



INSTITUTE OF SCOTTISH HISTORICAL RESEARCH

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Dr Sarah Leith

ISSUE 10 | Summer Edition 2023

*There never were strawberries
like the ones we had
that sultry afternoon
sitting on the step
of the open French window*

Edwin Morgan, 'Strawberries', *The Second Life* (Edinburgh, 1968)

*So, you think you know
Scottish history?*

- 1) On which island did George Orwell write *1984*?
- 2) In what year was the United College founded?
- 3) When James Boswell wondered where this person was buried, Samuel Johnson responded as follows: 'I hope in the highway. I have been looking at his reformations.' To whom was Dr Johnson referring? *

* Bonus point: Where is this person buried?

Answers on the last page



Congratulations to our Summer 2023 graduates!



Dr James Inglis



Dr Daniel Leaver



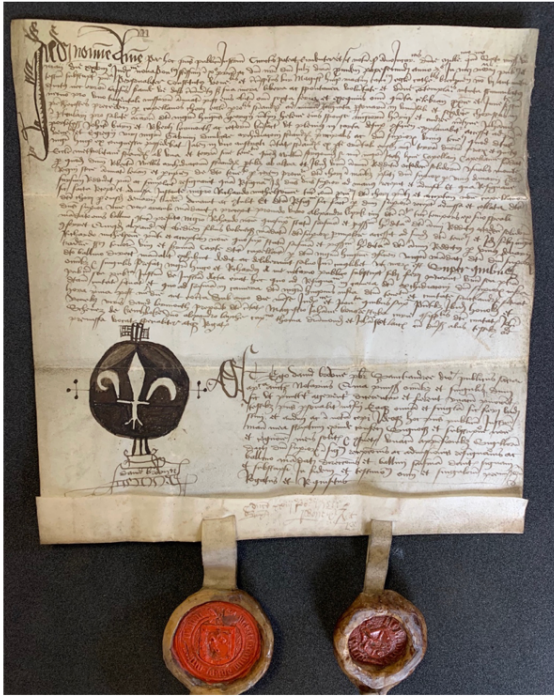
Dr Matthew Ylitalo



University of St Andrews
Institute of Scottish Historical Research

*Second-year PhD student Kate McGregor tells us all about her
Burnwynd Project...*

Notaries and their networks in St Andrews, 1466-1560



StAUL, B65/23/184c

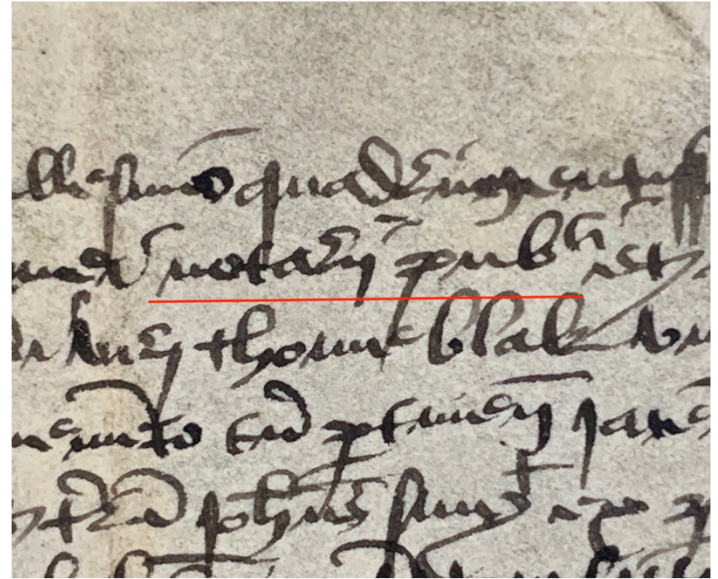
The Burgh Records of St Andrews, held in the University of St Andrews Library's Special Collection, contain a plethora of fascinating documents. With the generous funding provided by The Burnwynd Trust's St Andrews Local History Foundation Award I have spent the past year delving into the St Andrews burgh records to uncover hitherto untold stories of urban life in medieval Scotland. This project, supervised by Mrs Rachel Hart, Senior Archivist and Keeper of Manuscripts and Muniments at the University of St Andrews, and Professor Michael Brown, Professor in Scottish History at the University of St Andrews, aimed to investigate notaries who operated in St Andrews from 1466 to 1560 and their wider networks.

