



NAIRN

NAIRN is said to have been erected into a Royal Burgh by King Alexander I., but its original charter was lost, and it now holds its privileges under a Charter of Ratification and Confirmation granted by King James VI. in 1589, which was again confirmed by a charter of King Charles II. in 1661.

The Seal of the Burgh bears a figure of St. Ninian holding in his right hand a cross, and in his left an open bible.

The Abbey of Fearn in Ross-shire, on the opposite side of the Moray Firth, was founded in the thirteenth century by Ferquhard, Earl of Ross, in consequence of a vow made by him under the following circumstances. In 1227 he accompanied King Alexander II. to London, and while there, challenged a renowned French champion to single combat, vowing that if he were victorious he would found a monastery in his earldom. Fortune favoured him and he slew his opponent. In fulfilment of his vow he brought from the church of Candida Casa at Whithorn two canons of the *Candida Ordo* (so called because their monastic garb was white), and some of St. Ninian's relics, and built, founded, and endowed the Abbey at Fearn, appointing one of these canons, Malcolm by name, to be the first abbot. The monks of Whithorn followed the rule of St. Augustine, and from their principal monastery in France being at Præmontré, they were called *Præmonstratenses*. After some time the abbey was transferred to a spot about twelve miles further south, and there it remained ever after. Owing to the influence of this abbey on all the surrounding district, St. Ninian is said to have been adopted as the patron saint of Nairn.

The old name of the place was Narne or Invernarne, *narne* meaning the Water of Alders, which tree still flourishes on the banks of the river Nairn, and thus the name means the mouth of the water or river of Alders.



NEWBURGH

NEWBURGH seems to have come into existence at the same time as the Abbey of Lindores, and came under the provisions of the various previous Police Acts in 1858. Under the Burgh Police Act of 1892 the Town Council adopted a Common Seal.

The Seal is a thistle ensigned with an imperial crown, with a cross beneath the thistle, and is practically a small reproduction of the Coat of Arms of the Royal Burgh of Newburgh.

It is not at all certain how the Arms originated, but the most probable explanation is as follows. King Alexander III. erected the town into a Burgh of Barony at the request of the monks of Lindores Abbey, and it was made a Royal Burgh by King Charles I. in 1631. The last Abbot of Lindores, the second son of the fifth Earl of Rothes, was created Baron Lindores on 25th December 1600 by King James VI., and died without issue in 1649. The first Baron Melville married as his second wife Lady Mary Leslie, daughter of the fifth Earl of Rothes, and the Coat of Arms of the Earl of Leven and Melville bears on the first and fourth quarters of the first and fourth grand quarters a thistle, slipped proper, ensigned with an imperial crown, *or*, for Leslie, this being an augmentation of honour granted to the Leslies, Earls of Leven, by the King. The Burgh, accordingly, seems to have taken this on account of these families having been descended from the family of the last Abbot of Lindores. The cross evidently was taken as an ecclesiastical emblem in memory of the ancient Abbey of Lindores, but it is possible that it has reference to two ancient crosses in the parish. One of these, nearest the town, is known as the Cross of Mugdrum, while the other, about a mile distant, is called Cross MacDuff, and tradition connects the latter with the Thane of Fife, but as to the former, even tradition is silent.



NEWMILNS AND GREENHOLM

NEWMILNS was erected into a Burgh of Barony by a charter from King James IV. in 1490, and this charter was confirmed by Sir Matthew Campbell of Loudoun in 1566. It, along with the neighbouring suburb of Greenholm, from which it is separated by the river Irvine, adopted the Lindsay Act in 1872, and under the Burgh Police Act of 1892 took for its Common Seal the following: A shield, the upper part of which contains a sword supporting a pair of scales, representing the sword and scales of Justice. On either side, Newmilns being noted for the manufacture of muslins and lace, is a distaff and a shuttle. In the space beneath is a representation of the old Council House with its stair. In the old records it is called the Tolbooth, and seems to have been erected about 1739, as we find that on 24th October 1739, the House of Loudoun and the bailies of the Burgh entered into an agreement each to pay their "proportionate share of necessary charges found needful for keeping up, repairing and maintaining the said Tolbooth in all time coming after the same is builded and finished." A new Town Hall was erected in 1896. Above the shield is a bee-hive, representing Industry, and beneath is the motto "*Weave Truth with Trust,*" which was the motto of the old Guild of Weavers.



