



CAIRT

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Newsletter of the Scottish Maps Forum

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Scottish Maps Forum

The Forum was initiated by the National Library of Scotland in 2002:

- To encourage multi-disciplinary map use, study and research, particularly relating to Scottish maps and mapmakers
- To disseminate information on Scottish maps and map collections
- To record information on maps and mapmaking, particularly in a Scottish context
- To liaise with other groups and individuals with map related interests
- To build on, and to continue, the work of Project Pont

Cairt

The newsletter is issued twice a year. "Cairt" is Gaelic and 17th century Scots for map.

View all issues online [here](#).

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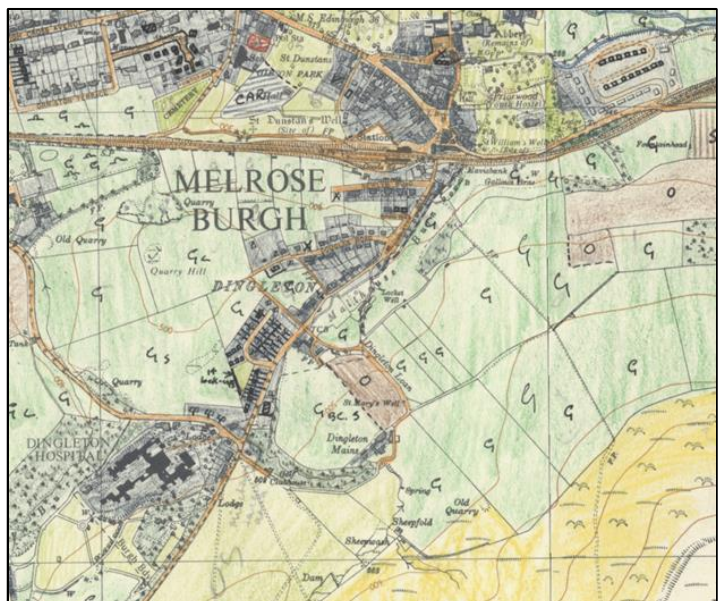
New online map resources

In the last six months, NLS has added a further 140,000 maps online, so that we now have over 410,000 maps on our website in total. The vast majority of these new maps are Ordnance Survey's detailed 1:1,250 / 1:2,500 maps of England and Wales (1940s-1970s), complementing the Scottish OS mapping at these scales which has been online for several years.

Several of the smaller online additions relate directly to Scotland. These include 860 field survey sheets showing land-use in selected areas in Scotland in the 1960s-1970s. These maps were created as part of the Second Land Utilisation Survey of Great Britain, directed by Professor Alice Coleman (1923-2023) of King's College, London. You can find more information [here](#).

See back page for further online map additions.

Also in this issue are two recent research articles on Scottish land surveyors – George Robertson and William Scott – whose work connected to one another. These highlight the importance of understanding biographical information and personal connections which often underpinned estate mapping.



Detail from 2nd Land Utilisation Survey Sheet NT53SW, surveyed 1966.

Unravelling George Robertson: a farmer and a nineteenth century land surveyor

Douglas Lockhart clarifies the confusion between two George Robertsons and pursues a Welsh connection.

This article focusses on two entries for George Robertson in the *Dictionary of Land Surveyors and Local Map-Makers in Great Britain and Ireland 1530-1850* which questioned if these were the same person.¹ The short answer is they were quite different, though their lives briefly crossed in Kincardineshire in the 1800s. George Robertson (the farmer) was born in 1758 at Mannerston in Abercorn Parish (West Lothian).² He tenanted Granton and Royston (Midlothian) and during this period wrote the *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Midlothian* (Edinburgh, 1795). The title of the sketchy county map in this volume contains an inscription 'G.R.

GRANTON' which may have encouraged historians to believe that he was also a land surveyor; in addition, he described this work as a 'survey' and himself as a 'surveyor', but this is as a gatherer or surveyor of information. His next move in 1800 was to become judicial factor managing the financially complex estate of the 8th Viscount Arbuthnott (1778-1860) and tenant of Mains of Arbuthnott farm near Laurencekirk (Kincardineshire) where he wrote the agricultural survey of Kincardineshire.³

Robertson (the farmer) left Kincardineshire in June 1811, where he had become embroiled in a long-running dispute over accounting matters and the condition of the Mains farm.⁴ He moved to Irvine (Ayrshire) and took up the factorship of the Earl of Eglinton's estates in the west of Scotland. Retiring in 1816, he continued writing numerous volumes, including *Rural Recollections* (Irvine, 1829) in which he gave an account of agrarian change in the three areas of Scotland where he had lived. Details of his later life were recorded in an obituary in the *Ayr Advertiser*.⁵

