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48

Spring 2020

Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive



Photo of Janet McIlvride Stewart, circa 1915

ACC19/54, Perth & Kinross Remembers First World War Legacy Collection

Image courtesy of Perth & Kinross Archive

CONTENTS	Page
Chairman's Notes and News from the Archive	2
Perth & Kinross Remembers (Fiona Hall)	5
The Incorporated Trades of Perth (Jamie Macpherson)	9
Archery in Perth from the 15 th to early 17 th Centuries (Thomas Brochard)	12
John MacLaughlan Milne (Maurice Millar)	16
Practical Aspects of Reading 300-year-old Documents	
Researching the 1715 Rising (Kathleen Lyle)	18
Keay, McKenzie & Company, Perth Shipowners (Jackie Hay)	20
Membership Numbers/Safeguarding Policy	23
COVID-2019/Friends' Talks 2019-2020 Session	24

Notes from our Chairman

As noted in the last Newsletter, we had been concerned about having a quorum at all Committee meetings. I am happy to report that the co-option of Anne Amos and Pat Kerr has completely solved that problem and the Committee is stable again.

At our Committee meeting on 13th February 2020, we had an initial discussion regarding how to commemorate Rhoda Fothergill. Three guests contributed to the discussion; they were: Mr David Bowler, President of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science; Mr Sandy Bremner, Co-Chairman of Perth Civic Trust; and Mr Steve Connelly, our former Archivist. Many possibilities were discussed, too many to list here, and a second meeting will have to be held to try to focus on the practical options and decide which to progress.

On 12th December 2019, the Scottish Council on Archives and the National Records of Scotland held what they call an “Outreach” day for community archive training in the AK Bell building. The event was very successful with 24 participants attending (including four Archive volunteers) and the Scottish Council on Archives is keen to repeat it.

Also at our last Committee meeting our Assistant Archivist, Sarah Wilcock, told us about the annual return of accessions. Over 90 accessions were received last year including: records relating to Scone Lodge; the Mary Cairncross photograph album containing images of Perth Sailing Club; accruals to the Richardson of Pitfour papers and the Indigent Old Ladies Society papers. Further, the Archive has been contacted by descendants of Pullars of Perth who wish to deposit family papers and diaries. All these are very important historic artefacts which will take some time to process so please wait a while before requesting to see any of them. This is all very encouraging and shows that the Archive is well respected and trusted. Hopefully there will be other equally important local donations in due course.

Much less encouraging is the effect the coronavirus is having on all sorts of activities including our own. By the time you read this you will have learnt that our talk scheduled for 19th March was cancelled as was our Committee meeting scheduled for 26th March. There is no way of knowing what other meetings will be cancelled, possibly including the AGM, but we will do our best to inform all our members as time goes by.

Alan Grant

News from the Archive

Activity in the Archive has been overshadowed by the outbreak of Covid-19 and by the closure of the Archive and other CPK buildings on 24th March 2020. The Archive team is currently working from home, catching up on back-of-house work and preparing material, which will allow us to continue to offer an on-line presence during the lock-down. For those of you who 'do' social media, look out for posts on our Archive Face-book and Twitter accounts, along with some blogs where we'll talk about the work of the Archive and Local & Family History Service. We are also sharing old photos with local newspapers who will be publishing them in their 'down memory lane' sections soon.

We are keen to record people's experiences of the pandemic in Perth & Kinross and will shortly be launching a collecting project with our colleagues in CPK's Museums team. Do look out for more information and consider contributing material to the project.

Since our last News from the Archive, we have been busy delivering Perth & Kinross Remembers, our First World War (WW1) memorial project which Project Officer, Fiona Hall, tells you more about later in this edition. In addition to the project's collecting activities, exhibitions and talks, Sarah also made an important contribution by delivering two WW1 school workshops to pupils in St John's Academy, Perth, and Pitlochry High School.

In the workshops, pupils learnt about the war-time experiences of local soldier, John Alex Veitch, by reading letters which he sent to his family whilst he was training in England and on service in France. The pupils and their teachers enjoyed seeing the original letters, which are preserved in the Archive, and appreciated the opportunity to learn first-hand from them, which brought the history alive in a way they hadn't experienced before.

Those of you who regularly visit AK Bell will have spotted our lovely Explore Your Archive exhibition which ran from November 2019 to January 2020, looking at the work of the Red Cross and Voluntary Aid Detachments in Perthshire during the WW1. This was the first outing for our new display cases, which were delivered just in time for the exhibition launch! Thank you again to everyone who made donations towards them. In February 2020, we installed a new display for Valentine's Day, looking at the experiences of love and marriage though the centuries; star of the show was undoubtedly the delightful board game 'Bowles's Entertaining Game of Courtship and Matrimony' from the Threipland of Fingask Papers (MS 169/8/1/2/2/79).