NEWPORT

NEWPORT, in Fifeshire, came under the provisions of the Lindsay Act in 1887, and under the Burgh Police Act of 1892, adopted as a Common Seal the following: On a shield an ancient lymphad with the figure of Hygea seated in the stern. On the sail is the Seal of the old Earls of Fife (a warrior on horseback for Duff) which is the present Seal of the Burgh of Macduff. It is also the Arms of the county of Fife, and has been adopted in order to distinguish Newport in Fife from other towns of the same name.

Hygea or Hygeia was the goddess of health. She was the daughter of Æsculapios, and her symbol was a serpent drinking from a cup held in her hand. In the Seal she is shown holding the cup, with the serpent drinking therefrom, and she, and the motto "*Hygea duce*" (With health as a leader), refer to the proverbial healthiness of the Burgh.



NEW GALLOWAY

NEW GALLOWAY was erected into a Royal Burgh by a charter of King Charles I. in 1629. Sir Herbert Maxwell, in his "History of Dumfries and Galloway," speaks of the town as follows: "A charter erecting the lands of Roddings, belonging to Lochinvar, into the Royal Burgh of New Galloway was ratified by Act of Parliament this year [1633] notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the burgh of Kirkcudbright. Lord Kenmure however died before his ambitious plan of building could be carried out, and New Galloway, though boasting the offices of provost, four bailies, dean of guild, treasurer, and twelve councillors, has never yet exceeded the dimensions of an upland village."

The Seal of the Burgh is as follows: On a shield in the lower half is a cross reversed, which is known as the cross of St. Peter, he having been crucified head downwards. The origin of this is uncertain. In front of it is a boar's head, and encircling the upper arm is a coronet showing nine pearls, being a viscount's coronet of sixteen pearls, of which nine are visible. Above is a helmet with mantling, and above that as crest, on a wreath a boar's head crowned with a similar coronet. The supporters are: On the right hand side a savage bearing a club in his right hand, and wreathed round the head and waist. On the left hand side is a ram; and the motto "*Cruce crescimus*" (Under the Cross we prosper) indicates the prosperity of the town under the blessings of Christianity.

The boars' heads of the shield and crest were taken from the Arms of the Viscounts Kenmure, which Arms were "*azure*, three boars' heads erased *or*, armed and langued *gules*." The family name was Gordon, and the Gordons bore and bear three boars' heads on their Arms. In ancient times, the Scottish kings used to bestow some signal honour on anyone who could prove that he had killed a wild boar, as they were considered noxious animals, and the family of Gordon are said to have taken their name and Arms from an achievement of one of their ancestors. The story as related in the "Old Statistical Account" is as follows: "The Laird of

Lochinvar, as the story is told, after his pursuit and conquest of the boar, finding himself weary, having cut out the tongue, and put it in his pocket, lay down near the spot where he slew him and fell asleep. In the meantime a gentleman called Seaton, who had also been in pursuit of the boar, finding him overcome and his conqueror asleep, immediately cut off the head and carried it to the King, representing to him that he himself had killed the boar, and was entitled to the reward which his Majesty was wont to confer on the conqueror of such an animal. The King, not suspecting his veracity, rewarded him accordingly. The Laird of Lochinvar having awoke, and missing the boar's head, conjectured what had happened; and therefore went with all possible expedition to Edinburgh, and presented himself before the King, expressing his apprehension that the reward of merit had been bestowed upon an imposter. To convince the King of the imposition put upon him, he produced the tongue from his pocket, affirming, that if the head which had been presented to his Majesty were inspected, it would be found to want that very tongue. The head accordingly having been examined, the King was perfectly satisfied with the evidence of the laird's representation, and asked him how he had killed the boar. May it please your Majesty, says the laird, I just 'gored him down.' Very well, says the King, as the reward of your merit, you shall be henceforward *Goredown*, Knight of Lochinvar. Ever since that period, a boar's head has been assumed in the armorial ensigns of the Gordons, whether or not connected with the Knights of Lochinvar, afterwards Viscounts of Kenmure."