However another George Robertson (the land surveyor) is identified in the *General View of the*



Fig.1. Sketch of a farm in G. Robertson, *A General View of the Agriculture of Kincardineshire ...* (London, 1810), opposite p.184. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Agriculture of Kincardineshire, or The Mearns, where an illustration of a farm steading (**Fig.1**) is described as 'drawn, not by the author of this survey, but by a young man of the same name, a land surveyor of distinguished accuracy, residing in this county'.⁶ This George Robertson (1783-1845) was born in Perthshire and during his childhood the family moved to Kincardineshire, probably to Fordoun Parish.⁷ It has not been possible to identify to whom he was apprenticed, but Colin Innes (*Cairt* 44, January 2024) is a strong candidate, as Innes was working in Aberdeen and Kincardineshire in the 1790s and 1800s. Robertson's earliest known plans are of Auchronie, Newhills Parish (1805) and three plans of the Earl of Aberdeen's extensive estates where he was employed between 1804 and 1808.⁸ His draughtsmanship is of high quality, reminiscent of the Peter May-George Brown-Colin Innes school of surveyors.⁹ Many of his plans, valuations, factory accounts and correspondence survive among estate papers (**Fig.2**).¹⁰

¹ S. Bendall (ed), *Dictionary ... 1530-1850* (London, 1997), vol.2, pp.435-6 entries R191 and R191.4.

² OPR 661/3 p.11 Register of Baptisms, Abercorn Parish, 12 May 1758.

³ G. Robertson, *General View of the Agriculture of Kincardineshire or The Mearns* (London, 1810).

⁴ Aberdeen University [hereafter AUL] Papers of Arbuthnott of Arbuthnott MS 2764/2/1/2/9; NRS GD3/15/3/1/1 Papers of the Montgomerie Family, Letter Book of George Robertson, 1811-1816.

⁵ *Ayr Advertiser*, 16 February 1832 p.3 col.4.

⁶ Robertson op cit p.184.

⁷ Glynne-Gladstone Archive, Gladstone's Library, Hawarden [hereafter GG] /2372 Letter, George Robertson to Sir Stephen Glynne. 1 August 1843.

⁸ AUL MS 3860/18502; NRS55/18/1/50 Earl of Aberdeen's *General Account* 24 Aug 1802-1 Nov 1816; RHP9923; RHP9941; RHP9945.

⁹ I.H. Adams (ed), *Papers on Peter May land surveyor 1749-1793* (Scottish History Society, Edinburgh, 1979), pp.xxv-xlii.

¹⁰ NRS55 op cit; NLS Acc. 4796 Fettercairn Papers; NRS GD274 Stuart & Stuart, Cairns & Co., WS. Collection; NRS RHP passim; AUL Dingwall-Fordyce Papers MS 4038/5/5

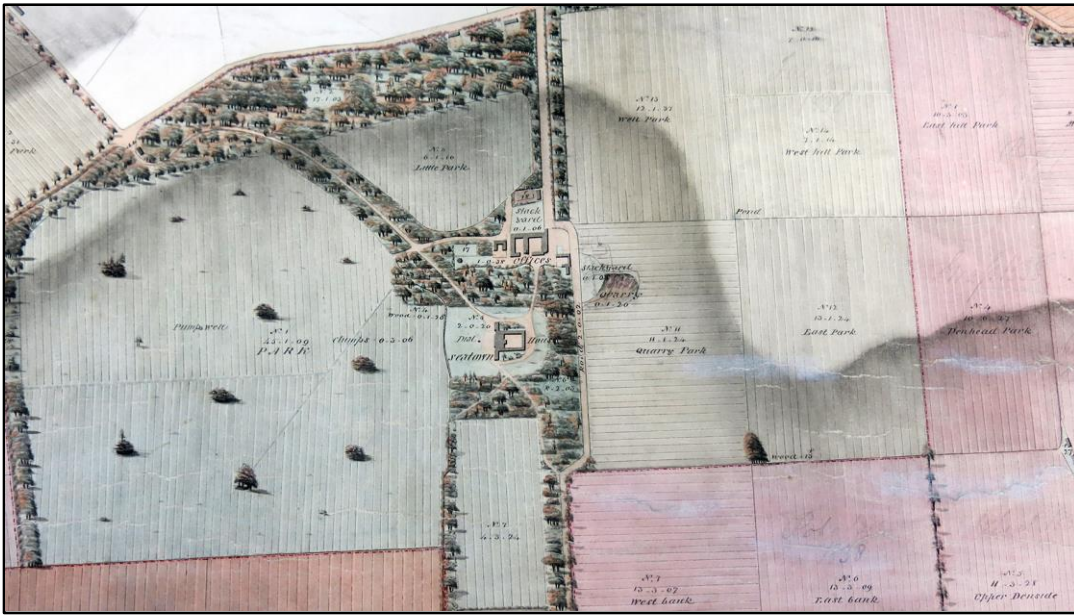


Fig.2. Excerpt from a Plan of the Estate of Seaton in the County of Forfar, 1817. RHP141372. Personal photograph reproduced with the permission of the National Records of Scotland.

