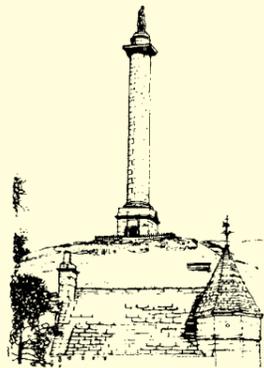


17. The commanding feature of the west end of the High Street is Dr Gray's Hospital built in 1816-19 with money bequeathed by Dr Alexander Gray, a native of Elgin who had amassed a fortune in the service of the East India Company.



16. Ladyhill derives its name from the Chapel of Our Lady attached to the castle of Elgin which occupied this site from earliest times. The column in memory of George, 5th Duke of Gordon, was erected in 1839 with the statue of the Duke being added in 1855.

15. The present Thunderton Hotel is all that remains of the most splendid house in Elgin, once a Royal residence with orchards and a bowling green. In the medieval times this was the site of the "Great Lodging" of the Scottish Kings and in 1746 Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed here on his way to Culloden.

14. There has been a church on this site since the 12th century. Dedicated to the patron saint of Elgin, St Giles, the present church, designed in the manner of a Greek doric temple by Archibald Simpson, dates from 1827 and is, the Cathedral apart, Elgin's best known building.

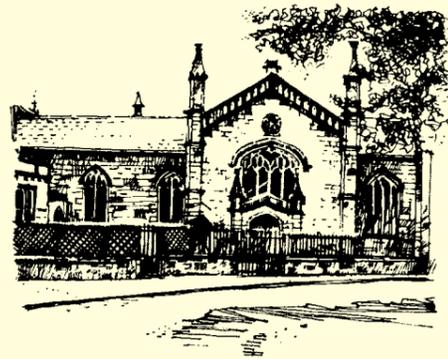
13. This part of the High Street was for many centuries both cemetery and market-place. There was a cross hereabouts as early as 1365 although the present Muckle Cross is an 1888 restoration of a 17th century cross demolished about 1792.



12. There is a tradition that this property originally belonged to the Knights of St John, but the tower itself is the only portion remaining of the town house built in 1634 by Andrew Leslie of the Glen of Rothies.

11. A good example of the arcaded buildings for which Elgin is famous is No. 42-46 High Street. In the 18th century this was the Red Lion Inn, the only place where Dr Samuel Johnson "found reason to complain of a Scottish table". The close to the rear, a fine example of Scottish burgh architecture, has been recently restored.

10. Nos. 15-25 High Street were the subjects of the Elgin Fund's first restoration project in 1971. To the rear is Masonic Close, a successful blend of the old and the new in the provision of town centre housing.

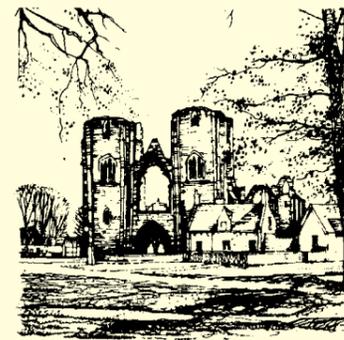


20. When it was built in 1825-26, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church formed a fine terminal feature to the then newly constructed North Street. It is most probably the work of the Elgin architect, William Robertson.

18 and 19. Descending the steps under the delightful garden bridge of Maryhill House we come on our left to the Mary Well, the water of which is said to be colder in summer than in winter. Tradition is that this well, dedicated to the virgin Mary, supplied holy water to the Cathedral. At the foot of the brae the Lossie is spanned by the Marywell Bridge, erected in 1870. Continuing eastward on the right-hand bank of the river we come to Hangman's Ford. The last execution in Moray took place in Elgin in 1834. After the event the hangman was set upon by the local people and only escaped with difficulty, fording the Lossie at this spot only to be found dead from his injuries near Forres.



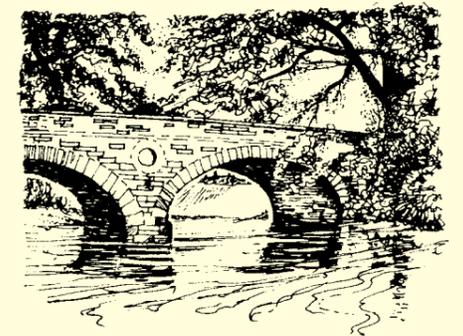
21. Grant Lodge was originally built about 1750 as the Elgin residence of the Earls of Seafield and was greatly enlarged a century later by the 6th Earl, Francis William. The public Park was given to the town in 1902 by Sir George Cooper.



