18th Century Architecture Revisited

by Gareth Bryn-Jones

The landscape through which both Jacobite and Government armies marched in 1745 has in many places, and particularly in the western Highlands and islands, changed little in the intervening centuries. Other areas have undergone radical change as agriculture, industry, forestry and urban growth have made their mark.

Some of the buildings, structures and towns documented as having played a part in the '45, such as Preston Tower, are largely unchanged. Many more have however been altered, improved or either wholly or partially demolished. Some buildings depicted on the tapestry, most notably Dunblane Cathedral, have actually been rebuilt to reflect their earlier forms.

In the north and west of the country the buildings of the mid-18th Century were largely of vernacular origin. Small, long and low dwellings built entirely using locally sourced materials predominated while the largest buildings were usually those remaining from earlier times, specifically the fortified stone tower houses and castles of the wealthier landowners. That is not to say that the Highlands were devoid of contemporary architecture and some substantial interpretations of neo-classical buildings were built. Some of the earlier fortified buildings were also enlarged and altered to give them a more domestic appearance. Other more middling houses also started to appear, less defensive in their design and owing more to the symmetrical and classically proportioned houses found in the lowlands.

As the clans moved south and east they would have been aware of significant changes in the buildings they encountered, largely reflecting the relative wealth of the regions they were passing through. Around the towns and cities Scotland had already undergone significant agricultural improvements and the simple vernacular farm dwellings were being replaced with larger and more formally designed building groups, their design following patterns developed to improve agricultural production. New buildings were almost always built from locally quarried stone (either from the ground or *robbed* from earlier buildings) with glazed timber sash windows. Slated or tiled roofs predominated in new works but many thatched buildings remained, although in Edinburgh the use of thatch had been outlawed by Act of Parliament as early as 1624.

Within the cities and towns many buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries remained in use, often rising high and perhaps incorporating timber jetties or galleries. The density of building may have been oppressive or astounding to Highland visitors more accustomed to open spaces and low buildings. Many of Scotland's Burghs, including Edinburgh and Stirling, were still constrained in part at least by their medieval boundaries and walls.

Industrialisation had also taken hold, particularly on the banks of the Firth of Forth where coal was being exported as well as being used to fire the growing local industries. These included salt panning, brewing, pottery making and chemical and (whale) oil production and processing. Prestonpans itself was a developing centre of industry, positioned between the rich agricultural lands to the east, the Firth of Forth to the north and Edinburgh ten miles, barely a day's march, to the west. The town was however still divided, with the Burgh of Preston occupying the higher ground above the industry, which was strung out along the coast.

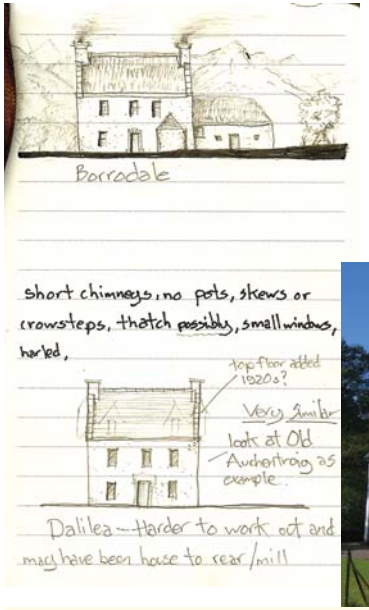
When Andrew Crummy asked for advice in recreating the buildings featured on the tapestry it seemed like a straightforward enough request. It quickly dawned on us however, during our trip to Borrodale and the west coast that, while many of the buildings which had played a significant part in the story survived, they had invariably been altered, modernised or extended. In many instances few, if any, illustrations of the buildings as they would have appeared in 1745 seemed to have survived.

We have not taken an entirely academic approach to the recreation of the buildings. Some were straightforward and well recorded and have hopefully been depicted with a good degree of accuracy. Some buildings were obscure, poorly recorded and much altered. With these we have taken a few liberties, informed by what scarce contemporary illustrations do exist and by reference to surviving buildings of comparable type. Finally, some locations proved too obscure to determine their appearance with any degree of accuracy at all. There may of course be surviving records of these locations but we were unable to trace them as stitching proceeded. These locations have either been reduced on the finished tapestry or in two instances they have disappeared altogether!

