Watergait”. Lindsay’s regiment numbered 800 men, and several hundred of these soldiers may have been accommodated in houses in the Watergate, indicating that it was primarily a residential area, or at least that the buildings were substantial. A property in the Watergate is also mentioned in connection with a suicide in January 1660: “Ane williame Imrie tailyer brother To mathaw wilsones wyfe being distractit did hang him self in ye nycht in ane towall in alexr wilsones hous his sister sone

88 Ibid., 21 (6/6), 24 (7).
89 Ibid., 12 (4), 25 (7/7), 61 (18/18), 27 (8), 47 (13), 55 (17), 42 (11/11).
in the watergate". The proximity of the Watergate to the quayside and Water of Tay is indicated in the description of the winter of 1615, when there was "daylie passage aboue ye brig nixt the north inche bayth for hors + men and beeneth ye brig forment ye erle of arrolls ludging + ye schore for men". The "Chronicle" does not state that the Watergate was seriously affected by the inundation of 1621. Substantial buildings in this area may have been better able to withstand the flood waters than houses in the Castle Gable; but being so close to the river, the Watergate is bound to have been inundated. 90

The Kirk

The largest public building in Perth was the Kirk of St. John. In the post-Reformation period the kirk was a venue for large public gatherings - both ecclesiastical and secular. Indeed, it was the only building in which the community of the burgh could meet together, and as such held a symbolic importance comparable with that of the mercat cross. St. John's was particularly vulnerable to damage and decay, but there is only one record in the manuscript of major repairs being carried out on the fabric; the implication is that the kirk was kept in a reasonable state of repair throughout the 17th century - in despite of "earthquakes" and severe flooding. The old religious houses of Perth, which were ransacked during the Reformation, are barely mentioned in the "Chronicle", and there is little information concerning the state of the monastic remains in the post-Reformation century; the Reformation itself receives scant attention in the text. Nevertheless, the manuscript does provide an indication of profound changes in the religious life of the burgh, and it is in the context of institutional and doctrinal change that a study of the ecclesiastical buildings of Perth should be placed.

Of the monasteries of Perth, only the Charterhouse is mentioned in any detail. A record of its foundation in the 15th century describes the monastery as the "chart(er)hows besyde pth". This phrase is repeated in subsequent entries, and it seems that the religious houses - which lay beyond the towns walls - were recognised to be set apart from the town proper. Strictly speaking, all the major monasteries of Perth were situated in the "enceinte" of the town; 91 both before and after the Reformation, St. John's served as the religious focal point for the townspeople. The Charterhouse is recorded in the "Chronicle" as a place of royal burial, but beyond this there is virtually no architectural information about the monasteries in the manuscript; their destruction in 1559 is merely alluded to. 92

However, the influence of the religious houses upon burgh life continued into the 17th century, as the Masters of the King James VI Hospital attempted to assert their authority over the lands and properties of the monasteries and hospitals, which were granted to them during the minority of James VI. The "Chronicle" details some of the activities of the masters in this regard as they tried to establish their rights to the lands of the Whitefriars of Tullilium, the Charterhouse, and smaller

90 Ibid., 47 (13), 52 (15/15), 59 (18), 31 (9).
91 This term is explained below, p.139.
92 "Chronicle", 8-9 (3).
hospitals and chapels. An entry which appears to be dated 24 January 1597(8) mentions the "yeards & theards" of the Whitefriars; another passage tells of the "place of the chart()hous yeards and or theards". These entries at least indicate that the properties of the religious houses were still recognised and identifiable decades after the Reformation. The land of the Greyfriars monastery became the common burial ground after 1580; this suggests that most of the monastic buildings were cleared away, but the site at least remained as a distinct feature.93

There is no mention of the state of St. John's prior to the Reformation, but at the turn of the 17th century it was in need of repairs. The manuscript records that in November 1598 "The toun repar began to repair ye new kirk in wallis + wandowis". This was a period of major public works projects, as shortly afterwards the townspeople were asked to fund the reparation of the Brig of Tay. In March 1607 "Thair raisse ane great extraordinarie winde yat blew ye lead af ye steepill to mr Jon malcolmes bak yet callit the bischope of murrayis hous". It is questionable whether the steeple actually sustained significant damage at this time - it seems that part of the lead sheathing was blown off. However, it is interesting to note the proximity of the minister's property to the kirk. A more serious incident occurred in January 1609 when "The great wind blew doun ye stanes of ye mantil wall of ye kirk in tyme of S(e)rmone and terrifeit ye peopel". The "mantil wall" of the kirk could have been an exterior wall, or possibly the facing stones of the outer wall. However, it may have been a rampart or parapet; like the steeple, a parapet would be vulnerable in high winds. If the outer wall fell, this would suggest that the kirk fabric was in a parlous state.94

There are no other records in the text of damage to the building, but several passages provide further architectural details. The practice of kirk burial continued after the Reformation amongst the nobility and propertied families. In 1603 the laird of Ballindean "wes buried in ye kirk of pert be eist ye counsulhous door wnder a blew stone of ye Ryne". This record not only reveals that St. John's contained an imported stone or grave-slab, but also indicates that the building served a secular, as well as an ecclesiastical, role in burgh life. The "counsellous" may have been a building appended to the kirk, or a partitioned area within. In 1643 Issobell wentoun "wes bured in ye kirk of pert wnder ye scollaris seat nixt auldeis buriall"; her family were required to pay for this privilege. The internal layout of the kirk is never properly described; indeed there is only one other reference to the seating arrangements: in 1602 Henry Bannewis and William Jack were forced to make a public apology for slandering the minister and the clerk of the burgh "in yair awn seattis on sabbath efter sermone". "Auldeis burial" - the Mercer vault - was an important feature of the kirk; in 1645 "Laurence mers(r) of mekilhour burid honolie in his awin buriall place wtin ye kirk of perth".95

There is one other reference to the council house, in a record of a meeting of the town council in 1623, at which the town's debts were discussed. However, there are several references to the use of the kirk as a meeting house for both church and secular assemblies. In April 1607 a synod met in

93 See ibid., 3-7, (1/1-2/2).
94 Ibid., 20 (6), 25-6 (7/7).
95 "Chronicle", 23 (7), 48 (13/13), 22 (6/8).
the kirk, but was disrupted by Lord Scone, who “come in + dischargit yame And threw ower ye tabils amongis yame + pat yame furt of ye kirk quha yit held yair assemblie at ye kirk door”. The assembly was presumably held at the west door of the kirk, although the passage which describes the funeral procession of Sir Harry Lindsay mentions the “south porche door”. The general assembly of 1618 which ratified the “Five Articles of Perth” also met in the kirk. The National Covenant was read in the kirk on the 25 March 1638 when “ye hail kirk + congreaga(o)un tane suorne yrto be wphaulding of yair hands”. Similarly, when “The new couueant” was “read sworne + subscryuit be the toum of pth” in November 1643, this act probably took place in St. John’s.96

The “Chronicle” emphasises the importance of public sermons and of public communion. The instability of religious life at this time is indicated in the changing nature of the communion services described in the manuscript. In the wake of the general assembly of 1618, in April 1619 “The sacrament of ye supper gewin on peace day be mr John Guthrie minister out of his awin hand to all ye peopill and they ressauit it on yr kneis”. In contrast, following the acceptance of the covenant in 1638, “The comunioun wes giwin be ye ministrie in ye auld maner be ye ministrie + elderis The ministrie at ye litill tabill and ye elders at ye tua burdis being peopill at both the sydes yrof euerie ane tuik the bread first of ye plait wt yr awin hand + fine the coup”.97

In the second half of the 17th century there may also have been a general change in burial practice. Almost all of the notices of burials entered in the later pages of Section 2 record interments in the Greyfriars. Some of these burials were of ordinary folk - a boatman and a captain of the Commissioner’s guard. But others were more prominent: James Dykes, dean of guild, was buried in 1663, and in 1665 the bishop of Dunkeld was buried in “ye cmoun buriall place callit ye grayfreiris”. The area of the Greyfriars monastery was officially designated as a burial ground in 1560, but it may have taken nearly a century for the site to become established as a cemetery for all sectors of town society. Indeed, the practice of kirk burial continued throughout this period at many rural kirks. Many noblemen were buried in country churches which effectively served as mausolea, whilst clergy and their families might also be buried in their parish kirks.98

Natural Disasters

One of the most striking themes to emerge from the “Chronicle” is that of severe weather conditions and natural disasters. Parts of the burgh were particularly vulnerable to flooding, and several harsh winters were endured in the first half of the 17th century. According to the manuscript, in some years there was deep snow and frost for months at a time, sometimes lasting through the spring. There were long periods during which the Tay was frozen and could be crossed by men and packhorses, even on occasion by carts. However, the town was periodically cut off from road and river communications and, as a consequence of flooding, the Brig of Tay was usually in a state of delapidation; after 1621 it was completely unusable. Furthermore, Lowswork

96 Ibid., 38 (10/10), 25 (7/7), 33 (9/9), 28(8), 44 (1 2), 48 (13/13).
97 Ibid., 35 (1 0), 44 (1 2).
98 Ibid., 59-60 (1 8), 61 (18/18).
and the Brig of Almond were also damaged by flood waters, and in 1614 the Brig of Earn collapsed; in the latter case, the burgh authorities moved swiftly to arrange its repair. The descriptions of severe snow and flooding may be exaggerated, but recent flooding in Perthshire - in 1990 and 1993 - has highlighted the town's vulnerable location, and there can be little doubt that flooding wreaked havoc in some quarters of the 17th century burgh. 99

The "Chronicle" suggests that there was a pervading threat of scarcity, and the burgh worked hard to maintain communication links with the countryside and its trading area in times of crisis. However, it is notable that no inundations or severe winters are recorded between 1635 and 1668. Was there a significant improvement in the climate during these years? Or did the strains of the Covenanting Wars overshadow other hardships? Given the frequency of the crises which are recorded prior to 1635, the lack of such difficulties in the middle years of the century seems unlikely; it is possible that some chroniclers were less interested in cataloguing these crises than others. Nevertheless, inundations and severe winters had far-reaching effects upon the the living and working conditions of the people of Perth and its environs; the incidence of floods and snow is of considerable significance in an assessment of the quality of life in and around Perth, and of the condition of major public works, in the later 16th and early 17th centuries.

The "Chronicle" records that two bows of the Brig of Tay fell in December 1573 due to "inundatio(u)n of wat"; Lowswork on the Almond was also damaged. This record was almost certainly written retrospectively, and the disaster is described as "The / first / down falling" of the bridge. The Brig of Almond had collapsed in November 1567, and there must have been serious disruption to communications between Perth, Angus and Stormont. Damage to Lowswork could restrict or halt the operation of the town mills, and deprive the burgh of its defensive lade. In January 1582(3) five bows of the brig of Tay collapsed. The manuscript does not state why this occurred, or whether any reparation work was carried out on the brig between 1573 and 1582(3). According to the "Chronicle", it was not until the turn of the century that measures were taken to repair the damage; in January 1599/1600 "The toun begane yair voluntar contributioun for repar(a)un of ye brige of pert and left in august 1600". The most significant technical detail in these early passages concerns the "bows" or arches of the bridge; this term indicates that in the late 16th century the Brig of Tay was of stone construction.100

However, in September 1601 "Thair fell a reik of ye tymer bridge of Tay". The term "reik" probably refers to a "stretch" or length of the bridge, rather than to an arch. It may be inferred that this timber bridge was built following the fundraising of 1600, perhaps as a temporary measure before further building work could commence. The next reference to the bridge states that in June 1605 "Jon myln and his men enterit to ye bridge work". In February 1607 "The trie bridge wes Tane away betuix 12 and ane on ane Sonday in tyme of denner". Again, it is possible that this bridge - which is

99 For details of the latest devastating flooding in the town and surrounding countryside, see the Perthshire Advertiser and The Courier & Advertiser, Tuesday January 19 1993. See also The Great Flood by Roger Smith (1993). See below, Part 3, Section 1, i).
specifically described as the "trie bridge" - was a temporary structure, built to maintain the river crossing during Milne's building works. But the text does raise the possibility that a stone bridge of the later 16th century was initially replaced by a succession of cheaper timber structures in the early 17th century. In the winter of 1607-8 there was "passage vpone yce or Tay" between December and March; the Tay was frozen as far downstream as the Mill of Errol. This is the first severe winter recorded in the text.101

The only detailed technical description of a bridge to be found in the "Chronicle" concerns the Brig of Earn: "Upone setterday ye xxij day of Januar 1614 the north west pend + bow of the brig of erne fell down being evill biggit fra the begying fillit onlie wt clay and yeard + but ony blind pend as the brig of tay hes bene in ye sam(e) mane(r) founeit + biggit of awld / the burgh of Pth wt all diligence causit dauid Jak and dauid millie craftsmen put vp ye same wt tyber vark / ".102 The author (TH1) of this passage seems to have been responsible for few other entries in the "Chronicle", and may have had particular knowledge of the structure. It is notable that the initial response to the collapse of part of the Brig of Earn was to erect a timber replacement - or at least to patch the damaged bridge with timber - presumably as a temporary measure, and seemingly in keeping with repair works carried out over the Tay between c.1600 and c.1607. The rapid response of the burgh authorities illustrates the importance of the Brig of Earn for landward communications between Perth and the south. The "pend + bow" of the Brig of Earn was a stone arch. This stone construction was packed - inadequately - with earth, ( "yeard" ), and clay. The phrase "blind pend" may simply reiterate this point, describing the packing of the stone arches; but it is more likely to describe a blocked arch - effectively a stone buttress or platform on the river bank which would provide extra support to the weight of the carriageway.103

The text is ambiguous, but the new Brig of Tay may not have been built adequately either. Nevertheless, this bridge withstood flooding in the following January, when the inches and Muirton "haugh" were submerged. The threat of flood waters, and the importance of the inches to the townspeople, is reflected in the pathetic image of "men rowing wt boats in ye same north inche taking furth scheip that war in perrell of drwny(n)g". The flooding was not particularly severe - it seems that the streets and properties of the town were unaffected by the waters. But the damage which routine flooding could cause to the land and livestock of the local inhabitants clearly posed a significant threat to living standards.104

The "Chronicle" records that winter arrived late in 1615. The "frost" finally came at the end of February, but "quhen it came it continewit sa lang that the vat of tay being all frosin aboue + beneth the brig that thair vas daylie passage aboue ye brig nixt the north inche bayth for hors + men and

101 Ibid., 22 (6/6), 24 (7/7), 26 (7/7). CSD, 546.
102 "Chronicle", 29 (8/8).
103 CSD, 484, 810, 48. The Brig of Earn is discussed below in Part 3, Section 2, i). "The Enviroms of the Town".
104 "Chronicle", 31 (9).
beeneth ye brig foiment ye erle of arrolls ludging + ye schore for men". The freezing of the Tay may not have inconvenienced merchants and travellers who could cross to the burgh upon the ice, but the ferrymen ("cobillaris"), "being yrby prudg(i)t of yr comoditie in the nicht tyme brak the Ice at the entrie and stayit ye passage". Clearly there were still problems with the Brig of Tay. On 6 March there was "ane vehement snau" which persisted for several days. The bad weather disrupted transport and communications, so that there was "na travell or litill passage vas yr ather for hors or men on the qik woddinsdy diuers hors + men perishit + deid". 1615 appears to have been a particularly bad year, as even in May there was "great snau and frost quharby na travell for hors nor man".105

The chroniclers' accounts of appalling winters need to be read with a degree of caution. A record dated 1624 relates that, "This yeir wes suche ane frost That ye ellyke hes not bene sene in our dayis for from mertymes To ye 30 of Januar Thair wes passage or Tay wpone ye Ice" (TH7). Given that the record for 1615 describes similar conditions (TH1), such phrasing warns the reader that certain chroniclers may have exaggerated their accounts for dramatic effect. The passage continues: "And yaireftir dissoluit and freissit agane to ye 23 of febry yat ellewin cairtis wt 21 puncheones of wyne come or wpone the lyce fro dundie heir". This detail is interesting, but it bears a striking resemblance to an anecdote included in the record of February 1615, which states that "Vpoun fastingis euin being ye xxj of februa yr was tua punchenis of burdeous vyne careit sting on ling on menis schulderis on the vat of tay on the Ice at the midies of the north inche ye wicht of ye puncheon + ye beraris estimat to iii xx xij stane veicht". These accounts, which were probably written by different authors, may be accurate. However, their similarity gives the impression that the chroniclers were writing to a formula. There is no reason to doubt that the winters of 1615 and 1624 were indeed severe; but the strict accuracy of these records is open to question.106

The account of the winter of 1635 is more convincing. The chronicler complains that "In Januar 1635 from ye 26 day yairof till ye 16 day of februar Thair fell furt suche ane hudge snow That men nor women could not walk wpone or streitis". The author (TH7) then provides details of the depth of this snowfall: "It wes Ten quarter or Tua ellis heiche throu all the toun". ("the measure of length, the SCOTS ELL = approx four fifths of the English"). Such heavy snow inevitably caused great hardship; communications were cut, and the "Chronicle" describes "great skairstie of wictuall". The plaintive remark that "AT yat tyme aill wes waie skant They knokit mall in knoking stones" suggests that the author had experienced this winter himself. However, it is notable that although great hardships are described in these passages, the authors also emphasise that the townspeople adjusted to the conditions and discovered ingenious methods of survival.107

105 Ibid., 31-2 (9).
CSD, 105.
106 "Chronicle", 38 (10/10), 31 (9).
107 Ibid., 43 (12).
CSD, 174.
In 1635 the Tay "wes 30 dayis frozen ower". This might have been of some help to the people of Perth - if not to the ferrymen - as the Brig of Tay was no longer standing. The "Chronicle" records that the inundation of 1621 "carriet away ye ellewin bow brig of Tay". This was the bridge constructed by John Milne, apparently to supercede temporary wooden structures. If it was of poor design - like the Brig of Earn in 1614, packed with earth and inadequately supported - its destruction is unsurprising. However, such was the ferocity of the inundation that Lowswork, "being of admirabill strent + structur", was also carried away.108 There is no mention of the fate of the new Brig of Almond.

Subsistence: Harvest Failures and Dearths:

Perth faced other natural disasters, and the "Chronicle" records several poor harvests - particularly in the 1620s, which appears to have been a decade of intense difficulty. However, the details provided by individual chroniclers vary; some write of particular food shortages and quote inflated prices, whilst others write in general terms of "dearth" and "mortality". Furthermore, there are no accounts in this manuscript of successful harvests or of periods of abundance and prosperity. The "Chronicle" is not a consistent or comprehensive record of events; but the reader is left to assume that if the harvest of a particular year is not mentioned in the text, then it was probably sufficient for the needs of the townspeople. The scale of harvest failures is difficult to gauge. Only one reference to death also suggests mortality figures; in 1623 about 1000 people died within Perth during the summer and autumn.109 As with inundations and heavy snowfalls, the "Chronicle" does not record any deaths after 1635, although the strain of quartering some civil war armies in the town is bemoaned. The text says little about the burgh's mercantile life, and the burgh markets are barely mentioned. It is apparent from miscellaneous references that the shore, or quayside, was a focal point of Perth's economic activities, but the only direct reference to a market concerns the re-location of the fish market in 1598.110 That the burgh enjoyed periods of prosperity is indicated by accounts of occasional public ceremonials and banquets which were staged in Perth in honour of visiting dignitaries.

The first account of scarcity is a reference to the "de(i)r symme(r)" of 1525. This record was certainly written retrospectively, and the privations of this year clearly lingered in the popular memory. The author gives specific details about the price of oatmeal during this crisis: "ye boll of maill gaiff xxvj_ 8_". A "boll" or "bow" was a "dry measure of weight or capacity varying according to commodity and locality"; a boll of meal = 140 lbs. Such a record is of interest, but it is of limited value without comparative figures for the normal price of meal. The strict accuracy of this account is also questionable; the chronicler (TH1) states that Alexander Blair was the provost at that time, but in 1525 the provost was Patrick Charteris; Alexander Blair held the position in 1526.111

108 "Chronicle", 35-6 (1 0).
109 Ibid., 37 (10/1 0).
110 Ibid., 19 (6).
111 Ibid., 10 (3/3); CSD, 52.
For Alexander Blair see Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no. 270, p.1.
The "Chronicle" records that in 1590 there was "A plague among ye bestial", but the manuscript offers few details about livestock kept in the town and its environs - the reference to sheep on the North Inch in 1615 is unusual. Such a paucity of information raises elementary questions: it is apparent that livestock were important to the townspeople, but what animals were kept, and where? Were there livestock within the town walls, or were animals only reared and kept in the rural environs of the burgh? Was the burgh an important livestock market? This is a subject in which the historian is dependent upon other sources, particularly archaeological evidence.112

The "quhyte" was "blastit" in 1598, but in April of that year the burgh had been able to stage a banquet in honour of the duke of Holstein, "be his maties directioun". The manuscript is generally more informative about cereal crops than about livestock. Oatmeal and wheat have already been mentioned. In March 1604 "The Comoun burrow mwre of pth wes sawin wt eattis", but in 1616 there was "great powertie of cornes and great dearth". During the scarcity which accompanied the inundation of October 1621, "abondance of eforane wictual" was brought to Perth, "yit it gaiff 12 lib 20 mok ye boll bear and pease meall 16 m(\)k". ("Bear" is barley, "Pease Meal" is "a flour made of ground pease"). Mention of "wictual" may be a general reference to food supplies; however, this term could also refer to corn, grain, or "leguminous crops; a crop before or after harvesting". Taken as a whole, these references provide a list of cereal crops which the citizens of Perth, and their rural counterparts, expected to form the basis of their staple diet.113

However, the most striking impression conveyed by the chroniclers' references to the food supply is one of recurrent hardship in the early decades of the 17th century - largely caused by a succession of harvest failures. In the autumn of 1612 there was "great dearthe The wictuall at 10 lib ye boll", and in December 1613 the burgh authorities were obliged to alleviate the town's debts by setting the town mills, inches and fishings to tack. (When the council met in September 1623, it was announced that the town's debt had been cut in half, "and ten yeir of the tak of ye mylnes Inches + fishings is to run"). The inches were flooded in the spring of 1615, and the persistently bad weather in the early months of this year presumably disrupted the passage of goods to and from the burgh. In the following year there was scarcity, due to poor weather. There seems to have been a respite from hardship for five years, but then in 1621 Perth suffered the double blow of an inundation of supposedly unprecedented force, and an "ewill harwest". Scarcity of corn was a problem "throu all ye kingdome" in this year. However, although the importing of foreign supplies alleviated suffering in 1621, there appears to have been no answer to the "vniersall seiknes in all ye cuntrie" which took hold during the harvest of 1622. In 1623 "Thair wes yis haruest tymne ane great mortalitie + dearthe yat x or xij deit ordinarlie euerie day from midsomer to mychaelmes wtin yis burt". After three years of dearth and disease, the winter of 1624 was severe.114

112 "Chronicle", 20 (6).
113 Ibid., 19-20 (6), 23 (7), 28 (8), 36 (10).
CSD, 34, 480, 760.
114 See above and "Chronicle", 27 (8), 31 (9), 37-8 (10/10).
The “Chronicle” records the movement of armies to and from the burgh during the Covenanting Wars in some detail, and it seems that the town was able to support most of the forces which quartered there. References to damage inflicted on the burgh “and ye cuntie about” by the troops of Montrose and Argyll are exceptional. However, it is important to note the association of town and country in these records. The emphasis in the manuscript upon the consequences of harvest failures illustrates that the quality of life of the inhabitants of Perth was heavily dependent upon the productivity of the countryside. In order to appreciate the nature of town life, the researcher must look beyond the limits of the town into the hinterland by which it was served.

The Environs of Perth

The immediate environs of the town of Perth were a patchwork of villages, private estates, and agricultural land. The general impression given by the “Chronicle” is that this area existed as a “buffer” between the town and the rural landscape of the sheriffdom. The defining features of the environs were the North and South Inches, the rivers Tay, Almond, and to a lesser extent the Earn, and the Burghmuir. (I will often apply the term “enceinte” - a word which is less vague than “environs” - to the area within these boundaries; but it is extremely difficult to indicate clearly the point at which the lands beyond the town became “the countryside”). Although the burgh encompassed much of the “enceinte”, the administration of these features was subject to disputes with rival landowners, and with the villages which were situated near the town. Indeed, the propertied landscape of the countryside extended into the environs of Perth, and the “Chronicle” mentions several of the important properties which overlooked the town - Balhousie, Pitheavlis and Craigie. With a variety of competing interests in the environs of Perth, some features were apparently well-defined; for example, there seems to have been a clear distinction between the North Inch and the Muirton Haugh. In contrast, the account of the battle of Tibbermore suggests that beyond the Burghmuir stretched further moor-land; the western limits of the burgh may have been difficult to define.

The references to Perth’s environs draw attention to the town’s extraordinary location. Areas of Perth are peculiarly vulnerable to flooding; the inches - flood plains of the Tay - feature consistently in the accounts of inundations. However, none of the authors remarks upon the inevitability of such disasters. It is noteworthy that considerable damage must have been caused to properties outside the town walls and that, following the flood of 1621 in particular, restoration work must have been as needful in the enceinte as it was in parts of the town.

The South Inch is first mentioned in the text as the venue for the reconciliation of differences between the Drummonds and Oliver Young, following an affray in the burgh. Indeed, it appears that in this instance the inch was used because it was outwith the town proper, and perhaps “neutral” ground. When, in September 1598, three women were burnt as "witches", "in ye southe inche betuix the buttis", the inch was presumably chosen for reasons of safety. The "buttis" are generally believed to have been targets used for archery practice by the townspeople; however,

115 Ibid., 50-1 (1 5).
the inch may have been under cultivation at this time, as a "butt" could also be "a ridge or strip of ploughed land". Although these passages indicate that the South Inch was clearly distinct from the town, its proximity to the built-up area of Perth is emphasised by the siting of the Cromwellian citadel there in the 1650s.116

The North Inch appears to have borne the brunt of flooding, but in winter tyme it was to this area that travellers were able to cross on the frozen Tay. In February 1615 "thair vas daylie passage aboue ye brig nixt the north inche bayth for hors + men". A distinction between the area of Muirton Haugh and the North Inch is indicated in an account of the death of John Bennet in 1663: "Johne bennet in ye muretoun betuix fywe and sex houris in ye efternoone beneth the murtoun wes drownit in ye water of Tay". It seems that there were demarcated areas along the banks of the Tay. Muirton itself was a small village; the term "Haugh" describes "a piece of level ground...on the banks of a river, river-meadow land".117

The record of a dispute between William Moncreiff and the burgh authorities suggests that there were complex property arrangements concerning the Tay itself. To the south of Perth was the village of Friarton, a settlement which seems to have had its own property rights on the Tay. The passage reveals that tension was inherent in a compact area of competing interests: "Vpoun ye day sex day of maij 1615 wm moncreiff of that ilk at his aufn hands but consent or knauledge of the burth pth + alledged richt to ane fisching of the freirtown callit hulloch hoill besyde ye fisching of pth callit ve ye veill off waist pat in same staikis of trie in the littil inche forment the lands of freirtown qks staiks ye counsall + magistratis of pth Insutme(s)t as it came to yr knauledge pullit vp hewit in peces and toist down ye wat(er) of tay quharupoun ye town and ye lard rasit lau souretie aganes vyeris".118 This passage raises several questions concerning the organisation of the fishings of the Tay. How were separate fishings identified? It seems that the wooden stakes erected by Moncreiff were intended to demarcate the area which he claimed as his own. How many fishings were there on this stretch of the Tay, and what were the terms of tenure? It appears from this record that some of the fishings were the property of communities. Such questions cannot really be answered archaeologically; but an understanding of the operation of the fishings of the Tay may contribute to an appreciation of the environment and quality of life in the 17th century burgh.

The account of the death by drowning of Andrew Read in 1658 includes a description of some of the town mills and the lade which ran from the Almond. Read "wes drownit in ye milnlead aboue ye ouer miln betuix the but and ye miln and fundin aboue ye ouer miln". This passage indicates that there were at least two mills in the complex, served by the mill lade. Read was drowned above the "upper" mill, apparently close to a "butt". The mills described here were two of the "four comoun mylnes" which, together with the inches and fishings of Perth, were set to tack in 1613.

116 Ibid., 12-13 (4), 19 (6).
CSD, 76.
117 "Chronicle", 31 (9), 59 (18).
CSD, 272.
118 "Chronicle", 32 (9).
References to Lowswork at the head of the town lade emphasise its importance to the burgh, and the wide area of the town’s enceinte: it seems to have been the first major structure to be repaired after the 1621 inundation.  

To the west of Perth lay moorland, a substantial part of which was the property of the burgh - the Burghmuir. The account of the battle of Tibbermore in September 1644 describes the battlefield as "ye mures yrof (Tibbermore) + besyde luderin + the burrow mure". In the early years of the 17th century, at least part of the Burghmuir was in use as agricultural land; the "Chronicle" records that in 1604 it was sown with oats. Later in that year it was the scene of a dispute between the burgh and "The men of blak ruthuen + huntingtor" who "cwist Truffis on or burrow mure"; this is probably a reference to peat cutting. Huntingtower is the only local settlement which the manuscript records as being connected to the town by road: in 1614, "dauid maxto(u)n burges of pth on the lang calsy foime(n)t the dwcat cm(yng frome huntingto(u)n in ane applex fal doun". However, it may be inferred from other passages that the environs of Perth were crossed by several roads; for example, in June 1615 the magistrates, council and community met the funeral procession of Sir Harry Lindsay "on fute at pathewlis + convoyit tha(m)e to the town". Directly and indirectly, the "Chronicle" presents a picture of a varied suburban environment in which were set essential industrial complexes, open and agricultural land, and settlements whose rights and interests could conflict with those of the burgh.

**The Countryside**

The chroniclers seem to have believed that there was a clear distinction between town and country; nevertheless, there was continual interaction between the two. The descriptions of failed harvests and bad weather illustrate that there was a high level of inter-dependence between Perth and "the cuntrie about"; numerous references indicate that the owners of rural estates frequented the burgh, and indeed owned properties there. How did the quality of life in rural areas compare with that of the urban environment? What can be learnt about the houses and castles of the propertied elite? And what was the nature of rural housing? Fundamental questions are also raised about the nature of communications between town and country: what was the extent and condition of the road network in Lowland Perthshire, and to what extent were the major rivers of the sheriffdom used for inland transport? Furthermore, it is implicit in certain references that some settlements and estates acted as focal points within the rural landscape. Perth was an economic and legal centre, whereas certain castles and, more particularly, certain churches and chapels may have held unusual social and political significance for rural communities. By the identification of such sites, a socio-political map may be constructed of the rural hinterland which lay beyond the burgh of Perth.

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119 Ibid., 59 (18), 27 (8), 37 (10/10).
120 Ibid., 50 (15), 23-4 (7), 29 (8/8), 33 (9/9).
CSD, 86, 742.
Occasionally, the "Chronicle" makes direct reference to the concept of "Town and Country". During the Covenanting Wars the land suffered considerable damage as numerous forces marched between the Lowland towns, but there are only two complaints in the "Chronicle" of exactions upon "this burt and ye cuntrie about". The association of town and country is also hinted at in the reference to an earthquake in March 1614, which was "haid bayth in land burth". However, perhaps the most interesting references to "both toun and cuntrie" occur in the accounts of the deaths of two prominent burgh officials. Andrew Gray died as provost of Perth in 1636; the manuscript records that he was given an impressive public funeral, and that he was buried "wt great greiff of all both toun and cuntrie". In the following year Andrew Wilson, a baillie and former dean of guild, was given a similar public funeral; "he deit wt great geiff of the toun + countai". These records occur together; they illustrate that important public figures of the town also had strong connections with rural areas, and suggest that the relationship between town and country was in part a consequence of the influence of certain individuals who had interests in both: in November 1665, John Paterson of Benchillis, a former provost, died on his estate beside the Tay, to the north of Perth, but his body was brought back to the Kirk of St. John.

In contrast to such images of co-operation, the "Chronicle" also records a number of violent disputes between the burgh and some of the propertied men of the surrounding countryside. The most detailed account concerns an assault upon the house of Gasconhall, in the Braes of Gowrie, in 1592: "The lard of clackma(n)an tuik wm Inglis dekin of the ha(m)mermen Jhone baslwie dekin of the wrchtis cu(m)yg fra dundie captives in to his hous of gaskenhall The town of pth mar raishelie ner vyslie vnvlng to abyde yt indigintie that sam(en) nicht wt all diligence past to the said gaskin hall in armes relewityr nychtbrs + brocht ye lard wt tha(m)e to pth". This episode poses more questions to the historian than to the archaeologist. But it is certainly of archaeological interest, as it raises questions concerning communications along the Carse of Gowrie - in particular transport between Perth and Dundee - and further questions about the laird's property in the Braes of Gowrie: the house of Gasconhall appears to have been easily overrun. In a similar episode in 1599, "The yo(un)g laird of balthiok and mr Wm Row minister at Kynnoull and laurence blair wer tane captive be my lord sanqr at kinross careit yame to sanqr and detenit yame yair systene dayis". This incident took place at some distance from Perth, and seems to have been resolved peacefully; attention is again drawn to the rural road network. Disputes between rural landowners could also be of significance for the town. In 1611, "my lord oliphant biggit ane dame to bring in water to ane miln at dupline wpone erne And quhen it wes perfytit ye erl of Tullibardin wt his freinds in ye nyt dang all doun". As has already been discussed, Perth had interests and responsibilities on the Earn, and the burgh might have been entangled in such a confrontation.

The churches at Aberuthven and Arngask feature prominently in the manuscript. Aberuthven is first mentioned in a passage dated 5 April 1598 as the place where the duke of Holstein was "receawit be Tullibardin". The duke was led to Aberuthven by "100 horss men of ye toun",

121 "Chronicle", 50-1 (15), 29 (8/8).
122 Ibid., 17 (5), 60 (18).
123 Ibid., 12 (4), 20 (6), 27 (8).
following a banquet in Perth held in his honour. It is unclear whether he stayed in Aberuthven and the settlement may simply have been a convenient point at which to pass the duke on to a new host. However, it is apparent from this passage, and from subsequent entries, that Aberuthven stood on a road from Perth leading westwards, presumably to Stirling. The manuscript records that in March 1597(8), "The countes ofmontroiss dame Jeane drumond Conuoyit threu perthe To Aberruthuen". The church at Aberuthven was the burial place of the Grahams, whose local estate was at Kincardine, near Auchterarder. The "Chronicle" records the burials there of Elizabeth, countess of Montrose, and John earl of Montrose, in 1618 and 1627 respectively. The manuscript also records that on 19 March 1646, "Coupairs men came bak eftir the hous of kincairne wes takin in be middletoun and brunt".124 The church at Arngask achieved a certain prominence as the place of burial of the Murray family. It is mentioned in a passage dated 14 December 1624 as the place of burial of Sir Andrew Murray of Balvaird. Like the church at Aberuthven, Arngask was set at a distance of several miles from the family's principal residence, but it would seem to have been readily accessible. In August 1667, "The ladie durie The wicount of stormont sister Dauid murriy convoyit fra perth qr shue departit To ye kirk of Amegask quhair scho wes buried Ane considerabill number of tounes men convoyit hir yair". This passage indicates that Arngask was accessible from Perth to the north; in contrast, the funeral procession of Sir Andrew Murray travelled to Arngask from Falkland in the south east. It is also important to note that townspeople did not travel from the burgh solely on business, but on occasion might join socially with their rural counterparts.125

Other Towns

The text of the "Chronicle" suggests that there was an impressive level of communication between prominent burghs of the southern and eastern Lowlands, but it also highlights their rivalries. In doing so, it places Perth within a wider urban context, in which the burgh sought to exercise influence. Perth also lay within the Diocese of St. Andrews, and occasional references to the cathedral town illustrate that the authorities of Perth had particular concerns with St. Andrews, during a period in which the episcopacy was an extremely insecure institution. Within Section 2 of the manuscript, St. Andrews is only mentioned in connection with the deaths of prelates - the murder of Cardinal David Beaton in 1546, and the death of Archbishop George Gladstanes in 1615. However, amongst the copies of letters written to the burgh (Section 3 of the "Chronicle") is one from Gladstanes, dated 26 April 1614, concerning a vacancy in the ministry at Perth. In this letter the archbishop describes Perth as "the second burgh both of the kingdome and diocy". Although this phrase is the rhetoric of a politician, it does reveal Perth's significant status in relation to St. Andrews.126 However, the cathedral town of Dunkeld was nearer to Perth than was St. Andrews, and the text indicates a close association between the two burghs. In 1594 the body of the earl of Atholl was "Convoyit honorablie to dunkelde" from Perth, whereas in April 1665, the bishop of Dunkeld died in his house in Perth and was buried in the Greyfriars burial ground.127

124 Ibid., 19 (6), 28 (8), 34 (9/9) and 40 (1 1), 54 (1 6/1 6).
125 Ibid., 38 (1 0/1 0), 63 (1 9).
126 Ibid., 9 (3), 33 (9/9), 69 (2 2).
127 Ibid., 12 (4), 61 (1 8/1 8).
Perth occasionally became embroiled in disputes involving other burghs. The "Chronicle" records the raid of Falkland in 1592, when the earl of Bothwell "assaiyle(i)t" the king; "The toun of pert went don for his defence in feir of weir". The manuscript also reports a violent confrontation between Perth and its nearby rival on the Tay, Newburgh, in September 1607 - "The read of carpow". Both of these accounts suggest that the burgh could be quick to mobilise forces to defend its interests in the sheriffdom, and beyond. In general terms, it is apparent from the text that Perth faced growing competition in the 17th century from its economic and political rivals. The "Chronicle" includes a record of the itinerary of James VI's progress through Scotland in 1617, and many of the burghs listed were in close proximity to Perth. Following his entertainment in Edinburgh, "Thus he wes wsit in all burrowis qr he come as perth Dundie striwiling brechene glassgow linlytgow drumfreis couper of fyff"; the king also stayed at Kinnaird Castle in the Braes of Gowrie, an area in which there was a dense concentration of tower-houses of the landed nobility.128

The proximity of Edinburgh is emphasised in several records of outbreaks of the "pest" there - in 1597, 1605, and particularly in 1624 when the Chancellor of Scotland fled the capital with his family and sought safety in Perth. The fate of Dunfermline in that year, when "almaist ye haiil toun" was burnt "in four houris space" re-iterates the inherent dangers of town life. However, the chroniclers were rarely sympathetic towards their fellow townsmen; only in the case of the sack of Aberdeen is there any sense of empathy with the inhabitants of another burgh: "god help it and amend it in his awin gude tyme". The Cromwellian invasion of Scotland also led to the savage treatment of some burghs, and Perth did not escape occupation. But the "Chronicle" makes no mention of the sufferings of this period; there is just one entry which records that on the "penultimo Aprilis 1654 generall monk came to Stirling being cheiff Comander of ye Inglishe army". There is no mention of the serious raid upon Dundee carried out by Montrose in 1645, nor of the devastating sacking of that town by the New Model Army in 1651.129

Although many of the references to Dundee are essentially anecdotal, there is an undercurrent of hostility in these records. It is stated that during the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of August 1600, "The toun of dundie being aduerteisit come all wp in armes to haue spoilyet ye burt of pert bot praisit be god The king knew ye toun of pthis part to be frie". This passage suggests that the townsmen of Dundee were informed of the events in Perth and travelled along the Carse at great speed; the account may be exaggerated, but it has an aura of resentment. There is perhaps a certain satisfaction in the tone of the passage which records "A great intestine discentioun in dundie" in July 1604. Indeed, the "Chronicle" includes a strange and ambiguous account of the deaths of two ministers in Dundee in December 1614: "mr James row Minist() at kilspinde and mr Robert Rynd minist at langforgow_n lyand bayth in ane bed wtin ye duelling hous of bayth being veill quhen yei lay down war found vpoun ye morne yreft bayth deid".130 Nevertheless, the text also reveals a level of co-operation between the two burghs. During the severe winter of 1624, supplies were brought to Perth from Dundee, and some propertied men appear to have had interests in both

128 Ibid., 20 (6), 26 (7), 28 (8).
129 Ibid., 19 (6), 24 (7), 38 (10/10), 52 (15/15), 55 (17).
130 Ibid., 21 (6/6), 24 (7), 30 (8/8).
burghs: in July 1603, the laird of Ballindean was killed in Dundee and buried in Perth, whereas in January 1659 "hunot of balgay depairit in perth being resident yairin Tua yeiris or yairby and transportit be water To dundie To be buried in his awin burial place yair being ane dundie man borene".131

The relationship between Perth and its rival towns thus appears to have been generally ambivalent. This was probably also the case with regard to Perth's closest neighbour, Scone. The character and status of Scone changed dramatically as a consequence of the Reformation; the abbey was destroyed and the site given to David Murray of Gospetrie (who frequently served as provost of Perth). The village of Scone held its own markets, and although it did not pose a threat to Perth which was comparable with that of Newburgh, Scone's close proximity may have occasioned disputes. Scone is of interest as a settlement which underwent radical change in a short period of time, and as one of the rivals of Perth on the Tay. The 17th century map of the Carse of Gowrie and Stormont may have been dominated by Perth and Dundee, but it was a heavily settled area in which economic competition was rife.

References in the manuscript to Scone tend to be incidental, but the change in its character can be discerned. The text fails to point out that "The burnyng of Scone" in 1559 was carried out by a mob which included townsmen from Perth; but it marked a fundamental change. The next reference records that in September 1631 "Dauid wicount of Stormont depairtit yis lyfe at Scone and wes buried in his awin burial yair wt great solempntie". By this time, the grounds of the old abbey had been converted into a secular estate (although the parish kirk stood within the bounds of Murray's property). There may be another reference to the buildings at Scone - the passage which Scott transcribed as, "The stepill of Scone fell". The paucity of references to Scone may indicate that its influence upon life in Perth was minimal; but the power of the Murray family suggests that Scone continued to be an important focal point on the fringes of the burgh.132

Communications

The importance of waterways and water transport is a recurrent theme in the "Chronicle". Perth was surrounded by a complicated lade system - filled with water drawn from the Almond - which was the first major feature to be repaired after the flood of 1621. The significance of the Tay in burgh life is often evident; the river supported a considerable weight of traffic, and was divided into various zones of influence. Perth's role as a port and market does not receive much attention in the manuscript; but the text does indicate the importance of the port of Leith, and of the other harbours on the east coast of Scotland. In general terms, the "Chronicle" presents a burgh society which was heavily dependent on its river links, and which was quite capable of adapting to the loss of the Tay bridge. The local rivers were a source of employment, of revenue and supplies, and of defence, rather than obstacles which needed to be bridged. The threat of flooding loomed large, but burgh life was inextricably linked to the Tay.

131 Ibid., 38 (10/10), 23 (7), 57 (17/17).
132 Ibid, 9 (3), 16 (5), 23 (7). The reference to the "stepill of Scone" is discussed on p.122.
Several passages demonstrate the economic importance of the local waterways. Disputes concerning a dam on the Earn and fishings on the Tay reveal how competitive rival interest groups could be. The lucrative nature of the fishings is indicated by the burgh’s decision to set them to tack in 1613. Competition on the rivers is also apparent in the record of the ferrymen who broke the ice on the Tay in February 1615, to prevent free passage across the river. Perth’s position as an inland harbour presented certain problems for the burgh authorities, who were frequently forced to challenge Dundee when that coastal port attempted to override Perth’s rights. However, Perth was at least protected from coastal storms, as indicated by a passage dated 1655: "The greatest storme Both be sea + land yt ever wes sein or red qrby all ye harberies on ye coast wer castin doun, + many ships + men cast away AT this tyme mr Jon reoch sone to Wm Reoch baillie + Wm Murray wer casten away comeing fro london". Improvements to the harbour and quayside at Perth in 1630 were essentially safety measures, although the harbour area may also have been extended by these building works.

The Tay was certainly dangerous, and the "Chronicle" records several accidents. The Brig of Tay was usually in a state of disrepair, and in September 1601 a stretch of the timber bridge fell "wt tua men Ane horss And ane lead On of ye men wes gottin saiff agane wt ye horss and ye lead Bot ye wyer man callit Lamb drownit in ye water". This incident may have been the result of the carriers’ folly in attempting to take a cart across a temporary bridge; but it is also clear that the bridge at this time was an inadequate means of communication with the east bank of the Tay. The presence of ferrymen, even when the bridge was standing, is thus unsurprising, although transportation by boat could be hazardous as well: in 1663 "The last weik of februar Tua boatmen brocht to ye schoir of perth some wyne of mr Williame ardie And depairtit being chokit with reik in yair awin boat beneath". In the same week, John Bennet was drowned in the Tay.

Although Perth’s economic status declined over the course of the 17th century, the burgh does seem to have remained a focal point in the Lowlands. The "Chronicle" suggests that Perth stood at the head of a substantial Lowland road network, and was easily accessible by land as well as by water. Several passages indicate that the journeys between Perth and other burghs such as Dundee and Edinburgh could be completed at speed - in appropriate weather. References to communications between burghs tend to concentrate on ceremonial processions - funerals and progresses - but it is apparent from the number of important assemblies which met at Perth that the town continued to play a part in regional and national affairs. However, road communications north of Perth receive scant attention; indeed, the Highlands are mentioned only once. The movements of civil war armies demonstrate that access to and from the Highlands could be achieved; but the "Chronicle" presents Perth as a Lowland burgh whose interests were concentrated south of the Highland Line.

133 Ibid., 27 (8), 31-2 (9).
134 Ibid., 55 (1 7), 42 (1 1/1 1).
135 Ibid., 22 (6/6), 59 (1 8).
136 Ibid., 14 (4/4).
The text records six visits to Perth made by James VI, between 1580 and 1617. By the later 16th century the burgh was no longer a place of regular royal residence, and each visit would have been an important occasion. But although royal visits were less frequent, Perth at least remained on the royal itinerary; this indicates that the burgh was well served by roads from the south, suitable for the entourage which would have accompanied the king. The routes of funeral processions also provide an indication of the roadways of the southern and eastern Lowlands. In one of the few references to a journey northward from Perth, the "Chronicle" records that in 1584 the body of the earl of Atholl was transported from Perth to Dunkeld; in 1615 the body of Sir Harry Lindsay was transported from Stirling to Perth, and thence to Coupar Angus. In 1624 the body of Sir Andrew Murray was carried from Edinburgh to Falkland, and from there to Arngask; it is notable that a funeral cortege was able to climb into the Ochil Hills. In 1643 the body of Laurence Oliphant of Condie was transported from Edinburgh to Forteviot.137

Several passages suggest the speed of landward communications. In August 1592 the townsmen of Perth marched to Gasconhall in the Braes of Gowrie, stormed the house, and returned to Perth with the laird of Clackmannan a captive, apparently in the space of one night. In 1600 the townsmen of Dundee seem to have mobilised and travelled along the Carse in less than a day, in response to news of the "Gowrie Conspiracy". When plague arrived in Edinburgh in November 1624, the Chancellor and his family fled the capital, and "came to perthe thrie dayis yairefter".138

Although the text contains many references for the movements of Civil War armies to and from Perth, only a few passages record their destinations. Captain Wachop, who was quartered with one of the authors, led a detachment to "Couper" - probably Coupar Angus - in February 1645. On 22 March 1645, "Bothe maitlandis regiment and crawfurdes regiment went furt of pert wt Loweten generall baillie and my lord crawfurde Towards angous + dundie". In December of that year, "Cowparis regiment" left Perth and headed westwards to Kincardine. But although the chroniclers provide few details of the movements of the armies, it is clear that Perth served as a staging post for both Royalist and Covenant forces during the years of conflict.139

The Environment of Perth and Its Hinterland:
Research Objectives and a Framework for Further Study

This thesis will not address all of the questions and topics which have been raised in these chapters; but the general themes which have been identified in the preceding pages provide guidelines for further documentary study, with specifically archaeological research objectives in mind. In various guises, the theme of "Town and Country" has been a recurrent feature of Part 2; as a general concept, and as a complex phenomenon, it prompts further study of the archaeological value of the "Chronicle of Perth". This impression is reinforced by a consideration of the research objectives for urban archaeology which have recently been set out by the Director

137 Ibid., 12 (4), 33 (9/9), 38 (10/10), 47 (13).
138 Ibid., 12 (4), 21 (6/6), 38 (10/10).
139 Ibid., 52 (15/15), 53 (16), 54 (16/16).
of the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust, Mr David Bowler. In very general terms, SUAT's "working objectives" embrace both specifically urban themes of burgh origins, topography, and townscapes, and the more complex themes of the economic and social relationships which existed between towns and the countryside.

Writing of "Hinterlands", Mr Bowler has suggested that "we can look for contemporary rural sites and traces of incoming manufactures, and try to understand network of communications and rural centres, patterns of collection and distribution, and the hierarchy of settlements. Historians and economic geographers may be able to help here". These are clearly matters in which the "Chronicle" has much information and guidelines to offer. It is also important to note that, conversely, excavated material may be of use in illustrating the nature of economic interaction between the burgh and its hinterland: "we might consider plan orientation, location and landward communications as evidence of relations with the hinterland. We can look for evidence of trade, not only in artefacts, but more probably in raw materials and waste. Animal bone is a likely candidate here, as abundant evidence of a major rural product and its production methods".

SUAT's work primarily concerns medieval archaeology, but study of the "Chronicle" can certainly develop the Trust's research themes, within Perth as well as beyond its walls. Much of the material evidence for buildings and structures of the early modern period has been destroyed in later building works, but the "Chronicle" may be used to provide some information for this period, and it is certainly of value in relation to buildings which Bowler has described as "Prominent Monuments". The kirk survives; the tolbooth, cross and castle of Perth have all been destroyed. But an impression of the structural history, condition, and uses of such buildings can be gained through documentary research. Bowler writes of prominent urban buildings that "these monuments are important not only in themselves, but as expressions of a burgh's importance and character, as foci for burgh development, and as substantial structures likely to survive. They are major features in towns, and major institutions in public life..." This argument is certainly supported by the contents of the "Chronicle". Major urban buildings simply would not have been built and maintained if they were not intended to serve essential functions within a burgh, and to express the character of the burgh; study of prominent buildings will surely provide important insights into the operation of burgh life, be it in the medieval or the early modern period.

In conclusion, Bowler states that "Most urban excavation will continue to be driven by rescue requirements, producing evidence piecemeal and at random. We will need to create mechanisms for research beyond the site publication, to integrate the results into coherent conclusions. We have to dig opportunistically and think thematically". Study of the "Chronicle of Perth" offers a means of developing research themes which have been identified by urban archaeologists; the text suggests a framework for study of the 17th century environment as it was perceived by the chroniclers themselves. The concept of the "Town and Country" relationship is essentially the creation of historians - the phrase is a convenient label for a particular category of research; but it is

140 The following discussion and quotations derive from Mr Bowler's unpublished paper, "Urban Research - What Are We Looking For?", which was delivered at the first Historic Scotland Urban Seminar, (5 August 1992).
clearly applicable to a study of the "Chronicle" as, consciously or unconsciously, the authors were interested in the character of the urban and rural landscapes of their locality.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature to emerge from the survey of the "Chronicle's" potential as an archaeological source is the subject of climatic disasters. The manuscript suggests that the quality of life of the citizenry of Perth, and the architectural history of the burgh, was influenced to a significant extent by the state of the weather. In some respects the "Chronicle" is a catalogue of natural disasters, and to appreciate the nature of the built environment of the early modern town, it seems necessary to study the climatic conditions of the time. The incidence of flooding should be a major concern, and study of inundations can offer various options for further research: the state of bridges and communications, the food supply and markets. Fundamentally, it is apparent from the "Chronicle" that although severe weather was a common occurrence, such conditions could seriously disrupt interaction between the burgh and countryside, and hence upset the balance of exchange between the two, upon which the livelihoods of their inhabitants depended.

The following inter-related subjects of enquiry are suggested by the archaeological themes raised by the "Chronicle": The vicissitudes of the climate; distinctions between the burgh, its enceinte, and the rural landscape beyond; the characteristics of urban buildings, both public and private; the manner and quality of landward communications; study of churches, in town and country. The years of war and occupation in the 1640s and 1650s stand out as a critical period. These crises brought social and economic distress to town and country, and the occupation of Perth wrought significant changes upon the architecture of the burgh.

In Part 3 these themes will be explored by reference to other local sources - particularly the contemporary manuscripts which have been catalogued as the "Perth Burgh Records". The "Chronicle" may actually derive from these sources, many of which were produced or guarded by John Mercer as town clerk, and it seems logical to use these papers to further the framework which the "Chronicle" inspires. The general theme to be pursued may be defined as the "Archaeology of Town and Country". The intention of the ensuing discussion will be to transfer the "Town and Country" theme of Dr Lynch's historical work into an archaeological setting inspired by Mr Stell's concept of the "architecture of landownership in town and country". My aim is to look at the broad environment of burgh and countryside, principally through the medium of historical documents.
Appendix 1

Trades and Professions in Perth


(Bold type denotes names which appear more than once in a particular category)

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PART 3 : Historical Evidence and the Archaeologist
Preface:

The use of Documentary Sources for Archaeological Research

My decision to study documentary material for purposes of archaeological enquiry raises important, though well-worn, intellectual problems, the most obvious question being why? My response to this question is both personal and practical. At a personal level, although I am an historian by training, I have studied archaeology - in one form or another - throughout my student career. Since my undergraduate days I have been aware of an ongoing debate concerning the nature and value of the relationships which are perceived to exist between these disciplines. I participated in an honours course given by Dr Colin Martin in the Department of Scottish History at St. Andrews University, entitled "Archaeological Evidence and the Historian", which was designed to introduce history students to the nature and uses of archaeological sources and methods of study. This course was also intended to demonstrate that the two disciplines have much in common, and that historical studies may often need to be integrated with archaeological enquiries - and vice versa. I found this course both illuminating and persuasive, and the basic argument that historians and archaeologists must make themselves aware of the working practices, source materials, and arguments of their counterparts in the alternative discipline is one that I accept without reservation. Collaboration between historians and archaeologists is frequently necessary, and increasingly becoming the norm. Much has been written about relationships between historical and archaeological evidence, and methods of study; this thesis is not intended to add directly to such literature but, in a rather narrow context, my work aims to explore the value of documentary sources in furthering knowledge of the built and natural environment.  

When I was first introduced to the possibility of studying early modern Perth, I was advised by Professor Michael Lynch that the "Chronicle of Perth" could form the basis for a study of the society and economy of the burgh, and that historical research could be augmented by consideration of the work in Perth of the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust. This suggestion was the starting point for my research, but the thesis has developed along rather different lines. It became apparent to me at an early stage that if the "Chronicle" was to form the centrepiece of my research, Maidment's published version of The Chronicle of Perth would have to be revised and improved upon. It was during the process of providing a new edition of the manuscript that I decided that it would be intellectually challenging to assess the value of this source for archaeologists working in Perth, rather than seeking to interpret their findings in the context of documentary study. This idea lies at the heart of the "archaeological" passages in this thesis. It prompts a theoretical study; but the results of this work could have useful practical consequences for archaeological research in Perth. In Part 2 of this thesis, I have sought to demonstrate that the "Chronicle of Perth" contains useful archaeological material in its own right, and that the manuscript

1 I have been taught by - amongst others - Mr Philip Barker, Professor Peter Fowler, Dr Colin Martin, and Mrs Edwina Proudfoot, and my familiarity with archaeological techniques, and with the debate concerning the relationship between history and archaeology, derives largely from their work.
indicates areas in which archaeological study may develop an appreciation of the 17th century environment, in both town and country. Part 3 will develop this work using related, documentary sources, in an attempt to build up a substantial reference source for historians and archaeologists, and as a means to prompt further archaeological research.
Section 1. Climatic Disorder?

This chapter will examine further the strong impression given in the "Chronicle of Perth" that severe weather caused repeated hardship in Perth and its locality in the early decades of the 17th century. Several related questions must be borne in mind: Is the "Chronicle" a valid source of information? To what extent can we judge the scale of damage and disruption which was caused by extreme weather? How did the climate affect the quality of life of the citizenry of Perth, and of their rural counterparts?

1. The Incidence of Natural Disasters:

Catalogue of Natural Disasters recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth":

Inundations:

20 December 1573

"The down falling of twa bowis of the brig of tay and off lowis wark be inundatio(u)n of wat" (11, 3/3).

January 1615

"ye vatte(r) of tay be veittis and sleit vaxit so great that all it coverit haill or ye north inche ye mortoun haugh and almaist all the south inche" (31, 9).

14 October 1621

"Thair wes suche ane inwnda(o)un of vater as ye lyke in no manes remembrance wes sene" (35-6, 10).

Frosts and Snows:

1 December 1607

"Thair wes ane continuall frost from yat day foirsaid till ye 21 of marcheand passage wpone yce or Tay all ye tyme and passage or + ower at ye mil of erroll(l)" (26, 7/7).

21 February 1615

"This yeir preceding ye frost was lang luikit for befoir it came quhen it came it continewit sa lang that the vat of tay being all frosin aboue + beneth the brig that thair vas daylie passage aboue ye brig nixt the north inche bayth for hors + men and beeneth ye brig foirment ye erle of arrollis ludging + ye shore for men" (31, 9).

6 March 1615

"ane vehement snau come on lestit all the ncht + c(on)tinewd to vedensday y(r)efte(r) at qlk tyme be xii houris in ye day it begowth of new and continuuit so vehement ncht + ay to the of m()che" (31-2, 9).
7 May 1615
"great snau and frost" (32, 9).

1624
"This yeir wes suche ane frost That ye ellyke hes not bene sene in our dayis for from mertymes To ye 30 of Januar Thair wes passage or Tay wpone ye ice And yaireftir dissoluit and freissit agane to ye 23 of febry" (38, 10).

January 1635
"In Januar 1635 from ye 26 day yairof till ye 16 day of februar Thair fell furt suche ane hudge snow That men nor women could not walk wpone or streitis It wes Ten quarter or Tua ellis heiche throu all the toun Tay wes 30 dayis frozen ower" (43, 12).

High Winds and Earthquakes:

23 July 1597
"Ane earthquhak" (12, 4).

20 March 1607
"Thair raiss ane great extraordinarie winde yat blew ye lead af ye steepill to mr Jon malcolmes bak yett callit the bischope of murrayis hous" (25, 7).

8 November 1608
"Ane earth quak at 9 horis at ewin yat schoak ye tolboth the battels end yat yair fell many stones aff it" (26, 7).

10 January 1609
"The great wind blew doun ye stanes of ye mantil wall of ye kirk in tyme of S(e)rmone and terrefeit ye peopel" (26, 7).

1 March 1614
"behalf hour to sax in ye momy(n)g ane earquhak haid in diuers places". (29).

3 March 1614
"ane uther earquhak at xii houris in ye night haid bayth in land burth" (Ibid.)

18 July 1646
"Thair wes ane horrible thunder qlk began in perth at 5 houris at nyt and lastit till 2 in ye morning" (55, 17).

Subsistence Crises:

1525
"The de(i)r symme(r)... quhen ye boll of mail) gaiff xxvý _ al(e)xr Blair than guest of pth" (10, 3).

1598
"The quhyte blastit" (20, 6).

1612
"fra mychaelmes to yat tyme (Winter ed.) great dearthe The wictuall at 10 lib ye boll" (27, 8).

1616
"great powertie of cornes and great dearth" (28, 8).
1621
"This yeir a great skairsteie of cornes wes throu all ye kingdome And yat be ye ewill harwest and inwnda(o)n yat happnit And haue bene greater abondance of eforane wictuall hed not cum in yit it gaitf 12 lb 20 mok ye boll bear and peass meall 16 m()k" (36, 1 0).

1622
"In yis yeir about ye haruest and efter Thair wes suche ane vniuersall seiknes in all ye cuntrie As the ellyke hes not bene ard of Bot specialie in yis burt yat no familie in all ye citie wes frie of yis visita(o)un Thair wes also great mortalitie Amongs ye poore" (37, 1 0/1 0).

1623
"Thair wes yis haruest tyme ane great mortalitie + dearthe yat x or xij deft ordinarlie euerie day from midsomer to mychaelmes wtin yis burt" (Ibid.)

January-February 1635
"Thair wes great skairsteie of wictuall + elding mylnes gaid not and yair wes no passage nor travelling to bring any in AT yat tyme aill wes waig skant They knokit mal in knocking stones" (43, 1 2).

The use of Documents for Climatic Research:

This thesis concerns relationships between historical and archaeological research; it is important to ask at this point whether documents are an adequate source of information for medieval and early modern climatic history? In a survey of the various forms of evidence which may be used to investigate the chronology of climatic change, M.L. Parry has offered a cautious acknowledgement of the potential of "meteorological descriptions". He gives only the broadest definitions of the types of material which are available. He states that "Annalists" wrote of "the most striking events of their times - for example, floods, droughts, frosts, and storms". He warns that "These descriptions have been used by climatic historians on the assumption that, given confirmation of their date and authenticity, they give an indication of exceptional weather events... it is important, however, to take account of the increasingly comprehensive nature of the record". This is an important point and, although Parry seems to be referring to early medieval sources, the question obviously arises: Can the accounts of extreme or apparently unusual weather recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth" be treated as such, or do they represent the norm? The "Chronicle" is not a comprehensive record of events in the 16th and 17th centuries, and these accounts may be unrepresentative of the general climatic trend; alternatively, they may be less extraordinary than they seem. In this context, it is necessary to consider the manuscript as a whole. Essentially, it is a miscellany of historical notices, but with pervasive themes - particularly in Section 2; and one of the most noticeable themes is that of disruption caused by bad weather. The authors were engaged by the effects of the weather; their emphasis upon the damage which was wrought upon the burgh and its environs by particular phenomena suggests that such conditions were a little out of the ordinary. Indeed, the chroniclers

2 M.L. Parry, Climatic Change, Agriculture and Settlement, (1978). The following discussion is based upon Parry's analysis of 'Meteorological descriptions', 32-38.
occasionally stated that the weather was unusual: "ye lyke in no manes remembrance wes sene". As has been noted, such remarks are of questionable value, particularly when they appear to be formulaic; but they are still relevant comments, and need to be considered as evidence.

It is noteworthy that Whittington has argued that the diary of John Lamont of Newton (1649-1672), which has been published as The Chronicle of Fife, is a valid source of evidence for climatic history on the grounds that the author was a factor on the estate of Lundie in the East Neuk of Fife. According to Whittington, "his occupation would have given him an acute interest in the weather and such men do not concern themselves overly with its ordinary vagaries". In addition, he states that the "proven accuracy of the many other events recorded in his diary" allows the reader to accept Lamont's reporting of extreme weather conditions. Although much of the factual information in the "Chronicle of Perth" is reasonably accurate, unfortunately John Mercer's occupation as a notary and town clerk does not enable a researcher to form a similar judgement about the Perth manuscript.

Parry's catalogue of the potential short-comings of documentary information principally concerns medieval sources, but his warnings have a more general application. The "psychology" of authors may present difficulties: "In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there is some manipulation of the facts to conform with religious or superstitious beliefs". This is apparent in some entries in the "Chronicle" and, more particularly, in the Perth kirk session registers; similarly, John Spalding was a steadfast royalist and his work concerning Aberdeen is full of foreboding in the years preceding the fall of Charles I. Parry also comments that "Conditions accepted as unexceptional during an exceptional period of years might well escape comment". Such omissions clearly leave gaps in the detail of the climatic record, but do not invalidate the record. The climatic historian, like any other historical researcher, must accept that his source material is likely to be incomplete. Amongst "early" sources, Parry places the greatest faith in "chronicles, monastic charters and ecclesiastical histories... Many of the recorded statements remain uncorroborated by additional evidence and appear to relate to isolated events. However, some do refer to exceptionally frequent hazards that suggest an unusual period of weather". It is fair to say that a concentration of notices in the "Chronicle of Perth" suggest that the early 1620s were years of persistently adverse weather conditions in and around Perth, and of hardship for the local population.

3 "Chronicle", 35 (10), lines 37-38.
4 See above, p.136.
The Perth Kirk Session and Presbytery Registers:

A survey of Rev. James Scott’s transcriptions of the registers of the kirk session and presbytery of Perth adds weight to the implication of the "Chronicle" that the 1620s were years of considerable difficulty in Perth and the surrounding countryside. However, there is no record in these volumes of any difficult weather conditions before 1621. The registers also differ from the "Chronicle" by occasionally recording successful harvests and periods of abundance. Two principal themes emerge: the disruptiveness of bad weather, and the frequent imposition of public fasts by the session to entreat God to send fine weather. The registers portray an inclement and often tempestuous climate, and the language of the accounts tends to be comparable with that of the "Chronicle".

Disruptive Weather:

The first account of a natural disaster is the detailed record of the inundation of 1621, entitled "An Remembrance of God's Visitation of Perth" (see below). Scott’s notes seem to add to the record of this disaster by stating that "I find by the Presbytery Register that during part of the month of November the uncommonly tempestuous weather still continued, 'The 14th Day of November, no convention of the Brethren for this Tempest of Weather'". Meetings of the kirk authorities were frequently disrupted by poor weather: On 12 November, 1623, "No Convention of Brethren, nor Exercise, thro' the vehemency + Tempest of the Weather"; 10 November 1624, "No Exercise this Day, nor convention of Brethren, by Reason of the Tempest of Weather"; 15 December 1624, "No Convention of Brethren, nor Exercise, because of the weather being so vehement + tempestuous". It is recorded that in February 1625, the Brethren were unable to convene because of the "Tempest of Weather + Inundation of Waters"; similarly, in January 1626 there was "No exercise because of the vehemency of the Weather, + Greatness of the Waters". In June of that year, heavy rain prevented travel from the country into the burgh: "There was no Exercise because of the Vehemency of the Weather + extraordinary Rain that the Brethren could not convene from far". The kirk session register re-inforces the "Chronicle's" account of the paralysing effects of heavy snows: on 19 January 1635, "By occasion of the present storm of snow there was no meeting of the Elders, but only of Mr Joseph Laurie Minister, who ordained to supply the poor persons"; a week later the session met and ordained that the poor of the burgh should be "supported now in this Time of this deadly storm of frost + snow". On the 27 January, the minister and elders convened, "having consideration of God's wrath kindled against the People of this Country for their sins, Whereby the Majesty of God is provoked to plague the same with Frost + Snow in such abundance that the like has never been seen before, threatening Destruction both of Man + Beast, if it be not prevented by unfeigned Repentance for our sins + Transgressions".

6 NLS Adv. 31.1.1 Perth Kirk Session Register, Rev. James Scott, Volumes I and II, (1774-5). All of the following extracts are taken from Volume II. (Scott's system of page numbering is inadequate for reference purposes, and as all of the entries in these volumes occur in chronological order, the reader is referred to each passage according to its date. See above, p.61 n.135). Between October 1624 and January 1631 the kirk session register is missing; Scott transcribed information relative to Perth in these years from the Perth presbytery register.

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"God's Visitation of Perth":

A direct comparison between the contents of the "Chronicle" and the registers is possible concerning the inundation of October 1621. The "Chronicle" states that this flood was the worst in living memory, in respect of its force and suddenness. The inundation came after a day's rain, and struck in the Castle Gable area at night, where the inhabitants were roused from their beds by deep water in their homes. The text records damage to some of the principal buildings of the burgh and its environs - the Brig of Tay, the tolbooth and Lowswork - and implies that homes in the Castle Gable in particular were ruined. Many inhabitants suffered material losses and communications were disrupted. The flood was at its height over the week-end of 14-15 October, but the waters subsided after about a week. The text emphasises that the burgh community spent this time "humblit... wt fasting + prayer Tuyss preiching euerie day". Perhaps the most memorable phrase in this account describes how "IT semit ye wandowis of heawin and funtanes of ye deip wer opponit".

The record in the kirk session register is more detailed, but in general corroborates the "Chronicle's" account. The entry is dated Tuesday, 16th October 1621, and begins with a note to the effect that the session had ordered a collection to be made from all the citizens as a declaration of thankfulness to God for their deliverance from the flood, the money to be given to the poor. The date does not quite correspond with that given in the "Chronicle", but it is apparent that by Tuesday, although the town was still flooded, the water had subsided enough to enable the inhabitants to resume their occupations and to begin to repair the damage which had been caused. The register account gives prominence to the fate of the bridge: "the Brig of Tay was hailly dung doun, except only one bow thereof standing. None could get furth of it, nor yet cum within it to make any relief thereto". The "Chronicle" - which includes the useful detail that the bridge was eleven arches in breadth - implies that the whole bridge was carried away. However, the register seems to corroborate other aspects of the "Chronicle’s" account, in commenting that the town was temporarily cut off from outside assistance, and implying that much of the burgh was flooded.

