AYR: A STUDY OF URBAN GROWTH
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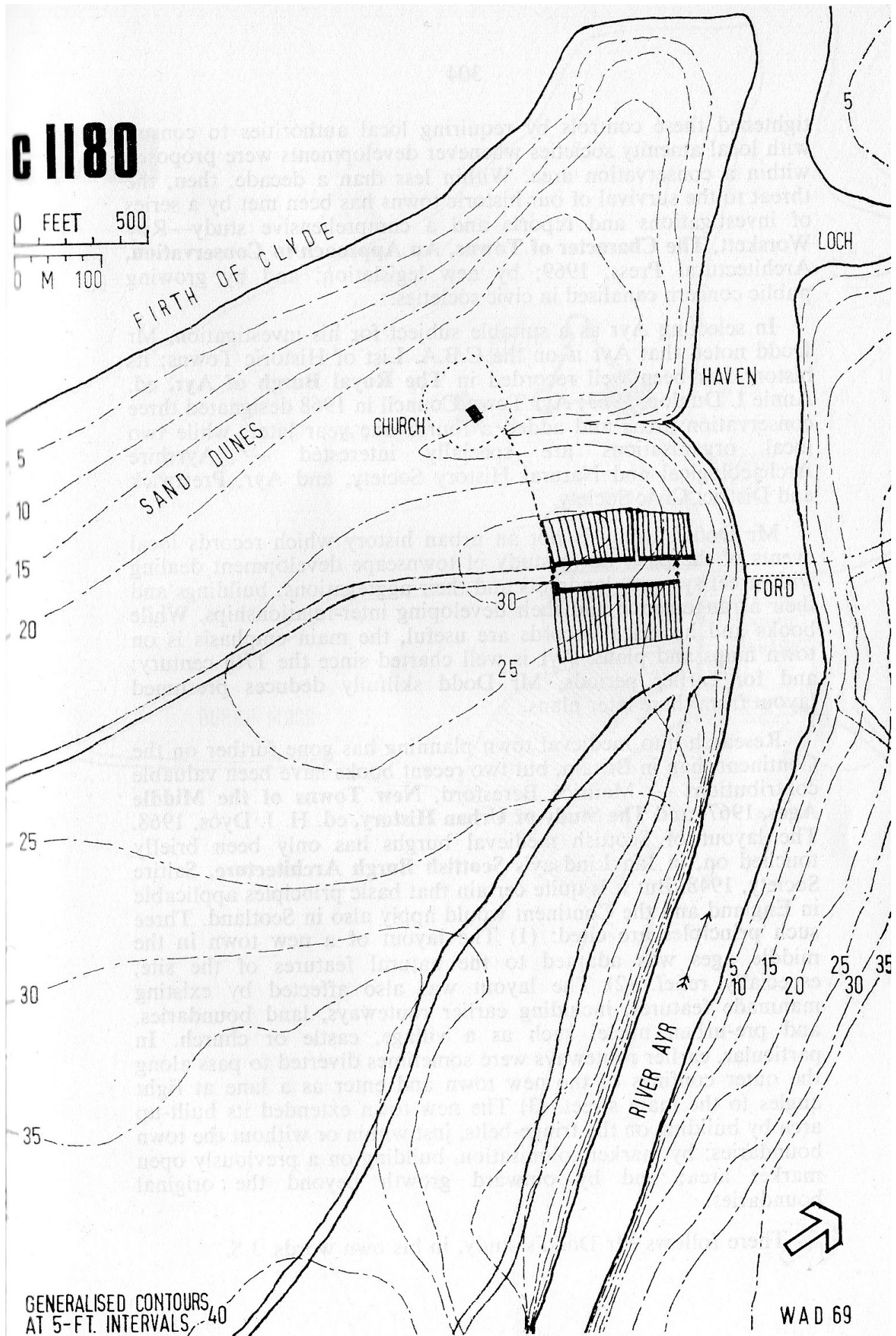
EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Mr Dodd's study of the growth of Ayr is part of a thesis on "Town Conservation Study" prepared in 1969 for the University of Strathclyde School of Architecture.[1] His approach differs from that of previous historians of Ayr who have concentrated almost entirely on literary sources; and this fresh viewpoint has produced some novel and important conclusions about the burgh's origin and development. As an introduction we summarise Mr Dodd's preliminary section on the conservation of historic towns.

Historic towns which survived the industrial developments of the 19th century are now facing a new threat in the second half of the 20th century from extensive redevelopments of central areas, with the creation of new shopping and housing complexes and new traffic patterns. Awareness of this danger really was awakened in 1963 by the publication of three reports from widely-varying sources: **Monuments Threatened or Destroyed, a select list** by the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments; **The Preservation and Development of Ancient Buildings,** issued by the Council of Europe; and the Buchanan Report on **Traffic in Towns.** The matter was taken up by the Council for British Archaeology who issued a Memorandum (1964) and compiled a List of Historic Towns (1960). The Ministry of Housing and Local Government organized a conference at Cambridge on Historic Towns (1966) and initiated case studies of several examples. This produced three years later published reports on Bath (by Colin Buchanan), Chester (Donald Insall), York (Brett and Pollen) and Chichester (by a local authority team). Concurrently the need for revision of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 was noted; there was issued a report on the Future of Development Plans (1965); a Planning Advisory Group was set up to review the machinery of planning (1965); also an official Preservation Policy Group (1966) which produced a report on Preservation and Change (1967). Meanwhile, the Civic Trust which had been set up in 1957 was enjoying increasing support from the many local civic and amenity societies which were springing up all over the country. In Parliament, Duncan Sandys presented a private member's bill which was passed as the Civic Amenities Act (1967) — a breakthrough which among other things made arrangements for local authorities to designate "conservation areas" within which alterations were more carefully controlled. Later the Town and Country Planning Act (1968)

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1. This part of the thesis has been amended and revised, August, 1971.

c 1180

FIRTH OF CLYDE

LOCH

FEET 500

M 100

HAVEN

CHURCH

SAND DUNES

5
10
15
20

30

FORD

25

25

30

35

RIVER AYR

5 15 25 35
10 20 30

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS, 40

WAD 69

tightened these controls by requiring local authorities to consult with local amenity societies whenever developments were proposed within a conservation area. Within less than a decade, then, the threat to the survival of our historic towns has been met by a series of investigations and reports and a comprehensive study—Roy Worskett, **The Character of Towns, An Approach to Conservation,** Architectural Press, 1969; by new legislation; and by growing public concern canalised in civic societies.

In selecting Ayr as a suitable subject for his investigation, Mr Dodd noted that Ayr is on the C.B.A. List of Historic Towns; its history has been well recorded in **The Royal Burgh of Ayr,** ed. Annie I. Dunlop, 1963; Ayr Town Council in 1968 designated three conservation areas and added a fourth one year later; while two local organisations are specially interested — Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, and Ayr, Prestwick and District Civic Society.

Mr Dodd's study is not an urban history which records local events of the past, but a study of townscape development dealing with street systems, landplots and their aggregations; buildings and their arrangements; and their developing inter-relationships. While books and historical records are useful, the main emphasis is on town maps and plans. Ayr is well charted since the 17th century; and for earlier periods, Mr Dodd skilfully deduces presumed layout from these later plans.

Research into medieval town planning has gone further on the Continent than in Britain, but two recent books have been valuable contributions — Maurice Beresford, **New Towns of the Middle Ages,** 1967; and **The Study of Urban History,** ed. H. J. Dyos, 1968. The layout of Scottish medieval burghs has only been briefly touched on, in Ian Lindsay's **Scottish Burgh Architecture,** Saltire Society, 1948. But it is quite certain that basic principles applicable in England and the Continent would apply also in Scotland. Three such principles are cited: (1) The layout of a new town in the middle ages was adapted to the natural features of the site, especially relief. (2) The layout was also affected by existing manmade features, including earlier routeways, land boundaries, and pre-urban nuclei such as a village, castle or church. In particular, earlier routeways were sometimes diverted to pass along the outer confines of the new town and enter as a lane at right angles to the main street. (3) The new town extended its built-up area by building on the fringe-belts, just within or without the town boundaries; by market colonisation, building on a previously open market area; and by outward growth beyond the original boundaries.

There follows Mr Dodd's study, in his own words. J.S.

c 1220

GENERALISED CONTOURS AT 5-FT. INTERVALS

WAD 69
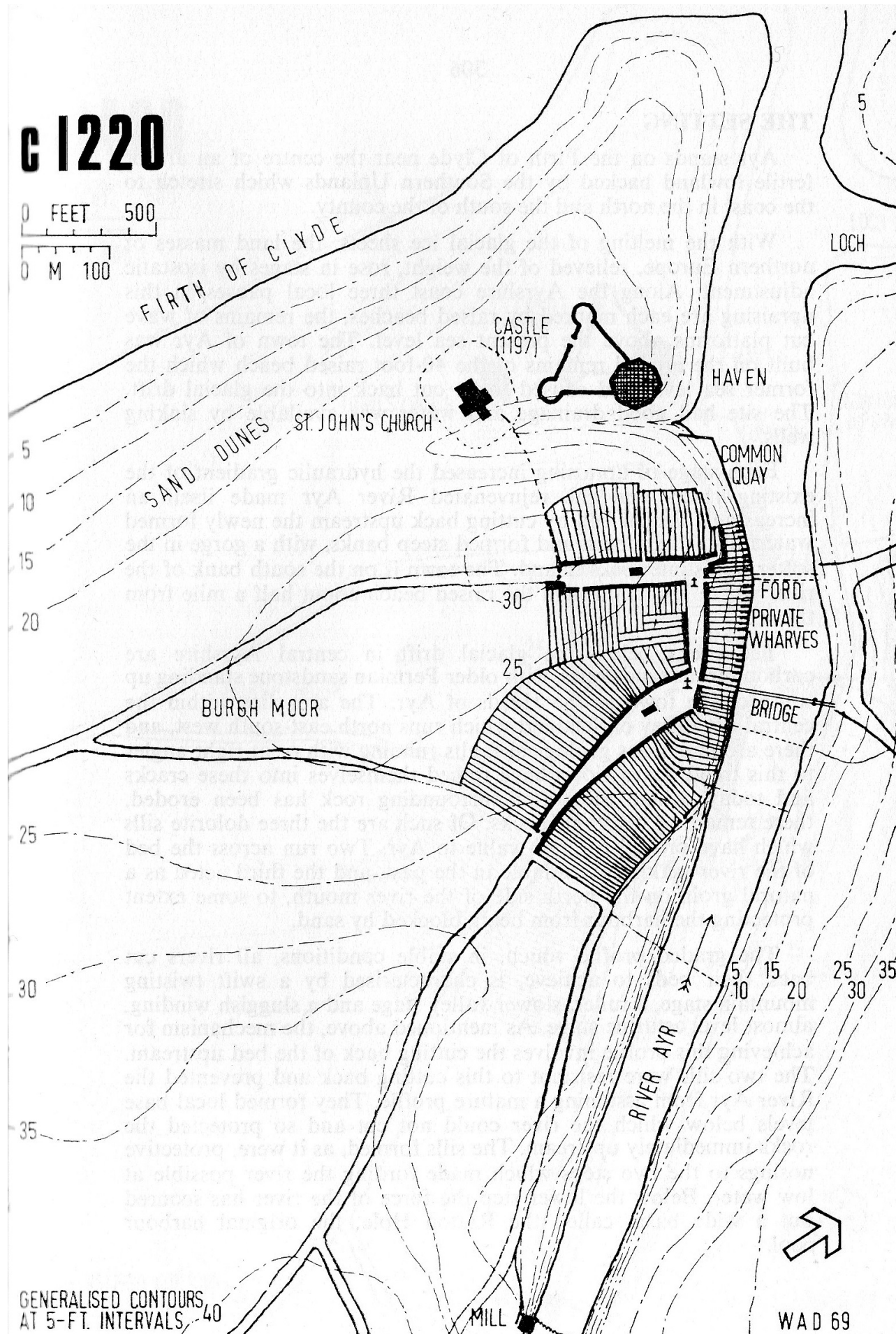
THE SETTING

Ayr stands on the Firth of Clyde near the centre of an arc of fertile lowland backed by the Southern Uplands which stretch to the coast in the north and the south of the county.

With the melting of the glacial ice sheets, the land masses of northern Europe, relieved of the weight, rose in stages by isostatic adjustment. Along the Ayrshire coast three local pauses in this upraising are each marked by raised beaches, the remains of wave cut platforms above the present sea level. The town of Ayr was built on the eroded remains of the 40-foot raised beach which the former sea level had caused to be cut back into the glacial drift. The site had good drainage and water was available by sinking wells.
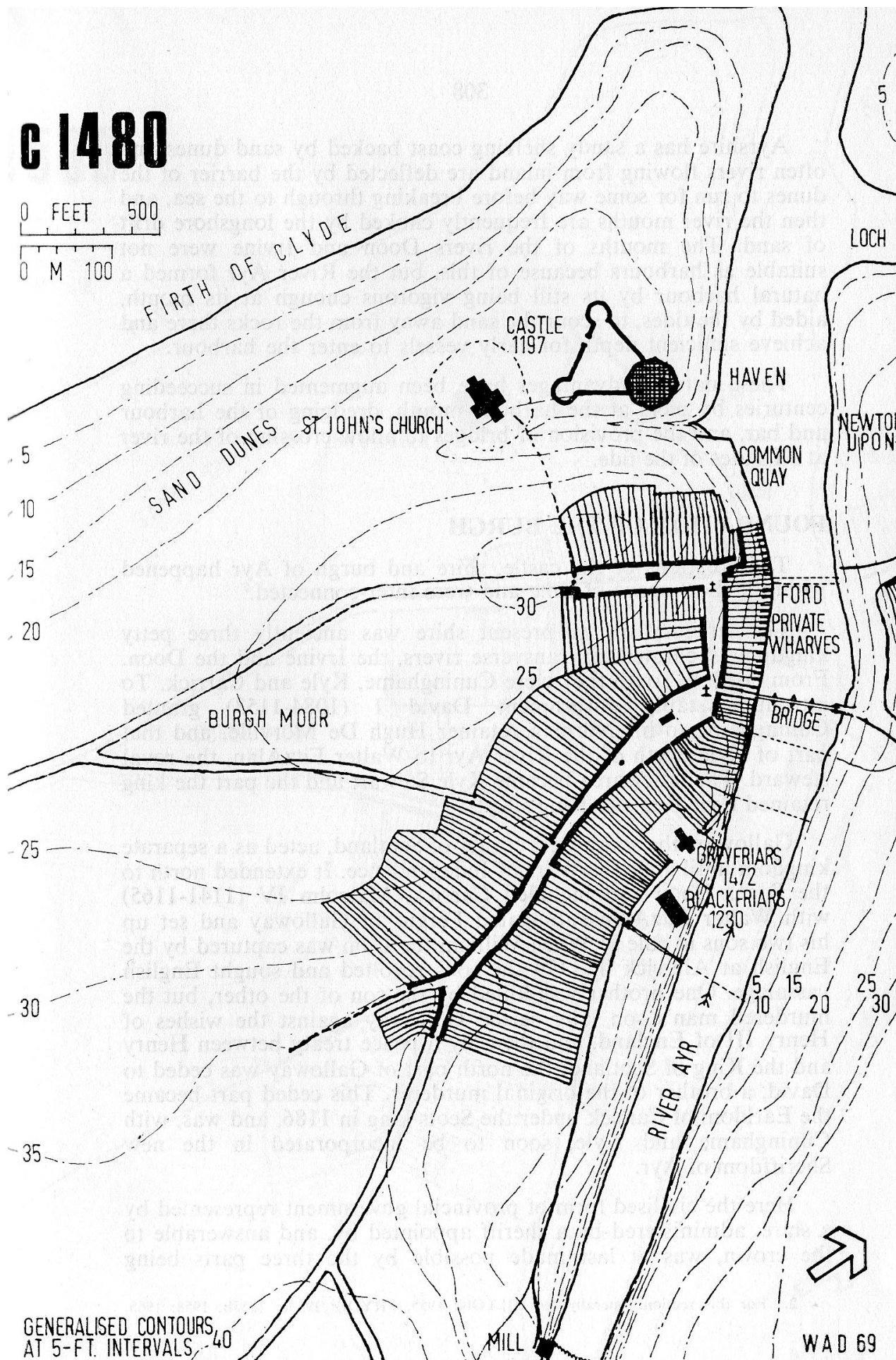
Each stage of upraising increased the hydraulic gradient of the existing rivers and the rejuvenated River Ayr made itself an increasingly deeper bed by cutting back upstream the newly formed waterfalls at its mouth and formed steep banks, with a gorge in the softer sandstone rocks inland. The town is on the south bank of the river where it cuts through the raised beach about half a mile from the sea.

The rocks below the glacial drift in central Ayrshire are carboniferous sandstones, with older Permian sandstone standing up south of the town as the Heads of Ayr. The area lies within the central rift valley of Scotland which runs north east-south west, and there are numerous geological faults running with or at right angles to this trend. Lava flows have forced themselves into these cracks and today, where the softer surrounding rock has been eroded, these remain as resistant blocks. Of such are the three dolorite sills which have proved of great value to Ayr. Two run across the bed of the river making it fordable in the past, and the third acted as a natural groin on the north side of the river mouth, to some extent protecting the harbour from being blocked by sand.

The graded profile which, in stable conditions, all rivers cut back their beds to achieve, is characterised by a swift twisting mountain stage, a fuller, slower valley stage and a sluggish winding, almost level esturine stage. As mentioned above, the mechanism for achieving this profile involves the cutting back of the bed upstream. The two sills were resistant to this cutting back and prevented the River Ayr from assuming a mature profile. They formed local base levels below which the river could not cut and so protected the rocks immediately upstream. The sills formed, as it were, protective nosings to the two steps which made fording the river possible at low water. Below the lower step the force of the river has scoured out a wide basin called the Ratton Hole, the original harbour pool.

c 1480

FIRTH OF CLYDE

LOCH

0 FEET 500

0 M 100

CASTLE
1197

HAVEN

SAND DUNES

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

NEWTON
UPON-

COMMON
QUAY

5

10

15

FORD
PRIVATE
WHARVES

30

20

25

BURGH MOOR

BRIDGE

RIVER AYR

25

GREYFRIARS
1472
BLACKFRIARS
1230

30

5 15   25
  10 20   30

35

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS 40

MILL

WAD 69

Ayrshire has a sandy shelving coast backed by sand dunes and often rivers flowing from inland are deflected by the barrier of the dunes to run for some way before breaking through to the sea, and then the river mouths are frequently choked by the longshore drift of sand. The mouths of the rivers Doon and Irvine were not suitable as harbours because of this, but the River Ayr formed a natural harbour by its still being vigorous enough at its mouth, aided by the tides, to scour the sand away from the rocks there and achieve sufficient depth for early vessels to enter the harbour.

These natural advantages have been augmented in succeeding centuries by piers at the harbour mouth, dredging of the harbour and bar, and the provision of bridges to allow crossing of the river at all states of the tide.

FOUNDATION OF THE BURGH

The creations of the castle, shire and burgh of Ayr happened within a short space of time and were inter-connected.[2]
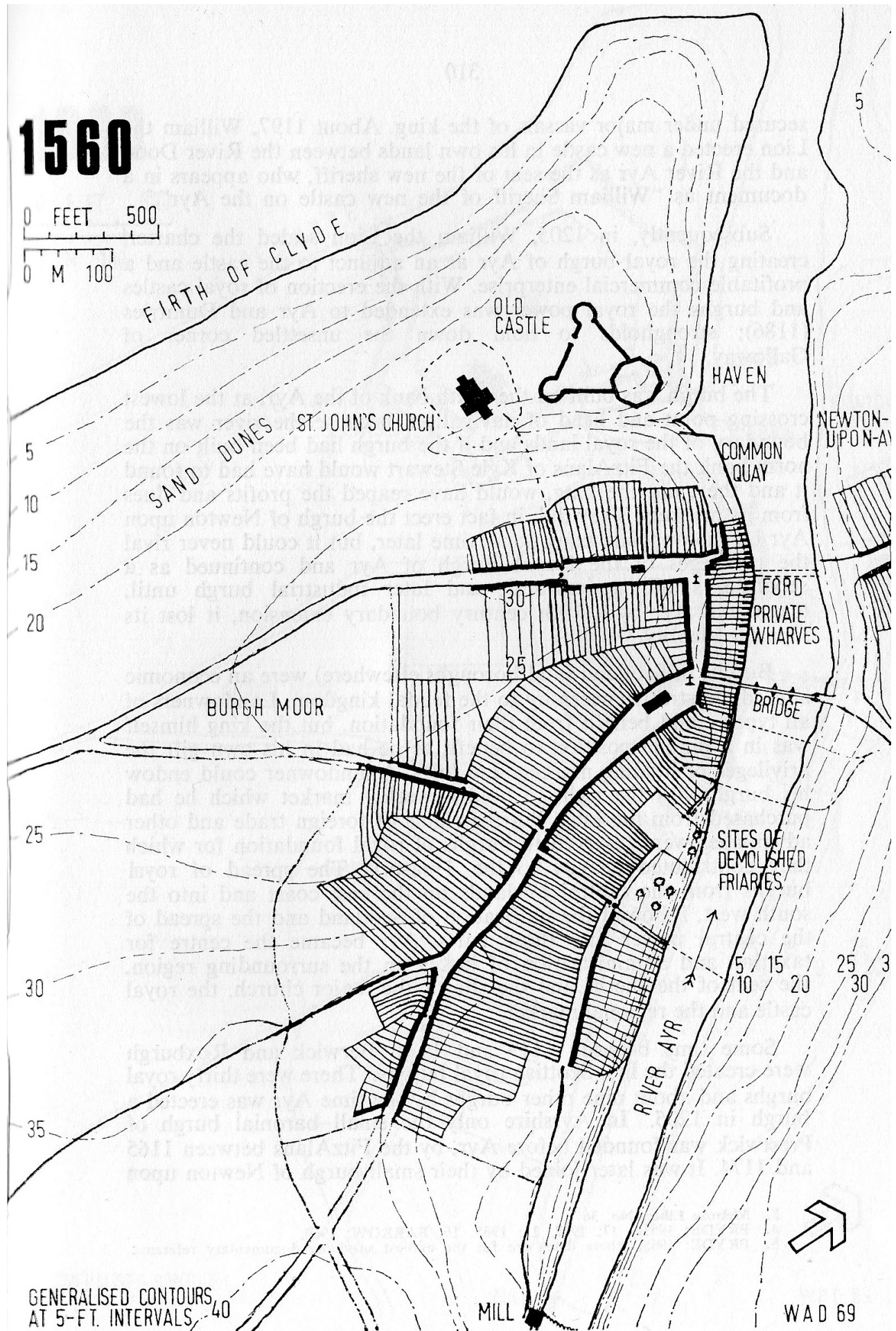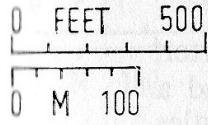
The territory of the present shire was anciently three petty kingdoms separated by transverse rivers, the Irvine and the Doon. From north to south they were Cuninghame, Kyle and Carrick. To introduce stable government David I (1084-1153) granted Cuninghame to his Norman retainer Hugh De Morville, and that part of Kyle north of the River Ayr to Walter FitzAlan, the royal steward. The latter area became Kyle Stewart and the part the king retained Kyle Regis or King's Kyle.

