**Legal history resources in Special Collections**

Andrew MacGregor, January 2015

QG HCOL023  [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/hcol/qghcol023.pdf](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/hcol/qghcol023.pdf)

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**The Wolfson Reading Room**

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

Tel. (01224)272598
E–mail: speclib@abdn.ac.uk
Website: www.abdn.ac.uk/library/about/special/

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**Introduction**

Many individuals, organisations and businesses have deposited their papers with the University and as a result, it has acquired an unrivalled collection of material relating to the north–east of Scotland. King’s College was founded by canon lawyer, Bishop William Elphinstone, and texts in canon and civil law represent one of the oldest deposits of medieval manuscripts and incunabula within the university’s collections.

Please note that this factsheet should be consulted in conjunction with the factsheets QG HCOL039: University student lecture notes in Special Collections and QG HCOL040: University student resources in Special Collections.

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**Archival collections**

**University institutional papers**

Faculty of Law papers: 1948 – 1971 (MSU 924).

**Business papers**


Davidson and Garden, advocates, Aberdeen: 14th century – 20th century (MS 2769 and MS 3744).

Robert Dawson, accountant: legal papers and correspondence: 1866 – 1921 (MS 3515).


Ledingham Chalmers, solicitors: 18th century – 20th century (MS 3257, MS 3277, MS 3394, MS 3521, MS 3662, MS 3665 and MS 3713).

F.A. MacDonald and Partners, engineers and surveyors, Aberdeen (incorporating Walker & Duncan, Aberdeen): 18th century – 20th century (Papers MS 2626; maps and plans MS 3860).


Inverness Lawyer’s account book: 1792 – 1793 (MS 873).

Inverness Writer, ledger containing accounts chiefly concerning Inverness Academy: 1807 – 1838 (MS 874).

**Personal papers**

Ancharano, Petrus de, teacher of canon law: legal tracts: 1484 (MS 262).


Daube, David, Roman and Biblical Law scholar, papers: 20th century (MS 3878).


Duff of Premnay, Patrick: legal style book: Mid 18th century (MS 2905).

Duff, Patrick, N.P., protocol books: 1717 (MS 3175/M/D79).


Gordon, Professor John, civilist, King’s College: Papers relating to legal teaching: 1701 (MS 132).

Hope, Sir Thomas, Lord Advocate, ‘Ane brief treatise upon severall substantiall heads of the Scottis law’: before 1646, copy 1679 (MS 2796).


Ogilvie, George, tutor: Treatise on Scots Law: 1675 (MS 559).

Spotswood, John, advocate: 'The Form of Process before the Lords of Council and Session': 1700 – 1740 (MS 144).


Wilson, physician and traveller: Volume containing a draft treatise by Robert Wilson on the purpose of Law and Punishment: 1820s (MS 421).

Zulueta, Sir Francis de, legal historian (MS 2785).

'Parainisis ad judices', Scots law treatise and another incomplete treatise: 1649 (MS 2775).

Notes on Scots Law by an unknown author: 1673 (MS 558).

Justinian I: Institutiones (commentary): 1676 (MS 5169).

Stair's Institutions of the Law of Scotland manuscript copy: c.1681 (MS 592).

'The body of Scots laws' manuscript: 17th century (MS 2097).


Essays on conveyancing, with forms of legal styles from an unidentified law firm: c.1790 (MS 556).

Records of local administration
Aberdeen Sheriff Court record extracts: 17th century -18th century (MS 3155).


Oral history collections
University of Aberdeen Oral History Archive: comprises nearly 200 interviews with individuals connected with the University (MS 3620) - of particular interest is the interview conducted with Michael Meston, Emeritus Professor of Scots Law (MS 3620/1/107).

Printed collections
The Local Collection, accessible via The Wolfson Reading Room, contains relevant printed materials specifically related to the study and teaching of law at the University.

There are numerous other printed collections of, or containing material of, particular relevance. A catalogue of the older legal literature held at the library can be found here: www.abdn.ac.uk/law/documents/antiquarian.shtml

Access
Materials are available upon request for consultation in the Reading Room. Please search online catalogues to identify individual items: www.abdn.ac.uk/library/about/special/search-catalogues/

Further reading
For further reading please also 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 and 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)


'Law at Aberdeen’ (University of Aberdeen Development Trust, undated).

Links
National Register of Archives http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

University Taylor Law Library www.abdn.ac.uk/library/about/taylor/