The register describes a week of dreadful weather. It states that the rains began on Friday 12th October, and continued that day and Saturday. On Saturday night, "unlooked for", the Tay flooded; those who lived "outwith the castel gavel port in laigh houses" were forced to seek refuge in "high houses". The flood waters rose "to the loftings in the highest mid houses in the castel-gavel before six hours on Monday in the morning". This suggests that the "Chronicle’s" description of the "peopill in the castell gauill + west port" being "wat in yair beddes and waikint wt water to ye wast in yair flores" is not an exaggeration, but refers to those who were living in "laigh" houses; it may even refer to the "highest mid houses" as well. However, the register states that the "highest mid houses" were flooded "before six hours on Monday in the morning", suggesting that the worst of the inundation lasted a day longer than is indicated by the "Chronicle". The register also records that "The waters began to decrease afternoon on Monday (15th,) but after day light past, there arose a greater tempest of wind and rain than at any time before... Notwithstanding thereof, miraculously, through the great mercy of God, by all men's expectation, the water greatly in the

7 "Chronicle", 35-6 (10).
8 This account is reprinted in the NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 47-8.
meantime decreased”. The register also emphasises that although the flood was at its height at the Castle Gable Port, it spread across Perth: “the water came up to Gilbert Henderson’s yett (gate) in the Castel gavel, and to Margaret Monypenny’s yett in the Fish Market, and to Donald Johnston’s yett in the Highgate, to the Meal Vennel in the South gate, and the water ran like miln-clouses, at the yett of diverse parts on the north side of the High gate... The water also came above Henry’s Sharp’s shop in the Speygate”. The “Chronicle” seems to have echoed the register’s lament that “The like fearful inundation of water was never seen in no living man’s remembrance”. 9

The “Chronicle” also resembles the register’s account in its emphasis upon the communal prayers which were offered by the citizens during this crisis. The register records that the minister “caused ring the preaching bell on Sunday at seven hours of the morning, and the haill inhabitants came to the kirk; and there he exhorted them to repent for their sins, which had procured the said judgement of God to come upon the town...whose powerful exhortations moved the people to cry to God with tears, clamours, and cries, and to hold up their hands to God to amend their lives, and every one of them to abstain from their domestic sins...The like humiliation, both of men and women, has not been seen in Perth before nor since; preaching and praying continued all that week”. The passage in the “Chronicle” is very similar: “we being humblit all that weik wt fasting + prayer Tuyss preiching euerie day god hard ws that the water decreassit glorie be to his matie mony maid wowes for yair saiftie gif abstenance + thankfulnes”.

The register concludes by mentioning the destruction of crops and livestock: “Great plenty of corns in all parts, both stacks and stooks, being on haughs and valley ground, was carried away by the waters; and divers ships by tempest perished, and horn nolt, kye, and sheep were drowned”. The “Chronicle” records that there was scarcity in 1621/2 following “ye ewill harwest and inwnda(o)n”, but relates that this was a problem “throu all ye kingdome”, and was in part relieved by the importation of “eforane wictuall”. Thus, whilst the two accounts differ in some elements of detail, much of the “Chronicle” account seems to echo that of the kirk session register. It is likely that the chronicler (TH7) was familiar with the register, but he may have had access to other material as well. The register provides a more substantial account of the flood, and this text offers some explanations of ambiguous passages in the “Chronicle”.

Public Fasts:

Many of the references to poor weather in the registers actually concern predictions of poor weather; it was common for the presbytery or session to ordain public fasts to prevent God’s wrath. The records of proposed fasts indicate that the fear of harvest failure was never far from the minds of the citizenry. Some fasts were general throughout Scotland, and might be called to entreat God’s blessing to the royal family or for military campaigns; prayers for good weather might be included as a matter of routine. Most of the fasts which are recorded, however, were local in application and generally concerned the harvest.

9 This record can be compared with Roger Smith’s analysis of the areas affected by flood waters in the 1993 inundation; see below, p.183-4.
In August 1622, the presbytery appointed a public fast to be held on two consecutive Sundays, in part to plead for temperance of the weather “to win the Fruits of the Ground”. However, in the following July a similar fast was proclaimed “That God will remove this Plague of Famine + Dearth that lies upon this land” and “That God of his mercy will turn all our Hearts to him; + his wrath from us; + that it will please him to send Temperance of the weather, + bless the Fruits of the Ground”. The registers record occasionally disruptive weather over the course of the next three years, but it was not until July 1626 that another fast was required: “an public fast to be observed in all this kingdom upon the said wednesday + the Sabbath thereafter” due to “The Intemperance of the Weather portending famine thro’ the Destruction of the Corns”. Similarly, a general fast was proclaimed in August 1628 in response to “The Intemperance of the weather threatening the Destruction of the Corns, + the Plague of Famine”. In August 1629, the threat of a poor harvest led to the proclamation of a fast within the presbytery. In July 1630 an entry records the proclamation of a fast “in Respect of the long Drought bygone + present, whereby the Corns + Fruits of the Ground appear to be in danger”; this was the first fast to be called in response to bad weather since June 1623.

In August 1631, the presbytery ordained a fast to be held as a token of gratitude for good weather and abundance: “The Brethren having in Consideration the Goodness of God in the temporal Benefits of the Present Increase + Abundance of the Growth of the Fruits of the Ground for the Relief of the Present Necessity of the poor + scarcity that has been these years bygone; as also considering that divers frequent + unlooked for Tempests of Wind + Rain do fall out, whereby that Curse is presaged that we see much but shall reap little; Considering therefore the working of God in Mercy + Judgement, The Brethren think expedient + necessary that a fast be kepted within the Bounds of their Presbytery, not only to give God Thanks for his bygone Goodness, but also humbly to entreat him for Continuance of the same, + to avert the Tokens of his Judgements which are feared”. However, in the following year, fasts were ordained in response to “the Lateness of the Harvest, + Intemperance of the Weather by the great + extraordinary Rains whereby the Fruits of the Ground are in Danger to be lost + destroyed, which is a manifest Token of the Wrath of God for sin”. Nevertheless, the harvest does seem to have been successful in the parishes of Kilspindie and Rait: an entry dated 27 February 1633 states that “the Moderator + Brethren of this Presbytery, within the Bounds whereof lie the Kirks + Parishes of Rait + Kilspindy, Understanding by the Visitation of the said Kirks, + by Inspection of the Books of Examination, that the said two Kirks are become very populous thro’ the great abundance of Fruits, Corns, + other Commodities, so that neither of the said Kirks are at this present able to contain their Parishioners…”

In September 1633, a fast was proclaimed as a cautionary measure, “in Respect of the evil Disposition of the Weather”. In the following year there was a more pressing threat: “God’s Judgements in the Plague of Famine, especially upon the North Part of this Country + Isles this year bygone...The tokens of his present wrath, + Imminent Judgements upon us in thir parts, threatening the like Plague in the Destruction of the Fruits of the Ground by violent Tempests of Wind”. In the summers of 1635 and 1636, the brethren were distressed by “droughts”; in July
1635 it was thought that the "great Drought" would dry up the crops, and in the next year there were "fears of famine because of the present Drought".

Scott's transcripts of the registers clearly indicate that the citizenry of Perth lived in fear of harvest failure but, unlike the "Chronicle", there are relatively few records of actual dearth. The registers' record of the trials of the 1620s supports the impression created by the "Chronicle" that these were difficult years - although it is important to remember that the information from Scott's transcripts is confined to a sixteen year period between 1621 and 1636. The registers add new perspectives to the "Chronicle's" accounts of hardships, but it is particularly notable that no such difficulties are mentioned for the late 16th century and the early decades of the 17th century.

Unusual Weather In Aberdeen

Does the "Chronicle of Perth" give unusual prominence to the state of the climate? Was Perth particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the weather? A survey of references in the "Chronicle of Aberdeen" and Spalding's History of the Troubles... provides an alternative context in which to consider the Perth chroniclers' concerns about the state of the climate.

Walter Cullen included only four accounts of hardship and bad weather amongst his historical notes, concentrated in the years 1576-1578. In some respects these notices are similar in style and content to those of the "Chronicle of Perth" and, rather like some of the chroniclers, Cullen appears to have been writing to a formula. He recorded that 1 May 1576 "was say ewill, the woynd and weytt at the waist northt waist, with gryt schwiris of snaw and sleytt, that the lyik was nocht sene be theyme that was lefand in mone yeris afor say ewill". Similarly, in October of that year, the wind and rain was so strong "that the lyk was nott sein in monne yens afor", and the 25 March 1578 "was say ewill ane day, of grytt woynd at the south wast and northt wast, quhilks dyd grytt skayth on the kyrk and howissis in the towin, thatt the lyk was nocht sein in monne yersis afor". The suggestion that each instance of bad weather was the worst in living memory indicates the fear of the townspeople of Aberdeen and the destructiveness of violent storms; but the writer's consistent phrasing raises some doubt about the actual strength of the storms. The mention of damage to buildings in 1578 is more helpful - the reference is similar to those in the "Chronicle of Perth" which record damage to public buildings of the town in 1607, 1608 and 1609. Indeed, the paucity of references to unusual weather in Cullen's notes could be testimony to the severity of the storms which he did record. Of particular interest is his account of widespread scarcity in 1578: "ane gryt daricht of all kynd of wittallis throicht all Scotland, that the lyke was nocht sene in nay manis day afor. The meill wes said for sax s. the peck, the aill for x d. the poyntt, the wyne for the best schaip, xl d. the poynnt; fysh and flaische was skaynt and der". This passage bears a close resemblance to entries in the "Chronicle of Perth" which record dearth and inflated prices - although not for the year 1578, and not in such detail. Indeed, although there is a stylistic similarity

10 "The Chronicle of Aberdeen", 43, 44, 47.
11 "Chronicle", 25 (7/7), lines 36-40; 26 (7/7), lines 40-48.
12 "The Chronicle of Aberdeen", 47.
between Cullen's work and the "Chronicle", the two sources do not overlap in this context. Because Cullen's material is relatively limited, it would be imprudent to draw strong comparisons between the two "chronicles"; but they do make similar comments about the impact of bad weather upon urban life in their respective burghs.

John Spalding's History of the Troubles... differs significantly from both these sources; it is far longer, more detailed, and overtly political. There is more information about the climate and harvests in his history, but mainly concerning the 1640s, when the "Chronicle of Perth" is silent about the weather. Nevertheless, there are some features of his style which recall Cullen and the "Chronicle"; in particular, the suggestion that "the lyke was never sein" recurs throughout his work, and there are several detailed accounts of price inflation during times of dearth. In other respects his work is noticeably different; writing with hindsight, Spalding adopted a superstitious tone, and frequently declared that bad weather was a portent of trouble for Aberdeen, or for the kingdom in general. Furthermore, his observations were not confined to events in New and Old Aberdeen; he often wrote of the countryside, and included some accounts of the effects of bad weather upon other towns in the north east.

In February 1633, "ane great storm of snaw, with horrible high winds, whilk was notted to be universall throw all Scotland" caused damage to "countrymen's houssis" and "threw doun the stately crown, bigged of curious assler work, aff of the steiple of the King's Colledge of old Aberdein". There is no notice of this storm in the "Chronicle of Perth", but Spalding records that its effects were felt "in sundrie watters... such as the watters of Leith, Dundie, Montross, and other parts" where the "ordinar course of ebbing and flowing" was disrupted. In October 1637 there was severe flooding in Moray, where mills were "washen doun; houses, kills, cotts, faulds wherin beasts were keeped, all destroyed"; this is a useful list of rural buildings, as well as of the nature of flood damage. Corn had been stacked, but now began to rot. At this time, four ships in Aberdeen harbour were scattered by the rising of the Dee. This passage gives a clear illustration of the widespread damage in both town and country which could be occasioned by flooding.

Another entry for 1637 records architectural details of the kirk at Elgin: "Upon the 4th of December, on the night, ther rose ane horrible high wynd, which blew doun the cupells standing upon the queir of the college kirk of Elgine, whilk had endured many winds befor, and fell never while now. And, if it had been theiked, might have stand, for the timber was fresh and fyne, suffering so much rain since the tirring therof, about 80 years". This record suggests that Spalding was far better acquainted with events in rival burghs than were the chroniclers in Perth, but it also bears comparison with some of the descriptions in the "Chronicle" of damage to public buildings. In general, the writers in Perth did not display Spalding's level of architectural

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13 John Spalding, The History of the Troubles... 1624 to 1645, Bannatyne Club, (1828), Volume I, 14.
14 Ibid., 49.
15 Ibid., 50.
knowledge; the description of the Brig of Earn is a notable exception, and does compare favourably with this and other such accounts. 16

Unlike Perth, New and Old Aberdeen were coastal burghs, and Spalding often mentions maritime disasters, the like of which Perth did not experience. However, failure in the food supply would have caused universal fear, and Spalding noted the costs of such disasters in the early 1640s. Political uncertainty and the exactions of the Covenanting crisis would later take their toll, but poor weather seems to have been the principal cause of price inflation at the beginning of the decade. In 1642, "the victualieis heir in Abirdene wes monstruous deir, for, about and efter Martimes, throw the hail wynter, the malt haldin at 15 and 16 merkis the boll, the white meill at 8 li. the boll, quhilk wes the first deir wynter heitorefe sein in this land, albeit thair hes bein deir symeris. There wes also gryte raines whereby none wes able to travell, gryte stormes in the seais, and few fishes gottin, to the gryte greif of the people, albeit our synis deserved wors; bot God sent, in June, July, August, excellent wether, whiche maid amendis for Marche, Apryle, May, horribill unseasonable wether". 17 In the following year, "Wether, at this tyme, frostie and cauld, mervellous to sie in Aprile. Fishes, fleschis, fowlis and all other commodities scarce gettabill in Abirdene; malt at 16 merkis, quhyt meill nyne pundis, houshold meill 11 or 12 merkis; mervallous to sie. Notwithstanding, this Assemblie did not proclame a fast whereby we might crave God mercy for our synis, and that he wold remove this tempestuous wether, now in the veray spring; bot mony dayis of fastis and humiliationis wes ordanit abefoir, and dayis of thanks giveing, for lichter caussis". 18

Spalding was a more accomplished writer than the Perth chroniclers and had access to more information; however, his interest in the consequences of an unpredictable climate was broadly the same as those of his contemporaries in Perth. Structural damage, disruption to the food supply, price inflation, and fear amongst the urban populace are common themes in both the "Chronicle of Perth" and Spalding's History. The bad weather conditions which these sources describe - heavy rain, floods, high winds, frosts and snow - are broadly similar, although the topography of the two burghs differed markedly, and whereas Aberdeen was particularly vulnerable to the effects of coastal storms, Perth was peculiarly vulnerable to flood waters.

Miscellaneous Weather Data

The "Chronicle's" information concerning the state of the climate can be placed within a wider historiographical context. An overview of some of the meteorological records which were included in Scottish historical works of the 16th and 17th centuries can be constructed by surveying Chambers's Domestic Annals of Scotland. 19 References from the "Chronicle of Perth" are quoted in his work for the years 1598, 1599, 1608, 1612, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624, and 1635.

16 "Chronicle", 29, (8/8).
18 Ibid., 127.
The "Chronicle of Fortingall" records that from 15 Januar 1570(1) untill 22 March, "great frost, that nae plews gaed while aucht days; and men might pass and repass on the ice of Lyon the 3d day of March". On 22 February, after noon, "there came ane great storm, and snow and hail and wind, that nae man nor beast might take up their heads, nor gang, nor ride, and mony beasts, and mony men and women, were perished in sundry parts, and all kind of victuals right dear, and that because nae mills might grind for the frost". 20 (The "Chronicle of Perth" describes similar dislocation as a result of snow, in March 1615 and in the winter of 1635). 21

Chambers quotes Walter Cullen’s account of a dearth of victuals in 1578, and adds that "In November 1577 two boat-loads of beir were about to sail from Aberdeen harbour for Leith, when the town-council arrested them, and ordained the victual to be sold to the inhabitants of Aberdeen at 'competent prices'". Furthermore, Chambers records that the government issued a proclamation commanding the possessors of grain to thrash it out before the 10th of June, and that no-one should keep more victual than was sufficient to serve his family a quarter of a year - the rest was to be brought to market within twenty days. "It was also ordered, that no grain should be taken forth of the kingdom, but 'strangers bringing in victual should be favourably enteranteed and thankfully paid'". 22

The "Diary of Robert Birrel" records a "famine" in 1595, "the like whereof was never heard tell of in any age before, nor ever read of since the world was made". This phrase is clearly an exaggeration but, in common with similar phrases in the "Chronicle of Perth" and the Aberdeen manuscripts of Cullen and Spalding, it seems to express the horror of those who suffered as a consequence of dearth. Birrel’s account also contains an impressive list of food prices at this time: "In this month of October and November the wheat and malt at £10 the boll; in March thereafter (1596), the ait meal £10 the boll, the humble corn £7 the boll. In the month of May, the ait meal £20 the boll in Galloway. At this time there came victual out of other parts in sic abundance, that, betwixt the 1st of July and the 10th of August, there came into Leith three score and six ships laden with victual; nevertheless, the rye came down and was sold for £7 the boll, and new ait meal for 7 s. and 7 s. 6 d. the peck. The 29 of October, the ait meal came up again at 10s. the peck. The 15 of July, the ait meal at 13 s. 4 d. the peck; the pease meal at 11 s. the peck". 23 The "Diary of James Melville" records that after a fast in St. Andrews Presbytery in May 1596, "God extraordinarily provided victuals out of all other countries, in sic store and abundance as was never seen in this land before... all the harvest quarter of that year, the meal gave aucht, nine, and ten pounds the boll,"

21 "Chronicle", 31-2 (9); 43 (1 2).
22 Chambers, Volume I, 117. Quotations are taken from the Aberdeen Council Register and D. Calderwood, History of the Kirk of Scotland, (Wodrow Society 1842).
and the malt eleven and twal, and in the south and west parts many died". 24 Birrel also records that in the following spring (1597) there was "sic increase of sawing, that the like has not been heard of before. Ane man of Libberton, callit Douglas, had, of ten pecks of beir sawn thirty-one thrave, and every threif had ane boll of beir and ane peck". 25

David Calderwood's account of an "earthquake" in July 1597 adds comic details to the brief notice of this event which appears in the "Chronicle of Perth": "Between eight and nine in the morning, there was an earthquake which made all the north parts of Scotland to tremble; Kintail, Ross, Cromarty, Mar, Breadalbane, &c. A man in St Johnston laying compts with his compters, the compts lap off the buird; the man's thighs trembled; one leg went up, and another down". 26 Sir James Balfour noted the effects of severe winds in March 1606: "The wind was so extraordinarily tempestuous and violent, that it caused great shipwreck in Scotland, England, France, and the Netherlands. It blew trees by the roots, ruined whole villages, and caused the sea and many rivers so to overflow their wonted limits and bounds, that many people and chattels were drowned and perished". 27

The "Chronicle of Perth" records a "continuall frost" from 1 December 1607 until 21 March 1608, with "passage wpone yce or Tay all ye tyme"; 28 Calderwood recorded "A vehement frost continued from Martinmas till the 20th of February. The sea froze so far as it ebbed, and sundry went into ships upon ice and played at the chamiare a mile within the seamark. Sundry passed over the Forth a mile above Alloa and Airth, to the great admiration of aged men, who had never seen the like in their days". 29 The "earthquake" of 8 November 1608 in which, according to the "Chronicle", many stones fell from the tolbooth of Perth, was felt throughout the Lowlands; 30 Calderwood registered "an earthquake at nine hours at night, sensible enough at St. Andrews, Cupar, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, but more sensible at Dumbarton... It was thought the extraordinar drouth in the summer and winter before was the cause of it". A fast was appointed in Aberdeen in response to God's judgement upon the burgh; Chambers writes that "There was one particular sin which was thought to have had a great concern in bringing about the earthquake - namely, the salmon-fishing practised on the Dee on Sunday. Accordingly, the proprietors of the salmon-fishings were called before the session, and rebuked". 31 The high winds which "blew doun ye stanes of ye mantil wall of ye kirk in tyme of S(e)mone" at Perth in January 1609 were also experienced in other parts; 32 according to Calderwood, "the wind did blow so boisterously, that

26 Ibid., 292.
28 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7).
29 Chambers, Volume I, 409.
30 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7).
31 Chambers, Volume I, 420.
32 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7).
the like was not heard in the memory of man. Houses in burgh and land were thrown down with the violence of it; trees rooted up, corn-stacks and hay-stacks blown away. Some men passing over bridges were driven over violently and killed. The wind continued vehement many days and weeks". 33

The Aberdeen kirk session records state that there was an "extraordinary drowth" in June 1612, "likely to burn up and destroy the corns and fruits of the ground"; a fast was ordered. Chambers adds that "In September, and for some months after, there are notices of 'great dearth of victual', doubtless the consequence of this drouth. 'The victual at ten pound the boll'. - Chron. Perth". 34 In contrast, the winter of 1614-15 brought heavy snows. The "Chronicle" records snows and frosts in February, March and May 1615.35 The snow was particularly heavy in March; Sir James Balfour recorded that "In some places, men devised snow-ploughs to clear the ground, and fodder the cattle". According to Sir Robert Gordon "most part of all the horse, noit, and sheep of the kingdom did perish, but chiefly in the north". The Privy Council noted "universal death, destruction, and wrack of the beasts and goods throughout all parts of the country". Chambers adds in a footnote that "This unheard-of snow fall was equally notable in the south. When the thaw came, it caused an unexampled flood in the Ouse of Yorkshire, which lasted ten days, carrying away a great number of bridges."36

Chambers refers to the "Chronicle of Perth" for accounts of privations which were suffered between the years 1621 and 1624, and adds material from other sources. The summer of 1621 was generally poor, "and the harvest was likely to be late and meagre"; he quotes Row's "History of the Kirk of Scotland", commenting that "A Presbyterian historian, after relating what happened at the ratification of the Five Articles, adds: 'That very day made the greatest alteration of prices of victual within eight days, that ever was heard of in so short a space in Scotland...'" Chambers continues that "It appears that wheat rose to £12 per boll, and the price might have been higher but for the coming in of foreign grain". (The "Chronicle" states: "This yeir a great skairstie of cornes wes throu all ye kingdome And yat be ye ewill harwest and inwnda(o)n yat happnit And haue bene greater abondance of eforane wictuall hed not cum in yit it gaff 12 lib 20 mok ye boll bear and peass meall 16 m()k" ). "The autumn was distinguished by heavy rains, carrying away the crops of extensive haughs or meadows. And of such as were preserved, scarcely any was 'won' - that is, secured - before Hallowmass. The wetness of the season was also unfavourable to the winning of peat-fuel". According to Calderwood, "Never was greater fear of famine, nor scarcity of seed to sow the ground. Every person was careful to ease himself of such persons as he might spare, and to live as retiredly as possibly he might. Pitiful was the lamentation not only of vagging beggars, but

33 Chambers, Volume I, 421.
34 Ibid., 444.
"Aberdeen Kirk-Session Records. (Spalding Club)" (1846). Ibid., x.
35 "Chronicle", 31-2 (9).
"Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland. By Sir Robert Gordon" (1813). Ibid., x.
also of honest persons". The "Chronicle of Perth" records "vniuersall seiknes" after the harvest of 1622, to which Chambers added mention of a fast in Aberdeen on 21 July, on account of "the felt wrath of God by this present plague of dearth and famine, and the continuance thereof threatened by thir tempestuous storms and inundations of weets likely to rot the fruits on the ground". Famine in the first half of 1623 caused widespread hardship, and a notable increase in the numbers of the poor and beggars; the "Chronicle" records "great mortalitie" between midsummer and late September.

A fast was held throughout Scotland in July 1625, "in consequence of the heavy rains which had prevailed since the middle of May, threatening the destruction of the fruits of the earth"; however, this fast is not recorded in the presbytery register of Perth. In July 1627, a similar threat was addressed by a "General Assembly" : "Because of the extraordinar rains, which now threaten rotting of the fruits of the ground before they be ripe, and so a fearful famine upon this land in so dangerous a time, when the seas are closed by the enemies, and no hope of help from other countries if God shall send a famine, (it was resolved) to entreat the Lord that he wold cause the heaven answer the earth, and the earth answer the corn, and the corns to answer our necessity, and us to answer His will, in faith, repentance, and obedience". Again, neither the Perth presbytery register nor the "Chronicle" mention this threat.

The harvest of 1634 seems to have been notable in Moray. Chambers records that "The spring of this year was cold and dry. During the months of April and May, there was no rain for seven weeks; consequently, the seed in some places never germinated. The summer, however, proved so fine, that after all there was a tolerable harvest". He quotes Spalding, who noted that "The gose-summer was matchless fair in Moray, without winds, wet, or any storm; the corn was well won; the garden herbs revived, July flowers and roses springing at Martinmass, whilk myself pulled. The kale shot and came to seed, and the March violets were springing as in April". In contrast, Balfour described the winter of 1634-5 as "the most tempestuous and stormy that was seen in Scotland these sixty years past, with such abundance of snow and so rigid a frost, that the snow lay in the plains from the 9th of December to the 9th of March...many bestial, both wild and tame, died; the flocks of sheep in the lowlands, and the goats in the mountains, went all in effect to destruction". Chambers comments that "From the long stoppage of running waters everywhere, it became impossible to get corn ground, and a scarcity began to be felt. Ale became equally scarce, and no wonder - 'they knockit malt in knocking stanes'". Spalding and Stevenson both commented on the disease and scarcity which was prevalent in this year; according to Stevenson, "The fiar was ten

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37 Chambers, Volume I, 523-4.
38 "Row's History of the Kirk of Scotland" (Wodrow Society 1842). Ibid., x; "Chronicle", 36 (1 0).
39 "Chronicle", 37 (1 0 /1 0).
40 Chambers, Volume I, 530-1, 598-9.
41 Ibid., 12.
42 Ibid., 79.
pounds Scots the boll of meal and beir...Several of the clergy, to the shame of them all, charged twelve pounds Scots and above".43

The "Chronicle of Perth" makes no mention of local weather conditions after 1635, apart from a record of a significant coastal storm in 1655. However, Chambers quotes meteorological material up to the year 1665. A number of passages from Spalding’s work are printed; another history from Aberdeen records that in 1638, "This year was ane very dry year, for about the end of August all the corns was within the yards". 44 1649 was a year of "extreme dearth"; Chambers records that "Wheat was at seventeen pounds Scots per boll; oats, twelve pounds; and other grains in proportion. Owing, also, to the coldness and dryness of the spring, the herbage and hay proved deficient, and cheese and butter consequently attained high prices - the former three, and the latter six pounds per stone". 45 1651 was also a year of great dearth, "bear being £20 Scots per boll"; however, John Nicoll recorded that "God’s providence was such toward the nation, that even when our awn corns failed us, the English nation did bring in abundantly wheat, bear, peas, and such like, and brought down the dearth of our mercats". 46 In contrast, 1652 appears to have been an excellent year; Nicoll recorded that "All the corn was got in without rain, and long before the usual time. The like harvest was in England". 47 Nevertheless, Chambers reports that "The heat of the summer 1652, and the earliness of the harvest, had not been attended with such plenty as to produce extraordinary cheapness. During this summer of 1653, wheat was £1, 5s. sterling per boll, and the inferior grains about 20s". In the second half of the year "the prices fell strangely, so that from Michaelmas till the end of the year, oats were at ( 6s. 8d. ) per boll, and wheat ( 11s. 8d. and 13s. 4d. )" (John Lamont of Newton). 48 The summer of 1654 was fine, and yielded an early and abundant harvest; however, even reasonable prices failed to relieve the sufferings of many Scots, and in Edinburgh a drought caused the city’s wells to run dry. 49

The weather seems to have been particularly unsettled in 1655. In February there was "excessively stormy weather", and then "A severe frost set in, and continued till the middle of April, to the interruption of farmwork". In August and September there was heavy rain, which forced up the prices of victual, "for this unseasonable weather put many in fear of dearth and famine" (Nicoll). 43 Ibid., 83-85. 44 Chambers, Volume II, 122. 45 Ibid., 207. 46 Chambers, Volume II, 185. 47 Chambers, Volume II, 217. 48 Ibid., 222. 49 Chambers, Volume II, 226-7.
On 10 December "there befell this day a tempest of the most terrible character, from the north-east, producing fearful havoc among the ships on the east coast, and causing likewise the loss of great numbers of people, bestial, and goods by land". "The Chronicle of Perth" records "The greatest storme Both be sea + land yt ever wes sein or red qrby all ye harberies on ye coast wer castin doun, + many ships + men cast away AT this tyme mr Jon reoch sone to Wm Reoch baillie + Wm Murray wer casten away comeing fro london". Nicoll also emphasised that the severity of this storm was unprecedented: "The like storm was not seen by the space of many years before; no, not that great storm that did arise at the death of King James the Sixth*. 50

Flooding destroyed many mills in the Edinburgh area in 1659. Nicoll suggested that this was a sign of God's anger with the town of Edinburgh for raising the price of ale; many writers attributed bad weather to the wrath of God, often in reaction to particular misdeeds. In this case, "God frae the heavns declared his anger by sending thunder, and unheard tempests, and storms, and inundations of water, whilk destroyed their common mills, dams, and warks, to the town's great charges and expenses". Sixteen mills upon the Water of Leith were destroyed, "with their dams, water-gangs, timber and stone-warks, the hail wheels of their mills, timber graith, and hailI other warks". 51 Although the "Chronicle of Perth" records that Lowswork suffered extensive flood-damage, at no point does it describe damage to Perth's mills; however, it may be inferred from this account that such destruction was almost inevitable.

The weather in the early 1660s seems to have been favourable. Chambers writes of 1664 that "This year, like the two preceding, was remarkable for abundance of the fruits of the earth". 52 Snow fell at Christmas 1664, and lay upon the ground until March; "Some began to say there would hardly be any seed-time at all this year", and yet the weather improved significantly, "so that in many places the oat seed was sooner done this year (than) in many years formerly" (Lamont). 53

The “Little Ice Age” In Scotland

The Scottish climate of the first half of the 17th century - as portrayed in the above accounts - appears to have been inconsistent, but frequently inclement. The harshness of bad weather seems to have contributed to much social hardship, and on occasion led to years of prolonged difficulties, in both town and country. Furthermore, the effects of particularly bad weather and concomitant subsistence problems were not socially selective - all classes of society might live in fear of inundations or heavy snows. In the general historiographical context which has been outlined above, the "Chronicle of Perth" emerges as an impressive source of weather data. It is less detailed than many of the Aberdeen records, but its authors were less superstitious than ecclesiastical historians. Indeed, in general the chroniclers seem to have been less excitable than

50 Ibid., 234-6.
51 Chambers, Volume II, 253.
52 Ibid., 299.
53 Ibid., 302.
some of their contemporaries, and the text appears to be a relatively sober account of difficult climatic conditions.

Chambers was probably not the only editor to refer to the "Chronicle of Perth"; two passages in a study of the meteorology of Edinburgh, by Robert Mossman (1897), almost certainly derive from this text:

"1614-1615: Very intense frost. 'In February (1615) the Tay was frozen over so strongly as to admit of passage for both man and horse.'

1615. March 2 (12). A great snowstorm; all communication stopped throughout the country." 54

Essentially, the "Chronicle's" record appears to be credible. It fits into an historiographical context, and occasionally adopts a popular historiographical style; the events which it describes are mirrored in a variety of other accounts, and cannot be dismissed as hyperbole. However, how does the "Chronicle" relate to the findings of modern climatic research?

The years covered by the "Chronicle" embrace a period of European climatic history which has been dubbed the "Little Ice Age", a cool epoch which lasted between c.1550 and c.1700. The climatic historian faces an array of potential source material. Amongst the direct evidence which is available, instrumental records begin in the 17th century, but are not directly applicable to Scotland. According to Parry, "The longest temperature records survive, though in discontinuous form, in England, and these have been assembled by Manley into a table of monthly means for central England from 1659 onwards". 55 "Meteorological descriptions" represent the main body of direct evidence for medieval and early modern Scotland. Parry also lists a variety of indirect evidence: geological evidence, glacier movements, dates of freezing and thawing, oceanographic evidence, isotope measurements, dendrochronology, and agricultural evidence. 56

Through the combination of such material, a chronology of climatic change in north-western Europe has been constructed, from around 800 A.D. to the present day. Parry warns that "The margins of error estimated for this chronology are often quite large", but it is possible "to indicate the general direction and the general range of changes in temperature and rainfall that have occurred since A.D. 800". 57 Between c.1150 and c.1250 there seems to have been a warm epoch, "a period of frequently warm and dry, evidently anticyclonic, summers in temperate Europe, with quite frequent thunderstorm rains in the Mediterranean... Winters were frequently moist and mild". Subsequently there was a cooling phase, temporarily interrupted by a run of mild, wet winters and dry, warm summers between c.1450 and c.1530. Thereafter, the cooler trend was resumed, "with nadirs in the 1590s and 1690s, but through much of the seventeenth century the

55 Parry, 31.
56 See ibid., 38-56.
57 Ibid., 66.
general pattern was that of dry and very severe winters and damp, cool summers. This cold epoch lasted until c.1700, to be followed by higher temperatures. 58

The Scottish climate of the first half of the 17th century seems to have conformed to this model of the "Little Ice Age". Dr D. Justin Schove, in a discussion of the "Little Ice Age" in Scandinavia and Scotland, has stated that about 1590-1620, European summers became cooler and there was a rapid advance of Icelandic and Alpine glaciers with an increase of ice near Iceland in such years as 1605, 1609 and 1615. Between 1595 and 1635 severe frosts and snows are reported in Scotland; this country suffered from the severe European winter of 1607-8, and the great snows of 1615 affected both Scotland and England. 59

Parry's brief summary of the climatic conditions in the British Isles in the late 16th and early 17th centuries corresponds loosely to the chronology of poor weather which is suggested by the "Chronicle of Perth". 60 Records of the wine-harvest indicate a run of particularly cool summers from 1591 to 1598. (The "Chronicle" records "The quhyte blastit in anno 1598".) 61 This was a period of famine across Europe, partly as a result of the slow decline of food reserves during three decades of generally poor summers. As early as 1550-2 there was alarm in Scotland about the food supply, which had been affected both by bad weather and English invasions. The dearth of the 1590s reached a critical point in 1598, with widespread starvation throughout Scotland. (The "Chronicle" records "Ane great dead amongis ye peopill in anno 1599".) 62 In the early 17th century, "Spells of very harsh dry winters and wet, tempestuous summers seem to have alternated with periods of moist, mild winters and quite warm summers". The Thames was frozen in 1607-8, 1649 and 1662-3. (The "Chronicle" states "Primo decembris 1607 /Thair wes ane continuall frost from yat day foirsaid till ye 21 of marche and passage wpone yce or Tay all ye tyme and passage or + ower at ye mil of erro(ll)".) 63 Parry concentrates on the summer of 1649 as being "exceptionally adverse"; in a cold, wet period, such a summer could cause dearth in Scotland in a single season. The hardships of this year were compounded by bubonic plague, which was brought into the country by the Covenanting army after the siege of Newcastle in 1644. Parry also comments that "In the south-east of Scotland it is ...difficult to distinguish the relative influences of the weather and of the Cromwellian occupation".

A short study by John Kington of the winter of 1615 in England provides a more instructive comparison with the material in the "Chronicle of Perth". 64 There was frost and snow from January until early March. (In contrast, the "Chronicle" records: "21 februarij 1615 /This yeir preceding ye

58 Ibid., 65-6.
59 Mr John Kington, Climatic Research Unit, University of East Anglia, pers. comm.
60 See Parry, 162-4.
61 "Chronicle", 20 (6).
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., 26 (7/7).
64 I am very grateful to Mr John Kington of the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia for providing me with this information.
frost was lang luikit for befoir it came*). 65 Francis Drake recorded that "On the 16th (26th) of January...it began to snow and freeze, and so by intervals snowing without any thaw till the 7th (17th) of March following; at which time was such a heavy snow upon the earth as was not remembered by any man then living". When the thaw arrived in mid-March, there was serious flooding; Drake commented that "It pleased God that at the thaw fell very little rain, nevertheless the flood was so great, that the Ouze (at York) ran down (streets) with such violence as to force all the inhabitants of those streets to leave their houses...Ten days this inundation continued at the height, and many bridges were driven down by it in the country, and much land overflowed". 66 The "Chronicle" records that flooding in Perth preceded the onset of snow: "Im vjc xv yeiris / Vpoun ye day of Januar 1615 yeiris being thursiday ye vatte(r) of tay be veittis and sleit vaxit so great that all it coverit haill of ye north inche ye mortoun haugh and almaist all the south inche contineuit sa fra thursidy in the mory(n)g to ye morne yreft". 67 In late February there was passage across the frozen Tay, until the boatmen broke the ice. On the 6th of March the weather worsened, and "ane vehement snau come on lestit all the ncht + c(on)tinewd to wedensday y(r)eft at qlk tym be xij houris in ye day it begowth of new and contineuit so vehement ncht + day to the of m(j)che that during ye hail tym mixit wt frostis na travell or litill passage vas yr ather for hors or men on the qik woddinsdy divers hors + men perishit + deid". Snow even fell on 7 May, "quharby na travell for hors nor man". 68

In England, the cold winter was followed by a warm summer, in stark contrast to the weather in Perthshire. Drake recorded that "After this storm followed such fair and dry weather, that in April the ground was as dusty as in any time of summer. This drought continued till the 20th (30th) of August following without any rain at all; and made such a scarcity of hay, beans, and barley, that the former was sold at York for 30s. and 40s. a wayne load, and at Leeds for four pounds". Another report states that there was little or no rain in Derbyshire from 25 March (4 April) until 4 (14) August, and that hay and corn became very scarce. Kington comments that "All the signs are that with the absence over England of (a) mild rainy conditions in winter and (b) cool wet weather in summer, the prevailing westerlies over the British Isles, with their attendant fronts and travelling depressions, were less dominant than usual over the country during much of 1615". However, the record of snowfall in Perthshire in May indicates that the climate in Lowland Scotland was harsher than that south of the border.

65 "Chronicle", 31 (9), lines 17-19.
66 See above, p. 169, for a comment about this flood by Robert Chambers.
67 "Chronicle", 31 (9), lines 1-9.
68 Ibid., 31-2 (9).
An Account of the "Little Ice Age" in Fife:

Dr Graeme Whittington has written recently about the characteristics of the "Little Ice Age" in Scotland, by reference to the "Diary of John Lamont of Newton" (1649-1672), which was published in the 19th century under the title of The Chronicle of Fife.69 Curiously, given the large number of contemporary histories and journals which survive from the 16th and 17th centuries, Whittington states that "Detailed information of the effect on Scotland's weather of this major climatic disturbance is rare"; he cites The Chronicle of Fife as a source which provides "remarkable insights".70 This thesis illustrates that there are a large number of early modern sources which Whittington could have considered; nevertheless, his analysis of meteorological information contained in Lamont's "Diary" adds a further perspective to similar material which appears in the "Chronicle of Perth".

Whittington states that the "Little Ice Age" lasted in Scotland from shortly before the middle of the 15th century until well into the 19th century, "apart from a warmer period between 1500 and 1550".71 The general characteristics of the weather in this period were colder than average temperatures, severe storms, heavy rainfall, deep snows, strong winds, droughts and floods. All of these phenomena are recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth" for the early decades of the 17th century, and Whittington illustrates how The Chronicle of Fife provides similar information for the middle years of the century. This material can be used to build upon Lamb's synthesis of climatic disturbance in 17th century Scotland: "Between 1600 and 1670 Lamb shows two famines (1622 and 1636), three general food dearths (1612, 1642 and 1650), four local food dearths (1606, 1624, 1647 and 1652) and two severe sheep losses (1613 and 1620)".72

Lamont records several violent storms in the 1650s and 1660s. On 13 October 1669 there was "a great tempest of wynd, raine and thunder, which occasioned great prejudice both by land and sea, in divers places". Ships in the harbours of the East Neuk of Fife were destroyed, and at Perth the Tay flooded the inches; cattle were drowned there and along the course of the Earn.73 Storms also occurred in the summer months - a succession of storms occurred in August 1655. However, winter storms posed the greatest threat, and particular attention is given to that of 10 December

69 G. Whittington, "The Little Ice Age and Scotland's Weather", in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, 101 (1985), 174-178. This article includes technical information concerning the causes of climatic disturbance. Whittington gives a colourful description of The Chronicle of Fife: "It is a strange document bearing considerable resemblance to many of today's national tabloid newspapers in that it is much concerned with local events and sensations (births, deaths, marriages, adulteries and other more salacious matters of public immorality), national happenings (treason and battles) and on occasion a brief mention of portentous events of international concern", 175.
70 Whittington, 174.
71 Ibid.
73 Whittington, 176.
1655 which the "Chronicle of Perth" describes as "The greatest storme Both be sea + land". Lamont states that the storm was preceded by snow; there was "extraordinair mutch snow" and "a great wynde" which "occasioned great losse and damage to the shyre of Fife, both by sea and land". Whittington comments that "From the description of the storm it would appear that it was associated with an easterly air flow and probably an outburst of Arctic Maritime or Continental Polar air in that the sea flooded the land, ships in harbour were sunk (28 in Dysart and 30 in Crail), the piers were damaged at St Andrews, Anstruther, Crail, Wemyss and Leith and salt pans were 'wronged' in Fife and Lothian".

Whittington emphasises that Lamont's "Diary" presents a climate of extremes - unusually cold and snowy winters in some years contrasted by long summers of drought in others. The effects of such conditions upon crops, livestock, buildings and communications were usually dire, and could last for many months. However, such were the vagaries of the weather, that periods of prolonged drought might be succeeded by years of abundance; Lamont relates that just such a reversal occurred in the early 1650s. The general picture which is presented by Whittington of the climatic conditions in Fife - and, by extension, in Scotland generally - in the middle years of the 17th century is one of frequent hardship, occasioned by unpredictable, but often violent, weather. However, the difficulties caused by severe storms, flooding, snows, or drought might be tempered by periods of unusual clemency.

**The Effects of the "Little Ice Age" in Perthshire**

The study of climatic history is an imprecise discipline. However, it is apparent from modern research that the "Chronicle of Perth" was written during an epoch of generally poor weather throughout Europe, punctuated by severe winters and summers which could be unusually wet or, at the other extreme, uncommonly hot and barren. The "Chronicle's" records of individual natural disasters do not always correspond with weather reports from other parts of Scotland, or indeed with the weather patterns in other parts of western Europe; but the portrait of intermittently severe winters and summer dearths fits the general trend which has been identified by modern research. The "Chronicle's" accounts are particularly useful because they not only record the nature of bad weather, but also some of the effects which these crises had upon the inhabitants of town and country. These records can be embellished by reference to other accounts.

**Inundations:**

Perth is peculiarly vulnerable to flooding. According to the New Statistical Account (1845), the land along the banks of the Tay is mainly composed of aluminous earth or clay, resting on beds of gravel and other alluvial deposits, and is obviously very fertile. The height above sea level varies from 20 to 30 feet, but the plain on which the town sits is lower, a flood-plain; at least partial

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74 "Chronicle", 55 (17).
75 Whittington, 176.
76 Whittington, 177.
inundation of the area of the town is, from time to time, inevitable. The "Chronicle of Perth" describes three inundations, apparently of increasing magnitude, between 1573 and 1621. The first record is relatively short, but it describes damage to the Brig of Tay - two arches were broken down by flood waters on 20 December 1573 - and perhaps the complete destruction of Lowswork. There is no mention of any destruction within the town, but damage to the weir on the Almond could have caused flooding along the course of the town lade, and presumably disrupted the operation of the town mills.

Rev. James Scott commented that "Another old manuscript calls the Inundation 'the great water solliter', by which I suppose was meant, the breaking, dissolving, or loosening of the Ice on the River". Scott did not name this alternative source but, if he was correct, it would seem that the flood resulted from the thawing of snow and ice - a common circumstance, and one repeated in January 1993. The Brig of Tay would thus have been subjected to considerable pressure, and it is perhaps surprising that only two arches were destroyed. Scott's commentaries can be unreliable - for example, he believed that Lowswork was originally a piece of Roman engineering, dating from the 2nd century A.D. However, he appreciated the value of the weir to the burgh: "Without it a Town in the situation of Perth could not have subsisted any Length of Time. It is necessary for the distribution of the waters of the Almond, which if they were to run in one channel would at Times prove very dangerous to the Town. The mills could be at Perth without it. And in ancient Times the water which is conveyed by it circulated the Walls of the Town, + rendered Perth famous as a Place of Defence against the Enemy".

According to the "Chronicle", the flood of January 1615 only lasted two days, "fra thurisdy in the mory(n)g to ye morne yreft". However, it almost covered both inches, and was at the very least a cause of great inconvenience: "men rowing wt boats in ye same north inche taking furth scheip that war in perrell of drwny(n)g". This flood is not mentioned in any other sources, and its effects are not noted in the town council records; however, it resulted from "veittis and sleit" - heavy rains - and such conditions would probably have turned the streets and burgages of the town into mires. There is a gap in the town council records between October 1620 and November 1623, and thus there is no extant official record of the 1621 inundation either; the principal sources for this disaster are the "Chronicle" and the kirk session register. Damage to buildings of the burgh was extensive, and dominates these accounts. Both emphasise that the new Brig of Tay was carried away in the sudden flood; just one of the eleven arches was left standing. The chronicler (TH7) is unlikely to have been exaggerating when he recorded that the water "wes wtin ane Pute in hicht frum ye croce of pth" - this seems to be a description of the deluge passing through the riverside areas of the town, within a foot of the cross in the High Street. The gable of the tolbooth fell, and Lowswork was "caried auay".

The kirk session register suggests that houses outwith the Castle

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78 "Chronicle", 11 (3/3).
79 NLS Adv. 31.1.4. Register of Marriages at Perth, (c.1784), 42-3.
80 "Chronicle", 31 (9), lines 1-12.
81 According to the index to the town council records - B59/ 17 / 1 - which was compiled in 1831.
82 "Chronicle", 35-6 (10).
Gable Port were ruined; many properties within the town walls are likely to have been waterlogged to some degree. Communications were disrupted as roads became temporarily unusable. 83

Another account of this flood - though not that of an eye-witness - was made by David Calderwood in his History of the Kirk of Scotland (Wodrow Society 1842). Perth was not the only place to be affected by bad weather: "The sea swelled and roared; waters and brooks were aloft. Houses, and women and children, and much corn, was carried away with the spates of water". According to Calderwood, the flood swamped the Brig of Tay: "The River Tay swelled so high that it went over the fair statelie bridge beside Perth, newlie complete". However, the deluge was not only caused by the flooding of the Tay; "In the meantime the Water of Almond, and a loch be-west the toun, come doun upon the toun on the west hand, which was als dangerous as the river on the east. The toun was invironed with water a mile in compass, so that noe man could passe out for five or six dayes, neither could the inhabitants goe fra house to house, because the waters covered the streets". 84 It seems that the destruction of Lowiswork allowed the flood waters of the Almond to descend upon the burgh along the town lade; flood damage would thus have been spread over a wide area of Perth's environs. It is unclear whether any local people were killed in this disaster, but all the sources emphasise that residents in the Castle Gable had to be rescued by boat. The "Chronicle" states that "The peopill of ye castel gawill hed died about iiijc soules gif a boatt hed not bene borne be men from ye spey tour to it". In the kirk session register it is stated that Henry Moss was awarded a double angel, "in recompense of his jeopardies, pains, and travels, in saving many persons from perishing by the late inundation of waters outwith the Castle Gavell Port by means of his boat, transporting them therewith from their houses full of water into the town"; Chambers named Charles Rollock as another of the rescuers. 85

It seems that most of the damage to private properties was sustained in the Castle Gable suburb. Any building which was close to the riverside would probably have been filled with water, but it is important to note that although the burgh seems to have been paralysed for a few days, there is little information about structural damage within the town walls. The scale of damage to private properties is difficult to judge on the basis of the documentary record, for the sources concentrate on the most dramatic incidents of the deluge. However, recent flooding in the town has demonstrated the power of the Tay - and of its tributaries - in despite of modern flood controls. In 1993, even areas of central Perth were affected by flood water.

The long-term effects of the 1621 inundation were widespread food shortages and large repair bills. Calderwood reported that "Their stuffe, malt, and meate was spoiled...The harvest was so late that scarce were cornes inned in the best parts of the countrie at Hallowmas. There was never seene in this countrie in so shorte a time suche inequalitie of prices of victuall; never greater feare

84 Calderwood (vii, 513), quoted in RPC, 1st Series, Volume XII, (1895), 599n.
85 For Henry Moss see R.S. Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", in A Book of Perthshire Memorabilia (1879), 142.
For Charles Rollock see Chambers, Volume I, 525.
of famine, nor scarsitie of seed to sow the ground". 86 It was a bad harvest, made worse in
Perthshire by extensive flooding. And yet there are few indications of severe mortality in 1621;
according to the "Chronicle", it was in 1622 and 1623 that dearth began to claim the lives of the
local inhabitants. 87 With respect to the material damage of the flood, help was sought from the
government. The Register of the Privy Council records that in March 1622 a commission was
granted to Viscount Stormont and Mr Patrick Galloway to assess the amount of money which would
be required to repair the bridge. The commission states that these men were to "conveene a
competent number of the most understanding and best affectit nightbouring gentlemen to the
said burgh ... and with thame to advise and considder quhat soumes of money will suffice for new
building of a sufficient and strong bridge and bulwarks for keeping of the river in the auld channell,
and repairing of suche otheris ruynis as ar most important and necessair for the goode of the said
burgh, and by quhat meanis the saidis moneys may be best and most convenientlie maid up, and
to reporte their opinionis to the saidis Lordis..." 88

The burgh authorities were well aware of the need to prevent "the appeirand gritar dangeir and
miserie lyke to ensew to the said burgh by the ryseing of the watter of Tay"; 89 but the bridge was
not replaced until 1771, and the "Chronicle" reveals that bulwarks were not constructed until 1630:
"The fynes yat wer gottin fra or ny(t)boris at ye preceiding iustice air wer bestowit on ... bigging of
croyis for saittie of ye toun + Inches from ye violence of ye water, And on ye bigging of ye front of
tyne stone aislart work at mounkis tour on ye tounes expenss(s) And for casting of ye dok for crearis
and boattis in ye winter tyme from danger". 90 A letter which is included amongst the burgh records
suggests that over a century after this great inundation, improvements were still required to keep
flood waters at bay: Letter from Laurence Craigie to George Miller, town clerk of Perth, about
building a bank to prevent water flooding on to the (North) Inch.
John Taylor has been proposeing what I really believe would answer + which I think would be
equally beneficall to The Grounds of the Muirtoun his proposall is this that ... he would undertake
to make a bank of chingle cross the Hollow at the head of the Fishers Haugh which would prevent
the water in time of speat from coming in by the head of the Inch, This would likeways be of great
use to the new Road..." 91

However, as recent flooding has demonstrated, all inhabitants of Perth and its environs face an
unequal struggle with one of the most powerful rivers in the British Isles.

86 See above, n.84.
87 "Chronicle", 37, (10/10).
88 RPC, 1st Series, Volume XII, 748.
89 Ibid.
90 "Chronicle", 42 (11/11), lines 17-29.
91 B59/ 24/ 13/ 12. (B59/ 24 (Administration)/ 13. public buildings, 1437-1839).
It is hard to resist making a comparison between the accounts of the 1621 inundation and eye-witness reports of the flooding of 1993 which appeared in the local press; after all, the *Perthshire Advertiser* declared that inundation of 16-17 January was "the worst in living memory". A consideration of this most recent flood is also helpful in drawing attention to the widespread damage suffered in rural areas of Tayside; although it is hard to judge whether the force of the 1621 flood compares with that of 1993, it is almost inevitable that agricultural land was damaged during the 17th century inundation.92

Perth and its surrounding countryside has suffered two serious floods in recent years; in 1990, flooding mainly affected rural areas, but in January 1993 the town centre was seriously affected too and suffered millions of pounds worth of damage. The 1993 deluge followed some of the worst snows of the century; according to an official of the Tay River Board, "The flood was a result of tremendous run-off caused by prolonged heavy rain, with 60 millimetres falling in one day at the head of the river combined with rapid snow melt as a result of night temperatures of 8 degrees, and a warm wind during the day". At the peak of the flood, there were 2200 cubic metres of water per second coming down the Tay, compared with 1750 in the 1990 flood. The results were truly devastating; flood barriers were breached and the North Muirton estate on the northern boundary of Perth was left undefended against the torrent. (Incredibly, the estate was built on land which was known to be susceptible to flooding - indeed, the "Chronicle" records flooding on the Muirton Haugh in 1615.93 Dr John Riddell, a reader in water engineering at Strathclyde University, commented that "Granting planning permission for house building in an area at risk to flooding wouldn't happen in England. It seems extraordinary to me that housebuilders, purchasers, lawyers and builders here can say, "What amazing luck - we've found a prime site which has lain undeveloped for 2000 years".

The residents of North Muirton were surprised by the sheer speed of the inundation: "The water came up through the drains very rapidly, really fast, up the path and into the back of the house. When it got to waist level, at about half past ten on Sunday night, we had to evacuate"; "In less than half an hour there was four to six feet of water coming down Lewis Place". Over 400 people were evacuated from the estate; the image of stranded residents being ferried from danger in small boats which is presented in the "Chronicle" was realised again in this operation. In the centre of Perth, many shops and properties were damaged as basements filled with water. Perth Museum and Art Gallery - which stands in the Castle Gable area, reputedly on the site of the castle which was swept away in a flood in 1210 - sustained significant damage; much of the collection was soaked, and some of it was destroyed. The bridges across the Tay were closed to all traffic, but withstood the flood waters - which rose near to the height of the arches of Smeaton's bridge. *At one point on Sunday night (January 17th) roads throughout Perth city centre disappeared as water flooded*

92 The following discussion is based upon reports which were printed in the immediate aftermath of the floods, on 19 January 1993 in *The Courier and Advertiser* and the *Perthshire Advertiser*. See also *Courier* on 2 February 1993 and *Advertiser* on 12 February 1993. At the end of 1993, Perth and Kinross District Council published an account of the January flood entitled *The Great Flood*, written by Roger Smith.

93 "Chronicle", 31 (9), line 6.
ground floor and basement premises*. If flooding can cause such damage to a modern city which is protected by flood barriers, no wonder that the accounts of the flood of 1621 are couched in such despairing tones.

Communications along several major routes in Tayside were interrupted by flooding, landslides, and fallen trees. Furthermore, the Tay was not the only river to burst its banks; to the south and west of Perth, the Earn and Ruthven Water both flooded; north of the city, the Isla overwhelmed a large area of farmland. The Earn valley was largely submerged; The Courier reported that 40 acres of wheat, 40 acres of barley, and 30 acres of winter oats belonging to two of the local farms were under water. It was hoped that the oats at least would survive, but even this was dependent upon the rapid subsidence of the flood waters. Local farmers bemoaned the fact that this flood had arrived barely three years after similar flooding, "which was supposed to be a once in 100 years event". Damage to the soil as well as to crops could have long-term effects for the productivity of their land; the same problems may well have been faced in the early 17th century.

There was loss of life during the 1993 inundation; in addition, several people were admitted to hospital suffering from hypothermia, and local ministers warned of the possible long-term effects on survivors of the traumas which they had endured. This is a factor to which the "Chronicle" and other 17th century sources do not pay direct attention; but accounts of community prayers for relief from their troubles indicate that the panic-stricken inhabitants sought solace in repentance for their past transgressions. In 1993 the flood crisis lasted less than a week - the waters reached their height over the course of a week-end, and subsided in a matter of days; however, the task of restoring properties and flood defences took nearly a year. In 1621 the immediate crisis was over after about a week, but the effects of the inundation lingered for the rest of the decade.

Smith’s account of "The Great Flood" is of use as a retrospective account of the 1993 crisis, and in the present context two aspects of his work merit attention. Smith’s account of the flooding within the centre of Perth provides an indication of areas of the early modern burgh which might have been affected by flood waters; and his account of flooding in the countryside gives a broader picture of damage to farmland than that given in press reports at the time of the 1993 inundation.

Smith states that at the height of the flood "65 square kilometres of land was under water (this figure does not include towns). Much of the inundated area was farmland in the straths of the Earn, Isla, Tummel and Tay". Despite the provision of floodbanks, many farms in Tayside are vulnerable to the effects of flooding. The characteristics of flood damage in rural areas include: prolonged waterlogging of fields and grazing land; the destruction of rural buildings and property divisions; the spread of river deposits on the land, scouring and the removing of topsoil. In the winter livestock are placed under threat by snow as well as by water, and communications with

94 On 19 January, The Courier reported the discovery of a man’s body in a flooded house on the North Muirton estate.

95 The following paragraph derives from R. Smith, The Great Flood, (1993), Chapter 5 "The Drowned Land."
isolated communities are impeded. In the aftermath of flooding there is an enormous amount of reparation work to be done, which is expensive and time-consuming, and may disrupt preparations for the harvest. The only tangible benefit of flooding may be the spread of minerals across arable land. The 17th century rural landscape of the Sheriffdom of Perth may not have been as intensively cultivated or populated as modern Tayside, but Scottish society was primarily rural in character, and many people would have suffered at times of severe flooding. Essentially, the experience of modern farmers probably mirrors that of their early modern predecessors, and the flooding of 1993 suggests that in the late autumn and winter of 1621 there may well have been widespread dislocation, across the sheriffdom, as a result of the poor weather, with enduring damage to the land which affected crop production in the following years.

It is very difficult to judge - from the contemporary accounts of the 1621 flood - the extent to which flood waters passed through the town itself. It is clear that the inches and Castle Gable suburb suffered, and that within the town walls properties built close to the Tay - notably the tolbooth - were affected by flood water. But this does not mean that the whole of the town was at any time underwater. Members of SUAT have informed me that there tends to be relatively little physical evidence of flooding within the stratigraphy of excavated sites in the area of the early modern town, and the researcher should not conclude from the distressed tones of the sources that Perth was inundated in its entirety. It is important to note that in 1993 the worst damage to a residential area occurred in North Muirton, not within the bounds of the old town. Although all inhabitants would have suffered from the consequences of flooding - disruption of the food supply, a breakdown in communications, and the effects of cold, wet weather - it cannot be assumed that there was widespread material damage to properties within the town walls.

Smith's diary of the events of 15 -18 January 1993 may be of some help in identifying areas of the burgh which are susceptible to being flooded or waterlogged. Modern civil engineering works, together with the vast differences between properties of the town today and those of the 17th century, mean that comparisons between the effects of flooding on modern Perth and the 17th century burgh can only be approximate. One crucial difference is the sewerage and drainage network of modern Perth, for in 1993 many problems were caused by the overflowing of drains and sewers.

It is noticeable that the centre of Perth - around the middle of the High Street - seems to have been relatively free of flood damage; but there were many problems in other parts of the city. The vulnerability of the Castle Gable area was demonstrated by the flooding of Perth Museum and Art Gallery, along with other properties in Charlotte Place. The lower end of High Street, Tay Street, the Watergate and St. John Street all suffered. The basement of the offices of the District Council at the foot of the High Street was flooded, and both Tay Street and St. John Street were closed during the inundation. When the flood subsided, water had to be pumped out from properties in High Street and Tay Street. Water also spread along South Street, and Canal Street. The residential area adjoining the South Inch (which lies outside the area of the medieval town) was

96 The following discussion derives from Smith, Chapter 8 "Problems in Perth".
naturally affected by flooding - Marshall Place and King Street suffered in particular. In Kinnoull Street water was pumped from the basement of the Sandeman Library, and properties in Hospital Street - the area of the Charterhouse - experienced some flooding. In general, it is fair to conclude that the 1993 flooding indicates that whilst the enceinte of 17th century Perth would have borne the brunt of flood damage, the nucleus of the burgh was certainly vulnerable as well. Whilst the force of the flood water would have by-passed much of the residential sector of Perth, water is likely to have run through many of the town's streets, as the kirk session register relates.

Frosts and Snows:

The "Chronicle" records that Perth was badly affected by frost or snow on six occasions between 1607 and 1635. Curiously, flooding is associated with a cold winter on only one occasion - in the winter of 1615 - and in that year the flood preceded the snows. However, if Scott's notes are correct, the destruction of the bridge in 1573 resulted from a flood after ice on the Tay had melted, and the same may be inferred for the destruction of the Brig of Tay in 1608. The manuscript records that the Tay was frozen from December 1607 until March following: "The trie bridge wes Tane away betuix 12 and ane on ane Sunday in tyme of denner" on 21 February 1607 (8). 97 (The date given in the "Chronicle" may be a copying error. This disaster could have occurred in the winter of 1607, but it is more likely that the bridge was destroyed during the long cold spell in the early months of 1608, perhaps during a temporary thaw. The town council records include an entry for 22 February 1608 in which the council were ordered to convene "to take order with the timber brig which had fallen yesterday being Sunday at eleven hours forenoon by reason of the great ice" ). 98

After a flood in January 1615, the winter was particularly severe in February and March. According to the "Chronicle" the Tay was frozen between 21 and 25 February. Both men and horses crossed on the ice, until the ferrymen "in the nicht tym brak the Ice at the entrie and stayit ye passage". Such was the thickness of the ice that on 21 February "yr was tua punchenis of burdeous vyne careit sting on ling on menis schulderis on the vat of tay on the Ice at the midels of the north inche ye wicht of ye puncheon + ye beraris estimat to iii xx xij stave veicht". In March there was a "vehement snau" that prevented travel, and led to the deaths of "diers hors + men". Snow returned in May, and again hampered communications. 99 According to the town council records, the burgh was already having difficulty with the Tay crossing before the onset of ice and snow. On 20 February, the baillies were ordered to convene the guildry to determine a new tax to finance repair of the Brig of Tay. On the day that snow finally arrived, 6 March, the council gave consent for a tax of £2000 to be levied for these repair works. 100

97 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7), lines 9-18.
98 B59/ 17/ 1, 198.
99 “Chronicle”, 31-2 (9).
100 B59/ 17/ 1, 266-7.

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Sir James Balfour's account of this winter indicates that destruction of livestock was widespread; his account also suggests that Perth was spared the extremities of the weather at this time: "The 17 of Jarij, this zeire, began a froste, with extreame snow, wich continewed till the 14 of Februarij; and albeit the violence of the froste and snow abated some thinge, zet it continewed still snowing, muche or lesse, till the 7 of Marche, quherby much catell perished, alsweill olde as young; and in some places diuers dewised snow ploughes to cleire the ground and fodder catell. This snow wes werey dangerous to all trauelers". 101 A quotation in Chambers's work from the records of the Privy Council re-inforces this portrait of prolonged hardship: in consideration of the "universal death, destruction, and wrack of the beasts and goods throughout all parts of the country", the council decided to prevent a future shortage of lambs, and issued a decree forbidding the consumption of lamb for a certain time. 102

It is difficult to judge quite how severe the winter of 1624 actually was, for although the "Chronicle" states that there "wes suche ane frost That ye ellyke hes not bene sene in our dayis", I have found no other accounts of this frost. Furthermore, as has already been noted, the description of eleven carts crossing the frozen Tay is a little suspicious, as it bears a close resemblance to the anecdote which accompanies the account of the winter of 1615. However, if this passage is to be believed, it is apparent that in 1624 communications between Perth and Dundee were maintained in despite of persistently frosty weather. 103

In contrast, the snows of January and February 1635 brought severe disruption to life within Perth; "men nor women could not walk wpone or streitis". The Tay was frozen for thirty days, and the lade was probably frozen too, as "elding mylnes gaid not". Outside communications were cut this time, and there was great scarcity of food: "They knokit mall in knoking stones". 104 The town council records register an act "as to augmenting the corn measures" in January, and an "Allowance to the four officers during the storm" on 23 February. 105 The kirk session register records that moneys were borrowed by the session to buy meal for the poor of the burgh. 106 Balfour's accounts tend to be rather colourful; but his description of widespread hardships in this winter adds credence to the "Chronicle's" record: "The winter the most tempestuous and stormey that was seine in Scotland these 60 zeires past, with such aboundance of snow, and so rigide a frost, that the snow lay in the plaines from the 9 of December, 1634, to the 9 of Marche, 1635, almost three els heigh in maney places. Many bestiall, both wylde and teame, deyed, ouerthrown with the snow; the flockes of sheepe in the low landes, and goattes in the montanes, went al in effecte to destructione". 107

102 Chambers, Volume I, 458.
103 See above, p.136; "Chronicle", 38, (10/10), 31 (9).
105 B59/ 17/ 1, 369.
High Winds and Earthquakes:

The contents of the "Chronicle" suggest that floods and heavy snows - although disruptive and dangerous - were extraordinary occurrences in burgh life, even in an epoch which can be dubbed an "Ice Age". Damage to buildings by high winds may have been more common. In addition to accounts of such events there are also several records of "earthquakes" being felt in the burgh. Other sources - notably Calderwood - refer to such events as well. There is little indication of any structural damage being caused, except to the tolbooth in 1608. References in the New Statistical Account to earthquakes in the region of Comrie indicate that tremors have been felt more recently in Perthshire. However, in an age of superstition, the references in the "Chronicle" may be exaggerated records of unexplained phenomena, or simply attempts to account for the dilapidated state of many of Perth's buildings. "Earthquakes" were supposedly experienced in the burgh in 1597, 1608, and twice in March 1614. They are not mentioned in the other local sources that I have consulted.

In November 1608, there was an "earth quak at 9 horis at ewin yat schoak ye tolboth the battels end yat yair fell many stones aff it". Judging by the number of records in the burgh archives which relate to repairs to the tolbooth, it should have been of little surprise to the citizens to witness damage of this kind. The town council records note repairs to the fabric in 1605, 1606, and 1616 when the roof was repaired; other burgh records indicate that the tolbooth was dilapidated in 1586, but was rebuilt in 1614. The tolbooth was unfit to be used as the meeting place of the "Red Parliament" in 1606. In November 1608, there was an "earth quak at 9 horis at ewin yat schoak ye tolboth the battels end yat yair fell many stones aff it". Judging by the number of records in the burgh archives which relate to repairs to the tolbooth, it should have been of little surprise to the citizens to witness damage of this kind. The town council records note repairs to the fabric in 1605, 1606, and 1616 when the roof was repaired; other burgh records indicate that the tolbooth was dilapidated in 1586, but was rebuilt in 1614. The tolbooth was unfit to be used as the meeting place of the "Red Parliament" in 1606.

The kirk was vulnerable to high winds, and two passages in the "Chronicle" describe significant damage to the fabric, in 1607 and 1609; however, it may be supposed that other properties in the burgh also succumbed to strong gusts of wind. Fawcett suggests that it would have taken several years for major repairs to be effected: in 1607 the lead sheathing was blown from the spire of the kirk, but "it was only in 1617 that one David Sibbald was appointed master of work for the repair of the steeple". However, the kirk session records suggest that maintenance work of one form or another was almost constant in the kirk and its precincts. Stavert has referred to "that state of chronic disrepair that seemed to affect most Perth buildings"; dilapidation and the need for temporary repair works may have been an ordinary feature of many structures in the 17th century town.

109 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7), lines 40-44.
110 B59/ 17/ 1, 175, 181, 280.
111 "Chronicle", 25-6 (7/7).
113 Stavert, 35.
Conclusion:

What were the characteristic effects of natural disasters upon the burgh and its environs? The most dramatic consequence of major flooding was the destruction of successive Tay bridges, coupled with damage to the weir and lade system which served the town from the Almond. (Damage to the lade would have affected the operation of the town mills, and possibly sanitation as well). There are no accounts of fatalities resulting from the 17th century floods in Perth, but inundation of the inches threatened livestock, and the residents of the Castle Gable area seem to have been lucky to escape with their lives in October 1621. In rural areas, the threat to people and livestock might be more severe, especially at times of surprise floods. However, certain areas—such as Strathearn and Glen Isla—were particularly vulnerable to flooding, and the inhabitants presumably lived in expectation of flood waters.

Within the town, streets might become impassable, and houses and burgages could be waterlogged. Obviously, the riverside area of Perth was the most vulnerable part of the town. This was an important sector of the town, in which notable private houses and the tolbooth were located, as well as the harbour; the functioning of the burgh would have been seriously undermined by the loss of key buildings. In the medium-term, Perth faced food shortages and large repair bills; essentially, flood waters threatened the very infrastructure of the burgh. Furthermore, it is possible that many of the inhabitants would have become susceptible to stress-related illnesses as a result of their experiences. Across the sheriffdom there would have been disruption in over-land communications, and damage to crops, livestock and buildings.