These demonstrate how his career developed along a path, typical of many land surveyors, beginning with surveying, followed by involvement in farming, and finally as factor for major estates, in his case in the Mearns (Woodston and Fettercairn) and Buchan (Brucklay and Pitsligo). The advertisement columns of the *Aberdeen Journal* and the *Montrose Review* provide further insights into his role in estate management. His expertise was sought by the Aberdeenshire Commissioners of Supply in relation to the accuracy of James Robertson's *Map of the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine ...* (1822) and by Sutherland estate management in the recruitment of skilled agricultural workers.¹¹

Robertson became a member of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland in 1833 and was a successful exhibitor of cattle at the Society's shows in Aberdeen in 1834 and 1840 and at the annual summer events held by the Fettercairn Farmers' Club.¹² He also played a prominent role in local politics, as a committee member supporting the Conservative candidate, Major-General Hugh Arbuthnott (1780-1868) at the 1832 General Election and chairing a meeting of farmers who were electors prior to the next election in 1835.¹³ His knowledge of contemporary agricultural conditions was

and 6; AUL Macdonald Collection MS 3860/9501; /18502; /37751; GG; NLW Glynne of Hawarden Papers [hereafter GH]; North East Wales Archives, Hawarden Estate Papers [hereafter D/HA].

¹¹ Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives, Records of the Aberdeenshire Commissioners of Supply AC9/8/1/44; 45; 101 and 106; NLS Dep.313/1197 Letter, George Robertson to George Gunn, 18 January 1831.

¹² *Caledonian Mercury*, 10 January 1833 p.3 col.5; *Aberdeen Journal*, 8 October 1834 p.4 col.1; *Witness*, 14 October 1840 p.4 col.5; *Montrose Review*, 5 August 1836 p.252 col.4 and p.253 col.1; 9 August 1839 p.253 col.3.

recognised when he gave evidence in 1836 to the *Select Committee appointed to inquire into the State of Agriculture* which published detailed statistics, provided by Robertson, for farming in Kincardineshire.¹⁴ In the same period, he contributed much of the entry for Fordoun Parish in the *New Statistical Account*, supporting his friend and referee the Rev. James Leslie.¹⁵ In 1844, he was a witness at the Devon Commission which inquired into land tenure in Ireland.¹⁶

An absence of surviving plans may suggest Robertson retired from surveying after 1825 and by 1842, ill health curtailed farming activities. Correspondence demonstrates the difficulties of making a living as a factor while competing with younger men in a crowded land factoring market.¹⁷ John (later Sir John) Gladstone of Fasque, helped Robertson find employment at Hawarden (Flintshire), the poorly managed estate of Sir Stephen Glynne, the brother-in-law of William Ewart Gladstone (John's son). Robertson took up the agency at Hawarden on 1 November 1843. He overhauled estate management practices, recruited skilled workers from north-east Scotland and introduced new improving tenancy arrangements informed by Scottish experience. These reforms met some resistance

¹³ *Montrose Review*, 20 July 1832 p.232 col.1; 23 January 1835 p.25 col.3.

¹⁴ PP 1836 (334) XVI *Third Report from the Select Committee ... State of Agriculture with the Minutes of Evidence*, pp.216-36 mentions 'our parish' ie Fordoun.

¹⁵ NSA XI (1845), pp.66-111 [drawn up 1835; revised 1837].

¹⁶ PP 1845 (616) XX *Royal Commission of Inquiry ... occupation of Land in Ireland. Evidence – Part II*, pp.42-55.

¹⁷ NLS Fettercairn Papers Acc. 4796 Box 58 Letters, George Robertson to Sir John S Forbes, 3 September 1840; 26 October 1840; 26 March 1841.

from the tenantry.¹⁸ His time in Wales was, however, short and he died on 28 July 1845.¹⁹

Robertson's successor at Hawarden was his former apprentice Gregory Burnett (1806-74), son of a Stonehaven lawyer.²⁰ He spent four years training with Robertson²¹ that included assisting some of his mentor's largest contracts, such as mapping the extensive Dingwall estates in Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire in 1825 (Fig.3).