My research drew from a recently completed pilot project, funded by The Scottish Medievalists, in which Mrs Hart and Professor Margaret Connolly, Professor of Palaeography and Codicology in the Schools of English and History, surveyed, identified, and digitised notarial instruments within the University's muniment collection. All data from my study was collected from the St Andrews Burgh Records, specifically B65/23 Burgh Charters and Miscellaneous Writs.

A notary in late medieval Scotland was a legal position. Notaries could draw up wills, contracts of marriage, compile evidence for courts, and formulate deeds or documents which detailed the transfer of land. These land transfers were referred to in Scots law as instruments of sasine and the vast majority of documents in the St Andrews burgh records are instruments of sasine. Such an instrument would record the transaction, the parties or clients involved, as well as the name of the notary and witnesses to the deed.

Within this project I constructed a database and wrote a detailed report outlining of which notaries were working in the town of St Andrews and how they interacted, along with exploring the wider network of individuals they worked and interacted with. In May 2023 I presented my findings to the Burnwynd board of trustees. It was wonderful to relate findings to some actual notaries on the board and it discuss my findings further at a stunning dinner organised by the Burnwynd Trust at the Rufflets Hotel.

Late medieval Scottish notarial practice was sophisticated, complex, and infused with ancient legal traditions governed by a powerful ecclesiastical authority. Notaries were the primary vehicles through which legitimacy and authority operated, and was translated, in these instruments. Across the burgh records it was evident that the university, diocese, and burgh were all highly interconnected, geographically, and socially, and that it was the notary that acted as a bridge between these connections. The expertise, and legal authority, of the notary legitimised and actualised these networks through authenticating economic transactions.



StAUL, B65/23/124c

In uncovering the identities, and networks, of notaries in St Andrews this micro-historical study has hoped to have contributed to the burgeoning field of urban and social histories within medieval Scotland. There is much left to explore, however, by naming these notaries and attributing them to their exquisite, and personal, notarial marks, this research project has begun to uncover these hitherto lost stories.

Photographs courtesy of Kate McGregor.



The Burnwynd Dinner at Rufflets Hotel

Professor Erik Opsahl (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) reflects upon his time in Scotland as this year's...

Institute of Scottish Historical Research Visiting Fellow



Erik Opsahl

My stay as a visiting researcher at St Andrews is ending, and I have been asked to write something about my visit here and my research. I'd be happy to do that. I have always been interested in Scotland and Scottish history. The first time I was captivated by Scottish medieval history, I think, must have been when, as a young boy, I read Walter Scott's *Castle Dangerous* in the Norwegian edition of the comic magazine *Classics Illustrated*. The story is based on an incident in 1307 when Sir James Douglas, a strong supporter of Robert Bruce, regained his castle Douglas Castle which the English had occupied. Here, in the form of a cartoon based on a 19th-century novel, I encountered many questions and themes that I later became interested in and worked on as a professional historian. It is state-building, political culture, political elites, identities and loyalties from the mid-13th century to the mid-17th century.

After all, Scotland is a neighbouring country to Norway. In the Middle Ages, the proximity was probably perceived as even closer as the sea was such a vital traffic artery. In "my" period, the political connections between Norway and Scotland became weaker, but the closeness in economic and social contexts remained. But even if the Norwegian-Scottish connections were not so close in «my» period, Scotland and Scottish history have always been important as a comparison within my research fields. For me, Scottish history has a particular value as a basis for comparison with Norwegian history. It struck me not least when, many years ago, I read the foreword to Ian D. Whyte's book "Scotland before the Industrial Revolution: An Economic and Social History c.1050-c. 1750" (1995). Here it says that «In the past Scottish history has often been introverted and parochial. Stress has been laid on the distinctiveness of Scotland's society and institutions rather on drawing meaningful parallels and contrasts with neighbouring countries. The effect of this has been to marginalise Scottish history in European terms by making its concern seem peripheral to mainstream scholarship...An aim of this book is to try to present the development of Scotland in broad terms emphasising similarities and differences with neighbouring countries» (pages XI-XII). Here it is only necessary to replace "Scottish history" and "Scotland" with "Norwegian history" and "Norway" to show how I perceive much of older Norwegian historical research and the goal of my research.