Ice might allow passage over the frozen Tay, but to the detriment of the local ferry trade, and during a thaw the Tay bridge would be threatened by moving sheets of ice. Heavy snow could halt transport to and from the burgh, and could trap people in their homes; fatalities amongst both men and beasts are recorded. If the water supply to the local mills was frozen then the food supply would be diminished. Hypothermia must have claimed lives. High winds caused structural damage in the burgh and, as Spalding suggests, may have been particularly destructive to rural properties.
### Appendix 2

**A Catalogue of Scottish Climatic Disorder**

This list is intended to provide an impression of the frequency of climatic problems which affected early modern Perthshire. It is a catalogue of meteorological descriptions contained in the sources which have been considered above. This list may well give a false impression; but it represents the most direct evidence which is available for a climatic study of Perthshire in the 16th and 17th centuries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1525</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1573</td>
<td>Inundation (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn / Winter 1574</td>
<td>Dearth in Scotland (D.O.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1574(5)</td>
<td>Dearth in Scotland (D.O.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 1577</td>
<td>Dearth in Scotland (Chambers, Vol. I, 117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1578</td>
<td>Dearth throughout Scotland (Chron. Aberdeen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1587</td>
<td>Dearth (H.K.J.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 1595-6</td>
<td>Dearth (Birrel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1596</td>
<td>Famine (Chambers, Vol. I, 271)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1597</td>
<td>Earthquake (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1599</td>
<td>Great mortalitie (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 1600</td>
<td>Dearth (Chambers, Vol. I, 318)</td>
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<td>1606</td>
<td>Dearth (Lamb)</td>
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<td>March 1606</td>
<td>Gales (Balfour)</td>
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<td>March 1607</td>
<td>High wind (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December - March 1607-8</td>
<td>Frost (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<td>November 1608</td>
<td>Earthquake (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<td>January 1609</td>
<td>High wind (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1612</td>
<td>Dearth (Lamb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 1612</td>
<td>Drought (Chambers, Vol. I, 444)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter 1612</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1613</td>
<td>Sheep loss (Lamb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1614</td>
<td>Earthquakes (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1615</td>
<td>Inundation (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>February - May 1615</td>
<td>Frost and snow (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1616</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>Sheep loss (Lamb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1621</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;The Intemperance of the weather&quot;) PKSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 1621</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1621</td>
<td>Inundation (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1621</td>
<td>&quot;Tempest of Weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<td>1622</td>
<td>Famine (Lamb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn 1622</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1623</td>
<td>Famine (Chambers, Vol. I, 538)</td>
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<td>Fast (Famine and Dearth) PKSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 1623</td>
<td>High winds PKSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn 1623</td>
<td>Dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1623</td>
<td>&quot;Tempest of the Weather&quot; PKSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>1624</td>
<td>Frost (&quot;Chronicle&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1624</td>
<td>Dearth (Lamb)</td>
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<td>DATE</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1624</td>
<td>&quot;Tempest of Weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 1624</td>
<td>&quot;tempestuous&quot; weather PPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1625</td>
<td>&quot;Tempest of Weather + Inundation&quot; PPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1625</td>
<td>Heavy rains (Chambers, Vol. II, 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1626</td>
<td>&quot;tempestuous weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1626</td>
<td>&quot;Greatness of the Waters&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1626</td>
<td>&quot;extraordinary Rain&quot; PPR</td>
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<td>July 1626</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;Intemperance of the Weather&quot;) PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1626</td>
<td>&quot;foulness of the weather&quot; PPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1626</td>
<td>&quot;tempestuous weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1627</td>
<td>&quot;Inclemency of the Weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1627</td>
<td>Heavy rains (Chambers, Vol. II, 12)</td>
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<td>August 1628</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;the Plague of Famine&quot;) PPR</td>
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<td>4 February 1629</td>
<td>&quot;foulness of the weather&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 February 1629</td>
<td>&quot;Continuance of the storm&quot; PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1629</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;the long Drought&quot;) PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 1629</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;the Plague of Famine&quot;) PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1630</td>
<td>Fast (Scarcity and &quot;Tempests&quot;) PKSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 1631</td>
<td>Fast (&quot;Lateness of the Harvest&quot;) PKSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 1632</td>
<td>Snow in Scotland (Spalding, Vol. I, 14)</td>
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<td>August 1633</td>
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<td>August 1634</td>
<td>Snow and dearth (&quot;Chronicle&quot;) PKSR</td>
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<td>January-February 1635</td>
<td>Snow storm PKSR</td>
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<td>19 January 1635</td>
<td>Snow storm PKSR</td>
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<td>26 January 1635</td>
<td>Scarcity (Chambers, Vol. II, 85)</td>
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<td>27 January 1635</td>
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<td>Fast (drought) PKSR</td>
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<td>29 July 1635</td>
<td>Fast (snow storm) PKSR</td>
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<td>1636</td>
<td>Dearth (Lamb)</td>
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<td>1642</td>
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<td>1647</td>
<td>Extreme dearth (Chambers, Vol. II, 185)</td>
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ii) Subsistence Crises and Disease

The impact of a foul climate upon the lives of the inhabitants of 17th century Perthshire can be studied in greater detail by concentrating upon two related phenomena which often spread in the wake of bad weather: food shortages and infectious diseases. Malnutrition and poor sanitation created the conditions for epidemics of typhus and, on occasions in the 17th century, outbreaks of bubonic plague depleted the urban population of Scotland. To a significant extent, the relationship between a town and its surrounding countryside was defined by the exchange of food and goods; disruption in the food supply or the paralysing effects of epidemics - when rigorous quarantine procedures were introduced to restrict traffic between towns - could upset the very basis of day-to-day urban life.

Subsistence Crises:

The "Chronicle of Perth" mentions two 16th century subsistence crises: the "de(i)r symme(r)" of 1525, when "ye boll of mail) gaiff xxvj_ 8_", and an apparent drought in 1598 - "The quhyte blastit". The manuscript describes two periods of concentrated difficulty in the early 17th century. Between 1612 and 1616 there were two dearths, and in 1621, 1622 and 1623 there appears to have been almost continual scarcity. In 1612 there was "great dearthe" from Michaelmas through to the winter, with the "wictuall at 10 lib ye boll", whereas in 1616 there was "great powertie of cornes and great dearth". The calamity of the early 1620s was directly related to the appalling weather of the autumn of 1621, which seems to have culminated in the October flood: "This yeir a great skairstie of cornes wes throu all ye kingdome And yat be ye ewill harwest and inwnda(o)n yat habnmit". The chronicler (TH7) recorded that in this year the shortages were at least partially resolved by imports of victual (corn, grain). After the harvest of 1622 there was widespread sickness "in all ye cuntrie". Apparently, Perth was affected particularly badly, "yat no familie in all ye citie wes frie of yis visita(o)un Thair wes also great mortalitie Amongs ye poore". It is important to note that this passage seems to draw a distinction between residents of the burgh and the poor - perhaps starving beggars who had come into Perth from the countryside. A similar situation seems to have prevailed in 1623: "Thair wes yis haruest tyme a great mortalitie + dearthe yat x or xij deit ordinartie euerie day from midsomer to mychaelmes witn yis burt". The crisis of these years appears to have been a result of harvest failures, although many deaths may have been caused by the spread of disease rather than by starvation. In the severe winter of 1635, food supplies were interrupted as a result of heavy snow and ice: "Thair wes great skairstie of wictuall + elding mylnes gaid not and yair wes no passage nor travelling to bring any in AT yat tyme aill wes waie skant They knokit mall in knoking stones". Together, these passages illustrate that food supplies could be disrupted at any time in the year - not just in the wake of a bad harvest. In

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115 Ibid., 27-8 (8).
116 Ibid., 36 (1 0), 37 (1 0/1 0).
117 Ibid., 43 (1 2).
general, the text suggests that the inhabitants of town and country were resilient in the face of such adversity.

**Miscellaneous Sources:**

Contemporary sources add to the impression of sickness and social dislocation which is given by the "Chronicle". Chambers noted that towards the end of 1598 there was "ane extraordinar dearth of all kinds of pultrie and other vivres", particularly in Edinburgh, as a consequence of the high price of oat meal, which Birrel recorded as being "6s. the peck". The Perth kirk session register records that dearth reached serious levels in the spring of 1596: "Because that the number of the poor daily encreases, + few are moved with natural pity to help them in the Time of this great Dearth + necessity. Therefore the session ordains that silver which is collected every sabbath for the Reparation of the kirk, to be employed for a certain space to the Use + Help of the poor, while some other provision be made". The "Chronicle of Perth" does not explain the causes of this period of scarcity, nor of that in 1612; but Chambers concluded that the latter crisis arose because of drought: 'There was at this time an extraordinary drowth, whilk is likely to burn up and destroy the corns and fruits of the ground.' On this account, a fast was ordered at Aberdeen. - A.K.S.R. In September, and for some months after, there are notices of 'great dearth of victual', doubtless the consequence of this drouth. 'The victual at ten pound the boll.' - Chron. Perth.* Chambers also decided that the dearth of 1616 was "probably a consequence of the stormy spring and adust summer of the preceding year". However, there is only a slight indication in the index to the town council records of trouble with the food supply at this time: 11 March 1616. "Order that James Tosheoch alias Gay pay the due custom for his corn, pease + beans which he buys in great and sells in small". 27 May 1617. "Entry as to grain ground at the mills taking the same to market + duties thereof".

A gap occurs in the index to the town council records between October 1620 and November 1623, but some information about the early 1620s can be found in the Register of Acts of Town Council, where regulations on the prices of foodstuffs prior to the years of crisis are recorded. In October 1619 it was ordained that "na derar aill be sauld wtin yis burth till ye last day of december nixt nor xd ye poyn and xijd at ye derest And ye pane of fywe pund for ye first fault ten pund for ye secund fault and fyftene pund for the thrid fault and ane unlaw to ye bailleis unforgewin". Similarly stringent regulations were imposed on the price of malt: November 1619 "na malt be derar sauld nor aucht (pounds) vi s viij d the boll qIl the last day of this _____ moneth... Ordains the bailleis to visie the quhyt marcat on Setterday nixt and repeit ye diligence agane yis day vii dayis". There is no indication in these passages of any subsistence problems; rather, they give an impression of an efficiently managed market. Such regulations also embraced manufactured goods: 14 February

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118 Chambers, Volume I, 303.
119 NLS Adv. 31.1.1., Volume I, (1774), 12 April 1596.
120 Chambers, Volume I, 444.
121 Ibid., 476.
122 B59/ 17/ 1, 273; 285.
1620 "na fremen transpart ony iron to be sauld to an outland merct win the shrefdome qll they
gait nell Licenceys and yt fremen nor chep man pas throw the shefdome wt ony stapill wairis to be
sauld out of marcatte".123 Information about prices in early 1624 suggests that the food supplies
were recovering after the crisis of 1621-3: 19 January 1624 "Ordains na darrar wyne to be sauld
efter candlmes nixt nor ten B ye pynt"; "Ordains na darre(II) silt to be sauld heirefter nor xx and xvi d
ye pynt at ye darrest"; "Ordains na darrer malt to be sauld heirefter nor ten pundis the boll". In May
1624 it was ordained that "na darrar all be sauld heirefter nor xij d the pynt".124 These prices are
similar to the pre-crisis levels; the maximum price of malt was nearly two pounds (Scots ?) greater in
1624 than in 1619, but it seems that during the first half of 1624 the price of ale was returning to
the level of 1619.

Price inflation in the crisis years was mentioned by Calderwood: in 1621 "the harvest was so late,
that scarce were the corns inned in the best parts of the country at Hallowmas. There was never
seen in this country in so short a time such inequality of prices of victual..."125 This comment
implies that prices varied across the country, presumably in relation to the scale of shortages in
different areas. Scott's transcription of the kirk session records includes two notes relating to the
value of barley at this time: 14 January 1622, "The Session sets down eleven merks to be taken
from John Lamb + John Broun for each Boll of their farm Bear of the crop 1621 years last bypass".
12 February 1622, "The Council + Session in consideration of John Lamb + John Broun's great
skaitl of their corns this last crop, have liquidate the Boll of their farm to ten merks".126

The "Chronicle's" account of widespread sickness at harvest time in 1622 suggests that migrant
poor had come to the burgh in large numbers. This would have been a relatively normal occurrence
at harvest time, as indicated by another passage in the session records:

123 B59/ 16/ 1, Register of Acts of Town Council, (Volume I), 344(v), 345(f), 350(f).
May 1624.
However, the "Chronicle of Perth" records that the winter was very harsh in 1623-4; "Chronicle",
(38, 10/10).
125 Quoted in R.S. Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth" in A Book of Perthshire Memorabilia (1879),
143-4.
126 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume II, (1775). For Scott's notes concerning these prices, see below
p.200.James Lamb and John Brown are recorded as the tenants of the Blackfriars and
Lamb had died by January 1622, when his son Mathew Lamb received the tack of the Blackfriars
lands. John Lamb - another son of James - seems to have held a tack of the Charterhouse lands
The Concise Scots Dictionary defines a Boll as: "1 a dry measure of weight or capacity varying
according to commodity and locality, eg a - of meal = 140 lbs (approx 63.5 kg) la14- 2 a valuation
of land according to the quantity of BOLLS it produced 18-e19..." CSD, 52. Scott noted that
"About the year 1615, the Town Council and Kirk Session of Perth began to have an annual
meeting in which they fixed the prices which the tenants were to pay for the bolls of bear which
grew in the Blackfriars and Charterhouse Crofts". Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no.270,
(Rev. James Scott), Prices of Victual at Perth, of various years, from 1525 to 1685. Extracted partly
from a Manuscript Chronicle or History of Perth, and partly from the Church Records,
(Transcript, p.5).
27 August 1593, "Forasmeikle as in the Time of Harvest, sundry both men + women, shearmers, resort to this Town on the Sabbath, walking up + down the streets in Time of preaching, waiting only to be hired, + on a worldly profit, little or nothing regarding the profit of their souls. Which Thing as on the one part it is dangerous to the persons Breakers of the Sabbath; so on the other part it brings an heavy slander on us thro’ the Country, + will bring greater except Remedy be had thereto in Time coming. Heretofore the minister + Elders ordain the porters to hold them out under the Pain of Reprimand of them in case thro’ their negligence they have access + Entry. And likewise that the Baillies remove + banish them the Town, + suffer not such Enormities to be unpunished*. 127 What was the attitude of the authorities at the time of food shortages? It is possible that many country folk were turned away from the burgh, whether they arrived on a Sunday or not. Of the crisis of 1622, Chambers recorded that "This was a wretched summer. A fast was ordered at Aberdeen, July 21st, on account of ‘the felt wrath of God by this present plague of dearth and famine, and the continuance thereof threatened by thir tempestuous storms and inundations of weets likely to rot the fruits of the ground.’ - A.K.S.R." 128 A fast was declared at Perth in August, in part "For Temperance of the Weather to win the fruits of the Ground". 129

Another fast was declared in Perth in June 1623, "That God will remove this Plague of famine + Dearth that lies upon this Land..." A reference dated to August 1623 tells of "the Time of the last tempestuous winds which did great Hurt to the fruits of the Earth", and a further passage dated to September of that year describes "the Tokens of God’s Indignation... both of famine amongst the poor, + great mortality of the people..." 130 This latter passage seems to make a similar distinction between residents and "the poor" as that made in the "Chronicle". 131 Chambers wrote at length about the troubles of 1623. He described "a vast increase to the usually inordinate number of beggars", and panic measures taken by the Privy Council in the absence of an adequate poor law: "... the Privy Council took measures for bringing the principal men together in their respective county towns to arrange for a taxation according to means and substance, in order to procure victual for the poor. A hundred merks for every thousand pounds of substance was the rate recommended". He also described how many poor people went to Edinburgh in search of food, but some died in the streets. 132

The severe winter of 1634-5 killed livestock, and from "the long stoppage of running water everywhere, it became impossible to get corn ground"; ale became scarce as well. 133 The Perth kirk session records tell of the efforts of the minister to supply food to the poor; on 30 January the session decided to borrow money, "therewith to buy meal to be distributed to the poor honest

128 Chambers, Volume I, 530-1.
130 Ibid., 8 June 1623; 19 August 1623; 25 September 1623.
131 See above, p. 191.
133 Chambers, Volume II, 83-4. See the "Chronicle of Perth", (43, 1 2).
misterful persons of Perth*. 134 Who were the "honest" poor of the burgh? Were they residents who had suffered losses in the severe weather, or were they rural migrants who had been driven to the town in search of succour? There is insufficient evidence with which to form a judgement.

Food supply and distribution:

Natural disasters disrupted food production, and in doing so could threaten the social fabric. Such crises were not regular occurrences in the early 17th century, but widespread mortality during periods of famine would have had enduring effects on life in town and country. What was the nature of the Scottish agricultural economy at this time?

Both Smout and Whyte have suggested that food production in Scotland was particularly vulnerable in the harsh climatic conditions of the later 16th and 17th centuries. According to Lamb, the intensity of average summer warmth in the British Isles at about 940 feet altitude fell by 6% in the second half of the 16th century, and remained at this level for most of the 17th. Smout has judged that the marginal nature of much Scottish agricultural land - either lying at high altitude or exposed on the coasts - would mean that even small alterations in summer temperature could cause significant changes to the volume of grain harvested. 135 Whyte has also argued that agricultural practices in Scotland were often inadequate. The main food crops - oats and barley - tended to be sown and harvested late, which increased the risk of crop failure. The poor weather could reduce the length of the growing season, and animal mortality could affect ploughing if there was a shortage of draught animals; “the borderline character of cereal production over large areas of Scotland probably rendered the country particularly sensitive to the effects of climatic deterioration”. 136 The topography of Scotland dictated that pastoral farming predominated over arable; the relatively limited amount of land which was available for cereal production ensured that even moderately poor harvests threatened subsistence, and many shortages might arise at a local level. Whyte refers to the observations of foreign travellers who came to the Lowlands in this period, and in particular to the account of Thomas Morer, who "noted how much of the low ground and valleys, potentially fertile land, remained undrained and scarcely used". 137

The distribution of foodstuffs, as well as their production, depended upon clement weather; roads - such as they were - could be blocked by snow or made impassable by water; in the winter, inland water transport could be hindered by ice. In periods of difficulty, domestic supplies needed to be bolstered by imports from abroad, but severe coastal storms could also interrupt maritime trade. Throughout Lowland Scotland, the distribution of essential supplies was an unpredictable business.

In rural areas, produce was traded locally, probably involving barter arrangements. The burghs participated in bulk transactions in commodities such as grain, or perhaps livestock, and more generally acted as market centres. Whyte describes the process of trade through licensed market centres as "essentially trade at a district and regional level as opposed to either a local or national one". However, there is relatively little information concerning the relationship between market centres and their rural hinterlands, and the scale of trade between them. 138 Perth is an exception in this respect, as the report which was prepared by the burgh and the commissioners from the Convention in 1692 provides details of the activities of market centres in the town's hinterland. At this time, Perthshire was served by 26 viable markets, but another 20 appear to have been moribund. The older burghs complained of competition from more recent foundations, but still handled the majority of trade. Burghs which had been founded before 1600 accounted for about 51% of trade within Perthshire, and those founded between 1600 and 1660 accounted for 29%. Mean annual turnover for the pre-1660 markets was £10,430 (Scots). Crieff was the most important of the post-Restoration foundations. Whyte draws attention to the fact that the Carse of Gowrie was prosperous enough to support six market centres, as well as the royal burghs of Perth and Dundee. Perth itself was a major market on account of its size, national importance, and strategic location in the Tay valley. The concentration of markets in the burgh's hinterland emphasises that economic competition increased markedly during the 17th century. In terms of the distribution of food and supplies it is important to note that across Lowland Perthshire this would probably have taken place at a relatively local level, but that with the growth of market communities, at times of scarcity there is likely to have been increased pressure on scarce resources. 139 At such times, grain was imported to Perth from the Baltic. Other imported foodstuffs included sugar, vinegar, spices, hops and malt from the Low Countries, and wines from France. 140

Population:

What was the scale of the mortality in Perthshire which resulted from the famines of the 17th century? With regard to the rural population, this question is virtually impossible to answer with any degree of accuracy; and estimates of the number of inhabitants in the burgh of Perth are unreliable. Rev. James Scott suggested that in 1562 the population of the burgh was c.6075, but this figure was based upon rather bizarre calculations. 141 According to Vasey, in the early 17th century the burgh's population may have been c.5000, and in the 1690s the total seems to have been about the same, judging from evidence in the Hearth and Poll Tax returns. He comments that

138 Whyte, Agriculture and Society, 179-180.

139 See Whyte, Agriculture and Society, 190-192. The Register Containing The State And Condition Of Every Burgh Within The Kingdom Of Scotland, In The Year 1692 is published in theMiscellany of The Scottish Burgh Records Society (Edinburgh 1881).


141 Scott multiplied the number of baptisms for the year 1562 - 225 - by 27 to arrive at the total of 6075. He offered no explanation as to why he chose to multiply the baptisms figure by 27. See "Parish of Perth" by Rev. James Scott in The Statistical Account of Scotland, ed. Sir John Sinclair (1791-1799), (Gen. eds D.J. Withrington and I.R. Grant, 1976), Volume XI, (Hereafter "OSA"), 503.
"Like its political and economic fortunes, Perth’s demography was relatively stagnant and depressed during the course of the seventeenth century". It is likely, however, that the number of inhabitants fluctuated quite significantly during the course of the century, as a consequence of periods of hunger, disease and war. It is also important to remember that migrant poor may have constituted a significant number of town dwellers, but that such people will not appear in the limited surviving source material.

Urban populations were peculiarly vulnerable to the spread of infectious disease, and this must have been a factor which regularly checked the growth of many early modern burghs. Scarcity created the conditions for epidemics, but sickness did not spread because of food shortages alone; it is possible that contagious diseases were a more frequent feature of town life than famines. Whyte suggests that "Really serious famines...before the mid-seventeenth century...occurred about once in every generation". It is difficult to assess the overall impact of food shortages upon the population of Perth in the 17th century because most of the compelling evidence seems to concern periodic regional or national crises; such periods of profound dearth may give a false impression of persistent famine. Writing of the period 1626-1643, Flinn commented that in general it is difficult to identify crop failures in Scotland because "Price data... is fragmentary and unsatisfactory... Evidence from imports is also more broken than in the earlier period..." However, he argues that Lowland society could cope with some food shortages: "There is no reason to suppose that in the south-east imports were not adequate to cover these domestic food deficits, as... they were in 1621. The early 1640s heard no complaints at all of famine: again one must assume that imports met local shortfalls well enough, at least where the localities were accessible to east coast shipping". Perhaps Perth’s demographic history in the 17th century is best illustrated by Vasey’s assessment that the total population of the burgh was more or less the same at the end of the century as at the beginning. Given that the "Chronicle" records that there were serious mortality problems in the early decades of the 17th century, it is reasonable to judge that the burgh’s population experienced periods of great stress which prevented expansion.

142 Vasey, 12-15.
143 Whyte, Agriculture and Society, 11. Note that Flinn has suggested that in the period 1626-1643, crop failure actually presented a more serious threat than bubonic plague. See M.Flinn (ed.), Scottish Population History from the 17th century to the 1930s, (1977), 127-9. Smout has written that famines "were comparatively frequent and severe between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries...they occurred with decreasing frequency between the middle of the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth centuries..." Smout, "Famine and Famine-relief", 21.
144 Writing of the evidence from burial registers, Smout has stated that, "...in a mortality crisis... there is a strong tendency for burials in most parishes to move up together: in some parishes the surge in burials may be a hundred per cent above the norm or much more... a national crisis consists of extreme suffering in many places but not in all places; it will be a widespread, but scarcely ever a universal, disaster. On the same kind of criteria we can also talk of regional crises affecting many parishes within a region, associated with soaring burial numbers and widespread local comment and alarm but not being a generalised experience for the whole, or for most, of Scotland". Smout, "Famine and Famine-relief", 22.
Recent studies of the 17th century crises:

The second half of the 16th century appears to have been particularly troublesome; Whyte records that between 1550 and 1600 there were 24 years in which grain prices were abnormally high, indicating severe shortages.\textsuperscript{146} Perth’s burial registers indicate high mortality in 1562-3 and 1579-81; the first peak appears to be related to a famine described by John Knox.\textsuperscript{147} Flinn cites a series of literary references to famines and visitations of the plague in Scotland in every decade from 1550 until the turn of the century; there was some improvement in the food supply in the early years of the 17th century, but disease was a recurrent problem.\textsuperscript{148} The “Chronicle of Perth” records a “plague among ye bestiall” in 1590 as well as dearth (“The quhyte blastit”) and mortality in 1588-9.\textsuperscript{149} Flinn records that there was a serious famine in 1595, outbreaks of plague in central and southern Scotland from 1597, and substantial grain imports in the years 1595-8.

The “Chronicle’s” report of “great dearthe” in the autumn of 1612 seems to be a record of a local - or perhaps regional - shortage, for neither Flinn nor Smout identified any other problems at that time. Similarly, the dearth of 1616 does not seem to have been widespread. At Aberdeen, deaths rose to a sudden peak in the last quarter of 1616, and at Stirling prices rose to the highest point of the decade; but Flinn comments that imports of grain from the Baltic were smaller in 1615 and 1616 than in 1614, and there was no mention of food shortages in the Privy Council.\textsuperscript{150} In contrast, the scarcity of the early 1620s was national in scale - perhaps the worst subsistence crisis of the century. Perth may have suffered more than other burghs, as the flood of October 1621 compounded the effects of a dismal harvest. However, Flinn points to evidence of similar disruption in south-east Scotland. In East Lothian there was a drought, followed by heavy rains during harvest in September and October. A passage in the Tynghame session record notes “the vehement rain began the 3 day of Octr, and lastit till the tent day without intermission... famin for thre yeirs continuit viz. 1621, 1622, 1623”. The Fife fiars price for barley in the harvest year 1621-2 was nine lib the boll - a more than 50% increase on the previous two seasons; in November 1621, the Privy Council forbade the export of victual. The difficulties of this first year seem to have been met by increased imports - as the “Chronicle” indicates. Movements of victual on Scottish ships from the Baltic rose from 38 lasts in 1620 to 277 lasts in 1621, and 1308 lasts in 1622. Flinn argues that if the dearth was caused by flooding, it was probably confined to valleys and carse lands, rather than being countrywide. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of affected burghs were ill-prepared for the failure of the harvest in 1622, when the subsistence crisis widened, and was worsened by the concomitant spread of disease. Imports of victual from the Baltic continued to increase, with 1493 lasts arriving in 1623. Despite these efforts, vagrancy increased dramatically, and many people travelled into the burghs in search of food - as the “Chronicle” implies. Famine could be a cause of profound social dislocation, and it crossed the boundaries of class and

\textsuperscript{146} Whyte, \textit{Agriculture and Society}, 10.
\textsuperscript{147} Flinn, \textit{Scottish Population History}, 109.
\textsuperscript{148} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{149} “Chronicle”, 20 (6).
\textsuperscript{150} Flinn, \textit{Scottish Population History}, 116.
wealth.\textsuperscript{151} Smout has recorded that mortality at Dunfermline in 1623 was equivalent to a quarter or a fifth of the total population of the town, and that at Dumfries was "rather under a fifth". These statistics represent an appalling crisis.\textsuperscript{152} Vasey has suggested that "perhaps as many as 2000 died (at Perth ed.), many of them recently arrived vagrants from the Highlands".\textsuperscript{153} However, the evidence of crisis dwindles dramatically for the year 1624. Only small quantities of victual were imported, and Scottish merchants actually exported Baltic grain to Europe; fairs prices dropped sharply and there are no more accounts of dearth. The harvest of 1623-4 seems to have provided the surviving populace with sufficient resources.\textsuperscript{154} However, the urban population had been seriously depleted by the mortality of the preceding years, and even though self-sufficiency seems to have been re-established in this year, there must have been an enduring legacy of human misery.

In the following decades, there does not seem to have been a national subsistence crisis to compare with that of the 1620s, although poor harvests caused local and regional difficulties in the middle of the century. Flinn has identified the years 1648-1653 - a period of extremely high prices in many areas - as being a time of widespread hardship.\textsuperscript{155} The severe winter of 1634-5, following a poor harvest, caused a subsistence crisis at Perth which may also have been experienced elsewhere. Vasey adds that the summer of 1652 witnessed a severe drought which destroyed crops;\textsuperscript{156} but apart from this period of scarcity, little evidence seems to have been discovered by researchers to contradict the impression given in the "Chronicle" that food supplies to the burgh of Perth remained at generally satisfactory levels between the mid-1630s and at least the mid-1660s.\textsuperscript{157}

**The Price of Foodstuffs:**

The vagaries of the food supply to Perth in the period covered by the "Chronicle" can be further assessed by reference to variations in the prices of foodstuffs in those years. In an undated

\textsuperscript{151} See ibid., 120-124.
\textsuperscript{152} Smout, "Famine and Famine-relief", 23.
\textsuperscript{153} Vasey, 14. I have suggested that c.1000 people may have died in Perth as a consequence of the dearth "from midsomer to mychaelmes". See above, p. 137. Fittis commented that "The period here given comprises 97 days, so that, on a daily average of ten deaths, the total mortality must have amounted to 970, - and the Plague is not credited with any share in it". R.S. Fittis, "Visitations of the Pestilence" in Chronicles of Perthshire, (1877), 388.
\textsuperscript{154} Flinn, Scottish Population History, 125-6.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., 150-156. Food prices were extremely high in the Sheriffdom of Perth, but fell dramatically in the 1650s, in keeping with the trend in other parts of the country. See below, p.201.
\textsuperscript{156} Vasey, 14-15.
\textsuperscript{157} However, Whyte has commented that "The trend of grain prices indicates that shortages were becoming less frequent in Scotland during the early seventeenth century, although the period between the 1630s and the 1650s was less favourable". Whyte, Agriculture and Society, 12. Lamb has recorded a famine in 1636, and general food dearths in 1642 and 1650; see above, p.176.
Rev. James Scott provided a comprehensive list of the known prices of the crops which formed the dietary basis of the inhabitants of the early modern burgh. As has already been noted, Scott's work can be unreliable, but he was a diligent transcriber and editor of important Perth records; this manuscript is still worthy of study. High food prices do not necessarily represent instances of local, or national, subsistence problems; but they can provide an indication of periods in which the food supply was unsettled.

Scott divided the presentation of his material into two sections - the first a catalogue of literary references, detailing prices for certain years in the period 1525-1685, and the second a table of "Friers Prices of Victual within the shire of Perth" from 1630-1721. The first section is of particular interest as it includes details of prices in the crisis years 1621-1623. Scott noted that from c.1615, the town council and kirk session met annually to determine the prices which tenants of the Blackfriars and Charterhouse Crofts were to pay for bolls of barley, and it was these prices which he entered onto his list. The crop of 1615 was deficient, and it is recorded that "because the crop of the ground had been small that year, a small price for the whole (40 bolls of barley ed.) is said to have been accepted"; this sum was £200 (Scots). In the following year (1616), the price of each boll of barley was £6, but this was reduced slightly in the following year to £5.13.4. The figure for 1618 is not given, but in 1619, "as a favour to the tenants each boll was reckoned at 15 pecks", and the price is listed at £5. In 1621, "the price of the farm bear is said to have been small this year, because the tenants had suffered great shathe of their crop price of each boll 10 merks, viz:- £6.13.4". This price, however, represented a significant increase from that of 1619. In 1622, the price of each boll of barley rose to £7. In the following year it rose again to £9, even though "as a favour to the tenants each boll was reckoned to consist only of 15 pecks".

Unfortunately, the figures for the rest of the decade were not available, and so the rate at which prices presumably fell after the crisis cannot be judged from this source. It is clear, however, that between 1621 and 1623, the value of relatively small quantities of barley rose significantly in comparison with the prices which pertained in the difficult period 1615-1619.

By 1631 the price of each boll of the farm bear was £5.6.8, but this rose dramatically in the following years, reaching a peak of £9 in 1635. Thereafter prices fluctuated, decreasing to £5 in 1638, but rising to £8 in 1641. There is then a gap in the records until 1665. Prior to that year "the Town Council and Kirk Session of Perth had begun in their annual meeting in January to fix the prices, not only of the Farm Bear of the Blackfriars and Charterhouse Crofts but also of the tiend..."

158 Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no.270, (Rev. James Scott), Prices of Victual at Perth, of various years, from 1525 to 1685. Extracted partly from a Manuscript Chronicle or History of Perth, and partly from the Church Records.

159 Friers: *17-20... the price(s) of grain for the year, used to determine MINISTERS' stipends... latterly fixed in spring by the local SHERIFF in the FIARS COURT 16-20.* CSD, 195. Victual: "l16... = victual l14... 2 corn, grain..." CSD, 760.

160 All subsequent prices are given in £Scots. In his manuscript, Scott noted the equivalent value of these sums in Sterling.

161 Peck: *1 = peck, a dry measure, in Scotland chf equivalent to a quarter of a FIRLOT but varying according to district and commodity...,* CSD, 481. Firlot: *"1 the fourth part of a BOLL l14-20", CSD, 197.
victual of the whole parish"; thus, for the final years covered by the "Chronicle" (1665-1668), Scott’s information concerns prices which pertained across the parish. In 1665, the assessments for "Farm and tiend victual in the parish of Perth" were, for meal, £3.6.8 per boll, and for barley £4 per boll. Prices rose slightly in 1666, to £4 and £4.13.4 respectively. The price of meal remained the same in 1667, but barley rose again to £5 per boll. Prices fell in 1668, the final year recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth", with meal at £3.13.4 per boll and barley at £4.13.4 per boll. Prices rose dramatically in the mid-1670s; in 1675 the price of each boll of farm barley was £11 and of tiend barley £10.6.8. Otherwise, price levels seem to have been relatively stable until 1685.

The second section of Scott’s manuscript appears in tabular form, and provides a guide to the prices of a wider range of crops, in the sheriffdom as a whole rather than just in the parish of Perth. Between 1630 and 1652, prices were only available for wheat, barley and meal; but after 1652 figures are also given for oats, pease, rye and malt. Price levels for most of these crops tended to fluctuate. In 1630, the price of wheat was £13, but it dropped substantially to £9 in 1631. The prices of barley and of meal also fell. By 1636, however, all had risen to the 1630 levels again - respectively £13, £10 and £8. By the end of the decade, the price of each crop had reduced significantly, although prices did not move up and down uniformly. All prices were particularly high in the late 1640s and early 1650s, but do not seem to have been unduly disturbed during the Covenanting crisis. Between 1652 and 1653, prices dropped dramatically. Wheat fell from £11.13.4 to £6, barley from £11.6.8 to £4.13.4, and meal from £10 to £3.6.8. Prices rose again towards the end of the decade, and then fell again, though not as drastically, in the early 1660s. From 1653, prices appear for oats, pease and malt; changes in the prices of these crops tend to accord with the behaviour of wheat, barley and meal. Despite some fluctuations, it is noticeable that prices were relatively stable in the 1660s. In 1668 the price of wheat stood at £5, barley at £4.13.4, oats at £3.6.8, pease at £4.13.4, malt at £5.6.8, and meal £4. This table also suggests that there were difficulties in the mid 1670s, but that prices thereafter were relatively stable until the famines of the 1690s.

The figures which are recorded in Scott’s manuscript seem to corroborate the general picture which is presented by the "Chronicle", namely that Perth endured serious subsistence problems in the first half of the 17th century - notably in the second and third decades - but that after c.1635, neither the burgh nor the countryside were troubled to such an extent by food shortages until the last quarter of the 17th century. Prices rose to extraordinary levels in the late 1640s and early 1650s, but there is little indication of local subsistence difficulty at that time. The information given by the "Chronicle" is partial, and cannot be used alone to indicate trends in levels of subsistence. However, when considered in conjunction with material such as Scott’s manuscript, the picture becomes more persuasive. In human terms, such a conclusion might suggest that although periods of scarcity were catastrophic, and universally feared, in general the population of town and country were rarely faced with a total dearth of supplies; this view contrasts with the impression which is conveyed by the kirk session registers, in which many fasts to seek God’s benison are

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162 Teind : “2 church law, chf in pl an allocation of a tenth of the produce of a parish for the support of religion, after the Reformation expropriated by the Crown and granted to landowners” CSD, 707.
recorded. It is important to remember that disease would threaten urban populations even at times of plentiful food supply. Although hardship would not have been constant, the enduring difficulty of urban life is apparent from the nature of the crises which town dwellers faced.

Further Material:

Few documents in the Perth burgh records relate to early modern subsistence problems, but there are two sources which add a further dimension to the material which has already been considered. The first, dated to February 1630, relates to charges against craftsmen of Perth - maltmen, baxters and fleshers - who had sought to abuse their influence over the supply of food. The document is a "Roll of persons cited before the provost and bailies 'conform to the justice ordinance' and indicted". Several maltmen were charged with taking more barley and malt than was their due, and with "keiping up of wictuall to dearth" - in other words, they were hoarding supplies. Two baxters, Robert Cok and Johne Hendersone, were charged with hoarding malt and wheat, and for baking bread of an insufficient weight. Fleshers were indicted "For foirstalling of Mercattis, and buying of guids befor they come to ye publict merca(t) place..." Scott's information concerning prices indicates that 1630 was a difficult year, and these charges may have been a response to wider subsistence problems in the preceding year. It is clearly important to note that the suppliers of foodstuffs held important positions in town life, and that the burgh authorities sought to exert control over their activities. A passage in the "Chronicle of Perth" records that steps were taken against "foirstallers" as a result of the justice air which was held in the burgh in October 1629; the roll of indictments also seems to refer to this process:

"Thair wes 97 psones of yis burt indytit quha wer referrit to or auin censure wpone pductiouan and syt of or charter qik wes pducit and documentis tane y(r)upone And fand ws crownearis wtin our selffis... Thair wer diueris foirstallaris wtin ye s(h)reffdome callit and conuenit befoir ye justices And our charter gewin be king Rot ye thrid being pducit Anent ye punisching of foirstallaris qik being sene and considerit ... sufferit yame to pas frie from yr censure Acknowledgeing yat we be or gift haid power so to do And yat ye on]laws of all foirstallaris wtin ye s(h)reffdome did appertene to yis burt qrsoeuir or be q(t)somr Judge they sould be convict As at yis tyme they did grupone instrumentis wer taikin + extractit extant among the tounes writtis". 164

The second document is rather different, a copy of the 1649 valuation of the parish of Perth. 165 Scott's material suggests that there were some subsistence problems at this time, as prices had

163 B59/ 26/ 1/ 16.
164 "Chronicle", 41-2 (11 /1 1).
165 B59/ 28/ 35.
( B59/ 28/ Documents relating to ecclesiastical affairs, 1316-1863 ).
been unusually high for a couple of years. The valuation details rents which were due in the parish to various landlords, including:

"The Victual to Eighty one Chalders whereof Bear fourty nine chalders of the measure + price foresaid extends to £3788.167
Meall therby two chalders of the measure + price foresd. extends to £2176
The sum of the price of the whole victual with the money rent in the Parish, extends to £7650..16..4"
These figures are interesting, but not necessarily reliable.

Meat:

Cereal crops were not the only foodstuffs available to the inhabitants of early modern Perth, and there is archaeological evidence that meat - particularly beef and mutton - formed an important part of the standard diet of many townspeople. A shortage of cereal crops would not necessarily deplete supplies of meat; but in periods of foul weather animals might die of starvation in drought, or be drowned in flood waters. Heavy snows in severe winters also threatened livestock. The "Chronicle of Perth" and other contemporary sources refer to such events, and the "Chronicle" also records a "plague among ye bestiall" in 1590; the harvest might be badly affected by shortages of draught animals. Meat supplies should not be thought of as a reliable alternative food source to cereals and vegetables; animals could be just as vulnerable to the vagaries of the weather as the crops in the fields.

How important was meat in the diet of the townspeople of Perth? The "Chronicle" makes no direct reference to the consumption of meat, although the presence of a butchery trade is clear from mention of fleshers. The only record of non-cereal foodstuffs is implied by the description of

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166 Further information about the price of victual at this time appears in the third volume of the Register of Acts of Town Council ( B59/ 16/ 3 ). An entry dated 17 March 1646 records that Andrew Butter and Marjorie Grant were required by the council and session to pay "aught marks our head" for victual "yt they haue takin from the toune". On 23 March 1646, the council ordained that Henry Jackson should be paid "four scoir punds money for meall was takin from him be Robert amott + Alexr Inglis dean of gild to ye use of ye toune".

167 Chalder : "a dry measure of capacity 1 in sing (1) of grain = 16 BOLLS", CSD, 91.

168 "Chronicle", 20 (6). See: "Vpoun ye day of Januar 1615 yeris being thursday ye vatte(r) of tay be veittis and sleit vaxit so great that all it coevert hail or ye north inche ye mortoun haugh and almaist all the south inche continoit sua fra thursday in the moryng to ye morne yeft men rowing wt boats in ye same north inche taking furth scheip that war in perrell of drwnyng", "Chronicle", 31 (9); "Vpo(u)n monadey at nicht ye vi day of m(t)che ane vehement snau come on lestit all the ncht + c(on)tinewd to wednesday y(r)efte(r) at qik tyme be xij houris in ye day it begowth of new and continoit so vehement ncht + day to the of m(t)che that during ye hail tyme mixtit wt frostis na travell or litill passage ys ruther for hors or men on the qik woddindsdy diuers hors + men perishit + deid", ibid., 31-2 (9). However, there are also references to the continued transport of goods by pack-animals in severe winters; in February 1615, for example, "the vat of tay being all frosin aboue + beneth the brig that thair vas daylie passage aboue ye brig nixt the north inche bayth for hors + men..." ibid., 31 (9); in February 1624 "ellewin cairtls wt 21 puncheones of wyne come or wpone the lyce from dundie heir", ibid., 38 (10/10).
the removal of the "fische mercat... fra ye schoar hed to ye South gait port" in 1598. However, excavated animal bones from several sites in the burgh point to the importance in the burgh economy of goods which were manufactured from animal carcasses, and the likely availability of meat for consumption. The analysis of animal bones which were excavated in Perth in the 1970s and early 1980s was mostly carried out by G.W.I. Hodgson, although not all of his work has been published. The majority of the excavated remains came from medieval levels, but it is reasonable to infer that the material reflects the likely animal species which were present in early modern Perth, and the uses to which they were put.

At the High Street site, the animal bones came from domestic animals, representing both domestic and commercial refuse; the remains of cattle and sheep were interpreted as being supporting evidence for the export trade in hides and wool-fells which is indicated by documentary sources. Hodgson thought that there was evidence of extensive wholesaling and retailing of meat. Bones from a large number of species were recovered: cattle, goat, sheep, pig, horse, deer (red and roe), cat, dog, fox, hare, bird, fish and shellfish. Such a variety of animals indicates the multiplicity of uses to which livestock were put. During the lifetime of the animals, oxen would provide traction, horses transport, sheep wool and milk, while at death they would provide meat and by-products. Some of these by-products may have commanded a greater market price in proportion to a single carcass than did the meat or fat which derived from it. The factors which influenced the age at which animals were slaughtered may have included ability to husband animals, cost and availability of fodder in relation to financial return for meat and by-products, and fertility of female breeding stock. These factors would not necessarily remain constant but would vary with weather, political change, trade, economic climate and even with fashion.

169 Ibid., 19 (6).
171 PHSE, 3, 6, 22-3.
172 Ibid., 41-2.
Hodgson and Jones drew similar conclusions from the material recovered from the trial dig at St. Ann's Lane and the first Canal Street excavation. Analysis of the bones from St. Ann's Lane "shows that the ratio of high meat-yielding to low meat-yielding cattle and sheep bones is almost unity. This is interpreted as indicating that the samples came from domestic rather than commercial refuse". They noted that dental evidence from the Canal Street remains suggested that cattle and sheep were reared to the ages of three to six years; "the animals were apparently successfully over-wintered in a healthy condition". It is apparent that the deaths of livestock in severe winters could disrupt both the supply of meat and the important productions of hides and wool-fells. In their assessment of the material from the Kirk Close, South Methven Street, and Canal Street II excavations, Hodgson and Smith decided that the bones were "apparently a mixture of domestic and commercial / industrial refuse ... of little value in assessing the inhabitants' dietary preferences for meats"; "The samples from medieval levels are direct evidence of an economy based on cattle and sheep".

However, in previous work Hodgson had considered the possible meat-based diet of the inhabitants of the burgh. In general, the High Street material indicated high rates of beef and mutton consumption, but pork and venison seemed to have been less popular. Beef was the major source of meat, supplemented by a variety of other meats, including game and fish. "Whether dog was eaten in medieval Scotland remains uncertain. When the burgh of Perth was besieged the incentive to eat dog must have been great". Goats may have provided an abundant source of cheap meat. In the 17th century there was a massive export trade in goat and kid skins; the animals were reared mainly in the Highlands, and may have been eaten by the residents of the early modern burgh. Hodgson and Jones attempted to use the bones from the St. Ann's Lane site to estimate the contribution of each species to the meat supply. On the basis of two differing methods of calculation, they demonstrated a clear beef-based meat supply, with cattle dominating over sheep/goat, pig and horse.

Hodgson also considered the potential causes of meat shortages in the medieval period. These might be brought about by price inflation, the chance coincidence of bad winters and disease amongst livestock, or the demands of the export trade in hides and wool-fells. "In practice, because of the monopoly the merchant burgesses exerted over the beef and mutton producers in the hinterland, the animals would have been raised to an optimum for hide production and not for meat. The time of slaughter of animals would thus largely be at the dictate of the export trade rather than the market forces of supply and demand for meat and may have been linked to the arrival and

173 Thoms, 451.
174 Blanchard, 514.
175 Holdsworth, 196.
176 PHSE, 17, 44.
177 Ibid., 44-5.
178 Thoms, 451.
departures of ships as well as to seasons thus causing an erratic supply of meat resulting in gluts and shortages". On such occasions, goats might be used to fill gaps in the meat supply. 179

If the supply of meat was unpredictable even in times of good weather, then the poorer sections of the burgh community would presumably have suffered more than wealthy burgesses. It is difficult to judge whether or not the inhabitants of the countryside would have suffered in kind, but presumably not all of the animals reared in the sheriffdom were sent to market. In this context, it is important to note that the early modern burgh of Perth was privileged to be situated in one of the most fertile agricultural areas of Scotland. Cereal crops were grown in Strathmore, Strathearn, and the Carse of Gowrie, and the Sidlaws and the Ochils offered good pasture lands. Nevertheless, although the area was wealthy, many of its inhabitants were poor. Most of the excavated remains in the Kirk Close, South Methven Street, and Canal Street II excavations "probably belonged to the poorer section of the community. These people practised small scale industries to supplement their subsistence level life style..." 180

**Disease**

The cold Scottish climate was not particularly suited to the spread of the plague bacillus, but nevertheless, in the first half of the 17th century the towns of Lowland Scotland endured several devastating epidemics of bubonic plague, and a population debilitated by occasional famines was also susceptible to the spread of typhus and smallpox. Infectious diseases seem to have been important secondary killers at times of dearth, and even in years of plenty, pestilence could ravage urban environments. The spread of disease could be a consequence of bad weather or poor harvests; but it was also an independent threat to early modern society and its economy. 181

The "Chronicle of Perth" is a valuable source of information about epidemics in the 16th and 17th centuries. It is an index of the fear that was generated by "the pest" that several outbreaks in London and elsewhere - which did not directly affect Perth - are recorded, apparently with some authority, for mortality figures are also reported in one of these cases. The "Chronicle" reports that there was "pest in leithe and edr in august 1597" (19, 6), and that in 1603-4 there was "Great pestilence in Ingland and specialie in londoun and in ye south of Scotland fra Junne to februar" (23, 7). Pestilence returned to Leith, Edinburgh and "sundrie places" in 1605 (24, 7), and there is also a record of an outbreak of pest at Edinburgh in November 1624 which caused the Chancellor and his family to flee to Perth (38, 10/10). The "great pest" at London in the summer of 1625 caused extreme mortality, "so yat yair deit wtin ye citie 1200 in an weik" (40, 11).

179 PHSE, 47, 47n.2, 48.
181 Flinn discusses the character of plague epidemics in early modern Scotland; see Scottish Population History, 127, 133-136.
The "Chronicle" suggests that Perth was seriously affected by disease in the first decade of the 17th century, and in the wake of the flood and poor harvests of the early 1620s. However, it should be noted from the outset that there is one glaring omission from the manuscript: there is no mention whatsoever of the worst visitation of bubonic plague in the period, that of the later 1640s.

"Mallochis pest" struck Perth in September 1537 (9, 3), but the "Chronicle" gives no other information apart from the fact that "Jhone de(n)yng" was provost. However, this outbreak may have been severe, for on 25 March 1539, eighteen months later, an order was issued by James V to cleanse Perth of the plague. Fittis questioned the accuracy of the "Chronicle", noting that John Donyng was elected provost in September 1538. There was plague in England in 1538, and in July the Scottish government instituted quarantine procedures in the Borders and at the country's ports. Fittis also cited the evidence of a prosecution in the town in April 1539, when Gilbert Blair, Constantine Fergusson, Sir John Luivell, chaplain, Sir Henry Elder and Sir William Davidson were charged with "forethought felony and hame-sucken done to the Keepers of the gates of Perth, in time of the Plague, coming upon them under silence of night, on 24th October, 1538, and striking and hurting of them in peril of their lives..." Fittis may well have been correct to alter the date of the outbreak from September 1537 to September 1538; but nevertheless, it seems that the pestilence endured for several months, at least from the autumn of 1538 until the spring of 1539. Both Fittis and Scott thought that the curious title "Mallochis pest" referred to the name of a man who brought the disease - presumably bubonic plague - into Perth; however, Bogdan interpreted the word "Mallochis" as "malicious" - a plausible reading.

According to the "Chronicle", the next visitation of "pest" occurred in September 1584, and lasted until August 1585, "quharin(h) at the plesor of god deiptit this lyff xiiij cc xxvij persones young and auld thby" (12, 4). If the "Chronicle's" figure is accurate - and there is no means of testing this - such mortality is representative of a devastating epidemic. There is a great deal of information about this outbreak in other sources, for the "pest" was not confined to Perth. Chambers recorded that the infection arrived in Scotland at Wester Wemyss, Fife, in July 1584. In 1585, the "pest" was transmitted to Edinburgh by a woman from Perth, and lasted in the capital until the following January. In August 1585 the disease reached St. Andrews, where about 400 people died "and the place was left almost desolate". The pest reached Dundee in October 1585. There is also mention of the crops in the fields being "universally corrupted"; clearly, 1585 was a harsh year in the

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182 The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 68.
185 Chambers suggested that the death total "could not be less than a sixth of the entire population", Chambers, Volume I, 157.
Lowlands. However, Chambers's sources suggest that the disease cleared rapidly in the spring of 1586.\(^{186}\) It appears that the disease abated in Perth some time before its cessation elsewhere in the Lowlands.

There is just one passing reference to the visitation at Perth in the index to the town council records; this describes the "Deprivation of James Hepburn and Patrick Inglis, by the Old Council, of their offices by reason of their passing "of" the burgh the time of the visitation thereof by God", on 4 October 1585.\(^{187}\) In contrast, the records of the kirk session include many references to the difficulties of this time. On 25 October 1584 the elders convened to appoint a new officiar, as the incumbent "was attacked by this plague". In January 1584(5), the burgh received a gift of 300 merks from Edinburgh, for the relief of the poor in the time of the plague. The plight of the poor is illustrated in a record of 1 February 1584(5): "Forasmeikle as there were sundry poor ones, within + without the Town in the Lodges, abill (likely) to perish for; + the victual that was sent by the country for the support of the poor was all distributed, so that there was none left. Therfore it was ordained that ilk one who received meal, should have weekly for the peck 30 pennies. And these that received Bread, should for ilk loaf have 3 pennies; 'Till God moved the Hearts of the Gentlemen of the country to send more support for their Relief". On the same day, Adam Anderson, one of the bailies, handed in his accounts for the money which he had distributed to the sick in their homes, or in lodges outside the burgh, amounting to £11 (Scots).\(^{188}\)

The enduring epidemic prompted the session to re-affirm its harsh moral codes; marriage banquets were all but forbidden in time of plague, and fornicators were required to give donations to the poor and the sick.\(^{189}\) It is noteworthy that although the "Chronicle" states that the plague ceased in August 1585, there is an entry in the session records dated 11 October 1585 which suggests that either the disease had appeared again in the town, or that the epidemic lasted into the winter of that year: "Forasmeikle as George + Elspith Cudbert were both apprehended in naked Bed together in filthy fornication upon the tenth of this Instant being the first Sunday of the holy communion + of public fast + Humiliation, appointed by the kirk to be holily observed, that God of his mercy might remove this miserable plague from this Town + all other Towns within this Country..."\(^{190}\) The session records also indicate that plague recurred in the Edinburgh area in late 1587: "Appoints an fast to begin on Saturday next, + to continue while Sunday eight Days

\(^{186}\) Chambers, Volume I, 154, 157-9. According to Creighton, "In the winter of 1586-7, 'the pest abated and began to be strangely and remarkably withdrawn by the merciful hand of God...'

\(^{187}\) B59/ 17/ 1, 114.

\(^{188}\) NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774).

\(^{189}\) Ibid., 24 May 1585; 17 July 1585.

\(^{190}\) Ibid., 11 October 1585.
thereafter at Even, with great Humiliation + prayer to God that it would please him to remove the plague of the pest from the Towns of Edinburgh, Leith etc. + to preserve us therefrom..." 191

Rev. James Scott made copious notes about this epidemic; as ever, his reading of events must be treated with caution, but his material is certainly interesting. He recorded that on 23 November 1584, a list of the poor in the burgh was presented to the session. This detailed that the number of the poor on the north side of the High Street was 235, and the poor on the south side numbered 328. The deacons of the session were ordered to make weekly distributions of loaves to the unfortunates. The quarter beneath the market cross, including Watergate, contained 232 poor people, and there were 380 poor in South Street, all of whom were to receive loaves of bread. A separate list was prepared of people who were "ashamed to be put in the Roll with common Beggars, + yet sustained great penury"; arrangements were made for private distributions of aid.192

Despite the spread of the disease to other burghs, Perth received support from its neighbours. In addition to financial help given by Edinburgh in January 1584(5), the earl of Atholl sent a number of Highland cattle, which were sold for 8 merks 10 pennies each, and the money given to the poor. A large quantity of butter was sent from Stirling: "The elders sold it to a merchant for thirty eight pounds current money of the realm to be bestowed by them on the poor & the merchant indemnified himself by retailing it in pounds & half pounds weight to all who could / would afford to buy it; but none were allowed to purchase more than one pound at most. It was a luxury in which none but the comparatively rich could indulge".193 In December 1584, the authorities started to distribute fuel reserves: "while the coldness of the weather was increasing creels of coals were furnished to some persons; the vault under the Tolbooth was emptied for the sake of the poor of its peats & coals its usual contents". 194 By 1 February 1584(5), however, there were concerns that "the victual from the country was now all distributed & they had no victual remaining so that sundry poor ones within the town & also in the lodges were likely to die of famine"; fortunately, a brief respite from the epidemic ensued.195

Creighton judged the period 1584-88 to have been one of "the most serious epidemics of plague in Scotland". The outbreak may have been "a revival of old seeds of the disease"; in this context, it is notable that "On November 22 (1580 ed.) a vessel which had come down the Tay with plague-stricken inhabitants of Perth, some of whom were dead, and with their goods and gear, was ordered to the Isle of May".196 A further point of interest is his comment that in the St. Andrews

191 Ibid., 7 November 1587.
193 See ibid., 28 and Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no.346, Account of the Plague in Scotland copied from a manuscript of the late Rev. James Scott one of the ministers of Perth..., 2-3.
194 PMAG Archive 346, 3.
195 Ibid.
196 Creighton, Epidemics, (1891), 367.
area, "The state of sickness was much aggravated by wet harvest weather". In the following
decade, disease seems to have accompanied dearth. According to Flinn, the late 16th century
ended in an atmosphere of crisis, "with a famine referred to years later as the 'great dearth of 1595',
very heavy grain imports from the Sound over the period 1595-8, and serious outbreaks of
bubonic plague and possibly other epidemic diseases in central and southern Scotland from 1597
onwards". The "Chronicle of Perth" reports that there was "Ane great dead amongis ye peopill
in anno 1599", and this may have been related to the destruction of crops in the previous year -
("The quhyte blastit in anno 1598") (20, 6). However, Perth may have been less affected than
elsewhere; there was pestilence in the north of Scotland in 1600, and in November 1601 the
town council of Perth ordered one of the craft deacons "to ride to St. Andrews, to ascertain the
progress of the pest...".

According to the "Chronicle", the "pest" did not reappear in Perth until 1606. On 29 August, "The
same nyte yair wes blude fyre and ye pest come in qk continewit till maij yrefter" (25, 7/7). The
length of this outbreak is an indication of its seriousness, as is the alarming reference to "blood
fire". The index to the town council records contains many references to measures which were
taken to deal with the disease. On 1 September 1606, James Henderson was granted £12 "for his
pains in sighting the estate of the town being visited with the plague of pestilence", and a
curfew was enacted "that none be seen on the streets after ringing of the 8 hour bell". On 29
September, there was an order to borrow £100, to be paid to the cleansers and officers "for their
pains", and a further order to make a mort kist "to carie the pure folk to the buriall". It is notable that
disease, as well as scarcity, seems to have accounted for significant increases in the numbers of
urban poor. Such people might have been vagrants from the countryside; but in time of disease it
seems that many were ordinary citizens whose livelihoods had been ruined by the economic
dislocation which resulted from epidemics. Nevertheless, although there was no formal system of
poor relief, the burgh authorities were experienced in organising the distribution of aid and
managing the poor. On 20 October Henry Lees was nominated "to be Overseer over the
plenishing goods and gear of the people infected and to be infected during the will of God and to
write up the Inventary thereof and to command the cleansers, and he to have 40 shillings weekly".
A record dated 13 April states: "Order in the event of the infection returning to build lodges on the

197 Ibid., 368.
198 Flinn, Scottish Population History, 117.
199 It is interesting to note that Aberdeen seems to have been unaffected by plague throughout
these years; an entry in the burgh register dated to 1603 records "It has pleasit the guidness of
God of his infinite mercy to withhauld the said plague frae this burgh this fifty-five years bygane",
Creighton, Epidemics, (1891), 370.
200 Fittis, "Visitations of the Pestilence", 383. The index to the town council records includes a
series of references to precautions which were taken in Perth in 1604-5 on account of the
presence of plague in other Lowland burghs, particularly Edinburgh, Leith and St. Andrews. B59/
17/1, 162-176.
201 Chambers found a reference to a similar phenomenon in John Nicoll's Diary: On 28 May
1650, "there rained blood the space of three miles in the Earl of Bucicleuch's bounds, near the
English Border", Chambers, Volume II, 199. "Blood Fire" could have been a raging fever.
202 See Fittis, "Visitations of the Pestilence", 384-5. Henderson was a physician.
Catside of the Common Muir, and not nearer the town and that no lodges be at the mill". The infection remained in the area in the summer; on 15 June there was an order "to send a person to Dundee to ascertain its condition in regard to the plague". 203

Fittis thought that the death toll in Perth was probably "slight", even though "all other quarters of the country were severely dealt with". 204 According to Sir James Balfour, "The plague of pestilence raged so extremely in all the corners of this kingdom, this year, so that neither burgh nor land in any part was free. The Burghs of Ayr and Stirling were almost desolated; and all the judicatories of the land were deserted, except the meetings now and then of the Lords of the Privy Council..." 205 Chambers also noted the severity of the plague at this time. 206 However, Fittis's judgement may be supported by the fact that the kirk session registers make no mention of this particular outbreak. Fasts were ordained in July and August 1604 in response to the threat of plague: "Because that the Plague of Pestilence continues in the Land, + seems to draw nearer unto us, Therefore the Session ordained a fast to be the next Sabbath, + other(s) Sabbath following..." 207 In October 1605 the session ordained the bailie Andrew Arnot, and Robert Lethem, master of the Hospital, to go to St. Andrews to distribute 400 merks which had been collected in Perth, "for Help of the poor there presently lying under the heavy Rod of pestilence..." 208 If Perth did escape the worst ravages of the disease in 1606-7, then the burgh was truly fortunate; Creighton characterised the year 1606 as "the worst of this plague-period in Scotland". 209 However, plague was endemic in Lowland Scotland in the first decade of the 17th century, and in 1608 at least, Perth did succumb again to the general trend.

The "Chronicle" records that the pest arrived on 29 August 1608, and lasted for nearly a year: "The pest came to perthe and continewit till may yairefter 1609 qrin deit young + auld 500 persones", (26, 7/7). 210 However, the burgh seems to have been affected by the disease in the preceding year too: "In April of ... 1607, we hear of the plague in Dundee itself... as well as in Perth and other places". 211 The outbreak was quite serious north of the Forth; Chambers referred to a description in the Privy Council records of the effects of the plague in Dundee: "a great many of the houses are infectit therewith, and greater infection like to ensue in respect of the few number of magistrates within the same, and the little care and regard had of the government thereof, ane of 203 B59/ 17/ 1, 184, 185, 187, 188, 190. 204 Fittis, *Visitations of the Pestilence*, 385. 205 Ibid. 206 Chambers, Volume I, 399. 207 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 4 July 1604; 27 August 1604. 208 Ibid., 21 October 1605. 209 Creighton, *Epidemics*, (1891), 503. 210 It should be noted that the phrasing of this entry is very similar to that which describes the outbreak of 1606-7. Both passages state that the pest arrived on 29 August and continued until the following May. This coincidence is suspicious, and casts some doubt on the veracity of the records. Both passages were written in TH7. 211 Creighton, *Epidemics*, (1891), 503, quoting Aberdeen Burgh Records.
the said magistrates being departit this life, and ane other of them visited with disease and infirmity, and not able to undergo sae great pains and travels in his person and otherwise as is requisite at sae necessar a time". 212 Inevitably, the authorities at Perth sought to prevent contact between the inhabitants of Perth and Dundee: "On the 15th of August, the Magistrates ordered Duncan M'Queen and some others to be "warded" or imprisoned, until they paid a fine of 40s, which had been imposed upon them for holding communication with a citizen of Dundee named Hunter... The Council, on 28th August, issued an order to close up the houses of James Ross and others, and they to remain therein during the Council's will, for having purchased certain goods from John Peebles in Dundee, who had died of the Pest..." 213

There is relatively little information about this outbreak in the Perth kirk session records, although there is a passing description of the symptoms of the disease - "the Botch + Boyll was upon their Bodies..." 214 Scott described the disease as "a common pestilence, which broke out as usual in a discoloured swelling, or sore Bile". He also remarked that many people recovered from this infection. 215 Fittis recorded the elaborate procedures which were adopted for segregating the sick from the healthy: "huts and lodges were erected - not, as before, on the Town's Moor, but on the lands of St. Leonards, the Loan of Balhousie, and the Blackfriars' Croft. It was arranged, on 19th September, that infected persons being sent to the Leonards, and dying there, should be buried in that place, which was also to serve as the burying-ground for those who died in the Watergate, and beneath the Cross, and in the South Street... and that all the plague-patients dying in the Loan of Balhousie and the Blackfriars' Croft, should be buried in the Blackfriars' churchyard, which was also assigned as the burial place for the north and south sides of the High Street; The object being to keep all such interments out of the public burying-ground, which would obviate the danger of future contagion by re-opening the graves..." 216

Perth would seem to have been free of the "pest" throughout the second decade of the 17th century. 217 However, the succession of poor harvests and foul weather in the early 1620s seems to have rekindled the spread of infectious disease. The "Chronicle" does not refer specifically to

212 Chambers, Volume I, 414.
213 Fittis, "Visitations of the Pestilence", 385-6.
215 NLS Adv. 31.1.6, Register of Deaths at Perth, (c.1784), 68.
216 Fittis, "Visitations of the Pestilence", 386. Note that Scott stated that the huts, or lodges, were "as formerly...erected in the Burough Muir..." NLS Adv. 31.1.6. Register of Deaths at Perth, (c.1784), 68. See NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 12 September 1609, "Because that many poor are presently in the muir lying under the heavy Rod of Pestilence..." With respect to standards of public health, Scott commented that "The Town of Perth, when surrounded with walls, + water Ditches, + when its Houses were mean + uncomfortable + closely adjoining to one another in narrow Lanes or vennels, must certainly have been very unfavourable to Health. Epidemical Diseases would easily be communicated from one family to another". NLS Adv. 31.1.6. Register of Deaths at Perth, (c.1784), 102.
217 Creighton, Epidemics, (1891), 504 : "Until 1624 there is no other Scottish reference to plague except an entry, November 7, 1609, touching the arrival at Leith of a vessel from the Thames, with some of her crew dead of the plague, and the quarantining of her at Inchkeith".
the "pest", but to "vniuersall seiknes" which was associated with harvest failure in 1622. According to Flinn, this is the main evidence that the heavy mortality of this year was caused by an epidemic, although he also notes a petition from the Edinburgh area to the Privy Council, dated 19 August 1623, "to the effect that all the poor are 'impotent, opprest and overrun bith with seikness and famyn'". If disease was a killer, along with famine, it is likely to have been typhus rather than bubonic plague: "Perhaps typhus, the 'famine fever' of tradition, followed as a secondary cause of catastrophe, carrying off those whom hunger had weakened".218 The Perth kirk session records tell of "famine amongst the poor, + great mortality of the people..." in September 1623.219

The "Chronicle of Perth" includes a list of prominent citizens who died in 1623: "In yis yeir deit wtin sextene weikis James adamsone quha wes puest mr henrie andersonsone quha wes bailyie dawid sibbald wm wmsone James bannewis quha hed bene baillies Andro andersonsone quha wes baillie yat same yeir", (37, 10/10). Scott commented that the "malignant Distemper" to which all these officials succumbed "was not called a plague..." 220 However, the "Chronicle" records a clear instance of the "pest" at Edinburgh in November 1624, which caused "ye sessione raiss And ye chancellor and his familie came to perthe thrie dayis yairefter" (38, 10/10). This outbreak was not particularly severe, but it caused anxiety at Perth. The index to the town council records notes a "Proclamation as to the plague then raging in Edinburgh and in regard to watching the ports + __ Entries in reference to the above", 3 December 1624. On 23 December, twenty seven watchmen were appointed "on account of the plague", and on 11 February 1625 a prohibition was issued "against the inhabitants receiving goods or letters from Edinburgh". 221 On 5 January 1625, the presbytery of Perth appointed a fast to be held, "That God will be merciful, + keep us from the Plague of Pest, + other Plagues, which our sins have else deserved..." 222

The last major outbreak of plague in Scotland occurred in the 1640s, but this is not recorded in the "Chronicle of Perth". Prior to the arrival of the plague from England in 1644, Scottish society was still affected by infectious diseases - "smallpox was at large in Scotland in 1635 and 1636" 223. The Perth kirk session records describe a "suspicion of pestilence in the Burgh of Perth" in October and November 1629; in July 1636 a fast was ordained within the presbytery of Perth, "The causes are the Danger of Pestilence, + the fears of famine because of the present Drought..." 224 However, these years seem to have been fairly untroubled; the arrival of the plague in the Lowlands in late 1644, from Newcastle, heralded a period of widespread mortality in the burghs. In general the countryside was not seriously affected by plague - although typhus was a significant threat to rural communities; but such was the severity of the pestilence between 1644 and 1648

218 Flinn, Scottish Population History, 123.
221 B59/17/1, 312, 315.
223 Flinn, Scottish Population History, 131.
224 NLS Adv. 31.1.1., Volume II, (1775), 21 October 1629; 4 November 1629; 1 July 1636.
that widespread disruption was caused throughout Lowland Scotland. 225 Perth and its surrounding parishes suffered particularly in 1646 and 1647, years in which the "Chronicle" is largely silent. The ravagings of the plague in the burgh may explain the paucity of information recorded in these years; but it is surprising that the arrival of disease was not noted by the author (TH 9/10) who recorded the siege of Newcastle. 226

The total mortality in Perth and some of its neighbouring parishes in the plague years 1645-7 seems to have been about 3000 people; this figure may represent up to half of the burgh's population - a devastating blow, which could in part account for Perth's weak economic performance in the second half of the century. 227 Details of the visitation at Perth were included in the New Statistical Account of 1845; the author claimed to be quoting from "an old manuscript volume" 228. This source describes how the sick were initially confined to their homes, where only physicians and "cleansers" could come into contact with them. However, it became necessary to move the sick out of the town when some cleansers deliberately attempted to infect healthy inhabitants. The sick "builided huts for themselves in different places around the town, particularly in the South Inch, the Vicar Knoll in the grounds of Friartown, Witch hill, near the parish kirk of Kinnoul, and the grounds near the river Almond, at the mouth thereof". An entry in the Register of the Acts of Town Council notes that in July 1646 the ministers and the council decided that "the north insche sail only be for the suspect peopell and infectit and the outr port to be closit..." 229

According to the NSA source, the dead were buried in the fields, rather than near to the town; occasionally there were burials "in the precincts of the town...in a certain place allotted for that purpose, as in the west side of the South Inch..." It is notable that these arrangements differed slightly from those described by Fittis concerning the outbreak of plague in 1608-9, when the plague sufferers built their huts in other parts of the enceinte. It seems that in 1646, Perth was almost surrounded by the temporary lodgings of plague victims. The "old manuscript" relates that many people died in Perth's neighbouring parishes, and that the plague "almost depopulated Perth"; "even some streets were entirely forsaken, particularly one between the church and the Meal Vennel..."

