

A History
of the
Caledonian Society of London

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175 Years of Charity and Fellowship

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION

The Caledonian Society of London is an association of Scotsmen, and men with close connection with Scotland or Scottish institutions, which has as its objects the advancement of Scottish national philanthropic interests and the promotion of good fellowship among Scotsmen in London.

There is no contemporary record of the Society's formation and only three Society documents are known to survive from the nineteenth century. The earliest is a minute book and register of members from the start of 1841 until mid-1843 that was out of the Society's possession for long periods but finally recovered in 2007. It is followed by a published set of the Society's Rules dated 1845 that was retrieved electronically from the National Library of Australia in 2015. Later, we have the 1890 edition of the *Chronicles of the Caledonian Society of London*, written by David Hepburn from a family with links to the early days of the Society, which covers the years from its formation until 1890. There had been a major loss of records about 1875 and his main sources for the first forty years were restricted to the minute book already mentioned and Hepburn family papers. These papers no longer exist but seem to have included press cuttings concerning Society events and the manuscript of an address given in 1853 in which the formation of the Society was described, and these are reproduced verbatim in the 1890 volume. It is clear that he also made notes based on family memories and those of other long serving members.

There have been two alternative sets of dates accepted for the formation. Until early in the twentieth century the quoted date seems to have been 1839, with 1839-1840 as the first session, but the 1853 address stated that the first dinner had occurred in early 1838 after preliminary activity starting some twelve months before in 1837. The claims in the address seem to have had no effect on Society opinion for many years but, after David Hepburn drew attention to them in the late 1880s, they gradually gathered favour and seem to have been accepted without question by the mid-1910s, until the re-assessment reflected in this account.

More recently, various external sources have emerged. These include online newspaper archives, the archives of the Royal Caledonian Education Trust and the record of a court case against the Society in 1844, but such material becomes minimal after the mid-1890s. Minute books from 1875 until 1924 have also been lost but those after the latter date remain extant and are supplemented by an initially sparse but gradually increasing range of other documents including year books, menu cards, records of speeches and office bearers' papers.

The sequence of published *Chronicles* was resumed in 1923 and continued until 1967, with two further volumes available only online. However, it must be stressed that while the *Chronicles* contain much historic information, they are not rigorous histories. There was a lack of source material in the early years, they were written for entertainment - tending to accentuate the positive, dealing only lightly, if at all, with less happy episodes and avoiding much routine detail - and they perpetuate some factual errors. The *Chronicles* for 1837-1905, published in 1923, included an abridged version of the content of the 1890 *Chronicles* in addition to new material mainly covering the years from 1890 until 1905. The aim of this editing seems to have been to condense the 1890 text, largely by replacing the verbatim press reports of the original with short abstracts. One result was to remove much useful historic detail and records of speeches. For these reasons, any person wishing to address the pre-1890

history of the Society from its Chronicles is recommended to use the original 1890 edition and not that of 1923.

The Society's archive material is now lodged in the London Metropolitan Archives. Several short histories have been published but this is the first full history of the Society to be produced. The volume seeks to harness all known sources to create a history of the Society's first one hundred and seventy-five years. In doing so, it is inevitable that the content for the final few years is less objective than that for earlier periods, and a future historian may wish to edit further.

In preparing this history, the editor has been indebted to earlier historians of the Society, to all other members who have assisted in recording or collecting information on our heritage and to various online avenues. Sources used in the text of this volume are acknowledged as appropriate in that content or in footnotes. Outwith the Society, John Horsefield, then Chief Executive of the Royal Caledonian Schools Trust, returned the 1841-1843 minute book and subsequently enabled the editor to examine the Trust's archives, Willie Docherty of ScotsCare and the London Metropolitan Archives both returned Society documents that had been held among those of ScotsCare and David Balden of the Caledonian Club drew attention to the photograph of the glass goblet presented to an earlier Caledonian Society in 1821.

Most illustrations were taken from previously published Society documents but grateful acknowledgement is due in respect a number of additions. The page from the 1845 Rules was recovered from the National Library of Australia, Neil McNair and James Scrymgeour provided the photographs of the member's badge and the 2013 Little Dinner respectively and photographs taken for the Society by James Finlay (James Finlay Photography) were the source of the illustrations of Michie Forbes Gray, Dr Guthrie Rankin's Gold Badge, the three pipe banners, William Will, the drum major's mace, the London Ayrshire Cup and the Society's grant of arms, cuff links and tie.

Edinburgh

November 2017

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THE
CALEDONIAN SOCIETY
Of London,
INSTITUTED FEBRUARY, 1839.

A page from the 1845 Rules showing the Institution date

CHAPTER 1

Formation

The minutes for 1841 until 1843 throw much interesting light on these early years of the Society's existence but unfortunately make no reference to its date of formation. However, the title page of the 1845 Rules carries the inscription 'Instituted February 1839' which seems compatible with a membership that was still only eighteen at the start of 1841, as recorded in the register of members at the back of the minute book, and with a first formal session in 1839-1840. Here the matter might have rested were it not for the 1853 address quoted in the 1890 Chronicles¹ in which Michie Forbes Gray, a pre-1841 member although apparently not a founder² despite his early involvement described below, and then a former Honorary Secretary of the Society, stated that the first dinner had been held in early 1838 but that the initial informal gathering of those who later formed the Society had been the year before, in early 1837. This was later interpreted as meaning a first session in 1837-1838.

It is clear from press reports, as reproduced in the original 1890 Chronicles and others accessed online, that, until the early 1900s, the official view remained that the start had been in 1839. In January 1893, the President wrote to the Editor of the London Evening Standard³, stating, inter alia, that the Society had been formed in 1839, a Society Gold Badge inscribed 1839 is known to have been presented as late as 1903⁴, and recently accessed Society documents from the first decade of the twentieth century were still indicating the same date⁵. However, probably in the late 1880s, David Hepburn had drawn attention to the 1853 address with its earlier dates. He seems to have favoured these, but offered no explanation for the apparent conflict of timings. Not until the twentieth century's second decade does the 1837 date seem to have become generally accepted⁶.

Despite any disagreement over dates, Gray's account of the circumstances leading to the Society's formation is the only one we have, and there is no reason to doubt the rest of his narrative. He explains how 'In the early part of 1837' he had dined with the Highland Society and about the same time with the Society of True Highlanders, and on both occasions met three or four acquaintances who agreed that they did not feel totally at home in either company. Both societies tended to be geographically prescriptive and, at this time, the Highland Society was composed largely of landed proprietors, their families and officers of Highland regiments and had a strong aristocratic element⁷. In a slightly lighter vein, Justine

¹ 1890 Chronicles, page 27.

² The register of members in the minute book does not show him as a 'first member' but lists him in sixteenth place, possibly in order of joining, of the eighteen who were members at the start of January 1841. Thus he may not have joined formally until towards the end of 1840.

³ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 11 January 1893.

⁴ Badge presented to Dr Guthrie Rankin (Chronicles 1837-1905 page 160) purchased by Society August 2010.

⁵ Admission card for 1907 Festival showing 1839 as formation date and stating that this was the '68th Annual Festival' thus purporting a sequence counting back to a first Festival in 1840, and menu card for 1914 Festival showing 1837 as formation date but with the sequential numbering still counting from 1840; among James Cantlie papers, Welcome Library, London. Also 1904-1905 Year Book quoting establishment in 1839.

⁶ 1913-1914 and later Year Book, President's log book for 1919-1920, menu cards for Little Dinners and Festival 1924-1925 and 1923 preface to Chronicles 1837-1905.

⁷ Two Hundred Years, the Highland Society of London, 1982.

Taylor, in her history of the Royal Scottish Corporation, records⁸ the suggestion that the Scottish nobles and lairds of the Highland Society were perhaps none too keen to dine with their bankers.

Michie and his friends considered that there was a need for a society that would appeal to all, what he called, middle class Scotsmen, regardless of the part of Scotland from which they came. The idea was welcomed by a number of others and the Society was launched with one John Boucher taking a leading role in forming the rules and procedures. The original objects of the Society are believed to have been the promotion of fellowship and brotherhood, the encouragement of education in Scotland by providing prizes for award in parochial schools, and the preservation of the ancient Caledonian costume.

Gray goes on to say that the first dinner was held at ‘the beginning of the year 1838’ at Beattie’s Hotel⁹ with a company of all the twelve members and twenty-two guests. He also tells us that the dinner was followed by an increase in membership which led to a move for the next dinner to ‘the British Hotel, Charing Cross’, and that there was a ball ‘with which the second year closed’.

The 1841-1843 minute book includes details of a dinner held at the British Coffee House, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross on Monday 25th January 1841 (presumably, the ‘British Hotel’ referred to by Gray) and gives the date of the Society’s first ball as 2nd March 1842. The register of members at the back of the minute book indicate that membership was still only eighteen at the start of 1841 but had risen to some twenty-seven by the end of that year.

Examination of the minute book, the institution date of February 1839 in the 1845 Rules and what is stated to be the text of Gray’s address suggests that while institution and, with it, the start of the first formal session, must have been in February 1839, the preliminary activity leading to this may have started as early as 1837, the year that Queen Victoria acceded to the Throne. We are left to speculate over the apparent conflict of detail. Gray would not have had access to the 1841-1843 minutes that seem to have been out of the Society’s possession at the time but must have been well aware of the February 1839 date. It is possible that the events of 1837 and the dinner of 1838 were as he describes and were part of the earlier activity leading to the 1839 institution, or he may simply have quoted years loosely in what was an account for non-members; it may be significant that his version does not seem to have had any impact on the Society’s view of its birthday for more than thirty years after the address was delivered, and that his statement that the first ball closed ‘the second year’ fits no known time lines.

It should also be mentioned that there had been at least one earlier ‘Caledonian’ society in London. In his *Sentiment of January 1923*¹⁰, William Will points out that there was a ‘Caledonian Society’ in London attended by John Murdoch, Robert Burns’ schoolmaster, in the late 1780s and mentioned by him in a letter to Burns in 1787 – possibly the ‘Society of Ancient Caledonians’ that Will described later in that *Sentiment*. There is also a photograph, presented to the Caledonian Club in 2001 by the then Honorary Historian of the Royal Scottish Corporation, that shows a large decorated glass goblet bearing the inscription

⁸ A Cup of Kindness 2003, page 148.

⁹ Perhaps the establishment of that name then in George Street, Cavendish Square.

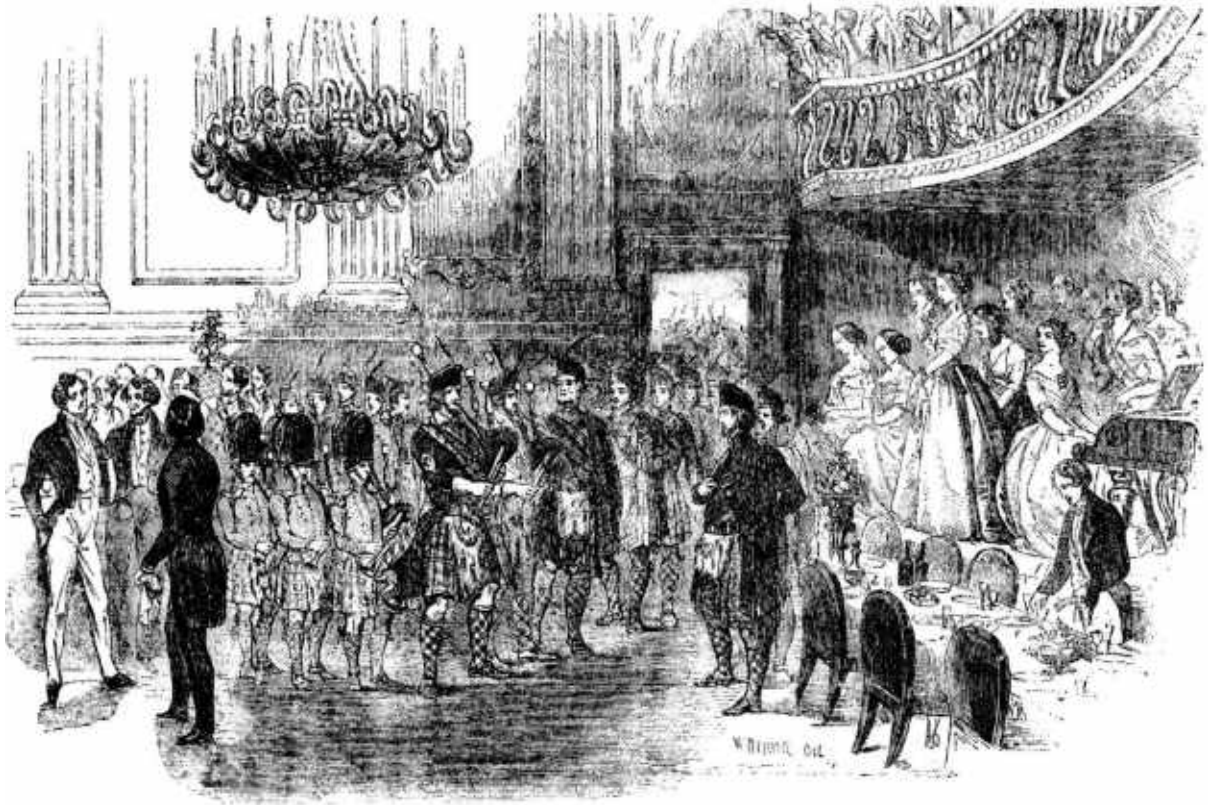
¹⁰ *Chronicles 1921-1930*, page 19.

‘Presented by Brother George Hosegood To the Caledonian Society May 3rd 1821’, although its provenance is unknown and the society to which it refers might not have been in London.

And what of the country that gave rise to the Society? Great Britain then had a population of some eighteen and a half million of whom two and a half million were in Scotland and a little under two million in London. The nation was still in the midst of the Industrial Revolution, the first power to reach such a stage. This had been made possible by a commercial strength based on maritime supremacy and a global, and still expanding, empire. Industrial development was largely in central and northern England and, increasingly, in central Scotland. In rural areas, improved health and moves towards more efficient agriculture had created a population surplus and this provided much of the labour for industry and also fuelled emigration. This effect was particularly strong in the Highland and Islands of Scotland where the Clearances were at their height. These changes led to opportunity and success for many, at home and overseas, but misery and squalor for many more. London was the political and main financial, commercial and professional hub for all this. Scots were, arguably, well placed in the contest due to the strength of their education system, at school and university levels, and the historic tradition of travel driven by citizenship of a relatively poor country. Nevertheless, not all prospered. With railway development still in its infancy, travel remained difficult and expensive and, with opportunity for home visits limited, the expatriate Scots community in London, with its distinct cultural traditions, would have been encouraged to seek each other’s company.



Michie Forbes Gray



Society Festival Dinner, London Tavern, 19th June 1847

CHAPTER 2

Early Growth – Formation to 1848

Although confirmation is lacking, the institution date of February 1839 and the change of session with the election of officers at the meeting on 25th February 1841¹¹ suggest that the period between those dates may have been divided into two sessions, 1839-1840 from February 1839 until about February 1840 and 1840-1841 from about February 1840 until 25th February 1841 respectively.

Apart from the original dinner at Beattie's Hotel, the only social function known to have taken place during these two periods is the dinner recorded in the minutes as having been held at the British Coffee House, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross on Monday 25th January 1841. We are not told the attendance but thirteen members were at the general meeting that immediately preceded it. Thirteen was also the number of toasts approved:

- The Queen
- The Princess Royal and Prince Albert
- The Queen Dowager and the rest of the Royal Family
- The Army and Navy
- The Memory of Robert Burns
- The Land We Live In
- The Land of Cakes
- The Ladies
- Our Visitors
- The Chairman
- The Secretary
- The Secretary pro tempore
- Prosperity to the Society

The toast to the Memory of Robert Burns, on the eighty-second anniversary of his birth, is the first such commemoration recorded for the Society and is many years before the opening of the first dedicated Burns club in London. However, it has to be admitted that the Memory does not seem to have become an annual fixture until 1857 and the celebration fell into abeyance between 1914 and 1947 before being restored. The Land of Cakes was Scotland, the cakes being oat cakes thus alluding to the supposedly austere nature of the country and its people. The toast to the Ladies did not necessarily mean ladies were present as there is no indication that this was the case. Interestingly, no mention was made of any charity in this list. The minutes tell us that a band played, but there is no mention of piping or singing, and that the evening finished at half past eleven.

The register of members in the minute book records that the membership was eighteen at the start of January 1841, eight of whom are noted as having been 'first members'. The latter were, in alphabetical order, John Boucher, John Gordon, Donald Grassick, Alexander Hay, George Rose Innes, Captain Lobban, William H Rose and Henry Thornton. A further three new members were enrolled before the session ended in February.

