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## **Remnants of Scottish stone architecture in Nova Scotia**

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thousands of Scottish emigrants travelled to Canada. This paper concerns those buildings which were designed and constructed by Scottish settlers, utilising skills and materials transported from their homeland. The research concerns the extent to which buildings of those early generations of settler might still be intact, with specific reference to selected case studies from Nova Scotia. One is faced with still intact examples of Scottish architectural heritage, located thousands of miles from Scotland. This has interesting and important implications for the manner in which we value, care for and understand meaning within the built heritage.

**Keywords:** Scotland / Canada / stone / architecture

### **Introduction**

This paper explores how selected examples of buildings by early Scottish settlers in Canada, still visible today, might be viewed from architectural, social and historical viewpoints. It is argued that taking a wide and holistic outlook helps to illuminate the manner in which such architecture may be understood by current and future generations, with a recognition of their value beyond notions of financial or property worth.

Scotland and Canada are linked through a significant shared history and the continuing vitality of the Scottish diaspora. From early settlement during the 1700s, to the establishment of major educational institutions, the linked cultures of Scotland and Canada have left many permanent records. This topic has been discussed in some depth through the literature generally, with particularly in-depth studies of the complex and widespread nature of emigration, affecting all parts of both countries (Hornsby 1992). Indeed, it is recognised that examples of

Scottish (and British) influence extend into many such areas including parts of the USA, Hong Kong, Australia and other countries that historically took in immigrants from the UK (e.g. Taylor 2003, Basu 2006). Within North America, examples of British architectural influence in the Northern and Southern Colonies (e.g. Carson 1987 on Colonial Williamsburg) serve to illustrate an impact on both domestic and agricultural buildings, including vernacular (Brunskill 2000).

The paper also draws on comprehensive study of Scottish architecture particularly the built heritage of the north east. This has been evidenced through research projects for Historic Scotland, city trusts around Scotland and various local councils (e.g. Urquhart *et al* 1997, Brogden, 1988, Brown *et al* 2008). Within these studies, the architectural styles and forms found in Aberdeen and its hinterland were investigated and analysed using a variety of methodologies to create a detailed diorama of local heritage through photographic records, drawn data and detailed high definition scanning. The knowledge developed through this work inspired a consideration of Aberdeens emigrants, concerning granite as a building material able to traverse beyond the boundaries of locality. Similarly, ongoing work within Canada (e.g. Historic Places Canada 2011) has sought to record, understand and protect examples of the built heritage, and has established a rich collection of drawn, photographic and oral evidence to support regional knowledge. Finally, a rich tradition of studying the Scottish diaspora (e.g. Forsyth 2000) has given rise to studies of the connections between diasporas and shared architectural styles, including a recent in-depth study of rural Nova Scotia (Maudlin 2007 & 2009).

With regards to architecture and building practice, early visitors to Scottish settlements in the late 1700s were surprised to find that little development had taken place that defined town layouts or buildings that were likely to survive for any length of time (Calder 2003). However, as the number of Scottish and other settlers increased into the early 1800s, the critical mass of occupants from Europe was such that the construction of more permanent structures would have been both desirable and socially sustainable. Of those early settlers, many came from construction trade backgrounds in Scotland, and would have taken those skills to Canada. There are thus many examples still existing in Canada of both timber and stone structures, which together serve to illustrate how traditions and trades developed over a period.

Nevertheless, previous studies have explored the manner in which people and communities derive a feeling of identity, personal history and well-being from the knowledge that the buildings that make up their own personal built environment convey a sense of where they, their family or their community originated (Zancheti and Jokilehto 1997, Pearce 1998). It should be stressed that this need not necessarily involve reference to particular architectural styles, or even to specific materials. However, it has been argued (as has been the case in examples from earlier work, for example Rodwell 1992) that architecture in itself has the capability of providing a reliable and meaningful backdrop, against which human activity can be played out.

Just as many of the social traditions of early Scottish settlers to Nova Scotia have been preserved, including perhaps most notably traditional Scottish

music, many of the earliest buildings, built using both stone and timber, still exist. It is also true that many early settlers quickly abandoned or at the very least adapted traditional Scottish construction methods, favouring new approaches relating to easily available local materials, or using design styles evolved long after generations have settled in Canada itself (Maudlin 2007). For these reasons, the selected case studies reported are of particular interest, as they provide evidence of a stage in the developing history of Canada, and are a tangible link to the roots from which the society grew.