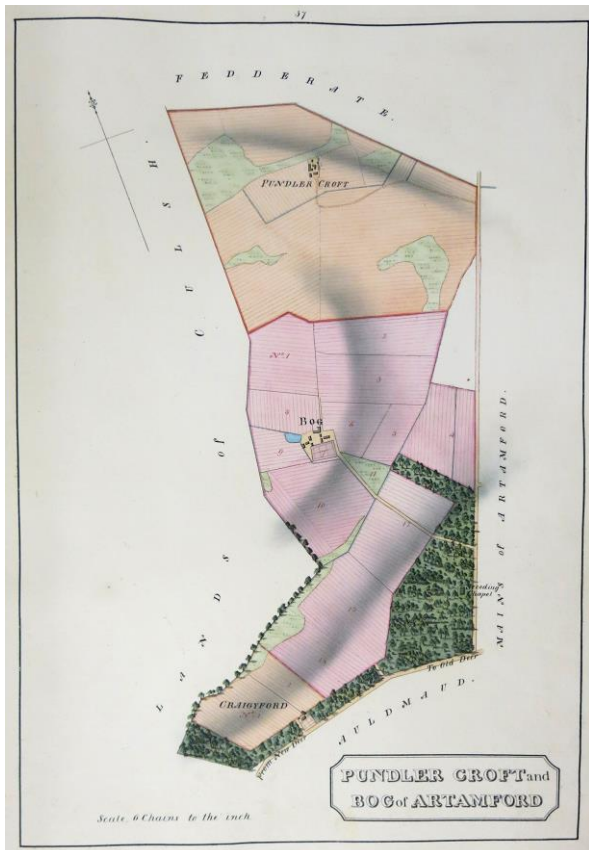


Fig.3. Pundler Croft and Bog of Artamford, Aberdeenshire, 1825. AUL MS 4038/5/5 p.37. Courtesy of Museums and Special Collections, University of Aberdeen.

From 24 January 1828 Burnett was employed by the Sutherland estates and was joined in September 1829 by another of Robertson's apprentices, William Scott (1812-82). Farm plans and a *Map of the county of Sutherland ... 1831-32* (published in 1833) resulted from their employment, which ended at Whitsunday 1833.²²

¹⁸ GH 5502 Remarks on Estate, 1842; 4684 Letter, John Gladstone to Sir Stephen Glynne, 4 August 1843; 4683 Letter, George Robertson to John Gladstone, 27 June 1843; 4692 Letter to the tenants of the Hawarden Estate, 1844; 164 Memoranda and suggestions ... 1844; D/HA/1433 Letter book 1843-45 passim; GG/2371 Letter, George Robertson to John Gladstone, 6 May 1845.

¹⁹ *Chester Chronicle*, 1 August 1845 p.2 col.5.

²⁰ OPR 258/3 f.74 Register of Baptisms, Fetteresso Parish, 23 November 1806.

LAND SURVEYING.

MR GREGORY BURNETT, Ardross, Ross-shire, begs leave respectfully to intimate to the Landed Proprietors, Factors, Professional Gentlemen, and Tenantry, of the Counties of Aberdeen and Kincardine, that he has commenced business in Aberdeen as a LAND SURVEYOR and VALUATOR. Mr BURNETT, after receiving a liberal education in Aberdeen, and studying Mathematics and Drawing under the best masters in Edinburgh, served an apprenticeship with Mr George Robertson (lately at Thornton Castle), the well-known Surveyor and Valuator. He afterwards was in the employment of the late Duke of Sutherland for seven years, during which period he surveyed the very extensive Estates belonging to his Grace in the Counties of Sutherland and Ross; adjusted, laid out, and valued many of the farms; and with the assistance of his former apprentice, Mr William Scott, constructed, from actual survey, a Map of the entire county of Sutherland, (consisting of upwards of a million of acres,) which has since been Lithographed and published. When these operations were completed, Mr BURNETT became Tenant of Mains of Ardross, a large arable Farm, on the Duke's Ross-shire property, which he has occupied for ten years; and while there, besides acquiring a thorough practical knowledge of Agriculture, he acted as a Surveyor and Valuator. From his regular professional education, and the experience which he has acquired in Surveying, Valuing, Mapping, and Farming, Mr BURNETT presumes to hope that he will be enabled to render satisfactory service to those Gentlemen who shall be pleased to honour him with their employment.

He can refer to Testimonials in his favour from a variety of highly respectable individuals to whom he is well known, both in his private and professional capacity.

For the present, any communications for Mr BURNETT may be addressed to the care of Messrs SMITH & COCHRAN, Advocates, 56, Union Street, Aberdeen.

Aberdeen, 29th May, 1844.

Fig.4. *Aberdeen Journal*, 29 May 1844 p.3 col.2. Courtesy of Museums and Special Collections, University of Aberdeen.

