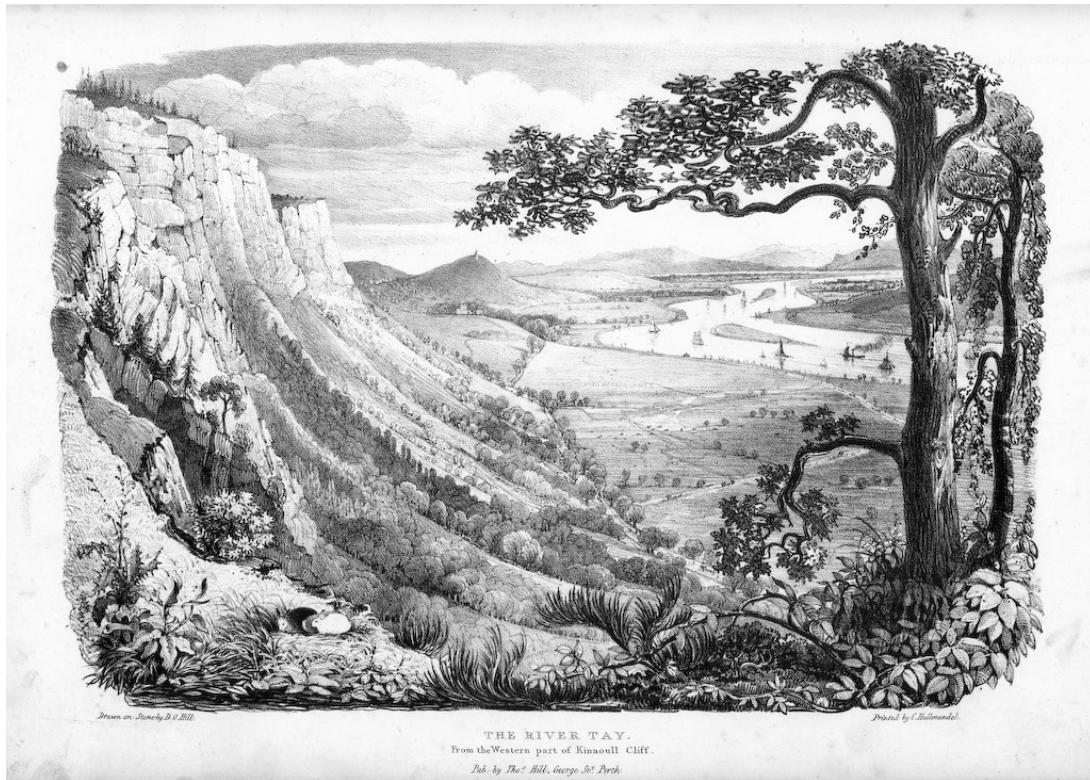


Issue Number

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Autumn 2021

Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive



The River Tay

From the Western part of Kinnoull Cliff

David Octavius Hill, print, 1832

Image courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery

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Notes from our Chairman

The exciting news is the reinstatement of the Talks Programme, that the 2021-2022 session can be viewed once again in its usual place at the end of the Newsletter. So far, 2021 has been a very quiet year for the Friends, with no talks, no summer outing, no conferences nor any other event.

As the Archive gradually and tentatively opens its doors after COVID-19, the restoration of the Friends' Talks session is a welcome extension to our affairs. Once more we may meet at the AK Bell Library and listen to the lecturer in person. However as not all members may be ready to take this step, it is a mixture of zoom and zoom with in-person talks as certain talks will be delivered in a hybrid fashion (both in-person and by zoom); please check the programme on page 24. The in-person events will be held, socially distanced, in the Soutar Theatre and the library has requested that we wear face-masks within the building. **Booking is essential** and this year will be processed through Eventbrite. Please visit [www.culturepk.org.uk/what's on](http://www.culturepk.org.uk/what's_on) (or tel: 01738 477060 on Tuesdays/Wednesdays if having difficulty booking).

Your committee has continued to hold meetings but we now have the option of holding these either by zoom or in-person. The 2021 AGM was conducted by zoom in May; this required a change to the governing document as agreed at the AGM. Also during the summer, a letter was sent on your behalf to PKHT (Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust) to support their City Mills funding application and the committee agreed to part fund (50%) the Archive's purchase of a Tay Salmon Fisheries volume. Just recently, the committee has approved £2,000 to support and provide match funding to the Archive's project "In your Own Words".

Although FPKA activities still have to be regulated, the restoration of the Friends' Talks Session and greater access to the Archive are a long-awaited respite. The outlook remains uncertain and we thank you, our members, for your continued support.

Prue Dowie

News from the Archive

When I wrote our last *News from the Archive* we were preparing to re-open the Archive after almost five months of closure due to a second Covid-19 lockdown and a related period of furloughing of CPK staff. I am pleased to report that the service re-opened on 12th May in our new larger search-room on the first floor of the library (Wednesday to Friday, 10am-4pm and Saturday, 9.30am-12.30pm).

To ensure everyone's health and safety, we ask researchers to book an appointment in advance but the Archive can accommodate a limited number of 'on-the-day' researchers for those who are unaware of the new procedures. For further details, see our website www.culturepk.org.uk/archive-local-family-history/archive-and-local-family-history-service-reopening/ or contact the Archive by e-mail archives@culturepk.org.uk or telephone 01738 477022.

