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**Gerard Baldwin Brown:
Edinburgh and the Preservation Movement
(1880-1930).**

Malcolm Ashton Cooper

**A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Edinburgh
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Abstract

In 1880 Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932) was appointed by Edinburgh University as its first Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art. Over the fifty-year period that he held the professorship he was to become well-known as a scholar of Anglo-Saxon art and culture, preparing the first comprehensive study of Anglo-Saxon church architecture in England as part of a six volume study of the arts in early England. In 1905 he produced a monograph, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905) which provided a comprehensive assessment of the protective systems in place across Europe and America for the protection of ancient buildings and monuments and made strong recommendations for the strengthening of the protective measures in Britain. These recommendations led amongst other things to the creation of Britain's first national inventory bodies but Baldwin Brown's call for the protection of occupied ancient buildings to be improved was not successful.

Although *The Care of Ancient Monuments* appeared to be a departure from Baldwin Brown's usual interests, this research suggests that it formed part of the author's longer-term commitment to the protection of long-lived elements of the built environment, and that his views were strongly influenced by his experience of pursuing preservation campaigns in Edinburgh's Old and New Towns. This study draws on a detailed study of Baldwin Brown's preservation-related campaigns in Edinburgh to trace the coalescence of an urban preservation movement in the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It draws on a range of information sources including a hitherto unidentified collection of letters to the press, reports of lectures and published papers to trace the development of his preservation philosophy and the nature and scope of his preservation campaigns. It also explores the mechanisms available to would-be preservationists in the absence of effective legislation, and it assesses Baldwin Brown's broader significance in the development of the urban preservation movement.

Lay Summary

In 1880 Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932) was appointed by Edinburgh University as its first Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art. Over the fifty-year period that he held the professorship he was to become well-known as a scholar of Anglo-Saxon art and culture, preparing the first comprehensive study of Anglo-Saxon church architecture in England as part of a six volume study of the arts in early England. In 1905 he produced a monograph, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905). This provided a comprehensive assessment of the protective systems in place across Europe and America for the protection of ancient buildings and monuments and made strong recommendations for the strengthening of the protective measures in Britain. These recommendations led amongst other things to the creation of Britain's first national inventory bodies but Baldwin Brown's call for the protection of occupied ancient buildings to be improved was not successful.

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Author's Declaration

I confirm that I have composed this thesis over the research period and that it is my own work. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

The publications included at Appendix V are my own and were published in the *Ruskin Review and Bulletin*, *Historic Environment: Policy and Practice*, and the *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*.

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Malcolm Ashton Cooper

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 - 'Gerard Baldwin Brown, Edinburgh and the Conservation Movement.' *The Historic Environment: Policy and Practice*, 4, 2 (2013), 156-77.
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List of Abbreviations

AIS	Architectural Institute of Scotland
AMBS	Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland
BCO	Brasenose College, Oxford
CRC	Caledonian Railway Company
CA	The Cockburn Association
CAC	Cumbria Archive Centre
EAA	Edinburgh Architectural Association
ECA	Edinburgh City Archives
ECL	Edinburgh City Library
EEN	Edinburgh Evening News
ESU	Edinburgh Social Union
ETC	Edinburgh Town Council
JRIBA	Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects
NAL	National Archives, London
NAS	National Archives of Scotland
NBR	North British Railway
NCE	New College Library, Edinburgh
NLS	National Library Scotland
NT	National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty
NTS	National Trust for Scotland
OCO	Oriel College, Oxford
OEC	Old Edinburgh Club
RCAHMS	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
RSA	Royal Scottish Academy
SAC	Scottish Arts Club
SAS	Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
SPAB	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
UoE/SC	University of Edinburgh Library, Special Collections
UoS/AL	University of Strathclyde, Anderson Library
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum, London
VCH	Victoria County History

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Part I

This study explores the coalescence of an urban preservation movement in Edinburgh during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth. Key to this study is a detailed analysis of the preservation-related activities of Gerard Baldwin Brown, the Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art at Edinburgh University from 1880-1930.

Following an introductory chapter which sets out the aims and approach to be adopted and situates Baldwin Brown within current conservation historiography, the city's developmental history and character are summarised. This is followed by discussion of the emergence of early preservation discourse in Edinburgh in the context of the increasingly rapid change taking place within the eighteenth and nineteenth century city.

The fourth chapter introduces Gerard Baldwin Brown, summarising his family background, his education and his early career prior to taking up the Professorship of Fine Art at Edinburgh in 1880. His work as the Watson Gordon Professor is then discussed and his areas of academic interest and publications are summarised. Finally the origins and nature of his approach to art and its philosophy are described.

Chapter 1. Urban Preservation and Change

The second half of the nineteenth and the early decades of the twentieth century saw a significant reaction to the extent of change within historic towns and cities in Britain and Europe. The loss of familiar and long-lived buildings, monuments and other structures was becoming a day-to-day experience for urban dwellers. While welcomed by many, for some at least the scale and nature of urban development was unsettling and raised questions about the value placed on survivals from the past. Concern over the loss of elements of the built environment, believed by some to be both historically significant and contributing to a settlement's identity, was becoming more apparent. However, for those who wanted to preserve these long-lived elements of the existing townscape there were difficult questions to be addressed. What was to be preserved? On what grounds might arguments be brought forward to justify this? Who had the responsibility for making such arguments and what legitimating body existed with the power to decide what elements of the urban environment were of value and had the authority to make decisions about their future? Finally, what processes and mechanisms, legal or otherwise, existed or needed to be developed in order to achieve preservation where this was deemed appropriate? Despite the increasing pace and scale of change in Britain's towns and cities from the later eighteenth century onwards, by far the majority of historic buildings and structures in urban areas were to remain outside the scope of legislative protection until the 1930s. In practice most were to remain unprotected until the mid-1940s when 'listing' legislation specifically designed to protect occupied buildings of historical significance finally made it to the statute book. Even then implementation was slow, with many historic buildings remaining vulnerable until the 1970s. The arrival of new legislation is often the culmination of a long and complex social and political process and this is certainly the case for what is referred to today as the historic environment. To understand the nature and form of the historic environment legislation relating to the urban built environment and the origins of its underlying protective

philosophies and methodologies, it is the socio-historic setting of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that is of particular interest.¹

Edinburgh provides an unusually interesting case study for the emergence and development of an urban preservation movement and its accompanying discourse during this period.

Within the city this movement was influenced not only by the city's own developmental history and its particular urban form, but also by the age and nature of the city's buildings and structures, and their potential to be drawn into discourse relating, amongst others, to economic development, public amenity and national identity. However, in the absence of protective legislation for urban historic buildings and monuments, preservationists in the nineteenth and early twentieth century had to develop new mechanisms or exploit the existing levers of power available within broader civil society in order to bring influence to bear on landowners, proprietors, the municipal authority and the other bodies and individuals who were involved in the city's development and improvement process. The study of the emerging preservation movement in Edinburgh therefore offers an opportunity to shed light not only on the preservation movement itself but also on the nature and workings of civil society within which the movement was to gain its momentum.

Edinburgh also offers one additional advantage for those interested in the emerging urban preservation movement. This relates to the activities of a highly visible and influential figure, Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932), appointed to the newly instituted Watson Gordon Chair of Fine Art at Edinburgh University in 1880.² The Chair had been endowed in the memory of the Edinburgh artist and President of the Royal Scottish Academy, Sir John Watson Gordon, to: 'give instruction on the history and theory of the fine arts, including painting,

¹ For the preservation movement in this period, see M. Hall (ed.), *Towards World Heritage: International Origins of the Preservation Movement 1870-1930* (Farnham, 2011); A. Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789-1914*, (Cambridge, 2013).

² Announced on 19 July 1880.

sculpture and architecture, and the branches of art therewith connected.’³ Baldwin Brown used the fifty years in which he held his professorship to produce a range of work on art theory and practice, including biographical studies of artists. He also established himself as a leading scholar on Anglo-Saxon art, architecture and culture during this time.⁴ Whilst continuing to pursue these two interests throughout his career, however, in 1905 Baldwin Brown published a book entitled *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.⁵ This appeared as something of a departure as the monograph concerned the preservation of ancient buildings and monuments, and included a detailed survey of ‘the legislative and other measures adopted in European countries and North America for the protection of ancient monuments and objects and scenes of natural beauty, and for preserving the aspect of historical cities.’⁶ This study was intended to demonstrate that Britain, a modern and forward-looking nation, had fallen behind other nations in valuing and protecting the surviving built-remains from its past. By illustrating the preservation systems in place in other countries, Baldwin Brown sought to persuade both politicians and the broader public of the need to strengthen the protective processes in Britain.

Baldwin Brown used *The Care of Ancient Monuments* to put forward proposals for a series of changes he believed should be introduced. The key recommendations were: the establishment of a principle that private or corporate property could be expropriated on aesthetic or historical grounds; the creation of a Royal Commission to compile an inventory of ancient and historical buildings and monuments in Britain (and to coordinate other bodies undertaking such work); and the strengthening of the existing protective legislation for ancient monuments to include occupied ancient buildings. The response to these recommendations was mixed. Baldwin Brown’s suggestion regarding the expropriation of

³ University of Edinburgh, *Deed of Foundation*. See also the *Edinburgh University Calendar 1880-81* (Edinburgh, 1880), 63-5.

⁴ This study included the first comprehensive inventory and analysis of Anglo-Saxon church architecture in England.

⁵ G.B. Brown, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905).

⁶ The book’s subtitle.

private property, for example, was seen as politically unpalatable and whilst some limited measures were introduced into the revised ancient monument legislation in 1913, the mechanisms were clumsy and rarely used. While the scope of the ancient monument legislation was broadened, allowing more effective protection for monuments and ruins,⁷ occupied buildings were not drawn into the scope of the revised legislation due to the perceived interference with the long-established rights of property owners in Britain.⁸ The reliance on other mechanisms to preserve occupied architecturally and historically significant urban buildings and the majority of other significant urban structures therefore continued.

More positively, Baldwin Brown's proposal for a national inventory body did gain support from the Secretary of State for Scotland, Lord Pentland. He was a keen promotor of Scottish identity, had encouraged increased administrative devolution, and had taken forward the reorganisation of the nation's art bodies.⁹ Less than three years after the publication of *The Care of Ancient Monuments*, a Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions for Scotland came into being with Baldwin Brown as a founding commissioner. In its early years he and his fellow commissioners pursued the compilation and strengthening of an Edinburgh inventory of historic buildings, intended to provide the basis for the city's emerging urban preservation movement. The Royal Commission also

⁷ Chapter 9.

⁸ This debate falls within the wider 'land question' which occupied politicians and activities from the mid Victorian period onwards. See M. Cragoe and P. Readman (eds.) *The Land Question in Britain, 1750-1950* (Basingstoke, 2010). For specific discussion of the political context of preservation debate and land ownership from the late Victorian period onwards, see P. Mandler, 'Rethinking the "powers of darkness": an anti-history of the preservation movement in Britain', in Hall, *Towards World Heritage*, 221-239.

⁹ Under the National Galleries of Scotland Act, 1906. See M. Sinclair, *The Right Honourable John Sinclair, Lord Pentland GCSI* (London, 1928), 102-6; D. Torrance, *The Scottish Secretaries* (Edinburgh, 2006), 59-69. The Scottish Royal Commission was followed by the creation of similar organisations in Wales and England.

sought to expand this initiative to create urban inventories for all of Scotland's royal burghs.¹⁰

Although previously unrecognised, much of Baldwin Brown's motivation for writing the 1905 book came from his personal experience of pursuing campaigns to preserve buildings and monuments of recognised antiquity in Edinburgh. While he was not the first to engage in the preservation of Edinburgh's built heritage, as a newcomer to the city he was able to bring a perspective based on different experiences and knowledge. His university position also gave him opportunities and freedoms which were not as readily available to others in the city. He was also extremely knowledgeable about the preservation movement and key cases across Britain and the continent, actively drawing on this knowledge for his preservation-related activities and writings.¹¹ A detailed study of Baldwin Brown's preservation-related work offers therefore significant opportunities to shed light on the evolution of the urban preservation movement more broadly.

The combination of Baldwin Brown's strategic vision and his persistent campaigning suggests that he should be recognised as one of the most active and influential preservationists in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹² As a detailed monograph concerning the nature, purpose and methods of managing historic buildings and ancient monuments, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* stands out in the early decades of the twentieth century in terms of its scope, comprehensiveness and its ambitious intent. However, this book formed only one element of a long-term campaign to develop and refine the intellectual and organisational infrastructure through which urban preservation strategies might become effective, and to gain the necessary broader political and public support for preservation in the context of the seemingly unstoppable process of urban change.

¹⁰ M.A. Cooper, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown and the preservation of Edinburgh's Old Town', *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, 58 (2014), 134-154. See Appendix V.

¹¹ Cooper, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown and the preservation of Edinburgh's Old Town'.

¹² M.A. Cooper, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown, Edinburgh, and the Care of Ancient Monuments', *The Historic Environment*, 4, 2 (2013), 156-77. See Appendix V.

Surprisingly, Baldwin Brown is commonly overlooked or given only passing mention in British conservation historiographies, with the reason why a Professor of Fine Art based in Edinburgh might have committed significant amounts of time and effort into the research and production of a book on preservation remaining largely unexplored. At a general level, the lack of detailed research on the emergence of building and monument preservation in Edinburgh together with a lack of study of Baldwin Brown's activities in the city are major contributory factors to his absence from key studies.¹³ A further problem is that where information about Baldwin Brown exists, it tends to be spread across a number of disciplines including art history, architecture and archaeology. This has led to a fragmentary picture, with the links between his philosophy of art and approach to teaching, his detailed knowledge of architectural and cultural history, and his preservation work unexplored. A broader underlying problem can be found also in the construction of British narratives of conservation historiography. These have tended to privilege developments and advances in England and particularly in London, with advances in Scotland poorly understood and rarely mentioned.¹⁴ There has also been a tendency to focus on organisational histories. The problem is further compounded by the fact that conservation historiography in Scotland is relatively poorly developed.¹⁵ A strong argument can be made therefore that the recognition of Baldwin Brown's preservation-related activities and their significance has suffered from broader weaknesses and biases in the philosophical and methodological approaches underlying the construction of both British and Scottish conservation historiography.

¹³ The developing interest in Scottish history as a distinct study area with its own philosophical and methodological approaches from the 1960s onwards has not been matched by a similar interest in terms of constructing a distinct Scottish preservation historiography - this is particularly evident in the area of urban preservation. Within Edinburgh, there has been a tendency for researchers to concentrate on the activities of the pioneering urban sociologist, Patrick Geddes. This has had the unintended consequence of drawing attention away from the activities of Baldwin Brown and other important figures in the city's preservation movement.

¹⁴ By way of example, Baldwin Brown was incorrectly referred to as a Scot in S. Thurley's *Men from the Ministry* (London, 2013), 61.

¹⁵ M. Glendinning's *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation* (London, 2013) includes some discussion of Edinburgh within a broader description of architectural preservation in Europe.

Aims and approach

The overarching aim of this study is to explore the emergence of a coherent urban preservation movement in Edinburgh, with a particular focus on the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This research explores how concepts of value and meaning were articulated in relation to occupied urban buildings and monuments in Edinburgh and seeks to identify the mechanisms available to preservationists prior to the arrival of broader legislative protection. This research draws in particular on a study of Gerard Baldwin Brown and uses a detailed analysis of his preservation-related campaigns and activities to trace the emergence of an increasingly powerful and coherent urban preservation movement in the city.

Broadly speaking, three analytical perspectives are drawn together here: the biographical, the processes of cultural production and discourse development, and the functioning of civil society. Gaining an understanding of the development of the emerging urban preservation movement through the detailed study of a single individual acting within broader society might at first sight appear problematical in ontological and epistemological terms.¹⁶

However, this problem has been faced by the French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu who sought to develop sociological methods of inquiry to explore how agency and structure (subjectivism and objectivism) interacted more broadly in society through cultural practice, and to investigate the development and reproduction of discourse and cultural meaning.¹⁷ Bourdieu developed his methodological approach¹⁸ in a wide range of projects undertaken over his lifetime ranging from ethnographic studies and analyses of educational institutions to detailed studies of cultural production in the literary and arts fields, with key

¹⁶ There is a philosophical division between studies of agency and the role of the individual, and those which focus on society and the structures and institutions through which it is seen to function.

¹⁷ For the purposes of this study the English editions of his work are referenced.

¹⁸ He termed the concepts he developed his 'tools for thinking.'

methodological texts including *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, *The Logic of Practice* and *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*.¹⁹

The ‘consecration’ of long-lived urban buildings and other structures with symbolic and cultural value, the processes by which this takes place, and the context within which this occurs, exhibits many similarities to Bourdieu’s views concerning cultural production in the fields of art and literature discussed most fully in *The Field of Cultural Production*.²⁰ The ways in which the meanings of such entities change to become recognised as objects of cultural *heritage* involves a complex process of cultural production with a range of actors and institutions of legitimation working within and across the fields that make up broader society.²¹ It is the process of cultural production in relation to long-lived elements of Edinburgh’s built environment — a process that becomes increasingly visible and coherent in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries — which forms the focus of the current study.²² In such a perspective, Baldwin Brown and his preservation-minded colleagues perform in the role of agents or cultural critics, inhabiting a coalescing urban preservation field, attributing symbolic value to specific cultural artefacts, and seeking to create and/or redefine a shared belief of historic significance. They also needed to engage with the fields of power within Edinburgh and beyond and to influence (or create) institutions which had the potential to carry out this process of cultural production. Importantly, they also needed to shift broader public and political opinion, not just in terms of value but in terms of prevalent beliefs regarding the appropriate treatment of specific parts of the urban built environment by the city’s individuals and institutions.

¹⁹ P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1977); *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge, 1990); P. Bourdieu and L. Wacquant, *An Introduction to Reflexive Sociology* (Cambridge; 1992).

²⁰ P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (Cambridge, 2003). Bourdieu produced a series of further works in which he develops and applies his philosophy of analysis relating to cultural production. These include *The Rules of Art* (Cambridge, 1996) and *Distinction* (Abingdon, 1984).

²¹ Heritage agencies such as Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland are guided by an informal ‘thirty-year rule’ which suggests that architectural and historical significance can best be judged after this period of time has been allowed to elapse.

²² There has been recent interest in the writings of Alois Riegl who in 1928 sought to explain the emergence of a ‘cult of monuments’. A. Riegl, ‘The modern cult of monuments: its character and its origin’, Translated by K.W. Forster and D. Ghirado, *Oppositions*, 25 (1982), 21-50.

This study draws on concepts developed by Bourdieu such as *habitus*, *field* and *cultural capital* to consider how cultural production functioned in relation to the emergence of an urban preservation field in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Edinburgh and it explores the social networks and institutional structures which were implicated in this process and which functioned in the creation and maintenance of preservation discourses.²³ Bourdieu identified three distinct levels of methodological approach in field analysis: analysing the position of the field under study and its relationship to the field of power; mapping the objective structure of relations between the agents competing for legitimate forms of specific authority; and analysing the habitus of agents and the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalizing a deterministic type of social and economic conditions.²⁴ These are not necessarily undertaken in this sequence however and in practice the analysis of habitus is often undertaken first.²⁵ Bourdieu also encouraged the problematisation of accepted concepts and words. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the emergence of a specific language and set of concepts in relation to the long-lived buildings and monuments can be seen as part of the developing urban preservation discourse.²⁶

Agency and structure

In terms of an agency perspective, there are elements of the biographical in this research insofar as the detailed study of Gerard Baldwin Brown and his preservation-related activities is used as a vehicle through which the urban preservation field in Edinburgh becomes available for investigation. He is also a significant actor within this field. While there has been a long-recognised link between biography and history, for most of the twentieth century

²³ Bourdieu introduced the analytical concepts of field, habitus and capital in 1966 and developed them in subsequent research. See P. Bourdieu, 'Intellectual field and creative project', *Social Science Information*, 8, 2 (1969), 89-119.

²⁴ Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Introduction to Reflexive Sociology*.

²⁵ M. Grenfell, 'Methodology' in M. Grenfell, ed., *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (Durham, 2012), 213-28, 223.

²⁶ See, G. Chitty, "'A great entail': the historic environment, in M. Wheeler (ed.), *Ruskin and Environment* (Manchester, 1995), 102-122, for the emergence of the words 'heritage' and 'conservation.'

the subjectivist approach typified by biographical study has been seen a popular past-time rather than academic in nature. Such studies have therefore been relegated by many historians to the margins of historical study.²⁷ Stanley Fish, for example, criticised biography as ‘minutiae without meaning.’²⁸ More recently however the humanities and the social sciences have witnessed something of a biographical turn,²⁹ with such studies recognised as offering differing perspectives and interpretations of events, based on the use of philosophical and methodological approaches situated within the broader postmodern philosophical shift.³⁰ By seeking to understand biographical information within a broader framework of cultural production, Bourdieu drew on a powerful model within the social sciences, occupying the middle-ground between objectivist structural approaches which seek to remove the role of the individual from consideration and subjectivist approaches which prioritise the individual at the cost of understanding broader social structures and mechanisms. Following Bourdieu, *habitus* relates to the disposition of individual actors to think and act in certain ways, including past and present circumstances such as their upbringing and education.³¹ Under such an approach, the need to define and understand *relevant* biographical information, becomes one part of a broader analytical process exploring how society functions through the dynamic interaction of individuals and the broader structures making up that society over time.

The study of Baldwin Brown’s biographical narrative offers an important route for understanding the early influences which affected his approach to fine art, preservation, and the role of campaigning in accomplishing social and political change. The breadth of Baldwin Brown’s knowledge, his intellectual abilities, his long-term commitment to the

²⁷ B. Caine. *Biography and History* (Basingstoke, 2010), 20.

²⁸ S.A. Leckie ‘Biography matters: why historians need well-crafted biographies more than ever’, in L. E. Ambrosius (ed.), *Writing Biography: Historians and their Craft* (London, 2004), 1-26. Leckie quotes Stanley Fish’s remarks published in the New York Times in 1991.

²⁹ N.K. Denzin, *Interpretative Biography* (London, 1989), 8.

³⁰ See P. Chamberlayne, J. Bornay and T. Wengraf (eds.), *The Turn to Biographical Methods in the Social Sciences* (Abingdon, 2000).

³¹ For Bourdieu’s use of the concept of ‘habitus’ and ‘capital’ see K. Maton, ‘Habitus’ in M. Grenfell (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (Durham, 2012), 48-64.

difficult cause of urban preservation and, in particular, his willingness to express his thoughts in a large number of didactic public documents, offer the opportunity to gain a detailed understanding of the processes of cultural production in relation to the built environment in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Edinburgh, whilst shedding light on the broader social context within which this took place. Study of his biographical narrative also provides important checks and balances for the study. Baldwin Brown's active commitment to the strengthening of urban preservation means that he was far from being a neutral observer, albeit he often sought to present a balanced overview of a preservation case before setting out his own views on the desired outcome.

Methodologically, it is important to situate Baldwin Brown's activities and opinions in terms of his own education, upbringing and the socio-political arenas within which he moved. Habitus is seen as a set of dispositions resulting from past and present experiences which influence, but do not determine, an individual's activities and behaviours in a social arena. There seems little doubt that Baldwin Brown's own biographical narrative influenced his thinking in areas such as the nature and purpose of public education, art and its role in society, the importance of acting for the public good, and methods for pursuing change in society. Baldwin Brown's subsequent position as a university professor and his nationality (both English and British), also influenced the specific techniques he adopted and each provided potential sources of power to be drawn on in pursuing his causes. Baldwin Brown used his formal position, his reputation and the many opportunities that his role offered to interact with professional groups, politicians and the public, in order to shape opinions toward that of urban preservation.³² While Baldwin Brown was not a part of the urban rich,³³

³² Bourdieu discusses the power generated by such associations under the headings of cultural, social and symbolic capital. See R. Moore, 'Capital', in Grenfell (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu*, 98-113.

³³ J. Garrard's 1995 discussion of urban elites, for example, focuses on the existence of an 'urban squirearchy' but whilst Baldwin Brown is better placed within the urban middle-class, he had influence through his own status and membership of organisations with their network of members and patrons. See J. Garrard, 'Urban elites, 1850-1914: the rule and decline of a new squirearchy?', *Albion*, 27/4 (1995), 583-621.

he nonetheless had significant status within the city. Being a university professor at one of the city's major institutions offered significant opportunities and gave him access to a wide range of discussions, together with opportunities to meet other opinion-formers and those with significant political power at events ranging from royal visits to major municipal gatherings. He also was highly visible at such events, with his presence regularly reported in the local and Scottish national press, and this in turn reinforced his identity and authority amongst the wider community. Baldwin Brown's role as an acknowledged expert arising out of his position as the first Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art also gave him particular status in the cultural field and with this came many opportunities to present lectures, to speak at civic and social events, and to mix with senior members of many cultural and political organisations. These lectures and events also offered opportunities to meet with the citizens making up the audiences, whether the public or members of particular societies, associations and other groups, allowing Baldwin Brown to raise specific issues and seek broader support for his own views. Baldwin Brown used his accomplished writing and public speaking skills to good effect throughout his career. Meisel has noted both the importance of public oratory in Victorian Britain and also the role of the press in promulgating communication to an increasingly literate public.³⁴

Sources

For Bourdieu, one of the key difficulties in the social history of subjects such as art was the problem of reconstructing position-taking in relation to the 'space of possibles' in a field in relation to participants' works and other activities. This resulted from the fact that these were seen as self-evident and therefore unlikely to be recorded in contemporary accounts and memoirs:

It is difficult to conceive of the vast amount of information which is linked to membership of a field and which all contemporaries immediately invest in their reading of works: information about institutions – e.g. academies,

³⁴ J.S. Meisel, *Public Speech and the Culture of Public Life in the Age of Gladstone* (New York, 2001), 276-8.

journals, magazines, galleries, publishers, etc. – and about persons, their relationships, liaisons, quarrels, information about ideas and problems which as ‘in the air’ and circulate orally in gossip and rumour.³⁵

It is helpful, therefore, to consider briefly the nature and character of the information which is available for the study of Baldwin Brown and his preservation-related activities. His publications included monographs, academic papers, newspaper articles and letters written to the national and local press.³⁶ These provide a significant and largely unidentified collection of texts which shed important light onto preservation debates in Edinburgh and beyond. Baldwin Brown also lectured regularly to a wide variety of professional and public groups, with daily newspapers such as the *Scotsman* and professional papers such as *The Architect* and *The Builder* frequently reproducing the content of his lectures in part or in full. Baldwin Brown was also highly active in a range of professional and amenity bodies which functioned through increasingly rational and bureaucratic formal processes. In a number of cases their archives still contain a range of information in the form of annual reports, committee minutes, memorials and other formal documents which help to shed light on his activities, his opinions, the strategies he was pursuing and the context within which these were taking place. There is also a very small number of personal letters which survive, but other personal information is extremely limited. Although the latter would be significant in the case of a traditional biographical study, it presents far less of a difficulty in the present context.³⁷

The current study sees relevant biographical information as one constituent of the broader process of cultural production. In working with the surviving texts, however, it is important to recognise that the majority were intentionally didactic in form. Baldwin Brown’s letters to the press, for example, were designed to be read by and to influence the opinions of a non-

³⁵ Bourdieu, *Cultural Production*, 32-33.

³⁶ For Baldwin Brown’s monographs see Appendix I. For his papers and related publications see Appendix II. For his letters to the press and related correspondence see Appendix IV.

³⁷ See J.M. Cooper, ‘Conception, conversation, and comparison: my experience as a biographer’, in L.E. Ambrosius (ed.), *Writing Biography: Historians and their Craft* (London, 2004), 79-102.

expert but educated public audience. As such, these texts were intended to play an *active* role in social construction rather than simply lying between a neutral observer and the world. These texts therefore exhibit a particular character which separate them from personal letters on the one hand and academic texts on the other.³⁸ The use of letters-to-the-editor as a social process and as vehicle for academic and public discourse has attracted research interest, particularly drawing on textual and discourse analytical techniques, although the focus of attention has frequently been twentieth century collections.³⁹ Magnet and Carnet's detailed analysis of letters to academic journals suggests that such texts exhibit particular macrostructures and linguistic features which distinguish them from other forms of writing.⁴⁰ Baldwin Brown's letters on preservation exhibit some structural and grammatical similarities to such writing in terms of their critical intent and promotion of a specific view. In addition to their content and underlying didactic purpose, Baldwin Brown's letters and related texts reflect also how he sought to construct or portray himself within various discourse communities, that is: 'group[s] of individuals bound by a common interest who communicate through approved channels and whose discourse is regulated.'⁴¹ As Porter has noted: 'a poststructuralist rhetoric examines how an audience in the form of community expectations and standards influence textual production and, in doing so, guide the development of the writer.'⁴² Such a perspective is highly relevant for understanding how Baldwin Brown drew on organisational and societal mechanisms when pursuing his campaigns.

³⁸ J. Potter, *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction* (London, 1996), 100, discussing the work of Derek Edwards.

³⁹ See, for example, C.A. Wieser, 'Taking a reader-centric approach to new production: the impact of Letters to the Editor', University of Utah, M.A. thesis, 2008; K. Wahl-Jorgensen, 'The normative-economic justification for public discourse: Letters to the Editor as a "wide open" forum', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Spring 2002, 79, 1, 121-33; B. Reader and K. Moist, 'letters as indicators of community values: two case studies of alternative magazines', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Winter 2008, 85, 4, 823-40.

⁴⁰ Magnet and Carnet, 'Letters to the Editor: still vigorous after all these years? A presentation of the discursive and linguistic features of the genre', *English for Specific Purposes*, 25 (2006), 173-99.

⁴¹ J.E. Porter, 'Intertextuality and the discourse community', *Rhetoric Review*, 5, 1 (1986) 38-9.

⁴² Porter, 'Intertextuality', 40.

A further concept arising out of the literary turn is that of intertextuality, deriving particular from the work of Kristeva.⁴³ At a simple level, this can be understood as the way in which the meaning of a text is constituted in relation to other texts. *The Care of Ancient Monuments* has tended to be treated in isolation from Baldwin Brown's other texts or activities. The adoption of an intertextual approach, however, offers the opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of the book and its intentions by drawing on his other texts, life events he had experienced, and the broader geographical and social context within which the book was created and was intended to function. There are, for example, repeated instances of Baldwin Brown using specific cases to illustrate particular preservation issues, but he frequently did not identify these by name, preferring instead to use phrases such as: 'An instance occurred not long ago in the North' or 'in a Northern city.' He may have adopted this technique to allow him to discuss general principles without getting drawn into the specifics of a case, but broader understanding of his texts allows these to be identified and allows the development of his thinking to be traced. Baldwin Brown also frequently developed his ideas in short published articles prior to presenting fully worked-up schemes in his monographs. He did so prior to publishing his comprehensive volume on Anglo-Saxon architecture in 1903,⁴⁴ for example, and again with the *Care of Ancient Monuments*, publishing a shorter booklet⁴⁵ and a series of articles in the architectural press beforehand.⁴⁶ He also published a further article on the issues surrounding preservation shortly after the publication of the 1905 monograph.⁴⁷ These papers provide important contextual information for the book's discussions and recommendations.

⁴³ J. Kristeva, *Desire in Language a Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (Oxford, 1980).

⁴⁴ Brown, G. B., *The Arts in Early England, Volume II: Ecclesiastical Architecture in England from the Conversion of the Saxons to the Norman Conquest* (London, 1903).

⁴⁵ Brown, G. B. *The Care of Historical Cities* (Edinburgh 1904).

⁴⁶ See chapters 7 and 8.

⁴⁷ Brown, G. B., 'Our Ancient Monuments and their Place in Modern Life', *Saint George*, 9, 35, (1906), 185-206.

Discourse and discipline development

This study explores the nature and functioning of discourse both in terms of the emergence of an urban heritage preservation field and also the competition between heritage discourse and others such as those within the sanitary or economic development fields. Applying Bourdieu's concept of structured and structuring spaces in Edinburgh, the coalescence of an urban preservation field can be seen to take place in terms of its population, its relationships, its character, its language and its institutions over the period of study. An important part of the emerging urban historic environment discourse was the development of a recognised and shared toolkit of concepts and supporting language. The emergence of specific descriptive terms was not solely a matter of developing labels for elements of the built environment. Each term developed shared concepts, meanings and values which acted to define and underpin particular discourse and frequently embodied methodological activities and judgements. For Bourdieu, such terms become *programmes for perception*.⁴⁸ In the same way that labelling a building a 'slum' automatically associates it with negative values and a 'common-sense' view that it should be demolished,⁴⁹ so labelling an element of the built environment a 'historic building' or 'monument' seeks to separate it out conceptually from other buildings and structures, to privilege it, to ascribe a positive cultural value, and to seek to influence its subsequent treatment in some positive or different fashion to those parts of the built environment not accorded such status. Each of these steps is given meaning and takes effect within a particular discourse and the development of a specialised language forms an important element in the construction process for the emerging urban historic environment field.

⁴⁸ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, xxv.

⁴⁹ See A. Mayne, *The Imagined Slum* (Leicester, 1993); M. A. Cooper, 'Exploring Mrs Gaskell's legacy: competing constructions of the industrial historic environment in England's northwest', in E.C. Casella and J. Symonds (eds.), *Industrial Archaeology: Future Directions* (London, 2005), 155-73.

In contemporary cultural resource management in Britain, the definition of historic entities is embodied within a legal and/or policy framework. It is common therefore to draw on these for the identification and definition of 'types' of heritage asset, for the methodologies to assess significance, and for the protective frameworks which apply in particular circumstances. Smith has termed this system/structure based around formalized governmental institutions, legislation and policy an 'authorised heritage discourse' (AHD) and in her research has explored how cultural resource management systems come into being and operate. Underlying such an approach is the belief that the definition of specific entities and the ascription of value to them is an active process of construction rather than an intellectually passive process of uncovering *pre-existing* entities of self-evident importance. Such a belief has much in common with Bourdieu's concepts of cultural production by which symbolic value is given to entities within specific social fields. AHD's are therefore implicated in the process of creating and privileging certain entities over others. Smith suggests that using such discourse, public policy-makers "govern or regulate the expression of social or cultural identity".⁵⁰ Drawing on the work of Rose and Miller, she has also sought to explore the 'technology of government', that is, the technology and activities by which dominant discourse is operationalized in specific circumstances.⁵¹ Smith and other researchers such as Waterton and the present writer have used the concept of AHD, together with techniques such as discourse analysis, to investigate how heritage discourses have come into being, function, and are maintained.⁵² The focus of attention of such studies has however tended to focus on legislative frameworks and the governmental bodies created to

⁵⁰ L. Smith, *Archaeological Theory and the Politics of Cultural Heritage* (London, 2004), 2.

⁵¹ N. Rose and P. Miller, 'Political power beyond the state: problematics of government', *British Journal of Sociology* 43, 2 (1992), 173-205.

⁵² E. Waterton, *Politics, Policy and the Discourses of Heritage in Britain* (Basingstoke, 2010); M.A. Cooper, 'Protecting our past: political philosophy, regulation, and heritage management in England and Scotland' *The Historic Environment*, 1, 2 (2010), 143-59; M. A. Cooper, 'Competition and the development of authorised heritage discourses in a re-emergent Scottish nation' in J. H. Jameson and J. Eogan (eds.), *Training and Practice for Modern Day Archaeologists* (London, 2012), 87-104; M. A. Cooper. 'The creation, evolution and destruction of authorised heritage discourses within British cultural resource management', in T. Rico and K. Samuels (eds.), *The Rhetoric of Heritage: A Handbook of Redescription*. (Boulder, forthcoming).

develop and maintain these, leaving the periods before these came into place relatively uninvestigated.

Civil society and cultural production

Bryant has described civil society as: ‘a space or arena between household and state, other than the market, which affords possibilities of concerted action and social self-organisation’,⁵³ and there has been strong recent interest in understanding how the study of civil society might be used to help shed light on how urban centres functioned in the past,⁵⁴ including: “the multiple sources and patterns of power and authority involved in the creation and implementation of policy, and in the social ‘steering’ attempted by elites and other interest groups.”⁵⁵ Bryant’s spaces or arenas exhibit conceptual similarities to Bourdieu’s *fields*, the latter seeking to define a series of overlapping arenas within a society relating to specific social fields in order to explore how specific discourse is established, develops and functions over time. The absence of effective protective legislation for ancient buildings and monuments in urban areas meant that those pursuing a preservation agenda needed to identify and use other mechanisms within broader society in order to achieve their aims. This meant navigating the complex social fields which characterised urban settlement — occupied by a wide range of social agents (individuals, groups and organisations) — and gaining access to specific locations and institutions which embodied power including council chambers and public auditoria.⁵⁶ There was also a need to make effective use of available media including journals and newspapers in order to establish and maintain specific discourse. Such activities also made use of personal and professional networks of power,

⁵³ C.G.A. Bryant, “Social self-organisation, civility and sociology: a comment on Kumar’s ‘Civil Society’” *British Journal of Sociology*, 44 (1993), 397-401.

⁵⁴ In 1998, for example, the journal *Urban History* dedicated a special issue to civil society in Britain. *Urban History*, 25 (1998), 3.

⁵⁵ R.J. Morris, ‘Governance: two centuries of urban growth’, in R. J. Morris and R.H. Trainor (eds.), *Urban Governance: Britain and Beyond* (Aldershot, 2000), 1-14, 12.

⁵⁶ A cultural field can be identified as a structured system of social positions or a conceptual space occupied by institutions, rules, conventions, designations, etc., which produce and authorise certain discourses and activities. P. Bourdieu, *Sociology in Question*, (London, 1993), 72-7.

political and legal activities, and public rhetoric.⁵⁷ In addition to the activities of municipal authorities and business interests in urban areas, the activities of the associations, clubs and societies have also become the focus of studies of civil society.⁵⁸ Such bodies formed a key part of the complex organisational and institutional entities which helped to structure particular fields of activity within urban society and provided a significant resource to be drawn on by would-be preservationists.

A sense of the social and organisational complexities evident in Victorian Edinburgh has been highlighted, amongst others, by Graeme Morton who drew on information held in the city's almanacs and post-office directories to create a model of the social structure lying behind the city's civil society.⁵⁹ Morton's study helps illustrate how: '[t]he Edinburgh middle classes were engaged in a whole range of issues, problems and causes of which all were conducted within civil society.'⁶⁰ In terms of public action, Doyle saw pressure groups as intimately bound up with the fabric of city politics in Victorian and later cities, suggesting that the emergence of environmental pressure groups was tied to the development of town planning in the early twentieth century, following the introduction of the 1909 Town Planning Act.⁶¹ However, the coming together of bodies such as the Commons Preservation Society in 1865, the Cockburn Association in 1875, the Kyrle Society in 1876 and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in 1877, suggests both an increasing awareness and sensitivities in relation to the impact of development on the urban and rural

⁵⁷ See, for example, R. Colls and R. Rodger (eds.), *Cities of Ideas: Civil Society and Urban Governance in Britain 1800-2000* (Aldershot, 2004), 1-2.

⁵⁸ P. Clarke, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800* (Oxford, 2000), 13. See also R.J. Morris, 'Clubs, societies and associations', in E.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950*, 395-443.

⁵⁹ This study focusses on the period preceding that of the current study.

⁶⁰ G. Morton, *Unionist Nationalism* (East Linton, 1999), 96.

⁶¹ B.M. Doyle, 'The changing function of urban government', in Martin Daunton (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain* (Cambridge, 2000), vol. 3, 1840-1950, 287-313, 307-312.

landscape as the second half of the nineteenth century progressed and, importantly, the recognition of the benefits of adopting an organised response.⁶²

As a more developed sensitivity to the Edinburgh's early buildings and structures emerged in the later part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, so questions of responsibilities and defined jurisdictions were raised. It is here that the gradual coalescence of a field relating to the urban preservation movement can be identified with organisations, associations and individuals — drawn mainly from the architecture, arts, antiquarian and legal fields, but including at times national and local government — claiming their position within this conceptual space and seeking to establish authority. Baldwin Brown was highly active in the process of defining this space and seeking to influence the power relations both within it and between it and other fields. He also acted as a gatekeeper to some degree, with strong evidence, for example, that he encouraged women's voices to be heard in relation to the preservation debate.⁶³

Situating Gerard Baldwin Brown

Discussion of Baldwin Brown's preservation-related interest has to a great extent focussed on *The Care of Ancient Monuments*, with the book identified in recent general surveys by Delafons, Cowell, Glendinning and Thurley.⁶⁴ Delafons, Cowell and Thurley each note that the book played a key role in arguments for the creation of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and its sister bodies in Wales and England.⁶⁵

Delafons also suggests that Baldwin Brown: 'deserves to be commemorated as one of the

⁶² For discussion of the emergence of environmental associations and groups, see for example, J. Winter, *Secure from Rash Assault; Sustaining the Victorian Environment* (London, 1999), chapter 2. C. Miele, 'The first conservation militants: William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (Stroud, 1996), 17-37.

⁶³ Like his father, Baldwin Brown was a keen supporter of the women's education movement and became acquainted with some of the key women activists in Edinburgh.

⁶⁴ J. Delafons, *Politics and Preservation A Policy History of the Built Heritage* (London, 1997); B. Cowell, *The Heritage Obsession: The Battle for England's Past* (Stroud, 2008); Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement*; Thurley, *Men from the Ministry*.

⁶⁵ Both Cowell and Delafons incorrectly abbreviate the title which was originally The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland.

Founding Fathers of conservation in Britain' although the justification for this is not presented,⁶⁶ while Larkham suggests that the *Care of Ancient Monuments* was one of the earliest scholarly works on the history of conservation and draws on his writings in his review of the nineteenth century evolution of urban conservation.⁶⁷ Cowell and Delafons' knowledge of the background to the 1905 book was limited, however, with both authors mistaken in believing that the comparative information on the legislation and measures in place across Europe was based on recent Government reports collected from British Embassies.⁶⁸ Glendinning has described Baldwin Brown as 'an eminent British archaeologist' but gives only very briefest of mentions of Baldwin Brown's Edinburgh campaigns,⁶⁹ and Thurley makes no mention of Baldwin Brown's activities in Edinburgh or his other preservation-related writings or activities. Swenson's recent study of the emergence of the preservation movement in France, Germany and England identifies Baldwin Brown's connections with Europe, focussing once again on *The Care of Ancient Monuments* while recognising that Baldwin Brown had published other papers. However, as the title of the book would suggest, his work in Scotland and in particular Edinburgh is not discussed.⁷⁰ Mandler gives brief mention to Baldwin Brown's arguments for state intervention in the management of national heritage in the context of the wider discussion of the protection of stately homes.⁷¹

Baldwin Brown is, however, generally overlooked in other standard conservation historiographies. He receives no mention, for example, in Briggs' *Goths and Vandals*,

⁶⁶ Delafons, *Politics and Preservation*, 29.

⁶⁷ P.J. Larkham, *Conservation and the City* (London, 1996), 41.

⁶⁸ Official Government publications referred to as the *Blue Books*.

⁶⁹ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement*. 90. Glendinning gives Baldwin Brown the initial 'J'.

⁷⁰ Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage*. See also, A. Swenson, 'The law's delay? Preservation legislation in France, Germany and England, 1870-1914', in Hall, *Towards World Heritage*, 139-154; A. Swenson, 'The Heritage of Empire', in Swenson, A. and Mandler, P. (eds.), *From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire c.1800-1940* (Oxford, 2013).

⁷¹ P. Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (London, 1997), 153-4, 190-1.

Kennet's *Preservation* or Jokilehto's *A History of Architectural Conservation*.⁷² He does, though, receive mention in some volumes of collected papers with Hunter's edited volume of papers on heritage management containing three separate contributions in which he features in relation to ancient monuments, listing, and London government.⁷³ He also merits a passing mention in the introductory chapter and the closing bibliographical essay, but with the exception of Saint's paper on the origins of listing, the focus once again is *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.⁷⁴ In another edited volume, Hall provides a brief but nonetheless more contextual understanding of Baldwin Brown and *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.⁷⁵ She notes the publication in Edinburgh in 1904 of his booklet entitled *The Care of Historical Cities* and identifies Baldwin Brown's connection with the National Trust, the Cockburn Association and his friendship with Patrick Geddes. Baldwin Brown receives a brief mention in Hall's edited volume *Towards a World Heritage* which contains a collection of papers on the international origins of the preservation movement.⁷⁶ Baldwin Brown is though absent from other key collections of papers on the historiography of conservation such as Fawcett's *The Future of the Past*.⁷⁷

In other research, Emerick⁷⁸ notes that Baldwin Brown published three articles on conservation in *The Builder* in 1904 and in the *Architects Journal* in 1906 but concentrates on *The Care of Ancient Monuments*. Saunders' 1983 paper on the history of ancient monument legislation⁷⁹ makes a single passing reference to *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.

⁷² M. Briggs, *Goths and Vandals: a Study of the Destruction, Neglect and Preservation of Historical Buildings in England* (London, 1972); W. Kennett, *Preservation* (London, 1972); J. Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation* (Oxford, 1999).

⁷³ M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (Stroud, 1996).

⁷⁴ A. Saint, 'How listing happened', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past*, 1996, 115-33, 116. The paper was published on 10 December 1904.

⁷⁵ M. Hall, 'Affirming community life: preservation, national identity and the state', in C. Miele (ed.), *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1919*, 39 (London, 2005), 129-57.

⁷⁶ See Swenson, 'The law's delay'.

⁷⁷ J. Fawcett (ed.), *The Future of the Past: Attitudes to Conservation, 1174-1974* (London, 1976).

⁷⁸ K. Emerick, *From frozen monuments to fluid landscapes: the conservation and preservation of ancient monuments from 1882 to the present*, University of York, Ph.D. thesis, 2003, 76-9.

⁷⁹ A. Saunders, 'A century of ancient monuments legislation', *Antiquaries Journal*, 63 (1983), 11-33.

Baldwin Brown is similarly given passing mention in *Echoes in Stone*, an edited volume on the protection of ancient monuments in Scotland published in 1983.⁸⁰ However, overviews of the development of conservation legislation in Britain omit mention of Baldwin Brown.⁸¹ In terms of organisational histories, Baldwin Brown was not a Fellow of Society of Antiquaries of London and neither the 1956 monograph nor the collected papers in the 2007 edited volume make mention of him.⁸² Dunbar, writing at the 80th anniversary of the Scottish Royal Commission, notes the importance of *The Care of Ancient Monuments* in the lead-up to the organisation's foundation and discusses the influence that the book had on Lord Pentland, the Secretary of State for Scotland.⁸³ However, Baldwin Brown's activities as a Commissioner are not discussed. Although Baldwin Brown sat on both the National Trust and Cockburn Association's executive, he receives no mention in Trust's standard histories⁸⁴ and is mentioned only within the lists of office bearers in the two published histories of the Cockburn Association.⁸⁵ A volume prepared to mark the bicentenary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, is similarly quiet about Baldwin Brown even though he was a member of its council and a corresponding council member at various times. More recently the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland published a series of papers on key personalities involved with the Society and Breeze took Baldwin Brown for his subject.⁸⁶ This draws heavily on Sir George Macdonald's 1932 obituary of Baldwin Brown published in the

⁸⁰ M. Magnusson (ed.), *Echoes in Stone* (Edinburgh, 1983), 13.

⁸¹ See H. Cleere, 'Great Britain', in H. Cleere (ed.), *Approaches to the Archaeological Heritage* (Cambridge, 1984), 54-62; M. Ross, *Planning and the Heritage* (London, 1991); G. Ashworth and P. Howard, *European Heritage Planning and Management* (Exeter, 1999); D. M. Walker, 'Listing in Scotland: origins, survey and resurvey', *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, 38 (1994), 31-96.

⁸² Evans, J., *A History of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford, 1956); S. Pearce (ed.), *Visions of Antiquity: The Society of Antiquaries of London 1707-2007* (London, 2007).

⁸³ J. Dunbar, 'The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland: the first eighty years', *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, 36 (1992), 1-58, 2-3.

⁸⁴ For example, R Fedden, *The Continuing Purpose: A History of the National Trust, its Aims and Work* (London, 1968); M. Waterson, *The National Trust: The First Hundred Years* (London, 1994); Baldwin Brown's father is mentioned by G. Murphy in *Founders of the National Trust* (Swindon, 2002).

⁸⁵ R Masson, *Scotia's Darling Seat* (Edinburgh, 1926), 68; G. Bruce, *Some Practical Good: The Cockburn Association 100 years' Participation in Planning* (Edinburgh, 1975), 98, 100.

⁸⁶ D. Breeze, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932)', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 131 (2003), 41-55, 48.

*Proceedings of the British Academy*⁸⁷ for details about his upbringing and character and provides a brief but wider review of Baldwin Brown's life and his academic achievements, including discussion of his activities in the fields of monument recording and protection. However, Baldwin Brown's preservation-related work in Edinburgh is not discussed.

⁸⁷ G. Macdonald, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown 1849-1932', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 21 (1932), 3-12.

Chapter 2. Edinburgh and Early Preservation Discourse

The city which Baldwin Brown was to make his home for fifty-two years was historically significant, economically powerful and rapidly changing.¹ The Scottish Enlightenment had confirmed Edinburgh as an intellectual centre and one known widely for its medical science. The autonomy of Scottish legal, educational, financial and religious institutions embodied within the Act of Union in 1707 strongly influenced the city's economic structure and social character. The long-lived presence of bodies such as the Court of Session and General Assembly combined with the city's growing reputation as an international financial and legal centre reinforced its reputation and authority.² The city's social make-up was reflected in its pattern of employment, with one in eight working in the professions including medicine, banking, law, the university, the church and the civil service throughout the nineteenth century. This was a significantly higher percentage of the workforce than in other Scottish cities and has led to suggestions that this in turn both reinforced the stability of the economy and increased the influence of the town's middle-classes.³ Although Edinburgh had portrayed itself as a non-industrial settlement, the nineteenth century city had a range of flourishing industries and crafts including metalworking, brewing, rubber, chemicals, medical instrument making, tobacco, dress making and hat making, leatherworking, furniture making, upholstering, printing and bookbinding.⁴

Despite changes to the urban topography, in the late nineteenth century the core of the city was still based around two architecturally distinct settlements —the 'traditional' Old Town

¹ Over the period of study Edinburgh is referred to as both a 'town' and a 'city'. For consistency the settlement will be referred to as a city in this text.

² R. Rodger, *The Transformation of Edinburgh: Land, Property and Trust in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001), 12. Rodger suggests that as a result of the Act of Union a critical mass of professional expertise was concentrated in the city.

³ R.J. Morris, 'Urbanisation and Scotland', in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1990), volume II, 1830-1914, 73-102, 79.

⁴ R. Rodger, 'Landscapes of capital: industry and the built environment in Edinburgh, 1750-1920', in B. Edwards and P. Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh: The Making of a Capital City* (Edinburgh, 2005), 85-102, 91-5.

and the classical New Town.⁵ The natural topography was also an important contributor to the city's character and appearance. In addition to the elongated glacially-formed ridge along which the Old Town developed, the spectacular collection of geological features on the eastern side of the city including Calton Hill, Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat provided both a characterful backdrop for the city and offered a series of elevated locations from which to view it. The Edinburgh area had been attractive for human settlement over long periods, with prehistoric and later remains on Arthur's Seat, Roman settlement at nearby Cramond, and possible dark-age settlement on the site of the latter-day castle. By the twelfth century a substantial settlement had developed along an east-west street, running downhill from the castle on its volcanic plug in the west to the Holyrood Abbey precinct sitting lower to the east.⁶ For much of its length the land dropped steeply on either side of the axial street, with some 300 lanes and wynds running down the slope to the valleys lying to north and south (figure 1). The narrowness and steepness of these lanes and wynds together with boggiess at the valley bottoms made the approach to the city from north and south challenging for much of the city's history.⁷

Until the seventeenth century the settlement comprised two separately administered burghs, Edinburgh and Canongate, the former, a royal burgh lying to the west and administered from the Castle with its parish church at St Giles, and the latter lying to the east with the Abbey as its superior and the nave of Holyrood Abbey as the burgh church. The nature of the buildings in each burgh contrasted for much of the city's history with a higher density and greater number of early tenement buildings in the royal burgh and larger individual properties with

⁵ For the history, topography and development of Edinburgh and its buildings see B. Edwards and P. Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh: The Making of a Capital City* (2005); J. Gifford, C. McWilliam and D. Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (London, 1991); Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of the City of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1951); M. Wood, 'Survey of the development of Edinburgh', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 34 (1974), 23-56.

⁶ Edinburgh was given Royal burgh status by David I in the early 12th century. In the foundation charter of Holyrood in 1128 David I gave leave for the canons to also establish a burgh between the church and his existing burgh of Edinburgh. See RCAHMS, *Edinburgh*, xxxviii, liii.

⁷ See Rodger, *Transformation of Edinburgh*, 14-18.

more open ground in Canongate.⁸ Although the early settlement was concentrated on the ridge between castle and abbey, by the fourteenth century a new suburb developed to the south centred along an east-west street (which became the Cowgate) running along the bottom of the southern valley linking Holyrood to the Grassmarket. This suburb became a high-status area, with houses and gardens also expanding up the counter-slope to the south. By the later medieval period the royal burgh also benefited from a series of defensive stone walls and gates,⁹ although the natural topography and the creation of an artificial loch in the northern valley by the damming of the Craig Burn meant that a complete defensive circuit on the north side of the royal burgh was not deemed necessary.¹⁰ As the city expanded southwards, an east-west line of religious precincts walls enclosing the Dominican Friary, the Collegiate Church of St Mary's in the Field (both thirteenth century foundations) and the later Greyfriars (mid-fifteenth century) formed the southern boundary of the town.

Early settlement in the Canongate burgh was less dense than that in the upper town, with a number of properties directly related to the Abbey's activities. However, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the gradual introduction of high status properties, with the owners attracted both by the available space and the presence of a royal palace. The latter had developed at Holyrood Abbey in the fifteenth century and became a favourite palace of James VI. In the later sixteenth century the presence of Scottish royalty encouraged nobles and others to take up residence in the Canongate, leading to it being described as a royal court with an urban precinct.¹¹ While the Union of the Crowns in 1603 attracted some of Edinburgh's elite to London, the latter part of the seventeenth century nonetheless saw the Canongate flourishing, encouraged by the residence of the Duke of York at the palace.

⁸ E.P. Dennison and M. Lynch, 'Crown, capital and metropolis' *Journal of Urban History*, 32 (2005), 22-43. See also, I. Campbell and M. Stewart, 'The evolution of the medieval and Renaissance city', in Edwards and Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh*, 21.

⁹ Sources suggest that the Royal burgh had gates by the mid-late twelfth century. See RCAHMS, *Edinburgh*, xl-xli.

¹⁰ For the city's geology and topography see J. Stuart-Murray, 'Landscape, topography and hydrology', , 64-80.

¹¹ Dennison and Lynch, 'Crown, capital and metropolis', 36.

However the departure of the Duke for France in 1682 and the Union of the Parliaments in 1707 meant that a London rather Edinburgh base became desirable and this led not only to the decline of the Canongate but the Old Town generally. It was in this decline that the seeds of Edinburgh's New Town were sown. By the middle of the eighteenth century critical voices were heard complaining about the disadvantageous situation of the city, with its decayed and crowded housing, collapsing buildings, dirty streets which were difficult to traverse due to their steepness, and lack of impressive public buildings.¹²

Proposals for a new planned suburb in fields to the north of the Nor' Loch were therefore brought forward.¹³ A small number of 'modern' residential developments reflecting classical ideals had already been created in the eighteenth century in the southern suburbs of the town including Brown Square, Argyle Square and George Square and had attracted professional and aristocratic residents. However, following the successful extension of the municipal authority's jurisdiction to the north in an Act of 1767 a 'new town' was constructed, following the plans of James Craig.¹⁴ This was based on a grid plan, and included wide avenues, classical¹⁵ residential buildings and communal gardens. Back lanes contained lower grade accommodation including servant quarters, stabling and warehousing, storage and light industrial activities. Although the first New Town had been planned as a residential suburb, commercial premises rapidly moved into the area with shops and office space appearing initially along Princes Street and around St Andrew's Square. The success

¹² Chambers discusses a pamphlet prepared in the early 1850s by Sir Gilbert Elliot entitled '*Proposals for carrying into effect certain public works in Edinburgh.*' R. Chambers, *Traditions of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1825), 24-6.

¹³ Whilst the majority of the proposals contained in the 1753 Act were not taken forward, many reappeared in later improvement legislation.

¹⁴ See K. Cruft and A. Fraser (eds.), *James Craig 1744-1795* (Edinburgh, 1995).

¹⁵ The New Town architecture includes neo-classical, Graeco-Roman classicism, Regency, Greek Revival, Palladian, Baroque, Renaissance classical and Edwardian classical styles. The general term 'classical architecture' is therefore used in this study.



Figure 1. Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh by Willm. Edgar architect anno 1765. Source: NLS, reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland, EMS.s786. The High Street runs east-west from Holyrood Abbey (right) to the Castle (left). The Nor' Loch has not yet been drained. The fields which were to become the site for the first New Town lie under the map titles. The southwards expansion from the 14th century onwards can be seen, with the Cowgate running east west along the valley to the south providing a second route from Abbey to the Grassmarket.

of the first New Town led to a series of further extensions to the north, east and west as the nineteenth century progressed. These retained the classical idiom but were characterised by a more flexible plan which included curving streets and greater architectural variety.¹⁶ By the mid-nineteenth century suburbs and industrial developments were also appearing outside the central core of the city as industrialists and others took advantage of the cheaper land on the periphery, helped by transport improvements which included the Union Canal to the west and the expanding railway network.¹⁷

In common with many other cities in Britain and Europe, eighteenth and nineteenth century Edinburgh faced significant challenges in response to the city's economic growth, demographic shifts and social change. A key stimulant was an accelerating increase in population attracted by the prospects of employment in the city. In 1751 the city's population had been c.49,000. This figure was to rise to 83,000 in 1811 and to 161,000 in 1851.¹⁸ The result was an intense pressure on existing accommodation, overcrowding and significant problems with sanitation, refuse disposal and disease. As the city grew there was also pressure to improve the existing road network. All of these sat within a broader rhetoric of progress and reform which underlay the project of modernity with its particular focus on urban areas in the Victorian period.¹⁹ In common with many other urban authorities in Scotland and beyond, such significant growth placed the public administration of Edinburgh under significant levels of pressure as it sought to deal with an increasingly wide range of

¹⁶ For New Town, see A.J. Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1966); P. Reed, 'Form and context: a study of Georgian Edinburgh', in T.A. Markus (ed.), *Order and Space in Society*, 115-153.

¹⁷ This expansion was enabled by the Edinburgh Extension Act of 1856. See Rodger, 'Landscapes of capital', 91-5.

¹⁸ By 1911 the figure was 320,000. Figures from B. Edwards and P. Jenkins, 'Introduction' in Edwards and Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh*, 1, and from R. Rodger, 'Industry and the built environment', in Edwards and Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh*, 88. Rodger notes that his 1811-1911 figures are based on the Parliamentary boundaries from 1881 which included the extended area of Granton and Portobello. See also, J. Leishman, 'Modern Edinburgh', in Institute of Public Administration: Edinburgh and East of Scotland Regional Group, *Studies in the Development of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1939), 54.

¹⁹ For urban progress and modernity, see R. Dennis, *Cities in Modernity: Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930* (Cambridge, 2008), Chapter 2.

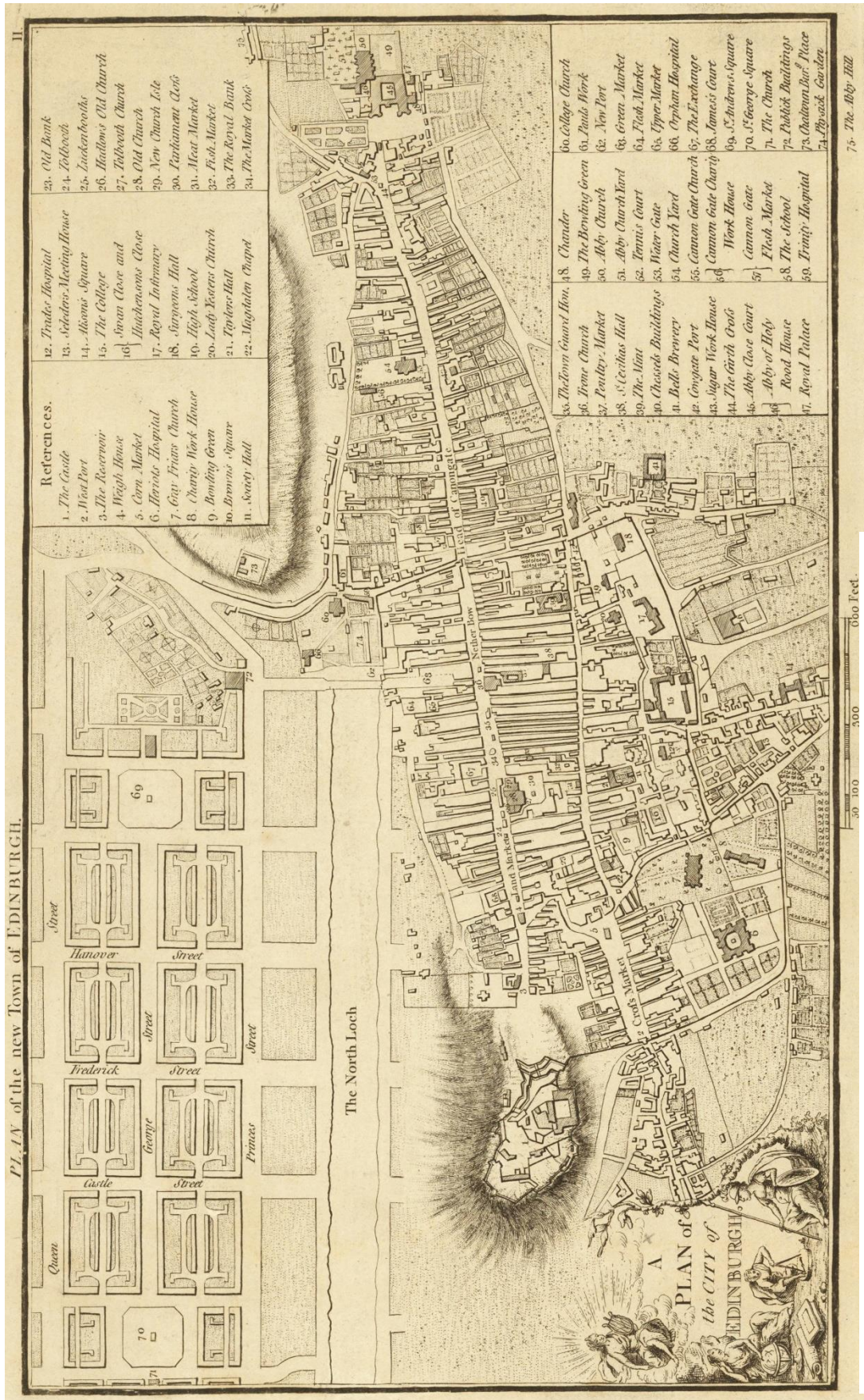


Figure 2. Plan of the City of Edinburgh 1771 showing the developing New Town layout to the north. Source: NLS, reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland, EMS.s.58

issues relating to *laissez-faire* capitalism.²⁰

One key issue in the nineteenth century was the fragmentation of many public functions across a range of differently-constituted public bodies working to different agendas and geographical boundaries. Municipal reform, therefore, seeking to vest a range of public functions into a single municipal authority was a feature in Scotland in the nineteenth century. Amongst the changes, the Burgh Reform Act of 1833 gave broader social responsibilities to local authorities,²¹ the functions and powers of the Police Commissioners were absorbed into municipal authorities in 1856,²² and the General Police and Improvements (Scotland) Act, in 1862, gave municipal authorities enabling powers to appoint commissioners to improve the regulation of lighting, cleansing, paving, draining, water supply and other functions.²³ In the case of Edinburgh, Acts of Parliament were also regularly brought forward by the municipal authority to increase its geographical jurisdiction in order to keep pace with the expanding settlement and allow a more coherent approach to public service delivery.²⁴ As the nineteenth century progressed, the municipal authority took an increasingly complex range of responsibilities which included lighting, paving, cleansing, licencing of slaughterhouses, naming and numbering of streets, water and sewerage, infectious disease management, gas and electricity supply, poor relief, hospitals and prisons, education, public transport, housing and the provision of public amenities such as parks and libraries. Not all were directly delivered with bodies including public boards, improvement commissions, and trusts being used by the Council.²⁵ At times the municipal authority also

²⁰ Cameron has described the period after 1850 in Scotland as one of consolidation, addressing the social and political challenges caused by the rapid growth of population in cities and the associated polluted industrial landscapes. E. Cameron, *Impaled upon a Thistle: Scotland since 1880* (Edinburgh, 2010), 9.

²¹ See C. McWilliam, *Scottish Townscape* (London, 1975), 143.

²² Under the County and Burgh Police Act 1856, 19 and 20 Vict., cap 69.

²³ Laxton and Rodger suggest that the municipal authority already held the powers necessary to tackle the public health issues and to appoint a medical officer of health prior to the adoption of the Lindsay Act, see P. Laxton and R. Rodger, *Insanitary City* (Lancaster, 2013), 89. See also P. Robinson, 'Edinburgh – a tenement city?', in Edwards and Jenkins (eds.), *Edinburgh*, 113.

²⁴ Such as, 19 and 20 Vict., cap 32, Edinburgh Municipality Extension Act, 1856.

²⁵ The boards of these bodies were heavily populated by municipal councillors.

developed relationships with various private concerns in order to meet its increasing responsibilities. Discussed under the broader heading of ‘progressivism’,²⁶ the need to administer an increasingly large and complex portfolio of public activities led municipal authorities to expand staff numbers and to draw in a wider range of specialist expertise to assist in their city’s administration. In due course professional staff posts in Edinburgh included the Town Clerk, City Engineer, City Health Officer and City Architect, each wielding significant levels of power.²⁷

Control over land-use in Edinburgh was achieved through the Dean of Guild Court although its responsibilities were limited.²⁸ The Court was elected by the municipal council and comprised a mix of councillors, bailies and specialists from the building trade. They were advised by the Burgh Engineer and, by the later nineteenth century, by the City Superintendent of Works and the City Architect. The Court held long-lived responsibilities for the superintendence of the streets, buildings and markets, and held powers to tackle building encroachment onto private property and the public highways.²⁹ It was necessary also to obtain a warrant from the Dean of Guild Court for the erection of new buildings or for certain alterations to existing buildings and from the seventeenth century onwards it used its powers to ensure that buildings were designed with the reduction of fire risk and collapse in mind. The Court was a powerful body, with Rodger suggesting that it used its powers not only to preserve amenity, but to instil aesthetic and architectural values.³⁰ The Dean of Guild Court also had powers of inspection and could order the demolition of buildings which it

²⁶ Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, 29-30.

²⁷ Rodger calls them a ‘new breed of Victorian barons’, *Transformation of Edinburgh*, 3.

²⁸ See R. Miller, R., *Guide to the Procedure of the Dean of Guild Court of Edinburgh with a short history of the Guildry* (Edinburgh, 1891); *The Edinburgh Dean of Guild Court: A Manual of History and Procedure* (Edinburgh, 1896).

²⁹ The legislative powers of the Dean of Guild Court were laid out in a number of local Acts, consolidated by the Edinburgh Corporation (Streets, Buildings and Sewers) Order, 1926. See A. Grierson and C. Guest, *City of Edinburgh Building Laws* (Edinburgh, 1928).

³⁰ R. Rodger, ‘The evolution of Scottish town planning’, in G. Gordon and B. Dix (eds.), *Scottish Urban History* (Aberdeen, 1983), 71-91, 86.

considered unsafe.³¹ There were however limits to its powers when it came to pursuing strategic issues and it tended to be reactive in nature.³² At various times, therefore, Edinburgh's municipal authority brought forward legislation which created improvement commissions vested with a range of powers including compulsory purchase, designed to allow it to pursue area-based development and improvement schemes. Improvement Acts were used to achieve strategic change in the townscape including new road schemes and, as the second half of the nineteenth century progressed, significant programmes of demolition, clearance and redevelopment in response to the city's sanitary issues.³³ However finance to support such initiatives was always an issue for the municipal authority as such schemes required large public subsidies through the rates. As Cameron has noted, the local authority expenditure on the housing of the working classes risked alienating middle class ratepayers who might take revenge through the ballot box.³⁴ For Edinburgh, the financial difficulties which resulted from the mid-nineteenth century aspirations regarding the design quality of replacement buildings together with sensitivities regarding the high level of subsidy meant that later schemes were characterised by more stringent financial constraint.³⁵ No improvement schemes were brought forward in Edinburgh in the first two decades of the twentieth century but after this the municipal authority began once again to pursue improvement, drawing on its increasing level of in-house expertise and its increasingly effective legal powers.

³¹ An aggrieved owner or applicant for a warrant could appeal to the Court of Session.

³² Local authorities had to await the arrival of the powers contained in the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act 1909, 9 Ed. VII, cap. 44., and subsequent planning acts before they could achieve comprehensive strategic planning. See Rodger, 'Scottish town planning'.

³³ See Rodger, *The Transformation of Edinburgh*, especially chapter 12; Laxton and Rodger, *Insanitary City*; J. Johnson and L. Rosenberg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh: the Enduring Legacy of Patrick Geddes* (Glendareul, 2010),

³⁴ E. A. Cameron, 'Setting the heather on fire: the land question in Scotland, 1850-1914', in Cragoe, M. and P. Readman (eds.), *The Land Question in Britain, 1750-1950* (Basingstoke, 2010), 109-125, 120.

³⁵ For expenditure see Rodger, *The Transformation of Edinburgh*, 436, figure 12.4. For Edinburgh's nineteenth century improvement schemes, see P.J. Smith, 'Planning as environmental improvement: slum clearance in Victorian Edinburgh', in A. Sutcliffe (ed.), *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning 1800-1914* (London, 1980), 99-133; P.J. Smith, 'Slum clearance as an instrument of sanitary reform', *Planning Perspectives*, 9, 1-27.

Development and early preservation campaigns

It is frequently the case that preservation-related activities are both stimulated by and become visible in response to specific development and urban improvements. The term ‘preservation’ in this context was understood in the nineteenth and early twentieth century as a countervailing or negating force to that of deliberate destruction or decay to monuments, and often involved the process of repair or maintenance of the existing fabric: ‘to preserve from demolition or decay works from ancient times which still exist, is an object that should merit the attention of the Government.’³⁶ The term preservation is used in this study in preference to ‘conservation’ as the latter was more commonly used in relation to the work of museum conservators although, as Chitty has discussed, its usage became more common in the increasingly heated debate about ecclesiastical architectural restoration in the mid-nineteenth century.³⁷

The idea of preservation gained stronger currency in response to the perceived increase in disturbance and destruction of early buildings and monuments caused by rapid urban development, agricultural improvements, and the transport revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Antiquarians such as Alexander Gordon had sought to involve other Scots in preserving English sites such as Avebury in Wiltshire from the ‘Goths and Barbarians’ who would destroy them,³⁸ and in an early documented Scottish case Sir John Clerk of Penicuik reported to William Stukeley’s antiquarian circle the destruction of a possible Roman masonry structure, Arthur’s O’on, by its owner in 1743. Gordon remarked that: ‘No other motive had this Gothick Knight but to procure as many stones as he could

³⁶ A. Way, ‘Introduction’, *Archaeological Journal*, 1 (1845), 1. Quoted in T. Champion, ‘Protecting the monuments: archaeological legislation from the 1882 Act to PPG 16’, in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (Stroud, 1996), 38-56, 39-40.

³⁷ Chitty, G. “‘A great entail’: the historic environment’, in M. Wheeler (ed.), *Ruskin and Environment* (Manchester, 1995), 106.

³⁸ H. Arnot *History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1788), 31.

have purchased in his own quarries for five shillings.’³⁹ The antiquarians John Williams and David Ure also wrote about the destruction of Scottish monuments in the later eighteenth century,⁴⁰ and in his speech to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1861, the physician and antiquarian James Simpson noted that: ‘at no period has this process of demolition gone on in Scotland more rapidly and ruthlessly than during the last fifty or a hundred years.’⁴¹ In addition to the destruction of monuments, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also witnessed increasing levels of damage to the surviving early fabric within buildings still in use such as churches and ruins including abbeys and castles, by well-intentioned but controversial ‘restoration’ schemes. Such work was intended to return the building to a ‘purer’ state which existed in the past but, as Pevsner has suggested, for its critics, restoration was modern work pretending to be what it was not.⁴²

Edinburgh was to experience both the loss of historically significant buildings and damaging restorations, and it is in response to these losses that early preservation campaigns can be identified. However a number of possible focuses for these campaigns and approaches were available to be adopted. If there is one characteristic of the early urban preservation movement, it is that each town or city approached preservation in its own particular manner reflecting a wide range of factors from the nature of its architectural inheritance through to the particular character and momentum of improvement and development schemes in the Georgian and Victorian periods. As Delheim has noted in his discussion of the emerging urban preservation movement “The Victorians’ veneration of the past did translate into

³⁹ Quoted in I.G. Brown, *The Hobby-Horsical Antiquary A Scottish Character 1640-1830* (Edinburgh 1980), 32. Brown also notes Stukeley’s comments about the neglect in Scotland of collecting and publishing their Roman treasures and Alexander Gordon’s remarks regarding the seemingly healthier interest in antiquities in England.

⁴⁰ See D. Ure, *History of Rutherglen and East Kilbride* (Glasgow, 1793), 210; J. Williams, *An Account of some Remarkable Ancient Ruins Lately Discovered in the Highlands and Northern parts of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1777), 70. Quoted in D. Murray, *An Archaeological Survey of the United Kingdom* (Glasgow, 1896), 19, note 1.

⁴¹ *The Scotsman*, 29 January 1861. Simpson noted that on Orkney, the local community prevented the destruction of the Stones of Stennes by an ‘iconoclast’ by setting fire to his house!

