

Jacobite resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL021

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre
The Sir Duncan Rice Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
AB24 3AA

Introduction

Many individuals and institutions have deposited their papers with the University; as a result it has acquired an unrivalled collection of material not solely relating to the history and culture of the north-east of Scotland but also of national and international importance.

The University holds a rich collection of material that gives an insight into the complex history of shifting political allegiances during the 17th and 18th centuries. Far removed from Presbyterianism's heartlands in the central Lowlands and Borders, Catholicism survived and Episcopalianism prospered in the north-east of Scotland long after the Reformation. With its long tradition of loyalty to the House of Stuart it is unsurprising that Aberdeen became a Jacobite stronghold.

It is no surprise then that the University has perhaps the best collection of printed Jacobite texts in existence, the MacBean Collection, together with some important manuscript holdings.

Printed collections

The Local Collection, accessible via the Reading Room, contains relevant printed material including core reference works.

There are also named collections of relevance:

The MacBean Jacobite and Stuart Collection

The collection was donated to Aberdeen by the New York businessman William M. MacBean, and is a resource of international importance.

Some 3,500 books and 1,000 pamphlets, as well as numerous contemporary engravings cover many aspects of the histories of the Stuarts and the Jacobite risings. Some are held in no other collection in the UK, and some are unique, with the collection also being added to continually. The collection also includes later, 19th century, retrospective and romantic depictions of Jacobite history.

See also *Mabel Allardyce, Aberdeen University Library MacBean Collection* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1949).

Please note that there are some manuscript items within the MacBean collection, mainly contemporary copies of original documents held elsewhere.

A further resource is *Drawn Sword: Engravings and Woodcuts from the MacBean Jacobite and Stuart Collection*. This is an online resource providing access to the c.1,300 loose engravings and woodcuts, including portraits, topographical subjects and historical incidents.

Archive collections

University institutional papers

Records of the disciplinary hearing at King's College after the failed rising of 1715 (KINGS/1/4/1/6).

Family and estate papers

Amongst the extensive family and estate papers there are collections by families with Jacobite sympathies:

Letters from Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat to Lord Charles Fraser of Inverallochy (MS 3470/4/61).

Papers of Ogilvie-Forbes of Boyndlie including the Pitsligo papers, Jacobite verse and papers of their family circle in exile at Charleston in California (MS 2740/4 & MS 2740/10).

Organisation papers

Episcopalian Church archives:

There are numerous sources within the records of the Episcopalian Church. This extensive collection comprises records of the (pre-1865) Diocese of Aberdeen and the (post-1865) United Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney (records of the pre-1865 Diocese of Orkney and its churches are not included in this collection): c.1600 – current (MS 3320). Also see the records of St Andrew's Cathedral in Aberdeen that have been catalogued separately: c.1700 - 1989 (MS 3499).

Personal papers

Acworth, Sir Jacob: letter to the Navy Board: 1745 (MS 2603).

Bruce, David: letter and papers: 1746 – 1747 (MS 2604).

Stuart, Prince Charles Edward: proclamation: 1745 (MS 2141).

Stuart, Prince Charles Edward, Paris, with notes from John Murray, Midlothian, concerning the Stuart cause: 28th April 1748 (MS 952).

Stuart, Prince Charles Edward, letter to the Duc de Bouillon concerning claims to estate of King John Sobieski: 1766 (MS 2743).

Stuart, Prince James Francis Edward: letter to the Duc de Bourbon: 1723 (MS 2486).

Ramsay, Allan, poet: 'The Royall Youth may now advance': c.1715 (MS 955).

Wade, General George: Report on the State of the Highlands (contemporary copy): 1742 (MS 2292).

Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates: papers: c.1723 (MS 2602).

Letters on the state of the Highlands after the Jacobite rebellion: 1745 – 1813 (MS 954).

Papers relating to 1745 Jacobite uprising including an unsigned letter to 'C' concerning the raising and command of English armies, particularly by Cumberland: 2nd November 1745; letter of Alexander Forbes of Pitsligo (1678-1762) to Mrs Forbes at New giving news of the Battle of Culloden.

He names some of the dead and asks for some broad swords and belts: 1745; and uncomplete account to an unnamed correspondent of Lord Lovat's trial in London, 11th March 1747/8 (MS 2848).

Musselburgh Gaol: list of Jacobite prisoners: 1746 – 1895 (MS 2273).

Ticket for the trial of Lord Lovat (Simon Fraser): 1747 (MS 953).

Papers relating to land ownership following the Battle of Culloden: 1747 – 1751 (MS 2783).

Documents relating to the Jacobite period in Aberdeen including oaths of abjuration and loyalty: 1757 – 1794 (MS 1016).

Commonplace book and Jacobite songbook containing acrostics, poetry, lengthy song lyrics and comic pieces: 18th century (MS 2222).

Other relevant collections

Scottish Catholic Archives

There are numerous sources within the records of the Scottish Catholic Church. This extensive collection relates to the Catholic Church from the 12th century prior to the restoration of the Scottish Catholic Hierarchy in 1878. The collection contains material of regional, national and international significance and provides evidence of the survival of Catholicism both in Scotland and abroad through the archives of its missions, seminaries and colleges. There are also extensive collections relating to prominent Catholic families, many in the north-east of Scotland, and to Jacobites in exile (SCA).

Access

Materials are available upon request for consultation in the Reading Room. Please search online catalogues to identify individual items.

Further reading

For further reading please see the studies of a number of manuscripts, printed books and collections in the journals *Aberdeen University Library Bulletin*, *Aberdeen University Review* and *Northern Scotland*.

A number of the above papers were highlighted in: Beavan, Iain; Davidson, Peter; Stevenson, Jane. *Library and archive collections of the University of Aberdeen: an introduction and description*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press with the University of Aberdeen, 2011)

'Satirical Prints, Pamphlets and Polemics at Aberdeen' (University of Aberdeen Development Trust, undated).

Alistair and Henrietta Taylor, *Jacobites of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire in the rising of 1715* (Edinburgh, 1934).

Alistair and Henrietta Taylor, *Jacobites of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire in the rising of 1745* (Edinburgh, 1928).