In January 2020, we prepared our Annual Return of Accessions for 2019 to The National Archives in Kew, which recorded 94 new deposits to the Archive last year. Our Chairman has already mentioned some of the highlights, to which can be added: Invergowrie Census Enumerator's records, 1821-1841 (ACC19/79); two volumes of Cartoons drawn by prisoners-of-war at Cultybraggan Camp, 1944-1945 (ACC19/06); and Sandy Wilson's (2018) Pitlochry History Collection, which includes a wonderful collection of photographs, printed and original material relating to the Pitlochry area 18th–20th century, including records of Pitlochry Highland Games and Pitlochry Curling Club (ACC19/11).

Until the next time, I hope you all stay safe and well and we will look forward to seeing everyone again later in the year.

Ishbel MacKinnon

An Update from Perth & Kinross Remembers

Hello everyone, I'm Fiona Hall, the Project Officer for Perth & Kinross Remembers. Below is a brief overview of what I've been up to since taking up the post. I had been looking forward to seeing you in April as I was to be speaking to you as part of the Friends' talk series.



Perth & Kinross Remembers Project Officer Fiona sorting through a recent deposit

Image courtesy of Perth & Kinross Archive

Introducing Perth & Kinross Remembers

Over the past five years, Culture Perth and Kinross's Archive and Local & Family History team have supported a wide range of First World War projects that took place across Perth and Kinross. During this period, Perth & Kinross Remembers was formed to help community groups and individuals across the region deliver a variety of commemorative projects to mark the First World War centenary.

In September 2019, a twelve-month First World War legacy project under the same title was launched with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Jimmie Cairncross Charitable Trust, the Perth Common Good Fund and of course the Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive. Through the creation of a First World War Legacy Collection, alongside a series of talks and workshops, this project will collect and preserve these remembrance projects in Perth & Kinross Archive, making them accessible for future generations.

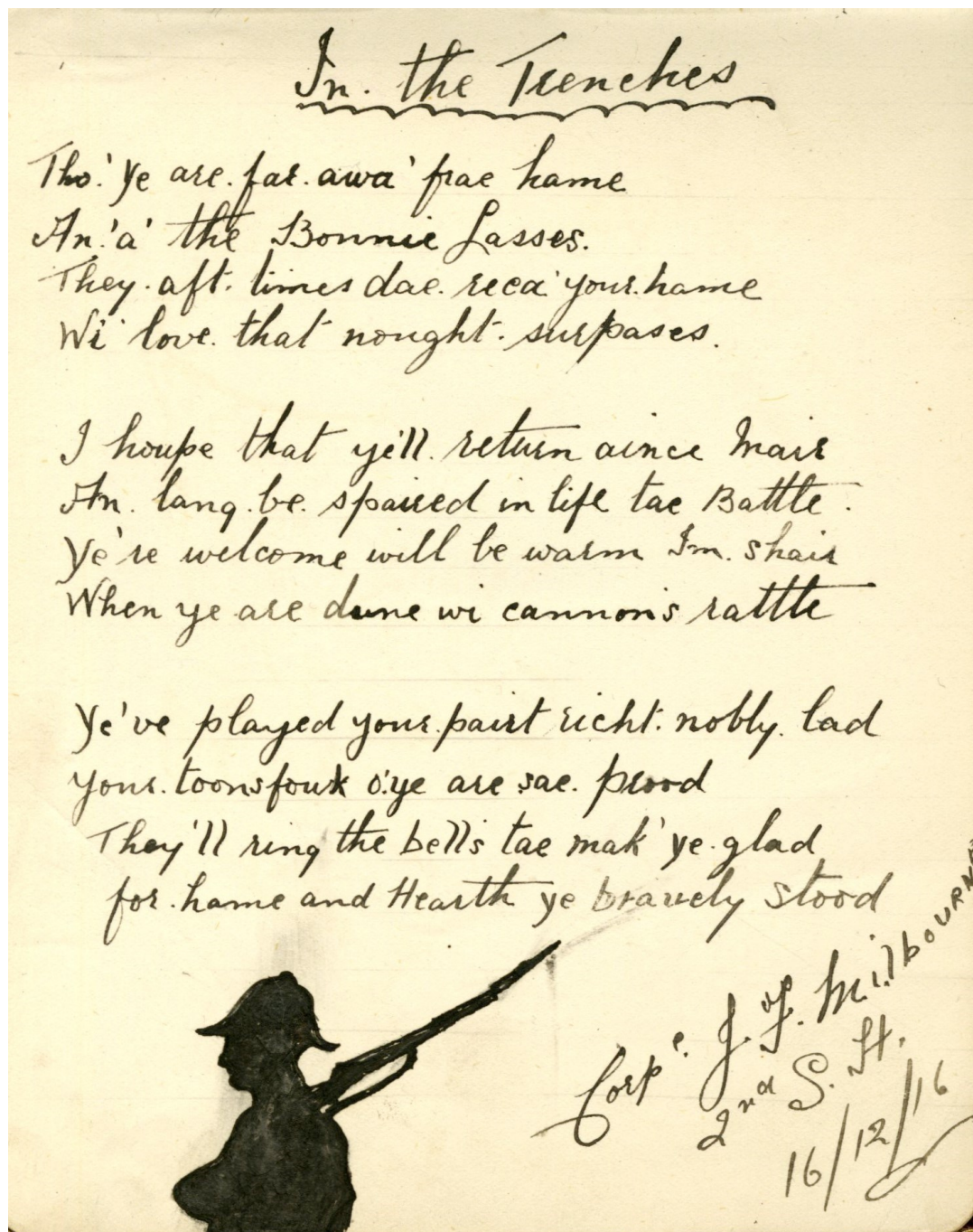
Perth and Kinross Remembers First World War Legacy Collection

To date, the Perth & Kinross Remembers First World War Legacy Collection has received thirty-five deposits, ranging from research on local war memorials to school projects, ephemera from family members and photograph albums.