⁴² See, for example, Pevsner, ‘Scrape and Anti-scrape’ in J. Fawcett (ed.), *The Future of the Past* (London, 1976), 35-53, 37-9.

efforts to secure its architectural remains, but they were bitterly divided on how this was best done.”⁴³ From the 18th century onwards a number of towns and cities across Britain were beginning to articulate arguments and approaches for preservation, frequently in the context of improvement programmes.⁴⁴ However, the approaches adopted in particular urban areas might contrast strongly. In York, for example, antiquarians successfully battled to preserve the town walls,⁴⁵ yet eighteenth century Norwich levelled its castle mound to provide a site for a new cattle market and in the first decade of the nineteenth removed its medieval defences almost in their entirety.⁴⁶ By way of contrast, by the mid-nineteenth century architects in Chester had adopted an approach which combined preservation, restoration and the construction of historicist new buildings. Termed the ‘Black and White Revival’, this approach was to allow the city to present the growing tourist market with a particular view of ‘Olde England.’⁴⁷ In Bath, however, the destruction of the medieval and early modern architecture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries meant that it was not well-placed to respond to the increasingly strong interest in medieval architecture as the Victorian period developed and its image was in due course to be strongly associated with its neoclassical buildings.⁴⁸ Meanwhile London’s urban topography saw significant change with the implementation of a series of street improvements in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁹ This followed the increasing recognition of the problem of urban overcrowding, poverty and the helpless living condition in the capital, vividly documented by the editor of

⁴³ C. Delheim, *The Face of the Past: The Preservation of the Medieval Inheritance in Victorian Britain* (Cambridge, 1982), 79.

⁴⁴ C. Miele, ‘Conservation and the Enemies of Progress’, in C. Miele (ed.) *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939* (London, 2005), 14.

⁴⁵ G.C. Curr, ‘Who saved York Walls: the roles of William Etty and the Corporation of York’, *York Historian*, 5 (1984); 25-38. P. Addyman, ‘Archaeology in York 1831-1981’, in C.H. Feinstein (ed.), *York 1831-1981: 150 Years of Scientific Endeavour and Social Change* (York, 1981), 53-87; D. Palliser, ‘Preserving our heritage: the historic city of York’, in R. Kimber and J.J. Richardson, *Campaigning for the Environment* (London, 1974), 6-26.

⁴⁶ B. Ayers, *Norwich*, (London, 1994), 104-106.

⁴⁷ Miele, Conservation and the Enemies of Progress, 14-22. P. Carrington, *Chester*, 109-111.

⁴⁸ P. Borsay *The Image of Georgian Bath 1700-2000*, (Oxford, 2000), 355.

⁴⁹ See, for example, P.J. Edwards, *History of London Street Improvements 1855-1897* (London 1898).

The Builder, George Godwin.⁵⁰ It was though broader concern over the ongoing loss of the city's early buildings that was to lead to the creation of the London Survey Committee in 1894.⁵¹

It was in this context, and as a reaction against restoration projects in Britain and Europe, that a move toward preservation on the basis of recognition of the age-value of buildings and the notion of stewardship developed out of an earlier concern for picturesque urban scenery. This drew in particular on the writings of John Ruskin and with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings at its forefront.⁵² However, the speed of urban change was such that at the close of the Victorian period in London, C.R. Ashbee reflected ongoing concerns:

Perhaps it may not be fair to take the parish of Bromley as an example of what is happening over the whole of London; but sometimes one is apt to ask whether their historic conscience is entirely lost to the citizens of London, so swift, so complete, so apparently needless—and, alas! so ignorant—is often the destruction of the records of their past.⁵³

In common with other British towns and cities, Edinburgh developed its own particular approaches toward preservation. In exploring this, it is helpful to consider four overlapping periods of change from the mid-eighteenth century to the later nineteenth century. These are: the Old Town improvements in the second half of the eighteenth century; early nineteenth

⁵⁰ See, for example, G. Godwin, *London Shadows* (London, 1854); G. Godwin, *Town Swamps and Social Bridges* (London, 1859). For broader discussion of Godwin's work on urban sanitary conditions and his editorship of *The Builder*, see A. King, 'Another blow for life: George Godwin and the reform of working-class housing', *The Architectural Review*, 136 (1964) 448-452; A. King, 'Architectural journalism and the profession: the early years of George Godwin', *Architectural History*, 19 (1976) 32-53; R. Thorne, 'Building bridges: George Godwin and architectural journalism', in G. Marsden (ed.), *Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Society* (London, 1998), 114-126. According to Peter Mandler, pers. comm., combining his studies and visits to urban areas across Britain with his antiquarianism and love of art, Godwin was to develop an early form of aesthetic preservationism.

⁵¹ See, H. Hobhouse, *London Survey'd: The Work of the Survey of London 1894-1994* (Swindon, 1994); J. Earl, 'London Government: A Record of Custodianship', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (Stroud 1996), 57-76.

⁵² Delheim, *The Face of the Past*, 81-130; C. Miele, *Morris and Conservation*, in C. Miele (ed.), *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939*, 30-65.

⁵³ C.R. Ashbee, (ed.), *Survey of London: Volume 1, Bromley by Bow* (London, 1900), xiii-xxxvii.

century improvements; the railway expansions in the mid-nineteenth century; and the sanitary improvements in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Old Town improvements in second half of the eighteenth century

While there was a great emphasis on the creation and expansion of Edinburgh's first New Town to the north of the existing city in the second half of the eighteenth century, improvement was also pursued within the ancient boundaries of the Old Town. Change to the High Street, perceived as narrow, old-fashioned, and presenting difficulties for the movement of carriages, was one major aspiration. The presence of town walls and gates, and the location of temporary and permanent structures on the main thoroughfare, while noted for their character and antiquity in the early city histories,⁵⁴ were seen as placing significant restrictions on movement.⁵⁵ In addition, they did not meet the classical ideals of modernity which celebrated wide and straight thoroughfares.⁵⁶ From the mid-eighteenth century therefore the municipal authority sought to demolish a number of long-lived buildings and structures using improvement legislation.⁵⁷ The resultant demolitions included large areas of the town walls, the town gates and a number of buildings on the High Street including the Mercat Cross (figure 3, 'L') in 1756 and the Netherbow (figure 4) in 1764.⁵⁸

The Mercat Cross, situated close to St Giles, was of recognised historical and political importance, and had been used for the public reading of Royal Proclamations, as a focus for public celebration and for public execution. Nonetheless, its demolition, which commenced

⁵⁴ For example, W. Maitland, *History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1753).

⁵⁵ For the development of antiquarian preservation discourse in response to eighteenth-century urban clearances and rural improvements see R. Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 2004), especially Chapter 8.

⁵⁶ See Dennis, *Cities in Modernity*, 113-43, for a broader discussion of the relationship of street improvements to the demand for economic and social improvements.

⁵⁷ Some of the buildings identified in eighteenth century improvement legislation remained standing into the following century.

⁵⁸ For the debate regarding preservation of the town walls in York see G.C. Curr, 'Who saved York Walls: the roles of William Etty and the Corporation of York', *York Historian*, 5 (1984), 25-38.

on 19 March 1756, was justified as part of the preparation for a new Royal Exchange to be located on a site lying immediately to its north.⁵⁹ Early nineteenth century guidebooks noted that its demolition was regretted at the time,⁶⁰ and the author, historian and Edinburgh urban topographer, Robert Chambers, described its demolition as ‘Gothic barbarity.’⁶¹ In a retrospective article many years later, the *Caledonian Mercury* noted that: ‘considerable opposition to the proceeding was shown by the more sentimental portion of the community; and a local poet composed some tolerable rhymes upon the subject.’ It continued: ‘But opposition was in vain. The march of improvement had begun, and could not be delayed by the tears or the indignant remonstrances of antiquaries.’⁶²

While *in situ* preservation was not achieved in such cases, objects of antiquarian interest from such buildings and structures were acquired for private collections. Despite the Market Cross shaft being broken into 5 pieces during demolition, the remains of both shaft and capital were saved and re-erected at Drum House in Midlothian.⁶³ Meanwhile the medallions from the Cross’s octagonal under-structure were acquired by Henry Raeburn for his house in Stockbridge. In 1814 Raeburn gifted them to Sir Walter Scott who had opposed the Cross’s demolition,⁶⁴ and they were subsequently incorporated into a wall at Scott’s home at Abbotsford.⁶⁵ In addition to the Market Cross, Scott was also to take an interest in the demolition of the Tolbooth,⁶⁶ acquiring its main door for his home.⁶⁷

⁵⁹ A mercat cross is first recorded on the High Street close to the east end of St Giles in 1365. It was taken down and re-erected on a number of occasions prior to its demolition in 1756. See RCAHMS, *Edinburgh*, 121.

⁶⁰ See, for example, An333on, *A Stranger’s Guide to Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1820), 61.

⁶¹ R. Chambers, *Walks in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1829), 118.

⁶² 26 February 1866.

⁶³ For the post-1756 history of the Cross and its reconstruction on its current site, see RCAHMS, *Edinburgh*, 121-2.

⁶⁴ Quoted by Lord Cockburn in his *Letter to the Lord Provost*. See *Journal of Henry Cockburn 1831-1854*, volume II (Edinburgh, 1874), 326.

⁶⁵ K. Cruft, J. Dunbar and R. Fawcett, *The Buildings of Scotland: Borders* (Edinburgh, 2006), 98.

⁶⁶ The building played a central role in his novel, *Heart of Midlothian*.

⁶⁷ Cruft *et al*, *Borders*, 93; I.G. Brown, ‘A flibbertigibbet of a house to suit an antiquary’, in I.G. Brown (ed.), *Abbotsford and Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh, 2003), xiv.

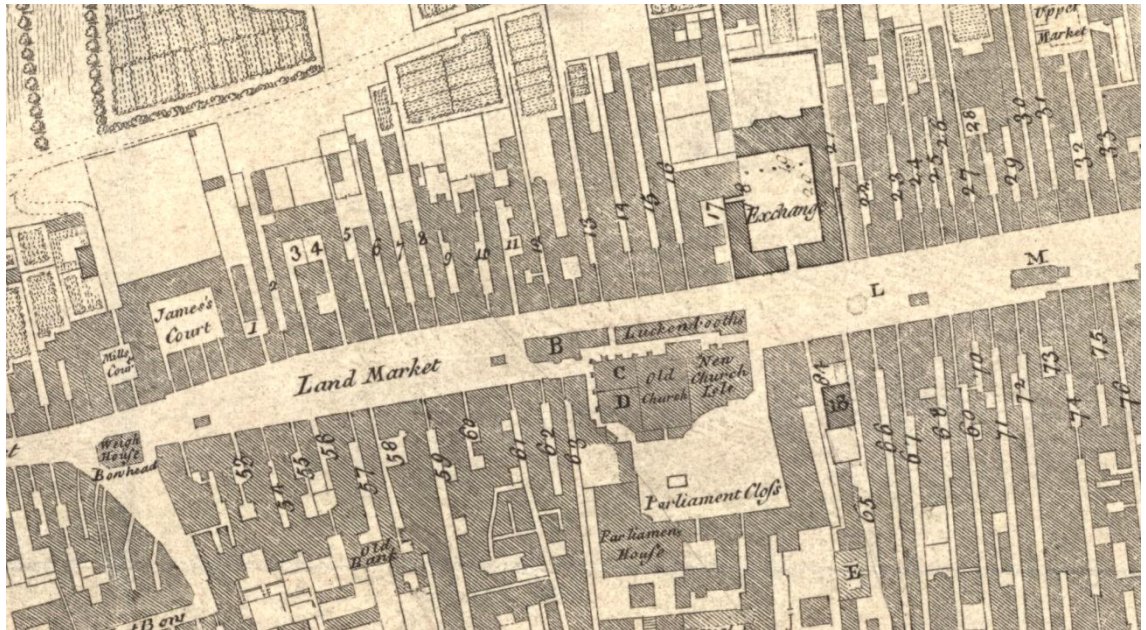


Figure 3. City and castle of Edinburgh, 1765. Detail of the High Street centred on St Giles Cathedral. (B) Tolbooth; (L) Mercat Cross; (M) The Town Guard House. The Luckenbooths and Kames lie to the immediate north of the Cathedral. The Weigh House lies on the extreme left at the junction of the Land Market (Lawnmarket) and West Bow. *Source:* NLS, 'Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh' by Willm. Edgar, 1765. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.EMS.s.55c.

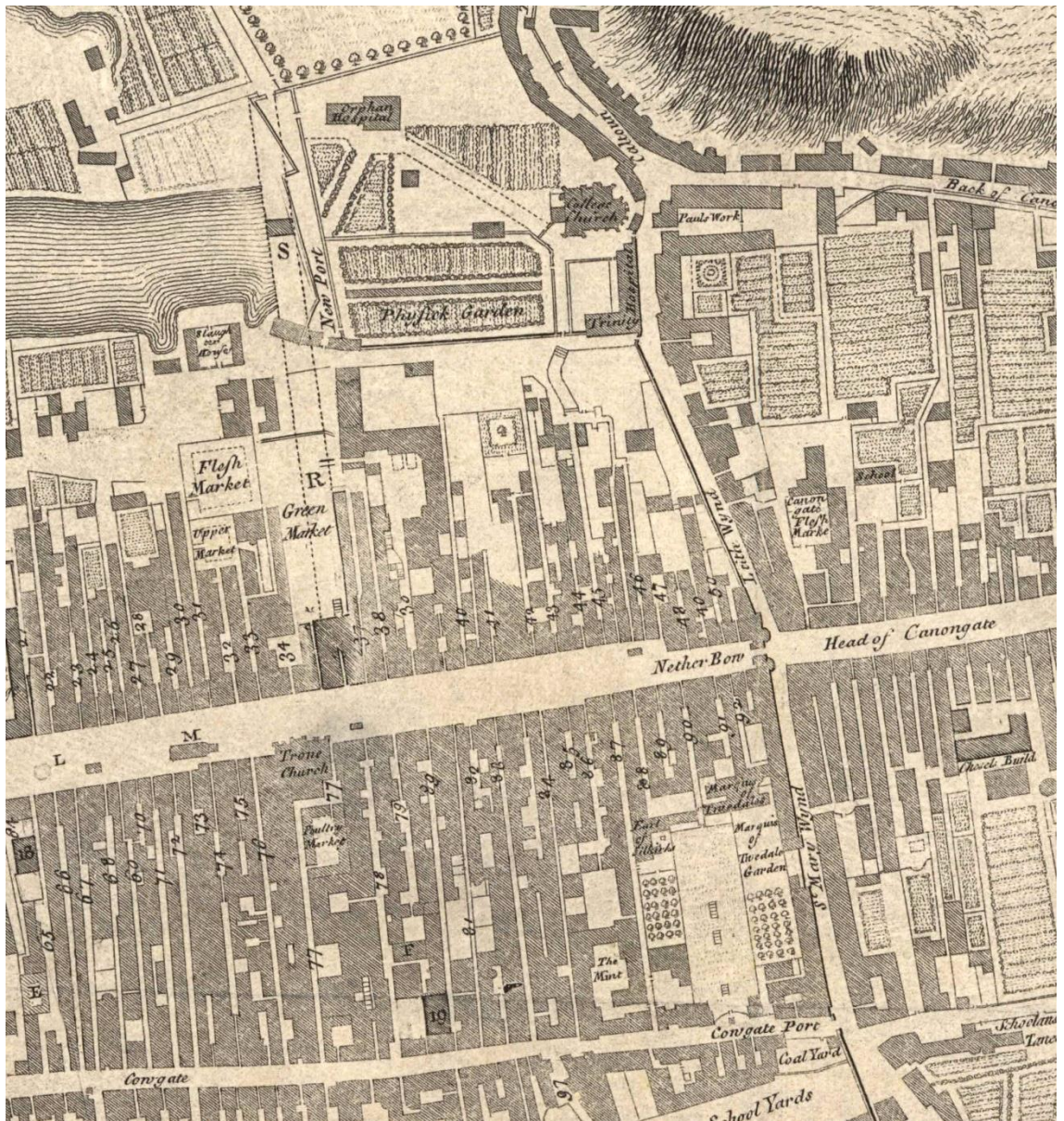


Figure 4. City and castle of Edinburgh, 1765. Detail showing location of the town walls on the eastern side of the Royal burgh. Source: NLS, 'Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh' by Willm. Edgar, 1765. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.EMS.s.55c.

The process of clearing the High Street of obstructions continued through the later part of the eighteenth century, with the removal of the Guard House in 1786. Powers to demolish the Luckenbooths, Krames, Tolbooth and Weigh House were also given to the Council in the Improvement Act of 1786, although their demolition did not take place until the second and third decades of the nineteenth century (figure 3). Despite being a historian of the city, Alexander Kincaid welcomed the removal of the Town Guard House from the High Street and he looked forward to the removal of the Weigh House at the foot of Castlehill and the Luckenbooths close to St Giles Cathedral as this would: ‘render that part of the street almost equally broad with the rest.’⁶⁸ While he saw the High Street as amenable to improvement he was rather less confident about the remaining area of the Old Town: ‘This, however, is the only part of the Old Town that probably can ever be brought to any degree of elegance; for not to mention the indifferent appearance of the buildings in other places, the narrowness of the streets would be an insurmountable obstacle.’⁶⁹

From 1753 onwards, the pursuit of new wide streets, major bridges and embankments over the valleys to the north and south, and the need to acquire cleared sites for the proposed new public buildings, meant the demolition of large numbers of vernacular domestic and other buildings. While there were vociferous and energetic objections to the works to lower the High Street,⁷⁰ there is little evidence that the press saw other demolitions as controversial with the *Caledonian Mercury*, for example, baldly recording the loss of a house close to the Tron Church built in 1557 with: ‘by far the best stair, of any house in either the Old or New Town’ without comment or judgement.⁷¹

⁶⁸ A. Kincaid, *The History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1787), 108-9. Kincaid was one of the Commissioners empowered to undertake improvements under the legislation.

⁶⁹ Kincaid, *History*, 108-9.

⁷⁰ Proprietors were concerned that the lowering of the existing High Street road surface by 5ft would expose the tops of cellars and foundations, and undermine adjacent tenements.

⁷¹ *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 August 1786.

Scottish historical and national awareness was significantly raised with the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in August 1822 with the accompanying celebration of Scottish culture coordinated by Sir Walter Scott. Attention was also drawn to the city's history and urban topography in the 1820s by Robert Chambers. His *Traditions of Edinburgh*⁷² and *Walks in Edinburgh*,⁷³ contained descriptions of the Old Town's buildings, their inhabitants and the historical events in which they appeared. The emphasis of Chambers' writings was on historical events and personalities, although architectural features such as inscriptions over doorways and ancient structures such as the town walls provided an important context for his descriptions. He also included mention of recently demolished ancient buildings such as the Luckenbooths, and in 1856 he also published a detailed and illustrated discussion about the city's early buildings.⁷⁴ However, whilst his books provided a social and historical context for the Old Town's buildings, these publications, like the early city histories by Maitland, Kincaid and that by Arnot,⁷⁵ do not appear to have created any significant momentum for slowing or stopping the progress of improvement and associated demolitions. Chambers' descriptions did, however, allow a broader understanding of the city's local history and topography and were regularly quoted in the press by those lamenting the loss of Old Town buildings subsequently.

While the demolition of buildings associated with the early nineteenth century opening up of the access to the Calton Hill⁷⁶ and the creation of Waterloo Place as the new eastern approach to the New Town seems to have passed without comment,⁷⁷ it was the proposed alteration to the screen wall of Robert Adam's classical General Register House,⁷⁸ in order to

⁷² Edinburgh, 1825.

⁷³ Edinburgh, 1829.

⁷⁴ R. Chambers, *Ancient Domestic Architecture of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1856).

⁷⁵ Arnot, *History of Edinburgh*.

⁷⁶ To provide a site for a new gaol. The 1813 Act had specified a site in the Old Town but this was amended in 1814.

⁷⁷ The classical scheme, designed by Archibald Elliot necessitated the demolition of tenements on Ann Street which ran north-south at the eastern end of Princes Street. See Youngson, *Classical Edinburgh*, 135-48.

⁷⁸ Scotland's public record office, dating from 1774.

improve the junction of Waterloo Place and the Leith road, which led to an early example of an Edinburgh urban preservation campaign. A group of citizens led by John Clerk of Eldin vociferously opposed the changes: ‘If any of you were fortunate enough to have a statue of the Venus de Medicis in your library, would you destroy or mutilate that splendid piece of art to make way for a chest of drawers?’⁷⁹ It is also in the early decades of the nineteenth century that another high-profile preservation campaign was mounted, in this instance however related not to buildings or monuments but to Salisbury Crag. This impressive geological formation, seen as a key contributor to the setting and beauty of the town, had been the subject of quarrying for over two centuries but the mid-1820s saw increasing concern over an increase in the scale of extraction. The *Scotsman* newspaper contained a series of emotive articles in the earlier 1820s about Salisbury Crag’s bold, romantic and classical scenery,⁸⁰ condemning the quarrying as vandalism and appealing to influential public figures such as Sir Walter Scott to take action.⁸¹ All was intended to encourage public pressure to be brought to bear on politicians, on those undertaking the quarrying and, in this instance, also the Crown under which the management of Holyrood and its park fell. The campaign eventually led to the cessation of the works.⁸²

Early nineteenth century improvements

In early 1824 Thomas Hamilton drew up proposals for the creation of a new road intended to provide a western approach to the Old Town.⁸³ This would commence at the junction of Castlehill, Lawnmarket and West Bow and would run westwards along an embankment constructed along the southern slopes of the Castle toward the Lothian Road. By the middle of the year however these proposals had been significantly extended by Hamilton working

⁷⁹ J.E. Cookson, “The row over the ‘screen wall’ of General Register House in 1849”, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 9 (2012), 90. The screen wall was to come under renewed attack in the later 1830s and 1840s.

⁸⁰ *Scotsman*, 3 April 1824.

⁸¹ Scott featured Salisbury Crag and the King’s Park in *Heart of Midlothian* (Edinburgh 1818).

⁸² W. Forbes Gray, “The quarrying of Salisbury Crag”, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 18 (1932), 181-210.

⁸³ *Caledonian Mercury*, 18 March 1824. Johnston Terrace and the King’s Bridge.

with William Burn, with the addition of two major new roads — a road running southwards from the High Street to Teviot Row (Figure 5, ‘D’) and a second running up the hill from the Mound (figure 5, ‘C’). Had the proposals been fully implemented as initially planned, a major new road junction would have been created at the base of Castlehill (figure 5, ‘g’). The scheme also proposed to lower Castlehill and demolish the houses on its north side to give a wider and more gentle approach to the castle: ‘A great part of the property to be thrown down for the West Road, and other improvements on the Castlehill, consists of wooden tenements crowded together, and almost ruinous, destroying principally “the wreck and rubbish of past centuries, sinking fast under the pressure of their own weight, receptacles of filth and hot beds of contagion.”’⁸⁴ At the same time suggestions came forward for the creation of new buildings on the park in the valley on the south side of Princes Street. The latter element raised significant concerns within the Faculty of Advocates, and in particular with Lord Cockburn,⁸⁵ with a number of pamphlets opposing the proposals also published.⁸⁶ In addition to Lord Cockburn, a lesser-known figure, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, emerges at this time. Sharpe was a collector of Scottish antique relics and ballads, a writer and illustrator of historical scenes, and was part of an antiquarian circle which included Robert Chambers. Sharpe was known as a committed protector of Edinburgh, having: ‘a vast aversion to those whom he was accustomed to designate as Athenian improvers, watching over the relics of Caledonian history with an eye every vigilant against the Vandalism of boards, committees, surveyors, and all municipal meddlers of the same sort.’⁸⁷ In the case of Hamilton’s proposals, Sharpe was particularly concerned about the visual effect of a new western road

⁸⁴ Quoted in Youngson, *Classical Edinburgh*, 167. The proposers congratulated themselves on preserving the Lawnmarket ‘interesting for its antiquity, and its striking characteristic features.’

⁸⁵ As discussed in Chapter 3, Cockburn was to become increasingly active in the city’s preservation debates.

⁸⁶ The role of the Faculty of Advocates in early preservation discourse is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

⁸⁷ Memoir by W.K.R. Bedford in A. Allardyce (ed.), *Letters From and To Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.* (Edinburgh, 1888), 58.

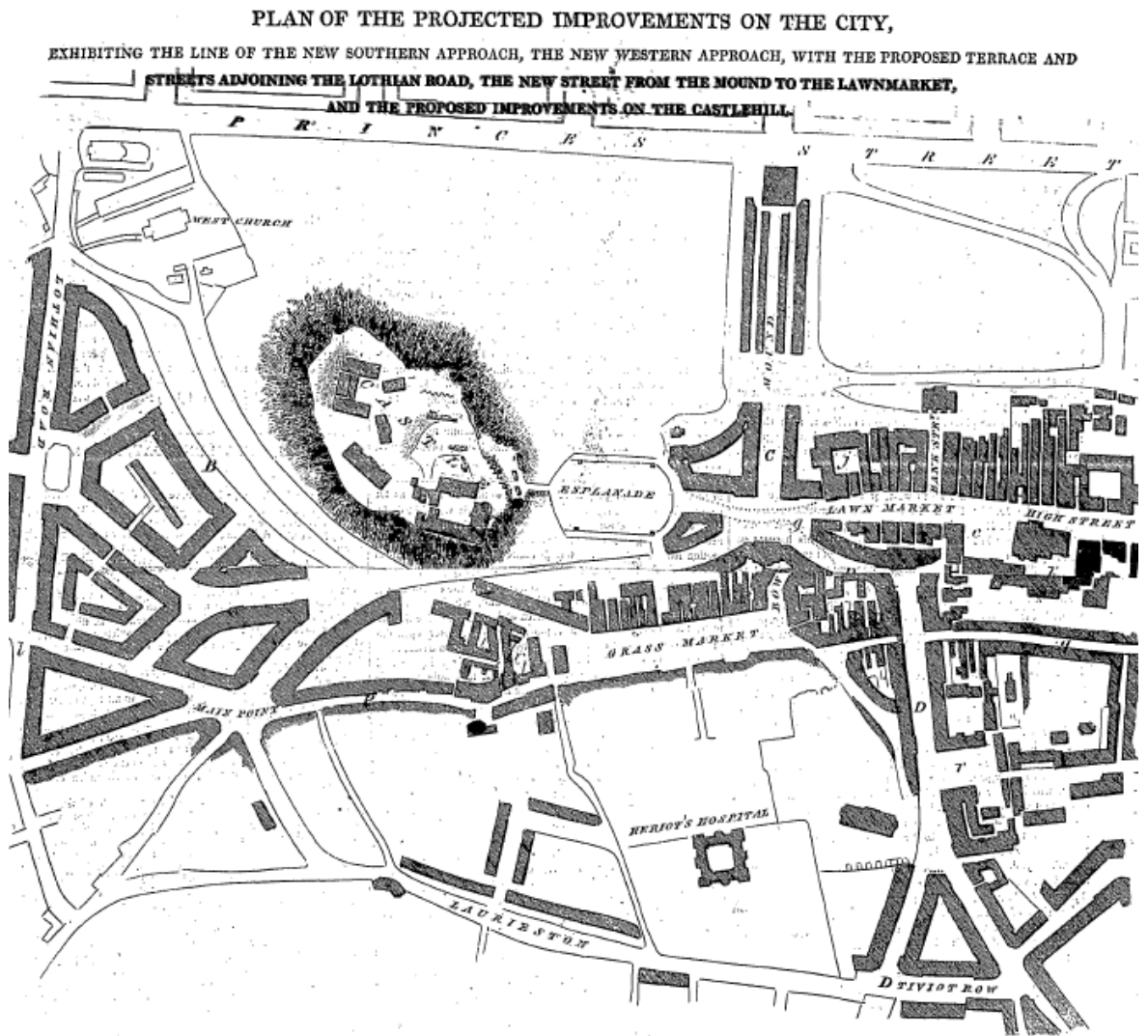


Figure 5. Thomas Hamilton's expanded proposals for the Old Town, 1825: (C) the extension of the Mound southwards to Castle Hill; linking road from Castlehill to Lothian Road, (D) new southern access and (g) the proposed major new road junction to the east of the castle esplanade. *Source:* The Scotsman, 29 January 1825.

traversing the southern-facing slope of the Castle Rock,⁸⁸ and the intended demolition of the vernacular buildings on Castle Hill. The latter included a mansion on the north side which reputedly had belonged to Queen Marie of Lorraine. In opposing these proposals he sought the support of not only Chambers but a number of powerful political figures including Sir Walter Scott. In a letter to the *Edinburgh Observer* Sharpe suggested that: ‘Though the committee seem extremely anxious to prove that their intentions are far from hostile to the antique beauty of our metropolis... I can assure them and the public that very many of the fellow-citizens are of a different way of thinking.’⁸⁹ A second letter followed in which he adopted a strongly ironic tone, suggesting that the Nor’ Loch valley be entirely filled in and built upon and that the Castle Rock be painted white to beautify it and to reflect the sunbeams to the New Town. He also proposed the demolition of a number of buildings in the Old Town which he suggested might otherwise be a distraction to tourists!⁹⁰

The broader objections to Hamilton and Burn’s proposals led to a range of amendments and, following a refusal of the scheme by Parliament in 1825, an amended Act in 1827.⁹¹ The western approach along the castle bank was constructed, but the proposed major junction at the base of Castle Hill was removed from the scheme. The proposed southern approach (now George IV Bridge) was realigned as was the connection with the Mound which followed its current circuitous route via North Bank Street. There was however a new linking road introduced running from the George IV Bridge westwards down to the Grassmarket. This was to lead to significant alterations and demolitions on West Bow, the upper part of which was re-routed to form the present Victoria Street. Overall, a large number of vernacular Old Town buildings were demolished to achieve the amended scheme including a number on Libberton’s Wynd and West Bow. However, if some sympathies had been expressed

⁸⁸ Johnston Terrace.

⁸⁹ Allardyce, *Letters*, 58-60. Many of the buildings he identified were subsequently demolished or heavily altered.

⁹⁰ Allardyce, *Letters*, 60-2.

⁹¹ The 1827 report noted that the commissioners had responded to earlier criticisms relating to the setting of the castle.

regarding the loss of Old Town buildings, there were nonetheless calls for further demolition across the Old Town, encouraged by the collapse of a tenement in the Netherbow in 1832. The *Scotsman* noted that the houses which collapsed had already been condemned by the Dean of Guild and his Inspectors but that this decision had not been acted upon. The newspaper listed other houses which should be inspected and demolished: ‘there are throughout the Old Town many wretched old wooden houses, projecting into the streets or closes on stumps of decayed wood, which none but a suicide can pass without feelings of horror. The heart-rending accident which has just taken place will no doubt stimulate the Lord Dean of Guild to adopt active and efficient measures for public safety.’⁹²

That the relationship between picturesque beauty and preservation was far from straightforward can readily be witnessed in the writings of John Britton. Britton had provided the text for a book of engravings illustrating Edinburgh buildings and vistas by T. H. Shepherd published at the end of the 1820s. Despite its title of *Modern Athens*, the book included illustrations of a number of Old Town vernacular building, suggesting that such buildings were perceived as of value for citizens and visitors alike. However the accompanying text gave a rather different impression: ‘The over-hanging stories and lookern windows of the buildings, by which the Lawnmarket and the West Bow are connected, as represented in the accompanying Engraving, have a picturesque appearance, when delineated on paper; but few persons will regret their removal, to make room for modern improvements.’⁹³ The demolitions in the West Bow did however become a cause for regret. The *Scotsman* noted in 1836 that: ‘Since the publication of Sir W. Scott’s Heart of Midlothian, and Chambers’ Traditions of Edinburgh, the West Bow, to strangers, has been one of Auld Reekie’s chief *lions*; but henceforth it will be deprived of half of its attraction.’

⁹² ‘We call on his Lordship to inspect the houses in the High Street, Nos. 153, 109, 93, 79 and downwards to the heart of Leith Wynd and consider if they are in such a state as to exempt them from his fiat of demolition.’ *Scotsman*, 11 July 1832.

⁹³ J. Britton, *Modern Athens*, (London, 1829), 30. Dedicated to Sir Walter Scott, it draws some of its descriptive material for the West Bow from Scott’s *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1826).

It continued: ‘The “March of Improvement” has reached the Bow, and the greater portion of the west side, and two houses on the east, including those parts which were connected with the ancient city wall, have been, or are in the course of being pulled down. “*Sic transit gloria mundi.*”’⁹⁴ The newspaper did not however intend to campaign in support of preservation. By September the demolitions on West Bow were complete and it gave its support to the ongoing demolition of the Old City Wall and adjacent vernacular buildings at Teviot Row (figure 5): ‘the antiquarian may lament the destruction of one of the ancient fortified walls of the city, but the march of improvement must not be stopped for such fancies.’⁹⁵ These works related to the city’s new southern approach road where it crossed the city’s defences. Again the improvement to ease transport movement outweighed any antiquarian impulse: ‘The public will have a better idea of the value and extent of this really useful improvement, when we state that the present entrance to this important thoroughfare at Teviot Row is only twenty-five feet wide, which is bounded on the north by the old wall, about twenty feet high, and from five to six feet thick; but after the wall is taken down, the width will be about sixty feet at the entrance.’⁹⁶

Over the latter part of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries we can identify campaigns for preservation by those interested in preserving the city’s vernacular and classical buildings and their setting. Their activities included letters to the press and the circulation of pamphlets intended to draw attention to the issues and to put forward persuasive arguments to shift public and political opinion. There was also the first coming together of an association of like-minded individuals with an interest in the city’s buildings and monuments although information about this group and its activities is sparse.⁹⁷ However, while those arguing to preserve the setting of the castle might hope to gain some sympathy

⁹⁴ *Scotsman*, 6 April 1836, ‘Thus passes the glory of the world.’

⁹⁵ *Scotsman*, 6 July 1836.

⁹⁶ *Scotsman*, 6 July 1836.

⁹⁷ Glendinning notes that: ‘in reaction to the march of improvement in the city, in 1841 an “Edinburgh Association for Illustrating Local Antiquities” was formed to compile “accurate sketches and authentic historical records”’, *The Conservation Movement*, 108.

not only with antiquarians but with politicians and the broader public, the reworking of the city to improve the transport links to the developing suburbs and in response to broader concerns with safety took precedence. In this context, the preservation of long-lived privately-owned vernacular buildings appeared undesirable or unachievable, despite the occasional expression of regret expressed over their loss.

The railway expansions

As Kellett has suggested, the Victorian railway was the most important single agency in the transformation of many of Britain's urban areas.⁹⁸ In the years around the middle of the nineteenth century Edinburgh was to see a significant debate about preservation of the city's buildings within the context of a broader discussion about the city's appearance, character and value. The stimulus for this debate was the acquisition of land for railway lines and associated infrastructure including stations, sheds, sidings and offices. In 1836 the Edinburgh, Leith and Newhaven Railway had obtained an Act of Parliament enabling it to create Canal Street Station lying immediately to the west of the North Bridge (on part of what was to become part of the later Waverley Station complex) in order to serve a line heading northwards out of the city.⁹⁹ The first railway line westwards from Glasgow to Edinburgh became operational in 1842 but rather than terminating at a city-centre site, the line stopped at Haymarket towards the western side of the New Town. This peripheral location and the presence of Canal Street station however led to early pressure for the Edinburgh-Glasgow line to be extended eastwards along the city's central valley to a new terminus adjacent to Canal Street station. The introduction of railway lines across the valley was controversial, with the Princes Street proprietors and the Society of Antiquaries, amongst others, resisting the proposals.¹⁰⁰ In due course however opposition fell away and in 1844 an Act was passed allowing lines to be extended eastwards from Haymarket, crossing

⁹⁸ J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of the Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969), 289.

⁹⁹ This ran underground northwards through the New Town.

¹⁰⁰ D. Robertson, *The Princes Street Proprietors* (Edinburgh, 1935), 37-46. James Skene was active in both organisations.

the central valley to a new station close to the west side of the North Bridge, adjacent to the Canal Street Station.¹⁰¹ The railway proprietors did eventually seek to reduce the visual impact of the proposals on the valley and on Princes Street insofar as their Act included measures limiting the height of the railway buildings and required that the railway plans be approved by William Playfair.¹⁰² This significant encroachment of the railways across the valley nonetheless introduced a significant change to the city's urban topography and was condemned by Lord Cockburn amongst others.¹⁰³

In parallel with the eastwards extension of the Glasgow and Edinburgh railway, the newly-formed North British Railway brought forward proposals for a new east coast route linking Edinburgh to Berwick-upon-Tweed.¹⁰⁴ The proposed line would enter Edinburgh from the east through a tunnel under Calton Hill, terminating at a new station situated immediately to the east of the North Bridge. In addition to a passenger station, a goods station was proposed for the site. The antiquarians were particularly concerned as this necessitated the demolition of a group of public buildings in the valley lying immediately to the east of the North Bridge which included the old Orphan Hospital, Lady Glenorchy's Church and Trinity Hospital (figures 6). Despite protests, in 1844 the North British Railway Act allowed the eastern line and the demolition of the buildings.¹⁰⁵ This Act proved to be the thin end of the wedge, however. In 1846 a further Act¹⁰⁶ enabled the acquisition and demolition of one of Edinburgh's most architecturally significant and historically important medieval buildings,

¹⁰¹ 7 and 8 Vict., cap 58, *Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Act*, 1844.

¹⁰² Trains began to run on 1 August 1846.

¹⁰³ By 1846 three separate companies operated from adjacent stations on the Waverley Station site: the Edinburgh, Leith and Newhaven Railway (Canal Street), the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway (General), and the North British Railway (North Bridge), the last providing a line heading eastwards and then along the coast southwards towards Berwick-upon-Tweed and England.

¹⁰⁴ J. Thomas, *The North British Railway* (New York, 1969), Chapter 1.

¹⁰⁵ 7 and 8 Vict., cap. 66, *North British Railway Act*, 1844.

¹⁰⁶ 9 and 10 Vict., cap. 74, *North British Railway Act*, 1846.

Trinity College Church,¹⁰⁷ a fifteenth century royal foundation, in order to increase the size of the site for the railway facilities (figure 7).¹⁰⁸

The threat to Trinity College Church was to provide the focus for the city's highest-profile preservation campaign to that date. When the proposals became public, a memorial to the Council was drawn up, signed by David Laing¹⁰⁹ from the Signet Library and 31 other inhabitants, stating regret and surprise at the rumoured intention to demolish.¹¹⁰ The *Scotsman* appeared sympathetic to the objectors' position, repeating a statement in the memorial that the church was the only pure specimen of ancient Gothic architecture which the city possessed, and noting that: 'The memorial also contained an extract from the work by Mr Rickman, the celebrated architect, praising [the church's] beauty and rarity.'¹¹¹ In his speech, the Lord Provost noted that the Council had been stigmatised by Sir Walter Scott and others as great Goths for their proceedings on former occasions including the removal of the Cross and for throwing down a mass of earth on the Mound instead of erecting an elegant bridge. He therefore sought to mitigate the adverse impact on the city's ancient structures as a whole by suggesting that if Trinity College Church had to be removed, the Council should as some small compensation endeavour to get the old cross replaced to make up the deficiency in the antiquities of the city. In 1844 the Society of Antiquaries submitted a memorial to the Council remonstrating against the sale of the church to the North British Railway Company. The case for preservation was not helped though by the fact that the overall architectural scheme for the church was incomplete due to the early death of

¹⁰⁷ Founded by Mary of Guelders in memory of her husband James II of Scotland. J.D. Marwick, *The History of the Collegiate Church and Hospital of the Holy Trinity, and the Trinity Hospital, Edinburgh, 1460-1661* (Edinburgh, 1911).

¹⁰⁸ P. Blyth, 'The Trinity Church affair', in V. Fiddes and A. Rowan (eds.), *David Bryce, 1803-1876* (Edinburgh, 1976), 42-5. The church was demolished under the supervision of Bryce.

¹⁰⁹ Laing was also highly active in the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland where he held the post of Treasurer. See A.S. Bell (ed.), *Scottish Antiquarian Tradition* (Edinburgh, 1981), 69-81.

¹¹⁰ A 'memorial' was a public petition.

¹¹¹ *Scotsman*, 13 November 1844. The Lord Provost was Adam Black.



Figure 6. Edinburgh's central valley and North Bridge prior to the arrival of the railways. Source: NLS, 'City of Edinburgh', W. & A.K. Johnston Limited, 1837. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, EMS.s.110.

its patron which had left the church without its nave. The low number of worshippers attending the church also counted against its preservation. Despite its recognised royal association and architectural importance, the focus of the discussions changed from the *in situ* preservation to its reconstruction elsewhere and the recovery and reburial of its royal founder's body. The Council ultimately accepted the principle of demolition provided that a replacement was erected elsewhere,¹¹² but there was to be a long and heated debate over the intentions of the Act of Parliament with regard to reconstruction of the church subsequently. After very significant delays, during which time many of the numbered masonry blocks stored on Calton Hill were stolen, the church was eventually partially reconstructed on its inauspicious site to the south of Market Street.

Between 1845 and 1850 the old palace on the north side of Castlehill which Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe had sought to protect in the 1820s was also demolished despite efforts once again by the Antiquarians protect the complex. The issue of the screen wall of General Register House also reappeared in 1849,¹¹³ and there were also proposals to demolish a further stretch of the Town Wall and its last remaining tower at the Vennel. The latter was a picturesque steep lane running alongside the western boundary of Heriot's School and into the Grassmarket.¹¹⁴ In what was one of a small number of mid-century preservation victories, this proposal was successfully opposed by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland with the support of others.¹¹⁵ At this time the Society also successfully opposed the demolition of John Knox's House on the High Street. This building had been condemned by the Dean of Guild due to its condition but in an innovative response, the Society

¹¹² On 24 June 1852 the Council's architect, David Cousin, wrote to the Secretaries of the Society of Antiquaries defending the Council and its Lord Provost, Adam Black. See *Scotsman*, 3 July 1852.

¹¹³ Cookson, "The row over the 'Screen Wall'", 91-6.

¹¹⁴ The wall formed part of the School's boundary.

¹¹⁵ Daniel Wilson was also involved. *Scotsman*, 14 March 1849



Figure 7. Trinity College Church, Edinburgh looking north-east with Calton Hill behind.
Source: R. Billings, *The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1852), volume 2, plate 28.

commissioned the architects David Bryce and Thomas Hamilton to prepare a report setting out how the building could be successfully repaired.¹¹⁶ This is an interesting case insofar as the key element of the argument for preservation was not that the building was ancient or picturesque but that it was associated with the key Scottish religious reformer, John Knox.¹¹⁷

Sanitary improvements

The high density of people living in the Old Town tenements and closes combined with poor drainage, bad ventilation and insanitary conditions was increasingly perceived as a serious problem for the city as the nineteenth century developed.¹¹⁸ However it was the fever epidemics in 1847-8, rapidly followed by a cholera epidemic in 1848-9 and a further fever epidemic in 1857-8 which led to a significant change in attitude and approach to public health within the city. As Smith has noted, while Edinburgh had involved itself in sanitary reform in the 1850s, the powers appeared inadequate to the task envisaged.¹¹⁹ It was believed until recently that it was the introduction of the 'Lindsay Act' in 1862¹²⁰ that paved the way for large-scale urban clearance with the aim of taking forward sanitary reform projects. However, Laxton and Rodger have argued that these powers already existed.¹²¹ Nonetheless it was not long after the 1862 Act that the municipal authority employed Henry Littlejohn as the city's Medical Officer of Health. He subsequently undertook a detailed survey of the city's health, publishing his results in 1865.¹²² His detailed statistical analysis of the city's mortality rates, presented on an area-by-area basis, showed a higher incidence of death

¹¹⁶ Bryce consulted with Robert Billings when producing the report.

¹¹⁷ C. Guthrie, 'The traditional belief in John Knox's House at the Netherbow vindicated', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, IX, 3rd Ser. (1899), 249-73; R. Miller, *John Knox and the Town Council of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1898).

¹¹⁸ W. Chambers, *Report on the Sanitary State of the Residences of the Poorer Classes in the Old Town* (Edinburgh, 1840). For sanitary reform in Edinburgh see Laxton and Rodger, *Insanitary City*, especially Chapters 2 and 3. George Godwin's writings were to draw attention to the similar situation in London and other towns and cities in Britain. Godwin, *London Shadows*; Godwin, *Town Swamps*.

¹¹⁹ Smith, 'Planning as Environmental Improvement', 103-4. Also, P.J. Smith, 'Slum clearance as an instrument of sanitary reform', *Planning Perspectives*, 9, 1 (1994), 1-27.

¹²⁰ 25 and 26, Vict., cap. 101, *Burgh Police (Scotland) Act*, 1862, (The Lindsay Act).

¹²¹ See footnote 22, above.

¹²² H.D. Littlejohn, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1865). For Littlejohn's work see Laxton and Rodger, *Insanitary City*.

within the Old Town and provided the momentum and justification for a major improvement programme. This would demolish older dwellings and would improve ventilation, sewage disposal, the water supply and access. It also proposed to reduce the density of occupation. Littlejohn was restrained in his recommendations as to how this might be all achieved, suggesting the introduction of new wide streets running at right-angles to the city's north-south closes and wynds to allow more light into the buildings and to give access for cleaning and refuse disposal. However, drawing on Littlejohn's persuasive statistical information the Lord Provost, William Chambers, drove forward the Edinburgh Improvement Act of 1867.¹²³ This was based on plans drawn up by the city architect, David Cousin and his colleague John Lessels the previous year which proposed a far more significant intervention into the city's built fabric by employing large-scale clearance.¹²⁴

The implications for the Old Town's surviving early vernacular buildings did not go unnoticed. In 1866, the Architectural Institute of Scotland (AIS) prepared a carefully worded response to the Council's proposals.¹²⁵ They supported the general principles of the scheme: 'in so far as it consists of the removal of old and ruinous tenements, and in the formation of new thoroughfares and widening of old ones, whereby a greater amount of ventilation and pure air may be introduced into the densely crowded and confined portions of the city.' They did however set out a number of 'well-defined general principles' which they felt should be borne in mind, two of which sought to protect the city's appearance and surviving ancient buildings. Principle 4 sought to ensure the sensitive contextual design for new streets and buildings with the use of a Scots Baronial style¹²⁶ for the Old Town's new buildings: 'The removal of old buildings, and the formation of new streets, ought to be accompanied by a

¹²³ 30 and 31 Vict., cap. 44, *Edinburgh City Improvement Act*, 1867. The Council also used a supplementary Police Act, procured in 1867, which included additional powers for removing tenements and widening thoroughfares. *Scotsman* 14 October 1874.

¹²⁴ D. Cousin and J. Lessels, *Plan of Sanitary Improvements of the City of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, August 17, 1866).

¹²⁵ AIS, *Report by the Sub-Committee ... to examine and report to the Institute upon the Projected sanitary improvements of the city of Edinburgh*. RIAS archives.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the emergence of Scots Baronial as an architectural style.

distinct proviso, that the new buildings shall be of an outline and character appropriate to their situation.’ It continued: ‘This, in a city like Edinburgh, is of primary importance; and your Committee are satisfied that it will not give general satisfaction unless this be made an indispensable condition in any Act which may be applied for.’ The nature and appearance of the city’s new buildings had already been a subject discussed in a report on working class houses in 1860.¹²⁷ In the report’s introduction, Macpherson referred to ‘the spirit and patriotism of Lord Cockburn and Sir Walter Scott’, suggesting that it was remarkable how much the Committee, and indeed every working man whom they had occasion to consult, were impressed with the idea of preserving and ancient and national character of their domiciles. Macpherson was also mindful of John Ruskin’s criticism of the New Town architecture.¹²⁸ In writing the report he had therefore ‘tried to think how we could to some extent meet Mr Ruskin’s views with regard to the monotonous appearance of the Edinburgh houses, and the possibility of introducing some useful, and perhaps ornamental, variation.’ However, the adopted approach was not to retain and refurbish the city’s ancient buildings but instead to construct new buildings with traditional historical detailing. The brief for works undertaken under the 1867 Improvement Act required that ‘elevations shall be of plain but marked character, in harmony with those fine specimens of national architecture in many of the neglected and overcrowded areas.’¹²⁹

The AIS’s Principle 8 related to the preservation of important buildings and was influenced by the early heated debates over Trinity College Church: ‘As there are several buildings of interest, historically and architecturally, in the districts chiefly affected by the proposed improvements, your Committee consider it desirable that these should as far as possible be preserved; or where this is found impracticable, that means should be taken to restore or

¹²⁷ A. MacPherson, *Report of a Committee of the Working Classes in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1860).

¹²⁸ Ruskin presented four lectures in Edinburgh in November 1853. His first criticised the monotony of the 678 undecorated windows on Queen Street. J. Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture and Painting delivered at Edinburgh in November 1853* (London, 1891), 6-7.

¹²⁹ Quoted in McWilliam, *Scottish Townscape*, 196.

reconstruct such interesting relics in some appropriate situation.’¹³⁰ However, this principle was to meet with resistance. In a subsequent speech to the AIS, Lord Provost Chambers not only stressed the importance of the replacement of: ‘a class of inhabitants who in decent terms were next to indescribable’ but pointed out also that the loss of many old historical edifices in the face of earlier improvement schemes had been a common occurrence and remained justified: ‘The abolition of closes has, in short, been going on for a hundred years, and yet large blocks remain untouched. The bulk of these narrow lanes, with their lofty structures, three to four hundred years old, remain as a singular anachronism till past the middle of the nineteenth century.’¹³¹ He mentioned that a writer in a London newspaper had said that the best improvement for the Old Town would be to improve it off the face of the earth, but he could not go to that length as the Old Town abounded in historical interest and its picturesque High Street should be as little interfered with as possible. Nonetheless, he argued that ancient buildings could not be preserved for all time. ‘Four hundred years may at all events be considered a very respectable age for a house, and we are entitled to think that after that length of time it has fairly done its duty, and may be thankfully dismissed.’¹³²

Cousin and Lessels used charged descriptive terms when referring to the Old Town buildings, including: ‘old and ruinous tenements’, ‘buildings of an inferior description’, ‘ill-adapted’, ‘disgrace to the locality’, ‘unsightly’ and ‘dilapidated waste and ruinous aspect’. In doing so they anticipated the later use of the term ‘slums’ as establishing a rhetoric that demolition was a ‘common-sense’ process.¹³³ They did however take the AIS report recommendations into account and were sensitive to the interest in maintaining the character

¹³⁰ AIS, *Report*.

¹³¹ William Chambers, *City Improvement: Address of the Lord Provost to the Architectural Institute of Scotland* (Edinburgh, December 12, 1866), revised, 11-12.

¹³² Chambers, *City Improvement*, 5.

¹³³ For slum rhetoric see A. Mayne, *The Imagined Slum* (Leicester, 1993); A. Mayne and T. Murray, *The Archaeology of Urban Landscapes* (Cambridge, 2001); M.A. Cooper, ‘Exploring Mrs Gaskell’s legacy: competing constructions of the industrial historic environment in England’s northwest’, in E. C. Casella and J. Symonds (eds.), *Industrial Archaeology: Future Directions* (London, 2005), 155-173.

of the Old Town ridge, in particular when viewed from the north.¹³⁴ Their 1866 proposal document, for example, discussed the preservation of the outline of the High Street as viewed from Princes Street reflecting a developing interest in the picturesque in relation to the Old Town. In discussing the clearance of ‘back buildings’ in the area to the east of North Bridge, they also noted that: ‘none of the buildings proposed to be removed form part of, or interfere with, the main ridge or outline of the High Street.’ They requested that the Magistrates and Council should take care with regard to the building elevations for the houses of the new streets, so as to preserve the architectural character of these districts, and at the same time to limit the height of the new houses to be erected. They suggested also that: ‘These elevations should be of a plain but marked character, in harmony with those fine specimens of national architecture of the early part of the 17th century, still to be found in great purity in so many of those neglected and overcrowded closes now referred to.’¹³⁵

In preparing their proposals, Cousin and Lessels may also have anticipated some criticism of the scale of change being proposed, noting that they could have very easily suggested more sweeping alterations but ‘two things we have constantly kept in view – economy in expenditure, and the preservation, as far as possible, of the peculiarly picturesque character of this ancient City. Without in the least destroying the general aspect of the Old Town, our projected improvements will bring it into harmony with the sanitary requirements of the age, and check that tendency to deterioration’.¹³⁶ They also saw their work as improving the setting of those buildings and areas of the town which were considered of historic importance by removing other less-significant buildings which hemmed them in. The demolitions in the area of the West Port, for example: ‘would greatly improve the West Port and adjoining districts, and, along with the proposed improvements on the Grassmarket,

¹³⁴ Both were professional architects and as members of the AIS would have felt its influence.

¹³⁵ Cousins and Lessels, *Plan*, 22.

¹³⁶ Cousins and Lessels, *Plan*, 23-4.

would certainly raise the whole character of this interesting old part of the city.’¹³⁷ This process of improving the setting of historic buildings had been followed in both Germany and France previously as part of a broader restoration philosophy whereby forgotten buildings were ‘uncovered’, ‘removed from others’, and generally made more visible.¹³⁸

Despite the above, however, it is not clear what criteria were used to discriminate between the vernacular buildings of greater or lesser historic importance. Their aspiration to preserve the Old Town’s earlier buildings became increasingly difficult in the face of financial, legal and technical constraints, and a lack of political support. The 1867 Act gave extremely wide powers to the Improvement Trustees, with some 34 areas identified for improvement covering 50 acres of land,¹³⁹ and in practice the approach adopted was wholesale clearance in many of the identified areas. The scale of change in the Old Town over the following 10 years is difficult to overstate, with the Solicitor and Clerk of the Council reporting to a Commission in 1885 that some 2721 households had been demolished under the Act.¹⁴⁰

The heated debates surrounding the loss and potential loss of the city’s medieval and later buildings in mid-nineteenth century in Edinburgh were of particular significance for emerging ideas relating to the nature and character of Edinburgh’s built environment and for public discussions relating to change and preservation. The context within which these discussions took place was the series of changes and improvements in the city, some of which could be traced back to the aspirations and improvement activities of the previous century. However it was the additional momentum provided by the railway developments from the 1840s onwards and the sheer scale and ambition of the proposed changes which the railway companies pursued (with the seemingly unquestioning compliance of the municipal authority that recognised the likely financial benefits which the expanded railways would

¹³⁷ Cousins and Lessels, *Plan*, 16.

¹³⁸ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement*, 78.

¹³⁹ Johnson and Rosenberg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh*, 40.

¹⁴⁰ *Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes*. Volume V, *Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index as to Scotland* (London, 1885), para. 18, 706.

bring) which brought matters into sharp relief for the city's residents. The demolition of Trinity College Church provided a highly visible symbol around which the preservationist cause could rally and by mid-century there had been some significant preservation victories. However, the progress made in both philosophical and practical terms faced a significant setback in the face of the city's emerging sanitary reform movement. The common-sense arguments relating to health supported by a wealth of statistical information re-energised the momentum for improvement in the city's Old Town with demolition undertaken on a scale previously unseen. If a different balance was to be achieved between preservation and change, there was a need for the various sympathetic individuals and bodies to cohere in the form of an urban preservation field, to develop a clear approach to assessing significance and to bring their influence to bear more effectively.

Chapter 3. An Emerging Urban Preservation Field

Despite the positive benefits of the ongoing changes, the loss of long-lived buildings and structures, and the introduction of broader changes to the form, character and extent of the city were not welcomed by all. The rhetoric for development was, however, persuasive. This was frequently associated with the health and well-being of citizens, with the need to keep pace with cities elsewhere, or in terms of the rights of institutions, organisations and private citizens to take advantage of the economic potential of their own land. Urban change was often pursued by powerful, resourceful, well-organised and well-connected bodies, whether the municipal authority and other public bodies, or by organisations such as the railway companies, the large land-holding institutions and charitable foundations. Those seeking to oppose development and change were unlikely to succeed therefore unless they were able to gain sufficient power to balance that available to those promoting change. Objectors needed to organise themselves, to develop clear, consistent and persuasive arguments, to gather resources, and to adopt strategies and campaigns which would gain political and public support. Such activities become increasingly visible in Edinburgh in relation to the major urban changes in the middle of the nineteenth century and indicate the early stages of the emergence of an urban preservation field. By the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, the antiquarian, architectural, fine arts and the broader historical, cultural and legal disciplines in Scotland had each constructed frameworks of significance, meaning and value around specific elements of Edinburgh's long-lived built environment. Each had involved themselves at one time or another in preservation-related debates and activities and this is explored in more detail below.

Nineteenth century urban society was characterised by its rapidly evolving organisational landscape. The increase in the size and responsibilities of legally constituted bodies such as the municipal authorities, whose scope and authority was defined and limited by statute, was accompanied by the growth in the number and power of professional organisations and

institutes, and the continuing popularity of more informal and flexible societies and associations.¹ These created highly complex and intricate networks of power in cities such as Edinburgh where such organisations were populated in particular by members of the middle-classes who navigated the embodied power relations for recreational purposes, to pursue social or political agendas, or to build their own social and political capital. In addition to public organisations such as the municipal authority and the Dean of Guild Court, powerful commercial bodies such as the railway companies and many other organisations sought to influence the nature and direction of development in the city to protect their own commercial or professional interests or in pursuit of a wider vision for the city. With regard to the protection of Edinburgh's built and natural environment, early campaigns by individuals such as Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe often relied on personal power or the power created by temporary networks and alignments.² As the nineteenth century progressed, however, those opposing change recognised the potential power embodied within professional and special interest bodies. Many of these organisations had well-developed administrative infrastructures, were expert in terms of particular knowledge, were representative of a broader community of interest by virtue of their membership and, in many cases, might wield significant political influence through the appointment of royal or aristocratic patrons and council members.

While it was a far-from-straightforward process to influence the nature and form of development in a city such as Edinburgh, there were a number of avenues which might be pursued. Where legislation was necessary to take forward change, as with many railway and local authority improvement schemes, opportunities existed to raise concerns with the initiating body, to present public petitions, and to oppose enabling legislation as it made its way through Parliament. If a municipal authority was the instigator of development,

¹ Morris, R.J. 'Clubs, societies and associations', in E.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950* (Cambridge, 1990), 395-443.

² The Faculty of Advocates sought to influence schemes such as the proposals for the new southern access in the 1820s.

opponents might seek to influence councillors, to raise concerns at Council events such as ward meetings and to elect more sympathetic representatives in the local elections. Councillors found themselves challenged at public events and in the press over the cost of development for ratepayers and whether the municipal body had the legitimate authority to take forward particular developments. Campaigning in a sympathetic local or national newspaper via the 'letters to the editor' section also provided an important avenue for objectors to raise concerns and attract support, benefitting also from reports of their meetings and sympathetic editorial coverage. Powerful patrons might also intervene, drawing on powerful political and personal connections. Such campaigning mechanisms were not however the preserve of objectors alone and were frequently used by those promoting developments. In the 1890s, for example, there is strong evidence that the railway companies actively pursued the replacement of ward councillors in Edinburgh by those sympathetic to their proposed expansions.³ The likelihood of success, whether supporting or opposing development, depended to a significant degree on the association of individuals, temporarily or more permanently, the use of power and authority embedded within such organisations, and the effective establishment and use of the networks of power in the city and beyond.

A number of preliminary developments were necessary before an urban preservation field could coalesce and undertake legitimate activities. The first of these was the development and use of techniques of discrimination based on a differential value-system. These were then applied to elements of the city's built environment. In essence, a philosophical framework with its accompanying conceptual language had to be developed which established that certain buildings, structures and spaces were of greater significance than others — justified in the context of specific cultural or symbolic value-systems — and that their preservation was therefore desirable. In parallel a discourse was developed within which the existing arguments which privileged economics, health, improvement or private

³ Chapter 6.

autonomy were reworked to give stronger weight to preservation. The second key element was the existence or creation of an institutional or disciplinary framework which legitimised and gave status to the preservation discourse, establishing and maintaining a robust value-system. Such a framework would give stability, credibility and visibility to the practices and processes which defined the urban preservation field and its activities. The third key element was the need for a network of individuals, drawing on their social and intellectual capital and on their personal and professional relationships, to influence opinion both within the urban preservation field itself and in other significant fields.

However, there was more than one possible source from which an urban preservation field might emerge in Edinburgh and as already noted above, the antiquarian, architectural, fine arts and the broader historical, cultural and legal disciplines in Scotland had been expressed opinions on the preservation of elements of Edinburgh's townscape at various times in the nineteenth century. Some commonality of view is evident, due at least in part to the fact that some individuals were members of a number of different disciplines and therefore provided some elements of consistency of argument and approach. However, there were also significant contrasts and fragmentation arising out of the differing nature, scope and priorities at play within these disciplinary spaces (figure 8) which influenced not only how and why certain elements of the built environment might be consecrated as of value but also the nature of the response, if any, to proposed development. Such differences are to be expected when a new field is in its emergent state and posed significant challenges in terms of fragmentation of philosophy and approach which needed to be overcome for a coherent, recognisable and powerful field to develop.⁴ To achieve this more developed state, either one discipline or body had to manoeuvre itself into a position of precedence or a number of disciplines and their organisations would need to collaborate in order to establish common principles and approaches.

⁴ For the emergence of the sports field in France, see J. Defrance, 'The making of a field with weak autonomy', in P.S. Gorski (ed.), *Bourdieu and Historical Analysis* (London, 2013), 303-326.

Antiquarians

The key Scottish antiquarian body was the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, founded in 1780 by the 11th Earl of Buchan and based in Edinburgh.⁵ Many of its Fellows held closely to the founder's view that the society should concern itself with the: 'antient, compared with the modern state of the Kingdom and people of Scotland.'⁶ The boundary between ancient and modern appeared reasonably straightforward in the case of rural monuments but within an urban area such as Edinburgh, defining a chronological separation was far more problematical. In the absence of Roman origins, it was the city's medieval buildings and structures which were in practice seen as ancient and therefore the legitimate object of study. Sites such as the medieval castle complex, Holyrood Abbey, the Palace of Holyrood House, St Giles and the town walls and gates were many centuries old and, given the visible and documented role that they had played in Scotland's history and their close relationship with the city's identity, were widely accepted as historically and symbolically significant for the nation.

The definition of such sites as legitimate objects of academic study was to a great extent an internal matter for the Society. However, campaigns for preservation might easily be branded by opponents as antiquarian self-interest or simply ridiculed as part of a wider caricaturing of antiquarians as unrealistic, gullible and other-worldly.⁷ Such campaigns needed to attract political, public and press support as without this the success of the Society and its wider credibility might suffer. The established national historical and symbolic

⁵ Smellie, W., 'An historical account of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland' *Archaeologia Scotica*, I (1792), iii-xiii. Cant, R.G., 'David Steuart Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan: founder of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland', in A.S. Bell (ed.), *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition* (Edinburgh, 1981), 9-13.

⁶ A.S. Bell, *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition* (Edinburgh, 1981), 12.

⁷ Scott and Dickens, for example, caricatured gullible antiquaries in their respective novels *The Antiquary* (Edinburgh, 1816) and *The Pickwick Papers* (London, 1837).

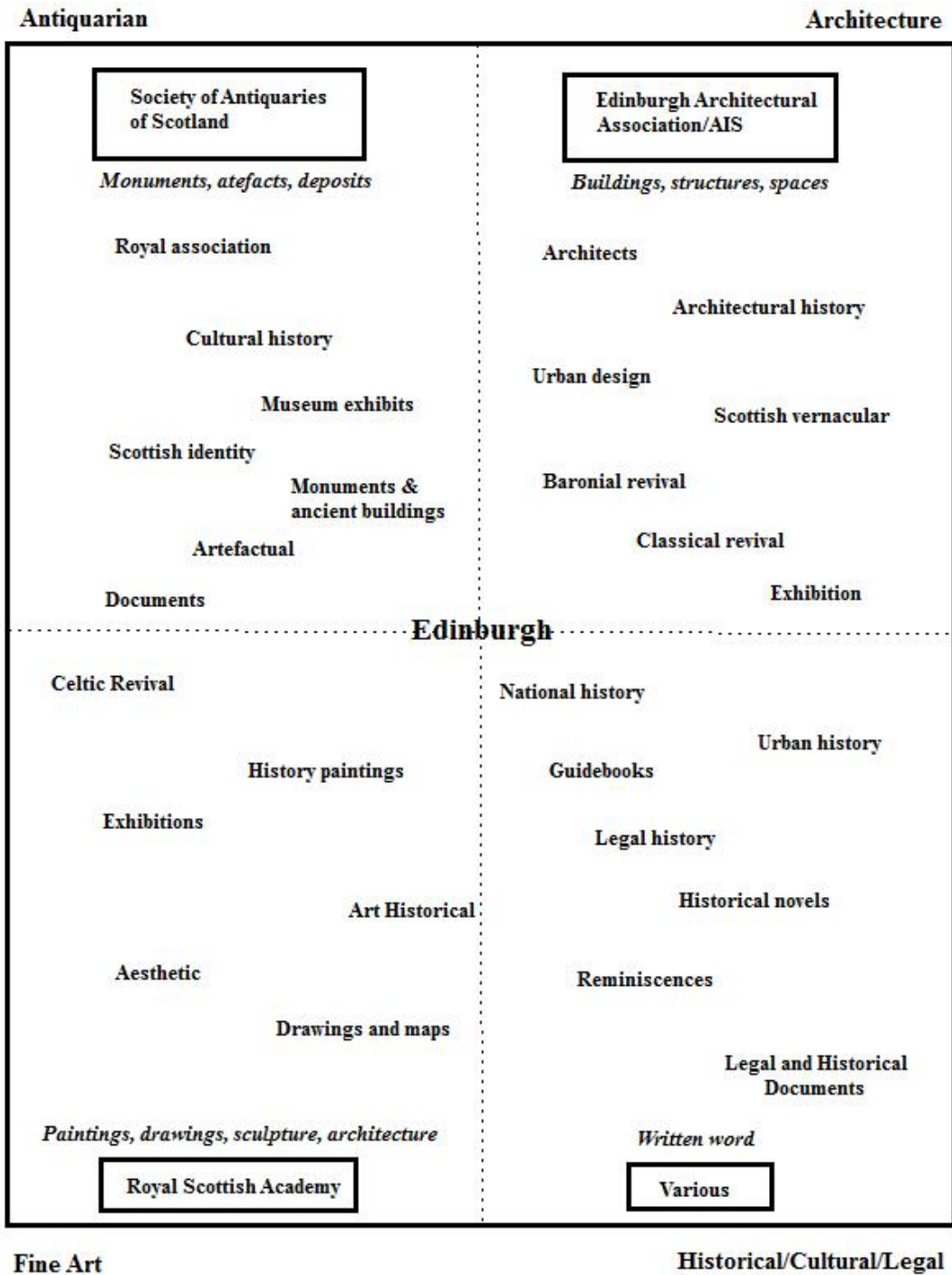


Figure 8. Disciplinary interests in an emerging urban preservation field in Edinburgh. *Source:* author.

importance of sites such as Edinburgh Castle suggested that the Society could be confident of attracting broader support when they mounted preservation campaigns involving such a site. Their confidence was also helped by the fact that long-lived building complexes of this type were frequently in public ownership such as the State, church or the municipal authority and could therefore be seen as public property. Those criticising development could therefore be presented as acting in the broader public interest and such arguments used to demand public consultation or drawn on as the basis for opposition.

The Antiquarian's position with regard to the Old Town's early domestic vernacular buildings was more complex however. These 'old-fashioned' buildings were frequently the target of publicly-supported sanitary and other improvement schemes. Campaigns for their preservation were vulnerable therefore to criticism that they were counter to common-sense or even irresponsible. Many of the city's vernacular buildings were also in private ownership. This introduced further difficulties for objectors whose campaigns could be seen not only as challenging private property rights but also land-holding principles more broadly at a time when such issues were of increasing significance more broadly.⁸ Most importantly, the relationship of these buildings to significant national events was often difficult or impossible to demonstrate. Without a broadly accepted preservation discourse which legitimised significance on grounds other than links to national Scottish history, and without broader public support to rebalance the emphasis on private property interests, there were very real difficulties in developing arguments which would persuade those both within and outside the Society to pursue preservation-related campaigns for the city's early vernacular buildings. As a result, the demolition of many domestic vernacular buildings in Edinburgh's Old Town went unopposed, despite known associations with local events or lesser personalities, with the Antiquarians instead focused on the more achievable route of

⁸ For a broader discussion of the issues surrounding land ownership in Victorian Britain and early twentieth century Britain see M. Cragoe and P. Readman (eds.), *The Land Question in Britain, 1750-1950* (Basingstoke, 2010).

recovering structural and decorative elements for private collections or the Society's own museum collection, as had occurred with the city's Mercat Cross and the Heart of Midlothian.⁹

Despite these problems, in the mid-nineteenth century some Antiquarians did seek to expand their Society's campaigning interests to surviving domestic urban vernacular buildings and structures in the Old Town. The most visible of these was Daniel Wilson (1816-1892),¹⁰ an Edinburgh-born antiquarian, artist and future Professor of History and English Literature at University College, Toronto and Principal of McGill College in Montreal. Wilson had trained as an artist and steel engraver. Following a period in London, he returned to Edinburgh in 1842. In parallel he pursued research into the city's history, archaeology and architecture, drawing on his friendship with Robert Chambers and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe.¹¹ Wilson became a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1846 and one of its two Secretaries from 1847 until his move to Canada in 1853. Although best remembered for his 1851 book on Scottish prehistory,¹² between 1846 and 1847 Wilson also published a series of illustrated articles about Edinburgh Old Town's early vernacular buildings. These articles were brought together and published in 1848 as the *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time*.¹³ The title is telling in that, as Mandler has noted, the phrase 'Olden Time' was used in the Victorian period not as a general term referring to an

⁹ See R.B.K. Stevenson, 'The museum, its beginnings and its development. Part I: to 1858: the Society's own museum', in Bell, *Scottish Antiquarian Tradition*, 31-85.

¹⁰ For Wilson's upbringing and career, see: K. Cruft, 'Daniel Wilson, 1816-1892', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 7 (2008), 153-9; M. Ash, 'A fine, genial, hearty band: David Laing, Daniel Wilson and Scottish archaeology', in Bell, *Scottish Antiquarian Tradition*, 86-113; and, M. Ash, K. Cruft and E. Hulse, 'Daniel Wilson, antiquarian of Edinburgh: a sense of place', in, E. Hulse (ed.), *Thinking with Both Hands: Sir Daniel Wilson in the Old World and the New* (Toronto, 1999), 42-59.

¹¹ Wilson acknowledged Sharpe and Chambers in his *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time* (Edinburgh, 1848), vii. Cruft suggests that it may have been Chambers who arranged for Wilson to be first introduced to Sharpe, see Cruft, 'Daniel Wilson', 154.

¹² D. Wilson, *The Archaeological and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1851). For its background and significance, see M. Ash, 'Old books, old castles and old friends: the making of Daniel Wilson's *Archaeological and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*', in Hulse, *Thinking with Both Hands*, 60-80.

¹³ Wilson, *Memorials*. Part I provided a historical overview and Part II, a topographical description of the city, its buildings and historical events.

undefined antiquity, but as a specific reference to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Wilson's volumes contain illustrations and text relating to a number of Edinburgh buildings of this date. Whilst of broader historical and architectural interest, the volumes were published in response to the ongoing demolitions across the city with Wilson noting in his preface that: 'the subject of many of [his illustrations] disappeared in the course of the radical changes wrought of late years on the Old Town.' Despite the difficulties in pursuing preservation, he intended that the detailed descriptions and illustrations would help stem the losses of buildings in the Old Town. In 1846, following completion of the serialised articles, the *Scotsman* gave its support to the idea of preserving at least some elements of the city's urban landscape: 'The general historical sketch of the city is now completed, and it is wound up by the following reflections, which we recommend to the attention of our fellow-citizens, and especially of our civic rulers, who ought certainly to watch over and protect, as far as possible, the venerable landmarks still existing of our own romantic town.'¹⁴ What was less clear was what comprised these 'venerable landmarks' and who might decide.

The *Scotsman* also noted Wilson's reflection that a very few years had sufficed to do the work of centuries in the demolition of time-honoured and interesting fabrics. Wilson's roll call of buildings lost or damaged in recent memory included St Giles (which had been heavily restored), the sweeping away of West Bow, Gosford's, and the Old Bank Closes, the removal of Libberton Wynd and some of the most interesting houses in the Cowgate for the construction of George IV Bridge, and the loss of the Guise Palace at Castlehill which Wilson noted bore on its front the earliest date then existing on any private building in Edinburgh. He also referred to the impending loss of Trinity College Church and the threat to John Knox's House on the High Street: 'In truth it would seem as a regular crusade had been organised by all classes, having for its object to root out everything in Edinburgh that is

¹⁴ *Scotsman*, 9 December 1846. The *Scotsman* did not identify specific buildings and structures. Walter Scott's epic poem, *Marmion* (Edinburgh, 1808) referred to Edinburgh as "mine own romantic town."

ancient, picturesque, or interesting, owing to local or historical associations, and to substitute in their stead the commonplace uniformity of the New Town.’¹⁵ Wilson hoped that the ongoing losses might lead to a movement for protection being established in the city but he was aware of the difficult reputation that antiquarians had in some quarters: ‘An antiquary, indeed, may at times seem to resemble some querulous crone, who shakes her head, with boding predictions of evil at the slightest variance from her own narrow rule; but the new, and what may be called the *genteel* style of taste, which has prevailed during the early portion of the present century, has too well justified his complaints.’¹⁶ He also recognised the threat that the increasing popularity of the Scots Baronial style posed for preservation arguments, suggesting that such modern imitations of the antique were easily erected, with more or less taste, and as easily replaced but that if the Old Town of Edinburgh was destroyed, no wealth could restore the many interesting associations that still lingered about its ancient halls.

In December 1850, Wilson used his speech to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland’s annual meeting to present further strong criticisms. Tellingly though he concentrated in the main on the city’s medieval buildings, with Trinity College Church: ‘barbarously, discreditably and disgracefully demolished to clear away a site for a common railway coal-shed’.¹⁷ Wilson’s speech gave a valuable insight into the avenues available to preservationists at that time, mentioning petitions to the corporation, appeals to Parliament and to the Government, and calls to the Crown to interfere. The Antiquarians also had private interviews with the Lord Advocate, suggesting that as the building was a royal foundation he had a right therefore to intervene.¹⁸ Although the Society had been unsuccessful in the case of Trinity College Church, Wilson reported more positively that

¹⁵ *Scotsman*, 9 December 1846.