The following examples are intended to illustrate the approach that has been taken throughout. Details of other buildings are held by the Trust and any further enquiries will be attended to as best we are able.

1. Borrodale House

The Battle Trust quite deliberately spent several days staying at Borrodale in October 2009 to be in the place where the Prince had awaited the response of the Clan Chiefs to his call for support. The house itself has been much altered since 1745 and is probably substantially larger now than it was then. It is clear that the current building does however incorporate substantial elements from the time of the '45. The earliest portion of the house would appear to be the low building on the right of the illustration. This seems to have been retained as an outhouse, as has the fascinating creel house, which projects from the more substantial two-storey house probably erected in the early 1700s. How this curious arrangement came about is unclear but it is likely that these three connected buildings form the core of the property in which the Prince lodged. The photograph of the house as it is today tells the story of the intervening years in which the house has been extended to the west, the windows enlarged and, in 1864, substantially remodelled and further enlarged to designs prepared by Architect Philip Webb. A farm group, which includes a huge and decidedly un-Scottish split barn, was also added by Webb and this work remains as his only surviving substantial Scottish commission.



Above top: Extract showing Borrodale from General Roy's survey map, c1750

Above left: Sketch showing Borrodale House as it may have been in 1745 and a similar sketch showing nearby Dalilea without its 20th century embelishments

Above right: Borrodale House in 2009, showing extensions and alterations by Philip Webb

2. Invergarry Castle

Tapestry **panel 30** depicts Loch Oich with Invergarry Castle resting above on its promontory, Creagan an Fhithich, the Rock of the Raven. The castle had ancient origins but had been rebuilt on at least two occasions before it was extensively remodelled in the early 17th century. The castle was however damaged by fire in 1654, just prior to its further bespoiling by soldiers under General Monk's command. In 1727 the castle was again rebuilt, this time by new owner Thomas Rawlinson, although soon after it returned to Glengarry hands. In 1746 the castle was again destroyed, this time with gunpowder by the Hanoverian army, and it was never rebuilt.

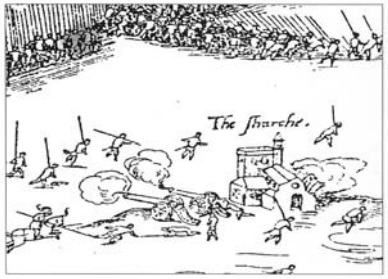
Left: Engraving showing Invergarry Castle in the late 18th Century, following its final abandonment

Despite its colourful history there seem to be few surviving illustrations of the Castle prior to its destruction in 1746. The clearest image of the Castle dates from after its ruination and the tapestry image is based loosely on this sketch. The building is a fine Tower House, with a basic L shaped plan and a distinctive roofline, punctuated with steep gables and turreted bartisans and towers. The remains of some of these embellishments now lie amongst the rubble strewn around the foot of the castle. Parts of the castle rose a full six floors but visitors today will find a fenced and dangerous ruin, which has continued to deteriorate despite bold attempts at consolidation.

3. Inveresk and Old St. Michael's Church

Panel 62 shows Inveresk, just five miles to the west of Prestonpans. Inveresk was, until the late 1600s, a relatively small and unremarkable village. It was however to change in character as a number of substantial mansion houses were constructed over the following century. Several of these houses are depicted in the panel and can still be seen, their external appearance having changed little.