One of our first deposits was an autograph book that belonged to Janet McIlvride Stewart. Janet worked as a domestic servant in Pitlochry before serving as a Private with the Scottish Territorial Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment No. 32 from 1913-1918. During the First World War she served at Fonab House, Pitlochry, which was used as a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital. Her autograph book contains sketches, poems and notes from the convalescing soldiers that she and her colleagues looked after. It was here that Janet met John Scott Miller, her future husband.

Project Highlights

During October and November 2019, we held two collecting days at Strathearn (Crieff) and Breadalbane (Aberfeldy) community libraries where I met with some of our Ancestry volunteers and those with an interest and connection to the First World War. As part of the Archive and Records Association's annual Explore Your Archive initiative, Assistant Archivist Sarah and I liaised with local groups to create pop-up exhibitions at community libraries throughout Perth & Kinross. Sarah also curated a successful exhibition on the role of the Red Cross and the Voluntary Aid Detachment in Perthshire.



Poem written by Corporal JF Milbourn, taken from Janet McIlvride Stewart's autograph book

ACC19/54, Perth & Kinross Remembers First World War Legacy Collection

Image courtesy of Perth & Kinross Archive

In November 2019, Perth & Kinross Remembers was invited to Scotland's Community Heritage Conference at Birnam Arts and Conference Centre. I was accompanied by representatives from Scone Remembers and Flowers of the Forest, two of the original Perth & Kinross Remembers memorial groups. Peter Olsen from Scone Remembers and David Dykes representing Perth Academy's Flowers of the Forest both gave fantastic talks that embodied the conference theme of *Making places, Connecting People*.

I had also put together an exciting programme of talks covering a variety of subjects including memorial art and architecture, conscientious objectors, Belgian refugees and more! The talks programme launched in January and was scheduled to run through to August 2020, see below.

Unfortunately due to developments with COVID-19, we have put our events programme on hold indefinitely. Instead we will be bringing you a series of blog posts on a variety of topics including all of the above-mentioned talks, and will also be sharing a selection of images from the project collections on Facebook and Twitter. For more information about Perth & Kinross Remembers and to follow our blog series, please visit www.culturepk.org.uk/cpkremembers.

I feel very fortunate to be working on Perth & Kinross Remembers and I am grateful for the support from all our funders and the valuable contributions from memorial projects across the region, as well as from my colleagues in Culture Perth & Kinross. Here's to the next six months!

Fiona Hall

PKR 2020 Scheduled Talks Programme

Patricia Keppie

Our Work Continues: The Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Scotland

Thursday 27th February, Sandeman Meeting Room, AK Bell Library, 6.30pm

Ruth Boreham

Women, Work and the First World War

Friday 6th March, Sandeman Meeting Room, AK Bell Library, 6.30pm

Phyllida Shaw

A Tale of Two Artists and the Memorial Shrine of St John's Kirk Perth

Friday 24th April, St John's Kirk, Perth, 6.30 pm

Dr Billy Kenefick

'Fair hotchin' wi' conchies': The story of war resistance in Dundee

Tuesday 19th May, Sandeman Meeting Room, AK Bell Library, 6.30 pm

Kieran Taylor

Relief of Belgian Refugees in Scotland during the First World War

Thursday 11th June, Sandeman Meeting Room, AK Bell Library 6.30 pm

The Incorporated Trades of Perth: An Under-studied Centre for Scottish History

This is the second of two articles about projects in the Archive that have recently been assisted by the Friends and concerns the Incorporated Trades in Perth. The seven corporations are the hammermen, bakers, glovers, wrights, tailors, fleshers and shoemakers but not the weavers who never had, nor claimed, the right of being represented in the Town Council, nor of exercising exclusive privileges.



Carved and Painted Stone Plaque of the Hammermen's Incorporation of Perth

Image courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery (1994.186)

I was fortunate to receive (April-June 2019) a funded internship sponsored by the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities to research the Incorporated Trades of Perth using sources drawn from the Perth Archive, Perth Guildry and Perth Museum. The project was advertised to PhD candidates in the annual Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities internship opportunities. These offer research students the chance to gain paid work, full-time for three months or six months part-time, on a research project usually unrelated to their field of expertise for the purpose of achieving a contribution to knowledge.