¹⁶ He also noted that the city was becoming vulnerable to changes to historically significant names, mentioning the change of Halkerston’s Wynd to North British Close.

¹⁷ Delivered on 30th November 1850. Reported in the *Scotsman* on 4 December.

¹⁸ *Scotsman*, 4 December 1850.

they had prevented the proposed demolition of part of the town wall adjacent to the Vennel at the Grassmarket, had attempted to bring back or restore a number of the city's historically significant artefacts and monuments,¹⁹ and had preserved John Knox's House on the High Street. In the latter case, the Society challenged the Dean of Guild Court's decision that the building was unsafe and commissioned its own architect to draw up a repair scheme. However, as noted in the previous chapter, it was the building's association with John Knox which was the main factor in the building's preservation.²⁰

Wilson was highly visible and articulate, and under his strong influence the antiquarian society became active in its pursuit of urban preservation. The Society had a far wider focus of activity relating to Scottish archaeology and history, however, and a threshold of significance needed to be crossed before it was prepared to bring forward campaigns for preservation. In the mid-nineteenth century a key consideration was whether a site or building could be placed in a historical narrative of national rather than local significance. Whether this reflected the general approach of the Society in terms of its perceived national remit, a belief that preservation in the face of improvement was unachievable unless nationally important associations could be demonstrated, or a view that vernacular urban buildings from the Olden Time were not of sufficient antiquarian interest to deserve preservation is less clear — it is probable that elements of each were relevant. Nonetheless, Wilson encouraged greater understanding and sympathy for the city's modest sixteenth and seventeenth century vernacular buildings. However, following his move to Canada in 1853, the Society's involvement in the city's wider preservation debate was to concentrate on the medieval building complexes with national historical associations and its next sustained

¹⁹ The Society had campaigned, for example, for the return of the Moray brass to St Giles in 1848. Ash *et. al.*, 'Daniel Wilson', 46.

²⁰ See C. Guthrie, 'The traditional belief in John Knox's house at the Netherbow vindicated', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, IX, 3rd ser. (1899), 249-73; R. Miller, *John Knox and the Town Council of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1898).

involvement in the preservation of the city's later vernacular buildings would not come for another half a century.²¹

The fine art community

The fine art community exhibited different considerations in terms of Edinburgh's buildings. Aesthetic sensibilities were applied both to individual buildings and to groups of buildings and their landscape settings. The evolution of the Romantic and in particular the picturesque movement in art at the end of the eighteenth century not only encouraged the aesthetic appreciation of landscapes but the ruins and vernacular buildings they contained. While the subject matter was more commonly rural, urban vernacular buildings also attracted artistic attention. Showing some similarities to the Pre-Raphaelite movement further south, during the nineteenth century there was an increasing interest in historical subjects in Scotland, accompanied by a desire to illustrate particular events within their historical settings and for appropriate artefacts to be included to add to their authenticity. Strong identified three phases in the development of history painting: Gothick Picturesque, Artist-Antiquarian and Intimate Romantic. He suggested also that it was the last of these which sought to provide historically accurate illustrations of every-day people, events and artefacts, and that its origins lay with Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* novel, published in 1814.²² The study of buildings followed a similar pattern with increasingly accurate and scholarly depictions of long-lived subjects developing from the eighteenth century onwards.²³ Edinburgh's Old Town attracted a number of artists with antiquarian leanings, with paintings and drawings including vernacular buildings such as those on the West Bow which amongst other things had

²¹ Wilson maintained his interest in the Old Town publishing *Reminiscences of Old Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1878) and a second edition of *Memorials* (Edinburgh, 1891). He also acted as advisor for the building restoration projects undertaken by H. Blanc at Edinburgh Castle. See R.J. Morris, 'The capitalist, the professor and the soldier: the re-making of Edinburgh Castle', *Planning Perspectives*, 22 (2007), 55-78.

²² R. Strong, *And When Did You Last See Your Father? The Victorian Painter and British History* (London, 1978), 30-32.

²³ Strong, *And When Did You*, 66.

provided a backdrop for prisoners being taken to the gallows at the Grassmarket.²⁴ In the nineteenth century the recognition that the Old Town was rapidly changing its appearance also encouraged artists to record surviving buildings. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, for example, James Drummond produced a series of drawings of Old Town buildings: 'many of them being made when he saw the buildings were on the point of being taken down or falling into decay.'²⁵ Drummond provides an interesting example of an individual working across disciplinary fields as he was the librarian and joint-curator of the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and also an artist and a Fellow of the RSA. He was therefore able to promote his interest in Edinburgh's history and in particular its buildings to a broad audience through the RSA's exhibitions which regularly featured historical subjects including Drummond's Old Edinburgh paintings.²⁶

As the senior artistic body in Scotland and Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA) saw itself as the visible guardian of aesthetic matters in the city. Established in 1826 to foster the study of the arts in Scotland, and receiving its royal charter twelve years later, the RSA brought together a powerful body of practising artists with reputations extending across Scotland and beyond.²⁷ Despite being reluctant to accept that architecture was a legitimate route for fellowship, the RSA nonetheless had Fellows with both architectural and antiquarian leanings. Indeed from the 1830s onwards antiquarian and historical expertise was built into the Academy's formal organisational structure with honorary officials including Professors of Ancient History, of Antiquities and Ancient Literature.²⁸

²⁴ For history painting in Scotland see M. Macdonald, *Scottish Art* (London, 2000), 109-13.

²⁵ Drummond's work with short descriptive notes by Andrew Kerr, architect to the Board of Works, was published in 1877, as *Old Edinburgh by James Drummond R.S.A.* See also City of Edinburgh Museums and Art Galleries, *James Drummond RSA* (Edinburgh, 1977).

²⁶ *Scotsman*, 8 March 1882.

²⁷ See: G. Harvey, *Notes on the Early History of the Royal Scottish Academy* (Edinburgh, 1873); E. Gordon, *Royal Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture* (Edinburgh, 1976).

²⁸ For the RSA's academicians and professors, see F. Rinder, *The Royal Scottish Academy 1826-1916* (Edinburgh, 1917).

In 1873 the RSA council reminded its fellows that they had at various times felt called on to give public expression to their opinion on matters affecting the beauty and amenity of Edinburgh.²⁹ The context for this remark was their comments to Edinburgh's Improvement Commissioners on proposals affecting Chambers Street.³⁰ Although their recommendation that the open space at Adam Square be preserved was ignored, this did not reduce: 'the importance of the function the Academy may discharge as a guardian of all that is picturesque or beautiful in our city.'³¹ Three years later the RSA discussed a proposal to erect buildings on the north side of Jeffrey Street and: 'In the conviction that the carrying out of such a proposal would seriously injure the appearance of that part of the city... a Memorial, expressing the views of the Academy was agreed to, and forwarded to the Council.'³² As with the case of the improvements close to the University, having made their suggestions the RSA was content to let matters rest however. Despite their comments, the RSA's preservation-related activities appear to have been spasmodic and the arts discipline was not to include a coherent and fully-fledged preservation-related body until the 1920s.³³

The architectural community

When considering the relationship of the architectural community to Edinburgh's built environment, a number of different views are identifiable. During the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries there had been a strong belief that the city's classical streets and buildings provided the ultimate expression of the city's modernity and intellectual achievements. As the nineteenth century progressed however this was challenged by the strengthening belief that a Scottish vernacular architectural style was more suitable for the

²⁹ RSA, *Annual Report*, 1873, 9-10.

³⁰ These formed part of the works undertaken under the 1867 Improvement Act.

³¹ RSA, *Annual Report*, 1873, 9-10.

³² RSA, *Annual Report*, 1876, 7. The architect John Dick Peddie was their Secretary at this time. The scheme was eventually abandoned.

³³ Royal Fine Art Commissions in Scotland and England were set up as formal advisory bodies in the 1920s. A.J. Youngson, *Urban Development and the Royal Fine Art Commissions* (Edinburgh, 1990), 24-41.

nation's capital, with something of a battle-of-the-styles developing.³⁴ At the forefront of the mid-century debate was the architect and architectural historian Robert Billings who criticised the use of the 'Greek' architecture in the city in a lecture delivered in 1855.³⁵ From the late 1840s Billings had been publishing detailed descriptions and illustrations of Scottish vernacular buildings. Originally published in serial form, these were subsequently brought together in 1852 in *The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*.³⁶ This was a highly influential study, recognised at the time and subsequently as promoting broader recognition of a Scottish architectural 'style' which had its own cultural, historical and aesthetic value. The *Scotsman* wryly commented that it was: 'rather curious that, with all our nationality, it should have fallen to an Englishman to do us this service.'³⁷ In a series of sympathetic reviews, the newspaper drew attention to the work's significance in recording for posterity buildings prior to their demolition, understanding their underlying architectural design principles and highlighting their importance in terms of Scottish identity: 'To the student of our national history and manners Mr Billings' labours will be of vast moment. A nation's architecture is not merely an indication of its progress in civilization, but is thoroughly interwoven with its policy and history. To know the history of a country one should know thoroughly the nature of its edifices.'³⁸ Billings' work became highly influential in creating the image of a national Scottish architecture with its own legitimate historical roots in the public's mind. It also encouraged Scottish architects to adopt a revival vernacular style when designing new buildings. Billings also sought to make use of the embarrassment of the unfinished classical National Monument on Calton Hill to add momentum to the use of the style.³⁹

³⁴ For the emergence of 'Scottish nationalism' in architectural design and the emergence of Scots Baronial, see F. Walker, 'National romanticism and architecture', in G. Gordon (ed.), *Perspectives of the Scottish City* (Aberdeen, 1985), 125-59.

³⁵ Presented to the Philosophical Institution on 20th November 1855. *Scotsman*, 21 November 1855.

³⁶ R. Billings, *The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1852).

³⁷ *Scotsman*, 16 July 1851.

³⁸ *Scotsman*, 15 June 1850.

³⁹ Billings, *Baronial and Ecclesiastical Architecture*, 5-6.

The Baronial and Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland became a key reference work for those who wished to develop a Scottish vernacular revival, with architects including William Burn, David Bryce and John Dick Peddie designing rural and urban buildings in the style which would in due course be termed *Scots Baronial*.⁴⁰ In addition to influencing the design of new buildings, Billings also raised concerns over the speed of destruction of existing vernacular Scottish architecture, caused not only he thought by the Reformation but in particular by the use of old buildings and ruins as quarries for new material and he pressed for the preservation of surviving historical Scottish architecture.⁴¹ Significantly, in the early 1850s he was chosen by the Government to design a new military chapel at Edinburgh Castle, although the scheme which included a 65ft tower led to a flurry of critical correspondence in the press.⁴² The increasing interest in Scotland's traditional architectural style and concern over the loss of Scottish vernacular buildings continued to grow over the following decades, with the Edinburgh Architectural Association's annual exhibition in 1875, for example, including a number of illustrations of Old Edinburgh vernacular buildings. However, Billings' biggest achievement was in encouraging the adoption of a Scots Baronial style for new buildings rather than preservation of the old suggesting that the interest remained focused on the aesthetic in relation identity rather than the age-value of existing structures.⁴³

Another architect who believed that Edinburgh's character was being rapidly eroded by inappropriate development and took part in the mid-century debate was John Dick Peddie (1824-1891). Peddie was an influential architect, a council member of the RSA, and was to become the MP for Kilmarnock Burghs from 1880-85. In February 1851 he gave an influential lecture to the Architectural Institute of Scotland suggesting that: 'To preserve its

⁴⁰ Billings termed this a 'Scottish style.' *Scotsman*, 12 February 1853.

⁴¹ He notes that the Surveyor to the Government recommended the use of the Earl's Palace in Kirkwall as a quarry for building repairs, *Scotsman*, 12 February 1853, 4-5.

⁴² *Scotsman*, 17 August 1853

⁴³ See M. Glendinning, R. MacInnes and A. Mackechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture: From the Renaissance to the Present Day* (Edinburgh, 1996), 274.

beauty should be an object of the most anxious solicitude of our citizens.’⁴⁴ He suggested that it was the city’s beauty to which the Scottish capital owed its celebrity and set out to define the features that contributed to the city’s character, in order that this could be used to identify principles to inform the city’s improvements. In his talk he provided a detailed consideration of the nature, form and character of the city’s architecture, drawing on his broader knowledge of cities outside Britain to provide comparisons and illustrate his arguments. He did not subscribe to the common view that it was the city’s natural features or the colour of its architecture which lay behind its beauty but suggested that it was almost wholly derived from the combinations of the forms and masses of its buildings which appeared in much greater variety of character than in other cities. He also emphasised the importance of the contrast between the Old and New Towns, the one giving an idea of crowding and discomfort and suggesting an unquiet and unsettled state of society and the other, regular and level, speaking of comfort, security, and high civilization. He stressed that any development which tended to impair the expression of either side, its principal views, or that filled the defining valleys lying between should be objected to. In today’s parlance he was seeking to protect the ‘legibility’ of the city by avoiding the infilling of the valley between the Old and New Towns and by protecting key views. He also encouraged what we would term today ‘contextual development’, based on an understanding of the character and appearance of specific areas of the city. Having set out working principles, he then provided a critical assessment of recent developments in the city, singling out new buildings on the North Bridge, the railway buildings in the central valley, and the introduction of the Mound and Waverley Bridge for their adverse impact. He criticised the Scott Monument due to its Gothic style and verticality which contrasted with Princes Street’s classical horizontality. Having stressed the importance of the view of the Old Town and its skyline when seen from the valley below, the Bank of Scotland building sited above the Mound also came in for

⁴⁴ J.D. Peddie, ‘On the architectural features of Edinburgh’, *Transactions of the Architectural Institute of Scotland*, I (1851), 141-60.

criticism as the building both broke forward from the existing building line and was of inappropriate mass and character. He concluded by suggesting that it was for architects to provide the knowledge and understanding to inform future developments. To preserve the city's beauty: 'will require no little watchfulness on their part, and no little study on the parts of those in whose hands the adornment of the city lies, a study different from that which devolves on their profession in other cities.'⁴⁵

Hard on the heels of their permission for demolition of the buildings at the bottom of the central valley, in 1853 the North British Railway Company obtained an Act of Parliament to create a new access road to their station, running down the steep slope from the High Street (figure 9). The idea of the proposals leading to further demolition of the city's early buildings was bound to be controversial and when the new road was first under consideration, the *Scotsman* sought to provide justification for the changes: 'as year by year they see one or more of these grey familiar "lands" removed by demolition or fire, it is natural that the antiquarian and the lover of the picturesque should condole with each other on the departing glories of Edinburgh.'⁴⁶ However, it noted, schemes on the most magnificent scale have been found absolutely necessary in all the active and growing towns of Europe including Paris and London. Such changes allowed the free circulation of the air of heaven and the locomotion of the inhabitants, increased the amenity of towns and diminished the disadvantages of town as compared with country life.⁴⁷ This narrative built on an earlier article in which it had been suggested that for a city like Edinburgh every wise project for opening up its in many places too dense masses of buildings ought to be most favourably received. The *Scotsman* suggested that to decline all alteration of the city's streets

⁴⁵ Peddie, 'On the architectural features of Edinburgh', 154.

⁴⁶ *Scotsman*, 28 April 1858.

⁴⁷ *Scotsman*, 28 April 1858.

because of the earlier destruction of the old West Bow, one of the finest and most extraordinary concentrations of antique buildings in the city, would be a folly.⁴⁸

The most persuasive support for the scheme was to come from another direction. When the North British Railway Company obtained its Act, Peddie and his younger partner Charles Kinnear were chosen to prepare the design for the new street and its buildings.⁴⁹ This was a key moment in Edinburgh's architectural history. Drawing on Billings' work, the new curvilinear street was built in the Scots Baronial style. This was the first use of this style in a grand scale in an urban context. While there were some objections to the demolition of houses on the High Street in order to form the breach for the new road, many potential objectors including Lord Cockburn were reassured by the design and scale of the proposals. Indeed the design provided the model for the architectural approach adopted by the forthcoming sanitary improvement programme (figure 10). The *Scotsman* once again lent its support, using a common-sense rhetoric which was to be drawn on for the later sanitary improvements: 'The ground is at present covered with "closes" which, though by no means the worst of their class, are in many cases sufficiently dark, ill-ventilated, and offensive. To drive through the hearts of these a wide, well-paved, well-drained street...is to admit the healthful influences of air and sunshine to regions where they have been for generations very rare visitors.'⁵⁰

Within the architectural profession as a whole, therefore, there were some who sought to develop a clearer vision for the city, based on an analysis of the aesthetic value of the city's existing topography, buildings and monuments, and to promote this in order to influence development away from wholesale or uninformed change. However, in the face of the strong improving and health rhetoric, many architects were content to support the wider

⁴⁸ *Scotsman*, 3 January 1857.

⁴⁹ Cockburn Street.

⁵⁰ *Scotsman*, 28 April 1858. For discussion of the general approach to demolition and associated evictions see J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of the Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969), 324-336.

improvement programmes, particularly those who might be commissioned to undertake work.

Other disciplines

In considering the other disciplines which might have contributed to or led the development of an urban preservation movement in Edinburgh, the historical, cultural and legal disciplines represented a broader and less coherent group. The work of Sir Walter Scott in promoting Scotland's history and material culture in his writings and more broadly through his antiquarian activities has already been mentioned. Arising out of the antiquarian interest there was also an emerging interest in local studies. Typically these were either county-based or focused on the history and topography of individual historic towns, the latter bringing together historical records, topographical information and providing lists and descriptions of ancient buildings and sites of antiquarian interest.⁵¹ Both Edinburgh and Glasgow were, for example, to see the publication of histories and topographies in the second half of the 18th century,⁵² and these were followed by increasing numbers of urban histories, topographies and guide-books. In the nineteenth century, the work on Scotland's history and identity was also enhanced by activities of a series of literary clubs such as the Roxburgh, Bannatyne and Abbotsford⁵³ which, encouraged by Scott and others, sought to research and re-publish key Scottish historical texts.

⁵¹ For urban histories see R. Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1997). For topographical writing, see A. Mitchell and C.G. Cash, *A Contribution to the Bibliography of Scottish Topography* (Edinburgh, 1917).

⁵² For example, W. Maitland, *History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1753); H. Arnot, *History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1788); J. Gibson, *The History of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1777); A. Brown, *History of Glasgow and of Paisley, Greenock and Port-Glasgow comprehending the Ecclesiastical and Civil History of these Places from the Earliest Account to the Present Time* (Glasgow, 1785).

⁵³ Founded in 1812, 1823 and 1833 respectively.

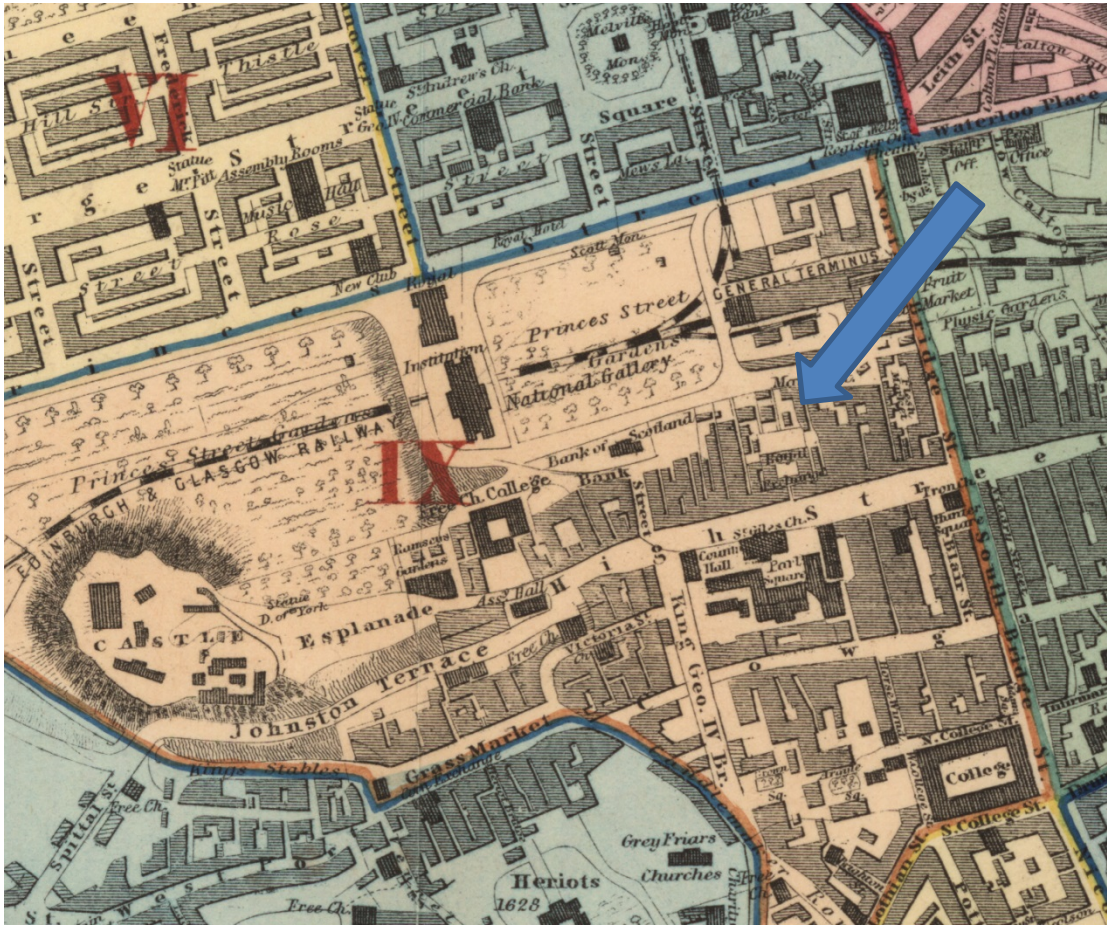


Figure 9. Central Edinburgh prior to the construction of Cockburn Street. *Source:* Plan of Edinburgh, Leith & Suburbs, W. & A.K. Johnston, 1856. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland. EMS.s.283.



Figure 10. Central Edinburgh after the construction of Cockburn Street (centre right).
Source: Edinburgh, Bartholemew, 1865. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland. Newman 521.

The link between national history and the legal profession in Scotland was not only related to the importance of a legal training in helping to understand the meaning and significance of historical and legal documents, but in particular to the existence of the Faculty of Advocates which had developed and maintained their own impressive library. Founded in 1689 the library held a very large collection of nationally significant books, manuscripts and pamphlets which, until the creation of the National Library of Scotland in 1925, included a large number of non-law related items: ‘as guardians of the distinctive Scottish legal tradition, they tended to see themselves as carriers of national identity.’⁵⁴ Drawing on their legal training and comprehensive library, the Advocates were well-placed to comment on or resist proposed development which they considered inappropriate.

In the 1820s the Faculty of Advocates involved themselves in the proposed Old Town improvement scheme.⁵⁵ It was in relation to these proposals that Lord Cockburn (1779-1854), a high court judge, first involved himself in the emerging preservation debate.⁵⁶ Some twenty-five years later, Cockburn published his *A Letter to the Lord Provost on the best ways of spoiling the beauty of Edinburgh*,⁵⁷ using this lengthy missive to mount a broad-ranging criticism about what he saw as the number of adverse changes that had taken place in the city. He was particularly critical of the role of the municipal authority in not managing this change in a manner which was sympathetic to the city’s beauty. Cockburn had travelled widely in Scotland and developed a broad interest in the appearance of the nation’s townscapes and the wider scenery — he attributed at least part of Scotland’s character to the nation’s history, its ancient sites and its historic buildings.⁵⁸ Following his interests in

⁵⁴ R. Anderson, ‘University history teaching and the Humboldtian model in Scotland, 1858-1914’, *History of Universities*, XXV/1 (2010) 138-184, 139.

⁵⁵ *Scotsman*, 9 March 1825.

⁵⁶ See, for example, *Scotsman*, 21 February 1827.

⁵⁷ See H. Cockburn, *Journal of Henry Cockburn (Edinburgh, 1874)*, vol. II, 249. The full text is reproduced in the *Journal’s* Appendix, 315-38.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Cockburn, *Journal*, 1874; A.S. Bell (ed.), *Lord Cockburn: Selected Letters* (Edinburgh, 2005).

what Bell has termed ‘civic well-being’,⁵⁹ Cockburn used his *Letter* to discuss ‘the ultimate fate of Edinburgh’ and the adverse impact of the imperative of ‘convenience’ and ‘utilitarian principles’ on the city. There are some similarities with Peddie’s later talk in that Cockburn also believed that Edinburgh’s importance depended on its beauty rather than its lectures, law or intellectual prowess. Cockburn’s greatest concerns related to the impact of the new and proposed developments within highly visible areas of the city such as the Waverley Valley, Calton Hill and Castle Hill, and the impact of development on vistas both within the city and from the surrounding area and he was clearly aware of the developing preservation debate for ancient structures. In a key passage he drew a telling distinction between the preservation of private and public monuments, defending the rights of the private owner. It was the relationship between private and public interests which was to become central to the preservation debate and the design of monument legislation. Speaking of the city’s early buildings, he noted that: ‘Many of them are gone, and many are going. The antiquarian soul sighs over their disappearance, and forgives nothing to modern necessities. Where they are private property, which no one will purchase to preserve, they must be dealt with according to the pleasure of the owner.’⁶⁰ He went on to stress though that in his view public memorials ought never to be sacrificed without absolute necessity.

Cockburn was a staunch defender of public buildings and open spaces with the loss of Trinity College Church being ‘a scandalous desecration’, and its re-erection on another site contrary to Ruskin’s views as expressed in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*.⁶¹ He also reflected more broadly on the needs of the railway in the Waverley Valley, noting that: ‘it wanted a few yards of more room for its station, and these it got by the destruction of the finest piece of old architecture in Edinburgh. The spirit that did this, or that submitted to it,

⁵⁹ A. S. Bell, ‘Reason and dreams: Cockburn’s practical and nostalgic views of civic well-being’, in A.S. Bell (ed.), *Lord Cockburn: A Bicentenary Commemoration* (Edinburgh, 1979), 27-67.

⁶⁰ Cockburn, *Journal*, vol. II, 329.

⁶¹ J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London, 1903).

would carry a railway through Pompeii.’⁶² Cockburn also drew attention to the importance of public scrutiny, mentioning the work of Daniel Wilson and his colleagues in seeking to preserve Trinity College Church, and other city residents who had fought against inappropriate developments. He recognised that it was necessary to gain the broader public support if preservation campaigns were to be successful, suggesting that in the case of the city’s central valley, part of the public was under the railway fever, and the rest, as usual, slept. Overall, for Lord Cockburn there were three key issues to be overcome if success was to be achieved by preservationists in Edinburgh: the incompatibility between private and public interests; the bad taste of proprietors; and the inconsiderate use of powers by the public bodies such as the municipal authority. Each of these issues was to remain equally significant and difficult for preservationists in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Edinburgh’s first amenity body

The debates and destruction relating to the railways in Edinburgh did much to focus attention on what was seen as of value in aesthetic, architectural and historical terms in Scotland’s capital. This was also taking place at a time when the city’s organisational landscape was developing and some commonality of interest developed across the city’s amenity and professional bodies in relation to the city’s preservation. The mid-century discussions also laid groundwork in terms of the value systems and philosophies which might be drawn on by preservationists at the end of the nineteenth century. In the years around the mid-nineteenth century those wishing to slow the change process were in the ascendancy with Trinity College Church acting as the *cause célèbre* for an infant urban preservation movement in the city. However, the city’s sanitary-led improvements using the 1867 Improvement Act were to give very significant momentum to further change and development within the Old Town. To a very great extent this reversed the gains made by would-be preservationists in the mid-

⁶² Cockburn, *Journal*, vol. II, 330-1.

nineteenth century. It was the recognition of the continuing scale of losses of the Old Town's early vernacular buildings and concerns about the vulnerability of the city's open spaces to development that led to the foundation of the Cockburn Association in 1875. Its creation was supported by the publication of Lord Cockburn's *Memorials and Journal* in 1874. A public meeting was held on 15 July 1875 in the city's Masonic Hall to gather support for the formation of a popular association for preserving and increasing the attractions of the city and its neighbourhood.⁶³ Early discussions on the role and scope of the Association stressed the importance of the healthy and elevating recreation of the city's inhabitants and the proposal document made specific reference to Lord Cockburn's *Journals* and his earlier *Letter to the Lord Provost*, reproducing sections of text from both. The document also made reference to the city's physical attractions and its rapid expansion which demanded a more than usually watchful eye and included seven recommendations — although with the exception of the removal of the northern line of tramway on Princes Street, these concentrated on improving access to, and the quality of, the city's green spaces.⁶⁴

In his speech to the assembled audience the Chairman, Lord Moncrieff, stressed that the city's beauty was one of its most important material advantages. This attracted strangers and delighted their eyes every day that they walked its streets. Anything which destroyed or marred it, he believed, was not only a sentimental but a practical evil or grievance.⁶⁵ A number of architects, some of whom were influential in the emerging preservation movement, were founder members of the Association including John Dick Peddie, C. G. H.

⁶³ *Requisition by the Citizens of Edinburgh to the Right. Hon. The Lord Provost to call a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants, and All interested, on an early day for the Purpose of Forming a Popular Association for Preserving and Increasing the Attractions of the City and its Neighbourhood.* (Edinburgh, 1875). See also, Cockburn Association, *Annual Report*, 1897, 3-4; G. Bruce, *Some Practical Good: The Cockburn Association 100 Years' Participation in Planning* (Edinburgh, 1975), 21-30.

⁶⁴ The initial scope of the Association remained very general. Early work focused on trees and recreational open space.

⁶⁵ Cockburn Association. *Report of Speech by Lord Moncrieff, delivered at a Meeting of Citizens held in the Masonic Hall on 15th June 1875* (Edinburgh, 1875). This was the Association's first annual meeting. Some 235 members were enrolled in the first year.

Kinnear, David McGibbon, Thomas Ross, John Lessels, David Rhind and David Bryce, with the City Architect, David Cousin joining by its second year. Nonetheless, in its early years, the Cockburn Association was to focus to a great degree on the preservation of open and green spaces — as much for recreation as for any aesthetic or built environment preservation reasons and it would take a number of years before it became identified as the local guardian of the built environment.

Despite the earlier debates and the creation of the city's first amenity body, the 1870s saw demolitions at Potterrow and Bristo Port, including a house in which Clarinda McLehose, a correspondent of Burns, lived, and a house associated with General Monk described in Wilson's *Memorials*. The *Scotsman* suggested that: 'the old houses themselves are rapidly disappearing, and soon very few of those picturesque tenements, so dear to the heart of the antiquarian will be suffered to remain.... The destruction, however, goes on, and all that can be done is to mark the sites upon which they stood, so that these shall not be entirely forgotten.'⁶⁶ The demolitions continued,⁶⁷ and in 1877, some three years before Baldwin Brown's arrival in the city, the Burgh Engineer ordered several further long-lived buildings to be demolished. These included tenements in Advocates Close and on West Bow including Major Weir's House and other buildings described in Wilson's *Memorials*.⁶⁸ Most significant of all was the demolition of the building at the head of West Bow (figure 11). This was a highly significant symbolic event in Edinburgh's preservation history as this stone and timber jettied building was one of the most picturesque and frequently drawn and visited buildings in the Old Town. The *Scotsman* noted that: 'This latter house, whose gables and eaves are richly carved, has long been regarded as a most characteristic relic of old Edinburgh. Its quaint timber-framed façade, irregular dovecot gables, and projecting

⁶⁶ *Scotsman*, 10 January 1876.

⁶⁷ *Scotsman*, 22 November 1877.

⁶⁸ *Scotsman*, 22 November 1877.

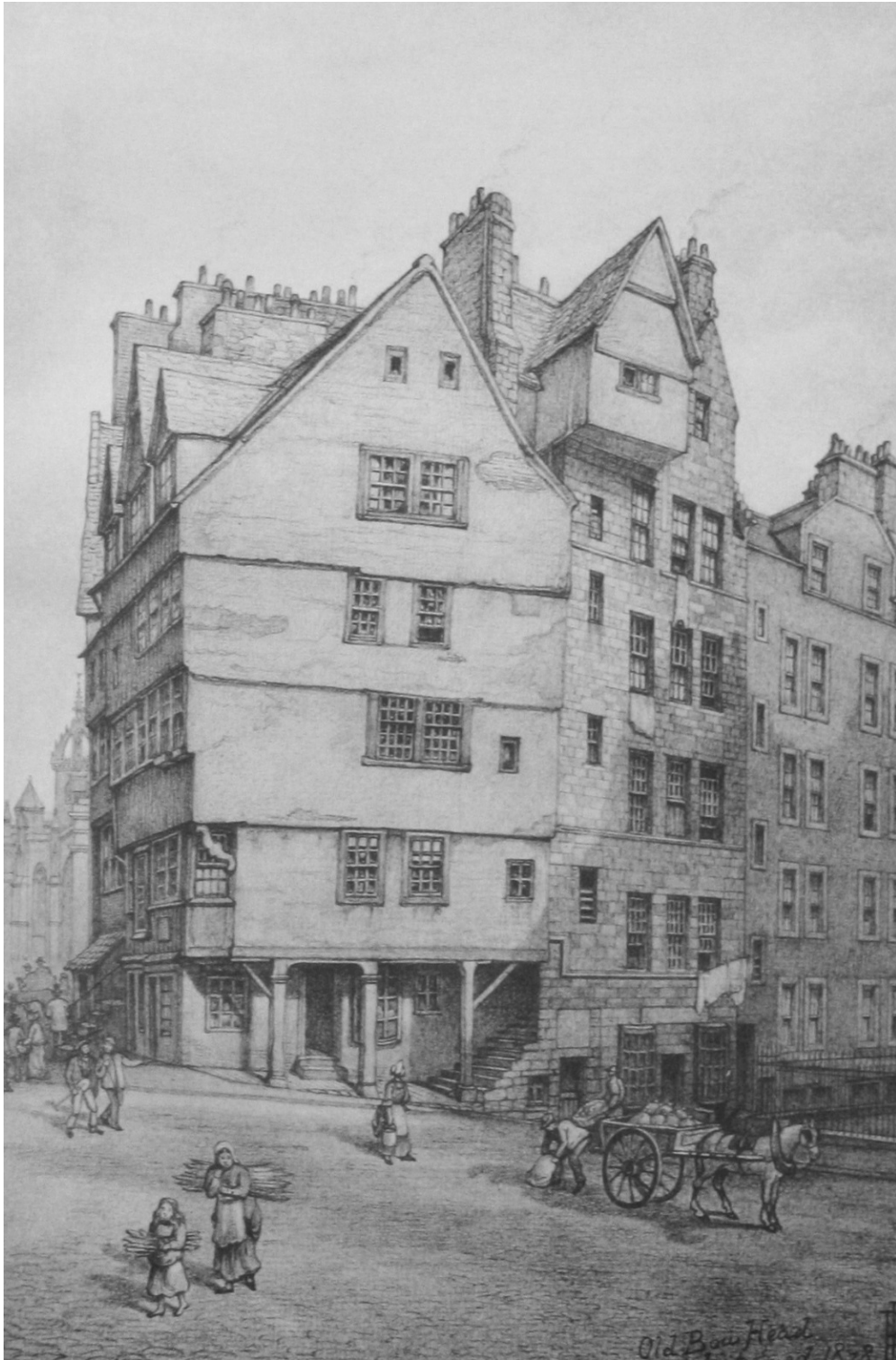


Figure 11. 'Old Bow Head'. Source: B.J. Home, *Old Houses in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1905-07).

windows have been a favourite subject of study alike for the architect and the artist.’⁶⁹

However despite its early date, its architectural and aesthetic significance, and the fact that it featured in many of the city’s tourist guides, there appears to have been no coherent campaign for its preservation. The loss of the Old Bow Head building was to symbolise the vulnerability of Edinburgh’s vernacular buildings to the ongoing program of city improvements.

⁶⁹ *Scotsman*, 8 February 1878.

Chapter 4 Gerard Baldwin Brown

Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932) was born on 31 October 1849 at 10 Foxley Road, Kennington, south London (figure 15).¹ The paternal side of Gerard Baldwin Brown's family had a tradition of law, non-conformism and scholarship. They also held a deeply principled desire with regard to overcoming unfair barriers and disenfranchisement within nineteenth century society. Gerard's mother, Elizabeth, and her family had links to the world of art and teaching, and had a broad knowledge and interest in European literature and philosophy. Gerard was to be influenced by each of these strands in his own life and work.

Gerard's paternal grandfather, Dr James Baldwin Brown (1790-1843) was a successful barrister who practised on the northern circuit and Lancashire quarter sessions. His home was in Bedford Place, London (figure 12).² He followed a variety of interests relating to civil and religious liberty including Catholic emancipation and the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act.³ He also pursued literary endeavours included the joint-editorship of a quarterly review magazine, *The Investigator*, with William Bengo Collyer and Thomas Raffles, the latter a congregational minister and close family friend.⁴ Dr Baldwin Brown's books included a historical account of laws enacted against the Catholics (1813), an exploration of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Crown (1815), memoirs of the prison reformer John Howard (1818), and a jointly-authored volume of poetry written with Jeremiah Wiffen and Thomas Raffles in 1813.

¹ The DNB identifies Baldwin Brown's birth place as 'Hoxley' Road. There is no Hoxley Road identifiable but a Foxley Road lies to the east of Claylands Chapel.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/view/article/32110?docPos=1> accessed 20 July 2015.

² See T. Cooper, 'Brown, James Baldwin, the elder (1785–1843)', revised. Jonathan Harris, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, Jan 2008. Also, Anon., 'Memoir of James Baldwin Brown LL.D.', *Imperial Magazine* 7:79 (1825: July), 588-98.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3615> accessed 23 November 2012; 'Obituary', *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1844, 93-94; 'Memoir of James Baldwin Brown LL.D.' *Imperial Magazine* 7:79 (1825: July), 588-98.

³ E. B. Brown (ed.), *In Memoriam: James Baldwin Brown B.A.* (London, 1884), 2.

⁴ T.S. Raffles, *Memoirs of the Life and Ministry of the Rev. Thomas Raffles, D.D.* (London, 1864); J.R. Dix, *Pen Pictures of Popular English Preachers* (London, 1852), 130-44.

In 1817 Dr Baldwin Brown married Thomas Raffles' sister, Mary,⁵ and they were to have two children. William Raffles Brown became a practising architect known for his buildings in Liverpool and Dublin,⁶ and James Baldwin Brown (the younger), Gerard's father. James Baldwin Brown was brought up and educated in London (figure 13).⁷ He intended to follow his father into law and commenced his legal training at University College. At this time he was attending Craven Chapel in Westminster which was in the ministry of Dr John Leifchild.⁸ Under his influence James abandoned his legal studies at the age of 21 to pursue a career as an independent Christian minister.⁹ He spent most of his adult life in south London, firstly as the minister of the Claylands Chapel in Kennington and, from 1870, of Brixton Independent Church.¹⁰ He was a prolific writer, producing large numbers of sermons, pamphlets, articles and books on religious thought.¹¹ After a controversial early career where he was accused at one stage of being subversive of the gospel,¹² his reputation within the Congregational church improved and in 1878 he was elected to the high-status position of chairman of the Congregational Union. His emphasis on fairness and supporting those who he felt had been badly treated helped him to grow an extensive following, particularly amongst the younger generation of ministers, with disciples including William Dorling, John Hunter and P.T. Forsyth.¹³ He was known as an energetic preacher and public speaker, giving lectures across Britain, writing and lecturing also on both religious and

⁵ First cousin of Sir Stamford Raffles, the colonial governor and founder of Singapore.

⁶ 1822/23-1866/7. Dictionary of Irish Architects. <http://www.dia.ie/architects/view/712> accessed 26 November 2012.

⁷ 1820-1884. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/view/article/3616?docPos=3> accessed 15 Jul 2015. See also Brown, *In Memoriam*. The character sketch on pages 62-9 was by Gerard Baldwin Brown as was the portrait opposite the title page.

⁸ 1780-1862. For his influence on James Baldwin Brown the younger, see J.R. Leifchild, *John Leifchild D.D.* (London, 1863), 201-2.

⁹ See M. Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation* (Milton Keynes, 2004), 17-45.

¹⁰ Reverend Brown hoped that his brother would design and build his new church but due to his early death it was designed by Arthur J. Phelps.

¹¹ For his religious philosophy and monographs, see Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation..*

¹² A further letter of criticism was published in *The Freeman* on 11 April 1860, signed by, amongst others, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

¹³ See J. Goroncy, *Hallowed by Thy Name* (London, 2013), 85.

historical subjects. Overall he was seen as having unusual vitality and determination, an incisive intellect, and unflinching forbearance.

In his childhood Gerard was exposed to the problems of the poor and disenfranchised through his father's ministry and his campaigns on broader social issues. James Baldwin Brown energetically pursued initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for his local community and the care of the poor. At Claylands Chapel these included Bible classes, young men's discussion meetings, night schools, penny banks and provident societies. He also arranged joint social gatherings for rich and poor of the neighbourhood which included readings, talks and viewing of objects of interest, and at Christmas he provided dinner for the poor from donations. He continued such activities after moving to Brixton, introducing penny dinners for poor children twice a week and a Christmas dinner for large numbers of children. He also organised a night school for women and older girls and created a lending library, a temperance society and a work room conducted: 'on the well-known plan started by Miss Octavia Hill.'¹⁴ His work culminated in the creation of the Moffat Institute in Brixton, run by a committee of churchmen and dissenters with James as President.¹⁵ He also supported, and encouraged his congregation to support, wider movements for education, social amelioration and reform such as the development of sanitation in towns, entertainment for the working classes on Sundays¹⁶ and women's education,¹⁷ and he pursued other social initiatives including contributing to relief for those suffering during the Lancashire cotton famine.

¹⁴ These activities are described in more detail in Brown, *In Memoriam*, 41-46.

¹⁵ Named after the missionary Robert Moffat (1795-1883) who lived in Brixton from 1873-80 after his return to England and who attended his services. Moffat's son-in-law was the missionary David Livingstone.

¹⁶ He favoured, for example, the opening of the Crystal Palace on Sundays. See <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc02/htm/iv.v.cclxi.htm>, accessed: 26 Nov 2012.

¹⁷ Amongst others, Baldwin Brown sat on the management committee of the Bedford College for Women.

In November 1843 James married Elizabeth Leifchild. She came from a large family, with three sisters and two brothers (figure 14).¹⁸ The Leifchilds were an energetic, intellectually curious and well-educated family, with three of the sisters pursuing careers as teachers. Elizabeth introduced her husband to Shakespeare, Goethe, Shelley, Keats, Landor, Coleridge, Emerson and Carlyle. The latter's *Life of Schiller* and *Essays* introduced him to German thought.¹⁹ Gerard was to develop a strong interest in German philosophy and language, and was later to become an admirer of the approach to preservation of German towns adopted in the period prior to the First World War. The Leifchild family moved in artistic circles. Elizabeth was friendly with the poet Christina Rossetti,²⁰ and her brother, Henry Stormonth Leifchild,²¹ was a well-regarded sculptor and a friend of the Pre-Raphaelite, Alexander Munro. Elizabeth noted that when Henry Leifchild shared their home, he was regularly visited by a number of other Pre-Raphaelite artists including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Thomas Woolner and John Ruskin.²² Henry's profession and his links to the Pre-Raphaelite group exposed Gerard to art and in particular the London-based Pre-Raphaelite artists. Although disguised by misattributions in both the Ruskin diaries²³ and the Winnington letters,²⁴ Gerard and his family dined with Ruskin. Gerard's older sister Charlotte also maintained a friendship with John Ruskin well into her adult life.²⁵

¹⁸ 1819-1907. Her parents were William Gerard Leifchild (1791-1862), a surveyor and Jane Newman.

¹⁹ Brown, *In Memoriam*, 3

²⁰ A.H. Harrison (ed.), *Letters of Christina Rossetti*, (Charlottesville, 1999). Letters 355, 8 February 1868; 356, 8 February 16, 1868; 583, October 1874; 855, 9 August 1880; 2075, nd.

²¹ See <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16372> accessed 26 Nov 2012. Also I. Roscoe, E. Harvey and M.G. Sullivan, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain, 1660-1851* (London, 2009).

²² Brown, *In Memoriam*, 62.

²³ J. Evans and J.H. Whitehouse, *The Diaries of John Ruskin* (Oxford, 1956).

²⁴ A. Van Burd. *The Winnington Letters* (London, 1969).

²⁵ M.A. Cooper, 'Ettie and Maude: Problems of identification in the diaries and letters of John Ruskin, and the letters of Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti', *Ruskin Review and Bulletin* (Autumn, 2013), 14-23.

Early years

Gerard's early schooling was in London, but in October 1865 he enrolled at Uppingham where he remained a pupil for four years.²⁶ The school, located in the village of Uppingham in Rutland, was under the headmastership of Edward Thring.²⁷ In addition to his educational writings and innovations,²⁸ Thring is credited with the major expansion that took place at Uppingham, transforming the modest charitable foundation into a well-known public school.²⁹ Thring focussed on strict classical training, and was referred to as 'an old-fashioned stickler for the classics who would have every one to learn Greek and do Latin verses.'³⁰ He also developed the boys' interests in English literature during the classical lessons, using a wide range of pictures and other material as illustrations.³¹ While strong on classical education he sought also to broaden the curriculum, introducing French, German, drawing, carpentry, and music. His innovations also included workshops, laboratories, an aviary, gardens and a gymnasium.³² Thring's wife and a large number of Uppingham's teaching staff were also German³³, and it may be that this influenced Baldwin Brown at an early age as he was to become a fluent German speaker and knowledgeable about German history and prehistory.

While at Uppingham, Gerard made a lifelong friend in Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley (1851-1920). Rawnsley, who became the vicar of Crossthwaite in the English Lake District and a Canon of Carlisle Cathedral, became well-known as a high-profile campaigner for the preservation of the natural and built environment and is regarded today as one of the three

²⁶ *Uppingham School Rolls, 1824-1894* (London, 1894), 106.

²⁷ Rawnsley, H.D., *Edward Thring: Teacher and Poet* (London, 1889). Edward Thring's most well-known publication on educational theory was *Theory and Practice of Teaching* (Oxford, 1883).

²⁸ See, for example, *Theory and Practice of Teaching*.

²⁹ B. Matthews, *By God's Grace... A History of Uppingham School* (Maidstone, 1984), 73.

³⁰ J.H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring* (London, 1889).

³¹ *Uppingham School Magazine*, iii, 1865, 313.

³² *Uppingham School Magazine*, iii, 1865, 91.

³³ Leinster-Mackay, D., *The Educational World of Edward Thring* (Lewes, 1987), 109-110.

founders of the National Trust (with Octavia Hill and Sir Robert Hunter).³⁴ In the biography of her husband, Edith Rawnsley noted that Gerard was one of Hardwicke's chief friends, the two boys drawn to each other by their love of nature, roaming over the countryside, visiting old churches in the neighbourhood, hunting for birds and flowers and jumping the hedges.³⁵ There was certainly no shortage of historic sites in the vicinity of Uppingham. Pupils visited Deene Park, Stoke Dry church (which contained the recumbent effigy of Sir Edward Digby of gunpowder-plot fame), the 'curious house' at Martinsthorpe, the Bishop's Palace at Lyddington, Wakerley Church, Tixover Church and Fineshade Abbey.³⁶ Gerard distinguished himself academically at Uppingham and there is also evidence of his broader interests, including languages, literature, history, architecture and sport. He was keen to take on broader responsibilities, becoming the editor of the school magazine and contributing articles and poetry, including an article on the poems of William Morris.³⁷ He also became a joint-curator of the school museum,³⁸ and was successful in the school's sporting events.

³⁴ Hardwicke Rawnsley attended Uppingham from October 1862 until October 1870. *Uppingham School Rolls 1824 to 1894*, 86.

³⁵ E.F. Rawnsley, *Canon Rawnsley: an account of his life* (Glasgow, 1923), 12. Gerard Baldwin Brown had been best man at Hardwicke Rawnsley's first marriage and dedicated *The Care of Ancient Monuments* to him 'in remembrance of life-long friendship.'

³⁶ W.F. Rawnsley, *Early days at Uppingham under Edward Thring* (London, 1904), Chapter 10.

³⁷ *Uppingham School Magazine*, vii, 1869, 72-80.

³⁸ *Uppingham School Magazine*, vi, 1868, 220; iii, 1865, 109.



Figure 12. Dr James Baldwin Brown (1790-1843). Source: *Imperial Magazine*, July 1825.

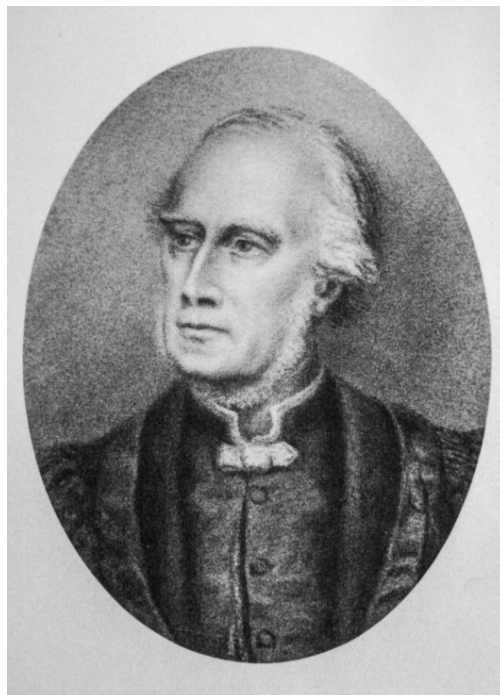


Figure 13. Reverend James Baldwin Brown (1820-1884). Drawn by his son Gerard. Source: E.B. Brown, *In Memoriam* (London, 1884).

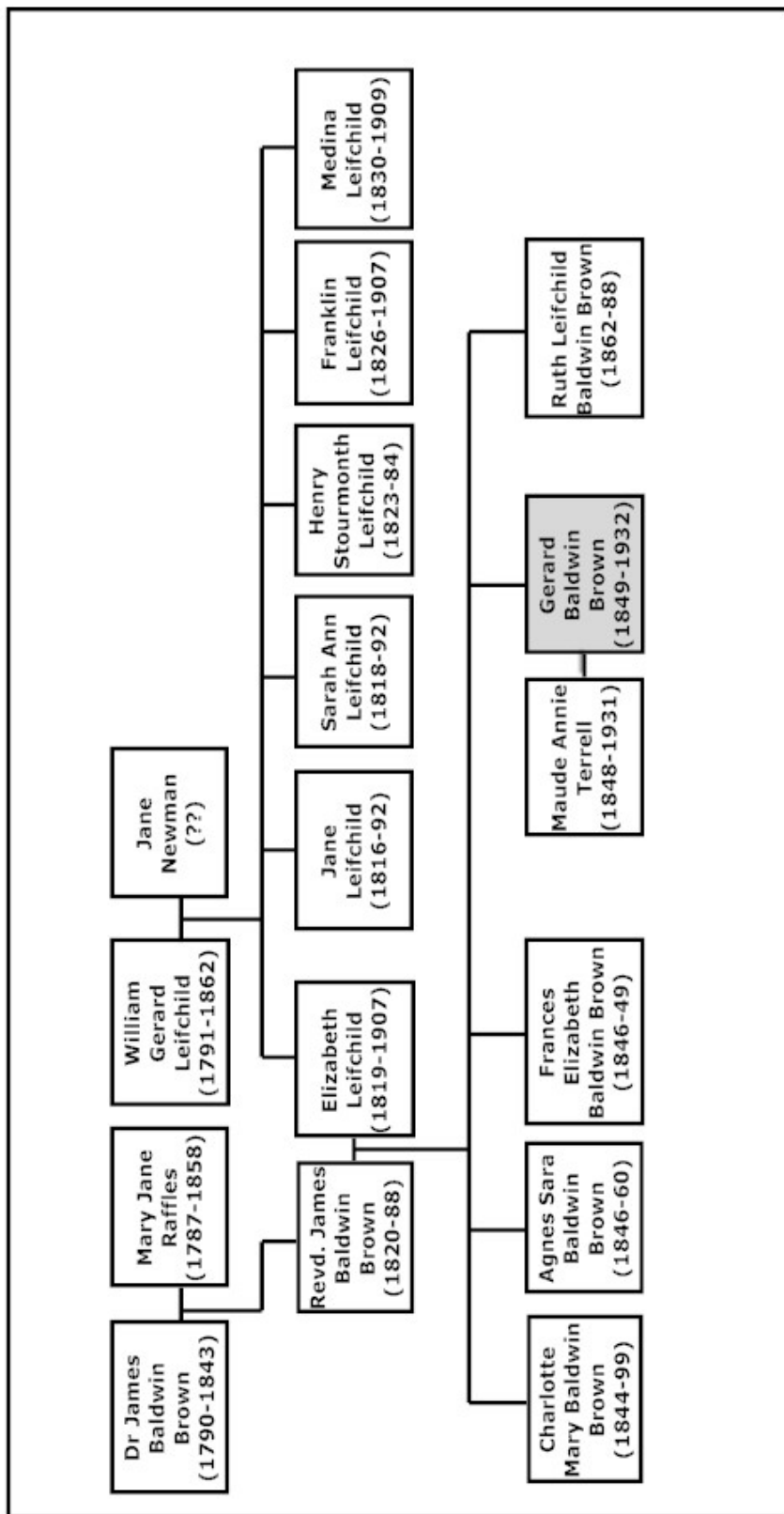


Figure 14. The Baldwin Brown and Leifchild Family Tree. Source: Author.

Gerard won a scholarship to Oriel College, Oxford, commencing his studies on 25 October 1869. Information relating to his time at Oxford is scarce but following a second in Classical Moderations (the first public examination for a BA degree in classics) in 1871, he went on to gain a first in *Literae Humaniores* in 1873.³⁹ Baldwin Brown's interest in art and art history had developed strongly while he was at Oxford and it may have been further influenced by John Ruskin who took up his first three year appointment as the Slade professor at Oxford the year following Gerard's arrival.⁴⁰ In 1873 Baldwin Brown further distinguished himself by winning the Chancellor's Prize for an English essay, a broad-ranging discussion of the development of art within different societies in history. His discussions ranged from Classical Greece and Rome to Gothic France and Renaissance Italy.⁴¹ His academic prowess was recognised by his election to a Fellowship at Brasenose, Oxford the following year, joining other Brasenose fellows who included in their number Walter Pater, author of *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*.⁴²

Baldwin Brown was awarded an M.A. in 1876 but he resigned his Fellowship the following year to pursue a career as a practising artist. He attended the National Art Training School in South Kensington,⁴³ and although it is not clear what courses of instruction he followed, in 1878 he won a prize in the National Competition of Schools of Art for his chalk drawing of a head from life.⁴⁴ During the period from 1877-80 he also worked in Henry Leifchild's

³⁹ MacDonald speculated that his dedication to sport may have led to the disappointing first result.

⁴⁰ K. Miyahara, 'An un-English activity?; The development of art history education after Ruskin and before the Courtauld', University of Cambridge PhD thesis, 2007, 27-32; J. Ruskin, *Lectures on Art* (Oxford, 1870); T. Hilton, *John Ruskin: the Later Years* (London, 2000), 174.

⁴¹ G. B. Brown, *The Short Periods at which Art has remained at its Zenith in the Various Countries* (Oxford, 1874).

⁴² *Oxford University Calendar 1875*, 281. W. Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London, 1873). For Brasenose, see J.M. Crook, *Brasenose: The Biography of an Oxford College* (Oxford, 2008), 280. Also, L. Brake, 'Pater, Walter Horatio (1839–1894)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, May 2006 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21525> accessed 9 May 2013.

⁴³ Renamed the Royal College of Art in 1893. See C. Frayling, *The Royal College of Art* (London, 1987).

⁴⁴ Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education, *26th Report with appendices* (London: HMSO, 1879), 548. Somewhat confusingly this entry identifies that Baldwin Brown attended Lambeth Art School. It is possible that Baldwin Brown also attended this School (the

studio. Although he was to return to academic pursuits with his appointment at Edinburgh University in 1880, he was never to lose his interest in the practical side of art and was to put his practical knowledge to good effect in Edinburgh. Baldwin Brown's broad-ranging interest in art theory is illustrated by two articles he published at this time. The first, on modern French art, appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, while he privately published a lecture on Early Greek Sculpture which he had delivered to the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching.⁴⁵

The Watson Gordon Professorship⁴⁶

The Watson Gordon Chair of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh was endowed in memory of the Scottish artist and former President of the Royal Scottish Academy Sir John Watson Gordon by his brother and sister.⁴⁷ The professorship was created for the promotion and advancement of the Fine Arts, and prosecution of the studies of painting, sculpture, and architecture, and other branches of the art connected therewith, in Scotland.⁴⁸ Of the eight applicants that were interviewed for the post in the summer of 1880, the art critic Philip G. Hamerton was the favourite and it is clear from the tone of his subsequent letter to *The Academy* that he believed that the post was to be his.⁴⁹ Unlike other candidates Baldwin Brown took up the offer to meet various members of the interview panel prior to the formal

South London Technical Art School) which was located close to his family home on Kennington Park Road.

⁴⁵ G. B. Brown, 'Modern French art', *The Nineteenth Century*, 8, (July 1880), 56-66; *Early Greek sculpture: the substance of a lecture delivered in connection with the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching* (Oxford, 1880).

⁴⁶ Although hyphenated in early documents (ie. 'Watson-Gordon') the hyphen is dropped in subsequent references and the latter approach is adopted here. For the University's general history, see A. Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during its First Three Hundred Years* (London, 1884); A. Logan Turner, *History of the University of Edinburgh 1833-1933* (London 1933); Anderson, R.D., M. Lynch and N. Phillipson, *The University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 2003).

⁴⁷ 1788-1864. He was RSA President, 1850-64. The endowment of £12,020 2s.7d. was released following the death of Henry George Watson. UoE/SC/EUA IN1/GOV/SEN/1, 25 July 1879. The University Court approved the Rules and Regulations for the Chair on 8 March 1880, with an annual salary of £427 16s 5d and allowance of £40 for class expenses. See also *Edinburgh University Calendar 1873-74* (Edinburgh, 1873), 320-3.

⁴⁸ For a broader discussion how the Edinburgh post fitted into emerging art history education in Britain, see Miyahara, *An un-English activity?*, 35-37 and *passim*.

⁴⁹ *The Academy*, July 31, 430 (1880), 81-2; *American Art Review* 1, 11 (September 1880), 506.

interview.⁵⁰ On July 16th the Edinburgh University Court announced that it had appointed him to the Chair.⁵¹ The University's obituary for Baldwin Brown some 52 years later noted that: 'His election to the Chair of Fine Art in Edinburgh in his thirty-first year, before the publication of any important work, was a tribute to personal qualities'.⁵² The appointment was reported accurately in both the *Scotsman* and the *Times* but reflecting his relative obscurity in the art world at that time, the *Art Journal*⁵³ referred to him as 'George' and *The Academy*⁵⁴ as 'Gerald.'⁵⁵

Baldwin Brown occupied the Chair of Fine Art from 1880 until 1930. Although he maintained strong contacts with London and a flat close to the British Museum for a time, he lived in Edinburgh from 1881 until his death in 1932.⁵⁶ He delivered his inaugural lecture, *Fine Art as a Branch of University Study*,⁵⁷ on 5 January 1881. This was well attended with the audience including the Vice-Chancellor, Principal, many professors, and a large contingent from the Royal Scottish Academy. Gerard's father also attended as did Hardwicke Rawnsley.⁵⁸ Reflecting the broad interest and knowledge of the history and development of art which he had demonstrated in Oxford prize-winning essay, the lecture ranged from prehistoric art to the work of Turner and from Egypt to Scotland. Baldwin Brown also took the opportunity to describe the history and nature of art teaching in Universities, noting that professorships connected with art history and theory had existed for

⁵⁰ Baldwin Brown's letter of application survives in the University Court archives, but the testimonials are absent. UoE/SC/EUA CHA.IN1/GOV/CRT, *Edinburgh University Court Draft Minutes and related papers*, 1880.

⁵¹ Anderson suggests that the 1880s saw the first large English influx to Scottish university professorships, with a particular bias towards Oxford and Cambridge graduates. R.D. Anderson, 'Scottish university professors, 1800-1939: profile of an elite', *Scottish Economic and Social History*, 7 (1987), 44-45.

⁵² *The University of Edinburgh Journal*, V, 1932-33, 178.

⁵³ *Scotsman*, 17 July 1880; *Times*, 19 July 1880; *The Art Journal*, September 1880, 287.

⁵⁴ *The Academy*, July 24, 1880, No. 429, 71.

⁵⁵ As Christina Rossetti did in her letter of 9 August 1880 to her brother Dante. See Harrison, *Letters of Christina Rossetti*, volume 2, 1874-1881, 255. See Cooper, 'Ettie and Maude'.

⁵⁶ Baldwin Brown lived at a number of different rented properties on the west side of the city. All of these were close to Haymarket Station other than between 1903-12 when he lived in George Square.

⁵⁷ Brown, G. B., *Fine Art as a Branch of University Study: Inaugural Address* (Edinburgh, 1881).

⁵⁸ *Scotsman*, 6 January 1881.

some time in Germany and had been recently established at Oxford, Cambridge and London. Drawing on the *Deed of Foundation* he described the nature and scope of the Edinburgh Chair, indicating that the art professor was expected to provide a course of instruction suitable for those who were studying art professionally and who intended to follow some branch of the Fine Arts as a profession, but that the professor would not be involved in teaching practical skills as it was not intended to create a technical school. Teaching would instead focus on the history and theory of the fine arts with the subjects to be covered including the great historical developments of art, such as the sculpture and architecture of the Greeks, the architecture of the Middle Ages, and the painting of the Renaissance. He also noted that there was some freedom for the Professor to choose additional topics.⁵⁹

Baldwin Brown rapidly developed a broad-ranging fine art course.⁶⁰ He ran three lecture series annually: one focussed on Classical art (Greek, Etruscan and Roman), one on the architecture and art of the Bible (designed specifically for the University's theological students), and the third covering a more eclectic range of thematic subjects. The scope of these thematic lectures was wide. In his first academic year (1881-82), for example, he lectured on Greek and early Italian Art, the following year on the history of art in Europe and the religious art of Italy and northern Europe, and on the influence of the Renaissance. In his third year, he lectured on the art of Germany and Flanders in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the art of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, on modern art and on the Scottish schools of painting.

Throughout his career, Baldwin Brown showed a very strong interest in architecture and architectural theory. He saw architectural history as important not only in terms of helping

⁵⁹ For the Regulations for the Chair of Fine Art see *Edinburgh University Calendar, 1880-81*, 63-5. For the *Deed of Foundation* see UoE/SC/EUA IN1/GOV/SEN/1, *Records of the Senatus Academicus*, 1879-83, and UoE/SC/EUA CHA/IN1/GOV/CRT, *University Court Minute Books*, 1872 onwards.

⁶⁰ In due course, recommended student textbooks included Baldwin Brown's own *The Fine Arts* (London, 1891), A.S. Murray's *Handbook of Greek Archaeology* (London, 1892) and *History of Greek Sculpture* (London, 1893); J.A. Overbeck's *Die Antiken Schriftquellen, zur Geschichte der Bildenden Künste bei den Griechen* (Leipzig, 1868) and, at a later date, W.B. Walter's *The Art of the Greeks* (London 1906).

the study and understanding of the past, but also for the broader education of architects and artists. By 1884-85 Baldwin Brown had become Vice-President of the Edinburgh Architectural Association and with Edinburgh's architects in mind he introduced a lecture series at the University on the chief epochs of European architecture including Greek, Roman, early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic and early Renaissance. As set out in the *University Calendar*, the object of the architecture course was to treat the history of architecture as a connected story, and to exhibit the relation of the various styles to the social condition of ancient and medieval communities. The interests of those who were pursuing architecture as a profession were to be specially consulted throughout, and opportunity was to be given to them to make notes and drawings at their leisure from the various illustrations brought under notice.⁶¹ A number of Edinburgh-based architects attended his courses at one time or another, including the Ministry of Works' principal architect in Scotland, William Oldrieve, the architect of the Old Edinburgh Street at the 1886 International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art, Sydney Mitchell, the future Professor of Architecture at McGill University, Percy Nobbs, and the highly-regarded arts and crafts architect, Sir Robert Lorimer.⁶² When receiving an honorary doctorate from Edinburgh University in 1928 Lorimer gave particular praise to 'that doyen of the Senatus' as he referred to him, recalling that when he had worked as an apprentice in Sir Robert Rowand Anderson's office, a number of the architects had attended his lectures and marvelled at his lantern slides: 'Those pictures were the first introduction for most of them to the loveliest buildings of the world, from the little Temple of the Winds at Athens to the French cathedrals.'⁶³

⁶¹ *Edinburgh University Calendar*, 1885-86. Baldwin Brown negotiated a reduced rate for members of the EAA to attend the course. UoE/SC/EUA IN1/ACA/ART, *Faculty of Arts Minute Book*, No.3, 1 March 1884.

⁶² UoE/SC/Da 35 FIN 1. Percy Nobbs dedicated his book *Design: A Treatise on the Discovery of Form* (Oxford, 1937) to the memory of Baldwin Brown and Robert Lorimer: "two of my masters".

⁶³ The ceremony took place on 27 June 1928 and was reported in the *Scotsman* on the following day.

In addition to his lantern slides⁶⁴, Baldwin Brown used a wide variety of casts, photographs and drawings and by 1888 he had created an art museum in the room under the dome at the University's Old College.⁶⁵ He also introduced freshly-made archaeological discoveries in the ancient world into his lectures,⁶⁶ with his students also taking part in trips to museums, galleries and sites on Saturday mornings and breakfast discussions at other times. Following the Scottish Universities Bill of 1889 the Commissioners enacted an Arts Ordinance in 1892 to regulate the arts curriculum in Scottish universities.⁶⁷ As part of the changes, a number of subjects which had established Chairs but which had not previously been part of the M.A. degree curriculum were now included. Fine Art was one of these and Baldwin Brown took the opportunity to introduce a new course, Classical Archaeology, in connection with Classical Honours.⁶⁸ From then on he presented annually 100 lectures on Fine Arts and 50 lectures on Classical Archaeology. These courses formed the core of his University lectures until his retirement in 1930.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ For the development of and use of lantern slides in art history lectures and Baldwin Brown, see Miyahara, *An un-English activity?*, 137-38, 158.

⁶⁵ Baldwin Brown had been on the Dome Committee which had commissioned the construction of the dome at the Old College and his fine art classroom was on the floor below. A.G. Fraser, *The Building of Old College* (Edinburgh, 1989), 289, 328. The dome contained Greek sculpture casts, reproductions of bronzes and terracottas, photographs and drawings. *Scotsman*, 13 October 1888.

⁶⁶ He corresponded with excavating archaeologists including Flinders Petrie and Sir Arthur Evans.

⁶⁷ Ordinance 11. This changed the duration of courses with the introduction of summer sessions and also brought in a uniform scheme of preliminary examinations before admission to degree courses. A.L. Turner, *History of the University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1993), 171-180.

⁶⁸ Turner, *History*, 337.

⁶⁹ He occasionally added further courses including a 50 lecture *History as Illustrated in Monuments* presented between 1901 and 1905, based in part on his research for the first two volumes on the *Arts in Early England*.



G. Baldwin Brown

Figure 15. Gerard Baldwin Brown in c.1884. Photograph pasted into *Quasi Cursors* (Edinburgh, 1884). Source: UoE SC/JY1202 85/97.

319.
To the Members of the University Court, Edinburgh
University, and the President of the Royal Scottish
Academy.
My Lords and Gentlemen,
I beg leave to present myself to you
notice as a candidate for the Watson-Gordon Professorship
of Fine Art in the University of Edinburgh, and to
submit the accompanying testimonials to your
consideration.
I am a Master of Arts of Oxford University,
where I graduated in 1874, being placed in the
First Class in the Final School of Art and Architecture
in Michaelmas Term 1873. Shortly afterwards I was
elected Fellow of Brasenose College Oxford and gained
the Prize for the Chancellor's English Essay in 1874,
the subject being "The Short Period during which
Art has remained at its zenith in the various countries."
Since that time I have been engaged in
practical study in the profession of an Artist in the
Government Schools at South Kensington, and in
the studio of a Sculptor, while at the same
time I have endeavored to bring to bear upon
the theory and history of Art that knowledge
with which my University course has furnished
me.

321.
me. I have ventured to include among my
papers the substance of a Lecture recently
delivered on Early Greek Sculpture, in which
it was my object to illustrate the technical
points connected with it by some general
view of the life and culture of the people.
I have the honor to remain,
My Lords and Gentlemen,
your obedient servant
G. Baldwin Brown M.A.
Late Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.
Stratham Hill
London. May 10. 1880.

Figure 16. Baldwin Brown's letter of application for the Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art, May 11, 1880. Source: UoE SC/CHA.IN1/GOV/CRT, volume II.

During his time as the Watson Gordon Professor, Baldwin Brown published 14 monographs, some of which went through multiple editions, together with an edited volume on Vasari. He also published a number of individual lectures,⁷⁰ together with over 130 articles and book reviews in academic journals, professional transactions, collections of papers, and encyclopedias.⁷¹ His writing covered three separate but interlinked subject areas. The first reflected his early interest in the fine arts, focusing on artistic theory and the work of specific artists or artistic schools. As with his Oxford prize-winning essay his interests were wide and his work ranged from studies of the art of early civilisations through to studies of contemporary artists. His monographs comprised *The Fine Arts*, a key text for his university and extra-mural lectures, which ran to four editions (1891, 1902, 1910, 1916), biographies of *William Hogarth* (1905) and *Rembrandt* (1907), a detailed introduction and notes accompanying a translation of Vasari's writings on art techniques (1907), an illustrated monograph on *The Glasgow School of Painters* (1908) and a study of prehistoric cave-painting, *The Art of the Cave Dweller* (1928, 1930). His papers were diverse, ranging from prehistoric art to Classical sculpture, from Roman altars to Greek women's dress, and from Gothic art and monastic workshops to modern French art. He also published a range of papers on architectural subjects including ancient and modern art theorists such as Vitruvius and Gottfried Semper, period-based studies including Roman Imperial and Gothic architecture, and architectural studies of buildings including the Old College at Edinburgh University and the city's New Town. These were published in a wide range of journals including *The Burlington Magazine*, *The Scottish Art Review*, *The Art Journal*, the *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, the *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects* and *The Builder*.

⁷⁰ Appendix I.

⁷¹ Appendix II.

Baldwin Brown's second area of interest, reflecting his family's long-lived connection with the church and its history, was the early Christian church. Within this he had a particular interest in the architecture, art and culture of the Anglo-Saxon and early Christian period in Britain and Europe. His first book on early Christian architecture, *From Schola to Cathedral* (1886), was followed by what became his major lifetime study, *The Arts in Early England*. This ran to 6 volumes published between 1903 and 1937,⁷² and provided a major exposition of the art, sculpture and architecture of the Anglo-Saxon period in England, placed within its social context. The first two volumes, containing a general introduction to the period and a detailed analysis of pre-Norman church architecture respectively, were published in 1903. These were followed by two volumes on Anglo-Saxon art and industry, published in 1915, and finally two volumes (in three parts) on sculpture and related arts (1925, 1928, and 1937).⁷³ He also published *The Arts and Crafts of our Teutonic Forefathers* in 1910 which resulted from his Rhind Lectures delivered in Edinburgh the previous year.⁷⁴

In advance of his monograph on Anglo-Saxon architecture Baldwin Brown published a series of papers on early Christian architecture in Britain and in Ireland in journals including *The Builder* and the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*. This study was designed to complement the work of Thomas Rickman who in his *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England*⁷⁵ had produced what Baldwin Brown believed to be the definitive work on English ecclesiastical architecture. Rickman had intended to publish a separate monograph on Anglo-Saxon architecture and in anticipation of this did not include Anglo-Saxon architecture in the 1881 edition of his book. However he died before the anticipated volume was prepared and Baldwin Brown decided to take on this ambitious task. His intention was to visit, identify and catalogue surviving Anglo-Saxon architectural remains and to develop a system of chronological division based on the

⁷² The last volume was published in two parts, the second posthumously.

⁷³ The second part of volume VI was completed by Lord Sexton.

⁷⁴ Baldwin Brown wrote c.750,000 words on the period.

⁷⁵ T. Rickman, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England* (London, 1817).

architecture itself. In contrast to Rickman, who had concentrated on the architecture and its details, however, Baldwin Brown also placed the buildings in their broader cultural and functional context.⁷⁶ It took ten years of primary research, including numerous site-visits before he produced the first edition of his study. This became the definitive work on the subject, with a second expanded and updated edition appearing in 1925.⁷⁷

Baldwin Brown's third group of publications are relatively unknown and relate specifically to the preservation movement and the process of managing sympathetic change in urban and rural areas. It seems most likely that his interest in preservation grew out of his long friendship with Hardwicke Rawnsley and the latter's involvement in preservation campaigns in the English Lake District and with the National Trust. After arriving in Edinburgh, Baldwin Brown rapidly became involved in the urban preservation debate. While he commenced writing letters to the press on the subject in 1883, however, his academic and professional papers on this subject only appear from 1904. There appear to be two inter-linked reasons for this delay. First, the need to develop his university courses and to establish his academic reputation through his chosen study of Anglo-Saxon architecture and culture left him little time to take on an additional major programme of work. Having published the first two volumes of *The Arts in Early England* in 1903, however, he was able to turn his attention to more substantive research and publication on the preservation movement. The second reason is equally important, however. It was the first-hand experience of pursuing preservation and sympathetic development in Edinburgh over his first two decades in the city that demonstrated that there was a need for significant improvements to the systems in place in Britain together as part of a broader debate about the control of new developments affecting historic urban settlements. After publishing *The Care of Historical Cities* in 1904

⁷⁶ See Cooper, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown and the preservation of Edinburgh's Old Town.' For its significance, see E. Fernie, 'History and architectural history', *Transactions of the Royal History Society*, Sixth Series, 13 (2003), 199-206.