Therefore, throughout the years, I have read much Scottish history and visited Scotland a few times. That's why I wanted to stay at St Andrews during a sabbatical year. I had visited St Andrews previously and had my good friend and colleague Steve Murdoch here as a professor. Initially, I had planned to be here for a whole year, but both professional and personal reasons meant that I reduced it to three months. It ended up being three months, with a stay in Norway of just under one month in the middle. Steve Murdoch had also left St Andrews in favour of a position in Stockholm before I arrived. But with no belittlement to Steve, and I would have loved to have had him here during my stay, my hosting here in St Andrews has been superb. Michael Brown has been my "main contact" and excellently performed that task.

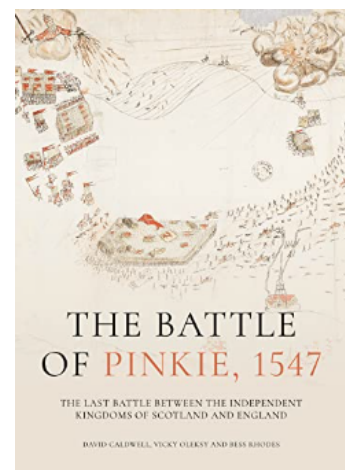
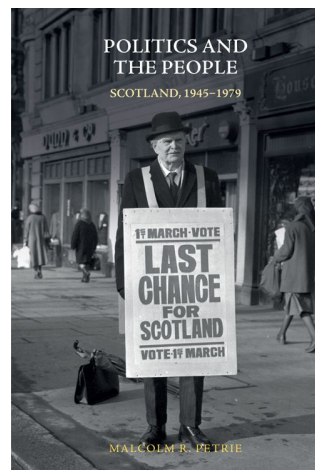
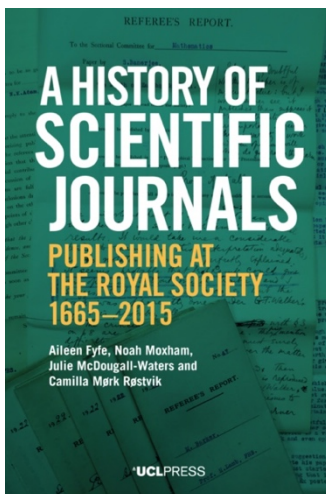
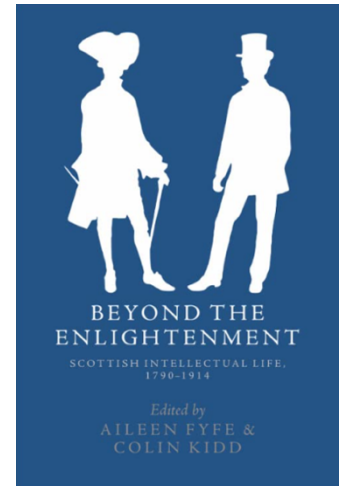
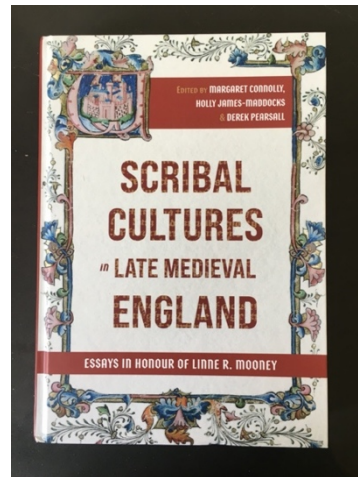
I have heard enough experiences from colleagues who have been on visiting research stays abroad and felt forgotten by the host. That certainly hasn't been the case for me. On the contrary, I have experienced the right combination of attention and calm. The idea behind such guest researcher stays is that you should have an opportunity to work concentrated on projects, make contacts with colleagues, discuss subjects and gain experience from other institutions regarding research, teaching, etc. I was invited to give a lecture at the Institute of Scottish Historical Research Seminar, participated in the 2023 Burn SAIMS & ISHR Reading Weekend and otherwise had many fruitful professional discussions with several people, but especially with Michael Brown, Alex Woolf and Barbara Crawford. Once again, I have had confirmation of the value of being able to meet and discuss professional issues with colleagues face to face, not just read books and articles they have written.

