

# THE SCOTS CANADIAN

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## Scottish Studies Courses to Focus on Experiential Learning

Report by David Hunter, President

Dear fellow members,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing support, encouraging suggestions and for your donations — all of which are greatly appreciated. It is truly gratifying to receive this tangible recognition of the importance of Scottish Studies in Canada, which has placed the Scottish Studies Program at the University of Guelph at the forefront of the international academic world.

These days, universities are under constant pressure to prove that subjects being taught — especially humanities and arts courses — have practical value and may lead to a job, and so the type of experiential learning work being carried out by students at Guelph as a result of the co-op placement initiatives funded by the Scottish Studies Foundation is now crucial in the current environment of

performance-based funding.

Speaking recently on this topic, Professor Kevin James thanked the Foundation for its foresight in funding the university's first co-op student program which pays Scottish Studies students to work on various projects while continuing their studies. Kevin highlighted the work carried out by Josh Lehman, the inaugural co-op student, who has been working with a number of faculty members and has gained valuable hands-on experience such as digitizing many of the University's historic documents to improve accessibility. He assisted Kevin on the Duff House and other projects; with Professor Linda Mahood by transcribing 19th-century newspaper letters on Lock Hospitals and Magdalene Asylums in Scotland; and with Cathryn Spence by transcribing landlord-tenant records and by working in tax rolls for further research. He also worked with Administrative Coordinator Melissa Turner, creating twitter (X) posts to improve the reach and subscriptions for the International Review of Scottish Studies.

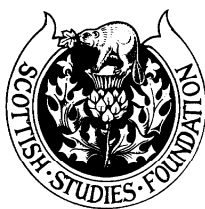
Also at the University of Guelph, the Foundation's Endowment Fund is being used to pay several students to work on various projects this summer. Wilma Thumm, an MA student who worked with Kevin on the history of golf and who is now completing a second MA on Scottish topics (in European Studies), will be working in the digitization room on a part-time basis. MA student Gavin Hughes is working on the partnership with Duff House in Aberdeenshire and is developing a 20th century guide which will present a narrative of the decay and subsequent revival of the mansion as it



Researchers from the University of Guelph are exploring the "Many Stories of Duff House" — a unique partnership with Historic Environment Scotland (HES). Gavin Hughes (MA '24) has been the lead student researcher with Professor Kevin James, working with Dr. Laura Harrison at HES. Duff House is a Georgian estate house in Banff, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Now in the care of HES, it is part of the National Galleries Scotland and is a Category A listed building.

evolved from 1900 on. James Rubino, also an MA student, is carrying out final editorial work on the Jacobite book which emerged from the 2022 colloquium on that subject. When completed, the book will be submitted to Edinburgh University Press for publication. Also, a record number of students are presently conducting research in Scotland including James Rubino and Katherine Foran, who received the Foundation's Duncan Campbell Memorial Travel Grant Award.

To further reinforce Guelph's commitment to experiential learning, Kevin also announced that he will be teaching a new course on that subject this fall. Again, it will be based on the idea of getting students out of the classroom and into practical hands-on experiences for historians. The course will include the development of an exhibit which will be curated and installed by students and which will showcase the University's collection of travel documents such as diaries, photographs and ephemera from the 19th and early 20th centuries. The final exhibit will be displayed on the second floor of the McLaughlin Library in spring 2025 and members will be invited to attend.



### THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

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## *The Scottish-Canadian Academic Partnership*

We are delighted to announce that the Scottish government has selected the University of Guelph to be its partner in a new initiative: *The Scottish-Canadian Academic Partnership (S-CAP)*. In a document signed by Professor Kevin James, Chair and Director, Scottish Studies Foundation Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph, and John Devine, Head of the Scottish Government Office in Canada and Directorate for External Affairs for the Scottish Government, they explained that the partnership between the Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph and the Scottish Affairs Office Canada underscores the enduring relationship between Scotland and Canada — which is demonstrated through a multitude of shared values and interests in global challenges. With ties between the two nations as strong as ever, the launch of S-CAP contributes to broader efforts to strengthen that relationship by:

- promoting communication between scholars with mutual research interests;
- highlighting their research to the wider community; and
- bringing experts together to nurture new research agendas across a broad range of disciplines.