Galloway, the south west corner of Scotland, acted as a separate kingdom until after the Wars of Independence. It extended north to the River Doon and included Carrick. Malcolm IV (1141-1165) with Walter FitzAlan subjugated Fergus of Galloway and set up his two sons to rule it. When William the Lion was captured by the English at Alnwick in 1174 the sons revolted and sought English vassalage. One brother was killed by the son of the other, but the murdered man's son later seized Galloway against the wishes of Henry III of England, and then, by a peace treaty between Henry and the King of Scotland, the north part of Galloway was ceded to David, a brother of the original murderer. This ceded part became the Earldom of Carrick under the Scots king in 1186, and was, with Cuninghame and Kyle, soon to be incorporated in the new Sheriffdom of Ayr.

Here the civilised form of provincial government represented by a shire, administered by a sheriff appointed by, and answerable to the crown, was at last made possible by the three parts being

2. For this section generally see DILLON: 1955; PRYDE: 1953a; 1953b; 1958; 1965.

1560

FEET 500

M 100

FIRTH OF CLYDE

OLD CASTLE

HAVEN

SAND DUNES

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

NEWTON-UPON-AYR

COMMON QUAY

FORD

PRIVATE WHARVES

BURGH MOOR

BRIDGE

SITES OF DEMOLISHED FRIARIES

RIVER AYR

GENERALISED CONTOURS AT 5-FT. INTERVALS

MILL

WAD 69

secured under major vassals of the king. About 1197, William the Lion erected a new castle in his own lands between the River Doon and the River Ayr as the seat of the new sheriff, who appears in a document as "William Sheriff of the new castle on the Ayr".[3]

Subsequently, in 1205, William the Lion sealed the charter[4] creating the royal burgh of Ayr as an adjunct to the castle and a profitable commercial enterprise. With the erection of royal castles and burghs the royal power was extended to Ayr and Dumfries (1186); strongholds to hold down the unsettled corner of Galloway.

The burgh was built on the south bank of the Ayr, at the lowest crossing point and head of navigation, because the river was the boundary of the royal lands and if the burgh had been built on the north bank the FitzAlans of Kyle Stewart would have had to found it and they, not the king, would have reaped the profits and dues from its markets. They did, in fact erect the burgh of Newton upon Ayr on the opposite bank some time later, but it could never rival the privileges of the Royal Burgh of Ayr and continued as a separate, small, agricultural, and later industrial burgh until, taken into Ayr by a 19th century boundary extension, it lost its separate identity.

Burghs in Scotland (and boroughs elsewhere) were an economic and administrative necessity to the feudal kingdom. Landowners of all types could benefit from their foundation, but the king himself was in a unique position to benefit as he had in his own gift the privileges of holding markets and fairs. A landowner could endow his burgh with the right to hold a weekly market which he had purchased from the king, but the rights of foreign trade and other advantages were reserved to burghs of royal foundation for which they contributed heavily to the Treasury. The spread of royal burghs from the central lowlands up the east coast and into the south west, followed the unification of Scotland and the spread of the central power into those parts. Ayr became the centre for taxation and administration of justice in the surrounding region, the seat of the sheriff and the site of the major church, the royal castle and the regional market.

Some time between 1119 and 1124, Berwick and Roxburgh were created the first Scottish royal burghs.[5] There were thirty royal burghs and about nine other burghs by the time Ayr was erected a burgh in 1205. In Ayrshire only the small baronial burgh of Prestwick was founded before Ayr, by the FitzAlans between 1165 and 1174. It was later joined by their small burgh of Newton upon
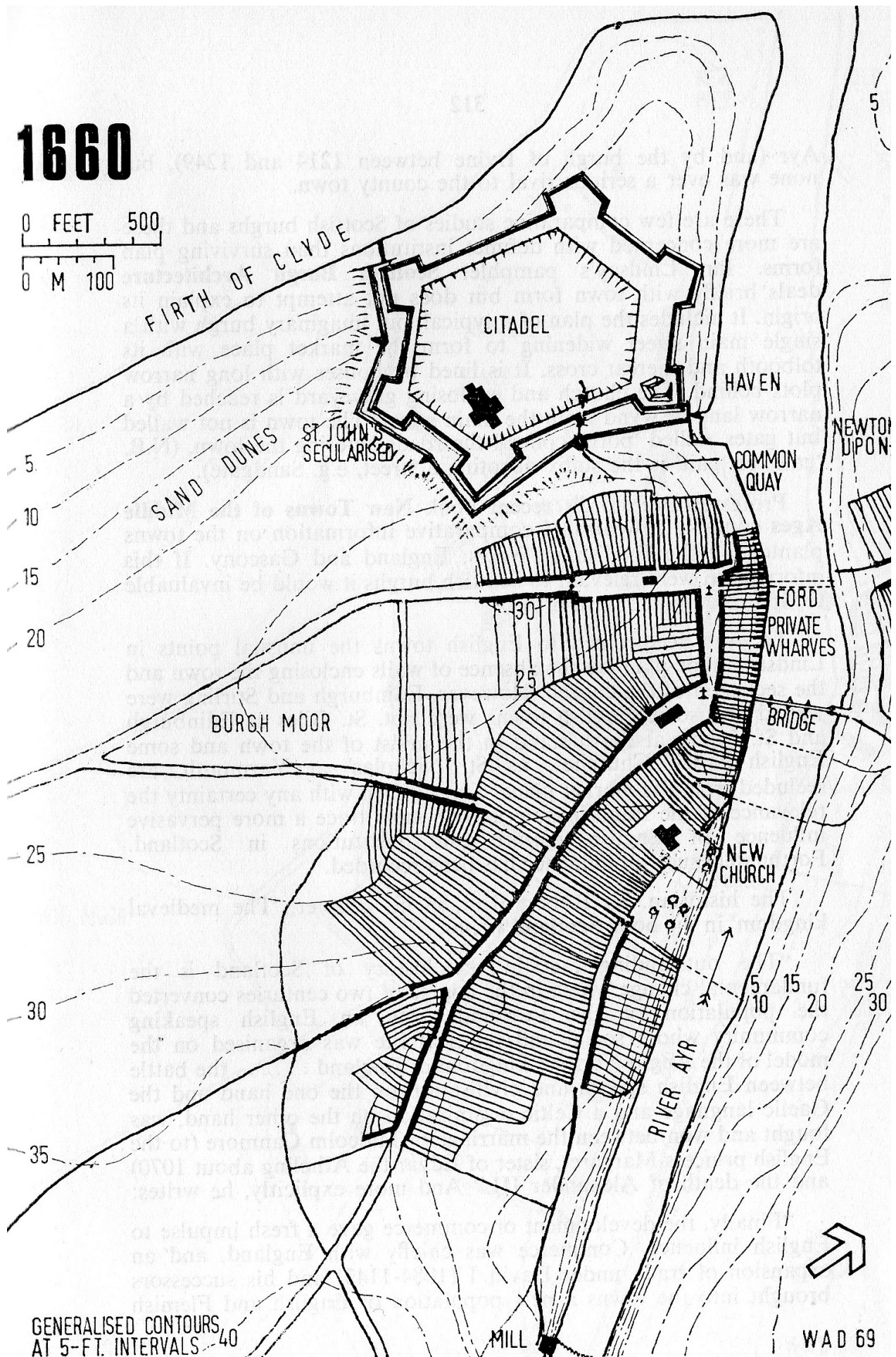
3. Melrose Liber, No. 36
4. PRYDE: 1953a, 17; 1958, 11; 1965, 16; BARROW: 1969.
5. PRYDE: 1965, where dates are for the earliest surviving documentary reference.

1660

0 FEET 500

0 M 100

FIRTH OF CLYDE

CITADEL

HAVEN

SAND DUNES

ST. JOHN'S
SECULARISED

COMMON
QUAY

NEWTON
UPON-

5.

10

15

20

FORD
PRIVATE
WHARVES

30

25

BURGH MOOR

BRIDGE

25

NEW
CHURCH

5   15   25
  10   20   30

30

35

RIVER AYR

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS 40

MILL

WAD 69

Ayr (and by the burgh of Irvine between 1214 and 1249), but none was ever a serious rival to the county town.

There are few comparative studies of Scottish burghs and these are more concerned with defunct institutions than surviving plan forms. Ian Lindsay's pamphlet **Scottish Burgh Architecture** deals briefly with town form but does not attempt to explain its origin. It includes the plan of a typical, but imaginary burgh with a single main street widening to form the market place with its tolbooth and mercat cross. It is lined by houses with long narrow plots behind. The church and enclosing graveyard is reached by a narrow lane or wynd from the main street. The town is not walled but gates, called 'ports' control the roads entering the town. (N.B. 'gate' or 'gait' is the suffix denoting a street, e.g. Sandgate).

Professor Beresford's recent book **New Towns of the Middle Ages** contains a wealth of comparative information on the towns planted by the English in Wales, England and Gascony. If this information were relevant to Scottish burghs it would be invaluable for interpreting the form of Ayr.

To eyes accustomed to English towns the unusual points in Lindsay's type-plan are the absence of walls enclosing the town and the seclusion of the church. However, Edinburgh and Stirling were walled and some English towns were not. St. Giles at Edinburgh and St. John's at Perth stand in the midst of the town and some English Parish Churches, as St. Nicholas' at Yarmouth, are secluded from the market place. To establish with any certainty the relevance of the English material one must trace a more pervasive influence of English culture and institutions in Scotland. Fortunately such an influence has been recorded.
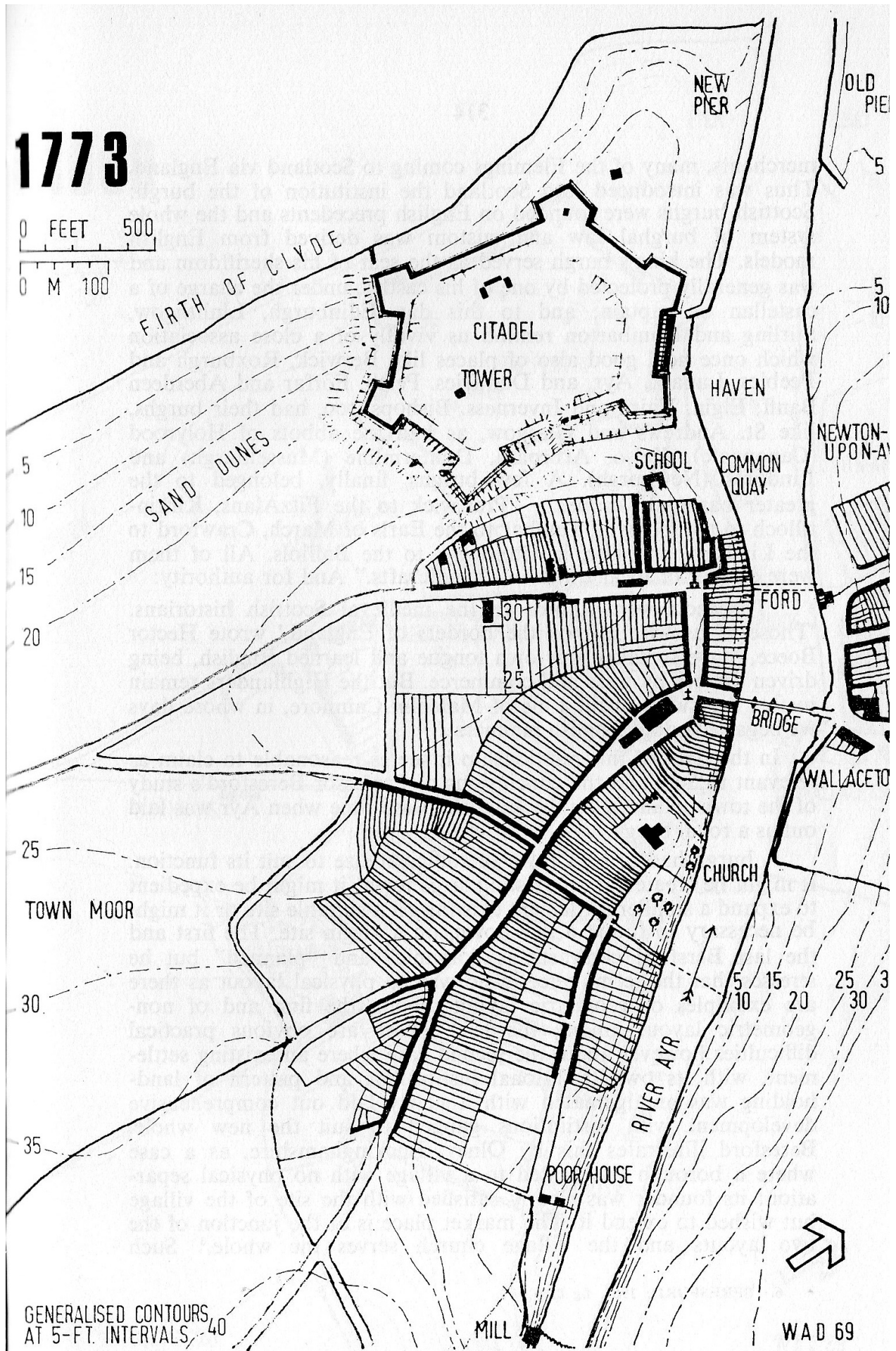
The historian, Sir Robert Rait, in his chapter, 'The medieval kingdom' in the book **Scotland** writes:

"The outstanding fact in the history of Scotland is the fundamental change which in the course of two centuries converted the population of the Lowlands into an English speaking community whose social and political life was organised on the model of the Anglo-Norman kingdom of England . . . . . . the battle between English speech and civilisation on the one hand and the Gaelic language and a Celtic organisation on the other hand, was fought and won between the marriage of Malcolm Canmore (to the English princess Margaret, sister of Edgar the Atheling about 1070) and the death of Alexander III." And more explicitly, he writes:

"Finally, the development of commerce gave a fresh impulse to English influence. Commerce was chiefly with England, and an expansion of trade under David I (1084-1143) and his successors brought into the towns a new population of English and Flemish

1773

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS.

0 FEET 500

0 M 100

FIRTH OF CLYDE

NEW
PIER

OLD
PIER

CITADEL

TOWER

HAVEN

SAND DUNES

SCHOOL

COMMON
QUAY

NEWTON-
UPON-A

5
10
15
20

25

30

35

40

TOWN MOOR

30

25

FORD

BRIDGE

WALLACETO

CHURCH

5   15   25   3
10   20   30

RIVER AYR

POOR HOUSE

MILL

WAD 69

merchants, many of the Flemings coming to Scotland via England. Thus was introduced into Scotland the institution of the burgh: Scottish burghs were founded on English precedents and the whole system of burghal law and custom was derived from English models. The king's burgh served as the seat of his sheriffdom and was generally protected by one of his castles, under the charge of a castellan or captain; and to this day Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling and Dumbarton remind us vividly of a close association which once held good also of places like Berwick, Roxburgh and Peebles, Lanark, Ayr, and Dumfries. Perth, Forfar and Aberdeen Banff, Elgin, Nairn and Inverness. Bishops, too, had their burghs, like St. Andrews and Glasgow, as had the abbots of Holyrood (Canongate), Kelso, Arbroath, Dunfermline (Musselburgh) and Lindores (Newburgh). A few burghs, finally, belonged to the greater baronial families — Prestwick to the FitzAlans, Kirkintilloch to the Comyns, Dunbar to the Earls of March, Crawford to the Lindsays and Urr, in Galloway, to the Balliols. All of them were centres of local trade and handicrafts." And for authority:

"The facts were known to the medieval Scottish historians. 'Those of us who live on the borders of England,' wrote Hector Boece, 'have forsaken our own tongue and learned English, being driven thereto by wars and commerce. But the Highlanders remain just as they were in the time of Malcolm Canmore, in whose days we began to adopt English manners'."
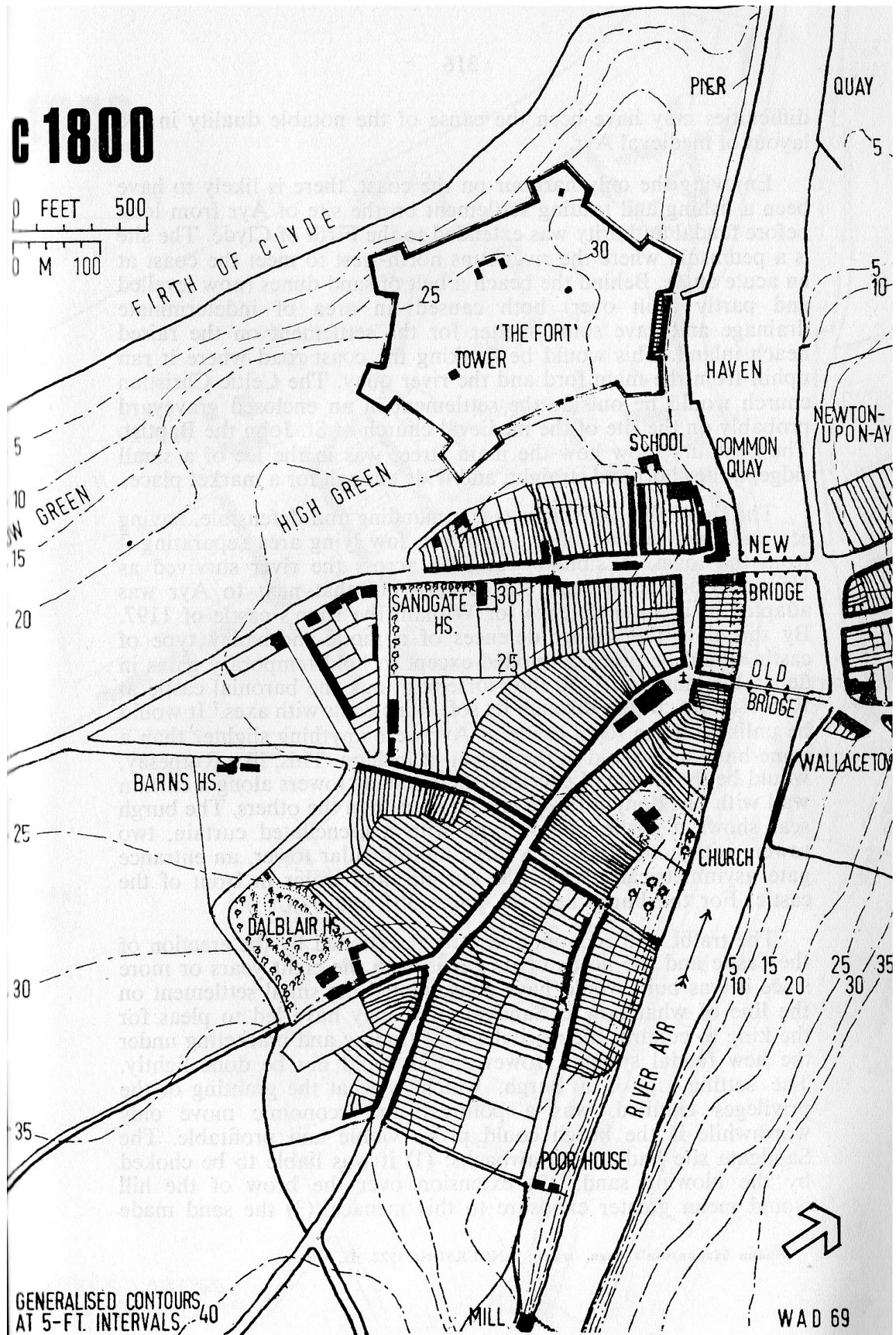
In the light of this relationship it seems reasonable to claim as relevant to Scotland the conclusions of Professor Beresford's study of the towns planned by the English at the time when Ayr was laid out as a royal burgh.

A burgh had to be a town of sufficient size to suit its function. It might be created at an existing large town; it might be expedient to expand a smaller settlement existing on a suitable site or it might be necessary to found a new town, on a virgin site. The first and the last Bersford contrasts as "organic" and "planned" but he stresses that the terms refer in no way to physical layout as there are examples of geometric layout among the first and of nongeometric layout among the last. There are obvious practical difficulties however about the second case where an existing settlement, with its own traditional institutions and pattern of landholding was amalgamated with a newly laid out comprehensive development with institutions gauged to suit the new whole. Beresford illustrates this by Olney, Buckinghamshire, as a case where a borough was added to a village with no physical separation: its founder was clearly satisfied with the site of the village but wished to extend it. The market place is at the junction of the two layouts and the village church serves the whole.[6] Such

6. BERESFORD: 1967, fig 8, p 107.

c 1800

FEET 500

M 100

FIRTH OF CLYDE

PIER

QUAY

5

5

10

'THE FORT'

TOWER

30

25

HAVEN

NEWTON-UPON-AYR

SCHOOL

COMMON QUAY

HIGH GREEN

GREEN

NEW

5

10

15

20

SANDGATE HS.

30

25

BRIDGE

OLD BRIDGE

WALLACETOWN

BARNS HS.

25

DALBLAIR HS.