Of the supporters, the savage is also taken from the Arms of the same family which had two savages as supporters. As sheep farming is the principal industry of the district, the other supporter, the ram, is probably an allusion to it.



NEWTON-STEWART

WILLIAM STEWART, the second Earl of Galloway's third son, who owned the estate of Castle-Stewart in the end of the seventeenth century, built some houses to form a nucleus for a village on the banks of the river Cree, where there was a ford. In honour of the family name he called it Newton-Stewart, and obtained a charter from King Charles II. erecting it into a Burgh of Barony. After a time Sir William Douglas of Gelston, the founder of the Burgh of Castle-Douglas, purchased the estate of Castle-Stewart, and under a second charter named the village Newton-Douglas ; but this new name soon fell into disuse and gave place to the original name of Newton-Stewart.

The place soon increased in size and importance, and came under the provisions of the Police Act of 1860 in 1861, and under the Burgh Police Act of 1892, the Common Seal of the Burgh was designed as follows : In the centre of the Seal is a representation of a Public Hall gifted to the town by two worthy natives of it, the Misses M'Millan, and known as the M'Millan Hall. It is a magnificent building, and in front of it is a lamp post and a fountain, which were gifted to the town by another generous donor, but whose name has not been allowed to transpire. The Hall and the Fountain were erected in 1888, at a cost of upwards of £7000.



NORTH BERWICK

NORTH BERWICK, with the lands round about it, at one time belonged to the Earls of Fife, but King Robert II. in 1373 granted to William, Earl Douglas, "the privilege of a port, with the usual pertinents to North Berwyk, in emulation probably of Dunbar."

King Robert III. erected the town into a Royal Burgh, and the Seal is as follows: A lymphad, with furled sail, rowed by four rowers, and flying a flag bearing a St. Andrew's Cross. In the stern is a figure seated with a crown on its head, and in the prow a lion rampant. The sea is full of fish swimming, and above, in a scroll, is the motto "*Victoriae gloria merces*" (Commerce is the glory [or reward] of victory). The lymphad refers to the fact of the Burgh being a seaport. It has been considered that the figure in the stern represents King Robert III., but from Laing's description of the Seal it is more probable that it is intended to represent King James VI. Laing describes the Seal thus: "A galley, the sails furled, rowed by four men. The prow of the vessel is ornamented with a lion rampant, and the stern has a head with a coronet of five points. The stern is perhaps intended to represent a shield, *parte per pale*, two crescents in base. In the water are several small fishes. The sun is casting his rays on the vessel from the sinister side." He then adds that it "was probably executed in the latter part of the reign of James VI., when some privileges were conferred on the burgh."

As regards the name, Chalmers remarks that "The parish of North Berwick derived its name from the town, and the village obtained its Saxon appellation from the same source as the Berwick-upon-Tweed, which in the charters of the fourteenth, thirteenth, and twelfth centuries is distinguished as South Berwick, while the more northern town was usually called *North Berwick*. In those charters and in the Northumbrian topography, the common orthography of the name is *Bar-wic* or *Bare-wic*, the bare, or naked, village or castle; the only difficulty being to discover whether the Saxon *wic* was first applied, in fact, to a castle or a village. The probability is that it was to the *village*, before any *castle* existed on the site of North Berwick, which stands on the naked shores of the Forth, being a small narrow promontory, projecting from the town into the firth."