Since re-opening we have accessioned around 25 new deposits, including additional deposits for Perth Methodist Church, Luncarty Bleachfields, Perth Harbour, Perth Chamber Music Society, Errol Women's Institute, the Munro Society, Perth Mountain Bothies' Association, the John McEwen Archive on Landownership and some interesting small family collections. The Friends kindly contributed £117 towards the purchase of an eighteenth-century volume relating to Tay Salmon fishing disputes, which contains information about the historic rights and privileges of Perth Burgh and landowners along the lower reaches of the Tay. Another deposit, Lord Provost John Ure Primrose's visitors' book for the City and Royal Burgh of Perth, 1945-51, reached us by an unusually circuitous route and I have written more about it later (see page 23).

Our hard work on funding applications earlier in the year has paid off with a successful application to The National Archives' "Archives Revealed" programme to catalogue our Sound Collection, which includes a variety of recordings relating to Perth & Kinross' rural and cultural heritage.

The funding will allow us to employ a Project Archivist for twelve months and to create learning and reminiscence resources and an on-line portal so that people can listen to the recordings remotely. There will also be new volunteering opportunities to help transcribe the recordings; further information about this will be distributed once our Project Archivist is in post later this year or early in 2022. The Friends have also kindly committed funding to this project for which we are very grateful.

In October we will also be joined for six months by a Kickstart Archive Collections Assistant. This post is funded by the Government's Kickstart Scheme, which provides dedicated training and employment opportunities for young people aged 16-24 years who have faced some of the greatest employment challenges due to Covid-19. Our Collections Assistant will learn about all aspects of the Archive service and will provide valuable extra support with the public service and delivering some cataloguing and collections care projects.

In the next Newsletter, our new members of staff will share with you some of the work that they have been doing. Until then, on behalf of the Archive team, thank you for your continued support and we wish you a peaceful autumn and winter season and a wonderful Christmas when it comes.

Ishbel MacKinnon

FPKA COMMITTEE MEMBERS SOUGHT

Are you looking for
a new challenge?

If YES, please contact
the Committee on

friendspkc@culturepk.org.uk



Archibald Macbreck and his Small Place in History: a Victim of Political or Religious Persecution?

One of the joys of involvement with the Archive is the steady stream of curious stories which emerge. Dr Thomas Brochard, to whom I am indebted for most of the research quoted below, drew the case of Archibald Macbreck, a Perth burgess and grandson of Provost Alexander Macbreck, to our attention:

An entry of 30th April 1604 in the Register of Acts of Perth Town Council (B59/16/1 p. 154) records a letter dated 28th April 1604 from the Privy Council of Scotland requesting that Macbreck together with a certain Williame Hay should be delivered to the bearer of the letter so that Macbreck, a hearer of Mass and “resetter”¹ of Jesuits, and Hay might be taken to Edinburgh for trial. The Privy Council letter mentions the incarceration and “lait” arrest of Macbreck “*for his being at ye mess and for resetting of mrs² robert abircrambie and johne hamiltoun Jesuittis, wtin his hous*” (please see Newsletter 43, page 23).

On 30th April, Macbreck and Hay were duly handed over to the bearer of the said letter. This was Robert Hepburn, the officer commanding the militia of an arrest party unit sent from Edinburgh. The soldiers duly took the prisoners away, not however before eating “*ane disioyne*”³. A few weeks earlier, Macbreck had appeared before the Session of St John’s Kirk and been referred for trial by the Synod the following week. Records state:

“2nd April 1604 – Compeirid Archibald Macbreck warnit to this day, quha being inquyrit quhat wes his behawiour at lst tyme of his being owt of the cuntire and specially being inquyrit if he had bene in Rom, or reciwed ony benefit of the Pope⁴, confessit that in his last being out of the cuntrie he resortit to idolatrous placis and kirkis, and went thair to pray to his God; confessit he was in Rome, saw the Pope , but reciwit no benefit from him. The Sessione remittit him to be tryit be the Sinodall Assembly to be haldin this nixt week in Perth.”

¹ harbourer

² “And for harbouring Masters Robert Abercrombie and John Hamilton. The title Master or Mr indicates that the holder had obtained a Master of Arts degree.

³ breakfast

⁴ Clement VIII

The story resumes in Edinburgh on the 9th of May 1604, with Macbreck's trial before the Privy Council.

“9th May— Archibald Macbrek, burges of Perth: Dilatit⁵, accuset and persewit, be Mr Robert Lyntoun, Aduocat substitute to Sir Thomas Hammiltoun, &c. for the crymes contenit in the DITTAY⁶.”

Macbreck was charged under the terms of an Act of Parliament of 8th June 1594 *“that in all tymes cuming, all wilfull heiraris of Mess and conceillaris of the same sall be execute to the death, and their haill guidis and geir escheitit to his hienes use [goods and chattels confiscated for the use of His Highness], as thay sall be fund gilty and convict thair of, or declairit fugitive for the same, befor the Justice or his deputtis, or the lordis of his Maiesties Previe Counsell, as the said Act at lenth heris.”*

The verdict was as follows: *“The Assyse, be the mouth of James Nicolsoune, tailzeour in Edinburghe, chancellor, ffand, pronuncet and declairit the said Archibald to be ffylet, culpabell and convict of the Wilfull heiring of Mess, wittingly and willinglie, but [without] compulsion: and conceilling of the same, quhill he was challanget; according to the said Dittay, and according to his confessioun maid thair of in judgement, and Depositiones producet, subscriuit with his hand.”*

There is no record of the sentence. On that we have to speculate.

At face value, we have uncovered a nasty incident of fierce religious persecution. The Perth burgess had discreetly heard Mass and, according to the account of his trial, had given the celebrant overnight accommodation. Although the law did provide for those who heard Mass to suffer the death penalty, other contemporaneous records⁷ show that even serial offenders were punished by fines or confiscation of property.