This opportunity rested upon earlier endeavours in 2014 and 2018, notably by staff at Bett Associates, who latterly crafted a research guide on the Perth Museum & Art Gallery's (PMAG) holdings, which listed artefacts related to the Perth Trades. These exhibitions sought to reframe the historical and popular awareness of the Incorporated Trades of Perth which have, hitherto, been largely neglected by both.

The absence of the Perth Trades from popular and, perhaps even scholarly attention, is a matter of perplexity. The historical Trades of other cities, notably Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling, are subject to myriad monographs or analyses in broader historical study; yet the Perth Trades, historically one of the leading and in some cases wealthiest Trades, have been largely forgotten. The internship project aimed to address this lacuna and re-establish the significance of the Perth Trades through two broad methods in assessing the extent of archival holdings, which would be published through a research guide for scholars and the general public.

The Perth Trades present a significant corpus of primary material which encompass four main organisations: Perth & Kinross Archive; PMAG; Perth Guildry; and the National Library of Scotland (NLS). Each of these archives offers a rich resource with dedicated, knowledgeable and patient staff. The primary corpus presents a diverse range including financial accounts (feu duties, account books, box-masters' records), letters, membership records (admission of new members/apprentices) and journals of meetings.

The three months assumed different stages, though not fully-defined when I began. The first month rested with the Archive's holdings, the second took me to PMAG, while the third rested with the NLS and Perth Guildry. The final month was largely one during which I wrote the research guide.

My approach to the internship rested with researching as much as possible, mapping the collections to myriad excel sheets, crafting the research guide and establishing the format/template of the finished product. The Trades were emblematic of an age before capitalist orthodoxy, where the competition of the market decided relative success, but they were pioneering institutions which pivoted upon political, economic and cultural power.

What were the products of my labours? The research guide I have produced draws on all sources and maps the collections to a central document. This includes not only archives but also artefacts which are stored in the museum. This was, first and foremost, an information gathering affair. The research guide features a historical overview, guide to the records and then summarises all holdings for each Trade; it was based upon four excel spreadsheets which mapped the collections in the Archive, Perth Guildry, PMAG and the NLS. The documents, therefore, represent the product of my three-month internship and will be used to guide researchers to the major sources related to the Incorporated Trades. The research guide is not finished but the Archive hopes to complete it later this year.

This internship presented a marvellous opportunity to expand my archival research, broaden my methodological skills and to contribute to a macro-historical analysis. The author's thanks are extended firstly to the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities which provided generous funding for the project, secondly to the staff at PMAG (notably Mark Simmons), thirdly to Carla Murray at the Perth Guildry who provided access and guidance to their prodigious records, fourthly to Dr Lucy Dean who offered historical expertise and finally to those staff at the Perth & Kinross Archive (notably Claire Devine, Lorna Westwater, Sarah Wilcock and, most especially, Ishbel Mackinnon).

Jamie Macpherson

Archery in Perth

from the Fifteenth to the early Seventeenth Centuries

Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive with an interest in the city's early recreations are familiar with the impressive work of Peter Baxter who covered such a vast array of themes from drama to football, golf and horse racing*. This short article is written merely to offer some notes on a sport not covered by Baxter, namely Archery (*this article will be published in two parts; part one on bow-making is below. Please see Newsletter 45 for references to Scots money*).



In the Middle Ages, Archery was a key military skill until the advent of firearms and gunpowder gradually rendered bows obsolete. The activity emerged as a sport and pastime alongside its military use as an obvious benefit to the latter. In Scotland, King James I made this civilian practice compulsory in 1424, with the practice to take place after mass and having the burghs set up butts. Subsequent Scottish rulers repeated the instruction and leisurely competitions were organised from the early years of the seventeenth century.

Stained-Glass Window representing Archery

Image courtesy of Café Royal, Oyster Bar, Edinburgh

*All these books are available in the AK Bell Library, Perth

The practice of bow-making and selling in Perth goes back a long way. In June 1547, the local town court heard the case of Robert Salmon who sued the aptly-named John Bower for 10^s per bow of Salmon's large contract for sixty bows with him. Indeed, Salmon had purchased 120 bows from Bower and had undoubtedly already received half of these by early May 1547. Back then in May, Salmon secured an Act by the burgh court for that payment if Bower would not deliver the remaining sixty bows by next mid-summer.

What is more remarkable is that both that Act and the June legal protest gave an indication as to the make of these bows. These were to be 'maid bowis of ew [yew] of vngry stings [Hungarian staves]'. By late July 1547, there was still no sign of these bows, as far as Salmon was concerned, so he formally requested 10^s each, that is a hefty £30 total.

Yew timber has long been associated with the process of Scottish bow making. But the fact that a Perth bow-maker could produce bows using Hungarian 'stings', that is staves of wood for making into a bow, is fascinating to say the least. In mid-sixteenth century Perth, local merchants thus had access to such an import whichever channels they used*. Bower must be the same individual who two years later in August 1549 confessed himself to be in debt of £8 to a David Hay from whom he sourced 'c[er]tane bowsting[i]s [bowstaves]'.