Burnett's *curriculum vitae* is neatly summarised in an advertisement placed in the Aberdeen and Montrose press in 1844 (Fig.4). His advertising campaign suggests that he may have planned to give up farming and concentrate on land surveying and work as a land agent. However, there was challenging competition in Aberdeen and Burnett left for Wales soon after Robertson's death.²³ He was agent at Hawarden for twenty-three years and was captain of the 2nd (Hawarden) Flintshire Rifle Volunteers which also helped cement his position in the community.²⁴

Acknowledgements

Thanks to archivists and librarians in Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, Ayr, Edinburgh, Haddo, Hawarden and Montrose. Malcolm Bangor-Jones for a letter held by Staffordshire Record Office.

²¹ Staffordshire Record Office D539/K/1/3/17 Letter, George Robertson to George Gunn, 20 January 1828.

²² NLS Sutherland Papers Dep.313 Plans and /1199 Letter, James Loch to George Gunn, 30 May 1833.

²³ GG/22 Letters, William Ewart Gladstone to Sir Stephen Glynne, 5 August-3 September 1845; GG/640 Letters, John Gladstone to William Ewart Gladstone, 2 August-19 September 1845.

²⁴ *Wrexham Advertiser*, 7 August 1875 p.7 col.5.

The daily life of a land surveyor: apprentice William Scott in Sutherland, 1829-32

Diana Webster examines five letters which offer a rare insight into a surveyor's living and working conditions.

On 14 September 1829, aged seventeen, William James Scott (1812-1882) left Thornton, Kincardineshire, to travel to Sutherland to become Gregory Burnett's apprentice.¹ Burnett (1806-74) had been employed to survey the Sutherland estate in the previous year, and then was commissioned to prepare a county map of Sutherland which was published in 1833.² Five letters survive in University of Aberdeen Special Collections, written by William to his mother, Elizabeth Scott (nee Cruickshank) at the family farm at Achath, Cluny parish, about sixteen miles northwest of Aberdeen.³ The information in the letters may be complemented by Accounts and Vouchers for payment of expenses during the surveys, held in the Sutherland Estate Papers in the National Library of Scotland (NLS).

William's family were 'industrious' farmers and factors. His grandfather David Scott (1734-1804) was from Angus, 'one of the earliest and best improvers in that county', and was factor for at least three large estates, including Craigievar.⁴ William's father James Scott (1776-1815), tacksman at Achath and factor at Castle Fraser, died when William was three, so the boy was close to his uncle William Scott (1781-1822), who farmed at Mains of Craigievar, where he had followed his father as factor.

The tone of William's first letter, written from Golspie on 28 September 1829 is of breathless excitement. After three nights in Aberdeen he left at six o'clock in the morning on the Duke of Gordon coach. The timing of the journey could not have been worse, as Buchan, Moray and Inverness had just suffered the 'Muckle Spate', the wettest August on record, resulting in devastating floods.⁵

I saw two or three bridges down before we got to Huntly and went over one where it was only wide enough to let the coach pass At the Spey half of the bridg [sic] was down and we had to cross with boats. The bridg [sic] over the Findhorn was entirely swept away

¹ NLS Dep.313/1903/p.70/no.195. Travelling expenses from Thornton to Golspie.

² D. L. Walker, The nineteenth century mapping of Sutherland, *Scottish Local History*, 101 (2018), pp.27-35.

³ Aberdeen University Library (AUL) MS 3873/2/6. The Special Collections catalogue gives considerable biographical detail of the Scott and Burnett family.

⁴ G. S. Keith, *A general view of the agriculture of Aberdeenshire* (Aberdeen, 1811), p.167.

⁵ AUL MS 3873/2/6/5. This letter is dated 'Monday 28' with no month or year, so is filed at the end of a chronological list and numbered as 5. The day of the week and account of the floods confirm it was written on 28 September 1829, and is the first

and the coach had to go through fields, the road being swept away and covered with sand and ston[e]s just like the bade [bed] of a river.

This letter can hardly have reassured his mother: at Huntly 'two peck-pocket' joined the coach and tried to pick his pockets. Following a night in Inverness, he reached Golspie twelve hours later, where he 'comfortably lodged' in the Golspie Inn and joined 'Mr Burnett': although just six years of age separated master and apprentice, William was always very formal in his address.

There was no surveying in his first week, although they did climb Ben Horn where William had his first sight of the interior, 'nothing but hills and lochs'. After a week surveying together, Burnett left for two months to work elsewhere, leaving William to survey farms on the east coast, supported by three Gaelic and English speaking Highlanders to carry the chain.⁶ His survey started about eight miles from Golspie heading north to Caithness, so 'I have a poney [sic] to ride to my work in the morning and back again at night ... Every persone [sic] has a pony here and they are the pret[t]iest ponies that ever I saw and stand a great deal of fatigue.'