As a historian, I have always believed and experienced that having been in landscapes and places you read about and meet and analyse through written source material is valuable. I have been able to fully practise that during my stay, especially on the trips that Alex and Barbara have taken me on. I also got to join a student trip around Fife that Michael and Alex arranged. In addition, I have collaborated with Dauvit Broun in Glasgow, and Dauvit, among other things, took me around on an extensive castle tour on a Sunday. Dauvit has been involved in a larger project on the Norwegian Code of the Realm of 1274, of which I have been one of the leaders (<https://cas.oslo.no/research-groups/social-governance-through-legislation-article4078-827.html>). The project had a stay at the *Norwegian Centre for Advanced Studies* (CAS) in Oslo in 2021/22, and Dauvit was among the foreign researchers who participated. A central part of the project has been to study the importance of the law in medieval society, and here a comparison with Scottish conditions has been paramount. I have spent most of my writing time here writing my parts of a more extensive commentary edition to the Code of The Realm, which is planned to be published next year for the 750th anniversary. In addition, I have finished a few minor things, while my actual project, a book about Norwegian identity before 1814, has not progressed far beyond the sketch stage.

I have stayed at The Strathmartine Centre with friendly and hospitable hosts Norman Reid, Muriel Watson and Barbara Crawford. It has been an excellent place for me to stay. As I leave St Andrews for this time, I am grateful for St Andrews, the university, the institute and all those I have met during my stay. Thank you very much, and a special thank you to Michael, Alex and Barbara, who I now count as my friends. Thank you for now and until we meet again.

Hot off the press

Recent publications by ISHR members of staff



A History of Scientific Journals: Publishing at the Royal Society 1665-2015 is Open Access and free to download [here](#)



Scoticonference

The 17th triennial International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Languages, Literature and Culture is being held at the University of St Andrews from 19 to 21 July this year. It has been organised by Dr Amy Blakeway and Dr Rhiannon Purdie, with plenary talks from Professor Thomas Clancy (Glasgow) and Dr Bryony Coombs (Edinburgh).

First-year PhD student Frances Bickerstaff reports on this year's...

ISHR x SAIMS Reading Weekend

This year saw the return of the joint ISHR and SAIMS reading weekend, held at The Burn, near Edzell. The first paper of the weekend was delivered by Professor Alison Beach. Appropriately enough for an event which drew people together from across a range of disciplines, Professor Beach's paper gave some fascinating insight into how bioarchaeology could enrich our understanding of the lives of medieval religious women.



After breakfast the next morning, we had the first Inspiring Books session, chaired by Julia Rohn. PhD students Phoebe McIndoe, William Mulloy, Rosalie Bernheim and Kate McGregor told us a bit about the books that inspired them on their journey to PhD research, sparking some spirited debate among the audience on the value of historical fiction. This was followed by three very interesting papers, the first from Dr Kirill Dmitriev on the figures of Barlaam and Josephat in Arabic sources. Visiting Professor Erik Opsahl discussed concepts of national identity in late medieval Norway. Dr Karie Schultz examined national identity from a different angle, looking at an eternal theme, that of conflict between English, Scottish and Irish students, this time at the national colleges in Rome in the first decade of the eighteenth century.

That afternoon we were left with free time, which some used to explore the Burn estate and see the famous salmon ladder, others to demonstrate their croquet skills. After lunch, we headed back in for four brilliant papers delivered by current third year PhD students Lili Scott Lintott, Matt Edholm, Jack Abernethy and James Fox (who knew numeracy could be so fascinating?) That evening saw another successful Burns Night Quiz completed, with requisite rounds on Scottish and medieval history, as well as a much-needed pet-identification round.



Dr Alex Woolf kicked off the second day with an exploration of the perils of masculinity, and a demonstration of just how many women can be found in eleventh-century Scottish records if you look for them. This was followed by Dr Bess Rhodes examining xenophobia in the Scottish Reformation in the 1560s. After this, a slight change of tack, with Dr Sarah Leith's wonderful paper on the 20th century poet Sydney Scroggie (look out for his monument in the Sidlaws!)



Before we knew it, it was time for the final session of the weekend. This was another Inspiring Books session, from three PhD students, Sophie Kniaz, Frances Bickerstaff and Lucy Turnton, along with Sophie Lemberg, a current MLitt student, chaired this time by Jonathan Gibson. After one final lunch, it was time to say our goodbyes. Departure was heralded by an impressive rainstorm, as everyone piled back into various cars to head their separate ways.

Thanks very much to Kate McGregor and Lili Scott Lintott as well as Professor Margaret Connolly and Professor Michael Brown for organising this fantastic weekend. We would also like to thank the entire team at the Burn, including our host David, who made the whole thing possible. Next year's ISHR and SAIMS reading weekend will be held again at The Burn, make sure you don't miss out!