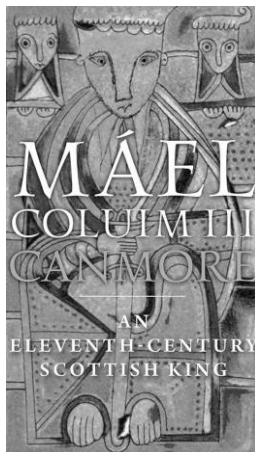
Perhaps one of the best examples of Scotland's collaboration with Canada is in exceptional teaching and research. Not only are we proud of our academic institutions; we also take pride in our aspiration to build educational links and partnerships globally. Scotland's International Strategy highlights a desire to deepen ties with key partners, like Canada, for both Scotland's benefit and that of its international counterparts — and through the launch of the Scottish Connections Framework, the Scottish Government welcomes diaspora networks around the world to join Scotland's Global Community. It is hoped that S-CAP can provide an extraordinary forum to deepen these international Scottish Connections.

This nascent partnership also represents an opportunity to inspire a new generation of Scots and Canadians alike. We are thrilled to share that S-CAP will facilitate a visiting scholar scheme — an initiative that will see the appointment of a scholar who exemplifies the innovative research generation that we are building between our countries.

Professor Kevin James explained that engagement in this new formal partnership is a major milestone for the Centre for Scottish Studies and reflects not only on the calibre of Scottish studies students, but on the resources, profile and support that the Foundation has provided over the decades.

He is excited about the future direction of S-CAP and looks forward to exploring how to make this program a success by delivering meaningful and sustainable collaboration between Scotland and Canada in the academic sector.

### *Online Lecture on Máel Coluim III, "Canmore": An Eleventh-Century Scottish King by Neil McGuigan*



Neil McGuigan, who was the winner of the 2023 Frank Watson Book Prize, will be giving a virtual lecture on Tuesday, September 10, from noon to 1 p.m. EDT. The lecture will be based on his book *Máel Coluim III, "Canmore": An Eleventh-Century Scottish King*. (Login details will be available soon.)

The legendary Scottish king Máel Coluim III, also known as "Malcolm Canmore," is often held to epitomize Scotland's "ancient Gaelic kings." But Máel Coluim and his dynasty were in fact newcomers, and their legitimacy and status were far from secure at the beginning of his rule. Máel Coluim's long reign from 1058 until 1093 coincided with the Norman Conquest of England, a revolutionary event that presented great opportunities and terrible dangers. Although his interventions in post-Conquest England eventually cost him his life, the book argues that they were crucial to his success as both king and dynasty-builder, creating internal stability and facilitating the takeover of Strathclyde and Lothian. As a result, Máel Coluim left to his successors a territory that stretched far to the south of the kingship's heartland north of the Forth, similar to the Scotland we know today.

The book explores the wider political and cultural world in which Máel Coluim lived, guiding the reader through the pitfalls and possibilities offered by the sources that

mediate access to that world. Our reliance on so few texts means that the eleventh century poses problems that historians of later eras can avoid. Nevertheless Scotland in Máel Coluim's time generated unprecedented levels of attention abroad and more vernacular literary output than at any time prior to the Stewart era.

Neil McGuigan is a researcher, historian and lecturer, and also works as a historical consultant. He gained degrees from the University of Edinburgh and a PhD in history from the University of St Andrews, where he is a regular lecturer and tutor. His recent research has concentrated on Scotland and Northumbria in the period 800 to 1200.

The Frank Watson Book Prize is awarded in odd-numbered years for the best monograph, edited collection and/or book-length original work on Scottish History published in the previous two years. The prize consists of a cash award, an invitation to present a plenary lecture and permission to advertise success in the competition. It was established more than 20 years ago by Dr. Cicely Watson, a crusader for educational reform in Ontario, in memory of her husband Dr. Frank Watson. Cicely and Frank were long-time supporters of the Scottish Studies Foundation and their association with Scottish Studies at Guelph dates back to 1968.

### *The Weirs of Blackwood*

Earlier this year, Sheila Mary Watt, one of our longtime members, sent us a package containing a large 3-ring binder containing a manuscript which she explained was the result of many years of painstaking research into her family history — the Weirs from the estate of Blackwood in Lanarkshire, Scotland. Sheila has very kindly offered to donate her work to the Foundation and we are pleased to announce that the resulting book will be published soon.

Sheila emigrated to Canada from Scotland after marriage in 1956, and worked for thirty years as a physiotherapist in Brampton and Orangeville. She is now happily retired and living independently in Guelph, Ontario, where she enjoys the challenges of genealogy and daily contact with her children and grandchildren.