225 See esp. Flinn, Scottish Population History, 133-149, for details of the plague in the 1640s.
226 Chronicle, 49 (1 4).
227 Flinn, Scottish Population History, 147. Other mortality estimates include c.9-12000 in the Edinburgh area, c.1600 at Aberdeen, and c.600 at Brechin.
Flinn noted that "The fullest account was given by the nineteenth-century minister in the NSA, 'from an old MS volume' (now evidently missing) from which he quoted at length. The year is there given as 1645, but 1646 is correct both according to the session and to Parliamentary records, which speak of the sheriff court being moved in November to Abernethy on account of plague". Scottish Population History, 142.
This manuscript has not been identified. See above, p. 63.
229 B59/16/3, 13 July 1646. (No pagination).
The population of Perth seems to have suffered severely from outbreaks of plague once in each generation during the first half of the 17th century; the rural population would also have been blighted by typhus and other infectious diseases. Plague could have a profound impact upon the demography of the burgh, and on the economic life of the region. It is clear that whenever the burgh authorities suspected the arrival of an epidemic, the rigorous quarantine procedures which were imposed would have severely restricted traffic between burghs, and disrupted the market economy of town and country. Severe epidemics were not regular occurrences, but disease was surely a constant factor in town life. The devastating consequences of major epidemics are highlighted by the persistent fear of the "pest" which appears in the kirk session papers. The combination of periodic scarcity and the spread of contagious diseases would have had an important influence on the quality of everyday life within Perth, and any breakdown in the functioning of the burgh as an administrative and trading centre would have had a knock-on effect on the operation of the local rural economy. Whilst it is necessary to beware exaggerating the scale of the hardships which were endured in the late 16th century and the first half of the 17th century, it is apparent from a variety of sources that Perth and its hinterland were - in common with other areas of Lowland Scotland - subjected to periodic catastrophes which would have had an enduring influence on the lives of the population. The image of a town surrounded by the makeshift dwellings of plague victims, and the graves of those who succumbed to such disease, is a sombre one.

Summary

The natural disasters which overwhelmed the burgh of Perth in the early modern period tended to induce a degree of breast-beating amongst the chroniclers who recorded such events. The "Chronicle" is notably restrained in its comments, but the account of the 1621 flood includes the plea "god lett ws nawer sie ye ellik of it agane". Such emotional responses are not surprising, for the inhabitants of the burgh and its environs faced physical hardships which now lie beyond our own experience. The residents of the North Muirton estate would probably disagree with this view; but food shortages and disease followed in the wake of the early modern floods. However, despite the undoubted severity of such crises, we must remember that floods, famines and plagues were exceptional events. Fear of such visitations may well have been prevalent in burgh society, but the worst disasters were extraordinary. It is apparent from the "Chronicle" that generally poor living conditions were made worse by natural disasters; heavy rains would cause damage to the land as well as to the town, and burgh society would have borne the scars of disease long after an epidemic had passed. Structural damage to the buildings of Perth is likely to have been a constant burden. In an era when the climate was generally poor, and intermittently very harsh indeed, it is perhaps fair to summarise the effects of the weather upon the quality of life in Perth by remarking that the threat of natural disaster was a constant feature of burgh life, and each generation faced some of the worst effects of climatic disorder.

Illustrations, pp. 217-221


16. NLS Adv. 30.5.23. 107c. "Monks Tower, Gowrie Castle, Perth" (General Hutton), (1783).

17. NLS Adv. 30.5.23. 121b. "Palace of Scone" (Engraved by A. Rutherford), (1775).

Plan of Perth and Adjacent Places
with a projection of a Citadel

Environ

after NLS MS. 1646 Z.31a. "Plan of Perth and
Adjacent Places with a projection of a Citadel by
Brigdr Patra" c. 1715/16

1. St. John's Kirk
2. Speygate
3. South Street
4. Watergate
5. High Street
6. Castle Gable suburb
7. Location of Blackfriars monastery
8. North Inch
9. Location of town mills
10. Cow Causeway
11. Long Causeway
12. Location of Charterhouse
13. South Inch
14. Citadel
15. Greyfriars burial ground
16. Gowrie House
17. Site of Monk's Tower
18. Harbour
19. Location of tolbooth
20. North Shore
21. Site of Mine's bridge
22. Balhousie
The South-east Prospect of the Town of Perth taken from Ward End.

Presented Inscribed to the Right Honourable Lady Clarissa Murray by her most obedient humble Servant Alexander Robertson.
Section 2. The Environment

Study of the climate of Lowland Scotland in the early modern period indicates that life could be extremely difficult for the inhabitants of town and country. The natural environment of Lowland Perthshire boasted a fine mixture of fertile arable and rough grazing land; but crops and animals could be destroyed in periods of harsh weather, and many settlements would have been dogged by flooding. Inland communication was vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the climate, and the gradual silting-up of the Tay - combined with occasional storm damage - is thought to have had a profound effect upon the 17th century burgh's economy and national status. In this context, it is important to question what the early modern built (man-made) environment was like.

Archaeological investigations in and around Perth have revealed a substantial body of evidence about both the material culture of the medieval and early modern burgh, and the nature of buildings of the town. The High Street excavations of the mid-1970s were particularly important in this respect. However, in the ensuing chapter I intend to discuss features of the built environment of Perth and its "enceinte" in a manner which ordinarily might not be adopted for such excavated material. In the following discussion I will be concerned primarily with the condition of buildings in Perth and its environs, and less with their design and structural histories.

I) The Environment of the Town and Its Immediate Surroundings:

In the last Royal Charter of the Burgh of Perth, granted by James VI in November 1600, the boundary of the burgh was defined as "Its islands north and south, and with all its pertinents, together with the common muirs, called the Burgh Muir of the Burgh of Perth, as well as that part of the said muir called Catside, as the rest of the parts of the said muir, with all loans, roads, ways, and passages leading to the north from the said Burgh of Perth, beyond and beside the Upper Mills thereof, and the two long ways thereof, called the Long Causeway ... and the Cow Causeway... as all other passages, and every part of the same". 1 The residential nucleus of early-modern Perth remained within the confines of medieval defences; the Castle Gable area was technically a suburb of the town, and the lands of the former monasteries of Perth lay outside the town walls. The "Chronicle of Perth" indicates that the "Burgh" encompassed more than the residential and administrative focus, and within the boundaries of the burgh of Perth lay a complicated patchwork of settlements and features. In this chapter, I wish to study the varied character of the environment of the town and its surroundings. 2

2 The words "Town" and "Burgh" can be used co-terminously. However, in this chapter, I have used the term "Town" to describe a substantial built, residential environment, distinguished from rural settlements by virtue of size and economic and administrative functions. "Burgh" is a legal term, referring to "a town with special privileges conferred by charter and having a municipal corporation"; (CSD, 73). In this context, the limits of the town of Perth were not the same as those of the burgh.
The morphological development of medieval Perth has been charted in detail by Dr R.M. Spearman; his analysis is now the standard reference work for the growth of the town and its suburbs, and reference should be made to his map of the layout of Perth in the 15th and 16th centuries. Spearman concluded that Perth grew significantly in the high middle ages, reaching a limit of 370 burgage plots in the 14th century; "There would seem to have then been a slow suburban expansion during the fifteenth century which tailed off leaving the town without significant physical growth until the end of the eighteenth century".  

The Defences of Perth

Although the general morphology of the town may have been relatively static in the later 16th and 17th centuries, the physical condition of the buildings of Perth would have been continually changing. The town was still ringed by the remains of its substantial 14th century defences, which consisted of a wall and a large ditch filled with water from the town lade. During the Cromwellian occupation Perth was re-fortified and garrisoned; the South Inch became the site of a major citadel. In the first half of the 17th century, the defences would have provided a reminder of the burgh's troubled past, and a symbolic definition of the limits of the town. More importantly, the walls, ditch and lade would have imposed a burden upon property owners of the town.

The course of the medieval fortifications can now be traced in the line of Canal Street, Canal Crescent, South Methven Street and Mill Street. However, although excavations have uncovered some stretches of the defences, there are no convincing remains of the walls or ditches to be seen today. The walls were demolished in the late 18th century. In 1762, the town wall from "the Highgate Port to the north-west bastion" was taken down, and further stretches of walling were removed in the following year. The old Statistical Account (1791-1799) refers to "the remaining parts of the north wall of the town, having been taken down a few years ago". One of the last sections of wall to be destroyed appears to have been that in Mill Street which was taken down in 1834 to make way for a spinning mill. Simpson and Stevenson have noted that the Ordnance Survey identified "a vennel off the High Street which is said to incorporate the remains of the city...

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4 Spearman, "Townscape", 56. Vasey commented in his 1987 thesis that "In view of the lack of any major expansion in either the economy or population of Perth, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the physical layout or topography of the burgh changed relatively little between the late twelfth and later seventeenth centuries". Vasey, 18-20. This view cannot really be sustained in the light of Spearman's article. However, it is interesting to note that both of these authors considered that there would have been little significant topographical expansion at Perth in the early modern period.
5 Stavert, 38.
6 A. Turner Simpson and S. Stevenson, Historic Perth the archaeological implications of development, (Scottish Burgh Survey 1982), 24-5.
7 OSA, 473. The NSA, Vol. X, (1845) states that the wall was pulled down in 1790 to make way for the construction of the George Inn, (George Street), 73.
8 Simpson and Stevenson, 25.
Remains of the town defences have been observed in excavations and building works, although little is known of the dimensions of the town wall. In October 1894, Fittis noted that "While a drain was being dug at the north end of the new street to connect it with the main drain in Mill Street, opposite Kinnoull Street, a portion of the Town Wall was uncovered. It was four feet in thickness, and in the middle of Mill Street, extending in a line with the existing portion in the Albert Close, George Street". 10 The author of The Third Statistical Account has recorded that "During drainage operations in mid-nineteenth century, some parts of the old wall were exposed: running obliquely across what is now Tay Street, a short distance north of High Street and also in George Inn Lane, the remains, here at a distance from the lade, were of masonry 8 feet thick; at the north end of Skinnergate, beside the lade, a double wall of masonry, the outer 8 feet thick, the inner 2 feet, had the intervening space of a foot or two filled with fine-wrought clay. The stones were well-dressed and laid". 11 Simpson and Stevenson briefly noted the results of excavations which had "revealed the foundations of the wall at a number of points in the burgh. A stretch about 12' (3.6m) long was uncovered at the north end of Skinnergate (NO 1193 2373) by the Red Brig Port (O.S. Record Card NO 12 SW 5) and excavations in Mill Street have produced traces of the late thirteenth century wall..." 12

The early excavations at the Marks and Spencer High Street site (1975-76) revealed a ditch and robbed-out town wall. Bogdan recorded that "The wall had been slighted in the early fourteenth century and robbed probably a little later". Three courses of ashlar were discovered in situ, and the wall cut a number of earlier features dating to the second half of the 13th century. It is an open question whether this damaged wall would have been an above-ground feature of the early modern town. 13 Excavations between the High Street and Mill Street (a site to the rear of Boots) revealed a section through the defences. According to the excavator's report there was no trace of a wall, but the 14th century ditch was discovered, which had probably been at least partially in-filled in the 15th-16th centuries. 14

9 Ibid. The Third Statistical Account of Scotland (Hereafter "3SA") records that "The last surface remains were cleared away in the eighteenth century, unless the present wall in the passage between Skinnergate and George Street is really a surviving portion as a tablet on it suggests, instead of merely being on the line as its width of only some 18 inches seems to suggest". This is a reference to the length of wall which stands in Albert Close (not "Barrett's Close"), near the reconstructed "Red Brig". Rev. Dr W.A. Smellie, "The City and Royal Burgh of Perth" in The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, The Counties of Perth and Kinross, ed. D.B. Taylor, (1979), 462. 10 A.K. Bell Library, Perth. R.S. Fittis Notebooks, MS 2/3/14, p.61. 11 3SA (1979), 462. 12 Simpson and Stevenson, 25. The Mill Street excavation discovered part of the defensive ditch, not the wall itself. Stavert has commented that "A little more has been learnt of the burgh defences though the town wall has proved elusive, probably due to its being beneath streets". Stavert, 20. 13 N.Q. Bogdan and J. W. Wordsworth, The Medieval Excavations at the High Street, Perth 1975-76. (1978), 15. 14 N.A. McGavin, Excavations at Mill Street, Perth 1979-1980 Interim Report, 8.
medieval town, beyond the course of the town lade, revealed a massive ditch lying parallel to South Methven Street. This feature was at least 5m deep, possibly 20m wide, and was probably originally waterfilled. These defences seem to have been constructed in the early 14th century, but were partially in-filled in the late 14th and 15th centuries. 15

The limited information which has been provided by excavation suggests that by the 16th and 17th centuries, the defensive ditches of the town were at least partially in-filled, and the evidence from the High Street excavation indicates that some of the walling had been robbed. However, there does not seem to be any substantial archaeological evidence concerning the state of the defences in the early modern period. The “Chronicle” suggests that some of the walls may have been seriously delapidated - “the greatest nu(m)ber of ye dsewaris leap ye t____ valls” (1597) - and Simpson and Stevenson have commented that “By the sixteenth century, the defences were obsolete and frequently in disrepair”. 16 However, other sources in the Perth burgh records do not really uphold this impression.

In a letter of complaint to the Privy Council, dated 23 September 1586, the provost, baillies, council and community of Perth objected to the imposition of taxes at the port of Dundee to raise revenue for the storm-damaged harbour there, on the grounds that the common works of Perth were in sore need of reparation: “Considering it is of verity and notour to His Majesty and Lords of Sacred Council of the great necessity the said complainers for themselves of such exaction to support the common works of their own Burgh more requisite to be bett and helped nor the said port and haven of Dundee, especially the brig having twice fallen down and decayed and lately being erected of timber is ready to fall without present help, the shore also fallen down and ruined, their tolbooth likewise fallen down, their kirk and common walls ruinous and at the point of decay in the beting (bettering) and reparation of the which brig and other works their Common Good is altogether spent...” 17 The community of the burgh may well have been exaggerating; rivalry between Perth and Dundee was quite fierce at this time, and the burgh would have been reluctant to help its neighbour in any circumstances. However, the “Chronicle of Perth” confirms that the bridge at Perth had recently fallen twice, and it is quite plausible that the tolbooth was in a state of disrepair. The “Chronicle” also records that in November 1598 “The town repar began to repair ye new kirk in wallis + wandowis”. As other buildings mentioned in the list were probably in a state of decay, then the description of the walls as being “ruinous” is credible. 18

A far more detailed insight into the state of the town walls in the late 16th century can be gained from a dispute in 1591 between the magistrates and town council, and the inhabitants of the “north side of the North gait” (High Street). Those dwelling in this area were set to the horn for failing to maintain the walls, with the result that criminals were able to break in and out of the town: “quhair ye

16 “Chronicle”, 12-13 (4), lines 2-3; Simpson and Stevenson, 24.
17 B59/ 26/ 11/ 9/ 6(3).
18 “Chronicle”, 11 (3/3); 20 (6).
town wall of our said burgh on ye north syde yairof being be ruinous and decyait and vulnable to held oute lymmars and thevis quha commounlie in ye nicht enterit within ye same and ye saids complenaris then not being able to repair and big up ye said wall inrespeck of divers vysis commoun and necessair effears quhilk wey they in doing The saids compl-aris granted licence and libertie to yair nichtbors duelland on ye north syde of the north gait of our said burgh betuix Dauid Youngis vennell and the turett brig and to their airs and successors vpoun yair awin suppliactiouin gevin in to ye saids complenar to that effect To sett furth yair landis consigne to ye said wall Thay and ilkane of yame for yair awin place leiting mending and vphaulding sufficientlie att effeirs ye said walls efferand to the ____ of the haillis of yair handis Quhairunto ye saidis nichtbouris (w)illinglie consented act and thame selfs to vphald ye said wall on yair awin expenss with passage on ye sydis qrof vist and ____ As in the act and Rotment of ____ maid yrvpoun..." 19

Obviously, it is of interest that responsibility for the upkeep of certain stretches of the walls was surrendered to nearby property owners by the burgh authorities, and it is notable that concern was raised at the decay of the walls. But more importantly, it seems that the defences on the northern side of the town could have been strong enough to prevent intruders entering Perth, if only the residents of the High Street had maintained the walls properly. The fact that these people were set to the horn for their negligence indicates that their offence was perceived to be particularly serious, and suggests that the burgh authorities valued the protection which the walls still offered. Conversely, the authorities' willingness to relinquish responsibility for the walls might suggest that the reparation of other buildings was of greater importance to them. If the walls were ruinous in 1586, then the inhabitants of the High Street may well have taken on an unsustainable burden.

The index to the town council records states that in 1604 the walls were damaged between the South and High Gate ports: "Order to appoint a watch at the Monks Tower, one between the South + High gate ports where the walls are broken and another between Dionysius Conqueror's yard and the Castlegavil port". 20 Repairs to the town walls were still being carried out after the Restoration: May 1664, "Entry respecting repairs of the wall at the Highgate Port"; September 1666, "Order to mend the Towns walls against the Inch mill"; November 1666, "Order to mend the breaches in the north wall between the north Inch and the Highgate port except a back door struck out by John Lamb without order which is to be built up at his own expence"; August 1667, "Order to John Lamb to build up his back gate broken through the Towns wall". 21

As these entries indicate, there were several gateways - or ports - through the town walls; in addition, towers were built onto the walls at strategic points. The ports were situated at the south end of the Speygate, the west end of South Street, and at the west end of the medieval Tay bridge. The Red Brig Port was situated at the north end of Skinnergate; this seems to have been

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19 B59/ 26/ 1/ 12. Fittis noted the agreement which was made in October 1583 between the burgh authorities and the residents of the High Street "betwixt Donald Young's Vennel and the Turret Brig", whereby the care and maintenance of the walls was transferred to the residents. R.S. Fittis, "Jottings from the Civic Records of Perth", in Historical & Traditionary Gleanings concerning Perthshire, (1876), 327-8.
20 B59/ 17/ 1, 162.
21 Ibid., 467, 502, 506, 515.
known as the Castle Gable Port as well. The Turret Brig Port stood at the west end of the High Street. 22 The North Port stood at NO11772374, and was identified during drainage excavations: "The tops of the gateway here were to be seen only a few feet above the level of the lade (O.S. Record Card NO 12 SW 5)." 23 The town ports were demolished in 1766 because of the restrictions which they imposed on the widths of the roadways leading into the town. 24 The most notable towers were the Monk's Tower and the Spey Tower, which stood at the south east corner of the walls, beside the Tay, and at the south end of the Speygate respectively. Other towers have been revealed by excavation at the north west corner of the walls and in George Inn Lane. 25 The Spey Tower incorporated a prison and, together with the Monk's Tower, protected the south eastern corner of the burgh. The Spey Tower was the last of the defensive towers to be destroyed, in 1766. The Monk's Tower had served as a watch-tower, but was demolished along with the Gowrie House in 1807. 26

The Monk's Tower is mentioned in the "Chronicle" as the property of Sir George Hay. In 1630 he "did big ane turret or somerhous wpone ye head of ye round of monkis tour on ye tounes comoun wall for his ples(i)r, wt ouersyt of ye toun". 27 Hay did not have permission in writing for this development, but the work was tolerated by the town council. The use of Monk's Tower as a private summer house suggests that it no longer served as a public watch tower. Hay was presumably responsible for the maintenance of the town wall in this area too. There is a useful pencil drawing of the tower, dated to 1783, in the Hutton collection. 28 This shows that the Monk's Tower was separated from the back wall of the Gowrie property by a narrow area of grass. A garden wall running beside the river may have been the remnants of the town wall in this area, although it is unclear whether the medieval walls extended along the waterfront. The tower itself was oval in shape, with a high tiled roof. An external stone staircase led to an entrance on the first floor, but there was also a large door on the ground floor. There appears to have been a stone buttress facing the river; (The "Chronicle" mentions that in July 1630 a "front of fyne stone aislar wark" was built at Monk's Tower). 29 The tower's decorated windows at the first floor level, and chimney, were presumably added in 1630 as part of Hay's building scheme. A smaller window beneath, facing out onto the river, may have been older. The tower seems to have still been in good repair; there is

22 3SA, (1979), 462.
23 Simpson and Stevenson, 25.
24 Ibid.
See Perth Civic Trust, Perth A Town Survey, (1972), 11. By 1790 the town council had given permission to breach the walls so that the town could expand.
25 3SA, (1979), 462; Simpson and Stevenson, 25.
26 NSA , Vol. X, (1845), 70; Maclaren, (1906), 163; Simpson and Stevenson, 24-5.
27 "Chronicle", 42 (1 1 /1 1).
29 "Chronicle", 42 (1 1 /1 1).
little sign of any damage to the cut and shaped masonry, although some tiles appear to be missing from the roof. The tower’s appearance is residential rather than defensive.

In general, there is little to suggest that the medieval defences of the town were severely affected by the storms and floods which are mentioned in the “Chronicle”. Structural damage to the walls and ports in the 16th and 17th centuries seems to have been the result of poor maintenance or wilful destruction, rather than of the accident of natural disasters. It is extraordinary that there is no mention of flood damage to the walls or of subsidence; the “Chronicle” indicates that many other prominent stone structures suffered as a result of flooding. Although the proximity of the lade to the town wall provided an additional defensive feature, at times of severe flooding the lade is likely to have overflown, and could have undermined the walls.

The defences continued to be relatively effective. In times of plague, access to the town through the ports would be strictly controlled, and even Cromwell’s army was forced to camp outside the walls when the town was besieged in 1651. The burgh authorities recognised the potential value of the defences in preventing criminals from entering the burgh, although the “Chronicle” records that rioters were able to “leap” the town walls. A curious, contradictory picture emerges in which parts of the old defences of Perth appear to have been in fairly sound order prior to the Cromwellian re-building operations of the 1650s - despite severe flood damage to buildings within and without the town. The defences were not actually obsolete; but the burden of maintenance could not always be met, and there were stretches in which the walls were neglected.

**Principal Public Buildings**

The mercat cross symbolised Perth’s status as a royal burgh, and as such was one of the most important buildings of the burgh. The medieval cross stood on the High Street, at the intersection of Kirkgate and Skinnergate, and served as a place of assembly from which proclamations could be read, as the site of public acts of penance by criminals, and also as a place of execution. Vasey has shown that Perth was divided into distinct quarters based on wealth and status in the early modern period: “The burgh contained a nucleus of affluence centred on the Market Cross, away from which wealth declined”. 30 Nevertheless, the importance of the cross did not prevent the occupying Cromwellian force from destroying it and incorporating the stone into the new citadel. The “Chronicle” makes no mention of the destruction of this period, and only hints at the significance of the cross in burgh affairs. However, it is an indication of its importance that soon after the Restoration, the town council took steps to commission a replacement. A note in the index to the town council records tells of an order of February 1666 “to the Treasurer to procure materials to build the cross, on the same place where it formerly stood”. In May 1668, an agreement was drawn up with John Milne, the king’s master mason, for the building of a new cross, “to be

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30 Vasey, vii.
inferior to none in Scotland*. The new cross was erected in 1669, only to be dismantled and removed in 1765.31

The pillar of Milne's cross supposedly stands in the grounds of Fingask Castle, but there are no remains of the medieval cross, and the site on which it stood has not been excavated. Little is known of its structure, but the New Statistical Account does contain a useful record of the state of the cross in 1578: "...in the session record of that year, there is the following entry: - 'The assembly (session) requests the bailies to clear the cross, that the door may open and steik, and that they get a lock and key to the door, and likewise the master of the hospital to buy three locks for the three irons (jugs) where delinquents do penance at the cross." 32 From this it seems that the cross was in a reasonable state of repair. Clearly, it was not a free-standing cross, but a small stone building with at least one internal room, which may have been used for storage at this time. It seems that the jugs hung on the outside of the cross. Proclamations may have been made from a second storey.

The cross seems to have been in a far better state of repair than the tolbooth. When the authorities of Perth complained to the Privy Council of the state of their "common works", in September 1586, the tolbooth was described as "likewise fallen down", but there was no mention of the mercat cross. 33 The tolbooth seems to have been a persistent problem for the authorities in the early 17th century. In October 1604, a protest was received by the baililies "as to the insufficiency of the ward", and in October 1605 there was an order "to the master of work of the Tolbooth to take down the old westmost kirk-door and use the stones to the Tolbooth"; this was followed by an order "to build up the fore-entry of the common 'Leth's' beside the Tolbooth". Some reparation work was carried out, for a note of 16 June 1606 records an order "to pay for the work of the Tolbooth". 34 However, the "Chronicle" records that the fabric suffered serious damage during an earthquake in 1608. 35

In January 1614, the burgh was granted permission to set the mills, inches and fishings to tack, to offset the burgh's debt of 40,000 merks. The authorities sought to restore their finances to enable the reparation of the brig of Tay, the kirk, and the rebuilding of the tolbooth. The act in favour of the burgh's application states that there were plans for "The bigging of ane new tolbuith with prissoune and wairdhouss accordinglie". 36 However, the work was not carried out quickly, for in December 1616 the jailer, Patrick Murray, sent a petition to the magistrates, complaining of the poor condition

31 B59/ 17/ 1, 492, 519, 527; Maclaren, (1906). 167.
32 NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 68.
33 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3). In December 1584, the vault under the tolbooth was emptied of peats and coals which were being stored there, and distributed to the poor and sick. There is no mention of any damage to the fabric at that time. Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no. 346, 3.
34 B59/ 17/ 1, 166, 175, 181.
The word "Leth" may refer to a shelter; see CSD, 379.
36 B59/ 24/ 13/ 2a.
For the tack of the mills, fishings and inches, see "Chronicle", 27 (8), lines 40-46.
of the tolbooth: "Unto yaire honorabill wise domes ... seruitor Patrick Murray That quhare the rowff of the ... tolbuith is verie Rutness bothe in the thak and crupillis for sindrie off ye barkis off the crupillis ar fallin out and at ye falling And great holliis and sclapis in the ruff wik giff to be not spedilie remedit will came (to) uther ruining and decay and sicly thair is great neid of schalpillis for the Irones and cotare yairo for sure keiping off varderies that ar vardit for great crymes Yeirfor it will pleis your wisdomes To caus the thesaurer repair the(s) premiss for escheving off gretar inconuenienciss". 37 The index to the town council records indicates that this request was heeded, for there is a record dated 16 December 1616 of an order “to repair the Tolbooth in the roof, slate and lime...” However, the tolbooth was badly damaged in the flood of October 1621, when the water "tuik doun ye gawill of yr tolbuith". 38

The site of the tolbooth was a subject of controversy in the 1690s, when the town council sought to build a new council house. A report of July 1690 by the town council committee on public works noted that the tolbooth should be repaired “in the roof as being altogether faultie...” 39 In 1695, plans for a new pack house, council house and clerks' chamber, to be built “upon the north shoar, nixt to the tolboith, wher the maine guaird house presently stands...” aroused widespread indignation. 40 By this time the guard house may have replaced the tolbooth as a prison, although there is a record of prisoners escaping from the tolbooth in 1695. Those members of the town council who wished to build a new council house described the guard house as "ane old rotten timber house of little value". 41 Objections to the new building works were led by the former provost Robert Smith, mainly on the grounds of expense. 42 Nevertheless, the new council buildings were erected in 1696; 43 curiously, the tolbooth survived, despite its history of decay, and was not taken down until the late 19th century. In 1875, the old tolbooth was still in use as the “Town-Hall and the Police Office”. Fittis described the condition of the tolbooth - (which he termed the "Chapel of our Lady"... "which, for many a day, formed the main portion of the Tolbooth") -

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37 B59/ 24/ 11/ 112.
38 B59/ 17/ 1, 280; "Chronicle", 36 (1 0).
39 B59/ 24/ 13/ 6.
40 B59/ 24/ 13/ 7/ 4.
41 B59/ 24/ 13/ 7/ 12.
42 B59/ 24/ 13/ 7/ 11.
43 Maclaren, (1906), 165: "Old Council House stretched across the east end of the High Street. Erected in 1696, and was used as a Justiciary Court before the County Buildings were erected. Demolished in 1839. Communication was maintained to the river by a series of arches under the Council Room, the southmost arch led to the Fish Market". Fittis was not impressed by this building: "This Council-house was a building which possessed little elegance, and its antiquity was not such as to make it worthy of preservation. It formed a barrier towards the river, on the site of the old Bridge Port or "Stations," having two arched-ways or "pends," which could be shut up and defended in times of danger".
prior to its removal as part of the development of Tay Street. The tolbooth had been used as a jail until 1818, and as a venue for the Sheriff Court and the Circuit Court of Justiciary. "The old jail was dark, filthy, and noisome, like other prisons of its day: and there was a grim cell, called the "Laigh Iron-house," entrance to which was obtained by a low grated door in the side of the north pend".

It is notable that although the tolbooth appears to have been a persistent liability for the burgh authorities, the building survived far longer than either of the crosses in the High Street. Indeed, the tolbooth survived in despite of its vulnerability to storm and flood damage, presumably because its function in burgh life was such that its demolition was unthinkable. When a new council house was built nearby at the end of the 17th century, the tolbooth was retained as a jail, even though resources were available to replace the medieval fabric. It is an open question as to why the tolbooth was not dismantled by the Cromwellian army for the construction of the citadel; but this may have been because the stonework was of insufficient quality; the soldiers did not shirk from demolishing other significant buildings, most notably the mercat cross.

The Condition of the Town

The index to the town council records suggests that public health was a pressing concern for the burgh authorities. Numerous entries record orders for the removal of dunghills from parts of the town and its environs, particularly in the early years of the 17th century, when plague was a persistent threat. In October 1603 there was an order for "cleaning the causeways and removing the dunghills", and order to "mend the causeway at South Inch Port". In December 1604 the council ordered that a midden should be removed from the shore-head, and in the following October there was an act "prohibiting swine from being kept in houses, or going on the Inches".

Many of the burgh's properties were let to tenants, to raise funds for the maintenance of Perth's buildings and the authorities' other expenses. To this end, the mills, inches and fisheries of Perth were often "rouped", as were the town ports. The index to the town council records states that the "fish and flesh boards", the "loust of the timber market", and the Blackfriars crott were also farmed-out. The task of maintaining the public buildings was a significant burden, as the burgh's substantial debts in the second decade of the 17th century testify. Nevertheless, foreign

44 Fittis, "The Old Council-House of Perth", 374. See Maclaren, (1906), 164-5 : "St. Mary's or Our Lady's Chapel and Tolbooth stood on the site which the Municipal Buildings now occupy. The first portion of this Chapel was built previous to 1210. The remains of it, an old tower, which was designed by Cochrane, Architect to Robert III., and an old doorway were demolished in 1878. Council Meetings were held here for some years, and a portion was converted into a Tolbooth. Mr Andrew Heiton repeated the form of St. Mary's Tower in the design of the Municipal Buildings, and practically on the same site".
46 B59/ 17/ 1, 153, 168, 174.
47 "Roup" : "...sell or let by public auction la16... n a sale or let by public auction la16-:" CSD, 570. The meaning of "Loust" is unclear.
For the burgh's debts, see "Chronicle", 27 (8); 38 (10/ 10).
travellers who visited Perth in the early modern period generally thought the burgh to be pleasant and impressive. Writing of a visit in either 1548 or 1549, Jean de Beaugue described St. Johnstone as "a very pretty place, pleasant and well fitted to be the site of a good town, which might be rendered secure for its inhabitants by building a citadel where is now the church of the Holy Cross". 48 De Beaugue's interest in the burgh's defences stemmed from his concern with methods of warfare; in this context, it is notable that he makes no mention of the medieval defences. Taylor the "Water-Poet" described St. Johnstone in 1618 as "a fine towne... but it is much decayed, by reason of the want of his Majesties yearly comming to lodge there". It is unclear whether Taylor was referring to the buildings of Perth, or to its economy; but even though the burgh had fallen on hard times, he received good hospitality: "There I lodged one night at an inne, the goodman of the house his name being Petricke Pettcarne, where my entertainment was in good cheere..." 49

Thomas Tucker arrived at St. Johnstone in 1655, during the Cromwellian occupation, apparently after the walls had been rebuilt and the citadel constructed; he described "an handsome walled towne, with a cittadell added thereunto of late yeares..." 50 Thomas Morer made the most detailed observations, following his visit in 1689. He described Perth as "The second city of Scotland", presumably on account of its historical links with the Stuart kings. "There are two long spacious streets, besides others of less moment, for intercourse, which being well paved, are at all times tolerably clean. The houses are not stately, but after the Scotch way make a good appearance. The most remarkable building, is that where the Gowries had like to have murder'd James VI... Here are only two churches; but one of 'em so big that it looks more like a cathedral than parish church, kept in good repair, and decent within." 51 Morer's description is surprisingly favourable, given that the economy of Perth appears to have been weak at that time, but it does confirm the impression given by the index to the town council records that efforts were taken to ensure that the town remained clean and well-kept. 52 The architecture of Perth seems to have been relatively undistinguished by this time, despite the great size of St. John's Kirk. It is notable, however, that the kirk was in good repair, for the upkeep of the fabric imposed substantial burdens on the secular and ecclesiastical authorities.

49 Ibid., 118.
50 Ibid., 171.
51 Ibid., 285-6. Morer's description of two churches is probably a reference to the fact that the fabric of St. John's had been partitioned at the turn of the century, with the western bays of the nave forming a "New Kirk"; see below, p. 246.
52 Although the burgh's national economic status declined during the 17th century, Perth remained a significant regional trading centre. The index to the town council minutes - unlike the "Chronicle" - makes numerous references to various markets which were established in the burgh: the fish market, flesh market, timber market, iron market.
Houses and Residential Areas

Apart from St. John's Kirk and the "Fair Maid's House", there are virtually no upstanding medieval or early modern buildings in present-day Perth. Furthermore, much of the archaeological evidence for the larger town houses of the 16th and 17th centuries has been destroyed by later developments - particularly by the construction of cellars on street frontages. The sites of some of the prominent buildings of the early modern town are known, but they lie beneath later buildings and cannot be investigated. 53

The "Chronicle of Perth" offers few clues about the condition of town dwellings. The suburb of the Castle Gable was vulnerable to flooding, and the houses in this district were inundated in 1621; but there is little indication of any damage in the Watergate - a street which emerges from the text as an important place of residence, along with the area "beneath the cross". 54 With the demolition of the "Kinnoull Lodging" in 1966, Perth lost the last early modern town house of the Watergate; 55 but excavations have provided additional information about houses and industrial buildings, 56 and there is documentary evidence to confirm the impression given in the "Chronicle" that residential areas of Perth differed markedly in terms of their wealth and the architecture of town houses.

The Perth High Street excavations revealed two important post-medieval buildings: part of the townhouse of the Davidsons of Balgay, and the stone foundations of the "Old Parliament House", which was probably built by the Conqueror family in the late 16th century. This building was a good example of an "L-plan" townhouse, and may have temporarily housed the Scottish parliament in 1606. Prior to the demolition of the Masonic Hall which stood on the site, the excavators noted that the north wing of the "Old Parliament House" had been incorporated into the hall, which was built in 1818. From these remains, it was possible to confirm the general reliability of a sketch of the

53 Simpson and Stevenson, 28. In 1982, these authors set out the following research guidelines: "To establish the structural nature of town buildings prior to the eighteenth century through excavation, and, in conjunction with documentary research, to determine the commercial and industrial usage of buildings other than dwelling houses in the associated backlands", 16.

54 The statistical accounts record, rather vaguely, that the street levels of the town were raised periodically to take account of the threat of flooding. In the OSA it is stated that "It was to guard the town against dangerous inundations, that the streets were raised from time to time. Old streets, well paved, are found 6, 8, or 10 feet below the present surface..." OSA, (1791-1799), 480. The NSA includes a similar reference, where it is noted that "In the year 1666, the causeways between the Highgate and the South Street port were raised, by order of the town-council". NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 62.

55 The "Kinnoull Lodging" was the town-house of Sir George Hay, first earl of Kinnoull. It stood on the east side of the Watergate, at its south end. The house was a timber-fronted stone building with a gallery extending over the street, typical of fashionable houses of the period; it was built c. 1600. See Perth Civic Trust, Perth A Town Survey, (1972), 20; G. Stell, "Urban Buildings" in The Scottish Medieval Town, 74-5.

56 See below, Appendix 3, for a summary of published excavated evidence for buildings and structures of the town.
old house made by a Dr Davidson in 1816. In the 16th and 17th centuries the excavation site included five burgages, properties which tended to be owned by richer citizens, a number of whom served as bailies and provosts. In this respect, the proximity of these properties to the mercat cross was significant.

Excavations at 45, Canal Street took place on the backland of a South Street property, and revealed a substantial 16th century stone house. The excavator thought that the lack of a destruction level for this building could have been because it was dismantled to provide materials for the Cromwellian citadel. The remains of the building consisted of a wall and layers of sand, loam and clay. The width of the wall and size of the foundation stones suggested that the building was built entirely of stone, and was possibly two or more storeys high. Soil levels overlying a sand floor were probably the remains of straw bedding and detritus. Excavations at Kirk Close, adjacent to the High Street and near the mercat cross, revealed a sequence of medieval structures, including a commercial bakery. The rental books of the King James VI Hospital indicate that several 17th century properties in the vicinity were occupied by bakers, presumably continuing a medieval tradition, despite the attendant fire-hazard. The excavator thought that one of the medieval occupiers might have been wealthy, with burgess status. This would be in keeping with the site’s location. The excavation revealed details of the construction methods which were used for the buildings, and emphasised the increasing use of stone in the later medieval period. Furthermore, it was notable at this site, and in a second excavation in Canal Street, that property boundaries remained relatively unchanged from the medieval period through to the 19th and 20th centuries.

Excavations at Meal Vennel uncovered a succession of buildings, including a post-medieval house with an associated smithing complex. The Hospital rental books record that many smithies were located on the west side of the vennel. In the 17th century, Meal Vennel was a thriving street, and a means of access between High Street and South Street. However, the outbreak of plague in the 1640s which depopulated some areas of the burgh led to the desertion of Meal Vennel. The smithy itself was a street frontage building, probably two storeys high, apparently a timber super-

57 This drawing can be seen in Perth Museum and Art Gallery.
59 According to Bogdan, although stone buildings were occasionally built in Scottish burghs from the early 13th century, it was not until the late 15th century that they became common. N.Q. Bogdan, "The Perth High Street Excavation 1975-77", in Transactions of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, XIII (1979-80), 21-22.
structure built onto stone foundation walls. Excavations at Scott Street also revealed the remains of post-medieval stone buildings, although later buildings had damaged much of the evidence. In general, excavations within the area of the town's defences have demonstrated a propensity for building in stone in the later 16th and 17th centuries, although most of the archaeological work has been carried out in areas which were relatively affluent in the early modern period.

The building in Curfew Row which is known as the "Fair Maid's House" can still provide some evidence of the construction of post-medieval houses. A survey of the house was carried out in 1972 during internal alterations. A length of rubble walling was exposed - apparently a surviving gable wall of a domestic building of the 17th century. This structure was at least two storeys in height with a ridged and gabled roof. Two fireplaces survived within the wall, which enabled the surveyor to estimate the floor levels. A stone corbel was observed in the wall, which probably supported a longitudinal ceiling beam beneath a hearthstone, 1 foot 6 inches below the level of the first-floor fireplace. The wall was built of local coarsely-grained random rubble masonry bonded in mud mortar with the occasional use of shell pinnings; it was approximately 22 feet long and 3 feet thick. There was some evidence of dressing and tusking, and the remains of a ground-floor doorway. A shorter section of rubble walling was also revealed, which contained a raking chimney flue and the rear of a blocked segmental arch-headed fireplace, built at a level corresponding to the surviving ground-floor fireplace.

Information about the artisan buildings and dwellings of the majority of Perth's citizens is elusive, but there are records which illustrate some of the problems faced by the burgh's residents. The "Chronicle" records that a house in the High Street belonging to Constantine Malice was burnt on 2 October 1619, and the index to the town council records states that on 4 October an act was passed "ordering all heather stacks be removed without the burgh, for the avoiding of fire between and the end of October instant under pain of £40, and that they shall not be built in any place but

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64 Blanchard commented that "Most of the buildings excavated in Perth have been on backland areas... It is likely that the large merchants houses, which are normally presumed to be situated alongside the street, have yet to be discovered". L.M. Blanchard, The Medieval Burgh of Perth, unpublished paper, 1982.
65 National Monuments Record (NMR) Library. Perthshire Record Sheets, A1.8 REC. PTR/21/1, Fair Maid's House, North Port, Perth. (1972). The Fair Maid's House is listed as a Category B building:
with the sanction of the Magistrates..." 66 The risk from fire was not confined to such practices, however. In September 1684 Charles Melving and Thomas Austen, burgesses and property owners on the north side of the High Street "beneath the market cross", petitioned the burgh authorities for steps to be taken against their neighbour John Clerk, "hookster" : "That qr the said Johne Clerk Does pntlie posses ane chop or mert booth Lyand as afoirsaid for his dwelling hous And does ordinarily keip and knnds fyre thairin albeit their never wes ane chimney or dwelling yrin formerly but aliennarly ane merchant booth Which mey tend to the utter ruin of yor supplicants yr Lands yr neighbors + tennents yrabout the samen being wpon the hie streit And all the lands being of timber work..." 67 Clerk's negligence was well known in the burgh by this time, and it may have been in order to press their case that the supplicants referred to the surrounding buildings as being of "timber work". In this part of the town, the houses and shops are likely to have been stone built, though perhaps with timber super-structures and wooden outhouses. 68

According to Marshall, "The houses in Perth had arched doorways and windows, but on the front wall there was erected a projection of wood work, about six feet in breadth. They were open on the ground floor and were called channels : here the articles for sale were displayed. A few of these houses with wooden fronts are still standing, but the channels are now filled up and converted into shops. The Skinnergate was built very much in this manner, and so close were the fronts of the houses brought together, that the inmates could easily shake hands across the street, or exchange dinners. Many of the old houses, too, were a foot or two below the level of the street, which gave the interior a very dark and gloomy appearance. Although all buildings were within the walls, the streets and lanes were not altogether built. A considerable part of the South Street was lined by garden walls, and the west side of the Meal Vennel being much in the same state. It may be added that few of the windows had glass in them, but were protected by a wooden grating". 69

The Castle Gable area was badly flooded in 1621, and as a suburb of the town, lying beyond the medieval defences, it may have been peculiarly vulnerable during periods of plague as well, when the town's ports were shut against outsiders. In September 1667, John Robertson, a glover, submitted a petition for compensation from the town council following the burning of his home in 1645: "Supplication... for a consideration for his house without the Castlegable Port, which was burnt by order of the Council in the year 1645 for preventing the spreading of the plague..." 70

66 "Chronicle", 35 (1 0); B59/ 17/ 1, 298.
67 B59/ 24/ 1/ 11.
68 See Vasey, 82 : When Loveday visited Perth in 1732 he found the burgh still contained a large number of wooden tenements, though by 1769 most of the older properties had almost disappeared from Perth.
70 B59/ 17/ 1, 516.
It is possible to account for some of the properties which were held by individual burgesses, and one of the most prominent property owners of the mid-17th century seems to have been Andrew Read, a controversial man whose death is described in the "Chronicle". Read drowned on 14 October 1658, "betuix sex and sewin houris in ye morning... in ye milnlead aboue ye ouer miln betuix the but and ye miln and fundin aboue ye ouer miln". His death may not have been regretted by the citizens, for Read had come to blows with some of his fellow burgesses on several occasions. However, as a property-owner he is of interest, for some records of his possessions remain amongst the burgh papers.

A booth belonging to Read was locked up by the burgh authorities during their dispute in the summer of 1648. The administrative papers of the burgh include an "Extract sentence of the magistrates and town council of Perth on complaint by Henry Broun, procurator fiscal, against Andrew Read, merchant burgess there, denounced rebel, ordering his burgess ticket to be given up and 'reivein' and his 'boothe dorris to be steikit up' in respect of his having fired a pistol at and assaulted Bailie John Conquerour who had been attempting to apprehend him". However, there is no indication as to where this booth, or shop, was located. Andrew Read appears to have been quite a confrontational character, for in 1651 he appeared before Cromwell, after Perth had surrendered to the invading army, and presented a bond which had been granted to him by Charles I. "Cromwell returned it, and said he had nothing to do with it, as he neither was Charles's heir nor executor. To whom Reid replied, If your Excellency is neither heir nor executor, you are surely a vitious intromittor... Cromwell turning to the company, declared, That he never had such a bold tale told him..." This was the occasion on which the gable wall of the house in which Cromwell had been entertained collapsed shortly after his departure.

Read owned property in South Street, and in 1655x6 he bequested land there to his wife and daughter: "Oliver be the Grace of God Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of Ingland Scotland and Ireland and dominionnes thatro belonging To All Men to whose knowledge thir presentis shall come Greiting Be It Knowne that wee with advyce and consent of our Commissioner of Exchekker have Ratified and approven and for ws and our successours perpetuallie confirmed..."

71 Details of individual property holdings can be found in the Rental Books of the James VI Hospital. See below, Appendix 4.
72 "Chronicle", 59 (1 8).
73 In April 1645, Andrew Read was imprisoned following an assault on Thomas Dykes, a merchant burgess. B59/ 16/3, 24 April 1645. He was imprisoned again in 1648, several times, and assaulted by John Conqueror, one of the baillies, during a protracted dispute with the magistrates and town council concerning a tack of the burgh's mills, fishings and inches. B59/ 25/ 3/ 2, 1 and 2 - ( B59/ 25 Documents relating to the financial affairs of the burgh, 1424 - 1871... 3. leases of burgh lands and revenue, 1592 - 1855 ); see below, Appendix 5. In the year before his death, he was discharged from his burgess-ship: 21 September 1657, "Act of the Council repelling an Act made by their predecessors against Andrew Reid Merchant discharging him from his burgessship and of new admitting him and his composition therefore to be at the discretion of the Dean of Guild". B59/ 17/ 1, 446.
74 B59/ 26/ 1/ 19. See below, Appendix 5.
75 The Muses Threnodie .... ed. James Cant, (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 128. The house was in the Watergate.
the Chartour and Infeftment of alienation and venditioun wnderwrittin with the precept of seasine insert thairintill of the date the secondd day of March ane thousand sex hundreth fitty fyve yeiris Made Givin and granted Be andro Reid Mercheand burges of Perth To and In favoures of Margaret Bissett his spous in lyfrent and to Elizabeth Reid his daughter her airis and assigneyis what sumever heretablie Off All and hail that his tenement of land back and foir with the yeard close front taill hail priviledges and pertinentis of the samyn whatsum-ever lying within the said burgh of Perth upon the north syde of the south street thairof presentlie occupied be david Jacksone and others the said andro his tennentis thairof Bounded betuixt the lands of the deceist James Campbell of Lawers, George Law, the deceist William Sharp James Marre and William adamsone burgess of the said burgh of Perth on the eist The lands of James Robertoun william Ediesone William wit(e)wood and Walter young alias pyper on the west the street commonlie called Fleemings Vennel and the kirkyeard of the said burgh on the north and the hie streit of the samyn burgh commonlie called the southgate On the south partis..." 76

Fittis discovered a record of a property which was owned by another daughter of Andrew Read, Marjory. This was also situated in South Street, adjacent to the property mentioned in the previous document: "Lands of the Lairds of Glenorchy + Lawers, and of Andrew Reid, Merchant in Perth. (Extract from Title-deeds of the tenement of land at the corner of Watergate and South Street, occupied by Alexr Bain, who died in March 1890). 'All and Hail that tenement of land belonging of old to the Laird of Lawers, afterwards to Andrew Reid, Merchant in Perth, thereafter to Marjory Reid, his daughter, and James Saunders, Lilster, late Bailie in Perth, thereafter to Elizabeth Saunders, his daughter, and Mr James Howie, residents in Perth ... bounded on the west by the lands of old of the the Laird of Glenorchy, thereafter of Elspeth Reid, thereafter of Alexander McEwan and others." 77 However, despite the long-list of owners which Fittis noted, the property mentioned in this latter record appears to have been waste in 1684 - long after Read’s death: in the report of the commission into ruinous housing at Perth, there is mention of "That vacuum and emptie ground lying partlie upon the north side of the Southgate and partlie on the west side of the Watergate sometime pertaining to Andrew Reid, merchant, the sum of 200 merks". 78

The Rental Books of the James VI Hospital mention these South Street properties in detail, 79 and reference to Spearman’s map of the burgage plots of Perth in the 15th and 16th centuries indicates that the property on the corner of the Watergate was uncommonly large, with frontages on the Watergate and South Street, and stretching behind plots on the west side of the Watergate, towards Baxter’s Vennel. 80 Read’s wealth is emphasised by notices of other properties which he held in the High Street and Skinnergate. The Hospital rentals record a foreland

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76 Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no. 144. (The words which appear in bold type are highlighted in the manuscript).
78 The Proceedings of a Commission into ruinous houses in the forestreet of Perth ( September 1684 ) are reproduced in Vasey, Appendix II, from SRO CS96/ 1/154/. See Vasey, 165.
79 See below, Appendix 4.
80 Spearman, “Townscape", 54.
in the Skinnergate pertaining to his heirs, and at least two merchant booths in the High Street.  

Like Constantine Malice, Read held properties in the wealthier areas of the town, in close proximity to the townhouses of the local nobility. These men were probably mentioned in the "Chronicle" because they were unusually wealthy and influential within the burgh. Read rented-out some of his properties, and it was perhaps the tenant class which made up the bulk of the urban population.

By the end of the 17th century, dereliction was a widespread problem in Perth, partly as a result of the Cromwellian occupation of the 1650s. The severe outbreak of plague in the 1640s depopulated some areas of the town - notably Meal Vennel - and this also contributed to the decay of private houses; a further factor may well have been poverty, and the inability of residents to maintain their homes. However, many of the larger town houses were in a state of poor repair simply on account of their age; this was particularly evident in the Watergate, where many of the prominent houses mentioned in the "Chronicle" were situated. According to Vasey, by the later 17th century at least a third of the thirty or so frontages in the Watergate dated back to the early or mid-16th century; a report into ruinous housing which was compiled in 1676 noted that the buildings in Watergate were particularly bad. A petition to the Dean of Guild Court in the early 18th century described one property, on the west side of the street, as being so ruinous that "people passing through the said Watergate is greatly endangered by slait, tymber and stones frequently falling off..." Vasey considered that the property which was possibly in the worst condition was that of the Mercers of Aldie, which stood on the corner of Watergate and High Street; the tenants on the upper floors petitioned for a new roof of "twa hundred slait and their pins". The Mercers' house had a troubled history; the "Chronicle" records that in 1605 "The laird of auldeis ludgeing

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81 See below, Appendix 4.
82 For details of ruinous buildings in Perth, see Vasey 79-81. Properties of John Mercer (either the father or the son) were mentioned in the Commission's Proceedings of 1684: "That ruinouse foreland lying as aforesaid sometime pertaining to David Murray, maltman and now to the representatives of John Mercer of Potterhill, the sum of 20 merks"; "That emptie ground pertaining to the representatives of the said John Mercer lying aforesaid betwixt the lands of ______ on the east and west, 20 merks"; "That emptie ground on the South Side of the Northgate betwixt the lands of bailie Schioch and John Mercer on the east and west, 10 merks". Vasey, 165-167. In 1692, the burgh complained of "the many and sewerall ruinous lands and decayed houses within the said burgh of Perth..."; see Register Containing The State And Condition Of Every Burgh Within The Kingdome Of Scotland, In The Year 1692, in Miscellany of The Scottish Burgh Records Society, (1881), 60.
83 Vasey, 81-2; 96, n.14.
beneth the cro fell on ane setterday at nyt*. 84 Despite such problems, however, it is notable that the fabric of the Kinnoul Lodging on the east side of Watergate survived until quite recently.

One of the oldest houses in this street was that of the bishop of Dunkeld, which was built in c.1510. It stood on the west side of Watergate, and probably had an entrance from South Street via Fountain Close.85 It was presumably in this house that George Haliburton, bishop of Dunkeld, died in April 1665. 86 A previous house, or "palace" on this site had been the residence of Bishop Thomas Lawder of Dunkeld (1450-1481). 87 George Haliburton was also parson of Perth, and an entry in the index to the town council records relates the transfer of the vicarage to Mr Mungo Law, minister, after the bishop's death. 88 The earl of Errol's house was adjacent to the bishop's in the Watergate. In addition to such noblemen, properties on the west side of the street were also owned by the Wrights Incorporation, and would have been used as shops, as well as houses. 89

The "Chronicle" records that in 1612, David Murray, Lord Scone, was instructed to make an inventory of the disgraced Lord Crichton of Sanquhar's property within Perth, to "goe... to the saidis lordis ludging in Perth cause the dooris yroff be mad patent and oppin, and their tak ane perfitt and exact count and inventorie of the hail gudis geir..."90 Sanquhar's town house was situated on the west side of the Speygate, but this nobleman was also in possession of the Gowrie House.91 The index to the town council records includes references to sasines in favour of Robert Lord Crichton and his son, William: "Recorded Transumpt of Seisin dated 9th March 1611 in favor of Robert Lord Crichton of Sanquhar + Kinnoul in the great house or Tenement of land with the pertinents thereof lying within the burgh of Perth which formerly Earl of Gowrie and disannexing the same from the property of the Crown in which it had fallen by the Treason of the said Earl of Gowrie - proceeding upon precept by the king dated at Edinburgh 10th January 1611"; "Instrument of Seisin in favor of William Lord Crichton of Sanquhar as heir to Robert Lord Crichton as

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84 "Chronicle", 24 (7). A rather bizarre legend has been attached to this property by some of Perth's historians: See NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 26: "Near to the east end, and on the south side of the High Street, there is a house having on its front a marble stone, bearing the arms of the family of Aldie, with this inscription, "Here stood the house of the Green." This house of the Green, which was removed by Colonel Mercer of Aldie about fifty years ago, for the erection of the present one, stood on what had been for ages reckoned the site of an old British temple, which, when Hollinshed wrote his history, 1571, was believed to have been built by the son of Regan, second daughter of Lear... In connection with this tradition, it may not be out of place to state, that the workmen, when they had dug about three feet below the level of the street, to find a proper foundation for the present building, discovered two parallel arches. Under each of these, they found an apartment 26 feet long and 14 broad. The walls were 31/2 feet thick, and strongly cemented. In the one there was a door to the south, and in the other one to the north..." 85 Vasey, 96, n.14; Maclaren, (1906), 170. 86 "Chronicle", 61 (18/18). 87 Perth A Town Survey, (1972), 19. 88 BS9/171/1, July 1665, 483. See also The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant, (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 133. 89 Maclaren, (1906), 170; Perth A Town Survey, (1972), 18. 90 "Chronicle", 27 (8); 68 (21/21). 91 Maclaren, (1906), 171; NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 58 n.
of Sanquhar his father, in the Great House or Tenement of land formerly belonging to John Earl of Gowrie - seisin dated 19 July 1619 - proceeding upon precept from Chancery dated 17th July 1619". Clearly, despite the disgrace of Robert Lord Crichton of Sanquhar, the family were important property owners within the town. However, Scott's transcript of the kirk session register includes a record dated 4 July 1631 which suggests that by that time Sanquhar's town house was under the stewardship of the James VI Hospital: "The Session ordain the Masters of Hospital to give to Andrew Ross forty Shillings money for an Discharge granted by Sir Robert Rynd + Sir David Cobine of an annuailrent of twenty three shillings four pennies forthcoming of my Lord Sanquhar's Lodging in the Spey gate, which proves that the said Lodging in the Speygate is subject to the payment thereof, which now ought to be paid to the Hospital". By this stage, Sir George Hay was resident at Gowrie House.

The Gowrie House was probably the most distinguished secular building in early modern Perth. It was built in 1520 by Elizabeth Gray, Countess of Huntly, but by 1600 it was the property of the 2nd Lord Ruthven. After his death during the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of that year, the house was given by James VI to Sir David Murray (later Lord Scone). However, the ownership of the property during the 17th century is often unclear. Cowan quoted an entry in the Register of the Great Seal, dated 7 January 1602, in which the property was gifted to the town by the king (although the house itself is not named in the record). As has been noted, by 1612 the property seems to have been granted to the Crichtons of Sanquhar, but in 1630 Sir George Hay converted the Monk's Tower into a summerhouse. The "Chronicle" indicates that he needed the permission of the burgh authorities to carry out this work: "...and tollerance yit I think they gaue no tollerance be writt". In the register of the Glover Incorporation, it is stated that when Charles I visited Perth in 1633, he stayed in the Gowrie House "belonging now heritablie to George Earl of Kinnoul..." By the second half of the 17th century, the property seems to have been back in the hands of the town council. After the Restoration in 1660, the council granted the house to Charles II, and in 1746 it was offered to the Duke of Cumberland. He sold it to the government, and Gowrie House

92 B59/17/1, 457-8.
94 Perth A Town Survey, (1972), 27.
95 The Rental Books of the James VI Hospital offer little information in this respect; see below, Appendix 4.
96 S. Cowan, The Ancient Capital of Scotland, Volume I, (1904), 97. An entry in the index to the town council records, dated May 1604, describes an order to "...remove the stones and redd lying before the Earl of Gowries Lodging previous to the sitting of the Privy Council". From this it seems that the town council may have been responsible for the maintenance of the property, but it is interesting that the house is described as the "Earl of Gowries Lodging"; the Gowrie's name had supposedly been expunged from local usage following the earl's death. B59/17/1, 161.
97 "Chronicle", 42 (11/11).
98 The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant, (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 118.
was converted into a barracks; in the early 19th century it was re-purchased by the town authorities, and demolished. 99

From 1602 onwards, the burgh authorities seem to have been keen to relinquish responsibility for the property; the size and age of Gowrie House would have meant that it needed regular, costly maintenance. The Crichtons and Hays of Kinnoull seem to have kept the property in good repair - both Charles I and Charles II were entertained there, and Hay clearly had the resources to improve the buildings. Under his auspices, the lodgings presumably retained their relative grandeur in comparison with other buildings in the burgh; after the destruction of the local religious houses during the Reformation, the Gowrie House may have been the most architecturally refined building in Perth, as well as the largest private property. In the later years of the 17th century, however, the buildings may have declined.

In March 1680, the "town's house and yard" were inspected by representatives from the town council: "The Comittee convened ffinds yt the hail) south Syde of the rooff of the gallerie must be pntlie packed and seeled. As alsoe the northesyde yrof to be seeled + paiked from the chimney eastwards, and some of the cuples to be Bleted and mendit, The north Jam to be poyneted, And the prinill hous to be poyneted + some holles yrof mendit, and yt the hail Inner dykes of the yeards are most pitifullie abused + casten downe, memorandum to mynd the _____ of the thrie sellars and the stable and the northesyde of the clos, and the Stopping of yt passadge wpon the northesyde of the yeard benig delved + seids sawne yrin qlk wes never in wse befor, And alse anent the casting of filth and excrements over the backstair into the yeard". 100 From this, it would appear that the extensive grounds of the house were being used to grow vegetables, perhaps by townspeople who had broken into the gardens. The fabric of the buildings was not extensively decayed, but clearly part of the roof was in need of urgent repair. This report suggests that the Gowrie House

99 Stavert, 39-41; NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 70. The index to the town council records contains several entries which suggest that even after the house had been gifted to the king, both the town council and the Hays retained rights to the property. Although the house was given to Charles II, the town council seems to have been responsible for leasing the property. One of the papers which was in the possession of John Mercer when he demitted the office of town clerk in 1670 recorded a tack "betuixt The Towne of Perth And Patrick Threipland Provest Patrick Urquhart and John ffoot of the great Ludging for 3 yeirs daitit 13 february 1665 yeirs". B59/ 24/ 1/ 4. In August 1667 an order was issued "...to meet with a person in behalf of the Earl of Kinnoul 'anent the rendition of any rycht the Towne hes to the great Lodging' and Report"; In May 1668 there were "Proceedings as to offering the great house to the Earl of Athol when he shall reside there, and containing particulars as to repairs of the same". There are several references to the need for repairs to the buildings in the 1660s. See B59/ 17/ 1, 459-529, esp. 516, 527. In 1723, John Romers produced a plan of the Gowrie property, in which one of the buildings was labelled as "The Earl of Kinnouis House". The main buildings formed a quadrangle fronting the Speygate, and the northern range was clearly separated from the buildings on the east and south sides; the southern range was labelled "The Kings House". If Romers' scheme is to be believed, then it would seem that the Hays of Kinnoull were only ever the residents of part of the Gowrie property; similarly, Charles II may only have been offered the southern range by the town. Leases pertaining to these buildings may have been separate. NLS Map Library 1648/ Z 3/3b. (1723 / 1773).

100 B59/ 24/ 1/ 5. 16 March 1680.
was beginning to fall into disrepair, and that trespassers may have had the run of the garden area. However, it was not mentioned in the proceedings of the Commission into ruinous housing of 1684.

John Romers’s 1723 report on the feasibility of converting the “Kings House at Perth” into a barracks raises further questions about the ownership of the Gowrie property; it seems that there may even have been a dispute between the Crown and the town authorities concerning this matter. Romer noted that “the Magistrates there lay claim to the Kings House + Garden as their own property”, but also questioned “if the disposing of the Kings House should be within the Grant or Gift of the Crown...” 101 However, he provided relatively little information about the condition of the buildings at that time, other than to say that the rooms were unsuitable for quartering troops “by reason of their Heights, as in the first place not sufficient to be reduced into Two stories, + to much for one...”

Despite Romers’ reservations, the Gowrie property was converted into a barracks after the 1745 uprising, as attested by Charles Tarrant’s “Plan of the Train Barracks at Perth” of 1754.102 This survey suggests that the fabric of the buildings was in good condition, and suggests that the gardens were now well-kept. Perhaps the most striking feature of the Gowrie property is the size of the gardens in relation to the size of the buildings; the garden area accounted for about 3/4 of the property. The gardens were divided into two rectangular enclosures; the smaller of the two in the north eastern corner of the compound is marked as “Bowling Green” on Romers’ plan. Two buildings marked on the 1723 plan seem to have been cleared from the gardens by 1754.

Tarrant’s sections through the elevations of the “King’s House” and the “Earl of Kinnoull’s House” indicate that the former was the larger of the residences, with three floors, cellarage, and an attic, built to an L-plan design with an external stair tower, and two decorative turrets on the north facing gable-ends. The roof would appear to have been tiled. The internal layout would not seem to have been altered substantially for its conversion to a barracks, and the Great Hall on the second floor was still in use. Tarrant’s perspectives are suspect, but the “King’s House” seems to have been taller than the other buildings in the quadrangle - although the buildings of the “Earl of Kinnoull’s House” also contained three floors, with cellarage and attic space. None of the buildings seem to have been elaborately decorated; the stonework and window frames were generally plain,

101 NLS Map Library. 1648/ Z 3/3b. (1723/1773).
although in the north range, one second floor window in the north-east corner was topped with a triangular stone pediment. 103

Gowrie House was like no-other private property in medieval and early modern Perth; it was far larger than any other nobleman’s residence, and the property was spread across many burgage plots on the east of the Watergate and Speygate. Gowrie House was sited at the eastern end of South Street, and was bounded on the south by the town wall, on the east by Speygate and the southern end of Watergate, and on the north by the Water Vennel; the gardens extended to the banks of the Tay. 104 The predominance of Gowrie House in this area of the burgh, the prominence of noble town houses in the Watergate and Speygate, the wealth of the area “beneath the cross” in the High Street, and the location of the tolbooth at the eastern end of the High Street, near the bridge, illustrate the importance of the riverside areas of the burgh. However, although many of the buildings in these streets were built of stone, their condition seems to have deteriorated as the 17th century progressed. Other areas of the town also fared badly; the Meal Vennel was largely depopulated in the middle of the century, and the Castle Gable area - although an important suburb - was badly affected in the 1621 inundation, and may have taken many years to recover. There is a strong impression that although many urban properties in Perth were substantial and well-built, age, economic hardships and inclement weather contributed to a decline in the quality of the residential environment.

The Kirk

From the early 17th century until 1925, the burgh authorities were in possession of the patronage and teinds of Perth, and as a consequence were the effective owners of St. John’s Kirk. Thus, there are numerous references in the burgh papers and the records of the kirk session to

103 In 1783, General Hutton made several drawings of the property, which was still in use as a barracks. These views indicate that the fabric was once again in decline, but show some decorated stonework on the “King’s House”, and a large decorated turret on the “Earl of Kinnoull’s House” facing the Speygate. NLS Adv. 30.5.23. Hutton Drawings: 107a, 107b, 108, 109, 110, 117, 118. Sparrow’s drawing of Gowrie House (1789) shows a clear difference in the architectural styles of the “King’s House” and the “Earl of Kinnoull’s House”; the “King’s House” would seem to have been the older of the two - presumably the original residence built in the early 16th century - built from cut blocks of stone. Details on the stair tower are particularly interesting. This structure had carved ornamentation above the ground-floor door. The mouldings on the first-floor level seem to have been disrupted by the wall of the south range, which may have been built onto the eastern range and stair tower. This is only a possibility, however, as the mouldings at the second-floor level of the tower seem to match neatly with the line of the roof on the south range. The stair tower had a stepped gable. The north range of the property was considerably lower in height, and at this time appears to have been harled. The triangular window pediment is a curious feature, and a projection of the wall into the line of the roof appears to be the remnants of an earlier design. Stavert, 34; Gowrie House by Sparrow, from a print published by J. Hooper, 1789. W. H. Lizars’s engraving of the property (after Robert Gibb, 1801-1837) shows that alterations were made to the “King’s House” after 1789, with new roofs and chimneys being added to the stair tower and eastern range. The Gowrie House seems to have been in relatively good condition at that time. See D. Graham-Campbell, Perth, The Fair City, (1994), 23.

reparation works on the kirk fabric. The frequency of repairs and alterations which were carried out on St. John’s in the century after the Reformation contrasts with the impression which is given by the “Chronicle” that the 17th century fabric was generally strong. The sheer size of the building must have contributed to maintenance problems, and the kirk placed a consistent drain on public resources. However, although the unstable state of St. John’s may be taken as a symbol of widespread decay in the urban environment, the burgh community consistently made sterling efforts to uphold the fabric and adapt it to the Presbyterian style of worship.

In the later years of the 16th century, following damage to the interior furnishings during the Reformation, the kirk fabric was perceived to be dangerously decayed. The kirk session register includes a lengthy record of an appeal for reparation work in 1586: “Forasmeikle as the minister + Elders perceiving the ruinous, pitiful, great, + lamentable Estate of the kirk in all parts + places thereof; + the great Decay that is abill (likely) to incur thereon : and being deeply in Heart + Conscience angry therewith. all with one voice, + with one consent, ordains + by thir presents ordains the minister to ommit + leave his ordinary Text + Purpose whereon he preached of before; + desired him most earnestly to elect + chuse some part + portion of scripture which he thought most able + meet to move the Hearts of the people, + especially the Baillies + Magistrates whosoever bearing Rule + authority in the said Burgh, to provide that the same with all Diligence were repaired + mended in all honest + decent form : Whilk Failing + being in no ways done, all should return to Ruin, to the great Hurt + Skaith of this our common weill...” In their letter of complaint to the Privy Council, in September of that year, the community of Perth mentioned that their kirk was “ruinous and at the point of decay...” However, the extent of the kirk’s disrepair at this time is questionable, for in 1587 the session ordained “the lofts to be put up in the kirk”; the Incorporation of Wrights had already erected a seat for themselves in the north transept. Indeed, burials continued to be made within the kirk, despite being declared illegal; there are records of the kirk floor being broken for burials in 1589 and 1593.

Nevertheless, throughout the 1590s efforts were made to raise money for repairs to the fabric. Work was carried out on the Halkerston Tower in 1591, funded from fines paid by fornicators and cohabiters, and in May 1593 James Adamson, one of the masters of the Hospital, was instructed to “repair + help the kirk Roof, but especially the Roof of the Counsell House”. In July of that year, Adamson was told “to cover the Session House otherwise called The Revestry; and to buy slates, Timber, Lath, nails, Lime, sand, with all other materials necessary + requisite thereto : And

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105 Fawcett, 11.
106 As a general observation, it is notable that in 1692 the burgh recorded that it had spent the considerable sum of £1, 400 on public works. The authorities seem to have maintained a commitment to uphold public buildings despite economic difficulties. See Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society, 59.
107 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 27 June 1586. Scott noted that “The above is the first mention in the Session Books now extant of the fabric of the Church needing any Repair”.
108 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3).
whassover Expences shall be bestowed by the said James upon the said materials + workmanship, the same shall be allowed to him in his accompts of the Hospital. 111 In October 1594, Adamson was commissioned to repair "the high windows of the steeple with Deals to preserve + keep the Bells from the weet, which shall be well allowed in the accompts of the Hospital"; furthermore, he was asked "to send for an plumber to visit the Quier + the Lead Theiking thereof, + to advise with him how the same may be helped + repaired". 112

The burgh authorities relied heavily upon the resources of the King James VI Hospital. In August 1595, the session received a grim report from Patrick Blair, "Commissioner from the Council": "...the Reparation + Theiking of The Kirk was apparently to stay for Lack of Expences; + that the Town was so troubled presently, + has been troubled all this year bypassed with Taxations, that they had not present silver in Readiness notwithstanding the necessity of the work craved the same, and therefore in name of the Council, Baillies + Deacons of Crafts, craved a hundred merks to be disbursed by the masters of Hospital for furtherance of that good work which was begun. The Session considering the necessity of the work, + present adoes of the Town, condescended + agreed to the foresaid suite, and ordained the masters of Hospital to give an hundred merks of the readiest silver they have, to be employed allanerly for Reparation of the kirk as was craved". 113 Perhaps only the most important repairs were carried out using this money, for in the following spring the session decided to distribute "that silver which is collected every Sabbath for the Reparation of the kirk" to the poor of the burgh "in the Time of this great Dearth + necessity", until proper provision could be made for the needy. In August 1596, James Adamson was instructed once again to carry out repairs to the fabric, on the "south side of the West Port of the kirk". 114

During the 1590s, weekly collections were held to raise money for repairs, but by 1601 these had been replaced by special collections.115 According to the "Chronicle", repair work on the "wallis + wandowis" began in November 1598; Fawcett states that "major repairs were undertaken on the nave, and at the same time the three western bays were walled off from the rest to form a separate West Kirk, served by a second minister". In this context, it is important to note that the chronicler (TH7) referred to repairs of "ye new kirk"; this is almost certainly a reference to the partitioned area mentioned by Fawcett. 116 (The kirk seems to have been partitioned because its size was unsuitable for Presbyterian forms of worship, but the nature of this change has aroused some confusion. Simpson and Stevenson thought that by the end of the 16th century "the church itself

111 Ibid., 3 May 1591; 28 May 1593; 23 July 1593.
112 Ibid., 21 October 1594. "Theek" : "1 roof (a building) wíth (stone, slate, lead etc) la14-18..." CSD, 712.
113 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 18 August 1595.
114 Ibid., 12 April 1596; 30 August 1596.
115 Ibid. Scott entered a note to this effect after the entry dated 9 February 1601.
116 "Chronicle", 20 (6); Fawcett, 11.
Two other passages in the "Chronicle" refer to the internal division of the kirk: the synod which was disrupted by Lord Scone in 1607 met in "ye new kirk of pert"; and in November 1665, the body of John Paterson lay "in ye west kirk" prior to burial. "Chronicle", 25 (7/7); 60 (1 8). 246
had been divided into three places of worship; the east (choir), West (nave), and Middle (transepts and crossing) Parishes. However, these developments took place during the 18th century; the New Statistical Account (1845) confirms that a "portion of the Old Church... had been separated...some time before the beginning of the seventeenth century...", although "The particular purpose to which it was originally appropriated is unknown". This source states that the partitioned area was known as the "new (West) kirk".

