



Scottish History Society: *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society, Volume XVI*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer. 2020. 403 pp. ISBN: 978-0-906245-45-3. £40.

The printed collections of the Scottish History Society's *Miscellany* have long been a source of eclectic treasures and the newest addition to this collection (vol. XVI) is no different. This volume comprises of five never-before published transcriptions of primary sources, accompanied by brief descriptions and contextual information provided by the editor(s) of each document. The contents include: Miles Kerr-Peterson and Michael Pearce's transcription of King James VI's English subsidy and Danish dowry accounts (1588–1596), Salvatore Cipriano's *The Principal of Glasgow Against the Covenant* (1638), Ciaran Jones's *An Account of a Confession of Raising the Devil at Irvine on 10 February 1682*, Martha McGill's 'very rare and memorable' stories from James Cowan's letters (1707–1710), and Alice Glaze's lists of Cannongate parishioners (1661 and 1684/7). The majority of the material hails from the seventeenth century, but the contents of this volume have significance for a variety of studies of early modern Scotland and Britain.

Kerr-Peterson and Pearce's transcription of James VI's English subsidy and Danish dowry accounts are drawn from three documents: *The Audited Accounts of John Maitland, Lord Thirlestane, 1588–93* (British Library, Additional MS 22958); *Miscellaneous Accounts of John Maitland of Thirlestane and Jean Fleming, Lady Thirlestane, 1588–90* (National Library of Scotland, Advocates MS.29.2.5); and the *Accounts of Thomas Foulis, 1594–6* (National Records of Scotland, E30/14). These accounts cover the expenses paid for by James VI's English subsidy and the dowry from Queen Anna of Denmark, which, crucially, were not included within the treasurer or exchequer accounts. John Maitland, James's chancellor, unofficially oversaw the subsidy and dowry, using the comparatively huge sums of money in a never-ending struggle to support the king's expensive tastes and increasingly unsustainable debts. Not only do these accounts provide clear (and fiscally terrifying) insights into James's ramshackle finances, they tell a story of how the Scottish crown became gradually more and more reliant upon private debtors, such as the goldsmith Thomas Foulis, and the vital role played by individuals like Maitland in keeping the crown afloat. These sources contextualise the expenses of James's household and court, and as such, they will be of particular interest to historians of Scottish court culture and will provide insightful context for previous studies such as David Stevenson's *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of King James VI and Anne of Denmark* and Julian Goodare's edited collection, *The Reign of James VI*. Amongst the records there are also several details which will intrigue a broader historical audience, such as the expense of James's lavish gift-giving — exemplified in the king's gift of a jewel worth £533 6s 8d (Scots) to the French ambassador, Clermont

d'Ambroise — and James's purchasing of what appears to have been a Gaelic genealogy of the kings of Scotland. The true strength of these accounts comes from their synergy with other bodies of material, most notably the treasurer's accounts, but even in isolation they provide fascinating details of political and cultural life in Jacobean Scotland.

Salvatore Cipriano presents the second source in the collection, *The Principal of Glasgow Against the Covenant* (1638). Written by John Strang, Principal of the University of Glasgow, during the autumn of 1638, *Against the Covenant* is a criminally underutilised document which details the ideological counterarguments employed by opponents of the Scottish Covenanters. Held in the National Library of Scotland's Wodrow Collection (Wodrow Folio Volume XXXI, item 2, fols. 7–24), *Against the Covenant* is a formal denunciation of the need for the National Covenant and a condemnation of the Covenanters' enforced subscription campaigns and dismissal of Charles I's political and religious concessions. Strang had originally intended to read his treatise aloud at the Glasgow General Assembly (November–December 1638) in an act of solidarity with the king's commissioner, James Hamilton, Marquis of Hamilton, but was threatened into silence by several leading Covenanters. While several recent studies of Covenanted Scotland, including Cipriano's own work, have made good use of the original manuscript of Strang's arguments, it has largely been ignored by the surrounding scholarship, despite its value in detailing the ideological debates which emerged between supporters and opponents of the National Covenant. *Against the Covenant* provides crucial details on the early Covenanting period, including rare insights into how opponents of the Covenanters justified their resistance while simultaneously attacking the legitimacy of the Covenant and its adherents. As such, Strang's treatise should take its place as one of the fundamental sources of the 1637–1639 Covenanting crisis, with Cipriano's transcription providing an accessible and invaluable window into this chaotic and formative period of Scottish history.