30

CHURCH

5 15 25 35
10 20 30

RIVER AYR

35

POOR HOUSE

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS, 40

MILL

WAD 69

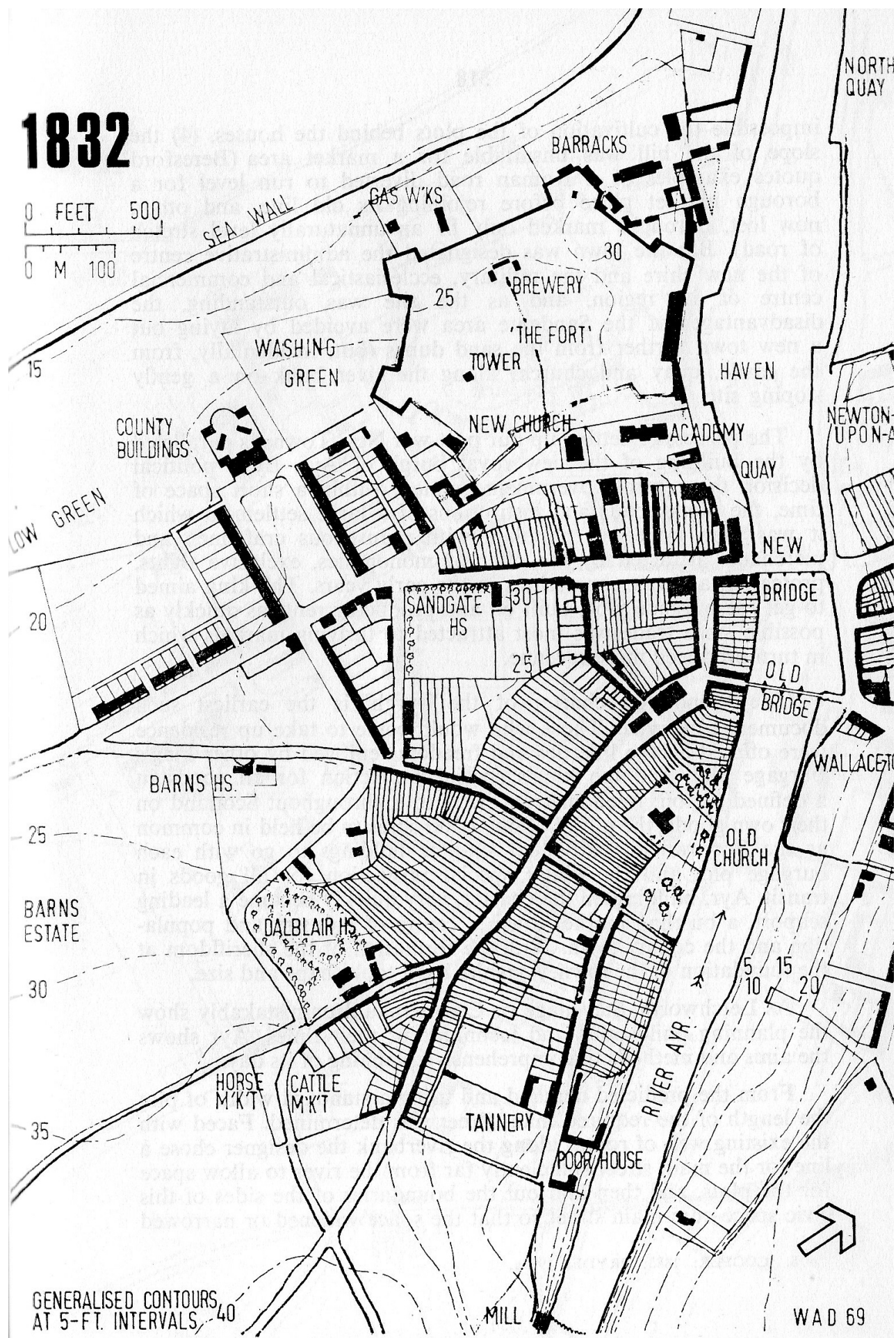difficulties may have been the cause of the notable duality in the layout of medieval Ayr.

Enjoying the only harbour on the coast, there is likely to have been a fishing and trading settlement on the site of Ayr from long before feudal authority was extended to the Firth of Clyde. The site is a peninsula where the river runs north-west to meet the coast at an acute angle. Behind the beach a belt of sand dunes (now levelled and partly built over) both caused an area of indeterminate drainage and gave some shelter for the settlement on the raised beach inland. This would be flanking the coast road where it ran uphill from the main ford and the river quay. The Celtic Christian church would be outside the settlement in an enclosed graveyard probably on the site of the medieval church of St. John the Baptist. The contours show how the main street was in the lee of a small ridge, quite short and straight, and wide enough for a market place.

The tip of the penisula was commanding and defensible, having sea and river on two sides and a wet, low lying area separating it from the town. A similar wet area across the river survived as Newton Loch until the 18th century but that next to Ayr was adapted as a water defence for William the Lion's castle of 1197. By this date the timber defences of a motte-and-bailey type of castle would be quite outmoded except to hold temporary gains in debatable lands. In 1230 the Norseman took the baronial castle at Rothesay by cutting through its soft stone walls with axes.[7] It would be unlikely if the royal castle at Ayr were anything slighter than a stone-built stronghold in the height of fashion. This, like Rothesay, would be the 'castle of enceinte', here having towers along a curtain wall with one donjon tower much larger than the others. The burgh seal shows a castle of this type with a crenellated curtain, two towers with conical roofs, a large multiangular tower, an entrance gate asymmetrically set in the curtain, and water in front of the castle. For the burgh seal see pages 301 and 376.

The traffic and economic activity occasioned by the erection of the castle and the needs of its garrison in the eight years or more since it was built would have consolidated the small settlement on the line of what now is Sandgate and may have led to pleas for the king to confirm their privileges of trading and marketing under the new feudal system. However, this could not be done lightly. The setting up of a burgh, which is what the granting of the privileges entailed, was a political and economic move only worthwhile if the burgh could prove viable and profitable. The Sandgate site had four drawbacks: (1) it was liable to be choked by the blowing sand, (2) extension over the brow of the hill would mean greater exposure to this menace, (3) the sand made

Hakon Hakonsson's Saga, trans.; ANDERSON: 1922, II, 476.

1832

0 FEET 500

0 M 100

SEA WALL

BARRACKS

GAS W'KS

30

25

BREWERY

'THE FORT'

TOWER

HAVEN

WASHING
GREEN

15

COUNTY
BUILDINGS

NEW CHURCH

ACADEMY

QUAY

NEWTON-
UPON-A

LOW GREEN

NEW

20

SANDGATE
HS

30

BRIDGE

25

OLD
BRIDGE

BARNS HS.

WALLACET

25

OLD
CHURCH

BARNS
ESTATE

DALBLAIR HS.

30

5   15
  10   20

HORSE
M'KT

CATTLE
M'KT

RIVER AYR.

35

TANNERY

POOR HOUSE

GENERALISED CONTOURS
AT 5-FT. INTERVALS 40

MILL

WAD 69

impossible the cultivation of the plots behind the houses, (4) the slope of the hill was unsuitable for a market area (Beresford quotes examples of a Roman road diverted to run level for a borough market place before rejoining its old line, and other, now lost, boroughs marked only by an unnaturally level stretch of road). But the town was designated the administrative centre of the new shire and the military, ecclesiastical and commercial centre of its region, and as the site was outstanding, the disadvantages of the Sandgate area were avoided by laying out a new town further from the sand dunes (but, incidentally, from the castle, quay and church) along the river bank on a gently sloping site.

The process of setting up our post-war New Towns is paralleled by the building of the new royal burgh of Ayr. By a political decision the central government created, within a short space of time, the plots, roads and institutions of a large settlement which it was then hoped to populate with industrious craftsmen and merchants attracted by the offer of monopolies, exclusive rights, protection and tax concessions in the early years. The king aimed to get the burgage plots built on and producing rents as quickly as possible since trade was most attracted to thriving markets which in turn produced more revenue.
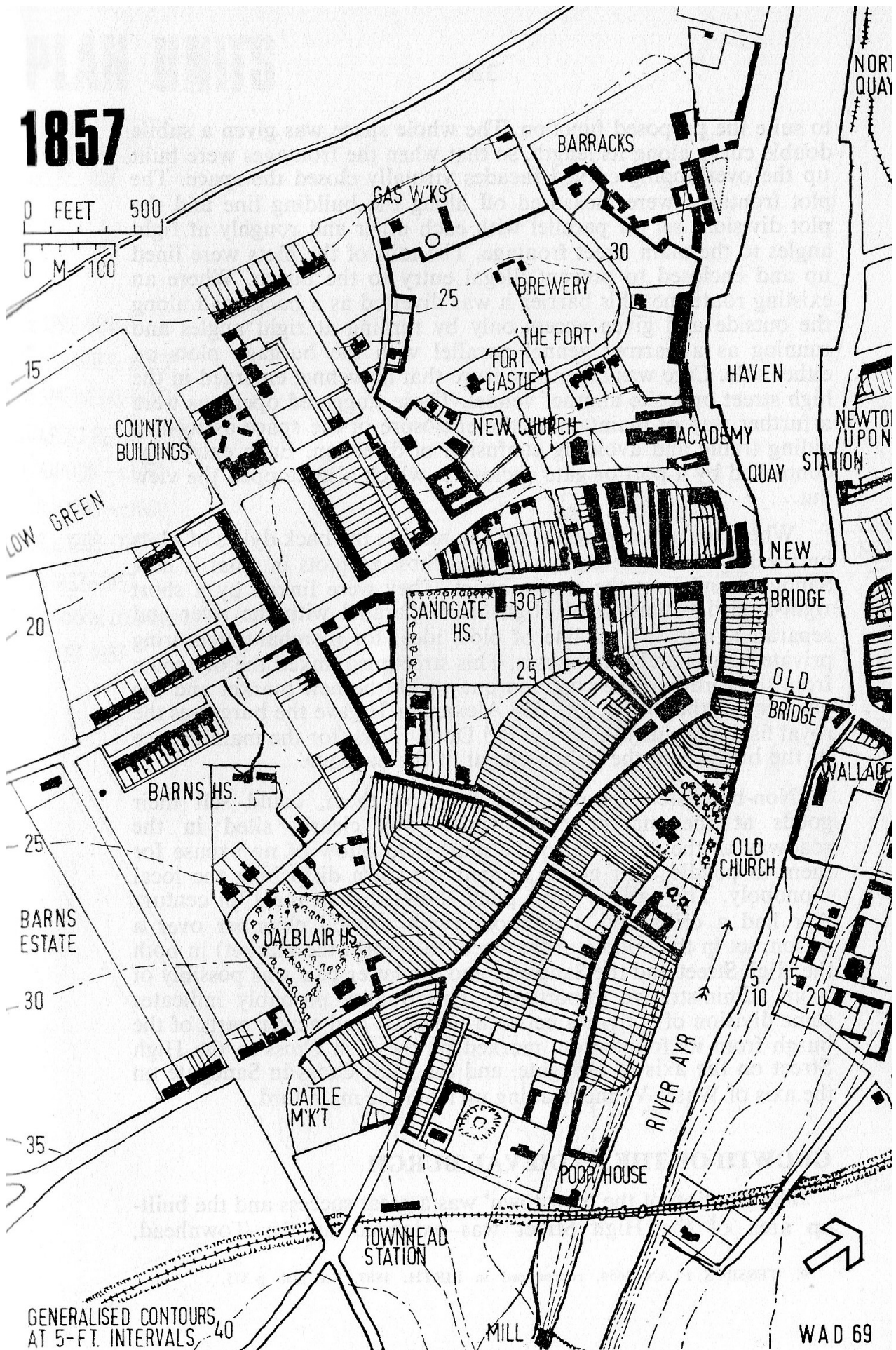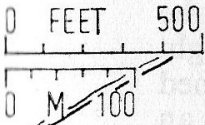
The foundation charter of the burgh[8] is the earliest such document to survive. Those who would come to take up residence were offered all the liberties and freedoms enjoyed by other king's burgage plot, and the king's special protection for all goods in a defined region, freedom from petty tolls throughout Scotland on their own goods, the gift of about 2,300 acres to be held in common as the Burrowfield, individual six-acre holdings to go with each burgage plot and the king's special protection for all goods in transit. Ayr, building on the charter, very quickly became a leading seaport, a bustling market town, a centre of industry and population and the county town. With the formation of the sheriffdom at the foundation of the town, Ayrshire itself took shape and size.

As Letchworth, Stevenage or Cumbernauld unmistakably show the planning philosophy and technique of their times, Ayr shows the aims and methods of comprehensive planning of its day.

From the predicted demand and using a standard width of plot the length of the required main street was determined. Faced with the existing web of routes along the riverbank the designer chose a line for the main street sufficiently far from the river to allow space for the plots, and then laid out the boundaries of the sides of this civic space-cum-main street so that the space widened or narrowed

8. COOPER: 1883; PRYDE: 1953a.

1857

GENERALISED CONTOURS AT 5-FT. INTERVALS

FEET 500

M 100

15

20

-25

BARNS ESTATE

-30

-35

LOW GREEN

COUNTY BUILDINGS

25

-40

BARNS HS.

DALBLAIR HS.

CATTLE M'K'T

TOWNHEAD STATION

GAS W'KS

BREWERY

'THE FORT'

FORT CASTLE

NEW CHURCH

30

25

SANDGATE HS.

30

25

BARRACKS

30

HAVEN

ACADEMY

QUAY

NEW

BRIDGE

OLD BRIDGE

OLD CHURCH

RIVER AYR

POOR HOUSE

MILL

NORTH QUAY

NEWTON UPON STATION

WALLACE

5 15
10   20

WAD 69

to suite the proposed function. The whole space was given a subtle double curve along its length, so that when the frontages were built up the overlapping curved facades virtually closed the space. The plot frontages were measured off along the building line and the plot divisions set off parallel with each other and roughly at right angles to the main street frontage. The tails of the plots were lined up and enclosed to prevent illegal entry to the burgh. Where an existing route met this barrier it was diverted as a back road along the outside and given access only by turning at right angles and running as a narrow vennel parallel with the burgage plots on either side. Care was taken to ensure that no vennel emerged in the high street opposite another vennel. These staggered openings were a further way of maintaining the enclosure of the space as well as aiding traffic and avoiding confusion of direction. Each entry was controlled by a port or gate enclosure, which also stopped the view out.

Where the space widened for the market the back dykes of plots on the landward side conflicted with those of plots in what is now Sandgate and kept the streets apart. They were linked by a short right-angled extension of High Street parallel with the river and separated from it by a line of plots ideal for merchants requiring private wharfs and warehouses. This street also linked the old route from the ford and the common quay with the new market and the entrance to the bridge. In 1236 Alexander II gave the burgesses the royal fishing rights in the Ayr and Doon rivers, for the maintenance of the bridge and the improvement of the harbour.

Non-burgesses, having paid tolls on them, could sell their goods at the market cross which was clearly sited in the roadway at the entrance to the market to allow of no excuse for them to peddle their goods around the town disturbing the local monopoly. The earliest town plan[9] shows that in the 17th century Ayr had a cross and a tolbooth (with council chamber over a prison, set in the middle of the street to control the market) in both the High Street and the Sandgate and the latter pair was possibly of more administrative importance. This duality probably indicates some division of activities between the older and newer parts of the burgh from its foundation, marked by the Fish Cross in the High Street on the axis of Briggate, and the Malt Cross in Sandgate on the axis of Water Vennel leading up from the main ford.

GROWTH OF THE MEDIEVAL BURGH

The creation of the 'new town' was a great success and the built-up area of the High Street was extended as the Townhead,

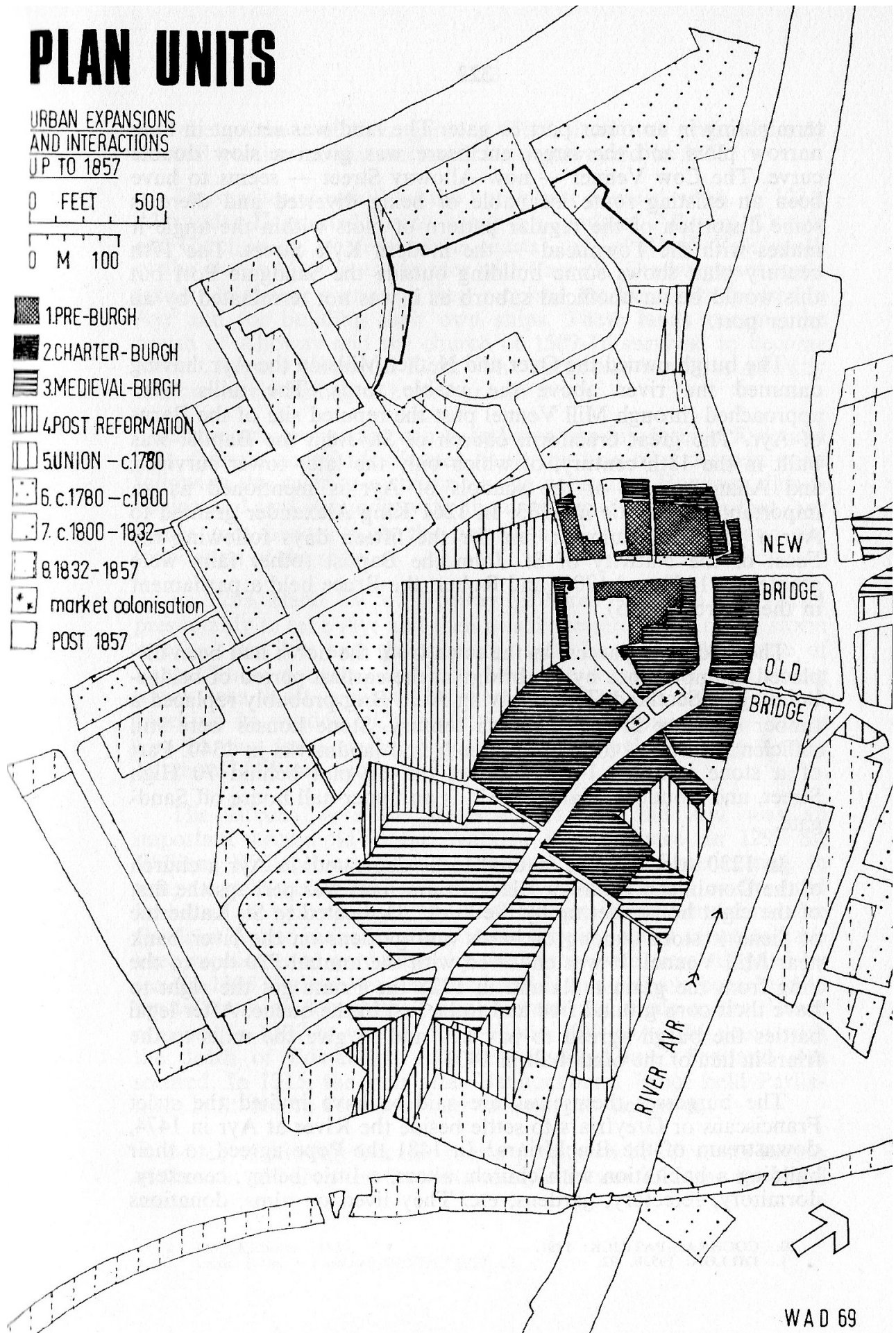9. TESSIN'S PLAN 1654, reproduced in FIRTH: 1889. See also p.375.

PLAN UNITS

0   FEET   500

0   M   100

- ▨ 1.PRE-BURGH
- ▦ 2.CHARTER-BURGH
- ▤ 3.MEDIEVAL-BURGH
- ▥ 4.POST REFORMATION
- ▢ 5.UNION – c.1780
- ⠿ 6. c.1780 – c.1800
- ▫ 7. c.1800 – 1832
- ⬚ 8.1832 – 1857
- ✦ market colonisation
- ▢ POST 1857

NEW

BRIDGE

OLD

BRIDGE

RIVER AYR

WAD 69

terminating in an outer port or gate. The land was set out in long narrow plots and the street enclosure was given a slow double curve. The Cow Vennel — now Alloway Street — seems to have been an existing route incapable of being diverted and there is some distortion of the regular pattern of plots within the angle it makes with the Townhead — the modern Kyle Street. The 17th century plan shows some building outside the Sandgate Port but this would be an unofficial suburb as it was not terminated by an outer port.

The burgh owned the Over and Nether Mills on the Ayr, having dammed the river above the usable fords. The mills were approached through Mill Vennel past the reputed site of the Barns of Ayr. The great cruciform church of St. John the Baptist was built in the 13th century, of which only the later tower survives, and Allan, master of the schools of Ayr is mentioned as an important ecclesiastic in 1233. In 1261 King Alexander granted to Ayr a yearly midsummer fair for the fifteen days following the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (other fairs were granted in 1458 and 1701) and Robert the Bruce held a parliament in the church (1315).

The ford giving access to the town from the north had been displaced in importance by the bridge at the earliest period of bridge-building in Scotland. The surviving Auld Brig probably replaced a timber structure in the late 15th century. Stone houses were still sufficiently unusual to figure in deeds and landmarks in 1340. Part of a stone house (c.1470) survives on the plot behind 70 High Street, and Loudoun Hall (c.1513) is an upper-hall house off Sandgate.

In 1230 Alexander II 'caused to be dedicated' in Ayr a church of the Dominican Friars or Black Friars. This was perhaps the first of the eight houses set up by the king.[10] Dedicated to St. Katherine of Siena it stood among orchards and gardens on the river bank near Mill Vennel. It was endowed with the annual £20 due to the king from the grain mills and in 1328 the Friars got the right to have their corn ground free and to be first in the queue. After legal battles the burgh agreed to pay £10 and to give the mills to the friars in lieu of the other half in 1406.

The burgesses themselves are said to have invited the strict Franciscans or Greyfriars to settle beside the River at Ayr in 1474, downstream of the Blackfriars.[1] In 1481 the Pope agreed to their building a habitation with church, altars, a little belfry, cemetery, dormitory, refectory, gardens, etc. They lived on alms, donations

10. COCHRAN-PATRICK: 1881.
1. DILLON: 1953b, 92.

and the produce of their gardens. Their land was probably only a small portion of that enclosed for a graveyard in 1655.

The territorial wealth of the burgh was doubled when, in 1236, Alexander II granted to the burgh his lands of Alloway, Corton and Carcluie, i.e., the rest of the coastal strip of King's Kyle south of the Burgh Muir to the border with Carrick. The burgesses could take such timber thence as they required for their own houses in Ayr and for building their own ships. These lands became the parish of Alloway and the church of 1509-16 survived to become Robert Burns's "Haunted Kirk." The burgh had a mill at Alloway and owned the fishing of both Ayr and Doon.

There are bronze age cairns and iron age hill forts in Kyle and it is thought that Mill Vennel is on the line of a Roman road following the river to a station on the peninsula. However, this is conjectural and it is only with the creation of the burgh that Ayr comes into history with the extension of royal power and the foundation of the shire.

In 1263 Haco IV of Norway gathered his fleet off Arran presumably to take Ayr and then attack western Scotland. A storm wrecked the fleet and the survivors were beaten at the battle of Largs. These dangers may have been the reason why the strong tower was built against the west gable of St. John's church blocking its window.[2] Certainly the sheriff complained he had to hire 20 men for 3 weeks to man the castle and make up for the burgesses' failure to come to its defence.[3]

The Bruces were the Earls of Carrick and Ayr was an important stronghold in the Wars of Independence. In 1297 Sir William Wallace surprised a superior English force resting in temporary barracks in the Barns of Ayr which he set on fire, and he killed all who emerged. In 1298 Robert Bruce burned out the Castle at Ayr to make it useless to the English, but it seems to have been repaired and garrisoned by the enemy who were supplied by sea. In 1305 Wallace was captured and is said to have been held in the tolbooth at Ayr. After being crowned and made to flee, Bruce returned in 1307 to victory at Loudoun Hill in Ayrshire and with the death of Edward I, and then Bannockburn, Scotland was secured. In 1315, the year after Bannockburn, Bruce held Parliament in St. John's Church at Ayr to settle the succession.