Photographs courtesy of Kate McGregor.

Eighteenth Century Scottish Studies Society Annual Conference

With the Eighteenth-Century Scottish Studies Society, the Institute for the Study of Scottish Philosophy, and the International Adam Smith Society, the Institute of Intellectual History at the University of St Andrews will host a conference to celebrate the 300th birthdays of Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and John Witherspoon, and the 250th anniversary of Johnson and Boswell's tour of the Highlands and Western Isles 18-21 July 2023. The plenary speakers are Professor Jeng-Guo Chen (Academia Sinica, Tapeit), Professor Lisa Hill (Adelaide), Professor Nigel Leask (Glasgow) and Dr Gideon Mailer (Minnesota Duluth).



Thomas Rowlandson, 'Walking up the High Street, Edinburgh, (Picturesque Beauties of Boswell, Part the First)', Creative Commons Zero, Public Domain Dedication, Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Walking_Up_the_High_Street,_Edinburgh_\(Picturesque_Beauties_of_Boswell,_Part_the_First\)_ME_T_DP871887.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Walking_Up_the_High_Street,_Edinburgh_(Picturesque_Beauties_of_Boswell,_Part_the_First)_ME_T_DP871887.jpg)

ISHR graduate Ashley Douglas tells us about...

Language, history, politics and Marie Maitland's 'Poem 49'



Since graduating in 2016, I am pleased to say that I have developed a successful career as a freelance researcher, writer, translator, consultant and speaker, with specialisms in the Scots language and LGBT history, drawing on both my undergraduate degree in languages and my MLitt in Scottish Historical Studies.

Earlier this year, it was a great honour and accolade to be named as one of the “15 most influential women” working in Scottish culture in an annual list to mark International Women’s Day.

I have worked with and written for a wide range of national heritage and literary organisations, including the National Library of Scotland, Historic Scotland, the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and the British Library. My most recent work has been focused on the *Maitland Quarto* manuscript, a 16th-century Scots manuscript penned by Marie Maitland, and containing among the earliest examples of lesbian poetry in any language in Europe since Sappho herself.

In September 2021, Scotland wonderfully became the first country in the world to embed LGBT inclusive education in schools, helping to ensure that all children see themselves and their families reflected in their learning. It was a great professional and personal honour to work with the charity Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) to develop teaching resources, based on my own research, about the remarkably early and explicit lesbian love poem in Scots that is Poem 49 of the *Maitland Quarto*, written by Marie Maitland.

