Editors’ Note: The Collection of Scottish Documents at the University of Guelph has been recognized as the foremost collection of such documents in the world, outside of Scotland. To aid in research in Scottish Studies, “Recent Acquisitions” to the collection are reported in Scottish Tradition.

Recent Acquisitions

University of Guelph Scottish Collection: A collection of handwritten letters from three notable Scots.

Contents: The first letter is from John Gilles (1747-1836), historian and classical scholar, writing to Evan Nescam. The letter regards some concern over the author’s political principles. Dated January 24th, 1793.

The second letter was written by Robert Nicoll (1814-1837) a popular Scottish poet who died at the age of 23. Written a matter of days before his death, the letter is sad and melancholy in tone. Its value lies in the rarity of Nicoll material.

The third letter is from James Beattie (1735-1803), Scottish poet and professor of moral philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen, to William Strahan Esq. The letter concerns progress on a book, a relative being held prisoner of war at Flushing and the illness of a friend.

A bound work entitled Letter to the Lord Advocate of Scotland.

Contents: The Volume contains two printed letters. The first is a fourteen page letter addressed to Henry Dundas of Melville, then Lord Advocate of Scotland. Dated Nov. 18th, 1777.

The second is a twelve page letter addressed to the Duke of Buecleuch.

A Poem entitled, Poem By a Lady On Seeing His Royal Highness The Prince Regent. 14 lines.

A Poem by William Julius Mickle entitled, Sir Martyn, A Poem in the Manner of Spencer.
CONTENTS: The poem was first published in 1767, going through several editions under the title *The Concubine*. 71 pages.


CONTENTS: Dated 1724, the work concerns the art of self defence, fencing and honourable conduct. The author states that the book is recommended reading for all gentlemen and soldiers.

Peter Buchan. *An Historical and Authentic Account of the Ancient and Noble Family of Keith, Earls Marischal of Scotland*.

CONTENTS: A history of the family of Keith. Dated 1820.


Scott A. McLean
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NEWS FROM HISTORIC SCOTLAND:

ROBERT ADAM—A THOROUGHLY SCOTTISH ARCHITECT

On the 200th anniversary of his death, 1992, scholars challenged the popular misconception that Scottish architect Robert Adam (1728-1792) belonged to an English architectural tradition. Adam, the second of four sons of architect William Adam, inherited a continuing tradition of Scots court architecture which is easily visible in his most famous works; the Adelphi in London, Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, and the University of Edinburgh.

Ranald MacInnes, Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings, concludes that “Adam has been treated as a glorified decorator for too long and perhaps as a consequence of this, we have tended to see his architecture purely in terms of surface ornament rather than composition.” However, essential elements of the Adam style such as the insistent use of the triumphal arch, the tri-partite plans, first floor public rooms and the distinctive use of changes at ground level, are all derived from Scots architecture. Rather than importing an English architectural tradition to Scotland, Adam achieved the reverse; he introduced elements of Scots architecture to England.

“It is important to remember,” MacInnes notes, “that Adam didn’t believe he came from an inferior culture. Far from it, he delighted in Scotland’s European fame.” And surely, Robert Adam contributed to that fame.

THE CAIRNS OF CLAVA

Visitors to Culloden battlefield may not be aware that if they find their way down into the nearby valley of the River Nairn they will gaze upon three Neolithic cairn cemeteries at Balnuaran of
Clava. There are two passage graves and one ring-cairn at Clava. The clearest difference between the two types of structure is that the passage graves have access to the central area, while the ring-cairns do not. In both cairn types the central spaces were filled in after they had been used for burial.

In spite of being badly damaged before entering into state care in 1926, the most striking common characteristic which surrounds each one. According to Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Gordon Barclay, "One of the most interesting, but puzzling, elements of the activity at Balnuaran is the cupmark decoration on some of the stones." They appear on the stones in the passages, on the kerb and even on the stones in the circle and there are at least eight stones with cupmarks on them.

Visitors to Balnuaran can find the location of the known cupmarks from the information boards at the site.

THE REGENERATION GAME

Although Scotland is rich in the remains of past human settlement, natural regeneration by the expansion of the cover of semi-natural birch and pine woodland could be the cause of important archeological sites being damaged and lost forever. The uplands of Scotland, in the band between the upper limit of modern agricultural ploughing and about 400 meters above sea level, contain extensive archaeological landscapes. These compromise houses, farms, fields and other structures, dating from before 2000 BC to the early 20th Century AD.

Gordon Barclay notes that "natural regeneration, which it is argued should be encouraged by removing sheep and deer grazing in front of the uplands, could cause catastrophic damage to some of our archaeological landscapes, which are of European significance." He warns that "unless we can find a way to work together to preserve the history of human settlement, then the remains of that history, particularly in the uplands, will be damaged or destroyed as thousands of years of land management is reversed."