The Weir Family Crest

# Haverings

P.B. Grant

I have a secret to share — and it's one that might strike my acquaintances as strange. For four years now, I've been writing and publishing haiku. As many of you will know, this is a form of poetry, originating in Japan, that finds its main source of inspiration in nature. Haiku aim to capture the essence of a moment or an experience and tend to be associated with meditation, silence, serenity. This is where the strangeness comes in, because those who know me don't associate me with any of those things. I've tried meditation: it didn't take. Silence? Not one of my virtues. Serenity? Maybe for about a minute in 1988. As for nature: while I'm often moved by the beauty of landscapes and am inspired by literary works on the subject (Thoreau's *Walden* is a long-time favourite, and Scottish author Nan Shepherd should be on your reading lists), I'm not known for being "outdoorsy." Like many who have grown up in urban centres, I don't quite know what to do with myself when confronted by Mother Nature. In this respect, I think of the scene from the movie *Trainspotting* where Renton and his pals travel from Edinburgh to the Scottish highlands in search of a spiritual experience, stand around disconsolately drinking beer, then get the first train back.

All of which is to say that I've been having trouble transitioning into this new role. An added complication is that I can't abide blather about inner journeys and paths to enlightenment, which many haiku enthusiasts discuss unironically. It's not that I don't recognize the value of inner journeys; I just don't feel the need to broadcast them. For most of us, outer realities tend to take precedence: we journey through life with an awareness of how easily and roughly trouble can elbow its way in—and at such times, let's be honest, no amount of zazen will help. As far as paths to enlightenment go, a lot of the paths I've taken lead in a somewhat darker direction (I'm thinking of a particularly grotty one near a chip shop in Greenock, of which the least said the better).

When I mentioned my new interest to my family, they reacted with scepticism and stifled laughter. Haiku, my younger brother informed me, don't go down well in Scotland. I know where he's coming from: the Scottish temperament doesn't seem suited to silent meditation; Scotland's soil is perhaps a bit too dark and inhospitable for this sort of poetry. However, haiku has been trying to take root in my homeland, to the point where a Scottish Haiku Society has come into being. I'm not the only Scot

toiling in this field — some, in fact, have been toiling there for quite a while. Glasgow author Alan Spence's poetry has long been infused with his interest in haiku and eastern philosophy. His book of haiku, *Glasgow Zen* (1981), is perhaps the best known of his works. The title speaks for a poetry and a mindset that can flourish amid mean streets. Crucially, his haiku contain a strain of wry Scottish humour, which helps leaven the seriousness while leaving the spiritual aspects intact. Spence runs the Sri Chinmoy Meditation Centre in Edinburgh, which underscores his commitment to this way of life.

Haiku is alive and kicking in Canada, too: those interested in meeting fellow enthusiasts can join the flagship organization, Haiku Canada. The majority of its members are based in the central provinces and the west coast, but as the Regional Co-ordinator for the Atlantic provinces, I've been doing my bit for the east coast cause and have organized the annual conference in Nova Scotia this spring. Till we meet in the Fall for some more havoring, I wish you all a safe and relaxing summer — and I'll end with a shout out to those, like me, who are trying to achieve inner peace in the face of outer discord: Serenity Now!



## *University of Guelph's inaugural Scottish Studies co-op student sends his thanks*

My name is Josh Lehman, a third-year Honours History Co-op student. I am also a member of Clan Campbell through my mother's side of my family. I had the pleasure and honour of working my most recent Co-op work term as the inaugural Intern for the Centre for Scottish Studies while working with Melissa Turner and as a Research Assistant for Dr. Kevin James, Dr. Linda Mahood, and Dr. Cathryn Spence of the History Department. What I enjoyed most about the position was the variety of projects and tasks I worked on. I enjoyed bouncing from different topics every few weeks, with my document scanning twice a week. I never felt I was bored by a task because I did it for too long. I enjoyed the challenges of accomplishing my tasks in the timeframes I followed. The opportunity of working with the Centre for Scottish Studies

aligns with my future aspirations by helping me improve my research skills and giving me experience working in Archives and Special Collections at a university. I feel this experience to be valuable for any career path in the history field that I may follow. I've always loved museums and the behind-the-scenes work, and I'd love to work at one. If I end up doing just that, I'm sure this opportunity will be extremely beneficial.