⁵ Accused, delated

⁶ Indictment

⁷ Pitcairn, Criminal Trials of Scotland

After looking at the facts, however, I believe that there is much more to this story than meets the eye. The most obvious curious points are:

- I. the arrest warrant accuses Macbreck of harbouring both Robert Abercrombie and John Hamilton. Yet there is no mention at all in the record of Macbreck's trial before the Privy Council of "resetting" nor of John Hamilton, who was the uncle of the King's Advocate, Sir Thomas Hamilton. Hamilton left it to a deputy, Robert Linton, to conduct the case against Macbreck;
- II. there is no record of any trial of Macbreck's brother-in-law, Burgess William Hay, described in Guildry records⁸ as a dyer; and
- III. as already noted, the account of Macbreck's trial does not record the sentence handed down to him.

Jumping back over three decades from the trial, we see that the treaty known as the Pacification of Perth, signed on 23rd February 1573, was devised to bring to an end the war between Roman Catholic supporters of Mary Queen of Scots and the Protestant faction which supported her son, King James VI. The Queen's men undertook to end the war and recognize James Douglas, 4th Earl of Morton as Regent in return for a full pardon and the restoration of their lands. But the struggle had continued with various plots on the part of the Roman Catholics, including one known as the Spanish Blanks Plot in 1592/93.

In response, the Privy Council had passed a series of measures against the Jesuit priests and members of the Roman Catholic nobility. Those most frequently named as enemies of the King included the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Errol and the Jesuit priests George Ker, John Hamiltoun and Robert Abercrombie. Draconian measures, including the Act of Parliament of June 1594 referred to above, prescribed the severest punishments for hearing Mass and concealing the fact. It also provided that anyone assisting the King's enemies would himself be considered to be an enemy of the King and would be subject to the same punishment as the named rebels.

The Spanish Blanks plot was allegedly a plot between the Scottish rebels and the Spanish for Spain to invade Scotland and impose Roman Catholicism. At the time, the King's obvious unwillingness to punish Huntly and the others led to much criticism of him within Scotland and even to accusations that he himself had been complicit in the plot. Although Privy Council pronouncements indicate that James deemed John Hamilton a traitor, James remained on very friendly terms with Father Hamilton's nephew, Thomas Earl of Haddington, one of James' principal ministers, who continued under Charles I lasting until 1637, and suspected of being a Roman Catholic (Tam of the Cowgate as James called him).

The Gowrie Conspiracy of 1600, allegedly an assassination plot by the King's enemies in Scotland against him, still invites strongly-held views amongst scholars. Supposedly, the Gowrie Conspiracy was the King's revenge on the third Earl of Gowrie for what he saw as mistreatment when a child and that Gowrie had no murderous intentions towards James. The historian, Andrew Lang, discounts this, arguing that there is sufficient evidence to support James's story. If Lang's account of a minor role played in the event by an Archibald Macbreck is accurate, the Perth Burgess might have been deemed to be giving evidence supporting the Earl of Gowrie.

The King claimed that he had been lured to Gowrie House to be slaughtered, but, with the assistance of men loyal to him, had escaped death. According to the Earl of Gowrie's equerry and stabler, Master Robert Cranstoun, the two of them had gone outside Gowrie House looking for the King, who they believed had ridden away. Supporters of the King had then forced them to take shelter in the house of Archibald Macbreck⁹. Both Cranstoun¹⁰ and the said Macbreck declared this to be true. The Earl had then returned home, where he was stabbed to death. Cranstoun was put on trial and later executed.

⁹ Pitcairn, *Criminals Trials of Scotland*, page 157. This is almost certainly the same Archibald Macbreck, as Gowrie who was Provost of Perth and Macbreck must have known each other

¹⁰ Andrew Lang, *The Gowrie Mystery*, page 28, citing Cranstoun's deposition in Pitcairn, 11, pages 156—157. The text I have merely refers to them being near the house of Archibald Macbreck and I have seen no documentation about any evidence given by Macbreck



Old Gowrie House

Photograph of an Engraving, Magnus Jackson MJ 1285, circa 1800

Image courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery

After the Gowrie Conspiracy, doubts were expressed about the reliability of the King's account. In response James arrested the doubters, Church of Scotland clergymen, and a later decree threatened with death any minister who prayed for his colleagues in public.

Based on the tentative assumption that the King was probably innocent in the Spanish Blanks affair but guilty of fabrication of the Gowrie Conspiracy, my conclusion is that Archibald Macbreck, whose fate I am still researching, was indeed a victim of cruel religious persecution, but that the motive of the King and his authorities (as with clergy and others who dared challenge the King's word) was basically political.

Margaret Borland-Stroyan

Editor's Note: Gowrie House (South Street, east end blocking off access to the River Tay)

The house was built by the Countess of Huntly in 1520. It was at Gowrie House that in 1600 the Gowrie Conspiracy took place. This may have been a plot to kidnap or murder James VI but the result was the death of John, 3rd Earl of Gowrie, and his brother Alexander, Master of Ruthven. The property was held by the Hay Earl of Kinnoull, who entertained Charles II in 1633. It was acquired by the city of Perth, who gave it to the Duke of Cumberland, butcher of Culloden, in 1746, who in turn sold it to the government. It was used as a cavalry barracks until demolished in 1805 www.thecastlesofscotland.co.uk

The Tyranny of the Comrie Kirk Session



The Old Kirk at Comrie, built 1805

Image courtesy of Bernard Byrom

Back in the 1780s the everyday life of Comrie's villagers, like most villagers in Scotland, had been under the heavy and usually censorious scrutiny of the Kirk. The earliest preserved records of the Comrie Kirk Session in the Scottish National Archives date from 1790 and the very first entry concerns one Isabella Miller being summoned to appear before the congregation nine times to be publicly rebuked from the pulpit, whilst sitting on the penitents' stool beneath the pulpit before she was absolved from her scandal of fornication with Duncan McIntyre.