Much of Ayrshire became crown property when first the Bruces of Carrick and then the Stewarts of Kyle-Stewart became the royal house.

2. MACKENZIE: 1935.
3. Exch. Rolls, i, 6 quoted PRYDE: 1958, 12.

Irvine, Prestwick and Newton were dependent on the Stewarts but Irvine alone became a king's burgh on the accession of that family to the crown.

In the later middle ages population and production increased and the burghs had to fight to protect their monopolies. A new type of baronial burgh began to be created in the 15th century with weekly market, annual fair and crafts designed to meet strictly local demands for goods and services. Five such were set up in Ayrshire within forty years: Newmilns (1490/1): Cumnock (1509): Mauchline (1510): Maybole (1516) and Kilmaurs (1527). At the Reformation there were the two royal burghs and seven burghs in barony — three of them in Cuninghame (Irvine, Newmilns and Kilmaurs), five in Kyle (Ayr, Prestwick, Newton, Cumnock and Mauchline) and only one in Carrick (Maybole).

Ayr's relations with Irvine were inevitably close. Ayr never enjoyed a monopoly of trade in the shire but its distant check points for tolls were early regarded as a basis for one. In 1322 Irvine was relieved of paying toll in Ayr and by 1372 they had divided the shire between them. This was not changed when Irvine became a king's burgh and it in effect had as its trading precinct Cuninghame, and Ayr had Kyle and Carrick.

By the 16th century Ayr was the leading western seaport. It traded regularly with France and Ireland, sent fishing expeditions to the western Isles, exported wool, woolfells, woollen cloth, skins, hides and cured fish, and it imported salt, iron, flour and wine. Already illegal marketing or 'unfree trade' was infringing its rights and in 1538 Ayr sent "ane bill to the king's grace anent chapmen at landward kirkis."[4] The tax accounts for the royal burghs show that in the 16th century of the 42 burgh assessed Ayr ranked tenth—just ahead of Glasgow and Dumfries and well in front of all other western burghs. Irvine ranked sixteenth along with Arbroath for which there is a firm estimate that it had a population of 1,000 people in 1517. From other evidence these would require about 200 houses and on this basis the inhabitants of pre-Reformation Ayr probably numbered between 1,500 and 2,000 with 300-400 houses.[5] This may be compared with a total Scottish population in 1500 of about 750,000 with Edinburgh the largest town having perhaps 20,000 inhabitants.

REFORMATION TO THE UNION (1560-1707)

Henry VIII had encouraged his nephew, James V, to follow his example and to dissolve the monasteries of Scotland, but he supported the church and preferred the auld alliance with catholic

4. PRYDE: 1937, 78.
5. PRYDE: 1958, 24.

France to friendship with the auld enemy. It was only during the minority of Mary Queen of Scots that John Knox returned, and the Parliament by 1560 abolished the authority of the Pope.

Ayrshire held strong Protestant sympathies and the Reformation was merely the culmination of a long struggle. There were, however, notable changes in the life of the town with the abolition of the old order. The monasteries of the Greyfriars and the Blackfriars were demolished and St John's Church was cleared of altars and images. The burgh took over the mills on the Ayr and co-operated with the kirk session in the spheres of religion, education and public morals. Sunday markets and holiday-making were forbidden. A hospital was found necessary and much new work went to lawyers as the friars had looked after the sick and needy and been custodians of legal documents. The Greyfriars left as a body but the Blackfriars who remained were given pensions. Poor relief now became a secular duty and Parliament authorised a system of local taxation and registration of origin. The hospital built in Mill Vennel in 1604 with stone from the Greyfriars' church was for the indigent poor.

The Over Tolbooth in the Sandgate was rebuilt in 1574-75 and in 1614-15 a belfry was erected on it. A steeple was projected for it in 1697 but was not completed until 1726.

The burghal monopoly of milling became extremely valuable in the early 17th Century and also the traditional customs were augmented by a Crown grant in 1588 of a special impost for 19 years on all animals, wool, skins, cloth and hides passing over the bridge to market and on every ship entering the harbour. This impost was to maintain and repair the harbour and bridge.

Brereton, in 1634 described the town as " a dainty pleasant-seated town, most inhabiting in which are merchants trading into and bred in France.[6] In the early 17th century Ayr, had a small fleet exporting wool, hides, skins, plaiding, salted herring and salmon, panned salt and coal from Ayrshire, Arran and Kintyre to many parts of Britain and Europe. They brought back wine and rock salt from France; cloth, spices, silk, wax and fruit from the low Countries; timber and iron from Norway; iron, canvas, rope and tar from Danzig and timber, cattle and grain from Ireland. Foreign traders also came to the markets of Ayr, which was described:

> " . . . .for number of goode schippis and skilfull and able marinaris it is the best in this your maiesties kingdome, Leyth and Dundie onlie except."[7]

6. BROWN: 1891, 156.
7. Quoted McGHEE: 1953, 197; MURRAY: 1932, ii, 330.

The trade with Ireland was profitable in the 16th century, but was regulated and often forbidden in the 17th century. The Civil War was further reason for the decline of Ayr, for attacks of Royalist privateers, the absence of many townsmen, and finally the invasion by Cromwell's troops interrupted the flow of trade. In 1638, Ayr had still twenty good ships, but she had only six by 1645, and in 1656, Thomas Tucker, an English excise officer, reported Ayr had the only three ships on that coast and two small barques for the coasting trade in coals. The harbour was becoming clogged and filled up with sand.[8]

Ayr remained the chief herring curing station in the west of Scotland, but among the western burghs, Glasgow far outpaced Ayr, moving from tenth place on the tax roll in 1564 to second in 1670, while Ayr declined from ninth to twelfth place. Its population could not have been much above 2,000.

In 1670, Dundee appealed to the Convention of Royal Burghs for financial assistance but Ayr refused help as its plight was just as serious. A summary headed "Reason for Decaying Trade" notes a lack of traffic with Barbados, France and Norway and

"The traid with Ireland was sometyme profitable to us quhilk is now altogether debarred.

"Our harbour is totally ruined and decayed quhilk we are not abill in the least to maintain. Our bridge daylie failing by great spaits, and yce coming down in the winter tyme on it."[9]

Between 1652 and 1654 Cromwell's troops built a great citadel on the peninsula west of the town which enclosed about 12 acres within an hexagonal ra mpart of earth revetted with stonework.[10] A moat was dug from the river to the sea cutting off the point, access to which was by drawbridge. The works obliterated any remains of the old Castle of Ayr and enclosed the church of St John and its graveyard. The Church tower made a superb observation post and the church was put to military use. The citadel was constructed to hold a large body of troops both to command the town and harbour of Ayr, and to overawe the south west of Scotland; and it continued to be garrisoned until the end of the Protectorate, but was dismantled at the Restoration. In 1663 the area became a possible threat to the burgh's prosperity. Each of the citadels which Cromwell erected at Ayr, Leith and Inverness was formally created a burgh, perhaps because no other plan for using the available materials could be devised. The Earl of Eglinton was granted the

8. MARWICK: 1881, 27.
9. Minute of Ayr Town Council, 26th July, 1670; printed McGHEE: 1953, 200.
10. FIRTH: 1899, xlvii.

citadel as compensation for his losses and it assumed the name of Montgomeriestoun after his family. Fortunately for Ayr it never prospered.

The plan of the citadel by Cromwell's engineer, Hans Ewald Tessin, also includes the first plan of Ayr, showing its separation from the citadel and its tight medieval layout with barriers at all entrances, and the church built to replace St John's. There are two versions of the plan, one annotated in English[1] and one in Low German.[2]

Deprived of their parish church the congregation of St John's met in the Grammar School until a new church was completed in 1655 in the area of the former Greyfriars monastery. The site seems to have been enlarged by blocking the back road and taking in the ends of plots running back from the High Street to form a spacious graveyard. The donation of £600 from the Commonwealth no doubt helped. The graveyard was originally reached by a close from the High Street, but in 1670 this entrance was blocked when a vennel to the west, running down to the ford, which had been taken into the site, was used as the main entry. This church is now known as the Auld Kirk and a gateway on the vennel, dated 1656, is known as Kirk Port.

Slezer's views of 1693 show Ayr across the river from above and below the Auld Brig. The one shows the new church and the way the gardens along the river gave way to buildings rising sheer from the water near the bridge. The other shows the private wharfs and inlets downstream of the bridge, the public quay and the abrupt western edge of the town, where the east side of the citadel ramparts were tumbled down, but the north and west sides still stood, and the church of St John still complete after the military had departed. It was used as a church again from 1687 to 1689 but in 1726 it was sold for its materials and the stone used for the tolbooth steeple.

The great lasting benefit from the erection of the citadel (later called Oliver's Fort) was that it guarded both the church and the town from the menace of blowing sand.

In 1662 the burgh got an Act of Parliament to build a covered meal market in the middle of the High Street next to the tolbooth and Fish Cross. The Malt Cross was replaced by one on the pattern of the market cross at Edinburgh.

1. Among the **Clarke Papers** in Worcester College Library; facsimile: FIRTH: 1899, xlvii.
2. In Kungsarkivet, Stockholm, photographic copies in Glasgow University Library, Register House, Edinburgh (ref. R.H.P. 1095), and in Ayr Carnegie Library.

In 1692 a survey of the gloomy state of Scottish trade reported of Ayr that:

> "There are about one hundred and forty waste houses, besides severall ruinous houses, and particularly two great tenements on each side of the mercat cross bouth ruinous, one whereof are on each side of the street."[3]

Defoe on tour noted:

> "It is now like an old beauty, and shows the ruins of a good face, but is still decaying every day; and from having been the fifth best town in Scotland, as the townsmen say, it is now the fifth worst; which is owing to the decay of its trade. So true it is that commerce is the life of cities, of nations, and even of kingdoms. What was the reason of the decay of trade in this place is not easy to determine, the people themselves being either unwilling or unable to tell."

Captain Mackie wrote:

> "From Kilmarnock in eight miles I crossed the river of Air over a fair stone bridge, to the town of Air which looks like a fine beauty in decay. Here are the ruins of an ancient trading town; the market place and two streets show what it hath been, but everything is now out of order."[4]

The decline was due in part to the further growth of "unfree trade" within the county.

At the Reformation, Ayr and Irvine were the largest of the twelve burghs in Ayrshire. The erection of a further group of burghs up to the Union of the Parliaments in 1707 was in part due to economic needs of townships, village communities and country dwellers, but also due to the emergence and ambition of a new set of noble landowners. Sometimes the new burghs were ill advised and proved stillborn. These are called "parchment burghs" after their only reality.

"Jealousy between the two royal burghs was much less prominent in the 17th century than the common fear of, and hostility to, unfree trade, whether in burghs of barony or landward markets. To this cause they unfailingly attributed the decay of their own prosperity, but the evidence points to other factors. The preference for cumulative borrowing (at high rates of interest) over taxation, a common feature of Scots burgh finance, was particularly evident at Ayr, and the local hazard of the western harbours — their tendency to be clogged by blown sand — played a part in arresting the progress, or even promoting the decline of

3. MARWICK: 1880, (1677-1711) 588.
4. Quoted McGHEE: 1953, 201.

both Ayr and Irvine. In relation to the other Scottish burghs they lost some ground between the Reformation and the Union. Ayr stood 9th (and above Glasgow) in the stent roll of 1564 and 8th in that of 1597, while Irvine was 17th on both occasions, but by 1649 they were 13th and 20th places respectively. It is true that Charles II's reign brought some recovery — for Ayr to 12th place in 1670 and 10th in 1683, and for Irvine to 18th in both years; but the next revison of the roll in 1705 reduced Ayr to 14th and Irvine to 20th. On the basis of this classification, it seems possible to guess the population of Ayr as about 2,000 in the 17th century with Irvine perhaps 1,500, Kilmarnock around 1,000 and all others well below that figure. By modern standards most of the Ayrshire burghs were miniscule townships with only a few hundred inhabitants."[5]

At all events in the eyes of the burgesses of Ayr and Irvine both unfree burghs and unfree markets were too numerous and too prosperous. Urged by the Convention of Royal Burghs, Ayr took punitive action against Maybole, its biggest rival, in 1599 and in 1600. After the Restoration, the threat became greater; not only were the nobles and barons seeking and obtaining statutory authority for private markets and fairs, but they also persuaded Parliament in 1672 to modify in favour of the burghs of barony, the rules strictly forbidding or limiting exports, imports and retail sales. The royal burghs won back most of the lost ground through further statutes of 1681 and 1690, but the problem of overconcentration of commercial rights, and the consequent illegal trade, remained unsolved. Returns made in 1692 in response to a Convention inquiry show that Irvine felt cause to complain of the hurt to its interests by reason of the rivalry of seven unfree burghs or markets within its precinct and Ayr of about ten.

A proposed way out of the impasse was that of the Act of 1693 "for the Communication of Trade" offering the rights of foreign trade to unfree towns and burghs if they agreed to pay a share towards the royal burghs' quota of the national "cess" or land tax. This ambitious and comprehensive plan, as it turned out, was quite unrealistic.

"Burghs of Regality", a variant style for burghs of barony came into use in the 16th century and more in the 17th century. Four cases exist in Ayrshire, the first of which was the Citadel of Ayr or Montgomeriestoun (1663) which was only a parchment burgh.

At the beginning of the 18th century, there were seventeen functioning burghs in Ayrshire out of twenty-two projected and granted a charter:

5. PRYDE: 1958, 36-7.

Royal Burghs: Ayr, Irvine.

Burghs of Regality: Newmilns, Cumnock, Mauchline.

Burghs of Barony: Prestwick, Newton, Maybole, Kilmaurs, Saltcoats, Ballantrae, Kilmarnock, Largs, Dalmellington, Kilbirnie, Girvan, Tarbolton.

"Parchment Burghs": Auchinleck, Fairlie, Dundonald, Riccarton, Montgomeriestoun.[6]

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The economic depression continued into the new century. In 1701 a third fair was instituted probably to increase the burgh revenues. In 1707 the Act of Union, the terms of which were opposed by the townspeople, made Scotland part of the same economic system with England. The first fruits were an influx of excise-men who put down the profitable local smuggling, but the opening of trade with America and other former English preserves led to a gradual increase in prosperity throughout the century.

The first harbour light was put "on the south stob, for directing the fishers in outgoing and returning during the fishing" in 1712. Part of the quay was rebuilt, in a firm manner with large stones in 1713. However, as late as 1724, Ayr had to appeal, as Dundee had done, for help from the Convention of Royal Burghs, whose commissioners reported that they

> ".... find the trade of the said burgh very low and much decayed, and that there is only two barques, one of about thirty tons, and the other about twenty belonging thereto. "That many of the houses on the fore street of the said burgh are ruinous and waste, and more back houses fallen, become wasted or converted to yeards. That the key and harbour of the said burgh of Ayr are very much out of order, and in an insufficient condition occasioned mostly by the great decay of their north and south dykes of their river."[7]

Mention is also made of the imminent collapse of the Tolbooth, and the need to "calsey the bridge" anew. The scrutiny of the town's accounts indicated that there was no adequate balance for the upkeep of harbour, bridge or other public works. Ayr was granted £40 for the repair of the harbour.

Between 1724 and 1730 determined efforts were made to strengthen both the north and south quays, and systematic dredging

6. ibid., 39.
7. Quoted McGHEE: 1953, 201.

began in 1730, but the modern development of the port dated from 1772 when an act of Parliament was obtained granting powers to improve the harbour, to deal with increasing trade and the accommodation of more shipping. The money difficulty was tackled by empowering the council to borrow money to the extent of £15,000.

The mention of backhouses in the report and the evidence from Slezer's view of 1693 show that by the 18th century, building had spread along the burgage plots from the principal houses on the frontage. Kept within the space of the medieval layout by valuable rights attached to the plots and by the need for security from raiders or the plague, the burgh had built upwards and made use of the former garden plots behind the houses. To the subtle plan forms of the original layout had been added the dimension of height from the tall tenement frontages. A striking characteristic of the town then as now is the way buildings, from the quay to beyond the Auld Brig, rise sheer from the water and the bridge runs into a cleft in this wall.

The burgage plots were in private ownership and the council controlled the public spaces of the town held in common ownership, so that public buildings had to be built outside the back dykes (e.g. the hospital in Mill Vennel) or become free standing buildings in the street space. A conduit, the New or Over Tolbooth, and the Malt Cross were in a line down the Sandgate and from the foot of the Auld Brig one met in turn the Fish Cross, the Old or Laigh Tolbooth and the Meat Market when going up the High Street.

The Over Tolbooth was where the town's business was conducted and the gaol was below. Its new steeple, the town's landmark, was completed in 1726 with stone from the demolition of St John's Church in the deserted citadel. There was a clock and bell turret, but in 1731 another clock and bell were fixed in the "auld tower" at the corner of Mill Vennel and High Street, for the inhabitants in Townhead, "as they could not hear the town's bell"[8] Bought by the burgh in 1673 this tower was later known as the Wallace Tower.

The marketing area of Ayr stretched from the Malt Cross at the Sandgate, along the High Street to the Tolbooth, and from there to the cattle market at the Fauldbacks between the Townhead and Cow Vennel (near the present Burns Statue Square). At different points in this market space were the Malt Market, the Butter Market, the Cattle Market, the Sheep Market and the Horse Market. The Fish Cross was the busiest area of the market, where

8. Ayr Town Council Minute, 23rd April, 1731; quoted CLOUSTON: 1950, 213.

proclamations were read, and the cross was a simple pillar on a stepped base with a weighing beam attached to the shaft.

The population of the parish of Ayr in 1745 was estimated as about 2,000 but by 1791 it had risen to 4,000 (i.e., 3,000 in the town, the rest in the landward area). It was only in the late 18th century that Ayr expanded outside the area of the medieval town. General Roy's map and Walker's plan show the town at mid century with no building outside its tight medieval layout.

General Roy's Military Survey (1752-4) shows the short straight main street of Newton contrasted with the elaborate curved layout of Ayr, about 15 times the area. The Sandgate, the High Street and its continuation the Townhead (now Kyle Street) are continuously built-up while there are a few scattered buildings along Carrick Vennel and Cow Vennel (now Alloway Street). The grammar school is shown at the end of School Vennel (now Academy Street) and the Citadel is clearly drawn — labelled Oliver's Fort — with the tower of St. John's Church, the buildings later used as a brewery, and the entrance arch carefully marked. The road runs south from the Sandgate parallel with the coast at the junction of the sand dunes and the cultivated land. Newton Loch is shown extending from the north bank of the river. 'Craigy House' (built 1730) is shown near the north bank some way above the town.

The Plan of the Town and Citadell of Air, surveyed by T. Walker (c.1754) was probably made in connection with Roy's survey, as the military carefully mapped the courses of rivers, roads, and the boundaries of cultivation but normally put in by eye the topographical detail of settlements using existing plans. Tessin's manuscript plan was presumably inaccessible and Walker may have been employed to survey the town.

It is a shadowed block plan with the boundary of the town and the free standing public building clearly drawn. There is a port or barrier across the Townhead and another across the Sandgate excluding Kirk Vennel (now St. John's Street). Both these ports together with one across the High Street excluding Carrick Vennel, appear on Tessin's plan of a hundred years before and may be better evidence for the positions of the medieval ports than the guesses of 19th century antiquaries marked now on the Ordnance Survey's plans, as they mark a tighter, more defensible circuit, with routes converging outside the gates.

The street leading into the High Street from the bridge broadens out markedly once beyond the buildings lining the river — this must have been an improvement since Tessin's survey but disappeared by 1818. The grammar school is drawn and the shad-

ing of slopes and ditches around the citadel shows clearly how it was dismantled.

The bastions facing the sea and the river were retained, presumably for use as a defensive battery if required, but the bastions facing the town and up to the central spur on the south were robbed of their stone revetment and the sand tumbled into the moat on these two sides. This would make the fortifications untenable against land forces. Where the steep hill of Fort Street is now must have been land sloping down to a deep wide fosse or moat (shown in section on Tessin's plan). The late 18th century engraving,[9] showing the fort archway and the tower of St. John's church, has a viewpoint lower than the arch but today the land slopes from Fort Street **down** to the arch which is itself buried to within three feet of its springing.

From 1725 onwards the levelling and reclamation of the sand dunes was carried out by Colonel Cathcart and Captain Nugent who had a long lease of the 'pasturage of the hills' and were allowed the refuse from the streets to consolidate the sand. There are no signs of progress near the town on Walker's plan (c.1754), but on Armstrong's plan (1775) there is an enclosed washing green shown to the south of the 'Fort'. A 'low green' formed along the shore is a public open space today but the 'high green' was the site of Ayr's 'West End' development from 1806 onwards. The infilling of the citadel moat must have been completed for the erection of the Academy about 1800 and on Wood's plan of 1818 the present Fort Street is labelled Academy Street.

In 1747 street lamps were provided in the town centre and in 1759 a poor house was established in Mill Vennel, the shell of which survives as an abattoir.

In the common market created by the Union, Scotland was at a disadvantage from being smaller and less developed than England. No immediate change in the pace of agricultural, commercial or industrial progress resulted, but the political framework existed for potential growth.

The slow agrarian revolution led to new methods of production, new crops and improved livestock breeding becoming widespread in the lowlands, but necessitated the creation of better means of transport and marketing. Technological advances, e.g. in ploughs and threshing machines, and the more economic application of animal, wind and water power raised the returns on investments and provided an increase in output. In turn, an increasing population, represented in the evolution of new villages and larger

9. Reproduced DUNLOP: 1953, Pl. III.

towns and cities, stimulated local price-levels and encouraged further agricultural improvement. An increased food supply allowed for greater specialisation in industrial activities since a growing population, capable of expanding demand for agricultural and industrial output and providing a labour force for entrepreneurs to recruit, would not have been available without the initial basis of greater agricultural production and productivity.

The Ayrshire breed of cattle was produced by the improving landowners in the county and Ayr began to thrive again on the marketing and shipping of produce to England. Brewing and tanning were carried on in Mill Vennel and there was a slaughterhouse built in the same street in 1747, and in 1749 an application to build a linen factory there. Ayr and district had an extensive domestic industry in weaving woollen cloth and linens with about 200 looms in 1776 plus about 60 for silk and 15 for stockings. Those in the town were chiefly employed in weaving plaidings and other coarse woollen goods for the weekly and annual markets. Attempts to start a sugar refining and a cotton industry based on imports from America did not flourish, but there was a small industry producing salt from sea water by boiling, using local coal for fuel. The salt was used mostly for preserving meat from the animals slaughtered each autumn.