The third entry in the volume is Ciaran Jones's transcription of the confession of Margaret Dougal, a servant girl, who claimed to have raised the Devil in Irvine on 10 February 1682. Drawn from Edinburgh University Library's David Laing Collection (LA. II/89, fols. 208r–209r), Dougal's curious confession is incredibly detailed, providing a step-by-step guide as to how and why she called upon the Prince of Darkness. Dougal hoped to convince the Devil to divulge the name of the true perpetrator of a crime (theft) of which she was accused. Following her titanic struggle with Lucifer, Dougal confessed the whole affair to her master, Major-General Robert Montgomerie, including details of the various guises the Devil took and the words they exchanged. The transcription will obviously be of particular interest to scholars of Scottish popular culture and belief, particularly for its reflection of societal attitudes towards the Devil and secular responses to paranormal events. Indeed, this account is particularly interesting for three

reasons: it comes very late in the ‘witch-hunting’ period; Dougal was not investigated for being a witch, but for summoning the devil (an important distinction); and the confession itself was pursued by the Privy Council, not the Presbytery of Irvine, although the Kirk did involve itself in the case. Such examples further nuance the work of previous scholars, such as Lizanne Henderson and Julian Goodare, and provide invaluable evidence of the uneasy relationship between the Kirk, the state and Scottish cultural attitudes towards the supernatural.

In a similar vein, Martha McGill’s transcriptions of three letters sent by the Presbyterian minister James Cowan to Robert Wodrow between 1707–1710 (Wodrow Folio XXVIII, fols. 222–225; Wodrow Letters Qu. II, fol. 143) discuss several supernatural occurrences, including two apparitions of angels, a ghost sighting and the story of a woman who died, went to Heaven, then returned to her mortal body. At first glance, the topic and audience of these letters seem utterly bizarre. Both Cowan and Wodrow were devoutly Calvinist, and yet, in these letters they discussed topics which were, as McGill points out, at best ‘theologically dubious’ if not ‘outright heretical’ (p. 159). Within this paradox there are several noteworthy themes which complement Jones’s previous contribution. First and foremost, these letters detail discussions had by two respected Calvinist clergymen about the theologically ambiguous nature of the supernatural. While ghosts, angels and journeys between the afterlife and mortal realm had long legacies within popular culture and belief, they were grey areas within scripture, which in this case provides a fascinating case study of two clergymen trying to rationalise the paranormal. Historians of popular culture and belief will enjoy picking out the details of these accounts, while church historians will relish the theological flexibility shown by two kirkmen whose church is often seen as fundamentally inflexible.

The final contribution to the volume comes from Alice Glaze, who has transcribed the lists of parishioners from the 1661 and 1684–1687 parish surveys from the burgh of Canongate, Edinburgh. Tirelessly transcribed from the National Records of Scotland (CH2/122/67 and CH2/122/68), these surveys provide a unique insight into parish and town life in seventeenth-century Scotland. In their own right, the records reveal details of contemporary household structures, social movement and socio-religious relations. However, one cannot help but feel that Glaze’s transcriptions will shine brightest when used in conjunction with other sources, such as local kirk session and burgh council records, to construct a uniquely clear picture of life in a Scottish burgh. Moreover, the parishioner lists will provide stimulating reading for gender historians, as even a cursory reading of the lists reveals numerous female-led households and several examples of women living on their own or with other unrelated women. On a more mundane level, these records (and the accompanying marginalia) give us a rare insight into parish and burgh administration.

All of the transcriptions discussed above make an invaluable contribution to their respective fields and will undoubtedly stimulate new research by widening access to these unique documents. The collection will be of most interest to social and cultural historians of seventeenth-century Scotland, but the scholarly generosity and professionalism exemplified by the editors of these sources should be applauded by the entire historical community.

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