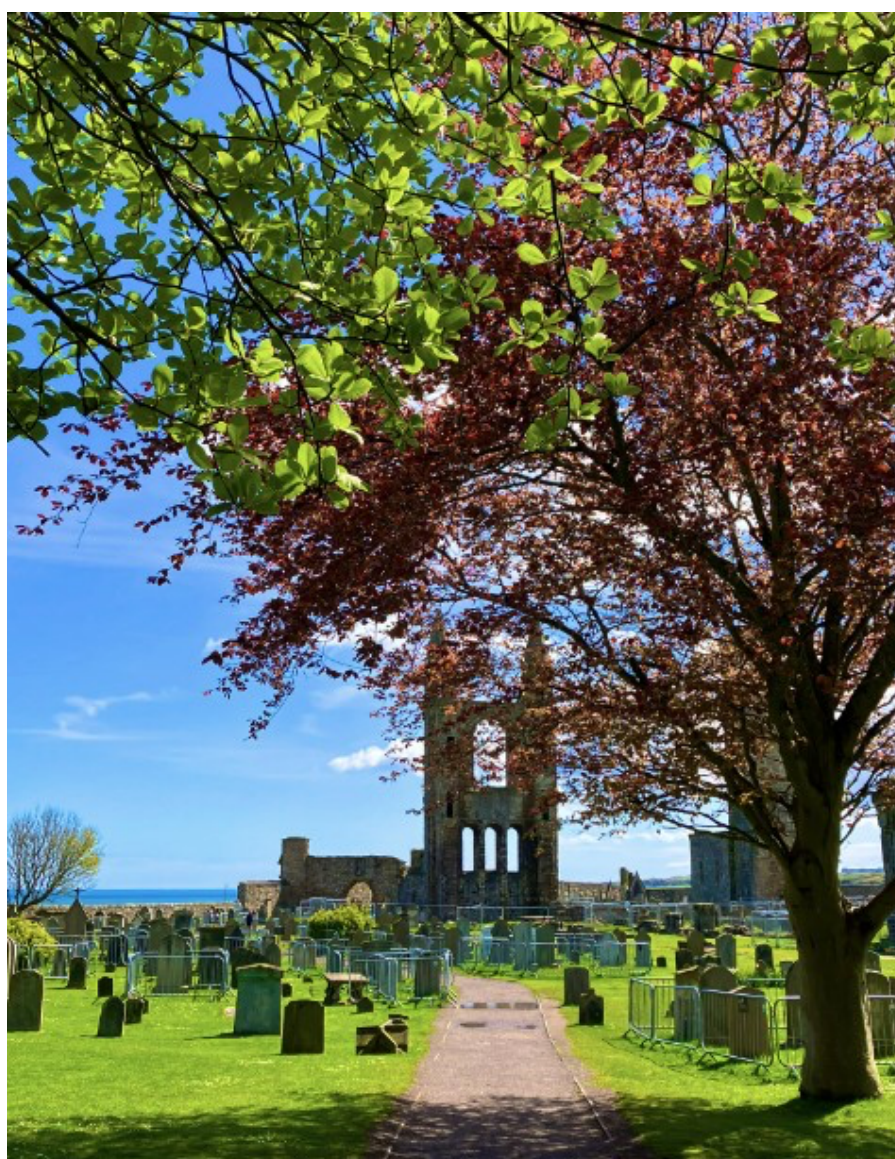
I am driven by telling the stories of and representing entire groups who have traditionally unfairly been excluded from Scottish history and culture, yet who have always been part of it, from women and LGBT people to people of colour. In more recent times, since it has become a minoritised language, Scots speakers have also been marginalised. I recently worked with the Scottish National Portrait Gallery to write interpretation boards in both Scots and English to accompany an imagined portrait (commissioned by myself and TIE) of Marie Maitland. This is the first time that there have been Scots interpretation boards in the gallery, and they tell the story of a crucial figure of Scotland’s LGBT history – representing Scots, women, and LGBT history at one and the same time. I encourage you to go and see the portrait for yourself at the portrait gallery, where it remains on display!

I am also excited to be involved in a big project with Historic Scotland at the moment, piloting the first ever audio tours in Scots, at Linlithgow Palace. For the

first time, Scots speakers will be able to experience the palace's history, which took place largely in (medieval) Scots, in the Scots they speak and understand today.

I am also currently working on my first book, which I hope to share more news of in a future update!

Alongside my freelance career, I also work for Holyrood's *Official Report* or *Hansard*; that is, I am part of the team that produces the authoritative, substantially-verbatim written record of all public parliamentary proceedings. It is very rewarding to work at the heart of Scotland's democracy, both witnessing the making of history in real time and creating the primary written records of the future, which has always appealed to me, as a historian! I also lead on our reporting of Scots and Gaelic, so it is also great to put my language skills to use and support Scotland's minoritised, but reviving, languages of Scots and Gaelic in my role in Parliament.



'If you're going to San Francisco...'

Third-year PhD student Amber Ward tells us about her semester at the University of California, Berkeley

As I was getting all organised for my semester abroad at the University of California, Berkeley, I was met by more than a few puzzled expressions. My PhD studies Fife's ex-mining communities in the twentieth century, and so people were understandably at a loss as to what exactly it was I needed to be doing over on the other side of the world. What they didn't realise is that the Golden State is in fact also a *massive* ex-mining locale, made by the displacement and capital that came searching for gold at around the same time as Fife was transformed by an industrial-scale hunt for coal. The purpose of my trip, I assured everyone, was for monastic contemplation in an apt, indeed similar, setting. I'd heard there was some good weather and nice things to do, but being so immersed in solitary thought, such temporal events would naturally pass me by.

It didn't quite pan out like this thanks to the warm welcome I received from faculty and students at Berkeley, who kept me very busy indeed. For the semester I was fortunate enough to work under the supervision of Prof James Vernon, director of Berkeley's Center for British Studies. My PhD primarily works with oral history interviews, which I'd just finished collecting back in Fife, and so I spent the semester listening to them and figuring out what they could mean. With James' guidance, and that of my home supervisors



Dr Malcolm Petrie, Prof Jim Phillips, and Dr Ewan Gibbs over Teams, I worked with theory and my sources to determine the overall form and key arguments of my PhD thesis, and started writing up the main body.