Isabella was unfortunate in that, three years previously, she had been in a similar situation with a John Stewart in Comrie, when she had been summoned to appear twice before the congregation to be sharply rebuked. John Stewart had also been summoned to appear and be sharply rebuked from the pulpit; he was fined 1 guinea (£1.05p) and exhorted to mend his ways.

The good health of the villagers seems to be borne out in the Kirk Session minutes of 9th April 1797 when Peter McInnes, aged 80, admitted to being the father of a child born to Elizabeth Robertson. They were summoned to appear before the congregation on two consecutive Sundays, when they were rebuked for fornication and exhorted to repentance. Occasionally even the Kirk Session gave up hope! In 1829 Elizabeth Cameron of Cultybraggan became pregnant out of wedlock for the fourth time and the Kirk Session resolved that *"this aggravated case of scandal be reported to the Presbytery at Auchterarder"*.

Until 1829 the minutes of the Kirk Session, which dealt with matters of Kirk discipline, record almost nothing except details of punishments meted out for adultery, fornication and, when a bride was obviously pregnant on her wedding day, what was described as 'ante-nuptial fornication'. The usual punishment was for the individuals concerned to be compelled to attend a specified number of church services and listen to the Minister publicly rebuking them before the congregation. In addition to this, the man would usually be fined; the going rate for fornication was 2/6d (12.5p) and 1 guinea (£1.05p) for adultery. Having attended church for the required number of occasions and paid the fine, the couple would be formally 'absolved from their scandal'.

The Kirk Session also had the authority to proclaim local fast days and feast days. For instance:

11/11/1829 (Martinmas) - Day of Thanksgiving to God for the abundant harvest (public collection to be made at church doors to help defray the cost of the scriptures recently purchased);

22/3/1832 - Day appointed by the Kirk Session as a day of National Fast on account of the prevalence of cholera;

19/12/1832 - Day of Thanksgiving for the abundant harvest and for our merciful exemption from the cholera.

The Kirk Session also kept their eyes open for other transgressions. In 1831 the Elders had declared that there had been much Sabbath-breaking by walking in the fields on the evening of the Lord's Day. In 1833 they agreed to send a petition to the House of Commons on the subject of Sabbath Sanctification. Their petition was: *"That the Profanation of the Christian Sabbath prevails to an extent which is truly lamentable and alarming to contemplate, being not only sinful in itself but leading to the violation of all laws human and divine, tending to bring down on this country the righteous wrath of the Most High".....*

and on 2nd February 1834: *"The Minister stated that on Sabbath the 17th November last he had warned the congregation and testified against midnight promiscuous dances - that on Monday 13th January last there had been midnight promiscuous dancing, revelling and drinking in the house of Peter Comrie, Publican, from between 8 and 9 pm to between 2 and 3 am or later - that he had spoken privately to said Peter Comrie before said meeting but that he had refused to cease keeping such meetings - that since then Peter Comrie had let the use of his house to a Dancing Master who in drunkenness and disturbances in the streets had been put into the Prison - that he is to have another meeting for promiscuous dancing and drinking on Tuesday first - that in company with John Kennedy (Elder of the Kirk) the Minister had gone to Peter Comrie's house on Friday last to ask him to cease giving his house for such meetings but had got no satisfaction".* Good for Peter!

In 1838 the Kirk Session tried to reduce the number of public houses in the village. The Minister wrote despairingly: *"There are thirteen inns, far too many. In opposition to the strong remonstrances from the Kirk Session the Justices have lately seen fit to add to the number of these moral pest-houses!"*.

Today there are only two hotels and only one public house in Comrie!

Bernard Byrom

The Towers and Table of Kinnoull Hill



The Binn Tower and Valley of the Tay, Perth

Postcard posted circa 1920-1930, J R White Ltd. Publishers, Dundee

Image courtesy of Kate Drummond Hay

Amongst the papers of the late Rhoda Fothergill is correspondence relating to the origin and then ownership of the towers and the stone table on Kinnoull Hill. The Fothergill Collection (MS347) was gifted to the Archive in 2019 (please see Newsletter 47).

A letter from Lord (the Earl of) Moray to Mr Baxter, dated 9th November 1927, is a response to “an antiquarian question, viz. Did the Lord Gray of the period build the semi-ruined towers on the shoulder of Kinnoull Hill, Kinfauns Hill and also of Binn Hill; and the Earl of Kinnoull of the day, 1796-1804, only build the Stone Table: or did Kinnoull build one of the towers, which are such a picturesque and much appreciated feature facing the Tay?”

This vexing question relates to a declaration, upheld by Lawrence Melville, that the Earl of Kinnoull had built a tower as well as a stone table on Kinnoull Hill and that the Lord Gray had built a tower on his own Gray Hill, a mile to the east. Lawrence Melville’s book entitled “The Fair Land of Gowrie”, published in 1939, has long been held as a source (page 7). The Earl of Moray believes he has the answer.

COPY.

Darnaway Castle,

FORRES. Nov. 9, 1927.