The panel also shows St Michael's Church, one building which the visitor to Inveresk today will not see. The church was demolished to allow for the construction of the existing building, which opened in 1805, but has been recorded in a number of sketches and written accounts. Some of these accounts and drawings relate to the Battle of Pinkie, which was fought in the fields to the south and east of the church in 1547. None can be regarded as precise representations of the church and so the sketch for the tapestry panel is based on an interpretation of the several sketches and written descriptions as well as comparison with surviving (if extensively altered) medieval churches in the area, such as Whitecross, Seton and



Contemporary drawing showing Inveresk Old St. Michael's Church during the Battle of Pinkie, 1547

Aberlady. The church was clearly of medieval origin but may have evolved over many years and we have tried to show this in the panel. Old St. Michael's final minister, Dr Alexander Carlyle, was also its most famous and Dr Carlyle described the old building's unusual features such as its two rows of aisles and double galleries. One of its most curious features was the double tower, which comprised a substantial round tower immediately adjacent to a more conventional square tower. Perhaps the circular tower was simply a large stair tower but perhaps it was a remnant of a much earlier building? Later illustrations of the church are also unclear and some show a spire, which was added to the square tower towards the end of its life.

4. Dunblane Cathedral

Very little interpretation or conjecture was required for the image of Dunblane Cathedral, shown in **panel 39**. There are several engravings, drawings and paintings of the building dating from the 1700s and earlier, including two views dating from the late 17th century from John Slezer's *Theatrum Scotiae*. The building shown in these is however quite different from the one seen today. By 1745 only the choir and the earlier tower of the Cathedral remained in use, while the nave and west front were roofless, derelict and decaying. Sections of the masonry were collapsing and to the north there was evidence that the building was being used as a quarry, providing stone for use in constructing new buildings. Dunblane was a developing industrial town centred on its mills, which were powered by the Allan Water, and there was a need to house an influx of workers. It is perhaps more surprising that so little of the building was actually removed during this time and in the closing years of the 19th century major repairs to the building were carried out under the direction of Architect Rowand Anderson. These continued over several years and work on the interior was completed in 1914, this time to designs prepared by Robert Lorimer.

Below Left: Engraving showing Dunblane Cathedral from the south west, 1821

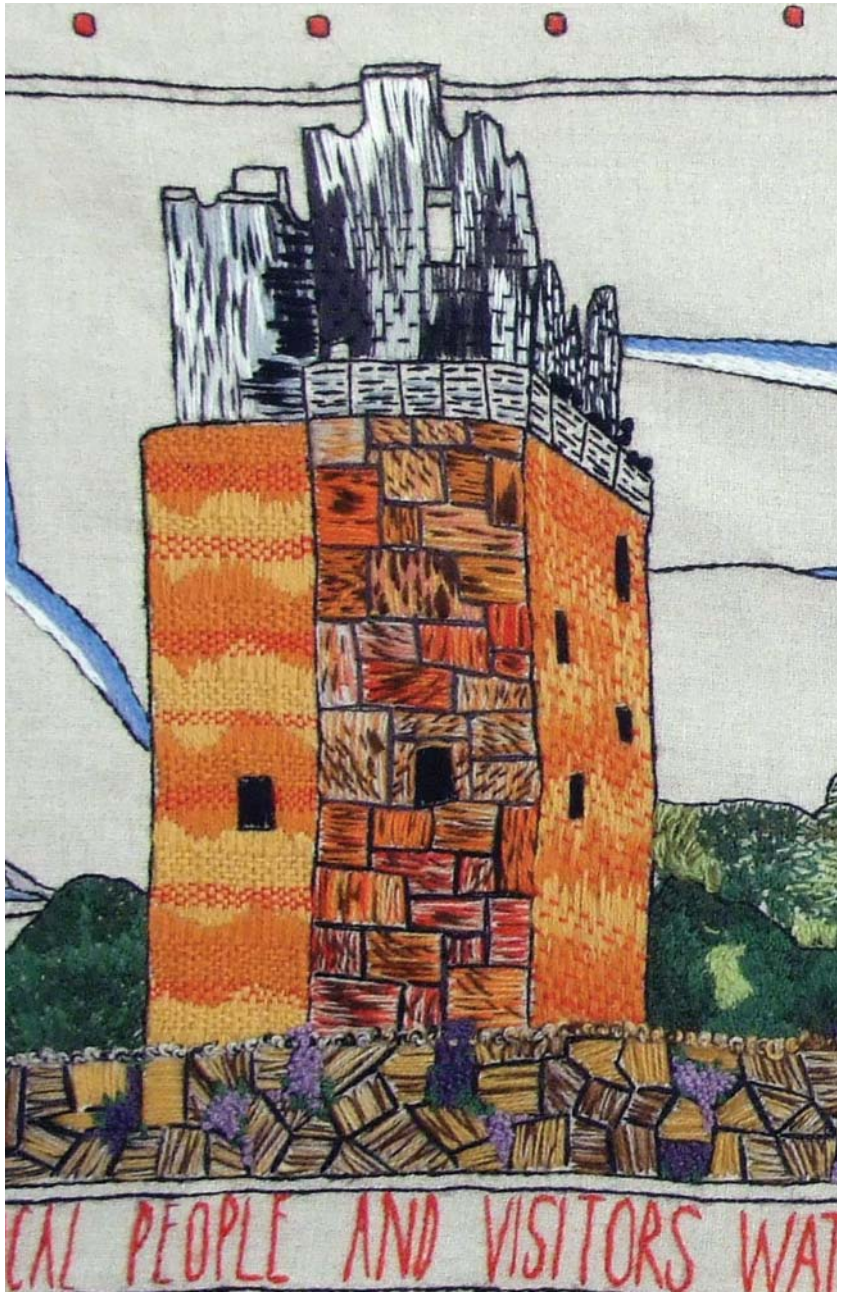
Left: Engraving showing Dunblane Cathedral from the south around 1693, from Slezer's Theatrum Scotiae