Throughout my work term with the Centre, I scanned Scottish documents, specifically letters exchanged by various people with Dr. James Dinwiddie and various documents in the Urquhart-Campbell-Sutherland Papers. I spent three hours twice a week in McLaughlan Library's Archives Reading Room scanning the various documents. I found it very fascinating to see the types of documents I scanned, as well as the way people wrote in the 18th and 19th centuries. With Melissa Turner, I created X (formally Twitter) posts to improve the reach and subscriptions for the International Review of Scottish Studies. With Dr. James, I assisted him on his Duff House project by looking through 20th-21st century newspaper articles that mentioned Duff House to gather information on it during the later parts of its occupation. My work with Dr. James on other projects I helped him with earned me special thanks in his books. With Dr. Mahood, I assisted her by transcribing 19th-century newspaper letters on Lock Hospitals and Magdalene Asylums in Scotland. With Dr. Spence, I assisted her by transcribing a landlord-tenant record into a Microsoft Excel sheet for further research.

Thank you very much for this invaluable opportunity to work with the Centre for Scottish Studies and to be a part of a wonderful team for the Winter Semester. This past work term has been my favourite semester in my three years of undergraduate studies. Without your support and donations, I wouldn't have had this unique and exciting opportunity.



*Josh Lehman is the first recipient of the Scottish Studies Foundation's Co-op Student Award which provides students with a \$10,000 payment to work on research and other projects pertaining to Scottish Studies in the History Department.*

# Hands Across the Sea: Curling and Transatlantic Sporting Travel

By Kevin J. James, PhD, Scottish Studies Foundation Chair & Professor of History, University of Guelph

Sports can tell historians a great deal about a society, revealing the historical patterning and the evolution of gender roles, socio-economic structures, national symbols, and influences and inflections of race and ethnicity. Rather than see it merely as “play,” in contrast with the serious stuff of “work,” historians take sport seriously, because it also reveals the interplay between the two: how work and leisure time were structured in the past, who had access (or not) to specific forms of recreation, and how sporting prowess could accrue “cultural capital,” which in turn had implications for the material prospects of people off the site of play.

Where does Canada’s curling culture fit into this narrative? As a sport, it came to be linked to ideas of the climate and the landscape: a quintessentially Canadian pursuit eminently suited to the country’s inhospitable climes. But within the first decades of the country’s establishment, the sport also knitted Canadians within a transnational network that proclaimed Scotland as the sport’s place of origin and spiritual home — a claim that was ritually affirmed by the transatlantic sporting tour. Sporting travel was enabled by improving transport networks, and by a growing network of clubs and associations, many linked to a wave of British immigrants in the first decade of the twentieth century. These networks and resources were critical to coordinating hospitality for international guests. Beyond these material factors were ideological incentives, some of which placed sporting tourism within the wider framework of imperial identities, and others which developed along the axes of Scottish identity, tracing the outsize impact of the Scots abroad and forging a culture of shared recreation in which the Scottish immigrant was a lynchpin. Sporting travel could highlight both the bonds forged by a common pursuit, underline divergences in practices and perspective, and also reveal the wider set of political incentives that motivated travel. Sporting tours — whether curling, cricket, baseball, lacrosse or others — were conspicuous ways in which the ties of sporting culture became nuanced performances of patriotism.

When an international tour by Scotland’s

leading “sons of the broom” was mooted in May 1902, the only impediment, one proponent, D.R. Gordon, Provost of Bathgate, wrote in a letter to the *Linlithgowshire Gazette*, was the expense. The cost risked privileging wealthier, rather than the most gifted, curlers. And yet, Gordon believed, the comparative ease of modern travel dovetailed with the pending coronation of Edward VII and the ongoing conflict in South Africa, where Canadians were fighting doggedly on behalf of the Empire, lending new impetus to such an initiative. He claimed that:

“In the altered circumstances of our scattered Empire, by railway, steamboat, and electric communication, our race is brought into a closer bond of union; the links of brotherhood and nationhood are being affectionately forged for our common war. The present war, now let us hope about to close, has shown the firm attachment of all his Majesty’s subjects to the cause of human progress as represented by the struggle in South Africa. Representatives from our colonies have fought side by side to work out their common destiny. At the Coronation this will be symbolized by the attendance of detachments of troops and other representative bodies from every clime. In the field of sports and athletics it is common and popular for teams of cricketers, bowlers, golfers, and others to visit various portions of the British Empire. Who can doubt but that the deepest feelings of kinship and patriotism are stirred by these visits are curlers alone, whose winter game pre-eminently draws out good fellowship, to stand idly by and prevent by their apathy the realization of a much-to-be-desired meeting of our home and trans-Atlantic curlers?”