¹¹ Minutes of Committee meeting on 11 February 1841 and general meeting on 25 February 1841.

The earliest known complete set of Society rules is that dated 1845. However, comments and references in the minute book allow a certain amount of assumption concerning their original predecessors. Among these were that:

- The office bearers of the Society were the Chairman, the Honorary Secretary, three trustees and eight (or possibly nine) Committee members. The three Committee members with the fewest number of attendances at meetings were required to retire at the Annual (general) Meeting every session. There was no treasurer and those duties seem to have been carried out by the Secretary.
- The Honorary Secretary, ex-officio, was also croupier, or vice chairman, for public events (dinners and balls) but not for business meetings where the senior member present deputised for the Chairman in the latter's absence.
- The Committee had full power to discuss and determine all business connected with the Society but their proceedings then had to be approved by the members at a general meeting.
- Authority to elect new members to the Society lay with the Committee.
- The annual subscription was one guinea and this included payment for the member's meal at the St Andrew's Day dinner on 30th November.
- Only those of Scottish descent, or with defined Scottish connections, were eligible for the Committee. Ordinary members could be of any nationality.
- Members of the Committee were obliged to wear Highland dress on stipulated occasions.

The acceptance of non-Scotsmen as members caused derision among some later members but does seem remarkably inclusive. Requirements for business meetings are unclear but those held during calendar year 1841 were the Annual (general) Meeting, five other general meetings and eight Committee meetings (there were also two sub-committee meetings connected to the first ball to be held in the February of the following year).

At the start of the period covered by the minutes, the post of Chairman, as it was then called, seems to have been vacant, perhaps because the person appointed had left the Society or was no longer able to attend meetings. John Boucher habitually took the Chair as senior member but the significance of this is unknown. George Rose Innes was Honorary Secretary but did not attend regularly and John Gordon was acting pro tempore. There also seem to have been some half dozen elected Committee members in post at this time.

The general meeting of 25th February 1841 confirmed the earlier Committee election of office bearers for the coming session including that of the first known Chairman, John Gordon. Notably, there was no mention either of the Society accounts or of any charitable support.

David Hepburn refers to Gordon as John Gordon of Knockespock¹², probably Knockespock House in Aberdeenshire. Listed as an original member, he seems to have been an active supporter before and, of course, during his chairmanship but then stopped attending although remaining a member until at least mid-1843. A pencil note in the minute book suggests that he may have returned to Scotland. However, he seems to have maintained a link with the Society as Will tells us in his 1947 *Sentiment*¹³ that Gordon was jointly instrumental in initiating the assistance to the family of William Thom, the Weaver Poet of Inverurie, which

¹² 1890 Chronicles, page 2.

¹³ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 36.

was supported by the Society in 1848¹⁴. This would have made sense as Knockespoock is not far from Inverurie. George Rose Innes continued as Honorary Secretary but his availability for meetings seems to have remained in question as an ‘Honorary Secretary during the absence of Mr Innes’ was also elected.

The session was to run for sixteen months, until 30th June 1842. A dinner was programmed for 24th May 1841, in honour of the Queen’s birthday, and a toast list approved. There is no record in the minutes that it took place although this could have been because no business meeting preceded it. The first dinner known to have taken place that session was the St Andrew’s Day dinner held on 30th November 1841 at Radley’s Hotel in Bridge Street, Blackfriars. The cost per head, to the Society, for the dinner was ten shillings (50 pence) and members were charged twelve shillings and six pence (62.5 pence) for a guest. Approval was given for a piper, a band and the following toast list:

- The Queen
- The Duke of Cornwall or Prince of Wales
- The Prince Albert and the Princess Royal
- The Queen Dowager and the rest of the Royal Family
- The Army and Navy
- The Land We Live In
- The Land of the Shamrock
- The Land of Cakes
- The Ladies
- The Chairman
- The Secretary
- The Press
- The Strangers

However, the main social event of the session was the Society’s first ball held in the Assembly Rooms, Hanover Square, on 2nd March 1842, replacing the dinner previously held early in the year. It seems to have been considered highly successful and made a surplus of more than five pounds (about one thousand pounds in today’s terms). The detailed arrangements were the subject of a Committee and eleven special sub-committee meetings. The minutes tell us that about three hundred attended (when the Society membership was thirty-four) with tickets charged at fifteen shillings (75 pence) for a gentleman and six shillings (30 pence) for a lady. Authority was given for advertisements in the Times, Herald, Chronicle and Post, all members served as stewards, toasts were restricted to ‘The Queen’, ‘The Ladies’ and ‘The Stewards’, and a policeman was engaged to assist in control of access. The ball also gave rise to the earliest known press report concerning the Society, published in the Morning Post of 4th March 1842¹⁵.

The second dinner of the session, or possibly the third if that planned for May 1841 had happened, was held on 24th May 1842, again at Radley’s Hotel and in celebration of Queen Victoria’s birthday. A band and a piper were engaged and the toasts included ‘The Parochial Schools of Scotland’. The latter toast is the earliest known reference at a dinner to a charitable body but it had been preceded by the first record of charitable support by the Society, in the minutes of a Committee meeting held on 12th May 1842, when note was made

¹⁴ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 05 April 1848.

¹⁵ British Library newspaper online archive.

of the donation to the Caledonian Asylum of books for presentation as prizes; this was subsequently acknowledged in a letter of gratitude copied in the Asylum letter book of the time¹⁶.

It was agreed that a rural fete should be held at Beulah Spa on 23rd June 1842 but there is no further mention of the event and it may not have taken place. During the sixteen months of this session, membership increased from twenty-two to forty-two, an impressive rise. The session finished with a general meeting on 30th June 1842 at which the earlier Committee election of office bearers for the coming session and its approval of the Society's accounts were confirmed¹⁷. The Committee had also authorised the preparation and distribution of a card of meetings for the next session, perhaps an early example of what would later become the Society's Year Book.

John Boucher was Chairman in 1842-1843. Gray's account and the record of the minutes both make it clear that Boucher was not only an original member but also the driving force behind the Society from its formation until he ended his term as Chairman by resignation in May 1843. We also know that he remained a senior and active member for several years thereafter as he is recorded as having been Vice President at the Festival dinners of 1846 and 1847. His address is given as Chief Barons Sergeants Inn but, otherwise, we know very little about him although, speculatively, he may have come from Cumbernauld – if he is the same 'John Boucher of London' quoted in Scottish archives as having been involved in a divorce at about this time. He seems to have been one of those who defected to form the Scottish Society and did not return. George Rose Innes was still Honorary Secretary until he also resigned as noted later. Eight other Committee members were elected, or continued in post and the three trustees also continued.

Once again, a dinner was held on 30th November 1842, St Andrew's Day. This was at Radley's Hotel; twenty-four members attended the general meeting that preceded the dinner but we do not know the number at table. An attempt had been made to secure the presence of the Chief of Clan Chisolm but this had been unsuccessful – the first known case of inviting a notable guest. The toast list was similar to those approved previously, including the Parochial Schools, but the loyal toasts were changed and were now:

The Queen
The Prince of Wales Lord of the Isles
The Prince Albert and the Princess Royal
The Queen Dowager
The Duke of Sussex, Earl of Inverness and the Rest of the Royal Family

As in the previous January, there was no dinner in January 1843, and no celebration of Robert Burns that year.

Following the success of the first ball, another was programmed for 23rd February 1843 and titled the 'Anniversary Ball of the Society', presumably the anniversary of the Society's institution. Arrangements were similar to those before except that the maximum attendance seems to have been set at four hundred, ticket costs were one guinea (£1.05) for a couple, fifteen shillings (75 pence) for a gentleman and ten shillings (50 pence) for a lady, and the

¹⁶ Royal Caledonian Education Trust Archives, Letter Book 1821-1850.

¹⁷ Minutes of Committee meeting on 09 June 1842 of General meeting on 30 June 1842.

toasts were further reduced to just 'The Queen' and 'The Ladies'. This time there were a number of problems. The Committee expressed its general dissatisfaction at the quantity and quality of the refreshments and a member mis-conducted himself during the evening to the extent that he was subsequently expelled from the Society. We are told that the ball accounts were approved but not what the financial outcome was.

Arrangements were again put in hand for a dinner on 24th May and a toast list was approved. A proposal to postpone it until 6th July, due to the disruption caused by the abrupt resignation of both the Chairman and Honorary Secretary and the general dissension at this time, was carried. The dinner seems to have taken place but its actual date is unclear. The minutes give no indication of the reason for the departure from office of the Chairman, announced by him at a Committee meeting on 18th May 1843, but that of the Secretary, at a further Committee meeting on 29th May, seems to have been connected to the temporary appointment of Michie Forbes Gray, made at a Committee meeting on 16th February 1843, to take charge of the ball arrangements and to continue until 'the accounts of the Society are settled'. It is possible that both resignations were linked to the financial difficulties referred to in Gray's address in 1853 and described later. This matter was unfinished, with a special Committee meeting called to consider matters further, when the minute book closes.

Other events during the session were a copy of the Society rules being sent to all members and the decision that future business meetings should take place at the tavern at which dinners were held and no longer at the Honorary Secretary's office¹⁸. This may have been the genesis of what later became the regular informal suppers, eventually re-titled Little Dinners, as it seems probable that at least some members would have dined together informally following meetings. In addition to the member expelled after the ball, another had his name struck out in for unknown reason and a member of the Committee 'Forfeited his seat at board' for failing to wear Highland dress on an occasion when this was required of him.

The Society had forty-two members at the start of the session and this had increased to fifty-one by June 1843. The minute book finishes before the record of the general meeting at which the office bearers for the next session were approved and the new session launched but there are indications that this gathering may have been in early July 1843 or thereabouts.

The next four sessions of this chapter lie beyond the period of the early minutes but are reasonably well covered by a range of other sources. However it must be noted that the dates on which sessions changed from one to the next, and hence also session lengths, varied from year to year throughout much of the period and this sometimes makes it difficult to decide to which session a dated event belonged.

James Wylie was in the Chair for session 1843-1844, when the title President seems to have been adopted instead of Chairman, and W Shand Low may have taken over as Honorary Secretary at this time. Wylie had joined the Society in October 1841, when his address was given as Tower Street, and was first elected to the Committee in June 1842. He proposed the toast 'The Land o' Cakes' at the St Andrew's Day dinner in November 1842 and also, after his time as President, spoke at dinners in 1846 and 1847. There is no record of his membership after the latter occasion.

¹⁸ Minutes of Committee meeting of 19 January 1843 (the original decision was only for meetings leading up to the ball but the minute book suggests the change became more permanent).

The St Andrew's Day dinner took place on 30th November 1843 and a ball was held, in the Hannover Square Rooms, in February 1844. However, the most notable event of the session was not a social function but a court case against the Society. The publication of court records, a century or so later¹⁹, revealed that the previous session's resignation of George Rose Innes as Honorary Secretary was not the end of the matter. He was considered to have used 'menacing expressions' to another member and was invited to apologise. On refusing, he was expelled from the Society by a small majority. He ignored the expulsion and tried to attend the dinner on 30th November 1843 but the Society had a policeman in attendance and Rose Innes was excluded. He subsequently claimed for assault and illegal expulsion from the Society, the latter on the grounds that not all those who voted to exclude him did so properly as some had not paid their due subscriptions. The court found in his favour but we do not know if he returned to the Society.

The session lasted less than twelve months. The Annual (general) Meeting in May of that year was followed by the usual spring dinner marking the Queen's birthday. There were eighty gentlemen present at table and the toast list included the Highland Society and the Caledonian Asylum but not the Scottish Hospital (Royal Scottish Corporation) suggesting that support to the latter might not yet have started²⁰. The Parochial Schools no longer featured; support to them had been discontinued after the Church of Scotland split acrimoniously in the Disruption of May 1843. James Wylie and W Shand Low were to continue for a second year as President and Honorary Secretary respectively.

Session 1844-1845 continued, after the May dinner, with an Anniversary Dinner held, in early January 1845²¹, at the London Tavern, the first time this establishment had been used but which would then be patronised until the 1860s, and included a toast to the Memory of Burns proposed by the President. One hundred and thirty gentlemen are recorded as present and also seventy-two ladies. This seems to have been the first occasion on which the latter had attended a Society dinner but they did not sit at table with their men folk. Instead, they were accommodated separately, on platform or galleries, until the meal had finished when they would join the gentlemen for conversation and dancing, apparently normal practice on such occasions at that time; they would not join the men at table until 1851. The now annual Ball followed in February and was held in Willis's Rooms in St James on this occasion²². The 1845 Rules now applied and among their main provisions were that:

- The objects of the Society were the preservation of the Ancient Caledonian Costume, the support and encouragement of Scottish Charitable Institutions in London, and for the purposes of general benevolence connected with Scotland.
- The office bearers were a president, vice president, treasurer, nine directors and a secretary.
- The running of the Society was vested in a committee comprising the office bearers and, ex-officio, those who had served as a president for one year to the satisfaction of the Society. Committee decisions were subject to subsequent approval of a general meeting.

¹⁹ The English Reports, Volume CLXXIV, August 1947.

²⁰ British Library online archive, Morning Chronicle 25 May 1844.

²¹ British Library online archive, Morning Chronicle 09 January 1845.

²² British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 15 February 1845.

- Natives of any country might join the Society but membership of the Committee was only open to natives of Scotland, those of Scottish descent, husbands of Scottish ladies or ladies of Scottish descent, and persons owning property in Scotland.
- An Annual General Meeting, to approve the Committee's nomination of officers and to receive the accounts, was to be held on the second Thursday of April.
- Other general meetings were to be held in January, prior to a dinner with guests, and preceding the Ball in February.
- The General meeting before the dinner was to be at 6:00 pm, dinner was to be on the table at 6:30 pm and the President was to leave the Chair before 12:00 midnight.
- The Ball was to be considered the anniversary festival of the Society and its object was to raise funds for charitable purposes.
- All office bearers were required to wear Highland dress at the January and February meetings.
- Committee meetings were to be held on the second Thursday of November, December, January, February and March.
- The entrance fee was to be one guinea and the annual subscription the same amount. The subscription included payment for the member's meal at the January dinner.

Notable among the changes were the introduction of the offices of Vice President and of Treasurer, the latter's duties having previously been included among those of the Secretary, and the disappearance of the three trustees. The January dinner seems to have replaced that previously held on St Andrew's Day, perhaps a sign that the Society was beginning to relate to the Royal Scottish Corporation with its own long established festival on that day. The spring dinner no longer featured. The monthly Committee meetings might have been a further step towards the emergence of the informal suppers that later became Little Dinners.

If the new Rules were followed, the Annual General Meeting would have been in April 1845 and this was when Robert Hepburn embarked on the first of his eight sessions as President, John Boucher returned as Vice President and W Shand Low continued as Honorary Secretary. We do not know who, if anyone, filled the new appointment of Treasurer.

Robert Hepburn²³ had been born in Edinburgh in 1810 and was educated at the Royal High School in that city. He entered the profession of dentistry in Edinburgh at the age of seventeen moving later to Dundee and then south to London in 1831 when he was shipwrecked enroute. After mixed fortunes and much hard work, he had successfully established himself in practice and went on to play an active part in the successful drive to establish proper education, training and legally recognised qualification for the profession. He was one of the original surgeons in the Dental Hospital of London, later the Royal Dental Hospital, and its first lecturer in mechanical dentistry. He was President of the Odonatological Society of London in 1869. His wider interests included seventy year support of the Royal Scottish Corporation – from a subscriber in 1832 through seats on the Committee of Management, of the Kinloch Bequest and of the School Money Fund to Vice President in the last twelve years of his life, the latter at that time a rare distinction for a commoner – similar involvement with the Royal Caledonian Asylum, a founder of the Ogle Mews Ragged School, Vice President of the Somers Town Blind Aid Association and one of

²³ Chronicles 1837-1905, Part II, page 145.

the instigators in the formation of what would later become the London Scottish Regiment. Robert Hepburn had joined the Society in November 1842 when his address was, and would remain for many years, Davies Street, Berkley Square. He was first elected to the Committee in February 1843. He remained an active Past President until nearly the end of his life and, for many years, was the Father of the Society, sometimes, incorrectly, credited as being a founder member. Robert Hepburn died in October 1901 at the age of ninety-one and after nearly fifty-nine years membership.

The Festival dinner, with ladies present in the galleries, took place on a Thursday evening at the London Tavern²⁴, probably in January 1846 as called for in the Rules, and included an address, delivered by the President, on Robert Burns. Toasts included those to the Highland Society, the Caledonian Asylum, the Royal Highland School Society and the Scottish Hospital. Piping was provided by Her Majesty's piper Mr Angus Mackay and other entertainment was by Mr Guinness's band and singing by Miss Birch, Miss Lucombe and Mr Sinclair. Auld Lang Syne was sung following the toast 'The Land of Cakes'. The annual Ball no doubt took place the following month although confirmation is lacking.