## **History**

Scotland and Canada are linked through significant shared history and the continued vitality of the Scottish diaspora, with recognition and promotion of those links a field of study in their own right (Forsyth 2000). From early settlement following the Highland Clearances, to the establishment of major educational institutions, the linked cultures of Scotland and Canada have left many permanent records. Pictou in Nova Scotia, established in 1773, was one of the first towns settled by Scottish emigrants, and contains many important examples of buildings constructed using traditional Scottish detailing, and a traditional use of materials typical of Scottish burghs construction, including sandstone and masonry detailing, cast iron fixtures and details, and timber sash and case windows (Kalman 1994, pg. 111). The Pictou region is one of the few in Nova Scotia where domestic buildings built in stone are common (Maudlin 2007), and it is important to record this built heritage. Further links with Scotland are evident in Halifax, with evidence of the tangible link with Scotland through the example of John Black (a merchant representing Scottish merchants in Halifax).

Black constructed a still-intact Palladian residence using Aberdeenshire granite for the main façade and local sandstone and ironstone elsewhere (Kalman 1994, p. 130). Again, it was important that the exact source of the materials be researched, to establish further links with built heritage elsewhere in Nova Scotia, and in Scotland. That particular example is also interesting due to its clear exhibition of a common architectural style, using granite, which is very much in common with architectural styles employed within Aberdeen during the same period. In Scotland at the time, it would have been unusual to find domestic buildings constructed using non-local materials, although the use of material from the settlers' homeland might also have carried wider social and cultural values, in addition to issues of pragmatism. Therefore, the importance of the case studies extends beyond that of material only, towards those of shared social, design and architectural histories.

### **An evaluative context**

The case study examples described within this paper have been selected due to their associations with a shared history of two countries. The buildings cannot be regarded as being rare or unique in a global context, but derive their heritage value from the associations between their builders and their countries of origin. For example, and as will be illustrated later, the buildings located in Pictou, although comparatively rare within Nova Scotia (in terms of their age, materials and historical associations) are physically similar to a very large number of buildings located in Scotland.

Thus, they fall arguably into a category whereby their heritage value relates as much to the community from which they emerged, as from assessments of architectural style or rarity (see also Waterton and Smith 2010). How this value can be recognised requires first an understanding of the history which gave rise to their existence. Likewise, the granite building described in Halifax derives its heritage value and historic interest from associations with Aberdeen. This is even though the building is of a form that can be recognised throughout contemporary Aberdeen, and particularly in buildings from the 1820s, when the city underwent major urban development. It is in this sense that reasons for supporting preservation of such buildings extend beyond the material and architectural object, and beyond more traditional reasons underpinning heritage management (Cleere 1989). Therefore, it is likely that the nature and extent of perceived heritage worth will vary, depending on the extent to which people have a knowledge of the buildings that extends beyond a superficial aesthetic appreciation of their current appearance and context.

The concept of *value* as attached to the historic built environment embodies a range of issues pertinent to the built environment and the term *value* can assume different definitions depending upon a range of factors, whether these be qualitative (as noted in Tweed and Sutherland 2007) or quantitative (for example, Ferrini and Scarpa 2007, Poor and Snowball 2010). Vecco (2010) noted that the term ‘heritage’ has been used increasingly in a wider sense than simply referring to the physical asset, and that this in turn has allowed for less tangible historic goods to be recognised, valued and protected. This may well carry associated financial and legal implications (Grefe 2004), as well as potentially informing

planning and urban design (Palang *et al* 2011) and cultural tourism (Ballesteros and Ramirez 2007). It is therefore important for us to consider why and how domestic scale buildings, which emerged from humble and arguably vernacular origins, might hold a greater resonance for current and future generations than could ever have been foreseen by the original builders and occupants. There is great pressure on heritage bodies to demonstrate their economic impact (through tourism, property value, and so on, as noted by Historic Scotland 2009). However, the central attributes associated with heritage *value* relate to what environmental economists would refer to as total economic value, thus encompassing both use and non-use values (an excellent discussion is provided by Turner *et al* 2003). As noted earlier, for the case studies in Nova Scotia, their value lies not only in the architectural merit of the buildings themselves, but also in their uniqueness within a context.