Below right: Dunblane Cathedral from the south east, as rebuilt.

5. Preston House and Tower

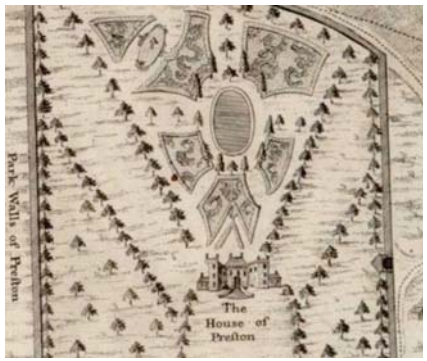
Preston House and more specifically its substantial and extensive stone garden walls played a critical part in the Battle. Many retreating Hanoverian government troops found themselves unable to climb or to avoid the walls and were cut down by the advancing Jacobite army. The role the wall had played in events was well recognised and respected in the aftermath of the battle and the government army ensured that the walls around Culloden were more comprehensively pierced in advance of that battle.

Preston House itself was surrounded by extensive and well-documented gardens. These are depicted in several of the contemporary battle maps. Less is known of the house itself however. It was probably built in the early 18th Century to replace Preston Tower, which had been severely damaged by fire. The tower is also depicted in the panel, ruinous as it appeared then and does now, with its curious roofline resulting from its extension upwards in the 17th Century. The design of Preston House



mirrored several other Scottish houses of the period and comprised a central block with pavilions clasped by curving wings. The lamentably derelict Mavisbank House near Loanhead, designed in the 1720s by William Adam, is perhaps a close match in character, if not detail, to Preston House.

By the late 19th century Preston House was in a derelict state and when the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland visited to record the remains of the house in 1924 there was little remaining above the ground floor walls. There are now no standing remains of the house itself, although sections of the garden walls do survive. The panel depicts the house as it may have appeared in 1745 and is based primarily on depictions of the property on contemporary maps, drawn to illustrate the Battle, and the 1924 RCAHMS survey drawings.