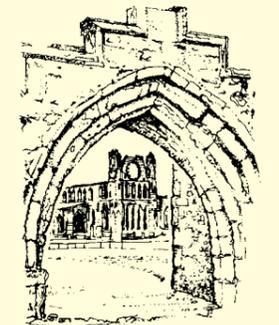
1. Elgin Cathedral (see overleaf), and adjacent, The Biblical Garden.



2. Popularly known as "the Bishop's Palace", this building was in fact the Precentor's Manse, the only one of a group of more than twenty manses in the precincts of the Cathedral to remain in something like its original form.



3. The two-arched Brewery Bridge of 1798 is so-called from the Brewery which, until 1913, stood on the banks of the Lossie immediately to the west of the Cathedral.



4. Restored in 1857, the Panns Port is the only survivor of the four gateways set in the precinct wall of the Cathedral. It derived its name from the meadow land lying immediately to the east known as 'le Pannis'.

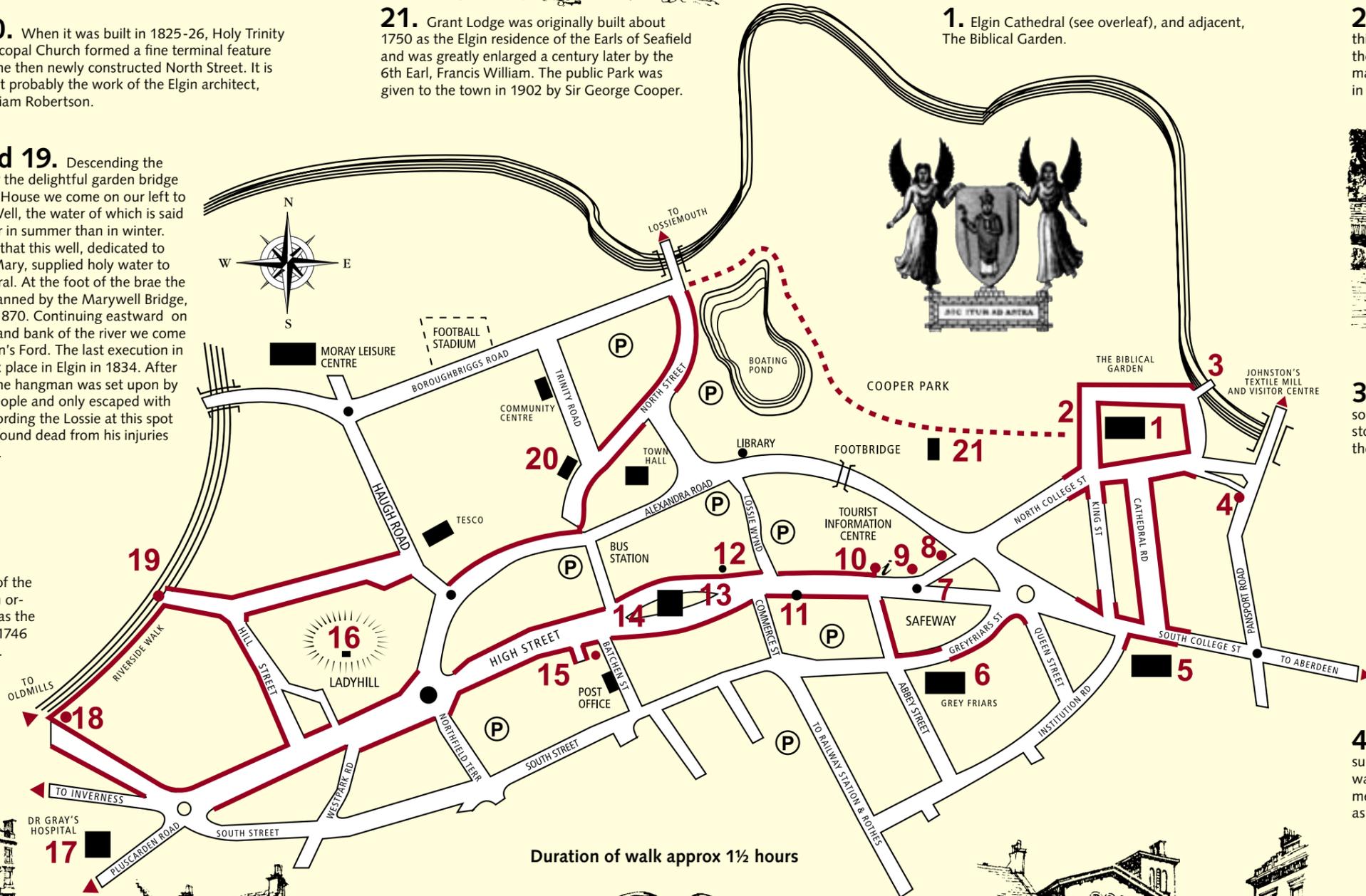
5. George Alexander Anderson, a local boy of humble origins whose story is one of the great romances of Elgin's history, bequeathed the money to found "The Elgin Institution for the Support of Old Age and Education of Youth". It was built in 1831 to a design of Archibald Simpson of Aberdeen, architect of St Giles Church.