The built heritage continues to exist due to society's needs, and the continued existence and protection of heritage satisfies that need. Of course, there have been examples where isolated buildings or even areas of towns and cities may have survived ill-advised redevelopment through financial neglect, rather than through them being valued in the past. Common examples would include dockland and other ex-industrial sites (Landorf 2009), many of which have been left untouched, sympathetically restored, preserved or redeveloped. In the absence of society, however (or even the absence of society ascribing heritage worth to an object in the first instance), the meaning and purpose of such heritage would be lost. Likewise, where a building were damaged, it is possible that the rationale for apportioning heritage *value* would be weakened, lessening or removing heritage

worth. Therefore, the built heritage is intrinsically valuable in certain contexts, although changes in context may well have a corresponding impact on the value.

Feilden and Jokilehto (1993) offer an assessment of those aspects of value that should influence the choice of treatment. As may be observed from the case studies presented below, very few of the buildings have been significantly altered externally since the original construction, and the condition of the stonework, both sandstone and granite, appears to be in remarkably good condition. The unusual design and even choice of material, within context, has arguably grown in prominence since the mid-eighteenth century, meaning that earlier discussion of the relationship between uniqueness and intrinsic value within context holds.

It is interesting to consider the concept of heritage as being an inheritance from past generations, to be cared for by current generations for the future, is of great importance to society (Fladmark 1994). The built heritage is comprised of buildings constructed over a long period, and that have come to define a setting for society. This is distinct from definitions of heritage where the term becomes synonymous with objects themselves, often defined in the pursuit of economic gain (Grefe 2004). As noted by Carman (2001), though, it has been suggested that the current period will be remembered due to its preservation of ‘old things’, rather than for the production of artefacts likely to be valued by future generations (a positive argument in terms of architectural practice is presented by Fladmark *et al* 1991). Heritage value, rather than being measured on an ordinal scale, must be examined through the consideration of public benefit, understanding, respect and integrity (Feilden and Jokilehto 1993, ICOMOS 1996), with every case by

necessity considered separately. The manner in which a building might contribute heritage worth will vary (for example, age, architecture, design, use, materials, occupants, social history, and so on), but every building potentially offers such value, even if it can be argued that such a holistic, and culturally driven, approach can become lost in the application of heritage management procedures (Carman 2001). Carter and Bramley (2002) argued that an integrated evaluation of heritage should consider physical characteristics, identification of significance, existing or potential uses, resource resilience and management resources. Therefore, the argument follows that constraints on resource must not be allowed to dominate other aspects of evaluation, thus running the risk that *heritage* become defined by usage and by practicalities.

A number of definitions have been proposed in the past to help understand the term *heritage*, at both a national and international level. At the global level, UNESCO Article 1 (1972) defined heritage to include monuments, groups of buildings or sites. The definition can, and has, been used as direction towards a conservation rationale. It is important to recognise that the manner in which such 'global' definitions or statements can be of actual use requires translation at the level of region, nation or district. Teller and Bond (2002) noted that, across Europe, a complex range of charters and conventions had developed, representing real challenges to the practice of conservation. In relation to the current study, reference to documents from Historic Scotland and Canada's Historic Places provides some insight into how a research informed process can be used to better understand heritage and heritage value.

Within Canada, the standards and guidelines for the conservation or historic places recognise that heritage value will be a product of ‘the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations’ (Historic Places Canada 2010). A similar range of attributes are noted by Historic Scotland (2009), included within the overarching criteria of age and rarity; architectural interest; and, close historical association. Within these, mention is made of specific age ranges, the interior, plan form, technical content, setting and regional variations.

A heritage resource, be it a building or site, can be of value through the whole: the quality of materials, artisanship, design, setting or relationship to the setting. Where buildings were to become damaged or altered over time, it is quite possible that what remained could become part of a new whole, of different yet equal value to that of the original. Feilden and Jokilehto (1993) state further that conservation should aim to ‘safeguard the quality and values of the [heritage] resource, protect its material substance and ensure its integrity for future generations’. The manner in which a heritage resource is protected or managed may relate to cultural (e.g. Yuen 2005) and socio-economic (e.g. Bedate *et al* 2004) values, all of which it could be argued may also be influenced by history, whilst also being concerned with the present and the future (Larkham and Jones 1993).