⁷⁷ Baldwin Brown's field notebooks (although incomplete) allow his visits to be traced. UoE/SC/GEN.2015/30-74.

and *The Care of Ancient Monuments* in 1905, Baldwin Brown wrote a series of papers on preservation and design which appeared in professional journals including the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* and *The Builder*, and he presented papers at conferences including the RIBA's 1910 Town Planning Conference which were subsequently published in the proceedings. Towards the end of his career he also co-authored detailed studies of Edinburgh buildings including the Magdalen Chapel and the Tailors Hall, both in Edinburgh's Cowgate, in order to assist in the recognition of their significance and in their preservation.

Despite the number and range of his publications, Baldwin Brown was not regarded as a prolific author with his biographer, Macdonald, writing that he published: 'in a steady but never impetuous stream.'⁷⁸ This may reflect Baldwin Brown's commitment to pursuing time-consuming large-scale and geographically wide-ranging synthetic studies, using primary sources which meant regular visits to libraries, museums and sites scattered across Britain and Europe. Like his father, Baldwin Brown was an energetic traveller.⁷⁹ Between 1891 and 1902 his notebooks show him travelling extensively in Britain, visiting ecclesiastical sites, museums and libraries to gather information for his study of Anglo-Saxon architecture and culture.⁸⁰ He also visited Ireland twice in 1897⁸¹ and travelled very widely in Europe and beyond gathering information and illustrations for his fine art and archaeology lectures. In 1908, for example, having agreed to present the Rhind lectures on the European context for the early Christian period in Britain (for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland), he undertook a programme of visits to museums and sites across Britain and

⁷⁸ G. Macdonald, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown 1849-1932', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 21, (1932), 3-12, 4.

⁷⁹ Macdonald noted his fitness which allowed him to cycle from Edinburgh to the Scottish Borders and back in a day.

⁸⁰ His research led to a series of articles on early Christian architecture in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* in 1895 and a series in *The Builder* in 1900 prior to his monograph.

⁸¹ This led to a series of six articles in *The Builder* in 1897.

Europe preparing notes and colour and monochrome lantern slides for his lectures.⁸² In Britain his preparations included visits to the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum and museums at Canterbury, Rochester, Maidstone and Ipswich, while his continent excursions included museums and galleries in Munich, Vienna, Leiden, Budapest, Beauvais, Paris, Lausanne, Bern, Freiburg and Zurich. His enthusiasm for travel did not diminish with age. In 1927, at the age of 78, he visited France and Spain to gather material and prepare illustrations for his 1928 book on prehistoric cave painting, exploring caves, taking photographs and preparing sketches at first hand.

Baldwin Brown's antiquarian cousin, Ella Armitage (1841-1931),⁸³ was aware of Baldwin Brown's predilection for detailed scholarship.⁸⁴ Commenting on a draft chapter of the first volume of *The Arts in Early England* in 1901, she remarked that: 'There is only one law which you have disregarded; the iron law which forbids you to have more lifetimes than one on this earth. Heaven! If you try to write the whole history of Gothic architecture with a *mise-en-scène* on the same scale as this, and done at first hand, it is certain that you never can finish the book.'⁸⁵ Later in the same letter she remarked: 'My impression is that what pre-Conquest history requires now is the labour of a thousand ants, all getting little minute points straight. Then in about twenty or thirty years those of us who are alive will see what they will see. But meanwhile you must not join the ants; you have only one life-time!' For the sake of his scholarship, however, this was advice which Baldwin Brown repeatedly ignored.

⁸² UoE/SC/GEN 1924/61, GEN/1924/62, notebooks 2 and 3 for 1908. Baldwin Brown was an enthusiastic photographer.

⁸³ See J. Counihan, 'Mrs Ella Armitage, John Horace Round, G.T. Clark and Early Norman castles', in R. Allen Brown (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies*, VIII (1985), 73-87; 'Mrs Ella Armitage and Irish archaeology', in C. Harper-Bill (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies*, XX (1998), 59-67.

⁸⁴ Armitage wrote a number of books on motte and bailey castles. Baldwin Brown read a paper written by Armitage to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in April 1900 and she was subsequently elected an associate member.

⁸⁵ UoE/SC/GEN 1922/9, letter from Armitage to Baldwin Brown, 22 March 1901. Her comments suggest that she was responding to a draft of chapter II of volume I of *The Arts in Early England*.

Philosophy of art

An understanding of Baldwin Brown's broader philosophy relating to art history, archaeology and architecture is important in terms of clarifying the basis of his approach to preservation. He had already developed a detailed knowledge about the history of fine art and architecture of the world's great civilizations by the time he left Oxford and he subsequently wrote and lectured on a very broad range of art-related subjects. He believed that the study of history and theory of art grew out of three particular avenues of research: history and archaeology, ethics in terms of the beliefs, ideals and moral condition of a people producing art, and the mental sciences in terms of an understanding of aesthetics.⁸⁶ Baldwin Brown was heavily influenced by German writers on art theory,⁸⁷ albeit noting that their writings could at times be difficult to understand and impractical.⁸⁸ His archaeological approach in terms of studying wider cultural history and seeking to trace the origins of art backwards in time place him in the camp of the 18th century German cultural historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768)⁸⁹ who, as Fernie has noted, was the first art historian to seek to draw on all relevant sources of information in order to place art in the context of the cultures that produced them and was therefore the first historian of art rather than of artists.⁹⁰ Baldwin Brown's general philosophy relating to cultural history can be seen as drawing heavily on German historicism which had developed in the eighteenth century under the influence of Vico and, particularly Herder who believed that nations had the characteristics of persons with spirit and lifespans and can be treated as organisms.⁹¹ As Iggars has noted, for Herder, true art was always national and historical.

⁸⁶ Brown, *Fine Art as a Branch of University Study*, 6-7.

⁸⁷ Macdonald noted that he was never happier than when he could use Johannes Overbeck's *Antike Schriftquellen* as a text book. Macdonald, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown', 6.

⁸⁸ Brown, *Fine Art as a Branch of University Study*, 18-19.

⁸⁹ For Winckelmann see D. Irwin, *Winckelmann: Writings on Art* (London, 1972); W. Leppmann, *Winckelmann* (London, 1971); A. Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (London, 1994).

⁹⁰ E. Fernie, *Art History and its Methods* (London, 1995), 12.

⁹¹ See G.G. Iggars, *The German Conception of History*, especially chapter 3.

An important influence on Baldwin Brown's thinking was Gottfried Semper. His major study, *Der Stil*,⁹² was not available in English but Baldwin Brown was able to read it in its original German. As Harvey noted, Semper had surveyed the artistic development of the human race as a whole, looking to identify principles across different times and places. He used scientific methods and had a particular interest in tracing art back to its origins.⁹³ Semper's philosophical position and approach toward art history is clearly recognisable in Baldwin Brown's, leading Mallgrave to suggest that he was: 'the most sensible Semper supporter.'⁹⁴ Baldwin Brown not only promoted Semper's work in his *Fine Arts* student text book but lectured on Semper's philosophy of art in London and Edinburgh,⁹⁵ also defending Semper in short articles in *The Architect* in 1884.⁹⁶ He also pursued the translation of *Der Stil* into English, sending Sir Philip Cunliffe, then director of the South Kensington Museum, a second edition of Semper's book with broad suggestions as to how a translation might be approached.⁹⁷

Baldwin Brown's interest in investigating the origins of particular art movements was highlighted in a speech he gave to students at Aberdeen University in 1919. In this he suggested that the study of art was not only for the poet and lover of beauty but also for the scientific investigator, the philosopher and the social student. This, he believed, allowed art studies to take on a disciplinary character which justified its place in the academic systems of practically all countries except in Britain. Students of art should follow those lines of investigation and criticism which would give: 'the natural history of the work of art so that

⁹² 1803-1879. Semper, G. *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten: oder, Praktische Aesthetik: Ein Handbuch für Techniker, Künstler und Kunstfreunde* (Frankfurt am Main, 1860-63).

⁹³ Quoted in Harvey, 'Semper's Theory of Evolution in Architectural Ornament' *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1 (1885), 29-54., 54.

⁹⁴ H. Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1996). In reaching this view Mallgrave acknowledges J.D. Berry, *The Legacy of Gottfried Semper: Studies in Späthistorismus*, Brown University Ph.D. thesis, 1991.

⁹⁵ On 5 January 1885 and 9 February 1885 respectively.

⁹⁶ G.B. Brown, 'Semper and the development theory', *The Architect*, 31 (December 1884), 414-5; 'Semper and Semperism', *The Architect*, 32 (January 1885), 60.

⁹⁷ Letter, 21 January 1885, Victoria and Albert Museum, archives. He had lectured on Semper at the Museum two weeks earlier. The first English translation of *Der Stil* did not appear until 2004.

you know its origin, its growth, its relations, and are able to set it in its true place as an element in the life of society.’ However, he suggested, they should never forget that the highest value of a work was its beauty.⁹⁸

Baldwin Brown believed that the discipline of art comprised ‘the three great arts of form’ — architecture, sculpture and painting.⁹⁹ Architecture was the ‘mistress art,’ inspiring and acting as a guiding influence for the other art forms.¹⁰⁰ His writing and lecturing showed that he was keen to place architecture within a broader context of geography and topography, with the other arts reduced, to some degree at least, to a subservient position. His second belief was that there was a very close relationship between art and the society that created it. As such, art could best be understood by studying broader society with study of the art offering opportunities to shed light on that society. ‘A large part of the history of mankind is written in monuments of Art, and in older days Art was so intimately connected with the social and religious life of communities that in knowing Art we become familiar with the ideas and aspirations as well as with the outward circumstances of the peoples of the historic ages of the past.’¹⁰¹ For Baldwin Brown there was a close relationship between art and national identity. He referred to this as the ‘national idea of a nation.’ Art scholarship allowed the gaining of a general impression of the people under study: ‘The life of a nation exhibits itself in various deeds and works and recorded thoughts. We study these in history and monuments, and compare, correct and enlarge, as we study, our conceptions of the true aims and of the strengths and weakness of the people.’¹⁰²

⁹⁸ G.B. Brown, ‘The place of art in human life’, *Aberdeen University Review*, 6, 17 (1919), 97-113, 110.

⁹⁹ Brown, *The Fine Arts*, 1. Part III discusses each in turn.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, G. B. Brown, ‘Why is architecture the "mistress art?"’, *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 9 (1928), 1-16; Also, R. Blomfield, *The Mistress Art* (London, 1908).

¹⁰¹ Brown, ‘The place of art’, 97-8.

¹⁰² Brown, *The Short Period*, 6.

For Baldwin Brown, the Aesthetic Movement's doctrine of 'art for art's sake', as encouraged by the writings of his former Oxford colleague Walter Pater amongst others, had been pushed to an absurd extent.¹⁰³ However in believing this, Baldwin Brown was aware that he opened himself to the criticism of cultural determinism. He stressed, therefore, that art was not simply a direct and immediate expression of society but that it created a world of its own, somewhat apart from the living world, but with an intimate inner relation to it that was something far more than mere resemblance. He also saw a place for individual genius, stepping beyond the constraints of societal norms.¹⁰⁴

In taking the world's great civilizations as his study, Baldwin Brown was also aware of the cycles of their growth and decay. In seeing the development of art across the world in terms of evolution or 'natural history,' his thinking reflected the development of the natural sciences and in particular the evolutionary theories which had become prevalent, arising out of the work of evolutionary biologists such as Charles Darwin. However, rather than seeing a single progression, for Baldwin Brown art and culture developed in a series of cycles or periods: 'At a particular stage in the history of such communities the ideas which have bound them together, and on which their life has been based, become, as it were, articulate in literature and art.'¹⁰⁵ Following a broader tenet of German historicism, he believed that 'To understand, therefore, the history of Art we must understand the national life of the lands where it found its highest development,'¹⁰⁶ and he was therefore particularly attracted to the study of the cities of the ancient world as it was there that he believed one could frequently witness the development of the arts and where it commonly reached its highest point. Baldwin Brown placed great significance on architecture as a key and influential element of a nation's culture and his approach can clearly be seen in his lectures on the cultural and

¹⁰³ G. Macdonald, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown, 1849-1932', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 21 (1932), 3-12, 5.

¹⁰⁴ Brown, 'The place of art', 99.

¹⁰⁵ Brown, *The Short Period*, 9-10.

¹⁰⁶ Brown, *The Short Period*, 8.

architectural history of, for example, Renaissance Italy.¹⁰⁷ His starting point was to identify the key towns or cities, such as Venice or Florence, and he would then provide a detailed description of the settlements and analyse them in terms of geography, topography and broader connectivity. Focusing on the cities themselves, he adopted a systems-like approach, dividing their architecture into separate functional classes such as public buildings, defensive structures, religious buildings, private dwellings, etc., and discussing the origins and characteristics of each and their associated arts of sculpture and painting. He also took a broader interest in the political and institutional history of the cities, seeking explanatory relationships between these and the character of the city's artistic activities.

Baldwin Brown kept closely abreast of archaeologists as they excavated the remains of buildings and artefacts which could shed further light on past civilizations and their art. He took a broad interest, for example, in the archaeology of Greece, Egypt and the Near East and was a member of a number of archaeological organisations including the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies and the Hellenic Society.¹⁰⁸ He also corresponded on occasion with pioneering archaeologists such as Flinders Petrie¹⁰⁹ and Sir Arthur Evans.¹¹⁰ Evans' second in command at the Knossos excavations, Duncan Mackenzie, had studied under Baldwin Brown in Edinburgh and his shift to an interest in classical antiquity was influenced, at least in part, by him.¹¹¹ Baldwin Brown's knowledge was such that he felt able to write a series of articles on recent archaeological discoveries in the Near East for readers

¹⁰⁷ A number of Baldwin Brown's lecture notebooks are preserved at Edinburgh University. See, for example UoE/SC/GEN 2015/1 for his lecture notes on Italian art, architecture and sculpture.

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix III for a list of Baldwin Brown's organisational affiliations.

¹⁰⁹ Petrie wrote to Baldwin Brown on Egyptian architecture on 25 February 1916, UoE/SC/GEN 2112 and again on 2 July 1926, UoE/SC/GEN1922/149. Baldwin Brown had attended Petrie's lecture at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh on 25 October 1909 and acted as a local fundraiser the following year.

¹¹⁰ Evans wrote to Baldwin Brown on 10 July 1929 seeking information about female toreadors in Spain, UoE/SC/GEN 1924/69a. Baldwin Brown lectured on Evans' discoveries at Knossos to the Edinburgh and SE Branch of the Classical Association of Scotland on 21 March 1922 and to the Egyptian Research Students' Association at Edinburgh University on 12 December 1922.

¹¹¹ See N. Momigliani, 'Duncan Mackenzie', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, S72 (London, 1999), 13-15, 17.

of the *Scotsman* in the 1920s.¹¹² He kept closely in touch with domestic discoveries as well. In Scotland his organisational affiliations included the Historical Association of Scotland, the Classical Association of Scotland, the Scottish Ecclesiological Society and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, with his broader interest in archaeology also reflected in his associate membership of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and honorary membership of the Finnish Archaeological Society.

Baldwin Brown's writings, teaching and broader activities show also that he had strong affiliations with the arts and crafts movement and its broader social aims. This movement, closely associated with John Ruskin and William Morris, emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century in response to the perceived ills of industrialisation and the poor quality of British design. It had therefore adopted a philosophy which promoted the primacy of the craftsman/woman as both designer and maker of objects. In this it responded to the perceived damage that the increasing separation of these functions in the Victorian machine age caused, encouraging detailed research, understanding and appreciation of materials, and encouraged a return to medieval guild-like workshops for the training of apprentices and for the production of arts and crafts.¹¹³ In common with the Pre-Raphaelites, the Arts and Crafts movement had a strong interest in the past, developing their knowledge from detailed study of early objects, books, manuscripts, and traditional myths and legends. This was part of a wider rediscovery of the arts and crafts of the medieval past and their perceived 'national purity' and was in part in reaction to the general dominance of the classical revival in arts, crafts and architecture in the earlier Victorian period.

While Baldwin Brown had a deep understanding of Classical art and architecture, his public lectures also included the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, the art of the medieval monastery, the

¹¹² 17 and 21 April, and 2, 6 and 10 June, 1926.

¹¹³ For the Arts and Crafts Movement see, for example, G. Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London, 1980); E. Cumming and W. Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London, 2004); E. Cumming, *Hand, Heart and Soul: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2006); A. Carruthers, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in Scotland: A History* (London, 2013).

work of medieval goldsmiths and also early book production, each of which fitted in well with the broader Arts and Crafts movement's interests. It is in this that we can find the roots of Baldwin Brown's interest in the local vernacular, reflected in both portable artefacts and in architecture, but it is important to note though that Baldwin Brown rejected both Ruskin's and the Pre-Raphaelite belief that excellence in art resides in close resemblance of their productions to nature: 'Ruskin is a dangerous guide in matters of aesthetic theory, and the Pre-Raffaelites [*sic*], though from the moral point of view we can never honour them too much, were quite at fault in their artistic aims.'¹¹⁴ The Arts and Crafts movement developed a programme of broader social and moral aims which saw the purpose of art to improve and enrich life and to tackle the ills of the industrial revolution for the working classes. Baldwin Brown was highly sympathetic to this and promoted the benefits of art and education for the working classes throughout his life. Baldwin Brown and his wife Maude Annie supported Patrick Geddes and the Edinburgh Social Union for a ten year period from 1888-1898, arranging programmes of practical art training, using their own artistic skills to deliver lectures and practical guidance to students, helping to recruit new lecturers and craftspeople, and even finding new premises for the Union's art activities.¹¹⁵ By the second half of the nineteenth century a Scottish Arts and Crafts movement had developed, drawing inspiration in particular from Celtic subjects, with artists such as John Duncan, particularly associated with the wider Scottish Celtic Revival in Edinburgh.¹¹⁶ The Scottish capital's role in the development of the Arts and Crafts movement in Scotland has attracted research from Cumming and Carruthers who have both identified Baldwin Brown as a key Edinburgh figure.¹¹⁷ Baldwin Brown and the prominent Scottish architect Robert Rowand Anderson were instrumental, for example, in getting the National Association for the Advancement of

¹¹⁴ G.B. Brown, 'The place of art', 100.

¹¹⁵ ECL/qY HV 250 E23S, ESU, *Minute Books*, and, ECL/Y HV 250 E23S, ESU *Annual reports*.

¹¹⁶ See Macdonald, *Scottish Art*, 151; J. Morrison, *Painting the Nation*, 204; J. Kemplay, *The Paintings of John Duncan: a Scottish Symbolist* (Warwick, 2009). 15-27.

¹¹⁷ See E. Cumming, *Arts and Crafts in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1985); Cumming, *Hand, Heart and Soul*; Carruthers, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*.

Arts and its Application to Industry to hold its second annual conference in Edinburgh in 1889. This took place in the newly opened Scottish National Portrait Gallery designed by Rowand Anderson, and was attended by many of the key artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement including William Morris, Walter Crane, Francis Newbery, Charles Ashbee, William Hole, John Honeyman and Patrick Geddes. Baldwin Brown chaired the Section of Museums and National and Municipal Encouragement of Art, arranged for various loans from South Kensington for a display in the Museum's basement areas, and pressed strongly for a series of lectures for working men to be included.¹¹⁸ He also took the opportunity offered by the presence of the conference to create a local committee of the Art Congress as a representative body which might comment on the aesthetic impact of development proposals in Edinburgh and was to use this with good effect with regard to development proposals in the city.

In summary, Baldwin Brown was well-educated, articulate and came from a family with a strong intellectual tradition reflected in law, historical research and scholarship. The family was well-connected and travelled widely, building up a broad knowledge of their continental neighbours' culture and languages, and had a particular interest in German literature and philosophy. They were also highly principled nonconformists with a long experience in successful local and national campaigning for social reform, with members of the family prepared to put themselves at personal disadvantage to help others and accustomed to adverse criticism where seeking to tackle particular injustices. Baldwin Brown was exposed to the problems of poverty and social disadvantage through his father's ministry and understood the need for charitable endeavour, social and political reform, and sanitary and broader improvements.¹¹⁹ Baldwin Brown's was also a family which exhibited strong artistic

¹¹⁸ He also edited the resulting publication *Transactions of the National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry: Edinburgh Meeting* (London, 1890). *Scotsman*, 5 September 1889.

¹¹⁹ Although it not been possible to identify Baldwin Brown's church in Edinburgh, he is likely to have followed the family's tradition of non-conformism. For a broader discussion of non-conformist

interest, knowledge and abilities with a practising architect and a practising sculptor in its number. Baldwin Brown was to bring together the abilities of a principled campaigner with a deep intellectual curiosity and knowledge of art and culture, and his schooling helped him develop ancient and modern language skills which were to help both his scholarship and his travels. His approach to art history was that of a cultural historian for whom art and broader cultural and national history were inextricably linked. He was particularly sensitive to the relationship between material culture and society, and in particular nationhood, and he exhibited a broad experience of architecture, sculpture and art across time and place.

Baldwin Brown had studied a number of civilizations and their cities across Europe and beyond, developing a detailed knowledge of architecture ranging from grand classical set-pieces to the domestic vernacular. He was also sympathetic to the broader didactic uses of art for teaching and improving the lot of man and his energies in this area brought his knowledge and influence before a broad professional and public audience.

evangelicalism and preservation see P. Mandler, 'Rethinking the "powers of darkness": an anti-history of the preservation movement in Britain', in M. Hall (ed.), *Towards World Heritage: International Origins of the Preservation Movement 1870-1930* (Farnham, 2011), esp. 229-232.

Gerard Baldwin Brown:

Edinburgh and the Preservation Movement

(1880-1930)

Part II

The following chapters contain a detailed discussion and analysis of Baldwin Brown's developing philosophy with regard to the protection of ancient buildings and monuments. The text is arranged chronologically, from his arrival in Edinburgh as the Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art through to his death fifty-two years later, in order to allow the development of his thinking and changes in the form of his campaigning over this period to be traced.

The discussion in these chapters draws on three inter-related 'dimensions' of analysis. The first of these relates to the identification of particular development or preservation-related cases in order to provide specific arenas of study. Preservation-related activities are commonly stimulated by change and development proposals, and it is in the context of such proposals that value-systems, discourse and approaches become visible and open to description and analysis. A number of high-profile cases involving proposed and actual change in Edinburgh have been selected. These cases form only a small subset of change and development cases in the city over the study period and the choice of case for discussion here has been determined by the identification of Baldwin Brown's substantive involvement. In some instances it has been necessary to describe individual cases in some detail to provide a context for understanding the perceived threat and therefore the scope of Baldwin Brown's interest. Cases from outside Edinburgh have also been included where they shed light on broader principles, such as Baldwin Brown's attitude towards restoration.

The second dimension of analysis relates to Baldwin Brown's relationship with a range of professional organisations and amenity bodies which formed part of the network of power in the city and beyond, or which became key elements of the emerging preservation field. Such organisations offered opportunities to add authority and weight to preservation campaigns, turning them from personal undertakings to those with a broader public interest. Baldwin Brown's membership of a number of organisations, and his rise to positions of authority within them, is traced as is their involvement with specific cases and campaigns.

The third dimension of analysis relates specifically to the emergence and development of Baldwin Brown's own preservation philosophy and his methods of campaigning. This becomes available through a detailed study of his preservation-related texts, in particular his letters to the press, reports of his lectures, his papers as published in a number of professional journals, and two of his monographs - *The Care of Historical Cities* and *The Care of Ancient Monuments*. Unlike writers such as John Ruskin whose texts are readily available and well-studied, very few of Baldwin Brown's texts are well known and (with the exception of the current author's recent study) his letters to the press and related texts have not been previously identified. The latter collection of preservation-related texts extends to over 80,000 words. While these are transcribed in Appendix IV, this does not provide an easy or rapid access to his main ideas or how these developed over time. Longer sections of his original text have been reproduced in the main body of this discussion therefore. This approach does offer an additional advantage in that it also helps illustrate the specific tone, content and rhetorical style adopted by Baldwin Brown in his public texts.

Chapter 5. Building a Personal Capital

As Bourdieu has noted, organisational membership is a significant indicator of the relationship of an individual to fields of power and is frequently implicated in the establishment of authority within particular fields.¹ Baldwin Brown understood that developing his cultural, social and intellectual capital would be dependent on his ability to establish himself successfully within the key organisations which made up the academic, fine art, antiquarian and architectural fields in Edinburgh and beyond. This meant being accepted into these organisations, gaining an understanding of the internal and inter-organisational power-relations and the way in which agendas were developed and pursued, learning how to influence or control the agenda-forming processes, and taking advantage of the broader opportunities offered through such associations. By becoming involved in these organisations, he would also have become exposed to and influenced by the bodies and their members.

The study of Baldwin Brown's organisational involvement provides important information on how he established his social and intellectual capital within and beyond Edinburgh. It also indicates which organisations he believed were significant in terms of the fields of power for the fine arts. Such a study also sheds light on the process by which in due course he sought to influence organisational agendas and to draw on their power in the pursuit of a preservation agenda. The latter is aided by the survival of a variety of organisational records including annual reports, minute books and other documentation. In some cases the meetings and activities are also recorded and expanded upon in the press at a level of detail uncommon by today's standards. As will be discussed below, such sources indicate that Baldwin Brown placed particular importance on working within and through organisations and institutions when pursuing his preservation activities. For most of his time in Edinburgh he was highly successful at navigating the subtleties of these complex organisational and

¹ P. Bourdieu and L.J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Cambridge, 1992), 76-9.

political environments as demonstrated by his appointment to the council or board of such organisations and, in a number of cases, his election to influential and high-profile positions within them, such as chairman or president. However, it would always be a challenge to balance a principled campaigning stance with the political pragmatism which was necessary in order to develop and maintain relationships within specific organisations and within the intimate, multi-connected community that made-up Edinburgh society and in particular its middle-classes.

Baldwin Brown's first priority was to consolidate his position at the University where he had joined an elite group of Scottish university professors, designing his courses and strengthening his academic reputation.² The early 1880s saw him developing his fine art syllabus, writing notes, preparing illustrative materials and presenting lectures. He also attended faculty meetings and university events, and supported the University and his academic colleagues in their wider endeavours.³ After his arrival, a new section introducing the University's architecture was included in the *University Calendar*, drawing attention to Robert Adam's Old College. This was subsequently expanded to include the School of Medicine and the McEwan Hall.⁴ This was written by Baldwin Brown and he led tours of the University's buildings for visitors including groups of academics, architects and others. Baldwin Brown's wife, Maude Annie,⁵ also became a visible member of the University community, undertaking university and charitable activities. She was to become a key mover in the creation of the University's first Women's Student Union and its subsequent

² R.D. Anderson, 'Scottish university professors, 1800-1939: profile of an elite', *Scottish Economic and Social History*, 7 (1987), 27-54.

³ Examples include the *Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women*. Baldwin Brown gave a lecture on Hellenic art in 1881 and delivered an annual fine art course subsequently.

⁴ Although unattributed, see *Edinburgh University Calendar 1891-92* (Edinburgh, 1891), 40-8. Also, G.B. Brown, 'The University Old Buildings', *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 1, (1891), 75-7; 'A New Piece of Scottish Architecture', *Art Journal* (1894), 112.

⁵ Maude Annie Terrell (1848-1931). See M.A. Cooper, *Ettie and Maude: Problems of identification in the diaries and letters of John Ruskin, and the letters of Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, *Ruskin Review and Bulletin* (Autumn, 2013), 14-23. They were married by Baldwin Brown's father on 25 April 1882.

management,⁶ and was also closely involved in the Ladies' University Tea Club. She also helped organise many fundraising campaigns for the University and for other good causes, and at a later date she became closely involved in the city's temperance movement.

Baldwin Brown's appointment as the University's fine art professor gave formal recognition to his academic knowledge and abilities in the fine art field. This in turn offered many opportunities to increase his visibility and to further establish his reputational and cultural capital within the Scottish fine arts field.⁷ He attended many events in his capacity as the Watson Gordon Professor, including those hosted by important Scottish institutions such as the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA) and the Government School of Art for Edinburgh.⁸ Seated on the stage with other key figures, he was often asked to address the audience as keynote speaker, placing new exhibitions in their national or international context.⁹ At this time, Baldwin Brown still considered himself to be a practising artist, recording his profession as 'artist' in the 1881 census. He exhibited a painting at the RSA annual exhibition in 1883,¹⁰ and from 1888 taught practical art skills under the aegis of the Edinburgh Social Union. In his speeches and lectures he was able therefore to draw not only on his knowledge of art theory and international cultural history but also on his own practical training and experience.

⁶ *Scotsman*, 14 October 1905; 19 October 1905; 8 October 1931. The Women's Student Union was inaugurated on 18 October 1905.

⁷ For Edinburgh arts and cultural institutions, see Board of Manufactures Committee. *Report by Department Committee to Enquire into the Administration of the Board of Manufactures* (London, 1903), volume 1.

⁸ Board of Manufactures Committee, *Administration of the Board of Manufactures*, 11. The School of Art was founded in the 1760s as a School of Design but in the 1840s developed in the direction of Fine Art. In 1858 it was removed from the jurisdiction of the Board of Manufactures and affiliated with the Science and Art Departments in London, becoming the Government School of Art for the City of Edinburgh. It transferred to the Scottish Education Department in 1897.

⁹ He lectured, for example, at the opening of the Fine Art Exhibition at the Glasgow Institute of Arts on 3 August 1880, *Scotsman*, 4 August 1880; was on the stage with members of the RSA council at the prize-giving ceremony for Edinburgh School of Art on 20 January 1881, *Scotsman*, 21 January 1881. He also attended the RSA annual exhibition dinner on 18 February 1881, *Scotsman*, 19 February 1881.

¹⁰ *The Afterglow* received a mixed reception. *Scotsman*, 8 March 1883.

Given the close relationship between the Watson Gordon chair and the RSA, the Academy might have been expected to have provided the single most important organisational base outside the University for Baldwin Brown. Despite his skills at navigating organisational structures, processes and politics, which he demonstrated in relation to many key organisations in the arts field, Baldwin Brown's relationship with the RSA community was fraught almost from the start. Part of the difficulty was philosophical. Some artists believed that historical and theoretical study encouraged a traditional and derivative approach which stifled their own creativity.¹¹ A second problem was that architecture was the 'mistress art' for Baldwin Brown. He therefore placed great emphasis on architectural theory and history in his research, writing and lecturing. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, the architectural discipline and its members were being increasingly ostracised by the RSA, leading to significant levels of tension between the two disciplines.¹²

In his opening fine art lecture in the 1884-85 session, Baldwin Brown discussed the issues surrounding the value of historical study for artists and the position of architectural history in Scottish society. 'The relation of past to present was much closer in architecture than in painting and sculpture; the traditions followed by the builders of old times had a more living interest for their successors than the traditions of monumental painting and sculpture for the exhibitors in our Academies.'¹³ Turning to architecture, he stressed his belief that Scotland had not made the most of its traditional architecture as an important part of its wider national artistic inheritance and that this in turn had influenced the way in which the architectural profession in Scotland was viewed more broadly: 'The architecture of Scotland, ecclesiastical and secular, had never received the treatment it merited, and a work dealing with her old buildings in a comprehensive spirit, and with due regard to the style of work of

¹¹ For historical study and artistic freedom, see J.D. Sedding (ed.), *Design, Arts and Crafts Essays by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (London, 1899). Baldwin Brown lectured on this subject to EAA in 1897. See *The Builder*, 11 December 1897.

¹² For Robert Rowand Anderson's activities in this, see E. Gordon, *The Royal Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, 1826-1976* (Edinburgh, 1976), 159-62.

¹³ *Scotsman*, 8 November 1884.

similar structures in other lands, might go far to raise the reputation of architecture in this country as a learned profession.’¹⁴ By the time of his lecture, the reluctance of the RSA to recognise architects and support architectural training had led to the high-profile and politically damaging resignation of one of its few architectural fellows, Robert Rowand Anderson.¹⁵

Baldwin Brown’s enthusiasm for architectural history as an integral and superior part of fine art would not have played well, therefore, in some quarters of the RSA. This problem was exacerbated by Baldwin Brown’s broader approach to art criticism and his view of the abilities of some living Scottish artists. In 1883 he had written to the Academy offering to lecture to their students from time to time: ‘on subjects as would be likely to inform them such as the Old Masters and their relationship to Modern Art.’¹⁶ This offer was accepted and Baldwin Brown broadened the potential audience for these lectures by requesting that former students of the RSA be allowed to attend.¹⁷ Problems arose though during his first series of lectures and when Baldwin Brown offered to resume the following year the Academy distanced itself from both his lectures and the Watson Gordon Professor. An RSA minute indicates the root of the problem:

Some discussion took place as to the advisableness of the Council authorising lectures by the Professor on this subject as his opinions might be considered as homologous by the Academy, and it was agreed to instruct the Secretary to intimate to him that the Council would have no objection to lectures being given provided that they were restricted to subjects connected with old or deceased Artists, and also, to suggest to him that, the lectures, however, might be delivered under the auspices of the Board of Manufactures¹⁸

¹⁴ *Scotsman*, 8 November 1884.

¹⁵ He resigned in 1883. It had taken Anderson five attempts before his election to the RSA in 1876 when he became only the seventh architect to be elected, see Gordon, *Royal Scottish Academy*, 155. Rowand Anderson became highly active in the calls to reform the RSA and the creation of the Applied Art School in Edinburgh in 1892.

¹⁶ RSA, *Minute Book*, 26 March 1883, 258.

¹⁷ RSA, *Minute Book*, 5 April 1883, 260.

¹⁸ RSA, *Minute Book*, 3 March 1884, 295-6.

Although Baldwin Brown continued to attend some RSA events,¹⁹ matters came to a head late in 1888 when a series of articles appeared in the *Scots Observer* criticising the Academy's approach to its teaching and arguing that reform was overdue. The RSA's relationship with Baldwin Brown was highlighted in support of the call for reform: 'One cannot but deplore the want of sympathy which the Academy has all along shown with the aims and objects of the Fine Art Chair in the University of Edinburgh, though the chair was founded in memory of one of its own presidents. To use a word of ill repute, the Academy has practically "boycotted" the Chair'.²⁰ The article went on to suggest that 'It is little short of a public scandal that a Fine Art Chair should exist which is tabooed by the Academy, especially as the Academy at its own hand does nothing to supply to its students that knowledge and culture which attendance on the lectures of the Fine Art Professor is calculated to secure.'²¹

A pseudonymous correspondent, *Veritas*, denied that such a boycott existed but his subsequent comments suggested nonetheless that all was far from well: 'The Academy cannot force students to attend the Fine Art classes, nor can it be expected to attend regularly in the person of its members. The Chair must stand on its own merits.' He continued: 'Whether the present Professor has the sympathy of the members of the Academy I cannot say; more probably the feeling towards the Chair is at present that of indifference, but what the reason for this is, it is not for me to say.'²² The Academy's President, Sir William Fettes Douglas, was forced to deny the alleged boycotting at the annual Edinburgh Merchant Company's anniversary dinner in December 1888.²³ However matters did not improve and while Baldwin Brown sought to maintain a cordial relationship with the Academy,

¹⁹ Although Gordon notes his absence from the RSA's annual meeting in 1889. See Gordon, *Royal Scottish Academy*, 156.

²⁰ *Scots Observer*, November 24, 1888, 8-9.

²¹ *Scots Observer*, November 24, 1888, 9.

²² *Scots Observer*, December 1, 1888, 45.

²³ *Scotsman*, 5 December 1888; *Scots Observer*, December 8, 1888, 67-68; Gordon, *The Royal Scottish Academy*, 157-59.

continuing resentment existed in some quarters, with an article on Sir John Watson Gordon in the *Art Journal* in 1903 (some 23 years after Baldwin Brown's appointment) commenting that 'It would appear that the beneficial outcome, artistically speaking, of this endowment has not yet been very great.'²⁴ It was not until 1911, thirty-one years after he took up the Watson Gordon Chair, that Baldwin Brown was made the RSA's Professor of Ancient History and received an honorary fellowship.²⁵ Somewhat ironically, given their lack of encouragement for Baldwin Brown, the RSA's obituary in 1932 recorded that 'It may be a matter of regret to the Academy and to the whole body of artists in Scotland, young and old, that the enthusiasm was directed into the channel of antiquities, rather than into that of modern art, reckoning modern art from the birth of the Renaissance to the present day.'²⁶

If he was to suffer at the hands of an unreformed RSA, Baldwin Brown's knowledge and enthusiasm for architecture and architectural history meant that the opposite was the case with the Edinburgh Architectural Association (EAA). This relationship was to prove far more representative of his general dealings with Edinburgh's many organisations, clubs and associations.²⁷ Founded in 1858, the EAA was a professional association of Edinburgh-based architects which promoted architecture, provided training, lectures and excursions, held a library of architectural books, journals and drawings, and provided a meeting place for practising architects. In contrast to the RSA, the EAA welcomed Baldwin Brown. His membership, from 1882 onwards, was to give him ready access to a community of architects, many of whom had shaped the city's townscape and were involved in key development, preservation and restoration cases. The EAA offered frequent opportunities to hear experts speak on a wide variety of architectural subjects, to visit buildings, and to take part in the

²⁴ G.A., 'The President of the Royal Scottish Academy', *Art Journal* (1903), 301-4.

²⁵ RSA, *Minute Book*, 30 March 1911, 106.

²⁶ RSA, *Annual Report*, 1932, 9-11.

²⁷ A successor to the *Architectural Institute of Scotland*, founded 'to promote and afford facilities for the study of Architecture and to serve as a medium of friendly communication between the members and others interested in Architecture'. G.S. Aitken, *History and Reminiscences of EAA* (Edinburgh, 1913).

ongoing discussions regarding the city and its built environment. The relationship was not unidirectional however. Baldwin Brown set out at an early stage to assist the training of architects in Scotland by providing them with a regular series of lectures, drawing on his detailed knowledge of the art, architecture and culture of the world's great civilizations. In 1882 he lectured to EAA members on the mosaics of Ravenna and the following year he provided a series on early Christian art and architecture, with the topics including the Romanesque church and the rise of the Gothic style in Northern France.²⁸ In 1885 the subject was his favoured art historian and theorist Gottfried Semper, the following year, Sir Christopher Wren, and in 1888 he lectured on the medieval monastery and its place in architecture. He recognised though that a more detailed course on architecture was in demand and by 1883 he had successfully negotiated with the University Court for EAA members to attend a course of lectures on architecture at the University at a reduced fee of one guinea.²⁹ Thirty registered to attend his architecture course in 1884-5 including the architects Sydney Mitchell, Hippolyte Blanc and William Oldrieve, all of whom were key figures in the emerging preservation movement in Edinburgh.

The EAA provides an interesting case-study for the manner in which Baldwin Brown worked with (and within) organisations which he felt could benefit from his knowledge and expertise on art, architecture and sculpture, and which also offered a potential platform for his preservation-related campaigns. That he was an accomplished committee man, able to develop strong working relationships with committee colleagues, is shown by his rapid rise to a position of power within the organisation's administrative and governing structures. By November 1882 he had become an active and visible member of the Association. By 1883 he was both a council member and member of the Syllabus Committee.³⁰ Two years later he had become vice-president, and in 1887 he succeeded Hippolyte Blanc as EAA President,

²⁸ EAA, 26th *Annual Report*, 1883-84, 9.

²⁹ UoE/SC/IN1/ACA/ART, *Faculty of Arts Minute Book*, no. 2, 1 March 1884.

³⁰ EAA, 26th *Annual Report*, 1883-84, 6.

holding the position for the usual two-year term. Baldwin Brown used the EAA's newly-introduced *Transactions* to publish a number of papers including his presidential address on the role of architectural associations and he remained closely involved with the organisation subsequently, sitting on its management committee from 1902. He was also particularly adept at using formal organisational mechanisms such as committee meetings, proposals and motions, letters and memorials, and even votes of thanks, to bring forward and pursue specific agendas, thereby gaining broader organisational authority and support.³¹ Active involvement with the EAA also helped Baldwin Brown to familiarise himself with the main issues relating to Edinburgh's built environment and to gain access to a network of expert contacts. His fellow council and committee members included John Dick Peddie who had lectured and written on the city's character and its rapidly changing built environment.³² Others included the architects and architectural historians, David MacGibbon³³ and Thomas Ross,³⁴ who were working together on a major study of vernacular Scottish architecture,³⁵ the influential Edinburgh architects George Washington Browne³⁶ and Hippolyte Blanc,³⁷ and the politically adept and highly successful Robert Rowand Anderson, later knighted, who became the key political and architectural force in Scotland.³⁸

Given the presence of MacGibbon and Ross, it is not surprising that one of the EAA's interests was early vernacular architecture in Scotland, including buildings within the Old Town. In December 1882, the EAA hosted an exhibition of the city's architecture at the RSA galleries on the Mound which included not only drawings, paintings, photographs and

³¹ See discussion of Edinburgh Castle, below.

³² Chapter 3.

³³ http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201785 accessed 20 Jul 2015.

³⁴ http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201067 accessed 20 Jul 2015.

³⁵ D. MacGibbon and T. Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1887-92).

³⁶ Architect of many significant Edinburgh buildings including the Edinburgh Central Public Library in 1887. http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200049 accessed 20 Jul 2015.

³⁷ Blanc restored the Great Hall, St Margaret's Chapel and the Portcullis Gate. See R.J. Morris, 'The capitalist, the professor and the soldier: the re-making of Edinburgh Castle, 1850-1900', *Planning Perspectives*, 22 (2007), 55-78.

³⁸ http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200031 accessed 20 Jul 2015.

³⁸ http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200041 accessed 15 Jul 2015.

models of key city buildings (including portraits of some of the architects of the New Town) but also included illustrations of Edinburgh's vernacular buildings. These included a set of detailed elevation drawings of the vernacular buildings on either side of the West Bow before they were lost to the improvement programmes, together with paintings and drawings of many other Old Town buildings.³⁹ In opening the exhibition on 22 December, the EAA President, David MacGibbon, reflected that in carrying out improvements many picturesque and interesting examples of ancient architecture had been removed and their town had suffered severely. However, he continued: 'we might congratulate ourselves that so many beautiful reminiscences of our old picturesque houses and closes had been preserved to us by the industrious and artistic pencil of the late James Drummond, G. Manson, and other artists.'⁴⁰ He went on to mention that the EAA were seeking to preserve a record of some of Scotland's older buildings by annually publishing a sketch-book, containing measured drawings and sketches of old Scotch architecture furnished by the members. He concluded that the revival of Gothic architecture had led to the careful preservation of many churches, hoping that: 'by showing the value and importance of our old Scotch castles and houses, it might lead to greater interest being taken in these buildings also, and some buildings being adopted to preserve them from the decay and demolition to which they were nearly all rapidly yielding.'⁴¹

Baldwin Brown's developing knowledge of Scottish art and architecture benefitted from the other speakers contributing to the EAA's annual lecture programme and from the Association's excursions. The lecture series ranged from detailed studies of Scottish abbeys and cathedrals to Scottish Celtic art. The visits programmes in 1883 included St Giles Cathedral, Donaldson's Hospital, the Roman Catholic Cathedral and Coates House. The following February, the focus was the Old Town with visits to the Canongate Tolbooth,

³⁹ *Scotsman*, 22 & 28 December 1882.

⁴⁰ *Scotsman*, 23 December 1882.

⁴¹ *Scotsman*, 23 December 1882.

Moray House, Milton House, Queensberry House, Queen Mary's Bath and Edinburgh Castle.⁴² Baldwin Brown's would also have visited the *Old Edinburgh Street*, one of the popular exhibits at the International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art hosted by the city in 1886. It was Sydney Mitchell, one of EAA's members who had attended his architectural lectures, who was responsible for the street's design.⁴³

The 'Old Edinburgh Street' comprised reconstructions of Old Town buildings which had been demolished over the previous two hundred or so years, together with costumed actors and practical exhibitions of various traditional crafts (figure 17).⁴⁴ It was a highly popular part of the broader exhibition, with the organising committee commenting 'I trust one of the early results of the first great Scottish Exhibition will be a return to a style of building at once suited to the varied scenery and the changeful skies of Scotland, and to the character and history of Scotland.'⁴⁵ However, the city's medieval buildings and other structures continued to be demolished as required by broader transport improvements and in response to sanitary and safety concerns. In April 1885 a section of the Town Wall was demolished at the west end of Drummond Street,⁴⁶ and early in 1886 the city's Public Health Committee identified a number of medieval and later vernacular buildings in the Old Town for demolition including ones at White Horse Close, Canongate, West Port, Grassmarket and

⁴² EAA, *Annual Reports and Transactions*.

⁴³ http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200197 accessed 15 Jul 2015. Mitchell was the architect for William Gladstone's scheme to reconstruct Edinburgh's Mercat Cross and for R. Findlay's scheme at Well Court in Dean Village.

⁴⁴ For the Old Edinburgh Street, see A.G.W. Smith, 'Displaying Edinburgh in 1886: the International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art', University of Edinburgh Ph.D thesis, 2015.

⁴⁵ See J.C. Dunlop and A.H. Dunlop, *The Book of Old Edinburgh and Hand-Book to the Old Edinburgh Street* (Edinburgh, 1886), 1.

⁴⁶ *Scotsman*, 14 April 1888. The municipal authority did press for repairs to the city wall adjacent to Heriots School, ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Books*, 11 September 1888.

SCENES FROM "OLD EDINBURGH" IN THE EXHIBITION.



CARDINAL BEATON'S HOUSE.



NETHERPORT AND FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S HOUSE.



LORD SELKIRK'S HOUSE AND TOLBOOTH.



ROYAL PORCH AND MINT.

Figure 17. The Old Edinburgh Street at the International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art. Source: *Souvenir of the Exhibition and Old Edinburgh 1886* (Edinburgh, 1886).

Potterrow.⁴⁷ Two years later the Dean of Guild ordered the demolition of two ruinous buildings on the east side of Fleshmarket Close.⁴⁸

In his first two decades in Edinburgh, Baldwin Brown also joined and became active in a number of other organisations. His status in architecture had been increased by his election as an Honorary Associate of the London-based Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 1877 and he attended their London meetings regularly. As with the EAA he was highly visible, proposing votes of thanks for visiting lecturers and contributing to post-lecture discussions. He also presented lectures to RIBA members on a range of topics including advances in architectural history, the use of Vitruvius and pre-Conquest architecture. As EAA president he also lectured to the RIBA on the Edinburgh architectural organisation. He also took advantage of their *Journal* and *Transactions*, publishing papers on subjects including the origins of Roman imperial architecture, monastic workshops and, at a later date, the use of urban legislation to preserve amenity, and he contributed a number of reviews of architectural monographs also.

In 1884 he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Although he was not to become a committee member until early in the following century, fellowship allowed him to attend lectures and to develop his network of Scottish antiquarians. Two years later, Baldwin Brown was invited by Patrick Geddes to become involved in the provision of practical art classes for the Edinburgh Social Union (ESU), a body set up to raise the standards of comfort among the poor in Edinburgh. Its activities ranged from housing and art in public buildings, to the provision of recreational and educational activities.⁴⁹ The ESU

⁴⁷ *Scotsman*, 12 February 1886, contains a list of buildings identified by the Committee. SPAB wrote to their representative in Edinburgh, Hippolyte Blanc, to seek advice over the proposed demolitions. NLS/MS 1735.

⁴⁸ See ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Book*, 14 September 1888.

⁴⁹ ECL/ qY HV 250 E23S, ESU, *Minute Books*, 5 & 8 January 1885.

took its model from the Kyrle Society,⁵⁰ but was intended also to take on wider activities such as those undertaken by the Nottingham Social Guild. As discussed in their early meetings, the ESU's initial intention had been to have separate guilds for art, music and nature but although these were not created, Baldwin Brown subsequently took the lead in planning and managing their art-related activities and by July 1888 had been invited to join the ESU's Executive Committee.⁵¹ Working within the Arts and Crafts philosophy espoused by Morris and his circle, and with similarities to the Keswick School of Industrial Art set up by his friend Hardwicke Rawnsley and his first wife in 1884,⁵² he rapidly developed the syllabus for practical Industrial Art classes, including painting, metalworking and textiles. The architect Stewart Henbest Capper also gave a course on architecture.⁵³ Baldwin Brown was highly energetic in the ESU, organising the move of their art teaching facilities to new premises at Lynedoch Place and setting up an impressive advisory committee to ensure that the decorative work schemes undertaken by the ESU students for public buildings met appropriate standards.⁵⁴ Baldwin Brown and his wife Maude Annie both taught practical classes⁵⁵ and remained closely involved with the ESU's industrial arts teaching until 1898 when these activities moved to the Edinburgh Arts and Crafts Club.⁵⁶

Although not discussed in detail here, Baldwin Brown involved himself in a number of other Edinburgh-based organisations in the first decades of his residence in Edinburgh, continuing

⁵⁰ The Kyrle Society, conceived as a 'Society for the Diffusion of Beauty', was constituted in 1876. See G. Darley, *Octavia Hill, Social Reformer and Founder of the National Trust* (London, 2010). 2nd edition, 169-75; H. Meller, *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner* (London, 1990), 72-79.

⁵¹ ECL/ qY HV 250 E23S, ESU, *Minute Books*, 2 July 1888.

⁵² I. Bruce, *The Loving Eye and Skilful Hand: The Keswick School of Industrial Arts* (Carlisle, 2001).

⁵³ He worked with Geddes restoring Old Town tenements, becoming the first Professor of Architecture at McGill University in Canada.

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200373 accessed 15 July 2015.

⁵⁴ The 'Professional Decoration Committee', met under the convenorship of Baldwin Brown, and included the artists William Hole and William D. Mackay, the sculptor David W. Stevenson and Sydney Mitchell. Other artists including William McTaggart also became involved on occasion. ECL/qY HV 250 E23S, ESU, *Minute Book*, 1 March 1888; 15 March 1888; 14 February 1889.

⁵⁵ Maude Annie Baldwin Brown was also known as an Edinburgh flower painter, see P.J.M. McEwan, *The Dictionary of Scottish Art and Architecture* (Ballater, 2004), 63. This entry though erroneously suggests that she moved to Nottingham in 1913.

⁵⁶ ECL/Y HV 250 E23S, ESU, *Annual Report*, November 1898.

to build social and cultural capital in the city. In 1888 he also joined the Scottish Arts Club. Founded as the *Scottish Artist's Club* in 1873 it was a more informal institution than the RSA. It was struggling financially when Baldwin Brown joined and as with his other memberships, he was to become closely involved in its activities and its reorganisation. He also managed its relocation to Rutland Square in the early 1890s when, amongst other things, it broadened its membership to include lay-members and renamed itself as the Scottish Arts Club. In a similar pattern to that of the EAA, Baldwin Brown was to rise through its ranks to become its President from 1897-99, and he regularly involved the Club in preservation-related discussions. In 1896 Baldwin Brown also became a committee member of the Franco-Scottish Society, another Patrick Geddes initiative, using his fluent French to assist the Secretary in his correspondence, joining the Society on its outings in France, and helping with the return visits. In the same year he also became a council member of the London-based National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, no doubt through Hardwicke Rawnsley who was a joint-founder and honorary Secretary.⁵⁷ He was also a member of the Cockburn Association by 1894 although it was not until 1898 that he joined their council.

Early preservation and development cases

When considering Baldwin Brown's early involvement in development and preservation in the city, three cases stand out. The proposals for the restoration of Edinburgh Castle's Great Hall sheds light on both Baldwin Brown's developing thoughts on restoration and to the broader issues of politics and identity associated with this highly visible and symbolic national monument. The proposed new headquarters for the city's municipal authority raised a wide range of issues relating to the design of new buildings for the Old Town, and the case also sheds an interesting light on the difficulties of procurement and available expertise. The third case, involving building alterations within Charlotte Square, drew attention to issues of

⁵⁷ Edinburgh University's representative.

ownership and the significance of individual properties in contributing to broader architectural character and townscape, and it also raised questions about where the responsibilities for assessing change in the city lay. This last case led Baldwin Brown to introduce the term ‘architectural amenity.’ These three cases also shed light on some of the techniques adopted by Baldwin Brown and others seeking to influence the outcome of proposed change or development within the city. Baldwin Brown, for example, regularly took the opportunities offered both by his organisational membership and through the letter pages of the national press to raise his concerns and set out his own thinking on approaches to the city’s built-environment.

The *Scotsman* letter pages in particular frequently contained views and opinions on development in the city. Baldwin Brown’s letters both here and in the *Times* newspaper reveal his approach to urban preservation in the context of the wider urban preservation debate.⁵⁸ One notable feature of the *Scotsman* correspondence was the common convention of disguising the name of the letter-writer. While Baldwin Brown always provided his name and his university address,⁵⁹ the majority of correspondents wrote either under initials or pseudonymously. In a 12 month period between December 1885 and November 1886, for example, a large number of pseudonymous correspondents discussed the proposed new municipal buildings in Edinburgh,⁶⁰ but only three correspondents identified themselves by name: William Skinner, the Town Clerk, who was seeking to correct the views expressed in an editorial about the Council’s discussions, a Mr William Miller, and Baldwin Brown. The fact that a large majority of correspondents chose to remain anonymous is a particular characteristic of such debate and reflected the functioning of civil society and the nature of the power relations in particular in Edinburgh’s middle-class society at that time. Without

⁵⁸ Appendix IV.

⁵⁹ A small number were written from elsewhere.

⁶⁰ These included ‘HH’, ‘J’, ‘A Ratepayer’, ‘Another Ratepayer’, ‘ARS’, ‘W’, ‘Athenian’, ‘Civis’, ‘A London Competitor’, ‘Another Competitor’, ‘Citizen’, ‘A Citizen’, ‘Vox’, ‘Architect’, ‘M’ and ‘Practical.’

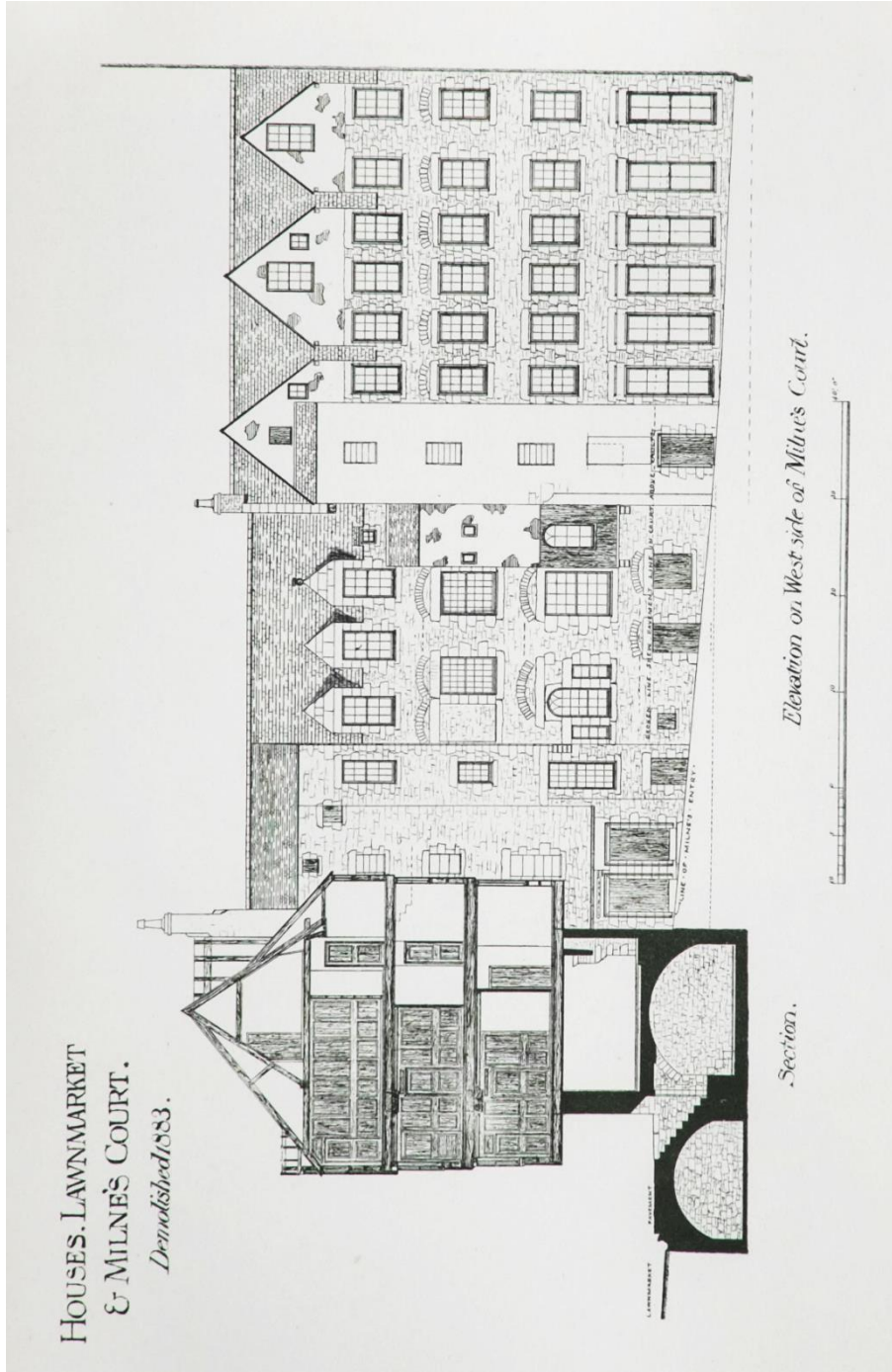


Figure 18. Wooden-fronted houses in the Lawnmarket, demolished in 1883. Source: EAA, Sketch Book, 1883-1886 (Edinburgh, 1877), Plate XXXIII.

the mechanism of anonymity, the need to nurture and maintain ongoing relationships within this close-knit group within the city would have constrained residents and others in the city from expressing their opinions on the important local issues of the day. The choice by three of the correspondents to identify themselves in this case and in particular the two who declared their organisational affiliations is a clear example of the use of organisational or reputational capital to add weight or authority to their statements.

These three cases were not, however, the only preservation-related cases in the city at that time. In November 1883, the press wrote about the demolition of a wooden-fronted house in the Lawnmarket, suggesting that ‘the photographers’ art should be called in before this typical old tenement is “improved” (?) out of existence.’⁶¹ In response, John Dick Peddie indicated that his architectural practice was preparing: ‘minute drawings of all its details which we intend shall form the subject of a paper to be communicated to the Royal [sic] Society of Antiquaries.’⁶² Peddie delivered this paper on 12 May 1884 lamenting ‘the necessity which existed for the demolition of this typical specimen of an interesting class of building once common in the city’,⁶³ with the drawings published subsequently in one of the EAA architectural sketch books (figure 18).⁶⁴ Discussions such as this drew attention to the issue of building-loss in Edinburgh, but the absence of a strong campaigning stance from one or more bodies and broader public support suggests that the emergence of a coherent urban preservation movement still lay in the future.

The Great Hall at Edinburgh Castle⁶⁵

On 10 December 1883, Lord Napier and Ettrick wrote to the *Scotsman* roundly criticising the ‘English Government’s’ management of Scotland’s royal palaces.⁶⁶ He specifically called for

⁶¹ *Scotsman*, 8 November 1883.

⁶² *Scotsman*, 9 November 1883.

⁶³ *Scotsman*, 14 May 1884.

⁶⁴ EAA, *Sketch Book, 1883-1886* (Edinburgh, 1887), plates 32-36.

⁶⁵ See Morris, ‘The capitalist, the professor and the soldier’, 55-78.

⁶⁶ He mentions Holyrood, Linlithgow, Stirling and Edinburgh.

the military hospital located in Edinburgh Castle's historic Great Hall to be removed and for the building to be handed over to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries or the Cockburn Association (figure 19). The building, created in the reign of James IV of Scotland,⁶⁷ had been subdivided both vertically and horizontally and it was no longer possible to appreciate the historic building's interior spaces, although it was clear that the overall form and some of its decoration remained relatively intact. For Baldwin Brown this was a proposal worthy of support as much existed of architectural and antiquarian interest and therefore that restoration of these buildings to something like their original condition was an object which he felt was worth making every effort to accomplish. His letter to the *Scotsman* is important for what it tells us of his philosophical stance at that point in time and in particular his tactical awareness and commitment to group action. Noting that this case would be looked at first from a military point of view, he emphasised the importance of collective rather than individual action, suggesting that the Government would only respond to a strongly expressed public desire. He saw the case raising issues of artistic significance and Scottish identity. He believed that the building's conversion was both technically straightforward and financially reasonable: 'Edinburgh Castle is one of the prides of Scotland, and a building of European fame. It is closely bound up with the national history, and possesses, besides, architectural beauties which need only the hand of a careful restorer, backed by the needful funds, to bring them again to the light of day.'⁶⁸ He then called for the public bodies of Edinburgh, antiquarian, historical, artistic, to make their influence felt by passing resolutions urging the matter on the favourable considerations of Government, suggesting that if the Council took the lead, the Society of Antiquaries, the Royal Scottish Academy, the Cockburn Society, the Architectural Association with other bodies, would provide a powerful weight of public opinion sufficient to start the movement. He concluded with an appeal to the pride of the citizens and offered a thinly veiled criticism of the adverse impact

⁶⁷ 1473-1513.

⁶⁸ *Scotsman*, 15 December 1883.

that changes were having upon the city: 'The results would be to ... afford to the people of Edinburgh an additional reason for being proud of their city, and, I may add, an additional ground for taking care in the future lest any more architectural blemishes are allowed to mar the picturesque effect of her streets.'⁶⁹

As well as giving Baldwin Brown's specific views about Edinburgh Castle's Great Hall, this letter allows the identification of the key principles that Baldwin Brown was to draw on repeatedly in his preservation-related activities. These were: assessing a building or monument's significance in local, national and international terms; giving technical advice on the feasibility of preservation; commenting about the character and concerns of the land or building owner; calling for public support to shift opinion; the drawing-in of appropriate amenity or professional bodies; and finally, commenting on the broader context within which the specific case lies. His didactic and rhetorical style, presenting a logical argument in a manner designed not only to influence others but to actively mobilise public support, was also one which he was to use regularly. His letter also identifies the organisations he believed occupied, or should occupy, the emerging urban preservation field for Edinburgh and his belief that collaboration between these bodies would be crucial if public and political opinion were to be influenced successfully. Given that this is the first instance of his involvement in such a preservation-related case in Edinburgh it is interesting to find many of his beliefs and the approach that he was to use in his campaigning activities in the city over the next fifty years already in place.

The Great Hall case also sheds an interesting light on another technique that Baldwin Brown was to use repeatedly — the gaining formal organisational support for a campaign through the use of resolutions and memorials.⁷⁰ At the time of this case, a tour of the castle's buildings by David MacGibbon, including the Great Hall, had been programmed for the

⁶⁹ *Scotsman*, 15 December 1883.

⁷⁰ *Memorials* were petitions communicating resolutions formally adopted by an organisation or committee.

Edinburgh Architectural Association's members. At the end of the tour, Baldwin Brown as an EAA council member thanked MacGibbon. He then presented a carefully worded motion to the audience:

That the Edinburgh Architectural Association resolve to press upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government the present condition of the ancient hall to the Castle of Edinburgh, the associations connected with which, are of the deepest interest to all students of the national history, and to urge most strongly the importance of restoring the hall and other parts of the structure connected therewith to something like their original condition; and that it be remitted to the President and Council to prepare a memorial signed by the office bearers in the name of the Association for presentation to Government.⁷¹

Baldwin Brown was pressing at an open door in that the castle's historical and symbolic significance was already widely accepted in the city, with a strong belief that decisions about its future should be taken in Edinburgh rather than in London. Napier's campaign therefore built significant momentum across the city. The Council resolved to 'urge most strongly upon Her Majesty's Government, the duty of restoring and maintaining the Castle of Edinburgh in a manner worthy of its history, its situation in this Capital City, and the associations which have made it of deep interest, not only to Scotsmen, but to intelligent students of history over the world'.⁷² A number of the other Edinburgh bodies which Baldwin Brown had identified, including the SAS, the CA, the RSA and the EAA, also involved themselves in the case,⁷³ sending letters and petitions to the Ministry of War and to the Prime Minister.⁷⁴ John Dick Peddie, by then the MP for Kilmarnock Burghs, also took the opportunity to raise the Great Hall restoration in a parliamentary question, asking the First Commissioner of Works whether he proposed 'to take any steps to restore this

⁷¹ *Scotsman*, 18 February 1884.

⁷² ECA/SL1/2, *Minute Book*, 18 December 1883, 33-34.

⁷³ The fact that the case involved Edinburgh Castle meant that there was a very high likelihood that these organisations would have intervened even without Baldwin Brown's call.

⁷⁴ The Cockburn Association wrote to the Secretary of State for War and discussed the matters with the Royal Scottish Academy. The text of the memorial from Society of Antiquaries to the Prime Minister, William Gladstone, was reproduced in *The Architect*, 12 April 1884, 235-6 and identified that further memorials had been sent to the Prime Minister by the RSA and the EAA.

historical building to its original form, and to apply it to some use more suitable to its character than that to which it is now applied.⁷⁵

In May of the following year Baldwin Brown wrote again to the *Scotsman* giving his views on the age of the Great Hall, based on primary archival research. Perhaps inspired by the Pre-Raphaelite movement in England, and desiring to support a similar development in Scotland, he took the opportunity also to encourage Scottish artists in their use of historical themes. Scottish artists, he thought, might throw upon the walls of the Great Hall their spell of a romantic past in the form of a series of mural paintings inspired by the national ballad literature of Burns and Sir Walter Scott. This might form that starting point of a new development of national art: ‘With, let us say, carved heads of Scottish Kings introduced at the beam ends of the roof, with the arms of some of the chief families famed in our history emblazoned on the walls, some of the noble and graceful creations of the Scottish muse, we should have a building of which we could indeed be proud.’⁷⁶ A continuing feature of Baldwin Brown’s activities in Edinburgh was the encouragement of Scottish art, promoting exhibitions by Scottish artists and offering his thoughts on the collections to be held by the Scottish National Gallery.⁷⁷ This proposal, however, attracted some criticism, with a correspondent to the *Scotsman* writing: ‘I would be much disappointed, however, to see the suggestions of Professor Baldwin Brown carried out. I will make bold to say that were the opinions of the Antiquarian Society and the Architectural Association taken on the subject, their answer would be to the effect – “Let it be restored as nearly as possible to its original condition.”’ The writer went on to suggest that ‘it would certainly be a mistake to take from or add to the building so as to in any way alter its original appearance or design.’⁷⁸ Whether this was motivated by a picturesque philosophy or whether it related to a Ruskinian approach

⁷⁵ HC Deb 13 March 1884 vol 285 c1335.

⁷⁶ *Scotsman*, 9 April 1884.

⁷⁷ See, for example, *Scotsman*, 11 October 1890.

⁷⁸ *Scotsman*, 10 April 1884.



Figure 19. Edinburgh Castle, Great Hall (centre) from the south in 1912. *Source:* RCAHMS SC 11637756).



Figure 20. Edinburgh Castle, Great Hall in 1888 after restoration and before dressing. *Source:* RCAHMS SC 1201267.

to resist unnecessary and potentially damaging intervention, as adopted by William Morris and SPAB, is less clear.⁷⁹

After some delays and difficulties, in 1885 the Secretary of State for War, William H. Smith, visited Edinburgh to discuss the proposals, with the War Office ultimately acceding to the demand to relocate the military hospital to another site.⁸⁰ Under the sponsorship of the newspaper proprietor William Nelson, with his architect Hippolyte Blanc and the long-distance guidance of Daniel Wilson (by then living in Canada), the Great Hall was restored (figure 20) together with the Argyle Tower and St Margaret's Chapel.⁸¹ Blanc sought Baldwin Brown's views on the proposed restoration, but the rather guarded tone and succinctness of his response strongly suggests that Baldwin Brown had decided to remove himself from further debate concerning this particular restoration programme.⁸² He did, however, pursue his interest in promoting mural paintings and supporting the development of Scottish art in other places, writing an article in the *Scottish Arts Review* on recent works in this 'neglected art' in Scotland, focusing on the work commissioned through the Edinburgh Social Union.⁸³ He also delivered a broader paper on mural painting in Britain at the National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry's Liverpool Meeting in 1888.⁸⁴ Although not introduced into the castle, murals on historical themes by William Hole⁸⁵ were to appear as a key part of the design of the National Portrait Gallery

⁷⁹ C. Miele, 'The first conservation militants: William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain*, 17-37.

⁸⁰ *The Architect*, 2 October 1885.

⁸¹ See Morris, 'The capitalist, the professor and the soldier', 55-78. Blanc became SPAB's Edinburgh correspondent.

⁸² Letter to H. Blanc dated 27 January 1886. NLS/ms 1734.f135.

⁸³ G.B. Brown, 'Some recent efforts in mural decoration', *Scottish Arts Review*, 1 (1888), 225-28. The work discussed included panels by R.B. Nisbet, A.G. Sinclair and Phoebe Traquair 1852-1936).

⁸⁴ G. B. Brown, 'Mural painting and its present prospects in this country', *Transactions of the National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry, Liverpool Meeting* (London, 1888), 326-32.

⁸⁵ Baldwin Brown was drawn by William Hole for Edinburgh University's tercentenary publication of academic staff portraits *Quasi Cursores* (Edinburgh, 1884), 133-8. Hole was also on the committee of ESU art advisors created by Baldwin Brown and worked with Baldwin Brown on occasion at the Scottish Arts Club.

(painted between 1887 and 1891)⁸⁶ and Edinburgh City Chambers (created between 1903 and 1909).⁸⁷

New municipal buildings

The building which provided the home for Edinburgh's municipal authority was situated on the High Street opposite the east end of St Giles Church in the Old Town (figure 21). This site had been proposed in the 1753 Improvement Act and the building had been designed originally as the new Merchants' Exchange by John Adam. It was completed by 1761 with some modifications to Adam's original design, with the municipal authority gradually acquiring the whole building over the next century. The building's restricted site however presented difficulties as the municipal council's activities expanded in scale and complexity, and the lack of a large hall for major ceremonial occasions was perceived as a particular problem. In December 1885, therefore, Lord Provost Thomas Clark raised the subject of possible a new city chambers for Edinburgh and despite the Council's ongoing financial deficit the matter was remitted to a committee to consider.⁸⁸ Edinburgh was due to host the International Exhibition the following year and the Council's reputation was undoubtedly in the minds of the councillors and magistrates. The discussion was also likely to have been given momentum by the lavish City Chambers then under construction in Glasgow,⁸⁹ with a substantial commemorative volume celebrating the laying of its foundation stone published earlier in December,⁹⁰ and by other municipal buildings including Manchester's impressive town hall completed in 1877.⁹¹ One immediate issue raised in the local press was whether the new city chambers should remain on its traditional site or whether it should move to a

⁸⁶ D. Thompson, *A History of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery* (Edinburgh, 2011).

⁸⁷ J. Gifford, C. McWilliam and D. Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (London 1991), 284.

⁸⁸ He commented in 1886 that: 'Hitherto the municipality had had its light under a bushel as regard municipal buildings', *Scotsman*, 24 July 1886.

⁸⁹ *Scotsman*, 3 December, 1885. The building, designed by William Young, commenced construction in 1882 and was opened by Queen Victoria in 1888.

⁹⁰ Glasgow Municipal Council, *Description of Ceremonial on the Occasion of Laying the Foundation Stone of the Municipal Buildings, in George Square, Glasgow, on 6th October, 1885* (Glasgow, 1885).

⁹¹ J.H.G Archer, 'A classic of its age', in J.H.G. Archer (ed.), *Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester*, 127-61.

new location. At the annual dinner of the RSA, Lord Provost Clark emphasised that the Council were most anxious to add to the natural beauties of the city: 'He was aware that public opinion did not always go along with the leaders of art in the city and the Council were obliged to exercise their own judgement. As regarded the new municipal buildings, the utmost care would be taken to secure such plans as would command the approval of the citizens of Edinburgh.'⁹²

Although Clark believed that the consensus of opinion was in favour of the new municipal buildings being erected on the present site, some councillors nonetheless believed that a new site would be advantageous. Discussion in the letters page of the *Scotsman* ranged from suggestions of alternative sites to likely cost, with concerns expressed about the impact of any modifications and extensions to the existing building. The Council resolved to seek competitive designs for the proposed new building and the EAA were quick to write to the Lord Provost to suggest that the Council use a professional architect to frame the conditions of a competition.⁹³ However the Council's reluctance to draw on their help or to provide an indicative budget for the project was to lead to very significant difficulties. It was at this point that Baldwin Brown joined the public debate with a long and detailed letter setting out the key issues that he believed needed to be addressed.⁹⁴ The discussion over siting could be tackled by separating the need for a new meeting hall from that of the municipal offices — the latter, he believed, should remain on its current imposing site close to St Giles in order to retain its Old Edinburgh historical associations. He next analysed the key problems concerning the existing municipal building, noting that whilst the south elevation onto the High Street was architecturally satisfactory, the north elevation of the building had been a rarely seen rear elevation before the creation of the New Town. However, with the arrival of Princes Street matters had changed: 'Now that the view of the picturesque and varied

⁹² *Scotsman*, 13 February 1886.

⁹³ *Scotsman*, 13 April 1886.

⁹⁴ *Scotsman*, 14 April 1886.

buildings along the ridge of the Old Town, as seen from that splendid terrace, is generally held to be one of the finest city views in the whole world, the back of the municipal buildings becomes, for architectural effect, their principle façade.’⁹⁵ He suggested that the rear elevation of the building, while solidly-built of excellent material and with colossal height and breadth was not ‘architecture’ due to its lack of composition and balancing of masses, and that it lacked the qualities of either symmetry or picturesqueness (figure 22). He went on to suggest the possible addition of a new rear wing and steps, or an entirely new north front altogether, concluding that: ‘A more honourable work was never set to members of the profession than the preparation of plans for buildings which shall grace and not disfigure one of the finest sites in one of the finest cities of Europe.’⁹⁶ It is not clear what impact, if any, this letter had, but in August 1886 the Council invited the submission of designs for a new building on the site of the existing City Chambers, expanded to include an adjoining property. They also indicated the intention to hold a public exhibition showing all of the designs once the top three entries had been chosen.⁹⁷ However, there was confusion both over the extent of the site available for development and the rules of the competition. This led to complaints from entrants and further discussion about alternative sites in the Council and in the press.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ *Scotsman*, 14 April 1886.