It transpired that Bower was originally from Dundee but had come to establish himself in Perth. Bower bound himself to repay Hay and, as a gratuitous gesture, he added 'ane sufficie[n]t bow of ew' for Hay's 'awin shuting' and twelve arrows for good measure.

* It could also be that Salmon was lied to in relation to the real origins of the staves but this is unlikely as it did not seem fanciful enough to prevent him from entering into that contract in the first place. The alternative is that by then Hungarian staves had become a generic term for staves made elsewhere comparable to what happened with dornick cloth, the Tournai linen, which was originally manufactured in the Flemish town but was then extended to apply to similar fabrics manufactured elsewhere: <http://dsl.ac.uk/entry/snd/dornick>, accessed 23rd April 2018. Certainly contacts with Hungarians even if loosely defined were not unheard of: Aberdeen City Archives, CA6/1/1/3 fiscal year 1593-4; CA7/2/1 fiscal years 1613-14, 1627-28.

Bower was one of the casualties when foreign vessels came under the Scottish Admiralty's radar. In 1545, Bower along with John and Andrew Billies ('bille') and William Man, citizen of St Andrews, purchased 'c[er]tane bowstings'. Unfortunately for these buyers, the goods were aboard a prized ship seized by David Wedderburn, Alexander Paterson and John Fotheringham, merchants of Dundee who took these bowstaves from the ship. The Billies, Bower and Man then made a contract later that year in December 1545 with these Dundee merchants to buy the same bowstrings again! In April 1551, the buyers then sued their surety John Gray, burgess of Perth, as Gray had been bound to relieve them of £30 which the Billies had paid to a servitor to Patrick Hepburn, third Earl of Bothwell, Admiral General, for the dues payable on these bowstaves. The same burgh court in Perth recorded similar large purchases of bowstaves over time. For instance, prior to June 1551, James Kennedy in Perth bought 200 bowstrings from a James Rolland.

The organisation of the trade and manufacture of these bows was not as straightforward as it might appear. Sourcing the raw material entailed, at least for a number of these professional craftsmen, travel and selection. In early September 1589, merchant Robert Monypenny sold to Perth bow-maker Thomas Galloway 340 bow-strings for £175 and for their delivery on the shore of Perth within a fortnight. Galloway made an initial payment of £20 to Monypenny. In fact, Galloway contracted Monypenny to purchase on his behalf the strings Galloway saw in John Couston's house in Dundee being 'content with the sufficiencie yrof'.

The records in the Perth & Kinross Archive additionally throw some light on the clientele for these urban bows. Suffice to say that a well-crafted piece could fetch a vast sum. However, standard yew bows were less expensive. In a 1626/7 inventory of the deceased Perth merchant James Marshall, 'ane bow of hew' was valued at £10 and 'ane quawer full of arrowis' at 10 marks. In comparison, Marshall's 'rapper suord [rapier sword]' was estimated to 20 marks.

There were purchases of these urban bows by Highland customers. One such buy is the one recorded in March 1590 when John Macdonald of Ardnamurchan stood £20 in debt to Anthony Maxton, a Perth burgess, for ‘c[er]tane sufficient maid bowis’ which Ardnamurchan bought and received from Maxton on that day. Highland clansmen thus sourced part of their hunting/fighting equipment from town merchants as opposed to their own local skilled professionals or even through self-manufacture in some instances.

These customers, whether urban or rural, were nonetheless not the only archers to feature within the aged-yellow pages of these registers. Archery shooting was a key activity of the education of the youth. In April 1624, Perth Council notified their local schoolmaster, Mr John Durward, to have ‘ye bairnis gang about ye toun wt yeir bowis & arrowis’ each week in May and one day in the week ‘according to wse and wount and mak als many as they pleis’.

The town magistrates thus encouraged Archery as a worthy recreation and for the development of skills which would be valuable later on in life, although the weapon had mostly become redundant within the Scottish army by then.

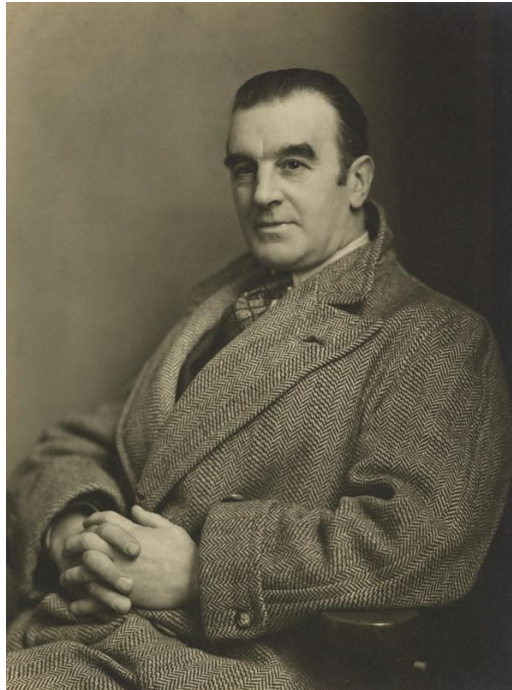
The Perth & Kinross Archive has revealed the close connection between the town and Archery and its heavy involvement in the sport through its manufacture and trade. That trade in toxophilite (archery) equipment brought in foreign contacts from far and wide and closer ones with other Scottish towns and also a clientele from the distant Scottish Highlands beside local urban buyers. From an early age, the Perth youth trained up in shooting the bow.