The dangers of regarding the ‘built heritage’ from a solely architectural or historical perspective at the expense of cultural identity have been highlighted in the past (Hubbard 1993, Waterton and Smith 2010). The value of having an

awareness of history and past events is not in doubt. However, a strong rationale for what should be conserved and for whom is required, unless conservation might run the risk of being branded elitist, and for the benefit of only narrow groups, is essential (Ashley 2007). It can be contended that familiarity and stability form important elements in the perception of buildings (Imamoglu 2000, Nasar 1984, Nasar *et al* 2005), and this in turn suggests that conservation of the wider built environment may have positive social implications. Although many buildings would have been preserved in the past due to their social or historical importance, there may come a time where such importance is known only to historians, and the tangible social impact has gone. Over a long period, buildings become part of the urban landscape, and the locus of heritage value may shift (Zancheti and Jokilehto 1997).

The buildings studied in this paper clearly demonstrate the importance of context within both architectural design and heritage studies. Whilst the context within which sandstone case studies sit today is reasonably consistent with that at the time of their original construction, this is due largely to the similarly domestic scale of most new construction within Pictou County. Conversely, the granite example is that of a stately home, which would have once dominated the surrounding environment. That it is now surrounded by far larger and taller buildings arguably alters the extent to which, or the manner in which, local residents and even decision-makers may regard the building in terms of its impact on today's urban environment. Indeed, its uniqueness in the present day might even arguably lead to it taking on greater importance as a city landmark.

## **Method**

The studies reported here include qualitative data from two field studies undertaken in Nova Scotia, Canada. The studies, though, concern quite different examples of Scottish architecture in Nova Scotia. The first case study, which concerns the historic sandstone architecture in Pictou, relates mainly to vernacular examples of domestic scale architecture constructed by Scots settlers in the early nineteenth century. The second case study is a townhouse in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the main interest for which lies on the strong connections between the buildings first owner, who had connections with Aberdeen and Scotland, and the use of granite as a construction material.

The overall aim was to identify selected surviving case studies in Nova Scotia, which represent a tangible record of the Scottish influence on Canadian building. The buildings selected represent a strong connection between Scotland and its diaspora, and the cases selected have been used as representative examples, rather than as an exhaustive catalogue. A field-based photographic research project recorded selected buildings and identified written records of seminal buildings in Nova Scotia (especially Pictou and Halifax) which exhibit an early Scottish architectural influence. The two research objectives were designed to support the collection of available information pertaining to the case studies themselves. These were:

- A field-based photographic research project to record buildings and identify written records of seminal buildings in Nova Scotia (especially Pictou and Halifax) which exhibit a Scottish architectural influence.

- A desk study of historic records, to establish the builders, designers and materials used.

Both objectives were addressed initially through a field study undertaken in Nova Scotia. Details of the buildings and material origins were used to identify buildings in Scotland, for comparative purposes. Initial investigation of buildings in Pictou and Halifax supported the identification of suitable comparative buildings located in Aberdeen (granite), and within various towns in the north east of Scotland. Photography was used primarily to collect visual information, with desk study at local libraries (Pictou, Halifax and Aberdeen) and city archives (Halifax and Aberdeen).

### ***Study: Pictou***

A Scottish influence on the early architecture of Pictou has been recognised and studied previously (Maudlin 2007). That study includes a fascinating and very expansive analysis of a wide range of derelict buildings in Nova Scotia, including a large number of timber agricultural and domestic buildings. What is perhaps of the greatest interest to the current study is recognition of the fact that Scottish settlers moving to the town in the early 1800s came from throughout Scotland itself. Much of the wider information available about the history of the town seems to suggest that the Scottish ancestry of the area came largely from the Western Highlands, as opposed to the north-east of Scotland. However, it is very apparent observing those stone buildings which still exist from the early 1800s, together with an analysis of the buildings first owners and constructors, that a wider Scottish geographical influence can be observed and felt which resonates through both form and the materials used.