⁹⁶ *Scotsman*, 14 April 1886.

⁹⁷ *Scotsman*, 12 August 1886. The Council indicated elsewhere that they intended to submit designs to some architect or architects of eminence to assist with the ultimate selection of design. *Scotsman*, 18 August 1886.

⁹⁸ *Scotsman* 26 October 1886; 27 October 1886.



Figure 21. Merchants' Exchange, John Adam, 1761. Source: J. Gowans, *Edinburgh and its Neighbourhood in the Days of Our Grandfathers* (London, 1886), 33.



Figure 22. The vertical 'cliff face' of the rear elevation of the Merchants' Exchange (far left) viewed from the north. Source: J. Gowans, *Edinburgh and its Neighbourhood in the Days of Our Grandfathers* (London, 1886), 31.

In a clear attempt to assist the Council out of the difficulties it had created for itself, Baldwin Brown wrote to the press once again, suggesting paying the competing architects for the work they had already undertaken, thereby allowing them to start afresh with clearer rules and information. He also drew on remarks made by some of the other correspondents and by the *Scotsman* itself to stress that the key aim was to ‘have a thoroughly good building, or group of buildings, which shall be an honour to the city for centuries to come.’⁹⁹ He used this aspiration to suggest that there was support for the works to be carried out on a large and generous scale, but noted that there were ‘signs of a desire for half measures on the part of the present managers of the undertaking.’¹⁰⁰ Having dismissed suggestions that the rear wall of the building should be preserved, he then turned to the discussion of the best location for the building, which had been re-opened in a *Scotsman* editorial, giving his strong support for the re-use of the current site, again stressing the importance of the cluster of public buildings in that area of the Old Town with their historic associations.¹⁰¹ He also offered a critical comparison of this site with an increasingly popular alternative at Bank Street. He concluded his letter with a theme that he was to pursue for the remainder of his years in Edinburgh — a small number of universally respected citizens of high standing, acquainted through long familiarity with the needs of Edinburgh, and with the views of their fellow townsmen should be invited to support the Council or one of its committees as ‘The matter in question is one which concerns not the Town Council alone but the whole Edinburgh community; and not the present generation, but also generations to come, whose interests we have in charge. It is a matter on which we need publicity and the free expression of opinion, and, above all, the practical aid of leading citizens, both within and without the municipal body’.¹⁰²

The municipal authority drew up a private Bill to give them powers to redevelop the existing site but in addition to the ongoing debate about the best location for the building, very

⁹⁹ *Scotsman*, 2 November 1886.

¹⁰⁰ *Scotsman*, 2 November 1886.

¹⁰¹ *Scotsman*, 1 November 1886.

¹⁰² *Scotsman*, 1 November 1886.

significant concerns were developing over the likely costs to be funded by local rates, with figures ranging from £80,000 to £250,000.¹⁰³ By December 1886 a significant opposition movement had developed in the city, with a 1,300 signature petition being presented to the Lord Provost. By January this had risen to over 9,000 signatures and a Parliamentary petition against the Council's enabling Bill had also been submitted at Westminster. There were also strong differences of view within the Council itself both in terms of the principle of development and over much of the detail including siting and costs. These disagreements were being played out in the public eye and there were a number of pseudonymous letters in the *Scotsman* each day, many of which were critical of the Council's conduct, with the debate being stirred up by regular editorial comment. Nonetheless, the Council pressed forward and in February 1887 an exhibition of the 56 submitted architectural designs was held in Waverley Market. While ignoring Baldwin Brown's call for a local expert committee to be set up the municipal authority had commissioned Sir Alfred Waterhouse RA, the architect of Manchester Town Hall, to act as their professional advisor.¹⁰⁴

Shortly after the competition entries went on public display, Baldwin Brown wrote at length to the *Scotsman*. His motivation was twofold. Firstly, as stated, he had written: 'not with the intention of pressing forward any particular opinion but rather of assisting the consideration of the subject from the artistic side, by bringing into prominence one or two questions upon which those who have at heart the beauty and dignity of the city will have to make up their minds.'¹⁰⁵ However, the content of the letter suggests that he had a second motivation, recognising that the process being followed would inevitably lead to further difficulties.

Although Waterhouse had by then given his views on the winning designs, he appeared not to have been asked to consider how effectively the proposed new building would integrate

¹⁰³ The competition entries ranged from £66k-280k.

¹⁰⁴ 1830-1905. Waterhouse became President of RIBA in 1888.

¹⁰⁵ *Scotsman*, 23 February 1887. Baldwin Brown commonly suggests that he is not giving his own views but by laying out guiding principles is helping the reader to reach their own view. A close reading suggests, however, that this was in part a rhetorical device.

with adjacent buildings when viewed from close by or from further afield — somewhat unhelpfully the council had also stipulated that perspectives of the building be excluded. Also, the relationship between Waterhouse's choice of winning design and the mechanism by which the Council was to reach its own view was not made apparent. This was likely to be problematical, particularly given the Council's stated intention to involve the public in the final decision.¹⁰⁶ For a case which had already been mired in difficulties, these shortcomings left a very real likelihood of continuing and highly visible disaster. Having identified an avenue by which the local authority could make a different choice to that of Waterhouse, Baldwin Brown, sensitive to public opinion and the impact of financial constraints on the quality of the chosen scheme, suggested once again that the Council draw on the services of an expert committee comprising one or two members of the RSA or the SAS to go over the plans with them and to: 'put before them the views of men accustomed to deal in a semi-professional way with questions of taste and of artistic and historical fitness.'¹⁰⁷

He went on to offer some guiding principles: 'Assuming, then, that the expression of a well-considered opinion on the part of the public is both legitimate and called for, it may be of advantage if one or two principal points of an artistic kind are kept clearly in view.'¹⁰⁸ These were, he suggested, the relationship of the south front of the new building to St Giles and the general character of the High Street, the treatment on the Cockburn Street side, and the effect of the introduction of domes, towers or similar features on views of the steeple of St Giles from Princes Street. His letter then offered a clear and detailed analysis of individual competition submission in terms of these principles, with the key issue being an understanding of the physical nature of the heavily sloping site and the relationship of the new building to its neighbours when viewed both from the High Street and from Princes

¹⁰⁶ *Scotsman*, 18 February 1887. Within a few days of Waterhouse's decision, a correspondent in the *Scotsman* rejected the three winning designs and instead promoted a different submission, based on a Scots Baronial idiom, thereby encouraging a further public debate. See *Scotsman* 21 February 1887.

¹⁰⁷ *Scotsman*, 18 February 1887.

¹⁰⁸ *Scotsman*, 18 February 1887.

Street. He was also sympathetic to a 'Scottish style' noting that although that the first two winning designs chose a classical façade facing into the High Street: '[m]ost people, however, with the general architecture of the High Street in their mind, will probably much prefer for the situation the Scottish Baronial or French Renaissance style, with its high roofs and gables, as shown in the two separate designs marked "in my defence," and in the conspicuously complete and pleasing south front of "Heart of Midlothian."' ¹⁰⁹ Despite Waterhouse's choice of 'Edina Classica' ¹¹⁰ there is a strong sense that Baldwin Brown preferred the third placed scheme 'In my defence' ¹¹¹ which: 'secures a broken and picturesque north aspect to the buildings generally which is suitable to their position and surroundings, and it would emphasise the height of the ridge along which runs the High Street.' He closed his letter by suggesting it was better to have no building at all than adopting half measures which will please no one: 'If we are to have municipal buildings worthy of Edinburgh, the ratepayers must be prepared to give a proper price for them, and if they obtain a first-rate building in the choice of which they have themselves borne a part, it may be predicted that they will not grumble that the outlay.' ¹¹²

The debate continued and by early March 1887 the Council decided to hold a plebiscite seeking the views of residents and ratepayers on whether to pursue the new municipal building scheme. Having read the letter which accompanied the voting card to residents, Baldwin Brown asked the *Scotsman* to publish a letter that he had written to the Lord Provost together with the Lord Provost's response. Baldwin Brown's letter stressed that were a scheme of rebuilding to go ahead, the question of architectural character was one of the greatest importance and he queried who would provide the 'careful and deliberate consideration of plans' referred to in the Council's letter: 'All that I am anxious for is that

¹⁰⁹ *Scotsman*, 18 February 1887. As the designs were to be judged without knowledge of the architectural practice which had submitted them, each was given an identifying title.

¹¹⁰ Submitted by Leeming and Leeming.

¹¹¹ Submitted by J.W. Simpson and E. J. Milner Allan.

¹¹² *Scotsman*, 18 February 1887.

considerations of artistic and historical fitness shall not be thrust into the background in comparison with questions of internal arrangements, which, however important, are not the only questions to be faced.’¹¹³ The Lord Provost’s reply that ‘every opportunity will be given for the fullest consideration of the architectural fitness of the designs which may be chosen for this site proposed; and for this end we will be thankful to have the *very best advice* which can be obtained’ may not have entirely reassured him! However, by 30 March the votes had been counted and the residents were against taking forward the Parliamentary Bill by almost three to one.¹¹⁴ The proposed scheme was shelved and the Council remained in their existing building, albeit continuing to explore other ways of building a public hall suitable for its municipal events.¹¹⁵

While the proposals to build new municipal buildings proved abortive, this case sheds much light on Baldwin Brown’s broader approach to new buildings in historic parts of the city. He saw his locus as commenting from an artistic point of view and he also understood that a key issue was the way in which a new building fitted into its context, both in terms of its visual impact on adjacent buildings and when seen from key viewpoints across the city. One interesting point was that he recognised and placed significant weight on the group of buildings, including the municipal council offices, the law courts and St Giles, which together formed an important religious, judicial and administrative focus within the Old Town. He also understood the significance of the Old Town ridge and the combined character and effect of its buildings when viewed from Princes Street, and he saw the advantage of a Scots Baronial or Flemish architectural idiom for such a prominent Old Town site. Whilst endeavouring to support the municipal authority by advising on the process it should follow, two other guiding principles are also apparent from his letters: that the public should be drawn into the process in some manner, and that the Council should put in place

¹¹³ *Scotsman*, 24 March 1887.

¹¹⁴ 20,538 against and 7,112 for. *Scotsman*, 30 March 1887.

¹¹⁵ Chapter 6.

mechanisms that would allow them to benefit from the professional expertise lying within bodies such as the RSA and the SAS.

Baldwin Brown also recognised that this case had broader implications for the architectural profession as a whole and in particular the relationship of a professional assessor to the client body. In a move that may not have endeared him to the municipal authority, he took the opportunity to raise this case as a cautionary tale in an article in the professional architectural press.¹¹⁶ In this he sought to draw out some key general principles for such developments: the need for clear budget setting, a commitment to undertake the scheme to avoid the potential wasted efforts and resources of the entrants, the need for guidance on the preferred architectural style (to avoid a ‘battle of styles’ amongst the judges), clarity over the role of the professional assessor in terms of decision-making and of public involvement, and the need for the Council to have an expert advisory committee of those accustomed to deal with matters of taste and artistic and historical fitness: ‘The one practical result so far seems to have been that we have proved the great and versatile talent of contemporary architects, and have proved, too, the necessity of some system for the management of these competitions which may bring this talent to bear in the most effective manner for the service of the community.’¹¹⁷

The architectural amenity of Charlotte Square and the wider city.

Two years later, Baldwin Brown raised a case that he believed might lead to a broader discussion on Edinburgh’s architecture and the city’s wider appearance — Robert Adam’s Charlotte Square. Baldwin Brown fully understood the significance of the classical architectural compositions that had come to characterise the Athens of the North. He had written about Robert Adam’s Old College for the *University Calendar* shortly after arriving at the University and had been closely involved in the addition of the dome to the Old

¹¹⁶ G.B. Brown, ‘The Edinburgh municipal buildings’, *British Architect*, 11 March 1887, 186-87. In an accompanying introduction, the editor called the competition ‘a fiasco’.

¹¹⁷ Brown ‘Edinburgh municipal buildings’, 187.

College building. The palace-fronted Charlotte Square had only been completed in 1820, but by the 1880s the buildings on three of its sides had already seen significant alterations which threatened to unbalance the composition, including the lowering of windows and the introduction of dormers overlooking the Square. The north side of the square was close to its original form, however, but in 1889 the Reverend Dr Whyte, Minister of Free St George's, began construction of a square attic storey on his house lying immediately on the west side of the central pediment (figure 23).¹¹⁸ Baldwin Brown was highly concerned about the visual impact of the works on the overall architectural composition but he came up against the difficulty of protecting buildings in private ownership mentioned by Lord Cockburn in his earlier 'letter to the Lord Provost'. In the absence of any levers of power such as legislative protection, Baldwin Brown could only draw attention to the 'serious injury' which was in his view being inflicted, in the hope of creating public pressure which might in turn encourage the owner to cease the works: 'It ought to be well enough understood, at any rate by that class of citizen who are supposed to read and travel and to represent culture in our midst, that when a private house forms an integral part of a recognised and admired architectural composition, its proprietor is bound to respect the general scheme of the designer of the whole.'¹¹⁹ Having suggested that the owners were under obligation to show piety for the past, and consideration for the feelings of his fellow townsmen, he sought to stir others into action: 'In this case Edinburgh is being distinctly robbed of an architectural beauty, while the Dean of Guild's Court has given neither aid nor warning, and the Cockburn Association watches from the further corner of the square, and makes no public sign.'¹²⁰

He also used his letter to draw attention to the introduction of a new painted shop advert on a building at Market Street, noting the adverse impact of its scale and brightness: 'Both the cases here mentioned may seem to some comparatively trivial. Artistic effect, however,

¹¹⁸ 7 Charlotte Square. See I. Gow, 'Charlotte Square Butefied', in D. Mays (ed.), *The Architecture of Scottish Cities* (East Linton, 1997), 96-98.

¹¹⁹ *Scotsman*, 22 April 1889.

¹²⁰ *Scotsman*, 22 April 1889

depends much on harmony, and it is unfortunately very easy to break this by a discordant note.’¹²¹ He identified other bodies which might add their weight to the city’s protection: ‘Could the forthcoming Art Congress find any better field of work than in endeavouring to make the general taste in these matters more intelligent and exacting, and rousing the public feeling which should make these and similar small acts of vandalism impossible in the future?’¹²² His letter encouraged a number of others to write, identifying their own issues, some of which Baldwin Brown believed were rather extreme and might damage his own position. In a subsequent letter he emphasised that ‘it is well to recognise the distinction between what is desirable but not practicable, and what we may not only wish for but are bound to secure. We can only carry the public along with us when we show that we make in the name of art no vague or extravagant claims, but desire only to enforce a practical point.’¹²³

He believed that the north block in Charlotte Square should be regarded as a public possession but that if their owners’ actions involved ‘a serious damage to the general architectural effect, then civic authority should certainly interpose. The Dean of Guild’s Court is obviously the proper quarter to which to look, and is a body on which we ought to be able to rely to safeguard the interests of the citizens.’¹²⁴ However, the problem for Baldwin Brown was that the Dean of Guild was generally unlikely to involve itself in matters of what it might consider to be minor alterations to buildings and even where it did so, it was more likely to concentrate on matters of fire, safety, light or boundary encroachments, rather than what might be considered solely artistic or aesthetic matters.¹²⁵ The municipal authority had no powers to intervene and the Cockburn were unlikely to do

¹²¹ *Scotsman*, 22 April 1889.

¹²² *Scotsman*, 22 April 1889.

¹²³ *Scotsman*, 29 April 1889.

¹²⁴ *Scotsman*, 29 April 1889.

¹²⁵ The Dean of Guild Court advised that although it was not necessary to submit trivial operations, proposals for alterations of minor importance should be submitted with a sketch to avoid the potential for a penalty to be imposed. See R. Miller, *The Edinburgh Dean of Guild Court: A Manual of History and Procedure* (Edinburgh, 1896), 56-7.

for what they may have considered was a minor matter. Somewhat unexpectedly, the RSA's fiery President, Sir William Fettes Douglas, then involved himself in matters. In an intemperate series of letters he criticised Dr Whyte in increasingly personal terms,¹²⁶ leading to the debate shifting to Fettes Douglas' letter-writing conduct. The *Scotsman* took a dim view of the latter, making the distinction between the Professor's complaint 'made in a perfectly proper and gentlemanly manner' and Sir William who 'began to throw mud' and 'cried out that Dr Whyte was in early life "picked out of the very gutter."' Is this the way in which a discussion as to the amenity of our streets is to be conducted? the *Scotsman* asked and concluded that Sir William was guilty of gross insolence.¹²⁷ Baldwin Brown was also quick to distance himself from the personal nature of the attack: 'What I have done has nothing personal about it, and my only desire is to enlist public opinion on the side of good taste and reverence for the great architectural traditions of our city.'¹²⁸ The final paragraph of his letter suggests that he had by then recognised that the Dean of Guild Court was unlikely to intervene and that its powers would need to be strengthened if the organisation was to have practical effect in such cases.

¹²⁶ *Scotsman*, 3 May 1889.

¹²⁷ *Scotsman*, 4 May 1889.

¹²⁸ *Scotsman*, 4 May 1889.



Figure 23. The north side of Charlotte Square in c.1890. The dormer at No. 7 is visible to the left and above the leftmost column. *Source:* RCAHMS 130 1728.



Figure 24. The north side of Charlotte Square in 2013 with leftmost dormer removed. *Source:* D. Henrie.

In a subsequent letter, a pseudonymous correspondent 'Suburbanus' clarified how the Dean of Guild operated in practice, identifying that the key consideration in such cases was the response of neighbouring proprietors, but that even where neighbours had concerns with the proposals, a notice period of only four days was given for commenting on proposals. This could be missed entirely if the neighbours were away. The writer also made the point that other residents might not become aware of submitted proposals until after works had started. In a suggestion which appeared to anticipate provisions introduced under land-use and planning legislation in the following century, the correspondent suggested that the system would be improved if, when plans were lodged with the Dean of Guild Court, an advertisement were placed in a special column of the local papers drawing attention to the proposals, thereby allowing the broader public to become aware of the proposals before the works had commenced: 'It is, therefore, highly reasonable that every citizen and proprietor of city property should have ample an adequate notice of what his fellow-citizens proposed doing with what is too so large an extent common property.'¹²⁹ Despite the, at times, heated debate in the *Scotsman* and calls for the Dean of Guild Court to intervene, the dormer was built (figure 23). In the 1930s, however, the Marquess of Bute is recorded as having removed the attic windows from his own house on the north side of the Square and those of his neighbours (figure 24).¹³⁰

The three cases discussed above demonstrate not only Baldwin Brown's intention to involve himself in the city's development and in the preservation debate, but also illustrate that his knowledge of architecture, architectural history, history (and urban history) and archaeology. This broad knowledge encouraged him to adopt a holistic view of the existing city's form, appearance and historical significance, providing an assessment of the significance of the Castle's late medieval Great Hall and the group of buildings and their setting on the High

¹²⁹ *Scotsman*, 9 May 1889.

¹³⁰ RCAHMS/MS/630/227

Street adjacent to St Giles and the impact of proposed alterations on these buildings. He also took a broader interest in the design and procurement process, both in relation to public bodies such as the municipal authority, Dean of Guild Court or the Ministry of Works as well as the city's private residents. Visible at this period is his interest and beliefs in relation to the role of experts and expert organisations in managing the process of urban change together with a clear recognition that broader public support was a key contributor to the process of influencing outcomes. His letters, in terms of content and rhetoric, and in terms of the use of his reputational and expert capital, were designed to garner public and organisational support and to place pressure on an instigating authority or individual.

Chapter 6. Railways and Urban Amenity

The arrival of the railways in Edinburgh's central valley and the subsequent acquisition and demolition of historic buildings by the railway companies as part of the mid nineteenth-century expansions led to the most vociferous preservation campaigns the city had seen. Nevertheless, in the late 1880s both the Caledonian Railway Company (CRC) and the North British Railway Company (NBR) decided to pursue significant expansion of their facilities in Edinburgh in response to the growing passenger market and to allow them to take advantage of rapidly expanding Leith Docks. Once again the railway expansions were to lead to heated debate over the impact on the city's beauty, its historic buildings and its green spaces. The proposals were pored over in Parliament and in the press, and they became the key issue in the city's municipal elections for 1890.

The NBR's main Edinburgh station was situated on the Waverley site in the central valley and had good railway links to Leith Docks to the north. The CRC was, however, at a significant disadvantage as its Caledonian Road station lay at the west end of Princes Street. There were also significant difficulties accessing Leith Docks as their line had to cross the NBR's land in order to achieve this.¹ The CRC therefore brought forward proposals to extend their lines eastwards from their Caledonian Road station across the city. The new lines were intended to run underground along Princes Street (or along the edge of Princes Street Gardens) with a new combined underground and overground station at Waterloo Place, before entering a new tunnel under the centre of Calton Hill, turning northwards, exiting on the slope below Royal Terrace and finally, traversing a 27ft high viaduct and embankment before heading towards the docks.² Although the exact details of the scheme varied over time, to achieve their desired expansion it seemed likely that the CRC would also

¹ *EEN* suggested that the NBR were 'fighting for monopoly and privilege'. 4 November 1890.

² *Scotsman*, 15 November 1889. For the route see *Scotsman*, 2 December 1889. The central Edinburgh proposals were identified as 'Railway No 1.'

need to demolish the south side of the classical Rutland Square and Rutland Street (which lay adjacent to their existing station), create a cut and cover tunnel with ventilation shafts along Princes Street, and undertake significant levels of demolition and alteration at Waterloo Place (figure 25) including the removal of the Regent's Bridge. The roof of the proposed tunnel as it exited Calton Hill lay very close to the basements of a number of Royal Terrace properties and it was also possible that these properties forming part of Henry Playfair's impressive and highly visible terrace would need to be demolished.³ In parallel, the North British Railway brought forward proposals to expand their station and associated facilities in the Waverley valley, doubling the number of lines, creating a major goods yard (with the loss of the remaining public gardens lying between the station and the Mound), and building a new access road running southwards up the valley slope and into the Canongate.

With both schemes coming forward together, the municipal authority, traders and city residents were faced with wide-ranging, visible and highly disruptive developments which would have a significant impact on the character of the city. A number of Edinburgh-based organisations raised concerns and there was a call from one correspondent in the *Scotsman* for the RSA, the EAA and the Cockburn Association to work together to oppose the proposals.⁴ Others fighting the proposals included an association of the proprietors and occupiers of shops in Princes Street (the 'Princes Street Proprietors') who wrote a letter to the *Scotsman* raising concerns over the impact of the proposed CRC line on their businesses. Their initial discussions led to decision to form an opposition group.⁵ Nonetheless, the plans for the proposed new CRC line were lodged with the Sheriff of Mid-Lothian at the end of November.

³ Papers held at NAS indicate that 22-27 Royal Terrace would be compulsorily purchased as would properties at the head of Waterloo Place. NAS/GD282/13/260.

⁴ O.S. Johnston, *Scotsman*, 18 October 1890.

⁵ *Scotsman*, 21 November 1889. They agreed to form an opposition group. *Scotsman*, 5 December 1889. For pamphlets released at that time see R. Butchart, 'Lost opportunities — Nor' Loch', Miscellany, note 34, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, XXXI, 177-8.

The Cockburn Association discussed the railway schemes at their AGM, focussing on the impact of the proposals on Princes Street Gardens.⁶ The RSA wrote to the Town Clerk: 'It is impossible that the Royal Scottish Academy can ignore the discussion at present rife in Edinburgh regarding the various Railway Schemes, and the proposed encroachment upon East and West Princes Street Gardens.'⁷ Their focus was also on the potential loss of public open space: 'While the Academy offers no opinion upon the scientific and administrative questions involved, its members feel that as an Academy of Art it cannot too strongly deprecate all or any interference with or alienation of the public gardens, which have indeed been already too much disturbed, filled up, and encroached upon.'⁸ Their intention was to give support to the municipal authority in opposing the proposals: 'The Academy is greatly pleased to observe the decided and protective stand the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council have taken in the question, and it is in the hope that it may strengthen their hands in that good part that this Minute is transmitted.'⁹

While the focus of the CA and RSA was on the impact of the schemes on public open space, Baldwin Brown adopted a broader stance, drawing attention to the impact on the Edinburgh's classical architecture and its setting. He had previously written to the municipal authority over the importance of Waterloo Terrace (figure 25) in the context of proposals to alter the Calton Convening Rooms windows, suggesting that 'the buildings were one of the best architectural features of city' and that any alterations would 'be regretted by all lovers of Edinburgh.'¹⁰ However, in comparison with the minor alterations being proposed then, the CRC scheme could not be achieved without very major alterations to Archibald Elliot's grand early nineteenth-century eastern entrance to the New Town at Waterloo Place,

⁶ Cockburn Association, *Annual Report*, 14, 1889-90.

⁷ Letter, 14 October 1890. See, RSA, *Annual Report*, 1890.

⁸ Letter, 14 October 1890.

⁹ Letter, 14 October 1890.

¹⁰ *Scotsman*, 5 June 1889.

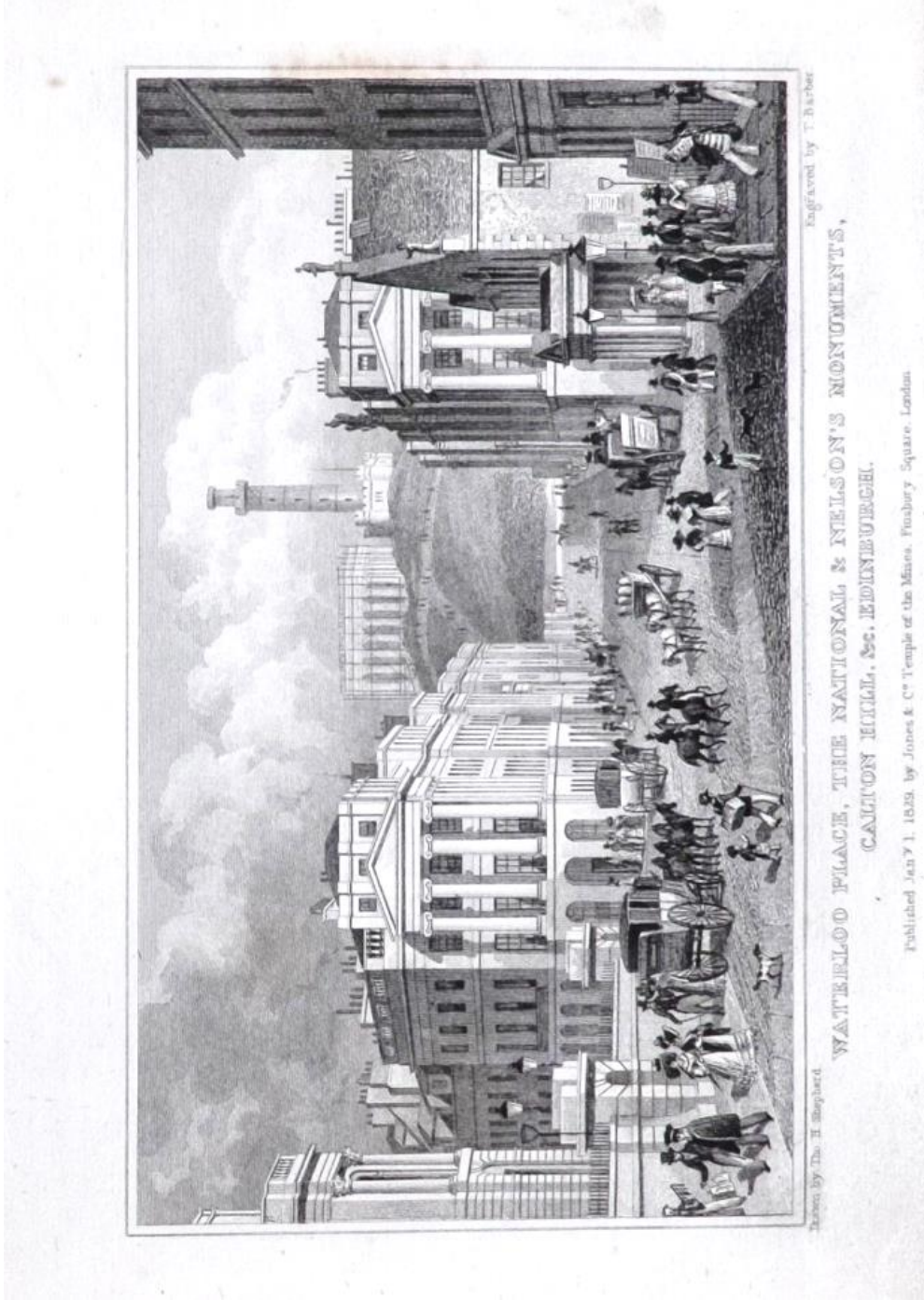
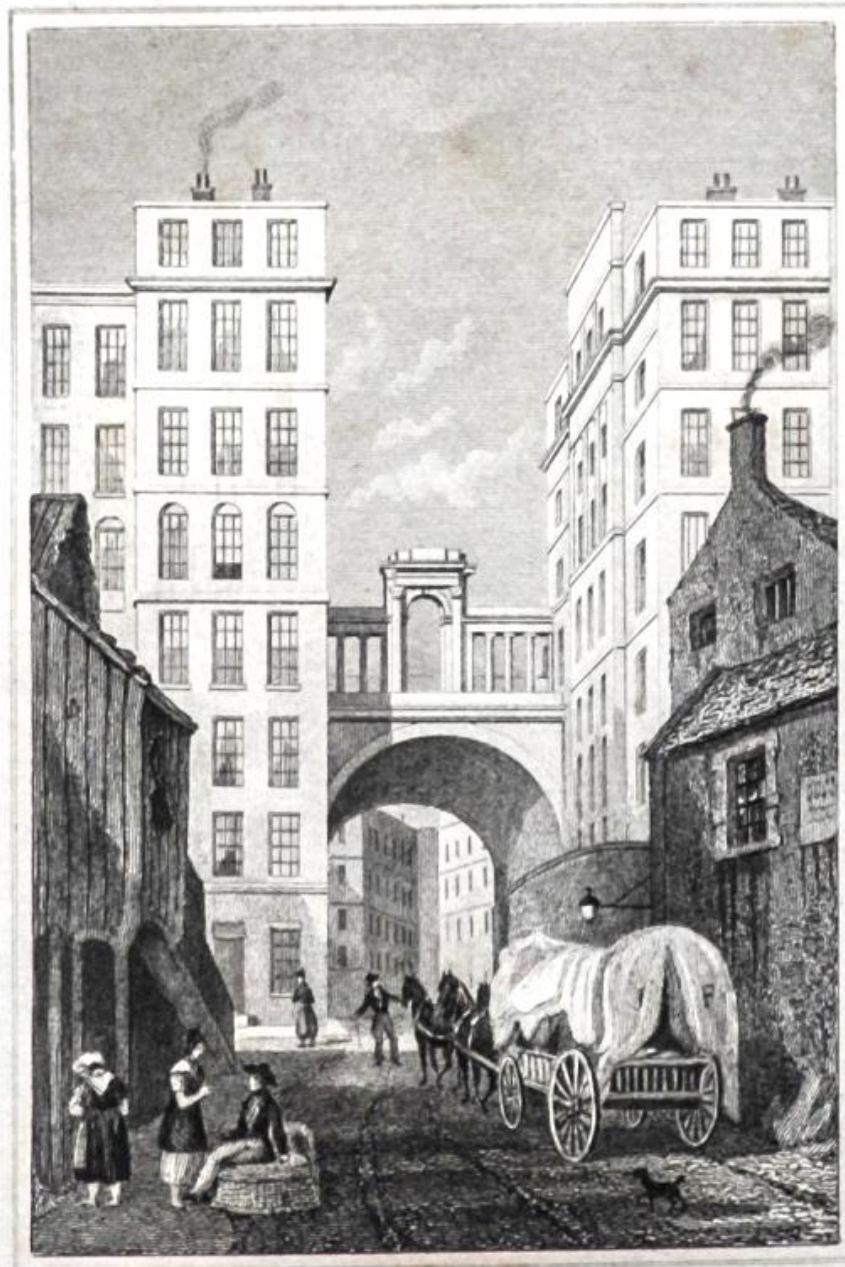


Figure 25. Waterloo Place and Terrace, viewed from the east end of Princes Street. Source: J. Britton, *Modern Athens* (London, 1829)



THE REGENT BRIDGE.

Figure 26. Regent's Bridge, Waterloo Terrace from Low Calton. Source: J. Britton, *Modern Athens* (London, 1829).

including the potential loss of the Regent's Bridge (figure 26).¹¹ Baldwin Brown wrote an unusually strong letter to the municipal authority about the scheme: 'If this ... should involve any tampering with the elevation of buildings flanking the entrance to Waterloo Place, and forming at the same time the termination of the long vista of Princes Street, an injury of the grossest kind would be done to one of the best architectural features of the city.'¹² Such a scheme, he believed, would be a blot upon the reputation of the city for piety and good taste, and would be remembered by future generations. Baldwin Brown also drew attention to the 'grievous injury' threatened to the beautiful northern slopes of Calton Hill where, he suggested, there was a happy combination of good architecture with fine natural features for which Edinburgh was widely and justly famous.

Two months later, in April 1890, Baldwin Brown attended meeting of St George's Ward residents in what was intended to be a meeting to foster opposition to the proposals. The *Scotsman* reported his remark that if they injured the natural and architectural features of Edinburgh they would injure what the inhabitants held most precious.¹³ He drew attention to the late Sir George Harrison who had said that Edinburgh's face was her fortune and reflected that 'It was that which made Edinburgh a centre of attraction to tourists and strangers from all parts of the world, and he ... considered if that was interfered with, the prosperity of Edinburgh would be spoilt, inasmuch as a lesser number of visitors would be drawn to the city.'¹⁴ However, supporters of the railway schemes proposed a motion condemning the Council's undue haste in opposing the Bill, committing the city to the: 'enormous expense of contesting the Bill without first consulting the ratepayers,'¹⁵ and they called for the three ward representatives sitting on the Council to instead support the scheme.

¹¹ Elliot's work was completed in 1819. See A.J. Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1966), 144-8.

¹² *Scotsman*, 22 February 1890.

¹³ *Scotsman*, 18 April 1890.

¹⁴ *Scotsman*, 18 April 1890.

¹⁵ *Scotsman*, 18 April 1890.

The motion supporting the railway scheme was carried, with one councillor¹⁶ indicating that although he personally opposed the scheme, he would act according to the wishes of the electors. Reflecting perhaps a broader pressure, the councillor also stated that he did not consider this a resigning matter. This was to become a broader pattern across Edinburgh, with the railway companies and their supporters attending ward meetings and placing municipal councillors who objected to the proposals under significant pressure to either change their views or to resign.¹⁷ The objectors, however, encouraged the councillors to stand firm. In May 1890, for example, Baldwin Brown used his valedictory presidential address to the EAA to draw attention to the developments and their proposers which were bringing powerful batteries to bear against the city's civic amenity:

What would Lord Cockburn have said had he contemplated a railway tunnelling under Princes Street, and casting up, after the manner of certain other underground burrowers, traces of its progress in the shape of blow-holes and railway stations, and finally issuing triumphantly out of a hill-side into the midst of stately roads and terraces from a tunnel, the frontispiece of which, it is fondly believed, can be made to harmonise with the architectural masterpieces of William Playfair!¹⁸

The railway debate became polarised between those supporting 'public convenience' and those supporting 'amenity.' Baldwin Brown argued that it did not necessarily follow that "amenity" should give way: "To take an extreme instance, it would undoubtedly be for the "public convenience" of Londoners to remove St Paul's Cathedral, which at present blocks the most important line of thoroughfare from the West End to the City, but no one would propose on this plea to demolish Wren's masterpiece."¹⁹ The proposal to tunnel under Princes St or through the gardens was a preposterous proposal and to allow it, he wrote, would be to risk making ourselves a laughingstock to a good part of Europe and America.

¹⁶ Councillor Hogg.

¹⁷ NAS/GD282/13/260. CRC papers include a letter identifying Bailie Cranston as an opponent and suggesting that a sympathetic candidate be found to oppose him in the elections.

¹⁸ G.B. Brown, 'The New Town of Edinburgh', *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 1 (1891), 100-101.

¹⁹ *Scotsman*, 4 October 1890. Unusually Baldwin Brown cites an English example and this may have reflected the need to draw in objectors from outside Edinburgh in the face of intense pressure on the city's councillors and residents.

The outsider would tell us that ‘You have got one of the best streets in the world, which strangers come from all parts to see and enjoy, and here you are prepared first of all to hand it over for years to the navy, and then risk making it almost uninhabitable’.²⁰ Baldwin Brown used his letter also to draw attention to the NBR’s expansion plans within Princes Street Gardens, identifying that they also intended to acquire and demolish the late sixteenth century Canongate Tolbooth in order to improve access to its station from the south by widening Tolbooth Wynd.²¹ He concluded: ‘Under the guidance of its own experts the Town Council will doubtless give these matters the independent scrutiny they call for, and neither they nor the rest of the citizens will be inclined to put faith in the pretended care of the railway companies “for the amenity of the city”’.²²

Baldwin Brown also called a meeting of the Art Congress committee and took the opportunity to propose a resolution in support of the municipal authority:

Having considered the railway schemes now before the city, [the Art Congress] hereby resolve to thank the Lord Provost for his statesmanlike and patriotic speech at the recent meeting of the Town Council and craves leave to express to him the unanimous feeling of its members that the most strenuous resistance should be offered to any encroachment on the central valley of the city west of the North Bridge, and that the tunnelling of Princes Street, with the consequent crossing of the London Road under Royal Terrace by a lofty bridge and embankment would be likely to have a most prejudicial effect on the amenity of the city.²³

The railway proposals were to become the major issue for the municipal elections held at the end of 1890 and in October the *Scotsman* reported that a requisition was being promoted in St Giles Ward asking Baldwin Brown to stand as a candidate for election to the Council.²⁴

Baldwin Brown subsequently agreed to stand, with Patrick Geddes and Francis Black, the

²⁰ *Scotsman*, 4 October 1890.

²¹ Baldwin Brown’s concerns regarding Tolbooth Wynd were discussed by the council at a private meeting on 30 September 1890. *Scotsman*, 1 October 1890.

²² *Scotsman*, 1 October 1890.

²³ The meeting took place at the Philosophical Institution on 17 October 1890. The resolution was adopted unanimously. *EEN*, 18 October 1890; *Scotsman*, 18 October 1890.

²⁴ *Scotsman*, 28 October 1890.

latter an Edinburgh publisher, acting as his proposers.²⁵ A *Scotsman* editorial welcomed Baldwin Brown's decision: 'His presence in the Council is much to be desired; for there is a crying need of a member of that body who would have full regard to matters of taste, and to the amenity of the city.'²⁶ The *Edinburgh Evening News* (EEN) was, however, firmly in the railway supporters' camp: 'What does Prof. Baldwin Brown know of St Giles and its inhabitants? If he were a man like Professor Patrick Geddes, one could understand it, but as it is, the only apparent reason for the proposal seems to be that the Professor has written some foolish letters on the railway schemes'. The article went on to suggest that the St Giles electorate would prefer a man 'whose views on matters of the work-a-day world corresponds with theirs, to an academical apostle of sweetness and light.'²⁷

Geddes already knew Baldwin Brown from his work with the ESU and they shared common interests including not only civic well-being but the importance Old Town vernacular architecture for the city and its residents.²⁸ Geddes also lived at James Court in St Giles Ward and was responsible for a number of early refurbishment schemes involving vernacular Old Town buildings.²⁹ An anti-railway stance was always likely to be difficult to argue successfully given that many of the Irish residents in St Giles Ward would expect to benefit from the employment associated with the proposed railway works. The *EEN* therefore focused on the likely number of jobs which would be created by the railway and tunnel

²⁵ *Scotsman*, 31 October 1890. He may have been influenced by Hardwicke Rawnsley's successful election to the Keswick division of Cumberland County Council in 1888 in order to fight for the protection of the Lake District's natural beauty. E. F. Rawnsley, *Canon Rawnsley: An Account of his Life* (Glasgow, 1923), 81-4.

²⁶ *Scotsman*, 31 October 1890. Flannigan was the first Irish Catholic to be elected to Edinburgh's Council, see *Scotsman* 10 November 1890.

²⁷ *EEN*, 28 October 1890.

²⁸ Baldwin Brown supported Geddes' applications for university professorships. UoS/AL/T-GED 9/1983

²⁹ See J. Johnson and L. Rosenburg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh: the Enduring Legacy of Patrick Geddes* (Glendareul, 2010). Baldwin Brown and Geddes exchanged occasional letters. UoS/AL/T-GED.

schemes, knowing that the Irish vote would feature strongly in the Ward election as a whole.³⁰

Baldwin Brown's address to the St Giles Ward meeting at the end of October is unusual in that it sheds light on his broader beliefs about politics and social reform. He indicated that he was standing as a candidate because he believed that there was a very widespread feeling among the electors in favour of electing representatives who were independent of political and other organisations and who came before them pledged to give every question a most careful and independent consideration: 'His platform was the platform of social reform. His special and continued object if returned to the Council would be to further every measure that would have for its effect the raising of the general level of the life of the population, and he believed that best could be done by beginning with material concerning the people'. He went on to suggest that the present railway schemes were of the most important future consequence to the city and that if they did not decide rightly now they would lose a great opportunity.³¹ Baldwin Brown also showed an interest in the city's broader working conditions, drawing on his experiences of his father's campaigns for social reform in south London: 'If returned he would see that Corporation contracts and estimated work were given to employers with properly-ventilated workshops, who paid the standard rate of wages, and he was in favour of the establishment of washhouses for the poorer classes.'³² It was though Geddes' comments at the summing up stage of the meeting which in hindsight were most prescient: 'in 25 years both companies would probably amalgamate, and form a great railway ring, and if their proposals were now allowed to go on they would then have useless lines and a desolated city.'³³ Despite attracting 893 votes, Baldwin Brown lost the election

³⁰ *Scotsman*, 4 November 1890, editorial.

³¹ *EEN*, 31 October 1890.

³² *EEN*, 31 October 1890.

³³ *EEN*, 31 October 1890.

when, as the *Scotsman* put it: ‘the wire-pullers, the logrollers, and the rag-tag and bobtail were marshalled against him.’³⁴ Flannigan was elected with a 267 majority.

Immediately after the elections Baldwin Brown travelled to the annual *National Association for Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry* conference in Birmingham and he reported on the work of the Edinburgh Art Congress Committee in opposing the railway schemes. The *Scotsman* reported Baldwin Brown’s speech:

They found themselves, in fact, involved in a railway war. One of these proposals was to take a considerable slice from Princes’ Street Gardens; another was to remove one of the best pieces of classical architecture they possessed at Waterloo Place, which it was proposed to take down and rebuild in the form of a railway station. A third was to extend the line on a high embankment through the beautiful suburb north of Calton Hill. A considerable public opinion had been aroused on the matter, and there was a strong feeling that the legitimate demands of the Railway Companies could be satisfied without any such acts of vandalism as were contemplated in the schemes.... On the ground that the preservation of the characteristic features of Edinburgh from any threatened vandalism was a matter not only of local, but also of national, perhaps even of world-wide importance...³⁵

The editor of *The Builder*, H.H. Statham³⁶, moved that the Art Congress should: ‘express its hearty sympathy with the Edinburgh Permanent Committee in its efforts to preserve the characteristic features of the city from injury.’³⁷ The Congress President, J. E. Hodgson RA, said this was a matter which concerned them very much. He did not deny the immense utility of the railways, but he wished that the amenity of their cities should be preserved. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The plans for both the CRC and the NBR schemes were lodged in Parliament at the end of November 1890, with the NBR scheme seeking the acquisition of the Waverley Market site adjacent to their station, together with the Corporation’s gasworks site to the east of the

³⁴ *Scotsman*, 5 November 1890.

³⁵ *Scotsman*, 10 November 1890.

³⁶ *The Builder* had previously been under the editorship of George Godwin. See J. D. Vann and R.T. VanArsdel, *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society* (Aldershot, 1994), 50-51. Baldwin Brown published a number of architectural articles in *The Builder* and corresponded with Statham more generally.

³⁷ *National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry, Transactions of the Birmingham Meeting* (London, 1891), xii.

current station and properties adjacent to Macdowal Street and Tolbooth Wynd (figure 27). Their proposals also included doubling of the number of lines running across Princes Street Gardens, with new tunnels under the Mound and under Calton Hill.³⁸ In January 1891 a special meeting of the municipal council was held to consider the railway schemes. The committee had before them reports by the Burgh Engineer and the City Superintendent of Works, and they were joined by their own specialist engineering advisor and by a parliamentary agent. A number of deputations were seen including a Citizens' Committee made up of representatives from a number of city bodies who handed in a petition of 9,503 signatures in favour of preserving Waverley Market, and the RSA who reinforced their concerns over the impact of the railway schemes on the amenity of the city. Baldwin Brown took part in two deputations, appearing for both the EAA and the Art Congress.³⁹ Speaking for the former, he confirmed that they were against encroachment onto Princes Street Gardens unless absolutely essential in the interests of the public, that the drawings, plans and elevations of the new Waverley Station should be laid before the public, and he questioned whether the demand existed for a new station at Waverley Market or Waterloo Place.⁴⁰ The potential loss of trees in Princes Street Gardens was also discussed.

The Art Congress deputation emphasised that they were there to preserve the artistic amenity of the city. The resolution which Baldwin Brown had proposed at the Birmingham Art Congress indicating that they strenuously resisted any encroachment into the central valley of the city was also read out.⁴¹ The deputation suggested that the railway schemes would injure the beauty and amenity of the city to a very great extent and that the railway companies should instead meet their demand outside the city. Baldwin Brown fielded a

³⁸ *Scotsman*, 1 December 1890.

³⁹ *Scotsman*, 13 January 1891.

⁴⁰ The EAA deputation was led by Baldwin Brown, together with W.W. Robertson, architect for H.M. Office of Works in Scotland and Vice-President of EAA, D.W. Stevenson, RSA, Henry Kerr, ARIBA, and Thomas Fairbairn, Secretary of EAA.,

⁴¹ Baldwin Brown was secretary of the NAAA local committee. The other members of the deputation were W. Birnie Rhind, James Tod, Pat Adam ARSA, and W.D. McKay RSA.

number of questions from the committee. When asked whether they had alternative schemes, for example, he suggested that their object was to strengthen the hand of the Lord Provost and Magistrates in the attitude they had taken up. He noted that while a George Street route for the CRC tunnel was preferable to the Princes Street scheme, they believed that there was no public demand for a tunnel and that the NBR's needs could be met by an eastwards expansion from the current Waverley site to the gasworks site rather than westwards into the Princes Street Gardens. The Committee pressed the Art Congress deputation on how an underground tunnel would affect the amenity of the city from an artistic point of view and again it was Baldwin Brown who responded, identifying the impact on Waterloo Place and the: 'dislocation of the architectural composition of the east end of Princes Street.'⁴² The council's committee concluded that Parliamentary petitions should be drawn up opposing the railway bills.

In March a House of Lords Select Committee under Lord Romilly sat to consider the railway bills with Baldwin Brown appearing as one of the town council's key witnesses⁴³ alongside Lord Provost Boyd, Bailies Dunlop and McDonald, John Smart RSA, Sir William Muir⁴⁴ and the Council's special technical advisor. After a long process, the Select Committee decided that the Caledonian Railway Bill should proceed, but that it was not desirable to proceed with parts of the proposals termed 'Railway No. 1' (the Princes Street tunnel, the Waterloo Place station and tunnel, and the Calton Hill tunnel and viaduct). This decision effectively killed the CRC scheme for central Edinburgh. The Committee decided however that the NBR Bill for Waverley Station should proceed including its expansion eastwards onto the site of the existing gasworks. At the end of March 1891 the Council held a further special meeting to consider the two amended bills and the focus therefore shifted to the NBR scheme. Although they had received encouragement from the Parliamentary Select

⁴² *Scotsman*, 13 January 1891.

⁴³ A painful episode for Baldwin Brown as his authority was questioned by supporters of the railway scheme given his loss at the municipal elections.

⁴⁴ Principal of Edinburgh University, 1885-1903.

Committee, the NBR were clearly concerned by the expense of acquiring the gasworks site and decided to pursue plans to expand westwards into Princes Street Gardens instead (figure 27). They also amended their proposed scheme to introduce a railway turntable and coaling station into East Princes Street Gardens. Once again the Council received deputations from the RSA, the EAA and the Art Congress, and they were joined by the Cockburn Association, all of whom opposed the proposed expansion into the gardens.⁴⁵ Speaking for the Art Congress, Baldwin Brown stated that ‘they were not fanatics on the question of amenity, but recognised when it came to a question between recognised public convenience and amenity, some compromise should be come to.’ While accepting that a case for doubling the lines across the valley was strong, he continued to resist the broader westwards expansion of the railway facilities into the gardens, mentioning that the ‘visual effects’ of the Old Town was very largely due to the depths of the valley and he was therefore resistant to development which would disguise this.⁴⁶

In the intervening period, the second reading of the NBR Bill took place in Parliament.⁴⁷ Dr Gavin Clark, Liberal MP for Caithness, gave a spirited speech against the proposals to expand into Princes St Gardens, suggesting that he had never anywhere seen anything to equal the city: ‘That is not mere sentiment. The truth is, the beauty of Edinburgh is one of its most important material advantages. It attracts strangers; it delights our eyes every day that we walk its streets, and anything which destroys or mars it, is not only a sentimental, but a practical evil or grievance.’⁴⁸ He suggested that the Bill would do much to destroy the beauty of Princes Street and that were they to give the Railway Company those powers they would ask for more, until the whole of Princes Street Gardens would become nothing but a

⁴⁵ *EEN*, 31 March 1891. Baldwin Brown arrived late at the meeting, explaining to an amused audience that he had been: ‘the victim of unpunctuality of the North British Railway.’

⁴⁶ Baldwin Brown proposed a vote of thanks to the Lord Provost and Council at the end of the deputations’ evidence.

⁴⁷ 28 April 1891.

⁴⁸ HC Debate 28 April 1891 vol. 352 cc1588-95. He was seconded by Mr Webb, MP of Waterford and Sir G. Campbell, MP for Kirkcaldy, also raised concerns.



Figure 27. North British Rail Station site in 1889 showing potential expansion sites to west (East Princes Street Gardens) and east (Gas Works). Source: Bartholomew Plan of Edinburgh and Leith with Suburbs, 1888-89. Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland, Acc. 10222/PR/10b fol. 116b.

big railway station. Nonetheless, a number of other MPs spoke in support of the Bill and it was committed.

Baldwin Brown was one of a number of objectors who joined Bailie McLachlan on the platform at a Council special public meeting on 4 May 1891. After some discussion Baldwin Brown moved ‘That the meeting of citizens entirely disapproves of the proposed encroachments upon the East and West Princes Street Gardens by the North British Railway.’⁴⁹ A further resolution supporting the Council’s opposition was supported amongst other by Miss S.S. Mair in the name of the ‘ladies of Edinburgh,’ who reported that ‘the ladies were not now so municipally dumb creatures, and it would be their endeavour at next election to see that they were represented by men who would give effect to their wishes on this point.’⁵⁰ The *Scotsman* which had been generally supportive of those opposing the railway developments however decided that sufficient concessions had been achieved. A highly critical editorial suggested that the meeting was: ‘a sectional gathering, with which the town had little sympathy, and in which it took comparatively small concern.’⁵¹ Baldwin Brown responded, drawing attention to the *Scotsman*’s contradictory position — it had described the opposition to the Caledonian Railway Scheme as ‘patriotic’ but the opposition to the NBR expansion as an ‘aesthetic fad’ — and stressed that it was not the principle of expansion which was being questioned but the Company’s preferred method of achieving it. He suggested that the artistic bodies of the city, headed by the RSA, had considered the railway schemes from the point of view of the amenity of Edinburgh and had twice brought their views by deputation to the Council and they, like he, believed that the municipal authority should not yield to the commercial desire of the NBR to get as far west as possible

⁴⁹ *Scotsman*, 5 May 1891.

⁵⁰ *Scotsman*, 5 May 1891.. Baldwin Brown knew Mair who was the Hon. Secretary of the *University Association for the Education of Women*. UoE/SC/GEN 2015/6. For women and the built environment, see H. Meller, ‘Women and citizenship: gender and the built environment in British cities 1870-1939’, in R. Cols and R. Rodger (eds.), *Cities of Ideas: Civil Society and Urban Governance in Britain 1800-2000*, 231-257.

⁵¹ *Scotsman*, 5 May 1891. The *Glasgow Herald*, 6 May 1891, concluded that the discussions contained ‘old-maidish aestheticism’ saturated by ineffectual cant.

with their station. He reflected that while they could not get the railways out of the valley: 'let us, in the name of common sense, as well as of amenity, keep them to that part of it where they can obtain all they can reasonably demand without fresh injury to those Gardens on which the public of Edinburgh feels just as strongly as it feels about Princes St itself.'⁵²

The municipal authority endeavoured to persuade the NBR to amend their preferred scheme, with both bodies publishing their correspondence in the *Scotsman* in order to explain their position and to gain public support.⁵³ Meanwhile Baldwin Brown continued to encourage bodies including the EAA to support the Council's stance,⁵⁴ despite attracting further negative comment in the letters page of the *Scotsman*. Once again he wrote supporting the Council's position and reminding readers that the city did not belong to the Council, but to the citizens, and it was their duty to look themselves after their property: 'Let us bear in mind that we are not contending only with a Scottish Railway Company that might be expected to share some feelings of patriotism, but with the great English companies, who have no sort of care for the interests of Edinburgh'.⁵⁵

Adverse comment about the objectors continued to appear in the press in advance of the final consideration of the NBR's Bill by the House of Commons Committee, with one letter writer speaking of 'a clique of interested busybodies' and 'aesthetic humbug' and calling on readers to: 'steadily oppose this miserable attempt to interfere with – without any cause or justification – the convenience and comfort of the travelling public.'⁵⁶ Baldwin Brown, never a fan of debate becoming personalised or insulting, responded in an unusually terse

⁵² *Scotsman*, 7 May 1891.

⁵³ *Scotsman*, 25 May 1891. The NBR's reply was published in the *Scotsman* on 27 May.

⁵⁴ EAA, *Minute Book*, 26 May 1891. Baldwin Brown also wrote to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland for support. SAS, *Minute Book*, 30 May 1891.

⁵⁵ *Scotsman*, 28 May 1891.

⁵⁶ *Scotsman*, 30 May 1891. Letter from Sir J. Don Wanchope, amongst other things a Scottish international rugby player.

manner.⁵⁷ The battles and negotiations continued, but in July 1891 matters were settled by a Commons Select Committee which concluded that the objectors had been ‘prone to sentiment and somewhat exaggerated.’ The Committee supported the proposal for a second pair of railway lines to be run across the valley, but the objectors claimed a partial victory in that very significant restrictions were placed on other expansions into East Princes Street Gardens and the proposed turntable and related infrastructure were removed from the scheme.⁵⁸ The Select Committee also recommended the demolition and replacement of the historic North Bridge to give the NBR a more flexible site.⁵⁹

After this extended and bruising campaign, Baldwin Brown’s focus shifted back to his university and academic interests, publishing the first edition of his *Fine Arts* textbook, and writing articles on a number of art and architecture-related subjects. The letters he wrote in the early 1890s focussed on art matters with one identifying the need for a museum of casts to aid art education in Edinburgh,⁶⁰ another explaining the background to the Impressionist art movement (examples of which were on display at the RSA Exhibition),⁶¹ and a further letter encouraging the Council to continue to provide a grant for technical education in art.⁶² He also became closely involved in the Scottish Arts Club, masterminding the expansion of the membership and its move to new premises in Rutland Square.⁶³

In the early 1890s Daniel Wilson published a second edition of *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time*, drawing renewed attention to the continuing loss of Old Town buildings: ‘In truth, the intervening years since these *Memorials* first appeared have witnessed a crusade

⁵⁷ *Scotsman*, 2 June 1891. Another correspondent, John Finlaison, also defended the position of the objectors in that day’s correspondence.

⁵⁸ Objections from the Bank of Scotland, whose head office overlooked the site of the proposed turntable, undoubtedly helped. The Select Committee also recommended the demolition and replacement of the historic North Bridge to give the NBR a more flexible site.

⁵⁹ See, Town Council of Edinburgh, *The Ceremony of Laying the Foundation Stone of the New North Bridge, Edinburgh, 25 May 1896* (Edinburgh 1896).

⁶⁰ *Scotsman*, 7 December 1891.

⁶¹ *Scotsman*, 22 December 1891.

⁶² *Scotsman*, 12 February 1892.

⁶³ SAC, *Minute Books*.

against nearly all that remained of Scott's "own romantic town."⁶⁴ Meanwhile the condition of the Scottish royal palaces in the Government's care was back on the agenda with both the EAA and the SAS raising concerns, this time about Linlithgow Palace.⁶⁵ The timing of this perhaps reflected the fact that the restoration work at Edinburgh Castle Great Hall was nearing completion.⁶⁶ A question was raised in Parliament by the Liberal politician A.C. Morton⁶⁷ who asked the First Commissioner of Works about his intentions for the Palace and quoting an EAA resolution which had sought Government action without delay:

On several occasions during the past few years I have called attention to the bad state of repair which the palaces and public buildings in Scotland have been allowed to fall into. There is a general opinion in Scotland that ever since the Union it has been the policy of the British Government to permit those places to go to ruin, with the view of getting them out of the way as soon as possible.⁶⁸

The First Commissioner of Works, David Plunkett, responded that the £500 that had been identified was sufficient in the view of their surveyor in Scotland in order to preserve intact the natural beauty of the ruins of the Palace but that they could not entertain a proposal to restore the building to a palace of dignity and rank. Shortly afterwards, the Ministry of Work's Principal Architect and Surveyor for Scotland, W. W. Robertson, used his Presidential Address at the Edinburgh Architectural Association to speak on *Our Duty in Respect of Ancient Buildings*.⁶⁹ This was an important paper setting out a strong Ruskinian view that a duty of trust fell on the current generation regarding those coming after in terms of protecting vernacular buildings as valuable art of a bygone age. He sought to identify the key threats which included the difficulties of protecting buildings which have remained in

⁶⁴ Wilson, *Memorials*, 1891, 2nd ed. *Preface*.

⁶⁵ *Scotsman*, 19 October 1891. The SAS Council sent a deputation to visit the castle and wrote subsequently to the War Office with a condition report by Robert Rowand Anderson. SAS, *Minute Book*, 12 November 1892.

⁶⁶ *Scotsman*, 18 October 1892.

⁶⁷ 1840-1923. MP for Peterborough, he was an architect and surveyor, and a member of the City of London Corporation from 1882-1923. He became the MP for Sutherland from 1906 until 1918 when he received his knighthood.

⁶⁸ HC, 4th ser., vol. 4, cc.1936-39, 26 May 1892.

⁶⁹ 1845-1907. W.W. Robertson, 'Our duty in respect of ancient buildings', *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 2 (1892), 55-69. The paper received broader attention from bodies such as SPAB and was also published in *The Architect*, 24 February 1893.

continuous occupation in term of pressure for change or ill-considered removal, and the need to preserve ruinous structures as they were, rather than to restore them. The last point was particular controversial in Scotland, where the doctrine of SPAB had had far less impact than in England.⁷⁰ Unsurprisingly the restoring architect, Robert Rowand Anderson, used the discussion session following the lecture to make it clear that he was he diametrically opposed Robertson's views.⁷¹

Baldwin Brown did not entirely ignore preservation-related issues however. The year 1893 saw the introduction of the Edinburgh (Housing of the Working Class) Improvement Scheme under which ten areas within the Old Town were designated as 'unhealthy areas.' In contrast with earlier improvement schemes, the approach adopted under this scheme was in some cases at least to improve rather than to demolish buildings or at least to retain their facades. In the case of two areas, Riddle's Close and Wardrop Court (the latter containing historic buildings including Gladstone's Land and Lady Stair's House), Patrick Geddes, who had already successfully demonstrated this approach through his own work and through the ESU, was to become involved in designing the schemes.⁷² Baldwin Brown took the opportunity when writing to the *Scotsman* in October of that year to praise Geddes's work at Ramsay Gardens in the context of what he termed the 'necessary urban clearances.'⁷³ A year later Baldwin Brown wrote with some alarm in response to a proposal 'to run some sort of railway up Arthur's Seat,' suggesting that: 'the sooner the impossibility of such an act of desecration is generally understood, the better.'⁷⁴ Three months later he wrote again, this time about the history and origins of village greens in the context of the creation of parish

⁷⁰ In Scotland, ruined palaces, castles, tower houses could be seen as symbolic of English oppression and the failed Jacobite cause, particularly by those adopting a romantic nationalist perspective. In such a context, restoration could be promoted as removing a 'stain' on Scottish nationhood. This argument far outweighed the Ruskinian notion of preservation.

⁷¹ See, I. Gow, 'Sir Robert Rowand Anderson's National Art Survey of Scotland', *Architectural History*, 27 (1984), 543-554.

⁷² Johnson and Rosenberg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh*, Chapter 4.

⁷³ *Scotsman*, 5 October 1893.

⁷⁴ *Scotsman*, 5 October 1894. He concluded his letter: 'I am quite sure that a day or two spent among the invigorating east winds of an Edinburgh August must brace up the tourist sufficiently to enable him to dispense with any such aid in his promenades.'

councils in Scotland.⁷⁵ However an old case, that of municipal authority's own property, was to re-emerge mid-decade and was again to cause significant controversy.

A site for the Usher Hall

One of the aspirations for the new municipal buildings in the 1880s was a public hall in which the Council could hold major public functions. Although the initiative faltered, in 1896 the brewer, Andrew Usher, offered a gift of £100,000 to the municipal authority for the erection of a town hall.⁷⁶ Once again there was no shortage of suggestions of potential sites from the *Scotsman's* pseudonymous correspondents, with possibilities including the corner of Rutland Street, St Andrew's Square, the north side of Charlotte Square, the Cattle Market site, Princes Street Gardens, Bruntsfield Links, an Old Town 'slum' site adjacent to Hunter Square, the Canal Basin, Castle Terrace and Waverley Market. The councillors discussed possible sites in early October, with a report from officers setting out key principles and identifying three sites: Castle Terrace, the Canal Basin and Chambers Street.⁷⁷ The councillors' preferred choice of Castle Terrace met with significant local opposition due to the large number of buildings that would need to be cleared and the number of residents displaced. In March of the following year, however, a council special committee performed a highly unexpected change of direction, recommending the north side of Charlotte Square as their preferred site!⁷⁸ Attending a dinner of the Mary's Chapel Incorporation the Lord Provost, Andrew McDonald, explained that the Charlotte Square site would dispossess 'barest minimum of families' and despite the choice being condemned in the press, 'there was a great deal more to be said for the Charlotte Square site than they imagined.'⁷⁹ Unsurprisingly, given his earlier defence of Charlotte Square, Baldwin Brown was fast to react with a carefully constructed riposte:

⁷⁵ *Scotsman*, 1 January 1895.

⁷⁶ *Scotsman*, 18 June 1896.

⁷⁷ *Scotsman*, 6 October 1896.

⁷⁸ *Scotsman*, editorial, 16 March 1897. The scheme proposed to demolish all but the two end buildings of Robert Adam's terrace.

⁷⁹ *Scotsman*, 17 March 1897.

Charlotte Square as it stands is a complete architectural composition known far and wide as one of the best existing specimens of its style, and is, moreover, carried out with such material and workmanship that it would be simply a shame to pull down a great part of it for the sake of replacing it by a building that may be in quite a different style, and may, after all, not have the artistic merits that we all hope and trust will belong to it.⁸⁰

He also pointed out that the proposals ran counter to one of the Council's development principles for the scheme — that the site should lend itself readily to architectural effect, and its appropriation should not require the effacement or disfigurement of any cherished and characteristic feature of the city. While the Lord Provost asked for judgement to be suspended until after the report of the Council sub-committee had been published, there was nonetheless much press correspondence both for and against the Charlotte Square site. Baldwin Brown would have read with undoubted frustration one letter suggesting that due to the alterations already made: 'the once perfect architecture of Charlotte Square is now a thing of the past.'⁸¹ More surprisingly, Hippolyte Blanc, the restorer of the Castle's Great Hall and SPAB's representative in Edinburgh, wrote a letter in support of the Charlotte Square site.⁸² In doing so he admitted that he had been the originator of the proposals which he had developed with Councillor Cameron. Despite the Lord Provost's request for patience and having sat on the Council's sub-committee, Cameron had already written to the *Scotsman* in support of the chosen site! Baldwin Brown clearly felt it necessary to respond to Blanc and Cameron's move to pre-empt discussions and he took the opportunity to set out in some detail why he believed that the loss of the majority of the north side of the Square was unacceptable. He drew attention to the fact that Charlotte Square was an acknowledged masterpiece of one of the most distinguished architects Scotland had ever produced. Its style, he suggested, was based essentially on the qualities of consistency and completeness and while a picturesque variety might be suited to other styles, that was not the case with Adam's work: 'It is not the case of a mere "piece of fine street architecture" as one of your

⁸⁰ *Scotsman*, 16 March 1897.

⁸¹ *Scotsman*, 17 March 1897. Letter from 'E.Y.E.'

⁸² *Scotsman*, 22 March 1897.

correspondents has termed it, but of a monumental composition, that impresses us as much by its noble and severe dignity of general design as by its perfection in material and workmanship.’⁸³

To Blanc’s suggestion that the new hall could be built behind the façade (or a façade combined with a new portico) Baldwin Brown responded: ‘I cannot see how such a patchwork sort of compromise would work. It would not be fair to the architect of the new hall to forbid him any facade at all, and it would not be fair to Adam’s work to reduce it to a mere frontispiece, or to add a portico he never intended.’⁸⁴ Baldwin Brown knew though that the scheme was gathering momentum and was no doubt deeply disappointed that Blanc appeared to be questioning the architectural significance of the square and its preservation.⁸⁵ Rather than going to the EAA for support Baldwin Brown called a meeting of the local Art Congress committee to discuss the proposals. Despite the attendance of Blanc who unsuccessfully proposed a counter-motion,⁸⁶ the main motion was adopted indicating that irreparable injury would be caused to one of the best architectural features of the city should the proposed scheme go ahead and this was subsequently forwarded to the Town Clerk. In mid-April the Council sub-committee’s report was released with the full text reproduced in the *Scotsman*.⁸⁷ The authors sought to counter Baldwin Brown’s earlier arguments in their report, suggesting amongst other things that as there were no ordinances protecting the Charlotte Square buildings, the buildings were in constant danger of gradual attrition. Therefore putting the façade in the Council’s hands, it was argued, was a better option for preservation than leaving the buildings in the hands of individual owners to be removed one—

⁸³ *Scotsman*, 23 March 1897.

⁸⁴ *Scotsman*, 23 March 1897.

⁸⁵ This issue highlights a potential conflict for architects confronted with the possibility of a high-profile and financially rewarding project.

⁸⁶ Blanc moved that ‘the building be placed at Charlotte Square as it afforded the best accommodation and the most economical conditions while saving the present frontage.’

⁸⁷ *Scotsman*, 13 April 1897.

by-one at different times! To ward off challenges, the report conclusions included the suggestion that:

Members of Council who may hesitate to sanction the appropriation of the north side of Charlotte Square for the new hall, because they think the present buildings should be preserved, ought to be prepared to point out another site equally eligible, and state what they propose to do to maintain perpetually the design to which they attach so much importance.⁸⁸

Deeply frustrated by what he felt were disingenuous arguments justifying the Charlotte Square site and by the attempt to intimidate possible objectors, Baldwin Brown wrote again. He drew attention to the fact that it was impossible to show how Charlotte Square or any other building could be preserved in perpetuity as a matter of rigid law: 'It is chimerical to suppose that an absolute law could be passed, now or at any period, forbidding alterations in Charlotte Square for all time to come.'⁸⁹ He did note, however, that a constraint might have been placed on the land at an earlier stage: 'All that could have been done when the feus were given out was to establish a servitude like that over the back-greens, putting it into the power of some constituted authority to veto any proposed change.'⁹⁰ However, this in turn raised for Baldwin Brown the problem of who would monitor such a constituted body. The Dean of Guild Court was the natural body for the purpose, he believed 'but the present Dean of Guild actually seconded, in its primary and worst form, this proposal to ruin the north block of Charlotte Square. The Dean of Guild is the last of all the public officials from whom such action was to be expected'.⁹¹ He was inclined think therefore that the city's buildings were safer in the hands of their present owners than in those of public bodies. Baldwin Brown was also deeply frustrated also about the lack of sensitivity of the current private owners,⁹² and suggested that it would be preferable were the buildings owned by local businesses as many would, he believed, take the greatest pride in their beautiful interior

⁸⁸ *Scotsman*, 13 April 1897.

⁸⁹ *Scotsman*, 15 April 1897.

⁹⁰ *Scotsman*, 15 April 1897.

⁹¹ *Scotsman*, 15 April 1897.

⁹² Unusually for Baldwin Brown, who was careful to support women generally, he placed the responsibility for the lowering of windows and raising of rooflines at Charlotte Square with 'fashionable egret plume-wearing ladies'.

decorations. Even were Charlotte Square destined to receive more injuries in the next century it would remain a fine composition from a great designer: 'It would have to suffer a great deal more than it is really at all likely to suffer before we should be resigned to parting with it. That old lion must have got very dead indeed before we should prefer to it the living dog that "our own architect" is ready to put up in its place.'⁹³ He concluded with a rallying call and a powerfully written warning to the Council regarding both the level of opposition and the levers of power that were being considered by the scheme's opponents which included the resistance in Parliament of application for the powers necessary for the proposed demolition.⁹⁴ Baldwin Brown was by then the President of the Scottish Arts Club and he chaired a special meeting of the Club to discuss the Charlotte Square proposals. They agreed a resolution that while sympathising with the difficulties being faced by the Council in selecting a location for the Usher Hall, they were of the opinion that 'the destruction or modification of the whole or part of the north block of houses of Charlotte Square, for the sake of securing a site, would inflict irreparable injury on one of the best architectural features of the city'.⁹⁵

Clearly concerned, the Council not only continued to explore the feasibility of the Charlotte Square site, but returned also to the Canal Basin site but following further delays for information gathering, the imminent municipal elections appear to have slowed matters. The Council's desire to find an alternative location was not helped when the NBR directors decided not to sell the Canal Basin site. This meant that without an Act of Parliament securing compulsory purchase, this site was effectively ruled-out. Following a common pattern, further possible sites were suggested by correspondents in the *Scotsman* and the municipal authority resolved in favour of a site on the West Meadows, although once again concerns were immediately raised. The Council commissioned further internal studies and in

⁹³ *Scotsman*, 15 April 1897.

⁹⁴ *Scotsman*, 15 April 1897.

⁹⁵ EEN, 24 April 1897.

parallel asked the architect Alfred Waterhouse to compile a report. In October 1898 the Council finally ruled out Charlotte Square and, ignoring Waterhouse's reservations, chose Atholl Crescent instead. Baldwin Brown appears reluctantly to have accepted this decision, noting though that he was sorry to see any part of the city's street architecture interfered with. Seeing his Charlotte Square scheme disappearing for good, Hippolyte Blanc took the opportunity to point out, with some justification, that Atholl Crescent had as much claim to preservation as Charlotte Square.⁹⁶

The Mid-Lothian County Council buildings

Although he was already active in a number of Edinburgh-based professional and amenity bodies, Baldwin Brown appeared reluctant to become closely involved with the Cockburn Association in his first years in Edinburgh and he only became a subscriber in the early 1890s.⁹⁷ The Association had been formed in 1875 to preserve and increase the attractions of the city, and to promote healthy recreation for its residents. While the constitution of the Association included reference to 'amenity', in its first decade its focus was mainly on the preservation of the natural environment and open spaces in Edinburgh. It did however also comment on unsightly advertisement hoardings in the city and in the 1880s and 1890s and involved itself in high profile cases such as the restoration of the Castle Great Hall, the CRC railway proposals, and the debate over the Usher Hall site. Given its commitment to health and recreation it is unsurprising that the CA generally supported the wider demolition of Old Town vernacular buildings under the town's improvement schemes, welcoming, for example, the removal of the old buildings on the west side of Bristo Street: 'In place of a narrow and squalid thoroughfare, a pleasant open space has been secured, disclosing to the view the McEwan Hall and other handsome buildings connected with the University.'⁹⁸ The

⁹⁶ EEN, 14 October 1898.

⁹⁷ His earliest identifiable involvement is identified in a list of Association subscribers published in 1894.

⁹⁸ CA, *Annual Report*, 1897, 19.

Association also recognised and supported the Old Town improvement works of Patrick Geddes, who was a member of their council.

In what appears to have been something of a change of heart, however, in 1898 Baldwin Brown accepted a suggestion that he join the CA's council. Although the reasons for this are obscure, this decision may well reflect Baldwin Brown's decision to become more closely involved in campaigns to preserve Edinburgh's buildings, both classical and vernacular, his concerns over the municipal authority's attitude to development and preservation and, perhaps most importantly of all, his recognition that he needed the assistance of a body whose support was not compromised by self-interest.⁹⁹ Membership of the Cockburn Association's council gave him opportunities to extend his network of contacts, to strengthen the Association's agenda with regard to building-preservation and, importantly, to link the Association's work with Edinburgh's other amenity and professional bodies. As with the other Edinburgh organisations, once he had joined the council Baldwin Brown rapidly developed a high profile role within the Cockburn Association and sought to draw it closer to other city bodies. In November 1898, the EAA received a letter from Baldwin Brown and an accompanying paper asking them to petition against the destruction of characteristic monumental and architectural work in Florence which was suffering from the hands of modern builders. Baldwin Brown's letter mentioned that 'The Cockburn officials signed it today.'¹⁰⁰ Similarly Baldwin Brown used the AGM of the CA in May 1899 to congratulate the Council on its stance with regard to the restriction of advertising hoardings in the city, proposing the motion that congratulated them upon their action in seeking from Parliament powers to check the abuses of public advertising within the city and suggesting that the

⁹⁹ It does seem that Baldwin Brown's confidence in the EAA had weakened and he had certainly lost confidence in the Dean of Guild Court.