Thomas Brochard

The second part to be published in the next Newsletter in Autumn 2020 relates to archery targets, the butts.

JOHN MACLAUHLAN MILNE (1885-1957)

The Summer of '32 ?



John MacLaughlan Milne

Photographic Portrait by Edmund Drummond Young, undated

Image courtesy of National Galleries of Scotland

www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/122217/john-maclaughlan-milne

If you were walking on Rosemount Golf Course in the summer of 1932, you might have spotted a middle-aged man carrying a wooden box, maybe a folding seat and various other stuff. He was John MacLaughlan Milne and he was an artist who produced a series of eight or more watercolour paintings of various holes on the golf course.

As he did each autumn, for a couple of weeks, he held an exhibition in his studio at 132a Nethergate in Dundee. His show in October/November 1932 included those watercolours from Rosemount.

Milne was a well-known character in the Dundee Art Society and among the leading local art collectors. Demobbed from the Royal Air Force in early 1919, he returned from France and Belgium to Dundee to resume his career as an artist.

Dundee emerged in the forefront of post-impressionist art in Scotland with the 1922 Art Exhibition including various pictures by significant French artists loaned by local collectors, as well as pictures for sale from local artists. Milne had returned to France, this time to paint, and the 1922 Dundee Exhibition included ten of his paintings from Paris.

In the subsequent years of the 1920s, he would spend time each summer painting in Provence from Cassis to St Tropez and St Paul de Vence. He was supported by collectors in Dundee. He had several one-man exhibitions but his main show was in London at the Independent Gallery in February and March 1931.

The market for his paintings was changing. He went to Tuscany in April/May 1930 but the continental travel was coming to an end. In future, he would focus on painting in the Highlands and, later in the 1930s, he would go to Iona to paint. He moved to Arran to live in 1940 and continued painting local scenes.

But what happened to the watercolours of Rosemount? Milne was part of a three-man exhibition in Dundee in February/March 1933 with fellow local artists, Stewart Carmichael and Alec Grieve. Amongst his watercolours of St Tropez and San Gimignano, the catalogue lists eight of Milne's watercolours of Rosemount Golf Course, priced at £8-8' each (*£8.40 each*). During this exhibition, Milne learnt that on 15th March 1933 he had been elected as an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy.

His paintings often appear in auctions but there seems to be no trace of the Rosemount watercolours. Do you have one of them?

Maurice Millar

(from his article published in "Blairgowrie and Rattray Hub Magazine", Spring 2019)

Practical Aspects of Reading 300-year-old Documents

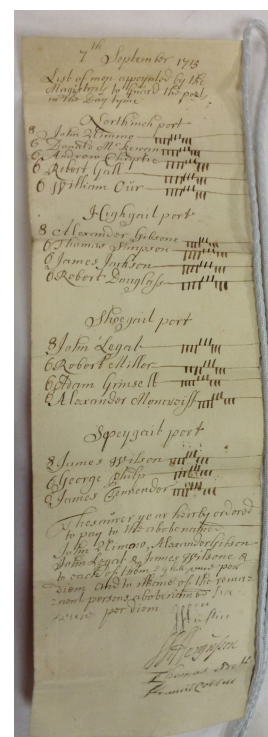
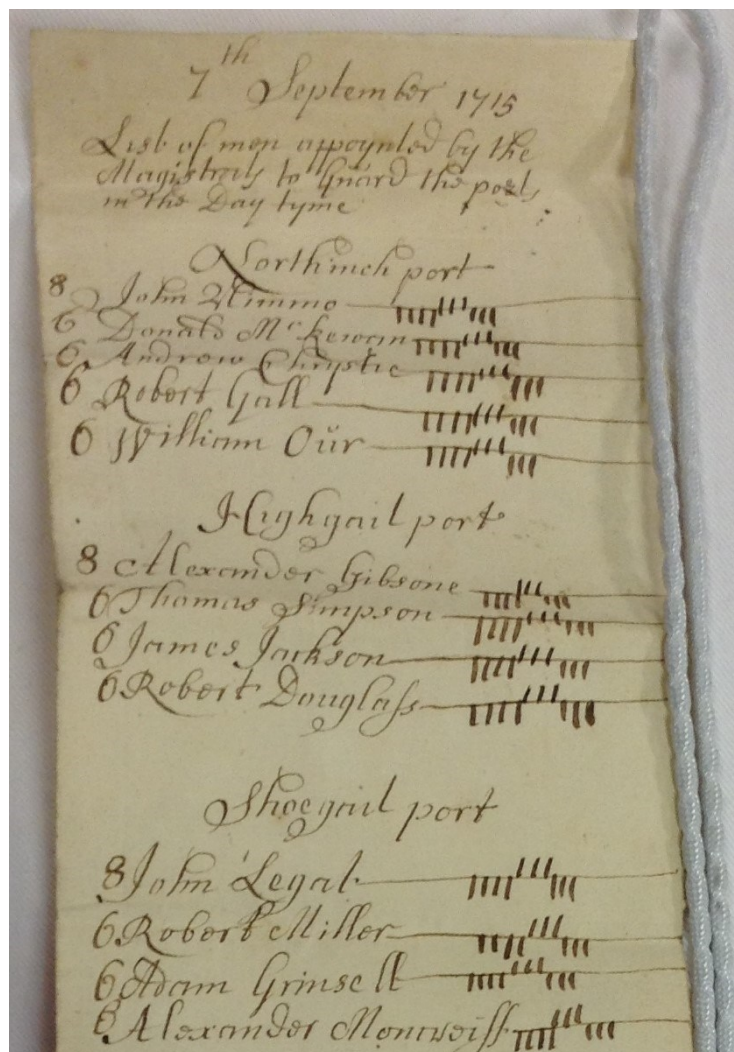
Researching the 1715 Rising

