



# Cracking the earthquake code

## A' fuasgladh còd na crith-thalmhainn

Pronounced: A fooaskla code na cree halaveen

It is thought that the Great Glen fault **Sgàineadh a' Ghlinne Mhòir** has caused around 60 earthquakes over the last 200 years. Most have been too minor to be noticed, but one of the strongest recorded tremors occurred in September 1901 - and it's epicentre was right here in Dochgarroch **Dabhach Gairbheach**.

### The Inverness Courier reported: A rèir Courier Inbhir Nis:

"The earthquake left its mark both on the Schoolhouse and on Dochgarroch Lodge ... In both, some of the (chimney) cans were thrown down and the stonework of the chimneys cracked. In the walls of the schoolhouse there are ... cracks from top to bottom, and nearly every ceiling is cracked...

Most peculiar of all is a crack on the north side of the Canal bank, extending 200 yards to the east of the locks and 400 yards to the west. It is in the middle of the tow-path, in the hard-packed surface, and it is nearly half-an-inch wide."

Map taken from Inverness Field Club 1902 report on the tremor showing estimated area of Scotland affected (around 33,000 square miles, 85,000 square kilometres).

The 1901 Dochgarroch earthquake **crith-thalmhainn** was said to have been felt as far away as Caithness in the north and Fife in the south. A lot of minor damage was caused to buildings, including in Inverness, where a blacksmith's shop collapsed.



Broom *bealaidh*.



Whins *conasg*.

### Did you know ...?

The ancestors of the broom and whin (gorse) shrubs which you can see growing along the canal banks were sown on the orders of Thomas Telford. Their roots help hold together the sand and gravel of the canal's embankments. In Spring these tough shrubs are covered in yellow blossom and give off a strong aroma of coconut.

Photograph illustrating the position of the crack caused by the 1901 earthquake.