As with the Black-Binnie building in Halifax, folklore accounts (as cited, for example, by Hector Exhibit Centre 2010) appear to suggest that the sandstone emanated from Scotland itself, with reports that the stone was utilised primarily as ballast in ships travelling from Scotland to Canada, and then subsequently used as a building material once the ships had arrived. However, it is difficult to identify definitive records which can either prove or disprove this, and the relative lack of sandstone buildings constructed in this area subsequent to the 1800s, and a lack of locally available sandstone, would tend to give some credence to such tales. However, it is arguably more likely that locally sourced material (Northumberland Shore) was utilised for the main building work, drawing on the skills of Scottish stonemasons resident in the town and region (Maudlin 2009, page 138), although ballast could have been usefully employed as infill. In this respect, buildings with particular resonance for the study include the Norway house, the Dawsons stone house, Lorrain's Inn and Tavern and the bank of Nova Scotia building (Pictou Heritage Society 1972).

The first of these, the Norway house (Figure 1), originally incorporated the door fittings imported from Scotland, and was constructed in 1813. This building was constructed by Edward Mortimer, an immigrant who travelled to Canada in 1788 and settled in Pictou, where he became a successful trader, mayor and local philanthropist (Graham 2004). Mortimer himself originally came from Banffshire in Scotland, and it is arguable that the style of building constructed for his own residence in itself represents a strong link between Canada and the North East of Scotland. However, Norway house is in a rather sorry state of repair today, with evidence of vandalism, graffiti and poor maintenance.

The Dawson stone house (Figure 2), constructed in 1815, is interesting for numerous reasons. Local notes on the construction suggest that Scottish granite blocks have been incorporated in the building, and typically Scottish five sided dormer windows have been included into the design (Pictou Heritage Society 1972). One can also observe the use of a gable chimney. Maudlin argues that this is perhaps the main aspect of domestic Scottish architectural detailing which took hold and was applied more widely.

Lorrain's Inn and Tavern (Figure 3), now used for domestic purposes, was constructed in 1820 and is of a style typical throughout Scotland. Again, five sided dormer windows can be observed at roof level and the style of the stonework used in the front façade and the window surrounds is arguably typically Scottish, as are details at the roof, verge and gable chimney. Indeed, the porch on the main elevation, the use of chimney pots and the buildings proximity to the street also carry a resonance with contemporary Scottish domestic buildings.

Figure 1. Norway House (photograph © Richard Laing)

Figure 2. Dawson stone house (photograph © Richard Laing)

Figure 3. Formerly Lorrain's Inn and Tavern (photograph © Richard Laing)

The old American consulate building (Figure 4), still largely intact and standing on Water Street, is one of many examples of Scottish townhouses, again complete with five sided dormer windows at roof level. In the same street, the building known as Kilmarnock house (Figure 5), constructed circa 1825 is a particularly striking example of Scottish vernacular domestic architecture, very similar to that which can still be observed in many towns in Scotland itself.

Figure 4. American consulate building (photograph © Richard Laing)

Figure 5. Kilmarnock House (photograph © Richard Laing)

The most notable and important aspects of architectural design relating to the existing stone buildings in Pictou are those of the use of sandstone, some specific issues of detailing regarding scale, openings and siting.

Figure 6. Comparable example from Elgin, Scotland. Image shows use of repeated dormer windows and gable chimneys. (photograph © Richard Laing)

Figure 7. Comparable example from Elgin, Scotland. Image shows use of (originally) five sided dormer windows and gable chimneys. One should also note the use of chimney pots, similar to those in Lorrain's Tavern, Pictou. (photograph © Richard Laing)

Figure 8. Comparable example from Lossiemouth, Scotland. Image shows use of local sandstone and five sided dormer windows. (photograph © Richard Laing)

There are clear examples within the town of still intact examples of Scottish detailing with regards to the design of windows, dormer detailing, and tooling of the stonework. As noted by Maudin, though, there is in fact little

evidence that such architectural and construction practice continued in such a pure form for any significant period after settlement had taken place. Certainly, it is true that more recent examples of domestic architecture in Pictou itself are built using a form of timber frame construction with timber cladding, common across North America. It is certainly the case that many houses, almost certainly timber frame, have been clad using synthetic cladding forms, resembling timber, rather than from masonry or any variation thereof. Therefore, those buildings, which still exist in what is a reasonably intact form within Pictou, are doubly important, as they reflect the changing history in terms of both the society existing in the local area and the predominant construction methods.