Official and legal documents relating to the Jacobite occupation of Perth in 1715-16 were usually written by clerks who had regular and legible handwriting. By 1715, professional clerks had abandoned the older Secretary Hand and were using a style of writing not very different from what we use today. They also had access to well-sharpened pens, good ink and good paper, all of which greatly aid legibility. Documents such as private letters or tradesmen's bills written by non-professionals are much more difficult to read. The handwriting may be shaky or ill-formed and the ink has often faded.

We now think of reading and writing as skills that children learn in parallel but in earlier centuries this was not so. A few years at Perth's burgh school would enable a child to read but writing with a quill pen was a craft skill to be learned later and it required much practice. Many people who could read were unable to write or could only produce a shaky signature or initials. At the beginning of the eighteenth century perhaps half of the men and a small minority of the women in Perth would have been able to sign their names.

Many of the documents in the Archive that relate to the 1715 rising consist of lists of names: men who guarded the ports (gates) of the town; men who enlisted in the town's militia; householders on whom soldiers were billeted; prisoners in the town's Tolbooth; and Jacobites who were deprived of their burgess status in 1716.

Most of the surnames on these lists are still familiar in the Perth area today but occasionally a name stands out. One example is Adam Grinsell, whose unusual surname is now most commonly found in Staffordshire. Adam was one of the men appointed to guard the town's ports (B59/30/2), then a member of one of the town's Jacobite militia companies (B59/30/17).



List of men appointed by the Magistrates
to guard the ports in the daytime

(B59/30/2)

Image courtesy of the Perth & Kinross
Archive

Adam must have fought at Sheriffmuir, as his name appears in a printed source listing men taken prisoner there. Fortunately he survived this ordeal and his name later appears in Perth's Kirk Session records (held at New Register House in Edinburgh); in April 1717, Adam paid contract money for his marriage to Helen Cuthbert. I hope they lived happily ever after but so far I haven't found any later mentions of anyone called Grinsell (or any likely variant spelling) in Perth.

William Austin, who was Provost at the time of the Jacobite takeover in 1715, is said to have been the son of an English soldier who had come north with Cromwell's army which occupied Perth in 1651. Perhaps Adam Grinsell's grandfather was a Cromwellian soldier too; it is one possible explanation of how this name from the English Midlands found its way to Perth & Kinross Archive.

Kathleen Lyle

Keay, McKenzie & Company, Perth Shipowners

The Robert Keay papers, MS24, include the personal and business papers of Robert Keay (1766-1839), silversmith and his nephew and partner Robert Keay (1800-1856), goldsmith. Robert Keay junior became a Bailie in Perth but this article concerns his investment in maritime transport.

Around 1837, three successful men decided to form a partnership. They were all based in George Street, Perth: Robert Keay, goldsmith and jeweller at No 29; William McKenzie, bootmaker at No 38; John Martin, writer at No 42. Their joint venture was Keay, McKenzie & Company, shipowners.

The company purchased a second-hand, two-masted, 149-ton schooner, the *Rose*, which had been built in Newburgh in 1828. They employed a Master and crew and offered the vessel for chartered voyages transporting various cargoes such as coal, hemp, flax and grain from port to port.

Trade between the east coast of Britain and North Sea and Baltic ports was particularly strong and the company must have been profitable because in 1839 it commissioned the building of a new ship, the brig *Eagle*. The *Rose* and the *Eagle* were kept busy for the next ten years but, as Keay, McKenzie & Co were to discover, the shipping business was anything but plain sailing.

On 9th June 1841, the *Rose* was towed by The Monarch & Perthshire Steam Tug Company from Perth to Dundee at a cost of £5.0.0. Nearly three weeks later, after cleaning, painting and loading she was piloted out of the Tay, heading for Rio de Janeiro with a cargo of, amongst other things, gunpowder and crockery.