The Ayrshire coalfield has the second most extensive deposits in Scotland and underlies most of the northern half of the county including the town of Ayr. It was exploited in the town in the 17th century by shafts near the river from which coal could be loaded into colliers without expensive transporting. However, flooding limited the depth of workings and it was not until the later 18th century that a large demand, coupled with waggon ways for transport and steam engines for pumping, allowed large scale working of the coal. Even then reliance on water transport and the cost of waggon ways limited the economic distance that a shaft could be from the coal quays at the harbour. In **Armstrong's Map of Ayrshire** (1775) the 'engine' and 'coal pitts' near the sea in Newton upon Ayr are the only ones marked on Ayr Bay.

There is much more detail on the **Plan of Ayr** inset in Armstrong's Map of Ayrshire (1775). Two groups of shafts with an engine house are shown near the sea in the north of Newton (spelt New Town) with a 'coal waggon way' running through the dunes to the Harbour; a pit and engine are shown to the north-east of Newton linked to another pit further south by a waggon way turning down to the river opposite the Old Kirk, and running along to the Old Brig. A lime kiln is linked to the east side of this waggon way presumably for a coal supply. Also on the Newton side of the river there is a ropery near the North Quay, the shallow

inlet of Newton Loch is labelled 'Newton Loch proposed for a Dry Dock', and there is a mill on the stream running down the middle of Main Street where the stream meets the Ayr. In Ayr itself a brewery is marked on the river side of Mill Vennel, another in the fort and a 'sugarhouse' on the point north-west of the fort.

The plan shows most strikingly the quadruple growth of the area of building north of the river before much new building took place in Ayr. Newton Main Street was extended to twice its length and the land immediately to the east of Newton was developed by the Wallaces of Craigie from 1760, as housing for the workmen of this new industrial suburb of Wallacetown free from guild regulations of the royal burgh.

In Ayr itself Mill Vennel had been continuously built up on both sides except for the west side of the part running into the High Street. This involved halving the old plots running north from High Street and redistributing the ground in wider plots along Mill Vennel, producing a new frontage rhythm and an unconformity at the junction of the new and old plot systems. Cowgate and Carrick Vennel are built up and the upper part of Sandgate also except for the south half of the east side where there is the large garden of Sandgate House. The line of Newmarket Street is marked by a tree-lined walk but with its characteristic dog-leg shape due to the collision of the 13th century plot boundaries of Sandgate and High Street. The route was instigated c.1767 to give access to the new butter market.

The 18th century improvements in agriculture and the reclamation of marginal land were the background to the life of Robert Burns (1759-96) the poet who was born in Alloway in a 'clay biggin' erected by his father, attended school in Ayr and used the town as the setting for some of his poems. The Tam o' Shanter Inn survives as the thatched museum in High Street and the erection of a new bridge, which occasioned the poem on The Brigs of Ayr, was instigated by his friend and patron John Ballantyne, to whom the poem is dedicated.

In 1777 the port controlling the Newton end of the Old Bridge was removed but the narrowness of the

" . . . . narrow foot-path of a street,
     Where two wheel barrows tremble when they meet"

was proving inconvenient for coaches and the burgh obtained an Act of Parliament for building a new bridge and cutting a new 40 foot approach street. The new bridge (1785-88) joined Sandgate to the foot of Newton's Main Street and was of five arches built from the designs of Robert Adam by a local mason. New Bridge

Street was flanked by regular three storey buildings where it cut through on the line of Water Vennel; the quay was extended as far as the new bridge.

The bridge was probably the first piece of classical architecture in Ayr, and Adam made a design for recasing the tolbooth steeple in a similar style but this was not proceeded with. A fantastic scheme for roads passing beneath the new bridge and regular houses flanking each side of the river as far as the harbour mouth seems to be a playful pipe-dream. It is metropolitan in character while Ayr was still a small country town. Lord Cockburn described the town as filled with the families of gentlemen from the county, from India and from the public service, and the minister of Ayr in the Old Statistical Account of 1791 writes, " Upon the whole, the inhabitants have been increasing sensibly, though not rapidly, for more than 30 years past." At that time about 4000 lived in Ayr, and in Newton some 1,500 and in Wallacetown another 1,000, and further to the east the mining community of Whitletts had 300 by the year 1800. In 1755 the population of the Parishes north of the river had been but a third of that of Ayr's, but with an influx of workers for the weaving and mining, the populations were about equal in 1801, and by the end of the 19th century there were to be twice as many north as south of the river.

After the Union and more so after mid century, economic and social changes brought in their wake a process, at first gradual but becoming ever more rapid, of redistribution of population and wealth. Whilst some towns languished, others grew apace and entirely new communities came into being. In Ayrshire the county town lost ground to its old rival and eventually to a new rival as well. At the Union Ayr stood 14th on the burghs' tax roll, and Irvine 20th. The next revision in 1718 brought Irvine up to 11th place and put Ayr back to 15th. Both towns were slightly down graded in 1730 when Irvine stood 12th and Ayr 17th.

The inference that Irvine as the port of a hinterland that was, for trading purposes, superior to that of Ayr, had overtaken and passed the county town, is borne out by Dr Webster's unofficial census, compiled in 1755. The parish of Ayr had 2,964 inhabitants, and that of Irvine 4,025; both had been out-stripped by the parish that was most favoured by the new industrial era, Kilmarnock with a population of 4,403. By the early 1790's Ayr, with 4,647 within the parish (including 3,871 in the burgh), had again displaced Irvine (4,500 in the Parish) though Kilmarnock retained a substantial lead over both, for the town alone held 5,670 people. In 1801 the first official census returned the population of the three parishes as 8,079 for Kilmarnock, 5,492 for Ayr and 4,584 for Irvine.

For Ayr however the most distressing development of the 18th century concerns, not its failure to retain first place in sheer size but its total lack of a sound financial policy. In common with most of the royal burghs of the time Ayr was stubbornly unwilling to tax its prosperous enough citizens for its current needs, and preferred to slide into insolvency through injudicious borrowing. To meet the mounting burden of the public debts the burgh parted with the valuable patrimony that it had held for over 5 centuries: in 1757 it sold the barony of Alloway for a mere £7,190 sterling.

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Under the heading of 'Improvements' the minister of Ayr wrote of his town for the New Statistical Account, in his article dated July, 1837.

" Few places have undergone a greater change for the better than this town has done, within the last twenty years. During that time, it has made greater advances in architectural and other improvements, than it had done during a century before. As a proof of this, we shall extract the following account of the state in which the town was found by the writer of it, at the time the work was published in which it is contained; and from personal recollections we do not think it exaggerated. We quote from the Edinburgh encyclopaedia. 'The streets are ill-lighted, wretchedly paved, and very indifferently cleaned. Side pavements of flag-stones for foot passengers might be mentioned among the desiderata that might be supplied. The prison, like the old tolbooth of Edinburgh, interlines and almost blocks up one of the principal streets. Security is the only consideration, which seems to have gained the attention of those who planned this public nuisance, which is not so much the terror of evil doers, as the horror of those who do well.' Now we have only to contrast with this short but very graphic description, the condition in which the town now appears to strangers, in order to be impressed with the great improvement that has since been effected. The nuisance complained of — the old gaol — has been entirely removed; by which means a fine spacious street has been laid open from Wellington Square to the new bridge, improving progressively, by new edifices on both sides, of which the new spire with the spacious and elegant buildings attached to it, and the Ayrshire Bank, may be mentioned as specimens. The principal streets are well lighted with gas, causewayed, and kept tolerably clean, and side pavements are

generally formed from one end of the town to the other. The square already named on the ' west end ', whether we consider the neatness of the houses, or the fineness of the situation, with its beautiful sea view, can hardly be surpassed in any other provincial town in Scotland."

At the end of the 18th century and in the early 19th century the town began his change in its character as it became a social centre and watering place for the Scottish gentry, with sea bathing golf and the Races as its attractions. Armstrong's plan of 1775 shows the town ending abruptly at the Town Moor on the south. Between that date and 1806 the land next to the town had been enclosed as the small estate of Dalblair House, fronting Cow Vennel; and the large estate of Barns with its house fronting a track from the foot of Carrick Vennel to the main road from Sandgate southward, now Racecourse Road. This area was all to the east of this road and Barns Street was laid out from the foot of Carrick Vennel to join the road at right angles and the restricted area for gardens on the north side caused that side to be built up as a speculative development — the first terrace in Ayr. The south side had space for the long gardens of upper-class houses and only the corner plot next to the road was early built upon before the track past Barns House from Carrick Vennel to Racecourse Road was stopped up.

In 1806 Provost Shaw took a lease of part of the ground on the west side of the road and built the house which after 1814 was known as Wellington House on the south side of a continuation of Barns Street across the road. He leased a park to the south of his house from Lord Alloway. At some time after 1806 it was decided to form a square rather than build-up the north side of this continuation of Barns Street. Apart from Wellington House the south side of the square has a uniform eaves cornice and ridge height which must have been dictated by the landlord. A statue in the square commemorates General Smith-Neill, a soldier who was born there in 1810, so the layout of the square dates from 1806-10. Earlier detached traditional houses built along the road form the east side but the north side was only slowly built up and is incomplete on Wood's plan of 1818. The west side has the facade and portico of the County Buildings designed by a Mr Wallace, architect, about 1817, and completed with a prison, 1823. The square became Wellington Square presumably when that popular hero was made a Duke in 1814. Lord Alloway intended a square bearing his own name on his land to the south of Wellington Square[10] but only three uniform terraces were

10. A drawing by John Robertson, architect, dated 5th June, 1799, now in the Register House, Edinburgh (ref. R.H.P. 2555), probably was made as a design for the four elevations of this square. It is titled 'Architectural plan and elevation of the square intended to be built at Ayr'. The blocks of buildings shown, stretch 240 ft. on the E and W sides, and 172 ft. on the N and S sides.

built on Provost Shaw's Park, facing onto the road which for this distance was named Alloway Place. The engraving c.1820 reproduced on Milliken's plan of 1832 shows the first terrace from across the Town Moor, with the new 'west end' and County Buildings on the left, the old Tolbooth steeple and the old Wallace Tower on the right.

Around 1800 the deep moat of the citadel was filled in and Academy Street (renamed Fort Street by 1832) laid out along the end of the plots of houses facing onto Sandgate and new Academy buildings were erected between this street and the citadel. In 1810 a new church was built next to the academy and a new wide street made leading to it from the Sandgate, originally St. John's Street and now Cathcart Street. On its north corner with Academy Street a Relief Church was built in 1816 but the houses opposite are not shown on plans until after 1832.

With the infilling of the moat Charlotte Street was laid out along the south side of the citadel parallel with the north side of Wellington Square with which its built-up south side shared a back lane. On the south corner with Academy Street a Wesleyan Methodist church was built in 1813 and near to it a theatre.

Wood's plan of 1818 shows the extent of the new development on the High Green to the west of Racecourse Road. There is no building further west than the end of Wellington Square, the sea came near the west wall of the citadel, and the interior of the fortification was bare except for the old brewery and the tower of St. John's Church.

The street improvements praised by the minister were the result of the speedy triumph of traffic over open air trading as the function of the streets of the old town. In 1778 the New Bridge broke into the tight circuit of the old town's defences and soon all the narrow gates or 'ports' were swept away. Next, the streets were cleared of the free-standing buildings belonging to the burgh, which were either obstacles to traffic or had lost their function though traffic driving out street-trading. In the High Street the Old or Laigh Tolbooth was demolished in 1810 and the Fish Cross possibly at the same time. The New or Over Tolbooth was removed from the Sandgate c.1823 (the Malt Cross is said to have been demolished for the opening of the New Bridge in 1778[1] but it is marked on Wood's plan of 1818 and it was probably removed with the New Tolbooth, or gaol).[2] The Meal Market in the High

1. DILLON 1953a, 191.
2. The octagonal structure of the cross is clearly marked in a 'Plan of part of the Town of Ayr, Surveyed June, 1824, by James Milliken Law, Surveyor, Ayr', in the Register House, Edinburgh (ref. R.H.P. 2574). Also its position is marked "cross" on a 'Plan of the Harbour of Ayr with proposed improvements, 1827,' reproduced in **Ayrshire Coll.** 2nd series Vol. 1: 1947-49 (1950), 83. It does not appear on either of the Plans of Ayr published in 1832.

Street was removed in 1843, and its island site and that of the Old Tolbooth were built up with commercial premises since they had been encroachments on the market place which was still wide enough for traffic.

The function of the Over Tolbooth as a council chamber and of its steeple as a landmark were taken over by new Town Buildings with a 225 foot classical spire built at the corner of High Street and Sandgate c.1825 by Thomas Hamilton, architect. Part of the accommodation was used for Assembly Rooms by polite society. In 1830 an attempt was made to reface the ancient 'Wallace' Tower[3] but it proved unsafe and was replaced by the present gothic tower, designed by Hamilton, in 1832, 115 foot high.

The street architecture of the main streets was substantially recast at this time with the addition of two fine banks, the concentration of coaching inns along High Street between the bridges, the spread of shops and the general replacement of the harled 18th century buildings by finer and more regular street blocks with moulded architraves and cornices. The buildings south of the Wallace Tower however remained poor and of one or two storeys often with thatched roofs.

On the north side of the river a suburb was planned along Content Street and John Street upstream of Wallacetown. St. Margaret's R.C. Church was built in 1826 in John Street and by 1832 half the north side of that street and the whole of Content Street were built up. A third street along the river was planned, and indicated on Wood's plan of 1818, but was never laid out as the riverside was covered by bleach and dye works later in the century. Wood also shows a mean industrial-housing layout between the backriggs of Main Street and the shore, with ' The Green ' on the site of ' Newton Loch' marked on Armstrong's plan of 1775.

In 1832 the growth of Newton and Ayr was recognised by their being combined for the purpose of electing a member of Parliament, but the Commission on Municipal Corporations in Scotland in 1835 had to report that further combination was opposed as Ayr did not wish to support the poor of Newton, and Newton did not wish to share the debts of Ayr. They describe the administrative arrangements:

> " The Water of Ayr forms the eastern boundary of the royalty, and separates it from the populous communities of Newton-upon-Ayr, Wallacetown and Content, which were united with Ayr under the Parliamentary Reform Act. The jurisdiction of the magistrates of Ayr, however, is at present

3. PATERSON: 1864, 5.

entirely confined to the west side of the river. Newton-upon-Ayr has been for centuries a separate burgh of barony, and is under the government of a magistracy of its own Wallacetown and Content are of modern origin, and are not under the government of any separate magistracy. The last two places lie in the parish of St. Quivox. Newton is a parish of itself."

The report notes that in 1831 the population of Ayr burgh and its landward area was 7,606 and of this the burgh's population, " may be stated as exceeding 6,500 and has increased upwards of one third during the present century. The population of Newton-upon-Ayr was by the census of 1831, 4,020 being considerably more than double of the census of 1801."

The burgh had considerable property:

" I. An extensive common, which is divided into fields, and which, with some trifling portions of ground at the shore.
  II. House property: 1) houses and shops within the town, 2) three mills, 3) houses, storeyards and lime kilns, with small enclosed portions of ground attached to them at the shore.
  III. Feu duties: 1) of lands in the Burgh Field and Burgh Roods in the vicinity of the town, 2) lands in the barony of Alloway, 3) ground, with houses thereon, in the Town's Green and neighbourhood of the burgh, 4) feu duties of salmon fishing in the rivers Ayr and Doon, and sea adjacent. The amount of these vary according to the number of cobles in use.
  IV. The site and buildings of the old churches of Ayr and Alloway and their burying grounds.
  V. Certain seats in the old and new churches of Ayr.
  VI. Surplus teind, payable to the town out of the Burgh Field and other lands holden of the town.

" The town is also possessed of considerable property, some of which does not yield any revenue. This property comprehends the churches, gaol, Wallace-tower and clock, new spire, with the assembly rooms attached, the poor's house, etc., etc. The burgh also possess a powder house, in the neighbourhood of the town, for containing gunpowder the property of the merchants: and they claim a square of ground in the front of the new court house, and various other unoccupied pieces of ground within the burgh and its liberties."

Although the town had drawn £47 13s 9d, in 1832-3, from its Lordship of coal, it still received its main revenues from the users of its harbour, market and bridges.

"Customs levied by Magistrates of Ayr for the year ending Michaelmas, 1833.

		£	s.	d.
1.	Shore dues levied at the harbour	93	10	0
2.	Meal market custom and duties on visiting and sealing of malt ground at the the Mills of Ayr	15	0	0
3.	Grain market custom	21	0	0
4.	Flesh market dues	65	0	0
5.	Sheep custom, with houses and ground at the market	90	0	0
6.	New market from custom	67	0	0
7.	Northern, formerly called bridge custom	130	0	0
8.	Causeway or south custom	65	0	0
9.	Fair custom	1	5	0
10.	Weighing machine	...10	0	0
11.	Street dung for six months	5	0	0
		£562	15	0"

The commissioners noted that although the New Bridge had been built 45 years before, tolls were still being levied on it and the debt had been reduced only from £4,000 to £3,000 in that period due to the bridge custom being used otherwise by the burgh. This was causing hard feelings in the county. They go on to describe the continuing medieval monopolies in the town:

"There are both guild brethren and burgesses in Ayr and no person is entitled to carry on trade who is not a member of one of these bodies.

Burgesses possess the privilege of carrying on trade within the burgh, and of vending British manufactures. Guild brethren have the right, besides, to import and sell foreign merchandize. The inhabitants and burgesses as such, have no seat at the council, guild brethren alone having a right to act as magistrates or councillors. In the last 40 years 375 burgesses and 322 guild brethren were entered.

The Incorporated Trades of Ayr are 9:

1. Squaremen (mason, wright, slater, glazier) 51
2. Hammermen (clock and watchmaker, silversmith, black-
   smith, copper and tinsmith) 24
3. Tailors 21
4. Skinners 3
5. Coopers 6
6. Weavers 42
7. Shoemakers 27
8. Dyers 4
9. Fleshers 15

> All are incorporated by Royal Charter except coopers and dyers who had a seal of cause from the magistrates, and the whole incorporations are included under the general charter to the Craftsmen of Scotland, granted by Queen Mary in 1564. Reference is made in this Act to the prior Act of 1555.
>
> The incorporated trades possess the exclusive privilege of manufacture within the royalty. The privilege does not extend to any of the suburbs upon the east side of the river, and thus is easily evaded."

As the Report gives a surprisingly medieval picture of Ayr, the plan which accompanied the Report on Parliamentary Boundaries in 1832 also shows a recognisably ancient layout. It is at a scale of 6 inch to 1 mile and shows the boundary for the parliamentary constituency. The extent of the town centre of Ayr is indicated by hatching and runs from the river up Sandgate to Newmarket Street and along High Street only as far as the Wallace Tower and Carrick Street. The lower part of Main Street in Newton is similarly hatched. The fanning out of built-up streets from the central area adequately shows the limited spread of the 19th century building when compared with the largely rural area of the parish dotted with mansions to the south of Ayr. The ring of toll gates marking the turnpike roads focussed on Ayr alone suggest that improved communications might lead to the further expansion of the settlemens.

In 1803 the Ayr Advertiser became the county's first newspaper and in 1832 Ayr received that second accolade of prosperous towns, a Directory. It was published by W. McCarter and has a map of the county by 'J. Milliken, surveyor, Ayr' and a 'Plan and Views of Ayr' presumably by Milliken. The plan is based on Wood's plan of 1818 but shows the extent of building. Wellington Square is complete, the 'proposed new square' of Wood's map is named Alloway Square (but seems never to have been built), and a curious new road bisects the fork at the head of Main Street, possibly to carry a turnpike road into Newton. Three

enclosures mark an area of reclamation to the seaward side of the citadel and in the southernmost is marked the gas works, built in 1826. An intriguing building near the town mill is named Castle Needless. The engraver of the plan has reproduced four engravings as insets to the plan, the first of the harbour from the New Bridge and the third of the town from the harbour showing the spire of the new Town Buildings. The second is " Ayr in 1800 " and shows the surviving building with two bow windows and on the right over the crown of the bridge the Tolbooth steeple is silhouetted against the sky. The fourth picture is that of the town from the south c.1820 already mentioned under the development of the ' west end', showing the dome of the County Buildings, the steeple of the Tolbooth and the old Wallace Tower.

TOWN AND COUNTY SINCE 1832

The need for a more equitable form of local government was generally felt throughout Scotland and reform came in periodic Acts from 1833 until the end of the century. That it had failed to come earlier was probably due in Scotland, as in England, to the system of closed corporation lending itself readily to manipulations of the political parties. The Burgh Reform Act of 1833, however, opened the way to change and in Ayr it ended the retention by a burgess body of some 220 of the political power in a community of 7,600. It gave the vote to £10 house-holders, with annual elections. The franchise was further extended by parliamentary reforms in 1867, 1884, 1918 and 1928, each lowering the qualifications for a municipal vote. Legislation in 1846 and 1870 abolished exclusive trading privileges and removed petty customs.

The first Reform Act of 1832 had greatly extended the bounds of the parliamentary burgh, by taking in most of Newton-upon-Ayr to the north and Wallacetown and Content in St. Quivox parish (The population of the royal burgh in 1841 was 8,264 of the parliamentary burgh, 15,749; Newton parish had 4,027 people in 1831.) By this time Newton, although a separate ancient burgh, had come to be regarded as the northern part of Ayr and the unification of the two burghs was recommended in 1835 by the Municipal Corporations, Commission, but vested interests delayed this ' most salutary measure ' until 1873 when by the Burgh of Ayr Act (36 & 37 Vict. Cap. CC) the old burgh of Newton disappeared to become one ward of the enlarged burgh and at the same time the local gas and water undertakings were transferred to the corporation.

The later development of the town can be followed by reference to the series of 6 inch to 1 mile plans published in 1832, 1857, 1897 and 1938. The first has been discussed. The latter three are reductions from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plans which record in

detail the physical, industrial and commercial expansion of Newton and Ayr. The burgh population increased in proportion, but at the expense of that of the parish.