***Study: Black Binney House***

Constructed in 1815-19 by John Black (representing Scottish merchants in Halifax), the 'Black Binney' house reputedly used Aberdeenshire granite for the main façade and local sandstone and ironstone elsewhere (Kalman 1994, p. 130). Black, born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1764, came from a successful family of merchants, and arrived at Saint John in 1786 as an Admiralty agent, prior to moving to Halifax in 1806 (Dictionary of Canadian Biography). It should be stressed that claims of the granite being from Aberdeenshire should be treated with caution, given that at least nine quarries have existed in the locale of Halifax in the past (Dickie 1993), although these have been reported as being in production mainly from the mid-1880s at the earliest, with many operating from the early twentieth century onwards. Indeed, structures including the Citadel and other public buildings in Halifax were constructed using locally quarried grey granite (from Queen Quarry, at Purcell Cove).

Figure 9. Black Binney House, Halifax. (photograph © Richard Laing)

Following Black's death in 1823 (during a trip to visit his family in Scotland), the building was subsequently occupied by his nephew and later by the Right Reverend Hibbert Binney. The building is of interest to this study due to the façade design bearing very prominent similarity to granite buildings constructed in the same time period in Aberdeen, and due to the possible use of Scottish granite blocks. Certainly, exports from the granite industry in Aberdeenshire accounted for approximately 50% of production between 1797 and 1831, at a time when production increased threefold and technology allowed for the extraction of larger building stones (Donnelly 1994). At this time, though, granite extraction was not fully industrialised, with many small quarries, although what were to become larger extraction sites (including Rubislaw were becoming established). Nevertheless, Donnelly also notes that granite taken from Rubislaw and Cairnlaw quarries in Aberdeen was used in the construction of Bell Rock Lighthouse (1807-1810) and Broomielaw Bridge in Glasgow (1830). The building is recognised as a national historic site, and the Nova Scotia Historic Places Initiative notes that its heritage value extends across both its social history, and its architectural design. Indeed, it is noted that the building was regarded at the time of its construction as being of a very high quality, and bears comparison with contemporary architecture in London and Edinburgh. Again, they note the likely use of granite being brought from Scotland (see also Pacey 1987), as well as the building being larger and more refined than most surviving stone buildings of the time.

Figure 10. Image showing the context of Black Binney House in 2010

The building has been the subject of conservation and restoration work for many years during the twentieth century. In 1965, the house was fully restored, the intention being that it became the headquarters for the Canadian Corps of Commissioners (Halifax Mail Star 1965). The building still serves this purpose today, having previously served domestic, YWCA, and apartment housing. As with those buildings studied in Pictou, the reputed source of granite used for the buildings frontage was Scotland itself, with both the stone and the manner in which it has been designed very similar to contemporary buildings in Aberdeen. Indeed, this case study by necessity incorporates information pertaining to the family of the buildings original occupant, and information regarding urban developments constructed in Aberdeen in the 1820s. Specific examples could be drawn from either Bon Accord Square (1823 – Figure 11) or Golden Square (1821), the former emerging from Charles Abercrombie’s ‘further improvements’ of 1803, and the latter designed by eminent local architect Archibald Simpson (Brogdén 1998). Detailed historical and heritage studies have been undertaken in these city centre areas, part of a conservation area of outstanding value, for Aberdeen City Heritage Trust. As an aside, the methodologies used for the study of these areas adopt contemporary, cutting edge heritage surveying techniques which can be used to provide detailed information on granite, its cut, shape and tooling. This detailed information can be used, coupled with scientific information of the grain of these granite buildings, to compare with possible case studies wherever they may be.

Figure 11. Bon Accord Square, Aberdeen, Scotland. (photograph © Richard Laing)

The Black Binney holds significant value, but these reside as much in its importance as a tangible record of connection between Scotland and Canada. Within Aberdeen itself, it is certainly true that similarly designed, scaled and constructed buildings are not unusual. As noted, this is due largely to the manner in which Aberdeen expanded towards the West End of the city centre during the early part of the 1800s. That Black chose to create such a vivid architectural reminder of Aberdeen in Nova Scotia itself is remarkable in itself, and worth celebrating and preserving. Black was clearly making an intentional statement through the process of having local Aberdonian stone cut, transported and built. As with the other examples described and discussed in this paper, the manner in which we as a society collectively value such buildings is inevitably influenced by our knowledge of those buildings. The building in Halifax is certainly of architectural value due to its design and comparatively large scale at the time of its original construction. However, the building holds far greater social and societal resonance due to its social history, and the way in which it represents a tangible link between Nova Scotia, Scotland and the shared history of the Scots, and the generations that followed.