In contrast with the reported financial difficulties faced by the authorities in the 1590s, by the turn of the century substantial sums were being collected from parishioners to fund work on the fabric. An entry in the session register dated 4 September 1599 records that "There was collected the last Sabbath for Reparation of the kirk threescore fourteen pounds + ten shillings, which was delivered to Robert mathow Thesaurer + Overseer of kirk work". Under the date 14 April 1600 it was recorded that "The Baillies + Elders collected the last Sabbath for Reparation of the kirk sixscore two pounds twelve shillings + ninepence. Whereof was deducted to the ordinary poor for two weeks, ten pounds, so rested five score ten pounds eight shillings nine pence". In February 1601, Walter Gray received thirty nine pounds from the baillie Constantine Malice for repair of the fabric.

Money continued to be collected over the following years, at intervals of a couple of months, often for repairs to the kirk roof, which tended to leak. The work which was carried out seems to have been of a fairly routine nature. The index to the town council records also suggests that the kirk was in a relatively sound state in the first years of the 17th century. In June 1604 there was an order "to repair the new kirk against the parliament", but other references to the fabric concern the provision of seats, and locks on the "over house" where the town's papers were kept. These entries emphasise that the kirk also played a secular role in burgh life; it was a venue for council meetings as well as a store for important documents. Two passages in the "Chronicle" refer to the council house, the most important being the description of the burial of the laird of Ballindean, "be eist ye counsulhous door". This meeting-place is difficult to locate, however. The modern plan of the kirk is a relatively simple rectangle, with two transepts of unequal size, but in the early modern period the plan may have been more complicated, with at least one revestry appended to the building. The north transept was truncated in the early 19th century, and Fawcett mentions a

117 Simpson and Stevenson, 11.
118 Fawcett, 12.
119 NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 111. In the old Statistical Account, Rev. Scott wrote that "From the year 1560, to the year 1595, there was only one minister in Perth. From 1595 to 1716, there were always two ministers, and only one parochial church. In the year 1716, the west part of the building, which had been separated from the rest, by a partition wall, was ordered to be seated, and a third minister was called by the magistrates". OSA, 510.
120 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 4 September 1599; 14 April 1600; 9 February 1601.
121 B59/ 17/ 1, 141, 146-7, 154, 163. There is also a curious reference, an order "to the clerk to present the warrants of the whole timber lent furth of the kirk and Inch", 156.
122 "Chronicle", 23 (7).
sacristy on the north side of the choir which was removed before the 19th century. The index to the town council records mentions "the music school held in the house at the back of the New Kirk". Church assemblies - including the general assembly of 1618 - occasionally met in the "New Kirk", but the town council seems to have used a revestry - presumably the sacristy which was built onto the north side of the choir. This may have been a two-storey structure, for the index includes a reference to "the removal of a press from the laigh to the high revestry".

An enigmatic entry in the "Chronicle" records that on 24 January 1604, "The stepill of Stone fell". As has been noted above, this passage could be a reference to the steeple of Scone, and it is almost certainly not a reference to the steeple of St. John's, for this was a timber construction, sheathed in lead. Fawcett has suggested that "references to the collapse of a stone steeple in 1604" may be associated with the stair tower of the Halkerston Tower, a structure which was often dilapidated. However, by May 1605, the main steeple was in a state of disrepair, for £113 3s (Scots) was collected for "Reparation of the kirk + steeple". In March 1607, the lead sheathing seems to have been blown from the steeple, but this damage may not have been repaired promptly; the kirk session register merely records that in June "The Session ordered a contribution

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123 Fawcett, 7, 13, 22. "The sacristy, in which the priests prepared for the services, used to project from (the north ed.) side of the choir, and traces of the door which opened into it may still be discerned in the second bay from the east".

124 B59/ 17/ 1, 522.


126 This arrangement was unusual, for a town council would usually assemble in the tolbooth. Fittis wrote, in typical style, that "We might suppose that, in olden days, the present Town-Hall was the place where the Town Council statedly assembled. But it seems that in the beginning of the seventeenth century the burghal Sanhedrim held their meetings in some building adjoining St John's Church... Certainly, at a later date the place of meeting was the 'Session-house of the Kirk'..." R.S. Fittis, "Last Days of 'Our Lady's Chapel'", in Sketches of the Olden Times in Perthshire, (1878), Appendix vi-vii.

There is a confusing entry in the Register of Acts of Town Council, which states: "Qlik day being convene wt in the counsell hous to treat on ther ain efferris the the hall counsell being mett wt in ye neu church of the fd burt.." B59/ 16/ 3, 27 June 1645.

From the late 1690s, the council met in the council chambers which were built, controversially, adjacent to the tolbooth. Scott noted that "The presbytery generally met in "The Revestry of the kirk of Perth", the same which is now called 'The Session House', + where the presbytery still meet". NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume II, (1775), 26 May 1624.

A record of a sentence pronounced against Andrew Read by the Magistrates and Town Council, in 1648, states that the "Baillies Dean of gild thesaurer Counsell and deaconnes of Craftis of the said burghe" met "within the Reuestore or Counsellhous". B59/ 26/ 1/ 19.

127 B59/ 17/ 1, 163. Another entry refers to the "over counceilhouse"; ibid., 521.

128 "Chronicle", 23 (7); see above, pp. 122, 145; Fawcett, 12. It should be noted that there are references in the kirk session register to the "stone work + Timber work" of the steeple, and the "Bartisan of the Steeple"; it is possible that the "Chronicle" entry describes damage to the parapet at the base of the spire. See NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 13 December 1619; 15 February 1620.

to be made for Reparation of the kirk..." 130 Nevertheless, it is apparent from the session register that the steeple demanded the most reparation work throughout the first half of the 17th century.

In January 1609 "ye stanes of ye mantil wall of ye kirk" were blown down; Fawcett suggests that this was the churchyard wall. 131 However, there is no record of the wall being repaired; in March the session ordered a collection to be made "Because the kirk Roof is faulty in many parts..." 132 Attention was paid to the steeple later in the year, for in September the session called for a contribution to be made "for Reparation of the kirk + steeple". 133 The internal condition of the kirk seems to have been quite good at this time, and in March 1609 James Adamson submitted an account of the sums which he had disbursed "for bigging of twa lofts in the kirk, the one for the provost, bailies, and council, and another for common people, and the scholars of the grammar-school..." 134

Thus, in the first decade of the 17th century the burgh community seems to have managed to maintain the fabric, despite poor weather conditions and the constant demands of renovation and improvement. Large sums were regularly collected for these works, and it is clear that the upkeep of the fabric was a priority for the authorities; collections were often so substantial that it was possible to make donations to the poor as well. This seems to have been the pattern of succeeding decades too. The incidents of storm damage which are recorded in the "Chronicle" are not reflected in the kirk session records, nor indeed in an appeal to the Lords of Council in January 1614. The council granted the burgh the right to apply the common good to the rebuilding of the bridge, kirk and prison; specifically, work was to be carried out for "The intertenying and upholding of thair kirk, in tha pend and rooffe thairof with Lead, and accomodating of tha same..." From this it would seem that the financial strain of maintaining and adapting the fabric was beginning to tell for the inhabitants. However, although the roof of the kirk was in need of frequent attention, major repairs do not seem to have been proposed. 135

The multitude of entries in the kirk session register concerning the fabric indicate that the maintenance of the kirk was rarely overlooked by the council or session. The tasks which were undertaken by agents and workmen on behalf of the authorities ranged from replacing bolts and locks, to glazing, or importing lead for the steeple. However, despite such diligence, throughout

130 "Chronicle", 25 (7/7); NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 8 June 1607. Indeed, Fawcett comments that "It seems that repairs were not always undertaken as promptly as might be expected, because it was only in 1617 that one David Sibbald was appointed master of work for the repair of the steeple". Fawcett, 12. By this stage the timber frame of the steeple, as well as the lead sheathing, was damaged. NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 9 June 1617.
131 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7); Fawcett, 12. "mantil &c... - wall a curtain-, or outer wall, a rampart, a screen wall 16- e17...", CSD, 400. The "mantil wall" could have been the bartisan of the steeple (see above, n. 128).
132 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 6 March 1609.
133 Ibid., 11 September 1609.
135 B59/ 24/ 13/ 2a.
the post-Reformation century, the practice of kirk burial was maintained by local nobles, despite being declared illegal by the reformed Kirk. In 1580, the site of the Greyfriars monastery became the burgh's burial ground, and the churchyard, which lay on the north side of St. John's, appears to have fallen into disuse; by 1616, a road ran through the yard. Nevertheless, burial in the kirk itself appears to have remained of spiritual - and perhaps social - importance to the local nobility, and to those who could afford the privilege. The "Chronicle of Perth" indicates that clandestine Catholic services were held in the town, and the kirk session seems to have bowed to the influence of the nobility. In September 1589, the session re-affirmed the general assembly's 1588 prohibition of kirk burial, but allowed for exceptions to this rule: "there shall be no person or persons, whatsoever calling they may be of, buried within the kirk of this burgh, and that the kirk floor thereof shall not be raised nor broken, in time coming, without the special advices, consents, and assents of the said bailies, council, deacons of crafts, minister and elders of the said burgh..." The "Chronicle" mentions at least three burials in St. John's - those of the laird of Ballindean in 1603, Isabel Wentoun in 1643, and Laurence Mercer in 1645; in addition to these, John Paterson of Benchillis may also have been buried in the kirk, although the "Chronicle" is ambiguous on this point.

Ballindean's burial is also noted in the index to the town council records, which reads for 4 July 1603: "Production by the Servant of John Earl of Athol of a Missive stating that the corpse of the Laird of Ballindean was as yet in Dundee unburied, and craving the Council's permission to bury him in such part of their kirk as they might think expedient + also stating the obligations they lay under to his forebears". The council gave their consent but, according to the "Chronicle", the

136 See Simpson and Stevenson, 30: "...considerable reconstruction work was found necessary early this century due to subsidence amongst the pillars of the nave. Before this work was carried out, a pit was excavated in the nave to ascertain the nature of the sub-soil, in the course of which operation many human remains were exposed... the majority of burials here must still pre-date the seventeenth century".

137 See NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 22 July 1616; Simpson and Stevenson, 30. The author of the New Statistical Account suggested that the kirkyard was not treated with respect: "The only mention made of it in the session records refers to facts which show that there was not an over strict regard paid to its sacredness as the depository of the dead. Thus in 1587, 'ordains no stables to be in the kirkyard after Whitsunday, and if ever they be found hereafter, any of the setters thereof to pay ten pounds.' And again in 1603, 'For as meikle as the causways of the kirkyard are greatly abused by the repair of horses and sleds, the sessions request David Sibald to set up an stock in the West Kirk Vennel, for staying of their passage on the west side of the kirk.'..." NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 76. (There seems to have been a printing error in the NSA, for the second passage quoted should be dated 8 November 1619. See NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774) ).

138 April 1604: "A mess said in georg boswallis ludgeing my lord Inchaffray duelling yair The ladie oliphant pnt h(i)r Tua sisteris Alexr mcbrak burges of per[r]t pnt The priest wes abercrombie To his name", "Chronicle", 23 (7). Archibald M'Breck was a wealthy man, with a house in the Watergate. He was censured by the session for his "popish" activities, and indicted before the Court of Justiciary. See R.S. Fitts, "Popery in Perth after the Reformation" in A Book of Perthshire Memorabilia, (1879), 65-68; NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 26 March 1604, 2 April 1604; B59/ 17/ 1, 159, 161.

139 NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 75.

140 "Chronicle", 23 (7); 48 (13/13); 60 (18).
funeral did not take place until 12 July. 141 In 1618, the body of the Countess of Montrose lay in the New Kirk, before being transported to Aberuthven; a note in the New Statistical Account states that: "In February 1618, the council issued an order to red the house where the guns lay in the new (West) Kirk, to receive the corps of Lady Montrose..." 142

Even in the post-Reformation period, the interior of the kirk would have been decorated by memorials. The laird of Ballindean was buried beneath a fine grave slab - "a blew stone of ye Ryne" - and in the north choir aisle there is a stone (the "Tournai slab") into which a monumental brass was originally set; this aisle was the burial place of the earls of Gowrie. 143 Fittis suggested that this was the stone beneath which Ballindean was buried, (although Tournai is situated at some distance from the Rhine). 144 The Mercer vault, which was beneath the north transept of St. John's, features in the two other burial notices in the "Chronicle"; the transept was known as the "Mercer Aisle", and also housed the pews of members of the Perth guilds. 145 Burials in the kirk continued late into the 17th century, and a record of the interment of Sir James Mercer of Aldie in the family vault indicates that such funerals could be important public events: 10 April 1671, "The Counsell having received ane letter from John Mercer of Melginsh for waiting upon the funeral of the Laird of Aldie, Wednesday, the 19th of this instant, They appoint the inhabitants to be warned to wait therupon, and ordains the bells to be rung as soon as the corps comes in sight of the town". 146 However, as the record of Isabel Wentoun's burial indicates, interment in the kirk was an expensive business. An entry in the session register records an application for kirk burial in July 1631 by the laird of Moncrieff, "craving licence to bury the corpse of umquhill Margaret Beetoun, spouse to Mr David Moncrieff, of Craigie, parishioner of Perth"; the laird offered to pay £40 (Scots), and was granted permission to bury the corpse "in the burial called Balleises burial". There was not a set burial fee, however; when Lady Stormont was buried "in the north east neuk" of the kirk, in April 1639, the price was £100 (Scots). 147

141 B59/ 17/ 1, 149.
142 NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 111. See "Chronicle", 28 (8), where it is recorded that the burial took place on 15 April 1618. See above, p. 143.
143 "Chronicle", 23 (7); Fawcett, 22. According to Fittis, "... the family of Gowrie had acquired a place of burial at the north-east corner of the edifice - in the present East Church - marked by a stone which had been transferred thither from the graves of James I. and his Queen Joanna, in the Carthusian Monastery, when that stately structure was demolished at the Reformation. The stone has now been built into the eastern wall of the Church. It is of blue marble, and consists of two compartments, each having at the top a crown, certified to be of the royal kind by containing fleurs-de-lis. It is understood that several of the Ruthvens were interred under this stone, and certainly James, second Earl of Gowrie, who died in 1568." R. S. Fittis, "Kirk-Burial in Perth after the Reformation", in Historical and Traditionary Gleanings concerning Perthshire, (1876), 90.
144 *... 'The Session... ordered his burial place to be at the north-east nook of the Kirk, where umquhill James, Earl of Gowrie, was buried before.' The burial is noticed in the Chronicle of Perth... This blue stone was doubtless the royal memorial, now in the east wall of the church." R. S. Fittis, "Kirk-Burial in Perth after the Reformation", 92.
145 Fawcett, 25.
Reparation works were a routine responsibility for the burgh authorities, and "more extensive repairs" were carried out in 1639. The kirk session register forms a catalogue of repair notices and appeals for donations to fund those projects; some of these notices also include details of the building materials which were used. In November 1620, Robert Dog, a mason, was commissioned to "pass down to Kinguddie... + there wyle 26 sufficient stones summer won, to be 13 Ovell (or Obbells) to the Barmekyn of the steeple, cause bring the same up the water, + hew the same sufficiently, according to the form of the old work of the Barmekyn. And likewise to wyle fourteen sufficient rough stones for aylers (or aisteris) to the said work, + cause the same be transported up the water...." In November 1622, the mason was paid a total of 21 merks 14 shillings "for putting up four Ovells on the north side of the steeple" and "For iron + lead furnished thereto.." In 1621, John Robertson was ordered to repair the glass windows of St. John’s, and James Lamb was required to "make Broddis of Wier to the laigh windows of the new kirk". These shutters were probably intended to prevent the windows being broken by vandals; a warning was issued in 1615 that "if it shall happen that any men’s Bairns of this burgh break any of the Glass windows of the said kirk, In that case the parents of these Bairns shall repair the same on their Expences..." Vandalism by children seems to have been a recurring problem, but efforts were made to maintain the appearance of both the exterior and the interior of the kirk; in January 1624, Mr Archibald Steidman was given 40 shillings for washing away of the Black of the seat above Auldie’s Burial.

According to Fawcett, the Commonwealth years may have been a period of neglect. But the index to the town council records relates that after the Restoration, repairs were undertaken on the fabric; normal problems were addressed - the steeple, the roof and the windows. The steeple was still giving cause for concern in 1680: "The comittie haifing gone wp to the steeple they ffind the wpper most ring of stones above ye O. sound somewhat louss And yt it is fitt ye same should be pntlie ffixt and battit being werie dangerous, as it stands for ye tyme". In 1684, the marquess of Atholl was given permission to remove some of the masonry of the kirk, but the routine of repairs

148 Fawcett, 12.
153 Fawcett, 12. B59/ 17/ 1, 471, 479, 482, 484, 485, 486, 510, 521, 523. It is notable that the congregation seems to have been very large at this time. In 1650 there were moves by the presbytery to erect a separate parish for the landward population. The New Kirk would have been used as a new parish kirk, but the plan was not developed "because of the troubles of the times." See NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 112; B59/ 28/ 36 - 26 February 1650, Decree of the Commissioners appointed for the plantation of kirks that there be a new erection for the landward parish suburbs called the New Kirk of Perth.
154 B59/ 24/ 1/ 6, Report of visitation of the Steeple and South and North Inches, (1680).
and surveillance continued. In 1690, the town council committee on public works issued a report in which they approved "the reparatone of the kirk sua far as is alreadly repaired and that it was necessar And that he repair the rest of the kirk sua far as it is faultie both in the stone Lead and sclait work therof..." Thomas Morer had already observed the fine condition of the kirk.

The value of the kirk as a focus of religious and civic affairs is clear from the authorities' consistent efforts to maintain the fabric. Their work seems to have been reasonably successful, for although the kirk needed constant attention, and the steeple was particularly vulnerable to storm damage, the whole building was maintained; despite the partition of the western bays of the nave from the rest of the kirk, little demolition work was carried out. It was inevitable that a building of such size would need constant upkeep, and the frequency with which repairs and collections to raise funds are mentioned in the session records is unsurprising. The necessity of regular repairs does not indicate that the building was in a state of decline, but is merely a reflection of the scale and relative sophistication of the fabric. However, it is important to consider that the parlous state of other buildings in Perth in the 17th century - particularly the tolbooth - may have arisen because priority was given to the upkeep of St. John's. This point must be qualified, for in the second half of the century the burgh was able to redress some of the widespread damage which was inflicted on the town during the Cromwellian occupation. Nevertheless, in a period of local economic difficulty, the burgh's resources were stretched by the demands of maintaining several large public buildings. The structure which seems to have suffered the most in this era was the bridge across the Tay.

**The Bridge of Tay**

The state of the Brig of Tay contrasted markedly with that of the kirk. The bridge was an unusual feature of Perth; it served as the actual - and as a symbolic - link between the burgh and the countryside. The importance of the river crossing in burgh life was reflected in the efforts which were made throughout the 17th century to establish an adequate bridge, despite numerous failures. Economic life was possible without the bridge; but the destruction of the newly built stone brig in 1621 drastically altered communications between Perth and its hinterland north and east of the river. The brig was also important in national terms: in 1621 it was described as "the onlie saife and certaine passage betwixt the north and south parties of this realm in all kyndes of weather..." This significance was reflected in the financial support which was offered throughout the 17th century by successive Stuart kings for the maintenance or rebuilding of the structure. And yet, the

155 Fawcett, 12.
156 B59/ 24/ 13/ 6, 3 July 1690.
157 See above, p. 232.
158 However, it is worth noting an entry in the index to the town council records: October 1605, "Order to the master of work of the Tolbooth to take down the old westmest kirk door and use the stones to the Tolbooth". B59/ 17/ 1, 175. See above, p. 229.
159 Simpson and Stevenson, 8. (APS, v, 689).
burgh’s failure to provide an adequate crossing before the flood of 1621 seems to have wasted the resources which were made available for this work. The will of the local community to establish a secure bridge seems to have endured, despite frequent setbacks; but it was certainly a hard task, for the Brig of Tay was the most vulnerable of all the public buildings to the persistent harshness of the climate. The absence of a bridge across the Tay for most of the 17th century has been taken to symbolise a general decline in Perth’s fortunes, but a lack of sufficient resources is not the only explanation for the burgh’s failure to build a viable bridge. The competence of the bridge-builders who were employed in an era of severe weather must be questioned. The situation at Perth during the 17th century was remarkable; the community’s concern for the re-building of the bridge matched their interest in the maintenance of the kirk fabric; but the burgh seems to have paid dearly for mistakes made by bridge-builders, and the misfortunes which resulted from dreadful weather.

The “Chronicle of Perth” suggests that in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, a stone bridge of long-standing was damaged beyond repair. This structure seems to have been patched with timber, or possibly replaced by a succession of timber structures, while a new stone crossing was built by John Milne - the bridge which was almost totally destroyed in 1621. However, the chronology and nature of the building works is difficult to discern from the “Chronicle” alone; nor does the text give an adequate representation of the complicated financial arrangements which were necessary to put these works into effect. Indeed, there is no indication of the vast sums of money which were involved. 160 The burgh records provide far more information about this process, and suggest that the loss of the new bridge in 1621, after decades of work, must have been a devastating psychological blow for the burgh community.

Financial Difficulties:

The value of the bridge for the local community - and its perceived national importance - is demonstrated by the large sums of money which were devoted to its maintenance and reparation. Much of the money came from the government; the exchequer accounts detail almost annual payments for the upkeep of the bridge in the 16th century and, from 1529 onwards, money paid to the Crown was returned to the burgh in the form of an annual grant for repairs. 161 Fines levied in the courts were often diverted to pay for work on the bridge: in 1507 the Justice-General, Lord Gray, granted £100 taken from Lord Oliphant and Alexander Scot to be used “to uphold the Bridge of Tay”, and in 1527 he decreed that “fines from the Justice Air should be used for the upkeep of the Bridge of Tay”. 162 The burden of maintaining the bridge seems to have increased significantly in the closing decades of the 16th century, as the state of the fabric declined. The flood damage of 1573 imposed a greater burden on the burgh than routine maintenance work. In 1574, the burgh appealed to the Privy Council against the imposition of tolls at Dundee, stating that the bridge

160 See above, pp. 134-137.
161 Vasey, 9.
162 B59/35/2; B59/35/3. (B59/35, Documents relating to roads and bridges, ferries, railways, posts and carriers, 1444-1878).
could not "be repairit and remeidit without some grite and extraordinar prouisioun...". The destruction of part of the brig raised new demands, "the lyke not happynning sen the first bigging thatirof", and in response to this difficulty, in 1578 parliament granted 10,000 merks towards the bridge's repair. In August 1582, James VI issued a letter ratifying to the community of Perth certain grants of fines from justice airs, which had previously been used to maintain the bridge.

Following the inundation of January 1582(3), the bridge was repaired with timber, and the burgh continued to complain of a shortage of funds to repair it properly. In 1586, the community's complaint to the Privy Council mentioned that the bridge had fallen twice in recent years, and was "ready to fall without present help...". Unfortunately, in this year the burgh acquired responsibility for the management of the Brig of Earn as well, which was also in a state of decay. The burgh's difficulties were compounded by further damage to the Brig of Tay in December 1589.

A decade of relative inactivity seems to have followed, but at the turn of the century the burgh entered into a period of intense fundraising for the building of a new bridge.

Money for the new building project was procured from a wide array of sources, and the burgh was always looking for concessions because of this work. Repairs were also carried out on the kirk fabric at this time, but the attempt to re-establish a sound bridge must have been the dominant public works project of the early decades of the 17th century. James VI seems to have been a consistent supporter of moves to provide a secure bridge, and after the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of 1600, the king affirmed all previous grants to the bridge: the burgage farm of £80 due annually from the burgh to the exchequer was to be allocated in part to the Hospital, and in part to the bridge, and the fines and escheats of any Perth citizen convicted before any court in the kingdom, and the confiscated goods of forestallers, were to be applied to the bridge work. The old stone bridge seems to have been patched with timber - part of which fell again on 22 September 1601. The burgh authorities replied swiftly, and the index to the town council records states that on the next day there was an order "for the Treasurer to furnish the Expences for repairing the part of the Bridge now fallen down and in case of refusal to be warded until he refund the same". The index records that in the following two months, fines were collected from various sources, and applied to the bridge, until in November 1601 there was an order "to repair the stone work of the Brig". However, there was also an "Act as to repairing the Timber Bridge"; it is unclear whether this

163 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 4.
164 Vasey, 9.
165 R.S.Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", in A Book of Perthshire Memorabilia, (1879), 127.
166 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3). It is questionable whether the bridge was really in such a fragile state, for in May 1587 the kirk session ordered the bailies and elders to "convene the haill poor strong and idle beggars on the Bridge of Tay, and every one to be put out at the ports..." (my italics), Rev. J. Parker Lawson, "Extracts from the Kirk-Session Register of Perth, 1577-1634" in The Spottiswoode Miscellany, Vol. II, ed. J. Maidment (1845), 257.
167 Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 129.
168 This event is recorded in "Dundee's Diary". See above, p. 59.
169 "Chronicle", 22 (6/6).
170 B59/ 17/ 1, 131.
is a reference to a separate structure, or simply a section of timber patching which propped-up the
old brig. 171 A concerted effort was being made to solve the problem of the Tay crossing, for the
king granted Perth an exemption from all public taxes for eleven years, and the money to be set
aside for the bridge work. 172 This concession may have eased some of the Treasurer's concerns,
and temporary repairs seem to have been carried out once again; in February 1602 a prohibition
was issued against "carrying dung along the Brig of Tay, either on horseback or otherwise". In
the next month, the Treasurer was ordered to advance money "towards the repairs of the Brig". 173
However, there were still insufficient resources to build in stone. In 1599, an arrangement had
been established between the burgh and John Murray of Tibbermore, whereby the community
was to pay 50 merks annually for the right to take stones from Pitheavlis quarry for the building of
the bridge; but the index records that in May 1602, the authorities were still looking for cheap
timber: "Order as to the Timber Ports and the deals thereof to be taken to the Brig of Tay". In
January 1603, the bridge was described as "being laid over with 'singill deillis'". 174
The "Chronicle" records that a voluntary contribution was raised within the burgh in 1600, and this
was repeated in 1602; by August 1602, James Adamson had been appointed master of work for
the repair of the brig. 175 In the following year, stone was procured for this work, but not from
Pitheavlis quarry; the index records an "Order to take down the lime house in the Fishmarket for
the use of the brig and the stones to the new shore + bulwark". 176 It seems that the funds were
still insufficient, and in 1604 the minister, William Cowper, was sent to London to seek further aid;
rather bizarrely, he was given 1000 merks to cover his expenses. Considering all these efforts to
secure adequate funding for a new bridge, there can be little doubt of the community's
commitment to the project, and its perceived necessity. 177 In February 1605, Cowper reported to
the council that a sum of 10,500 merks had been granted towards repair of the bridge; with such
support, the burgh authorities were encouraged to employ John Milne, the king's master mason,
to design a new bridge of stone. The index to the town council records tells of far greater activity on
the bridge work during 1605, but there were continual financial worries: in August there was an
"Order to borrow £1000 for the Brig", and in October 500 merks were borrowed for the project. 178
Payments to the quarriers and masons seem to have fallen behind, and in February 1606 the
daecos were asked to "give in their answer whether they prefer a voluntary contribution, or a

171 Ibid., 134.
172 Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 133.
173 B59/ 17/ 1, 137.
174 B59/ 35/ 4(2). 7 April 1599. Privy Council decreat(s) in action at the instance of the magistrates
and town council of Perth against John Murray of Tibbermure relative to the taking of stones from
the quarry of Pittheveles for repair of the Bridge of Tay
B59/ 17/ 1, 139, 144.
*Dale*: * la16-e17... 1 = deal, a plank la15- ...*", CSD, 134.
175 *Chronicle*, 20 (6); B59/ 17/ 1, 139-141.
176 B59/ 17/ 1, 152.
177 Ibid., 165.
178 Ibid., 173-4.
taxation for the reparation of the Brig of Tay". In May 1606, there even seems to have been a fund-raising dinner held in the town, for another entry in the index records an "Order to pay Gabriel Mercers wife for the supper furnished to the Commissioners directed by the Earl of Errol for craving support to the Brig". In the following month, commissioners were nominated to go to Edinburgh, to seek further financial assistance.

In February 1608 the "trie" bridge was swept away - a severe setback at a time when the burgh had secured new tax exemptions. In September 1607, the council wrote to the king, stating that "at zour Mj command, we have begun the building of the brig of Tay, and hes brocht it ane gude way fordward without the help of ony saffeing zour Mj... the grant of sewin thousandis poundis money of this realme, quhilk is in sic sort payit, that ewerie zeir we resaive ane thousand poundis tharof; and quhill that zour Mj wes resident amang ws, zour Mj granted to ws, for forderance of that wark, exemptioun from taxationis for ellewin zeiris, quhairoff the maist part ar past alredie. This zour Mj moist princelie fawour maid the peopile the moir willing to contribute of their awin, till now that the Lordis of your Mj hienes counsell will not allow the same without zour Mj speciall command, quhilk, gif it be directed, they half promised to gave their willing consent thairunto; and thairfor we craive that zour Mj wald direct commandment to thame, otherwayis the payment thairof by our peopill will compell ws to interrupt the wark..." Exemption from the new national taxation was granted in the following February.

In 1609, the Scottish parliament went further, and granted the community 5000 merks annually for a period of seven years, "for bigging of their Brig". The burgh was already mortgaged in large sum for the completion of this project, but it was recognised that even the new grant would not be sufficient to fund all of the remaining construction work. In 1614, the burgh took action to offset its debts, and successfully applied for the right to set the mills, inches and fishings to tack. By November 1616, Milne's bridge was nearly completed, although there seems to have been one further plea to the king for money to finish the work; according to Fittis, the last of the eleven arches cost 3000 merks to build. Milne's work was certainly completed by July 1617, only to be swept away in October 1621.

Between 1573 and 1617, the reparation of the Brig of Tay must have been one of the most onerous responsibilities faced by the burgh authorities. The fact that it took over forty years to re-establish a proper river crossing after the inundation of 1573 is a clear indication of the immense financial difficulties which were raised by the project. But the community's inability to raise sufficient

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179 Ibid., 178.
180 Ibid., 180.
181 Ibid., 181.
184 B59/ 24/ 13/ 2a.
185 B59/ 17/ 1, 278; The Muses Threnodie... ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 96; Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 140.
funds by itself is certainly not a reflection of economic decline, for the bridge over the Tay was perhaps the largest such structure in the country at that time, and the cost of replacing the brig would have stretched the resources of any one of the leading burghs. However, it was a cruel additional burden for Perth at a time of local difficulty. In the context of the great expenditure which was devoted to the construction of Milne's crossing, it is unsurprising that attempts to rebuild the bridge after the disaster of 1621 were less energetic. 186

The rebuilding of Lowswork on the Almond was organised quite quickly; the "Chronicle" records that it was repaired in 1623, and that the cost was shared between the king, the burgh and the laird of Balhousie.187 The king also showed willing to fund the building of a new bridge, promising 30,000 merks, to be paid in 1624 and 1625. Many noblemen also pledged money, but the death of James VI in 1625 seems to have stalled the process. 188 Shortly after his accession, Charles I attempted to renew the project, writing to the nobility in July 1625: "Rt trustie and right veill belouit cousinis and counsellors and right trustie and veil belouit counsellors we greit you veill It pleast our Late deare father of famous memory out of hes lust consideratione of the pitifull or deplored estaite of the toune of Pearthe not onlie to pute to his helping hand by conteributtione of guid soume of money for reedificatione of ther bridge, Bot lykvayes to recomend the same to your speciall fauors and furtherance requyryng not onlie your particular benevolence for so cheretabill a vork, Bot lykvayes the mediatione and intersessions of eury one of you to your particular fines for the same effect. And becaus we ar no les desyrous nor our said latte father wes, yat the said toune should be helpid, and the bridge one respect of the special comoditie or rather necessitie yairof be re-edified, we haife thought guid to requyre you by these pntts, to cause suche guide courses as ather wer taken or intendit in the Lyffetyme of our Latte father for releiffe of the said toune and reedificatioune of the said bridge or get one and be prosequted till they haue taken the vissed effect and ye you selves vill bothe by your example and exhortatione, persuade and encourage, others freilie and Langlie to contribute yairunto viche being a generall benefite to yat quholl kingdome, sali be unto ws most acceptabill Bot houping to finde you amongst your seluex To so cheretabill and necessar a worke, We viii use no more vords... " 189

The next work to be carried out on the ruins of the bridge was funded by the fines raised at a local justice air; but it seems that this money was only used to clear away fallen masonry. The "Chronicle" records that in July 1630 "The fynes yat wer gottin fra or ny(t)boris at ye preceiding justice air wer bestowit on ye redding of ye rwynes of ye fallin brig of Tay" - although construction work was

186 I am inclined to disagree with Vasey's view that "Although the loss of a bridge at Perth did not seriously damage the local economy, the failure of the burgh to maintain it can almost certainly be taken as a sign of the decreasing prosperity of the community." Vasey, 9. I would suggest that the upkeep of the Tay bridge was such an unusual responsibility, particularly in an epoch when the river's behaviour could be so violent, that the long-term maintenance of the bridge would have drained the resources of most communities. Perth's difficulties may have been enhanced by imprudent management and poor construction work, but the inappropriate use of funds is not an index of economic decline.
187 "Chronicle", 37 (10/10).
188 Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 147.
189 NLS Adv. 33.1.1. (XI) Denmilne MSS. (no. 45).
carried out on flood defences. The community seems to have been forced to accept the
destruction of the bridge; as the national political situation worsened, it became harder to solicit
money from the government, and the burgh had already incurred substantial debts prior to 1621.
Ferries became the norm at the Tay crossing. In 1632, the kirk session complained to the council
about a boat which was ferrying parishioners over to Scone from the North Inch; but in 1636 the
council granted a licence to the Viscount Stormont for “the passage and service of two boats at the
head of the North Inch for the duration of his lifetime”. Rather surprisingly, during the 1640s, an
attempt was made by the earls of Perth and Kinnoull to raise funds for a new bridge; but their plans
for a voluntary subscription met with a poor response. In 1662, Charles II ratified all grants which
had been given by James VI and Charles I for rebuilding the brig, amounting to 40,000 merks; but
little seems to have come from this initiative, and the index to the town council records states that in
March 1665 the “kings Bill for building the Bridge” was deposited in the “Over house”. At the
time of the completion of the “Chronicle of Perth”, the community must have been quite used to
the absence of a bridge over the Tay.

Structural Problems:

John Milne may have been unfortunate in seeing his bridge destroyed so soon after its
completion, for the inundation of 1621 was remarkable, even in the context of the poor climate of
the time. However, he must have witnessed the Tay in flood in 1615, and should have taken
account of the potential force of the river when designing the new bridge. He does seem to have
altered the site of the crossing slightly, moving it a little northwards from the old bridge which had
abutted the foot of the High Street; but the new location was of little consequence when the flood
waters arose. The author of the New Statistical Account noted that the destruction of the bridge
“was ascribed to the lowness of the bows of the bridge. The water had not free issue through
them; it rose above them, and being thus gorged, its force and weight bearing against the upper
part of the structure, covered the key stones, and the whole at last gave way”. Fittis
emphasised that the bridge was poorly founded, and too low to withstand the flood. He referred to
the passage in the “Chronicle of Perth” which describes the method of construction of the old Brig
of Earn: “evill biggit fra the begying fillit onlie wt day and yeard + but ony blind pend as the brig of

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190 “Chronicle”, 42 (11/11).
191 NLS Adv. 31.1.1, (Volume II), (1775), 16 July 1632; B59/ 35/ 78, 79.
192 Vasey, 9. (APS, v, 488).
193 B59/ 17/ 1, 459, 478.
tay hes bene in ye sam(e) mane(r) founeit + biygit of awid...

196 Fittis was sure that this passage referred to the design of Milne's bridge; but this is by no means certain. Although it is possible that the passage is a near contemporary record, it may describe the medieval Brig of Tay which fell in 1573, and which proved so difficult to repair. However, the passage does suggest that previous architects had been forced to cut corners - presumably by a lack of resources. Milne does not seem to have faced this problem, and given that whenever he required new finances the money seems to have been found, the competence of his design must be questioned.

The bridge which fell in 1573 was stone-built, and seems to have stood for some considerable time; the community claimed that such damage had not happened "sen the first bigging thairof". 197 The burgh seems to have been ill-prepared for this emergency, and following the second falling of the bridge in 1582(3), the fabric was patched with timber-work. 198 The need to build in stone was understood, and as money slowly became available for the rebuilding works, efforts were also made to secure materials. 199 The "Chronicle" implies that a series of temporary timber bridges were erected whilst the new stone bridge was under construction; these were presumably the structures which fell in 1601 and 1608. 200 Indeed, the index to the town council records indicates that after 1605 the community was forced to support two building projects: the new brig of John Milne, and temporary wooden bridges, which Fittis thought were erected over the ruins of the medieval bridge. 201 In this case, John Milne's failure to supply an adequate design is all the more remarkable. Resources were found for two bridges, not one, and the stones which he required were forthcoming. It may have been merely fortuitous that the old bridge stood for so long - particularly if it shared the basic structural weakness of the Brig of Earn. But nevertheless, the builders of the new Brig of Tay seem to have been at fault. Perhaps the pressure of constructing a new bridge whilst maintaining a doubtful timber substitute prompted Milne's force to hurry their


197 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 4/ 0/ 0. This claim is questionable; Inglis recorded that "In 1531 the bridge became ruinous, and urgent repairs were ordered". H.R.G. Inglis, "The Roads and Bridges in the Early History of Scotland", PSAS, 4th Series. Vol. XI, (1912-1913), 324.

198 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3). Fittis suggested that this sort of temporary repair work was fairly common, even before 1573. See Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 126. However, the burgh's application to set some of its property to tack in 1614 suggests that the initial damage of 1573 was replaced with stonework: "the reparatioun bigging up intertenying and uphalding of tha brig of perth, quhick within this Threttie yeiris bighin(e) hes bene thrys distroy/! t and tane away by the violence and force of the wattir of tay, and aince biggit up be thame in stonework Thairafter biggit agane in tymmer and now intendit to be set up agane be the said(e) supplicautir in stone work..." B59/ 24/ 13/ 2a.

199 See B59/ 35/ 4(2) for the community's agreement in 1599 with the proprietor of Pitheavlis quarry for extracting stone for the bridge work. See above, p. 256.

200 The "Chronicle" records that the timber bridge fell on 21 February 1607, but in the index to the town council records an entry of 22 February 1608 records that "the timber brig... had fallen yesterday being Sunday at eleven hours forenoon by reason of the great ice". "Chronicle", 26 (7/7); B59/ 17/ 1, 198. See above, p. 184.

201 Fittis, "The Bridge of Perth", 132.
work. If so, the efforts of the community to raise adequate funds and materials were wasted. Perhaps the inundation of 1621 was so powerful that it was inevitable that the bridge should fall; however, the almost complete destruction of the crossing suggests that the fabric was fundamentally unsound.

The burgh’s apparent attempts to patch the medieval brig with timber prior to the completion of Milne’s bridge may have been imprudent as well, for the resources which were expended on the temporary wooden crossings might have been saved for Milne’s work. In the decades after the inundation of 1621, the community demonstrated that it could function adequately without a bridge. A large ferrying trade developed, and communications with the east bank of the Tay were sustained. In the years following the first fall of the bridge in 1573, the burgh might have been better advised to wait for the collection of adequate resources to rebuild the brig properly, rather than seeking to maintain a failing fabric. The “Chronicle” records that in September 1601 two men and a horse and cart fell from the bridge, and this is unlikely to have been the only such accident. However, it is seems that the inhabitants of town and country had difficulty in adjusting to the initial loss of the bridge. Clearly, the community had grown used to the presence of the medieval bridge, and its rapid decline seemed to threaten the livelihoods of merchants and farmers alike; it was essentially force of circumstance which enabled the ferry trade to burgeon after 1621.

The river crossing would seem to have been an ugly and decayed site in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The relatively fine condition of the kirk contrasted with the ramshackle temporary bridges, and then with the ruins of Milne’s fabric. For several years, the foot of the High Street would have served as a building site, and the building operations would have entailed inconvenience and disruption for the inhabitants “beneath the cross”. The series of disasters which befell the bridges may well have induced despair in certain quarters, and these events seem to have been etched into the popular memory; Henry Adamson recalled the fall of the medieval bridge in The Muses Threnodie, as well as the destruction of Milne’s work. After 1621, the burgh was deprived of its symbolic link to the countryside, and the prestige of a fabric which was of national importance.

The Environs of the Town

Although the Tay crossing symbolised the link between town and country, the burgh encompassed lands beyond the town walls; the variety of features which surrounded the town of Perth indicate a close association between rural and urban life. Nevertheless, there were also important contrasts between life in town and country. The town was a distinct, well defined entity, whereas the bulk of the sheriffdom comprised agricultural land, small communities, and isolated industrial complexes. The countryside approached the very walls of Perth, and the inhabitants of

202 “Chronicle”, 22 (6/6).
203 See above, pp. 68-9.
the town had particular interests in their suburban environment; but the relationship between Perth and its wider hinterland was less immediate.

The last Royal Charter stated that the burgh included the inches and the muirs to the west of the town, together with all the roadways which crossed these lands; but the boundaries of the "enceinte" - the area which was closely associated with the everyday functioning of the town - were defined to the north and to the south by the rivers Almond and Earn, rather than by the inches. Indeed, a cursory study of Perth's topographical setting emphasises the prominence of waterways. As has already been discussed, the town and its environs faced a constant threat of flooding; this threat was counter-balanced by the benefits of waterborne communications, hydraulic power, and abundant supplies of fish.

The "Chronicle" describes the Fishings of the Tay in connection with a dispute between the burgh and the laird of Moncreiff, in May 1615. This record mentions fisheries which pertained to the burgh and the village of Friarton, respectively the "veill off waist" and the "helloch hoill", which seem to have been adjacent to the South Inch and Friarton. The burgh moved swiftly to prevent Moncreiff from annexing the "helloch hoill", and the financial value of the fisheries is indicated in the record of 12 December 1613 when the town's mills, inches and fisheries were set to tack for nineteen years to offset the burgh's debts.

The index to the town council records relates that Moncreiff held discussions with the burgh in April 1615, prior to erecting stakes "in the litill inche"; the index also records an "Order to remove the stakes put in by the Laird of Moncrieff in the Little South Inch with The little timber bridge at the head of the South Inch", and "Proceedings as to Lawborrows against the Laird of Moncrieff" in May. A century later, the laird's descendant, Sir Thomas Moncreiff, was engaged in a dispute with Perth concerning a right to lands of Friarton, and a salmon fishing called "Pollockhell"; the matter was eventually settled in 1717. These episodes are notable partly because they demonstrate the economic value of the Tay fisheries, but also as examples of occasions on which the burgh was at odds with a member of the local landed gentry. Competition for property and revenues could stifle co-operation between Perth and the wealthy landowners of the countryside. Furthermore, the burgh claimed rights to an extensive length of the Tay, and this brought Perth into conflict with Dundee. In 1574, in response to attempts by Dundee to raise a new toll, Perth claimed to have been "founidit and dotit with sindrie giftis and preiulege as be oure souerane Lordis maist nobill progenitouris of gude memorie As the evidentis thairupoun under the grite Beall proportis And amangis vtheris thingis thay ar dotit with the wafter of Tay fra drumla to the burgh of Perth to pertene to thair Libertie and fredome..." Similarly, in 1586, in their letter of complaint to the Privy Council against another attempt by Dundee to levy a toll, the community of Perth stated

204 See above, p. 222
205 "Chronicle", 32 (9).
206 Ibid., 27 (8). See also B59/ 24/ 13/ 2a.
207 B59/ 17/ 1, 267-8.
208 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 4.
that "the whole water of Tay and privileges thereof from Drumlary to Druml alone pertains to the said Burgh of Perth as a part of the property thereof with the pier and shore of Dundee which stands and is situated within the said water of Tay, bounty, freedom and privilege thereof, and that the said complainers, their ships, boats, merchandise and other gear couffed and ladened by the said complainers, inhabitants of the said Burgh of Perth was never in use nor required that the payment of any towst or exaction in time byegone in respect of their said privilege and freedom likewise the said Burgh of Perth has been in continual possession of the freedom and liberty of the said water of Tay and therein loosing, ladening, packing and pielling, selling and waring of their goods and merchandise within the bounds of the said water from Drumlay on without any payment of anchorage, small custom or other towst or exaction by reason of the freedom foresaid ..." 209

The fishings of the Tay seem to have been organised and let as separate nets. Fittis quoted a passage from the Guildry Book, dated to the end of November 1581, which records the letting of "the King's Fishings of the Burgh of Perth, viz. the xij nets and the the Weil of West, to thir persons underwritten, paying for ilk net yearly ten lib aforehand to the Treasurer ere ever they streik the nets..." The "Weil of West" was set separately, for three years "for 49 lib yearly, to be paid ay in forehand to the Treasurer, ere they streik their nets..." 210 Indeed, most of the information in the burgh records about the fishings concerns their value, and the terms by which they were set to tack. There is no description of the way in which the fishings were divided up, although it is apparent that the "Kings Fishings" and the "Weill of West" were separate entities. A record of 1604 mentions "the fishing of the ships". 211 Fishings seem to have been set to tack throughout the 17th century, and contracts with tacksmen are recorded for the years 1604, 1613, 1633, 1646, 1648, 1649, 1657, and 1659. 212 Most of the tacksmen would seem to have been local inhabitants. In 1712, the salmon fishings of the burgh were valued "as they are presently Lett to one thousand and five merks of yearly rent..."

The records of the dispute between Perth and Sir Thomas Moncreiff in the early years of the 18th century do describe some of the property divisions relative to the Tay fishings, and indicate that the Moncreiffs did gain possession of the "helloch hoill", despite being worsted in the dispute of 1615. The parties both claimed rights to the lands of Friarton, the Friarton Inch, a salmon fishing, and a sand bank which had lately appeared on the Tay. In the first document, dated 19 February 1714, the lands of Friarton are referred to "with the pertinents outhells and Isles in the water of Tay..."

209 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3).
An entry in the index to the town council records details an "Order for rouping the Inches the weill of west and fishings of the 12 nets of the kings waters", (9 Nov. 1601). B59/ 17/ 1, 134.
211 B59/ 36/ 9 ( Notes from the Council books anent Blackfriers + fishings etc...) ( B59/ 36/ Documents relating to River Tay fishings and navigation and to Perth harbour, 1437-1866 ).
212 See B59/ 24/ 1/ 4 ( Inventory of the town's papers which were in the hands of John Mercer, writer, when he demitted the office of town clerk of Perth in May 1670 ); B59/ 25/ 3/ 2 (1); B59/ 36/ 9; B59/ 25/ 2/ 27, (27 June 1712, Estimate and valuation of the true and real rent of the mills, fishings, inches, and burgh muir of Perth), ( B59/ 25/ Documents relating to the financial affairs of the burgh...:2. taxation, 1563/4-1871 ).
with ye salmond fishing called Pollock hell upon the said water of Tay". (The Friarton Inch may have been an isle in the river). The new sand bank had arisen "in that pairt of ye water of tay which runs betuixt the lands of FFreertoun and ffreertoun inch". The burgh of Perth claimed to be in possession of "the South inch + cou inch adjoyning thereto with ye fishings on the water of tay", and the sand bank seems to have been "in the said water of tay at ye south pairt of ye said cou inch...". The document continues to acknowledge that the Moncreiffs had rights in Friarton: "the leittle burn called craigy bum and the ancient course therof was the march betuixt ye south and cou inches belonging to the toun and moncreifs lands of FFreirtoun and that both ye touns and Moncreiffs property was bounded therby and that ye toun has ye right to the peice of ground cast in upon the ulest syd of ye burn to ye lands of ffreirtoun by ye alteration of ye ancient course of ye burn and offers to prove that ye said ancient course of ye said burn was the march betuixt the toun + Moncreiffs lands". It is notable that natural features - particularly Craigie burn - seem to have been used as property boundaries.

Three years later, the provost of Perth sent a detailed memorandum to the sheriff, which acknowledged the rights of the Moncreiffs in Friarton, following an examination of papers belonging to the King James VI Hospital: "We found Three authentick Instrumants in the years 1628 (and 1629) By which the Masters of the Hospital are required by Sir John Moncreiff to enter him Heir to his Father in the Lands of Friertown with the Fischings and pertinents..." However, Sir John's claims to rights over the fishings of the Tay were disputed, and eventually, in 1665, it was settled that the Moncreiffs only had rights to the fishings of "kelloch hole". The memorandum concluded with a series of proposals for the resolution of the dispute. These alternatives made mention of the use of the Cow Inch for grazing, and the possibility of fencing the inch against the Craigie burn. The "Cow Inch" would appear to have been a riverside area at the southern end of the South Inch. The provost added that "it may be lawfull to the town to demolish the sandy bank when they see Cause for the benifite of navigation...". It appears that in the early 18th century - and probably in the mid- to late-17th century, the fishings and associated properties to the south of the town were mostly owned by the burgh, but nevertheless this was an area of competing interests. The properties seem to have been well-defined - although few artificial boundaries are mentioned.

Clearly, the fishings were valued by the community as lucrative sources of revenue, although they also fulfilled a symbolic function, emphasising the burgh's rights on the Tay; the disputes between Perth and the Moncreiffs illustrate the burgh's determination to defend those rights. However, there are few references to the sale of fish in the burgh. The "Chronicle" records that in c.1598 "The fische mercat wes remowit fra ye schoar hed to ye South gait port be act of counsal!", and this may have been in response to building works at the Brig of Tay: the index to the town council.

213 B59/ 36/ 3.
214 B59/ 36/ 5 (1).
records tells of the demolition of a "lime house" in the Fishmarket in October 1603 to provide building materials, and an order in 1605 "to remove the red from the Fish Market, to the bulwark". 215

Although Perth’s share of international trade declined significantly during the 17th century, the harbours of the burgh seem to have been well maintained, and continued to develop, despite the gradual silting-up of the Tay. In the medieval period, Perth had prospered as a port because it was situated at the point where the Tay became tidal; the early street system developed to enable easy access to the "Old Shore" at the head of the High Street, indicating the importance of the harbour in burgh life. Private wharves were owned by merchants in the Watergate. 216 During the 16th century, the harbour was moved to the Greyfriars area - the "South" or "New Shore". The "Chronicle" describes the "casting of ye dok for crearis and boattis in ye winter tyme from danger" in July 1630. 217 The construction of Tay Street in the 19th century destroyed much of the early harbours, but massive jointed timbers were revealed during consolidation work beneath the municipal buildings in 1980, which may have been the remains of an early wharf. 218 In 1987/8, an excavation at the corner of Canal Street and Tay Street revealed a quay, at the point where the town lade had run into the Tay. An area of well preserved cobbling and a wall were discovered, possibly part of a post-medieval harbour. The excavator associated these remains with records of a harbour which was built by 1539; when James Moncur joined the Perth guild in that year, he was required to provide money for stones for the "new haven by the Grayfriars". This harbour area may also have served the Cromwellian citadel in the mid-17th century. 219

The burgh community described the shore as being "fallen down and ruined" in 1586, although it is unclear whether it refers to the "Old Shore" at the foot of the High Street, or to the "New Shore" near the Greyfriars. 220 However, in May 1603 the town council issued an order "as to a stent of £600 for repairing of the shore and bulwark and clearing the waters", and in October of that year there was an order "to take down the wall between the Provost of Methven's Lodging and the Spey Tower and the stones applied to the new shore"; similarly, stones from the lime house in the Fishmarket were applied to the new shore and the "bulwark". By this, it appears that the harbour at the Greyfriars was being renovated. 221 The bulwark was situated "on the north side of the Highgate", and appears to have been both a defensive feature and a loading area. 222 There may have been some work carried out at the "Old Shore" in the second half of the 17th century; a record of June 1666 states that there was an "Order to visit the shores and side of the North Inch

215 "Chronicle", 19 (6); B59/ 17/ 1, 152, 172.
216 Simpson and Stevenson, 8. These authors state that the harbour was moved during the 17th century to the "South Shore", but this development occurred earlier.
217 SUAT News Series, No. 1 "What's New in Old Perth?" (1988); "Chronicle", 42 (11/1 1).
218 Simpson and Stevenson, 44.
220 B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3); see above, p. 225.
221 B59/ 17/ 1, 148, 152.
222 Ibid., 169-70; 177.
and repair the same*. In December 1667 the "timber house" at the shore head was converted into a "guard house". 223

The "New Shore" would seem to have been maintained in good condition for most of the 17th century, and does not seem to have been significantly damaged in the inundation of 1621. By the end of the century, however, reparation works were necessary. In July 1690, the town council committee on public works reported that it was "absolutlie necessar the butradge at the South Shoare be presently repaired and the breaches of the gray frier dyik"; the "Old Shore" seems to have still been in use, for it was also recommended that "the entrie to the north shoar nixt to Deacon Youngs hous at the cousie to be repaired for the better upholding of the harbour". 224

John Slezer's famous prospect of Perth (c. 1693) shows a basin at the end of the High Street, perhaps a bulwark or another small harbour in the area of the Watergate, and ships at the "New Shore" near the Monk's Tower. There is no indication of flood defences on the North Inch, but a stone retaining wall seems to run along the riverside all the way from the old shore to the new. (The "Chronicle" refers to a "front of fyne stone aislar wark at mounkis tour"). 225 A prospect of the town from the south east, included amongst the Hutton drawings, and perhaps dating from 1754, also shows large sailing ships at the New Shore beside Monk's Tower, and a substantial retaining wall running beside the banks of the Tay. There is little indication of the Old Shore, but there is clearly another small basin in the area indicated by Slezer. 226 In 1695, the "Old Shore" was the scene of a dispute between members of the burgh authorities, concerning the construction of new council buildings. Despite the absence of a bridge, the area of the "Old Shore" was cluttered by important buildings - particularly the tolbooth and the guard house. The shore may still have served as a wharf, and it was clearly perceived to be an important focal point in the burgh. Objections to the construction of a new council house were mainly concerned with its cost, however, and not with its location. 227

The river Almond, to the north-west of Perth, was almost as prominent in burgh life as the Tay. Indeed, the engineering works associated with it were just as sophisticated as the bridge and harbour works on the Tay. The town's lade ran from the Almond, where water was diverted by means of a substantial weir known as Lowswork. 228 Both of these features survive, and water is still carried along the lade to the former town mills. The "Chronicle" indicates that Lowswork in

224 B59/ 24/ 13/ 6.
226 NLS Adv. 30.5.23, (Hutton Drawings), 116c (1754 x 1808). See illustration no.15, p. 218.
227 B59/ 24/ 13/ 7/ 4 and 11. See above, p. 230.
228 The name "Lowswork" has a number of variants, but I have adopted this spelling throughout this text. Lowswork is listed as a Category B Building of Architectural or Historic Interest ( NMR Library, Ref. PJ BU 5/ PK, Tibbermore Parish). The current structure is 80 yards long, made of unmortared boulder rubble with ashlar groins.
particular had a chequered structural history in the early modern period, twice being being ruined by flood waters. The "Chronicle" makes little mention of the damage which the Almond in flood may have caused to the northern environs of the town, although the destruction of both Loweswork and the Brig of Almond indicates the force of this river. Loweswork was damaged during the flooding which brought down two arches of the Brig of Tay in December 1573, and in 1621 the waters "caried auay all Louswark being of admirabill strent + structur". It is an indication of the importance of the lade to the burgh, both as a supply of water power and as a defence, that the reparation of Loweswork was swiftly organised after the great flood; the "Chronicle" records that in 1623 it "wes buildit in stone", with the costs being borne by the king, the burgh and, supposedly, by the laird of Balhousie. 229 The building operations of the 1620s seem to have been very successful, for essentially it is the 17th century fabric which survives today. 230

However, the process of rebuilding the weir after the 1621 inundation was not as smooth as the "Chronicle" suggests; not only did the laird of Balhousie prevaricate in the payment of his share of the costs, but the work was still not finished in 1627. The burgh records include letters of horning, issued at the request of the burgh authorities, against John Colt, the mason who had been employed to rebuild Loweswork. These are dated to May 1627 - four years after the "Chronicle" indicates that the work was completed. This source includes extensive details of the materials and techniques which the burgh expected Colt to employ, and serves as an important record of the sophisticated engineering which was required:

"That quhair thair was ane contract and appointment maid at our burgh of Perth the Twentie thrid of Junij The yeir of god Im VI H twentie and thrie yerris Betuix our richt traist consing and counsallo(r) dauid Vicount of Stormount Lord Scone Proveist of our said burgh Charles Rollock than bailyie... and umql Jon Mathow of Balhousie for himself on the ane pairt and Jon Colt meason burges of our said burgh as prinll and with him dauid Jaksone burges of our said burgh Patrik Gray of Lednot also burges yair and Williame Stewart in dalcroive cationeeris ... The said Jon Colt under tuk on him the bigging and compleiting of ye work under wreittin callit Lowis wark To be bigget and constructed be him in maner following In the first ye said Jon Colt sould fumeis all kynd of warkmen and all sortis of materiallis quhatsumeiur requisit for compleiting of ye said wark sic as stane timer Irne Leid Lyme Sand and uther sort of materiallis quhatsumeuir meit and expedient for the said wark upon his awin chargis and sould hald continuallie at ye same wark aucht sufficient measones Tua queriors and sex barrowmen at ye Leist wpone his said charges ay and qll ye samyn be furnieischid Tue entir and begin yairto in maner foor(d) ptntie and neuer to leve ye same nor be absent yairfra be him self nor vtheris foirsaid nor undertak na vther wark in the meane tymo qll the Samyn be performed To Beand speciallie declarid that qll the saids vther paireis contractoris salbe no forder chargis expense nor travell in the said matter Bot onlie to visie the said wark that ye sam be sufficientie wrocht And to procure querrell Leive at Cragingall or any maist convenient and awayest part for the said wark..."  

229 See "Chronicle", 11 (3/3); 36 (1 0); 37 (1 0 / 1 0).
230 This is the implication of the entry in the List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest, NMR Library, Ref. P/BL/5/ PK, Tibbermore Parish.
Not all of the fabric had been destroyed in the flood, for the letter continues: "Item the said Jon Colt sould big and repair the brokin auld wark as yt standing qr the new wark sould joyne and help the foir syde yairof sufficientlie with tymer and stayne Item the said Jon Colt sould found big and compleit ane great wall of stane wark of Tuentei ane scoir futts doon ye watter of Lenthe and auchtine futeis thik at ye ground Beginnand the new wark at ye bak of ye auld wark at yat pairt yairof qik is magkit befoir the said Jon Colt himself be his mateis maister of wark 231 Item the said Jon Colt sould found ye sd wark of Auchtine futeis of Thiknes at ye ground and ten futtes of thiknes at ye hicht qik sould be Thrie ells hicht from the channell and ground at ye eist end and from ye westwert to ye heichest pairt of Lowiswark presentlie standing the samyn beand _____ and sua it wilbe at all pairtis vpone thrie ells of hicht Item he sould prouyd on his auin chargis as said is ane sufficient brander 232 of aik to lay on the channell and ground from end to end to found ye first course of ye wark thair upone with corstrers 233 of aik goand throw ye samyne in all pairtis from the foir(d) to ye baksyde yairof qik is estmit to tak sex corstreis in euerie ruid 234 of ye samyn the end being sex ellis yat is ane corsetrie at ye end of euerie ell yairof Item ye said Jon Colt sould wyne als mony frie stanes out of ye ye querroll of Cragin-gall ane anie vther convenient querrell of thirie or four fouteis of Lenth ye ane to help the vther and tua futeis of breid and ane fute of thik all throw And sould caus leid as mony of ye sds stanes to ye said wark as sould build up the foir face of ye said wark nixt ye watter of four futts of thiknes all weili Leawin aisler wark and that they be all fullie Joyned at ye taill Item he sould wyne and Leid to the said wark alsmony greit quhinnes 235 as sall reis the wall and wark to ye hicht on the baksyde of four futeis of thiknes to be foundit wt ye foir(d) aisler wark and reasit up altogidder weill Layd with Lyme and sand qik wilbe about aucht futeis thik of aisler wark and full wark Item he sall wyne carey and lay all allogis the bak of ye said aucht futeis wall alsmayn great quhinnes as will augment ye said wark and enlarge it to ye breid of Ten futeis moir at ye ground qik with the foir(d) aucht futeis wil be compleit ye foirsaid auchtine futeis of thiknes at ye ground as said is Item the said Jon Colt sould mak and construct ane sufficient Clowse at ye eneterie of ye milneleid in the said wark of fyne aisler wark of sic hicht and breid and samerkill yairof pendit as sould be throcht meit be skylded and experiencid men in sic wark and sould carey the same tuenf varteis lang on euerie syde And ye said Jon Colt sould sufficientlie bolt wt Irme all allogsy ye foir face of ye sd wark ye hall overcourse yairof and ye boittis to be all hid within the stane and indentit with leid at ye ends And ye said Jon Colt as prinill and his saids cautioneris obleist yame conjunctlie and seuerallie to outred and compleit ye said wark in maner sufficient according to ye conditiounes speciallie abouve wrettin betuix the dait foir(d) of ye said contract and ye elles wett day of November nixt yair after following and now of long tyme bypast...

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231 In May 1622/3, "the maister of wark tuik jorney at the Counsallis directioune for sichting Lowis wark at Huntingtoune + did set down ordour for building the same ..." (NMR Library, Ref. P/BL/5/PK, Tibbermoo re Parish, note). There is an entry in B59/ 17/ 1 which records the "Nomination of masters of work to the men on Lows work and the multurers to big the same"; (23) July 1609, 212.

232 "Brander &c la15 - ... a framework of metal or freq wood, wooden supports as used in the construction of buildings, bridges etc or in the foundations of structures ..." CSD, 61.

233 There is no record of this term in the CSD.

234 "Ruid &c ... masonry or slaterwork an area of 36 square ELLS or later yards 16-19 ..." CSD, 573.

235 "Whinstone", CSD, 788.
The burgh demanded compensation for Colt's failure to abide by his contract, as well as that he finish the work in good time. 236

There is no other record of this dispute between the burgh and the mason, but the fabric must have been satisfactorily completed. There is no indication of any further damage until 1667, when flooding affected much of the "enceinte" of Perth: 11 February 1667, "Order to provide horses for baillie Orme and others to visit the Brig of Earn Shiel's Bridge passing by Pitthevelles Lows Wark and others the Towns marches to know what prejudice the late inundation has done and to Report". A week later there was an order "to repair Lows wark and the Cross dam". 237 In 1679, it was recommended that a conduit should be built to divert water away from the face of Loweswork, and in 1681, during a visitation of the marches, the magistrates, council, guildry and tradesmen found "it altogether necessar yt ane considerable quantitie of ye great stones yt lyes foirnent Lousework wpon ye wytt syd of ye vater, Be taken wp and layed at ye roott of ye sd Lousework, yrby to stop ye same from being wndermynded, by ye impetuosness of ye vater yt falls doun wt so great violence in ye winter tyme". 238 Despite the need for such monitoring, the strength of the fabric is apparent in its current condition, for the weir still functions, and survived the flood waters of 1993.

In contrast, a footbridge near the site of the old Brig of Almond was badly damaged by the recent inundation, and the early modern bridge was also a vulnerable structure. The "Chronicle" records that the brig collapsed on 23 November 1567, but that a new bridge was completed in August 1619. 239 The New Statistical Account recorded that this bridge far outlasted the Brig of Tay: "...the Old Bridge of Almond, has now stood for more than two hundred years. It consists of one arch, founded on two rocks, and was built in 1619, by a number of gentlemen, the chief of whom was John Graham, Esq. of Balgowan..." 240 This bridge may have stood for such a long time because it was a single-arch, and there were no piers to be buffeted by swelling waters. The benefactors who financed the construction of the bridge tried to carry out the work swiftly; John Graham appeared before the presbytery of Perth in May 1619, to appeal for financial assistance for his project, in order to finish the work before the onset of winter. Graham argued that the Almond was a dangerous river, in which many people had drowned, and that the building of a bridge was necessary for the common good. 241 However, once again the passage in the "Chronicle" is slightly misleading, for in May 1620 John Graham and his associates appealed to the kirk session.

236 B59/ 26/ 1/ 15.
237 B59/ 17/ 1, 508-9.
238 B59/ 24/ 10/ 5; B59/ 24/ 1/ 9/ (1). (B59/ 24/ ...10. mills, 1586/7-1848).
239 "Chronicle", 10 (3/3); 35 (1 0).
241 Ibid. The author of the New Statistical Account commented that "The Almond is a very rapid river, and often comes down in a flood of four feet in a perpendicular breast, in which no kind of boat could live".
for more money, stating that the building was unfinished. The session were not particularly
generous in this instance, instructing the Masters of the Hospital to make a donation of £20. 242

Nevertheless, such building operations illustrate the important role of the Almond both as a natural
barrier and as a source of power. In flood, the river could pose a considerable threat to the land
around Perth, and even to the town itself, when an excess of water travelled down the lade. But
the local community expended considerable labour and resources in harnessing the river to the
needs of the town. 243 A curious feature of the burgh records is the paucity of references to the
upkeep of the lade itself - the man-made channel by which water was conveyed from the Almond to
the town mills, and also around the town in line with its defences. It may be supposed that the
retaining walls of the lade were maintained in good order, but as the water does not appear to have
been used for domestic purposes, there may have been little need to monitor the cleanliness of
the lade. 244

The town mills, by contrast, seem to have needed increasingly regular repairs as the 17th
century progressed. The mill complex was situated outside the town's defences, in the north-west
suburb; the “Lower” mill has recently been refurbished, and the “Upper” mill, close by, is now a
hotel. 245 In the 17th century, four “common” mills served the burgh in this area; the remains of
the other mills have not been investigated. 246 The names of these mills tend to change between
various sources; but Andrew Read seems to have drowned in the area of the “Over” or “Upper”
mill. 247 Reports of two visitations in 1645 and 1646 refer to the four “common” mills - the “Inch”
mill, “Nether” mill, “Middle” mill and “Over” mill. At this time, the “Inch” mill was in a poor state of
repair, needing two new water-wheels; the wheel of the “Middle” mill also required repairs, and the
roof of the “Over” mill was not watertight. 248 The “Middle” mill seems to have been in particular
need of repair in 1667 - work which was carried out by bailie George Conqueror. 249 In 1668, a new

243 The burgh community shared responsibility for the upkeep of Lowswift and part of the town
lade with the lairds of Balhousie; See B59/ 24/ 16/ 2, 1513(? ), Indenture between William Lord
Ruthven, John Eviott of Balhousie and the burgh of Perth concerning the upkeep of the water
works called Lowswift, and NSA, Vol.X, (1845), 72. (B59/ 24/... 16. water supply, public baths and
sewage, 1464-1896).
244 The index to the town council records does include one reference to damage caused to the
lade: 17 September 1666, “Order to ascertain what damage Andrew Jack hath done to the
passage of the mill lead and to Report”. B59/ 17/ 1, 503.
245 This building is a Category A listed building; NMR Library, Ref. P/BL/5/PK, Perth Burgh,
Section 11.
246 The mills were often set to tack by the burgh authorities, along with the fishings and inches;
see B59/24/13/ 2a (1614), B59/25/3/ 2 (1648), and B59/24/ 1/ 4 (misc. tacks). (B59/25/...3.
leases of burgh lands and revenue, 1592-1855). The townspeople were obliged to purchase flour
etc. only from these mills; an entry in B59/ 17/ 1 records a “Decreet fining certain persons for going
to other mills than those of the Town”, (March 1604, 158).
247 “Chronicle”, 59 (1 8).
248 B59/ 16/ 3, 12 November 1645; 12 November 1646.
249 B59/ 17/ 1, 512, 514, 517, 522; B59/ 24/ 10/ 4.
mill was constructed "above the Over mill", a "waulk" mill for the use of the fullers of the town; this project may have been inspired by the provost of the time, for in June 1668 a licence was granted to him "to take down the round at the Highgate Port to build the Waulk mill upon his own expences". 250 If the "Over" mill was indeed the mill which is now known as the "Upper" mill, then by the the later 17th century, this area of the lade just beyond the town walls would have been quite congested with milling operations.