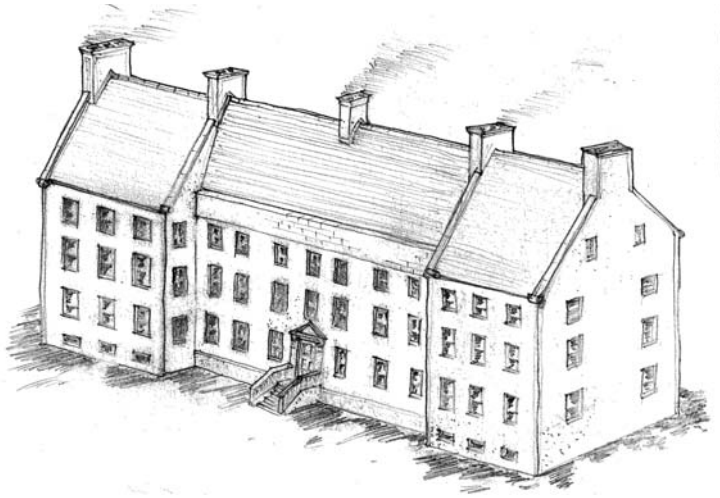
Above: Photograph showing Preston Tower, which has survived its replacement, Preston House

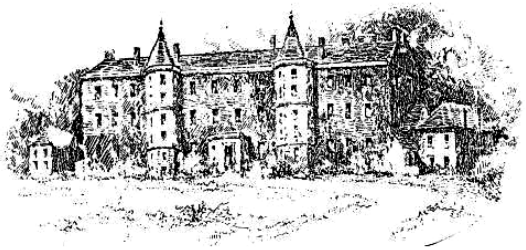
Preston House 1745: Extract from a Battle plan drawn in 1745 showing Preston House and its gardens and walls

6. Callendar House

This imposing house has a long and complex history. Its origins may relate to the Roman occupation of Scotland and some of the most impressive sections of the Antonine Wall pass to the immediate north of the house. Close by are the remains of a 10th century timber hall. The house is a development of a 14th or 15th Century stone tower house and by the early 18th Century it had grown, incrementally, into a substantial dwelling. The house, as it is depicted in **panel 43**, had grown into a formal and basically symmetrical classical building, very much in the fashion of the time. This is not the appearance of the house today however, for it was again extensively remodelled in the mid-19th century gaining a profusion of French medieval turrets, steeply pitched roofs and eventually large projecting bay windows. Callendar House has been repaired by Falkirk Council and now houses an impressive museum, which includes the working early 19th century kitchen. The external wall of the building depicted in the panel can still be seen in the entrance hall of the current house.

The panel also depicts the tower of St.Michael's church in Linlithgow, which is immediately adjacent to Linlithgow Palace. The tower was, in 1745, topped with its fine stone crown but this was removed in response to concerns about its stability in 1821. The current aluminium spire was constructed in 1964.





Right: Drawing showing Callendar House as extended in the later 1700s

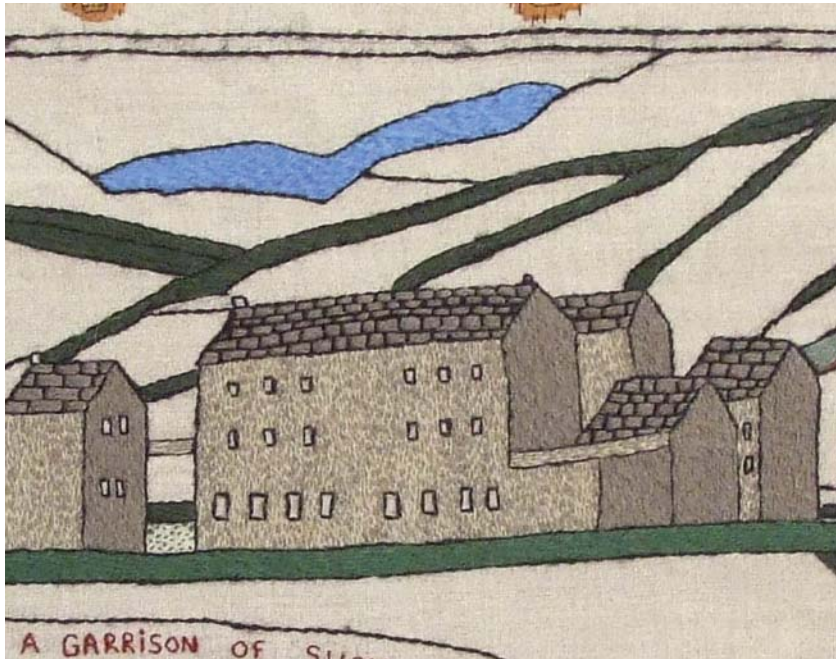
Left: Sketch showing the possible appearance of Callendar House in 1745