Details for 1846-1847 and 1847-1848 are a little thinner. We know that the usual Ball took place in February or March 1847 and that Robert Hepburn was President and John Boucher Vice President at the time of an 'annual Festival' dinner held at the London Tavern on 19th June 1847²⁵, the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo with the date possibly chosen for that reason. However, an event on such a date was outside the template provided by the 1845 Rules and we do not know whether it fell in session 1846-1847 or 1847-1848. The dinner itself is well described in no fewer than three press reports quoted in the Chronicles, one of which also provided the illustration on page 5 of this volume. About one hundred and fifty gentlemen were present and also a good number of ladies, the latter again accommodated in galleries. A wide range of toasts were honoured including one covering the Scottish institutions in London for which thanks were returned on behalf of the Caledonian Asylum and the Royal Highland School Society. The guest of honour was Benjamin Bond Cabbell MP, a noted supporter of charities and the arts, who spoke briefly. Piping was by Her Majesty's piper Mr Angus Mackay and the band of the Caledonian Asylum, and the misses Birch sang. The service of toastmaster was provided by a Mr Higgs.

Social events at this time seem to have followed the pattern of the 1845 Rules with the Festival dinner every year and the Ball in February, although the date of the former varied. As already mentioned, informal suppers may have followed those business meetings not followed by more formal entertainment but details are lacking.

Michie Forbes Gray was Honorary Secretary by session 1848-1849 and may have taken over as such about 1847. His 1853 address describes the serious difficulties that the Society faced at this time. Due to excessive ambition by the group of members who lead the management of social events, several otherwise very successful balls before 1847 had been run at substantial loss. The situation was made worse by poor account keeping. Remedial action seems to have been put in place before the Ball of 1847 that was profitable, to the tune of over one hundred pounds²⁶, but a difficult time still ensued. This situation is illustrated by

²⁴ 1890 Chronicles, page 8 (elimination allows attribution to 1846).

²⁵ 1890 Chronicles, page 11.

²⁶ 1890 Chronicles, page 49.

patterns of donations at the time. The Caledonian Asylum had been given²⁷ twenty-five pounds and twenty-one pounds in 1844 and 1845 respectively but then nothing until 1848 when twenty-one pounds was again forwarded. Similarly, the Royal Highland School Society was supported in 1845 but not again until 1848²⁸. Figures for the Scottish Hospital are unknown. In March 1848, the Society was also able to operate a subscription list in support of the family of William Thom, the Weaver Poet of Inverurie²⁹.

An even greater challenge came either in late 1847 or in 1848 (probably about the middle months of the latter year) when the Scottish Society, appealing to the same constituency as ours, was set up and, in Gray's words, 'many of our best members were decoyed away'. He goes on to say that only twenty members remained and some of these were lukewarm, at a time when the serious financial shortfall was still being addressed; it is clear that the Society nearly became extinct.

²⁷ Royal Caledonian Education Trust Archives, Receipts and Expenditure 1830-1848.

²⁸ Royal Highland School Society, Historic Account 1853, List of Subscribers, page 17.

²⁹ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 05 April 1848.



Robert Hepburn

CHAPTER 3

Rebuilding – 1848 to 1855

In 1848 the Society was in critical need of rebuilding. Fortunately, the duo of Robert Hepburn, as leader of the process and for eight sessions President, supported by Michie Forbes Gray as Honorary Secretary were present and willing and able to do so. We do not know all the names of the twenty members who remained after the defections to the Scottish Society but, apart from Hepburn and Gray, they also included George Brock who was later an honorary auditor. Post-1847 members Professor Richard Cull, Sir Charles Forbes, Captain James Lamont, John Mouatt and, possibly, Andrew Maclure, are recorded as having been at dinners in 1846 or 1847 but may then have been guests.

The exact mechanism applied and sequence of events is unknown but, in his address, Gray was able to say that by 1853 the Society had successfully re-established itself, with some departed members returning. Not only was a three hundred pound debt paid off but a further four hundred pounds been disbursed to various charities. We may note that three hundred pounds was the cost of two hundred and eighty-six Ball tickets; the same number of tickets for the Caledonian Club ball of 2008 would have cost more than £54,000.

A dinner was held on 16th November 1848; the Asylum pipers had been booked and subsequently played³⁰. This was another departure from the routine in the Rules and a return to a dinner in the month of November, although now perhaps sufficiently clear of the Scottish Hospital's 30th November St Andrew's Day date. President Captain James Lamont was in the Chair and described as newly elected, indicating that the Annual General Meeting had been held recently, perhaps earlier on the evening of the dinner, a change from both the 1845 Rules and practice from 1842 onwards which had seen that meeting held in the spring or summer. The meeting and dinner might have been brought forward as part of the re-grouping following the recent turmoil in the Society. This change in the meeting date may have been enduring as what little evidence there is points to sessions changing in November or December for many decades to come. At the dinner, Lamont proposed the toast to the Ladies during which he apologised for banishing them to the galleries. Mr Higgs was again toastmaster. The Ball followed in February 1849 at the Hannover Square Rooms and 'under the direction of Captain Lamont'³¹. The latter joined the Society sometime after June 1843. He was born in 1786³², the third son of son of James Lamont laird of Knockdow, Cowal, Argyll. He joined the Royal Navy at a young age, served in CHARON during the evacuation of the Army from Den Helder in 1799, as a midshipman in HEBE off Egypt in 1801, was made lieutenant in 1805 and was badly wounded while boarding an enemy ship in 1808 in the Gulf of Mexico. Subsequently invalided, he saw no further service and was retired in the rank of commander in 1838 ('Captain' seems to have been a courtesy title). By the time he joined the Society, he appears to have been resident in London for some years and to have been

³⁰ Royal Caledonian Education Trust Archives, Letter Book 1821-185; British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 17 November 1848. The account of the dinner should be read with care as it confuses the identity of the Society with that of the Caledonian Asylum.

³¹ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 15 February 1849.

³² Most of these biographic notes are from Clan Lamont and other Internet sources.

active in a wide range of charities, including in management of the Scottish Hospital (Royal Scottish Corporation) and the Caledonian Asylum. He died in London in December 1853.

Lamont was President for only a single session and Robert Hepburn is believed to have returned for 1849-1850 but no record survives for that session. He seems to have been succeeded in turn by Professor Richard Cull for 1850-1851. Press reports cover the Ball of February 1851 and an Annual Festival dinner at the London Tavern in July 1851. At the latter³³, about one hundred persons dined and, notably, the ladies sat with the gentlemen at table instead of separately in galleries. This was greeted as an innovation and the tone of the report suggests it was welcomed as a most progressive move. For many years, the Society prided itself on having made this change when it did. Richard Cull FSA is described as a member of the Ethnological Society and may have been the same Richard Cull who was a professor of elocution and an active member of the Phrenological Society at this time (Phrenology was a, now discredited, theory that a person's personality is linked to the shape of the skull). He joined the Society after mid-1843, is reported to have been Vice President at the time of the November 1848 dinner and was still listed as a Committee member in 1855.

Hepburn probably returned again in 1851-1852, this time with a new Secretary – a Mr Gibbon (or possibly Charles Gibson). We know that the Ball was held in February 1852 at Hannover Square but nothing else of events that year. Robert Hepburn was definitely in the Chair during the next two sessions of 1852-1853 and 1853-1854. In January 1853 he hosted a Society *conversazione* in his home³⁴. This was attended by more than seventy gentlemen and various displays included examples of hosiery, shirts, plaids and hand woven cloth available for sale from the depot of the Highland Patriotic Society. The Highland Society, Scottish Hospital, Royal Highland School Society and Caledonian Asylum were represented. George Bain, Secretary of the Highland Society, was invited to chair the proceedings and the other representatives spoke of their own institutions. Michie Forbes Gray gave the address that has been referred to previously, a Mr Mossman spoke on Australia and piping was provided by Mr Mackay, Her Majesty's piper. It seems that, in modern terms, this event was the re-launch of the Society after it had put behind it the uncertainties of the previous few years, and after the Scottish Society had closed.

The annual Ball probably took place the following month but the only other event that we hold evidence for that year was the anniversary Festival dinner at the London Tavern in May 1853³⁵. About one hundred and fifty attended and the ladies were again seated with the gentlemen. The proceedings included the presentation of a silver tea service to Michie Forbes Gray, in recognition of his work as Secretary during the recent challenges. The band of the 1st Life Guards entertained, there was singing by Miss Benson and Mr Dolby and the company enjoyed dancing after dinner. The dancing is a first mention but may also have occurred on earlier occasions. An interesting comment in the press report, although not connected to the evening, was that the Society was contemplating the introduction of essays on matters of interest at ordinary meetings – perhaps the first move towards the eventual introduction of Sentiments at Little Dinners.

Session 1853-1854 is the last, for several years, for which any detailed record can be found. Another Ball no doubt took place, although we hold no report, and the first definite function

³³ British Library online archive, Banffshire Journal 05 August 1851.

³⁴ 1890 Chronicles, page 20.

³⁵ British Library online archive, Banffshire Journal 24 May 1853.

was a second *conversazione*, this time held in the Hannover Square Rooms in April 1854³⁶. Ladies and gentlemen were present and Mr Charles Mackie, of the Royal Highland School Society, presented an essay on the history and antiquity of the Highland language and garb. Singing and dancing continued until three o'clock in the morning. This was followed by an 'anniversary dinner' at the Artichoke, Blackwall in July 1854 attended by sixty members and friends (no mention of whether ladies were present)³⁷. Robert Hepburn was in the chair as Society President and the Highland Society, Royal Highland School Society and the Caledonian Asylum were represented. A Mr Crawford sang and a piper was present. Hepburn probably continued as President until the end of session 1854-1855 although confirmation is lacking.

The cosy evenings at the Craven Hotel, Covent Garden, referred to by David Hepburn in the *Chronicles*³⁸, seem to have occurred while the membership numbers were depressed, perhaps between 1848 and 1853, and may have included some of the early informal suppers. One guest at such a gathering was Colonel Burns, son of Robert Burns. The 1890 *Chronicles* contain the copy of an address on Sir Walter Scott given by Robert Hepburn at about this time³⁹ and is the earliest surviving text of what would later be called a *Sentiment* but we are not told of the occasion on which it was delivered.

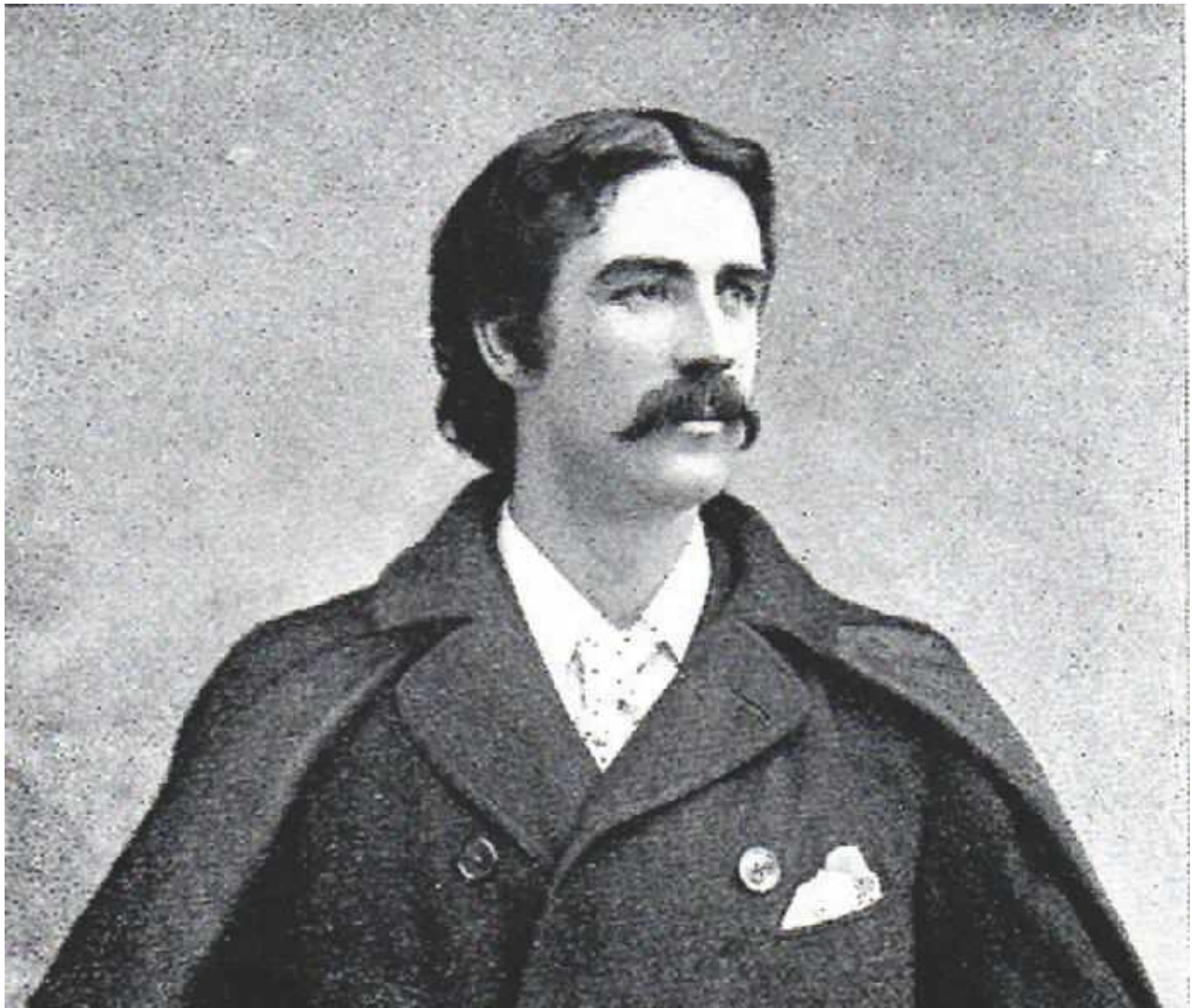
Development of the nation had moved on over the decade and a half since the Society had been formed. The mainland of the British Isles now had a population of some twenty-one million of whom three million were in Scotland, and the same number were Londoners. The country's industrial revolution continued apace and the Empire continued to grow with overseas trade opportunities under both the union flag and, assisted by the protection of the Royal Navy, many others. The main cities of Scotland were now connected to London and other areas of England by an extensive, but still growing railway network. Movement of population from the rural areas continued, not least in Scottish Highlands where the Clearances continued for several more decades, albeit at a smaller scale than previously.

³⁶ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 22 April 1854.

³⁷ British Library online archive, Caledonian Mercury 10 July 1854.

³⁸ 1890 *Chronicles*, page 17.

³⁹ 1890 *Chronicles*, page 18.



David Hepburn

CHAPTER 4

The Mid-Victorian Society – 1855 to 1890

The record of the years from 1855 to 1890 relies largely on David Hepburn's 1890 Chronicles, with some additional information from online newspaper archives and, in respect of members of Council, from additional material in the edited content for these years in the Chronicles for 1837-1905 published in 1923. The 1890 Chronicles devote many pages to the period from 1855 to 1875 but sources were clearly limited, and much of the account centred on the lives and associated anecdotes of Presidents, other prominent members and notable guests.

After frequent, and at times radical, changes in routine during the Society's first fifteen or so years, the annual programme now seems to have settled down to a pattern of the Annual General Meeting at the start of the season early in the winter in November or December, a Festival dinner in January, the Ball in February or early March and occasional summer functions. There would have been other regular meetings and probably informal suppers but details of these are lacking. A further development was that it became customary for Presidents to complete two or three consecutive years in office. Donations to the Royal Highland School Society may have ceased about this time but support to the (by then) Royal Caledonian Asylum and to the Scottish Hospital (Royal Scottish Corporation) continued as the Society's main charities.

This consolidation seems to have coincided with the start of Andrew Maclure's tenure as President and his appointment may have been the passing of the baton after the rebuilding under Robert Hepburn's years of leadership. The date of Maclure's assumption of office is not definitely known but there is strong circumstantial evidence that it was in late 1855 and that his three sessions were 1855-1856 to 1857-1858. He may have been the Mr Maclure reported as being present at the 1847 Festival⁴⁰, and a Wester Ross man as he was eventually buried at Auchtertyre, near Kyle of Lochalsh⁴¹. We do not know much else about him but he seems to have been a talented, very well regarded President with artistic interests who was adept at attracting interesting guests and remained a member of the Society until his death about 1885.