The record of a visitation of the town mills and lade in 1679 indicates that the maintenance of these structures was a burden for both the town and their tacksmen, and that the mills required frequent attention: "FFirst, ane b(d) in the Insch mylne neidfull to be renewid, be the toun, and ane Inner wheell also neidfull to be renewed, and ye trowes a little faultie, qik ocht to be done be ye tacsmen And ye rest of ye sd mylne in a good conditiane Secondlie, The vatterwall of the nather mylne, somewhat faultie, qik ocht to be repaired be ye toun and ye Innerwheell neidfull to be re-newid be the tacsmen, And ye rest of ye s(d) myln whollie sufficient". The Middle mill was in a good condition, except that the outer wheel needed to be replaced; however the grinding mechanism of the Over mill needed several repairs. There were also recommendations to strengthen stretches of the lade, in preparation for the ice and floods of winter. 251

The regular need for significant repairs to the mills might suggest that they were inadequately constructed; but their value in burgh life is clear both from the regular series of tacks which were issued to townsmen who sought to profit from the local milling monopoly, and in the "Chronicle's" desperate account of the winter of 1635, when "elding mylnes gaid not... They knokit mall in knoking stones". 252 The need for frequent repairs is unsurprising, for the mills were perhaps the most sophisticated industrial complexes in the burgh, and amongst the busiest. There are few indications of the building materials which were used; but the "Waulk" mill was clearly stone-built, all water-wheels would naturally have been made of wood (and perhaps bonded with iron), and a record of repairs in 1690 mentions the need for "timbering and theiking" on the "Middle" mill. 253

The lade from the Almond served another mill at Balhousie, situated on the border of the North Inch, to the south of Muirton. Balhousie was a small settlement, technically within the bounds of the burgh, but dominated by the tower-house of Balhousie, the property of the Eviots, and later of a branch of the Hays of Kinnoull. The lairds played an influential role in the life of Perth, and held lands in Muirton and elsewhere in the sheriffdom; however, the only significant reference in the "Chronicle" to one of the lairds concerns his failure to contribute to the rebuilding of Lowswork in 1623. 254 Water from the town lade was diverted to the Balhousie mill through a conduit known as the "Boot", a feature which seems to have been rebuilt in the early 17th century. The index to the

250 B59/ 17/ 1, 525, 527.
251 B59/ 24/ 10/ 5.
252 "Chronicle", 43 (1.2).
253 B59/ 24/ 13/ 6.
254 Details of the history of "The Barons of Balhousie" may be found in R.S. Fittis, Historical & Traditionary Gleanings concerning Perthshire, (1876).
town council records relates that a timber "boot" was constructed in 1603, although this seems to have been a temporary arrangement prior to the building of a new stone boot later in that year. In July 1603 there was an agreement "that the Boot of Balhousie shall not be altered in length but shall remain as at present viz an ell three inch". The construction of the boot involved "emptying" the mill lade; this was probably the lade which served Balhousie mill, rather than the main town lade. 255

The tower-house, or castle, at Balhousie was also extensively remodelled during the 16th century. MacGibbon and Ross assigned this building to their "Fourth Period", 1542-1700. The date 1631 was carved on one of the skew putts. The castle was built to an L-plan and, with a ground-floor doorway, does not seem to have been defensive in intent; it was surrounded by a substantial wall, but with two gateways. The building was essentially the semi-rural dwelling of a wealthy family. Its architectural merit is difficult to judge, as a result of extensive re-building in the "Baronial" style in the 1860s. 256 But the castle is principally of note on account of its extraordinary proximity to the town. The architecture of the town could be clearly distinguished from that of the country, but at Perth urban and rural wealth could be seen in close association. When a branch of the Hays of Kinnoull acquired the lands of Balhousie, the family re-inforced its position as a major property-holder in town and country.

To the south of Perth, the river Earn lay beyond the bounds of the burgh; but from the later 16th century, the authorities in Perth had responsibility for the management and maintenance of the Brig of Earn, a structure which was vital to Perth's interests as the only major crossing point for the route which led to the burgh from Edinburgh. Although the bridge was a potentially lucrative source of revenue from tolls, 257 these resources seem to have been channelled straight back into the maintenance of the fabric.

The management of the brig was just as burdensome as trying to uphold the Brig of Tay. Architecturally, the structure was distinguished, being amongst the oldest stone bridges of medieval Scotland; the brig shared many characteristics with Stirling Bridge, which may date from the late 15th or early 16th century. However, the "Chronicle" records that the medieval bridge was poorly constructed, and this weakness was compounded by the effects of erosion on the river-bank and the shifting course of the river. 258 Hay and Stell have commented that "its building

255 B59/ 17/ 1, 145, 148, 151.
257 The burgh's responsibility for the brig marked an important extension of its influence in the surrounding countryside. In 1606, the local landowner, William Moncrieff of that Ilk, went to some lengths to establish exemptions for himself, his family and his servants, from the payment of tolls at the brig. See Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no. 268.
258 "Chronicle", 29 (8/8).
history was... more calamitous than most", and observed in 1970 that the surviving masonry of the ruined bridge showed "much evidence of reconstruction and repair". Nevertheless, the repairs of the 17th century seem to have been reasonably successful; it is of particular note that the brig survived a flood in February 1667 undamaged, although the roadway was in need of repair.

An undated document from amongst the burgh records provides a useful indication of the nature of reparation work at the bridge, and the expenses which were entailed; it is possible that this document refers to work carried out in the wake of the collapse of the north west "pend + bow" in January 1614:

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*heir folows ane acompt of expenses at the brig of Earne
It payed to four men for lodning of Wiliam bonies boatt with stons and scalfalts for the brig 00-09-0
It spent at the sighten of the brig with the dean of gild and the rest 01-00-0
It for ane litell boat to tek them in to the brig 00-05-0
It to the ofishers for firlishing for therurpars and ane craue frone 00-06-0
It to James messer 8 li of load 200 doubale flouring ane quarter of ane hundar singall
garons 261 01-04-0
It mor to James messer half ane hunder douball plenshar\[262 15 singell garons 00-09-0
It for prjes for melting the lead 00-07-0
It payd for taking out irone bats 00-02-6
It payd for ane Rect for teking out small skilay + p_ts 00-07-0
It mor for teking out lead from ______ 00-02-6
It payd for the cuse of the litell boatt 00-16-0
It payed to James messer wha agreed with to cast the touns hous + mend the brig of Earne
__ in ornest 03-05-0
It to James messer for his workmanship 87-00-0
It to Wiliam bonie for his self and his boatt by the dean of gilds ordr 14-10-0
It to Thomas droumond per acompt 14-01-6
It Spent with the dean of gild mr gorg robartsone dikon broun and the work men when
sighting the brig by the counsell ordar 01-17-0
Sum : 117: 19: 6\[263
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260 B59/ 17/ 1, 508-9. The "calsie" was reported to be in need of repair on 20 October 1645; B59/ 16/ 3.

261 "garron &c, garroun &c 16 - e17 n a wooden beam... - nall a large nail or spike..." CSD, 226.

262 "plensher... - nall a flooring nail la15-18 ..." CSD, 503.

263 B59/ 35/ 6. The index to the town council records includes useful details concerning the reparation works of 1614. On 24 January, the town council ordered that the ruins of the northern arch should be retrieved from the river, and "ane passage of timmer be set ounw thair quhill ane certane space". This suggests that a temporary timber structure was erected on the bridge to replace the fallen arch. An order followed for "John Wilson Mason to arrange the stones of the pillar of the Brig of Earn on land"; B59/ 17/ 1, 257.

In 1692, the burgh recorded that it had raised £2, 500 from the four ports of the town and the bridge of Earn; Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society, 58.
The western portion of the burgh comprised the agricultural land of the **Burghmuir**. The Royal Charter of the Burgh made particular mention of the components of this area - the muir itself, including Catside, and a network of roads, particularly the Long Causeway and Cow Causeway. However, entries in the "Chronicle" suggest that this large expanse of land stretching away from the nucleus of the burgh may have been a disputed area, in which the residents of smaller settlements sought to defy the burgh authorities. There were also two important castles in the Burghmuir area - Pitheavlis and Huntingtower. Although farther from the town than Balhousie, the occupiers of these estates would have been closely associated with burgh affairs; in the 16th century, Huntingtower was the property of the earls of Gowrie.

One of the burgh papers records a dispute between Perth and two local lairds in 1599. The burgh community complained to the king that the tenants and servants of John Murray of Tibbermore and John Ross of Craigie, of the lands of Pitheavlis and Little and Meikle Tullilum, were pasturing cattle, sowing corn, digging up turf, and pulling up heather on the burgh's land; they had even tried to appropriate parts of the muir. The index to the town council records refers to the appointment of muir grieves - officers who were responsible for watching against such incursions by outsiders - and the burgh authorities inspected the enceinte annually. The townspeople used the land both for growing cereal crops and for pasture, and as a source of fuel; like the mills, inches and fishings of the town, the muirs were also let to tacksmen. The whole of the common muir was let for 21 years in 1659 - an unusually long tack - with half the muir let to John Lamb, and the other half to Robert Smyth and James Schioch.

As has already been noted, the environs of Perth were used to house plague victims, and a part of the muir was also set aside for public executions. Maclaren located this spot at some distance from the town, on a branch of the Long Causeway, beyond Tullilum; however, the "Chronicle" records that in 1608, James McNair and Janet Ross were executed for murder, "brunt

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264 According to Maclaren, the Long Causeway ran west from the High Street, along the road which is still called Longcauseway, through Dovecotland and along Jeanfield Road; the Cow Causeway ran along what is now Kinnoull Causeway, and the Burghmuir Loaning - which has been subsumed within modern development. Maclaren, (1906), 170 (and map).

265 Huntingtower is now a guardianship property, and a summary of its history can be found in the relevant Historic Scotland guide (HMSO 1989). Pitheavlis Castle is a Category A listed building (NMR Library, Ref. P/BL/5/PK, Perth Burgh, Section 7). It is a building of the late 16th century, on an L-plan, with later alterations and additions. It seems to have been more defensive in intent than Balhousie, for MacGibbon and Ross noted several gun-holes in the south-west tower. The castle was the property of John Ross of Craigie until 1586, when it appears to have been sold to Robert Stewart. See MacGibbon and Ross, *Castellated and Domestic Architecture*, Volume III, (1889), 588.

266 B59/24/4/4/1. (B59/24/...4, burgh muir and woods, 1421-1867). The "Chronicle" records that the townsmen clashed with the people of Black Ruthven and Huntingtower during a similar dispute in June 1604; "Chronicle", 24 (7).

267 B59/24/1/4. In 1712, the Burghmuir was valued "as it is presently Lett" at £100 (Scots); B59/25/2/27.

268 See above, p. 214.

269 Maclaren, (1906), 170 and map.
after they wer hangit in ye playfield of pth”. 270 According to Maclaren, the "Playfields and Bow Butts" were situated quite close to the town, beside the Long Causeway, to the east of the old Whitefriars monastery; he also referred to an area known as the "playfield" within the town at the college yard, but this space is unlikely to have served as a place of execution. 271 The varied use of the muirs is illustrated by a record of a "play" being performed on the Playfield in June 1603. 272

The Burghmuir and the marches of Perth were visited annually by the burgh authorities, but there are relatively few detailed records of these inspections. However, a series of lengthy reports from the 1680s do survive, and these provide a good indication of the extent and condition of the burgh’s lands in that decade. They are particularly informative concerning the state of the roadways which led from the burgh. 273 In 1681, the inspectors found that "ye stone bridge wpon the west syd of ye comon loan yt leads to Pitheavles neidfull to be casten", and that "Potterhill hath incroached considerablie wpon ye east syd of ye sd Comon loan a little below ye sd bridge..." The tenants of Pitheavlis were found to have incroached upon the muir, along with tenants of Tullilium. In 1682, Robert Laing, a tenant of the laird of Kinfauns, was found to have "greatlie prejudged ye kings hieway leading from pittheavles, a little befoir ye stone bridge by cutting of ye Ditch wpon ye west syd of ye sd way in sea(ll) places, yrby diverting ye vater from ye ordinarie current and old channell and causeing ye same run doun wpon ye hieway..." It was also noted that the tenants of Pitheavlis had not yet removed themselves from the burgh’s land. By 1684, the ditch cut by Robert Laing had been attended to, but no other reparations had begun, and this was the case at the time of the final report in the series, in 1687.

Elsewhere, it was noted in 1681 that there was an "incroachment maid be ye heritor or tenents of the hangmans aiker wpon ye comon calsey leading to ye brugh being ye kings hieway" 274. The report continued that "Then they ffand yt James Johnstoun and his tenents, have als incroached wpon ye north syd of ye sd comon calsey". Another road is described, leading from Huntingtower - (this was probably the road along which David Maxton travelled, before collapsing on the Long Causeway) 275: "...yr is ane Incroachment maid be ye tenents of Tullieium wpon ye south syd of ye sd comon calsey leading from huntingtour..." It was also noted that tenants of the Marquis of Atholl, the proprietor of Huntingtower, had ploughed two furrows on the muir, "a great way wtin ye march". In 1682, it was observed that John Cuthbert of Nether Tullilum had incroached "wpon ye south syd of ye hieway leading fra huntingtour".

In 1686 "they ffand ye stone bridge below gloverland, to be both too low, and too narrow, and not sufficientlie calseyed ane ye top", 276 and the inspectors were informed "yt ye grass of ye

270 "Chronicle", 26 (7/7).
271 Maclaren, (1906), 167 and map.
272 B59/ 17/ 1, 149.
273 I have highlighted relevant place names and references to features such as roads in bold type.
274 This was obviously a different roadway to that mentioned above which led from Pitheavlis.
275 "Chronicle", 29 (8/8).
276 The "Gloverland" was in St.Leonard’s, an area adjacent to the South Inch.
Playfeild belonging to ye toun is eaten by James ogilvie carier as tenent to Baylie Jack or Jon whyt of yt houss + yeard nixt adjacent yrto*. Roads across the North Inch - "ye comon calseyes qik Balhousie is oblegged to uphold" were "werie faultie and so ocht to be repaired". The burgh seems to have had little success in enforcing reparations, however; in 1687, "They tand as they went alongs the tounes marches that their was not the least reparations of any incroachment that was found the last yeir But that they all continou in ye same conditione as they were in at ye last visitatione.." 277 It is apparent from these records that rival landowners and their tenants were confident that they could appropriate areas of the burgh's substantial lands. The authorities of Perth were particularly concerned to maintain the known boundaries of their lands; in 1681 there was concern that the furrows ploughed by Atholl's tenants might "by proces of tyme ... be reckoned ye march".

In 1721, if not before, attempts were made to clearly define the western limits of the muir beside the lands of Huntingtower: "...It is agred betwixt His Grace John Duke of Athol... Heretabale proprietor of the lands + Barony of Huntingtower and pertinents thereof ... and (the whole community of Perth ed.) ... The Magistrats + Council of the said burgh having Ditched + Inclosed a part of the Burrow Muir and planted the same, and being now upon the further Inclosing + Improving their said muir; and for acertaining the limits thereof on the west and preventing all Controversie betwixt the said Duke + the Town anent the March between His Grace's lands of the Hill of Huntingtower or any oy(r) his lands contigue therewith, and the west end of the said Burow Muir, And for clearing + distinguishing of the march betwixt the said partyes in time coming They have now placed + sett march stones in the way and manner following To witt Beginning on the north side of the said muir a stone having the letter A upon the Westmost and the letter P upon the Eastmost side thereof Is placed and sett on the South side of the Highway leading from Perth (highlighted by ed.) to Tippermuir at forty feet distance of the Old Dyke that runs East + West betwixt His Grace's lands of Letham + the said Highway And Two hundred + fifty three feet westward + crossing the said highway from the South end of the Old March Dyke that runs South and North betwixt the said lands of Letham and a part of the lands of Goodlieburn called the Holl pertaining to the Earl of Kinnoul and from the stone aforesaid so sett and Described the March Runs up southward to an Earthfast big Gray Stone having the said Letter A cutt upon the west part + the said Letter P upon the Easter part thereof And from the said Earth fast Gray Stone to another stone cutt and marked with the two letters aforesaid placed in a Straight Line toward the South West And from this last mentioned lettred stone The march runs down the muir toward the South West to another Lettred stone which is placed at one hundred + ninety one feet distance northward from the vestige of a Dyke or march betwixt the lands of LamberkIn + the said muir And from the said stone last before mentioned the march runs southward and ends at another stone marked with said letter A on the Westmost and the Letter P on the Eastmost side thereof And placed on the said vestige of the Dyke which is Reputed the March between the said muir + lands of Easter LamberkIn And which march stones specially + particularly before mentioned have several other stones interjected in the several lines... And the Town Renounces Quitclaims de simpliciter Overgives all right title or clame to the Lands on the west side of the said marches as

277 These reports appear in B59/ 24/ 1/ 9 (1 + 2).
they are now sett or any servitude y(r)upon As on the other part the said John Duke of Atholl for himself his heirs + successors by these presents Renounces Quitclames + Simpliciter overgives In favours of the sd Town of Perth all Right Title or claime to the said Burrow Muir or any part thireof on the East of the said march stones or to pasturing casting of ffewal ffeall or Divot or any other servitude whatsoever thereupon But prejudice always to His Grace + the Tennents Inhabitants of the said Barrony of Huntingtower of the Exemption + freedom from the Customs conform to use + wont for their Bestial going to + from the Towns midsummer Cattle mercat And it is likeways agreed That notwithstanding of the Regulating + setting the marches as afores(d) the Highways are not to be yrby stoped, but that the sd highway leading from Perth west toward Tippermuir in so far as the same goes through his Grace's ground is to be kept fourty feet in Breadth and the way leading from Huntingtower through His Grace's + the Towns muir to the Bridge of Earn shall be keipit patent Twenty five feet in Breadth..." 278

The picture which emerges of the Burghmuir in the 17th century is of a large expanse of agricultural land which, although defined by royal charter, was nevertheless the subject of rival claims from a host of local landed interests. The burgh authorities were certainly concerned to uphold the march of the muir, but in general seem to have lacked the means to enforce their rights; the episode recorded in the "Chronicle" in which the men of Black Ruthven and Huntingtower were driven from the burgh's lands seems to have been unusual. It is quite possible that the burgh was unwilling to challenge local lairds if they or their tenants encroached upon the muir; it is important to remember that these landowners would themselves have been important figures within the burgh, and that some at least would have owned properties within the town as well as in its environs. The Burghmuir was set to a variety of uses; it included both pastoral and arable land, and was an important source of fuel in the form of peat. Furthermore, most of the important roadways to Perth from the south and west seem to have crossed the moors; if the dimensions mentioned in the previous document are accurate, then it is apparent that by the early 18th century, some of these roads were very substantial, and their maintenance seems to have been a priority for the burgh.

By the later 17th century, there seems to have been just one roadway leading north from Perth, across the North Inch. In 1680, inspectors reported that it would be "most convenient + advantageous for ye toun yt yr be but one comon way designed in ye north insch for all passengers and for ye tenents of moortoun for carieing of yr muck, and they impedit from spoilling ye rest yrof as formerlie they have done..." 279 The town council records often make mention of the need to clear the causeways of dung - particularly on the North Inch; in the 1660s several letters were sent to the Presbytery of Dunkeld concerning the need to repair Muirton Causeway. The council's concern for the upkeep of roadways also applied to the streets of the town; in October 1667 there was an order that "every proprietor and liferenter to repair the causeways opposite their own houses". 280 There is less information about landward communications on the east side of the Tay,

279 B59/ 24/ 1/ 6.
280 B59/ 17/ 1, 518.
but the town council records do describe an incident on a road near the Braes of Gowrie: July 1604, "Complaint by George Ogiluy baillie against George Scott in Kirkstyle of Kinfauns and others for waylaying him on the high road near the wood of Kinfauns when returning to Perth". 281

In 1614, David Maxton collapsed on the Long Causeway "foirne(n)t the dwcat", almost certainly in the "Doucatland", the area in which the Whitefriars monastery had stood. Prior to the Reformation, the town of Perth was ringed by four substantial monasteries, and many lesser hospitals and chapels; the vestiges of these establishments seem to have been important features of the environs of the post-Reformation town. The excavator of the Whitefriars site found relatively little demolition rubble; this suggested that either the stone of the buildings demolished at the Reformation was removed from the site, or that the monastery sustained relatively little damage and was gradually robbed over time. If the latter was the case, then it is possible that fairly substantial remains would have survived at the time of Maxton's death; however the "Chronicle" makes no mention of the friary buildings. The excavation also revealed 14 graves which had been cut through demolition levels of the friary church. There was a stone retaining wall, and the site might have been a small cemetery. The dates of these burials were unclear; but they do suggest that the sanctity of the site was still recognised after the Reformation. 282

The Charterhouse was located at the south west corner of the town, slightly beyond the walls, and part of the site is now occupied by the buildings of the reconstructed King James VI Hospital. Some of the land of the monastery was bought by the Glovers Incorporation in 1642, and cultivated as arable land until the middle of the 18th century. According to Simpson and Stevenson, after the Reformation the only remnants of the priory buildings were the gateway and a dovecot. 283 Indeed, Scott thought that these remains of the Charterhouse were the gateway and a dovecot. 284 Verschuur remarked that "Certainly by late June 1559, as noted in the record of a local property transaction, the Charterhouse had been destroyed and Scone Abbey burnt..." 285 However, the site of the monastery remained of particular significance for the burgh,

281 Ibid., 164.
283 Simpson and Stevenson, 33-34.
as the eventual site of the Hospital. 286 Of course, James VI’s endowment of former church lands for the establishment and maintenance of the Hospital at Perth ensured that the properties of the old religious orders continued to play an important role in the life of the post-Reformation burgh.

The site of the Greyfriars monastery, to the south east of the town, remained a distinct feature by virtue of its use as the common burial ground after 1580. The kirk session records include an order for John Jack to repair the walls of the Greyfriars in 1595, but these were later demolished to provide building materials for the Cromwellian citadel. The remains of the friary buildings may have been demolished or robbed before that time; in March 1633, the session ordained the masters of the Hospital "to enter + possess Beatrix Gardner in an piece yard within the Grayfriars, which John Foullis at his own Hand intromitted with". 287 After the Restoration, efforts were made to repair the damage caused by the Cromwellians, as in October 1664 the council issued an order for the rebuilding of the west wall of the Greyfriars. 288

The substantial site of the Blackfriars monastery, to the west of the Castle Gable, also remained as a distinct suburban feature after the Reformation. Some of the old monastic site seems to have been given over to cultivation, 289 and even in 1785 a property was described as "lying without the Castle-gavil Port, in the gate called the Curfew Row, bounded betwixt the common vennel sometime passing to the Blackfriars on the east... the ground originally called the kirkyard of the Blackfriars... on the north". 290 The post-Reformation site may not have been protected by a wall, but in 1604 the town council prohibited pigs from being seen "on the Inches and Blackfriars yard without rings, or the same to be "sticked" and the owners punished"; in this instance, the yard might have been used as a pen. 291 Part of the monastic area has been excavated, and the post-medieval features which were revealed included a series of walls, five wells, and a stone drain. Part of the friary’s cemetery, including boundary features, was revealed, and there was some evidence of robbing from the remains of a stone building which was believed to be part of the monastery. However, the condition of the monastic remains in the 17th century remains unclear. 292

286 The kirk session records indicate that several sites were considered for the construction of the Hospital, including the Old Shore; a curious record of 1601 reads: "The Session ordains John Jack Officiar, to repair that part of the Burial Dyke which is lately fallen doun; + to intromit with, + to have the Grass of the said Burial[ay + while the Hospital House be inhabited". NLS Adv. 31.1.1, Volume I, (1774), 2 February 1601.


288 B59/ 17/ 1, 472.

289 See above, pp. 200-201 for details of the the prices of crops grown on the Blackfriars Croft.

290 Simpson and Stevenson, 31-2.

291 B59/ 17/ 1, 168.

A rural environment was juxtaposed with the urban centre of the burgh by the Burghmuir, and by the inches of Perth. Like the Burghmuir, both inches had a variety of uses, and along with the mills and fishings were frequently set to tack. However, the character of the two inches does seem to have been slightly different. The North Inch tended to bear the brunt of flooding, and during the course of the 17th and early 18th centuries acquired a series of flood defences. The only route north from the town led across the North Inch to the settlement at Muirton, and beyond. The South Inch seems to have been used less intensively, but the drainage on this inch may have been more efficient, and it was clearly a suitable site for the construction of the Cromwellian citadel in the 1650s, a major piece of military engineering. Although some boats did land at the North Inch, the development of the New Shore would have contributed to the rather different character of the land to the south of the town. Both inches were, however, used as sites for public executions; the "Chronicle" records that three "witches" were burnt on the South Inch in 1598, and Maclaren noted that witches were executed on the North Inch, near Balhousie Castle, in 1623.

The inches seem to have maintained their importance for the town in the 18th century. The old Statistical Account mentions that they were used for pasture, but also for recreation. Although "weaponshows" seem to have been held on the inches, in the 1740s the medical officer of Cumberland's army noted that linen cloth was bleached on both. Most of the useful material in the Perth burgh records concerning the inches relates to the later 17th and early 18th centuries; but the index to the town council records furnishes details of the condition of these lands during the time of the "Chronicle's" composition. Reference is made to the bleaching of cloth - apparently on the inches - in 1601, and if this was the case it is unsurprising that the burgh authorities frequently sought to remove dung from the inches and the Muirton Causeway. Similarly, in 1605 pigs were banned from the inches although, as the "Chronicle" makes clear, other livestock remained. By the 1660s, both inches had acquired flood defences.

In 1680, a report on the visitation of the inches concentrated on the need for adequate drainage and the maintenance of flood defences: "...haifing taken ane exact inspectione of ye pnt conditio(ne (of the inches ed. ) ... ffand sea(ll) things y(r)in absolutlie neidfull to be repaired, especialie ye casting of ye stank (highlighted by ed.) one ye west and north syd of ye south Insh q(rto) they think ye inhabitants ocht to concurr And als it is ye opinione yt yt feall dyke

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293 "Inch": "...1 (1) a small island 15-, in place names la 12-. (2) a piece of rising ground in the middle of a plain la 18-. 2 a stretch of low-lying land near a river or other water, sometimes cut off at high tide la 15-, now chf in place-names..." CSD, 312.
294 In 1692, the burgh recorded that it had raised £3,300 from the four mills, two inches and fishings; Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society, 58.
295 "Chronicle", 19 (6); Maclaren, (1906), 166.
296 OSA, 477; Simpson and Stevenson, 5.
297 "Chronicle", 31 (9), lines 9-12: "men rowing wt boats in ye same north inche taking furth scheip that war in perrell of drwnyg(n)g". See above, p. 264 for references to the "Cow Inch".
298 See 859/ 177 1, 134, 145, 174, 496.
299 "Fail-dyke": "a field wall built or covered with sods 16-...", CSD, 185.
at ye head of ye sd insch (somewhat toment alex(r) allans house) be taken doun, in respect it stops ye vater from returning into Craigie Burn from whence it cometh and yt ye ground of ye fd dyke be maid als levall as ye sd burn is, and yreftir ane conduct maid below, and ane new feall dyke biggit y(r)on, yt yrby ye vater mey have ane frie vent out of ye insch, then They declar yt it is also yr opinione yt yt great gulf qlk ye vater hath maid at ye west end of ye citedail beyond ye trench be filled wp and yt ye inhabitants lykewyss concurr for doing yrof, and yreftir yt ane little stone dyke be built at ye head of ye same nixt ye trench / Margin note And yt ye great pudle at ye head of ye sd insch be also Pille wp w red / Then they think it most convenient + advantageous for ye toun yt yr be but one comon way designed in ye north Insch ... And yt the Croy one ye eist Syd of ye sd insch be pntlie helped ther being ane great pairt yrof fallen doun and ye rest lykene so to doe if tymeslyie it be not remeadit” 300

In April 1695, following a flood, the protesters who opposed the building of a new council house argued that the money would be better spent on establishing new defences, and repairing the damage which had once again been caused by flood water: “the vaccand steipends ... rather ought to be bestowed in building of the Tounes north insh bridg + in bigging ane croy att the foot of the north insh wher the watter att the bruke of the home neulk maid ane great incroalchment ...” 301 In January and February 1724, plans were submitted to construct an elaborate series of flood defences along the east bank of the Tay from the Almond to the town of Perth; these proposals illustrate the property divisions which had been established along this stretch of the river, and emphasise that the burgh authorities - and local landowners - fought a continual battle with the powerful river. It is apparent from earlier records that the landscape of the riverbank along the North Inch had already been punctuated with flood defences:

“...The said George Earle of Kinnoull (highlighted by ed.) and the said Magistrats and Town Councill of Perth Considdering That for some few years bygone The water of Tay hath in time of speats made sodne Encroachments upon the said Earle his lands on the north and south sides of the Muirton of Balhousie and that if suitable methods be not taken to keep The said River within its old Chanell the frequent speats may happen soon to divert the Current from its proper channell And thereby endanger the Loss of a great part of the ground aforesaid belonging to the Earle of Kinnoull and of the North Inch of the burgh of Perth which lyes besouth and Contique to the Earles Lands aforesd They find it absolutely necessary and therefore both parties do agree That proper fences Bulworks and Cruys be with all convenient Dilligence made and built at the necessary and convenient places af(t) mentioned betwixt the point of Land on the west side of the water of Tay opposite to Rome and the head or north end of the said North Inch of Perth Viz a croy or fence of an hundred foots of measure into the water at the sd point of land opposite to Rome made up with Creels stones and feal, another croy at the mouth of old Almond of Twelve Elns into the sd water of Tay, another croy or fence alittle be south the former reaching also twelve elns into the water, another croy a little further southward Extending fourteen elns into the water, another croy over against the End of the Lamb Inch of at least twenty elns of Length and That a Dyke be built with feal and Chingel on the mouth of the Latch - another croy a little south ward of

300 B59/ 24/ 1/ 6.
301 B59/ 24/ 13/ 10.
Ten Elns Length, a croy of sixteen Elns Length at the upper or North End of the Muirtown Inch, a croy Ten Elns Long at the Pyet Trees in the said Inch, a croy of sixty Elns Length from the neither or southmost point of the Muirtown Inch To the Standeets\textsuperscript{302} or Bank, And a Cross Dyke in the Muirtown Loan about one hundred paces Distant from old Almond - Expences of making and building all which, Conform to Estimats made by persons of skill at the Desire of both parties IS Computed To Amount To The sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty five pounds Scots money, as also The said Parties agree That fences and fortification made at the head or north end of the Muirtown haugh and from there southward near to the head or north end of the said North Inch of Perth The Charge and Expence of which IS Computed to Extend to Two Thousand pounds money foresaid...\textsuperscript{303}.

Cartographic and pictorial evidence for the layout and condition of the 17th century burgh is sparse. Slezer's stylised prospect of the town suggests that the inches were heavily planted with trees, and appears to depict several water courses or drainage dykes on the North Inch. The Castle Gable suburb appears to have been quite substantial, but it is notable that the North Inch was smaller in extent than it is today. Slezer seems to have depicted the enclosed property of Balhousie, but the castle is not readily identifiable. The landscape beyond the town is open and almost devoid of feature. In the foreground, small cottages and outhouses are depicted on the east bank of the Tay, and perhaps garden rigs or "lazy-beds".\textsuperscript{304} The prospect of the town which is included amongst Hutton's drawings (c. 1754) is also stylised, and provides few details of the environs; however, animals are shown on the Moncreiffe Island, and the South Inch is heavily wooded.\textsuperscript{305}

John Adair's map of "Straithem Stormount and Cars of Gourie" (c. 1685) places Perth within a large landscape of settlements and private estates. The environs of the town are depicted quite simply. The estate at Balhousie, a settlement at Muirton, and the lades from the Almond are shown to the north of the town, with a roadway leading north to Dunkeld across the Almond, close to its confluence with the Tay. There is no bridge or ford indicated at that point, but the "Almond bridg" is clearly shown upstream near Methven. The estate at Huntingtower, Tibbermore kirk, and the park of Dupplin are shown along with other settlements, but there is little detail of the Burghmuir. Some of this area seems to be depicted as rough ground, or perhaps marsh. A large house is shown at Pitheavlis, past which a road leads from the town to Dupplin and a "Roman Paved Way".

\textsuperscript{302} Also known as the "Stanners" - an area of shingle. CSD, 664.
\textsuperscript{303} B59/ 36/ 8 (4th doc.). See above, p. 180 for further proposals for flood defences, dated 1756.
\textsuperscript{304} A Vision of Scotland, 59.
\textsuperscript{305} See illustration no. 15, 218.
Petite's plans of Perth and the environs of the town seem to provide more information concerning the state of the "enceinte" in 1715/6. The "Exact Plan of the Town and adjacent parts of Perth as it was fortified and possess'd by the Rebells in Scotland" indicates that almost all the land surrounding the burgh was cultivated in rigs. The North Inch, by contrast, appears as open and uncultivated land, dissected by the roadway which by-passes the enclosed estate of "Baffin" (Balhousie), leading north through the substantial settlement of "Morton". The inch is bounded on the west by the lade which runs from Balhousie; the mill is clearly shown west of the castle grounds. Most of the South Inch is shown as open land - though dominated by the citadel - but its fringes appear to have been marshier land, particularly along the course of the Craigie Burn. However, close to the southern limits of the town, the inch seems to have been under cultivation. The Greyfriars burial ground was clearly defined, but apparently overgrown. Few trees are indicated on the inches, but the Castle Gable area seems to be depicted as gardens. The harbour and an inlet beside the Gowrie House are clearly shown.

Petite depicts an overwhelmingly agricultural landscape, but the buildings and settlements to the west of the burgh are not shown in any detail, apart from an enclosed wooded area with associated buildings which may be a representation of Huntingtower, or the settlement which Adair called "Newtoun". There is a notable concentration of properties to the south-west of the town, but none of these is identified by name. Six, or perhaps seven, roads cross the Burghmuir, of which three are named: A "Road to Stirling" (presumably the Long Causeway); a "Road to Dumferling & Queensferry", emanating from the Cow Causeway; and a road leading south-westwards to Edinburgh by Kinghorn. The course of the lade, and its junction at the Boot of Balhousie, is clearly shown. However, the map is remarkable for depicting a heavily cultivated landscape with few substantial settlements beyond the town. This is surely a misleading portrait, and given that Petite mis-named Balhousie, his knowledge of the wider landscape of the burgh is questionable.

306 "The Mapp of Straithern Stormount and Cars of Gourie with the Rivers Tay and Iern - Surveighed and Designed by John Adair Fellow of the Royal Society". This version of the map, which originates from 1685, seems to have been issued after 1688, and was re-published c. 1745. See illustration no. 18, p. 221.

307 NLS Map Library 1648/ Z3/ 2a, "An Exact Plan of the Town and adjacent parts of Perth... 1715/6". Petite's "Plan of Perth and Adjacent Places with a projection of a Cittadel" (1648/ Z3/ 1a 1715/6) indicates that most of the properties to the south-west of the town comprised rectangular enclosures and buildings which were generally constructed to an L-plan. It is also apparent that the south-eastern portion of the South Inch - where the Craigie Burn joined the Tay - was an ill-defined area of marsh and banks - presumably the area which was disputed by the burgh and Sir Thomas Moncreiff. See illustration no.14, p. 217.
The immediate landscape beyond the walls of Perth was cluttered with developments. A growing system of roadways stretched in all directions and, despite the loss of the Tay bridge in 1621, it is apparent that Perth was still a focal point for communications between the southern Lowlands, the east coast, and even the Highlands beyond Dunkeld. The significance of the harbours in town life also indicates that the burgh continued to be accessible by water. The burgh was responsible for the maintenance of the Brig of Earn, and played a part in the re-building of the Brig of Almond - two of the most important river crossings in the Lowlands. The management of such features was expensive; but the authorities of Perth seem to have been adept at letting their properties to tacksmen. The inclement climate of the period certainly contributed to the burgh's managerial problems in the "enceinte", as well as within the town, and some of the sophisticated engineering works associated with the local rivers were particularly vulnerable in the event of inundations. However, financial aid was offered from central government for the rebuilding of Lowswork. Such help indicates that the weir and town lade were perceived to fulfil a crucial function, serving the town's mills with water. The details of the re-construction of Lowswork which are contained in the burgh records emphasise that expensive building materials were available to the engineers who were charged with constructing such works; in this context, the failure of John Milne's bridge must have been extremely controversial, as well as disappointing.

By the early 18th century, steps were being taken to define the limits of the burgh, but in the 17th century the burgh's boundaries do not seem to have been adequately marked out on the ground; the Burghmuir in particular was vulnerable to encroachments by the residents of nearby settlements. Similarly, property divisions do not appear to have been satisfactorily established on the South Inch. The enceinte of Perth was a competitive environment, and one in which the interests of landed proprietors and the local nobility clashed with those of the burgh. However, the proximity to the town of estates such as Balhousie and Huntingtower underlines that close associations of long standing existed between the burgh and landed families. Architecturally, the environs inevitably contrasted with the appearance of the town - even though a building of distinction such as the Gowrie House might evoke the castellated architecture of rural tower-houses. There was a diversity of building types within the environs of the 17th century town, but the nature of smaller properties is not discussed in the sources. Much of the land which surrounded the town was essentially agricultural; but in times of plague, the Burghmuir and inches would have been populated by the temporary dwellings of the diseased inhabitants of Perth, and these lands were also used for the disposal of the dead. The town was ringed by the ruins of the old religious houses, and the enceinte is unlikely to have been an attractive landscape. Rather, the local inhabitants made wide-ranging use of the town's environs; it was a working landscape, divided by roads and growing industrial developments.
Summary

The burgh records do suggest that the environment of 17th century Perth was adversely affected by bad weather - particularly by the effects of flooding during harsh winters. Much of the built environment of Perth seems to have been tawdry in the post-Reformation century. Prolonged economic recession and epidemics of disease were crucial to the burgh's difficulties as well, although neglect and incompetence played a part in the loss of stretches of the old town walls and the Brig of Tay. However, the picture is not as clear-cut as this, and not all buildings were caught in a cycle of decline. The maintenance of St. John's Kirk was one of the burgh's leading commitments, and the civil and ecclesiastical authorities seem to have been successful in upholding - and perhaps even improving - the condition of the fabric and the experience of worship. Other leading buildings in the burgh - notably the tolbooth - seem to have suffered from a lack of investment; but this fabric survived, and characteristic features of the medieval burgh - notably the cross and the harbour areas - remained as important focal points within the town.

Although the burgh authorities do not seem to have managed their resources particularly well in the matter of the reparation of the bridge, in general they did use their limited finances to good effect in an era of natural disasters and widespread disease. The importance of public health seems to have been recognised, and some measures were taken to clear the environment of detritus caused by building projects, agricultural activity, and industrial processes.

Living conditions within the town were still cramped and, as the "Chronicle" suggests, many houses were vulnerable to fire damage and structural decay. There were certainly wealthy residential areas, and the riverside sector of the town emerges as a busy, claustrophobic locale in which were situated the large houses of merchants, public buildings, a quayside which was still operative at the head of the High Street and, for many years, the site of the building works over the Tay. The Gowrie House seems to have stood in a class apart from most other residential buildings in the burgh. The distinctions which did exist between the residential areas of Perth were physical expressions of social differences based upon class, wealth and occupations. However, the burgh records and the "Chronicle" also convey a strong sense of community; burgh society continued to function in despite of adversity.

Some stretches of the town walls may have been in poor condition, but nevertheless, in the 17th century the limits of the town were still neatly defined by the defences. The landscape of the town's immediate environs contrasted with the urban centre, and the records make clear that the burgh comprised a diverse mixture of urban and rural features. Periodically, the operation of this working environment was badly disrupted; but it continued to function throughout the century. Indeed, despite the destruction of the Tay bridge, Perth's role as a focal point of communications seems to have developed as the quality of the local roadways improved. It is important to note that foreign visitors to the burgh do seem to have been impressed by its condition.

To a significant extent, the burgh records uphold the general impression which is given by the "Chronicle" concerning the state of the environment of Perth in the early modern period. The
“Chronicle” draws attention to the variety of urban buildings, and their vulnerability; it suggests that there were distinctions between residential areas of the town. The text indicates that the kirk stood out as a building in fine condition, but that the built environment was seriously threatened by the elements. The “Chronicle” points to the defining features of the enceinte of the town; and there are strong parallels between the information conveyed in this source and that contained in the burgh records concerning the landscape which lay beyond the town walls.

In terms of the archaeology of the early modern burgh, further research should take account of the general environmental state of Perth which has been portrayed in this chapter. The burgh functioned in an era of climatic and economic difficulties which profoundly affected the condition of the built environment and the quality of life of its inhabitants. Ideally, if the right sites were to become available, excavations could still be directed towards answering questions about the residential and industrial buildings of Perth, about the state of the defences, the construction of the town's roads, and waste disposal. Information about buildings "beneath the cross", in the quayside area of the town and the Watergate, could be particularly helpful given the emphasis which this area receives in the documentation. Similarly, further work beneath the floor of the kirk, and in the area of the old kirk yard, could complement ample documentary material. The building survey of the Fair Maid's House was an unusual opportunity to examine 17th century masonry in Perth; but where early modern fabrics can be identified - as at Lowswork - then architectural survey is required. Study of the landscape will inevitably be an inter-disciplinary process; understanding of the morphology of the three leading rivers of the enceinte, for example, could embellish the historical record which portrays their significance in the life of Perth. Fundamentally, the documentation points to the buildings and features of Perth which characterised the burgh - and which indicate its environmental condition in the difficult era which followed the Reformation.
Appendix 3

Archaeological work carried out in Perth: Selective list of published information relative to buildings of the burgh

(Several excavation reports await publication)


1975-77 Perth High Street Excavations. Excavated buildings included the "Old Parliament House" and the townhouse of the Davidsons of Balgay. See main text for references.

1977 High Street. A watching brief during building operations in Thistle Tavern Close. Evidence of medieval wattle, posts and floor levels was found. L. M. Blanchard, An Archaeological Survey of Perth (Urban Archaeology Unit 1979), 1.

1978 65-67 South Street. A watching brief during building operations. Medieval oak posts, wattle and daub fragments were recovered. Ibid.

1978 Trenches excavated in the area of the Turret Brig Port (NO 1157 2364) produced traces of wattle structures. Simpson and Stevenson, 20.

1978-79 45 Canal Street. Excavation revealed a 16th century stone house with external gravel yard and stone-lined drain. See main text for references.

1979 21-22 Mill Street. An excavation on the line of the northern defences of the town. Structures which were revealed included a sequence of medieval furnaces and a post-medieval oven. N. A. McGavin, Excavations at Mill Street, Perth 1979-1980. Interim Report.

1979 97, High Street. A watching brief during building operations. Medieval oak posts were discovered. An Archaeological Survey of Perth, 2.

1979 Kirk Close. Several late medieval buildings were excavated, including a bakery. See main text for references.

1980-81 1, High Street. During works to re-inforce the City Chambers, stone foundations from 
earlier buildings and large jointed timbers were located - possibly the remains of the medieval 
harbour, tolbooth or bridge. Simpson and Stevenson, 22.

1982 King Edward Street. Four structures fronting the High Street, dated c.12th century, were 
revealed during excavations. L.M. Blanchard and L. Ross, An Excavation at King Edward Street, 

1983 Meal Vennel. Several structures spanning the 13th-17th centuries were revealed during 
excavations. See main text for references.

1989 Scott Street. Evidence for post-medieval structures had been disturbed by later 
developments. See main text for references.
Appendix 4
Properties and property-holders recorded in the Rental Books of the King James VI Hospital

The following material is taken from Rev. R. Milne's edition of the Rental Books of King James VI Hospital, Perth (1891). Milne edited five rental books, of varying length and character, all dating from the 17th century. Details of these volumes have been noted above, p. 28 n.90, p. 46 n.107. The following list relates to some of the properties and property-holders which are discussed in the "Houses and Residential Areas" essay, pp. 233 - 244.


Constantine Malice:

Book 1.
A just rental of the Hospitality of Perth, with the warrants upon the same, in the Hospital's hands presently...
1. The rental of the annuals pertaining sometime to the Blackfriars within the Town.
   Item, a tenement pertaining to Andrew Brydie, his wife life-renter, and Constantine Malice, future possessor, yearly - 40 sh. p.52.

Book 2.
The names of the persons underwritten yearly addebted to the Hospital of Perth, from the Kirkgate to the Cross.
   Kirkgate...
   Blackfriars - Item, the land of Constantine Malice pays yearly -xl sh. p.143.
   South side of the Southgate...
   Obit. - Item, the land of Constantine Malice pays yearly - xvi sh. p.150.

Book 3.
The Rental of the Annuals sometime paid to the Blackfriars of Perth, and now to the Hospital of Perth.
   Item, the land of Constantine Malice, lying on the west side of the Kirkgate - betwixt the land of umquhill Patrick Blair, now Patrick Gray's on the south, the land of umquhill Alexander Robertson, notary, on the north, pays yearly (now the heirs of Alex. Whyte, merchant - xl sh. pp.184-5.

The rental of the "haill obits," sometime paid to the Kirk of Perth, and now to the Hospital of Perth.
   Item, the land lying on the south side of the Southgate, sometime pertaining to umquhill Andrew Robertson, and now to Constantine Malice - the land of the heirs of umquhill John Elder on the
east, the land of David Rynd on the west, pays yearly - xvi sh. (Now the heirs of Andrew Maiden).

p. 229.

The rental of St. James' altar, within the Burgh of Perth...
Item, the land lying on the south side of the Southgate, pertaining to David Rynd - the land of Constantine Malice on the east, the land of Henry Elder on the west... pp. 236-7.

The rental of St. Ann's annuals, within the Kirkyard of Perth...
Item, the land of Robert Murray, lying on the west side of the Kirkgate - the land of Constantine Malice on the south, the land of Mr. Colt on the north... p. 240.

Book 4.
Alex. Peebles.
Item, his land occupied by himself, sometime Constantine Malice's land, to the obits, by decree - xvi sh. (Obits)... p. 271.

Book 5.
South side of the Southgate...
Patrick Young (now James Peddie's).
Item, that land, back and fore, with the yard and pertinents, lying as said is, sometime pertaining to Constantine Malice, thereafter to Alex. Peblis, Provost, thereafter to Oliver Peblis and his heirs, and now to Patrick Young, tailor - bounded betwixt the lands of the heirs of William Rioch on the east, the lands of George Buchan, tailor, on the west, the Spey stank on the south, and the said Southgate on the north parts, pays yearly to the obits, and now to the said Hospital - 00: 16: 00. This is in constant use of payment. pp. 340-1.

West side of the Kirkgate...
Agnes Malcolm (James Gray, now Alex. Whyt).
Item, that land, lying as said is, "heich and laich," sometime pertaining to Andrew Brydie, thereafter to Constantine Malice, and now to the heirs of Oliver Peblis, life-rented by Agnes Malcolm, his relict - bounded betwixt the lands of the heirs of Patrick Brown on south, the land of the heirs of Mr. John Robertson on the north, the land of Henry Rollo, saddler, on the west, and the Kirkgate on the east parts, pays yearly to the Blackfriars, and now to the said Hospital, of feu-maill - 02: 00: 00.
(Item, more, thereoutof, to the said Blackfriars - 05: 00: 00.
(There is decree against Constantine Malice for 2 lib. in Gowrie's time)... p. 376.
Andrew Read:

Book 1.
The rental of St. Ninian's altar.
Item, umquhill John Drummond's, merchant, booth, lying on the north side of the Northgate, under umquhill William Kynpont's (Kippen's) land, now pertaining to Andrew Reid, merchant, yearly - xl sh. p.74.

Book 4.
Andrew Reid.
Item, "furth of" his merchant booth, sometime occupied by John Drummond, to St. Ninian's - xl. p.293.
Alex. Donaldson (and his "guid dame")...
Item, their merchant booth, sometime pertaining to Patrick Blair (now Andrew Reid), on the north side of the Northgate, to St.Tennent's altar - xxxv sh... p.296.

Book 5.
North side of the Southgate, beneath the Meal Vennel.
Thomas Wilson (now John Smith, wright).
Item, that land, back and fore, lying on the north side of the Southgate, sometime pertaining to Mr. Archibald Steidman, and now to Thomas Wilson - bounded betwixt the land pertaining to the Hospital on the west, the lands of the heirs of Andrew Reid on the east, the lands of the heirs of Andrew Gray on the north, and the said Southgate on the south parts, pays yearly to Lady Presentation altar, and now to the said Hospital, of feu-maill - 20: 13: 04. p.362.

West side of Watergate.
The heirs of Andrew Reid.
Item, that land lying on the west side of the Watergate, and north side of the Southgate, sometime pertaining to the Laird of Lawers, and now to the heirs of Andrew Reid, merchant - bounded betwixt the lands sometime of the Laird of Glenorchy, and now of the heirs of the said Andrew Reid on the west, the said Southgate on the south, the lands sometime of William Hamilton, and now of James Schioch on the north, and the said Watergate on the east parts, pays yearly to St. Adamnan's (the Confessor), and now to the said Hospital (of feu-maill) - 01: 06: 08.
( The above-written 1 lib. 6 sh. 8 d. is instructed in a particular charter).
Item, more, thereoutof, to St. Nicolas altar - 01: 00: 00.
There is none of these two in use of payment. p.363.

James Schioch.
Item, that land, lying on the west side of the Watergate, sometime pertaining to Gilbert Blair, thereafter to William Hamilton, and now to James Schioch, merchant - bounded betwixt the land sometime of the Laird of Lawers, and now to the heirs of Andrew Reid on the south, the other land of the said James Schioch on the north, the lands of the heirs of Andrew Reid on the west, and the
said Watergate on the east parts, pays yearly to "Holy Blood" altar, and now to the said Hospital - 00: 14: 00... p. 363.

James Schioch.
Item, that land, lying as said is, sometime pertaining to James Marr, thereafter to William Hamilton, and now to the said James Schioch - bounded betwixt the lands of the said James Schioch on the south, the land of the heirs of James Whytock, shoemaker, on the north, the close and yard of the heirs of Andrew Reid on the west, and the said Watergate on the east parts, pays yearly to the Charterhouse, and now to the said Hospital - 00: 06: 00. p. 364.

North side of the Northgate (to the Cross).
The heirs of John Anderson ( now Alex. Anderson ).
Item, that land, lying on the north side of the Northgate, and west side of that Vennel called Murdieson's Vennel, sometime pertaining to Andrew Anderson, skinner, and now to the heirs of John Anderson, bailie - bounded betwixt the lands of the heirs of Robert Boig, elder, on the west, the said Vennel on the east, the land of the heirs of Andrew Reid on the north, and the said Northgate on the south parts, pays yearly to St. James' altar, and now to the said Hospital - 01: 00: 00... p. 399.

Robert Conqueror ( now Jean Blair ).
Item, that land, back and fore, lying on the north side of the Northgate, and east side of Bunshe's Vennel, sometime pertaining to the heirs of Andrew Gray, and now to Robert Conqueror, merchant - bounded betwixt the lands of George Conqueror, and the said Vennel on the west, the fore land of the heirs of Andrew Reid, and back land of the heirs of James Gairms, on the east, the inner land of the said Robert, on the north, and the said Northgate on the south parts, pays yearly to St. Katharine's altar, and now to the said Hospital - 01: 06: 08... p. 406.

James Hoome.
Item, that land, back and fore, with the yard and pertinents, lying as said is, sometime pertaining to Dionysius Cavers, thereafter to John Salmond and William Balneavis, thereafter to Andrew Reid, and now to James Hoome, merchant - bounded betwixt the fore land of the heirs of Andrew Reid and back land of the heirs of James Gairms on the west, the land of the heirs of David Sharp on the east, the yard of the heirs of Patrick Dundie on the north, and the said Northgate on the south parts, pays yearly to St. Paul's Hospital, and now to the said Hospital - 02: 13: 04... p. 407.

East side of the Skinnergate, within the Port.
John Chrystie ( now Adam Chrystie, his son ).
Item, that land, lying on the east side of the Skinnergate, sometime pertaining to Alex. Donaldson, and now to John Chrystie, tailor - bounded betwixt the Mill Lade on the north, the fore land of the heirs of Andrew Reid, and back land of Robert Boig, younger, glover, on the south, the yard of the said Robert Boig on the east, and the said Skinnergate on the west parts, pays yearly to the Abbey of Scone, and now to the said Hospital - 01: 06: 08... p. 421.
The heirs of Andrew Reid (now James Sanders, Elizabeth Sanders).
Item, that fore land, lying as said is, now pertaining to the heirs of Andrew Reid - bounded betwixt the lands of John Christie on the north, the lands of Robert Boig on the south and east, and the said Skinnergate on the west parts, pays yearly to the Abbey of Scone, and now to the said Hospital - 03: 00: 00... p. 421.

Robert Boig, younger (now the heirs of William Balvaird).
Item, that inner land, lying as said is, sometime pertaining to Robert Boig, and now to Robert Boig, younger, glover, his son - bounded betwixt the lands of the heirs of Andrew Reid, and land of the said Robert Boig on the west, the yard sometime of William Hall, now of his heirs, on the east, the common walls of the said Burgh on the north, and the land now of the Glover craft on the south parts, pays yearly to the Abbey of Scone, and now to the said Hospital - 04: 00: 00... p.421.

Laird of Aldie:

Book 1.
Record of Obits.
A decrete of the obits, 1565, penult March, before the Lords, and more "decretes" of the Provost and Bailies of Perth thereupon...
Item, the obit of Patrick Hall; xl sh., in wadset, "furth of" the lands of Robert Cathro, baker, betwixt the lands of James Hepburn on the west, and the Laird of Aldy on the east. (David Walker's, Wm. Cathro's). p. 29.

Rental of the Confraternity altar, called also Trinity, summed in the foundation...
Item, Crysteson's land, next the Laird of Adie's land - 13 sh. 4 d. p.67.

Book 2.
Watergate.
St. Michael. - Item, the land pertaining to the Laird of Aldie, pays yearly - xxvi sh. viii d. p. 146.

Book 3.
The rental of St. Joseph's altar, given up by Alex. Cok, Curate...
Item, the land lying on the west side of the Watergate, sometime pertaining to Robert Cristison, now to John Maclagan, minister - lying betwixt the land pertaining to the Laird of Adie on the north, the land of Henry Monypenny on the south, the Watergate on the east, pays yearly - xiii sh. iii d. (Now Henry Hogg's). p. 199.

The rental of the Confraternity altar, founded by Mr John Irland, Vicar of Perth, 16th March, 1518; and confirmed by the Bishop of St. Andrews, penultimo Martii (30th), 1519...
Item, the land lying on the west side of the Watergate, sometime pertaining to John Chrystison, now to John MacLagan, Minister - betwixt the Laird of Adie's land on the north, the land of Alexander Monypenny on the south, pays yearly - xiii sh. iii d. (Now Henry Hogg's land). p. 203.
The rental of St. Michael's altar, founded and situated within the Kirk of Perth, and given up by
umquhill Sir Robert Rynd, Chaplain thereof, in the time of his life.

Item, the land lying beneath the cross, on the south side of the Northgate, pertaining to the Laird
of Adie - ( bounded by ) the land of William Cathrow on the west, the Watergate on the east, the
land and yard of John M'Lagan on the south, the Northgate on the north, pays yearly - xxvi sh. viii d.
( Now the Lady Adie's ). p. 216.

Item, the land lying on the south side of the Northgate, beneath the cross, pertaining to William
Cathrow - the land of David, Lord of Scone, on the west, the land of the Laird of Adie on the east,

The rental of the "hail obits," sometime paid to the Kirk of Perth, and now to the Hospital of Perth...

Item, the obit of Patrick Hall is xl sh. in wadset "furth of" the land of umquhill Robert Cathrow, now
William Cawthrow's, lying on the south side of the Northgate - the Laird of Adie's house on the
east, the land of umquhill James Hepburn, now David, Lord of Scone's, on the west, yearly - xl sh.

Book 4.
Laird of Aldie and David Merser.

Item, his land on the west side of the Watergate and salmon market, yearly to St. Michael - xxvi sh.
viii d. ( James Strachan ). pp. 262-3.

Book 5.
West side of Watergate...

Laird Aldie.

Item, that land, lying on the west side of the Watergate, and south side of the Northgate, pertaining
to the Lairds of Aldie - bounded betwixt the lands of Thomas Hogg's heirs, the lands now of
Andrew Walker on the west, the said Watergate on the east, and the said Northgate on the north
parts, pays yearly to St. Michael's altar, and now to the said Hospital - 01: 06: 08.
This is not in use of payment. pp. 368-9.

Hay of Kinnoull:

Book 1.
The confessed annuals within the Burgh of Perth, with the names of the possessors and payers
thereof the same, as the rental given subscribed by Leonard of Coupar bears, subscribed by his
hand...

Item, William Tiry, for the Spey Lodging, now my Lord Chancellor's, of feu maill - 4 lib. 6 sh. 8 d. p.
39.
Book 4.
My Lord Chancellor's land and yard.
Item, out of his land, pertaining sometime to William Tyrie of Busbie, to Coupar, of feu-maill - iii lib. vi sh. viii d... p. 267.

Gowrie:

The rental of Saint Nicolas altar pertaining to Sir Walter Ramsay, living...
Item, my Lord Athol's land, now pertaining to George Boswell, forenent my Lord Ruthven's Lodging - twenty shillings. p. 15.

Record of Obits...
Item, the obit of Mr Andrew Pittscotty, vicar of Perth; xx sh., "furth of" the "Little College," sometime pertaining to Sir William Lyndsay, and now to my Lord Ruthven, in the west end of the Kirkyard: who deceased the viii day of September, in anno Domini 1438 years. (The Hospital's). p. 28.

The rental of All Hallow's altar...
Item, my Lord Gowrie's yard, pertaining sometime to umquhili Walter Balvaird, pays yearly - xxiii sh. p. 47.

Book 4.
The "King's Lodging."
Item, it paid yearly to St. James' altar - xlv sh. viii d. (St. James' altar).
More, thereoutof to the obits, by decreet - x sh.
More, out of that yard sometime pertaining to Walter Balvaird, thereafter to the Lord Gowry, to All Hallow's altar - x sh. (All Hallow's).
Item, more, out of the King's Lodging, and yard, to the Mess of the Cross, sung each Friday - x sh. (Mess of the Cross, or Rood).
Summa, iii lib. xvi sh. viii d.
( Item, out of the northmost land, bought from Donald Johnstone (Mathew Nicoll), to the Whitefriars - xx sh. Whitefriars ). p. 267.

Instrument of two annuals out of the King's Lodging, called the great Lodging, lying in the Speygate, "biggit" by umquhili Elizabeth Gray, Countess of Huntlie... pp. 308-10.
Appendix 5: Disputes between the burgh authorities and Andrew Read, 1648

At Edinburgh the Second day of May The yeere of God Im Vic fflourtie eight yeeres Anent oure Soveraine Lords Ire of complaint raised befoir the lordis of henes privie councell At the instance of Andro reid merchand burges of Perth Againes Robert amote provest Johne Conqueror Andro butter and archbald Lamb baillies of the burgh of Perth Alexr inglis deane of gild yrof Mr Johne patersone Thesaurer of the said burgh and the deacones of the craftis of the burgh of perth and remanent Counsellors yrof Makend mentioune That the they haveing conveened at mertimes last To sett ane tak of ye mylnes fisches and insches for the space of Nyntene yeeres for defraying of the burdinges and debtis wherein the toune is ingadged The said Andro reid compleiner finding that some of the counsellors had intentioune to procure the tak to thameselves and for yr awne behave for the soume of fflourtie thousand merks Scottis whilk is farr beneath the worth yrof he and a counellor haveing regarde to the weill and standing of the burgh maid offer of the soume of fflourtie thousand pundis for the said nynteine yeere tak and withall desyres That inregaird the toune wes not weill Bot under some suspitioune of the Visita(o)un That the same might be rouped and put to the tron for this nixt ensewing yeere Whair upon they who intentid to have gottin the bargane finding the compleiner offer so farr aboue thame and declaireing his mynd for the weill and standing of the burgh whilk he wes obleidgd in conscience to doe being bund yto be his oath he wes rejected and removed be thame out of councell Bot they being constious to thair owne errouris within a Schorte space yrefer sent some of yr number to the compleiner in a maner thanking him for his offer and requyred him if he would stand to his bargane Whilk he ansred he wald doe if they fred him of all deuties and impositiounes paying the fourtie thousand pundis allanerlie Whilk offer wes than accepted be thame The Compleiner haveing gone yrefter to Edr for doeing of his effaires and bussines The saidis provest and baillies upone the day of November last sent to the compleineris wyff in his absence desyreing her To accept of the keyes of the mylnes and to enter to the possessioune yrof conforme to yr agreement whilk she refused to accept the bargane in her husbandis absence whill she acquanted him yr with so the compleiner haveing receaved advertisement from her yrof he wrote to the provest and baillies shewing that he could not stand to the bargane They not standing to yr former agreement Quhairupone they intendit actioune befor the Lordis of Sessioun againes the compleiner for perfyteing the said bargane whilk being callit and heard in Januar last The samyne is standing out ... and continewes till Junij nixt... Not-withstanding grof at the compleineris returne to Perth The Provost and baillies caused conveene him befoir their counsall and enacted him to enter himself and enter befoir thaim wheensover they sould requeyre him under the paine of Ten thousand merkis Whilk he haveing done They within a few dayes yrefter caused conveene the compleiner againe befoir thame Who for eshewing of the penaltie conteint in the forsaid act haveing compeired They most illegallie
without any just caus or ground The difference betuixt thame standing undiscust as said is befoir the Lordis of Sessioune By ane uther act of ____ courte ordained him to pay to thame sex thousand merksis and to submitt his persone guids and effairte in yr reverence whilik the compleier refus.seing to doe In regarde of yr unwarrantable proceedinges They most illegallie and uniustlie presentlie comanded him to prisone whair he has still stille tyme since a prisoner in great miserie and slavery As also they have declared him uncapable of useing any kynd of merchandrie taking his liberties frome him And Shute up his booth doore and dischairsed als tender merchandis to traffick with him under the paine of tinsell of yr liberties and ____ hundreth pundis to hes quoties ... ye saidis parties To represent yr saidis complaintis To that Comitie of parliament appoynted for Billis and supplica(o)nnes to be considerit be the Comittie and to hear heir the parties And to report the Samyne with their opinion yrupone To the parliament That yrefter the parliament might determine yranent ... According whairunto The said Andro reid compleiner haveing caused represent his Ires of complaint abouemen(o)nat againes the provest baillies and counsell of perth to the foirsaid Committee ... The said Comitie upone the Sevintene day of the said monethe of appryle Vpone the reiding and consider(o)un of the foirsaid complaint nane than compeirand for the defenderis Gave warrand and ordour To Sumand and chairge The provest and baillies of perth To Compeir befoir the said Comitie ... And in the meane tyme to put the said Andro reid compleiner to libertie ... And the said mater and parties foirsaidis being su(o)erallie called before the said Comitie ( Vpone the Tuentie nyntday of the said moneth of appryle ) than conveened ... Compeired personallis The said Andro reid compleiner with Mr Williame Maxwell and Mr Johne Rrollok his old vocattis And als Compered personallis The saidis Robert arnote provest Andro butter and archbald Lamb baillies and mr Johne paterson Theasurer of the said burgh of perth for thameselves and in name and behalff of the remaint baillies deaconis of craftis and councelleris of the said burgh with mr harie Chaipe yr prot ... The said Comitie ... All in ane voyce with ane consent Decerins and ordaines The said Andro reid Supplicant To reenter his persone in waird ( within ) the Tolbuith of perth ___ betuixt and the sixt day of May instant And thair to remane in waird during the pleasour of the magistrattis of perth And als Decernis and ordaines the said Andro reid To pay To the provost baillies and Thesaurer of perth for thameselves and in the behalff of the deaconis of craftis and remanent councell of the said burgh ... the soume of Thrie thousand merks Scottis mo(y) Betuixt and the feist and terme of Lambes nixtocomo In full satisfactioune of all that the toune of perth can clame of the said Andro reid concerneing the bargane of the tak abouewrittin and halil mater submitted As also Decernis and ordaines the said Andro Reid to ren(o)unce and ______ dischairsage thefoirsaid bargane agreement and tak abouewrittin concerning the mylnes Insches and fischinges of Perth for his pair And siclyk the said Comitie Decernis and ordaines the saidis provest Baillies Deacones of craft and councell of the said burgh of Perh for thameselves and yr successors and tak and burding for the said toune To Discharge ... The said Andro Reid his aires and ____ of the foirsaid bargane agreement and tak abouemen(o)nat Anent the saidis Mylnes Fischinges and Insches of the toune of Perh and actioune abouemen(o)nat intendit and depending at ye instance againes him befoir the Lordis of Sessioune yrupone Withall that hes followit or may follow upone the foirsaid bargane agreement or tak ____ And to declaire the samyne voyd abinitio and in tymcumeing for ever...
Att Edinburghe the Tuente fourt day of July The yeir of god Im VIC and fourtie eight yeires Anent our Soverane Lords Ires raiseit at ye instance of Androw Reid merchand burges of Perth before the Lords of Secret counsell Makand Mentioun That quhair Johne Conquerour baillie burges of ye said burgh haveing conceawed some presiudice against the persewar he upone ane pretixt of a late quarrell betaux the Magistrats of ye said burgh and the persewar fore wicth he was illeggally incarcerat being his maties frie Leidge and Lay in prisone above six weiks whill he was relieved be warrand of the Comittee of Parliament for the tyme. And the actioun persewed be the persewar against the said toune wherupone he was incarcerat being submitted be either pairties to the Comittee of bills for the tyme They gave Sentence and decreit against the persewar deeming him to re enter his persone in ward and to remaine thairin during the tounes pleasr and to pey to thame at Lambes nixt Thrie thousand merks Scotts w(r)upone the persewar accordinglelie haveing reentered his persone in waird he remained thair till it pleased the toune to put him to Libertie And howvert the persewar did evir befoir and sinc behave himselfe most duetifully and soberly to the Magistrats of the Said burgh And did desyre nothing more than peace and to ( exercise ) his trade and calling quyetly and peaceable amongst thame Yitt notwithstanding thairof some of thame remaining in thair wonted hatred and malice against the persewar did most malitiouslie upone the Tent day of July instant at Tuelf houres in the day he goeing be his horse to ryde to the cuntrey fordoeing of his effaires and bussines ( as the persewar is informed ) fund out the said Johne Conquerour by thair or some of thair instigatioun And knowing that he had evil will against the persewar the said Johne haveing Ires of Captioun against him at the instance of Robert Arnot of Benchells Proueist of the said burgh for not releiving him of ane contract past betuix the said Robert and the complenor And Harie Auchmowtje Sr James Stewart thesaurer, of the excise whilk was formerlie satisfeit and upone productioun of a dischairge thairof suspensioun was procured from the Lords Comissioners of excise befoir the said Tent Yitt notwithstanding thairof the said Johne to manifest his splene and malice against the complenor and knowing that he had a suspensioun albeit he had it not at that instant to schou the said Johne not haveing anie officer or Messinger with him affirming he would be officer himselfe declared he would pntlie have the persewar to prisone And his wyfe hearing of it came imediatlie to the said Johne Conquerour and offered befoir hir husband sould goe to prisone schoe would rather py anie soume contenit in the Ires over agane he but not being satisfeit thairwith declared agane he would pntlie have the persewar to prisone Who being willing to oby his comand he being a magistrat desyring onlie that he might have Libertie to lay by his weapons and that he sould pntlie goe to prisone the said Johne notwithstanding of the compleners obedience pat violent hands in him took him on the mouth and bled him And thaireftir perswaded some standing by to fall upone the persewar who gave him mane fearce and cruell stroaks caried him violently auay to prisone put him in the Iron house in Irons wher he hes still byne sinc as if he held bene a notorious malefactor and traittor And still denyes anie kynd of acces to him wherby the persewar is most uniustlie and violently abused throu his illegiell imprisonment and heavily preiudged thairby not being at Libertie to goe about his laull effaires and bussines And Anent the chairge given to the said Robert Arnot Proueist Johne Maister Androw Butter And Archibald Lamb Baillies of ye said burgh To have compeaired befocir the
Lords of Secret Counsell To have exhibite the said Androu Reid persewar befoir thame this day
And als Anent the chaire given to the sad Johne Conquerour To have also compeired this day
And anserd to this complaint and oppressioun And to have hard and sene such course and order
tane thairanent as appertenit under the pane of rebellioun and putting of thame to the horne with
certificationoun Ires sould be direct _____ to put thame theik Lykeas at mare Lenth is contenit in the
Ires executiounes and _______ thairof Quhilk being called this day and the Said Robert Arnot
Comperand personally for himselfe and in name of the remanent baillies defenders abovewrin Who
exhibite the said Androw Reid persewar Conforme to the chaire given thairanent And the said
Johne Conqurour Comperande and also personallie declared that what he did was be vertew of
Ires of Captioun And declared upone oath that the suspensioun was nevir intimat nor knouin to
him befoir he had incarcerat the persewar In regaird quhairof and that the remanent pynts of the
complaint being referred to the said Androw Reid his probatioun he succumbed and did not prove
ye same Thairfore the Lords of his maties Secret Counsell A(b)sol(v)eis the said Johne
Conquerour from this Complaint And ordans the said Androu Reid persewar To be caried bak to
prisone from whence he came...