6. The Grey Friars in Elgin moved to this site in 1479. The buildings were restored at the end of last century by John Kinross and now "form the best example of a medieval friary to be seen in Scotland".

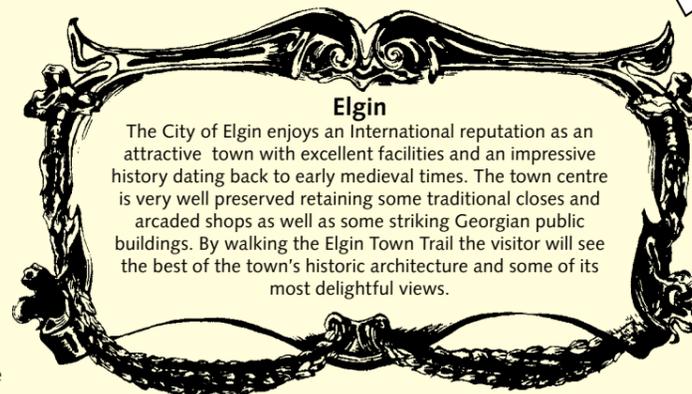
The Elgin Museum was built in 1842 to a design of Thomas Mackenzie to house the collections of the Elgin Literary and Scientific Association and is still run by the successors of that association, the Moray Society.



7 and 8. The first cross on this site was erected as part of a penance by Alexander Macdonald of the Isles who "spulzied" (dispoiled) the Cathedral in 1402. It marked the limits of the Sanctuary of the Cathedral and was also a place of punishment where "jougs" and "stocks" were situated.



Duration of walk approx 1½ hours

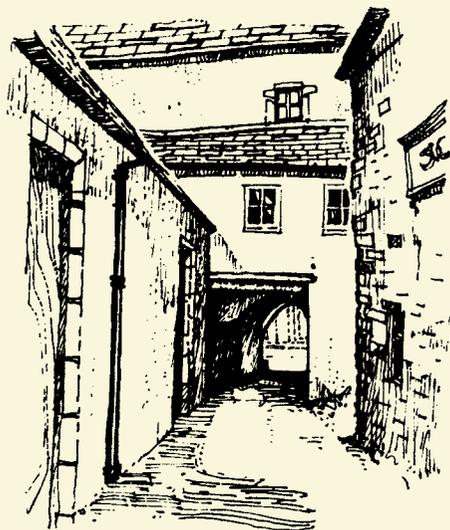


9. This carefully-preserved three-storeyed house at No. 7 High Street bears the date 1694. From 1703 to 1722 it was the banking house of William Duff of Dipple and Braco, ancestor of the Earls of Fife, and has ever since been known as Braco's banking House.

ELGIN is a city of considerable character and contains many buildings of individual merit. The High Street has to adapt to meet the needs of commerce and Moray Council as Planning Authority has the responsibility of ensuring that any change is for the better; that the best buildings are maintained, and new buildings are designed sympathetically.

Some 242 important buildings are 'listed' by the Scottish Ministers as being of Architectural or Historic Interest but the Council has also designated two conservation areas to emphasise the importance which is attached to retaining this unique heritage of historic buildings, closes and townscape.

Despite extensive redevelopments over the past 200 years, fragments of some 50 closes survive within the former Burgh. Some new buildings incorporate salvaged material - carved stones, mouldings or marriage lintels. The visitor will be able to see and take pleasure in the continuing improvement work undertaken by the Council and private developers.



THE MORAY SOCIETY is concerned with the history and conservation of Moray. As an organisation of voluntary members, it aims to further the arts, archaeology, geology, botany and natural history of the district; to collect, preserve and display objects in its museum; and to safeguard and conserve the amenities and environment of Moray.

THE ELGIN MUSEUM, which it runs, contains a wide range of exhibits illustrating the history of the area. There is a unique collection of fossils from 200-400 million years ago. Some of them, discovered locally, are the original types by which certain reptiles and even one dinosaur are known to world science. From ancient sculptured stones including the famous Burghead Bull; via guns, clocks, dresses, Elgin Silver, and items of domestic and country life; to the modern development of North Sea Oil, the Museum's collections are freshly displayed and well worth a visit.