The only record of a function during his time in office is of a Festival dinner held in the London Tavern on 29th January 1857⁴². A company of about two hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen sat down at half past six o'clock to commemorate Robert Burns, the first time we know Burns to have been remembered since 1846. However, the major event of the evening was the presentation to Robert Hepburn of his portrait, in recognition of his years as President of the Society and of his support for Scottish charities in London. The work was by the celebrated artist Daniel, later Sir Daniel, Macnee who was a frequent guest at Society gatherings, and it now hangs in the headquarters of the London Scottish Regiment. All Society members were reported to be in Highland dress. The Highland Society, the Scottish

⁴⁰ 1890 Chronicles, page 12.

⁴¹ 1890 Chronicles, page 32.

⁴² 1890 Chronicles, page 42.

Hospital and the College of Dentists were among the other institutions represented. Toasts were given with Highland Honours and the evening concluded with dancing for the company.

The office bearers in late 1855 are believed to have included WP Clireheugh as Honorary Secretary and John Kilpatrick as Honorary Treasurer, with James G Smith and George Grant in the new posts of joint Honorary Auditors⁴³. Clireheugh's role may have been short lived as Michie Forbes Gray is again described as Secretary in the account of the January 1857 dinner. By contrast, Kilpatrick continued as Treasurer until 1883 and Smith was still shown as an auditor in 1874. The use of the term director, for elected Committee members, seems to have been discontinued.

Robert Marshall followed Andrew Maclure into the Chair and occupied it during sessions 1858-1859, 1859-1860 and 1860-1861. Marshall seems to have been a larger than life character with a love of outdoor pursuits, if no great orator, and another long term member. His first year in office was a notable one for the Society. The January 1859 Festival dinner⁴⁴ played a major part in the London celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Robert Burns. This was held in the London Tavern and a number of Burns artefacts were on display. We are not told the attendance but only that the lack of accommodation caused a large number to be turned away; if the event was held in the Tavern's main dining room, the company may have been over three hundred. It was noted that the menu included haggis sent from Ayrshire. Toasts included:

The Queen
Prince Albert and the Royal Family
The Army and Navy
The Caledonian Society
The Undying Memory of Robert Burns proposed by Robert Hepburn
British Literature coupled with the name of Professor Masson
The Fine Arts
The Edinburgh Deputation coupled with the name of Mr W Chambers
Our Guests
The President
The late President, Mr Maclure
The Ladies
The Land o' Cakes
The Land We live In, etc

All this was controlled by a Mr Higgins (or Mr Higgs as before?) who officiated as toast master; the text of Robert Hepburn's speech is reproduced in the Chronicles. Five pipers played, Mr Templeton, assisted by Miss Lizzie Stuart, sang songs by Burns, a band also performed and the festivities continued until a late hour.

Later that year, the London Scottish Rifle Volunteers, subsequently the London Scottish Regiment, was raised. The exact circumstances of this event are far from clear but our 1921 President is reported⁴⁵ as having written to the editor of the London Scottish Regimental Gazette in March 1921, to point out that it was in Robert Hepburn's home that the matter was

⁴³ Chronicles 1837-1905, page 179.

⁴⁴ 1890 Chronicles, page 50.

⁴⁵ Chronicles 1961-1967, page 329.

first discussed by members of the Caledonian Society and it was decided to form a regiment; the Highland Society was then asked to join in and readily agreed. There is now no trace of what might have backed this statement but the Hepburn family may have again been the source. If it is accurate, the Society seems to have initiated the formation even although the Highland Society's greater financial muscle and military connections allowed it to become the more senior partner. Subsequently, both societies jointly called a meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern on 4th July 1859⁴⁶ where it was proposed by Lord Elcho (Highland Society) and seconded by Sir Charles Forbes (who Honorary Historian William Will tells us was a Caledonian Society member) that the unit be formed. During the first thirty years of the Regiment's existence, its members who were also members of the Society included Robert Hepburn (as an honorary member), Major Campbell, Captains Conway, Nottman and MacKilligan, Lieutenant Kenneth Barclay Brown and Dr Farquhar Matheson.

A newspaper notice⁴⁷ tells us that the 1861 Anniversary dinner was to take place on 25th January of that year at the London Tavern and, given the date, we may assume that Robert Burns was again celebrated. This is the last record that we have of an event at that venue. Towards the end of the April that followed, the Times revealed that the Society had taken a significant part in a fund to support the family of the artist John Cross who had just died at a young age. Five members, including the President and Vice President, were on the fund committee and at least eleven others had subscribed. Interestingly, neither Cross nor his family seem to have had any Scottish connection. Also about this time, the Society contributed to the Society for the Relief of Poor Fishermen and Families in the Highlands and Islands.

It is probable that Marshall, in turn, was followed by David N Chambers FSA in 1861-1862 and the latter was certainly in post in 1862-1863. Chambers was a member of the Edinburgh publishing family of that name who worked in the firm. He had moved to London in 1853 and was an active supporter of the Scottish Hospital. He ceased to be a member of the Society about the start of session 1870-1871 and may have died at this time or possibly returned to Scotland.

No details are held for any Society event during this period. However, for at least its second year, Robert Hepburn re-joined the team as Vice President and, in this capacity, represented the Society at the Scottish Hospital's 1863 St Andrew's Day Festival attended by the Prime Minister Lord Palmerston. Hepburn responded to the Corporation toast to the Society⁴⁸ and, in so doing, quoted the comment by an unknown, and possibly apocryphal, Scotsman concerning Palmerston 'Weel, weel, if his lordship is not a Scotchman, he has abilities enough to warrant him in being one'. Further changes in officers were that David Budge was now Honorary Secretary and George Brock had replaced George Grant as one of the Auditors. It was also about this time that the limit of one hundred members was first adopted.

We now know that Hepburn did not follow this appointment by returning to the Chair as was once believed. Instead, John Young took over for three years starting in 1863-1864. Young was described, in the Chronicles, as 'being widely known and universally respected, not only in the City of London but elsewhere. By his own exertions he rose to a position of affluence and honour' – but we are not told of his roots. His profession seems to have been that of an

⁴⁶ See document attached to minutes of Council meeting dated 14 November 1947.

⁴⁷ British Library online archive, London City Press 19 January 1861.

⁴⁸ 1890 Chronicles, page 60.

accountant and his firm Young, Turquand and Young. He may have been the same John Young noted, in its history, as a significant subscriber to the Scottish Hospital during the years 1864 to 1873. He died in 1887.

The only record of a Society function during Young's time is that of the Festival dinner held in the Freemasons' Tavern on the 1864 anniversary of Burn's birth⁴⁹. We also know that he represented the Society at the Scottish Hospital Festival on 30 November 1866⁵⁰. David Hepburn tells us that a Festival dinner at the Freemasons' Tavern at about this time attracted ninety members and guests and that a Ball at the Hannover Square Rooms was attended by just over three hundred ladies and gentlemen⁵¹.

The Chronicles also indicate that, by 1866, the term Council had been taken into use to include the office bearers, the elected Committee and also, listed separately for the first time, ex-officio members. Past Presidents had been afforded such membership under the 1845 Rules but it now seems to have been tied to holders of the Gold Badge and among those listed is Michie Forbes Gray who is believed to have been the recipient of the first non-presidential award of the Badge. This is the earliest date at which the existence of the Gold Badge can be deduced; there are photographs of then Past Presidents Hepburn, Maclure, Marshall and Young wearing the Badge but none of these illustrations can be dated and the awards might have been made retrospectively sometime after their tenures.



Early Gold Badges – On the left as depicted in the 1890 Chronicles (the date at the bottom, probably 1839, is obscured); on the right, the badge presented to Dr Guthrie Rankin in 1903 inscribed with the date 1839. Later badges carry the date 1837.

⁴⁹ British Library online archive, Teesdale Mercury 10 February 1864.

⁵⁰ British Library online archive, Caledonian Mercury 02 December 1865.

⁵¹ 1890 Chronicles, page 64.

The 1890 Chronicles include a copy of a press report, dated October 1867⁵², which provides a detailed account of the Society as it was then and which seems to have been based on an interview with a well-informed member. Among the points it made were that:

- The Society had been established in 1839 for the promotion of brotherhood and good fellowship, and combined efforts for national and benevolent objects connected with Scotland. The Scottish Hospital and the Caledonian Asylum were the main, but not only, causes supported
- Membership was limited to one hundred exclusive of Council and office bearers who comprised a president, a vice president, five ‘ex-presidents’ (the ex-officio members of Council), a committee of nine, a treasurer, two auditors and a secretary.
- The Annual General Meeting was held in December.
- Council met quarterly, or more often if necessary.
- Entrance fee was two guineas and the annual subscription one guinea.
- The main social events were the annual Festival and the Ball.

Dr Charles Hogg succeeded John Young but, for reasons which are unclear, he only completed two sessions in the Chair (1866-1867 and 1867-1868), although he would later re-join the officers as Honorary Secretary. Hogg was born in 1811 and was a medical doctor who was also FRCS, having gained his first medical qualification in 1835. The Corporation’s history⁵³ tells us that he was active in the management of the Royal Scottish Corporation, chairing or serving on most of its committees, and the Chronicles tell us that he was also active with the Caledonian Asylum.⁵⁴ The Chronicles relate⁵⁵ the anecdote of how he was called, when in Highland dress, from a Society event to attend a female patient and, having covered himself in an all enveloping coat, intrigued the lady when the hilt of his dress dirk appeared through an opening. On answering the appeal to reveal what the coat was hiding, the view of the Doctor in all his finery brought an instant improvement! He remained an active member for some years after his presidency and died in 1897.

Society events presided over by Dr Hogg included the ‘annual dinner’ in January 1868⁵⁶ at the Freemasons’ Tavern with nearly one hundred gentlemen present (no mention of ladies but they were probably represented). The account of this dinner also included the first record of the term ‘Caledonian Honours’ although the significance of its use is unclear; it may have been merely another term for the traditional Highland Honours or it could be something closer to Caledonian Honours as recognised today. Highland Honours were performed with one foot on the chair and the other on the table – not always easy or wise for more senior members towards the end of a long evening and arguably discourteous with ladies at table as was now the custom at the Festival dinner. There was a wide range of toasts and in that to the Society the Vice President, Dr Ramsay, is quoted as saying that it had been established in 1839. Piping was by the Highland Society’s piper, Mr D Macpherson. Later that year, an ‘annual white bait dinner’ was held at the Ship Hotel, Greenwich⁵⁷ and attended by eighty-

⁵² 1890 Chronicles, page 68.

⁵³ A Cup of Kindness 2003, page 232.

⁵⁴ 1890 Chronicles, page 74.

⁵⁵ 1890 Chronicles, page 79.

⁵⁶ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 27 January 1868.

⁵⁷ Scotsman online archive, 08 June 1868.

two gentlemen. The Chronicles also mention a fete held at Vanburgh Park, Blackheath⁵⁸ in the summer of the same year.

One medical doctor followed another as Dr FW Ramsay took the Chair at the start of session 1868-1869 but this time recent practice was restored as he would remain in occupation for three years, until the end of 1870-1871. Ramsay hailed from Inveresk, near Edinburgh, and had qualified FRCP Edinburgh. He seems to have been well known for his support of Scottish causes and charities, and these included the Royal Caledonian Asylum and the Scottish Hospital. He was also a member of the Highland Society. Dr Ramsay is believed to have died or left the Society in the late 1870s. J Seton Ritchie is recorded as having been Honorary Secretary at this time.

Press reports cover January Festival dinners⁵⁹, at the Freemasons' Tavern, and Balls⁶⁰ in the Hannover Square Rooms in all three years. The 1869 Festival dinner was notable for the presentation of the Gold Badge to the immediate Past President and also to the Honorary Secretary David Budge, the first record of the presentation of the Badge. The report also notes, with approval, that ladies sat at table with the gentlemen – something that we now know had started as early as 1851. However, on this occasion, and for many years after, the response to the toast to the ladies was still given by a gentleman speaking on their behalf. In proposing the toast to the Society, Robert Hepburn pointed out that it had been founded thirty years before (thus in 1839). The following year's dinner witnessed the first known playing, at a Society occasion, of the Society's Reel or Strathspey 'The Caledonian Society of London'. Later research⁶¹ would reveal that while it is usually attributed to Pipe Major George MacClelland (1884-1929), it may have been composed originally by one William Mackay. However, nothing has been found to explain why it is named after the Society. In both years, the dinners were followed by dancing for the company until a late hour. The Balls were well attended with companies of three to four hundred and this would have contributed to the donation of three hundred guineas made to the Scottish Hospital in late 1869⁶².

Of special interest were other reports of the Annual General Meetings at the Freemasons' Tavern on the second Thursdays of December in 1868⁶³ and 1870⁶⁴ which indicate that informal suppers for members and guests followed the meetings. This is the first specific mention of these suppers that would eventually develop into the monthly Little Dinners. What we are not told is whether, at this time, they were held only following the annual meeting in December or also at other times during the session, perhaps following the quarterly Council meetings. At the 1870 supper, the President proposed the main toast, apparently to the Society, and there was singing finishing with Auld Lang Syne.

William Thomas Morrison followed in sessions 1871-1872 and 1872-1873 and he would return to the Chair later for a third year in 1881-1882. We know little about him other than that, in the early 1870s, he was with the Bank of Mexico and South America. He seems to

⁵⁸ 1890 Chronicles page, 72.

⁵⁹ 1890 Chronicles, page 81 & 91 and British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 27 January 1871.

⁶⁰ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 27 February 1869 and 04 March 1871, and Oban Times 19 March 1870

⁶¹ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 283.

⁶² British Library online archive, Manchester Courier 02 December 1869. This may have been the Society subscription list in which case it comprised donations from individual members.

⁶³ Scotsman online archive, 14 December 1868.

⁶⁴ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 09 December 1870.

have been somewhat more youthful than recent Presidents at that time and was known as the ‘young man’s President’. He would remain in the Society until his death about 1909.

We know that his first session started with an Annual General Meeting in December at the Freemasons’ Tavern⁶⁵ at which the new President was elected and then took the Chair. There is no mention of a supper after the meeting but, as guests were said to be present, this seems to have been likely. The annual Festival dinner, with its commemoration of Robert Burns, took place on the 25th of the following month, again at the Freemasons’⁶⁶. The meal was on the table at six o’clock, two hundred ladies and gentlemen were present and the proceedings included presentation of Gold Badges to the immediate Past President and to the Honorary Secretary J Seton Ritchie. The Ball took place in March at the Hannover Square Rooms with over three hundred and fifty present⁶⁷.

The 1872-1873 programme included the usual Burns celebration at the January Festival⁶⁸ and the Ball of March 1873⁶⁹ when over three hundred enjoyed the traditional accommodation of the Hannover Square Rooms for what was to be the last time before the Rooms closed to the public in 1875. As a charitable aside, the history of the Royal Scottish Corporation records that, between 1848 and 1873, it received £367 10s from the Society, making the latter about the fifth largest subscriber at that time⁷⁰.

Aeneas J McIntyre, a Queen’s Council, and later a Member of Parliament and then a judge, was President in 1873-1874 and 1874-1875 before public duties prevented further Society activity on his part. He was one of an increasing number of members who, at that time, represented the Law. Born in 1821, he was called to the Bar of the Middle Temple in 1846 and joined the North Wales and Chester Circuit. He was appointed Queen’s Council in 1872 and became a Bencher of the Middle Temple. The date of his joining the Society is unknown but it must have been after the start of 1870 as he is recorded as having been a guest at the Festival in January that year. Later, he was a Member of Parliament from 1880 until 1885 and, in 1888, became a County Court Judge. He also held an important position in Freemasonry. Although no longer active, he remained a member until his death in September 1889.

McIntyre’s first session included the January Festival⁷¹ that followed the now customary pattern with the presentation of the Gold Badge to the immediate Past President and, in March, the Ball, held this year at Willis’s Rooms in St James⁷². At the start of the session, William Robertson and Thomas Kennedy had taken over as the Honorary Auditors.

The January 1875 dinner at the Freemasons’ Tavern is recorded in detail in three press reports that are reproduced in the 1890 Chronicles⁷³. Nearly two hundred ladies and gentlemen are quoted as having been present, the President reminded the company that the

⁶⁵ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 15 December 1871.

⁶⁶ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 26 January 1872.

⁶⁷ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 09 March 1872.

⁶⁸ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 25 January 1873.

⁶⁹ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 08 March 1873.

⁷⁰ The single payment of 300 guineas in 1869 was probably a subscription list while the £367 10s is more likely to have been from Society funds.

⁷¹ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 27 January 1874 and Morning Post of same date.

⁷² British Library online archive, Morning Post 07 March 1874.

⁷³ 1890 Chronicles, page 106.

Society had been formed in 1839, Robert Hepburn made the speech proposing the toast to the memory of Robert Burns, a gentleman and a lady singer entertained, the band of the London Scottish played as did the (adult) piper of the Royal Caledonian Asylum and dancing for the company followed dinner. It is also the earliest occasion with a record of the National Anthem being sung at the end of a Society event after Auld Lang Syne (although this might have been happening for many years). The Ball was again in March at Willis's Rooms with a reported attendance of over four hundred⁷⁴.