Indeed, Provost Gordon, reflecting in 1903, confessed that the idea had first formed in his mind two decades prior, in connection with ideas of imperial federation, and spurred his desire to see a visit of Scottish curlers... “awaken in their brethren expatriated Scots, kindly feelings of attachment to the dear homeland, as well as revive memories of the country, and of their great history.” In fact, writing his 1904 account of the tour, the Scottish team’s captain, Rev. John Kerr, one of the North American sport’s most famous chroniclers, attributed an even longer

genealogy to the idea

By July 1902, the first plans were afoot to organize a North American tour by Scotland’s finest curlers, supported by the Royal Caledonian Curling Club with a grant of £200 to defray the costs. In autumn 1902 the Royal Caledonian Curling Club announced the composition of a team of 26 men, mostly from Border and Central Belt regions, but also including members from Forfar, Perth and Kinross. On December 18<sup>th</sup> they set forth from Liverpool aboard the *R.M.S. Bavarian* on a tour that would last almost two months, the last week featuring matches in the US before departing from New York. The Scots’ arrival in Canada in Halifax offered occasions for the press to indulge in expressions of warm welcome, and also in stereotypes. *The Globe* reported on their arrival that “The Scotsmen Mean Business,” and that the contingent — a “typical lot of Scotchmen, robust and jolly” — began practice in earnest. The team spent seven weeks in Canada, beginning in Nova Scotia and moving westward. The Scots won 47 of 99 games, losing 49, with 3 ties. The American leg of the tour recorded a much higher proportion of Scottish victories. The record in Canada left curlers there proud of having defeated a contingent sent from the sport’s ancestral home — and the Scots searching, good naturedly, for explanations for their defeats.

Travel typically involves some element of fun. By all accounts, the Scots sought and enjoyed it in good measure. In many press accounts, the Scots spoke approvingly of the hospitality they enjoyed, as well as the attention that they were accorded by young Canadian female spectators — and female players, too: indeed the attention and



Members of the Thistle Curling Club, Montreal 1893

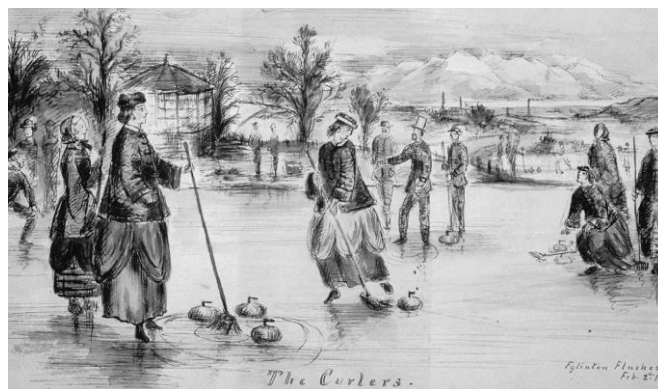
admiration of young Canadian women became a trope in retrospective accounts of the pleasures of the tour, in ways that reveal a highly masculine discourse of sporting culture. Yet members of the team, keen, like so many travellers before and since, to explore the freedom of being outside the spaces and routines of everyday life, also found that the structure of a sporting tour in which they were representing an esteemed club and, by extension, their nation, imposed restraints on their indulgences. The Scottish press recorded surprise at the dour Canadian condemnations of the Sabbath-breaking and excesses which the Scots encountered — a reminder that their tour was carefully scripted and superintended. More often, though, it recorded the curlers' delight with the succession of games and evening "smoking-concerts" as they made their way westward — a reflection of the significant resources at the disposal of their hosts and the importance attached to the tour as a program of hospitality as much as fixtures. During their time in Ottawa, for instance, they were welcomed at Rideau Hall by Lord and Lady Minto. While Rev. John Kerr found space in his tour account to comment on peculiarities of Canada, from its lack of reserved female sleeping carriages on trains and the slow speed of the trains themselves, to the novelty of tobogganing at Montmorency, Quebec and Montreal, he rhapsodized about the generous welcome afforded his team, not least by Scots and people of Scottish descent in the dominion.