To be in charge of farm surveys, William must already have had some expertise, so who provided initial tuition? Burnett had been in Sutherland for over a year, and previously would have been an apprentice himself. Burnett's master, George Robertson (1783-1845) is the obvious candidate: in a later letter William writes that 'Mr Robertson' would not approve of his request to his parent for more money, suggesting Robertson had a position of authority; also he departed from Thornton, where Robertson lived.⁷ Robertson often advised James Loch (1780-1855), the Commissioner in overall charge of the Sutherland Estates, about potential staff. Loch's wife was from Bridgeton, Kincardineshire, a few miles from Thornton.

letter. See [Wikipedia article – Muckle Spate](#) & [WeatherWeb \(Weather in History\)](#) website.

⁶ Experienced chain men were paid 2 shillings per day: NLS Dep.313/1903/p.70/no.186.

⁷ Assuming 7-year apprenticeships started at about age 14, it is likely that Burnett's and Scott's apprenticeships with Robertson overlapped. After drawing and mathematics tuition in Edinburgh, Burnett spent 4 years with Robertson, c.1824-27; Scott was probably with Robertson c.1826/7-29, completed with Burnett 1829-32. No surviving Robertson plans after 1825 suggests a decline in his active surveying, so he probably trained Scott in draughtsmanship and theory, and Burnett provided practical experience in Sutherland.

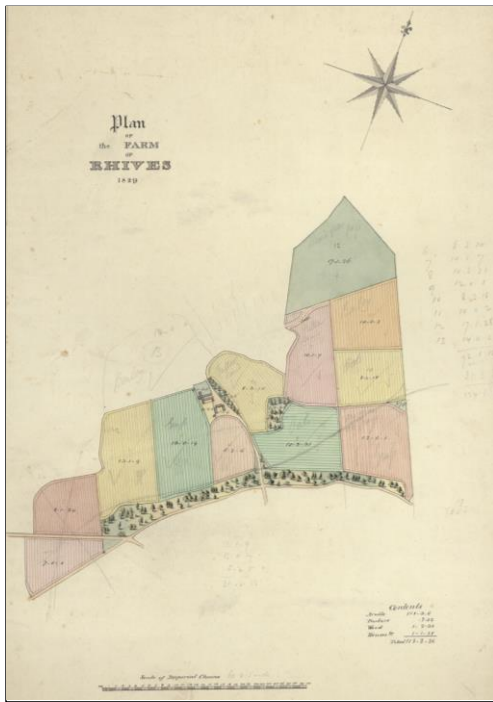


Fig.1. William Scott, *Plan of Rhives farm*. 1829. NLS Dep.313/3618/10. Reproduced with permission of the Sutherland Estates. [View map online](#)

Scott's *Plan of the farm at Rhives 1829* (**Fig.1**) reveals the standard he had reached.⁸ The finished quality and colouring is very different from the practical but quickly drawn uncoloured farm surveys which Burnett was producing at the time, in response to Loch's desire to speed up the surveys. In this apprentice piece William is also displaying different designs of lettering. The *Plan of the farm of Golspie Tower 1829* is anonymous, but of similar style, and the over-embellished title suggests William was practising his flourishes.⁹ (**See Fig.2**)



Fig.2. Flourishes decorate the title on the *Plan of the farm of Golspie Tower*. 1829. NLS Dep.313/3618/14. Reproduced with permission of the Sutherland Estates. [View map online](#)

The second letter was eighteen months later on 4 April 1831, sent from Rhives farm, their base near Golspie:

*Mr Burnett and I returned from the west Coast last week after an absence of about a Month in which time we have traveled [sic] about 250 miles in a circuit and the weather was so bad that we have had not a dry day all the time we were away and as we were constantly exposed we were always quite wet. The houses that we lived in were also damp so that you may see we did not live very comfortably. Notwithstanding all this bad usage I never enjoyed better health with the exception of the skin coming off my face.*¹⁰

By 9 June, two months later, they had started to survey the east coast for the Sutherland county map, and planned to go into the interior in a fortnight:

*so that we will require to live in a tent. The way that we intend [sic] doing is to get a cart for carrying our bedding and provisions and 4 men, 3 to go along with Mr B and I to carry our instruments and a forth [sic] to take charge of the tent and to cook for us. Our tent is what officers in the army use – it is about 13 feet long and 10 broad and of an oval [sic] form not like the tents that they use in the markets but like shape of a corn stake [stack] slanting in the roof and coming even down so that you can stand upright in any part of it. It has a door each end so that we will have it divided [sic] into two part, one for ourselves and another for the men.*¹¹

This style of tent was used by army officers for many decades, called initially a marquis (marquee).