J Seton Ritchie resigned as Honorary Secretary during the session and died shortly after doing so, in August 1875. David Hepburn states that a major loss of Society records occurred at about this time, possibly of most of those covering the years from 1848, or even from 1843. He gives no details, merely saying 'Over this unhappy incident it is well to draw the veil'. Conjecturally, the loss may have been connected with the circumstances of Seton Ritchie's resignation and death. The Corporation's history states that the Society lost records and artefacts when the former's premises were destroyed by fire in 1877⁷⁵ but Hepburn's writing suggests that most Society records had gone before the later event⁷⁶. Anderson Soutar took over as Secretary but only briefly as business called him abroad and Past President Dr Charles Hogg stepped into the breach.

J Shiress Will was another Queen's Council and Bencher of the Middle Temple who took time from a busy life to fill the Society's Chair for three years from 1875-1876 until 1877-1878. He also went on to become a Member of Parliament and subsequently serve as a judge. Will seems to have died during session 1909-1910.

The January 1876 Festival dinner took place, as usual, in the Freemasons' Tavern with about two hundred present⁷⁷. Macrae Moir proposed the memory of Burns and the Gold Badge was presented to the immediate Past President. The London Scottish band played under the direction of Louis Beck and there was piping by Donald Mackay, the Price of Wales' piper, and John Mackenzie of the Royal Caledonian Asylum. Telegram greetings were read from kindred societies in Nottingham and Stockton on Tees. No other social details survive for this period but the Chronicles say the Balls continued in Willis's Rooms, now that those in Hannover Square were no longer available. A note of charitable business tells us that the Society donated six hundred guineas to the Scottish Hospital in 1876⁷⁸.

James Lawrie followed Will for another three years, until the end of 1880-1881. He is recorded as having been active in London Scottish matters generally and charities in particular, being specially associated with the Royal Caledonian Asylum. Later, he returned to Scotland, settled near the Falls of Clyde where he became a Justice of the Peace and died in 1901. The only account of his time in office is of the Burns celebration in the Freemasons' Tavern in January 1879⁷⁹. Upwards of a hundred and fifty attended and enjoyed dancing after the dinner.

⁷⁴ British Library online archive, Bradford Observer 08 March 1875.

⁷⁵ A Cup of Kindness 2003, page 202.

⁷⁶ 1890 Chronicles, chapters XI and XII.

⁷⁷ British Library online archive, various titles of January 1876 including Western Daily Press.

⁷⁸ British Library online archive, London Daily News 01 December 1876. Once again, this seems to have been the Society's subscription list.

⁷⁹ British Library online archive, Dundee Courier 27 January 1879.

The final decade leading up to 1890 seems to have seen something of a transition for the Society. After thirty years during which multiple year presidencies had been standard, this custom started to fade. At the same time, the success of the annual Balls declined but, by contrast, the informal suppers developed into Little Dinners. Only the January Festival dinners, with their celebration of Robert Burns, continued relatively unchanged. It is now difficult to determine why these developments occurred, and to what extent they may have been connected, but one possibility is that there was a trend away from formality in favour of more relaxed events, and that the demands on Presidents arising from the more frequent dinners discouraged repeated sessions in that office.

Session 1881-1882 had WT Morrison in the Chair for a third time after an interval of eight years and Thomas Masson in post as Honorary Secretary. Morrison was followed by Alexander Milne Dunlop who covered 1882-1883 and 1883-1884. Dunlop was a surveyor and land agent by profession and would later become Senior Vice President of the Surveyors' Institution. He represented the Manchester Ship Canal Company and was also responsible for several large rural estates but still found time for considerable involvement in public affairs. He maintained a home in Wales. He first served on Council in 1879-1880 and is believed to have died in January 1897. At the start of Dunlop's presidency, the number of auditors was reduced to one and that post filled by William Robertson. However during the second year, the veteran Treasurer John Kilpatrick resigned and was replaced by Robertson whose position as Auditor was now taken by James Glegg. Kilpatrick was deservedly awarded the Gold Badge but, sadly, died very soon after in March 1884.

The Festival dinners of 1883⁸⁰ and 1884⁸¹ were reported, both at the Freemasons' Tavern and both celebrated Robert Burns. The first had an attendance of about a hundred and sixty and finished with dancing after dinner and the second was the occasion of the presentation of the Gold Badge to John Kilpatrick, accompanied by an illuminated parchment commemorating his many years in office. We also read that the Society contributed to the Mansion House Fund for Relief in the Highlands and Islands at this time⁸².

Dunlop was followed into the Chair by J Nisbet Blyth who also completed two years, 1884-1885 and 1885-1886. He seems to have been a particularly effective President as we are told that the Little Dinners (first so called at this time) were eminently successful under his direction and the Festivals also seem to have gone well. The anecdote is told how, when travelling in France, and being told that there was 'no room at the inn', his comment 'what, no room for the President of the Caledonian Society of London!' brought the response of an offer of the best accommodation for 'Monsieur le President'. During or at the end of his time in office, he presented the handsome table snuff burr that is our earliest known item of Society property. He is recorded as having been an active Past President and is believed to have died during session 1909-1910.

A further change at the start of Blyth's term was an increase in the number of elected members of the Committee of Council from nine to fifteen, thus effectively relaxing slightly the restriction on the total number of Society members.

⁸⁰ British Library online archive, Aberdeen Evening Express 26 January 1883.

⁸¹ 1890 Chronicles, page 134.

⁸² British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 23 July 1883.



Snuff Burr presented by J Nisbet Blyth

Blyth's time was followed by two presidencies lasting for only a single session, R Barclay Brown in 1886-1887 and W Hutton Inglis in 1887-1888, the first time that this arrangement had occurred for thirty-five years. Brown was a shipbuilder hailing from Montrose, an impressive looking man in his kilt with a fluent command of the Doric and well able to provide contributions in song. He was described as a hearty, kindly Caledonian and seems to have remained an active Past President until his death in February 1895. A further change in Society management saw R Mackay take over as Honorary Auditor at the end of 1886.

We know almost nothing of Inglis as a person but a press report gives a full account of the Festival dinner that year. Still at the Freemasons' Tavern, it was held on a Wednesday evening, probably 25th January, and seems to have been well attended⁸³. The memory of Burns was proposed by the President and other toasts included those honouring the Army, Navy and Reserve Forces, the Society (in what the proposer recognised as its jubilee year fifty years after its establishment – the first apparent acceptance that 1837-1838 might have been the first session), the President, the Visitors, the Past Presidents and the Ladies. Mr Louis Beck directed the band of the London Scottish Rifle Volunteers, piping was provided by Her Majesty's piper Mr William Ross and the pipers of the Royal Caledonian Asylum, and a number of singers performed. Telegraphic greetings were read out and the evening finished in the ball-room. By contrast, the Ball had clearly been in decline, despite a move to the Hotel Metropole in Northumberland Avenue sometime after that establishment opened in 1885, and that of 1888 was so poorly supported that it was decided to discontinue the event, after what may have been an unbroken run since 1842. The Chronicles relate that Little Dinners finished at ten o'clock prompt and that a typical menu of the time was as illustrated on the next page.

⁸³ 1890 Chronicles, page 153.

Dinner

At the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street.

SOUPS.

Cockle Leekie. Mutton Broth.

FISH.

Cod and Oyster Sauce.

SCOTTISH COURSE.

Haggis. Sheep's Heads and Trotters. Black and White Puddings.
Mashed Potatoes.

REMOVE.

Saddle of Mutton.
Spinach. Potatoes Rissolées.

ROAST.

Turkey and Sausage.
French Salad.

Cheese. Celery.

Little Dinner Menu about 1887

The rationale behind the adoption of 1888 as the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Society is unexplained but seems to accept the dates given in Gray's address, despite the continuing opinion that the formal institution date remained 1839. This recognition also led to the introduction of the silver member's badge on the suggestion of J Nisbet Blyth.



The original Member's Badge 1888

The badge seems to have introduced the use of the Lion Rampant as the Society's emblem and this would continue, in various forms, until the Grant of Arms to the Society in 1992 (and even then continued to appear on that badge). The use was, and is, somewhat improper as it trespasses on Royal prerogative, and we do not know what the Scottish Lyon Court might make of such lese majeste. However, there had been even worse before; both the published 1845 Rules and the 1890 Chronicles displayed the pre-1603 Scottish Royal Arms.

We also read in the Chronicles that the earliest recorded use of the Selkirk Grace was at the Little Dinner of 8th December 1887 when the President spoke the words, repeated by so many of his successors:

Some ha'e meat that canna' eat;
Some ha'e nane that want it;
But we ha'e meat, and we can eat,
And so the Lord be thankit.

The final two sessions of this period, 1888-1889 and 1889-1890, returned, albeit briefly, to the custom of multi-year presidencies when David Hepburn took the Chair. He was the son of eight times Past President Robert Hepburn and born in London in 1851 but sent to Scotland for his schooling. He returned to become a student at the Dental School, then in Soho Square, qualifying LDS in 1873. He received an appointment at the Hospital the following year and remained there until 1888. For the next eight years he held a teaching post at the London School of Dental Surgery, and also served as Chairman of the Medical Committee of Management. Later, he was elected to a vice presidency and was a member of the Committee of Management. For more than thirty years he was a member of the Odonatological Society, being President in 1895, and he was an early member of the Publishing Committee of the

British Dental Association. A man of wide talents and interests, he was, at various times, a Managing Governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation, a Director of the Royal Caledonian Schools, Honorary Treasurer of the piping organisation Comunn Pbiobairean Lunnain and a member of the Highland Society. Of Norse blood, he delighted in travelling in areas such as the Faroes and Iceland. He joined the Society in 1881 and first served on Council in 1886. His first presidency was to last two years, this session and next, and he would be recalled for a third term in 1905-1906. Of at least equal impact on the Society as his years of office was his authorship of the 1890 volume of the Chronicles, written while President, that covered the years from the Society's formation and set the example without which it is most unlikely that the Society's history would have been recorded. David Hepburn died in January 1907, less than three months after finally demitting office and at the age of only fifty-six.

The annual Festival dinner took place on Friday 25th January 1889⁸⁴ in the Freemasons' Tavern with an attendance that was the best for some twelve years; the menu featured a Scottish course of cock-a-leekie soup, haggis and black and white puddings. The programme included the President's proposal of the Immortal Memory, the toast to the Society, the toast to the Visitors and its response and several other speeches and toasts. The Gold Badge was presented to immediate Past President WH Inglis and the President was saluted in the Ceremony of the Dirks. Piping was by Her Majesty's piper Mr William Ross, several singers entertained and there was probably a band in attendance as the traditional dancing took place after dinner, finishing with Auld Lang Syne.

The Ceremony of the Dirks is described in the 1890 Chronicles⁸⁵ and is the subject of the photograph on page 42 of this history. The description reads 'Heralded by the piper, and preceded by a body-guard formed of kilned office-bearers and members of the Society, the recipient of the medal is conducted to the head of the room, where he is received by the President, who is attended by the beadle of the Society, Donald Mackay, attired in full highland costume, and carrying his silver-headed staff of office. The gentlemen composing the body-guard then range themselves in a semicircle round the President's chair. The retiring President is addressed in terms befitting the occasion, and the medal pinned to his breast by the lady seated on the right of the chair. This being accomplished, the President draws his dirk, holding it aloft, and each member of the body-guard, as he passed by, touches with his own weapon the President's upturned blade, in solemn silence. The sound of the pipes ringing out once more and the honoured recipient of the Society's highest distinction is conducted back to his seat, amidst the cheers of the assembled Caledonians and guests.'

The 'Society's Beadle' and his staff of office seem to have been those of the Royal Scottish Corporation, apparently borrowed for such occasions⁸⁶.

In addition to the Little Dinners, and those of the year have left no record, the President entertained the Society at his home that summer⁸⁷. This may have set a precedent as some other Presidents were similarly generous in the next quarter of a century.

⁸⁴ 1890 Chronicles, page 160.

⁸⁵ 1890 Chronicles, page 163. This is the first mention of the Ceremony and it may have then been recently introduced as it does not feature in any of the press reports of the pre-1880s Festivals.

⁸⁶ A Cup of Kindness 2003, pages 207 & 208 indicate that Mackay was the name of the Corporation Beadle.

⁸⁷ 1890 Chronicles, page 167.

The one change in officers at the start of 1889-1890 was that Thomas Masson resigned as Honorary Secretary and, apparently in the absence of a suitable longer term candidate, Vice President John Ross took over pro tempore. The opening Little Dinner⁸⁸, probably in December, was attended by sixty members and guests. A number of such occasions about this time⁸⁹ enjoyed speeches by guests from overseas responding to the toast to ‘The Guests’ including a Parsee gentleman and others from Japan and France. The author JM Barrie had been another recent visitor. These evenings were clearly relaxed in character with entertainment, in song, story or verse provided by members and guests, an example of the latter being a poem written by a member and recited on the final Little Dinner of this chapter on the third Thursday of April 1890:

“ It’s aye the same thing ower again,
 We build the same auld tower again,
 Wi’ toast and sang
 The hale nicht lang,
 And simple things hae power again.

“ We hear the same auld strains again,
 That thrill through a’ our veins again,
 An’ hearts grow licht
 An’ faces bricht,
 Wi’ memory o’ our hames again.

“ The sea rins round the pier again,
 Its angry thuds we hear again,
 An’ sounds an’ sights
 O’ days an’ nights,
 Lang passed awa’ come near again.

“ The wind blaws through the mains again,
 The burns plash ower the stanes again,
 An’ sparkling e’e
 An’ laugh sae free,
 Greet auld familiar names again.”

The Festival took place in January as usual⁹⁰. Burns was again celebrated by the President and the other toasts were in accordance with custom as was the piping. Once again the response to the toast to the Ladies was given by a gentleman. The choral entertainment was led by Mr Dalgetty Henderson, later a member of the Society, assisted by three ladies. A list of members in the Chronicles shows a total strength of 107 in 1890, of whom eighty-two were ordinary members⁹¹.

During this period London developed into the world’s largest city with its population growing from one million in 1800 to five and a half million ninety years later. This was driven by a combination of the administrative requirements of Empire and the needs of servicing the nation’s internationally unrivalled industrial base and mercantile marine. Poverty, congestion and sanitation were major challenges and these helped to drive civic

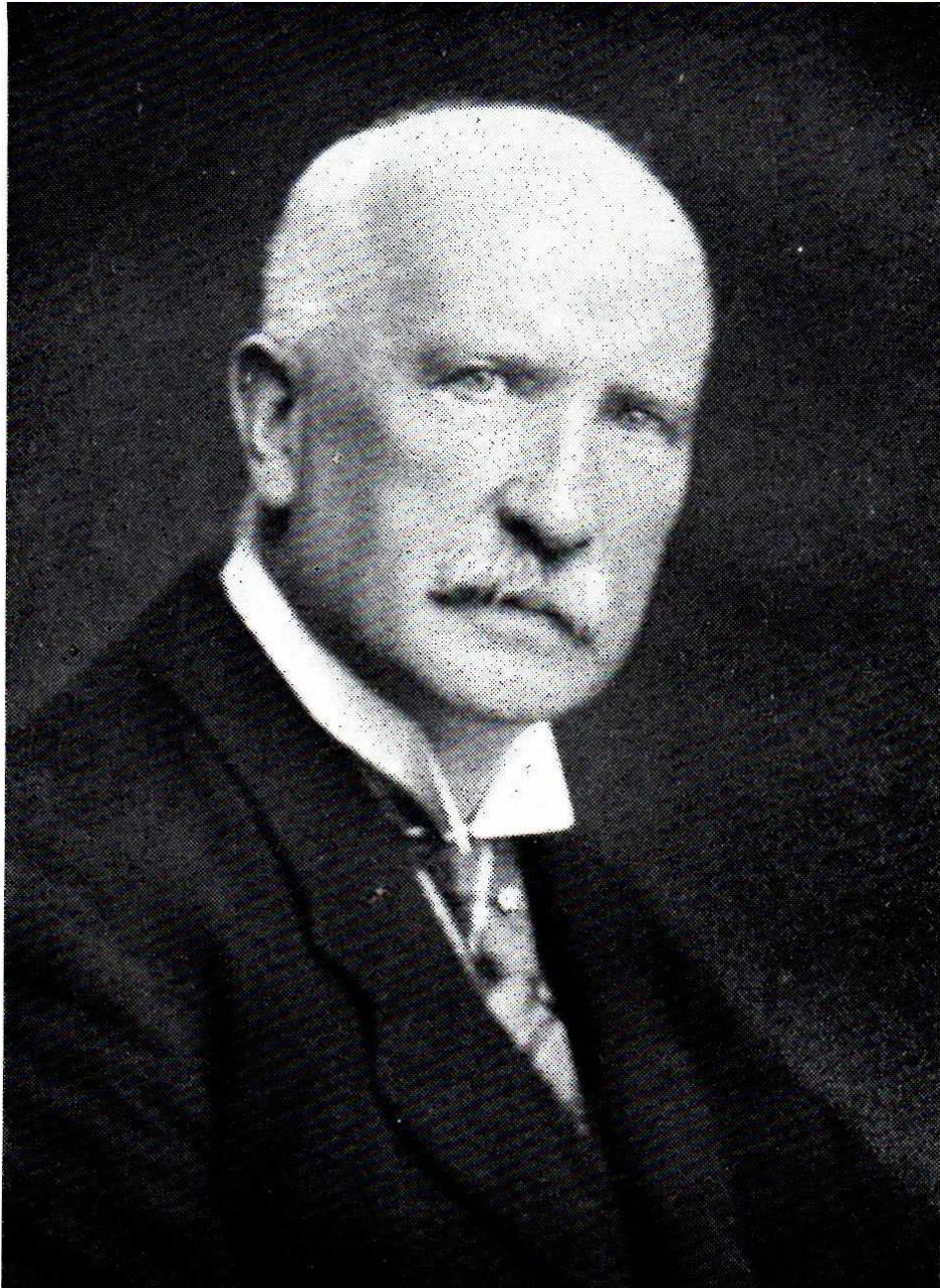
⁸⁸ 1890 Chronicles page, 169.