B59/ 26/ 1/ 19

At Perth the twentie froun day of July Im Vic founie Aucht yeres
Quhilk Day being conueinit within the Reuestore or Counsellhous of the burghe of Perth The
Baillies Dean of glid thesaurer Counsell and deaconnes of Crafflis of the said burghe ... Anent the
bill of Complaint maide and gewin in to them be henrie broun procur fiscall of ye said burghe for his
___ enteres Againes Androw Read merchant burges of Perthe makand mentioun That quhaire
wpone the tent day of July instant 1648 yeirs Johne Conqueror ane wther of the Baillies of the said
burghe Being chairgit be David Hay messinger be vertew of our Souerane Lordis Lettirs of
Captioun Raisit at the Instance of Robert Arnott provest of perthe To take and apprehend the
Said Andro Read Rebell and to put him in sure ward conforme to ye said Letteris And the said
messinger then Immediatlie haveing designit the said Androu Rebell foresaid ( then standing
wpone the streitt with ane sword and tua pistollie abouthim ) To the said baillie for that effect
wpone the hie streitt of ye said burghe ane littill aboue the mercat croce thaireof. And Lykwaysis ye
said baillie for obedience of the said charge being accompanyt with thrie officiaris and the foirsaid
messinger who designit him haveing past to the Said Rebell for apprehending of him And
commanding him to pass forward within the tolbuith of ye said burghe conforme to the said charge
Nevinthereless the said Rebell in maist barbarous manner and hie contempt of his majestie auctie and
Lawes Inhumanelie and maliciouslie Resistit and deforceit the said Baillie and his said officeris
haveing chargit pistollittis about him as said is Did bend and schoott the ane of the samyne att
him. And no doubt haide killit him Whernot by gods providence scho misgave And he finding the
said chargitt pistolleth to haife misgewin To prosequate his crewell and bloodie Intentioun agains
the said magistratt In executioun of our Souerane Lordis auctie and Lawis Did most despytefullie +
crewellye after seuerall straikes gewane be him to the said baillie on the breist thairwithe stroke the
said baillie wpone the face with the Samene pistoll To the great hassard of his Lyfe and effusion
of his blood in great quantatie Quhairthrow he being one of your owin suorne burgess haiweing
commitit sic ane barbarous and Inhumane offence and wrang to one of yair owin magistrattis in the
eexecutioune of the kingis Majesties Lettris within the said burgh ( The Lyke of the quhilk
barbarous fact hathe not beine heard off heitofore in any pairt of this kingdome ) he(s) In contrair to
his aithe maide at his admissioune being sworne to be obedient to the magistrattis within the said
burghie. As also in contempt of his henes auctie and Lawes Violat his said aithe most maliciouslie
and contemtuouslie And thairfoir merittis to be exemplarlie punischt + censurit Conforme to ye
actis of parliament Lawis practie prewiledgis and Libertties of this kingdome and borrowis of the
samene. Be the quhilkis actis of parliaments It Is Statute and ordanneit That all deforceris of officeris
may be either Civilie or Criminallie persejgit and punischt in their bodie and goods and to foirfault
and fyne thair moweabilitis, thair persones to be wardtitt, themselwis to be Infamows ( Who ar ____ )
and newer to bruike office ______ dignitie nor benefice. As in parliament king James the 4.
p.6.c.87. Lykewayis in par Queine Marie. p.5.c.19. And in par. k.J.6.p.11.c.84. As also in par.
k.J.6.p.12.c.150. And in par. k.J.6. par.7.c.117. As the saids actis beares heirefore desyreing thair
honorabill wysdomes To take the samene complaint to their serious consideratioun And to take
suche course and ordour therwithe as apperteinis and may preweine wtheres In all tyme coneing fra
doing the Lyk attempt againes the kingis magistratt in executioun of his office and yair hono(II)
wisd. answere as the said bill of Complaint beires The said Andro Read being Lawfullie summond
to answere to the samene complaint this day be Johne hog offi(r). personalie appre(t) And to have
heard and seine him decemit to have done the barbarous + inhumane wrang abouespeit to the
said Johne Conqueror baillie In maner foiresaid And to be punischt their foir In his persoun and
goods conforme to the said actis of parliament Lawis practik prewiledgis and libertties of this
kingdome and borrowis. Or ellis to hawe schowine some reasonabill caus in the contraire And he
being callit wpone compeirit personalie And efter Reading of ye said bill of complaint to him and
accusieing of him thernpoe he produceit in wreatt certane frivolous exceptiounes aganis ye said
complent quhairupone he tuik Instrumentis Quhilikis on respect of ye answir maide ther to be ye
said pro.(r) fiscall wer Repellit And the counsell foiresaid fand themselwis Judges competent to the
said complent And admissit the samene to probatioune Quhairwpone the said procurator fiscall
lykeways tuik instrumentis And thairfoir they Ordanneit the Witness summond for that effect to be
callit receivit swore and admittit, And all wther kynd of probatoune hade theranent to be hed and
deducett In presence and audience of the said defender Quhilkis being Lawfullye done and the
Counsell foiresaid being weill and rycle adwyseit theranent And with the depositiones of
dieris of ____ witness receivit swore admittit and examynat therintill and cleirlie proweand the
pointtis of the said bill of complaint Togiddir with the copie of the charge of captione gewin be ye
said messinger to the said baillye for apprehending of the Said Rebell quhilk wes ther produceitt all
spottit with blood And haueing Con siderit the Samene with the foiresaid complant abouve-
mentionat Togiddir with the sumonds raisit be the said Andro Read againes the saids baillies of
perthe for exhi bitioune of ye fd Andro befor the Lordis of prewie counsell and sumonding of ye said
Johne Conquerour baillye To compeir before the saids Lordis To anser to his sumonds and
complaint the twenty seuint day of July instant 1648 As the copie thairof dewlie subscrivit be
Johne Williasone messinger thairto did beare The said counsell being fullye conueinit as said is All
In Ane Voice with ane consent Convict the said Androw etrir Lawfull probatou and receuieuen of
ye saids witness in the sd lybell And decernit and ormdanit the said Andro Read ___ burges ___ to be
brocht in and reiuein And if he refuised to delyuer the samene Ordannit ane declaratioune to be
gewin out against him Declareing him not to be capabill to be ane Burges at the Mercatt Croce And
Lykewayis ordanneit his bothe dorris to be steikit up or wtherwayes ordannit hanging Lockis to be
put thaireon then presentlie Therafter compeirit the said Johne Conquerour baillie and gave in ane
wrettime protestatioun subsrivit with his hand Quhairby he for himselff and In name of the said
Robert Arnott prowes Protestit that quhat-souewer sentence decreit or ordynance thair
wysdomes hade pronounceit emittit or inflictit against the said Androw Read for the causs conteint
in the foresaid complaint geuin in be the said procurator fyscall sould be without prejudice of all or
ony wther persute Criminal or Civill before quhatsomever wther Judge or ___ competent to them
againes the said Andro. Quhilk protestatioun wes be the said Counsell admittit + receiwed And
quhare-wpone the Said Johne Conquero(r) tuik act and Instrument
Extract furth of the buikes of the towne counsell of perth be me Johne Elder notar Clerk therto ...
Appendix 6

Building materials used for the bridges across the Tay:
Selective list of references from the index to the town council records. B59/17/1.

134/
November 1601
Order to repair the stone work of the Brig
Act as to repairing the Timber Bridge

139/
3 May 1602
Order as to the Timber Ports and the deals thereof to be taken to the Brig of Tay

144/
17 January 1603
Act prohibiting dung being carried along the Brig of Tay, and describing the condition thereof as being laid over with "singill deillis"

152/
October 1603
Order to take down the lime house in the Fishmarket for the use of the brig and the stones to the new shore + bulwark

170/
12 April 1605
Order to borrow 20 merks to be given to a wright who had advised with the Council on the repairs of the Brig of Tay

171/
10 June 1605
Order to the Dean of Guild and James Mar to ride to Inchstrerie wood and Strathurd to visit the woods and to see if there were any trees suitable for the Brig

172/
July 1605
Order to inspect the trees pertaining to the Laird of Balthayock and to agree with him therefore

174/
21 October 1605
Order to agree for carrying stones to the Brig

302
October 1605
Entry as to carrying stones to the Brig
Act and agreement as to carrying stones from the Quarry to the Brig

(November 1605)
Allowance of £100 for carrying stones from the Quarry to the Brig
Order as to payment for every load of stones brought from the Quarry of Craigie and laid down at
the end of the High gate beneath the cross for the Brig...

7 April 1606
Order to take down the second old pillar (of the Brig) and found it of new and to that effect the
“brander” thereof to be made and a new to be sunk at the south end of the first new founded pillar
and to repair the boats for serving of the work.

(3 June) 1606
Order to pay the lime men in Aberdoun for lime for the use of the Brig

4 June 1606
Order to persons to ride to the south ford to examine the great timber lately come from Sweden, if
suitable for the Brig

20 July 1607
Order to send to Dundee to procure timber to be brander to the Brig

17 December 1607
Report as to purchase of 32 pieces of oak timber from James Car to be a brander (to the Brig) at
£140 overhead

14 March 1608
Order that the masons hew (stones) at the brig for a week, and John Mar to make the brander
II) Connections between Perth and the Wider Countryside

The Sheriffdom of Perth was a substantial administrative area, similar in extent to the old County of Perth; 308 it included Highland areas as well as the central Lowlands. However, the "Chronicle" makes virtually no mention of the Highlands; indeed, the sheriffdom is only referred to fleetingly. 309 The authors were almost exclusively concerned with affairs in the Lowlands, and the "Chronicle" portrays the burgh operating within a Lowland environment. Perth was connected with Lowland landowners, and the burgh's economic rivals seem to have been drawn mainly from the south and east of Scotland. Most of the prominent rural estates and settlements which appear in the "Chronicle" were situated in the Lowland areas of the sheriffdom. This chapter is intended to examine further the burgh's connections in the Lowlands, and the particular ties which bound town and country together.

Markets and Economic Competition

In its record of a violent confrontation between Perth and Newburgh in 1607, 310 and ambiguous treatment of Perth's relationship with Dundee, the "Chronicle" indicates that there were strained relations between Lowland burghs in the 17th century. The exchange of rural produce and goods at burghal markets was one of the clearest expressions of interaction between town and country; but the Perth burgh records relate that there were occasions when Perth had difficulty in asserting its authority as one of the principal markets of the sheriffdom. In 1692, the burgh complained of a loss of trade on account of competition from "regalities, baronies, and other unfree places within ther precincts"; 311 such resentment may have been been overstated, but throughout the century the burgh was at pains to assert control over the local market economy.

The inhabitants of Perth were restricted from visiting other markets: in February 1602, the townsmen were prohibited from travelling to the St. Monans market, in Fife; in 1603 there was a prohibition against going to the Kinross market without a licence, and in the following year the town council repeated the ban "under pain of tinsel of freedom and paying of £10". 312 Restrictions were imposed in February 1620 when the town council declared that "na fremen transpart ony Iron to be sauld to an outland mercat wtin the shrefdome qll they gait neu licenceyis and yt fremen nor chep man pas throw the shefdome wt ony stapill wairis to be sauld out of marcatte". 313 In September 1631, the inhabitants of Perth were prohibited from going to markets held in burghs of barony. 314 In 1645 visits to Dunning market were controversial; in October the council declared

308 The counties of Scotland were replaced in 1975 by a system of Regions and Districts. Most of the old County of Perth has been retained in the District of Perth and Kinross.
310 Ibid., 26 (7/7).
311 Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society, 60.
312 B59/ 17/ 1, 137, 152, 166.
313 B59/ 16/ 1, 350 (f).
314 B59/ 17/ 1, 353.
that those who had gone to the market should be "holdin out till the counsell ..." In the same month, prohibitions were issued concerning the market at Fowlis. 315 The index to the town council records indicates that these markets were subject to inspections by burgesses of Perth; an entry of October 1665 notes an "Order to the Treasurer to allow £30 Scots yearly to the Guildry out of the Towns half of the burgesses for visiting the markets of Dunning and Fowlis and the rest of the markets accustomed to be visited". 316 The Perth authorities could also issue prohibitions against outsiders entering the burgh; in April 1646 the council ordained that "non win the parichone of meckleuir to come in win this burt till furder traille. And the portis to be keped be the bailles and the best of the toune". 317 The index to the town council records notes an order of April 1668 "to the Dean of Guild with the Magistrates and Guild Council to make acts in the Guild Court for preventing the great abuse committed by the Merchants of uther burghs in selling gear to our Inhabitants without making Entry with the Dean of Guild and his Council". 318 It is notable that local lairds might seek to disrupt trade; in October 1667 there was a "Supplication by the Tacksmen of the duty on slates anchorage and cess boll to be relieved of the years yet to run of their Tacks, in respect the Laird of Cultmalundy had put a stop to the bringing of slates into the town..." 319

However, the most detailed information concerning Perth's local economic competitors comes from the end of the 17th century. The report to the visitors of the royal burghs of 1692 includes an estimation of the value of the trade which was handled annually by "the realitie, barronies, and other unfree places within the shirefdome of Perth". 320 The figures provided in this list may have been exaggerated, but they do at least point to the market centres which the burgesses of Perth perceived to be their strongest competitors. By this reckoning, "the city of Dunkeld" handled the largest volume of trade, accounting for £12,000. The "Regality and city of Dumblane", "The stewartry and city of Doune", and "The regality of Coupar of Angus" all handled £8,000 annually, whereas "The stewartrie and towne of Creiff" accounted for £6,000. Abernethy, Dunning and "Eloth" (Alyth) handled trade amounting to £4,000 per annum, but most other markets were significantly smaller, and the estimation for these centres ranges between £2,000 and £500. According to Whyte's calculations, Dunkeld handled trade to a greater value than that of Perth, and it is notable that most of the market centres to the west of Perth in Strathearn were substantial. The market at Dunning would have faced competition from those at Doune and Dumblane, but nevertheless it handled a relatively large volume of trade; the market at Fowlis Wester seems to have been dwarfed by that of Crieff. However, Perth was clearly threatened by a concentration of large markets in this area. In contrast, most of the markets on the east side of the Tay were relatively small; in particular, those closest to Perth, at Scone and at Bridgend, only handled trade of the

315 Probably Fowlis Wester. B59/ 16/ 3, 13 October 1645; 20 October 1645.
316 B59/ 17/ 1, 486.
317 B59/ 16/ 3, 3 April 1646.
318 B59/ 17/ 1, 524-5.
319 Ibid, 518.
320 Miscellany of The Scottish Burgh Records Society, 59-60. This material has been analysed by Whyte in Agriculture and Society, 190-192. See above, p. 196.
value of £1,000. The absence of a bridge over the Tay may not have bolstered markets in this area.

Ordinarily, ferries across the Tay may have been quite sufficient for traders coming to the burgh from the Carse of Gowrie or Strathmore. In 1730, the magistrates and town council of Perth heard complaints that the ferrymen were charging exorbitant rates "upon the Towns passage on the water of Tay betwixt the Town + the Bridgend of Tay", and that as a consequence "many of the country people to the eastward of the said water have been discouraged from coming to the town to the great disadvantage of the Retailing trade + commerce of this Burgh..." 322

In general, there was a concentration of markets in Lowland Perthshire, mostly associated with the major rivers - although the significance of Dunblane and Doune may have been due to their location on the overland route between Perth and Stirling. The number of competing markets increased during the course of the century, but it is notable that Perth's principal rivals in 1692 were mostly older, established market centres. It seems clear that Dunkeld, Coupar Angus, Dunblane and Doune would have been prominent markets throughout the 17th century. 323

Tensions between leading market centres at this time are revealed in a record of January 1700, concerning the imposition of a tax on Perth merchants who wished to use the market at Coupar Angus. 324 The authorities at Perth complained to the Privy Council. Claiming to be the "Second Burgh royall of the Kingdom", they asserted that Perth had "lived in peace + quietness with all yeir Neighbours as much as possible". Trading relations with Coupar Angus "and with the Countrey about" had been good, but in response to the imposition of a new tax by the Commissioners of Supply and Excise, 325 the bailies of Coupar had introduced a stent on burgesses of Perth. Furthermore, the burgesses' goods were impounded: "upon this only pretence That these Burgess of pearth after they had presented their Goods in the sd FFares + Marketts, were in use, to leave them in the sd Towne of Coupar in privat hous to be keept until the next markett or FFair day..." The traders from Perth may have been engaged in some wrong-doing, by allowing their goods to be distributed by agents during their absences. Nevertheless, the Perth authorities argued that their burgesses were "mast wrongously stented + their Goods Pounded by the said Baillie ogilvie + his Complices And that not withstanding that the sd Burgess of Pearth doe pay stent in their own Burgh for all the Trade they Exercise in any place whatsoever..."

321 Whyte comments that "The lack of a bridge over the Tay at Perth at this time may have given places like Bridgend and Scone an advantage in attracting day-to-day traffic, while the larger size, greater importance and strategic location of Perth would have ensured its pre-eminence for less frequent higher value transactions", Agriculture and Society, 191.

322 B59/ 36/ 10.

323 Another indication of the prominence of particular burghs in Perthshire at this time may be gained from a list of the proportion of the tax roll which was applicable to burghs of barony and regality between 1692 and 1697. See below, Appendix 7 ( B59/ 25/ 2/ 21) - ( Fowlis Wester, Auchtergaven, Meikleour, Kinrossie, Longforgan, Scone and Bridgend do not appear on this list ).

324 B59/ 25/ 2/ 23. ( 8 papers). Document no. 2 is referred to here.

325 See B59/ 25/ 2/ 21, ( Appendix 7).
If relations with other leading market towns were occasionally fraught, Perth's relationship with Dundee was inevitably tense. As has already been noted, the burghs often challenged each other over the right to exact tolls on the Tay shipping: in 1574, 1586, and 1601, Perth took particular exception to attempts by the authorities of Dundee to raise money for repairs to the harbour there by means of a new toll, and documentary sources convey a general lack of co-operation between the two burghs. The Perth burgh records indicate that the dispute concerning tolls at Dundee harbour was a protracted affair, but one in which Perth eventually secured exemption from the payment of extraordinary dues. Perth's complaints against the authorities at Dundee seem to have begun in 1564, when it was stated that merchants of Perth had "peciable in all tymes bigane schippit and lossit yair gudis at ye porte and schoir of dundie without payment of ony small custumes yairfore", but that "the prouest and baillies of oure said bur(t) of dundie hes laittie attechit certane of ye said complenaris befor yame for yair small customes of yair gudis schippit and lossit ..." After several wrangles, the king eventually settled the matter in Perth's favour, in December 1602: "And as concerning the towst + Extractioun and the Particular Deuties abovewritten qike are mentionat + enumerat in the Decreit of Secret Counsell Producit be the saids Commissioner of the said Burt of Perth In presens of His Maiestie and the saids Lords as said is And qike was Granitt be his Henes for reparatiunis of the said peir shoir Bulwark and Haven of Dundie During the space mentionat in the said Gift Granitit be His Henes to the said Towne of Dundie in maner above reheirset Our said soveraine Lord and Lords of his Counsell + Session as said is haveing seene and considerit the said Decreit + Hail contents thereof they have Decernit and ordainit the saids Provost Ballies Counsell Inhabitants of the said Burghe of Perth to be free of the said towst and Impost callit the Shoir Silver and of all other Deuties specifeit in the said Decreit fra the qiks they are Decernit to be maide free be the samen Decreit of Secret Counsell efter the form and tenour of the samit Decreit gewin yairanent in all Poyntes qike Decreit his Maiestie and the saids Lords Ratifies and approvis..."

The "Chronicle" suggests that in times of need, Dundee may have come to Perth's aid, and some of the local nobility and gentry had interests in both burghs. A record in the Register of Acts of Town Council indicates that co-operation was possible, even over the vexed issue of the Tay shipping: 8 October 1645, "Anent ane Letter yt cam from dundie direct to the majestrats of the sd burt desaring them not to recaue Mr Jon Stoune his bark of goods the heall counsell being pnt has disasentit yt the sd Mr sall haue entre heir ..." Perth may have benefitted indirectly from the devastating sack of Dundee in 1651, for Perth's rival at the head of the Tay is unlikely to have been as troublesome in the aftermath of its ruin by the New Model Army. However, Perth still faced economic competition from other local rivals, and it is important to note that as the 17th century progressed, so Perth's significance within the sheriffdom may have been muted by the development of other market centres. Though still of strategic significance, and the possessor of

326 See B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 4; B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 6(3); B59/ 26/ 1/ 9/ 9.
327 B59/ 25/ 2/ 1. 13 February 1563(4).
328 B59/ 25/ 2/ 3. 31 December 1602.
329 See above, p. 144-145.
330 B59/ 16/ 3, 8 October 1645.
status and privileges which set it apart from other towns and burghs, by the 1690s Perth was surrounded by competitors whose markets handled a similar volume of goods. It is curious that the "Chronicle" offers few indications of such developments - which were at least underway by c.1668. But the burgh's dispute with Newburgh early in the century perhaps presaged later difficulties.

**Landed Interests**

If the exchange of food and goods was one of the fundamentals of the town and country relationship, then the ownership of land and property was a factor which went hand in hand with the operation of the local and regional economy. By the 17th century, some sectors of the townscape of Perth were clearly established as the reserves of wealthy nobles and merchants; their town houses and urban properties were physical manifestations of their dominance in urban life, and this status was also reflected in the rural estates and larger properties of such men. As a general rule, the significance of wealthy landowners in town and country is long established and accepted by historians. 331 The influence of particular noble families - such as the Gowries and the Hays - in the affairs of Perth has already been mentioned, and properties such as the Gowrie House and Ruthven Castle, or the Kinnoull Lodging and Kinnoull Kirk, clearly illustrate Mr Stell's idea of "the architecture of landownership in town and country". Such buildings were amongst the most impressive structures of the Perthshire environment and - particularly in the relatively peaceful 17th century - stood as part of a symbolic landscape of wealth and authority. The houses and estates of the wealthy were outstanding features of the local environment; paradoxically, they were defining features of the built landscape as well.

If the place of the town within its rural setting is to be appreciated, the composition of this propertied landscape must be addressed. Archaeologically, it is far easier to study the remains of large estate buildings than the sparse remnants of the farming communities which were controlled by landowners. Indeed, documentary evidence for the condition of farming settlements in the 17th century is unsatisfactory. 332 Inventories for "North-East" and "South-East" Perthshire have recently been published by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. 333 These volumes indicate the problems for archaeological research in rural areas, but also form the standard studies of the archaeological landscape which lies to the east of the Tay. The commission's inventories could serve as the basis for developing a detailed "socio-political" map of the countryside around Perth. This study cannot begin to emulate the scope of these volumes, but buildings and features which served as "local points" within Perth's rural hinterland can be assessed - features which were part of a symbolic landscape, and which served particular functions within it. 334 In archaeological terms, it is possible to assess the condition of such features; and by pointing to those estates, castles, or churches which the chroniclers thought

331 For example, see Whyte, *Agriculture and Society*, 113.
332 See ibid., 162.
334 See comments above, p. 141.
were notable, suggestions can be made about the "hierarchy of settlements" referred to by Mr Bowler. 335

An impression of the extent of the holdings in the vicinity of Perth of a prominent nobleman is given by a record of the sasine of James, Master of Gowrie, in 1584. Gowrie held property in the counties of Kinross, of Edinburgh, and of Berwick, but the bulk of his lands seem to have been situated in the County of Perth: "Lands and Barronies etc. contained in the Seizin of James Master of Gowrie... which seizin is of Date 1584...

Apr(l) 11th. The Lands + Barony of Ruthven, with the patronage of the chapels of Ruthven + Tibbermuir - The Lands of Ballinbrecht, Pitcairne, Craigingale, Adenacly, Harehaugh; a third part of the Lands of Arbirlot, The Town + Lands of Cultrony. The Lands of Drumgrain; The Half of the Miln of Ochtergavin; w(th) the Half of the multures + Miln lands The whole + intire Lands of Monydie, Bambuir, with the Half of Miln, Multures and Miln Lands - The Third part of the Half of all the Lands of the Barony of Ballingirno, w(th) the castle + fotalice thereof, with the Miln, multures, Miln lands + wauk miln The third part of the Lands + Barony of Abernyte, w(th) milns and wauk miln - a third part of the whole third part of the Lands + Barony of Forgandenny, with milnes and the Patronage of the chapel of Forgandenny..." 336

Not all of these names are identifiable, but nevertheless it is clear that Gowrie was the possessor of a variety of lands surrounding the burgh, from Ruthven itself with lands adjacent to the Burghmuir, northwards to Moneydie and Auchtergaven near the Tay, eastwards to Abernyte in the Braes of Gowrie, and southwards to Forgandenny in Strathearn. It is notable that his rural properties included tower-houses, chapels, and mills.

The fall of the Gowries in 1600, and the re-distribution of their lands, led to a substantial change in the structure of property-ownership in the hinterland of Perth. Other families came to the fore - particularly the Murrays. Sir David Murray of Gospetrie succeeded to the Ruthven property of Scone, where William Lord Ruthven had built a house in the early 1580s; in the early 17th century this was replaced by Murray's "palace", and the focus of land-ownership and control in Perth's hinterland may have switched from Ruthven Castle to Scone. 337 Scone's prominence on the east bank of the Tay is reflected in an agreement signed between the burgh and Lord Scone in 1636, allowing him two ferries for transportation to and from the North Inch: "...the prouest baillies Counsall Deane of gild thesaurer and Deacone of craftis of ye burgh of Perth undersubscrywand on the ane pairt And ane nobill vicount Mungo vicount of Stormont Lord Scone ___ on the wther pairt And that be the mediatioun Counscill and advyse of ane nobill and mightie earle William earle of erroll Lord hay __ heich constabill of the realme of Scotland... the saidis prowest baillies counscill deane of gild and deaconis of craftis of the Said burgh all in ane uoice but weviance for thame and thair successouris have giwen and grantit and be thir pntis gewis and grantis tolarence and licence to the said nobill vicount mongo vicount of Stormont During all the dayes of his

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335 See above, p. 148.
336 Perth Museum and Art Gallery Archive no. 271. I have highlighted the names of Gowrie's properties.
337 South-East Perth an archaeological landscape, 144.
lyftyme allanerlie the passage and service of tua boattis at the head of the north inche of the said burgh of perth quheur they hawe servit thir severall yeiris bygane be tollerance and permission of the said burgh for serving of his Lordships familie servantis and our souerane Lordis leidges During that ilk speace As they haue done thir severall yeiris bygane be tollerance and permission foirsaid but obstacle Impediment troubill or molestatioun And but prejudice allways of the said burgh thair ryghtis and Liberties quhilk sall no ways be hurt nor prejudgit ...

Many influential local landowners possessed estates close to, or even within, the area which I have termed the "enceinte" of Perth. This situation is illustrated by several records which date from the 1650s. When the creation of a new parish for the suburbs of Perth was mooted in February 1650, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of Perth were consulted, along with landowners of the affected area: "Sir John Moncreiff of yt ilk knicht barronet Mr Dauld Moncreiff of Craigie John Oliphant of Bachilton John Moncreiff of easter Moncreiff Mr Francis hay of Balhousie, Thomas Blair of Tarsappie Patrik anderson of Tullium... Campbell of Abar(u)quhell..." Aberuchill is situated near Comrie, but the Campbells do appear in the "Chronicle" - the castle was sacked during the Covenanting crisis - and clearly had a connection with the burgh; the other lords mentioned held more local estates. In 1835, a Valuation of the County of Perth - which had been carried out in 1649-50 - was published by William Gloag, from a copy written in 1654 by William Fleming. Fittis published an extract from Gloag's copy, the valuation of the parish of Perth, which lists local proprietors:

*Laird of Balhoussie, for the Muirtounne and hail lands belonging to him in this parish... £2900 0 0
Laird of Bachiltone, for Pitheavles and others about Perth... £460 0 0
George Johnstone, for his aikers... £123 0 0
The Glovers, for their lands... £400 13 4
John Messer, for his aikers... £28 13 4
Lady Aberuchlie... £206 0 0
Hew Smyth, for his aikers... £54 6 8
John Tyrie, for Magdalens... £138 10 0
Mr David Moncrieff, for Craigie... £490 6 8
Laird of Tersappie, for Tersappie and Leitch hill, with his aikers... £740 13 4
Earle of Tullibardine, for Few duties in Tersappie... £7 13 4
Earle of Annandale, for his Few duties... £16 5 0
Laird of Moncrieff, for Friartoune... £370 6 8
Summa £5936 18 4 340

There is amongst the Advocates Manuscripts a handwritten notebook by one James Pinckney, which claims to list "The valued Rent of the Shyre of Perth Conforme to An order from the Right honorable Generall Monck Dated Aprill 6th 1655 With the Assessment payable by Each Heritor in

339 B59/ 28/ 36. 28 February 1650.
For Aberuchill, see "Chronicle", 54, (16/16), lines 30-31; 48 (13/13), lines 25-30.
the Respective paroches of the Several presbuterys In the said shyre since the Totall of the Shyrs valued Rent was establisht at 350000 Lib Scotts". The list of heritors in the presbytery of Perth includes propertied men familiar from the previous documents. Within Perth parish were listed the lairds of Balhousie, Tarsappie, Craigie, Moncreiff, Aberuchill, and Bachilton. Within Scone parish the heritors included the Earl of Annandale, and the lords of Balvaird and Balhagillis. Amongst the heritors of Kinnoull parish were listed Lady Kinnoull, the lords of Balhagillis, Balthayock and Evelick in the Braes of Gowrie, and also Tarsappie who held property at Inchyra in the Carse. 341

However, whilst the influence of the nobility and gentry is clear, it is important to note that the majority of heritors listed by Pinckney were commoners - wealthier burgesses and townsmen; the name of John Mercer appears on several occasions as heritor in the parishes of Perth, Kinnoull, and probably Scone as well. Town and country were not solely linked by the interests of rural landlords who sought property within Perth; residents of the burgh were also the owners, or lease holders, of properties in the "enceinte" and beyond. Townsmen might not be great landowners, but their property holdings and interests complicated the bond between town and country. Indeed, such connections emphasise that although the town, its "enceinte", and the surrounding country were distinguished from one another in terms of their physical environments, such distinctions may have been less important to their inhabitants than the ties of trade and land ownership which bound town and country together.

An impression of the range of property holders in the town and surrounding countryside can be gained from a survey of John Mercer's protocol books. Appendix 8 lists those individuals or families from outwith Perth who appear to have been involved in property transactions within the burgh, and also residents of Perth who held property in the countryside. The list is not strictly reliable, and each particular sasine needs to be consulted to firmly establish the nature of the transactions which Mercer recorded. However, simply by scanning the names of the people involved, an impression of the interaction between "town" and "country" interests can be presented. 342

Most of the information in these volumes concerns transactions within the burgh. In the first volume (1620-1625), the name of John Mathew of Balhousie appears on several occasions, but David Murray of Scone is mentioned just once. A merchant of Dundie, and one William Crombie from Edinburgh appear; but most of the other outsiders seem to have hailed from small estates in the burgh's vicinity. The second volume (1625-1633) mentions more prominent landowners. Lord Scone is noted once, but the Chancellor, Sir George Hay, appears in four documents. A merchant burgess of Edinburgh and a man from Claypotts, near Dundee, are recorded; but most of the landowners came from estates near to the burgh - Graham of Balgowan in Strathearn, William Drumond from Cargill on the Tay, John Dundas of Fingask in the Braes of Gowrie. The bishop of Dunkeld appears in four documents in the third volume (1633-1635), and Hay of Kinnoull appears

341 NLS Adv. 15.2.30. Rental of the Shire of Perth 1655x65.
342 See below, Appendix 8, for details.
in three. Connections with Strathearn and the Braes of Gowrie are again expressed in the records of a sasine of John Oliphant of Bachilton, and a resignation by Sir Patrick Douglas of Kilspindie.

Another citizen of Dundee is also mentioned. In the fourth volume (1635-1637) there are documents relating to the bishop of Dunkeld, and the commissioner of Dunkeld, and two sasines of John Hendersone from St. Andrews. Lords Scone and Oliphant appear in a sasine together with the earl of Kinghorn and the laird of Inchmartine in the Carse. In the fifth volume (1637-1641), there are three sasines of Edinburgh merchants, and the prominence of the Oliphant family in Strathearn is apparent in references to William Oliphant of Pitlochie, William Oliphant at the Mill of Gask, and John Oliphant of Bachilton. There are two references to the Lindsays of Evelick in the Braes of Gowrie. In the sixth volume (1641-1655), all of the sasines between June 1642 and June 1651 concern lands "in the countrie". There are three sasines of the Lindsays of Evelick, but most of the names listed appear to be of inhabitants of Perth. The entries in the seventh volume (1655-1666) are notable for a mixture of local lairds and landowners from beyond the sheriffdom. Merchants from Stirling and Dundee are listed, along with John White of Burntisland and Walter Smith of Strathmiglo. Andrew Grant of Balhagillis appears in three sasines, and William Blair of Kinfauns appears in two; there are two sasines in name of William Blair of Tarsappie. Lord Scone is mentioned in one document. William Blair of Kinfauns appears again in the eighth volume, (1666-1668), and two burgesses of Edinburgh and Glasgow are also noted. In the final volume (1668-1673) the name of Hay of Balhousie appears for the first time since the fourth protocol book. In general, although some individuals hailed from impressive distances - particularly the burgess of Glasgow - there seems to have been a preponderance of landed interests from Strathearn and the Braes of Gowrie.

Prominent Features

Although there was a complex patchwork of land-ownership surrounding Perth, the "Chronicle" indicates that the built landscape was dominated by the houses and mausolea of the nobility. In Strathearn, the Graham's castle of Kincardine and mausoleum in the church of Aberuthven seem to have been particularly prominent in the 17th century. Indeed, the church is still a distinguished site in virtue both of the 17th century ruin, and the 18th century Montrose mausoleum, designed by William Adam, which was incorporated into the churchyard in 1736. The church, like Kincardine Castle, is now ruined, and the vaults at the western end are derelict. In the 17th century the parish of Aberuthven was united to that of Auchterarder, and although the minister continued to preach in the church, its role as the mausoleum of the Graham family may well have been its principal function. The church is not particularly large, measuring 65 feet by 21 feet externally, but it occupies a prominent site, raised above the banks of the Ruthven Water - which also flows past Kincardine. MacGibbon and Ross thought that the only features of architectural interest were the 17th century belfry at the west end, and two windows in the east wall which both

343 See above, p. 143.
344 The mausoleum is a Category A listed building; the church of St. Kattan is a Category B building. NMR Library, Ref. P/ BL/ 5/ PK, Auchterarder Parish (Landward).
have ogee arch-heads. However, although the building was modest, it fulfilled a significant function within the surrounding landscape; furthermore, its situation in Strathearn, apparently on an overland route between Perth and Stirling, would have ensured its prominence as a feature of that landscape. 345

The castle at Kincardine was situated only a couple of miles away, but in a defensible position high above the Ruthven Water, and screened by woodland. Such a site combined defence and privacy with an image of authority. As the seat of the principal local landowner, the estate was both a focal point and a segregated domain. The destruction of the castle in 1646 removed a significant feature of the built environment of Strathearn; the ruins, naturally, formed a new landmark, but were representative of political and social upheaval. Nevertheless, in some respects the ruins also symbolised the continuity of landed authority, despite the effects of war. The Graham family was not destroyed, as the 18th century mausoleum of the dukes of Montrose at Aberuthven testifies; indeed, the castle and barony of Kincardine remained the property of the family. Only an angle fragment of the castle, and traces of walling amongst overgrown mounds of rubble survive today, although the remains seem to have been more extensive in the 18th century. 346

Balvaird Castle and the church of Arngask, in the Ochil Hills to the south of Perth, form a similar unit to Kincardine and Aberuthven - although in this case, whereas there is little trace of the mausoleum of the Murray family, the tower-house is largely complete. The only surviving indication of the church's role as a burying place for the family is a badly worn medieval stone effigy at the ruined watch-house. This is believed to be Lady Margaret Barclay, the foundress of the chaplainry at Arngask in 1527. The statue lay for a time in the grounds of the castle - where MacGibbon and Ross saw it. The medieval church originated as a private chapel for the community at Balvaird Castle, but was demolished in the early 19th century. The situation, however, high above Glen Farg, still serves to indicate its dual role as a private chapel and as a public expression of the Murray's local authority; it was remote, but strikingly located. This function was expressed forcefully by the elaborate castle, much of which had been built by the late 16th century. A substantial

345 See NSA, Vol. X, (1845), 290; D. MacGibbon and T. Ross, The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland from the earliest Christian Times to the Seventeenth Century, Volume III (1897), 485-6. However, although the "Chronicle" suggests that a roadway led to Aberuthven (see above, p.143), there is no indication of such on John Adair's map of c.1685. See illustration no. 18.
346 For details see NMR Library, Ref. P/ BL/ 5/ PK, Blackford Parish; the ruins are listed as a Category C building. A.G. Reid included an engraving of the ruins in 1784, in The Annals of Auchterarder and Memorials of Strathearn, (1899), 37, 48. The Third Statistical Account notes that stones from the castle were incorporated into the steeple of the parish church of Auchterarder; 3SA, 492.

The castle seems to have been sacked twice during the course of the Covenanting wars. Furgol records that in the Spring of 1644, the Earl of Lothian's Foot sacked the castle whilst marching to rendezvous with Argyll in the Mearns. The "Chronicle" records that Kincardine was burnt by Middleton between 10 and 19 March 1646. In accordance with passages in the "Chronicle", Furgol notes that Kincardine was attacked on 10 March 1646 by forces under the command of Major General John Middleton, although he also records that Middleton prosecuted a seige in March 1647, when the castle was razed. See E.M. Furgol, A Regimental History of the Covenanting Armies 1639-1651, (1990), 99, 181, 258-9, 418. "Chronicle", 54 (16 /18), lines 17-31.
complex, even in the 17th century it was physically imposing, defensible, and difficult to approach; prominent in the landscape, the location afforded the residents commanding views across the Ochils, and south into Fife. However, in the context of the landscape of land ownership, perhaps the most interesting feature of this unit is the fact that the Murrays of Balvaird were a branch of the Murrays of Scone; the "Chronicle" records that in August 1667 the viscount of Stormont's sister was buried at Arngask.347 The inter-connection of these estates is an indication of the complexity of property holding in the shire, but also suggests the particular importance of the Murrays in affairs at Perth. The family owned some of the most important and dramatic property in the countryside, and the first Lord Scone frequently served as provost of Perth in the early 17th century; the Murrays were closely associated with the operation of the politics and economy of the burgh. 348

The relationship between Perth and Scone was centuries old, and from its inception Perth was perhaps in the shadow of the site of royal coronations. Scone was a place of national significance, symbolically and politically; its role as a sacred site survived the Reformation and - although partly forced upon - the coronation there of Charles II was a deliberate evocation of medieval tradition. The burgh of Perth rose to be the dominant economic and administrative centre on this stretch of the Tay, but even after the Reformation and the sacking of the abbey, the Scone estate remained influential in the local landscape. The creation of a large house at Scone in the post-Reformation era, at first for Lord Ruthven and later for Sir David Murray, sealed the secular transformation of a site which had previously been a religious estate; however, vestiges of the abbey may have survived into the early decades of the 17th century, and may still have been used for public worship. 349

Slezer’s “Prospect of the House and Town of Skuyn” (1693) shows the 17th century palace amongst a landscaped plantation, and the old gateway - apparently a vestige of the abbey complex - which is still standing today. The landscape beyond the palace is essentially open agricultural land, clearly under the plough. The low wooden buildings of the village or toun are also visible amongst the trees, and a line of houses or barns stretches into the foreground. Although clumps of trees appear on the hills in the background of this view, there are no other visible settlements. Essentially, Scone is shown in isolation as a small but organised hamlet, dominated by the "palace". This building is notable not so much for its architectural merit - it would seem to have been three storeys in height, with distinctive projecting square towers and stepped gables - but because it was clearly constructed without a defensive function. In the previous century such an estate would have been vulnerable to attack and even in the 17th century the Covenanting crisis led to the destruction of buildings like Kincardine Castle. But Scone seems to have been

347 "Chronicle", 63 (1 9).
349 South-East Perth an archaeological landscape, 127.
designed as splendid residence, rather than as a defensible domain. 350 Rutherford’s engraving of the palace in 1775 shows decorative details in the stonework, particularly above the windows and over the central ground-floor doorway. The crowsteps and projecting towers hark back to earlier building styles, but the plan of the palace seems to have owed little to the traditional tower-houses of the surrounding shire. The emphasis upon domesticity is perhaps more in keeping with a major urban residence like the Gowrie House, than with rural fortresses such as Balvaird. 351

The domestic style of the house at Scone was an expression of wealth and confidence, and certainly not of weakness. But if this palace was forward-looking in intent, the status of a major landowner such as Lord Scone also found a more traditional expression in a major funerary monument. The tomb of Sir David Murray in the mausoleum at Scone (c. 1631) - formerly part of the post-Reformation parish church - was unusual in scale, and probably imported from London. The monument was carved from Italian alabaster, and features statues of Murray himself, flanked by the Marquis of Tullibardine and Earl Marischal. 352 Closer to Perth, in sight of the town on the east bank of the Tay stood the Kirk of Kinnoull, where Sir George Hay was buried in 1635. 353 His funerary monument compares with that at Scone, although it is now in a state of decay. MacGibbon and Ross were unimpressed by this tomb; but its location in a church which was often used by the nobility, within sight of Monk’s Tower which Hay had renovated, was a clear expression of his influence, and brought the symbolic landscape of landed authority to the very fringe of the burgh. 354

An Overview of the Landscape

The best 17th century cartographic evidence for the composition of the Perthshire landscape is John Adair’s Map of Strathearn, Stormont, and the Carse of Gowrie (c.1685). Adair’s depiction of the immediate surroundings of Perth has already been described 355; but in the present context, his work underlines the emphasis which I have placed upon the dominant built features of the landscape. Whyte has written that this map, together with earlier 16th century maps by Timothy Pont, “depict a countryside with only a few properly constructed roads, a landscape in which the dominant features were the country houses of the gentry and nobility with their surrounding parklands and enclosures, and a scattering of small burghs. Rural settlement was widely dispersed in a series of hamlet clusters, to some of which the existence of a church, mill or nearby castle gave

350 See A Vision of Scotland, 52.
351 NLS Adv. 30.5.23 121b. See illustration no. 17, p. 220. The engraving of Scone Palace from the north by A. Rutherford (1775) is reproduced in South-East Perthshire an archaeological landscape, 144.
352 See NMR Library, Ref. PI BL/5/ PK, Scone Parish. The mausoleum is a Category A listed building; South-East Perth an archaeological landscape, 137. See also the visitors guide to Scone Palace.
353 “Chronicle”, 43 (1 2).
354 See MacGibbon and Ross, Ecclesiastical Architecture, Volume III (1897), 580-1; Kinnoull, (SUAT 1991), 22-3; South-East Perth an archaeological landscape, 137.
355 See above, p. 282 - 283.
a degree of local prominence". 356 It must be noted that Adair's map is stylistic, and although reasonably accurate in scale, he was selective in his choice of the sites and features which he recorded. This is apparent in the relatively empty environment depicted in the area of Perth's Burghmuir. Adair shows just three roads in the "enceinte", although documentary sources indicate that several other roadways crossed this land. But Adair was concerned with the prominent characteristics of the landscape, and in this respect, his work is helpful to the present study.

On the east banks of the Tay, the estate at Scone is indicated by a rectangular enclosure, and symbols which presumably mark the palace complex and chapel; a church is shown outwith the enclosure, and nearby are shown the houses of the town. The land around is shown to have been open and uncultivated; looking northwards, the estate is the only major feature on the east side of the Tay before a much larger estate is shown at Stobhall. By contrast, the Braes and Carse of Gowrie are shown to have been quite densely settled, with a series of estates and churches depicted. The house of Gasconhall - sacked by the townspeople of Perth in 1592 - stands out atop one of the braes, but some of the larger estates in this area seem to have been at Glendoick, Murie, Errol, Megginch, Kilspindie and Fingask, all of which are shown with enclosures. Nearer to Dundee, the lands of Inchture, Moncur, "Drumine", Longforgan and "Lyon" are shown in particular detail. Only one road is shown, running along the Carse between Perth and Dundee, but there must have been others in the Braes of Gowrie. The area between Glendoick and Fingask seems to be depicted as rough (or even marshy) land, and was presumably used for grazing. The Kirk of Kinnoull stands out on the banks of the river, and the Carse road seems to lead off from this area. Small houses indicate a settlement at Bridgend, from where a road leads northwards to Coupar Angus. Two plantations are shown in the Stobhall area, but otherwise, the land to the east of the Tay seems to have been almost devoid of woodland.

To the south of Perth, Adair shows large enclosed estates at Moncrief and Dupline; at the latter, there is also an enclosed area referred to as the "park of Dupline", which stands at the head of a "Roman Paved Way" leading along the Gask Ridge to an enclosed area at Innerpeffray. The Brig of Earn is clearly shown, where the roadway from Perth crosses the river and then carries on to Abernethy and Newburgh in Fife. In Strathearn, south of the river, the major enclosed estates are Muckarsie, Duncrub, Tullybardine and Drummond. The latter two are shown in detail, and are by far the largest estates depicted on the map. Both enclosures are rectangular, and at Drummond there are regular plantations and enclosed areas which may be fields; the estate is traversed by straight roadways. The regularity of the plan is suspect, but presumably this was an attempt by Adair to depict a planned, and carefully managed property. The estate at Tullibardine appears to have been smaller and less ordered. Kincardine is highlighted on the map, and appears as a large house or castle within extensive woodland which dominates the nearby town of Auchterarder. The church at Aberuthven stands out in an otherwise barren area on the banks of the Ruthven Water. It is notable that there are few settlements along the Gask Ridge, which is shown as rough ground, and the land beside the East Pow river which joins the Almond also seems to be rough or marshy ground. There are more settlements in this area, however, notably the estates at Keilour, Balgowan and

356 Agriculture and Society, 24.
Methven, Bachilton - the property of the prominent Oliphant family - is indicated as a large house amid unenclosed land. The omission of roadways on this map is highlighted by the depiction of the Brig of Almond, where no causeway is shown, despite the significance of the bridge; the nearest road is shown crossing the Almond near its confluence with the Tay - and no bridge is shown at that point. The roadway leads north to Dunkeld through rough and sparsely settled land, although a large estate is shown at "Neamn". Together with the nearby market centre of Auchtergaven - here depicted as a church amongst woodland - Neamn is one of several houses and settlements which do not appear on modern maps of the area.

Closer to Perth, the castle at Huntingtower is shown amongst trees beside the town lade, but the most substantial property in the area beyond the Burghmuir appears to be the enclosed estate of Cultmalundie. Perth and Dundee are the largest towns shown on the map. Whereas Newburgh and Coupar Angus are shown with burgage plots stretching back from a single street, and Auchterarder is depicted as a single street of houses, the two main streets of Perth, together with a connecting street or vennel, are drawn within the bounds of the lade. It is, of course, a stylised view; but it offers a clear comment about the status of Perth. The layout of Dundee is shown in greater detail, together with its substantial harbour; nevertheless, Perth's prominence in the sheriffdom of Perth is unambiguous.

The Advocates Manuscripts include a series of volumes associated with Sir Robert Sibbald which contain detailed descriptions of the Perthshire landscape in the 17th century. In the earliest of these surveys, Sibbald appears to have amended and added to a volume by Sir James Balfour (dated c.1633), which describes the condition of several Scottish counties. This volume emphasises the importance of Strathearn as "ye principall countrey of perth", and points to the Ochil Hills as a natural boundary between Perthshire and the south. However, the volume is mainly of interest for its long lists of houses and castles in Strathearn and the "Brae of Almond"; Although Balfour's geography is questionable, these are the properties which he deemed worthy of notice: "at the foote of the neighbour ing ocells layes the housses and castells of Craigpotey, Kirkpote y, Fordel, Balmano, Exmagirdle, Forgone, Inermeth, Condey, Kelty, Garnock, Rossie, Denembe, Glen, Kincardine, Nather gask, Tullibardyne, Aurthermachony, Drymen, Balioch, Boreland".

"Betuix ye Riuers of Erne and Tay Layes the easten and wester Brae of Almond housses castalis... Rindes, Fingaske dundas, Kilmounth, Elcho. Ester, castle, Moncreiffe vester, Malar, Aberdalgy, Dupleine, Pittheueless, Balhoussey, Hutingtoure, Methuen, Bachiltone, LogyAlmond, Cultemluidryes, Tippermure, Tippirmallow, Keilour, Gorthy, Trewin, Strouen, Cultoquhay, Abircarney, Inchbrakey, Monywa ird, Carriwechten, Fordee, Comre, Williamstoune, Dondum, Ochtirtire, Milnabe, Inerpephrey."
Two other volumes associated with Sibbald seem to be descriptions of Perthshire in the last years of the 17th century. 359 These surveys pay particular attention to land use, as well as cataloguing the towns and houses of the sheriffdom. Sibbald described the land as being generally "very well mixed the high grounds being proper for pasture and the lower very fruitfull in Cornes having many Lochs Rivers + Waters in it..." In contrast to the view of the landscape set out by Adair, Sibbald also noted an "abundance of woods, and much planting every where". 360 In Strathearn there were "many woods the most considerable is the Forest of Glenairtnee which forest will be five or six myle in Lentghe four myle broad yr are a great many deer and Roe and wild Horse and Cowes... Some of the sydes of the mountames are covered with wood Ther is to ye East of Lothem upon the water of Erne ye wood of ______ which is of oaks Ther is much wood about ye Castle of Drumond the woods of mackenie and Culdees The wood of Kinkairn ye wood of Meffen the wood of Innermay the gentries houses have much planting about y(m)". 361 Indeed, at Drummond Castle there were "syme Gardens and Avenues + ______+ Much wood, beside the planting near the house"; this description does accord with Adair's depiction of the estate. 362

Drummond was the residence of the earl of Perth, and the other "Chief Houses" and leading families were: "Tillibardine a noble duelling with large parks + much planting about it ye Residence of the Marquesse of Athole, Huntingtour ye Duke of Athols, Kincaime ane Ruionus castle belonging to ye Marquess of Montrose. Yr are many fyne duellings Belonging to Gentlemen of ye name of Grahame at Braco Inchbrakie, Orchill. Gorthie Balgowan. Garvack Many fyne houses belonging to Gentlemen of the name of Drummond as Millnab, Kalender Pitkellines, Kilo Machany Innermay Copmelundie Colquhilly Drumond of Erinoch, Balloch Innerpefferay the Residen of the Lord Madertie Freeland ye Residence of ye Lord Ruthuen Dincrub the Residence of ye Lord Rolloch. Ther be many fyne houses belong to Gentilmen of the name of Murray as Struan Abircairny, Keillour, Auchtertyre ye are Besydes ys Duplin Castle + Balhsusie Gleniegles Bachiltoun Esmagirdill Bloncrief, Huntingtour..." 363 In addition, Sibbald noted that "Madertie" was the seat of the viscount of Strathallan. 364 These lists correspond poorly with those in the Balfour volume. However, Sibbald stressed the sheer number of estates and prominent houses in the landscape at the end of the 17th century, and the prominence of particular families, whose branches were to be found at many of these seats. In this context, it is important to note the absence of the Oliphants from his list, although the importance of the Grahams is highlighted.

359 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, Map and description of County of Perth, c. 1680; NLS Adv. 15.1.5, description c.1695 (?) in "Scotland, Ireland, and the British Islands .. 1733". The map of Perthshire which accompanies the commentary in MS 15.1.1 (MS 15.1.1A, ff141-2) is of poor quality; it is principally of use for providing an indication of the density of estates and settlements in Strathearn and the Carse of Gowrie.
360 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 143.
361 Ibid.
362 NLS Adv. 15.1.5, 12.
363 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 143.
364 NLS Adv. 15.1.5, 12.
Sibbald noted of Stormont that it was "a mixed country the over part hilly being more propper for pasture ye Lower grounds are fertile In cornes + is well planted In the east... much Fishing of Salmond..." 365 The Carse of Gowrie is described as "a strong fertile ground which produceth in great plenty: wheat Bear : peas + Beans Rye and Oats..." Again, the seats of gentry and nobles are noted. 366 However, the land lacked peat for fuel, and coal was imported by sea. 367 Strathmore was "ane fertile country for cornes well planted and plenished w(t) many houses of ye nobility and gentrie." Scone is described as "now the Cheife Residence of the Vicount of Stormont a stately house with fyne gardens, and the kirk Is famous for ye Coronation of severall of our kings..." 368

Perth is referred to as the "head Burgh of the shyre", and other towns mentioned include Coupar Angus, "Eliot", "a small market town belonging to the Earl of Airly", Auchterarder, "Crief ye seat of the Courts of the Stuartry a market town", and Abernethy. "Beside yr yr are Fowls, Denning and Forgan + some other towns of small note". However, Culross in Fife is strangely described as the "Chief port... for ye whole shyre". 369 If this detail is improbable, Sibbald’s notes about the Tay are more helpful: "The River of Tay is Navigable from ye Castle of Broughtie wher it Loseth itself in the German sea up to the Town of St Johnstoun to which small ships come wp yr is ane peer yr at which ye ships Load + unload all along down ye River yr be upon each syde of the River several places wher vessells lye to and load and unload". 370 This record implies that Perth’s status on the Tay was in decline, with the rise of rival harbours and increasing navigation problems, for only small boats could make the journey upriver from Dundee to Perth. The proliferation of harbours along the Tay compounded a general increase in the competitiveness of Perth’s landward rivals; but even so, Perth still emerges from Sibbald’s notes as the most important burgh of the sheriffdom.

Sibbald’s portrait of Perthshire differs in important respects from Adair’s map. Although both sources emphasise the dominance of the properties of nobles and gentry in the landscape, Adair’s map offers little indication of land use at the end of the 17th century. In contrast Sibbald was keen to stress the abundance of arable and pasture lands throughout the shire, both in the Highlands and the Lowlands. His surveys seem to have been rather uncritical - although the silting of the Tay is implied in his studies, the only deficiency which he noted in the landscape was a lack of peat in the Braes of Gowrie. Sibbald’s descriptions of extensive woodlands and new plantations are not borne out by Adair’s stylised map. Relatively few of the estates portrayed by Adair seem to have incorporated new plantations, and the wood at Kincardine is the only substantial woodland depicted in the region of Perth. Sibbald may well have exaggerated the extent of tree cover in the shire; his knowledge is questionable, and it is notable that he made no mention of any roadways in the sheriffdom. However, the portrait of a fairly densely settled working landscape is persuasive.

365 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 145.
366 NLS Adv. 15.1.5, 12.
367 Ibid. and NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 144.
368 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 144.
369 NLS Adv. 15.1.5, 12.
370 NLS Adv. 15.1.1, 148.
Where both Sibbald and Adair were most remiss was in their failure to indicate the condition of ordinary settlements in the agricultural hinterlands of the burghs and rural estates; such omission, however, reflects a general bias in the source material. 371

The assault on Gasconhall which was led by townsmen of Perth in 1592 illustrates that relations between the burgh and landowners in the shire could be fractious. 372 Indeed, incidents such as this and the "Raid of Carpow" in 1607 emphasise that a consideration of the town and country relationship, or a survey of the appearance of the landscape of the sheriffdom, raises absolutely fundamental questions. The major features of the landscape of 17th century Perthshire are readily identifiable, but the complex workings of the landscape are far harder to appreciate. Perhaps the key to understanding, however, is to consider the concept of a "hierarchy of settlements", as Mr Bowler has suggested. Sibbald was quite sure that even at the end of the 17th century, the burgh of Perth was still the most important burgh in the county. The authorities of Perth were still making important claims for themselves in 1700 - asserting that Perth was the second most important burgh in the kingdom. However, the documents which have been considered provide a more ambiguous testimony. The market at Dunkeld seems to have handled more goods than that of Perth - or at least goods of greater value - and the authorities of Coupar Angus were not exactly deferential to the burgesses of Perth. Perth was certainly the largest burgh in the county - and perhaps the most impressive architecturally; but its economic position was less secure, and the market economy of the sheriffdom was extremely competitive. The burgh was an economic focal point; but there were many other such foci in the locality. In terms of a "hierarchy" of markets, the report of 1692 may be taken as a rough "league table" of market towns. Even if, as Whyte suggests, Perth dealt in prestigious goods, by this reckoning it was clearly not at the top of the local league. A number of burghs - Dunkeld, Dunblane, Doune, Coupar Angus, and Crieff - were vying with Perth for superiority in the county.

It is harder to indicate a hierarchy of estates of the nobility and gentry, for this requires a detailed consideration of the relative political influence of particular families. However, it is easy to point to Scone as a site of extraordinary significance in the locality of Perth in the 17th century - a dominance which was expressed in the architecture of Lord Scone's properties, as well as by the site's traditional associations. In areas of relatively dense settlement, such as the Braes of Gowrie, it is more difficult to identify a hierarchy - although Adair paid particular attention to estates such as Megginch and Fingask. It is perhaps more helpful simply to note the concentration of estates in

371 This point must be qualified by reference to the detailed study of Pitmiddle Village, near Kinnaird in the Braes of Gowrie, undertaken by the Perthshire Society of Natural Science. The published history of this deserted village is a comprehensive study of the workings of a rural town, and includes an assessment of the living conditions in the village in the medieval and early modern periods. The impressive volume of documentary material that relates to this settlement may not be exceptional. See Pitmiddle Village & Elcho Nunnery, (P. S. N. S. 1988).
this area, and the implication that the Carse of Gowrie was intensively cultivated by the tenants of the major landowners. It is certainly relevant to study a record such as the "Chronicle of Perth", for the estates and estate-holders mentioned therein were clearly of significance in the life of the burgh and its surrounding landscape. Sir George Hay emerges as a prominent figure; the burgh's relationship with the marquis of Montrose was less harmonious. The character of the buildings which such propertied men occupied or commissioned in the countryside reveal the character of the times, and serve as a commentary upon the life of the burgh. Kinnull was sufficiently wealthy and confident to erect his own mausoleum on the fringes of the town, and clearly felt that this site was prestigious; in the second half of the 17th century, the Grahams' sacked and abandoned castle of Kincardine stood as a testimony of the upheaval of war in an otherwise peaceful era.

Town and Country - a review

Study of the environmental condition of Perth in the 17th century allows further comments to be made about Professor Lynch's historical analysis of the town and country relationship. The competitive regional economy which he portrays is certainly apparent in the material from the Perth burgh records which has been considered, as is the tendency for townsman to acquire properties in the rural hinterland. Understanding of the operation of local market centres, and of the patronage systems which were created by the nobility and gentry, requires more detailed historical analysis; but this study has indicated how the relationship between Perth and major landowners developed following the fall of the Gowries in 1600. Indeed, the political interaction between town and country is vividly displayed in the extant castles and chapels of the Perthshire countryside, and the major properties within the town for which there is substantial documentary evidence.

Perth's national economic decline seems to have been matched by local difficulties - certainly in the second half of the 17th century. The burgh may not have suffered as dramatically as Dundee during the wars of the 1640s and early 1650s; but Perth was visited by a succession of serious epidemics, and periodic subsistence crises in the first half of the 17th century may have stifled the burgh's development. In addition, the community was forced to bear the costs of substantial reparation works on the Brig of Tay prior to 1621, and on a variety of features after the great flood. Financially strained, the burgh's admirable efforts to maintain the Kirk of St. John contrasted with widespread dereliction in the later decades of the century. The condition of housing in 17th century Perth is difficult to assess, because documentary evidence of decline is contradicted by the observations of foreign visitors. But it does seem that the burgh's hey-day was long past, and the decaying state of many of Perth's buildings was a poignant reminder of diminishing local economic power.

However, economic life at Perth was still vigorous. This is reflected in the aspirations of wealthier townsman to acquire land, and the fact that important noblemen remained closely associated with the burgh. Perth's location continued to be of benefit; its strategic significance was acknowledged by the construction of the Cromwellian citadel, and the garrisoning of the burgh emphasises that it stood at an important junction in the overland road network. Furthermore, the concept of Perth as
a "dry town" seems to be contradicted by the development of the harbours there in the 16th and
17th centuries; the proliferation of rival quays illustrates that the Tay was busy with traffic, even
though international shipping fell away. The report of 1692 indicates that the inhabitants certainly
had difficulties with international maritime trade, but they were prepared to "incouradge trade at the
place". The famines of the 1690s were a cruel blow after the resilience which the burgh had
shown through a series of calamities, and abiding economic difficulties.

The built environment of Perth in the second half of the 17th century seems to have been tawdry,
with derelict areas and poorly maintained buildings within the town, and a poorly defined area of
moorland beyond the walls. The condition of the burgh contrasted with a rural landscape that
boasted many fine houses and castles, but perhaps had more in common with the still rudimentary
farm buildings and dwellings of the countryside. The poor state of the urban environment may
have been a reflection of long-term economic decline; but the burgh's ability to focus resources on
particular building projects - such as the kirk or new council buildings - and the presence in the
burgh of influential and wealthy men of property argues that economic decline was not the only
cause of urban decay. Clearly, the effects of an intemperate climate, and severe visitations of
disease must also be considered in this context. The damage which was wrought upon the town
by flooding should not be overstated - even in 1621, flood damage was largely restricted to the
riverside areas of the town. Nevertheless, the character of the urban environment reflected the
dangers of the Tay river. Flood defences were constructed in this period, a safe haven for ships
was added to the shoreline, and street levels seem to have been raised progressively throughout
the medieval period and later, to take account of inundations. However, despite its vulnerability,
the threat of flooding does not seem to have restricted the development of the Castle Gable
suburb - although the flood damage of 1621 probably prevented any new building in that area for
many years, as reparation work was undertaken.

The loss of the Tay bridge seems to suggest that the poor weather enhanced economic decline;
but it may be incorrect to assume that trade at Perth was profoundly restricted by the absence of
the bridge. The report of 1692 suggests that markets on the east bank of the Tay were small, and
that the principal threats to Perth's market status lay in the west. The system of ferries over the Tay
seems to have been adequate to meet the needs of visiting tradesmen - although by the early
18th century the system was in need of strict regulation. The burgh remained at the junction of an
important road network, and historians should look to factors other than the loss of the Tay bridge
to fully account for Perth's weak economic position in the 17th century.

373 Miscellany of The Scottish Burgh Records Society, 60.
374 The nature and condition of rural buildings is a difficult area of study; see South-East Perth an
archaeological landscape, 116-119. There is a clear contrast between the buildings of the town
and the palace at Scone in Slezer's prospect; see A Vision of Scotland, 52.

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Similarly, the impact of disease in town and country can be difficult to judge, because poor health was a part of the local culture at this time. Perth certainly suffered from major epidemics of plague and associated infectious diseases in the first half of the 17th century, and society seems to have been beset by a fear of disease and famine. Such concern is unsurprising - but it is unclear whether Perth and its hinterland suffered more than other Lowland areas. If the burgh economy was particularly vulnerable to the effects of a poor climate, this was probably on account of the combination of periodic floods, epidemics, and food shortages. High levels of mortality in such periods certainly seem to have contributed to the abandonment of many buildings in the burgh - the depopulation of Meal Vennel being a particular case in point.

A factor which so far has not been examined in detail is the impact on the burgh of war and occupation in the 1640s and 1650s. The authors of the "Chronicle of Perth" concentrated on this period, and recorded instances of disruption and hardship. The Covenanting wars and Cromwellian regime brought destruction to the countryside - and in some cases, to burghs as well. At Perth, the built environment was profoundly affected by the construction of a major citadel, and the local economy appears to have been strained by the demands of occupying forces. The middle decades of the century stand out as a stressful era of hardship, and perhaps the rest of the century was spent recovering from the exactions of this period.
Appendix 7:

B59/25/2/21
1692-1697. "The proportion of the taxt roll applicable to the burghs of barony and regality in Perthshire".

(I have highlighted the names of burghs)

List of the unfree traders In the Shyre of Perth with y(r) sell proportions of the monthly cess payabll to Mr John Buckan advocate Commenseing frae Lambas Nyntie tuo to Lambas Nynty Sevin As fourteen shilling of the Taxt roll Imposed by the Comiss(r) of Supply and excyse of the said shire Conforme to the Councills proclamation and Mr Buchans offer as is particularly subdivided Viz

Toun of Doun at three shill of ye taxt roll Is of monthly cess...£18 00 0
Toun of Dunkell at 3 (shillings ed.) of the Taxt roll is of monthly cess...£18 00 0
Coupar of Angus at three shill of the Taxt roll is of monthly cess...£18 00 0
Toun of Elith at 2 (shillings ed. ) 6 (pence ed. ) of the taxt roll is of monthly cess...£15 00 0
Dunblane at Six (pence ed.) Scots of the taxt roll Is of monthly cess...£03 00 0
Creiff + Comrie at 12 (pence ed.) Scots of the taxt roll is...£06 00 0
Kincairn + Valley field at 6 (pence ed.) of the taxt roll is...£03 00 0
Muthill + Ochterardor Blackford + Donying at 6 (pence ed.) is monthly...£03 00 0
FForgundeny Abernethie + A(yr) adjacent at 6 (pence ed.) of the taxt roll is...£03 00 0
Erroll Rait grainge Inshmarteine Kilspindie + Kinnaird at 3 (pence ed.) Scots...£01 10 0
Migle Rattrey Blair and Kirkmichaell at 6 (pence ed.) is monthly...£03 00 0
Logiereat Kenmore FFOrthingalle and Killine at 3 (pence ed.) Scots taxt roll is...£01 10 0

Summa of the _____ cess as it is imposed is...£93 00 0

(Note. Dunblane seems to have made a surprisingly small contribution, considering the relative importance of its market.)
Appendix 8: Town and Country Connections
(Scottish Record Office) B59/1/ Protocol Books of John Mercer

A list of individuals or families, seemingly from outside the burgh of Perth, who were involved in property transactions there; and of townspeople who were involved with properties beyond the burgh.