His fourth letter was written from 'Kirkiboll', near Tongue, on 28 January 1832.¹² He had been waiting for the mist to clear for a week at the Inn so that he could climb a mountain to take observations. As usual a large part of the letter is concerned with the design of his shirts, which his long-suffering mother has been making for him. They must be made of linen, with finer linen for the front, five buttons, and a particular shape of collar; he is not pleased when she sends cotton shirts. He prefers ribbed socks, as plain knitting is too large and baggy at the ankles. He asks his brother to go to Simpson and Whyte (a gentlemen's outfitter in Aberdeen) to buy a ready-made waterproof 'topper', a shoulder cape. For entertainment he asks for the Waverley novels and a magazine; he also has a Bible.

⁸ [NLS Dep.313/3618/10.](#)

⁹ [NLS Dep.313/3618/14.](#)

¹⁰ AUL MS 3873/2/6/1.

¹¹ AUL MS 3873/2/6/2.

¹² AUL MS 3873/2/6/3.

Scott's half yearly salary increased from £25 to £50 at Whitsunday 1832, indicating his change of status from apprentice to assistant surveyor.¹³ His fifth letter, written from Dallmichie [Dalmichy, north of Lairg] on May 16 1832, is the most informative about daily routine during the county map survey.¹⁴ William was trying to persuade his brother David to visit for a fortnight and extolled the fishing opportunities and that they were not without home comforts and had plenty of food. They rose at five o'clock, had breakfast at seven, with biscuit and butter, ham or eggs and tea for William, and potage, biscuit, butter, cheese, and milk (when it was available) for the men. It took about an hour to dismantle the tent and pack the cart,¹⁵ which was sent on ahead for around ten miles with the cook, who unpacked the cart, lit a fire, and prepared dinner. After a day's work they arrived about four o'clock, when they erected the tent, then all had dinner at half past four, which was usually broth with mutton, plus cheese, hard biscuit and butter. William had tea about seven and went to bed at nine. The men had more bread or biscuit, butter and cheese for supper.

Vouchers give quantities and costs of food purchased and also the suppliers, and indicate that their camping arrangements were far from primitive. For example in March-April 1832 John Low, merchant in Golspie, provided an extensive list of supplies including rice, mustard, soap, pepper, vinegar, candles, corks, fine tea, salt, split peas, shoe brushes, 6 egg cups, brimstone, 8 large flints, 40 lb pot barley, lemon juice, 2 gallons whisky, fishing line.¹⁶ Andrew Lindsay of Golspie sold them 2 claw hammers, nails, saws, ropes, a pair of 'Bretannia mettle' [ie. pewter alloy] candlesticks, 2 brass snuffers, 2 goblets, 2 cork screws, 2 salt spoons, 3 egg spoons, 2 frying pans and various items of crockery.¹⁷ They bought one or two sheep a month, costing from 15 shillings to £1:1s.¹⁸

One surprising creature comfort is that William had:

a portable airy bed which is so lite that you may hold it out with your little finger and when the air is out fit it into a great coat pocket and when it is blown up it is 6 feet long and 3 broad and about 6 inches thick and quite as easy to ly on as a common

bed. I have also got a portable bed sted [sic] which goes into very little bulk.¹⁹

Air mattresses were a recent invention. Thomas Hancock experimented with rubber-coating pneumatic mattresses, cushions and other inflatable equipment in the mid 1820s, and gives an amusing account of early designs where people rolled off the bag-shaped mattresses, until he developed a more stable mattress with separate cylindrical air pockets.²⁰

These letters do not describe surveying methods or instruments (although Vouchers do record Burnett's purchases of instruments and drawing materials) but offer a unique view of a surveyor's life in the field in 1830s Sutherland.

Later life

William did not continue as a surveyor after his apprenticeship, but emigrated to Canada in 1835 which offered more opportunities for farming land. In 1838 he settled in New Hamburg, near Toronto (where his mother's brother lived), and is recognized as a founding father and a prominent citizen, nicknamed the Laird of Campfield (after his uncle's farm in Scotland). Letters from Canada show his varied efforts to build a life, as farmer, shopkeeper, mill-owner and politician.²¹ His surveying expertise must have been useful when he served as Village Planner and Reeve in the township. His house in New Hamburg, built of Canadian granite in the style of an Aberdeenshire villa, is now a heritage site, and his name is commemorated in a local park.²² But he disliked the freezing winters and hot summers and decided to try New Zealand. After an exploratory visit, when he returned to Canada via Scotland, he moved his reluctant family to New Zealand in 1867 where he farmed, and dabbled unsuccessfully in gold mining. He died in 1882 at Paterangi north of Auckland, and is recorded on the family gravestone in Cluny churchyard.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to staff at University of Aberdeen Special Collections, Sutherland Estates, Douglas Lockhart and Malcolm Bangor-Jones. Digital images of many many Sutherland Estate plans are on the [NLS maps website](#).