In addition to bringing these imperial subjects together in a fraternal conviviality, albeit in a culture that the Scots found occasionally to be more stringent than they had anticipated, the tour introduced players to the peculiarities of a shared sport played in different places. The Royal Caledonian Curling Club curlers returned from Canada with their captain, Rev. John Kerr remarking that the transatlantic crossing had left a wearied team encountering spirited Canadians playing amidst thousands of sympathetic spectators. The Scots had also, they claimed, been handicapped by having played on covered rinks (a necessity of the harsh Canadian climate). Moreover, they recorded the disadvantage of having brought stones which were "not of the Canadian type," and were four to five pounds lighter. The "curler's grip," it seemed, fastened onto altogether different stones, by their account. Another complaint was that the Scots' stones were not cut sharp enough for Canadian ice. At the same time, the tour became a ritual affirmation of the fraternity of curlers, as the "curler's grip" united sportsmen across the ocean in a spirit of amity and camaraderie. Occasions feting the returning Scots, as those before the Duddingston Curling Club, offered opportunities for a measure of

commiseration, but it mixed with nostalgia, congratulation, and expressions of gratitude towards their Canadian hosts and rivals, all pronounced with a rhetorical flourish. The travellers had been welcomed by mayors, MPs, Masonic lodges, Saint Andrew's Societies and churches. They had been impressed by displays of Canadian patriotism, but even more so by the intensity of the Canadians' love of Scotland. Indeed they seemed "more Scottish in many of their habits and customs than the people at home," including the self-described "old-timers" they had encountered — men who had left Scotland years ago and became interlocutors between the two communities of sportsmen. The patriotism that they encountered and performed on the sheets and on tour, therefore, was a complex one in which Canadian, Scottish and imperial identities overlapped.

Perhaps nowhere were the nuances of these identities given clearer express than during the opening of the great bonspiel in Montreal pitting Scottish-born Canadians against Canadian-born curlers.

Over time the curling tour became institutionalized as a reciprocal practice, as strong as the curler's grip. In the first decade of the twentieth century, as British emigration to Canada accelerated, the number of transatlantic tours did, too. Conditions of play had changed in Scotland by 1909, when the Canadian curling team — a contingent of 11 members of the Manitoba branch, 10 each from Ontario and Quebec and 6 from Nova Scotia, including captain Hon. Duncan Cameron Fraser, the province's Lieutenant Governor — boarded the *Empress of Ireland*, landing at Liverpool a week later and proceeding directly to Edinburgh. Their tour of the northern kingdom comprised 26 matches, only three of which, in Highland districts, were played on natural ice under open skies, with the rest played on the Scottish Ice Rink at Crossmyloof in Glasgow — a facility whose establishment in 1907 brought year-long curling, and an indoor site of play that the Scots found novel in their earlier Canadian tour, to the home of curling. The Canadians triumphed handily in the majority of matches, and brought back an ebony-based, silver cup donated by Lord Strathcona. The cup signified the extent to which such travel had become a fixture of international curling,



*Curling near Eglinton Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland, 1860*

and how a curling tour that had been given impetus by war in South Africa, an impending coronation, and by a desire to affirm the ties of a common sporting culture, became an enduring vehicle for international sporting competition.

*This article is one of many included in "The Hog-Score in the Great Rink of Time," a new book by D. Bruce McCowan, P.Eng. Bruce is one of our patrons and his book covers a century plus of men's curling in Canada from 1830 to 1960. Based largely on the writings of his Uncle Jack McCowan, Bruce considers his book to be a "modest contribution to the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of the Ontario Curling Association, 1874–2024."*

## ***The Hog-Score in the Great Rink of Time***



**Ramblings on Curling  
With John Rae McCowan**  
(May 28, 1919 – June 5, 2021)

Book 2: 150 Years of Men's Curling in Canada, 1830–1980  
*A Modest Contribution to the Celebration of 150 Years  
of the Ontario Curling Association  
1874–2024*

***The Scots of Scarborough -- Volume 4***  
James McCowan Memorial Social History Initiative ([www.mccowan.org](http://www.mccowan.org))

## Henrietta Gilmour: Pioneer Woman Curler

Adapted from an article by Bob Cowan

During the nineteenth century women of the middle and upper classes were expected to be content with a life lived mainly in the home. Not all of these women were happy to do so, and, by the end of the century, many defied convention and began to participate in sports such as climbing, cycling, and curling, not always with the approval of their male counterparts. Although there are accounts of women curling earlier in the nineteenth century, and even in the eighteenth century, these occurrences were not common.

Henrietta Gilmour was a pioneer of curling in Scotland, at a time when the sport was just becoming accepted as an activity in which women could compete, and she deserves to be better known.

She was Canadian, born in 1852 in Quebec City. She married her first cousin, John Gilmour, in September, 1873. John was the son of Allan Gilmour, one of Scotland's principal shipowners and involved in the Canadian timber trade. The family business (Allan Gilmour and Company) took John, a young man in his twenties, to Canada, where he was to meet his future wife, a daughter of David Gilmour, his father's younger brother who had died in 1857. The couple returned to Scotland and set up home in Montrave House, on an estate in Fife owned by John's father and which he duly inherited.