Historic Scotland is writing to organizations and individuals active in the management and conservation of the Scottish
countryside, to raise the profile of archaeological conservation in the broader debate on woodland regeneration.

**New Visitor Centre at St. Andrews**

An impressive new visitor centre has opened at St. Andrews housing an imaginative exhibition and a shop selling quality merchandise made in Scotland. The exhibition tells the story of St. Andrews Cathedral's rise to preeminence in Scotland and the corresponding growth of the Castle.

Visitors can see in graphic detail scenes such as the execution of the Protestant martyr George Wishart, the assassination of Cardinal Beaton and the looting of the Cathedral following a sermon in the burgh by John Knox. The digging of the mine and counter-mine during the siege of the Castle from 1564-47 is atmospherically recreated with the eerie sounds of picks striking rocks.

Before construction began, Historic Scotland carried out an archaeological dig on the site. This was extremely fruitful, revealing a substantial number of pieces of broken pottery, the remains of an early road surface, the masonry remains of an outer courtyard building and many timber buildings with what may have been a tannery workshop.

**In an Octopus's Garden: Underwater Archaeology**

Historic Scotland is responsible for the protection of historic wrecks within a 12-mile radius of Scotland. To date, the number of protected wrecks is under its care is four, and one of the most interesting of these is the shipwreck off Duart Point in Mull. It is part of an English naval vessel, dating to the mid-17th century. The visible remains consist of several iron guns and extensive areas of the wooden structure of the ship, including carved softwood paneling. Surprisingly little is recorded about the techniques of ship construction at that time and the wreck may provide some valuable clues.
Noel Fojut, Historic Scotland's Principal Inspector responsible for underwater archaeology asserts that this wreck is important “because we do not know just why it was there and how it was sunk. It is also important because wrecks in Scottish waters are usually just that—wrecks. This one is different. A lot has been preserved because of the relative calmness of the waters.”

Unfortunately, because there are very few people who know how to survey and excavate underwater, and because it tends to cost so much more than land archaeology, it needs to be a very worthwhile site or it will be left alone. Fojut hopes that underwater archaeology will soon be treated as part of mainstream archaeology and not as something with its own rules and special funding. Only then will the majority of archaeologists appreciate the full value of the information that lies below the waves.

'BRAER'—THE AFTERMATH

One of the major implications of the Braer tanker accident at the south end of Shetland in January 1993 is the effect of the oil spill on the island's archaeology. Historic Scotland sent inspectors to Shetland to assess the damage as soon as the news broke.

Although the oil has begun to evaporate, it is not yet known how deeply it has penetrated into the stones and soil of the sites and whether long-term damage will be caused. Research has been commissioned by Historic Scotland and it is hoped that at least some of the sites will reopen by Easter.

GLASGOW CATHEDRAL.—
THE PAST REVEALED

Important discoveries have been made about the early history of Glasgow Cathedral during recent archaeological excavations. Richard Fawcett, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, explains: “The architecture of the Cathedral is extremely confusing. In the course of building what we now see, it seems that no sooner did one bishop come on the scene than he abandoned the work of his predecessors and started again.”
The most extensive evidence found is for the church built by Bishop Jocelyn in the late 12th century. Equally exciting has been the finding of large numbers of discarded carved and painted stones from Jocelyn's church which were re-used in the foundations of the elongated crypt built by Bishop Bondington in the mid 13th century.

Although the tradition that St. Kentigern founded his cathedral in Glasgow in the late 6th century has been dismissed as a fabrication of the 12th century, evidence has been found of burials and drainage channels that appear to pre-date any of the recorded cathedral buildings. It now looks as if the site has a longer ecclesiastical history than was thought.

**St. Margaret's Chapel Refurbished**

In recognition of the 900th anniversary of St. Margaret's death this year, Historic Scotland has undertaken a sensitive refurbishment of the tiny chapel in Edinburgh Castle which is dedicated to her memory.

St. Margaret's Chapel, dating back to the 12th century is the earliest surviving structure in Edinburgh Castle. It has had a chequered history, including use as a powder magazine. However, work which began in January has removed layers of modern paint to reveal fine carving and traces of the original painting. Masons have laid a new stone floor, employing a simple and traditional pattern in keeping with the building. In addition, the St. Margaret's Chapel Guild has commissioned cabinetmaker Piers Kettlewell to make ten seats of solid oak for the chapel.

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SCOTTISH BOOK COLLECTOR consists of several elements pertaining to Scottish books old and new:

- Features on collecting Scottish books by writers such as Stevenson, Buchan and Conan Doyle; about particular areas of Scotland; history; limited editions and fine printings; Scottish children's books, etc.

- Bibliographical studies and history of publishing in Scotland: for instance, a series of articles by Warren McDougall, who is an authority on the eighteenth century publishers in Hamilton, Balfour and Neill.