Each week I also attended seminars at the Institute of European Studies (IES) where I had the opportunity to present and develop ideas with fellow visiting scholars, as well as James' writing workshop for a small group of historian PhDs. I also had the privilege of living at Berkeley's beautiful International House, a residence for international students and scholars from over four hundred different countries. International House was vibrant and loud, known for its discussion and stories and events non-stop, all the time. There was always the latest news or a debate going in every corner of its great echoey halls. It was an exciting place to live, and I learned so much from new friends from around the world.



Then about mid-way through the semester I headed east to present at the Northeast Conference on British Studies (NECBS) in Lewiston, Maine. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet academics working with similar ideas, to learn about their research and to receive their feedback on mine. After that I popped up to Canada for a live podcast recording with scholars at Montreal's Concordia University, who are also working in deindustrialisation studies, for the Deindustrialization and the Politics of Our Time (DePOT) project partnership. As a transnational partnership we usually meet over Zoom, so chatting away in-person felt special and surreal.

I'm from Scotland and I'd never really lived away before, and feel lucky for everything I had the chance to experience. In California everything seemed a distorted version of something familiar, of images I'd absorbed through the animations and films that are some of the state's great historic exports. It was the small things that hit most - things that I'd never seen or thought of before – that registered weirdly like an old memory from years ago. Like the precise colour palate of a blue sky met by palm trees and the top of a wooden house. Or like in San Francisco, where I went most weekends, the exact mix of skyscraper glass cut through by tram wires and iron fire escapes, all staggered up a steep hill. Unpixelated and still, my surroundings felt less real for being seen.

When I got back, I realised that adjusting to a new life abroad had made me see my old one as strange. For a good few weeks all I could see was grey stone and thin, spindly roads, and there was an alarming purpley-ness to everything that, when actually looked at, turned out to be composed of just the normal colours. It was like I could really, properly see the Scotland that everyone else always seemed able to see except me. And history's layers seemed exposed in everyday things, like the old money tucked into an old mansion, now a thriving open attraction, its image captured and dispersed through Californian-designed tech. Much of the urban poor and 'low-skilled' contained out in postwar peripheries, bussing in to serve coffee for a Seattle-based boss. Hegemony is so weird (grotesque!) on days you think you can see it, but I guess the whole point is that usually you don't. And so eventually all that wore off, flushed out by dreich and the resumption of things. But there's still a bit of it lodged in, and hopefully it'll never fully be gone.

I had the time of my life, and it couldn't have happened without the support of my supervisors Malcolm, Jim and Ewan, nor the kindness I was shown by James and Berkeley PhDs, who took me in like I was one of their own. Thank you so much, I'll never see anything the same again.

Photographs courtesy of Amber Ward.

Dr Cailean Gallagher tells us about the...

British Academy-funded extra-mural learning project Scottish Histories of Resistance

We have just been on our Ayrshire leg of an intermittent tour to different spots across Scotland to gather stories, take videos, and record interviews with folk who have taken part in forms of resistance, or who could share histories of resistance from before living memory. Poring over maps that mark out the clearances in Raasay one month, and marching round the edge of the commons of Hawick another, we have been collating a bank of case-studies, archive extracts, moving images and other records of all kinds of resistance in Scotland.

With input from a diverse community of activists, archivists, and researchers, this treasure trove will become a learning programme for local groups to explore submerged or forgotten currents of radical history. The loose curriculum is structured around twelve themes - one for each month - on subjects such as methodologies of radical history ('What they dinnae teach ye in school'), land history ('The Clearances niver ended') and Scotland's role in Empire ('It wisnae us').

Histories of resistance often focus on the lives of folk involved in organised movements that channelled demands for freedom, justice, and a better society. At the same time, many people who lived and worked in struggle did not consciously regard their resistance as part of a political process to unmake and remake the world. Their histories are just as rich and just as real.

History is a creative process requiring sources and resources. Historians sometimes have a dragon-like tendency to guard sources like gold, occasionally leaving the cave in a venture to dazzle or daze whoever is paying attention. This project, emulating a more radical tradition of extra-mural education, is committed to redistributing the means of doing history beyond the walls of the academy, into the hands of communities, activist groups, and friendship circles.