They had seven children. Allan was born in 1874, but died when just four years old. John (also called Jack) was born in 1876, and Harry in 1878. Maud, the first of two daughters, was born in 1882. Henrietta (Netta) was born in 1884. Ronald was born in 1888, but survived only for three weeks. Douglas, the youngest child, was born in 1889.

It is not thought that Henrietta had curled as a youngster in Canada. She was at home on ice though, and was an accomplished skater.

Her husband John was certainly a keen curler, as his father had been. John founded a curling club based in and around his Fife estate.

At the Annual Meeting of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club held in the Bold Arms Hotel, Southport, England, on Friday, July 31, 1885, the Lundin and Montrave Curling Club applied for membership of the governing body, and, having been duly proposed and seconded, the club was admitted at that meeting. In the 1885-86 Annual, John Gilmour and "Mrs. Gilmour"



*This is probably the earliest published photograph of women curling in Scotland. The skip is Henrietta Gilmour, second from the right. She was Canadian, born in 1852 in Quebec City, and was a pioneer of curling in Scotland.*

are listed as patron and patroness. John Gilmour was also the club's president and was one of the sixteen regular members listed.

To have been admitted to the Royal Club, the Lundin and Montrave Curling Club would have needed a sheet of ice on which to play and so a pond near to Montrave House was put to use as the Club's rink.

Henrietta's curling career likely began in earnest after the birth of her son Douglas in 1889. Her team was Isabella Gentle of Kilwhiss, at third, and Mary Martin of Priestfield at lead. The second player was a "Miss Fortune." Both Martin and Gentle are listed in the membership roster of the Lundin and Montrave club. Miss Fortune is not, and unlike her teammates there is no mention of her in reports of curling games in the years following that first successful season. She was perhaps Mary Fortune of Pilmuir Farm. Her younger brother was head of the family there, according to the 1891 census, and lived with his widowed mother, and his two sisters Mary (28) and Jessie (22). George was a member of the Lundin and Montrave club until the 1895-96 season, and that might have been the connection which brought his sister to the ice.

The Lundin and Montrave club flourished, as did the estate, and so did the Gilmour family. John seems not to have been much involved in the family business. He joined the Fife Light Horse in 1874 as Second Lieutenant. He gained promotion to Captain in 1881, and was Lieutenant-Colonel in 1895. He was active in politics, contesting the East Fife constituency on three occasions. In 1897, John Gilmour was created a

Baronet, and the *Glasgow Herald* of June 28, 1897, records scenes of great excitement when Sir John and Lady Gilmour arrived back at Leven station from London. They were undoubtedly popular landowners and held in high esteem.

The Gilmours were a curling family. The parents seem to have encouraged their children to play. By 1897-98, John and Harry were both regular members of the Lundin and Montrave club, and sixteen-year-old Maud was an occasional member. Two years later she was a regular member. In the 1900-01 Annual, four children, John, Harry, Maud, and Netta, are all listed as regular members of the curling club. Netta indeed may well have been the youngest woman to become a 'made' curler. The *Dundee Courier* of February 18, 1899, reports the annual dinner of the Lundin and Montrave Club. During the evening a curlers' court was formed and a number of curlers, including Miss Netta Gilmour, were "duly initiated into the mysteries of the brotherhood of the broom." She would have been fifteen years old.

Lady Henrietta Gilmour continued to compete. For example, on February 15, 1901, the *Dundee Courier* records that she skipped an all ladies' rink against one from the Balyarrow Curling Club, skipped by Mrs. Johnstone, on "splendid ice" at Montrave, winning 21-14.

The Lundin and Montrave women also played alongside the men. The *Dundee Courier* reports on February 3, 1902, that a friendly match took place between the Cupar curling club and the Lundin and Montrave club, on the former's pond on Thomaston

Farm, four rinks aside. The report highlights the fact that three ladies took part and “despite the unfavourable conditions, played a sterling game.” Lady Gilmour played lead for her husband. Miss Gentle played second stones for James Balfour, and Miss Martin played lead for T E Mudie. The Cupar teams were the stronger on the day.

Sir John Gilmour became a Vice-president of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club in 1902, and in 1912 he became President. He and his wife left a curling legacy, donating trophies to promote women's curling.

But there are two additional important things to say about Henrietta Gilmour. First, she was one of only two women included in Charles Martin Hardie's famous painting of the Grand Match at Carsebreck, from 1898. The Royal Caledonian Curling Club owns the original of this which hangs in a room in Scone Palace.