Dear Mr. Baxter,

I deeply regret to find and think that a letter of yours dated Aug. 30, has never been answered, though it has lain in my letter file all the time - I am really very sorry and ask you to overlook what has been an error on my part. You inquire for my health, and remark you have not seen me at many Cricket Matches on the North Inch this season. I am thankful to say I have been very well all this unsummerlike summer, but am very lame. But the reason you did not see me at the Cricket Matches was partly the weather which was too inclement to make sitting and watching a Cricket Match enjoyable, and partly that I went to the South of England on June 16, and have not been in the neighbourhood of Perth much since. You refer to the meetings of the Gaelic Society being in the winter and in the evenings and ask an antiquarian question, viz. "Did the Lord Gray of the period build the semi-ruined towers on the shoulder of Kinnoull Hill, Kinfauns Hill and also of the Binn Hill; and the Earl of Kinnoull of the day, 1796-1804 only build the Stone Table: or did Kinnoull build one of the towers, which are such a picturesque and much appreciated feature facing the Tay?"

The answer is, I believe, as follows:-

There are only two Towers, that on the Binn Hill and that on Kinnoull Hill. On Kinfauns Hill lying between the above two there is no tower except that of the existing residential house of Kinfauns. The family tradition was that Francis, Lord Gray, who built in 1825 the House of Kinfauns and was a man of varied and cultivated taste, and withal a great traveller, often making the voyage from Dundee to Perth by steamboat, and which was much more made use of then than now, since there was no railway and no trains, was struck with the similarity between the River Tay as it approaches Perth, and the Rhine in the vicinity of Cologne near the Drachenfels and the Seven Mountains. He, Lord Gray, however, admitted the additional interest the scene possessed in the case of the Rhine from the remains of Castles either genuine or built for scenic purposes which crowned each commanding hill along the river bank and to obviate this he built the two towers, the one on the Binn the other on Kinnoull, - whilst Lord Kinnoull about the same time I think placed the flat Stone Table close alongside of the eastern dyke which was through the wood in a line directly north about 4 ft. in height which marks the march between the Estates of Kinnoull and Kinfauns.

It may interest you to know that Lord Gray went a step further and constructed a Battery around the base of the Tower on/

Letter from Lord Moray
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on Kinnoull Hill in which he mounted some ten small cannon which could be fired as a salute on occasions of rejoicing. This has all long been done away with, but the cannon themselves may be found lying about in one of the stable buildings. One of these occasions one of these cannon was brought out to the front door and fired with no untoward effects. The occasion was I believe on the evening of the day on which the poll was announced (in the year 1885, I think, when Sir Donald Currie as a Gladstonian Liberal defeated Colonel Home-Drummond as a Conservative and was returned as one of the Members for Perthshire.

I think I have now answered your question and told you as much as I know myself. I trust you will forgive me for this long delay in not answering you before.

Believe me,

I remain, with kind regards,

Sincerely yours

MORAY.

Letter from Lord (the Earl of) Moray to Mr Baxter, dated 9th November 1927

The Fothergill Collection, MS 347/4/12/4

Image courtesy of Perth & Kinross Archive



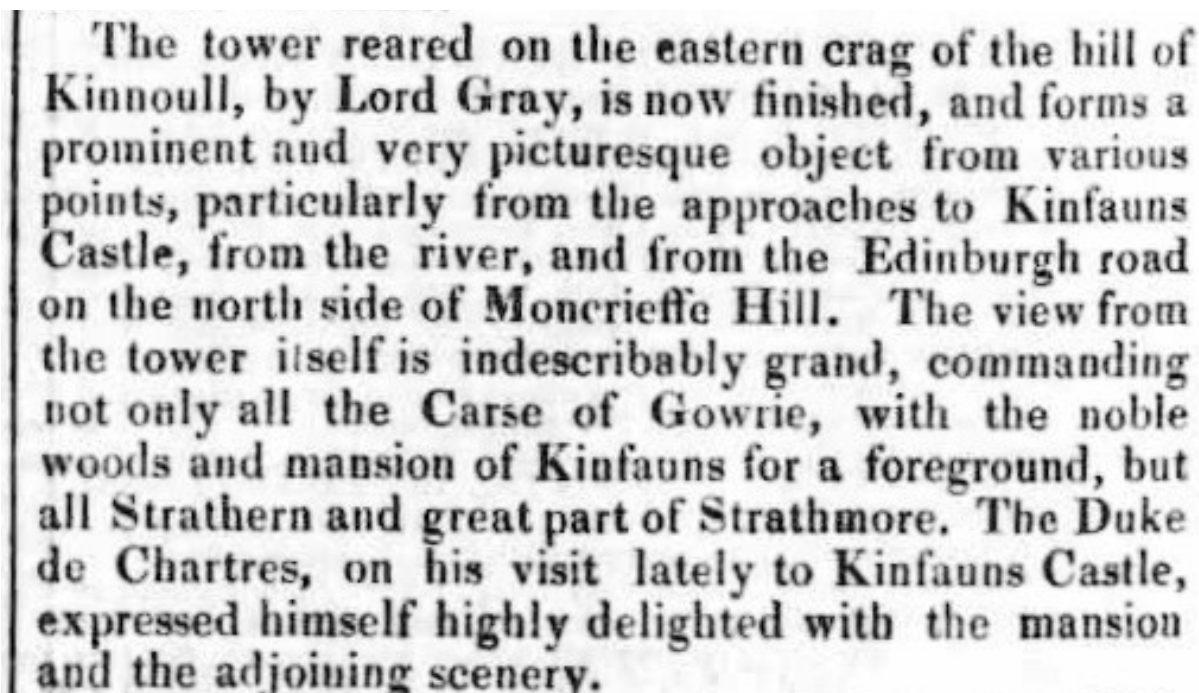
Folly on Kinnoull Hill
overlooking the River Tay 1903
Wood (Perth) W22

©Image courtesy of
Perth Museum & Art Gallery

Lawrence Melville confirms that there are two summits to the hill. "On the east top, which lies in Kinfauns parish, there is a tower standing out very prominently for miles to the south. Espying the structure from below, the traveller gets the impression of a watch tower, perched on top of the hill on the brink on an apparently unscalable precipice to secure against some surprise attack some castle as yet hidden among the hills" and then goes on to state that: "The real story, if not so romantic, is none the less curious.