In short, this project is about people making history, however and wherever they are moved to do so. Everyone should have the skills and support to discover histories that can inspire the struggles of tomorrow.

Scottish Histories of Resistance is supported by the British Academic Early Careers Research Network Seed-fund. If you are interested in getting involved, email scottishhistoriesofresistance@gmail.com

Institute of Scottish Historical Research

University of St Andrews

Keep us Posted!

Updates from former students

Dr Chelsea Reutcke

In July 2023, Chelsea took up the position of Gordon B. Hinckley Postdoctoral Fellowship in British Studies at the University of Utah. Here, she is teaching British History and Assistant Editor for the *Journal of British Studies*. Her new chapter 'A coordinated Catholic press: The editing and dispersal of Nicholas Sander's *Schismatis Anglicani*, 1580-c.1600' is being published this year in Leiden's edited volume *Early Modern Catholicism and the Printed Book. Agents – Networks – Responses*.

The *Journal of British Studies* is currently looking for book reviewers. If you wish to review a book for this journal, please email jbs@nacbs.org.

Dr. Edward M. Furgol, FSAScot, Department of History and Political Science, Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland, USA

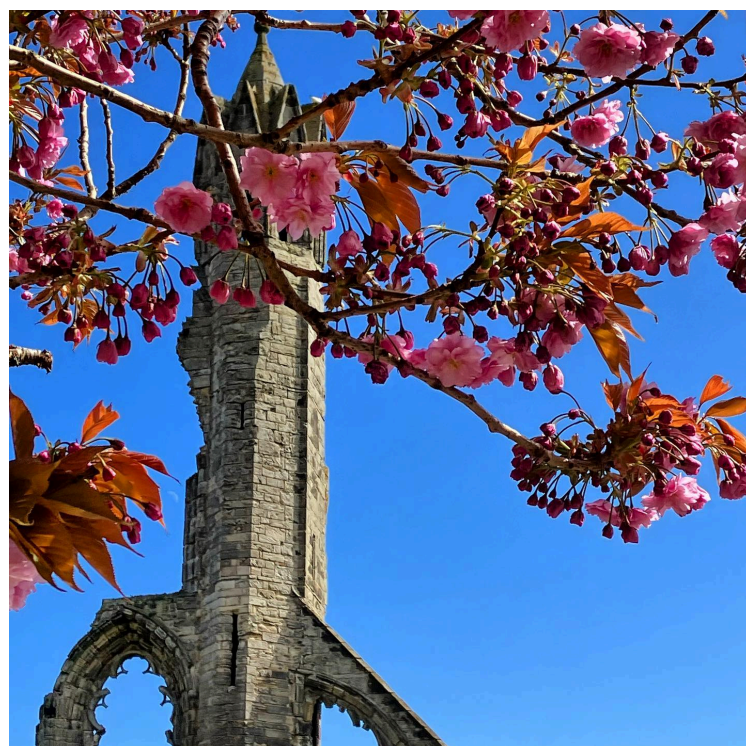
As a non-graduating student, I left St. Andrews in 1976. I completed my career as a museum professional in August 2017, retiring from as managing director of the National Museum of the United States Navy. Since then I have continued as an adjunct history lecturer at Montgomery College, Maryland, USA. I have also thoroughly revised *A Regimental History of the Covenanting Armies, 1639-1651*, and with my co-author Dr. Andrew Lind have made substantial progress on *'His Majesty's Loyal Subjects': Scottish Royalist Regiments, 1639-1655*. My article 'Three Armies in One? Scottish Engager Military Organisation in 1648' appeared in *1648 and All That. The Scottish Invasions of England 1648 and 1651. Proceedings of the 2022 Helion and Company 'Century of the Soldier' Conference*, ed. C. Singleton (Warwick, 2023). I delivered a paper entitled 'Montrose's Armies, 1644-46' to The 1st Marquis of Montrose Society, and to the 2023 Helion and Company 'Century of the Soldier' Conference. The War and Society in Early Modern Europe Conference (Oxford 11 September) has accepted my paper 'Pluscarden's Rising 1649: inevitable failure or lost opportunity?'

Keep up to date with ISHR!

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Website](#)



So, you think you know Scottish history?

The Answers

- 1) Jura
- 2) 1747
- 3) John Knox. He is buried behind St Giles' Cathedral on Edinburgh's High Street.