The Moray Society also keeps a watchful eye on the conservation of our heritage. It makes constructive comments on planning applications and policy reports, presses for the preservation of buildings of architectural or historic interest, organises lectures and co-operates with all the bodies, including local authorities and the Scottish Civic Trust, which share its interests and concerns.



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Elgin Town Trail

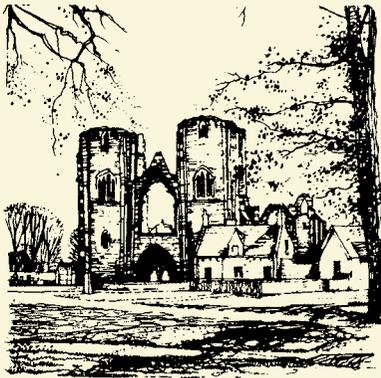


The Town of ELGIN

and its DEVELOPMENT

WITH its equable climate, fertile soil and strategic position, Moray has played an important part in the story of Scotland from earliest times. Its principal town, Elgin, was founded on a well-drained ridge with a natural defensive mound and protected on three sides by the River Lossie which was also a source of power and a means of communication. There was probably a castle here as early as the eleventh century and the land hereabouts was a favourite hunting ground of the early monarchs. David I raised Elgin to the status of a Royal Burgh and in 1224 the town received the additional accolade of being chosen as the seat of the Bishop of Moray.

Despite the unwelcome attentions of various armies and bands of brigands, Elgin grew steadily throughout the medieval period until by the seventeenth century it boasted many fine buildings reflecting the prosperity of its merchants and craftsmen. At the beginning of the nineteenth century though, the town had a population of less than 4,000 and was still largely confined to three parallel lines of streets running between the Castle and the precincts of the Cathedral. Then fortunes made abroad financed some of Elgin's finest buildings and stimulated a sense of civic pride, which, aided by the coming of the railway and the general economic growth of Victorian Britain saw the laying out of new streets and the construction of new buildings on a scale previously unparalleled. The most recent development has been into the previously separate villages of Bishopmill and New Elgin and latterly into the marshy area south of the railway line so that the town now has a population of some 20,000.



The Bishopric of Moray was founded in 1107, but it was not until 1224 that the Cathedral was transferred to 'the Church of the Holy Trinity beside Elgin'. In its original form Elgin Cathedral was a simple cruciform building, but after it was damaged by fire in 1270 the choir was doubled in length with aisles added on each side and a Chapter House built opening off the north aisle. In 1390 Alexander Stewart, more familiarly known as the 'Wolf of Badenoch', plundered and burned both Forres and Elgin including the Cathedral, which sustained such damage that it was necessary to rebuild the western gable, the arcades of the nave, the central tower and the chapter house.

Although in the years immediately following the Reformation the Cathedral seems to have remained untouched, it was much too rich a target to resist for long. In 1567 the lead was stripped from the roofs and in 1637 the choir roof collapsed. The rood-screen with its painting of the crucifixion was taken down and destroyed in 1640 and on Easter Sunday, 1711, the great central tower fell destroying the north transept and the main arcades of the nave. Thereafter the ruins were used as a quarry and rubbish dump until in 1807 an enclosure wall was built and the process of decline arrested. About 1824 John Shanks was appointed keeper and set about clearing the rubbish which had accumulated over the years, removing, it is said, some "3,000 barrowfuls and laying bare the foundations of the pillars of the nave, the elevations of the altar and the stairs at the western gate". From this time onward the conservation of the building became the great concern of successive government departments so that the ruins seen today remain one of the finest examples of medieval architecture in Scotland.



FURTHER READING

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Crammond, W. | The Records of Elgin. 2v. 1093-07 |
| Elgin Society | Historic Elgin and its Cathedral, 1974. |
| Elgin Society | Old Elgin. 1954. |
| Mackintosh, H. B. | Elgin Past and Present. 1914. |
| Seton, M. | Elgin Past and Present. 1980. |
| Watson, J. & W. | Morayshire Described. 1868. |
| Wyness, F. | Medieval Elgin. 1944. |
| Young, R. | Annals of the Parish and Burgh of Elgin. 1879. |

All these titles, together with many others of local interest, are available for consultation at Elgin Library, Cooper Park.



A worthwhile extension of the Town Trail is provided by the walk to Oldmills, the oldest mill on the Lossie. Continuing on from Oldmills one reaches Bow Brig, built between 1630 and 1635 and the first stone bridge over the Lossie. After crossing the bridge a sharp right turn leads to a network of paths which follow the river and rejoin the Town Trail at Marywell Bridge.