POPULATION (in hundreds)	1811	1851	1891	1931	1947
Ayr Burgh	50	176	240	368	445
Parish (including Newton and St. Quivox)	127	211	274	404	457

The writer of the section on Ayr dated 1837 in the New Statistical Account, says, of the economy before the railways brought expansion:

" It has often been a matter of surprise that Ayr has not been more benefitted by manufactures and public works, possessing, as it does, so many advantages for this purpose, and such facilities of communication with other places, both by sea and land. With such an extensive grain country surrounding it, distilleries could not fail to thrive: the price of labour is low rated, and all the requisites are easily procurable. Cotton works might prosper as well here as at Catrine, the town being favourably situated in regard to all the materials necessary — coal, water and labourers in abundance; while it has greatly the advantage, by enjoying the means of sea, as well as land, carriage. And we can see nothing to hinder the manufacture of wool in its various branches, particularly in the weaving of carpets, from succeeding as well in this place as in Kilmarnock, which owes to this cause so much of its wealth and prosperity."

Mr James Templeton had acquired a small woollen mill in Fort Street in 1827 and began the manufacture of carpets in 1832, building a dye-house in Mill Street. The Templeton works was the only sizeable one in the town and was one of the largest of its kind in Scotland until the mill in Fort Street was burned out in 1876 and production was transferred to the less residential area between Mill Street and Kyle Street.[4] The Assistant Hand Loom Commission (1838) reported that by 1828 the number of looms in Ayr and district was 900, and by 1838 Ayr and suburbs had 1,087 looms weaving cotton and wool, as compared with 1,800 in both Girvan and Kilmarnock, 1,580 in Irvine, and 1,380 in Maybole and Crosshill. Most of the work was supplied by agents of Glasgow and Paisley firms who often compelled the weavers to purchase their goods from them. There were three tanning firms in 1837 and the manufacture of shoes, although not as active as during the Napoleonic war, still employed two hundred tradesmen with an expert trade, chiefly to the colonies.

4. KENNEDY: 1953, 176-7.

In 1835 Trustees took over the management of the harbour from the Town and the first of a series of dredgers began work in 1839. An Act of 1855 authorised the further deepening of the harbour, the extension and improvement of the quays, borrowing powers up to £25,000, the establishment of a sinking fund, and the purchase of a new dredger and tugboat (the harbour master's horse had previously often given a schooner a pull down river in a light wind). Dredging achieved 22 feet depth at the bar. In the half century from 1840-90 it is said that every yard of the harbour walls had to be rebuilt. About 1855 the line of the wall of the (southern) Ratton Quay was altered to its present form.

In 1840 a gravitation water supply was brought into the town, and also in that year the railway line from Glasgow to Ayr was opened. The railway respected the linear pattern of Newton and ran down the backriggs between Main Street and the shore to terminate at a Tudor-style station on the north harbour near the end of the New Bridge. The new form of transport curtailed the formerly frequent steamer service to Glasgow but swelled the numbers embarking at Ayr for Girvan, Stranraer and Campbeltown.

The establishment of new industries stimulated by the opening of the Glasgow-Ayr Railway did not completely alter the town as, apart from various small businesses near the harbour and along the river, the main industrial establishments were sited north of the river in Newton and Wallacetown, where they were convenient to the quays and the railways. South of the river the congestion of the old town and the restrictions of the Incorporated Trades of the Burgh checked industrial development and here for a time change was arrested.

The bulk of the exploitable coal was on the Newton side of the river in the vicinity of the town, and as the nearer seams were worked out, new pits were opened further north. In the 1840's the mines were owned by Messrs. George Taylor and Company: one existed not far from the Auld Brig; another, the Allison Pit, near Russell Street; Newton Head Pit near the present railway bridge, 'Tam's Brig'; Saltfield Pit and Green Pit near Newton Lodge. About 1850 two pits were sunk in the grounds to the north of Craigie House, from which coal was carted across the river to vessels lying on the south side. Most of the coal from the Whitletts and Auchencruive pits was conveyed by horse-waggon in trains of four, two or three-ton waggons via Waggon Road and Newton Green to the North Quay. The rail ran straight down towards the Newton shore then swept round in the direction of the harbour to the jetties, and the wooden 'hurries'. The coal was tipped into the holds of a fleet of sailing colliers two of which the 'Sister Anne' and 'Commerce', belonged to the port of Ayr. This trade was the most important at the harbour.

The lane for the cattle market at the head of Kyle Street to Mill Street was developed and became Smith Street from Smith's Institution, a school for poor children built in 1842. In 1844 the General Voluntary Hospital was built next to Mill Street and is marked 'Fever Hospital' on the 1857 plan.

With 1843 came the 'Disruption' — a revolt which split the established church and led to much duplication of church buildings in Scotland. The minister and most of the congregation left Wallacetown Chapel and, after temporary quarters, built a church in Sandgate in 1845 opposite Sandgate House. In the same year Newton-upon-Ayr built its Gas Works, and also Parochial Boards were set up to administer relief to the poor by the Poor Law (Amendment) Act. Before this the town had been responsible. The exclusive trading privileges of burgesses and guild brethren were swept away by parliamentary reforms in 1848 but the superior advantages for industry of the north side of the river meant that development in the burgh was chiefly commercial and residential.

The railway was extended south to Dalmellington and on its completion in 1857 the passenger station was transferred to Townhead at the end of Kyle Street, and the former one in Newton became a Goods Station. The Ordnance Survey plan of 1857 shows how this new railway branched off the earlier line well to the north of Newton and curved through the fields to the east of the built-up areas of Newton and Ayr, crossing the river by a high viaduct but running in cuttings eleswhere so as not to interrupt the road pattern (and possibly to screen views of the line from the estates of Blackhouse and Craigie). For proximity of the new station to the burgh the viaduct passed next to the Poor's House and crossed Mill Street at high level. However, it was a single line and the road southward from Kyle Street was not interrupted.

The plan marks the coal pits north of the Craigie estate and the Tram Road running down to the river; a shipbuilding yard and dry-dock on the north harbour; and three foundries in Newton.

The built-up area of the town had not been extended further than in 1832 but there had been substantial infilling of the pattern of the West End. To Wellington Square and Alloway Place, now complete, further streets and terraces had been added extending the pattern. Charlotte Street ran to the shore with Templeton's Mill, a large house with grounds, and an Infant School on the north side. Cathcart Street had been built-up with houses. Queen's Terrace crossed the extended Charlotte Street and had houses only on its west side backing onto the shore. Only three houses had been built north of Charlotte Street by 1857. The infilling of the Barns House estate had continued with six houses on the south side of

Barns Sreet — but a large gap still — four houses on the west side of Dalblair Road and Barns Terrace set back but facing Alloway Place. Miller Place was laid out as a cross route from Alloway Street and the cattle market, but there were no houses along it[5]. Killoch Place extended as ribbon development down the west side of the road leading south from Alloway Street. The Citadel walls had been breached on the east and west sides and eight houses built backing onto the walls but leaving the centre open with the old brewery buildings surviving but the tower of St. John's Church added to in the castellated fashion and enclosed as a gentleman's residence named Fort Castle.

The plan shows the survival of that contrast between the built-up area of the town and the fields and parkland on every side which characterised the pre-industrial town. There are fields north of Newton, large estate east of the town, and a growing number of isolated villas in their own extensive grounds to the south of Ayr as far as the municipal boundary at the north end of the Race Course. The new Railway reinforced the eastern limits of the favoured residential belt.

In 1858-60 the local Poor Law boards built the Kyle Combination Poorhouse beyond the railway at Townhead, and the United Presbyterian Church was built on the corner of Main Street and North Harbour Street. At the census of 1861 the burgh's population was 18,571 (4,307 families living in 2,091 houses). Heathfield Hospital opened in Newton in 1856 and in 1869 the district lunatic asylum. In 1868 the established church in Ayr built a mission hall in Carrick Street, an ancillary soon felt necessary by other churches, and by the Scottish Education Act (1872) responsibility for schools was transferred from burgh and churches to local School Boards, and education became compulsory. The Ordnance Gazeteer (1885) notes that the Citadel was covered with handsome villas in a few years prior to 1870,[6] which may mean the the infil of the circumference continued and that it was at this time the southern bastion was demolished and Eglinton Terrace built extending the line of Cassillis Street up the centre of the enclosure.

Newton became part of the burgh of Ayr in 1873 and thereafter it was possible to make developments north and south of the river, complementary. In fact Newton continued to develop as an industrial suburb and Ayr as a residential and service town. The Ayr and Mauchline Branch of the Glasgow and South Western Railway was built by 1875 and isolated a large triangle of land in

5. Proposals for this road are shown in a plan at Register House, Edinburgh (ref. R.H.P. 2551) dated 1846, where it is described as a turnpike road.
6. GROOME: 1885, vol. 1 under 'Ayr'

Newton. The lines were extended in a loop north of Newton to run to the West Dock excavated from the rock at the Newton shore 1874-81. On the Ayr side a Slipway was constructed along the shore and with it the esplanade of the south beach was formed in 1879. Templeton's Mill in Fort Street was burned out in 1876 and production was then concentrated on the Mill Street site where the present mill was built two years later. The site of the mill was covered by tenements and in 1880 the Academy was again rebuilt in the classical style and decorated by medallions of Wilkie, Watt and Burns. In the same year the birthplace of the poet in Alloway was purchased by the Burns Monument Trustees, and in 1881 his statue was erected at the townhead in Killoch Place looking towards the cottage. With the reconstruction of the railway station from 1881 and the removal of the cattle market beyond the railway, the triangular space at Townhead became 'Burns Statue Square' and prospered commercially as Kyle Street died, because the new railway sidings truncated the road leading from it southward.

In 1877 Adam's New Bridge was injured by floods and by 1879 had been rebuilt to a new design for about £15,000. The Auld Brig's prophesy was fulfilled.

> " and tho' wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn
> I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn."
>
> Burns — 'The Brigs of Ayr'

Four stone medallions survive from Adam's design, in different parts of Ayr, and the balustrade reused for the pavilion on the Low Green.

The Census of 1881 gives the population as 20,821, with 4279 houses inhabited, 277 vacant, and 60 buildings. The Ordnance Gazetteer describes the town in that year:

" . . . . it made a further start at and after the opening of the railway to Glasgow in 1849; and it had issue in giving the town a high rank for at once orderliness, cleanliness and beauty, among the second-class towns of Scotland. Wellington Square stands in the south-west, and, as regards at once the neatness of its houses, the spaciousness of its area, the finess of its situation and the fine seaward view commanded by its windows, is scarcely excelled by any modern extension in any other provincial town in the kingdom. Handsome suburbs, with numerous villas, have radiated from Wellington Square or arisen beyond it; and these, with the square itself, constitute an ornate and urban West End. All the parts nearest the river and towards the shore have, gener-

ally speaking, a modern townlike aspect; those in the centre and towards the south continue, in considerable degree, to be either antiquated, mean or of village-like character. High Street is still to be the principal street, winding through both the modern regions and the old, and partaking the character of both."

Ayr County Hospital was built on Holmston Road in 1883 next to the Kyle Union Poorhouse and three years later the burgh inaugurated the Loch Finlas water scheme. Further municipal undertakings were the electricity station built in Mill Street in 1896 and the Carnegie Library in Main Street closing the vista over the New Bridge in 1893.

Compared with the Ordnance Survey plan of 1857 that of 1897 shows considerable expansion of the town. The dense housing and factories of north of the river stop only at the railway cutting and there are developments past the railway along the roads to Whitletts and Prestwick. South of the river the corridor of land between the railway and the Parliamentary Burgh Boundary is built up with houses and the new Cattle Market next the railway south of Ayr, within the boundary, the spaces left by the large villas are subdivided for a multitude of small villas facing onto new cross-streets between Monument Road and Racecourse Road. The former road has a ribbon development of small houses stretching up Beresford Place to Alloway Street; the latter's frontage completely divided now, for the grounds of large villas. With the building up of Barns Park and Barns Crescent the last possible house-plot has been squeezed out of that estate and the house, shorn of its outbuildings, occupies a miserly corner plot. Miller Road is built up and the former open area south of it is filled by a horseshoe layout only partly built with terraces. The piecemeal nature of the layout is pointed by one leg being Park Circus but the other Bellevue Crescent, Sandgate House and Dalblair House still have unbuilt grounds in the built-up area and a cycle track has been laid out on the backland behind High Street. Queen's Terrace is complete and Eglinton Terrace has replaced the old Fort Brewery but the circuit of villas in the Citadel is not yet complete. The tall sandstone buildings line the north side of Burns Statue Square but there is no answering group across Alloway Street as the corners and the north side of Dalblair Road are not built on. The complex of industrial buildings around the south end of Mill Street is well developed but the Fever Hospital remains isolated on the corner with Smith Street. A Corn Mill is still marked on the site of the 'nether mills of Ayr'.

Coal continued to be the main export from Ayr harbour increasing in the 1930's and 1940's but declining thereafter, being a close indicator of the production in Ayrshire pits.

COAL EXPORT FROM AYR HARBOUR

1900, 504,167 tons; 1910, 755,543 tons; 1920, 968,113 tons; 1930, 1,281,754 tons; 1940, 1,541,397 tons; 1950, 965,000 tons.

The largest engineering firm in the town — now the Scottish Stamping and Engineering Company Limited — is successor to the original business formed in 1900 when the first drop hammers were installed. They made structural forgings for shipyards up to 1914, but after the war an increasing output went to the motor industry. The forge in the 1950's was still the second largest in the U.K., employing 750 people and having one of the heaviest drop-hammers in Britain.

Before 1900 the river was crossed by a road bridge (New Bridge), a footbridge (Auld Brig), and a railway viaduct which carried a pedestrian walkway. In that year two more bridges were built and another soon after. The railway was extended through the old station building on the north harbour and crossed the river on an iron viaduct to the south harbour (1909). Mr Turner generously provided a footbridge, midway between the two existing, continuing the line of upper Mill Street across the river at the site of an old ford. Finally a second road crossing was provided by the low level Victoria Bridge on the upstream side of the railway viaduct. In 1910 the burgh were left money which the council were advised they could use only for the rebuilding of the 15th century Auld Brig. By some exertion by antiquaries they were restrained from demolishing the bridge — now scheduled as an ancient monument — and building a modern bridge in its place. Fortunately reason prevailed and after thorough repair the bridge was handed back to the burgh in 1910.[7]

In 1901 a municipal tramway was opened running from Prestwick Cross, down Main Street, over the New Bridge and along the High Street and south to Alloway.

Before the first War, the Marquis of Bute bought Fort Castle and removed all the modern additions, restored the tower of St. John's Church, and presented it to the burgh in 1914.

The harbour trustees had been in financial trouble for some time, and had already indebted themselves to the railways, when in 1919 the harbour undertaking was transferred by Act of Parliament to the railway company who were bound to put the harbour works in good condition as soon as possible after the termination of the war. The act also safeguarded the Royal Burgh of Ayr by granting the town council the right to complain in case of advantages being

7. MORRIS: 1910.

granted to neighbouring ports by reason of lower harbour rates, rebates or other facilities; and allowed it to retain the public bathing shelter and existing bathing privileges at the south pier and battery and the use of the south pier as a promenade. When the railway amalgamation took place in 1926, Ayr became an L.M.S. harbour; in 1948 it was nationalised under British Railways; and in January, 1950 it came under the Docks and Inland Waterways executive.

In the administrative changes in 1919, the School Boards were abolished and education became the responsibility of a county authority. In 1924, the electricity undertaking was handed over to the Ayrshire Electricity Board.

The final closing of the Lugar and Waterside ironworks in 1928 meant the end of importation at Ayr harbour of iron ore and limestone and of the export of pig iron. In the general depression, Ayrshire had many unemployed and in 1931 the municipal tramways were discontinued and dismantled, but public works led to the opening of the Loch Recawr water scheme in 1932. In 1935 another boundary extension gave Ayr the land from Prestwick in the north to the River Doon in the south.

The 6 inch Ordnance Survey plan of 1938, compared with that of 1897, shows a denser infill of terraced houses within the former built up area, a wide belt of development extending northward from Newton towards the Prestwick boundary, an infill of building between the roads and railway lines radiating from Ayr and along the edges of all these developments (and along the shore at Seafield) a fringe of proposed housing layouts. A large clear space north of Craigie Park is the new racecourse — the old one south of the town remains as a golf course and open space. By 1901 Content Avenue and Craigie Road had been laid out on the grounds of Craigie House nearest the railway and the plan shows a sports ground near the river. This layout is linked by Victoria Bridge to the south side. There is a large area of railway sidings surrounding the wet dock and near the shore north of Newton. South of the river the old town is more densely built up. Dalblair House is a hotel with its frontages to Alloway Street and Dalblair Road built up (with tall sandstone building before 1909), and the layout of Boswell Park and Arthur Street, before 1909, has opened up the backland west of High Street to development. The large garden of Sandgate House has been separated from the house and developed as a bus station, theatre, and commercial garage. The remaining plots in Cromwell Road, Charlotte Street, Dalblair Road, the citadel area and Bellevue Crescent are built up, and tenements have replaced the Fever Hospital in Mill Street. The south side of Burns Statue Square is partially built up (by a super-cinema and a single

storey shop and garage development) and there are signs of commercial encroachment on the residential area in the commercial garages on the back lane west of Beresford Place and on the west side of Dalblair Road. Her Majesty's Prison behind the County Buildings has been replaced by an extension of offices for the county (1935). The confirmation of this function led to Wellington Square becoming an area of offices.

The hulking grey shape of the Ice Rink was one of the last gifts of the 30's to Ayr and has catered for skating, curling and ice hockey, popular ever since. The war put a stop to extensive redevelopment proposals and the scheme to dam the river at the harbour to create a boating lake. The engineering industry turned to war work and the port was busy as materials came by sea to ease congestion on the railways. The council kept their eyes on the future and purchased Craigie House and its extensive grounds along the river in 1940 for £12,500. It was used by the army up until 1945 but is now one of the town's parks and since 1964 the site of a Teachers' Training College. In 1942 the burgh prepared a plan for post-war rebuilding and the future of the town, and in the next year purchased the Tam o' Shanter Inn in the High Street which was opened as a museum in 1957 when the brewers had secured other premises. In 1944 a church next to Craigie Park was converted into a Civic Theatre.

A far reaching effect of the war was the siting of an airport at Prestwick on Ayr's northern border. 1940 saw the first trans-Atlantic flight from Gander, and from 1941, with new concrete runways, Prestwick was Britain's major trans-Atlantic airport. Its war-record for fog-free operation led to its adoption as a civil airport for international traffic. In 1964 the new terminal building was opened and the future prospect of jumbo jets is expected to make the airport even more busy. Although virtually fog-free, it suffers from too few internal air connections.

After the war, Butlin's re-possessed a naval base on a secluded bay about 2 miles south of the Ayr boundary and made it their Heads of Ayr Holiday Camp. It caters for about 3,500 visitors weekly each season, about half from England and many others from Central Scotland.

As a "large burgh" the town received comprehensive planning powers and adequate control of development by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947, in which year the population of the parish was 45,700 and of the burgh 44,500. The burgh's Sanitary Inspector's Survey of houses rated at or below £45 in 1948 showed that 721 houses (7.6 per cent of the whole) were "unfit for human habitation," and other 3,376 houses (36 per cent) were below "modern standards", making a total of 4,097 houses needing

to be modernised or replaced. This was just under 40 per cent of all the 10,765 houses in the town. Also 3,717 houses (35 per cent) were judged to be overcrowded. Another survey showed in 1948 that, within the burgh, 156 households were without an indoor water supply, 28 had no water closet and 2,271 had to share water closets with neighbours. 161 families were "squatters" in seven war time military camps in the burgh. The worst affected areas were the two wards covering the town centre and the older industrial parts of Newton.[8]

By its boundary extension of 1935, the burgh doubled its area by taking in Alloway and Doonfoot in the south and Whitletts in the north east, and the latter, a former mining community, was developed with council houses and had its own Community Centre opened in 1949. Subsequently municipal housing estates have been carried up to the burgh boundary in the north, east and south and the County Council have agreed to development up to the west side of the line of the proposed by-pass on the east. There are large areas of parkland, formerly private grounds and now public golf courses, etc., within the burgh but the council regards these as amenities and the capital of its tourist industry. The county is holding the sprawl of Ayr at its Boundary, but this control may go when the institutions of local government are recast.

In 1950 the bus station was reconstructed. The next year Ayrshire had the honour of being one of the four counties to have published pilot volumes for the Third Statistical Account of Scotland; a volume to which this study is greatly indebted.[9] In 1951 the population was 43,011 and that of Kilmarnock 42,120. The town had its own celebrations in 1952 when it had been a burgh for 750 years.[10] Historic sites were marked by plaques and a history **The Royal Burgh of Ayr** edited by A. I. Dunlop was published. In 1959 came the bi-centenary of the birth of Robert Burns, two years after the Tam o' Shanter Inn was opened as a museum.

The population of the burgh at the 1961 census was 46,747. Since then the traditional division of influence between Ayr and Kilmarnock has begun to be threatened by the designation of Irvine as the focus of Scotland's fifth New Town which will take in Kilwinning. The present 30,000 population of its designated area is expected to grow to more than 80,000 in twenty years, by which time it will be the biggest in the county.

Following the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 the burgh designated three separate Conservation Areas and a local amenity

8. STRAWHORN: 1951, part 2, ch. 6.
9. **op cit.**
10. The closest estimate of the date of the charter, then available, was, "not before 1203 and not after 1206", PRYDE: 1953a.

society was formed.[1] The county's planning officer made a report but no designations have yet followed.

Ayr and Prestwick are now the two nodes of a continuously built-up area along Ayr Bay. The runways of Prestwick's airport contain it to the north and east and have necessitated a grand ring-road inland to the east which has been extended south as a by-pass for Ayr, but has not yet been completed. From it Whitletts Road has been improved and driven through Newton to Main Street where the town steeple stands forlorn on a traffic island marking the position of the Town Buildings and the 18th century parish church, destroyed for the new road.

The street plan confirms that existing developments of housing reach to the burgh boundary at Heathfield and Whitletts in the north, at Holmston, Castlehill and Laigh Glengall in the east, and at Alloway and Doonfoot in the south. In addition there are proposed layouts between the River Doon and the south boundary (Doonbank development), at Alloway, at Castlehill between the burgh boundary and the proposed by-pass, and near Holmston (Masonhill development).

Redevelopment has recently swept away most of Wallacetown and the industry on the north bank of the river from Turner's Bridge upstream to the railway, and these areas are being built up with council flats. Content House was demolished in 1961 and the county Fire Headquarters has been built on the site, with its hose drying tower a new landmark on the north bank, just upstream of the railway.

South of the river the south side of Mill Street has been redeveloped with blocks of flats. The houses on the north side had earlier been replaced by three gaunt brick flat-blocks, and the result with the new development is the destruction of Mill Street as a recognisable space. The new flats seem rather to be on backland related to the High Street; this is turning the clock back to the sixteenth century!