¹⁰⁰ EAA, *Minute Books*, 18 March 1898.

citizens were clearly willing to entrust to the civic authority the powers sought in the new Edinburgh Corporation Bill.¹⁰¹

In June 1899, Baldwin Brown drew to the attention of the Cockburn council the destruction of a number of features of interest in the city. Amongst these he mentioned a major concern over the emerging proposals to alter the Mid-Lothian County Council Buildings, situated on the west side of Parliament Square opposite the west door of St Giles (figure 28). The classical building, designed by Archibald Elliot, was based on the Erectheum in Athens with an entrance based on the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus. Completed at the same time as Elliot's Waterloo Place in 1819, it was mentioned in a number of nineteenth century town guidebooks.¹⁰² Shortly after the CA discussion Baldwin Brown wrote to the *Scotsman* to draw the public's attention to the danger of the loss of what he considered to be one of its characteristic monuments. He focussed firstly on the issue of expertise and of local public opinion: 'Seeing that the majority of the Mid-Lothian County Council would hardly claim to be judges of architectural questions, and are not even citizens of Edinburgh, it does seem right that the city in general should take some cognisance of the matter.'¹⁰³ He then raised the issue of utility versus artistic merit: 'It should be impossible for a monument of such artistic value to be dealt with as if it were a mere utilitarian structure, that may be cut and carved about as convenience seems to suggest'.¹⁰⁴

The *Scotsman* carried two responses to his letter, the first from 'architects' seeking to preempt further debate by pointing out that the design of the new building had already been put out to tender. The second, from the one of the founders of the EAA, George S. Aitken,

¹⁰¹ CA, *Minute Book*. The advertising control powers came into effect in 1902. Baldwin Brown also proposed a vote of thanks for the Edinburgh School Board which was seeking to reduce vandalism in the city.

¹⁰² See, for example, Anon, *The Stranger's Guide to Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1820); 104-5; J. Stark, *Picture of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1825), 137; Anon, *Black's Guide to Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1880), 26.

¹⁰³ *Scotsman*, 3 July 1899.

¹⁰⁴ *Scotsman*, 3 July 1899.

included a telling statement that the buildings were ‘not of any historic value, as they date no further back than the year 1815.’¹⁰⁵ Despite Aitken’s views, Baldwin Brown attended a further CA council meeting in June and had already drafted a detailed letter for the Secretary to send to the County Clerk. This drew attention to the building’s considerable historical and artistic value and indicated that ‘the Council of the Cockburn Association feels that it cannot be wrong in calling attention to the value of the structure.’ There must have been differences of opinion at the CA however as it was only after ‘considerable discussion’ that the Secretary was instructed to send the letter on behalf of the Association.¹⁰⁶

The County nonetheless pressed on with their architectural competition. The winning scheme by J. Macintyre Henry led to the total demolition of Elliot’s building in 1905. In making their decision, the County Council’s committee not only ignored Baldwin Brown but also rejected the advice of their professional assessor, W.W. Robertson, the Board of Works principal architect in Scotland who had earlier used his EAA Presidential Address to speak about preservation.¹⁰⁷ As with the earlier municipal authority handling of the city chambers redevelopment, Baldwin Brown used the problems surrounding this case to write about architectural competitions and the role of professional assessors in the professional press. He explored why the views of the promoter of a scheme might differ from those of the professional assessor, believing that one important factor was that architects tended to focus on architectural styles or aesthetics, whereas the promoter looked towards functionality as a priority. For Baldwin Brown it was a matter of planning, and he suggested that the aesthetic architectural idiom employed should grow from the building’s functions: ‘One cannot help thinking that the problem of a new style or a modern style in architecture would be more likely to be solved if designers attended primarily to their planning and the character of their

¹⁰⁵ *Scotsman*, 4 July 1899. Letters from ‘Architects’ and G.S. Aitken. Aitken was the architect of the heavy-handed ‘restoration’ of Lady Stair’s House for Lord Rosebery which subsequently passed to the municipal authority and was opened as a museum in 1913.

¹⁰⁶ Letter, 7 July 1899.

¹⁰⁷ 1853-1922. *Scotsman*, 12 October 1899. He had been the EAA President 1893-4.



Figure 28. Midlothian County Hall (demolished, 1905). Source: J. Britton , *Modern Athens*, (London, 1929).

materials and processes, and allowed style to form itself naturally out of these, instead of making a deliberate effort to invent new forms.’¹⁰⁸ He did, though, recognise that such buildings had to express their status, office and aspiration, and that these factors should also guide the architect.

The Cockburn Association’s council were not always supportive of Baldwin Brown’s desire to intervene and there were differences of opinion regarding the locus of the Association and the weight to be placed on specific concerns. In December 1900, for example, the minutes recorded that ‘Professor Baldwin Brown referred to the disfigurement of the streets by the partial painting of certain electric lamp posts for the purposes of indicating stopping places for the cable tramway cars, and while sympathising with the objection the Council resolved that it was undesirable to take any action in the matter.’¹⁰⁹ In such cases Baldwin Brown frequently expressed his opinion separately, either in parallel with or in place of wider organisational support. He did so in 1903, for example, in response to proposals to create a new tramway to Queensferry crossing Thomas Telford’s spectacular Dean Bridge over the Waters of Leith (1829-31) on the west side of Edinburgh: ‘To take one point only, the Dean Bridge is one of the best works of its kind that the country has to show.... I trust that whatever decision is come to on the project as a whole, the Town Council will not allow the Dean Bridge to be altered except in accordance with the very best of architectural advice.’¹¹⁰ Baldwin Brown was however able to persuade the CA to involve themselves in the subsequent proposals to raise the parapets of the bridge to reduce the number of suicides and he subsequently joined an advisory committee to design the proposed changes.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ *British Architect*, 28 September 1900, 215.

¹⁰⁹ CA, *Minute Book*, 6 December 1900.

¹¹⁰ *Scotsman*, 10 January 1903; 28 October 1909; 31 October 1911.

¹¹¹ CA, *Minute Books*, 20 February 1905.

Scottish restoration philosophy and Iona Abbey

The subject of the restoration of ancient ruined structures was one which caused particular controversy in Scotland. Albeit situated outside Edinburgh, the debate around the restoration of Iona Abbey, a very long-lived ecclesiastical site off the west coast of Scotland, is of relevance not only for shedding light on Baldwin Brown's philosophy on restoration, but also because of the impact that this case had, together with other recent church restorations in Scotland, on the subsequent call for the restoration of Edinburgh's Holyrood Abbey Church. In 1899, Iona Abbey and its monuments were gifted by the Duke of Argyll to a Board of Trustees, set up under the Church of Scotland. He had earlier funded limited repair works on the site which were undertaken by Robert Rowand Anderson. In the Deed of Trust the Duke stated that he wished to see the cathedral reroofed and restored so as to admit it for public worship, albeit he did not provide any funds to meet this aspiration.¹¹²

On 17 October 1899 Baldwin Brown wrote a long letter to the *Times* regarding the proposed restoration.¹¹³ From his ongoing studies of the early Christian period in Britain and Europe, Baldwin Brown understood the religious and cultural significance of the site and he was concerned not only of the impact of a restoration on the cathedral remains, but that such a project would lead to a demand for 'a general rejuvenation of the whole group of structures, the consequences of which one would rather not contemplate.'¹¹⁴ He pointed out that while each case should be taken on its merits, and that circumstances might arise where church restoration might be justified to meet the needs of a growing population, this was not the case in Iona where there was only a very small community. He was also aware of the potential difficulty in that a number of different Christian communities might lay claim to the Columban succession and would therefore question the decision to gift the site to the Church of Scotland. The proposed restoration however received many letters of support and

¹¹² *Deed of Trust*. See *Scotsman*, 30 September 1899.

¹¹³ *Times*, 17 October 1899.

¹¹⁴ *Times*, 17 October 1899.

the Trustees pursued the restoration proposals. Baldwin Brown wrote again in June 1900 welcoming the gift of the Cathedral site but deploring the requirement in the Deed of Trust to restore the ruins.¹¹⁵ Nonetheless the restoration project commenced. Following completion of the first stage significant funding issues emerged, and Baldwin Brown took the opportunity to ask whether it was now too late for the authorities of the Church of Scotland to reconsider what he termed a profitless and risky restoration project: ‘Only the fanatical anti-restorer would resist such works as those at Dunblane, Paisley, or Hexham. In the case of Iona, on the other hand, there is no such practical purpose in view, and, indeed, the project was apparently due to certain private desires and apprehensions which do not seem to have much in them, and with which the public have little concern.’¹¹⁶ In this case, he suggested, all the arguments which had been urged for the last fifty years against needless tinkering of ruined mediaeval buildings held their full validity.

As with his earlier letters on Iona, his views attracted criticism with the Clerk to the Trustees pointing out the donor’s wishes in the Trust deed and suggesting that they would be guilty of a breach of trust were they not to meet them.¹¹⁷ There was also a more measured and informative letter from Rev. Professor James Cooper, the incumbent at Glasgow Cathedral and President of the recently-created Scottish Ecclesiological Society. In general he was a strong supporter of church restoration and he used his letter to review the large number of what he believed were successful church restoration cases in Scotland including Dunblane, Paisley and St Giles. He nonetheless agreed with Baldwin Brown that if no proper scheme of usage for Iona Cathedral could be identified, restoration should be resisted: ‘Any restoration (even such as we have got at Dunblane and Brechin) involves some sacrifice alike of beauty and of sentiment, a sacrifice we are not justified in making, except for a really valuable

¹¹⁵ *Scotsman*, 4 June 1900.

¹¹⁶ *Scotsman*, 23 May 1903.

¹¹⁷ *Times*, 17 October 1899.

purpose.’¹¹⁸ In a further letter Baldwin Brown pointed out what he felt was a significant weakness in the Trustees’ position: ‘no legal obligation can rest on trustees to carry out a donor’s wish when its fulfilment depends on securing voluntary contributions from the public. As I read the deed of trust, the only obligation involved is a moral or personal one, and I have yet to learn that such obligation compels trustees to act against the public interest.’¹¹⁹ He welcomed the suggestion in James Cooper’s letter that not all religious sites should be restored, suggesting that the Scottish Ecclesiological Society ‘will do good work in helping to chasten the exuberance of many excellent people who cry out, “Here is a ruined church, let us restore it to the glory of God.”’ He continued later in the letter: ‘By all means let us provide for the service of religion new churches as noble and as beautifully fitted and adorned as we can, but let us at the same time recognise that old work, untouched save by time, has an artistic and a poetic value which are bound to be marred by the juxtaposition of new work’.¹²⁰

Baldwin Brown wrote a further letter shortly afterwards seeking to develop his arguments. He identified once again that public opinion provided the ultimate sanction and check in various proceedings in Britain: ‘While a proprietor retains his hold on his property he can do as he pleases with it, but at the same time he is always amenable to public opinion, and may at any time on reason shown reconsider his procedure.’¹²¹ Nonetheless, adverse public opinion was muted and the Trustees pursued the further restoration scheme with funding eventually found which allowed the restored Cathedral to be inaugurated in 1910.¹²²

Despite his approach to Iona’s restoration, Baldwin Brown’s position on restoration was more generally based upon a detailed consideration of the circumstances of each case rather

¹¹⁸ *Times*, 17 October 1899. The Scottish Ecclesiological Society studied Christian worship and church architecture and was created from the merger of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society and the Glasgow Society on 19 May 1903 at a meeting attended by Baldwin Brown. *Scotsman*, 20 May 1903.

¹¹⁹ *Scotsman*, 26 May 1903.

¹²⁰ *Scotsman*, 26 May 1903.

¹²¹ *Scotsman*, 27 May 1903.

¹²² The first service was held in the partially completed church in 1905.

than a single inflexible view. In an interview quoted in a *Country Life* article just over a decade later he explicitly chose to distance himself from William Morris's and SPAB's views. The article noted that Baldwin Brown was 'anxious to regard, as far as is possible, all our monuments as living, even if their alteration for this purpose involves some loss of aesthetic charm and archaeological value. He is disinclined to subscribe to the manifesto written in 1877 by William Morris for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.'¹²³

In contrast to the generally supportive approach to restoration for Scotland's abbeys and cathedrals, the condition of Scotland's nationally significant sites in the care of Government was a continuing source of concern and any development proposals were likely to be subjected to very detailed public scrutiny. In the 1890s there was a highly visible public debate over a proposed new building by the Ministry of War at the Castle, with a number of bodies including the Town Council, EAA, CA and SAC raising concerns and demanding that the plans be subject to public consultation.¹²⁴ In 1899 James Bruce used his speech as incoming President of the EAA to call for the better treatment of 'Scottish National Buildings.'¹²⁵ Following his speech, Baldwin Brown seconded a proposal by Thomas Ross that copies of the President's address be circulated to Scottish MP's, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the First Commissioner of Works and a number of relevant organisations and amenity bodies including the Cockburn Association.¹²⁶

¹²³ L.W., 'Westbrook, Godalming, the residence of Mr Thackeray Turner', *Country Life* (20 January 1912), 96. In referring to those who divide monuments into 'dead monuments' and 'living monuments' Baldwin Brown distanced himself from the Austrian art historian Alois Reigl.

¹²⁴ See, for example, ECA/SL1/2, *Minute Books*, 21 January 1896.

¹²⁵ James Bruce was a Writer to the Signet who involved himself in a range of issues relating to Edinburgh. His speech was reproduced in full in *The Builder*, 9 December 1899, 527-28.

¹²⁶ The covering letter from EAA to MPs, dated 10 January 1900, specifically identifies Ross as one of the authors of *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* and Baldwin Brown as the Professor of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh.

The continuing debate over the Usher Hall.

At the century's end, the issue of a suitable site for the Usher Hall still rumbled on. Despite opposition from the George Heriot Trust as superiors and several proprietors and tenants, the Council were given powers under the Edinburgh Corporation Act of 1899 to acquire the Atholl Terrace site. However, following the municipal elections in 1901 the scheme was allowed to lapse and by 1902 a new site, then occupied by the Synod Hall adjacent to Castle Terrace, had been agreed. It appeared that matters could now be allowed to progress but the Council's decision to place the design with their own architect's department then met with significant levels of concern. Given his previous interest in the procurement of public buildings, Baldwin Brown held strong views that an architectural competition was the preferred way of achieving an appropriate design and that the role of a professional assessor would be crucial in overcoming the weaknesses of a non-expert council committee.¹²⁷ The Cockburn Association decided not to make any formal protest¹²⁸ and Baldwin Brown therefore chose to use his position on the Executive of the Edinburgh Citizens' and Ratepayers' Union to second a resolution which condemned the Council's decision to place the work with the council's Superintendent of Works.¹²⁹ Baldwin Brown's remarks were reported in the *Scotsman*: 'They wanted an architect of genius who would set the fashion for the future... With all possible respect to the Works Department, he should not like to say that there was there either genius or originality. He did not think genius and originality were in their place in the Town Council or in any department of it.'¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Baldwin Brown believed that the professional assessor in such competitions represented the public and without identifying the case, made reference to the overturning of the assessor's decision in a case 'in the North' – a reference to the Mid-Lothian County Buildings case. See G.B. Brown, 'The appointment of the professional assessor', *British Architect* (September 28, 1900), 215.

¹²⁸ CA, *Annual Report*, 1903, 5.

¹²⁹ Baldwin Brown joined the Executive on 18 June 1902, see *Scotsman* 19 June 1902.

¹³⁰ *Scotsman*, 7 November 1903.

The municipal authority ignored these suggestions but they were slow to take forward their proposals and in the meantime a movement grew to retain the Synod Hall as the public meeting hall and to avoid the additional costs necessary for the proposed new building. Baldwin Brown was on the platform once again in February 1905 for a further public meeting of the Citizens' and Ratepayers' Union attended by c.1,500 people. He expressed unhappiness with the detailed scheme chosen by the local authority and called once again for an architectural competition. He stated once again that he did not believe that such a public building should be put in the hands of the city superintendents of work who would come under pressure from councillors and others to change the designs.¹³¹ Due to a range of difficulties over the site and finance, the scheme went into abeyance until 1910 when a new site, close to the Synod Hall, facing onto the Lothian Road was agreed. At a meeting on 22 March 1910 Baldwin Brown's views were vindicated when the Council also agreed that the proposed building design be put to competition with the assessor being Sir Aston Webb assisted by the City Superintendent of Works, James A. Williamson.¹³²

In the period between 1890 and 1910 Baldwin Brown was a highly active campaigner who, having failed in his campaign to be elected to the municipal authority, nonetheless continued to seek to influence the council's own schemes and to encourage them to oppose what he felt were inappropriate third-party schemes. The political manoeuvrings and rhetoric associated with such cases were at times intense and Baldwin Brown used his position and influence across a range of bodies to encourage broader support and to give him alternative bases from which to mount campaigns. Over this period he became increasingly concerned with the level of expertise available to the municipal authority to be drawn on both in its own schemes

¹³¹ Reported in the *Scotsman*, 28 February 1905.

¹³² Williamson, previously the Deputy City Superintendent of Works, had succeeded Robert Morham in 1908.

and in judging others' proposals. Underlying this was a gradual disenchantment with the role of the municipal authority to maintain an objective and consistent approach to managing the city's built environment in a sensitive and informed manner. Meanwhile demolition was continuing within the Old Town and by 1904 he had recognised that rather than fighting preservation cases on an individual basis a move to a more strategic approach was necessary. He therefore conceived a campaign which sought to put in place a system to support the long-term preservation of the city's significant buildings and monuments.

Chapter 7. Historical Cities and Ancient Monuments

Edinburgh's Council ceased to promote new area-based sanitary schemes from 1900 until the 1920s,¹ but demolition and clearance in the Old Town under the 1893 Edinburgh Improvement Scheme continued.² Works under this scheme included the well-documented pioneering refurbishments undertaken by Patrick Geddes at Wardrop Court, Riddles Court and at in the Watergate area at the foot of the Canongate. However, demolitions included over 200 dwellings on the designated site off Old Assembly Square (now Tron Square) with further demolitions and clearance taking place at High School Yards, Portsburgh Square and at other locations in the Old Town.³ In February 1902 a pseudonymous correspondent 'Autochthon' wrote two letters to the *Scotsman* in rapid succession regarding the demolition of a group of Old Edinburgh tenements on the High Street which he believed had been condemned unnecessarily. Terming the act 'this riot of vandalism, this barbarous defacement and obliteration of the fairest and noblest of historic cities,' he sought to 'evoke an earnest and united effort to avert a consummation so imminent and so pitiable.'⁴ He followed his letter with an article giving more detail about the buildings and their historical associations.⁵ In 1903, a letter in the *Scotsman* by 'TPM' suggested that old walls and other ancient structures of historic interest in the city should be carefully looked after: 'No one would wish them "renewed" or "restored," but all would wish them judiciously preserved to lend interest to our ancient town, and so that we might be enabled to hand them on for the enjoyment of generations yet unborn.'⁶ This letter led in turn to correspondence about the condition of the

¹ J. Johnson and L. Rosenburg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh: the Enduring Legacy of Patrick Geddes* (Glendareul, 2010), 127-130. The authors suggest that the Council's financial deficit, carried on the local rates, was a key factor in the decision.

² Edinburgh (Housing of the Working Classes) Improvement Scheme 1893. 56 & 57 Vict, cap c.cxiii *Edinburgh Improvement Scheme Provisional Order*. See Johnson and Rosenburg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh*, Chapter 4, 87-140.

³ For 1893 improvement areas see Johnson and Rosenburg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh*, 138-9.

⁴ *Scotsman*, 4 April 1902. The buildings were at 105-119 High Street.

⁵ *Scotsman*, 14 February 1902.

⁶ *Scotsman*, 6 June 1903.

medieval Wellhouse Tower in West Princes Street Gardens.⁷ In the same year a book of picturesque scenes from Old Edinburgh and Leith by L. Ingleby Wood entitled *Vanishing Edinburgh* was published,⁸ and there was continuing newspaper coverage of the incremental losses of ancient structures resulting from the Council's broader improvement programme.⁹

A significant shift in Baldwin Brown's approach becomes evident at this time in that he started to promote the use of a two-tier protective system for Britain within the context of the broader aesthetic control over development in urban areas. The former was based on detailed research that he undertook on approaches to preservation on the continent while the latter appears to have developed in response to a presentation by Sir William Emerson to RIBA in 1900, suggesting that there was a need for official control over architecture and development in Britain's cities, and the discussions that ensued.¹⁰ Importantly for Baldwin Brown, Emerson's paper also considered, albeit briefly, the existing arrangements for such controls in a number of European countries and in America. Emerson also proposed the creation of a national Ministry of Fine Arts and local expert advisory committees. Baldwin Brown had already suggested the use of local expert committees in relation to the proposed new municipal buildings in Edinburgh in 1886 and he continued to pursue this suggestion throughout his remaining time in Edinburgh.¹¹

At the end of 1903 Baldwin Brown set out his own concerns over the loss of Edinburgh landmarks, as he termed them, to his fellow Cockburn Association council members.

Consideration of this problem was remitted to a committee which it suggested should confer

⁷ *Scotsman*, 8 June 1903.

⁸ L. Ingleby Wood, *Vanishing Edinburgh and Leith* (Edinburgh, 1903).

⁹ See, for example, *Scotsman*, 2 December 1903.

¹⁰ W. Emerson, 'Opening address', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 7 (1891), 1-13. See *Building News*, 22 June 1900, 853-6 for discussions of the control of development at the 1900 architectural congress. This suggestion was raised subsequently by RIBA Presidents Sir Aston Webb and John Belcher.

¹¹ Chapter 5.

with a similar committee in the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.¹² The proposed involvement of the SAS is noteworthy and their renewed interest in the preservation of Old Town buildings seems likely to rest with Baldwin Brown who had been elected to their council in late 1903.¹³ In January 1904 Baldwin Brown proposed that a deputation be sent to the Council and that funding for the circulation of a memorial on the subject be found.¹⁴ This was discussed by the CA council and a joint-initiative with the SAS focussing on the preservation of Old Town buildings was agreed drawing on an investigation of how urban preservation was being achieved on the continent. In the summer of 1904 Baldwin Brown, a practiced European traveller, used his language skills and broad network of contacts to collect ‘a great mass of materials from all over the Continent.’¹⁵

Following his international research, in the late summer of 1904 Baldwin Brown produced *The Care of Historical Cities* on behalf of the CA and SAS. In the introduction he wrote:

This question of preservation is one that concerns the inhabitants of a large number of towns, both at home and abroad. In Edinburgh the gradual lessening of the number of picturesque domestic dwellings has been watched by many with the deepest concern, and there is a widespread feeling that this matter is one deserving the attention of patriotic citizens, who desire that the town shall retain as far as is practicable the traditional aspect of its older and more historical features.¹⁶

The report went on to summarise some of the protective provisions in place across Europe and the activities of various official and amenity bodies in the urban preservation process.¹⁷

¹² CA *Minute Book*, 20 December 1903; 24 November 1904.

¹³ Elected on 30 November 1903. SAS, *Minute Book* 1901-13. Other council members included Thomas Ross., Professor Hume Brown, and Herbert Maxwell (Chair).

¹⁴ CA, *Minute Book*, 15 January 1904.

¹⁵ Part II of *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905) contains detailed descriptions of the situation in various continental countries including Britain together with discussion of the historical development. For the historical development of British and continental preservation arrangements, see J. Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation* (Oxford 1999); M. Hall, (ed.), *Towards World Heritage: International Origins of the Preservation Movement 1870-1930* (Farnham, 2011); M. Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation* (London, 2013); A. Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789-1914* (Cambridge, 2013).

¹⁶ G.B. Brown, *The Care of Historical Cities* (Edinburgh, 1904), 5.

¹⁷ Brown, *Historical Cities*, 5-7. Baldwin Brown noted that on the initiative of the Society of Antiquaries of London, the British Government had obtained reports on the statutory provisions for

This was intended to encourage Edinburgh's municipal authority to adopt more effective preservation measures and to provide exemplars of the mechanisms and processes adopted elsewhere. The research reinforced Baldwin Brown's views that the basis for any protective system was the preparation and adoption of an inventory identifying significant buildings and monuments worthy of preservation:

Since the formation of these [CA and SAS] committees the Town Council of Edinburgh has taken into consideration a proposal to make an inventory of the older Edinburgh Houses of artistic or historic interest. Such an inventory is the necessary first step towards any measures for preservation, like those in force in certain foreign cities, and it is confidently to be hoped that this timely proposal will issue in protective action for which future generations of Edinburgh citizens will long be grateful.¹⁸

This referred to a proposal by Bailie Fraser Dobie for the Town Council 'to consider the advisability of preparing a register of all the old buildings in Edinburgh of historical or architectural interest, and consider whether any steps should be taken for the preservation of those considered of sufficient importance to be retained or restored'.¹⁹ However, taking forward such a proposal within the Council proved extremely difficult.²⁰

Baldwin Brown also used *The Care of Historical Cities* to introduce the benefits of a two tier protective system. He drew attention to the fact that many of the ancient monument acts in Europe had as their main object the preservation of a relatively small number of monuments which were perceived as of national value. Many countries, however, possessed a very much larger number of other monuments which he believed should be preserved, but which did not benefit from national protection. These included many of the characteristic features of the older cities. He sought therefore to encourage the support of both Edinburgh's municipal council and the city's broader population for the development of local protective measures,

the care of historical monuments in Europe in 1897. However the survey was not complete, had led to no particular action and by 1905 the reports were out of date. *The Care of Ancient Monuments*, viii.

¹⁸ Brown, *Historical Cities*. For London County Council's inventory in the late 1890s, see J. Earl, 'London government: a record of custodianship', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain*, 57-76, 61-63.

¹⁹ ECA/SL1/2/29, *Council Minutes*, 20 September 1904. Dobie and Baldwin Brown had common sympathies regarding the preservation of Old Edinburgh.

²⁰ Chapter 8.

drawing attention to examples of how this had been achieved through the use of local byelaws in Germany and Prussia.

The protection of Edinburgh

The publication of *The Care of Historical Cities* heralded an intense campaign by Baldwin Brown to preserve the Old Town's ancient buildings and monuments. In July 1904 he gave a detailed lecture on *Old Edinburgh: The Secrets of Its Charm* to a crowded St Cuthbert's Hall. The meeting was presided over by the Lord Provost, Robert Cranston, with the audience including a large number of other councillors and magistrates. Baldwin Brown analysed Edinburgh Old Town's general character, but in line with his comments in *The Care of Historical Cities* his focus was on the locally-significant buildings and the need for local protective measures. His talk concentrated not on monuments such as the Castle, Holyrood or St Giles' which he felt were already well-protected but:

rather of the Edinburgh of the smaller picturesque features, which singularly were of minor importance, though in combination they imparted to the street their special physiognomy. By these were meant the division and grouping of the masses of the older houses and their rugged masonry; the frequent gables, the dormer windows, with their carved finials, the timber projections, the rough stone slating, the harling, the moulded doorways and inscribed lintels, all of which helped to impart such a pleasant old-world aspect to the more ancient thoroughfares. The secret of the charm of Edinburgh resided partly in the natural features of the site, and partly in the general architectural treatment of the site, with the effective contrast between the classic regularity of the New Town and the picturesque confusion of the crowded and towering "lands" of the Old... These older architectural relics, with the historical associations which gathered so thickly around them, were amongst the attractions of Edinburgh which intelligent strangers found of especial interest. They were in this sense civic assets that had really a commercial as well as an artistic and historical value. Their preservation was from all points of view a matter of importance, for it must be remembered that they were a class of possessions which, when once destroyed, could never again be restored.²¹

Having reviewed other large cities where buildings demolished under improvement programmes were in poor condition and of questionable value, he suggested that 'In Edinburgh, on the contrary, the older houses, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were as a general rule solid stone structures, many of which might stand for

²¹ *Scotsman*, 14 July 1904.

centuries, and they possessed the artistic and historical value already referred to.’²² He believed that it was worth taking a great deal of trouble to preserve these and even if some outlay was needed, this would soon be repaid if the city retained its attractions. Reflecting the inventory for Edinburgh proposed by Bailie Dobie, and seeking to encourage wider support, he continued that it was a matter for congratulation that ‘a policy of wise conservation was now in the ascendant in that department of municipal government which had this matter in charge. The old “lands” might have to be gutted and their interior spaces redistributed, but the matter of importance for the charm of old Edinburgh was the judicious reparation and preservation of the external fabric.’²³ As there was no move at national level to introduce protective measures for occupied buildings, he suggested that the local authority might consider introducing its own controls as it had done successfully to reduce the adverse visual impact of advertising hoardings on the city’s amenity.²⁴

In August, Baldwin Brown also wrote two important articles for the *Scotsman* on the care of historical cities.²⁵ The first discussed what it was to be a modern city, what this meant for history, traditions and ancient memorials, and the need to achieve a balance between individual freedoms and broader public good. Baldwin Brown noted that while some progress had been made: ‘complaints are sometimes made that municipal authorities in this country are indifferent to appeals to a generous civic pride and sense of continuity with the bygone days, and are too fond of putting aside what are after all serious considerations with a facetious reference to ratepayers or the sanitary inspector.’²⁶ He then set out why remains from the past were of value. At a broad level, he believed that the traditional memories of the race were rooted in ancient memorials ranging from palaces, castle and churches to the

²² *Scotsman*, 14 July 1904.

²³ *Scotsman*, 14 July 1904.

²⁴ 61 & 62 Vict. cap 71, *Edinburgh Corporation Act, 1899*.

²⁵ *Scotsman*, 17 and 19 August 1904. Although unattributed, their content and style, and the fact that part of the text was reproduced in *The Care of Ancient Monuments* subsequently, allows Baldwin Brown to be identified as author.

²⁶ *Scotsman*, 17 August 1904.

streets and squares, and that such memorials were of incalculable advantage in keeping alive throughout the Empire the sense of unity of the race.²⁷ In relating ancient memorials to national identity, Baldwin Brown was following Ruskin who in his *Lamp of Memory* had defined the glory of an ancient building as its lasting witness which: ‘connects forgotten and following ages with each other, and half constitutes the identity, as it concentrates the sympathy, of nations.’²⁸ Baldwin Brown then reviewed some of the recent changes in the city as an object lesson and speculated on the positive impact on the city’s tourism had the West Bow and its ancient buildings been preserved. Nonetheless:

If the city has lost much, it still retains a very large number of its ancient dwellings, and it is in those houses and their groupings and arrangement that the artistic and historical interest of Edinburgh largely consists. The known and nameable monuments that attract the ordinary sightseer we could more easily spare than the general masses of the older houses that in some parts of the town still stand so finely shoulder to shoulder on the crest of a ridge. These houses, the height and massiveness of which have been admired by travellers for hundreds of years, are specially characteristic of Edinburgh.²⁹

He then reviewed German efforts to take stock of their urban areas in order to make the most of what remains to them. He concluded this first article by reminding Edinburgh councillors that they already had proposals for an inventory under discussion and he then set out the other steps that should be pursued in the city:

Local regulations for building should be enlarged and strengthened along the lines of the German ones.... The city should be able to control the laying out of new districts that will presently be forming part of the city.... There should be no more demolitions of frontages to the High Street or the Canongate, and no atrocities in brick and concrete should be permitted in the conspicuous parts of the city. New work on old domestic buildings should not borrow fancy architecture from models of quite a different character, but should accord in style and treatment and material with the mass of structures of the same kind in the vicinity. Builders, when they point an old rubble wall, should be taught not to smear all their superfluous mortar over the ancient stones; and when they plaster a rubble wall they should not rule lines upon it to make it look like squared ashlar. Brick should, where possible, be avoided in the repairs of the chimney stalks and other parts of the old stone houses. These may to some seem trivial matters, but people in other ancient cities are taking

²⁷For Baldwin Brown and Empire, see A. Swenson, ‘The Heritage of Empire’, in Swenson, A. and Mandler, P. (eds.), *From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire c.1800-1940* (Oxford, 2013), 9.

²⁸J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London, 1903), 234. First edition published in 1849.

²⁹*Scotsman*, 17 August 1904.

pains about these details, and why should we be left behind? There is ample room for the activity of any civic official who may aspire to be known to after time as the preserver of Old Edinburgh, just as Provost Drummond is acclaimed as the creator of the new.³⁰

In a second article, published two days later, Baldwin Brown focused in more detail on the steps being taken on the continent to preserve key elements of historic cities in the face of the pressures for modernisation and change. In common with Edinburgh, the demand for broad, level, and straight streets, roomy places of business, imposing frontages, and domestic interiors supplied with the latest apparatus of health and comfort had led to wholesale demolitions and rebuildings. These had altered out of all knowledge the older parts of many historical cities: ‘It is not to be wondered at that misgivings have arisen in the minds of many as to the wisdom and economy of some of these sweeping changes.’³¹ He then discussed recent preservation-related activities in Germany, where ‘Thoughtful and patriotic citizens who saw the traditional aspect of cities of the fatherland dissolving before their eyes were wounded in their historic sense and in their affection for home.’³² From this, he noted, a powerful preservation movement had arisen some five years earlier, summed up by the title of this patriotic society — ‘Heimatschütz,’ or ‘The Defence of Home’.³³ Alongside this movement, an annual congress under the title “Tag für Denkmalpflege,” or “Meeting for the Care of Monuments,” was held in different towns of the Empire together with publication of a special journal.

Baldwin Brown also used the article to draw attention to a speech given by the Burgomaster of Hildesheim on the duties of civic authorities with regard to ancient features which he regarded as a classic expression of the principles of the new movement and valuable for the information it contained about the practical measures adopted in the town. In addition to the

³⁰ *Scotsman*, 17 August 1904.

³¹ *Scotsman*, 19 August 1904.

³² *Scotsman*, 19 August 1904. For the preservation movement in Germany, see A. Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage*, 114-128; M. Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement*, 144-152.

³³ For a broader discussion of the emergence of heimat, see C. Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: the German Idea of Heimat* (Oxford, 1990), especially chapter 3; C.F. Otto, ‘Modern Environment and Historical Continuity: The Heimatschutz Discourse in Germany’, *Art Journal*, 43, 2, 148-157.

compilation of a local inventory, the council had purchased ancient buildings and provided funds for repairs by private owners. It had also introduced architectural competitions for houses or rows to be built in the traditional style of each city, and compulsive measures to be used in certain circumstances involving historic buildings.

Broadening the campaign

In November 1904, Baldwin Brown wrote to the *Times* on the recently held *Congress for the Care of Monuments*, attended by representatives of the German states and by public officials from Germany's towns and districts, where a long discussion took place on the question of the treatment of the older examples of domestic architecture in historical cities, and it was urged that these should not only be catalogued, photographed, and measured, but should be preserved. He drew attention to the fact that a number of German cities, including Nürnberg, Hildesheim, Frankfurt, Lübeck, and Rothenburg, had local building regulations which prescribed adherence to the traditional style in new work introduced into the central part of towns, and safeguarded what was valuable in the old.³⁴ In British cities such as Chester and Edinburgh, however, the official care of monuments had been reduced to the narrowest limits: 'We have to rely almost entirely, save when the Office of Works acts out of the goodness of its heart, on public opinion as influenced by private societies, and public opinion acts in a somewhat haphazard fashion, or does not act at all till it is too late.'³⁵

In December 1904 three long articles written by Baldwin Brown appeared in *The Builder* reviewing the protection of monuments across Europe, taking as their subject: the activities of local amenity bodies and professional societies, protection at the local or regional level,

³⁴ *Times*, 1 November 1904. The event took place in Mainz.

³⁵ *Times*, 1 November 1904. The reference to the Office of Works refers to the Berwick Ramparts case where the Department was very slow to react to the threatened destruction of the earthworks. Chester introduced measures of protection for its town walls in 1884, 47 & 48 Vict. Cap 239, *Chester Improvement Act*.

and national protective measures respectively.³⁶ These articles fleshed out the information contained in *The Care of Historical Cities* and the two *Scotsman* articles, drawing together his knowledge of the protective measures in place across Europe, distilling the key activities and arrangements, and discussing the different governmental arrangements between state and the local administrations. At the outset, Baldwin Brown emphasised the distinction between appreciation of the remains of the past and their protection, noting that while the public were open to the charm of a picturesque medieval building: ‘Unfortunately this vague general feeling is seldom effective for the defence of an ancient monument or a lovely site when attacked in the name of some modern improvement. It required continual effort on the part of those fully alive to the value of this portion of the national assets to secure a proper balancing of the claims of the new with those of the old.’³⁷

In turning to his study of foreign protective systems he identified that there were commonly three elements: private societies; a state-appointed Commission with custodians or inspectors; and legislation in the form of state monuments acts or local byelaws affecting buildings in towns or districts. He went on to list the work of local societies across Europe, including the work of the National Trust and Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in Britain, and stressed the importance of gaining the support of the general public, especially the young: ‘No principle is more insisted upon in these discussions than the need for basing the movement for the care of monuments on the public will. Law and commissions, it is pointed out, can only be really effective if they represent the genuine wishes of the community.’³⁸ He noted that Bavarian Ministers had recently introduced guidance for local authorities which he felt would have delighted William Morris as it included the preservation of ancient works such as gates and walls, that alterations to

³⁶ G.B. Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments I,’ *The Builder*, 10 December 1904, 594-6; ‘The care of ancient monuments II,’ *The Builder*, 17 December 1904, 622-4; ‘The care of ancient monuments III,’ *The Builder*, 24 December 1904, 654-56.

³⁷ Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments I’, 594.

³⁸ Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments I’, 595.

buildings of historical or artistic interest necessitated public permission and were required to be in the style and character of the original, that new buildings in the area of historic buildings must take account of their character, and that the preservation of picturesque views of streets and open spaces should be taken into account when new lines of houses were planned. He also reflected on the broader improvement and emerging planning movement suggesting that: “the tyranny of the engineers’ rule and level must be resisted.”³⁹ Baldwin Brown stressed that this guidance had been issued by Ministers rather than any militant society for the protection of ancient buildings or some individual lover of monuments such as William Morris. Finally, in discussing the German and Bavarian towns, Baldwin Brown noted the importance of their beauty and picturesque charm for attracting visitors: ‘The preservation of this charm is accordingly a matter of enlightened self-interest, and the citizens have wit enough to recognise this fact. One wishes that the same recognition were more common among the citizens of our own older towns, such as Chester and Edinburgh.’⁴⁰

The last part of Baldwin Brown’s discussion concerned statutory protection and the difficulties in introducing national monuments legislation in more advanced European countries due to the conflict with the rights of private owners. Again he reviewed the legislation in place on the continent and noted in particular the inventorization processes, the consents system and the potential for compulsory purchase for national monuments available in France through legislation introduced in 1887.⁴¹ This contrasted with Britain where ‘the Government can only purchase monument by agreement with the owners, and, in view of the portentous “dourness” exhibited (though not in connection with monuments) by some British property-owners, one trembles to think what might happen to some monument of world wide value were war declared between a private proprietor and the public at large.’⁴² He then

³⁹ Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments II’, 623. He was to return to this theme over the coming decade.

⁴⁰ Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments II’, 623.

⁴¹ The provision for compulsory purchase existed prior to the 1887 Act.

⁴² Brown, ‘The care of ancient monuments III’, 654.

discussed in detail the legislation passed by the Duchy of Hesse. This made a distinction between public and privately-owned monuments, with consent necessary for works to the latter. In the case of private monuments, however, once on the official list a notice period of 6 weeks had to be given before proposed works could be implemented, with compensation payable if consent was ultimately refused.⁴³ Finally he noted that there were powers to limit the rights of private property to secure the preservation of an architectural monument or to secure its opening out as demanded by its artistic or historical considerations.⁴⁴

Baldwin Brown placed these articles within architectural rather than fine art or antiquarian journals. This reflected his growing belief that the architectural discipline, and in particular the RIBA, was best placed in terms of its broad interests in civic aesthetics and its ongoing discussions about appropriate control mechanisms, to act as a central point for the demands in towns and districts for legislation to plan new developments while protecting existing amenity and historic buildings. In December 1904 he published a broad-ranging paper in the *RIBA Journal on Urban Legislation in the Interest of Amenity at Home and Abroad*.⁴⁵ Here he adopted a land-use planning perspective, whilst taking the opportunity to repeat some of his earlier published information. He gathered the issues together under his previously-used term of 'urban amenity' and identified four separate areas in need of protective or restrictive measures: the treatment of public edifices with special reference to those which are mainly of an engineering character; the building of new streets in connection with urban improvements; the laying out of new suburban districts; and, ancient monuments of artistic or historical value.

While Baldwin Brown had great faith in architects' abilities with regard to new public buildings, he suggested that it was those structures placed in the hands of engineers without

⁴³ This is similar to provisions introduced in Britain some nine years later as part of the 1913 Ancient Monuments Protection Act, although occupied buildings were excluded.

⁴⁴ Brown, 'The care of ancient monuments III', 654.

⁴⁵ G.B. Brown, 'Urban legislation in the interests of amenity at home and abroad', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 12 (1904), 69-78. The paper appeared in the 10 December issue.

architectural training where some form of guidance was necessary: ‘for there are certain well-defined artistic principles which all architects will understand, but which the modern engineer too often wholly neglects.’⁴⁶ Once again, Baldwin Brown stressed the need to take advantage of available expertise: ‘It is they who ought to approach the artists, instead of the artists having to hammer at the doors of the Guildhalls and County Council chambers and railway officers, for an audience. In the Institute and in the Councils of provincial associations there exist bodies which could always provide suitable expert advice.’⁴⁷

In the laying out of new streets, again Baldwin Brown drew on his experiences in Edinburgh. He identified a key success factor for the New Town in Edinburgh being the municipal authority’s ability to acquire the land and, in discussing the different types of approach to frontage design, he drew attention to Edinburgh and Bath in terms of the regular composition of monumental beauty — but also mentioned the problems of preserving these compositions subsequently. Drawing on his Charlotte Square experiences, he illustrated the problem by referring to ‘a well-known square in a northern city’ where the original elevations had to conform to the prescribed design but where there was no formal provision for their maintenance and the present proprietors were under no legal restriction in the matter of alterations on an original façade. He then went on to discuss another Edinburgh case: ‘In the case of classical compositions, balanced and detailed with the nicest sense of form and proportion, such as Archibald Elliot’s Waterloo Place at Edinburgh, any alteration throws the whole out of gear, and the most zealous care should be exercised to prevent inconsiderate or wanton tampering with what depends for its value on its completeness.’⁴⁸ He suggested that ‘As the importance of this is not always seen by the average citizen, we have here a field where the exercise of a little authority and compulsion would be quite in place.’⁴⁹ Unless well-considered monumental schemes could be carried out, however, he believed that it was

⁴⁶ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 70.

⁴⁷ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 70.

⁴⁸ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 71.

⁴⁹ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 71.

better to give individual proprietors freedom, contrasting Regent Street which contained in his view nothing really of a high order with the agglomeration of accidental shapes and colours in Oxford Street. With regard to suburbs, he noted that there were issues of quality and the impact on views, particularly the surroundings of towns ‘which offer noble prospects of rock, or sea, or woodland’ now replaced with: ‘long unbroken rows of tenements of the dullest description that completely block out every prospect, and make the pedestrian feel as if he were in prison.’⁵⁰

The final section of his RIBA paper focused on the protection of ancient monuments of artistic or historical value: ‘when an ancient building, with associations, style, and technique redolent of the past, is “with a light heart” demolished, the loss is absolutely irrevocable, and for this reason alone any civic policy which involves such demolition should be very carefully considered. For if the average British town councillor sees no special value in these things, there are many people whom he rightly wishes to please who rate them very highly.’⁵¹ For Baldwin Brown, the protection of ancient buildings was an issue of national interest and such buildings ought to be regarded as a wealth possessed by Great Britain and valued by kinsfolk across the seas as objects of extreme interest. Reflecting discussion in his earlier papers, he again tied the importance of the built environment to broader issues of identity, stressing that traditional memories of race were reflected in a nation’s culture and that in the case of Britain, this kept alive the sense of unity across the Empire and as such were imperial assets of economic and almost political grounds. In referring to the value of ancient buildings and monuments for kinsfolk across the sea Baldwin Brown may have drawn on a speech by the Liberal Carlisle MP, Robert Ferguson, in Parliament on 14 April 1875, during the second reading of the unsuccessful Ancient Monuments Bill:

⁵⁰ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 71.

⁵¹ Brown, ‘Urban legislation’, 72. He includes in his accompanying list ancient fortifications, civic halls, hospitals and almshouses; bridges, railings, gates, steps, fountains, and the like as well as domestic buildings and their adjuncts.

There was an ever-increasing stream of visitors to this country from across the Atlantic, who came here, not to inspect our railways, our warehouses, or our clocks, but to seek out in quiet nooks our ancient monuments, which were the landmarks of our common history. In times to come, when the English-speaking race should have spread itself over the greater part of the globe, and should have acquired wealth and power, the culture that wealth and civilization gave would lead it to seek for that which wealth could not purchase nor civilization create—namely, the monuments over which it could affectionately linger as the existing records of its old home in England. He thought that such a feeling was likely to conduce to the peace, security, and happiness of the world, and he was certain, as he had before observed, that such was the honourable feeling of reverence held by the working men of this country for such monuments that they would not object to the necessary expense being incurred for their preservation.⁵²

Baldwin Brown suggested that public opinion as voiced in, for example, the *Times* was prepared to accept some reasonable legislation. He disagreed however with Emerson's vision of a British Minister of Fine Arts, which he felt should be given up as unachievable. What was really required he believed was agreement among bodies and individuals interested in this matter on certain proposals of limited scope which could be pressed on Parliament with some reasonable hope of a successful issue.⁵³ Once again he drew on his knowledge of the measures in place in Europe to give a brief indication of what might be sought in Britain.⁵⁴ Having looked at the use of local powers for new suburbs in Germany he moved onto Bavaria and the control of building operations to safeguard the traditional aspect of older cities. Here the town authorities were encouraged to use local regulations in the interest of amenity, laying down that ancient works of fortification, with their fosses, city walls, gates, towers, and all thereto appertaining are to be preserved as carefully as possible and that constructive alterations, interior or exterior, on buildings of historical or artistic importance must depend on official permission. He noted further that 'When new lines of houses are in

⁵² HC Deb 14 April 1875 vol 223 cc879-917.

⁵³ He noted that in Europe the arts tended to be dealt with as part of more extensive departments.

⁵⁴ His suggestions, he indicated, should be seen as supplementary to Sir William Emerson's paper on official control over architecture in towns and cities, read before the London Architectural Congress of 1900 and to other contributions to the RIBA journal.

contemplation care should be taken to safeguard the picturesque views of streets and open places, and the tyranny of the engineer's rule and level must be resisted.'⁵⁵

At the close of 1904, Baldwin Brown continued his campaign by writing a further letter to the *Times* containing a broad public appeal regarding threatened demolition of ancient buildings and monuments. In it he mentioned recent preservation cases in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Berwick-upon-Tweed, York and Dunfermline: 'Abroad there is everywhere some Government agency at work for the preservation of local monuments, while our own, which are all the assets of the kind that exist for the Empire at large, are at the disposal of councils or individuals, who at times show a curious indifference to their value.'⁵⁶ Again he noted that the: 'destruction of all these historical relics when once carried out is irrevocable, and suggested that the fact that in the future their value may greatly increase and be recognised in ever-widening circles should surely enforce a policy of reasonable preservation on all town councils and other responsible bodies.'⁵⁷ His letter was reproduced widely in the professional press and gained support from others, with the *Manchester Guardian's* editor discussing the dilemma of balancing needed civic improvements with the preservation of 'some interesting or venerable house.'⁵⁸ He returned to the subject in an unattributed review article which he wrote in April 1905 for the *Quarterly Review* entitled *Our Neglected Monuments*.⁵⁹ This took as its subject five German and French books on ancient buildings and monuments, together with a British report relating to the statutory protective provisions for historical buildings abroad. Baldwin Brown drew attention to recent preservation cases including the

⁵⁵ Brown, 'Urban legislation', 75.

⁵⁶ *Times*, 27 November 1904.

⁵⁷ *Times*, 27 November 1904.

⁵⁸ *Guardian*, 30 December 1904. Baldwin Brown clarified some of his points in response to the earlier *Guardian* editorial in a subsequent letter. See *Guardian*, 5 January 1905.

⁵⁹ G.B. Brown, 'Our neglected monuments, *The Quarterly Review*, (April 1905), 497-520.

town-walls at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a tithe barn at Peterborough, the late medieval Whitgift Hospital in Croydon and the Adam Houses in Penrith.⁶⁰

He also drew attention to the recent case of the town walls at Berwick to provide a broader introduction to the problems facing ancient remains in British towns. In this case, the local authority had agreed to give over land which included a long stretch the early fourteenth century town wall, ditch and its last remaining tower for a housing development. In response a vociferous local campaign had been led by a local clergyman, the Reverend James King. Baldwin Brown visited the site in May 1905⁶¹ and joined the preservation campaign, writing a detailed letter to the local press setting out the historical and educational importance of the remains.⁶² He had also raised the case at the SAS council meeting in May 1904.⁶³ Although a number of other bodies including the Society of Antiquaries of London were drawn into the case,⁶⁴ it was only following the intervention of Edward VII that the Berwick defences were saved by virtue of being taken into guardianship.⁶⁵ This was a long-running and hard won case in the face of a single-minded municipal authority, which had broadened Baldwin Brown's experience of the difficulties of achieving preservation where a town council had other priorities:

There exists no real reason for the destruction of the Edwardian *enceinte* of Berwick. The proposal was only made because those responsible for the government of the town had no sense of the value of that part of the civic assets; and in this respect, it is to be feared, they only shared in the national laxity of thought about matters of this kind. Many other recent cases could be adduced to show how precarious is the existence of many monuments which are part of the history of the country, and for the loss of which future generations may call us to account.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ See letter, 28 February 1905

⁶¹ 13 May 1904. He was joined by Andrew Murray, Secretary of the Cockburn Association.

⁶² *Berwick Journal*, 19 May 1904; SPAB/Casefiles *Berwick on Tween Ancient Vallum*. The case involved bodies including SPAB, the National Trust and the Society of Antiquaries of London. The *Scotsman* reported Baldwin Brown's letter in a supportive editorial on 21 May 1904.

⁶³ SAS Minute Book. 17 May 1904.

⁶⁴ *Times*, 21 May 1904.

⁶⁵ A very rare case of 'urban protection' under the Ancient Monument legislation at that time.

⁶⁶ Brown, 'Neglected monuments', 499.

The Care of Ancient Monuments

By the beginning of 1905, therefore, Baldwin Brown had undertaken not only detailed research on the preservation mechanisms across Europe but he had also gathered together a number of preservation case studies from Edinburgh and from further afield. Bringing this information together he became committed to a two tier system of protection in Britain, noting that it would be through local mechanisms of protection, particularly drawing on the powers potentially available to municipal authorities such as the byelaws used in Chester and Edinburgh, that ancient buildings and monuments within urban areas and their broader character and amenity could be preserved. In developing this model he was strongly influenced by the rise of the preservation movement focused on German towns and the interest in the preservation as providing a link with the past and to national identity. Baldwin Brown also entered the emerging debate on the mechanisms of control for new urban development which was to coalesce in the early years of the twentieth century as the town planning movement. Through his letters, articles and talks it is possible to see Baldwin Brown's views crystalizing with an increasingly clearly stated preservation philosophy and language, and a system based upon proposed national and local mechanisms of control. His views were however scattered over a series of publications in the press and professional journals but these were used to develop arguments and text for a more substantive considered work. *The Care of Ancient Monuments* extended his study of the preservation arrangements in place on the continent and beyond but also set out the basis of a new preservation philosophy and accompanying system for Britain. Unlike *The Care of Historic Cities*, the target of this book was national government and the wider British population, and it reflected, at least in part, Baldwin Brown's increasing frustration with the difficulties of achieving effective preservation at a local level.

Despite its title, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* considered the safeguarding of ancient occupied buildings as well as ancient monuments. Perhaps under the influence of his work

with the National Trust, Baldwin Brown's discussion also drew in objects of aesthetic interest including elements of the natural landscape and portable artefacts.⁶⁷ The change of focus toward national government was at least in part generated by Baldwin Brown's experience of the difficulties in working with the local authority in Edinburgh and with other local councils in Britain:

The town councillor is a representative of the public, and it is useless to expect from the average councillor any greater sensitiveness in this regard than is shown by the members of the public at large. We may expect from him a feeling of responsibility for the interests in his charge, which may keep him benevolently neutral in his attitude to a portion of the civic assets that can never be increased; but of active care for the monuments of the past he will only show as much as he thinks public opinion demands.⁶⁸

The significance of the 1905 book rests not so much with the expanded survey and description of the preservation measures in use across Europe and in America which formed Part II,⁶⁹ but with the comprehensive discussions contained in Part I setting out a philosophical framework for building and monument protection and providing recommendations for the new mechanisms necessary in Britain. Baldwin Brown took the opportunity to draw on and distil the ideas that he had raised in his earlier articles, letters and talks in order to provide a structured and logical discussion. The fourteen chapters which made up Part I set out the historical background to preservation, defined key terms, outlined the broader philosophical framework to justify the case for preservation, explored the beneficial role that buildings and monuments might play for government and broader society, and provided an overview of what Baldwin Brown had identified as three elements of preservation — the activities of private societies, those of official and semi-official agencies and bodies, and the use of legislative measures at both local and national level. He

⁶⁷ Parts of Baldwin Brown's text are identical to elements of his 1904 and 1905 articles in the *Scotsman*, *The Builder* and the *Quarterly Review* and suggests that they were being written in parallel.

⁶⁸ G.B. Brown, 'Our ancient monuments and their place in modern life', *Saint George*, 9, 35, (1906), 185-206, 205-6. This article is discussed in further detail below.

⁶⁹ It is commonly asserted that Baldwin Brown used the Government reports (the 'Blue Books') for information on the protective systems in place in Europe. He corrected this in the *Times Literary Supplement* indicating that his knowledge was drawn from personal contacts and various published documents, and that these had been identified in the 1905 book's preface and bibliography. *Times Literary Supplement*, 2 March 1906, 74.

also discussed the use of inventories, and gave his views on controversial subjects such as the desirability or otherwise of building restoration, the disposal of finds from excavations, the issue of exporting works of art, and the use of compulsory purchase powers.

Unlike *The Care of Historical Cities*, Baldwin Brown also took the opportunity to include a critical assessment of the legislative provisions in Britain in Part II of the 1905 book.⁷⁰ Here he noted the resistance to the introduction of protective legislation in the 1870s and 1880s due to the perceived infringement of private property rights, and that subsequently only 41 monuments had been brought under the protection of the 1882 Ancient Monument Protection Act. Whilst welcoming the strengthening of the Act in 1900 (when county councils were given powers to take guardianship responsibilities for ancient monuments and allowed public access to the protected sites with the consent of the owner), he emphasised that since the first Inspector of Ancient Monument's death in 1900, no successor had been appointed and that the protection process under the Act was effectively moribund.⁷¹ He also drew attention to the work of London County Council and in particular their inventory of historic buildings and also highlighted the use of local byelaws in Chester and Edinburgh.

The content of *The Care of Ancient Monuments* brought together much of Baldwin Brown's 1904 and early 1905 writings on preservation. His overarching message was important — Britain had fallen behind other countries in its protection of its early buildings and monuments and the book was intended not only to assist in the design an enhanced national preservation system, but to persuade both politicians and the public for its need. His key recommendations were threefold: the establishment of a principle that private or corporate property could be expropriated on aesthetic or historical grounds; the appointment of a Royal

⁷⁰ G.B. Brown, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905), 148-165.

⁷¹ See M.W. Thompson, 'The first Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the field', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 23 (1960), 103-24. Bowden suggests that for all practical purposes the 1882 Act died with the General. See M. Bowden, *Pitt Rivers: The Life and Archaeological Work of Lieutenant-General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, DCL, FRS, FSA* (Cambridge, 1991), 102.

Commission to compile inventories; and, the strengthening of the legislative provisions for the protection of ancient buildings and monuments.⁷² National inventory bodies were created in Scotland, Wales and England in 1908 as a direct result of Baldwin Brown's recommendation, and strengthening of the ancient monument legislation was also to take place in 1913, including some, albeit very limited, elements of compulsory protection.⁷³ However the expansion of the legislation to include provisions for the protection of occupied ancient buildings (whether singly or in groups) was not to be achieved within Baldwin Brown's lifetime.

Inventories of ancient buildings

Despite the wider focus of the 1905 book, Baldwin Brown had not lost sight of the need to make progress in Edinburgh. In 1905 he had written the introduction to a two volume illustrated study of Old Edinburgh buildings by Bruce J. Home,⁷⁴ published between 1905 and 1907: 'Mr Bruce Home has not only preserved for us in some of his drawings detailed records of the utmost value of work which has unfortunately perished, but in others he is offering most effective aid to those who are desirous that the city should not lightly part with what remains of her monumental heritage from the past.'⁷⁵ Early in 1906 Bailie Dobie, presented a paper to the EAA on *The Aesthetic Duties of a Corporation toward A City*.⁷⁶ This bore a number of similarities to the paper delivered by the Mayor of Hildesheim which Baldwin Brown had drawn attention to in his Edinburgh talk in 1904.⁷⁷ Dobie noted that in Nurnberg in Bavaria, the old medieval architecture was retained, that no building was altered

⁷² Brown, *The Care of Ancient Monuments*, 10-11.

⁷³ Chapter 9.

⁷⁴ Bruce J. Home, *Old Houses in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1905/07). Published in serial form with the first three drawings published in January 1905. The first volume was given to the municipal authority in October 1905 and the second volume in July 1907. ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Books*, 31 October 1905; 9 July 1907.

⁷⁵ Home, *Old Houses*, 2.

⁷⁶ W.F. Dobie, 'The aesthetic duty of a corporation towards a city', *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 5 (1910), 49-58. *Scotsman*, 14 February 1906. Dobie took a visible role within the municipal authority on matters relating to the city's history, collections and museums.

⁷⁷ Although it cannot be demonstrated, it is very likely that Dobie and Baldwin Brown worked together on this speech.

or demolished without permission and that the town more recent development had been concentrated outside the town walls. Such a principle, he suggested, might have been adopted sixty or seventy years ago in Edinburgh in connection with the High Street and the northern slopes of the ridge: 'During the last fifty years much has been done in the city that should not have been done, and chances innumerable of producing features of great civic duty have been ruthlessly thrown away, but it is not yet altogether too late to prevent destruction of much that is well worth retaining'.⁷⁸ It was, he believed, the duty of every citizen, to earnestly strive to see that what is done in the future is for the lasting benefit of the city and the dignity of the capital. He went on to criticise the North British Hotel and development on the south side of Princes Street, and the impact of the Caledonian Hotel on views towards the Corstorphine Hills to the west of the city and suggested that it was the duty of a corporation of a capital city to make such necessary regulation as shall prevent anything likely to interfere with its beauty and interest:

Municipal representatives, as a rule are inclined to look in other directions for the welfare of the citizens, there are sanitation, public health, cleaning, police arrangements and many other things, all being necessary for the well-being of a community; but man cannot live by bread alone, and I hold that municipal art and the material dignity of a capital city should have equal consideration with these others. They have not, however, been much thought of. The municipality has left the individual to his own devices and neglected their own duty of tackling these problems: the result is heterogeneousness and confusion, and there has not been sufficient public opinion to stir them into action, either in the direction of control or initiation. If the citizens desire improvements in these matters they have it in their own hands to force their representatives to move.⁷⁹

Picking up an issue regularly mentioned by Baldwin Brown, he also suggested that an advisory committee be created to advise a merged Council and Dean of Guild Court. This would be made up of amenity and professional bodies, he suggested, who would have two considerations — new buildings and the preservation of the old. Bailie Dobie's speech had been strongly influenced by Baldwin Brown:

⁷⁸ Dobie, 'Aesthetic duties', 51.

⁷⁹ Dobie, 'Aesthetic duties', 54.

Then there is a point requiring very serious and immediate consideration, namely, the care of old building of historical, archaeological or architectural interest; it is to the underlying discredit of our city that so many of these have been so ruthlessly destroyed, either by being cleared away altogether or ruined by alterations. Professor Baldwin Brown in his book on the care of public monuments and in his lectures and speeches has done splendid work in this directions, and by pointing out what is done in other countries, and even in some of the towns in our own country, has shown how it is possible to make regulations to enable us to preserve what is left of our ancient buildings. It is unnecessary for me to go into the details of such regulations, as you have probably all read this admirable work, but I may say that some time ago I made an attempt to get a register of all such buildings in Edinburgh made out with the intention of trying ultimately if in one of our provisional orders it were not possible to get powers to prevent alterations without consent of the local authority. As a general indication of the lines to go upon, I would go to the length, I believe, of suggesting that the whole of the "Historic Mile" should for this purpose be scheduled.⁸⁰

Following the report of Dobie's speech in the press, Baldwin Brown took the opportunity to add his voice to the call for the more sympathetic treatment of Edinburgh's ancient buildings and its civic amenity. Unsurprisingly he took the opportunity to support Dobie's suggestion of advisory committee for the city and he also pressed once again for an Edinburgh inventory: 'Is it too much for the Edinburgh public interested in these matters to press on the Town Council the carrying out of this very valuable and interesting piece of work? No doubt outside help would be readily given by the citizens of architectural, historical, and antiquarian tastes.'⁸¹ In June Baldwin Brown also suggested at a National Trust council meeting that they become involved in encouraging the creation of a national inventory body and: 'it was resolved that the Trust should put itself into communication with the various archaeological societies throughout the country with a view to urging the govt. to undertake, by Royal Commission or otherwise, a survey and inventory of monuments of artistic or historic interest.'⁸²

⁸⁰Dobie, 'Aesthetic duties', 55-6. The list of people he suggested would comprise the proposed Advisory Committee included the Edinburgh University Professor of Fine Art.

⁸¹ *Scotsman*, 16 February 1906. Baldwin Brown also suggested that Bruce Home become the standing advisor to the Council in antiquarian and historical questions.

⁸² National Trust, *Minute Books*, 18 June 1906.

In July 1906 the International Congress of Architects met in London and Baldwin Brown took the opportunity to present the opening paper at a session dedicated to the conservation of national monuments.⁸³ The Congress had already discussed preservation at the 1904 conference in Madrid,⁸⁴ and Baldwin Brown highlighted the resolution at that earlier meeting that every country should have a society for the preservation of historical and artistic monuments and that such societies should collaborate in the compilation of inventories of national and local treasures: 'The buildings and works of art that have come down to us as a legacy from the past represent national assets which can never be increased, and the problem how best to deal with them is the same in all European countries.'⁸⁵ He stressed that in many cases the work of the Continental Monument Commissions was based on a list or schedule of national monuments which were worth preservation either on artistic or historical grounds: 'here again Great Britain is conspicuously behind her sister nations.'⁸⁶ Using a well-tested technique he then sought the formal support of the Congress to add weight to his calls: 'it is suggested that the International Congress should strengthen the hands of those who are working in this direction by a memorial in favour of a Government scheme for the survey and inventorisation of the vast treasures in ancient monuments and works of art which this country possesses, and for which there is practically no protection.'⁸⁷ Following discussion of the papers two resolutions were adopted. The first related to the compulsory acquisition of monuments where they were not kept in good condition. The second was specifically aimed at the British Government and reflected Baldwin Brown's earlier presentation and appeal for support:

⁸³ G.B. Brown, 'Government action on the continent in the interests of national monuments', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 13, (1906), lxii-lxvi. The session took place on 18th July, 1906. Other contributors included William R. Lethaby, joint director of the Central School of Art and professor at the Royal College of Art in London, who was highly active in SPAB.

⁸⁴ The earlier congress took place in April 1904 and was reported in the *RIBA Journal* on 23 April 1904. Six resolutions regarding the preservation and restoration of architectural monuments were adopted.

⁸⁵ Brown, 'Government action', lxii.

⁸⁶ Brown, 'Government action', lxiii.

⁸⁷ Brown, 'Government action', lxiii.

this International Congress of Architects recommends that the British Government be approached with a view to appointing a Royal Commission to control and extend the operations of the Ancient Monuments Protection Amendments Act of 1900 and to prepare an accurate catalogue of all ancient monuments, whether historic or prehistoric, taking similar action to that of the Department of Historical Manuscripts and in agreement with the measures adopted in other countries.⁸⁸

Ancient monuments and their place in modern life.

If *The Care of Ancient Monuments* was intended to set out the systems of preservation in Europe and America, while making recommendations for how the system might be improved in Britain, a far more discursive philosophical article published in 1906 sought to explore why the systems had developed differently and the challenges for those in Britain wishing to improve matters.⁸⁹ Entitled *Ancient monuments and their place in modern life*, the article gives a highly unusual insight Baldwin Brown's thinking and his preservation-related experiences and it is therefore deserving of detailed consideration here. A key element of the paper was the consideration of the attitudes toward preservation in terms of perceived national character. The text commences with a description of how the remains of the past were valued differently in England, Scotland and Ireland: 'In Scotland it requires some kind of adventitious interest, such as an association with Walter Scott or Robert Burns, before the public will be roused to active measures of defence for a threatened monument'.⁹⁰ In Ireland however, Baldwin Brown suggested that the peasantry cherish for their own sake the older sacred and secular structures of their land, while in England, and perhaps in Scotland, he believed that this instinctive reverence for the relics of the past could hardly be said to exist as an element in the popular kind. This problem had implications for those pursuing a preservation agenda:

The taste for ancient memorials is an exotic, and requires very careful cultivation. The few in whom it forms a substantial part of their mental

⁸⁸ Brown, 'Government action', lxvi.

⁸⁹ Gerard Baldwin Brown, 'Our ancient monuments and their place in modern life', *Saint George*, 9, 35, (1906), 185-206. 185. This article was published shortly after Baldwin Brown published *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.

⁹⁰ Brown, 'Our ancient monuments', 185.

equipment have hard work to make the importance of the subject understood by their fellows, and would often give up their efforts in despair, were it not for one consideration of such moment that it really overshadows all others. This is the consideration that the destruction or degradation of an ancient monument is an absolutely irrevocable act, that we may prevent but cannot recall. Unless we interfere in time it is not use our interfering at all. If through the negligence of ourselves and our contemporaries these monuments be suffered to come to harm, there is no place for repentance. Ceaseless vigilance is the only safeguard, and many a patriotic defender of these treasures, wearied out with newspaper controversy, with interviewing town councillors, memorialising public bodies, and getting questions asked in the House of Commons, has been inspired to fresh efforts by the sense that if he and his fellow workers fail to avert the threatened ill, there is no second line of defence, and the harm done will be done for ever.⁹¹

The article went on to explore how to broaden the interest and support for preservation, and whether it might be possible to formulate: ‘certain rational principles which would appeal to all intelligent minds.’ This part of the discussion opened with Baldwin Brown challenging the perceived difficulty that aphorisms such as Montelambert’s ‘Long memories make great people’ would not commend themselves to the ‘common-sense businessman’ whose interests were directed towards the present and for whom memories might act as a distraction from the problems of the hour. Using examples from the natural environment as a parallel Baldwin Brown noted however that: ‘Ordinary people however can be brought to see that intercourse with nature in her unspoiled aspects makes for the moral and the physical health of the community, and cannot be left out of sight in any survey of the national economy’,⁹² and he suggested that preservation arguments could be developed in a similar manner in order to appeal to businessmen and the public at large. He pointed out that in Japan, a country known for its practical modernity, historic shrines and the ability to commune with the ancestors was of recognised importance and he quoted a saying of Confucius that ‘By cultivating respect for the dead and carrying the memory back to the distant past, the moral feelings of the people will awaken and grow in depth.’⁹³ He also drew attention to the fact that the Germans, the most pushing, energetic and up-to-date of all modern European

⁹¹ Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 186.

⁹² Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 188.

⁹³ Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 190.

peoples, took the lead in the systematic care of artistic relics from the past and saw the preservation of the memorials of past history as crucial for the maintenance of the national consciousness. Noting the growth of the German preservation movement in response to the rapid expansion and improvement of its urban areas, he went on to suggest once again a two-tiered system of protection, with the lower tier introduced to protect the characteristic aspects of cities which would not benefit from national protection:

It is all the more important on this account to preserve all those elements in civic life to which historical associations cling.... a much larger number of humbler domestic relics of the older days, in the shape of town houses or cottages, street fountains, bridge, sign boards, and the like, which would never find a place in any state inventory, but which combine to give their picturesque charm to our more ancient centres of population. With all this domestic apparatus may be grouped the remains of ancient military works such as ramparts, walls, fosses, gates, which, through in themselves perhaps reduced to mere fragments, are of the utmost moment as aids to the reconstruction of the older history of our towns.⁹⁴

While the nationally important monuments were in little danger of destruction other than by the disastrous hands of the restorer, he believed that those of more local significance were in constant danger of being swept off the face of the earth as they were too insignificant to evoke defenders and often stood in the way of so-called civic improvements. They were, however, especially worth preserving, both for their artistic charm and their historical interest. Edinburgh, he suggested, would still be Edinburgh though fortune should deprive her of Holyrood, but she would not be Edinburgh without the High Street and closes.⁹⁵

Baldwin Brown then compared the situation in Britain with Europe, suggesting that constituted authorities, national or civic in Britain were as a rule indifferent and that preservation depended almost entirely on the efforts of private individuals, whether working alone or associated in voluntary brotherhoods: 'Probably nine-tenths of the works of preservation in this country is done by private agency, while more than half of the needless

⁹⁴ Brown, 'Our ancient monuments', 194-5.

⁹⁵ Brown, 'Our ancient monuments', 195-6.

destruction which is going on all about us is carried out by public bodies such as Town Councils, that ought to be foremost in the cause of protection.’⁹⁶

He then turned his attention to the organisations and practical measures involved in the preservation process, suggesting that the propaganda be divided up depending upon whether the buildings and monuments were of national or local significance. For the owners and administrators of conspicuous monuments, the key issue was when restoration was or was not appropriate and Baldwin Brown set out his views on restoration philosophy. While he had sympathy with the SPAB doctrine embodied in its motto ‘Preserve, do not Restore’, he saw difficulties arising when a time-worn monument had passed beyond the stage where protective work alone would suffice to render it fit for modern usage or where a building needed enlargement to meet the needs of its modern users. In the case of smaller domestic building there was a need to influence town, county and parish councillors, small proprietors, business people and the community in general. While praising London County Council for its policy in the matter of monument administration, he suggested that the attitude of town councils was by no means so promising:

The difficulties to be contended against are serious but not necessarily insuperable. It is of course impossible to preserve all old buildings and picturesque features in our cities, but many more could have been preserved than actually survive. If there be goodwill; if urban authorities be convinced of the value, historical and artistic, of these surviving relics, and mean to preserve them if they can; it will generally be found possible so to arrange new schemes that the older monuments may remain to grace the streets and squares.⁹⁷

He concluded with a critical but realistic reflection of the role of town councillors:

The town councillor is a representative of the public, and it is useless to expect from the average councillor any greater sensitiveness in this regard than is shown by the members of the public at large. We may expect from him a feeling of responsibility for the interests in his charge, which may keep him benevolently neutral in his attitude to a portion of the civic assets that can

⁹⁶ Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 197. He does though praise County Councils, with London County Council at their head, for being disposed to act in a more encouraging fashion.

⁹⁷ Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 205.

never be increased; but of active care for the monuments of the past he will only show as much as he thinks public opinion demands.⁹⁸

In January 1907 Baldwin Brown was, with the Cockburn Association, fighting against the introduction of overhead wires for the tram system in the central part of Edinburgh which it was believed would seriously disfigure the character and beauty of the streets. A detailed memorial was sent and Baldwin Brown led a deputation to the Council in early 1907.⁹⁹ In the summer of 1907 Lord Rosebery gifted Lady Stair House to the Council and there were broader discussions about the local authority and others sympathetic to the preservation of Old Town buildings acquiring key properties on the 'historic mile.'¹⁰⁰ In November of 1907 Baldwin Brown returned to the subject of civic control in aesthetic matters with a further letter to the press, noting the lack of legal powers available to the Council, Dean of Guild Court and the Cockburn Association and again noting the powers available to local authorities in Italy and Germany, and the existence of Municipal Art Commissions with statutory powers in a number of American cities whose approval needs to be sought for a range of developments.¹⁰¹

Restoration and Holyrood Abbey

Despite Baldwin Brown's usual approach of drawing on the authority associated with local amenity and professional bodies to pursue his preservation campaigns, a controversial and increasingly heated Edinburgh restoration case was to come forward in late 1906 which saw him adopting an individual stance while both being opposed by many of the city's key amenity and professional bodies and attracting much personal criticism. Holyrood Abbey church was founded by David I in the twelfth century as an Augustinian monastery. It was seriously damaged during the Earl of Hertford's invasion in 1544 and following repairs

⁹⁸ Brown, 'Our ancient monuments', 206.

⁹⁹ CA, *Annual Report*, 1906, 8-9. See also, letter by Baldwin Brown, *Scotsman*, 28 January 1907. The Council's consideration of the introduction of overhead wires was eventually postponed.

¹⁰⁰ UoS/AL/T-GED 9/804. In a letter to Andrew Murray, Patrick Geddes identifies possible candidates and suggests he discusses the subject with Bruce Home and Baldwin Brown. See Chapter 8.