Second, Henrietta took up photography as an interest and hobby, probably after Douglas was born in 1889. She is important as the first identified woman photographer in Scotland. Much of her work has survived. Fifteen hundred of her negatives were deposited in St Andrews University Library by her grandson, Sir John Gilmour, 3rd Baronet of Lundin and Montrave, in 1978. These now comprise the Lady Henrietta Gilmour Photographic Collection, looked after and cared for by specialist staff at the University Library. Some of her photos have been exhibited in the past and more recently some of the collection has been digitized and can be seen online. A further six hundred negatives were given to the National Museums of Scotland, and these are in the Scottish Life Archive.

Many of Henrietta's photographs depict her husband, her children, and friends. Sir

John leased sporting estates in the West of Scotland, and stalking, shooting, fishing, picnicking, bathing, and boating became subjects for Henrietta's camera. At home at Montrave Sir John bred prize livestock. His stud of Clydesdale horses gained national recognition, and horses, as well as prize-winning cattle and sheep, were the subjects of photographs by Lady Gilmour. There are many highland scenes, and photos of buildings. There are also a number of self portraits. Rarely do we have the privilege of such an insight into what life was like for a landed family in the late Victorian era, Henrietta's photographs providing a fascinating record.

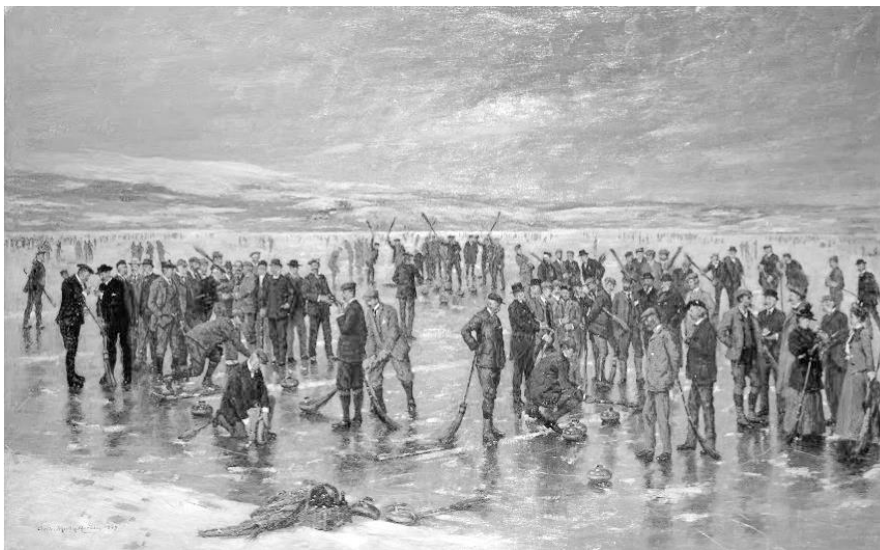
But, given her own interest in the sport, she photographed curlers and curling and several such photographs exist. There are two in the Lady Henrietta Gilmour Photographic Collection at St Andrews. And five are in the Scottish Life Archive at the National Museum of Scotland. Some of the latter are available to view as thumbnails on the SCRAN website, and at larger size if you have a subscription. One is (incorrectly) entitled “Women curling on the Ladies' Curling Pond, Fife, 1896” can be seen on page 6. But the photo is certainly of the Montrave pond, not a “Ladies' Curling Pond.”

The photo is from an article in the March 14, 1895, issue of *Hearth and Home*, a weekly broadsheet magazine for women published in London from 1891-1914. Note the long handled brooms the women are using, with their crook tops. It cannot have been easy to curl wearing the dress of the time! It would appear that fashionable headgear was de rigueur. The stones are just a little lighter than used by the men, at 31 to 34 lbs, according to the article. Note also the wooden tee-marker at the centre of the rings scratched on the ice.

Bob Cowan is the former Editor of the “*Scottish Curler*” magazine. He set up “*The Curling History Blog*” in 2008 with curling historian David B Smith. Bob thanks the helpful staff at the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, which holds a run of the “*Hearth and Home*” magazine; and Rachel Nordstrom, Photographic Research and Preservation Officer, Special Collections Division, University of St Andrews, who went the extra mile to assist him.



*Lady Gilmour (Sir John Gilmour's mother). One of the photographs in the Lady Henrietta Gilmour Photographic Collection at St Andrews University.*



*Charles Martin Hardie's painting of the Grand Match at Carsebreck, 1898. Seen on the right, Henrietta Gilmour was one of only two women included.*