The redundant Churchill Barracks on the point outside the citadel has been cleared, revealing the masonry wall of Cromwell's fort from the north west bastion (complete) to the central bastion on the north side next the quay. The cleared site is used as a car park, but there are plans by the council to build an ambitious entertainments complex with hotel, cinema and car park, using the adjoining slipway for a marina. The burgh have resolved to build their long awaited swimming bath on the site instead of on the north bank as planned.

1. Sandgate has been recently designated as the burgh's fourth conservation area.

SUMMARY OF AYR'S GROWTH

There is likely to have been, before the burgh was formed, a previous settlement at the site of Ayr, taking advantage of the only haven on that coast and the lowest ford and head of navigation of the river.

The duality of main streets, markets, tolbooths and market crosses in the burgh indicates the continuing survival of a pre-burgh nucleus along Sandgate in line with the main ford. The position of the medieval church among the sand dunes west of the town probably points to the site of an early Celtic church and enclosing graveyard. The early settlement presumably had gates for security and for convenience in marketing cattle.

In 1197 the Scots king, William the Lion, extended his control into SW Scotland and built a royal castle in King's Kyle on the river Ayr. The site indicated is traditional and the form based on the burgh seal and advanced practice at the time.

By a charter of 1205 Ayr was created a royal burgh as an economic investment by its landlord the King. The burgh was planned and laid out in burgage plots as a New Town with the short steep Sandgate displaced as the chief market by the new High Street on the flatter land along the river, less subject to the nuisance of blowing sand.

The king offered valuable privileges to craftsmen and merchants who would settle in the town. They had to build up the frontage of their long narrow plots and pay rent to the king. All rights and privileges were tied to the ownership of the burgage plots, and since this arrangement continued until the 19th century the pattern of plot boundaries was a very conservative part of the town pattern and is still the framework of landholding in the central area.

The burgh had a bridge at the earliest time of bridge-building in Scotland and the river frontage below the bridge was probably lined with the private wharves and warehouses of merchants still discernible on Slezer's engraving of 1693. The common quay was further downstream at the pool or Ratton Hole and reached through Boat Vennel. The layout of High Street had to take account of pre-existing routeways and access paths to the numerous fords. The main ford was reached by Water Vennel from the foot of Sandgate. The New Town became the administrative and garrison centre of the new shire.

The agricultural burgh of Newton-upon-Ayr was founded in the 14th century on baronial lands across the river but did not compete with the royal burgh. The land between the backriggs of

High Street and the river was taken up by buildings of the Black-friars in 1230, and the line of High Street was continued by a new suburb, Townhead. In the 13th century the (surviving) tower was built at the west end of St. John's Church, probably as a watch-tower and place of refuge against Norwegian raiders. In 1472 the Greyfriars were invited to come to Ayr by the citizens and their church and garden were built next the Blackfriars on a site partly carved out of the ends of burgage plots.

The burgh had early commuted its rents to an annual lump sum (feu farm) and gained control of its own finances. It had been favoured by grants of all the coast land of King's Kyle, the fishing rights of the Ayr and Doon, and the monopoly of mills on the rivers. Ayr was the major port in Western Scotland.

At the Reformation (c.1560) St. John's Church was stripped of images and both friaries dissolved and the buildings destroyed. The revenues and social duties of the eccleciastics devolved on the town council and the kirk session.

Suburbs spread outside the gates at Sandgate, Townhead, and Carrick Vennel, and the space between Mill Vennel and the river was built on. The vennels were blocked and the gates controlled against periodic plague epidemics.

During the Protectorate, Cromwell built a Citadel at Ayr (1652-4) to control the south-west and to have convenient supply routes by sea from Liverpool. The bulwarks and bastions were of earth revetted with battered stone walling. A deep moat cut off the tip of the peninsula. The fortifications destroyed all traces of the castle and took in the church and its graveyard, necessitating a new parish church which was built near the site of the former Grey-friars with the help of money from the military.

At the Restoration the east and south-east walls of the citadel were thrown down making it untenable as a fortress. It was granted to the Earl of Eglinton as the burgh of Montgomeriestown but was never built. The old church was redundant and was demolished, leaving the tower; a brewery was built in the citadel, and a line of cottages on the quay against its wall. Charles II granted a meal market which involved the town in a building south of the Tolbooth in High Street and the Malt Cross in Sandgate was reconstructed on the model of the market cross at Edinburgh. A steeple was added to the Sandgate tolbooth and the Auld Tour on the corner of High Street and Mill Vennel was fitted with a clock and bell for the benefit of Townhead. Harbour works were strengthened and a school and poor house built on the fringes of the built-up area but Ayr suffered from the general economic depression in Scotland and little extension took place. The plots north of Townhead were trun-

cated and the land divided as plots for houses built on the south side of Mill Vennel. The enclosure of the town moor next to the burgh began. In the later 18th century a new industrial suburb of Wallacetown was built next to Newton.

Throughout the 18th century work was going on to level and consolidate the sand dunes south of the citadel and this resulted in the Low Green and the High Green to the west of the road south to the racecourse.

The growth in carriage traffic led to the destruction of the town gates (or ports) and dissatisfaction with the Auld Brig led the council to obtain an Act of Parliament to build the New Bridge (1785-8) to the design of Robert Adam. This continued the line of Sandgate across the river to the foot of Newton's Main Street, and involved the building of New Bridge Street and the destruction of the Malt Cross as an obstacle to traffic. This constitutes the only break in the space enclosure of the town centre even today.

Towards the end of the 18th century Dalblair House was built off Cow Vennel and Barns House off the road from Carrick Vennel to Racecourse Road. The Barns estate covered the land east of Racecourse Road and Barns Street was laid out at right angles to the latter from the end of Carrick Vennel. The north side was the first regular terrace development.

The residential West End of Ayr was laid out on the High Green from 1806 onwards, Barns Street continued, gave the line of the south side, and the bulk of the County Buildings the width. Charlotte Street and Fort Street cover the area of the citadel moat and the latter was chosen as the position of the Academy (1800) and the New Church (1810). Cathcart Street was cut from the west side of Sandgate to give access to the church. Newmarket Street was developed along the line of a lane to give access to a new Butter Market on its north side.

A sea wall protected the reclaimed land and a Gas Works and Churchill Barracks occupied the peninsula outside the citadel.

The increase in traffic caused the removal of the Fish Cross and both Tolbooths and a new Town Buildings and Spire was built near the old site, on the corner of Sandgate and High Street c.1832. The Auld Tour was rebuilt in 1832 as a gothic Wallace Tower.

Content Street parallel with the river on the north bank was built and John Street laid out south of it.

In 1832 the parliamentay boundary of Ayr was extended to include Newton but they remained separate burghs.

In 1840 the railway from Glasgow reached Ayr and ran to the west of Newton's Main Street to a terminus on the north quay near the New Bridge. On the lane from Townhead to Mill Street, Smith's Insitution, a school for poor children, was built in 1842 and next to it the Fever Hospital in 1844. The lane became Smith Street.

In 1848 all exclusive privileges of burgesses and guild brethren were swept away but the concentration of industry north of the river continued. In 1857 the railway went round Newton and crossed the river near the Poor House in Mill Street. The passenger station was transferred to Townhead but the single line did not disturb the road network.

By 1857 there had been considerable infilling in the West End. The road past Barns House had been stopped up and the south side of Barns Street begun to be developed. Barns Terrace was built facing Racecourse Road. Charlotte Street ran to the shore cross by Queen Terrace. There was ribbon development at Killoch Place south of Alloway Street[2] (formerly Cow Vennel), and Miller Place was laid out between this and Racecourse Road, but unbuilt.

The Citadel enclosure was breached on the west and east sides and eight villas built within. The tower yas incorporated in a gothic residence named Fort Castle.

The Citadel was covered by villas c.1870 and the southern bastion was demolished and the line of Cassillis Street extended up the centre of the enclosure and Eglinton Terrace built on the west.

In 1873 Newton burgh was merged with Ayr and development of the harbour followed with a Wet Dock (1874-81) in Newton and a Slipway and esplanade along the Ayr shore in 1879. The concentration of woollen mills between Kyle Street (formerly Townhead) and Mill Street began in 1878.

Street widening took place on the north of Kyle Street, the east of Alloway Street and in High Street on the east side from the Bank to Mill Street leaving the Wallace Tower projecting. In 1881 Townhead Station was rebuilt and extensive sidings caused the diversion of the road leading south from Kyle Street and started its economic decline. The Cattle Market was moved beyond the railway and Burns Statue Square created, but open to the south.

In 1877 Adam's New Bridge was injured by floods and was rebuilt by 1879, level and wider, and the west side of New Bridge Street was re-developed. In 1893 the Carnegie Library was built in Newton, closing the vista down Sandgate and over the second New Bridge.

2. Proposals for widening Alloway Street to its present width are shown on a plan in Register House, Edinburgh (ref. R.H.P. 2552), dated 1846.

By 1897 Barns Park and Barns Crescent were built up and the last possible house-plot had been squeezed out of that estate. Miller Road was built up and the horseshoe layout south of it laid out but not built up.

In 1900 the harbour was crossed by a rail bridge to the south side and Turner's Footbridge was built across the river on the line of upper Mill Street. A second road crossing was provided by the Victoria Bridge just upstream of the railway viaduct. A scheme to replace the Auld Brig was fortunately averted in 1910, and in 1914 the burgh was presented with the tower of St. John's Church, stripped of accretions and restored by the Marquis of Bute.

By 1909 Dalblair House was an hotel with its frontages to Alloway Street and Dalblair Road built up with the tall sandstone buildings, and the layout of Boswell Park and Arthur Street had opened the backland west of High Street for development. Sandgate House was severed from its garden which was made into a bus station and the site of a theatre. In 1935 the prison behind the county buildings was replaced by offices, and the south side of Burns Statue Square was covered by graceless buildings—a super-cinema, gargantuan ice rink and single storey shops and garage.

The war stopped a scheme for extensive redevelopment and the Post-War Planning Acts meant that proposals had to be recast. The burgh has concentraed on building up to its boundaries with housing schemes which depend on the town centre and are served by burgh has concentrated on building up to its boundaries with house-cleared and the area redeveloped with low blocks of flats. Recently the west side of Mill Street has been similarly redeveloped with a complete loss of urban enclosure. The barracks site and the industrial area on the north bank of the river downstream from the railway viaduct were cleared for redevelopment, the one as an entertainment centre, the other for 14 storey blocks of flats.

AYR AS A PALIMPSEST

The fact that much evidence for the history of Ayr, not available otherwise, can be deduced from a modern plan showing streets, buildings and property boundaries, is proof of their historic interest to present and future generations and is a strong argument for their survival. Where destruction of a building is inevitable it should take the form of an archaeological exercise in unpicking and recording, from the roof of the existing building to the levels of undisturbed strata below the foundations and floors.

The plans show the size and structure of the community at different periods, the progress of extension and the town's institutions, reflecting its place in the region. The pattern of burgage plots

showing the problems of a 13th century land surveyor is the factor governing the succession of short frontage buildings so characteristic of the town today.

The record is seldom so clear since the town is more of a palimpsest on which the features of a period may have been partially obliterated by later rebuilding or change. Changes of function are frequent, alteration or rebuilding are less so, but until modern times changes of plot boundary or street frontage line were exceptional.

The overall pattern of the town composed of buildings, streets and plots shows the pattern of successive units of urban growth. The stages of extensions of the High Street and Sandgate are clearly indicated by side roads which formerly congregated outside the gates. Earlier parts and those functionally important such as street spaces, tended to act as a framework conditioning the start and growth of subsequent parts and were often modified by them There is a recognisable unity in the integration of streets, plots and buildings at each stage discernable in the town plan.

The contour plan shows the topographical determinants of the first settlement in the lee of a mound and the way the relief dictated extension along the river to provide a more level market place as well as freedom from blown sand. The skill of the medieval planner is shown in the response to the relief and the tricky layout along the steeply sloping river bank in the town centre. the levelling of the sand dunes in the 18th century and the creation of the High Green paved the way for building the West End and made it feasible by stopping the blowing sand.

The lines of established tracks to the entrances of the previous settlement have at each stage of the town's growth occasioned irregularities in the pattern of the extension. The lower part of High Street may be the continuation of Mill Street, disconnected in 1205. The triangle of ground at the river bank causing a change in the direction of plots east of High Street may be the landing place of a ford in use at that date. Alloway Street was the cattle drove to the town moor and to accommodate it the plots west of Kyle Street are bent round parallel with it. Barns Street could not be built up until the road south from Carrick Street had been stopped up and the new street gave the line for the south side of Wellington Square.

A former settlement on the line of Sandgate rather than the castle formed the nucleus of the burgh, since the founding of which, extension was linear up to the 18th century when there began an infilling of spaces between the roadways near the town. Ribbon development continued along roads far outside the town and this century has brought infilling between these so that the burgh is

effectively built up and redevelopment of an inner ring of 19th century houses, chiefly north of the river, is providing sites for housing.

The charter burgh had a simple hierarchy of spaces with the broad main street-cum-market place, narrow vennels at right angles to this having no developed frontage, and sometimes back lanes outside the town. The market place widened at the Fish Cross but the broad Sandgate and the extension of High Street must be regarded as spaces intended for market activity and not mere route-aways. From 1800 the West End was developed with a different spatial hierarchy characteristic of its time with broad east-west residential streets, lesser cross streets and narrow back-access lanes (which probably saw more frequent, if meaner, traffic than the others). The space between two broad streets was left open and called Wellington Square but it is too wide and too little enclosed to be anything but a forecourt to the county buildings. In the later 19th century some interesting spatial effects were achieved by building within the bowl of the citadel with villas on a sloping ramp against the wall facing a formal north-south terrace across a green space. In general the old town is enclosed, with all views out blocked, while the later development provides little enclosure and views out over the Firth of Clyde to Arran.

At the widest part of the market place the laigh tolbooth was the nucleus for an island of later buildings and the 17th century Meal Market, south of it, was a further encroachment on the market space. These sites of market colonisation were redeveloped with ordinary business buildings providing a broad and a narrow way past them.

Possibly the earlier importance of Mill Street as a routeway led to the land between it and the river being developed as a peripheral or fringe belt of specialised use, outside the back-dykes of High Street. The Blackfriars buildings (1230) were next the original burgh and later in the 15th century the Greyfriars were fitted in as a partly intramural development. The 17th century hospital was built in Mill Street and the Poors House in the 18th century. Its west side was redeveloped intramurally for factories and public institutions in the 19th century and the river bank was also made the site of the municipal electricity undertaking and the abbatoir in this century.

There has for long been continuity in the positions of the civic institutions. The two market crosses stood at street junctions from the founding of the burgh until they were demolished to ease traffic in the late 18th century and early 19th century. Their sites are now marked by granite sets in the roadways. The positions of the Laigh Tolbooth and meal market are marked by islands of buildings in

the High Street, and when the Over Tolbooth with its prominent steeple (replacing an earlier one) was demolished to clear the Sandgate for traffic, c.1832, the Town Buildings with a towering spire were built nearby on the corner of High Street and Sandgate. (Critics have said it would look better on high ground rather than at the bottom of a hill but this makes no allowance for traditional conservation—the proper place for the town clock and steeple is at the bottom of the Sandgate as it appears on Slezer's View of 1693!) Similarly the Auld Tower which had been fitted with a clock and bells for the benefit of Townhead early in the 18th century was rebuilt c.1834 in the gothic manner with a clock and the old bells. When the street frontage next to it was later set-back it was left projecting and, as far as traffic is concerned, effectively controls the width of High Street. The opening of the court house, and county jail behind, in 1823, led to Wellington Square becoming the centre of activity for the County Council whose offices have now replaced the jail. The houses in the square are now mostly used as offices.

The central area of the Royal Burgh of Ayr is a palimpsest on which the characters of each successive period can be made out more clearly, elaborating the previous pattern. It would be a notably uncivilised action to employ our modern, all too effective techniques, to erase all.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PATTERN

The pattern of property boundaries laid out in the 13th century is still in force today and the long narrow burgage plot is still the unit basic to the redevelopment of sites in the centre of Ayr. The rhythm of standard short frontages along the street has been a feature of successive phases of rebuilding for over seven hundred and fifty years and is essential to the character of the town. Variations of the rhythm have appeared where two or more adjacent plots were originally taken up or where someone subsequently acquired adjacent plots by purchase. The early Ordnance Survey plans of the town show how in the mid 19th century the pattern was still unobscured, but in some places late Victorian and modern developers have built premises extending across the frontages of three of four plots or have fragmented the frontage by subdividing a plot width. The medieval civic authorities jealously guarded the public space and levied fines for encroachments by foresteps or the underbuilding of a jetty: on the other hand they had no powers to alter the building line and in 1435 had to apply to the Duke of Albany, Regent for Robert III, for liberty to narrow a vennel against the entry of drifting sand, and in the 18th century an Act of Parliament was necessary for cutting a new street and

building a new bridge on the line of Water Vennel and over the ford. Apart from New Bridge Street the plan of the plots, streets and spaces of Ayr today is substantially that of the medieval town and the continuing attractive character of the town is intimately involved in the plan's survival.

The West End is a rectangular pattern of straight streets set out in relation to the pre-existing road south from the head of Sandgate. The early speculative development of Barns Street fixed the position of the south side of Wellington Square and the drop to the Low Green limited its westward extent. The width of the central garden is equal to the length of the plots flanking the square but this width may have been fixed by the intended length of frontage of the proposed County Buildings.

Wellington Square — described in the Municipal Corporations Report of 1835 as a 'square of ground in front of the new court house' — was not designed in the spirit of the closed urban space laid out in Georgian London but was intended more as a wide forecourt or esplanade to set off the County Buildings. The two rows of houses were of three storeys and set so far apart as merely to demark the floor pattern rather than enclose the space. The 'square' lacks enclosure to define its space and there are vista-like views outward focused on the backland of High Street or the limitless blue (or grey) of the Clyde. The symmetrical layout and the controlled character of the buildings make it distinguishable as a planned space, but it is a poor example of that date and is what Camillo Citte has called 'artless planning'. Owned by the town, and not the square, the central garden is enclosed, with entrances placed to avoid the normal lines of pedestrian traffic. It has a symmetrical layout of gravel paths, grass and flower beds and has collected a central war memorial and assorted statues. The use and design of the square would be enhanced if the space between the two rows of houses was unified, simplified, made exclusively pedestrian and planted with trees.[3]

The County Buildings were designed as a free standing temple on the edge of the sea backed by the sky and the distant views of the Firth of Clyde. The prison was tucked in behind so as not to mar this romantic aspect. The isolation of the County Buildings has been maintained by the openness of the Low Green and the use of the north west corner as a bowling green, and only slightly compromised by the extension of its offices over the site of the prison in 1931. There is a notable view northward looking past its portico to the tower of St. John's Church in the citadel.

3. The trees most suitable to withstand the salt-laden wind are: Cornish Elm (**ulnus stricta wheatleyi**) and Sycamore (**acer pseudoplatanus**). Shorter trees (25 ft. to 40 ft.) are Whitebeam (**sorbus aria**) and Swedish Whitebeam (**sorbus intermedia**).

The terraces nearby are uniform speculative developments of various dates along the rectangular pattern of streets with no attempt at space enclosure. The severe Victorian Barns Terrace c.1860 is pleasantly set back behind a row of trees making a complex relation of parallel spaces with the earlier terraces of Alloway Place opposite.

The 19th century layout of plots and streets contrasts markedly with that of the medieval town area when seen on a plan. The plot widths are sometimes irregular and the length is much shorter. There is a comprehensive system of lanes or mews for service access to houses but the great width of the streets seems to have been dictated less by prediction of future traffic than contemporary notions of what was proper in a fashionable suburb. This aim is vitiated by the diagonal pattern of parked cars usually seen along the centre of these wide streets.

THREATS TO CONTINUITY

Wheeled traffic was little used in Ayrshire up to the middle 18th century but by 1778 the New Bridge was designed for carriages to pass one another and wheeled traffic started the revolution in the use of the street spaces, by banishing street trading from the market cross at the junction of High Street and the Sandgate. Further inroads by the traffic of vehicles abetted the tendency started by high class retailers for retail activity to take place in shops lining the street or in special market buildings in back courts rather than from stalls in the open market place. The revolution was completed by the removal of the two tolbooths and the two market crosses in the early 19th century which had been free standing buildings in the street space. By this time also the ancient gates of 'ports' of the town had been demolished as impediments to traffic.

The side pressures of the volume of traffic continued to increase and in the later 19th century the east side of the High Street was set back leaving the Wallace Tower still marking the original frontage and Alloway Street was widened. The tramway built in 1901 fortunately involved little road widening but with the coming of the motor vehicle an ever greater proportion of the street space has been taken over by vehicles, stationary or moving. A proposal to widen the New Bridge and demolish the 18th century buildings on the east side of New Bridge Street seems to have been dropped, only after the buildings were purchased and the street corner demolished, when it must have become apparent that instead of opening up a view of the Town Buildings this would probably mean their destruction as the next stage of road widening. A more recent proposal was to demolish the central part of High Street and create

a roundabout enclosing the Wallace Tower. A similar desecration has been perpetrated in Newton where the 18th cenutury church and town buildings have recently been demolished and Newton Steeple alone left standing.

The great threat to the layout, which has been sufficiently flexible to satisfy the varied demands of seven centuries, is the unsympathetic use of the new and sweeping powers of the authorities to widen roads and to redevelop town blocks all at one time, obliterating the plot pattern and its varied expression on the frontage. If the subleties of the urban spaces are ironed out to improve their convenience as traffic routes and if the rhythm and proportion of property frontages are altered to express the large size of supermarkets and multiple stores, the essence of the character of Ayr will have been destroyed beyond recovery.

At the moment the pressures of fashion and commerce are moving towards this: Mill Vennel has become a meaningless unenclosed space by comprehensive redevelooment with blocks of flats; and the building line has been set back for recent buildings in Alloway Street and the extension of Sandgate, both on the fringes of the medieval layout.

The desirable alternative policy involves reduction of the traffic and recognition of the over-riding importance of the continuity of the historic layout, its subtle character and its great potential as a continuing structure for the town centre. All new buildings must improve and not disrupt the street scene and must be of an architectural quality to equal the best of the existing buildings. The latter must be appraised for their architectural, historical and townscape value and a considered policy pursued to encourage conservation ranging from the preservation of the best to the replacement of the worst. With careful planning the local authority could guide the forces of investment to suitable sites and by the normal process of piece-meal redevelopment build up the plots of the town with worthy modern buildings among the best of these of the past. The process would be continuous and the environment ever altering but the character of Ayr would survive by the ancient layout grinning through and new buildings being designed to fill the gaps in a continuity.