B59/1/11. 1620-1625

Wm Crombie ___ in Edr
Johe Bonnar of ________
Johe Mathow of Balhousie
Alexr Peibles of Chaplehill
Androw Conqueror & David Vicount of Stormonth
Johe Mathow of Balhousie
Wm Ross of Carsehill + his sps
Androw Horne in Tamyuane
Instrument of possesion Jon Lamb of Jon Mathow of Balhousie his haill cornes goods + gear
James Mercer of Crevadge
Wm McNeiven in Dalchlaile + his sps
To ye fd Wm McNiven + his sps
Johe Moresone in _________
Donald Moresone in ________
Alexr Jack merd in Dundie
Nota ye Sasines of ye lands in the cuntrie yt are bookit in this regre are not in____ in this table but are all to be fund wt this mark X wpon margine

B59/1/12. 1625-1633

Sa Comissr of Dunkeld + his dochteris
Sa Dame Alysone Grahame
Sasing Laurence Lord Oliphant
Sa Dame Lilias Drumond his spous
Sasing Sr George Hay of Kynfawnis knyt
Sasing Dame Katarene Pebxls
Sasing Jon Grahame of Balgoun
Sasing my Lord Olyphant and his spous
Sasing Sr George Hay of Kynfawnis knyt
Sasing Sr George Hay of Kynfawnis knyt
Sasing Johnne Elder in Kirkstyll of Kinfawnis
Sasing my Lord of Stormont
Sasing James Broun in Claypottis
Sasing Jon Murray merd burges of edr
Sasing William Drumond in Cargill
Sasing Sr Jon Moncreiff of yat ilk baronet
(Sasing pure memberis of Jesus Chryst)
Sa my Lord Oliphant
Sasing Jon Broun of Fordell
Sasing Jon Dundas of Fingask
Sa Sr Aiene Campbell of Glen_____ knyt
Resionaoun Thomas Andersone of Tullyum (x2)
Sa my Lord Chancellar
Sasing Jon Broun of Fordell
B59/1/13. 1633-1635

Sasing my Lord Chancellor
Sasing Jon Oliphant of Bachiltoun
Sasing Bishop of Dunkeld and his spouse
Sasing Bishop of Dunkeld
Resignaoun Bishop of Dunkeld
Sasing William Broun of Hyelandis of Dewlie
Sasing ye Earl of Kynnoull (x2)
Sasing Bishop of Dunkeld
Resignaoun Sir Patrick Douglas of Kilspindie
Sasing Thomas Ogilwy in Balgay
Resignaoun Sir Patrick Hamiltoun of Jordistoun knt
Sasing William Fergusone in Dundie

B59/1/14. 1635-1637

Sasing Andro Grant of Balhaggillis
Sasing Mr James Stewart Comissr of Dunkeld and Marie Stewart his dochter
Sasing Andro Grant of Balhaggillis
Sasing Jon Hendersone in Sanctandrois
Sasing Alexr Bishop of Dunkeld + his spouse
Sasing Patrik Broun of Horne
Sasing the Earl of Kingorne Wicount of Stormount My Lord Olyphant and ye Laird of Inchemaitene
Sasing Wm Muray of Kinghermstoun
Sasing Sir Patrick Murray of Elibank knt baronet
Sasing Patrik Hay of _____ and Helene Hay his spouse
Sasing Dauid Murray burges of Edr
Sasing Johnne Hendersone in Sanctandrois

B59/1/15. 1637-1641

Sasing Rot glen and Thomas Somerwell merdis in Edr
Sasing Johnne Broun of Fodell
Sasing William Oliphant of Pitlochie
Sasing Wm Oliphant at ye myln of Gask
Sasing Patrik Eleis merd in Edr
Sasing Alexander Lindsay of Ewelyk
Sa Jon Oliphant of Bachiltoun + Elizabeth Hay his spouse
Sasing Elizabeth Forbes Ladie Ewelyk
Sasing Mr Dauid Moncreiff of Cragie
Sasing Patrik Eleis merd in Edr

B59/1/16. 1641-1655

Sasing Johne McLeisch in Fawllis
Sasing James Corbie in Scone
(Sasing James Corbie in Perth)
Nota, That all the sasines inst in this table, fra June 1642 till June 1651, wer given be Jon Mercer as ane ordinair notar and not as toun clerk They Being off lands ____ in the countrie____
Junij 1642
Sasing hew Smyth and his spouse
Sasing Johne chaip and his spouse
Augusti 1642
Consignaoun Alex Smyth

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May 1643
Consiguation Mr James Merser

Junij 1643
Sasing Patrik Andersone of Tullilum

September 1643
Sasing Patrik Adamesone
Sasing Jonet Robertson his spouse and Bessie Adamesone their daughter

March 1644
Sasing Margaret Bisset
Sasing Catharine Bisset
Sasing William Robertson
Sasing James Bonar
Protestation Helene Justice
Sasing Patrik Andersone (x2)

July 1644
Sasing Patrik Andersone
December 1644
Sasing John Merser of Melginsch

Januar 1645
Sasing John Balnewis
Sasing Robert Gill

May 1647
Sasing Mr Johne Malcolme
Sasing John Row
Resignation Mr Johne Malcolme (x2)

April 1647
Resignation Mr Johne Malcolme

Sept 1647
Sasing Mr William Marschallis barones

November 1647
Sasing Alexander Lindsay of Ewelyk

Januar 1648
Sasing Alexander Lyndsay of Ewelyk (x2)

September 1649
Sasing Andro Gray notar

December 1649
Sasing Patrik Adamsone

Januar 1651
Sasing Helene Moncreiff spouse to Alexr Mersar

Maij 1651
Sasing Mr James Mersr of Inner____
Sasing Johnne Sempill writer in Edr

B59/17_1655-1666

Sasing Johnne Patersone of ________
Sasing William Blair of Tarssappie (x2)
Sasing Alexander Fargusone merchant in Striviling
Sasing Andro Grant of Balhaggillis
Sasing Johnne Gairdner in Ochterardro and Elspet Patersone spouse
(Sasing poore members of Jesue Chryst)
Sasing Johnne Lamb of ye mure
Sasing James Schoch Robert Smyt yrof
Dauid Wicount of Stormont
Sasing Johnne Patersone of ________
Sasing Patrik Drumond of Gardrum

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Sa Wm Blair of Kynfaunis
Walter Smyth in Strameglo
Sa Androw Grant elder of Balhaggils (x2)
Sa Johne Quhyte in Bruntisland
Sa Johne Lyell merd in Dundie
Sa William Blair of Kinfawnes

B59/1/18. 1666-1668

Pro Gullielmo Blair de Kinfaunes
Pro Jacobo Inauld mercatore burgen burgi de Edr
Pro Davide Smith calceario burgen burgi de Glasgow
Pro Joanne Scott inniore De Glenalbertt

B59/1/19. 1668-1669(73)

Sass Jon Murray in Gorthie
Sasing fr Williame Stewart of Innerytie
Sasing Dame Isobel Chrychtoun his spous
Sasing William Stewart ilister in Dunkeld
Sasing Georg Hay of Balhousie
Sasing Petir Brown in Klein
Sasing George Drumond (writer) in Edr
Section 3. War and Occupation

The "Chronicle of Perth" includes a series of detailed entries which record the comings and goings of forces which quartered in Perth between 1644 and 1646. 1 Strangely, there are few complaints in the text about the strain on the town of quartering troops; even the arrival of plague in Scotland, carried by soldiers who had served at the siege of Newcastle, goes unremarked in the "Chronicle". However, the events of the mid-1640s were clearly of particular importance to some of the chroniclers, 2 and there are also key passages which refer to the Cromwellian occupation of Perth in the 1650s. The chroniclers' concentration upon this period suggests that it was an era of particular importance for the burgh - civil war and foreign occupation had not been experienced in Scotland for several generations. The burgh records indicate that the events of these years profoundly affected the environment of Perth, and imposed significant financial strains. Perth became a garrison town, and troops were still present in the late 17th century.

I) Soldiers in the Burgh

The index to the town council records and the Register of Acts of Town Council illustrate that throughout the 1640s, the need to levy, supply, and quarter soldiers was a persistent responsibility for the burgh. There is a note concerning the costs of the "Troubles" dated to February 1640, when the value of all rents of burgage lands and trade within Perth was assessed, "for the purpose of defraying the charges incurred in the late Troubles in the Country, the same being a proportion of 10 merks for every 100 merks of annuallrent". In April of that year, Perth was required to send twelve men as part of a "flying army to be sent to Leith", and in July an act was issued "as to taking up every fourth man throughout the Town"; there was an allowance of £9 4(shillings) to every man levied, and an allowance "to the Lieutenant for service and also to the Captain and Ensign". In September, the burgh was required to provide "shoes, hodding, padding and handling for the army at Newcastle". 3 The index to the town council records includes a list of the town's expenditure on "Expeditions" between 1638 and 1640:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charge for 140 men sent to Edinburgh to meet the Marquis of Hamilton</td>
<td>800 merks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge of North Expedition 1639</td>
<td>2966 - 2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge of first south Expedition</td>
<td>£2841.4s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge of second South Expedition</td>
<td>2468 merk. 5sh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge for ammunition - muskets</td>
<td>£373 - 6 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 Stone + 12 lib of leu</td>
<td>£79 - 2 - 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Details of the "Chronicle's" list of troops in Perth are given below in Appendix 9.
2 The passages in the "Chronicle" which record troop movements are written in TH9/10, TH9/11 and TH12.
3 B59/17/1, 384, 385, 386.
The cost to the burgh was significant in financial terms; but perhaps more importantly, a large number of townsmen seem to have been levied for military service, and this could have affected manufacturing and trade at Perth.

In the middle years of the 1640s, Perth became of strategic significance for the civil war armies, and the council records are dense with references to expenditure upon defence, levies, and the quartering of troops. The “Chronicle” provides a much clearer record of the movements of the armies, whereas the council records indicate the cost to the burgh of the Covenanting crisis. A guard was formed to keep watch in Perth, and in the days preceding the battle of Tibbermore, detailed preparations were made for the defence of the town: 26 August 1644, “Qik day being convenit wt in ye counsell hous of ye but of perth to treat one yr auin efferis viz to put the toun in one _____ of defence ... ye heall counsell all in one voce hes schoin dauid grant + James _____ to be capitanes for ye toune ... Sicklyk they ordaine the hall toune to be rasined be tuik of drume to be in redines the mornne at six of cloke”; on 28 August, the council convened and decided that “the souldiors sall onely hau one dolier the pice”.5 There is no mention in the Register of Acts of Town Council of the conflict at Tibbermore in September 1644, but numerous references to the quartering of troops occur thereafter. On 12 October the council admitted “Robert Thomson flescher hew ______ Wme Scherp andro Gib all Sworne To contan and assist the baillies in quartering of the men in Rot _____ guard + be the wark Johne andersonse Constantine Laurie __Sworine Rot Jack Johne Schoecho for attending ye wark wt andro grant baillie and quartering of men”. The council ordained “the hail quarter maisteris to quarter souldeouris in thair awine quarteris and non vther to Impoes men Upone thair quarteris except the Provest + baillies and to distribute ye moneys qik __ hall ____ ordant to giue partlie be him self ad not be them”.6 It is evident that the burgh authorities were concerned to establish control over a potentially dangerous situation, and sought to maintain discipline both amongst the soldiers and the townspeople. In November the council was forced to expand the system of quartering, with an appeal to all the inhabitants: “The hailt counsall ordains the hail honest men / + hail Inhabitants / wtin the towne quha is able to tak ane soger upon / his chargis untill ye consils ordor / and ane vther for weiklie payt and the counsall to meitt the morow eft the sermone to reives the hail quartermaisteris rolls quha is able to keip tham”.7

At the same time, the burgh was beginning to issue claims for compensation from the authorities at Edinburgh. A further entry in the register records that in November the council ordained “the hail grevences of the towne to be gevine in be everie particular psine quha hes any concerning their

4 Ibid., 387, (November 1640).
5 B59/ 16/ 3, 26 August 1644, 28 August 1644.
6 Ibid., 12 October 1644.
7 Ibid., 11 November 1644.
loces and furnisheing be thame that they may be remonstrat to the council at Edr." On 23 November, Mr George Halliburton and Andrew Grant were sent to the Committee of Estates at Edinburgh to present a list of Perth's grievances. At the end of December the burgh was required to levy arms, and a troop of twenty five soldiers were raised to go to Dunblane. But the burgh records also include a notification sent from Edinburgh, in which money owed to the burgh is acknowledged: "Theis are to testifie That thair Is Restand Be the Publick To the burt of Perth The sowme of Sex Thowssand ane hundrethe Thrie Scoir tuelff Guldingis and ane half gulding Flennes money Extending In Scottis money To Ten Thousand merkis And whilk sowme wes advancit Be the Said burt of Perth To the factors at Chamfeir vpon the accompt of the Publict And in pairt of payment of the sowmes Restand be the Estateis of this kinddome To the saidis factors for armes and amunition sent home Be them Lykeas the Saidis factors In thair accomptis maid Be the Croun for the Comon burdingis hes acknowledgit the recepit of the foir said sowme And the anneirant thairof Is dew since the tuentie ffourt of September Im VI (c) ffourtie ane yearis whilk wes the tyme of the advancement thairof Extract furth of the Recordis and Registeris of the Comon burdingis Be me Robert hepbume advocat Clerk thairto ... Att Edr the second day of december 1644". 8

It is interesting to note that in May 1645, the burgh appealed to the earl of Crawford to send men to Perth to aid its defence. The "Chronicle" records that the Fife Foot of the earl of Crawford-Lindsay, together with the Midlothian Foot, was stationed at Perth on several occasions between September 1644 and March 1645. These forces were associated with Perth for a relatively long time, and it seems that the burgh missed the security of their presence; indeed, the "Chronicle" records that these regiments had originally come to Perth "for kepeing of ye toun". The burgh's appeal seems to have been unsuccessful, and the authorities continued to organise their own defence: "The counsell ordains eurie baillie to attend his awin portis + the best of the gartir to attend daylie wt ye balles, and four men to be at eure port 10

In July 1645, the provost, Robert Arnot, reported that the parliament had ordered "all gentellmen" to fight against Montrose, but the register concentrates upon new measures which were introduced for quartering troops and horses: "Jon barckly Androu butter dauid Jak thomas wilsone, fd henrie Scharpe androu gartlie to attend the buying of Straw + oatts + provyding steabelly". 11 The register also suggests that a body of troops under the command of Argyll were quartered in the burgh in July 1645, although there is no such indication in the "Chronicle": "quatrermess(e)rs for Jon mersr for quartring of the nobell men + Comissioun(ers) henrie Jak henrie elder robert gill thomas naime... the counsell odains the troupes it appettines to argyll to be payed..." These men may have been levied in the town, and were being sent to join Argyll's forces. 12

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8 Ibid., 11 November, 23 November, 3 December, 30 December 1644.
9 B59/ 25/ 4/ 1, 1. (B59/ 25... 4. treasurers' accounts, vouchers, bonds and discharges, 1562-1819).
10 B59/ 16/ 3, 2 May 1645, 6 May 1645; "Chronicle", 52 (15/ 15), 53 (1 6).
11 B59/ 16/ 3, 14 July 1645.
12 Ibid., 17 July 1645.
continues with further entries about the process of quartering troops; there is a suggestion that
the expense of supporting a garrison was beginning to stretch the burgh’s resources: “the
Counsell ordains wm hall tresurar Jon elder + henrie broun to find quher we can gett one thousand
punds... to be given to the garisone”. 13 In September 1645 the council ordained each of the
baillies to man the town’s ports with eight men “againe the lieutenant generall leslie his in cumg”; the
approach of Leslie towards Perth is not mentioned in the “Chronicle”.14 However, in October the
council required the provost and baillies “to give ane warand to Comissar patrik ros for meall
to be given to the soldiars quk appertnes to major hamiltoune wha cam from ingland”, and the
"Chronicle" records the arrival of 400 men of the Midlothian Foot on 2 October 1645. 15

An entry in the register dated 22 May 1646 details the cost of quartering troops in the burgh in
1644. The account begins with a discharge given by Mr Andrew Ker of Lothian’s regiment, for
£4124 1 shilling 4 pence, relating to the period 16 April to 29 April, and continues “Item mar for the
forsed quaturing the space of 3 dayes, to the soume of foir hundeth tuente lll 12 lll 12 (shillings) for
ane sike sogr / mar sextin pund sextin (shillings) for horse meat for officars 45 lll 15 (shillings) for
(th)gr d(a)yes”. The “Chronicle” records that the earl of Lothian’s foot quartered in the town for two
days in September 1644. According to the register, Maitland’s regiment were in Perth from 28
September to 23 December 1644, “in all 86 dayes expenses for sex hundrth sogers extends to
996 ll by ye officars”. The “Chronicle” also records that Maitland’s troops (the Midlothian Foot)
arrived on 28 September, and departed on 23 December, before returning on 8 January 1645, but
the numbers in this force are not given. The register continues with a note about the Fife Foot: “for
my Lo: crafurds regiment for 7 hundreth souiers by the of ye officars for 7 dayes at 7 (shillings) in
hedges -- 980 ll”. Mention is also made of a troop of horse being stationed in the burgh. The
"Chronicle" notes the arrival of Crawford-Lindsay’s men on 28 September 1644, and their
departure from Perth on 22 March 1645; again, the size of the contingent is not given. 16

The burgh records include a lengthy account of expenditure on foot soldiers and baggage horses
in 1645. £649 12 Shillings was spent on foot soldiers “being fourescore four”, for their levying and
transportation. The guildry “put out” forty foot soldiers, the grovers raised eleven, the baxters
supplied five, and the tailors levied 7 soldiers. The fleshers, wrights and cordiners raised thirteen
soldiers “equaallie”, but the hammermen only supplied two. The brabonars levied four men. Only six
baggage horses were supplied, at a cost of £160 3 Shillings 4 pence 17; the guildry supplied three
horses, and the baxters, tailors, fleshers, wrights, cordiners, and grovers supplied the rest. The
record concludes with details of total expenditure, and the sums paid by the burgh in instalments:

13 Ibid., 27 August 1645.
14 Ibid., 22 September 1645.
15 Ibid., 13 October 1645; “Chronicle”, 54 (16/16).
16 B59/16/3, 22 May 1645; “Chronicle”, 52 (15/15), 53 (16).
17 It is unclear in the document whether this sum is given in marks of £Scots; the latter is more
likely.
"Suma Totalis of Levie and transport money qroff allowance is to be giuen in maner foresd is 809-15-4
Item payit be the Bruch in real moneyes to the collector grall of this Shyre 5333-6-8
Soma Depursit and payit is 6143-2-0
Sua rests as yit wpayit the soume of 2293-6-0
Qlk soume of Tua thowsand Tua hundreth nyntie three pounds sex (Shillings) is instantlie payit
and Delyverit in name and behalf of the sd bruch be Jon Congueuour Tresaurer wt the Discharges
instructing and verifieing the forenameit Depursements to the fd grall collector of this Shyre In
witnes qrof this compt fittit at perth fyftene Day of november Im Vic fourtie fyve years..." 18 It is
notable that the burgh seems to have made few complaints at such exactions, although there
could be substantial delays in their full payment. An entry in the register, dated 1 May 1646, does
record an appeal from the burgh to be given more time to raise money for the excise of 1644: "Qlk
day being convenit wt in the counsell hous of the burt of perth ... the geving the excise of the yer
of god 1644 desents the prouest to craue ane longer day becaus of the pouertie one the on part +
be caus they ar nou beginid to collect the Samen, in lyk meane geving the excise 164_ yt the
prouest to appelle from the comitte of excise ____ the keping of the Samen the prouest has
uplyed the lers of excise ____ ____ producit". 19

In 1646, Perth was re-fortified, and it seems that by this stage there may have been a permanent
garrison in the town. The register records that in March "Lewetennent collonell Roche desyres
Ane man to be sent for fra edbr (to) giff advyse in furtefica(o)ne of the warks and geving advyse for
repairing yrof and for fulfifieing of his desyre The counsall ordains ane Ire to be sent for henrie
young sruitor to the clerk of dundee and lykwayes ordains Twentie men Twelfff for casting faile and
aucht for laying to remaine costantlie at wark having satsafactione for their pains... and ordains
henrie Jacksone to be maister of wark and oversier of thame he having considera(o)ne yrfoir... and
ordains the deacoune of the wrichtis constantine Lawrie to comand the wrichtis not to go out of
the towne to work wtout leave of the counsell and lykwayes ordains the said deacone to caus his trad
have all thair axes readie at roches desyre for cutting of timber for supplie of the wark(s)".20 The
Committee of Estates had already granted some aid for the burgh; but the townspeople seem to
have been seconded into building the new earthworks, and in February were granted meal as a
reward: "The Comittee of Estaittis Ordanies the ____ Comissr or his deputtie To delyver to the
magistrattis of perthe FFour hundrethe bolls meall to be distribute amangst the Inhabitantis of the
said burt who have beine and ar to be imployed at working for completting the fortifica(o)nes
about the said burt at the discretioune of the magistrattis yroff..." 21 However, the meal was not
efficiently delivered, as letters of the summer of 1649 illustrate: "Patrick Ross Lait Comissr deput at
perth Be thir pnttis testefie and declair That yare was onlie delyuierit be me To ye manestratis of the
burgh of perth Ane hundrethe tuentie aucht bolls mail To compt and in pt of payment off FFour

19 B59/ 16/ 3, 1 May 1646.
20 Ibid., 23 March 1646.
*Faul*: '1 turf as a material for building or roofing 15-... 2 a piece of turf, a sod 16-..." CSD, 185.
hundreth bolls mail grantit be ye estaites of parliament sitting at St androis in ye moneth of febr
1646 yers To ye poor people of ye said toun qII war Impoyit to work at ye Fortefica(o)unes yrof Qlk
ane hundreth tuentie aucht bolls mail Is givin up be me in my accompts to my Lord ______ And
allowit yrin at ye same compts ______ yr is yt trewlie restand undelyuerit of ye said four
hundreth bolls mail the number of Tua hundreth thrie scoir and tuelff bolls... at Edr ye tuentie sixt
day of Junij. 1649". In late August, the Committee of Estates ordered that the rest of the meal
should be delivered to Perth. It is unclear from their letter whether or not the fortifications were still
being built. It is notable that Patrick Ross referred to the "poor people" of Perth who were
employed on the work; whilst this phrase could simply be an expression of sympathy, it may be a
reference to an underclass within the burgh. 22

Vasey has suggested that by the late 1640s, the burgh was experiencing serious financial
difficulties: "So hard pressed was the burgh in 1648 that it was exempted from a levy of 2, 400 foot
and 240 horse imposed on the county and was unable to meet in full a demand for additional
taxation". In the following year the town was exempted from all levies for as long as it remained a
garrison town, and another order was given for its re-fortification. 23 The burgh records include a
copy of a letter of exemption from the levying of troops and horses, dated 24 February 1649; but
the terms of this exemption do not indicate that the burgh was experiencing particular difficulties:
"The Estatts of Parliament now presentlie conveined in this secund sessioun of the secund
trienniall parliament, be vertew of one act of the committee of Estatts who had power and authoritie
from the last Parliament for conveining of the Parliament Taking to thair consideration That the
Toune of Perth is ane garrisone toune and thairfore aucht to be exeemed from any levie aither
horse or foote Imposit upon this kingdome be this present Parliament Thairfoire The saids Estatts
be thir pnttis doe exeme The said tounne of Perth from outputting of aither horse or foot In this
present levie appointit to be put furth be the Parliament And dischargies the committee of warre of
ye said shyre Colonels or commanders or any Inferior officers Therin To exact aither horse or foot
from the said town of Perth In this pntt levie Imposit upon ye kingdome be the saids Estatts In
respect the samen Is ane garrisone toune". 24

However, in the following year the burgh did complain to the Estates about the expense of
quartering the King's Lifeguard of Foot: "The Committee of Estates Haveing considered the report
of the Committee of Billes concerning the petition of the Toune of Perth, con(cern)ing the charges
they have beene at in mantaining sex score soudiers of the Kings Lyfeguard of Foot Since the
midst of August Last at the rate of sex shilling Scotts to each of them per diem, qlk wes a burden
unsupportable and therefore craveing to bee fred yrof And beeing desyrous to grant unto the said
Toune all the ease that is possible Doth therefore give warrand and command to the Commissary
Generall and his deputie pntlie to lay up in Magazine within the said toune One Hundreth bolles of
meale out of the first and (r)eadiest meale belonging to the publict And to give furth thereof 400
pond of meale daylie to _____ the said sex scoir soudiers And then entrie yrto, to beginne at the

22 B59/25/4/5; B59/25/4/6; 28 August 1649.
23 Vasey, 5-6.
dait hereof and continue dureing yr residence in this place, And ordaines the Inhabitants of the said Toune to give to each of the said soudiers a pynt of aile or two shilling scotts to buy the same daylie dureing the same space, Or vther-ways appoints the said Inhabitants to accept of the said Two pund of meale for each soudier And to affoord to the souldiers in the regne Houses qr thiy quarte such Intertainement as they take to themselfes Or else to give to each of the said souldiers sex shilling per diem yrfore as they have done in tyme byganne And that in the option of the said Souldier, And siclyk ordaines the Inhabitants of the said Toune to Intetaine the officers of the said sexes score souldiers with such Inte- // Intertainement as they be take to themselfes Or otherwise appoints the said officers to bee in the same condition anent yr Intertainement as they are presentlie, And the Committee declares that the said pynt of aile or twa shilling yrfore And the Intertainement of the said officers, qrwith the said toune is burdened as aforsaid shall bee allowed to them in yr manteinance..." 25 Despite its protestations, the burgh was given only limited help, and it is apparent from this document that the townspeople were expected to devote time and energy to the management and entertainment of troops quartered in Perth. Over the course of the civil war period, such responsibilities would have become routine for the Inhabitants of the burgh. But large numbers of potentially unruly troops posed a threat to community life, as well as a financial burden; there is a record in the register of a townswoman being disciplined for committing adultery with a soldier, and this was not an isolated case. 26

The identity of the King’s Lifeguard of Foot is unclear; these soldiers are unlikely to have fought at Dunbar on 3 September, and were presumably associated with the presence in Perth of Charles II - who was crowned king at Scone in January 1651. Throughout the complexities of the Covenanting years, Perth seems to have endured the passage and quartering of troops with relative equanimity. There are few complaints in the foregoing documents; and the “Chronicle” only describes the arrival in the burgh of Montrose, and then of Argyll, in 1644, as being burdensome. Lynch has stated that “The human cost of almost thirteen years of war is incalculable. A dozen armies of the Covenant had been raised. The people of Scotland had been taxed as never before to pay for them, and many had had free quarter, forced levy or plunder inflicted upon them as well”. 27 In 1663, Perth submitted a claim for damages incurred during the 1640s amounting to £6000 sterling. For such a claim to be made over a decade after the conclusion of the Covenanting conflict indicates that the burgh authorities had been awaiting a suitable occasion to press for reparations, and that the experience of those years had been traumatic. But the claim was for relatively modest damages, and whilst such a figure probably does not reflect the full extent of Perth’s losses between 1640 and 1650, it is apparent that Perth was not as badly affected by the wars as some of its rivals. 28 Despite being closely involved with the Covenanting wars, only in the later 1640s do serious financial problems seem to have arisen in Perth. The civil records of the burgh suggest that the community adapted quite successfully to the demands of forced levy and

26 B59/ 16/ 3. 14 April 1646. See below, Appendix 9. In 1645 two members of Midlothian’s Foot were accused of fornication.
28 B59/ 17/ 1, 465. 31 August 1663.
quartering; the burgh was never subjected to plunder. But a significant turning point may have been reached when Perth was occupied by the English in 1651, and garrisoned by the Cromwellian army.

II) The Cromwellian Occupation

The "Chronicle of Perth" does not concentrate upon the Cromwellian occupation of the burgh. There is a lengthy description of the ceremony at which Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector in 1654, and an important passage which notes the destruction of part of the citadel in a fire in 1656. However, the short siege of 1651 is not mentioned, nor is the arrival of General Monck in 1654, and there is little indication that the occupation of the 1650s was problematic for the burgh. In contrast, the index to the town council records contains many notices of the burgh’s complaints. General Monck entered Perth in June 1654, and was met with numerous complaints: about the behaviour of the governor; the destruction which had been wrought upon the burgh by the building of the citadel on the South Inch; and the strain of supporting the garrison. The index is characterised by references either to complaints, or to efforts to establish adequate supplies of coal to the garrison.

In September 1654, the town submitted a petition to Monck as to injuries sustained through casting down of the Towns lands (Tenements), Inches, the Hospital, School, Spey Tower, burial place, and corns, at the time of surrendering the Town + and containing 6 Items of redress as to trade, coal + candle, and reference by the General, of the same to the Governor of St Johnstons. The damage done to buildings of the town almost certainly refers to the plundering of materials for the construction of the citadel; there can be little doubt that this work caused major changes in the environment of the burgh - on the South Inch, and within the town walls where many buildings were demolished. Perth seems to have made many supplications for redress, both on account of this work, and the burgh’s sufferings in general "in the late commotions". On 20 November 1654, the town submitted an account of its grievances "for casting down of houses barns (etc) by the English Army", and it was still complaining to parliament and General Monck in the spring of 1655. However, an agreement seems to have been reached, as there is a subsequent reference to an "Act regarding demolished houses" in August 1655. A note of December of that year refers to "injuries sustained by the Pest or by war", and the provost was sent to the Privy Council to relate the town’s sufferings. In the spring of 1656, the town received sympathy from Cromwell, and there are notes concerning "redress of the Towns

29 "Chronicle", 55 (17), 18 (5/5).
30 The burgh records include an instruction to one of the baillies to arrange for the supply of coal to the garrison in September 1651. B59/ 25/ 4/ 10.
31 B59/ 17/ 1, 431.
32 Ibid., 433.
33 Ibid., 433, 435, 436.
34 Ibid., 437.
losses", and a "Warrant from the Lord Protector as to the Towns losses..." 36 However, on 20 May the provost sent a petition to Cromwell "as to injuries sustained, and reference by him to the Council in Scotland"; grievances were still being addressed to Monck in January 1657. 37

The damage which was wrought upon the town by the construction of the citadel is apparent from a petition for reparations, made by the burgh authorities to the Lords of Exchequer in January 1662. They complained that "the most pairt of the ___ stones ___ the Citadaill of Perth wes built wt the stones of the Elevin great arches pillars and land, scaills of or demolished bridge; suburbs of o(r) burgh above a third pt of the sd burgh and of the Stones of the Sepulchres and wall of o(r) burial place and of the Spey touer hospitall and grammar schooll of the sd burgh..." The king had already granted the citadel to the burgh in recompense for their losses, but the authorities hoped for more help: "It is therefor humble desyred to have the premisses and the losses of the sd burgh sustained be building of the sd Citadaill and our uther great sufferings for for his ma(tie) To y(or) serious consideratione And in respect thereof To put such ane easie compositione upon our signato(r) of the sd Citadaill As y(or) Lo/ shall think fitt and find the Conditione of the sd burgh to meritt..." The Lords responded by guaranteeing "the compositiun already put upon the signature". 38 Another document in the burgh records indicates that at that time the town was still seeking adequate remuneration from troops who were quartered in Perth: "We Leijtenent Collonell Richardsoun, Leiwenant collonell to Collonell Daniell, Captane Overtoune in the same regiment, Captane Richard Lowrie in Collonelt Mylesmans regiment and Captane Johne Man of the same regiment Doe heirby testifie and declair, that we haue perused and examined the accompts resting by the Souldiers of our severall companies to the Inhabitants of the -burgh of Perth particularie mentioned in the saidis accompts the soume whairof acknowledged by the souldiers amonteth to Ane hundreth thriescore fywe pundis eight Shillingis 1d sterling money, Which we oblidge our selves to satisfie and pay to the saids Inhabitants... And that whensoever we shall receaue the arreares dew to our saidis souldiers". 39

In the years immediately following the Restoration, it is apparent that Perth faced the major task of rebuilding an environment which had been scarred by the occupation. The index to the town council records abounds with references to the gradual demolition and sale of parts of the citadel, and it seems that much of this material was used for new building works in the town. In June 1661 Charles II granted the citadel to the burgh both in thanks for the support which he had received

36 Ibid., 440.
37 Ibid., 444, 454.
38 B59/ 24/ 13/ 4. 14 January 1662.
39 B59/ 32/ 1. 18 April 1662. ( B59/ 32. Documents relating to military affairs, 1662-1866 ). It is notable that the burgh was still issuing complaints about the cost of housing troops in 1692. The report on the condition of the burgh stated "Their rests to the towne and inhabitants therof by ther Majesties forces in annis 1689 and 1690 upwards of eighteen thousand marks, conform to the particular verified accompts therof given to the lords of privie council, and wherof as yeit ther is no allowance nor payment made nor granted, inde .......... 12,000". Miscellany of The Scottish Burgh Records Society, 60.
there, and in reparation for their losses - including "the ruin of their Trade". 40 Sir George Kinnaird of Rossie was commissioned to oversee the demolition of the citadel, 41 although this was a gradual process, and the fortification remained as a feature on the South Inch well into the 18th century. The process of selling-off the building materials was a protracted affair, involving townsmen and interested nobles - even the bishop of Dunkeld - and it seems that it was difficult to regulate; some townspeople were able to rob materials from the site.

The components of the citadel were sold off throughout the 1660s. In May 1663 a cart road was ordered to be made "through the mount", and in October and November of the following year, part of the ditch and the north east corner of the citadel were "filled up". 42 In January 1665 "the rubbish of beds and cloathing at the Mount" were given to the poor of the town, and the filling up of ditches continued in the autumn. 43 In January 1666 the east port of the citadel was used "for building of the South Inch Port". 44 In March the council offered the whole of the citadel for sale; the index records an "Order to the Members of Council to see if any one will buy the citadel", and in July a public roup of the citadel was arranged. 45 In August 1666 the earl of Tullibardine was granted "as many stones from the Mount as will build a water well to the Mill of Huntingtower", and the laird of Aldie was given stones "for good service done by him to the Town and encourage him to build therein". The rouping of the citadel followed, "and 4000 merks offered therefore by the Treasurer and proceedings as to bond to be granted by him for said sum..." 46 Thereafter, materials from the fortification were still available - the earl of Kinfauns was given ashlar stones in October 1666 - but the citadel seems to have been wholly in the gift of the treasurer. 47 However, work continued on the gradual demolition of the fortification; in December 1667 there was an "Order to turn out the half of the Quarters, with the carters and sleders to fill up the ditch of the Citadel and allowance of 4 shillings daily to each person". 48

The process of selling off the citadel is detailed in an account book of baillie Alexander Jamieson, a merchant in Perth who was also town treasurer. According to Cant, Jamieson served as treasurer between October 1667 and October 1669; the treasurer in August 1666 was George Conqueror. 49 The account book covers the years 1660-1673. If the details of the disbursement and sale of the citadel are a little confused, Jamieson's account - which is transcribed here in full - is of considerable value in detailing the nature of the building materials which were used on the citadel.

40 B59/ 17/ 1, 459.
41 B59/ 24/ 13/ 3.
42 B59/ 17/ 1, 463, 471, 473.
43 Ibid., 476, 487.
44 Ibid., 490.
46 Ibid., 499-500.
47 Ibid., 504.
48 Ibid., 507.
49 The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 134-5.
It is also an important record of those townsmen and nobles who sought to benefit from the end of the occupation, and whose building works may have contributed to the regeneration of some of Perth's built environment:

*Compt of what tymber is sold out of the citidaill*

Imp: to the Laird of moncreeff 200 aslair stones

__sold to Tho: mccall elliewin trees at 29 (shillings ed. ) ye peice qïk was devydit in 3 pts and payed

Receave be Wm Crie for ane qïk tree 40 (shillings ed. )

To Baille Rankin 34 fir trees for ____

To him (seven ed. ) of yt same sort

To him ten of that same sort

To him two oak trees of 16 foot laing

To him 3 oak trees of 8 foot long being great es

To him nyne ____ sydes being great

To great fir trees to carie the first ____

To him another couple foot

To him 3 stones

To him a double doir

To him a great dormond and a fir tree being at ye doir of ye mount

To him a lintell of oak

To mr Robert firbarne ____ __

To Ja: young baxter 16 asler stones

To killgraston ane oakin Lintell ane rib and a peice of a plank estimat to 3 __ 16__(receaved ed. ) be deacon crie

To the Laird of dumbarney 10 trees estimat to 10 lib

To Ballylie Rankin 50 ____

To alexr Jemisone 10 aik(e) trees + 29 dealls

To Ballylie wrght 30 stones at 4 (shillings ed. ) 8 pene

To alexr ____ 40 aislar stones

To Jon Jemender 13 rabet stones at 6 lib + a double doir

To Seggaden a stain geatt at 40 merk.

To my Lord Loure 13 stepes of stairs at 14 lib 10 (shillings)

To Wm Bruce 100 lead of work stones at 2 (shillings) ye lead

To agnes Bell 12 aslars stones

To -bor 7 ribet stones

Receaved be Thos Black for 3 peres of oak 48 (shillings ed. )

To deacon cree ye rebbets of a doir 16 lib

To deacon cree tuo fir trees at 50 (shillings)

To the provest a fir ____ at 40 (shillings)

(Margin note: everie one that receaved his proportione of ... payed be alexr Cuninghame)

---

50 William Cree was the town treasurer between October 1664 and October 1665. The Muses Threnodie ... ed. James Cant (1774), ('Magistrates of Perth'), 133.
To David Smyth 20 lead of stones

to S(r) Wm Stewart six lead of stones

To Gilbert monorgand for oon stones

Re bailie murray for oon stones + trees

to George Rollo one oak tree + 3 aslar stones

to Deacon Cree one great and 3 steps of stars

to Bailiie Jack 12 aslar stones

to Alcxr Rollo 25 leads of stones

to Geo: Rollo a lintell estammat to 12 (shillings ed.)

to my Lord Loure 4 stone Lintells 44 (shillings ed.) ye peige

for to him 30 aslers stones at 6 (shillings) ye peige

__ to John hall 4 asler stons at 6 __

__ And to ___ 2 aslers stons at 6 ___

ty deaconc black a double Jambe of adoir

to david Smyth 5 aslers 30 (shillings ed.)
to david Smyth a lintell 24 (shillings ed.)

17 Junij To my Lord Low 24 aslers recet be Tho mecr at 6 (shillings ed.) ye peice 7 l ib 9

( shillings ed.)

17 Junij FFor to my Lord Low_e 2 Lintells at 30 (shillings ed.) ye peice 03 00 00

Item payed to John dundie for goinge to Erroll 00/07/00

8 July Item payed to the three workmen in the mont 02/10/00

Item to pa: gow smyth 7 Load of wallstones

Item to cowie 3 Lead of Stanes 00/07/00

Item receaved by william Cree from Wm grant for a parcel of stones 18/00/00

6 August Item receaved be wm cree and deacone black from tho: Cragdellie 30 lib 30/00/00

FFor to James S_ for stones 20 lib 20/00/00

Itt to Jems gerdenner 4 asler stons 10/ 4/00

Itt receved be decon blak fra "georg Rollo" 40/00/00

6 "aslar" stons

*made* wall of stoms

oak lintell / tua windows with the lentell of oak rebetts

3 lod stons

FFor six rea bitts that Wm crie took from the_ North insh pow__

- two windows with the Lintells that Ja(s) Schioch took downe on the geabell
- takin be him tuo tries of baylie Rankins qrof on of fir + another of oak pryce 4/0/0/0

Item to John Chrystie Loads of stones

Item to James Schioch a geabell qch he aggried for with Wm Crie

Item of money resaved be baylie Rankine FFourteine pund Scotts 14/0/0/0

Item be Patrick Scott Leads of Staines
Item be david Wilsone leads of staines
Item to the tayleors Well leads of staines
Item to Sr Wm Stewart 7 lead of stones
Item be Jonet Cairncruse 7 ashlers
Item be Wm Chapman 6 ashlers
Item be deacon Crie ane --------- yt belonged to yt pairt of the mount qr Wm grant took away his stones
Item to the minister of erroll ashlers and reabitts*. 51

This account lists a variety of men - and some women - who bought materials from the citadel. The name of Baillie Rankin appears frequently; he acquired a variety of timber, and a small quantity of stones. At no point does the account suggest why the purchasers bought particular items. But several doors and lintels are listed, and these may well have been re-used in houses of the town. Of the local nobility, Lord Lowrie seems to have been particularly acquisitive, purchasing stone steps, lintels, and ashlars. The account carefully specifies the types of stone or timber which were purchased; from this it is apparent that fir trees and oak trees were used in the construction of the fortress, and it seems that the stone work was of good quality, with references to ashlar masonry and other worked stone. Even the rivets of doors were available for purchase, and these seem to have been very expensive; Deacon Cree paid £16 (Scots) for "ye rebbetts of a doir". Perhaps the most important feature of this account is that the buyers seem to have been locals; many of the materials which had been appropriated from the town to build the citadel were at least available for re-use on the buildings of Perth. The gravestones of the Greyfriars were irreplaceable, and some districts of the town remained derelict following the destruction of houses by the Cromwellians; but the Restoration period may have witnessed some redress after the disruption of occupation. Nevertheless, there was much re-building to be done; the governor of Perth, William Daniel, had commented that "all the rest of the suburbs at the west end of the town of St. Johnstoun were pulled down ... the greater pairt of the servisable stonis were made use of to the fortificatione of the Citadell". 52

Despite the building works of some wealthy locals, the economic weakness of the burgh in the second half of the 17th century probably prevented adequate investment in reconstruction. However, it is unclear from the material which has been considered whether or not the exactions of the war years and the Cromwellian occupation promoted economic decline. Financial exactions were certainly a burden, and after the Restoration the burgh sought reparations. Some help was forthcoming from national sources; but the gift of the citadel was not sufficient compensation for the physical damage which had been caused to the town and its environs. Several of the buildings

51 B59/ 25/ 1/ 11. (B59/ 25...1. general, 1424-1861 ).
52 Vasey, 81.
Vasey indicates that the scale of destruction was such that for a long time it was beyond the means of the burgh to rebuild, and there were still large areas of wasteland at the turn of the 18th century.
which were robbed by the Cromwellians - the grammar school, the King James VI Hospital, and Greyfriars graveyard - were important features of Perth, and difficult to restore; the school and the Hospital needed to be rebuilt from scratch. Furthermore, the destruction of 140 houses not only left areas of wasteland within the burgh, but would also have caused housing problems for the dispossessed residents. 53 It is unclear from the burgh records whether many townsfolk were pressed into military service; but a legacy of the 1640s and 1650s would surely have been social upheaval. This would have been fuelled by economic decline - and also a contributor to that decline.

The sources which have been used in this chapter - including the "Chronicle" - suggest that Perth was generally compliant with the demands of the Covenanting forces who used the burgh during the 1640s. The different tone which accompanies references to the 1650s surely reflects the burgh's opposition to the Cromwellians - an English occupation force. The financial strain of quartering Covenanting armies was certainly significant, as later appeals for reparations illustrate. But the Cromwellian garrison left physical destruction in its wake, long after the Restoration. Petite's plans of Perth (1715/16) show that the citadel was still a major feature on the South Inch, and a plan of the citadel made by Leigh Jones in 1745/6 notes that the fortifications were repaired by Jacobites. When the citadel was constructed, the soldiers used turf from the inches to build the ramparts; this would have destroyed grazing land and, nearly a century later, the remains of the fortification were an impediment on the inch, restricting its use. 54

It is possible that in the Covenanting years, the burgh came to rely upon the presence of troops - particularly the Midlothanian Foot and the Fife Foot - as conferring security in the troublesome climate of civil war. However, soldiers were also the carriers of disease, and the ravages of plague on burgh society were extremely severe in the 1640s. The population of the burgh which was controlled by the Cromwellians had been significantly depleted by disease. It is possible that the troops destroyed the empty houses of plague victims; but the cumulative effect of epidemic disease and the widespread demolition of properties in Perth would surely have been to exacerbate the weaknesses which Lynch has identified in the very structure of Perth's economy. After the serious set-backs which were caused by natural disasters in the 1620s, the war years of the 1640s and 1650s stand out as a period of prolonged stress, which markedly altered the demography and environment of the burgh. Perth did not suffer alone; indeed, both Dundee and Aberdeen were sacked. But Perth's suffering may have been more drawn-out, and it lacked the advantages of Dundee, Aberdeen, and particularly of Edinburgh, each of which maintained lucrative international trading contacts.

54 NLS Map Library 1648 Z3/1(a) "Plan of Perth and Adjacent Places with a projection of a Cittadel", (Illustration no. 14, p. 217); 1648 Z3/2(a) "An Exact Plan of the Town and adjacent parts of PERTH..." 1715/6; 1648 Z3/1(c) "A Plan of an Ancient piece of Fortification Near Perth Lately Repair'd by the Rebels Drawn and Survey'd by Jas Leigh Jones Feb the 9th 1745/6".
Appendix 9: The “Chronicle’s” list of troops in Perth, 1644-1646

The “Chronicle” is a useful source of information about the movement of Covenanting armies in Perthshire during the mid-1640s. However, the first record of occupation concerns the arrival of Montrose’s royalist forces after the battle of Tibbermore:

1. September 1644:

James marques of montroiss... being assit be ye athoill men s(r) Jon drumond my lord pthis secund sone And some of ye marques awin freindis estomat in number all Thrie Thowsand men...

(Margin) mr Alexr ____ be ane s(r James makconiell brother to ye eril of Antrum wt xiic men of erishes expert souldioris

... the hail s(reffdome__ of pth fyff + wthers + hail burrowis of fyyfe nobill men and gentrie yairof estimat to the number of Sex Thousand weill armit by Thrie hundret excellent hors my lord elcho wes crownear...

He tuik wt him viijc fyffe men yat come in to yis toun on Sondy at nyt They wer wardit in ye kirk

... This same nyt about nyne horis at ewin The toun wes randerit to ye marqueis wpone quarteris viz but prejudice of ye couenantis To be frie of plundering + to leawe as the kingis loyall subiectis his copane quarterit frie heir fra sondy at nyt monoday + Tuysday many woddensday + Thurisdy he him/self remant qll woddensdy" *Chronicle*, 50 (1 5).

The “Chronicle’s” record of the war years proved a useful source for Furgol in his study of the Covenanting armies; 1 the validity of the information which is given in the “Chronicle” can be judged by reference to Furgol’s wide-ranging survey. Of the conflict at Tibbermore, he noted:

(1644) "29 August Montrose rendezvouses with Alasdair at Blair Atholl. 31st Lord Kilpont with 500 foot defects to Montrose at Hill of Buchanty. 1 September Battle of Tippermuir, Montrose defeats Lord Elcho’s army of 7,000 men which loses 1,300 killed and 800 captured. 1 September Montrose captures Perth and leaves it on the 4th*. 2 Furgol’s estimate of the size of Elcho’s army differs slightly from that given in the “Chronicle”, but otherwise his notes corroborate those details which are provided in the manuscript account.

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2 Furgol, 410.
2. "Tuysday ye tent of Sepr 1644
The erll of lauthianeis regiment cam to yis burt and quarterit frielie 2 dayis him selff came wt yame"
"Chronicle", 50 (15).

Furgol provides a lot of information about the Earl of Lothian's Foot. The regiment was ordered to go to Perth by the Committee of Estates on 28 August 1644. Lothian was supposed to organise the Covenanter forces which were being assembled there to oppose Montrose, until the arrival of Argyll. However, the regiment moved slowly, and thus missed the engagement at Tibbermore. Furgol concurs with the "Chronicle" that the regiment arrived at Perth on 10 September; he states that it left on the morning of the 13th. The regiment numbered 700 men and officers. 3

3. "xj of Sepr 1644
The marqueis of Argyll come to yis burt wt great armeis wt him stayit qil setterday yairefter ye xiiij yrof
The toun wes greatlie Damnefeit in yair meanes and ye cuntrie about"
"Chronicle", 51 (15).

This entry is closely linked to the previous note, and illustrates Argyll’s campaign against the royalists. On 12 September, the Committee of Estates ordered Lothian's Foot to support Argyll in suppressing the rebels and Irish led by Montrose. Furgol records that between April 1644 and February 1645, Argyll commanded four expeditions against the royalists and men of the "MacDonald-Irish-Highland alliance". He arrived in Perth after assembling an army at Stirling, and left on 14 September, heading for Aberdeen. The movements of Lothian’s Foot are somewhat curious. The "Chronicle" records that the regiment left Perth on either 12 or 13 September - after the arrival of Argyll. The regiment went to Stirling, which Argyll had recently left, but with orders to join his army - which Furgol states they did. Either the dates given in the "Chronicle" are slightly inaccurate, or there was a serious breakdown in communications between the committee and the commanders in the field. The "Chronicle" presumably complained about the strain of quartering the troops of Montrose and Argyll because these were the largest forces to occupy the town. 4

4. (11 September 1644)
"Culrous company stayit heir 7 or 8 dayis wpone yr awin expenss(s)
The laird of mcgregour wt men remainit heir als long"
"Chronicle", 51 (15).

Furgol records that Patrick Roy MacGregor of that Ilk led his clansmen for the Covenanters in September 1644, quartering in Perth from 11 to 19 September. However, in December 1644 the

3 Furgol, 100.
4 Furgol, 198-201.
clan joined Montrose's invasion of Argyll. The clan was "steadfastly royalist", and may have feigned support for the Covenanters. There are no notes concerning Cullross's company. 5

5. *The x day of Sepr 1644
Thair come furt of dunbartane and ye lennox and remaint heir*
"Chronicle", 52 (15/15).

These troops may have been raised by James Campbell of Ardkinglas, and almost certainly served with Argyll. Furgol noted that, having raised 500 men from amongst the Campbells in the summer of 1644 to serve with Argyll in the west, Ardkinglas joined Argyll in September - either at Stirling or at Perth - with approximately 800 foot soldiers. 6

6. *xix of Sepr 1644
Mcgregour and his companey went furt of yis burt to*
"Chronicle", 52 (15/15).

See above, (4). Several thousand troops passed through Perth during September 1644; this must have been an extremely unsettling time for the residents of the burgh and the countryside, particularly after a major battle had been fought within sight of the town. It is unsurprising that the burgh and the countryside suffered from the exactions of that time.

7. *Setterday the Tuentie aucht of September 1644
My lord maitlandis regiment come to perth for kepeing of ye toun and stayit qll ye 22 of marche /1645/ both they and crawfurdes regiment

Monday 16 December 1644 at nyt
My Lord Lindsayis regiment came to Perth being in number Aucht hunder And stayit qll monday the 23 of December and we quarterit in the Southgait and West Syde of the Watergait / At qlk tyme both this regiment and my L/ Maitlandis regiment went furth of perth and left behind thame tua hundreth men Viz ane hundreth of my L/ Lindsayis quhairof C/ Moncreif wes Capitane and the other hundreth of my L/ maitlandis qrof C/ Cuninghame was Capitane

viiij of Januar 1645
Maitlandis regiment come bak to perthe agane

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5 Furgol, 229.
6 Furgol, 196.
nynt of Januar 1645
Lyndesayis regiment come in to perthe agane
The soliouris begane to gett tua peckis of mail ilkane of yame weiklie"
"Chronicle", 52 (15/15).

"22 of marche 1645
Bothe maitlandis regiment and crawfurdes regiment went furt of pert wt Lowetenent generall bailleie
and my lord crawfurde Towards angous + dundie"
"Chronicle", 53 (16).

John, viscount Maitland and 2nd earl of Lauderdale was the Colonel of the Midlothian Foot; his
Lieutenant Colonel was Colin Pitscottie. The regiment served at the siege of York, and at the battle
of Marston Moor, where the troops fought in the front line with distinction. The regiment was
brigaded with the Fife (Crawford-Lindsay’s) Foot. The Midlothian Foot were ordered back to
Scotland on 4 September 1644, and quartered in Perth on 28 September. In the late autumn,
both the Midlothian Foot and Crawford-Lindsay’s Foot served in Baillie’s army. Furgol followed the
troops’ movements by strict reference to the "Chronicle": The two regiments left Perth on 22
March 1645, having been ordered by the Estates to split a levy of the eighth man from Angus.
They joined Baillie on his march to Dundee. The Midlothian Foot’s stay in Perth had not been
without incident; in early 1645 two members of the regiment appeared before the presbytery of
Perth accused of fornication. From 2 October until 20 December 1645, 400 men of the regiment
quartered in Perth; Pitscottie was in command but, as the "Chronicle" records, he was unpopular
with the men. Furgol could not discover where the regiment quartered after December 1645. 7

John, earl of Crawford-Lindsay, was the Colonel of the Fife Foot. The regiment had a similar record
of service in England as the Midlothian Foot. The regiments returned to Scotland after they were
worsted in an engagement during the siege of Newcastle. Following its return to Scotland, the Fife
Foot fought solely against Montrose and his allies. It is possible that this regiment, and Maitland’s,
was instrumental in carrying plague to Perth, although there is no indication of this in the
"Chronicle". Furgol relied heavily on the "Chronicle" to identify the regiment’s activities, but he also
added details. The Fife Foot took some time to find winter quarters in 1644, but was in Perth from
28 September until mid-November. The regiment was then ordered to Dundee by the Committee
of Estates, but had returned to Perth by 10 December. The Fife Foot was now 800 strong, and
from 16-23 December it was quartered with the Midlothian Foot. (Furgol fails to properly account for
the period 10-16 December). They withdrew on 23 December, leaving a garrison of 200 men
drawn from each regiment, and returned on 9 January 1645. "Then the soldiers began an exaction
of two pecks of milk per man per week"; this reading of the "Chronicle" is questionable. In early
1645 the regiment was troubled by desertions, and it left Perth to join Baillie on 22 March. 8

7 Furgol, 168-170.
8 Furgol, 135-7.
Baillie was appointed Commander in Chief in Scotland in November 1644, and in late December marched from Perth to Dumbarton, via Stirling. In January 1645 he met Argyll at Roseneath, and gave him 1000 foot soldiers, before returning to Perth on 8 January. After 22 March, he confronted Montrose along the Isla, and eventually moved back to Perth. 9

8.
*eodem die 22 martij 1645
Ane number of my lord murrayis regiment come to perth The soieuris being hieland simpill bodeis naikit extending in number to ___ ii c± L men*
"Chronicle", 53 (1 6).

These men belonged to the Perthshire (Gask’s / Tullibardine’s) Foot; the Colonel was James, Lord Murray of Gask, later 2nd earl of Tullibardine. The regiment served at the siege of Newcastle, but was one of the first regiments sent back to Scotland to oppose Montrose. "Unfortunately, it is impossible to trace the activities of the regiment during its sojourn in Scotland. On 22 March 1645 250 Highland recruits for the regiment arrived in the burgh of Perth. Between 9 June and 16 July the Perthshire Foot was marching to join Leven’s field army in the Midlands..." 10 The "Chronicle’s" description of the Highlanders suggests that their presence in Perth was not welcomed by the inhabitants. From September 1644 onwards, there seems to have been little respite from the pressure of quartering troops in the burgh.

9.
*(Jon persone his name) fra ye 28 of September 1644 ane soiour of maitlandis re//giment wes quarter(i)t wt me Till ye viij of Januar 1645
The regiment scrywenar wes quartert wt me callit / Dauld Skater / fra ye secund of December 1644 Till ye nynt of Januar 1645*
(See above, 7).

*Capitaine Frances wauchop and his man wes quarter(i)t wt me fra ye viij of Januar 1645 Till ye 22 of marche in eodem anno 1645 gratis

22 martij 1645
my lord murrayis regiment come to pert being in number*
(See above, 8).

9 Furgol, 411-12.
10 Furgol, 174-5.
mononday ye last of merche 1645 at nyt
The chancellers regiment come to pert being in number viijc men, / and went furt yairof on
Thur(i)sday yairefter ye Thrid of apryll 1645 /"
"Chronicle", 53 (1 6).11

10.
"2 of apryll 1645 at nyt
My lord cassillis regiment come to pert and depairtit yairfra ye mome yarefter ye 3 of Aprill 1645
being in number viijcc men

4 April 1645
Thair come bak to pert of comandit men of yiz regiment viijcc men qrof quarterit in my quarter W3
men yat come in of ye shyre"
"Chronicle", 53 (1 6).

John, 6th earl of Cassillis, was Colonel of the Kyle and Carrick Foot. From the spring of 1645, until
its disbandment in 1647, the regiment served as part of the home army. In March Cassillis was near
Brechin with Baillie, and Furgol referred to the "Chronicle" for the regiment's two visits to Perth -
although the manuscript states that 800 men came to the burgh on both occasions, whereas
Furgol records that only 160 appeared on 4 April 1645. "They may have taken part in the pursuit of
Montrose from Dundee on 5 April". 12

11.
"Secund of october 1645
Thair come to pert ane regiment of men extending to l 400 men / qrof pitscottie soulde haue bene
Crownar and ane / William / ham	ltoun wes maior The maist part disasentit that pit/ scottie soulde
haue bene yr crownear / and remanit heir till the 19 and /20/ dayis of december /"
"Chronicle", 54 (1 6/1 6).
(See above, 7).

12.
"28 13 december 1645
Kenmuriis regiment came to perth betuix 11 and 12 houris at nyt being Saturday In number -- 400
men / and depairtit furt yrof ye xix of december instant /"
"Chronicle", 54 (1 6/1 6).

Robert, 4th viscount Kenmure was Colonel of Viscount Kenmure's Foot. In 1645 this regiment
served in England at the siege of Hereford, where it was brigaded with the Galloway Foot.
Kenmure's returned to Scotland in the autumn, and fought against Montrose. On 7 November it

11 The Chancellor's Regiment was the Loudon-Glasgow Foot; see Furgol, 102, 183, 215, 223-4,
252
12 Furgol, 152-3.
was allowed 200 recruits from Dumfriess-shire, which may never have been raised; Furgol implies that the 400 men who came to Perth may not have been the regiment's full complement. The troops left Perth for Aberdeenshire.13

13. **18 December 1645 Thursday**
Cowparis regiment came to perth In number -- qrof Lumbisdail wes Lewttannant __ colonell and stayit qll the and went out the 10 march being tuysday to kincairne

10 March 1646
Colonell Lyell his men came to perth in number -- 300 men and went out the 19 day of march
The same day Coupairs men came bak eftir the hous of kincairne wes takin in be middletoun and brunt
The same tyme the hous of Abirarquhill brunt be the mcgregour"  
"Chronicle", 54 (16/16).

The Strathearn Foot was commanded by James, 1st Lord Coupar. The regiment served at Hereford, and at the battle of Philiphaugh in Scotland. Prior to its quartering in Perth, the regiment's whereabouts are not known. The regiment was ordered to Montrose on 16 December, and to keep garrisons in Perthshire, Angus and Mearns; Furgol follows the "Chronicle" in stating that it remained at Perth until at least 10 March 1646. Furgol presumed that the Strathearn Foot served under Middleton's command, following the sack of Kincardine Castle; however, the "Chronicle" does not record the presence of Middleton when the Strathearn Foot returned to Perth. 14

Lyell's/ Lyall's/ Lye's Foot was commanded by Colonel Arthur Lyell (?). A "mysterious" regiment. In early November 1644, 15 men of the regiment stayed in the Aberdeen tolbooth for thirteen days, at a cost of £28. In mid-June 1645, the earl of Crawford-Lindsay replaced Lothian's Foot in Dundee with Lyell's, but the soldiers and burgesses rioted on 30 June. The regiment was replaced in Dundee by the Edinburgh Foot. On 5 November Lyell was ordered to bring the regiment from Dundee to Glasgow, and the last reference to this unit is that which occurs in the "Chronicle of Perth". 15

13 Furgol, 149-150.
14 Furgol, 180-1.
15 Furgol, 228-9.
For details of the sacking of Kincardine Castle, see above p. 313.
Conclusion and Bibliography
In Conclusion

The fundamental questions which are posed to an editor of the "Chronicle of Perth" - *When* was the manuscript written? *Who* were its authors? *Who* were its owners and *What* purposes did it serve? - remain largely unanswered. The composition of the manuscript can be loosely dated to c.1590 - c.1668, but the "Chronicle" is too complicated to bear detailed dating analysis. John Mercer can easily be identified with the authorship of some of the text, and handwriting analysis has shown that he may have been responsible for writing the majority of the "Chronicle". But his fellow authors remain anonymous. More importantly, the manuscript's function is still only a matter of surmise. It appears to have been a private, secular record - albeit one that incorporated several public documents. It was not a personal diary, but the structure of the volume does conform to a standard definition of the term "chronicle". The manuscript was valued by the ministers of late 18th century Perth, and the mere fact of its survival - apparently largely intact - indicates that it was perceived by its earlier owners or guardians to be an important document.

The details of my editorial work on the manuscript can be summarised briefly. I have identified thirteen handwriting styles in the manuscript, although there were probably less than thirteen authors. Whereas Maidment was dismissive of the notion that John Mercer was the principal author of the "Chronicle", it is quite possible that he was responsible for the compilation of much of sections 2 and 4. Handwriting analysis and the anecdotal information which is provided by "personal references" in the text indicate that an appropriate date-range to apply to the composition of the "Chronicle" might be the working lifetime of John Mercer. Many of his fellow writers in Perth can be identified by name from the pages of his protocol books, and a detailed comparative study of the palaeography of the "Chronicle of Perth" and the other burgh records of the period might lead to the identification of Mercer's fellow chroniclers. However, I am cautious about the usefulness of such a study. My research has indicated that although a comparative analysis of Perth sources can indicate important connections, such work also reveals anomalies which are very difficult to resolve. Mercer's close association with much of the text of the "Chronicle" is an important discovery. This man was a writer of some distinction in the burgh; a notary, town clerk, and clerk to the kirk session, his knowledge of burgh affairs and skill in writing must have been considerable. Mercer's varied professional life seems to be reflected in the wide-ranging material which appears in the "Chronicle".

The manuscript is not a comprehensive historical record, but it is a carefully structured piece of work. The four "sections" have distinct characteristics, and Section 2 in particular is often chronological in form; its factual content is fairly accurate. Furthermore, it is certainly a chronicle about events relating to Perth, and there can be little doubt that the manuscript was written in the burgh. It is not a narrative history; but it does offer a series of observations about significant affairs in Perth in an era of intense political and religious upheaval, and local economic difficulty.

The "Chronicle" is not a work of literature to compare with Henry Adamson's poetic history, *The Muses Threnodie*. But the manuscript does belong to a genre of historical writing in early modern
Perth. The chroniclers adopted a form of composition which could have been copied from earlier works such as "Mr Dundee's Diary". Like "Provost Blair's Book", the "Chronicle" could have been intended as a work of historical reference, a collection to be used by Mercer's colleagues and successors. Alternatively, given its relevance to ecclesiastical matters, and Mercer's connection with the kirk session, it is possible that the volume was presented to the Kirk authorities, and handed down from one minister to another from the late 17th century onwards.

The original purpose of the manuscript cannot be positively identified; but this thesis is intended to demonstrate that the "Chronicle" can fulfil several important functions today, as a source of historical and archaeological information. To some extent the value of the manuscript is obvious: the "Chronicle" includes a register of deaths at Perth covering a period in which there is no local burial register, and it is clearly an important source for climatic research. The text embraces a turbulent era in Scottish history, and represents a provincial perspective of the aftermath of the Reformation, and the allied political machinations which led to civil war in the middle of the 17th century. The value of the "Chronicle" as an historical source can be assessed by reference to the works of Professor Lynch. The text supplies supportive anecdotal material for important aspects of Lynch's work - certainly concerning the concept of a "Town and Country" relationship. However, it is salutary to note that the important theme in the "Chronicle" of town and country would not be obvious without the prompting of Lynch's studies. A careful reading of the manuscript in the context of Lynch's economic analysis also reveals some of its limitations.

The "Chronicle of Perth" is not a narrative history, and the authors tended to be circumspect in their comments - although their political and religious sympathies can often be discerned. Nevertheless, historical writing seems to have been important in early modern Perth, and the chroniclers clearly had a sense of history, and a concern for local affairs. The "Chronicle" was a deliberative work, one which the authors constructed carefully and - it would appear - selectively. Indirectly it presents their perceptions of a society and a way of life. In this respect, the mere existence of the "Chronicle" is of greater import than the factual accuracy of its contents. There are numerous dating errors in the "Chronicle", and the omission of information can often obscure the meaning of the text; however, the manuscript presents a series of judgements of what was important or notable in the life of the burgh. It is in this context that an archaeological interpretation of the "Chronicle" can be formed.

Analysis of the "Chronicle of Perth" as an archaeological source raises a host of questions, only some of which are tackled in this thesis; many of them have been addressed by archaeologists seeking to clarify the results of excavations in the town. Although this thesis seeks to identify archaeological themes which may be explored concerning the condition of the early modern burgh, and suggests that historical sources can provide archaeological information ahead of excavation, the thesis also represents a synthesis of known archaeological and historical material concerning early modern Perth. The burgh has been extensively excavated, and is the home of
the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust partly because of the rich archaeological potential of the area. The Trust has not yet devised a programme of excavation and research with the local planning authority, and the Director has acknowledged a need to dig "opportunistically". However, the Trust does work with a series of research questions in mind, many of which are duplicated in the suggestions for archaeological enquiry that are raised by this study.

The value of the research themes which are raised by the "Chronicle" has recently been underlined by a list of priorities for research presented in an exhibition - entitled "Mud, Middens and Muck in Medieval Perth" - at Perth Museum and Art Gallery. This exhibition of excavated artefacts primarily concerned life in the medieval burgh, between c.1100 and c.1600; but some of the questions posed for future studies echoed those put forward in this thesis. There was a particular emphasis on the need to study sites in "The rural setting": "This is where most people lived in The Middle Ages and where most townsfolk came from... The craft skills and building techniques used in the town had their origins in the countryside... Pottery, the main find on excavations, was made outside the town... Food production and the raw materials for industry came from the rural surroundings... How do town sites relate to those in the countryside?"

The early modern burgh was set within a rich agricultural environment, and appears to have been reasonably well served by roads from the south and west. Communications with Dundee along the Carse of Gowrie were only occasionally disrupted; and even though the Tay seems to have been less navigable in the later 17th century than during Perth's medieval hey-day, river transport remained of significance in the life of the burgh. However, living conditions in and around early modern Perth were poor. The 17th century witnessed a decline in Perth's economy which coincided with - and may in part have resulted from - an epoch of cold, harsh weather. The "Chronicle" indicates that the quality of life of the citizenry of Perth and of their rural counterparts was strongly affected by the state of the weather. The important relationship between town and country is brought into sharp relief by accounts of natural disasters which caused structural damage in Perth, and led to food shortages within Perthshire. A study of the archaeology of town and country in the 16th and 17th centuries must be placed within the context of climatic disorder.

The "Chronicle of Perth" emerges as an important source for Scottish climatic history. The manuscript provides only a partial record; but it offers a portrait of intermittently severe winters and summer dears which fits the general climatic trend that has been identified by modern research. Accounts of phenomena such as the inundation of 1621 or the severe winter of 1635 must not be interpreted as being typical events of the period; modern studies have illustrated that such disasters were the worst manifestations of generally poor weather. The chroniclers presumably concentrated on such events because they were particularly disturbing and destructive. However, the manuscript does draw attention to the lingering effects of major disasters - particularly to problems in the food supply and damage to buildings. Disease is likely to have been a persistent factor in town life, and the "Chronicle" is an important source for the major outbreaks of the "pest".

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despite its omission of any reference to the bubonic plague which struck in the 1640s. In terms of climatic history - and the associated issues of the food supply and public health - the "Chronicle" should not be used in isolation. But in the context of modern research, the manuscript can make an important contribution to the general view of a persistently harsh climate, punctuated by major disasters.

The parallels which can be drawn between accounts of flooding in the 17th century and more recent inundations are instructive, and lend credence to the tone of some of the "Chronicle". It is not surprising that the account of the 1621 inundation contains emotive language; and the imagery of this passage is recognisable in some of the events of the 1993 flood. The damage which has been sustained by agricultural land in modern Perth and Kinross is a useful indicator of the likely problems which were experienced by early modern farmers. Indeed, recent experiences of climatic disorder encourage a researcher to draw important inferences from the text of the "Chronicle". For example, damage to key buildings of the town is likely to have disrupted town-life long after the waters had subsided; similarly, inhabitants of the burgh could have been affected by stress related illnesses as a consequence of their experiences. The severity and frequency of natural disasters must not be exaggerated; but an era of severe weather increased the burdens of early modern town life, and often disrupted the links between town and country.

In archaeological terms, it can be difficult to define points at which the environment of the burgh of Perth gave way to the rural environment of the countryside. The walls of Perth clearly established the limits of the town, but the burgh's property extended into a competitive environment of rural estates. However, this study has sought to examine the characteristics of the built environments of town and country. The townscape of late 17th century Perth would have borne witness to a succession of crises: the accidents of natural disasters, and the deliberate destruction of military occupation. The townsfolk were forced to cope with poor housing and infectious diseases; Parry has even commented that in the late 1640s it is difficult to distinguish between the effects of adverse weather and the English occupation in the southern Lowlands. There are important instances in which the "Chronicle of Perth" gives a misleading portrait of the state of the urban environment. Building maintenance is a key theme of the text; but the paucity of information about work carried out on St. John's Kirk is at odds with the copious references to repairs which appear in the kirk session records. Similarly, it is difficult to discern the nature of the building works which took place on the Tay bridge, and the description of the rebuilding of Lowswork in 1623 is inadequate - there is far more detailed material in the burgh records. However, the "Chronicle" does highlight incidents which determined the course of the burgh's fortunes in the 17th century. The flood of 1621, and the associated hardships of the 1620s, would have coloured burgh life; the years of war and occupation in the middle of the century seem to have retarded any economic recovery which the burgh might have been making.
The rural environment featured stark contrasts between the fine houses of the local men of property, and the lesser buildings of farming communities. However, it is apparent from documentary records that Perth was surrounded by an increasing number of markets, and local trade seems to have expanded significantly during the course of the 17th century. Overland communications seem to have been sufficient to meet the needs of numerous market centres. The "Chronicle" is particularly useful in pointing to the local men of property whose interests and holdings provided an important link between the burgh and its hinterland. In conjunction with other sources, the "Chronicle of Perth" provides complex, seemingly contradictory impressions of an environment and a local economy which was blighted by misfortunes, but vital and competitive.

The "archaeological" value of documentary sources may be encapsulated in this paradox. The sources which have informed this thesis point to a way of life in early modern Perthshire which - for the majority - revolved around the production and exchange of goods, but which for all - regardless of wealth - was interrupted by unforeseen acts of nature, or the deliberate destructiveness of man. The built environment was characterised by relatively large market centres, large rural estates, and scatters of farming hamlets. This is to describe the landscape in the most general - and uncontroversial - of terms. But documents such as the "Chronicle" also allow the researcher to focus on particular aspects within the early modern environment. The information may be suspect or misleading; but nevertheless, the "Chronicle" is a testament of those who experienced life in Perth in the 17th century. This study has attempted to show how a variety of documentary sources may be used to add important archaeological detail to a framework which the "Chronicle" provides.

An archaeologist does not need to read this sort of material prior to an excavation or survey. But such documentary sources indicate what contemporaries thought about their built environment, and the works which they carried out upon it. An archaeologist may at least take such information into account, and indeed test such material. Even when documentary evidence can be demonstrated to be wrong - in terms of the technical information which it provides - a work such as the "Chronicle of Perth" still indicates the perceptions of its authors about the town, or countryside, in which they lived and worked.
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