¹⁰¹ *Scotsman*, 16 November 1907.

damaged again at the hands of religious reformers in 1559. In 1570 the choir and transepts were demolished but the nave, which functioned as a parish church, was retained with repair work undertaken in advance of Charles I coronation in 1633 in order to allow it to function as the Chapel Royal. However, following the introduction of heavy stone slabs, the roof collapsed during a storm in 1768, causing significant damage to the vault, clerestory and north wall.¹⁰²

In 1906 the Earl of Leven and Melville, former Lord High Commissioner, left £40,000 for Holyrood Abbey's restoration as a chapel for the Order of the Thistle.¹⁰³ His bequest also indicated that Thomas Ross be the restoring architect and that Lord Balcarres and Sir John Stirling Maxwell superintend the execution of the works. Ultimately, though, the decision rested with the King as advised by the Ministry of Works. The bequest was seen by very many as a patriotic act but it raised a number of difficult issues — should the church as a whole be restored or just the nave? Could the remaining masonry in the nave take the weight of a new roof? What level of taking down and rebuilding would be necessary and what effect would restoration have on the surviving historic masonry? Holyrood Abbey was to develop into a politically-charged case with many key figures and organisations including the Edinburgh Architectural Association, the Cockburn Association, the Scottish Ecclesiological Society, the St. Andrew's Society, the Scottish Patriotic Society, the Builders' Association of Edinburgh and others supporting the proposed restoration.

However, Lord Balcarres and Stirling Maxwell had commissioned a report from the architect William Lethaby¹⁰⁴ on the feasibility of reconstruction. Following detailed consideration he had concluded: 'I am of the opinion that an attempt either to add to the ruin without

¹⁰² See RCAHMS, *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of the City of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1951), 129-144.

¹⁰³ The Scottish equivalent of the Knights of the Garter whose chapel was at St George's Chapel, Windsor.

¹⁰⁴ 1857-1931. Advisor to Westminster Abbey and SPAB's council member.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/view/article/34503?docPos=1> accessed 27 July 2015.

rebuilding it or to rebuild it would be disastrous to it as a great historical monument, and I cannot but earnestly recommend that no such scheme be entered on.’¹⁰⁵ A *Scotsman* editorial ominously suggested that there ‘will be no disposition to find fault with them [the trustees] for the judgement which they have arrived at, after, it is understood, consulting the best available authorities, at least until the report they have drawn up has been laid before the public.’¹⁰⁶ Once the report was published there followed a highly visible campaign by a *Holyrood Restoration Committee* under their President, Lord Stair which set out to either make the trustees change their view or to pursue the restoration scheme by bypassing the trustees entirely. Supporters included the former Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery, who believed that the intentions of Lord Leven, the widespread public support for restoration, and the fact that the architect Thomas Ross believed that restoration was possible, meant that the case should be re-opened.¹⁰⁷ Encouraged by Rosebery’s letter, Thomas Ross had entered the fray with a lengthy public letter challenging Lethaby’s analysis.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, with the strong support of William Bruce, a former President, the EAA created an expert committee to scrutinise Lethaby’s report.¹⁰⁹ They too concluded that restoration was structurally feasible, albeit they were careful to ‘express no opinion on the historic or aesthetic aspects of the question.’¹¹⁰ However despite the increasing levels of acrimony the trustees remained of their earlier view and as time went on pressure mounted on them and the Ministry of Works, under whose responsibility the ruins lay, with questions raised in Parliament¹¹¹ and letters in

¹⁰⁵ *Scotsman*, 7 December 1906. The original report was dated 11 October 1906.

¹⁰⁶ *Scotsman*, 6 December 1906. The editorial places an emphasis on the destruction of the church by the English in 1544 rather than the damage caused at the Reformation.

¹⁰⁷ *Scotsman*, 4 February 1907.

¹⁰⁸ *Scotsman*, 8 February 1907.

¹⁰⁹ *Scotsman*, 17 January 1907; 14 February 1907.

¹¹⁰ *Scotsman*, 2 September 1907. This allowed them to avoid being drawn into the broader philosophical debate regarding restoration.

¹¹¹ HC Deb 19 December 1906 vol 167 c1517; HC Deb 14 February 1907 vol 169 c310; HC Deb 08 April 1907 vol 172 cc18-72; HC Deb 05 February 1908 vol 183 cc844-5.

the press questioning the competence of Lethaby (whose English nationality was also raised) and the Commissioner of Works, L.V. Harcourt.¹¹²

In light of the earlier Iona case, Baldwin Brown well understood that such cases were likely to raise strong passions. He had nonetheless expanded on his views regarding restoration which he had included in his recent *Saint George* article. In this he had indicated that while he was a pragmatist and took each case on its own merits — recognising that strong arguments could be put forward in support of restoration where a building was in need of repair to allow it to continue in use or to be expanded — he resisted the re-use of ruined structures due to the likely impact on their interest and beauty, and the impact of ‘decorative repair’ on a ruins aesthetic charm.¹¹³ Although he could have readily avoided been drawn into this case and despite the risk of attracting adverse opinion and damaging his relationships with colleagues, Baldwin Brown nonetheless raised early doubts over the justification for restoration. In a letter to the *Scotsman* he suggested that unlike other recent church restorations: ‘the argument that the old building is really needed for modern purpose... does not apply here.’¹¹⁴ Concerned that a restoration could not be achieved without destroying much of the artistic value of the existing masonry, he suggested instead that a new building be erected adjacent to the existing ruins. However, the latter suggestion was problematic as the wording of the bequest constrained the trustees to considering restoration of the abbey’s nave alone and ruled out consideration of other locations. Baldwin Brown mentioned this issue in his second letter and used it also to defend Lethaby’s reputation, suggesting that reference to his English nationality ‘looks rather as if it were brought in to cover a weak case.’¹¹⁵ He concluded:

Our duty to the monument, which is now being conscientiously fulfilled, is to preserve as far as possible what remains, and not to write a new chapter in its history for which future generations may call us anything but blessed. The argument that the proposed rebuilding will effect the purpose of “preservation” does not apply to what is by far the most valuable part of the structure from the artistic point of view, the

¹¹² See letters to the press from David MacRitchie and the deputation from the St. Andrew’s Society to the Lord Provost reported in the *Scotsman*, 17 April 1907.

¹¹³ Brown, ‘Our ancient monuments’, 200-02.

¹¹⁴ *Scotsman*, 16 October 1906. Baldwin Brown was supported by the Arts and Crafts architect Robert Weir Schultz who acted as architect for the third Marquess of Bute.

¹¹⁵ *Scotsman*, 8 February 1907.

exterior of the West front, which would not be helped by the re-roofing of the nave.¹¹⁶

When the First Commissioner of Works, L.V. Harcourt, came under personal attack from David MacRitchie (a member of the Restoration Committee) who cited the support of EAA for the proposed restoration, Baldwin Brown wrote a short letter defending Harcourt and suggesting that the views of EAA were being misrepresented.¹¹⁷ Following a further letter, Baldwin Brown pointed out that the EAA council was not unanimous and had specifically chosen not to comment on the historic and aesthetic aspects of the case for restoration. He also quoted from the Presidential Address of the Royal Institute of British Architects who had visited the site in the summer of 1907: ‘the consensus of the opinion appeared to be very strongly in favour of non-restoration and that it was only desirable to devise some simple means of protecting the upper parts of the walls from the ravages of rain, frost, and snow’.¹¹⁸ Matters appeared to have been brought to a close when the Edinburgh MP, Charles Price, wrote to the restoration committee indicating that in his view that there was not the slightest chance of matters being reopened, also mentioning that the late Queen Victoria had explicitly declined to disturb the building previously.¹¹⁹ Despite this, however, the case continued to rumble on, with supporters endeavouring to re-open consideration and objectors such as SPAB challenging the views of the restoration committee.¹²⁰ Early in 1909, however matters were brought firmly to a halt when the King expressed his preference that a Chapel

¹¹⁶ *Scotsman*, 8 February 1907.

¹¹⁷ Letters, *Scotsman*, 24 February, 1907; 25 February 1907; 26 February 1907.

¹¹⁸ 29 February 1908. RIBA undertook their jubilee annual tour to Edinburgh as guests of EAA from 4-6 July 1907. See *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 27 July 1907. Baldwin Brown was absent due to his mother’s death in Edinburgh on 3 July and attendance at her funeral in West Norwood in south London on 6 July 1907.

¹¹⁹ *Scotsman*, 26 March 1908. Price had asked a question about the proposed Holyrood restoration in Parliament shortly before this. HC Deb 05 February 1908 vol 183 cc844-5.

¹²⁰ *Scotsman*, 30 December 1908. *The Architect and Contract Reporter* (8 January, 1909), 36-9.

for the Knights of the Thistle be located at St Giles rather than Holyrood. The Thistle Chapel was completed at the cathedral under the architect Robert Lorimer in 1911.¹²¹

This case suggests that Baldwin Brown was prepared to take a principled stance even where it was highly likely to lead to significant personal and professional discomfort. Not only was he prepared to oppose such a strongly supported scheme in line with his principles of restoration but he defended the professional competence of his friend and colleague William Lethaby and the First Commissioner of Works. None of these actions was likely to endear him in certain quarters in Scotland. Unsurprisingly, during the case Baldwin Brown attracted much personal criticism within both the local and the professional press. Perhaps most stinging would have been the accusation of ‘sickly sentimentalism’ and ‘unmitigated cant’ contained in an editorial of the *British Architect* in 1907.¹²² He had also risked his relationship with colleagues, although it seems that despite their opposing views, his friendship with Thomas Ross was to survive this difficult case and they were to work closely together for the best part of the next three decades.

In the period after 1903, by which time he had completed his survey of Anglo Saxon architecture in England together with an introductory volume on the period, Baldwin Brown was able to commit significant additional time and effort to the protection of buildings and monuments and, in particular, vernacular buildings in the Old Town of Edinburgh. His study of protective systems on the continent suggested to him that there was an overwhelming need both to broaden the scope of national legislation in Britain but this needed to be accompanied by the development of more effective local infrastructure and mechanisms, drawing on local inventories and municipal bye-laws, to protect urban buildings and assemblages from the ongoing process of loss. He therefore combined national campaigning

¹²¹ J. Gifford., C. McWilliam and D. Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (London 1991), 117-8. In July 1911, Baldwin Brown wrote to Lorimer to congratulate him on his Knighthood and for the Thistle Chapel, UoE/SC/GEN/1963/29/318.

¹²² 15 February 1907, 108.

with focused local campaigns including lectures and detailed letters to the press setting out a framework for local protection drawing on continental examples. He continued in parallel to campaign on individual Scottish and Edinburgh cases, even where his opinions were not widely supported and attracted personal criticism.

Chapter 8. Inventories and Town Planning

In 1906 emerging plans for new classrooms at Heriot's Hospital on the south of the city threatened the loss of part of the town wall and its last remaining tower, the Flodden Tower, which formed part of the boundary of their site. This gave Baldwin Brown a further opportunity to suggest that there should be no further delay in the compilation of the city's inventory, which he termed a patriotic resolve: 'Other cities have been accomplishing such inventories; is our own action to be confined to empty resolutions and references to committees that show no activity in the matter?'¹ It took a further year, but in January 1908 Bruce Home was appointed as the Council's Museum Curator and by June he had circulated his *Provisional List of Old Houses Remaining in High Street and Canongate of Edinburgh* to councillors for discussion and adoption (figure 29).² The 'Municipal Register' as it became known identified historic buildings along the High Street and Canongate before describing those in the: 'outlying parts of the Old Town, beyond the central avenue, but within the limits of the City Wall, the Nor' Loch, and the North and South Backs of the Canongate.'³ The register contained a numbered list of 105 buildings split into three sections: 'List of Older Public Buildings in Edinburgh Which are Not Threatened at Present; List of Older Public or Semi-Public Buildings in Edinburgh Whose Outlook is Less Assured; and, List of Buildings Possessing Historic, Antiquarian, or Architectural Interest Which it is Desirable to Preserve as Far as May Be Possible.' The list was formally adopted by the Council but there was some confusion subsequently over how buildings were to be protected. Cllr. Macfarlane drew attention to the register at the Council's Plans and Works Committee in June 1908 and suggested that they: 'might take into consideration the question of taking steps to conserve

¹ *Scotsman*, 12 June 1906.

² B. J. Home, *Provisional List of Old Houses Remaining in High Street and Canongate of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1908). Home had prepared an earlier list in 1902 and had also published two volumes of drawings of Old Edinburgh buildings in 1905/07 which contained a preface written by Baldwin Brown.

³ Home, *Provisional List*.

these ancient buildings.⁴ In reporting the circulation of Home's list, however, the *Scotsman* suggested that the duties of the City Superintendent of Works had already been amended to include a new responsibility:

To report to the Town Clerk or the appropriate Committee on any proposal which may come under his notice, either by examination or the Dean of Guild Court plans or otherwise, for alterations on or demolition of any buildings in the city of antiquarian or historical interest, and particularly of buildings contained in the Corporation's Register of Historical Buildings.⁵

A copy of the register and this new duty also appeared in the professional press in June.⁶

However later Council minutes suggest that the new duty had not yet been formally adopted⁷ and the Council's further deliberations over how the buildings might be protected stalled. It was a newly-created Edinburgh organisation which was to bring further pressure to bear on the Council to resolve matters.

The Old Edinburgh Club (OEC), inaugurated at a public meeting on 29 January 1908,⁸ included on its council the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Lyon King of Arms and a number of key figures in Edinburgh's emerging preservation movement including Baldwin Brown, Thomas Ross, Hippolyte Blanc, Bruce Home, William Hay, William Oldrieve and Andrew Murray.⁹ Initial discussions had suggested that the club's main objective would be the preservation of information and lore regarding Edinburgh life in the pre-railway days, focusing on unprinted or ephemeral information in newspapers and elsewhere to perfect local knowledge of the city's nature and development.¹⁰ However the OEC rapidly expanded

⁴ *Scotsman*, 19 June 1908.

⁵ *Scotsman*, 16 June 1908.

⁶ *The Architect and Contract Reporter*, June 26, 1908, 421-2.

⁷ ECA/SL/44/2, Plans and Works Committee, *Minute Books*, 9 July 1908. It was remitted to the Plans and Works Committee which remitted it to the Museum Sub-Committee, chaired by Cllr. Dobie.

⁸ *Scotsman*, 30 January 1908.

⁹ Baldwin Brown was one of four council members who stepped down in 1909, but returned as a council member in 1916-19, 1921-23 and 1930-32. The Club's secretary was Lewis MacRitchie with whom Baldwin Brown had held heated public correspondence over the Holyrood restoration proposals.

¹⁰ ECL/Y.DA 1824, Old Edinburgh Club, *Minute Books*, 3 December 1907.



PROVISIONAL LIST OF OLD HOUSES
REMAINING IN HIGH STREET AND CANONGATE
OF EDINBURGH

1902

Revised, March 1908

BEGINNING at the Esplanade, on the south side stands a building, popularly known as "THE CANNON BALL HOUSE," dating from the reign of Charles I. It has survived three sieges, and has been a good deal knocked about and altered, so that its general aspect is more modern, but here and there it bears traces of its antiquity, and its date, 1630, crowns a dormer window on the west side. Its name, "The Cannon Ball House," derived from a bullet said to have been fired from the Castle in 1745 and still sticking in the wall.¹ This house exhibits the unique peculiarity of stone grooves above and below the windows for outside sliding shutters. Immediately to the east stands the new Board School, erected some twenty years ago on the site of the stately mansion of the Duke of Gordon, governor of the Castle in 1689.

To the east of the new Board School stands a handsome old house of hewn stone entering from Boswell's Court (so named from a medical man there resident at the end of eighteenth century). A doubtful tradition associates this building with the Earls of Bothwell.

These are the only ancient buildings remaining on the south side of Castlehill. On the north side—behind the reservoir—stands a group of buildings, mainly modern, called Ramsay Garden² and reached from Ramsay Lane. Incorporated in this group we find the oddly shaped house, built for himself by Allan Ramsay the poet, known as "The Guse Pie," and the somewhat later row erected by his son, the painter. These buildings are found in Edgar's Plan, dated 1742.

At the east corner of Ramsay Lane we come to "The Outlook Tower," the lower portion of which is antique, the upper part raised and remodelled for "Short's Observatory." Eastward from "OUTLOOK TOWER," and standing considerably back from the street, is the southern part of a good old house known as "LORD SEMPILL'S HOUSE." Between the gable of this house and the street front extends a row of ancient buildings, but the house facing the street is modern. This exhausts the list of ancient houses on the north side of Castlehill.

On the same (north) side, and immediately east of U.F.C. College, stands a very large building of hewn stone forming the front of a courtyard—the whole erected by Robert Milne (builder of the newer Holyrood), and dating from 1690. On the east side of the quadrangle stands an old house, evidently of earlier date than Milne's tenements. "MILNE'S COURT" commences the Lawnmarket.

Still proceeding eastward, we come to "JAMES' COURT," with three separate entrances, the buildings surmounting which are all modern. Inside the court on the north side stands a very stately group of buildings, the western half of which is modern, the eastern half however dates from 1727, and is associated with the memories of many eminent citizens of the eighteenth century—among others, David Hume, James Boswell, and his guest, Dr Samuel Johnson, Dr Blair, etc. A portion of the more ancient buildings, a survival of several closes removed to form this early sample of "City Improvement," bounds the court to the east.

Passing "JAMES' COURT" and its modern frontage, we reach a very picturesque old house known as "GLADSTONE'S LAND," where may still be seen the last example of the Arcades, once an almost universal feature in old Edinburgh streets. In the

¹ This legend is open to question.

² Erected by Professor Patrick Geddes.



Figure 29. *Provisional List of Old Houses* by B.J. Home, 1908 (cover page). Note the Edinburgh Municipal Council seal. Source: UoE/SC/ZV.1.90/27.

its remit to include the preservation of Old Edinburgh's buildings and in doing so, its first Honorary President came to the fore. This was Lord Rosebery who had restored and gifted Lady Stair's House to the Council and had also lent his support to the proposed Holyrood Abbey restoration.¹¹ His speech at the OEC's first annual general meeting in January 1909 criticising both the Council's initiative to attract more industrial development¹² and their record on preservation was widely reported in the local and national press.¹³ For the latter, he drew on the opening paper in the first volume of the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*. In this Home had reproduced the 1908 register, adding a map and an introductory text including the alarming opening sentence which Rosebery described as the most sinister and most dismal in the whole book: 'It may be safely affirmed that since 1850 two-thirds of the ancient buildings of the Old Town of Edinburgh have been demolished.'¹⁴ Having drawn attention to Home's statement, Rosebery continued 'That is to say, within the lives of many of us here present, and certainly within my own, two-thirds of the ancient monuments of this city, crumbling old houses which formed so distinguished and historical feature, have been swept away. Was that necessary?' He went on to suggest that the OEC and its patrons would: 'bear testimony on behalf of antiquity where it was threatened by an unnecessary development of utility' and use its best endeavours ensure that the remaining buildings were shown due respect.¹⁵

Rosebery believed that Edinburgh's face was her fortune and he suggested that this was difficult to combine with manufacturing as witnessed by Sheffield and Newcastle whose

¹¹ For OEC see O. D. Edwards, 'Rosebery and the Birth of the Old Edinburgh Club'. Rosebery involved himself in preservation cases such as Lady Stair's House in Edinburgh and the Auld Brig of Ayr, see Marquess of Crewe, *Lord Rosebery* (London, 1931), 606-8.

¹² In December 1908 the Council discussed a memorandum by the Town Clerk which stressed the advantages of Edinburgh as a site for industrial expansion and recommended that this be promoted to manufacturers. *Scotsman*, 23 December 1908.

¹³ The meeting was held on 29 January 1909. As well as the *Edinburgh Evening News* (29 January 1909), *Scotsman* (30 January 1909) and *Glasgow Herald* (30 January 1909) the speech was reported on the 30 January in the *Daily Record*, *Times* and *Telegraph*.

¹⁴ B.J. Home, 'Provisional List of Old Houses Remaining in High Street and Canongate of Edinburgh', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 1 (1908), 1-30.

¹⁵ *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 1, Appendix, 5-11, 7.

faces, he suggested, were no longer their fortune: 'let us take care at any rate that as trustees for posterity we preserve the ancient historical metropolis as untouched as possible. You may have a new Edinburgh, but by no conceivable hypothesis will you have an Edinburgh more beautiful.'¹⁶ The *Edinburgh Evening News* reported that 'The contents of the Book [of the Old Edinburgh Club] show how useful the club will prove in preserving the history of old Edinburgh, and in bridling that spirit of vandalism which has destroyed many of the interesting buildings in the Scottish capital.'¹⁷

At its second annual general meeting a year later the Lord Provost, William Slater Brown, challenged Rosebery's and Home's statements: 'No one regretted it more than the members of the Town Council that many of the houses had had to be removed... he was not aware of any buildings being ruthlessly removed.'¹⁸ However, possibly in anticipation of further questions at the AGM, the Council had concluded its consideration on protection of buildings on the Municipal Register shortly beforehand, adopting a slightly reworked and broadened resolution to that published by the *Scotsman* and *The Builder* two years earlier that 'the various officials of the Corporation be instructed to report to the Town Clerk (for submission to the Magistrates and Council or appropriate Committee) any proposals which may come under their cognisance affecting such buildings.'¹⁹ Lord Provost Brown's defence of the Council did not attract sympathy in all quarters. A highly critical letter in the *Scotsman* suggested that they had been 'heedless and wanton in their destruction' when taking forward the 1867 Improvement Act and that 'all interest in some well-known streets has vanished.'²⁰ The correspondent suggested that the Council were 'waking up in a sort of half-hearted way, and is making some attempt to preserve interesting old buildings' but suggested that 'they

¹⁶ *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 1, Appendix, 5-11, 10.

¹⁷ *EEN*, 29 March 1909.

¹⁸ *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 2, 1910, Appendix, 10-11.

¹⁹ ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Books*, 20 December 1910.

²⁰ *Scotsman*, 1 February 1910. Letter written by H.H.P.

have to be content to catalogue buildings of 1690-1700 as ancient buildings, when at times in the memory of us all they could have listed dozens of buildings 1550-60 or earlier.’²¹

Not long after the Lord Provost’s speech Baldwin Brown resorted to the press. This time the subject was not an Old Edinburgh building but the frontage of the classical terrace at Atholl Crescent, which was subject to proposals for major alterations for a new Edinburgh School of Domestic Economy. He appealed both to the governors of the Heriot Trust as owners and to the Council to recognise the educational value of good taste and of the habit of subordinating private to public interests: ‘That the younger citizens of Edinburgh should grow up proud of their city and jealous for its beauty and its reputation is of quite as great importance as additions to the mere mechanical apparatus of education, of which we are disposed in these days to make a fetish.’²² He went on to suggest that the Trust’s governors had to decide between the demands of an excellent private or semi-public institution and the larger interests of the city, noting both their very conspicuous and responsible position in relation to property in the city and the claims of civic amenity which were being brought prominently forward in connection with the Town Planning Act. He concluded by hoping that they would regard the matter in its broader aspects rather than from the point of view of immediate utility.²³ Baldwin Brown was deeply disturbed that the Lord Provost, as a member of the Heriot Board of Trustees, voted in support of the proposals despite his earlier assurances to the OEC about the Council’s sympathetic attitude to preservation. Later in 1910 Baldwin Brown was to refer explicitly to this case in a highly charged paper on planning and amenity at the RIBA Town Planning Conference which he presented to an audience which included the Edinburgh Lord Provost in its number.

²¹ *Scotsman*, 1 February 1910.

²² *Scotsman*, 20 May 1910.

²³ *Scotsman*, 20 May 1910.

A new inventory body for Scotland

While Edinburgh's Council went through the attenuated process of preparing a local inventory and considered adopting procedures to preserve the buildings it contained, Baldwin Brown continued to pursue what proved to be a far-reaching initiative. In 1907 he met with the Scottish Secretary of State, Lord Pentland, to discuss his proposals for the creation of a national inventory body.²⁴ Pentland had a broad interest in Scottish art, culture and identity, amongst other things taking forward the *National Galleries of Scotland Act* in 1906 which had provided additional funding and new management arrangements for the gallery.²⁵ Baldwin Brown suggested that 'if ever a national work of inventorization were set on foot, it is in Scotland that it might be started with the best promise of a satisfactory result.'²⁶ After discussions with others including Sir James Guthrie, President of the RSA and Sir Arthur Mitchell, the RSA's Professor of Ancient History and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,²⁷ Lord Pentland decided to create a national inventory body for Scotland.²⁸ This was to come into being in 1908 as the *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland* (RCAHMS). It was tasked to: 'make an inventory of all the ancient and historical monuments and constructions connected with or illustrative of the contemporary culture, civilization, and conditions of life of the people in Scotland from the earliest times to the year 1707 and to specify those which seem most worthy of preservation.' This was a significant achievement which Baldwin Brown

²⁴ G.B. Brown, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905), 10-11.

²⁵ 6 Edw. 7. Ch. 50.

²⁶ M. Sinclair. *The Right Honourable John Sinclair*, 104-06. Pentland was Scottish Secretary from 1905-1912. D. Torrance, *The Scottish Secretaries* (Edinburgh, 2006), 59-69.

²⁷ Father of Sydney Mitchell.

²⁸ Peter Mandler has suggested, *pers. comm.*, that Pentland's position as Scottish Secretary gave him far greater freedoms to create a Commission in Scotland than was possible in Wales or England.

could rightfully claim as his own, and he was appointed as one of the organisation's founding Commissioners, remaining one until his death in 1932.²⁹

RCAHMS held its first meeting in February 1908 and rapidly set about undertaking county-based surveys.³⁰ Not unexpectedly Baldwin Brown was highly energetic with the minute books showing him involved in various detailed tasks such as working with fellow commissioner Thomas Ross and the Secretary, Alexander Curle to develop the survey methodology for the inventories.³¹ He had much to offer in this area, drawing on his own experience of developing an inventory of early Anglo-Saxon architecture in England and his detailed knowledge of the systems for preparing inventories on the Continent. He also brought his interest and experience of publication to bear on the Commission's work. In 1909 he assisted in the editorial work for the Sutherland volume, helping to decide which ground plans and photographs should be produced and he also accompanied Curle to a meeting with J.G. Bartholomew to discuss the most appropriate maps to be appended to the survey volumes.³² He was also closely involved in the preparation and content of the survey volumes more generally, at times contributing text where he had particular knowledge and expertise.³³ In the absence of any other available expert body, the Commission was also approached by organisations and individuals seeking advice on monument management and proposed developments. Although outside their brief, the Commissioners responded

²⁹ The creation of the Scottish Royal Commission led to the creation of similar bodies in England and Wales. The Scottish Commissioners were: Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart (Chairman), Lord Guthrie, Mr William Oldrieve, F.C. Buchanan, Dr Thomas H Bryce, Thomas Ross, and Baldwin Brown, with Alexander O. Curle as Secretary.

³⁰ The first volume on the county of Berwick was produced in 1909. Until 1948, the cut-off date for RCAHMS survey work was 1707.

³¹ A. Graham, 'A Memorial of Alexander Ormiston Curle', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 88, (1954/6), 234-6; J. N. G. Ritchie, 'James Curle (1862-1944) and Alexander Ormiston Curle (1866-1955) : pillars of the establishment', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 192 (2002), 19-41.

³² RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 14 October 1908; 2 December 1909.

³³ Baldwin Brown was responsible for much of the 'Report on the Ruthwell Cross' which formed a major appendix in the Commission's seventh report on the County of Dumfries. He subsequently asked for permission to use some of this text for volume V of his *The Arts of Early England*, as the Commission's publication of the Dumfries volume had been delayed due to the manuscript being burned at the printer's offices in 1916! RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 20 January 1920 and *Letter Books*, 8 April 1917.

positively, with Baldwin Brown and Thomas Ross in particular undertaking site visits and providing advice to owners and local authorities.³⁴ Baldwin Brown also drew attention in the press to particular issues which became apparent during the work of RCAHMS, including the use of stone-built prehistoric cairns as quarries for road-metalling.³⁵ Drawing on his expertise on early Christian crosses, he also raised concerns over the proposals for the removal of an incomplete Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft in a quarry site above Brampton in Cumbria which the local community had proposed to cut out and to use as a war memorial.³⁶ Baldwin Brown recognised that the authority vested in the Royal Commission by its royal charter and the support of the Scottish Secretary gave the new organisation significant authority and that this could be used to encourage the expansion of the Edinburgh inventory into areas of the Old Town not included within Bruce Home's 1908 list. At RCAHMS' second council meeting on 14 October 1908, Curle was asked to write to Bailie Dobie at Edinburgh Council to congratulate the Council on their inventory, to ask that RCAHMS be allowed to make use of it for its own work, and to suggest that their inventory be expanded geographically to include other ancient structures still existing within the bounds of the city.³⁷

The link between the Commission's work and broader protection in Scotland was emphasised in December 1908 when Sir John Stirling Maxwell presented a paper to the Scottish Modern Art Association entitled 'A Reasonable Policy for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.'³⁸ The content of his talk suggest that he had read *The Care of Ancient*

³⁴ Baldwin Brown visited Dundee to give advice on the introduction of a crown to Old Steeple and Thomas Ross prepared a condition survey and gave recommendations for the Bridge of Earn. RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 28 September 1910. This advisory work ceased after the creation of the Ancient Monument Board for Scotland in 1913.

³⁵ *Times*, 28 October 1913.

³⁶ *Times*, 17 December 1920; *Manchester Guardian*, 26 January 1921.

³⁷ RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 19 October 1908.

³⁸ Stirling Maxwell had presented an earlier paper in Glasgow in 1905 suggesting that a body for architectural preservation in the city should be founded, extending the powers of the Dean of Guild Court, with responsibilities for scheduling monuments or buildings and commending on alternations and additions, together with design of new buildings. L.E. Hewitt, 'Associational Culture and the

Monuments.³⁹ He mentioned the importance of the work of the RCAHMS, albeit noting the lack of clarity over its scope and a shortage of funds. As the survey of Scotland might take twenty years, he called for the Secretary of Scotland to initiate a practical policy for protecting ancient buildings in the meantime: 'Ours was the only civilized country in which the State had made no effort to protect ancient buildings.'⁴⁰ In response to the paper Bailie Dobie raised the situation in Edinburgh, noting that the inventory was now kept as a record in the Council Chambers, and that: 'instructions had been given to the new Superintendent of Works and the Burgh Surveyor that no building mentioned in this register should be altered or removed without information being given to the Town Council.'⁴¹

In March 1909 RCAHMS also decided to expand the burgh inventory process across Scotland asking town councils and royal burghs to make up local inventories to help in the preservation of their monuments in case they were destroyed or damaged before the Commission could record them.⁴² In their letter they referred to the characteristic specimens of the domestic architecture of former days, as well as interesting relics such as stones bearing heraldic devices, inscribed lintels, sun-dials, &c., suggesting that councils might make a list with the assistance of a local antiquarian society. Edinburgh was offered as an exemplar: 'It may be mentioned that the City of Edinburgh has already compiled and printed an Inventory of the ancient structures in the historic mile from the Castle to Holyrood.'⁴³ By November over half of the sixty councils had responded favourably, and a number had already begun to compile inventories. Individual Commissioners were therefore identified to

Shaping of Urban Space: civic societies in Britain before 1960', *Urban History*, 39, 4 (2012), 590-606, 602.

³⁹ Baldwin Brown was present at the lecture.

⁴⁰ *Scotsman*, 4 December 1908. Stirling Maxwell went on to chair the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland (1913) and the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland (1927), was a Trustee of the Scottish National Gallery, and became a founding member of the National Trust for Scotland.

⁴¹ *Scotsman*, 4 December 1908. He also referred to the kindness of Lord Guthrie in supporting the preparation of the inventory. It is not clear how Lord Guthrie was involved in the Municipal Register but it may be that he supported the compilation of Bruce Home's first 'informal' inventory in 1902.

⁴² RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 15 March 1909. The letters were sent out on 7 April 1909.

⁴³ RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 7 April 1909.

visit and inspect the buildings once draft inventories had been completed. In April 1910 Curle was in correspondence again with Bailie Dobie drawing attention to the progress of surveys in other Scottish burghs and encouraging the expansion of the Edinburgh inventory.⁴⁴ By June, Curle had received draft lists from twenty-eight councils and the allocation of burgh visits between Commissioners had commenced. In November 1910 a sub-committee was created with Baldwin Brown, Ross and Oldrieve in order to ‘supervise the Reports on Architectural Structures and to deal with the Burgh Inventories’.⁴⁵ In 1910 the Commission also resolved to increase their staffing with the recruitment of the architect A.L. MacGibbon.⁴⁶ MacGibbon’s task was to commence forthwith on the City of Edinburgh survey, with Curle suggesting that a volume of Royal Burghs, should be published the following year.⁴⁷ In February 1911 Curle wrote in positive tones to Thomas Hunter, the Town Clerk, at Edinburgh: ‘I expect that the Inventory of the Edinburgh monuments will be undertaken very shortly, and the representative of the Commission will, as your Committee suggest, see Mr Bruce Home with a view to obtaining any further information regarding these.’⁴⁸ Yet only a month later, the Commission’s plan to compile inventories for Scotland’s Royal Burghs had been abandoned, with the Commission’s sub-committee recommending ‘that separate inventories for the Royal Burghs should not be proceeded with on the grounds that it is undesirable to separate the antiquities of the towns from those of the Counties in which the towns are situated.’⁴⁹ The most likely explanation for this significant change of direction is a concern raised by Lord Pentland over the length of time the county-based inventories were taking. The Treasury had indicated therefore that when appointed

⁴⁴ RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 1919/30. Dobie asked Curle to send him a copy of the Corporation of Glasgow’s inventory as he no doubt felt that a Glasgow inventory would encourage further progress in Edinburgh.

⁴⁵ RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 23 November 1910.

⁴⁶ 1874-1915. Son of David MacGibbon.

⁴⁷ RCAHMS, *Letter Book* 1910/103, 29 November 1910.

⁴⁸ RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 1911/16, 9 February 1911.

⁴⁹ RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 8 March 1911.

MacGibbon should concentrate on the county surveys and pressure was placed on the Commission to cease all other work.⁵⁰

Reluctant to abandon the expansion of the Edinburgh inventory which, with Leith, was intended to form part of the Midlothian volume, Baldwin Brown, Ross and Oldrieve decided that they would undertake the work as Commissioners, thereby avoiding the criticism that RCAHMS staff were being distracted. Following their suggestion to the Scottish royal burghs, they resolved also to bring together various organisations and individuals interested in Old Edinburgh to assist. Curle wrote to a number of Edinburgh bodies and following encouraging responses an Old Edinburgh meeting, chaired by Baldwin Brown, was held on 2 May 1911. This was attended by representatives of the Edinburgh Architectural Association, the Old Edinburgh Club, The Outlook Tower, Edinburgh Photographic Society and Leith Town Council. Ross, Oldrieve and Curle were also present.⁵¹ The group resolved to form an advisory and consultative committee and a sub-committee was created to prepare a recording form to be used for the information collected for the inventory. The sub-committee, comprising Baldwin Brown, Ross, Judge Craig and Andrew Murray, met on 5 May when 'A rough draft of the suggested form of schedule prepared by Mr Mears was submitted, and the sub-committee having considered the same and made some alterations and amendments thereon, directed that a clean draft be prepared'.⁵² Baldwin Brown subsequently received the amended forms that were to be used to gather information for the survey from the Commission staff, the first for recording 'old houses' and the second for 'monuments and memorials'.⁵³ It is not clear whether any progress with this initiative was made however. In June 1911 Bailie Dobie as representative of the municipal authority met with Baldwin

⁵⁰ It is highly likely that the Treasury consulted with Charles Peers who had been appointed as the Ministry of Works' Inspector of Ancient Monuments in March 1910.

⁵¹ Baldwin Brown was closely involved in each of these organisations. Apologies were received from Dr Hunter, Edinburgh Town Council and Sir James Balfour representing the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. The Cockburn Association had also been invited. RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 41-2.

⁵² RCAHMS, *Minute Book*, 43. A marginal note in the *Minute Book* records that 'Amended draft prepared and sent to Professor Baldwin Brown 22/9/11.'

⁵³ RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 1911/113. 22 September 1911.

Brown representing RCAHMS to explore how the Council's Municipal Register might be expanded and in October the Council agreed to undertake the work themselves using Bruce Home under the supervision of its museum sub-committee.⁵⁴ Four months later, however, Bruce Home was dead and this, together with the subsequent disruption caused by the First World War, stopped the further expansion of the municipal register.⁵⁵

The public ownership of ancient buildings

Despite the creation of the Edinburgh municipal register and the attempts to persuade the Council to adopt a more sympathetic attitude towards the city's ancient buildings, there remained significant concerns that the city's ancient buildings would continue to be lost in the face of sanitary and other improvements. If control through the local authority was proving difficult to achieve, an alternative was to adopt the approach being used by the National Trust in England and Wales, and in continental cities such as Hildesheim in Germany. This was to secure the ownership of key buildings by sympathetic individuals, responsible public bodies or charitable organisations. This was an approach which Patrick Geddes was already pursuing successfully in Edinburgh's the Old Town.⁵⁶ Geddes' own work in Edinburgh over a twenty-year period had preserved buildings towards the west end of the High Street and at the east end of Canongate, and he was closely involved in Lord Rosebery's decision to purchase Lady Stair's House and to donate it to the municipal authority.⁵⁷ In 1907 Geddes wrote to Andrew Murray, the Secretary of the Cockburn

⁵⁴ ECA/SL44/2, *Minutes of the Plans and Works Committee*, 26 October 1911.

⁵⁵ In November 1912 a letter from the Commission to the Under Secretary for Scotland noted that: 'The Inventory of ancient monuments in the City of Edinburgh is being undertaken by one of the Commissioners.' RCAHMS, *Letter Book*, 1912/160. 22 November 1912. On 20 April 1915 the RCAHMS Minute Book records that: 'Dr Ross made a report as to the survey of the City of Edinburgh, in connection with which Professor Baldwin Brown intimated that that he would forthwith take in hand a general account of the old town in which department photographic assistance might be expected from Dr Chrystal on his return in June.'⁵⁵ Baldwin Brown reported on progress at subsequent meetings but in 1916 the Commission's work ceased for the duration of the War.

⁵⁶ J. Johnson and L. Rosenburg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh: the Enduring Legacy of Patrick Geddes* (Glendareul, 2010), 114-126; R. M. Pinkerton and W.J. Windram, *Mylne's Court*, 75-89.

⁵⁷ For Geddes and urban renewal, see H. Meller, *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner* (London, 1990); V.M. Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life* (London, 2002); V.M.

Association, suggesting a group of houses which could act as the basis of a municipal museum situated along the 'Historic Mile.' Geddes believed that Rosebery could be persuaded to acquire further ancient buildings in Edinburgh: 'Does not all this clearly show how the preservation of Old Edinburgh, indeed the preservation and resuscitation of the Historic Mile, interests not only Edinburgh citizens, but eminent Scotsmen everywhere.... Pray talk this over with Mr Home and Mr Baldwin Brown, and any others you think fit.'⁵⁸ However, at that time Edinburgh lacked a suitable body which was able and willing to acquire ancient buildings in order to secure their future and preservationists had to rely in the main on sympathetic individuals with the financial wherewithal to pursue private initiatives.⁵⁹

Both Baldwin Brown and Geddes were on the council of the London-based National Trust and in this organisation they saw a model which might replace the Cockburn Association which by then had lost popular support and was severely stretched financially.⁶⁰ In February 1910 an event took place in Geddes' Outlook Tower in Edinburgh.⁶¹ The *Scotsman* reported that the Cockburn Association was on the point of being dissolved and the purpose of the meeting was 'To consider the desirableness of federating in some manner a number of existing organisations all interested in the preservation of Old Edinburgh and the general amenity of the city.'⁶² Baldwin Brown, Patrick Geddes and Thomas Ross were among the speakers and it was agreed to hold a broader conference of the several bodies interested in the subject later that year. This later event which was referred to a 'National Trust'

Welter, 'Slum, Semi-slum, Super-slum – some reflections by Patrick Geddes, *Architectural Heritage*, 10, 66-73; Johnson and Rosenberg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh*.

⁵⁸ UoS/AL/T-GED 9/804.

⁵⁹ For White Horse Close see R.J. Morris, 'White Horse Close: philanthropy, Scottish historical imagination and the rebuilding of Edinburgh in the later nineteenth century', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 33, 1 (2013), 101-28.

⁶⁰ CA did not produce annual reports between 1908 and 1910.

⁶¹ For the Outlook Tower see Mellor, *Patrick Geddes*, 103-113; P. Boardman, *The Worlds of Patrick Geddes* (London, 1978), 137-145; K. Maclean, 'Patrick Geddes: regional survey and education', in W. Stephen (ed.), *Think Global, Act Local* (Edinburgh, 2004), 85-119.

⁶² *Scotsman*, 4 February 1910.

conference took place in the City Chambers in October 1910.⁶³ Baldwin Brown attended with other key figures including the Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Kingsburgh (who had been a vice-president of the Cockburn Association since 1886) and Sir John Stirling Maxwell who was committed to the preservation of ancient Scottish buildings and was also a member of the National Trust executive. They were joined by two of the three original founders of the National Trust, Sir Robert Hunter and Baldwin Brown's boyhood friend, Canon Hardwick Rawnsley. Lord Kingsburgh noted that the meeting would be glad to see the operations of the Trust extended in the North, and recommended it to the support of the people of Edinburgh and of Scotland generally: 'Edinburgh formed one of the saddest examples of the failure of the nation and the failure of the inhabitants of the city to see what was before their eyes'.⁶⁴ He shared some of the challenges faced by the city's first amenity body:

He belonged to an association which had existed from a great many years, and which had done a good deal of hard work in connection with the preservation of the amenity of the city, yet the citizens took no interest in the matter. When the Corporation- not so often now as formerly- or some citizen proposed to perpetrate some frightful disfigurement, people began to write to the newspaper asking – Where is the Cockburn Association? It would be better if they would become members of the Association and bring their strength into its work. Or they could form themselves into a new and competing association, and the Cockburn Association, if the new body were successful, would be very glad to hand over to them the work. They had no body of citizens taking a real interest in the matter, otherwise they would not see things done of which they ought to be heartily ashamed.'⁶⁵

As a result of these discussions plans for a 'National Trust' based in Edinburgh were taken forward, with the Secretary of the Cockburn Association going as far as to draw up the memorandum and articles for the new body. However there was a change of heart at some stage and, although the reasons are obscure, the proposals for the new body were abandoned in favour of a revived Cockburn Association. The latter subsequently launched an appeal to secure the future of Moubray House adjacent to John Knox's House on the High Street (figures 30 and 31) by means of acquisition. Fundraising to allow this proved difficult,

⁶³ 26 October 1908. Baldwin Brown was one of the speakers.

⁶⁴ *Scotsman*, 27 October 1908.

⁶⁵ *Scotsman*, 27 October 1908.



Figure 30. Moubray House (centre) and John Knox's House (right) in 1843. *Source:* D. Wilson, *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time* (Edinburgh, 1848), vol. ii.



Figure 31. Moubray House and John Knox's House in 2013. *Source:* D. Henrie.

however, and in addition to appeal letters in the local press from David Moncrieff, the convenor of the Cockburn Association and its secretary, Andrew Murray, Baldwin Brown wrote to the *Times* to appeal for help from its readers. He drew attention to the fact that on the continent some central or local authorities could use powers of compulsory purchase and suggested that such powers might be introduced in Britain once the Commissions had finished their survey works. However in the meantime all that could be done in Britain to assure ‘country monuments’ against destruction or injury was for a private body to undertake a ‘friendly purchase at a fair price.’⁶⁶ The fund-raising campaign was ultimately successful with the ownership of Moubray House secured by the Cockburn Association and then vested in a purpose-created trust.⁶⁷ Under proposals brought forward by William Hay, the publisher who owned the adjacent John Knox’s House, Moubray House and John Knox’s House were to be used together as a visitor attraction, with the buildings also containing a gallery for the sale of locally-produced arts and crafts.⁶⁸ However, the arrival of the war in 1914 undermined the viability of this initiative, with Moubray House subsequently leased as a student residence for the Women’s Missionary College of the United Free Church.

Town planning and preservation

The *Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act* was introduced into Britain in 1909.⁶⁹ Although the Housing Acts of 1890, 1900 and 1903 had not mentioned ancient monuments, section 45 of the 1909 Act included a protective measure: ‘nothing in the Housing Act shall authorise the acquisition for the purposes of those Acts of any land which is the site of an ancient monument or other object of archaeological interest’. The fourth schedule attached to section

⁶⁶ *Times*, 1 December 1910.

⁶⁷ The trustees were Lord Guthrie, Baldwin Brown, Bailie Dobie, Walter B. Blaikie and Helen Kerr.

⁶⁸ *Scotsman*, 1 February 1911. See NAS/BT2/8086 for the Arts and Crafts Company created to run the visitor attraction and gallery.

⁶⁹ 9 Edw. VII. Ch. 44. See W.A. Casson, *The Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909* (London, 1912); C.E. Allen, *The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890-1909* (London, 1916); A. Sutcliffe, ‘Britain’s First Town Planning Act’ *Town Planning Review*, 59, 3 (1988), 289-303; B.W. Thompson, *Handbook to the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909* (London, 1910).

55 also enabled the Local Government Board to prescribe conditions within town schemes related to the preservation of objects of historical interest or natural beauty. For Baldwin Brown, the new Act offered the opportunity for the protection of urban monuments and ancient buildings under designated town schemes. He set out his thoughts in a paper presented at the RIBA town planning conference in 1910, encouraging the use of the 1909 Act for the sensitive treatment of ancient features.⁷⁰ This paper suggests that Baldwin Brown understood the close link between the protection of ancient buildings and other features in historic towns and the emerging town planning powers, and that he recognised the potential for the 1909 Act to be used to introduce the local tier of protection for which he had previously campaigned. However the unusually critical tone employed in the paper suggests that Baldwin Brown had also lost confidence in the reliability of local councils for preservation, at least where Edinburgh was concerned. Despite the presence of William Brown, the city's Lord Provost and a party of his officials,⁷¹ Baldwin Brown attacked what he saw as the inadequacies of local councils and illustrated his belief with a highly critical assessment of Edinburgh's conduct.⁷² He drew attention to the contradictions between Brown's earlier speech to the Old Edinburgh Club where he had stressed that he and all the members of the Council were deeply impressed with the need for preserving most jealously the architectural beauties of the city and his subsequent decision to give sanction for a destructive alteration of the classical buildings at Atholl Terrace. Although the chief parties had eventually abandoned what Baldwin Brown termed 'this act of vandalism', he suggested that the whole transaction 'had cast a sinister light' on the real value of the Lord Provost's previous statements: 'A civic official may profess in words a sensitive regard for these

⁷⁰ 10-15 October 1910. Although Geddes's paper at the conference has attracted the attention of Geddes scholars, the significance of Baldwin Brown's paper and its relevance to Edinburgh has not previously been identified.

⁷¹ Sir William Slater Brown, an active member of the Improvements Committee. The Edinburgh Corporation also sent James Williamson, the City Superintendent of Works, Councillor Cameron and Dr Thomas Hunter. Geddes was due to present but was prevented by illness, his paper appearing in the proceedings. The architect F.C. Mears, Geddes' son-in law, also attended.

⁷² While he did not name Brown, the description of the case would have left him and his colleagues in no doubt as to who the subject of Brown's criticisms were.

aesthetic considerations, and then proceed to ignore them in practice in the most cynical fashion.’⁷³ He stressed once again the need for public vigilance with regard to local councils: ‘The average civic administrator, though desirous of doing his duty in all departments of his activity, needs as a rule considerable urging before he will go a step out of his way to preserve an object of natural or architectural beauty, or some site or monument of historic interest.’ As a result ‘we must watch their proceedings with vigilance, and invoke and educate a public opinion that will guide and control them aright.’⁷⁴ Baldwin Brown then turned his attention to the 1909 Act, showing his familiarity with the emerging subject of town planning and housing legislation and that he had explored what threats and opportunities it offered for the preservation to ancient urban buildings and monuments. One of the key innovations of the 1909 Act was the introduction of power to enable local authorities to draw up area-based town planning schemes which took account of historic features. However Baldwin Brown was concerned that this would not be the approach adopted:

There is a significant sentence in a recent book by one of these, in which the writer exclaims: “it is so infinitely easier to achieve the hygienic, artistic, and economic objects of town planning when starting with a clean slate that one would like to see our overgrown towns done away with, and new ones built in their stead, if only this were possible.”... his *obiter dictum* points to the possible danger of a doctrinaire insistence on certain special advantages that might, after all, be too dearly bought. Every responsible person who is dealing with the subject matter of this Conference will acknowledge that the historic past has the very strongest claims on the reverent attention of the present; but here again the danger is that considerations recognised in principle may in practice be crowded out through the clamorous insistence of hygienic, artistic, and economic claims.⁷⁵

He was nonetheless optimistic about the 1909 Act: ‘our Government departments, acting in matters of detail through their subordinate officials, have as a rule appeared indifferent to these considerations of beauty and historic interest’, [but] public servants would now be

⁷³ G. B. Brown, ‘Town planning and the preservation of ancient features’, in Royal Institute of British Architects, *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects Town Planning Conference, London, 10-15 October 1910* (London 1911), 187-199.

⁷⁴ Brown, ‘Town planning’, 188.

⁷⁵ Brown, ‘Town planning’, 190. Baldwin Brown’s quotation was taken from J. Nettlefold, *Practical Housing* (Letchworth, 1908), 93.

obliged to follow the new policy relating to ancient monuments.⁷⁶ Baldwin Brown went on to suggest that it was important for town planning schemes to follow the existing configuration of a site. He suggested that this did not mean that artificial lines of communication should not be created in certain circumstances, such as with the North Bridge in Edinburgh, but that they should be introduced for good reason into an existing ensemble that preserves its general character. Reflecting John Dick Peddie's mid-nineteenth century views about the importance of preserving Edinburgh's legibility, he reflected that the construction of 'solid causeways rather than light bridges across the low-lying valleys has had the effect of cutting off communications between the upper and lower levels and of thrusting the latter down into squalor. The cities of the well-to-do and of the poor are in this way sharply sundered, with the worst possible social and economic effects.'⁷⁷ He also took the opportunity to warn once again against what he saw as the dangers of the civic official and town planner: 'It will be remembered that we are faced here with the indifference of the ordinary civic official, and with the predilection for the "clean slate" of the municipal reformer and professed town planner.'⁷⁸

He then turned to the issue of expertise and the vulnerability of monuments to demolition due to an inexperienced assessment of their condition. To overcome this problem he suggested that local authorities should employ public officials (such as inspectors) with local knowledge to report on operations in relation to the amenity of the district and for higher officials to then consider possible modifications to plans with a view to ensuring preservation. Monuments that exhibited symptoms of decay he felt were vulnerable to destruction as the iconoclast would insist, and would back his opinion by expert evidence, that such structures could not possibly be saved. Baldwin Brown suggested however that there were 'experts and experts' and cited the recent case of the Old Bridge at Ayr as an example where when the right

⁷⁶ Brown, 'Town planning', 192.

⁷⁷ Brown, 'Town planning', 193.

⁷⁸ Brown, 'Town planning', 193-194.

people were called in to advise, preservation had been found to be feasible.⁷⁹ Baldwin Brown also pointed out that even when monuments were in good condition, they were also vulnerable, noting that the arguments for destruction in such cases usually related to their causing obstruction: 'Surely the right method is not to ignore the object of beauty or historic interest in the inception of the scheme, but to start with it as an essential factor in the situation, and assuming it, for argument's sake, to be absolutely irremovable, let the scheme of improvement grow around it as about a centre.' He went on to suggest that 'It will generally be found that, just as the dilapidated monument can be strengthened, so here the claims of utility and of art and history can be harmonised, and the object or building in question may at times become the pivot of the whole scheme and its central feature and adornment.'⁸⁰ He concluded his paper by stressing once again the need for vigilance against 'the doctrinaire with his clean slate and paper projects' and stressed the potential of 'those monuments of the art of the past, which have not only an aesthetic charm hard to compass in modern work but are centres round which the national and civic patriotism of the young may be taught to grow.'⁸¹

Baldwin Brown's paper was reported as part of the wider coverage of the conference in the national press,⁸² with the *Times* giving support to Baldwin Brown, suggesting that it would be a dangerous thing 'to let loose the municipal enthusiast with his plans inspired very often as much by political as artistic or even sensible utilitarian considerations.'⁸³ Unsurprisingly, not all were supportive of his views, however, with the Liverpool City Engineer disappointed with the tone of his paper.⁸⁴ Baldwin Brown's paper was however prescient in that it was only five years later that Edinburgh witnessed the conflict between the preservation of a

⁷⁹ See *Scotsman*, 21 June 1905; *Scotsman* 15 August 1905.

⁸⁰ Brown, 'Town planning' 195.

⁸¹ Brown, 'Town Planning', 196-197;

⁸² *Times*, 13 October 1910; *Guardian*, 13 October 2010; *Scotsman*, 13 October 1910.

⁸³ *Times*, 15 October 2010.

⁸⁴ *Scotsman*, 13 October 1910.

historic building, Murrayfield House, and the ‘clean-slate’ approach to town planning adopted by Edinburgh’s Council in its first town scheme.⁸⁵

Intrinsic value and value by association.

In 1912 Baldwin Brown wrote an article for the *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation* on the protection of cultural treasures. He used the article to identify where legislative provisions in Europe had been updated since publication of *The Care of Ancient Monuments*.⁸⁶ As with his 1905 book, he used his continental experience to identify practical measures for future British legislation. The article drew in particular on two high-profile cases — the sale of a Rembrandt painting by Lord Lansdowne and the sale of the chimneypieces from Tattershall Castle⁸⁷ — to make a key distinction between objects with intrinsic value and those where value was derived from ‘association.’ The Rembrandt was not of British origin nor associated with the national life and while of undoubted intrinsic value, he felt that to give the nation a right of pre-emption over the sale of such foreign masters, where a long-lived and established art market existed, would be difficult to bring forward successfully. However, a painting such as Hogarth’s portrait of the founder of the Foundling Hospital in London had a closer association with a particular historic location and he anticipated a situation where such a sale might lead to protective legislation. In the case of the Tattershall chimneypieces, the chimneypieces were characteristic examples of a special phase of the national art. They were ‘an integral part of a historic structure, and had no place or significance save where they were actually located, and the mutilation of the monument was an act of impiety which it is unjust to a historic people to call Vandalism.’⁸⁸

In reviewing the position on the continent he concluded that it was easier to protect permanent objects than portable ones and those in public ownership than those owned by a

⁸⁵ Chapter 9.

⁸⁶ G.B. Brown, ‘Recent monument legislation and the care of artistic treasures’, *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation*, 12, 2 (1912), 266-79.

⁸⁷ Chapter 10.

⁸⁸ Brown, ‘Recent monument legislation’, 266.

private proprietor. The proper safeguard of older urban buildings, he suggested, was in fact one of the chief problems of British monument administration: 'the British town council acts in such a matter with a freedom tempered only by the local press and public opinion, and, owing to the predilection of its average member for what is new and clean and straight, it has often proved itself terribly destructive.'⁸⁹ In the case of private property he suggested that a new power of intervention should be created which would allow a threatened edifice or other immovable a monument to be declared of special interest in relation to the past history and the art of the country, and that a delay of three months should be introduced during which time the Office of Works could undertake friendly negotiation. However, should these fail they should be armed with the powers of expropriation. Baldwin Brown's paper was especially timely as the Tattershall Castle case had exposed for once and for all the weaknesses of the existing monument legislation and the Government was finally to accede to the growing calls for the strengthening of the ancient monument legislation in Britain.

In the period between 1906 and 1912 Baldwin Brown continued to campaign for improvement of national protective legislation and its supporting infrastructure. Having found a sympathetic ear in Lord Pentland, in 1908, a key element of his vision for improved national infrastructure, a Scottish national inventory body, was created and it was followed by similar organisations in Wales and England. At the same time Edinburgh's Council adopted a new municipal register, albeit limited in its geographical scope, and adopted procedures which appeared to give significantly improved protection to early Old Town vernacular buildings. However, despite local progress, Baldwin Brown's confidence in the municipal authority's desire to approach preservation in a consistent and competent manner was declining. He therefore became closely involved in an initiative to set up Edinburgh's first historic building trust and he also took part in discussions about the creation of a municipal collection of historic buildings. The new town planning legislation offered the

⁸⁹ Brown, 'Recent monument legislation', 277-8.

potential to provide a local tier of protection for historic buildings and structures but Baldwin Brown recognised the possibility that the new legislation, in the hands of engineers and town planners, might instead lead to the resurgence of unsympathetic area-based clearances and further losses of the city's ancient vernacular buildings.

Chapter 9. National Legislation and Local Cooperation

There were significant problems with the Ancient Monuments Protection Act which had been adopted in 1882.¹ Amongst other things, the legislation relied on the owner of a monument placing it under the provisions of the Act, and in practice its scope was restricted to a small number of prehistoric monuments which tended to be located in rural areas. Once the 1882 legislation was enacted, it was also starved of resources and when General Pitt Rivers, the first inspector of ancient monuments, retired in frustration, the post was left vacant for almost a decade.² While minor amendments to the Act had been made in 1900³ and 1910,⁴ the majority of historic structures and monuments were to remain unprotected and vulnerable to destruction. Although Baldwin Brown and others had drawn attention to the inadequacies of the existing legislation, it took a high-profile case to demonstrate the impotence of the existing provisions and to shift the political mood. As Baldwin Brown stated in 1912: 'It may, in fact, be laid down as a working principle that anything which really shocks the conscience of the public will sooner or later form the subject of legislation'.⁵ For ancient monument legislation this shock related to Tattershall Castle, a fifteenth century brick-built tower in Lincolnshire.⁶

Tattershall Castle and new ancient monuments legislation

In 1911 the castle owners took the decision to sell the building's late medieval carved chimneypieces to an American buyer and had stripped them from the building in preparation for their export. In addition, there were rumours that the building itself was to be sold, taken down and exported. The Government's long held belief in an owner's right to determine the

¹ 45 & 46 Vict., cap 73. *Ancient Monuments Protection Act, 1882.*

² Chippindale, C., 'The making of the first Ancient Monument Act, 1882, and its administration under General Pitt Rivers', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 86 (1983), 1-55.

³ 63 & 64 Vict., cap 34. *Ancient Monuments Protection Act, 1900.*

⁴ 10 Edw. 7, cap 3. *Ancient Monuments Protection Act 1910.*

⁵ G.B. Brown, 'Recent monument legislation and the care of artistic treasures', *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation*, 12, 2, (1912), 266-79, 267.

⁶ N. Pevsner, J. Harris and N. Antram, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire* (Harmondsworth, 1989). Revised edition, 745-9.

fate of their own property meant that it had no legal powers to intervene. A major public protest led by SPAB and the National Trust, endeavoured to stop further demolition and to fundraise in order to acquire the property for the nation.⁷ Despite strong rhetoric in the press and in Parliament, however, the case was rapidly being lost.⁸ Baldwin Brown, who sat on the National Trust council, was well-placed to understand both the importance of the building and that the ancient monument legislation would be helpless. His letter to the *Times* in October 1911 was caustic and sought to raise public disapproval of those parties involved: 'There are elements in the transaction that make it a disgraceful one for any civilised country. I do not refer to the mere fact of the sale or alienation of works of art of national interest.... It is the brutal treatment meted out to the fine work of old English art that should move the indignation of the public'.⁹ He went on to criticise the directors of the bank which owned the castle, the firm of art dealers who were handling the sale of the chimneypieces, and the American purchasers.

Despite the importance of Tattershall Castle, the day was saved not by the Government or an amenity body, but by the action of the former Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. He tracked down and purchased the chimneypieces which were awaiting transport to America and returned them to the castle. He also bought the castle, gifting it to the National Trust subsequently.¹⁰ Curzon had been responsible for the introduction of the Ancient Monument Protection Act in India in 1904,¹¹ and he was therefore knowledgeable about ancient monument protection and a powerful political force. He added his weight to the calls for strengthening of the ancient monument legislation in Britain to prevent a repetition of this

⁷ A large number of letters appeared in the *Times* between 11 and 22 September 1911.

⁸ For the mixed reception to the Tattershall case and its impact, see P. Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (London, 1997), 184-187.

⁹ *Times*, 14 October 1911.

¹⁰ See T. Champion, 'Protecting the monuments: archaeological legislation from the 1882 Act to PPG 16', in M. Hunter (ed.), *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (Stroud, 1996), 38-56, 45-7.

¹¹ B.K. Thapar, 'India', in H. Cleere (ed.), *Approaches to the Archaeological Heritage* (Cambridge, 1984), 63-72, 64-65.

embarrassing case¹² and under growing pressure, the Government acted with haste. The Ministry of Works' Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Charles Peers, was asked for his views on the administration of the existing legislation,¹³ with a new survey of the legislation in place in Europe and further afield commissioned from the Foreign and Colonial Offices.¹⁴ In 1912 a joint Commons and Lords Select Committee under the Chairmanship of the Earl of Plymouth met to consider proposed new legislation.¹⁵ They had in front of them three rival Ancient Monuments Bills and after detailed deliberations the outcome was the Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act of 1913.¹⁶ One of the members of the Joint Select Committee was Charles E. Price,¹⁷ the Liberal MP for Central Edinburgh, and a number of Scottish witnesses were called to give evidence including the Secretary of RCAHMS, Alexander Curle, Thomas Ross and Sir Robert Rowand Anderson.¹⁸ Given his unrivalled knowledge of monument legislation on the continent and his high profile as a preservationist in Britain, it is surprising that Baldwin Brown was not called to give evidence, nor was *The Care of Ancient Monuments* identified within the Committee's report.¹⁹ The most likely explanation for this was, however, that Baldwin Brown was deliberately overlooked. A paper given to the Society of Antiquaries of London by Sir

¹² Although his support did not include bringing occupied buildings under the scope of the strengthened legislation. Mandler, *Stately Home*, 189.

¹³ NAL/WORK/14/2270/C562670. Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act: bills 1912-1913; Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments' report on working of old act; report of select committee of both houses. *Memorandum*, 2 November 1911.

¹⁴ NAL/WORK/14/2278/C562671, Systems adopted in foreign countries for preservation of ancient monuments. Foreign Office, *Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives Abroad showing the Systems Adopted in Certain Foreign Counties for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments* Miscellaneous No. 7 (HMSO, 1912), [Cd. 6200]; Colonial Office, *Papers relating to the Preservation of Historic Sites and Ancient Monuments and Buildings in the West Indian Colonies*. Miscellaneous, No. 84 (HMSO, 1912), [Cd.6428].

¹⁵ The draft Bills were by the Government, the National Trust and SPAB. S. Thurley, *Men from the Ministry* (Yale University Press: London, 2013), 74-75.

¹⁶ 3 & 4 Geo. 5, cap 32, *The Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act*. Enacted on 15 August 1913.

¹⁷ Price raised the issue of including occupied buildings and historic urban areas within the legislation. His Edinburgh base and his choice of examples raises the strong possibility that he held discussions with Baldwin Brown beforehand.

¹⁸ House of Commons, *Report from the Joint Select Committee of the House and Lords and the House of Commons on the Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Bill, etc. together with Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence*, 7 November 1912 (London, 1912).

¹⁹ There is no reference to *The Care of Ancient Monuments* in the *Minutes of Evidence*.

Schomberg McDonnell, the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Works, in December of 1911 is highly informative in this regard.²⁰ In setting out the case for strengthening the ancient monument legislation and how this might best be achieved McDonnell, who was fully aware of the problems suffered by Sir John Lubbock when promoting ancient monuments legislation in 1882, took the view that the inclusion of occupied buildings would lead to the failure of any strengthened legislation to be enacted. A strong theme which runs through his paper was the need for caution: 'If you bring forward very drastic measures you will frighten people, and if you frighten people you will not get your Bill either through the House of Commons or the House of Lords — at least, that is my humble opinion.' There was also a possible reference to Baldwin Brown's 1905 book in his lecture in that McDonnell indicated that he had read the relevant laws in place in other countries about six years previously.²¹ He stressed that 'People in Great Britain will not stand too much control; it is entirely foreign to their nature; they are not going to be inspected and harassed and worried in every kind of way. Gentlemen, do not let us attempt it.'²² He continued 'Let everybody who is drafting a Bill of that kind remember the hackneyed phrase that Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen all regard their houses as their castles, though I must say that I have some doubt whether they should regard their castles as their houses, especially if they are in ruins.'²³

Given such strongly expressed views, and the likely difficulties of stopping Baldwin Brown giving evidence to the contrary, it is possible that McDonnell and Peers took steps to ensure that Baldwin Brown was not called.²⁴ Nonetheless there was a significant amount of

²⁰ S. McDonnell, 'The Protection of Ancient Buildings and Monuments' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 24, (1912), 14-32. He was accompanied by Charles Peers.

²¹ McDonnell, 'Protection', 23. The mention of reading the foreign legislation '6 years ago' places it at the beginning of 1906. *The Care of Ancient Monuments* was published in November 1905.

²² McDonnell, 'Protection', 23

²³ McDonnell, 'The Protection of Ancient Buildings and Monuments', 23

²⁴ Peers was actively involved, for example, in ensuring that neither Robert Rowand Anderson nor Macgregor Chalmers were appointed to the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland as they were

discussion by the Joint Select Committee about whether occupied buildings should be drawn within the scope of the amended legislation. A number of issues were covered including public-funded repair works, disrepair, demolitions, sale and removals, setting issues, and the ability of local authorities to raise funds for the upkeep of historic buildings. Specific examples discussed ranged from Chester to Canterbury and from Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-on-Avon to Edinburgh's Moubray House. However, while there was support from some witnesses to include measures for the protection of inhabited buildings, the official line from the Government's witnesses remained that such a step was likely to stop the legislation in its tracks when it reached Parliament.²⁵ Peers was careful to emphasise that they must proceed as fast as they could but not try to go too fast: 'nobody regrets more than I do the destruction of any old farmhouses or any houses that are interesting, but I do not see how you can bring inhabited houses within the purview of this Bill.'²⁶ Robert Rowand Anderson and Reginald Blomfield also discouraged the inclusion of occupied buildings, with the latter stating rather disingenuously that: 'Owners who inhabit old houses are fully alive to their historical and artistic importance; far more so in this country than on the continent, as for example, in France.'²⁷ He went on to say that architects were taught in their training to respect old works and that the owner was ready to put up with considerable personal inconvenience rather than sacrifice part of the history of the house, concluding that the tendency seemed to him to be a tendency to sentimentalism rather than to vandalism.

Another important consideration for the Select Committee had been whether there should be a separate Ancient Monuments Board and Chief Inspector for Scotland. Scottish sensitivities had been raised in this area by the recent move of responsibilities for Scottish monuments

'restoring architects.' NAS/DD30/1. Memorandum from C R Peers to McDonnell's successor, Lionel Earle, 17 October 1913.

²⁵ Surprisingly, SPAB did not argue for the inclusion of inhabited buildings whereas the Chairman of Worcestershire County Council did.

²⁶ House of Commons, *Report from the Joint Select Committee*, para. 1560.

²⁷ House of Commons, *Report from the Joint Select Committee*, para. 1584. The evidence was focused on larger houses and ignored smaller vernacular urban and rural buildings.

from the Edinburgh-based principal architect of the Office of Works for Scotland, William Oldrieve, to the London-based Charles Peers. The explanation offered by MacDonnell that Oldrieve had been too busy to undertake his work effectively and that this was better administered by Peers and colleagues was guaranteed to raise hackles in Edinburgh. Oldrieve also suffered implied criticism during the evidence given by Schomberg McDonnell to the Joint Select Committee when setting out a proposed restructuring of the Ministry of Works,²⁸ and again subsequently in an article by an architect, W.A. Forsyth, who had questioned Oldrieve's approach to monument repair in Scotland.²⁹ Baldwin Brown was quick to defend his former student and RCAHMS colleague, and to emphasise that the situation of many monuments, their specialities and Scottish methods of work suggested that local expertise was more appropriate and would take account of: 'Scottish feeling, which becomes a little uneasy when matters of distinctly national import are suddenly whisked away to be settled for the future in London.'³⁰ Peers wanted a single Ancient Monuments Board for Britain,³¹ but there was an eleventh-hour decision to create separate Ancient Monuments Boards for Wales and Scotland. Despite this decision, however, neither Baldwin Brown nor Oldrieve were invited to join the Scottish Board.³²

The resulting 1913 Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act created Ancient Monument Boards for Scotland, England and Wales, introduced the mechanism of preservation orders by which threatened monuments could be placed under the protection of

²⁸ *Scotsman*, 17 October 1912.

²⁹ W.A. Forsyth, 'The repair of ancient buildings', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 17 January 1914, 109-137.

³⁰ *Scotsman*, 18 October 1912. Baldwin Brown defended Oldrieve in a letter to RIBA published on 2 January 1914. Oldrieve retired from the Ministry of Works by the summer of 1914 but remained actively involved in Scottish preservation through RCAHMS and other amenity bodies.

³¹ NAL/WORK/14/2270/C562670, undated response to *Memorandum* of 2 November 1911. As the draft legislation was developed the proposed board was to rise from 9 to an unwieldy 50-60.

³² NAL/WORK/14/2270/C562670. Memorandum 28 July 1913. HC Debate 12 August 1913, cc.2451-2. The Scottish Board was chaired by Sir John Stirling Maxwell, the other members were Sir Herbert Maxwell (Chair of RCAHMS), A.O. Curle (Society of Antiquaries), George MacDonald (Scottish Education Department), Sir James Guthrie, Sir Robert Lorimer, Sir J.R. Findlay, C.R. Peers (Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments) and J.S. Richardson (Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland).

the Commissioner of Works for an eighteen month period, and allowed the Commissioner of Works to become the guardian of the monuments (albeit in heavily prescribed circumstances). It also broadened the date range of monuments which could be protected by virtue of section 22 which defined Ancient Monuments as any monument the preservation of which is a matter of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic, or archaeological interest. However section 8 explicitly excluded any structure which appears to be occupied as a dwelling house (otherwise than by a person employed as the caretaker thereof or his family). Although there is no record of Baldwin Brown's response to the new legislation, he would have recognised that the 1913 Act contained significant advances in some areas, with the introduction of preservation orders and compulsory guardianship responding to one of his recommendations in *The Care of Ancient Monuments*. However, he would have been deeply disappointed not only by the absence of an invitation to give evidence to the Select Committee, but by the lack of provision made to protect occupied ancient buildings or their settings. There was little in the 1913 Act that could be used to protect broader townscape,³³ excepting the potential use of the legislation to protect monuments such as the remains of town walls as had already been used in the case of the Berwick Ramparts.³⁴

The weakness of the 1913 Act with regard to ancient buildings was to be highlighted a year later. In 1914 the Office of Works attempted to use a preservation order under the new Act to preserve a vacated seventeenth century house in Soho Square in London. However, the House of Lords not only refused to confirm the order but also awarded costs to the owner, and the house was subsequently demolished. In the 1920s the Office of Works did use the

³³ With the exception of section 18 which allowed the relaxation of local authority byelaws where they would prevent the erection of new buildings 'in a style of architecture in harmony with other buildings of artistic merit existing in the locality.' Section 19 enabled local authorities to use the existing advertisement regulation legislation to prohibit or restrict advertising which would be detrimental to the amenity of ancient monuments.

³⁴ Although rural monuments in the surrounding area were protected, no features within the Edinburgh's boundaries were protected by scheduling within Baldwin Brown's lifetime. Historic Scotland, *pers. comm.*

orders successfully in the case of ruins and earthworks but inhabited (and recently inhabited) houses were to remain outside the legislation. When a further attempt was made to persuade the then first Commissioner of Works, the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, to use a preservation order on an occupied building in 1921, he refused to agree such ‘a grave inroad upon the private rights and the development of property.’³⁵ The opportunity for the protection of occupied historic buildings in urban areas through the ancient monuments legislation had effectively been lost and was not to return for a generation.

Throughout his time in Edinburgh, Baldwin Brown was prepared to campaign singlehandedly when other bodies and individuals were unwilling to pursue objections to development schemes.³⁶ Following Edward VII’s death in May 1910, proposals were brought forward by Robert Lorimer for a memorial gateway at the entrance to Holyrood Palace precinct (figure 32). Matters were not straightforward as the proposals included the demolition of an early building standing immediately outside the existing gate on Abbey Strand (figure 33), described by the *Scotsman* as ‘some old property’.³⁷ Baldwin Brown immediately sought to correct the impression given: ‘This old property happens to include one of the best preserved and most characteristic pieces of old Edinburgh domestic architecture of the suburban type now left to us.’³⁸ Describing the proposed demolition as a cruel act of destruction he explained the building’s significance: ‘The artistic effect of this little building as opposed to the mass of the Palace is most pleasing. It gives scale to it, and it links it with the older structures of the Canongate, with which in historical associations Holyrood is so closely connected.’ Using a common rhetorical device, he also suggested that

³⁵ Quoted in Thurley, *Men from the Ministry*, 170.

³⁶ His letters were written from the University of Edinburgh in order to draw on his authority as the Professor of Fine Art.

³⁷ *Scotsman*, 24 January 1911.

³⁸ *Scotsman*, 25 January 1911. Baldwin Brown wrote a further letter about Holyrood and its environs mentioning Geddes’ work and suggesting that the best way to raise social conditions was by running traffic through poorer localities. *Scotsman*, 6 February 1911.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL MEMORIAL TO KING EDWARD.

A SUGGESTED HOLYROOD DESIGN.