The erection puzzled Mr J J Bell but at last he discovered its history and we quote his words: - “Concerning the tower on the edge of the precipice, I had to ask many people before I discovered its story. In the eighteenth century the ninth Earl of Kinnoull, with his friend and neighbouring landowner, Lord Gray, was sailing up the Rhine. They did not think the Rhine a finer river than the Tay, but they did greatly admire the baronial castles on the heights. So when they came home the Earl built a tower on Kinnoull Hill and his Lordship built one on his own Gray Hill, a mile to the East. On the top of Kinnoull you will find also a stone table. It was set up by the same Earl who was so fond of the view that he often dined there. In 1924 the hill was gifted to the City of Perth by the late Lord Dewar *Glory of Scotland*, p. 284”.

Also amongst Rhoda Fothergill’s papers is a copy of a note, headed “Kinnoull Hill Tower” and dated 10th October 2003; it is written by the late G S Keay, one of FPKA’s founder members and a former Treasurer (MS347/4/12/4). He writes: “In the local Archives, there is an O.S. map, which shows the boundary between the Kinnoull and Kinfauns estates. This runs across the hill between the stone table and the Tower. So the tower is built on Kinfauns ground.” Stan then refers to a newspaper report from August 1829, as shown below.



The tower reared on the eastern crag of the hill of Kinnoull, by Lord Gray, is now finished, and forms a prominent and very picturesque object from various points, particularly from the approaches to Kinfauns Castle, from the river, and from the Edinburgh road on the north side of Moncrieffe Hill. The view from the tower itself is indescribably grand, commanding not only all the Carse of Gowrie, with the noble woods and mansion of Kinfauns for a foreground, but all Strathern and great part of Strathmore. The Duke de Chartres, on his visit lately to Kinfauns Castle, expressed himself highly delighted with the mansion and the adjoining scenery.

Article published in the London Gazette & Courier, 19th August 1829

(also reported in the Perth Courier, 6th August 1829)

Image courtesy of Family & Local History

Stan continues: “This explains why the Tower does not appear in watercolours painted in 1809, nor in the drawing of the cliffs from the south by David Octavius Hill, published by his father, a Perth bookseller, about 1822. The drawing does show the Binn Tower built by Lord Gray on the Binn Hill, 1812/13, and Kinfauns Castle built, or rebuilt, by the same gentleman in the 1820’s.

The local story that the Earl of Kinnoull and Lord Gray agreed to erect towers on their respective cliff tops, appears to be a myth. It is reasonable to assume that the Earl of Kinnoull had nothing to do with it, as the Kinnoull Tower was not even on his estate! It was certainly not built in the 18th century. An old Guide to Perth says that generations of Perth citizens had enjoyed the privilege of access to Kinnoull Hill, granted by the Earls of Kinnoull **and Moray**. This confirms the division of the hill. The Barony of Kinfauns had passed into the Earldom of Moray.”

In February 2018 on behalf of the Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Group, Dr Bill Gray gave a talk at Kinnoull Shed about the history, folk stories and skulduggery associated with Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park. In “History of a Special Hilltop”, Bill indicated that the stone table was built between 1780 and 1790 by the Earl of Kinnoull, possibly in 1792, whereas the two towers were built by Francis, Lord Gray, as they were on his estate lands: one in 1813 as an observatory; the other after 1824 as a folly. “There is no doubt of the boundaries of the Kinnoull and Kinfauns estates. When the Kinfauns estate was divided up on the death of the last Earl of Moray, a large part was bought by the Forestry Commission. The house plus the immediate surrounds plus the tower was bought by the Cooperative Holidays Association; they subsequently sold the tower to (the city of) Perth. (Please note that most papers and references use the spelling GRAY although the O.S. have used GREY on their maps)”.

Editor’s Note:

The Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Group was established in 2001 to represent a wide range of users of the Park. A major challenge has been to correct a long-held and widely-distributed mistake that Lord Kinnoull had built the Tower (Folly). The Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Group is currently in suspension; for details of the Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Facebook Group, please contact <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1547244438853733>

Distant View of the River Tay from Kinnoull Hill, 1907

Photograph, Wood & Son, Perth W701

Image courtesy of
Perth Museum & Art Gallery



Dr Gray explained that the Table has the names of people from Corsie Village carved along the side (rim) by young men before going away to war. Its original use was apparently as a picnic table as there used to be a rough road/track leading from the back road above Kinfauns through the woodland area to take parties out in carriages from the castle at Kinfauns.

Dr Gray also told a story about a young poet who lost his muse: “At the top of the hill, beside the table, feeling very despondent and contemplating jumping over the edge, he suddenly got his muse back which resulted in a poem: Symons’s Last Interview Wi His Muse, dated 1802”. The stone table continues to inspire poetry; one recently, by David Wood of the Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Group, has been published in two of the local newspapers.