From the front cover of the log book of the Rose, 1849-1850

MS24/Vol 1

Image courtesy of Jackie Hay

By the time the ship reached the Deal Roads off Kent she was "very leaky" and the ship's Master, Andrew Ritchie, was obliged to beach the Rose near Exmouth in Devon to check the metal sheathing below the water line as she was taking in four inches of water per hour, keeping the pumps working continuously. It was another week before the repairs were completed, at which point the crew refused to put to sea. The ship's boy had run away, leaving them short-handed and the remaining crew complained of the food and accommodation on board. The men were taken before the Exeter Magistrate and sentenced to 30-days hard labour.

Having already incurred repair bills and legal expenses, Ritchie was now obliged to engage a new mate and crew. By mid-August, the Rose was in Penzance, having been driven back from beyond the Scilly Isles more than once by high winds. It was not until 18th November 1841 that Ritchie reported their arrival in Rio de Janeiro "... after a troublesome passage of 102 days from Exmouth".

The rusty sheathing, heavily fouled with weed and barnacles "... as large as a pigeon's egg ..." had made the vessel unmanageable and she had made little progress even under full sail. Once the gunpowder and other goods had been delivered, the Rose was once again taken out of the water for surveying, antifouling and repair; meanwhile Ritchie was having difficulty finding a return cargo. His 18th November report, received by the company in February, was sent by Robert Keay to his partner, Mr McKenzie, with the note "...please show this to Mr Martin. It should surely sicken him at the shipping trade".

Six weeks after arrival in Rio, Ritchie advised the company that he was returning with a cargo of "rose and Zebra-wood ... Shugar and Coffee ... salted hides ... 20 casks of tapy-ocar [and] 10000 Bullocks horns..." but the voyage home was also marked by adversity.

Ritchie put into Faial, Azores, on 2nd May 1842 in want of provisions and with all the men seriously ill with scurvy. Ritchie himself had been suffering the bloody flux [dysentery] and once the schooner's hull was scraped clear of weed yet again (at an estimated cost of £500 on this occasion), they set sail, leaving two seamen behind in hospital. On 9th June 1842, exactly a year after leaving Perth, the Rose arrived safe at Leith.

The company seriously considered selling the two vessels (expecting to realise £1200-£1300 for the Eagle and £800-£900 for the Rose) but decided to hold on and try to recoup their losses; the records show brisk business in the following years. In December 1849, however, the Rose left Hull for Norstrand, Germany, encountering heavy seas and storm-force winds in the North Sea. She ran aground on sandbanks off the North West coast of Jutland, with such force that her hull sat in just a few inches of water. Thick snow, surf and gales over the next few days hampered efforts to heave her off the sandbank but she was stranded four feet into the sand and was listing badly.

Following a survey by the British Consul agent, local police and "several seafaring captains", the Rose was condemned as no longer seaworthy and, on 3rd March 1850, the hull and materials were sold for a mere £392. At the same time, her sister ship, the Eagle, was trapped in ice off Nyborg, Denmark, the ship's Master writing "I am sorrow [sic] at making so long and unprofitable a voyage".

Further research is needed into what became of Keay, McKenzie & Co but the Eagle was sold in 1851 and they were no longer listed as shipowners in the Perth postal directories after that time. It seems likely the venture proved too much for the partners.

The collection, MS24, is an excellent resource for anyone interested in 19th century shipping, detailing cargoes, destinations, financial records and information about individual seamen, at least one of whom left his ship because "... the sea does not agree with him".

Jackie Hay

FPKA Membership Numbers

110 members, mix of ordinary and life

Thank you for your support

In line with OSCR guidelines, we have produced a Safeguarding Policy

that can be seen in the Archive Search Room and on the website

(www.culturepk.org.uk) or made available on request.

Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive

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Honorary Presidents: The Provost Sir William Macpherson Mr Donald Abbott

Scottish Registered Charity Number: SC 031537

COVID-19

In line with advice from the UK and Scottish Governments
and to delay the spread of COVID-19 all CPK venues were closed to the public
from 18th March 2020 until further notice
The Archive Service was also suspended

The scheduled programmes of talks remain however listed in this publication
in the hope that suspended events can be re-arranged at some later date

Friends' Talks 2019-2020 session

Date	Time	Talks
2019		
Thursday 19 th September	6.30 pm	Dr David Robertson More Lost Country Houses of Perthshire
Thursday 24 th October	6.30 pm	Syd House Aye Stickin' in the Trees: 100 years of the Forestry Commission
Thursday 21 st November	2 pm	Peter Drummond-Hay A Perthshire Lady's Journey to War: the story of V.A.D. nurse Edith Drummond-Hay
2020		
Thursday 20 th February	2 pm	Ian Ferguson Getting the Most Out of Scotland's People
Thursday 20 th March	6.30 pm	Hazel de Vere Archive Conservation at the National Records of Scotland
Thursday 23 rd April	6.30 pm	Fiona Hall Perth & Kinross Remembers : The Story so Far
Thursday 21 st May	6 pm 6.30 pm	AGM Dr Michael Penman The Declaration of Arbroath