⁸⁹ 1890 Chronicles page, 169 & 170.

⁹⁰ 1890 Chronicles page, 177.

⁹¹ Chronicles 1837-1905, pages 92 (list of members) & 184 (Council members).

development and the expansion of public transport that would, in turn, encourage many of the better off to live further from their work – the age of commuting had arrived, initially to and from the suburbs but later further afield. Scotland's population grew from just under three million to a little under four million. Industry and manufacturing were generally thriving, albeit with poor conditions for many workers, an almost fully developed railway system connected Scotland with the rest of Great Britain, and Glasgow was emerging as the second city of Empire. Agriculture in Lowland Scotland also did well but the problems of the Highlands continued where sheep farming, sea fishing, sporting estates and crofting all provided employment but not sufficiently for the available population, and emigration to the central belt or abroad continued. Scottish education, industry and professions still prepared and trained many young men to high standards and some of the brightest and best sought their fortunes in London.



John Douglas

CHAPTER 5

Pre-World War One – 1890 to 1914

The twenty-four sessions between the close of the 1890 Chronicles and the outbreak of World War One in August 1914 attracted very much reduced press reporting and that now available online ceases almost entirely after 1909. David Hepburn's initiative in historical recording was not immediately followed up and it was not until the early 1920s that the Society acted to preserve further knowledge of its heritage by appointing its first Honorary Historian, Past President John Douglas. Douglas was a keen historian who had joined the Society in 1905 and had been Honorary Secretary from 1908 until 1919, thus having access to the Society papers of the time. However, there is clear anecdotal evidence that he never saw the 1841 to 1843 minutes and it is unlikely that he was aware of any documents from the mid-nineteenth century inscribed with the 1839 institution date. He was therefore unsighted on the reasons for the earlier tradition of the Society's establishment in 1839 and instead seems to have accepted unreservedly Michie Forbes Gray's dates of initial action in 1837 leading to a first dinner in 1838. This clearly has influenced some of his historical work, and also that of William Will who followed him as Historian. However, although the Society's fiftieth anniversary had been marked by the introduction of the member's badge in 1888, there is no indication that the corresponding dates for either the sixty year (diamond jubilee) or seventy-five year anniversaries, both of which fell during this period, were noted in any way.

These developments led to the publication, in 1923, of a further volume of the Chronicles, reproducing in an edited and condensed form the content of Hepburn's 1890 version, and adding new material mainly covering the years from 1890 to 1905. The coverage from 1890 onwards is more complete factually than that recorded by David Hepburn but, initially, records of speeches seem to be limited to short extracts from some given at the annual Festivals, and these may again have been taken from press reports. There was less information on Little Dinners but this increased gradually during the period and latterly included detail of some Sentiments.

We are almost wholly reliant on Douglas's Chronicles for this period of the Society's history. With Presidents now usually changing annually and increasing biographical information for them in the Chronicles, it is no longer practical or indeed necessary to repeat such information here; readers may refer to the Chronicles themselves. Nevertheless, it is useful to summarise the backgrounds of the Presidents during these years. The twenty-four sessions were led by twenty-three Presidents, of whom John Wilson covered two successive years and David Hepburn returned for his third session, these being the last occasions on which Presidents would hold office for more than one year, other than in wartime and its immediate aftermath. Of the twenty-three, six were medical doctors or dentists, of whom one was also in the Army, three had qualified as professional engineers, three were in export/import or shipping, three were directors of large or medium sized companies of unspecified role, two were in insurance and one each came from the petroleum industry, ranching in South America, HM Customs, the Army and banking; finally, one seems to have been what might then have been referred to as a gentleman of independent means. Interestingly, the Law was no longer represented and neither accountancy nor stockbroking featured. Some were retired, one was over eighty years of age, and a number were clearly self-made men of considerable means.

It may not be wholly coincidental that the change to single session presidencies took place about the time that Sentiments started to feature at Little Dinners, with the need to find speakers making the office even more onerous. A perhaps unintended consequence was that the number of Past Presidents, and hence ex-officio Council members, grew more quickly thus making more head room for new ordinary members. A further change at this time was the final acceptance of Caledonian, as opposed to Highland, Honours for accompanying toasts. William Will, who would have known members from that time, tells us later⁹² that by 1894 Caledonian Honours were established as an alternative to the more extravagant Highland Honours. As already mentioned, our current practice may have been launched much earlier but Highland Honours were not given up easily by some. As late as 1920, Society folklore still told of the battle to retain the more extravagant Highland variety – the final record of its use being at, what seems to have been an all-male, special dinner held in 1904 to mark the award of Companion of the Bath to the President⁹³. Still on the subject of dinners, and of Little Dinners in particular, a constant theme during this period was the ability of Presidents, other members and guests to contribute in song, verse or story, having been brought up, before gramophones let alone radio, in homes where entertainment had to be self-made. Many had party pieces for which they were well known. Finally, the policy that Highland dress should be worn on formal occasions was rescinded in October 1898 and hence forward would be entirely optional.

The 1891 annual Festival dinner took place on Tuesday 27th January at the Freemasons' Tavern with an attendance of two hundred and forty ladies and gentlemen that was believed to have been a record at that time. The programme was traditional with the presentation of the Gold Badge to the immediate Past President and a toast list that included:

Her Majesty The Queen
The Duke of Rothesay and other members of the Royal Family
The Navy, Army and Reserve Forces
The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns
Prosperity to the Caledonian Society of London
The Visitors
The President
The Ladies

Evidence of what would later be called a 'Sentiment' is found at the March 1891 Little Dinner when Mr George McK Munro of the London Ross and Cromarty Association gave several illustrations of Scottish music and humorous speech using Edison's phonograph.

The 1892 Festival was cancelled following the death of the Duke of Clarence of the Royal Family. The Ball was resurrected in 1892, 1893 and 1894, all held in the Hotel Metropole. However, the general meeting in November 1894 passed a resolution that no Ball should be held in 1895 and this turned out to be its definitive abandonment as it would not be held in future, despite occasional attempts to resurrect it again that lasted until 1914. There seems little doubt that this change was much regretted by the more traditional members. Nevertheless, with hindsight, the decision must have been correct and set the pattern of Little Dinners and an annual Festival that continued until early in the twenty-first century. Formal

⁹² Chronicles 1945-1952, page 34.

⁹³ Chronicles 1837-1905, page 167.

events of this type were perhaps now less popular and the Society may have lost some of the social cachet that it enjoyed earlier in the century and that had once helped to make the Ball such a success.

A summer excursion to Eastbourne took place in May 1891. The charge of one guinea per person covered a first class saloon return rail journey, lunch and dinner with the additional opportunity of a special rate should members wish to extend their stay until Monday morning. Ten members and over thirty guests took part and they were accompanied by the sergeant and six boy pipers from the Royal Caledonian Schools and by ‘the beadle of the Society’ (presumably, the Royal Scottish Corporation beadle on loan once more). Forty-nine sat down to dinner including the Mayor of Eastbourne. Entertainment during dinner was provided by the Eastbourne String Band as well as by the pipers.

Another very successful event was a Council rail excursion to Chingford, hosted by the President in 1892. A hotel lunch was followed by a drive through Epping Forest with a visit to the official residence of the Forest Ranger and a pub call for skittles, and the day finished with dinner at the President’s home before returning to London.

We read ⁹⁴that the 1890 Chronicles were published in 1891 and that each member received a copy with others going to:

Her Majesty Queen Victoria (a special edition bound in satin)
The London Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association
The London Caithness Association
The London Forfarshire Association
The London Inverness-shire Association
The London Morayshire Club
The London Ross and Cromarty Association
The London Galloway Association
The Scottish Club

No mention is made of the Highland Society or of the two main charities, the Royal Caledonian Asylum and the Royal Scottish Corporation, but it is possible that these bodies received copies direct from the author. Later, in 1898, a copy was presented to the Caledonian Club but this may have been done by an individual and not by the Society.

The annual programme was adjusted in October 1892. The Society’s year was changed so that, from the end of the 1892-1893 session, sessions would run from November to November. The Annual General Meeting would now be in November, rather than December, with the new session’s President taking the Chair at the Little Dinner that followed the meeting; thus sessions effectively changed between the November business meeting and the Little Dinner that immediately followed it, the season’s first Little Dinner now being that month. Later that winter, the President wrote to the Editor of the Evening Standard, his letter including the statement that the Society had been formed in 1839⁹⁵.

The 1893 Festival dinner in January was to be the last held in the Freemasons’ Tavern after some thirty years of custom, the move triggered by a mix up in bookings, blamed on the

⁹⁴ Chronicles 1837-1905, Preface to Part II.

⁹⁵ British Library online archive, London Evening Standard 11 January 1893.

Tavern, which left the Society with no hall for post-dinner dancing that night. The Little Dinner that opened the 1893-1894 season with an attendance of eighty members and guests was held in the Holborn Restaurant in Kingsway. The press report⁹⁶ of the latter comments that the Society's annual social programme was a festival, a ball and five 'morning dress' (Little) dinners. The change of venue may have caused difficulty in securing a sufficiently large room in the Holborn for the 1894 Festival as we learn that, in what seems to have been a one off arrangement, it was held in the Hotel Metropole with a company of one hundred and twenty-five gentlemen and eighty-three ladies and dancing after dinner.

The December 1894 Little Dinner was held in the Holborn Restaurant with an attendance of about one hundred when a guest spoke of the Matabeleland campaign⁹⁷, and the President proposed the toast to Robert Burns at the Festival the following month. At this time, the December meeting and dinner was used as an opportunity to meet friends from the north down for the Smithfield Show. The January Festivals of the next few years, now firmly established at the Holborn Restaurant, continued to be well supported. Little Dinners of this time are unrecorded but we do know that a major step towards regularising the inclusion of what would be later called a Sentiment was made in December 1897 when it was proposed that a special toast or topic of interest to Caledonians should be introduced at Little Dinners, and that Scotsmen of note should be invited as guests on such occasions. However, at this time, it was decided to leave implementation to the discretion of the President of the day and it would be another nine years before the Sentiment became routine. Nevertheless, we do know that one titled 'Shakespeare's Clowns' was given by President William Simpson during session 1898-1899.

April 1899 witnessed the introduction of honorary membership⁹⁸, at this stage restricted to those who had given many years of good service to the Society. The first two members so honoured were Duncan Hepburn and David Mossman. A dentist like his brother Robert, Hepburn had been a Committee member by 1855 and may have retained membership while working in Nottingham where he was active in local Scottish societies. He again became active in our Society when he retired to London and returned to the Council in 1892-1893. He would die in 1902. David Mossman was a Society character, well known for his humorous songs, who had been a Committee member by 1879.

No information is available regarding support at this time for the Society's two main charities but we do know that an annual donation was also made to the Scottish Gathering, where Scottish games and sports took place. Perhaps ironically, this seems to have been a successor to our old rival the Scottish Society of London which had originally been responsible for the event.

The final session of the nineteenth century and the first two of the twentieth coincided with the South African, or Boer, War but, unlike the two world wars that followed, impact on the Society and its activities was only minor. The normal routine continued almost unchanged and the only known additions were support for the Daily Mail fund for the benefit of the families of Army reservists recalled to the Colours, and response to an appeal from the Marquis of Tullibardine for field glasses to assist in the raising of the Scottish Horse.

⁹⁶ British Library online archive, Dundee Evening Telegraph 15 November 1893.

⁹⁷ British Library online archive, Glasgow Herald 15 December 1894.

⁹⁸ Chronicles 1837-1905, page 134.

Other national events had more impact. The death of Queen Victoria in January 1901 caused the cancellation of that year's Festival at only three days' notice. Later, the Society had sent loyal greetings to His Majesty King Edward VII in anticipation of his coronation and had organised a special commemorative dinner, for three hundred diners, to mark the event but this too had to be cancelled at short notice when the King's illness led to the coronation's postponement. Another sad event at this time was the death of the Father of the Society when Robert Hepburn died at the age of ninety-one in October 1901.

After this inauspicious start, the Society's century was back on track in January 1903 when the President, Dr Cantlie, used lantern slides in his presentation on the life and works of Robert Burns to an audience of one hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen. Unusually, Gold Badges were presented to not one but two Past Presidents. Piping was by boys of what would shortly become the Royal Caledonian Schools (previously Asylum) and others, an orchestra played and, as was still usual, dancing followed the formalities.

Session 1903-1904 was another busy year. Sentiments now became standard at Little Dinners and the first such of the session was on 12th November 1903 when Past President Dr James Cantlie spoke on the life and writings of William Marshall, fiddler and composer. The following month Past President Surgeon General Don delivered an account of the life and poems of Thomas Campbell, concluding by singing two of his songs. At that time, there were six little dinners in a season; January had two dinners, a Little Dinner around the middle of the month and the Festival about the 25th. The first had as its Sentiment 'Extracts from the Works of Shakespeare' by Past President William Simpson. The Festival followed the usual pattern, with Burns remembered by the President, piping was by the 'Society's own piper' (although we are not told who he was) and by the pipers of the Royal Caledonian Schools. Brother Caledonian GW Thomson spoke at the February dinner, but we are not told his subject, Past President Dr Guthrie Rankin continued in March with 'Bonnie Jean' and Past President David Hepburn finished the season in April with 'Auld Scotland's Hills' illustrated with lantern slides. Notably, the Sentiments were all given by members and all but one by a Past President. However, there was to be yet another dinner. The President, Robert Henderson, had been created a Companion of the Order of the Bath for his work as Secretary of the Board of Customs. To celebrate this event, the Society entertained him at a complementary dinner in July 1904 under the chairmanship of Colonel John Young, the Vice President. This seems to have an all-male affair and is the last known occasion on which the Society indulged in full Highland Honours.

The Society had engaged pipers since its earliest days, often on a regular basis, but this January 1904⁹⁹ report is the first to refer specifically to its own piper. However, his date of appointment is uncertain as explained later in this chapter.

The following year started with a membership of one hundred and twenty-two including eighty-five ordinary members¹⁰⁰. The Year Book for this session is the oldest still held and contains the Rules, historic annual lists of office bearers and other members of Council from 1855 onwards, and a list of members as at the start of the session. The President provided a Sentiment at the first dinner in November when his topic was 'Caledonia – Floreat Caledonia' and in December Brother Caledonian GW Thomson reflected on Scottish humour and Scottish pathos. No details are given of a Little Dinner in January but the Festival is

⁹⁹ Chronicles 1837-1905, page 169 and Chronicles 1945-1952, page 35.

¹⁰⁰ Year Book 1904-1905 and Chronicles 1837-1905, pages 191 (Council members) & 192 (list of members).

described and was similar to that of the previous year with the President addressing Robert Burns, piping courtesy of the Royal Caledonian Schools and a company of nearly one hundred and thirty. In February Past President Robert Henderson reminisced on the early life of Sir Walter Scott, March had Brother Caledonian William Dick giving an account of the poet and song writer William Watt and the season finished in April with Past President James Cantlie entertaining the those present for twenty minutes in a humorous style on some stories of an old North Country precentor. A break from routine was imposed late in the session when the Vice President advised that business overseas prevented him from stepping up to the Chair as planned and Past President David Hepburn was recalled for his third year of office.

