



Society of Antiquaries  
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## The Fortification of the Firth of Forth 1880–1977

‘The most powerful naval fortress in the British Empire’

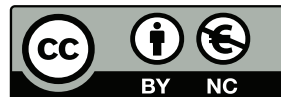
Gordon J Barclay and Ron Morris

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# CONCLUSION

For around a century, the Firth of Forth was defended, first, as an increasingly important commercial port, then as a naval anchorage, and finally as the site of an important Royal Naval Base. In contrast to the anchorage in Scapa Flow, it was continuously used and provision made for its defence from 1880 until 1977. It played a vital role in two World Wars, as a repairing and commissioning base, as the base of the Grand Fleet and other naval formations and as the home of the convoy mustering area in Largo Bay. For all its prominence in the past, when the estuary was full of ships, the memory of the Forth's naval history is fading.

The most enduring markers of that history are the remains of the great naval fortress built to defend the commercial and naval port. These fortifications reflected the most up-to-date contemporary thinking on defence and their extensive surviving remains provide not only a major resource for understanding this aspect of Britain's naval history, but also for telling that story to a wider public. We hope our research provides the basis for future understanding, interpretation and conservation.