There is a proposal to form a broad path along the riverside which at present stretches from Turner's Bridge to the churchyard. If this is continued along the riverside as far as the Auld Brig it would spoil the characteristic impression of Ayr from across the river as of buildings rising sheer from the water. This is the impression of the town in Slezer's View of 1693 and has continued since. The Auld Brig would be much less dramatic if its high level walkway did not disappear into a slot between buildings. Any path

should extend no further than the triangular yard north of the churchyard where historically the built-up stretch began next to the ford whose landing place is marked by the space.

APPRAISAL AND CONSERVATION

Ayr was laid out as a New Town soon after 1205, since when each generation has lived in, adapted and extended the pattern bequeathed to it. By a happy chance this continuity was not disrupted by the industrial revolution since corporate trade restrictions made the burgh much less attractive for industrial enterprise than Newton across the river, and Ayr survived to become an 'historic town.' This means that its character is perforce the record of urban accretions and adaptations during its life.

Before the nineteenth century every old town was 'historic' in this sense, and in the long view Ayr must be regarded as a normal result of urban growth and Glasgow as abnormal. The selective disruption of continuity in the characters of towns, during the crude pioneering days of the industrial revolution, was dictated not by human planning but merely by their proximity to exploitable natural resources. The mechanism of disruption was that the sudden concentration of a large population dictated the restructuring within a short period of the town centre to suit a city rather than a town function. Village, town and city have different structural forms, recognisable by change in scale as well as in extent. A settlement can grow from one to another and maintain some continuity in its character as long as the rate of growth is unhurried. The rate of change is dirsuptive when a man sees his town transformed during his lifetime.

Since Ayr avoided disaster in the 19th century—more by luck than good management—the population of the burgh has been growing briskly (17,600 in 1851; 24,000 in 1891; 45,011 in 1951; estimated 51,000 in 1980) and central area functions have spread over and beyond the area of the medieval town to the exclusion of residential use. The pressures for change, resulting from this population growth alone, are manageable; but they are coupled with alarming demands for space for new roads, car-parks and larger units of development for multiple stores and supermarkets; which together could disrupt the continuity of character in the town centre as effectively as would industrial revolution, if change is not controlled and diverted elsewhere.

The central area of the burgh can be regarded as an area of historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve, by retaining its ancient layout and the best of its buildings, and to enhance, by replacing eyesores by buildings of a quality equal to the best of the old.

The continuity of character and historic interest of the central area will be disrupted and destroyed within this century unless positive use of planning powers ensures a proper conservation of the town's environmental resources.

A CONSERVATION PLAN

Given the resolve of the Town Council and its officers, and the support of the electorate, the character of Ayr can be preserved and enhanced by judicious use of powers under existing legislation.

The first (and easiest) move, is to designate the historic Burgh a ' Conservation Area ' under the terms of the Civic Amenities Act (1967), as a statement of intent. Besides giving a stronger control of development, this designation will give the important historic area of the town centre a separate legal existence, so that a local Conservation Area Committee, set up now to guide its development, would continue to have powers to safeguard its character after administration of the Burgh had otherwise passed to the new Regional Authority. Designation merely involves drawing the boundary of the Conservation Area on a map, confirming this by a resolution of the Council, advertising it in a local newspaper and in the ' Edinburgh Gazette,' and sending a copy to the Secretary of State for his information.

The proper boundaries of historic Ayr are deduced from a lengthy study of its national and man-made features in the ' Townscape ' section of this thesis (a photographic copy of which is in the Carnegie Library, Ayr) and these bounds are marked on the plan on page 369. Ayr is on a peninsula between the river and the sea. The river forms a natural boundary but is itself a unity so the boundary follows the further end of building plots beyond the river, behind North Harbour Street, River Street, and John Street. At the shore the boundary follows the limit of the built-up area, but the green areas of the Low Green and its extension northward, west of Queen's Terrace, should at the same time be designated as ' adjoining areas of special control.' The railway, with its cutting, viaduct, and embankment, is a strongly marked boundary, partially cutting off the peninsula, but a line between the Station and the Low Green is less clearly defined. As Miller Road has many buildings of architectural and historic interest, and has council and private offices, it partakes of the central area functions, and the plot-ends beyond its south side, should be the boundary; which thence follows Racecourse Road north to Alloway Place and runs west to the Low Green, along the plot-ends north of Fairfield Road.

Within this proposed Conservation Area the Burgh has already designated three separate smaller areas as such (the Fort area;
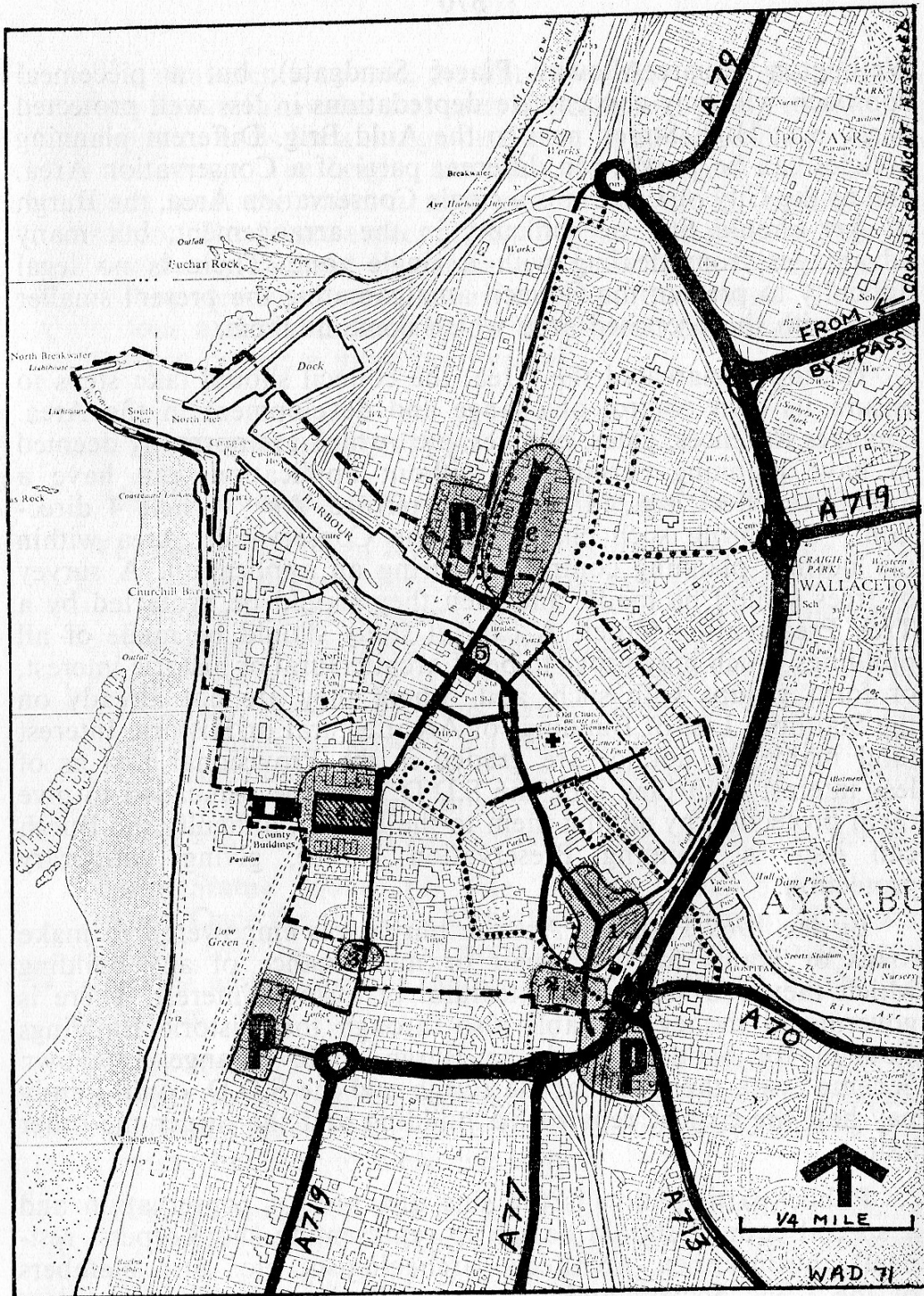
CONSERVATION AND TRAFFIC IN AYR

Proposed Conservation area   — · — · — · —

Proposed Pedestrian area   ————————

Proposed Service road   ·····················

Proposed Loop road   ━━━━━━━━

Proposed Distributor roads, A79, etc.

Areas of opporunity, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Wellington Square/Alloway Place; Sandgate), but a piecemeal approach will only concentrate depredations in less well protected parts, e.g., High Street, next to the Auld Brig. Different planning policies can be pursued in different parts of a Conservation Area, and as the City of Lincoln is a single Conservation Area, the Burgh of Ayr should find no difficulty in the arrangement, but many advantages from dealing with a single zone. There is no legal difficulty to prevent the Council amalgamating the present smaller areas with the proposed area which contains them.

Having demarcated the Area, the council should take steps to ensure its own control of change and development in the Area. Changes to fences, gates, porches, etc., which are normally deemed to have planning permission, without application, can have a disruptive effect, e.g., in a uniform terrace. An " Article 4 direction " will bring such changes in the Conservation Area within the normal planning control, requiring an application. A survey of trees should be made, and then they should be protected by a Tree Preservation Order. A careful study should be made of all buildings which may prove to be of architectural or historic interest, or form groups with such, and, where they are not already on the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest (and many are not, or are graded in the Provisional List as of less interest than they are), the S.D.D. must be persuaded to give them protection by adding them to the List. In difficulty the Burgh can issue a Building Preservation Notice, giving temporary protection.

By the 1969 Planning Act the burgh was empowered to make loans or grants for the repair or maintenance of any building which they consider of architectural or historic interest. There is government money available also through the Historic Buildings Council for Scotland, and the Burgh could arrange a ' Town Scheme ' with them so that the Burgh and the S.D.D. could jointly pay half the cost of repair of a building and the owner the other half.

Public participation is the sine qua non of conservation and a special council should be set up representing shopkeepers, residents, businessmen, architects, archeologists, etc., and members of the Civic Society and town-councillors; with sub-committees for special areas or problems. This council should consider all planning applications for the Conservation Area ('outline' applications not being allowed) as well as itself initiating proposals for improvements. A useful tool would be a scale model of central Ayr, into which models of proposed buildings could be inserted, to show their effect on the surroundings. The surveys and studies of the Area could well be organized by the C.A. Council and might usefully be published.

The next step is to take the initiative away from the developer in Ayr. A careful analysis of each building and group of buildings must be the basis for a design discipline to govern infill or replacement buildings. The height, materials, detailing and width of each building and the rhythm and proportion of its openings are important. The future aspect of, say, High Street, must be sketched, and gradually realised by piecemeal renewal or repair, financed by willing developers at the invitation of the Burgh. The study once done and made available to developers, the planners should be freed to pursue a more positive role.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

(As shown on the map of Conservation and Traffic in Ayr)

Townhead (1) When Kyle Street was truncated by the railway and its sidings, Alloway Street prospered as a shopping street until there is now a straggle of shops, etc., south of Burns Statue Square. Kyle Street and Smith Street next the siding form a run down area, in a good position as the continuation of High Street, and next to the Railway Station. The bus station should be moved to form a transport interchange with the railway, and car parking areas below an integrated shop and office development on the sidings and along Kyle Street and Smith Street. The parking should be integrated with the loop road proposed in the traffic plan, below.

Burns Statue Square (2) The 'square' lacks all feeling of enclosure. Once the traffic is decreased, redevelopment of its south side could well be extended northwards to form two polygonal spaces, one with the statue, and the other dominated by the Railway Station.

Miller Road (3) The western end of Miller Road is focussed on nothing more than the side door of a single storey bungalow assymetrically placed. In future the site could well take a more dominating building to close the vista.

Wellington Square (4) The un-square-like aspects of this rectangle of ground have been described above, and suitable trees suggested for planting to withstand salt-laden winds. The footpaths on north and south should be kept, behind bollards, but the roadways north and south should be thrown in with the central space, gravelled and cobbled, and the space planted with formal rows of large trees, but otherwise left open as a place for people to walk, talk and play games in.

New Bridge St./High Street Corner (5) For thirty years this corner site at the commercial centre of Ayr, facing the Town's Buildings, has lain empty, and reveals ragged gable walls and an

unlovely view of the back-buildings. The corner has been rounded off for traffic and a small garden has been planted and a telephone box added. This is all too makeshift for a proud town like Ayr. The corner should be rebuilt to its old form with a building fronting High Street at the height of its neighbours. The ground floor could well be open, on arches, forming a covered public space with telephones, etc., and a small garden in the court at the back.

Main Street of Newton-upon-Ayr (6) If the Town's Buildings are taken as the commercial centre of Ayr, Main Street lying just across the river over the New Bridge, is in a very good position for trading. The Newton Town House was demolished recently along with its Old Kirk, so that there are few buildings of any age or pretention in Main Street. If the Goods Station immediately to the west became a large car park, fed by the former rail line from the north, and traffic were removed from Main Street during shopping hours, the area could become the extension of the prime shopping area and provide sites for large multiple stores and supermarkets which would otherwise disrupt the medieval texture of High Street. A proper archaeological survey and excavation should precede redevelopment—paid for by the developers.

A TRAFFIC PLAN

To a large extent the prosperity of Ayr has been due to its importance as a crossing place on the River Ayr. Today, with the Auld Brig closed to traffic and the Victoria Bridge hidden away on a B-Road, all traffic crosses the New Bridge, having been funnelled to it either down Newton's Main Street, or through the heart of the old town of Ayr down Sandgate or High Street. The traffic to the bridge is now fast ruining the town, environmentally and financially, by noise, vibration, visual intrusion and sheer danger to pedestrians, making it impossible to carry on its function as a service and retail centre for large numbers of people moving on foot. The new by-pass has taken traffic wishing to avoid Ayr, but the town is the service centre of a large hinterland and generates its own traffic. At the bridge, at peak travel times, there is about the same volume of traffic travelling northward as is travelling southward and traffic management measures have been imposed to prevent vehicles trying to turn right at each end of the bridge. It has been suggested that a second bridge further downstream opposite Fort Street would ease the load and might be approached by a new road on the line of the old railway running north from the Goods Station.

Apart from ruining all views of the Two Brigs, such a bridge would merely serve to swell the volume of traffic drawn through the streets of Ayr towards the bridging point, or travelling in

the opposite direction having crossed. Most of this traffic is local traffic and the lesson of the Buchanan Report is that such traffic will increase by 100% as more people become car owners. The people want to get from one part of Ayr to another somewhere across the river. All are forced to come together, to approach the only bridge, down Main Street, or down Sandgate or High Street, even though often their origin and desired destination lie far beyond these congested central streets of the town. Traffic from the New Bridge debouches into Sandgate at its junction with High Street. The point used to be marked by the Malt Cross in the middle of the street: nowadays nothing could exist there. Barriers restrain the people to the footway and roaring traffic moves in deadly surges governed by lights. The west side of Sandgate is dying commercially as it becomes impossible to cross the street.

To restore humanity (and profit) to the main streets of Ayr, they must be closed to traffic during shopping hours: the traffic must, however, be provided for. The answer to the paradox is to close the New Bridge to traffic and build the new bridge proposed, as a high level bridge immediately upstream of (and hidden by) the railway viaduct. A new loop road, with a direct link to the by-pass as the main entry into Ayr, should be constructed along the east side of the existing railway line, to pick up all the main roads leading into Ayr (as an inner by-pass) and distribute traffic for the two environmental areas of central Ayr, separated by the river and linked only by the new bridge.

A car park could be provided on the Goods Station site next to Main Street, fed direct from the 'loop road,' and be next to the centre of Ayr, by a short walk across the New Bridge. The site of the present Cattle Market could become a long-stay car park next to the rail and bus stations in the Townhead development. For office and county council workers, a car park could be incorporated into a development next the Low Green, approached directly from the 'loop road' by a new road on the line of Bellevue Crescent.

Traffic should be removed from Sandgate and High Street, and much reduced elsewhere in the town so that the pedestrian could once more be master. To record this signal victory it would be appropriate, finally, to commission a modern design for the site of the Malt Cross, at the junction of Sandgate and High Street, and place it boldly in the middle of the road so that in future people may walk around it and remember the danger averted.

APPENDIX 1:

THE TOWN AND FORT OF AYRE

in the west of Scotland

1. the covered way
2. the crenelations
3. the fosse
4. the middle fosse
5. the bastions
6. the sentry posts
7. escarpment
8. firing slits
9. the 'katte'
10. turrets
11. powder magazine
12. grain store
13. the church
14. Governor's office
15. houses for 1,000 men
16. houses for 280 officers
17. stables
18. private houses
19. Dr. Shulder's and Margaret's lodgings
20. wells
21. houses
22. market place
23. guard room

a. the town of Ayre
b. town hall
c. old town hall
d. bridge
e. river
f. quay
g. the sea
h. Craigie House
i. the Newtown
k. the customs house
l. the town gates
m. the wells
n. the new town church

From the German edition of Tessin's Plan of 1654.
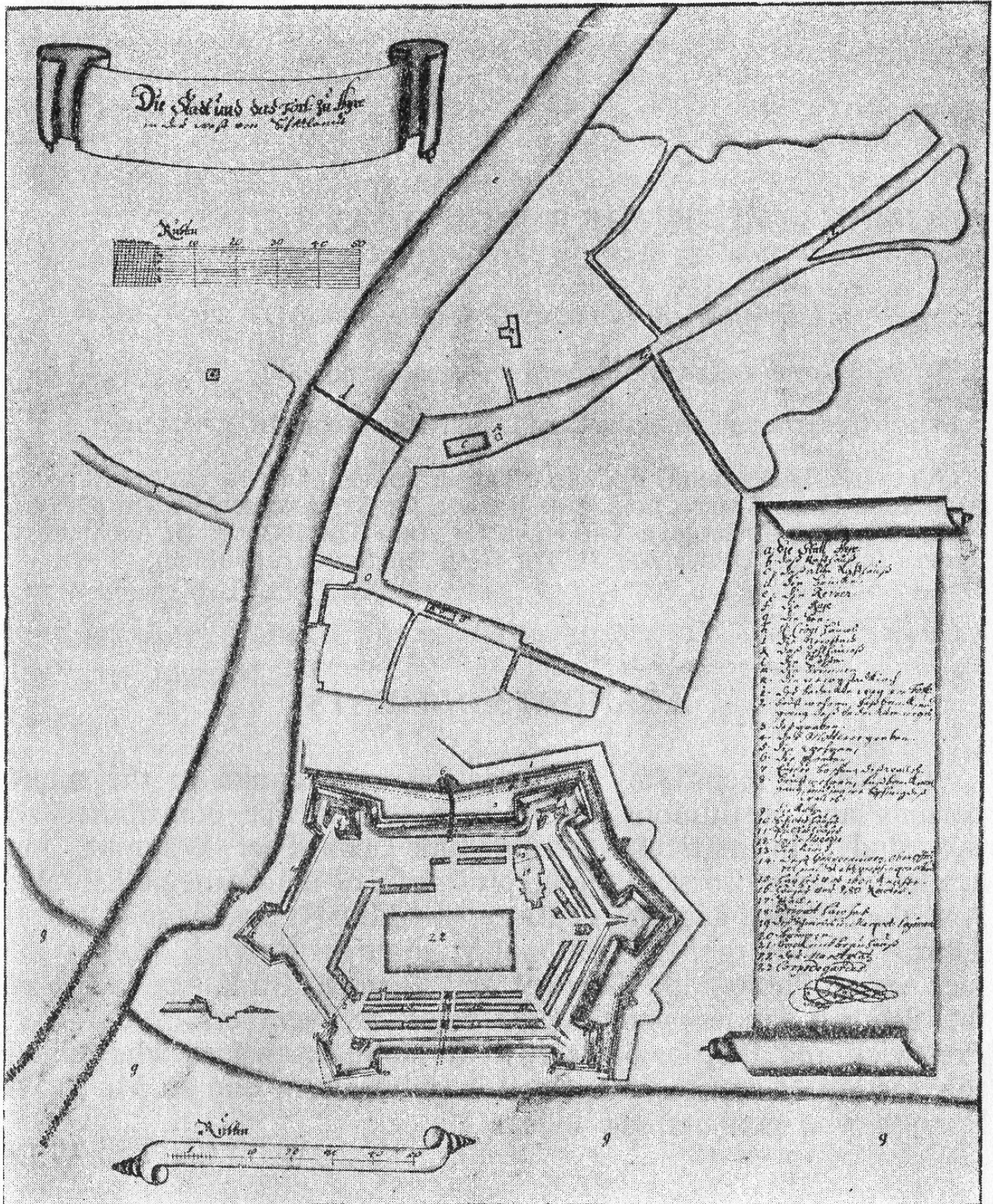
APPENDIX 2:

COMMON SEAL OF THE BURGH OF AYR

Inscription—SI (GILLUM) COMMUNE BURGI DE ARE.

'The said Royall Burgh of Air gives for ensignes armoriall:

Blazon from the register of the Lord Lyon King of Arms 1673.

GULES (red background) A CASTLE TRIPLE TOURED ARGENT (silver) BETWIXT ANE HOLY LAMB STAFF CROSS AND BANNER OF ST. ANDREW IN THE DEXTER FESSE AND IN THE SINISTER THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST IN A CHARGER PROPER (natureal) UNDER ALL IN THE BASE THE SEA AZURE (blue).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MAPS AND PLANS

(M: map; P: plan)

1. 1654 (M) Blaeu's Atlas—Province of Kyle ... Timothy Pont.
2. 1654 (P) The Town and Citadell of Ayre—
Hans Ewald Tessin.
3. n.d. (P) Die Stadt and das Fort zu Ayre—
? Hans Ewald Tessin.
(German version of 2; see p. 375)
(4.) 1693 views. Prospects of Ayr from the East
and from Newton .... Slezer.
5. c.1754 (P) A plan of the town and citadel of Air T. Walker
6. 1754 (M) First Military Survey of Scotland .... Wm. Roy.
7. 1775 (M) New Map of Ayrshire .... Armstrong.
8. 1775 (P) Plan of the town of Ayr .... Armstrong.
(inset in 7)
9. 1818 (P) Plan of the town of Ayr .... John Wood.
10. 1824 (P) Plan of part of the town of Ayr .... J. Milliken.
11. 1832 (P) Plan and Views of Ayr .... ? J. Milliken.
(9. amended)   (Ayr Directory)
12. 1832 (M) Map of the County of Ayr .... J. Milliken.
13. 1832 (P) Ayr and Suburbs (6in.).
(Report on Parliamentary Boundaries)
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AYR
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Index