Right: Photograph showing Callendar House as extended and embellished in the 19th Century

7. Ruthven Barracks

There had been a fort on the raised mound at Ruthven since at least the 13th century and a more suitable site for controlling the passage to and from the north would be hard to imagine. The mound rises from the glacial valley as if man-made, although its origins are probably also as a glacial drumlin. The earlier castles were however cleared away in the aftermath of the 1715 Rebellion and the Barracks were largely completed in 1721. They formed a vital part of the Government's strategy to control the Highlands and followed designs based largely on functional principles. The barracks were capable of housing over 100 troops and were extended in the 1730s to incorporate stables for use by the dragoons. The stables can be seen to the side of the main barrack blocks and enclosure. When the Jabobite army reached Ruthven **[Panel 34]** it found it defended by just 12 soldiers but they successfully held out and the building survived.

The Barracks were less fortunate however in February of the following year, when the Jacobite army returned, this time with artillery, and the



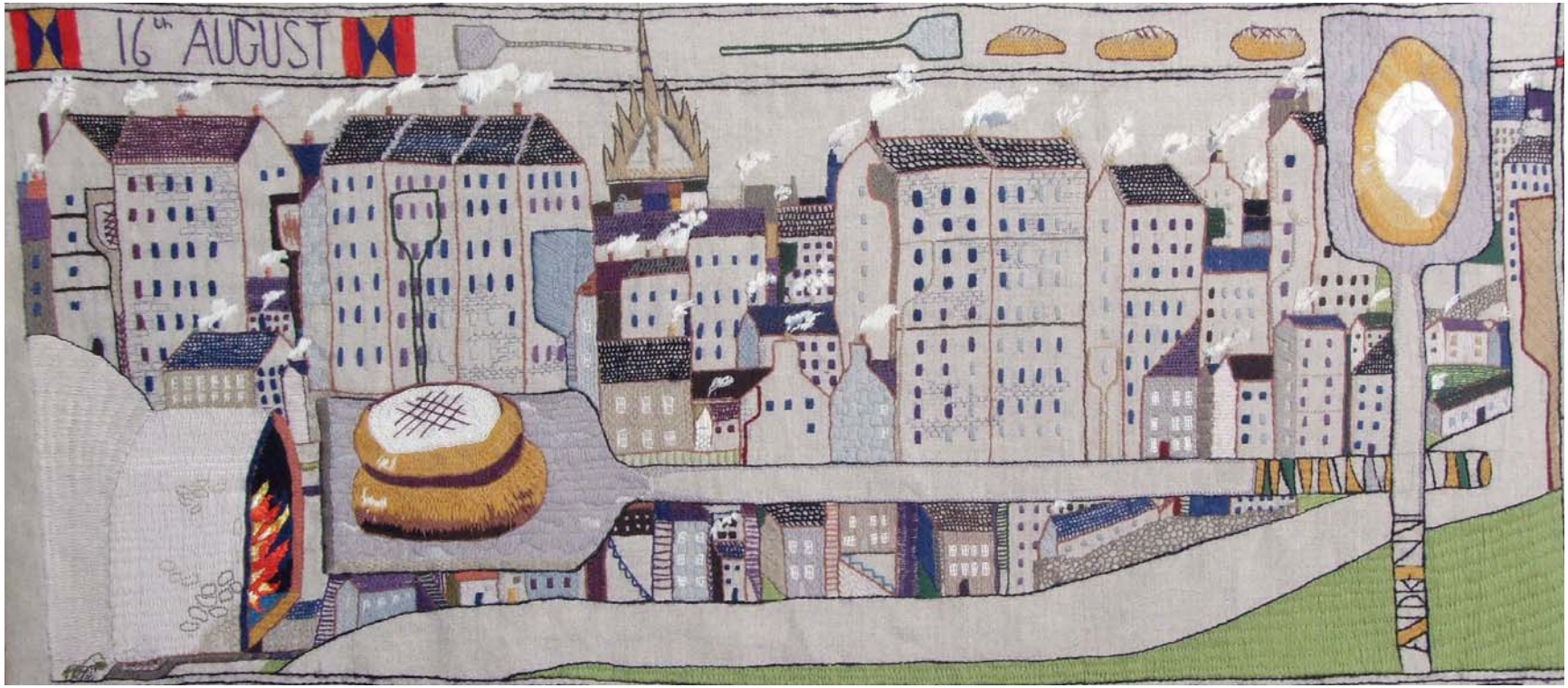
small garrison surrendered. The building remained largely intact however, until it was sacked and burned by the remains of the Jacobite army on 17th April 1746. It was never rebuilt.