As befitted Hepburn's proven leadership, session 1905-1906 seems to have been a thorough success. The Festival is well described in the Chronicles, apparently quoting a lengthy press report. The toast list was traditional and the President proposed the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns, the third time that he had done so at such a gathering. Seventy-nine ladies and one hundred and nine gentlemen were present, an orchestra played and there was piping by Pipe Majors Taylor and William Ross and the pipers of the Royal Caledonian Schools (interestingly, no mention of a Society piper or officer), the President was saluted in the Ceremony of the Dirks, and dancing later continued until midnight. No mention is made of the November Little Dinner but the authors of the Sentiment and their subjects for December to April were, in calendar order, Past President William Don's appreciation of Burn's 'Jolly Beggars' enlivened by his singing of appropriate songs, Brother Caledonian John Douglas and the humorous side of the Scottish character, Brother Caledonian W Mackay Tate on the bagpipe, Vice President GW Thomson on Thomas Chalmers (for which the Chronicles reproduce the earliest known text of a Little Dinner Sentiment), and the President's talk on the pastor and painter John Smith of Duddingston. There was an additional social event late in the session in October when a complementary dinner was given for the President, to mark a memorable year, with the Vice President in the Chair.



Saluting the President - Ceremony of the Dirks 25th January 1906

Session 1906-1907 started brightly when the Society received its first pipe banner, donated by William Mackay Tait, at the inaugural meeting in November. Also that night, the President, GM Thomson, provided the Sentiment when he spoke on the Ettrick Shepherd and his text may be found in the Chronicles.



The 1906 (Tait) Pipe Banner

Four other Sentiments were given during the session, in December, January, March and April; as we shall see, the February meeting was cancelled. Authors (all Brothers Caledonian) and subjects were James Gray (Baroness Nairne, Caledonia's Queen of Song), John Webster (Hugh Miller), Peter MacEwan (The Swither of the Scott as exemplified by the early life of Thomas Carlyle) and TR Moncrief (Michael Bruce, Poet of Lochleven), the last of which had its text recorded in the Chronicles. The Festival had been arranged for 25th January but the sudden death of immediate Past President David Hepburn earlier that month caused its postponement until April and also the cancellation of the February gathering. The delayed Festival was attended by over one hundred and sixty when the President balanced the subdued background to the evening with maintaining the Festival tradition with its commemoration of Burns. Meanwhile, the Society had commissioned a portrait of David Hepburn to be presented to his sisters.

The remaining seven sessions prior to World War One followed a settled pattern, albeit with occasional changes of detail. The annual programme, as followed in 1912-1913 but perhaps little changed since the 1890s, started with the Annual (general) Meeting in November that voted in new officers and Council members and finished with the new President taking the Chair, and hence moving the Society from one session to the next, before the evening finished with the first Little Dinner of the new season. There were five further Little Dinners, each preceded by Council and general meetings, in December, January, February, March and April and, in addition to the Little Dinner earlier that month, the Festival dinner in late January. There was then a six month summer recess until the Council meeting in October, to prepare for the Annual General Meeting in November, following which Council members dined together informally. Details of Little Dinners remain scant other than that Sentiments, delivered by members, were now standard and entertainment seems still to have had party

pieces by members and guests as a main component. Some Sentiments and other speeches are recorded in the Chronicles. Festival dinners continued generally unchanged. All these gatherings were held at the Holborn Restaurant. As an additional activity in all these years except the first, the Society responded to invitations from the Caledonian Society of Bournemouth by sending a small deputation including a speaker to a dinner in that town in late March, resulting in a donation of five guineas to the Royal Scottish Corporation each year.

Past President Colonel John Young was created a Knight Bachelor and the Society marked the event with a complementary dinner in December 1907 with a company of sixty-eight ladies and gentlemen. The following month, the Festival was the occasion of the presentation of David Hepburn's portrait to his sisters; the portrait was hung for many years in the premises of the Royal Scottish Corporation but its present whereabouts are unknown.

An innovation in 1908-1909 was to make the April Little Dinner an evening of song, piping and other items performed by members and would be repeated the following year. In January 1910 the Society was presented with a silken banner hand-worked by Dame Gertrude Young as a token of gratitude for the dinner mentioned earlier. For many years it was hung behind the President's chair but eventually fell into disrepair.



The Society's Banner

At the first meeting of the 1910-1911 session, the retiring President Allan William Freer presented the gold and enamel badge that now forms the main part of the President's chain of office. Later that session, the Society decided to provide, in memory of David Hepburn, the centre piece in gold that is now mounted above the badge and the gold links, inscribed with the names of Presidents, were added subsequently by Past Presidents and Presidents.



An early photograph of the President's Chain

In the same session the Gold Badge was presented to TR Moncrief following five years as Honorary Secretary, special donations were made to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools, increased to one hundred guineas, to mark the coronation of His Majesty King George V and a Highland dress outfit was provided for the Society's Officer Pipe Major GR Smith (the first record of the title or of his name). It was also decided that miniature Society medals, in brooch form in gold, should be provided for sale to members so that they might be worn by ladies.

During 1911-1912, the Society received a donation of £44 13 shillings from the St Andrew's Society of the River Plate for distribution in support of dependents of Scottish members of the crew of liner Titanic that had recently sunk, and duly discharged the duty. As a mark of appreciation, our Society's Honorary Secretary, John Douglas, was made an honorary life member of the River Plate society. Also during this session, a revised set of Rules was taken into use; they included the first reference to a waiting list for membership.

The next session witnessed a number of items of note. It was decided to discontinue dancing following the Festival dinner, the Chronicles recorded a Hogmanay dinner given by the President for members of Council and their ladies and made it clear that events of this nature were not unusual in these years, Honorary Secretary John Douglas received the Gold Badge following five years in office, a wreath was sent as a token of respect on the death of the manager of the Holborn Restaurant and the April Little Dinner was again an evening of Scottish entertainment by members. It apparently became the custom that a different special toast should be included in each of the six Little Dinners. The subject in April was 'The President' but we do not know what the others were.

Session 1913-1914 was the last season before World War One. A final attempt to resume the Ball was voted down, a representative party visited the Royal Caledonian Schools at Bushey and the April dinner was again an evening with a domestic Scottish flavour. In an unusual item, the Glenriddel Manuscripts of Robert Burns had been purchased and then presented to Scotland by Mr John Gribbel of Philadelphia and, on hearing of this, the Society sent him a resolution of gratitude, and a letter of thanks from Mr Gribbel was received in due course. In a further event the President and his lady accompanied by the Vice President visited the Caledonian Friendly Society at Canning Town where the President had presided at a most successful annual festival, in aid of charities, attended by about one thousand persons.

The nation declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914, deep in the Society's summer recess and after all but the final business meetings of the session. A special meeting of Council was convened on 17th September and five decisions were made. All social events were to be suspended for the time being, the routine business meetings were to continue to enable charitable and other service activities, the current Society officials were to continue in post for the following session, the usual subscriptions to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools were to continue and funding was approved to provide temporary premises for a recreational club for the recently formed second battalion of the London Scottish if this were to be appropriate. The reason for ceasing social functions is not recorded but was taken after discussion among Scottish organisation in London and may have reflected an aversion to apparent frivolity at a time of national endeavour and sacrifice.

Alexander Ritchie filled the post of Honorary Secretary for one year in 1890-1891 before stepping up as Vice President, he was followed by David Laing for two sessions and then by William Dick who filled the post for five sessions from 1893-1894 until 1897-1898. Dick set the pattern for the rest of the period with William Milne in 1898-1899 to 1901-1902, Robert Hunter in 1902-1903 until 1906-1907 and John Douglas whose term was extended by World War One and completed no less than twelve years between 1907-1908 and 1918-1919. William Robertson continued as Treasurer until the end of 1891-1892, PM Shanks followed from 1892-1893 until 1900-1901 and Past President George Struthers stepped up to the mark for three sessions until 1904-1905. TR Moncrief succeeded between 1905-1906 and 1912-1913 and was followed by JW Webster in 1913-1914. The function of Auditor was discharged (confusingly) by another William Robertson in 1890-1891 and 1891-1892 who was followed by Captain HW Notman whose term ran for an impressive twenty-one years from 1892-1893 until 1912-1913 before he handed over to Robert Davidson. Dick, Shanks, Notman, Moncrief and Douglas received the Gold Badge for these services.

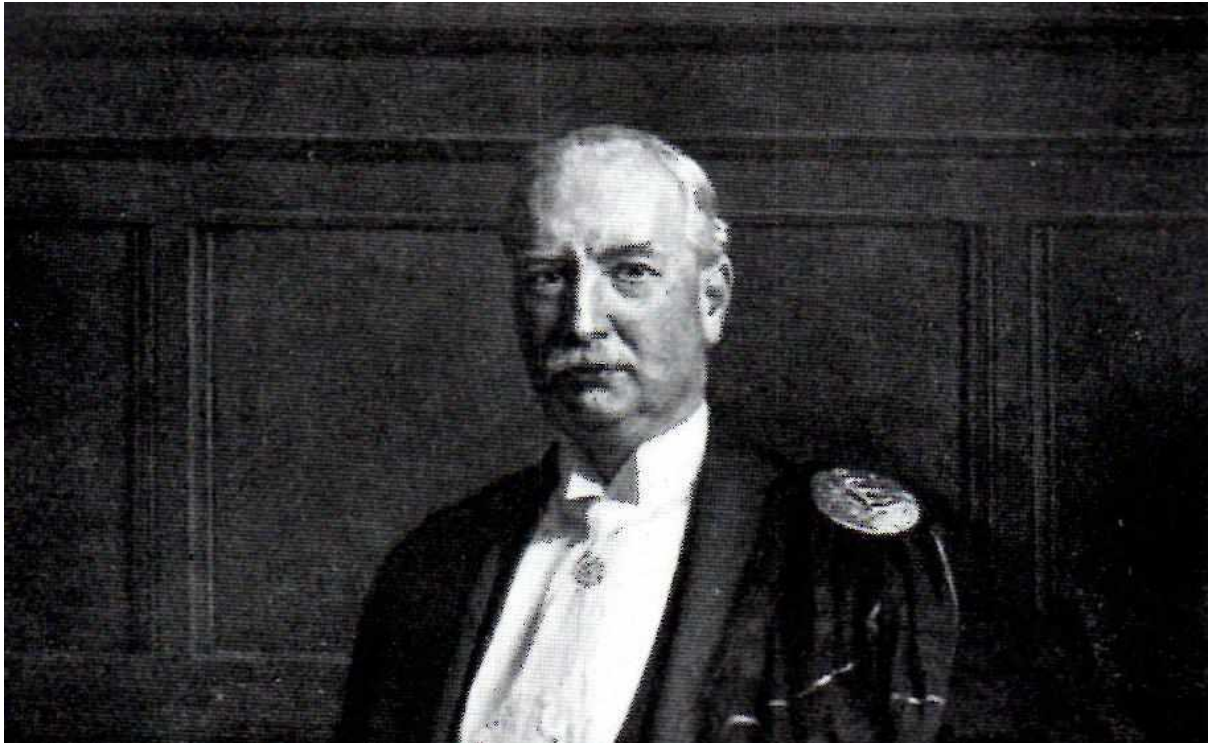
The appointment of Society's Officer was created during this period. The duties are now not wholly clear, and may have varied over time, but included piping, collecting dinner dues at table, acting as toast master and, presumably, leading in top table parties and new members

for presentation. In later years at least, he dined with the Society but sat at a table on his own. The first recorded holder was Pipe Major GR Smith but the date of his appointment is uncertain. The lists of Council and officers at the back of the Chronicles for 1837-1905 show him in post from the start of session 1900-1901 but this is unconfirmed in the chapters of the Chronicles. The press report of the January 1904 dinner referred to 'the 'Society's own piper' but did not name him and he is not included among the pipers named as present at the 1906 Festival. William Will's February 1947 Sentiment on the Society's history states that it was in 1907 that Smith, the (Royal Scottish) Corporation's Beadle, was named as the officer but his source is unknown, and it is not until the provision of the new dress outfit in 1910-1911¹⁰¹ that we have unambiguous evidence of his presence. The only other information that we have on him is that, in Will's words, he was a great character and 'a devoted, consistent and determined anti-teetotaler'.

The Year Book for 1913-1914 shows that the Society considered the premises of the Royal Scottish Corporation to be its headquarters, the first time we know of this.

London continued to grow during this quarter of a century with the population expanding to over seven million. Changes in city development and that of its transport systems were a continuation of what had gone before, but there was also an increasing awareness of the need for social support to improve education and health and reduce poverty. However, internationally, the position of the British Empire was less strong. Nations such as France, Germany, Japan and the United States were all developing industrial economies to rival that of Britain whose world trade position, while still powerful, was no longer unchallenged. The population of Scotland grew by another million and, in 1913, the Clyde shipyards launched more tons of shipping than the combined outputs of all the yards of Germany and the United States. However, Clydeside profit margins were falling and had become overly dependent on warship construction, and some other Scottish industries were also less healthy. The Highlands and Islands remained poor although the more efficient Lowland farmlands did quite well. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century emigration from Scotland had been relatively low but it increased again at the start of the twentieth.

¹⁰¹ Chronicles 1905-1921, page 96.



George William Paton

CHAPTER 6

Wartime – 1914 to 1918

This is another period for which we are almost entirely dependent on the Chronicles for source material. The decision, late in the last pre-War session, that office bearers should remain in post, coupled with the circumstances when the War ended, would lead to George Paton, the 1913-1914 President, continuing in the Chair until the end of session 1918-1919, a total of six consecutive years. This gave him a record period of unbroken service as President, greater even than that of Robert Hepburn, albeit with less than the latter's total number of years in post.

George William Paton was born in Greenock in 1859 and was educated at Greenock Academy and at a private school in Roxburghshire. He started his business career in shipbuilding in Greenock and later moved into sugar importing. He served as a member of Argyllshire County Council in the mid-1890s until he moved to Liverpool to become managing director of a match company. The company subsequently amalgamated with the well-known match company Bryant and May and Paton eventually became the latter's Managing Director, and later the Chairman. He went on to become Chairman of the (wartime) Match Control Board. He was a vice president of the Royal Scottish Corporation, a life managing director of the Royal Caledonian Schools, Chairman of Trustees of the St Andrew's Scottish Soldiers Home at Aldershot, an elder at St Columba's and patron of the Borough of Poplar Children's Carnival Fund. He joined the Society in 1906 and first served on Council in 1910-1911. Later, he held a number of Ministry of Labour appointments and was a member of Council of the Industrial Welfare Society and also of the Council of the Empire Forestry Association. George Paton was knighted in 1930 and died in March 1934.

By November 1914, when session 1913-1914 gave way to 1914-1915, contributions to welfare provisions had been made for a number of Scottish regiments and, that month, the decision was made to 'work in harmony' with the Federated Council of Scottish Associations in London, thus channelling the Society's charitable war work; the Society's Honorary Secretary became Chairman of the Council and members provided strong support. This arrangement was clearly most successful and its work was reported at subsequent Society meetings. Its coordinated nature seems to have done much to minimise overlapping and waste and ensuring that maximum benefit was achieved for the resources committed.

Later in the session, Brother Caledonian Frederick Watson published a book 'The Story of the Highland Regiments' and the Society purchased forty copies for presentation to the girls and boys of the Royal Caledonian Schools. By contrast, in October 1915, the executors of the estate of the late Past President Allan Freer handed over a cased set of dirks and a log book that he had bequeathed to the Society. The dirks had been the property of Robert Hepburn and then of David Hepburn and had been presented to Freer by David's sister. The log book may have been that of Freer's year of office 1909-1910. The Chronicles reported both items missing in 1952¹⁰². William Will had already reported the dirks to be missing in a speech in

¹⁰² Chronicles 1945-1952, page 30

1947¹⁰³ but their actual loss may have been earlier as they were omitted from a 1937 list of items to be insured¹⁰⁴.

These arrangements continued throughout 1915-1916 and into 1916-1917. By this time, as well as the provision of comforts for the troops, food parcels were being sent to prisoners of war, all well supported by contributions in cash and kind from members and their wives and lady friends. Also in 1916-1917, Brother Caledonian Hugh Reid presented a silver and granite bracelet that had been given by Queen Victoria to the Marchioness of Ely and inscribed 'To Marchioness of Ely in recollection of the Dhu Loch 3rd October 1870 from Victoria R'. The bracelet was still held in June 1968 but has been lost since¹⁰⁵. In January 1917, the work of the committee organising outings for wounded soldiers in the London hospitals was reported and in March reference was made to the service provided by St Columba's congregation in providing rest facilities and a meal for Scottish soldiers passing through London on leave at weekends and who would otherwise have been left to their own resources for a significant number of hours – and it is believed individual members participated in both schemes. At this time, the President and the Honorary Secretary accepted office as trustees of the St Andrew's Soldiers' Club at Aldershot. By the War's end, the Society had adopted ten individual prisoners in an extension of the earlier system of support for prisoners of war. All this was done without diminishing support for the two traditional charities. Statistics included:

- Attendance of Council members during the war years averaged more than twenty per meeting.
- Members subscribed £1174, in addition to many gifts in kind, for the work of the Federated Council of Scottish Associations.
- The Society's subscription lists for the Royal Scottish Corporation realised £6116 from the start of the 1913/1914 session (that is the Corporation's annual appeals of 1913 to 1918 inclusive). The lack of data for the Royal Caledonian Schools seems to indicate a lack of visibility of effort attributable to the Society due to the manner in which it was administered rather than to any lack of support.