## **Discussion**

The strong cultural and emotional links between Nova Scotia and Scotland are clear, with artistic, musical and cultural exchanges extremely common. How we understand and value the associated historic buildings can be affected by our collective knowledge of those buildings histories, including the physical and

social history (Cundari 2001). The nature of that knowledge of course will often be affected by the reliability of information available to current generations. Whilst, the examples presented with in this paper exhibit tangible physical evidence of links between Scotland and the buildings in Nova Scotia, they are also underpinned by oral history. The authors argue that the study is important, and would benefit from future research to study tangible and systematic evidence to either support or contradict claims of material sourcing, or building design. Indeed, it would be valuable to undertake studies that seek to establish and understand the wider value of these buildings, beyond the materialistic, and embracing social and cultural values. The use of cutting edge surveying technology (for example, Brown *et al* 2009, Smits 2011) will aid the understanding of this issue and consequently could provide the evidence needed to support, or not, this argument (Historic Scotland, 2010).

It is clear that these buildings, even with a significant change of use, have not been physically altered to the extent that we must regard them as being anything other than still intact remnants of the past, and as such are important to society. In much the same way that the buildings hold value and resonance for occupants within Nova Scotia itself, it is also arguable that the buildings mere existence deserves to be recognised and valued within Scotland. Future research should address the question of how, as a society, we come to value and appreciate such buildings, given the deep complexity of the variables involved. They exist today as part of an architectural heritage that extends beyond traditional geographical boundaries. As such, they represent and suggest a route through which future studies of the Scottish diaspora and its architectural legacy can be explored.

The buildings described in this paper are clearly of importance to the local communities and to wider groups, although this is not necessarily due to the architectural detail or their scale. Rather, the buildings are important specifically because of the manner in which, even at a small domestic scale, they serve to provide evidence of the history of the societies and cultures from which they emerged. Whilst it is important to recognise that none of the buildings described are collectively ‘owned’ by the wider community, and that the consideration here of value or worth extends well beyond concepts of financial value (e.g. Shipley 2000) they nevertheless greatly define the public realm which exists today (e.g. Gehl 1987, Gehl and Gemzøe 2006). Historic Scotland (2010a) states that historic buildings ‘are a highly visible and accessible element of Scotland’s rich heritage, spanning a wide range of uses and periods, which together chart a great part of the history of Scotland’. These buildings serve a clear purpose in illustrating specific aspects of that history, and of a shared history with Canada.

## **Conclusions**

This paper argues that tangible links between Scotland and its diaspora can be found in the built heritage itself. The buildings discussed in this paper are powerful symbols of those links, and serve to illustrate how building tradition can be carried by migrant communities, to be further moulded and changed through experience, culture and material. Finally, it is argued that such examples will assume greater meaning and worth to current and future generations only where people are aware of historical importance of the buildings. How that meaning can be communicated and understood presents a challenge worthy of further research.

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## Notes on contributors

Richard Laing holds qualifications in Surveying and History, and completed a PhD in value assessment of the built heritage. Since 1999, he has led and participated in numerous research commissions dealing with urban design, heritage and public engagement.

Jonathan Scott holds a first class Honours a degree in Architectural Technology, and completed an EPSRC-sponsored PhD in 2004. His research is concentrated on environmental design, energy monitoring, life-cycle analysis, social and occupancy evaluation. He has also developed research concerning innovative surveying technologies and historic conservation.

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Figure 1. The Norway House



Figure 2. Dawson stone house



Figure 3. Formerly Lorrain's Inn and Tavern



Figure 4. American consulate building



Figure 5. Kilmarnock House



Figure 6. Comparable example from Elgin, Scotland. Image shows use of repeated dormer windows and gable chimneys.



Figure 7. Comparable example from Elgin, Scotland. Image shows use of (originally) five sided dormer windows and gable chimneys. One should also note the use of chimney pots, similar to those in Lorrain's Tavern, Pictou.



Figure 8. Comparable example from Lossiemouth, Scotland. Image shows use of local sandstone and five sided dormer windows



Figure 9. Black Binney House, Halifax



Figure 10. Image showing the context of Black Binney House in 2010



Figure 11. Bon Accord Square, Aberdeen, Scotland