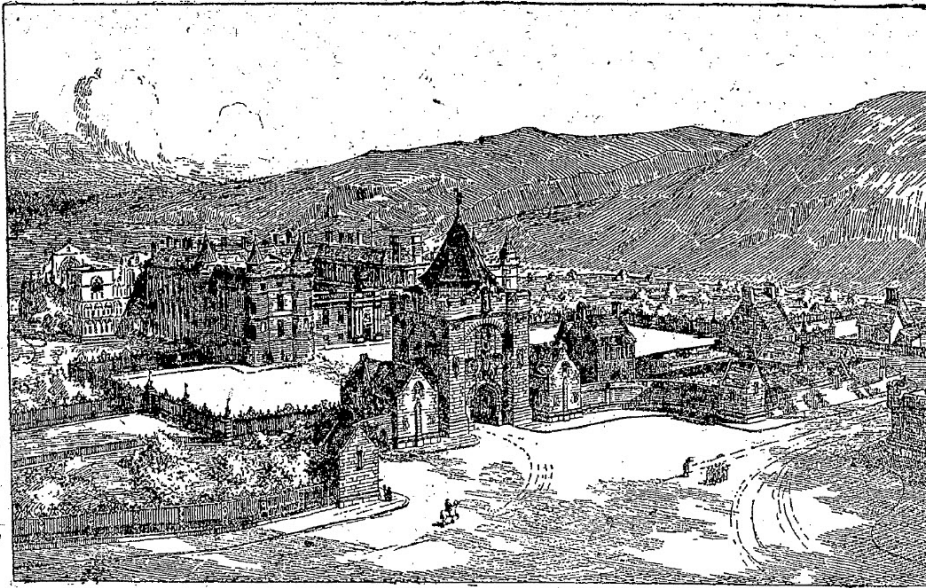


Figure 32. The proposed King Edward VII memorial gateway. *Source: Scotsman, 24 January 1911.*



Figure 33. Abbey Strand cottages at the gates to Holyrood Abbey in 2013. *Source: D. Henrie.*

as the Crown, the Office of Works, and the Council, had each declared themselves in favour of the preservation of old structures of historical or artistic value, it seemed unlikely in any event that the scheme would receive assent.³⁹ Baldwin Brown raised the case with the Old Edinburgh Club⁴⁰ and again as a council member of the Cockburn Association,⁴¹ but he remained the most high-profile objector to the proposals and in due course an amended scheme was adopted which preserved the building. In June 1911 Baldwin Brown also defended Charlotte Square from the proposed erection of a bronze memorial statue on a granite base commemorating the Marquis of Linlithgow, to be located in the south east corner of the central garden.⁴² His letter to the *Scotsman* raised concerns over the impact of the proposed statue on the harmony of the square, noting the danger that if this one was allowed the other corners of the Square would soon succumb to similar proposals.⁴³ As his earlier campaigns suggest, however, Baldwin Brown had already recognised that group action was more powerful than individual campaigns. Frequently therefore whilst writing to the press under his own name and university address, he would also seek to draw one or more of the city's organisations into pursuing a broader campaign.

Local coordination and cooperation

It is significant that after the adoption of the 1913 Act, Baldwin Brown ceased his strategic campaigning for legislative change and an amended national organisational infrastructure. Instead, he shifted his focus to the provision of local protective arrangements while continuing to campaign on individual cases. He recognised that the omission of occupied buildings from the amended ancient monument legislation meant that the protection of ancient buildings in urban areas would mostly fall to local authorities, using their powers

³⁹ *Scotsman*, 25 January 1911.

⁴⁰ *Scotsman*, 31 January 1911.

⁴¹ CA, *Annual Report*, January 1913, 4.

⁴² ECA/SL123/1, *Edinburgh Town Council, Streets and Buildings Sub-Committee*, 1902-10, 26 October 1909. The committee recommended the scheme and site in Charlotte Square to the full council. The proprietors of Charlotte Square were reluctant to agree the proposals which were eventually abandoned.

⁴³ *Scotsman*, 12 June 1911.

including provisions under the emerging town planning legislation. However in Edinburgh he had lost his trust in the Council and he therefore used his energies to identify how the city's amenity and professional bodies might bring coordinated pressure to bear on the Council, developers and landowners from the outside. As part of this move, Baldwin Brown became increasingly visible in a growing number of amenity, professional and academic bodies. He remained a highly active Commissioner of the RCAHMS, continued to sit on the council of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Scottish Arts Club, remained involved with the EAA,⁴⁴ and was to sit for periods on the council of the Old Edinburgh Club.⁴⁵ In 1911 the long-lived difficulties with the Royal Scottish Academy were to a great degree overcome, with Baldwin Brown becoming their Professor of Ancient History and thereby an Honorary Fellow. He had also joined the committee of the Historical Association of Scotland (Edinburgh and South East Branch) and remained on the council of the National Trust and an Associate of RIBA. However after 1913 the Cockburn Association was to assume far greater significance for his preservation-related campaigns.

Baldwin Brown had joined the council of the Cockburn Association in 1898 and in 1913 he made the important decision to become its convenor, a position he would occupy for the next seven years. For much of this period Sir J.H.A. Macdonald (Lord Kingsburgh) was either Vice-President or President and the latter's biographical sketches reflect the difficulties that the organisation faced, heartily disliked in some quarters for its actions and criticised in others for perceived inaction.⁴⁶ Baldwin Brown's position as convenor gave him significant power for setting agendas and responding to specific development proposals. In 1915 Baldwin Brown reflected that 'So vast a destruction on the Continent makes what is left to the world more than ever valuable.... We in this country, who so far have enjoyed practically complete immunity from this sort of loss, should more fixedly determine to

⁴⁴ The EAA minute books for this period are missing and it is not possible to assess his involvement.

⁴⁵ See Appendix III.

⁴⁶ He was a founder member of the CA. See J.H.A. Macdonald, *Life Jottings* (Edinburgh, 1915), 391-4 and 483-8 for the CA and broader interest in Edinburgh's amenity.

conserve for future generations all that remains to us of what the art and industry of our forefathers created.’⁴⁷ Under Baldwin Brown’s guidance, the organisation exhibited rejuvenation both during the War years and into the following decade.⁴⁸

Over the period of Baldwin Brown’s convenorship the Cockburn Association began to focus on more strategic initiatives in addition to specific campaigns. In 1883 Baldwin Brown had called for various amenity bodies to work together in support of the Council and he continued to pursue this subsequently.⁴⁹ When Bailie Dobie had lectured to the EAA in 1906 on the aesthetic duty of a corporation toward a city, he also included the suggestion that the Council would be strengthened by being able to draw on the advice of a committee of artistic advisors drawn from the city’s key amenity and professional bodies.⁵⁰ The following year Baldwin Brown had drawn attention to the movement in American cities such as Boston to appoint Municipal Art Commissions,⁵¹ and in 1911 Bailie Dobie submitted a proposal to the Council for the creation of an advisory committee as: ‘Under the present constitution of the Town Council it is exceedingly difficult to get the members to seriously consider questions of amenity.’⁵² One justification he offered for such a committee was that it would be more sensitive to the pressures placed on the council than an external body. Despite some internal support, however, the Council ultimately voted by 30 to 9 to take no action on the proposal and as Dobie had predicted, the coordination of expertise regarding Edinburgh’s amenity

⁴⁷ CA, *Annual Report*, March 1915, 6-7. Baldwin Brown was to write letters over this period condemning the destruction by the German army of the Cathedral in Reims. He did though support the continued employment of German academic staff by Edinburgh University. *Scotsman*, 15 September, 1914 and 23 September 1914. He also wrote an article on German art in an edited volume on German culture which sought to take a measured view of German national achievements to correct the overly-positive and negative propaganda being circulated at that time. G.B. Brown, ‘German Art’ in W.P. Paterson (ed.), *German Culture: The Contribution of the Germans to Knowledge, Literature, Art, and Life* (London 1915), 197-231.

⁴⁸ The Cockburn Association sought to increase its membership by expanding: ‘among all classes of the community.’ In the short-term this led to the recruitment of a further 109 life members and 40 additional annual members. CA, *Annual Report*, March 1915, 14-15.

⁴⁹ *Scotsman*, 18 December 1883.

⁵⁰ W.F. Dobie, ‘The aesthetic duty of a corporation towards a city’, *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 5 (1910), 49-58.

⁵¹ *Scotsman*, 16 November 1907. It is notable that following the War, Baldwin Brown ceased using the German preservation movement as an exemplar.

⁵² ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Books*, 2 May 1911.

was then energetically pursued outside the municipal authority. It was the Cockburn Association under Baldwin Brown's convenorship that played the leading role. In 1915, the CA approached a number of Edinburgh bodies and in due course formal representatives of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Scottish Arts Club and the Old Edinburgh Club had joined its council.⁵³ While the EAA and RSA declined the invitation, they nonetheless strengthened their working relationship with the Association on a case-by-case basis.⁵⁴

The pattern that had already been established, whereby Baldwin Brown would write to the press about specific preservation cases but would also discuss the case at the Cockburn Association and with the other amenity bodies, was repeated regularly over this period. In 1913, Baldwin Brown wrote a detailed letter of objection to the proposals emerging from the Council for a winter garden to be erected at the extreme west end of Princes Street Gardens, arguing that the gardens formed a *tenemos* for the Castle Rock which: 'should make them sacred from any airy proposals'.⁵⁵ In parallel, the Cockburn drew together a broader group to resist the proposals, with a deputation appearing before the Town Council comprising the CA, RSA and EAA.⁵⁶ In the same year Baldwin Brown also wrote a detailed letter of objection to a proposed new staircase at the Mound and again the same three bodies made joint-representations in parallel.⁵⁷ Although the 1911 proposals for the Edward VII memorial at Holyrood had been modified to avoid the early Abbey Strand buildings, discussions on alternative proposals at Holyrood had continued and in 1915 the Cockburn called together a group comprising the RSA, SAS, EAA, SAC and OEC to discuss the merits of the new proposals and to make representations.⁵⁸ Another key issue for the city's amenity at this time was the issue of trams, both in terms of the expansion of routes within the city

⁵³ These were R. Scott Moncrieff, Henry W. Kerr and W. Moir Bryce respectively. See the list of Council Members, CA, *Annual Report*, March 1915.

⁵⁴ Although the RSA had no official council member, the Scottish sculptor, J.P. MacGillivray RSA was a member of the Cockburn and joined various campaigns. EAA members including Henry Kerr and James Bruce were active in the CA's activities.

⁵⁵ *Scotsman*, 17 March 1913. See also, *Scotsman*, 13 December 1913 and 5 January 1914.

⁵⁶ CA, *Annual Report*, January 1913, 4-5.

⁵⁷ *Scotsman*, 10 May 1913; CA, *Annual Report*, January 1913, 3.

⁵⁸ CA, *Annual Report*, 39, December 1915, 6-7.

centre and the impact of the street furniture necessary for the electrification of the lines. Again Baldwin Brown wrote to the *Scotsman* to set out his concerns and to mobilise wider public objections against the proposals.⁵⁹ Once again, the CA discussed the various schemes in parallel, raising objections where they felt the work would adversely affect the city's amenity.⁶⁰ In this case, matters progressed slowly and in 1921 Baldwin Brown was to write again to the press raising concerns over the proposals to attach wires to the face of the University's Old College Building on South Bridge Street, using this as an example of the wider damage which would be caused by the proposed overhead electrification system.⁶¹

Baldwin Brown had already raised concerns about the dangers of civic officials adopting 'clean slates' in town planning and in 1915 this problem was to become a reality. Edinburgh Council's first town planning scheme, covering parts of the Murrayfield and Ravelston areas on the west side of the city, proposed a cleared area which included the demolition of the seventeenth century Murrayfield House.⁶² In a letter to the press, Baldwin Brown appealed to both the Council and Local Government Board to make the building's preservation an integral part of the town planning scheme: 'Of recent years the Government, rightly interpreting the intelligent public opinion of the country, has shown a marked solicitude for the preservation of the monuments representing our older social history, and a building like the one in question has now far stronger claims for consideration than in former days.'⁶³ He suggested that such buildings could find successful use as private residences or as public buildings, noting Unwin's views that accidental irregularities in older towns had been used in the past to make something fitting and beautiful.⁶⁴ Baldwin Brown drew attention to the 'unpardonable public crime' of the continuing destruction of ancient buildings in Belgium:

⁵⁹ *Scotsman*, 2 January 1917.

⁶⁰ CA, *Annual Report*, 1917-1918; 1918-1919.

⁶¹ *Scotsman*, 24 October 1921; *Times*, 24 October 1921; *Scotsman*, 24 October 1922

⁶² *Scotsman*, 25 January 1915. See J.C. Gifford, C. McWilliam and D. Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (London 1991), 630.

⁶³ *Scotsman*, 22 February 1915. He was to make a similar point about the use of natural features such as the Water of Leith. *Scotsman*, 15 October 1920.

⁶⁴ R. Unwin, *Town Planning in Practice: An Introduction to the Art of Designing Cities and Suburbs* (London, 1909), 194.

'If we ourselves have been so far spared similar or worse inflictions, it is all the more incumbent on us to preserve on our part as carefully as we can this part of our heritage from the past.'⁶⁵ Once again this case also featured in the CA's discussions and they received a letter from the SAS offering their support in any effort to secure the preservation of the house.⁶⁶ Subsequently a special committee was formed to watch over matters with Lord Strathclyde, Lord Guthrie (both vice-Presidents of the Cockburn) and Baldwin Brown amongst its number, and the house was ultimately preserved.⁶⁷ Baldwin Brown also wrote to the *Scotsman* in 1914 to argue for the preservation of Edinburgh's street names as an important part of preserving the historic associations of the town with this issue also discussed by the Cockburn Association.⁶⁸ While it is not possible here to discuss all of the cases that the Cockburn Association pursued under Baldwin Brown's convenorship, a powerful and coordinated preservation movement had visibly coalesced, with the Cockburn Association providing a coordinating role under Baldwin Brown's guidance. This was to become crucially important in the light of the municipal authority's post-War housing and improvement plans, although there are signs that the effective coordination of the amenity bodies fell away to some degree in the post-War period.⁶⁹

Post-War housing and Old Edinburgh

In 1918 the municipal council discussed housing provision and employment as a priority. By the following year proposals for a new improvement scheme, which had already been under discussion prior to the outbreak of the War, were brought forward.⁷⁰ The scheme identified a number of sites in the Grassmarket and Cowgate areas of the Old Town for improvement.

⁶⁵ *Scotsman*, 22 February 1915.

⁶⁶ CA, *Annual Report*, March 1915, 7-8.

⁶⁷ *Scotsman*, 27 March 1915. See, CA, *Annual Report*, 39, 1915, 8-10.

⁶⁸ *Scotsman*, 16 July 1914. This case appeared in the CA, *Annual Report*, March 1915, 14.

⁶⁹ Baldwin Brown stepped down as convenor of the Cockburn in 1919 although he remained a council member.

⁷⁰ ECA/SL1/2 *Unsigned Minute Books*, 11 March 1919. For the Council's improvement scheme, see J. Johnson and L. Roseberg, *Renewing Old Edinburgh: the Enduring Legacy of Patrick Geddes* (Glendareul, 2010), 157-60.

This exposed the limitation of the Municipal Register which had not extended into these areas. A number of the city's amenity bodies sought to address this issue as a priority. The Cockburn Association reviewed the surviving Old Edinburgh buildings and produced a list summarising their character and condition. Their work also included a memorandum on the remaining old domestic houses in the city prepared by the architect Frank C. Mears.⁷¹ A meeting was held with the Lord Provost where the councillors were asked to use every means in their power to preserve as many as possible of the few remaining specimens of the old buildings of distinctly Scottish character in the chief streets of the Old Town 'preserving these rare and interesting examples of our early domestic architecture must appeal to a wide circle; but the trouble and unknown cost of the necessary restoration, or repairs, is enough to prevent the thought maturing into action. Yet the market value of such property is low, and a comparatively small sum of money, judiciously expended, should suffice'.⁷²

The activities of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland were stalled by the onset of the War but they became increasingly active after 1918, also engaging with the emerging Edinburgh proposals. They approached the Society of Antiquaries, the RSA, the Cockburn Association, the Old Edinburgh Club, and the Incorporation of Scottish Architects⁷³ with: 'a view to formulating definite policy for dealing with the protection of old Town houses within the City of Edinburgh, and submitting that policy to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Councillors.'⁷⁴ At first sight this is surprising on two counts: firstly, the 1913 ancient monument legislation which brought the Ancient Monuments Boards into being had

⁷¹ Who worked with Patrick Geddes, becoming his son-in-law, and was co-founder of the Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland.

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=202402 accessed 22 September 2015.

⁷² CA, *Annual Report*, 1818-19, 9.

⁷³ The Incorporation of Scottish Architects was created in 1916, with bodies such as the EAA becoming chapters of the national organisation. It was given a royal charter in 1922 and a further charter in 1929 when it became the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland.

⁷⁴ NAS/SC20228/10/1. Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland, *Minute Book*, 29 April 1919. The Board continued to involve itself in Old Edinburgh with periodic meetings with the council and the Town Clerk was instructed to seek the Boards approval of their proposals at 74-82 Grassmarket and Candlemaker Row. ECA/SL2/1, Housing and Planning Committee, *Minutes*, 15 June 1925.

specifically excluded occupied buildings from its provisions.⁷⁵ The second was that a mechanism for a coordinated response in Edinburgh now existed through the Cockburn Association. The latter in particular would seem to raise questions both about the relationship between the two bodies and suggest that AMB wished to take over a coordinating role in such cases. It appears that the AMB's proposed joint-action was not successful, but using their authority as an officially appointed board of the Ministry of Works, they do appear to have wielded a level of influence with local authorities which the amenity bodies could not achieve, with the Council subsequently referring specific proposals to the AMB for comment and approval.⁷⁶

In the meantime, the Edinburgh amenity bodies approached the local authority directly with their views on the emerging proposals. By 1920, the Cockburn Association had converted its earlier list into a *Memorandum on the Preservation of Old Edinburgh Houses* and this was considered by the council's Public Health Sub-Committee in 1920.⁷⁷ The Cockburn Association continued to impress upon the Council the need to save the town's historical buildings in the context of planned demolitions. A year later it had set up a special committee 'to watch the interests of the Association and the ideals it stands for in any scheme of demolition and reconstruction under contemplation by the City Authorities.'⁷⁸ Following his established pattern, Baldwin Brown also wrote to the *Scotsman*, reinforcing his earlier view that the character of Edinburgh depended not on a few outstanding monuments but on the aesthetic and historical value of the quaint and expressive 'noble lands.' His focus was that of endeavouring to persuade the local authority that many early

⁷⁵ Its locus was that of advisor to the Local Government Board which was required to approve Town Schemes under s.54 of the 1909 Act.

⁷⁶ On 15 June 1925, the council referred the proposals for properties on Candlemaker Row and the Grassmarket to the AMBS 'for approval. ECA/SL123/1, Streets and Buildings Sub-Committee, *Minute Book*. It is not clear however that the Council followed their advice.

⁷⁷ ECA/SL26/2, Public Health Sub-Committee, *Minutes*, 8 July 1920. A number of the buildings lay outside the proposed improvement areas suggesting that the CA were seeking to expand the municipal register more generally.

⁷⁸ CA, *Annual Report*, 1819-20, 5-6.

buildings were suitable for adaptation rather than demolition, due both to their robust construction and their generous supply of windows. He praised the local authority which had successfully used such an approach at Mylne's Court, which had been extensively renovated in 1914-15: 'All honour to the civic authorities who planned and carried out, at a considerable cost, this admirable work. What we need now is the same spirit in all dealings with the old properties in the city, the fate of which is now trembling in the balance.'⁷⁹

In 1920 Baldwin Brown stepped down as the Cockburn Association Convenor, to be succeeded by his like-minded colleague and supporter Bailie Dobie.⁸⁰ However together with Thomas Ross, William Oldrieve and Frank Mears, he appears to have inspected properties affected by the improvement proposals. A detailed paper on the 17th century Tailors' Hall complex on the Cowgate, written by Ross, Baldwin Brown and a colleague, also appeared at this time.⁸¹ The threat of the emerging improvement scheme also encouraged the Royal Commission to restart its work on Edinburgh in 1921 with the decision that: 'the principal architect should co-operate with Professor Baldwin Brown, Mr Oldrieve and Dr Ross in continuing the architectural survey of the City of Edinburgh.'⁸² However, other priorities were once again to intervene and following the decision to exclude Edinburgh from the Midlothian volume in 1927 work on the city's inventory stalled.

In January 1920 the OEC also sent the Council a memorandum about the preservation of Old Edinburgh buildings.⁸³ They were careful to acknowledge that the health of the inhabitants was a primary consideration and the necessity of dealing with the city's 'slum properties.'

⁷⁹ *Scotsman*, 10 January 1920.

⁸⁰ He remained on the CA council until his death in 1932.

⁸¹ The Tailors' Hall, Cowgate, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 11 (1922), 125-72. The third author Forbes Gray was also an Old Edinburgh Club member. Ross and Baldwin Brown had previously written an article on the Magdalen Chapel, also situated on the Cowgate, for the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 8 (1915), 1-78. Both articles were originally intended to be included in the Royal Commission's survey of Edinburgh.

⁸² A.L. MacGibbon had died and was succeeded by G.P.H. Watson. Draft entries were drawn up for a number of buildings between 1921 and 1923.

⁸³ ECA/SL26/2, Public Health Sub-Committee, *Minutes*, 27 January 1920.

They restricted their comments to the early buildings which fell within the nine specific areas identified by the Medical Officer of Health as unfit for occupation. However, they expressed their anxiety that every care should be taken to preserve not only buildings possessing interesting historical associations, but also those which they suggested exhibited the architectural characteristics of past periods of Scottish national history: 'The Council beg respectfully to urge that before any building is condemned to entire demolition, care should be taken to ascertain whether it is not possible, while submitting the interior to whatever reconstruction is found necessary, to retain the outside walls, and especially the street elevation, and so preserve the external appearance of the buildings.'⁸⁴ Their list included 129-141 Cowgate (which included the Tailors' Hall complex), a number of buildings at the heads of South Gray's Close, Fountains Close and Tweeddale Court, which exhibit their 'antique features' onto the Royal Mile, and a number of other buildings of acknowledged lesser importance but which: 'are excellent and interesting examples of the old domestic architecture of the City', including structures on Cowgate, Candlemaker Row, East Richmond Street, East Crosscauseway and Church Street.⁸⁵

The OEC suggested subsequently that the Corporation should obtain the benefit of the advice and assistance of citizens with expert or other special qualifications and experience in connection with a regional survey of the city, town planning, and city development generally, again suggesting that an advisory committee be formed.⁸⁶ The Cockburn Association were also pressing for the creation of what they termed a 'Civic Amenity Council' to assist the Council with town planning matters, writing to a reportedly sympathetic Town Clerk on the basis of a memorandum drawn up by Baldwin Brown.⁸⁷ Many of the amenity bodies believed that key to the decision to undertake repair and renovation rather than demolition was the availability of suitable and sympathetic expertise.

⁸⁴ OEC, *Memorandum*, 10 January 1920.

⁸⁵ OEC, *Memorandum*, 10 January 1920.

⁸⁶ ECA/SL1/2, *Unsigned Minute Books*, 1 February 1923.

⁸⁷ CA, *Minute Book*, 4 December 1922.

The EAA and the CA both pressed the Council to ensure that appropriately experienced architects were appointed to deal with ancient buildings under the improvement scheme. This was discussed by the Streets and Buildings Committee in early 1921 who resolved that the proposal be agreed and that the EAA be asked to provide ‘a list of Architects capable of undertaking the restoration and reconstruction of buildings which have historic value or special architectural interest.’⁸⁸

A list of buildings of architectural and historic interest in the Cowgate and Grassmarket was subsequently identified in a report by the Council’s Director of Housing with a suggestion that an architect be appointed to undertake the professional work.⁸⁹ While the overall impact of this initiative is unclear, this suggests that the Council were becoming more sympathetic to both the idea of adapting rather than demolishing key historic buildings where this proved feasible.⁹⁰ It was certainly the case that the Council did subsequently employ suitably qualified architects on occasion to work with their own City Architect on specific schemes. Rather than demolish properties within the Improvement Area on the west side of Candlemaker’s Row, a scheme of internal alteration and refurbishment took place and a scheme for retaining the front elevation of 74-82 Grassmarket would also have taken place had not the Medical Officer of Health vetoed the proposals due to the low floor-ceiling height. This led to the near-total rebuilding of the properties (figures 34 and 35)⁹¹, with Baldwin Brown subsequently raising his concerns over the impact of the regulations on

⁸⁸ ECA/SL123/1, Streets and Buildings Committee, *Minute Book*, 4 April 1921. It is not clear if such a list was produced by the EAA.

⁸⁹ ECA/SL2/1, Reconstruction Sub-Committee of the Housing and Town Planning Committee, *Minute Book*, 14 July 1921.

⁹⁰ The council’s Public Health Committee identified that in the preparation of improvement schemes: ‘due provision should be made for the preservation of historic buildings.’ ECA/SL26/2, Public Health Committee, *Minute Book*, 7 June 1921.

⁹¹ The building was demolished but rebuilt in a style which sought in part to replicate its earlier appearance while altering features such as the stair and window locations to address the issue of floor-to-ceiling heights and access.



Figure 34. 74-82 Grassmarket before rebuilding. *Source:* RCAHMS SC1131026.



Figure 35. 74-82 Grassmarket after rebuilding. *Source:* RCAHMS SC1131042.

ceiling heights at a RCAHMS council meeting.⁹² The AMBS had fought to prevent the demolition of the Grassmarket properties. However an AMBS minute for 24 May 1929 records that the Council had ‘on various pretexts’ declined to put into effect their recommendations.⁹³

As a footnote to the discussion of advisory committees, in 1929 the Lord Provost, Thomas Whitson, finally brought an advisory group together to consider the re-planning of the City. The subsequent report, written by Frank Mears, included discussion of the Old Town’s historic monuments including both larger and smaller buildings, suggesting that there was an increasing recognition of the significance of the remaining historic buildings and also that the Council might make use of both an advisory committee comprising appropriate internal and external expertise in taking forward its strategic plans.⁹⁴ The council’s advisory body included, amongst others, representation from bodies including HM Office of Works, Edinburgh University, the Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, Edinburgh Architectural Association, The Old Edinburgh Club, the Royal Scottish Academy, the Cockburn Association, the Heriot Trust, the Merchant Company, the Faculty of Advocates, Heriot Watt College, the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church.

A national Scottish war memorial

Although the original proposal had been that a united war memorial be constructed in Hyde Park, it was subsequently decided that there should be a separate memorial for Scotland. An advisory committee under the Duke of Atholl’s chairmanship concluded that Edinburgh Castle, as a centre of Scottish history, should be the chosen site and that a regimental museum also be created. After a selection process, the design was prepared by Sir Robert

⁹² RCAHMS, *Minute Books*, 8 January 1929.

⁹³ NAS/SC20228/10/1, 24 May 1929. For an overly positive, assessment of this scheme and other cases, see R. Hurd, ‘Clearing the slums of Edinburgh’, *The Architect’s Journal*, March 26 (1930), 491-4; ‘Clearing the slums of Edinburgh’, *The Architect’s Journal*, April 2 (1930), 542-5.

⁹⁴ F.C. Mears, *The City of Edinburgh: Preliminary Suggestions prepared for Consideration by the Representative Committee in regard to the Development and Re-Planning of the Central Area of the City in relation to Public Buildings* (Edinburgh, 1931).

Lorimer who proposed to demolish the existing block making up the north side of the Crown Square and to replace this with a 'cloister and shrine.'⁹⁵ As was frequently the case in Edinburgh, however the decision was not supported by all, with suggestions that the building be located elsewhere, perhaps even by completion of the unfinished national monument on Calton Hill.⁹⁶ Baldwin Brown already sat on a memorial guidance committee for the construction of local memorials across Scotland's towns and villages (coordinated by the RSA),⁹⁷ and he sensed another long and acrimonious public debate. He suggested therefore that a national memorial was unnecessary as: 'The name of every one of the honoured dead will now be commemorated near his own home and among his kinsfolk and friends, and the spirit of Scotland may rest in the assurance that the heroism of her sons will not be forgotten.'⁹⁸ The case attracted something of a public battle with Lord Rosebery writing a series of increasingly intemperate letters of objection to the Castle site.⁹⁹ Baldwin Brown subsequently wrote in support of a 'reasonable scheme' at the castle, noting that the extensive and irregular collection of buildings made such a proposal easier than where the architecture formed a formal composition such as at Charlotte Square or Waterloo Place.¹⁰⁰ He also pointed out the need for the scheme to be agreed by the Ancient Monuments Board as advisors to the Ministry of Works, and that this, together with broader public scrutiny would ensure a suitable scheme. Rosebery continued to oppose the scheme, invoking the opposition of Sir Walter Scott. Meanwhile Baldwin Brown wrote a further letter suggesting that as the military significance of the castle was declining as a result of the reduction of the army presence 'the project of elevating it into a Scottish National War Memorial gives it promise of new life and usefulness'. He continued 'One feels, of course, great diffidence in

⁹⁵ *Scotsman*, 13 August 1919.

⁹⁶ A facsimile of the Parthenon to commemorate those who had fallen in the Napoleonic Wars designed by Cockrell and Playfair. The partially completed project ceased in 1829.

⁹⁷ *Scotsman*, 30 January 1919.

⁹⁸ *Scotsman*, 28 February 1919.

⁹⁹ 'Will not one of our countrymen from the Dominions raise a protest against this most wanton, insane proposal?' *Scotsman*, 20 February 1919

¹⁰⁰ *Scotsman*, 16 August 1920.

opposing Lord Rosebery on any Scottish question, but for my part I can imagine no project which would appeal more nearly to the patriotic pride of Sir Walter's ghost, and to its sense of what, under present conditions, is fitting.'¹⁰¹

He re-entered the fray in December of 1922, once again stressing that the castle's irregular collection of buildings meant that 'on that site any reasonable addition to or alteration of the masses and groupings is as likely to do good as harm'. He also suggested that despite concerns and criticisms over the new military hospital block at the north-west corner of the castle, the new scheme introduced a very great improvement to the effect of the castle and that this provided an important object lesson in this case.¹⁰² Following construction of a model and the preparation of illustrative views from the north, significant concerns about the impact of Sir Robert Lorimer's proposals for the proposed new north range in Crown Square were raised. The proposals would certainly have introduced a significant change to the skyline of the castle as viewed from Princes Street, and this, together with difficulties in fundraising, led to the eventual decision to re-model the existing barrack block on the north side of the square.¹⁰³ Baldwin Brown also proposed that a new terrace at Princes Street Gardens would allow the new building to be viewed and he went as far as resisting further proposals for a cenotaph-like structure in the gardens to commemorate overseas soldiers, arguing that this function would be carried out instead by the proposed new structure at the castle.¹⁰⁴

Final years

While Baldwin Brown continued to involve himself in individual cases in Edinburgh as the nineteen-twenties progressed, he gradually began to withdraw from the amenity bodies' activities. He did nonetheless produce a steady stream of letters on individual cases in Edinburgh and further afield. In 1922 he wrote short letters on the new University Buildings

¹⁰¹ *Scotsman*, 24 July 1922.

¹⁰² *Scotsman*, 14 December 1922; 23 December 1922.

¹⁰³ The building was designed by Robert Billings in 1863 and lay on the site of St Mary's Church. See D. Macmillan, *Scotland's Shrine: The Scottish National War Memorial* (Farnham, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ *Scotsman*, 28 January 1924.

at Blackford Hill and on an inappropriate illuminated advertisement in Nicholson Street.¹⁰⁵ A year later he opposed changes to the front façade of the Royal Institution building where it caused a pinch-point on Princes Street, suggesting modifications or demolition of the buildings on the opposite side of the street to create a crescent.¹⁰⁶ Two years later he opposed the construction of a new bridge across the Cowgate.¹⁰⁷ Looking further afield, he also joined the debate about a new bridge over the River Thames by raising the issue of the relationship between engineering and art.¹⁰⁸ In 1928 he wrote a didactic letter on the competition for the proposed Wallace and Bruce statues to guard the entrance to the castle and their design,¹⁰⁹ and a letter on Robert Adam's architecture in Edinburgh.¹¹⁰ In late 1928 and again in early 1929 he wrote on proposals affecting Princes Street Gardens.¹¹¹ He returned to the arrangements for protection in Germany in September 1929¹¹² and in 1930 wrote a highly critical letter on the design for the proposed new Government officers on Calton Hill.¹¹³ His last letters, in August 1930 and May 1931, looked further afield and concerned a proposed development adjacent to Durham Cathedral and a request for information relating to Jedburgh Abbey.¹¹⁴

While it might be tempting to suggest that Baldwin Brown was slowing down in his last years, there is much evidence to suggest that this was not the case. In 1928, in his eightieth year, he published a book on prehistoric cave-painting that necessitated the strenuous activity of visiting and sketching cave-art in France and Germany.¹¹⁵ It is also clear that he sought to clear the decks to allow him to complete the last volume of *The Arts in Early England* which

¹⁰⁵ *Scotsman*, 4 January 1922; 7 March 1922.

¹⁰⁶ *Scotsman*, 5 May 1923.

¹⁰⁷ *Scotsman*, 2 February 1925.

¹⁰⁸ *Times*, 18 September 1926; 2 October 1926.

¹⁰⁹ *Scotsman*, 12 January 1928.

¹¹⁰ *Scotsman*, 25 July 1928.

¹¹¹ On a proposed new Gentlemen's lavatory to be constructed in Princes Street Gardens. *Scotsman*, 18 December 1928; 12 January 1929.

¹¹² *Times*, 13 September 1929. This was his first use of a German example since the close of the War.

¹¹³ *Scotsman*, 28 July 1930. The latter was written shortly after the Cockburn Association discussed the case. See CA, *Minute Book*, 22 July 1930.

¹¹⁴ *Scotsman*, 16 August 1930; 1 May 1931.

¹¹⁵ G.B. Brown, *The Art of the Cave Dweller* (London, 1928).

focused on Anglian Art.¹¹⁶ After occupying the chair of Fine Art fifty years, Baldwin Brown retired from the University in the summer of 1930¹¹⁷ but continued to attend meetings of the SAS, the CA and the Scottish Ecclesiological Society with regularity and delivered lectures to the general public and to various organisations. He also continued to work actively with RCAHMS until his death in the summer of 1932, but his gift to RCAHMS in October 1930 of his copies of Maitland's and Arnot's Edinburgh histories, together with his notes on Edinburgh ancient monuments suggests that he had taken the decision to cease work on the city's inventory and on the city's amenity by that date.¹¹⁸

Baldwin Brown died on 12 July 1932, with his funeral service held at Edinburgh's Warriston Road Cemetery four days later.¹¹⁹ A number of obituaries were published at this time.¹²⁰ In the main these focussed on his achievements in relation to the study of Anglo-Saxon art and culture and on his more general activities in the field of art scholarship. His activities in the cause of monument and building preservation, however, received intermittent coverage only and this may have contributed to the subsequent lack of recognition of his work in this area. His biographer, George Macdonald,¹²¹ made a succinct reference to this work: 'to his fellow townsmen generally he was familiar as a doughty champion of ancient landmarks against vandalism of every form, while the University of Edinburgh Journal made no mention of this work.'¹²² Within the architectural field, the RIBA included brief mention of his work with the Cockburn Association protecting the amenity of Edinburgh,¹²³ while the Royal Incorporation of Architects noted that although he was necessarily occupied with the past:

¹¹⁶ G.B. Brown, *The Arts in Early England, Vol VI part I: Completion of the Study of the Monuments of the Great Period of the Art of Anglian Northumbria* (London, 1930). The manuscript for Part II, well advanced before his death, was completed by Lord Sexton in 1937.

¹¹⁷ Baldwin Brown was seriously unwell in December 1929 and January 1930.

¹¹⁸ The Edinburgh RCAHMS volume was not to appear until 195. No recognition of Baldwin Brown's broader work on the city or that of Oldrieve and Ross was included in the acknowledgement section.

¹¹⁹ His ashes were subsequently buried at the family plot in Upper Norwood.

¹²⁰ He died on 12 July 1932. *Scotsman*, 13 July 1932; *Times*, 14 July 1932.

¹²¹ G. Macdonald, 'Gerard Baldwin Brown 1849-1932', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 21, (1932), 3-12, 8.

¹²² *University of Edinburgh Journal*, 5 (1932-3), 178-80.

¹²³ *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architecture*, 6 August 1932, 763.

'he lived, on the contrary, very much in the present, keeping a vigilant eye on every-day affairs, raising a clarion call if need be in defence of the amenities, both within and without the country of his adoption, and to make his point more clear at times, he would not hesitate to turn a pithy phrase in homely language.'¹²⁴ Within the arts field the Royal Scottish Academy took a different view: 'It may be a matter of regret to the Academy and to the whole body of artists in Scotland, young and old, that the enthusiasm was directed into the channel of antiquities, rather than into that of modern art, reckoning modern art from the birth of the Renaissance to the present day'¹²⁵ but his preservation-related activities were not included in the *Burlington Magazine's* short review,¹²⁶ or in *Nature's* obituary.¹²⁷ The antiquarians were surprisingly quiet also, with neither the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland¹²⁸ nor the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland¹²⁹ mentioning his preservation-related work. The RCAHMS mentioned his special qualities to undertake his work as a Commissioner, with further discussion of what this entailed,¹³⁰ but the Old Edinburgh Club mentioned his deep interest in Old Edinburgh.¹³¹ Of the press, the *Scotsman* reproduced the statement at his University retirement in 1930 that: 'On the platform and in the Press he has waged relentless war against the vandals in the sacred cause of amenity and reverence for the monuments of the past'¹³² and the *Times* noted his work with the Cockburn Association as 'a vigilant guardian of the amenities of Edinburgh.'¹³³

¹²⁴ Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, *Quarterly*, 40, 1932, 128.

¹²⁵ Royal Scottish Academy, *Annual Report*, 1932, 9-11.

¹²⁶ *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, 61, 353 (Aug. 1932), 92.

¹²⁷ *Nature*. July 30, 1932, 158-9.

¹²⁸ Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 67 (1932-3), 5.

¹²⁹ The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 7 ser, 4, 1 (Jun. 30, 1934), 160-161.

¹³⁰ RCAHMS, *Counties of Fife, Kinross, and Clackmannan*, 11th Report (Edinburgh, 1933), vi.

¹³¹ *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 19 (1933), Appendix, 3.

¹³² *Scotsman*, 13 July 1932.

¹³³ *Times*, 14 July 1932.

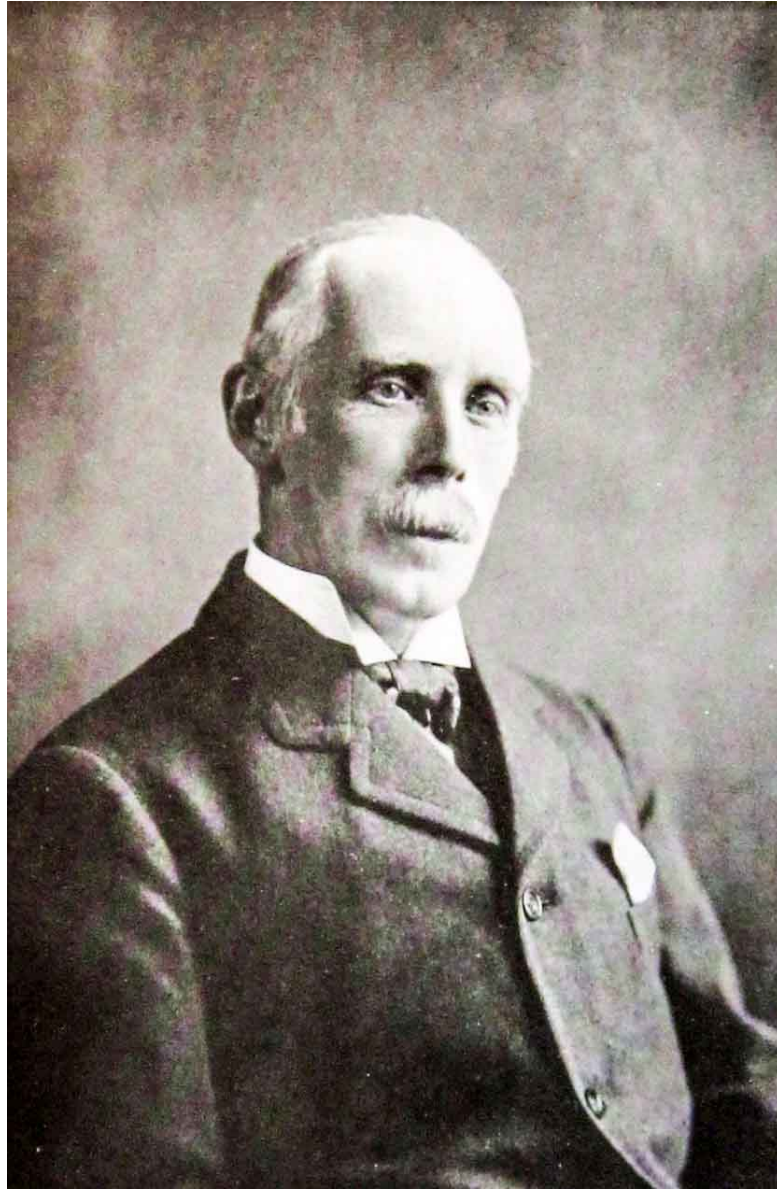


Figure 36. Gerard Baldwin Brown in c.1930. *Source:* A. Logan Turner, *History of the University of Edinburgh 1883-1933* (London, 1933), 192.

After the adoption of strengthened ancient monument legislation and the creation of Ancient Monuments Boards in 1913, Baldwin Brown ceased his campaigning for national change. Despite its benefits, he recognised that the new legislation provided little or no protection for occupied urban buildings and that any effective protection would rely on the introduction and effective use of local protective mechanisms and infrastructure. However, despite the support of Councillor Dobie, the municipal authority in Edinburgh repeatedly rejected the creation of an expert advisory committee nor did it adopt local bye-laws to enable local protection. The benefits of the municipal register were difficult to see in terms of their impact on Council decision-making. Baldwin Brown was not content to let matters rest however and he used his convenorship of the Cockburn Association to encourage the coordination of local amenity and professional bodies, setting up an expert advisory body outside rather than within the council to act as a pressure group. Between 1913 and 1920 he coordinated the Cockburn's campaigning activities while pursuing personal campaigns where he was unable to get broader support. He also used his membership of RCAHMS and the authority of the body to encourage the expansion of the city's municipal register although this initiative ultimately failed and it was only in response to the Council's later improvement schemes on the south side of the city that the city's amenity bodies sought to provide the Council with an extended list and to encourage the use of suitable professional architectural expertise which allowed adaptation rather than demolition in some cases. Baldwin Brown's decision to step down from the Cockburn convenorship in 1920 signalled, to some extent, his gradual withdrawal from coordinated campaigning and whilst he continued to comment on individual schemes he significantly reduced his broader activities within the city's professional and amenity bodies until his death in 1932.

Chapter 10. Conclusions

In the period between 1880 and 1930 it is possible to trace the coalescence of an urban preservation movement in Edinburgh in response to the fast-moving changes which included major transport projects, sanitary and related improvement schemes, and general development across the city. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards preservationists focused their attention onto two inter-linked considerations. First, what ancient buildings and monuments should be preserved (and what did 'preservation' mean in practice), and secondly, where should new development take place and what form should it take. For the first of these, the lack of protective legislation for occupied buildings before the mid-twentieth century meant that a range of other strategies need to be identified and pursued. In the second, it was necessary to influence the approach adopted by the organisation undertaking the development either directly or through regulating bodies such as the Dean of Guild Court and the municipal authority, or Parliament if enabling legislation was necessary. The social, economic and political momentum behind the city's changes however meant that preservationists faced significant challenges.

A range of approaches were pursued across the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The most effective was to persuade private or public owner to retain significant buildings or monuments and to manage them in a manner sympathetic to their historical and architectural significance. Even in such circumstances, however, such buildings and monuments were vulnerable to compulsory acquisition and demolition as part of urban improvement or major development schemes, as was the case with the buildings on the upper West Bow in the early nineteenth century and Trinity College Church mid-century. Where a sympathetic owner did not exist, a related option was to seek the transfer of ownership to a purpose-designed charitable body through purchase or donation. Old Town buildings such as John Knox's House, Whitehorse Close and Moubray House owed their long-term survival to sympathetic private owners or charitable trusts, with the municipal authority itself acquiring a small

number of vernacular Old Town buildings including Lady Stair's House¹ and, at a later date, Huntly House and Acheson House.² Despite the Cockburn Association's rescue of Moubray House in the early years of the twentieth century, however, the failed attempt to create a 'National Trust' in Edinburgh meant that the option of bringing other significant Old and New Town buildings into the ownership of a powerful historic building trust was only to become fully effective following the creation of the National Trust for Scotland in 1931.³ The continuing political reluctance to include compulsory powers of acquisition for ancient occupied buildings within amended monument legislation also reduced the potential for this approach to have a broad impact in the city.

Preservationists might also encourage owners, developers or improvement bodies to repair and refurbish rather than to demolish important buildings. This might lead to the preservation of one or more buildings within wider development or clearance zones, albeit the level of alteration was likely to be significant, particularly in terms of interior form and structure. Nonetheless, the approach was used on a limited basis by Cousin and Lessels within the 1867 improvement areas, by Patrick Geddes (in some cases working with the municipal council) in securing Old Town buildings including Gladstone's Land and Riddle's Court at the end of the nineteenth century, and from the 1920s was adopted by the municipal council,⁴ leading to the preservation of early buildings, most notably those on the west side of Candlemaker Row. Where full retention was not possible, the preservation of street frontage elevations might be pursued in order to preserve the appearance of the surrounding townscape, although in the case of 74-82 Grassmarket this preferred approach failed due to

¹ Purchased by Lord Rosebery in 1895 and donated to the municipal council in 1907 following restoration.

² Purchased in 1923. In 1931 Frank Mears provided a list of 13 Old Town buildings and structures 'saved ... by the Corporation and other interested bodies and identified for special protection further significant Old Town buildings. F.C. Mears, *The City of Edinburgh: Preliminary Suggestions prepared for Consideration by the Representative Committee in regard to the Development and Re-Planning of the Central Area of the City in relation to Public Buildings* (Edinburgh, 1931), 14-15.

³ D. Bremner, *For the Benefit of the Nation: The National Trust for Scotland: The First 70 Years*. (Edinburgh, 2001).

⁴ Under the advice of the City Architect, Ebenezer MacRae.

regulations concerning floor to ceiling heights and the buildings were ultimately demolished and reconstructed in an amended form. More drastically still, the demolition of a significant building and its reconstruction at a different location, as had occurred with Trinity College Church, might offer a solution of sorts although such an approach was vulnerable to the same criticisms as was seen in response to the heavy-handed church restorations more generally. As a last resort, decorative elements taken from demolished buildings might be preserved in museum collections and/or plaques and inscriptions used to mark the site of lost buildings of historical significance, such as occurred in the case of Cardinal Beaton's House on the corner of Blackfriars' Wynd and Cowgate.

In terms of the location and character of new development within the city, three overarching principles become increasingly evident as the nineteenth century progressed: the need to protect the character and silhouette of the Old Town ridge and its medieval building complexes, particularly when viewed from the north; a broad acceptance of Scots Baronial as the most appropriate architectural style for new buildings within the core of the Old Town;⁵ and, that encroachments into the open spaces, most particularly the Waverley Valley, should be resisted both on their own terms, to allow the preservation of the settings of significant buildings, or to maintain the design integrity of New Town architectural schemes.

How successfully preservation options might be pursued within the city depended upon the ability of campaigners to influence those taking forward the development or those with regulatory powers. Effective intervention depended upon both a broader acceptance of the significance of individual or groups of buildings and the ability of preservation discourse to outweigh other development-related arguments. To a great extent successful preservation arguments had been established in relation to the city's medieval complexes with a strong discourse developed around Scottish national history and identity. In the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the scope of urban preservation discourse was expanded

⁵ Although a classical idiom might be favoured for government-related buildings.

in order to encompass occupied vernacular Old Town buildings and to the city's major classical New Town compositions. Detailed study of the city over this period sheds important light onto how a more developed urban preservation field and its accompanying discourse emerged. It also allows the mechanisms available to preservationists to be identified and their strengths and weaknesses to be assessed. More broadly, such a study allows the identification of how preservationists increasingly took advantage of institutional power and other civil society mechanisms to establish and strengthen their influence in particular cases while seeking also to develop their broader legislative, organisational and informational infrastructure. Within such a study, Gerard Baldwin Brown campaigns, his broader activities and his writing are particularly helpful in the light they shed on the city's emerging urban preservation field.

In the same way that a work of art is an object which exists as such only by virtue of the collective belief that it is a work of art,⁶ ancient buildings or structures become of value in historical, aesthetic and political terms only when a value-system, together with supporting intellectual and organisational infrastructure, is established which consecrate them as such. From shortly after his arrival in Edinburgh until his death fifty-two years later, Baldwin Brown committed significant time and energy to the process of cultural production in relation to the city's built environment. This involved not only identifying individual elements of the townscape which he believed were of cultural value but also seeking to improve the systems and institutions which underlay this process of consecration and which shifted the balance of opinion further toward preservation. Throughout his time in the city he sought to expand the recognition of significant cultural value in relation to Edinburgh's built environment, believing that the accepted view of significance needed to be expanded beyond the city's major medieval building complexes to include a far broader range of Old Town vernacular buildings, the New Town's classical architectural compositions, and the settings

⁶ P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (Cambridge, 1993).

of both. He was not the first to have pursued this, but he rapidly came to realise that in order to make long-term progress there was a need not only to campaign on individual cases but to strengthen institutional involvement and improve the associated processes, including the introduction of new legal, organisational and social mechanisms for the long-term preservation. It was the combination of his comprehensive vision for an expanded urban preservation field, his intense long-term campaigning to bring this into being, and his dogged pursuit of individual cases, which together make his activities of significance for Edinburgh and for Britain as a whole.

Key early influences for Baldwin Brown included his family's intellectual pastimes, their relationship with the art world, and their campaigning on liberal issues. While Edinburgh became his adopted home, Baldwin Brown was an Englishman whose upbringing, education and early career were pursued outside Scotland. This opened him to criticism that he was not well-placed to understand or comment on Scottish cultural matters, but it also offered potential benefits. Baldwin Brown brought with him the experience of growing up and living in a different country, a network of non-Scottish contacts, well-developed and very broad-ranging art scholarship including detailed knowledge of the history and culture of the world's great civilizations, and a particular interest in how art and architecture functioned in relation to society, particularly within the urban context. Together, these gave him an intellectual and experiential distance from Scottish society and a contrasting frame of reference with which to view Edinburgh's built environment. He was able to step back when considering the capital's architecture and its relationship to its history and its identity as he did when lecturing or writing about ancient Rome or Renaissance Florence. He was also readily able to place the city and its architecture within a broader narrative of international cultural history. The advantages of his perceived academic distance could though also be portrayed as a significant disadvantage in relation to practical business of improvement and development in the city as occurred during the 1890 municipal elections when he was

caricatured as an amiable theorist who brought ‘a childlike simplicity to the debate.’⁷

However, Baldwin Brown was in fact no stranger to the need to tackle poverty and sanitary issues, and he was always careful to support the broader principle of improvement in the city even where he disagreed with the approach being taken in specific instances.

Baldwin Brown’s interest in urban preservation is best understood by considering it within his broader philosophy of art. He exhibited a significant level of knowledge and achievement in the latter which contributed significantly to his cultural capital and his authority to give opinions on artistic matter. For Baldwin Brown, there was a very strong link between the particular character of art — comprising architecture, art and sculpture — and the society or nation in which it developed. From his prize-winning essay as an undergraduate in Oxford onwards, he framed his studies within the context of particular nations and national identity, believing that the study of cultural history could shed an important light onto a nation and *vice versa*. This philosophy was best evidenced by his highly influential study of the arts in early England and in particular his research into Anglo-Saxon architecture which formed the second volume of his broader study.⁸ From the outset he designed this survey not only to generate a gazetteer and descriptions of the architecture but to elucidate the broader society in which the buildings were created and functioned. He drew on this perspective when considering Edinburgh, seeing the city’s buildings and monuments not only as valuable cultural artefacts in their own right but as key elements of the city’s and Scotland’s national identity.

In his lectures and writing on art, Baldwin Brown commonly focused his attention on cities, including Athens, Rome and Florence, describing their history and topography before moving on to explore their architecture and other art forms. He undertook a functional

⁷ *EEN*, 28 October 1890; 31 October 1890.

⁸ Brown, G. B., *The Arts in Early England, Volume II: Ecclesiastical Architecture in England from the Conversion of the Saxons to the Norman Conquest* (London, 1903); 2nd edition (London, 1925).

analysis, separating out and characterising defences, religious buildings, governmental buildings, domestic and related structures, and so forth. His approach was not to concentrate on the study of grand architecture alone but to consider all urban buildings and to seek to understand them from a social, historical, functional and aesthetic perspective. In adopting this comprehensive perspective in relation to the city's architecture, his approach contrasted with that of other would-be city preservationists such as Daniel Wilson and Patrick Geddes, who tended to adopt a more restricted focus. Again he brought this perspective to bear on Edinburgh's buildings, both classical and vernacular, not only in terms of the study of individual buildings but recognising the presence of assemblages of buildings and spaces which gained value by virtue of their groupings, associations and relationships. Drawing also on his first-hand experience of other cities gained during his travels, he also was able to place the city's architecture in its national and international context. Given all of the above, it is perhaps surprising that he did not produce a monograph on the city's architectural history. However, from the early 1900s onwards he committed his energies instead to creating the right circumstances for the preparation of an Edinburgh inventory and supported the proposed detailed study by RCAHMS.⁹

In developing and pursuing his vision of preservation and the legislative and organisational infrastructure necessary to support it Baldwin Brown was able to draw on his knowledge of the approaches being promoted both in Britain and more widely on the continent. As the references he included in each of the country-based surveys in part two of *The Care of Ancient Monuments* illustrates, he based his knowledge not just on published documents but on personal contacts and discussions, on knowledge of the historical development of particular systems of protection and on the study of particular preservation cases. Perhaps as a result of his wide knowledge his thinking and approach does not sit readily within the

⁹ The volume eventually appeared in 1951. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of the City of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1951).

philosophies espoused by key figures such as Ruskin or Morris. At heart Baldwin Brown was a pragmatist who believed that different approaches were necessary in the case of nationally important buildings and monuments, and those of more local significance. The latter also relied on the powers of local councils who, he noted, would be strongly influenced by powerful interests in the towns and cities towards development and change.

In the case of nationally important buildings, where a building could be brought back into use without damaging its artistic and architectural value and, importantly, where there was community need for re-use, then he would generally support this. Baldwin Brown's approach to restoration repeatedly showed that he preferred to take full account of the particular circumstances of a case rather than to approach cases with an unvarying principle adopted irrespective of local circumstances. Thus he tenaciously opposed the restoration of the nationally significant abbeys at Iona and Holyrood, because he felt in the first case that there was no local community to be served by a restored building and that the funding was inadequate, and in the second case because the restoration could not be achieved without significant damage to the building's nave and its surviving decorative architectural scheme. He conceded though elsewhere that the restoration of ruined Scottish abbeys and churches was acceptable due to the demonstrable needs and desires of the local community. In adopting such a stance to restoration, he may have sensitive also to a particular contrast between the English and the Scottish views on restoration which related more broadly to notions of Scottish identity. As the Scottish romanticism developed in the Victorian period, ruined castles and palaces became associated for some Scots with notions of a 'lost' Scottish identity and with an oppressed nation. This might be encouraged also by long-lived associations between particular families or clans and particular buildings, particularly in Highland areas. In a number of cases, the desire to restore building ruined in the Jacobite uprisings drew on notions of family ownership and authority to help justify restoration

schemes.¹⁰ Restoration in Scotland was therefore far more than an act of bringing a building back into use. It increasingly became drawn into a wider political process relating to Scottish identity, nationhood and autonomy in the Victorian period and subsequently. The strength of feeling and increasingly heated rhetoric around the proposed restoration of Holyrood Abbey to form a chapel for the Order of the Thistle is one illustration of this, but the same narratives and rhetoric appear increasingly in a number of other restoration cases. Baldwin Brown's lectures and letters show that he was both aware and sensitive to issues of Scottish identity and, whilst he might fight against restoration in specific Scottish cases, that his underlying philosophy was still to respond positively to public demands where possible, particularly where these were well-informed.

Baldwin Brown's pragmatism was most commonly reflected, however, in the case of urban buildings and particularly those of more local, rather than national, significance. In this approach he was perhaps influenced by a broader non-conformist philosophy which, as Mandler has shown, sought above all to improve the conditions of life for the poor and disenfranchised and which Baldwin Brown witnessed at first hand in his father's work in London.¹¹ Despite the persistence of his Edinburgh campaigning which recognised the importance Geddes' work in the Old Town, he did not oppose the principle of the city's sanitary improvement programmes and the large-scale demolitions that resulted. While his approach to individual historic buildings might best be termed a pragmatic preservationism, his wider interest in urban townscapes meant that he sought not only to preserve historical continuities (such as when he argued that the Council offices should remain on its historic site in the Old Town, close to the Cathedral and courts), but was sensitive to picturesque

¹⁰ See, for example, R. Fawcett and A. Rutherford, *Renewed Life for Scottish Castles*, CBA Research Report 165 (York, 2011), esp. chapter 3; D. Watters, 'Castle Reoccupation and Conservation in the Twentieth Century', in A. Dakin, M. Glendinning and A. Mackenzie (eds.) *Scotland's Castle Culture*, 143-172.

¹¹ P. Mandler, 'Rethinking the "powers of darkness": an anti-history of the preservation movement in Britain', in M. Hall (ed.), *Towards World Heritage: International Origins of the Preservation Movement 1870-1930* (Farnham, 2011), 221-239.

assemblages of buildings and skylines. He pursued the preservation of Scottish vernacular architectural assemblages therefore not only due to their architectural and historical significance but also to preserve their aesthetic impact. Edinburgh's architecture and topography (and relationship between Old and New Towns which promoted views of the Old Town ridge and its buildings) encouraged an aesthetic preservationism which a trained art historian would be well-placed to recognise. This also drew on his increasing recognition that the likelihood of retaining significant numbers of historic buildings of more local significance was always likely to be an uphill task without the protection of primary legislation.

Baldwin Brown's power and authority in Edinburgh and his legitimacy to comment on art and on preservation was strengthened by the prestige and the symbolic capital that he was able to gather. Some of this derived from his education and upbringing, but once in Edinburgh he committed significant time and energy into developing his relationship with the city's organisations, clubs and associations in order to strengthen this further. At a general level, he supported broader educational initiatives such as the city's women's education movement, the working class education and the Classical Association of Scotland. He also became involved in other city bodies including a citizens and ratepayers' group and the Franco-Scottish Society. More importantly, Baldwin Brown was quick to identify the institutions which brought their expertise to bear on the city and its buildings, or which had the potential to do so. These included the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Royal Scottish Academy, the Cockburn Society, the Architectural Association and at a later date, the Old Edinburgh Club. Such organisations embodied power and held status through their history, expertise, membership, representativeness and the formal institutional mechanisms through which decisions were taken and activities pursued. Their members and patrons also held significant potential to influence others through the positions of power they held in the many other fields which they occupied and through their network of contacts. Despite

differences of philosophy and inconsistencies of engagement, Baldwin Brown worked consistently to focus their attention on urban preservation, while seeking to grow their power and influence by encouraging them to adopt a coordinated activities in this area.

Baldwin Brown exhibited a consistent, coherent and repeating pattern with regard to these and other organisations. It was an approach designed to influence the organisation's embodied power towards his arts and preservation-related agenda, while increasing his own status and influence. In the first stage he would become a member of the organisation, attending meetings on a regular basis and using them to increase his visibility, asking questions from the floor, proposing or seconding motions, and giving votes of thanks. The second stage involved his election or appointment to the organisation's council and one or more specialist committees. This gave him higher visibility and authority, and the opportunity to influence discussions and organisational strategies. The third stage was to take up a position of seniority and power within the organisation, through appointment as vice-president, president, convenor or chair. This further strengthened his symbolic and cultural capital, his power and his influence. It also gave him access to the senior echelons of the organisation including one or more powerful patrons, offered significant opportunities in terms of agendas, and allowed him to develop linkages with other organisations. The final stage was to form a more formal network of organisations in order to pursue common causes, thereby building a larger and more influential power-base. This last stage can be seen during his opposition to the railway schemes in the late 1890s and in his focused activities with regard to the Old Town between 1903 and 1913. It sees its greatest expression, however, when Baldwin Brown held the position of convenor of the Cockburn Association. Frustrated by the municipal authority's repeated rejection of proposals for an expert advisory panel, he created a powerful network under the aegis of the Cockburn Association in order to monitor the activities of the council, landowners and developers and to place them under pressure to change their strategies towards more effective urban preservation.

The development of an urban preservation field offered a range of opportunities to bring together like-minded individuals, to debate and agree value-systems and processes, to define the scope of their interests, and to undertake studies and other information gathering and sharing exercises. Such fields are dynamic and power-laden with individuals and institutions positioned within a network of relationships, and in addition to offering opportunities for shared understandings, they also can exhibit significant tensions as contrasting opinions, philosophies and practices are brought into precedence or replaced. In Edinburgh, bodies such as the Edinburgh Architectural Association were always likely to be unpredictable in the urban preservation field given some of their members were direct beneficiaries when new buildings were commissioned and some might hold contrasting views about restoration or the nature of new development. There was a need therefore to maintain coherence and stability within the emerging urban preservation field and there is evidence that Baldwin Brown worked within and between these organisations in order to achieve this. With the exception of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland, Baldwin Brown was to take on a highly visible role within each of the bodies that made up the coalescing urban preservation field in Edinburgh. He became a council member and office holder within the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Edinburgh Architectural Association, the Cockburn Association, the Old Edinburgh Club and, eventually, the RSA. He was also a commissioner of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland from its creation in 1908 until his death in 1932. He also drew other bodies into the preservation debate including the Scottish Arts Club, the Edinburgh Art Congress and the Edinburgh Citizens and Ratepayers Union. His council position on the Edinburgh Social Union and the Franco-Scottish Society also gave him a close working relationship with Patrick Geddes. As is well known, Geddes was highly influential in urban preservation in Edinburgh through refurbishment of Old Town properties and his promotion of wider survey. He was also very well-connected within the city. Baldwin Brown found opportunities to publicly recognise and praise Geddes and the relationship between these two key Edinburgh figures is worthy

of further detailed study. Baldwin Brown also benefited from his membership of the National Trust council. His long friendship with Hardwick Rawnsley is another relationship deserving of further study.

The fact that Baldwin Brown reached positions of authority within the majority of the organisations he joined suggests that he was able to navigate the political currents within such bodies and that he saw significant advantages in doing so. Involvement in these organisations increased his symbolic, cultural and relational capital, and his own power, authority and legitimacy. It also gave him regular access to many other professionals with their own knowledge, experiences and networks of contacts in the city. Some of these were like-minded and formed an important preservation-related network, but even where they held differing opinions to his own, this broad network allowed Baldwin Brown to understand and influence their views or, if this was not possible, to counter them. While the parallel membership of a number of such bodies and associations was not uncommon in Victorian or Edwardian middle-class urban society, it is the combination of the number of memberships, his senior position in each, his ability to influence their agendas towards urban preservation-related activities, and his creation of mechanisms by which they could more readily work together in pursuit of a common agenda, which are particularly noteworthy, and which separates him out from other preservationists in the city.

For the emerging preservation field to be successful there was a need also to influence those organisations and processes in other fields which either threatened the destruction of elements of the townscape through their own development activities or which held the power to influence this process towards preservationist goals. The urban preservation field in Edinburgh needed to engage with three major groups: governing and regulatory bodies, landowners and developers, and in particular their architects, and the general public. At a national level, Baldwin Brown sought to persuade the Westminster government through his newspaper correspondence, and in particular through the publication of *The Care of Ancient*

Monuments, to strengthen monument legislation and improve its underlying organisational infrastructure. It was following his discussions with Lord Pentland that Baldwin Brown's recommendation for a national inventory body was taken forward in Scotland. However, Baldwin Brown's influence with Westminster and the Ministry of Works staff who advised them was problematical. This can most readily be seen by his absence as an expert witness at the joint Parliamentary Select Committee in 1912 and from the Ancient Monuments Boards which were created under the revised ancient monument legislation in 1913. In addition to seeking to influence the form of the ancient monument legislation, Baldwin Brown also followed the development of the emerging housing and town planning legislation in the early years of the twentieth century, recognising in it the possibility of achieving the local tier of protection that he had called for. He sought to ensure that architects, engineers and the new professional town planners gave weight to the preservation of historic buildings, monuments and other features within town plans at a general level and monitored planning-related developments in Edinburgh closely.

Baldwin Brown increasingly saw local protective measures as crucial to long-term urban preservation and therefore identified councils, at both county and local level, as the key bodies to be targeted. In Edinburgh this meant the municipal council together with the Dean of Guild Court. However, in the nineteenth century much of their energy was understandably committed toward sanitary, safety and transport improvements and Baldwin Brown's relationship with the council therefore ebbed and flowed. Having unsuccessfully stood for municipal election, acted as a council witness in Parliament, and having repeatedly suggested that the council set up an expert advisory committee, Baldwin Brown increasingly lost patience with the unpredictability of both the council and the Dean of Guild Court. Although the city had adopted a Municipal Register and introduced reporting procedures by 1910, it is also unclear what, if any, additional level of protection this actually gave in real terms as there are no identifiable references to the register within the council's subsequent

papers or discussions. Baldwin Brown's decision to act as convenor for the Cockburn Association from 1913-1920 suggests that he recognised that it would remain necessary to place expert and public pressure on the council from the outside, whilst supporting internal allies such as Bailie Dobie. Baldwin Brown's views on the eventual creation of an advisory committee for city development in 1931 is not recorded but he would have welcomed both the wide external representation on the body and the lead role given to Frank Mears.

The emergence of the town planning movement in the early years of the twentieth century offered opportunities for urban protection, but Baldwin Brown recognised early on the dangers of a 'clean slate' approach replicating the earlier area-based clearance approach which had seen the loss of many historic buildings and reworking of the city's broader topography. A different problem became evident as the twentieth century progressed, however, in that the emergence of the professional town planner was to reduce the influence of architects in relation to strategic urban planning.¹² There is little evidence to suggest that Baldwin Brown was able to influence the emerging town planning organisations in the way that he had the city's architectural, antiquarian and fine-arts bodies. It is also noticeable that Baldwin Brown's visibility with regard to the architectural bodies reduces as the twentieth century progresses,¹³ with no evidence that he became involved with the (Royal) Incorporation of Architects in Scotland following its foundation in 1916.¹⁴

Baldwin Brown's approach to urban preservation in Edinburgh can be characterised by three separate phases of development. From 1880 to 1903 his approach is particularist, involving himself in individual cases and gaining more detailed knowledge of the role of particular organisations and the limitations of their powers and approaches in relation to preservation.

¹² See M. Hawtree, 'The emergence of the town planning profession', in A. Sutcliffe (ed.), *British Town Planning: The Formative Years* (Leicester, 1981), 64-104, esp. 72-75.

¹³ The missing minute books of the EAA make it difficult to establish whether his involvement reduces here also.

¹⁴ The fact that Sir Robert Rowand Anderson was the key driving force in this body may have acted as a barrier for Baldwin Brown's involvement.

After the completion of his gruelling survey of Anglo Saxon church architecture in England and the publication of his first two volumes of the *Arts in Early England*, a significant shift in his approach is detectable. He becomes a far more active campaigner for preservation, particularly but not just in the Old Town, drawing in bodies such as the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Edinburgh Architectural Association into the campaigning and using on a broad knowledge of preservation legislation and organisational arrangements in Europe and urban preservation cases in Britain. This second phase, which included a national campaign for strengthening of the ancient monument legislation, the inclusion of protection for occupied buildings, and a two tier system of protection, ends with the adoption of the 1913 Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act.

The lack of protection for occupied buildings and urban townscapes more generally led to a third phase of Baldwin Brown's urban preservation. This was to focus attention on how the emerging town planning legislation might be used to protect urban townscape and occupied urban buildings at a local level. When the weakness of the local authority approach to urban preservation in Edinburgh became apparent together with a reluctance to draw officially on local expertise in the form of an expert local advisory committee became apparent, Baldwin Brown pursued the creation of an integrated local campaigning structure, using the Cockburn Association as a focal point for drawing in the other city amenity and professional bodies. Baldwin Brown became an energetic local activist in this third phase, seeking to create, develop and strengthen the local tier of protection that he had argued for in the earlier phases. The fourth phase ran from 1920 until his death in 1932 and saw his move away from the coordinating and campaigning role and a return to a more personal activism on individual cases. This reflected his age, his desire to complete the *Arts in Early England* series, and a recognition that a new generation was appearing with their own views on urban planning and preservation. An underlying theme from 1908 onwards was how the Royal Commission might be engaged in urban preservation, but his attempts here were to be frustrated by a

renewed emphasis on county-based surveys, the chronological upper limit on the Commission's work, and the persistent delays to an Edinburgh or a Midlothian volume within which Edinburgh's historic buildings and monuments were intended to appear.

In 1905 Baldwin Brown answered a question in the *Guardian* newspaper 'Quis custodiet ipso custodiet?' with the view that it was newspapers such as theirs which allowed the expression of public opinion.¹⁵ It was public opinion which he believed was the ultimate authority in monument preservation,¹⁶ and he regularly set out to influence public opinion and to place pressure on national and local government, landowners and developers using the mechanism of letters-to-the-press. His preservation-related letters frequently incorporated the word 'public' and its derivatives with the intention both of mobilising broader opinion and placing pressure on the 'public bodies' or 'public officials' as he carefully referred to them such as councillors who relied on public support for their appointment and were publicly accountable, or onto the trustees of the large land-holding organisations who might be sensitive to reputational damage.¹⁷

Baldwin Brown employed a consistent strategy in his campaigns and letters. By defining the city's buildings as public assets, Baldwin Brown was able to suggest that proposed change was therefore of broader public interest. This was a more straightforward argument to pursue in the case of public-funded buildings, buildings with a public function, or where public powers and funds were used to introduce change. However, he also sought to broaden the boundaries of this 'public' group by suggesting that other significant buildings and architectural assemblages, such as at Charlotte Square, should be regarded as public property. He was aware that he was on weak legal ground in such cases and adopted a moral

¹⁵ *Guardian*, 5 January 1905.

¹⁶ G.B. Brown, *The Care of Ancient Monuments* (Cambridge, 1905), 31.

¹⁷ Although detailed grammatical analysis has not been undertaken, 'public' is the most commonly used word (189 instances, weighted percentage 0.56) in his preservation-related letters to the press, followed by Edinburgh (181, weighted percentage 0.54).

rather than legal stance in such cases.¹⁸ Having established public interest, the next step was to highlight the short-comings in the system of managing public interest by bodies such as the Council, Dean of Guild Court and/or the land-owner/developer, frequently identifying lack of expertise or self-interest. Where relevant he would also point out the failure of the city's professional and amenity bodies to hold these public bodies to account. Finally, he would call for the proposals to be reconsidered against a backdrop of a broader call for the public to make their own views heard. Throughout, his letters contain charged phrases relating to public action or public opinion, using phrases such as 'strongly expressed public desire', 'powerful weight of public opinion' and 'public voice.' His language and rhetoric was intended both to galvanise public opinion and to act as a note of caution for the public bodies involved.

Previous assessments of Baldwin Brown's achievements in the preservation field have concentrated on *The Care of Ancient Monuments* and the resultant creation of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland in 1908. However, these resulted from a far more ambitious, complex and comprehensive long-term project to improve the mechanisms, infrastructure and resources for preservation in Britain and, in particular, to protect Edinburgh's built environment. Any assessment of Baldwin Brown's impact in Edinburgh must recognise the severity of the challenges facing a would-be urban preservationist. Seeking to develop and improve the effectiveness of the urban preservation movement in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain was always likely to be a challenging task. The strongly held views about private property rights, the scale and momentum of the Victorian capitalist expansion, the need to respond to the significant social and health problems associated with the rapid unmanaged growth of urban areas, and the desire to keep pace with transport and other improvements in other European cities meant that there was near-irresistible political, economic and social pressure driving

¹⁸ Listed building legislation adopts a similar underlying philosophy in justifying protection of public or private buildings in terms of a notional broader public interest.

urban change. The continuing lack of support for the expansion of monument legislation to include occupied ancient buildings is extremely telling. In its absence urban preservation in any strategic sense was bound to be exceptionally difficult to achieve. Baldwin Brown recognised this and the need therefore to work at both a strategic and a tactical level were an urban preservation field to become more effective. He campaigned for legislative change and the creation of a new organisational infrastructure at national level, while at a local level he pursued the introduction of protective measures, expert advisory committees, the use of local trusts to fund-raise and to take on the ownership of ancient buildings, and the monitoring of development proposals to identify potentially damaging cases and to campaign against them. Key to his vision was a two-tier system of protection with national and local inventories, together with the repeated mobilisation of public opinion to support the development of protective measures and to place pressure on councils, developers and land-owners to adopt a more sympathetic approach. While his individual impact on specific preservation-related cases is often difficult to judge, he engaged with a large number of the key preservation cases in Edinburgh, repeatedly raised public and political consciousness, and became arguably the most recognised public campaigner for preservation in Edinburgh's Old and New Towns between 1880 and 1930.

Perhaps the most tellingly judgement when considering Baldwin Brown's significance relates to his overarching vision for an effective urban preservation system in Britain. By far the majority of the broader arguments and mechanisms identified in *The Care of Ancient Monuments* in 1905 and related writings were adopted subsequently, albeit a number of these came into place only after his death. These included: the drawing in of occupied buildings within the scope of protective legislation, the creation of formally-constituted expert advisory bodies for local authorities, the protection of urban buildings and monuments through strategic plans and land-use planning controls at a local level, the creation of bodies to compile and use inventories at both national and local level, the creation of effective

building preservation organisations, the use of expert Inspectors, and restrictions on the export of cultural artefacts. Above all, he recognised that without broader public and political support, preservation was unachievable. Even with today's expanded legislation and significantly expanded infrastructure, the process of urban preservation today still relies as much on public and political support as it did in 1905.

Ultimately Baldwin Brown occupied a lonely position. For those sympathetic to Morris and SPAB, he would have been too pragmatic and too influenced by the peculiarities of Scottish history and identity. For many in Edinburgh and in the city council he was not pragmatic enough and was increasingly labelled as inflexible and other-worldly. Perhaps above all, despite living in Scotland for the majority of his adult life and pursuing his academic career in Edinburgh, he was to remain too-English and vulnerable to criticism from those pursuing a Scottish national and cultural autonomy. It is perhaps no surprise therefore that his obituaries focused to a very great extent on the successes of his work on Anglo Saxon art and culture. However, by steering away from his urban preservation work, his great legacy in this area, particularly in relation to Edinburgh, was been obscured at the time of his death and ever since.

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