¹³ NLS Dep.313/1906/p.2/no.9 and 10. Previously Burnett was promoted from £50 to £70 per half year.

¹⁴ AUL MS 3873/2/6/4.

¹⁵ In April 1832 a new cart with cover cost £11; repairs to the old cart £5: NLS Dep.313/1906/p.79/no.43.

¹⁶ NLS Dep.313/1906/p.80/no.55.

¹⁷ NLS Dep.313/1906/p.80/no.54.

¹⁸ For example NLS Dep.313/1906/p.80/no.53.

¹⁹ Two portable bedsteads costing 27 shillings each were bought in 1832: NLS Dep.313/1906/p.80/no.57.

²⁰ T. Hancock, *Personal narrative of the origin and progress of the caoutchouc or india-rubber manufacture in England* (London, 1857), pp.49-51.

²¹ AUL Scott Family Collection, Letters of William Scott MS 3873/2/6/1 [Sutherland]; /2 [Canada]; /3 [New Zealand]; M. Voisin, *William Scott and his extended family* (Voisin Publishing, New Hamburg, Ontario, 2009).

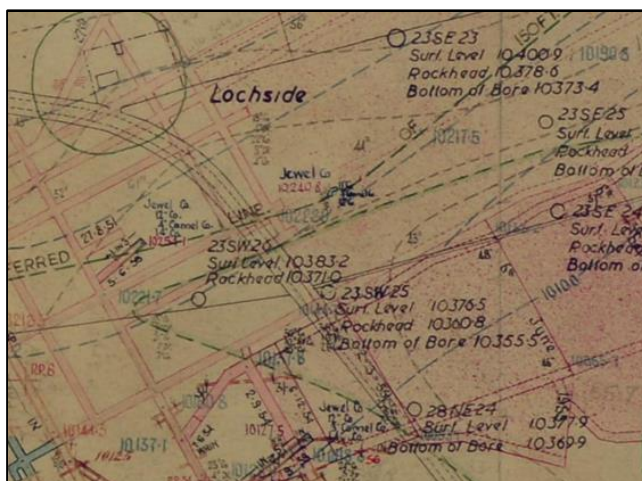
²² View references on [Canada's Historic Places](#) and [William Scott Park](#) websites.

Scottish Mining Abandonment Plans go online

In April, the National Records of Scotland released online images of 4,865 individual National Coal Board (NCB) mining abandonment plans onto the *ScotlandsPeople* website. These date between 1955 and 1989, and cover much of the central belt of Scotland from Ayrshire through to Stirlingshire.

More information can be found in [this article](#) on the *ScotlandsPeople* website.

Right: Hurlford main seam, Craigie parish, Ayrshire, 1953. RHP146000/99/2.



Collaborative project makes available the earliest estate map of Lewis (1807-9)

For many years, the earliest estate plan of Lewis, surveyed by James Chapman (1807-9) was on display on an internal stairwell within the Western Isles Council Offices in Stornoway. It was difficult to get close to it to read the map.

Through a successful collaborative project in early 2024 involving Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Libraries Service, Heritage Service, the National Library of Wales, and the National Library of Scotland, the map can now be viewed as part of the *Stornoway and environs historic maps web resource*. Both the original map and georeferenced versions are online, and the original map is now stored in archivally sound conditions. Further details [here](#).



Recent publications on Scottish Maps

- Juliette Desportes, 'Mapping the Scottish Highlands: Lochiel, 1772', *History Scotland* 24(3) (Summer 2024), pp.20-7.
- Douglas Lockhart, 'George Robertson's Letter Book, 1843-1845, North East Wales Archives, Hawarden', *Retour* 41 (Spring 2024), pp.3-5.

Recent NLS map website additions

- *Woodland in Scotland map viewer, 1840s-1880* - a layer of woodland extracted using automated procedures from OS six-inch 1st edition maps of Scotland.
- *Maps of Britain by commercial publishers, 1840s-1970s*. 906 smaller-scale maps covering Great Britain, England, Scotland and Wales.
- *Place and Poetry in Premodern Scotland*. A web resource, linking with our recent Scottish Maps Forum workshop in May, dedicated to how places were presented, imagined, and described, in the poetry of premodern Scotland, c. 1400-1700).
- *Maps of the Channel Islands by Ordnance Survey, 1900s-1970s*. 72 maps by OS and related official publishers.
- *OS National Grid maps of England and Wales, 1940s-1970s*. 137,859 detailed maps at 1:1,250 and 1:2,500 – the most detailed maps of all settled areas in England and Wales in the mid-20th century.

More information can be found on our [Recent Additions](#) page.