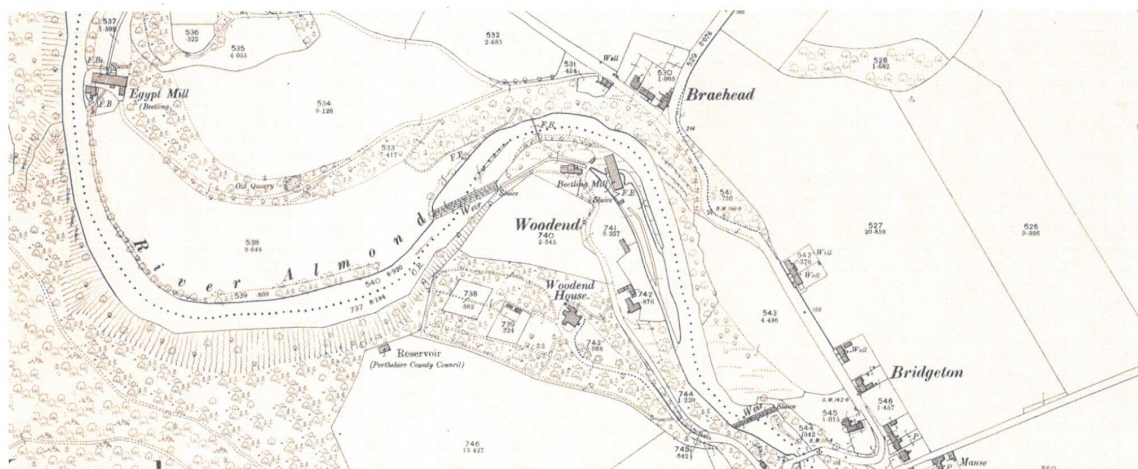
Prue Dowie

Key Dates

1780-1790	Stone table built
1812-1813	First tower built as an Observatory on Binn Hill
1820’s	Kinfauns Castle rebuilt on site of former castle
1829	Second tower built as a Folly atop Kinnoull Hill

Perthshire Paper Mills

The first paper mill in Perthshire was created in Crieff by James Taylor in 1763; it was the second of its type to be erected in Scotland and was indicated on Stobie's map in 1783. Other mills were founded at Ruthven on the River Almond on land owned by the Duke of Atholl and at Woodend at Hodge Haugh, also on the River Almond on land owned by David Smyth(e) of Methven. The business papers of Peter Duff* B59/37/4 give details of the Woodend paper mill, which produced poor quality paper but constant business in its 15 years in operation.



RAGS MAKE PAPER
PAPER MAKES MONEY
MONEY MAKES BANKS
BANKS MAKE LOANS
LOANS MAKE BEGGARS
BEGGARS MAKE RAGS
(ANON 18TH CENTURY)

REF FOR WOODEND PAPER MILL B59/37/4
B59/37/2.

<http://maps.nls.uk/view/82898880>

15/08/201

Plan of the Woodend Paper Mill, B59/37/4

Image courtesy of the Perth & Kinross Archive

The specific area known as Hodge Haugh is shown on Stobie's map sitting on the south bank of the River Almond to the west side of the bridge, which carries the main road through Almondbank. Today there is no indication above ground level of the existence of the mill.

*Editor's Note: Further information on Peter Duff can be found in Newsletter 46

The site was rented from Lord Methven (David Smyth(e) by Peter Duff and Patrick Blacklaws, who were Perth-based merchants, and resided on by James Miller, a sub-tacksman who paid a rent of £26 (per annum) in 1777.

A letter dated 7th November 1776 was received from Archibald Harley saying that he was returning to Perthshire from Warden Paper Mill in Hexham to look after his aged mother and enquiring whether there was a vacancy for himself and his wife; she was a skilled rag sorter, an occupation that was much sought after by those in the trade as the quality of the finished paper depended on their skill. There had been a seizure of a quantity of paper from Woodend Mill, which did not comply with the law set down by HM Customs and Excise in several respects, relating to it being unstamped, poor quality, not correctly wrapped and labelled.

The paper mill, house and rag house had been built in 1775 with the digging of a trail lead or race requiring vats, presses, sol-stoves and machinery. Although Peter Duff was keen to ensure equipment from the Carron Foundry in Falkirk, he was disappointed to be informed that the equipment he required could not be made of steel but cast iron so nothing came from his enquiry.

The manufacturer of the equipment required was William Brown in Maidstone, Kent, who on 4th January 1776 wrote that he had shipped on board the Atholl (Captain Clark) all the machinery required for paper production. Building work continued and by 7th August 1776 the roof of the rag house had been slatted with 2,600 grey slates and by 4th September 1777, 169 feet of glazing had been completed.

The Edinburgh Insurance Office sent a letter dated 3rd September 1776 referring to an insurance policy drawn up for Peter Duff & Co for the sum of £1,000 in respect to the paper mill at Woodend. As Peter Duff was an agent in Perth and District for the Edinburgh Insurance Company, he was familiar with the requirement to maintain a specific distance between buildings to prevent fire spreading and affecting insurance premiums.

By July 1778 production was in full swing and the types and quality of paper being produced was shown in the annual returns submitted by James Taylor:

Dyed Blue Eliphant 24 reams

Light Blue Eliphant ditto

No.6 Eliphant 1 ream

No.4 Eliphant 8 reams

Sugar Loaf Blue 18 reams

Fine Demy 44 reams

Common Demy 70 reams

No.4 Cartridge 152 reams

Brown Eliphant 6 reams

There was 1,966 stone of rags and rope on hand and 4 cwt of glew.