Extract from General Roy's military survey of Scotland, showing Ruthven Barracks in context

8. Edinburgh - baking the bread

Some things never change and so it might seem with Edinburgh, instantly recognisable from **panel 19**. Edinburgh has in fact changed very substantially since it became embroiled in the 1745 rebellion. The soaring and tightly packed buildings depicted in the panel (only slightly heightened for artistic effect) made Edinburgh one of the most densely populated cities anywhere. The city was however already becoming the centre for the Scottish Enlightenment (David Hume was born in 1711 in one of the tenements on Lawnmarket) despite having such cramped and apparently insanitary conditions. Substantial tenements fronted the street while smaller and often poorly built buildings spread to the rear, filling much of the rig ground. The bakehouses, breweries, workshops and booths were packed within the tightly confined boundaries of the city, still constrained by its hilltop geography and defensive walls. Few of these buildings survive today however.

In the years following 1745 the city boundaries were extended, the Nor' Loch drained and, in 1765-66 a competition was held for designs for a New Town, to be built to the north of the city. Access to the new development was formed by breaking through the city's original northern boundaries and this was followed, in the 19th Century, by a series of city Improvement Acts. One such Act, in 1867, had been prompted by the collapse of one of the substantial buildings to the north side of the High Street. The improvements invariably involved the demolition of many of the earlier tenements and often the formation of new streets, running at right angles to the High Street and connecting it with the New Town and further developments to the south. If any part of the image of Edinburgh stands out then it is surely the stone Crown on the tower of the church of St. Giles'. The crown survives, unlike the similar crown of the tower of St. Michael's in Linlithgow, although the church itself, hidden from view behind the tenements, was extensively remodelled and cleared of much of its later medieval alterations in the 19th Century.



Left: View of the High Street, Edinburgh in the 18th Century

Right: View of Edinburgh from the north, from Slezer's Theatrum Scotiae, c1695

9. The Netherbow Port, Edinburgh

Edinburgh was not well defended when the Jacobite army arrived in September 1745 but it was not completely without protection and was still largely confined within its walls and gates. Netherbow Port stood at the east end of the High Street, near to where the well-known World's End bar now stands. It was a substantial stone built gate-house with turreted towers facing east to either side of the single gateway and a clock tower rising centrally above. The inner face of the building, as shown in **panel 52**, was simpler. There had been a gate in the Netherbow since the 12th Century but the stone building, which confronted the Jacobite army, probably dated from the 16th Century and was similar in character to the foreworks at Stirling Castle and to other near-contemporary royal works at Holyrood and Falkland. The gateway was not however maintained in good condition and it was demolished in 1764. That was not the end of the story though and it was reconstructed on Edinburgh's Meadows as part of the 1886 International Exhibition of Science and Art. The Netherbow Port was demolished for a second time shortly after when attempts to have it retained as a lasting monument to the exhibition failed.

Above: Engraving showing the east front of the Netherbow Port – as captured in the tapestry panel

Left: Engraving showing the west front of the Netherbow Port

Right: Sketch showing the Netherbow Port being dismantled in 1764

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To conclude therefore, we trust it will be appreciated that we took such steps as were reasonably possible to accurately represent the buildings along the Prince's and Sir John Cope's routes in 1745. We also trust that the reader or viewer will accept that some artistic licence has been taken and will excuse the [hopefully occasional] indiscretion.