The rags and rope in the inventory were procured from merchants in Arbroath and Dundee. The paper was sold to clients in Glasgow, Dundee and Tayside but the London market was the one that Duff was desperate to break into. He finally made contact with the leading London stationer Bloxam, Fourdriner, Bloxam and Walker but although there were ongoing questions about the quality of the paper, the London market had been breached.

Peter Duff's son had, with his father's blessing, been sent to London as his agent but opened a wig-making and perfumier business and many years later returned to Perth a very rich man.

On 3rd March 1791 Peter Blacklaws died and Peter Duff disposed of their paper mill at Woodend passing ownership to his brother-in-law. Peter Duff died on 25th June 1805 and was buried in Greyfriars churchyard in Perth.

Jim Ferguson

A Postcard from Loos



Sewn Postcard from Loos

Image courtesy of Donald Abbott

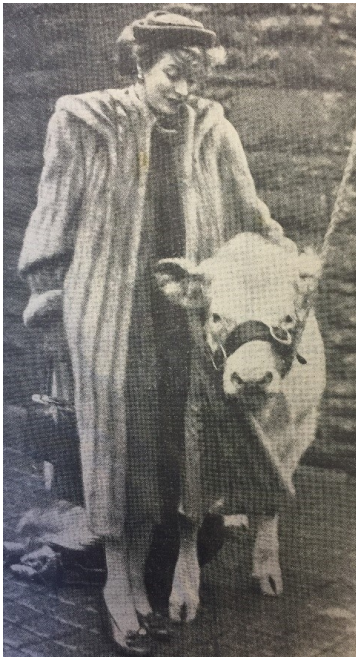
The postcard was sent to Auburn Terrace, Invergowrie, on an undated Carte Postale and commemorating the battle of Loos. It is not clearly dated but was addressed to Mrs W Young c/o McIntosh, Auburn Terrace, Invergowrie by Dundee stating “Just a PC to let you know that I am still in the best of health. This PC for all at home and I hope you will like it.....with all my fond love and kisses”. The house is no. 37, Main Street, Invergowrie today. The 4th Battalion, Dundee’s own The Black Watch was heavily involved at the Battle of Loos. I believe the McIntosh family were members of the United Free Church of Longforgan at Invergowrie.

Donald Abbott, FSA Scot.

Editor’s Note: On 28th August 1915, William Young a wool lawyer aged 21, son of Jane (nee Paterson) and Alexander Young, was married at 16, King Street, Dundee by declaration to Jane F McIntosh a tobacconist’s assistant aged 21, daughter of Agnes (nee Forbes) and Alexander Smith McIntosh under warrant of Sheriff Substitute of Forfarshire. There is no record of William’s death in The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) red book listing the soldiers who died in the Great War 1914-1919 (4th Battalion). The Battle of Loos (The Big Push) was fought between 25th September and 8th October 1915

An Unexpected Find

Archives turn up in the most unusual places and earlier this year we were surprised to discover stray Perth Burgh records being sold by an auctioneer in Kent. We immediately got in touch and negotiated their purchase, with financial support from the National Fund for Acquisitions and the Friends of the National Libraries.



Greer Garson with her shorthorn bull at Millhills, Perthshire

Photograph, February 1950

Image courtesy of Perth & Kinross Archive

The records in question were the Lord Provost's Visitors' Book for the City and Royal Burgh of Perth and a related scrapbook covering the years 1945 to 1951, which shine a light on what was happening in the burgh in the years immediately following World War Two. Visiting dignitaries included members of the royal family, politicians, military personnel, sportsmen and women, singers, actors and others, but our favourite is American actress Greer Garson, who came all the way to purchase a pedigree shorthorn bull for her Mexican ranch at Perth Bull Sale!

The records have now been reunited with the rest of Perth Burgh Archive and are safely stored in the archive strongroom. We will do a little research to unearth the story behind their journey to Kent – and hope they will not be travelling anywhere else soon!

Ishbel MacKinnon

Friends' Talks 2021-2022 session

This Session, the talks programme will be delivered by a mixture of zoom (virtual)
or zoom/in-person (hybrid) in the Soutar Theatre at the AK Bell Library, Perth.

Please note the varied times. Evening talks are at 6.30pm.

All are welcome to attend the talks, which are free to members (non-members £5.00 in person or £2.00 by zoom)

Pre-booking is essential, processed by Eventbrite.

Please visit www.culturepk.org.uk/whats-on to register your place/obtain the zoom link. If you are having difficulty with the booking, please call 01738 477060 and a member of staff will try to assist you.

Date	Time	Talks
2021		
Thursday 28 th October	2 pm	J P Reid (HYBRID) Ancient Roots: creating a new museum at Perth City Hall
Thursday 25 th November	6.30 pm	Hazel de Vere (VIRTUAL) Archive Conservation at the National Records of Scotland
2022		
Thursday 17 th February	6.30 pm	Lara Haggerty (VIRTUAL) Innerpeffray—A Living Library
Thursday 24 th March	6.30 pm	Nicola Small & Syd House (HYBRID) “Oh, what a parish!”: Stories in Song from Perthshire’ historic parishes
Thursday 21 st April	6.30 pm	Steve Connelly (HYBRID) George Miller, 1688-1763: The Life and Interesting Times of Perth’s Town Clerk
Thursday 26 th May	6 pm 6.30 pm	AGM (HYBRID) David Strachan The Work of Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and the Lower City Mills, Perth

Friends of Perth & Kinross Archive

A K Bell Library, York Place, Perth PH2 8EP 01738 477022 archives@culturepk.org.uk

Honorary Presidents: The Provost Mr Donald Abbott

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