The Society kept in contact with the London Scottish Regiment throughout the War, by sending telegrams after notable events and, largely, through Past President Bernard Green, senior major of the 1st Battalion when it deployed to France in November 1914. He was wounded in 1914 but was subsequently promoted to lieutenant colonel and commanded the battalion during two periods in 1915 and 1916, and would do so again after the War.

The officials were re-appointed each year with only unavoidable changes. In addition to the President, Vice President TR Moncrief, Honorary Secretary John Douglas, and Honorary Auditor Robert Davidson also remained in post throughout, as did the Society's Officer. However, Honorary Treasurer JW Webster died in March 1915; John Brodie then took over but he died just before the end of the final wartime session. There were also a number of changes in other elected Council members during hostilities, made to maintain its strength. New members continued to join and there was a total of twenty-nine entrants during the six years of the presidency that had started in late 1913. In November 1916, it was decided that

¹⁰³ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 29.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of Council meeting on 11 February 1937.

¹⁰⁵ Reported present in the Property check of June 1968 but the April 1982 Property valuation stated that it had 'not been in possession of Society for many years'.

bars, one for every additional year of office, should be added to the Gold Badge of the President in recognition of his exceptional further service.

Largely due to its demography, the Society suffered no direct war losses and even relatively few such losses among families of members. Nevertheless, at least five sons of members fell. Of these, the late Captain GH Tatham Paton MC, of the Grenadier Guards and son of President George Paton, was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross. One member died as a result of injuries sustained in the Gretna (Quintin's Hill) railway disaster in 1915. A less visible but still significant effect of the War on the Society lay in the war service of those who became members later.

The Armistice that ended the War came only two days before the pre-arranged date for the close of session 1917-1918.



William Will

CHAPTER 7

The Inter-war Years – 1918 to 1939

For the years between the wars we have contemporary Society records, to supplement the Chronicles. These include an incomplete President's log book for session 1919-1920, minute books from November 1924 onwards and a small number of other documents from about the same time. William Will (President 1924-1925 and joint or sole Honorary Historian for thirty years between 1927 and 1957) was a major source of material for this period.

The Armistice came too late to allow any forward planning for the first post-war session of 1918-1919 and this became a transition year with the main office bearers remaining in post once more. Thus the Annual General Meeting that closed the previous session and opened the new one took place without a subsequent dinner and it was not until December 1918 that social functions were resumed. The first such took the form of a dinner for members only when the President delivered an address in which he summarised the Society's work and changes during the war years. We do not know whether there were Little Dinner in January and March, although meetings did take place these months so there probably were, but Sentiment details are in the Chronicles for February and April. In the first of these, Past President Don reminisced on Old Caledonians and in doing so reminded his audience of the singing abilities that members had once demonstrated, illustrating many examples with his own voice. In April, recently joined member William Will made a plea for the Scottish Vernacular, the first of eight Sentiments that he would provide over the years. There does not seem to have been a Festival during the session, although we are not told this specifically.

After the November meeting, telegrams of congratulations were sent to the Admiralty, the Commander of the Army in France, the Headquarters of the still new Royal Air Force and the Officer Commanding the London Scottish Regiment in France. In what may have been an unusual but welcome event, the Society received a legacy of one thousand pounds. In addition to the usual charitable activities, twenty guineas was donated to the Harry Lauder Fund that benefitted sailors, soldiers and men of the mercantile marine.

Session 1919-1920 started with the holders of the posts of President, Vice President and Honorary Secretary all changing, thus reverting to what might have been at the end of 1914 had international conflict been avoided. The final event of the old year was when the outgoing President presented a large silver cup to mark his six years in office. The cup would be used as a top table centre piece until late 1981 or early 1982 when it was lost, presumably by theft and, although covered by an insurance claim, was not replaced¹⁰⁶. A determined, and largely successful, effort was launched to return to pre-war normality. However, a major decision in the new session was one taken under duress. Accommodation for the Festival dinner could not be found in January, and it was decided to postpone it until later in the season. It was also decided that it should take the form of a complementary dinner for the immediate Past President and Mrs Paton in recognition of the former's exceptional service during the war years. However, there is now no record of whether it took place, and the current editor has to admit to surprise that the editor of the Chronicles for this period left this gap in respect of the Festivals of both 1919 and 1920. Furthermore, the coverage of the

¹⁰⁶ Minutes of business meetings, session 1981-1982.

incomplete log book for 1919-1920 ceases after December. However, the fact that all subsequent Festivals were end of season events suggests that the 1920 Festival may indeed have taken place with sufficient success to perpetuate a change that broke the sequence of January Festivals that had stretched back to about 1857. Robert Burns would only be remembered occasionally for the next twenty-six years.



The Paton Cup

Another action at this time was to implement the November 1916 decision and present Past President Paton with a Gold Badge embellished with five gold bars for his additional years in office, and the wartime Honorary Secretary had one bar added to his existing Badge. Paton's family returned his unique badge to the Society in 2017 and it is now preserved among the artefacts. The Ceremony of the Dirks as part of the salute to the President continued at least occasionally as illustrated on page 58, and the Chronicles record its use at the 1923 Festival.



Depiction of George William Paton's Gold Badge with Five Bars

If the record of the Festivals is lacking, that of Little Dinners is more complete. On Armistice Day 1919, Surgeon General Don delighted the Society and guests with a final choral Sentiment in which he addressed 'Our Glorious Sea Songs', illustrated with his own inimitable voice. Sadly, he would die before the end of the session. The programme for the evening is the oldest surviving complete example for a Little Dinner, and is remarkably similar to those of today although lacking a formal interval and with a speech in response to the toast to the Guests.

THURSDAY 11th NOVEMBER 1919

PROGRAMME

Toast: — "The King." The President

Toast: — "The Queen, Queen Alexandra,
the Duke of Rothesay and the other
members of the Royal Family." The President

Toast: — "The President." Cd: Sir John S. Young, C.V.O.
Response by the President.

Sentiment: "Our glorious sea songs." Surg: Gen: W.G. Don, M.D.

Toast: — "Surg: General W.G. Don, M.D." The President
Response by Surg: General Don.

Song: — "A wee drappie o't." H.M. Reid.

Toast: — "Our Guests." G.W. Thomson, J.P.
Response by A. J. Wall, O.B.E.

Song: — "The Soldier's Return." The President

Introduction of New Members :-
R.H. Broadfoot . Thomson Aikman.
James K. Munro . D^r Cumming Grant.

Toast: — "Our New Members." The President
Responses by the new members

Pipe-Major's Selection on the Pipes and Toast.

Toast: — "The Past Presidents." The Vice President
Response by George W. Paton

"Auld Lang Syne": -

First verse :- Surg: General W.G. Don, M.D.
Second " :- William Jeffrey.
Third " :- Loudon MacQueen Douglas, F.R.S.E.
Fourth " :- The President.

Little Dinner Programme 11th November 1919

The following month's dinner is also fully described. Vice President John Douglas spoke of the war work of the Federated Council of Scottish Associations in London, HW Reid again sang 'A Wee Drapie O' it', Patrick Gardener sang 'A Lum Hat Wantin' the Croon' and piping and Auld Lang Syne featured as usual. The log book then stops, and we know nothing of the January dinner, but the Chronicles inform us that the February Sentiment was an

account of two notable early Scottish bankers in London, William Paterson and Thomas Coutts, given by Brother Caledonian the Reverend Doctor Archibald Fleming, while in March a guest speaker provided a Sentiment when Captain Bruce Bairnsfather spoke on 'Old Bill and Me' – 'Old Bill' being Bairnsfather's famous World War One cartoon figure from the trenches. This may have been the first time that the Sentiment's author had been a guest since Sentiments became a regular feature in 1903-1904 although there had been at least two occasions before that session when a visitor had spoken for his supper in a similar manner. There is no record of any Little Dinner in April in this or later sessions of the period and it may have ceased at this time, perhaps because of the move of the Festival to the end of the season. On a charitable note, during the session the Society made a donation of ten pounds to the Doctor Elsie Inglis National Memorial Fund.

What was now in place was an adjustment of the previous annual programme. The Annual General Meeting in November still voted in new officers and Council members closing with the new President taking the Chair, and the evening finished, as before with the first Little Dinner of the new season. There were four further Little Dinners, each preceded by Council and general meetings, in December, January, February and March. There was now no sixth Little Dinner in April but the Festival had moved from January to the end of the season, usually in April but occasionally as late as May or even June. The summer recess followed and lasted until the Council meeting in October, to prepare for the Annual General Meeting in November. In addition to toasts to the President and Past Presidents in November, another tradition at this time was that the January dinner should include a senior member singing 'The Year that's Awa', and the March dinner was when the President thanked his officers. The new arrangement meant that the Festival was no longer on, or close to, Burns' birthday so that members who were also members of other institutions that celebrated the Bard no longer experienced clashes of loyalties, and there was now no competition from a Little Dinner held the same month. A disadvantage was that there would be a longer gap between the outgoing President handing over office and being presented with the Gold Badge at the Festival. A more subtle change was that the term 'Ladies' Festival' started to appear.

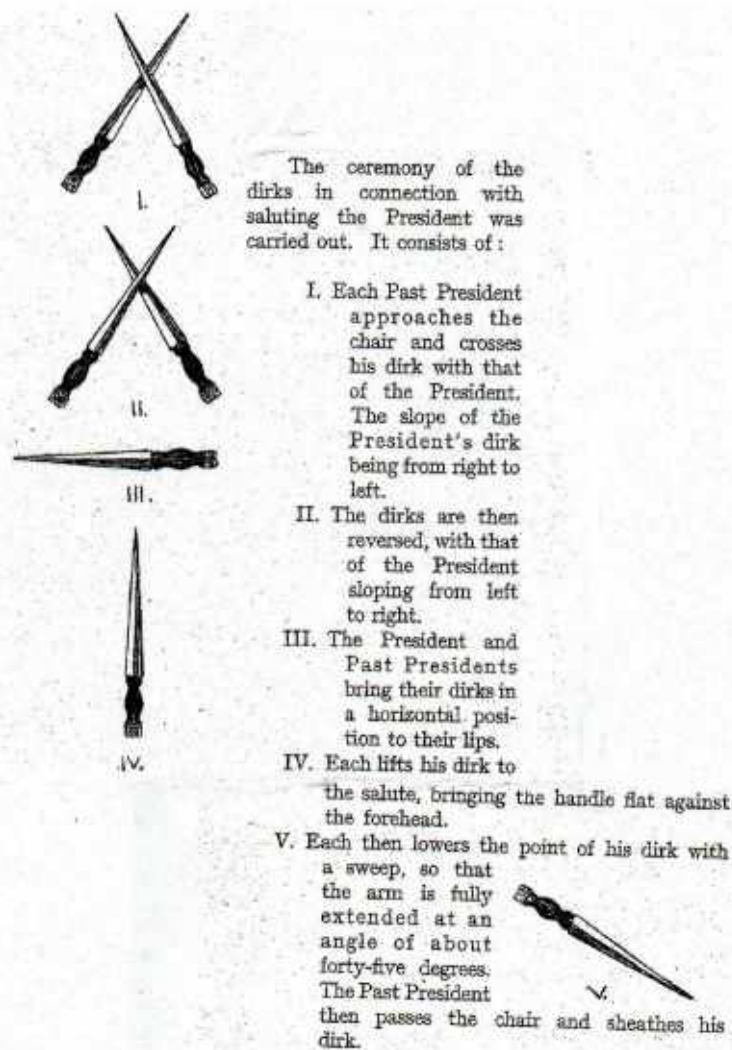
An inflow of new members led to a total strength of about one hundred and thirty-five and also a waiting list onto which a prospective member was admitted by Council prior to formal election at a general meeting after a vacancy occurred¹⁰⁷. However, some additional headroom was obtained in 1921 by creating the category of Life Member, additional to the one hundred member limit, for those who had been members for twenty-five years and who were not Gold Badge holders. At this date, Life Members no longer payed annual subscriptions thus the new category replaced the earlier provision for honorary membership.

The November meeting in 1920 approved the addition of two bars to the Gold Badge already worn by immediate Past President Thomas Moncrief that had been awarded for his service as Honorary Treasurer; one bar was for his wartime years as Vice President and the other for his session as President. The remainder of session 1920-1921 and the three sessions that followed are believed to have followed the new pattern although some Little Dinners went unrecorded. Charitable involvement remained strong. In 1921, the Society and its members contributed £324 to the fund for the construction of the Scottish National War Memorial, followed by £356 in 1924 in support of a visit by relatives to war graves in France, four members of the

¹⁰⁷ The earliest mention of a waiting list is in the Rules as amended in 1912. Preface to Part II of the Chronicles for 1837-1905 of April 1923 in which it is stated that 'in recent years, there has been, very often, a waiting list'. Meeting minutes from November 1924 onwards indicate that such lists existed continuously from at least the start of session 1924-1925 until session 1932-1933.

Society acting as stewards during the trip. The usual support to the Corporation and the Schools continued and the President was able to report that in one year the Society's contributions, individual and corporate, amounted to almost half of what these two causes received. As one President commented at a Festival, 'the Society was not only a playground for the workers of the charities, but it formed a training-ground for the managing governors and directors of the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools'. Lesser charities were not forgotten and the London Gaelic Services Fund received ten guineas.

A further bar to a Gold Badge was awarded in 1921, this time to John Douglas for his year as President following earlier service as Secretary, and in March 1923 the same member was appointed the Society's first Honorary Historian. This may have been almost post-facto as the Chronicles for 1837-1905 were dated the following month and were probably published later that year. John Douglas was also instrumental in forming the 1921 Society committee that, on behalf of the Burns Club of Detroit, USA inspected a statue of Robert Burns before it was shipped across the Atlantic.



Ceremony of the Dirks – From the Chronicles for Session 1922-1923

TOAST LIST AND MUSIC.

1. THE KING. THE PRESIDENT
 2. THE QUEEN, QUEEN ALEXANDRA,
THE DUKE OF ROTHESAY,
AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY. THE PRESIDENT
 3. THE CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON. THE PRESIDENT
 4. OUR GUESTS. THE VICE-PRESIDENT
Responses by—
The Rt. Hon Sir ROBERT S. HORNE, G.B.E., K.C., M.P.
Sir ROBERT BLAIR, M.A., LL.D.
 5. THE PRESIDENT. THE TREASURER
In the course of the evening the Gold Badge
of the Society will be presented to
WILLIAM JEFFREY, Esq., F.R.G.S. (President, 1923-1924)
and
J. F. McLEOD, Esq., (Hon. Secretary, 1919-1924)
The Past Presidents of the Society will salute the President.
Pipe-Major PETER McLEAN will act as Toastmaster,
give the Piper's Toast, and play a selection.
- MARCH "The Barren Rocks of Aden"
STRATHSPEY AND REEL "The Caledonian Society of London."

Programme of Music.

- Mr. TOM KINNIBURGH will sing—
- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| "Willie's gane to Melville Castle" | ... | ... | ... |
| "The Deil's awa wi' the Exciseman" | ... | ... | ... |
| "The March of the Cameron Men" | ... | ... | ... |
| "Gae bring to me a pint o' wine" | ... | ... | ... |
- Miss ETHEL MACLELLAND will sing—
- | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| "Doun the burn" | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| "Gala Water" | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| "Leezie Lindsay" | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| "Afton Water" | ... | ... | ... | ... |
- Mr. WILL KINGS in Selections from his Repertoire
- Mr. CYRIL WELLER at the Piano

Programme for Ladies' Festival April 1925

Session 1924-1925 is the first year linked to the present by an almost unbroken series of meeting minutes and is also the date from which point forward membership records are

largely complete. Furthermore, some of the minutes for the next few years also included dinner attendance details and, for Festival dinners, seating plans and this makes it possible to analyse some of what was happening at these events. At a time when total membership had risen further to about one hundred and forty-five, still with a waiting list, session averages for Little Dinner attendances varied from just over seventy to the mid-nineties, including a substantial number of guests. Typical attendance by members at a dinner seems to have been about fifty, or a little over one third of the total membership, and an issue addressed by Council was that of members who did not attend, although no action was taken at the time. The seating plans for Festival dinners show companies of between one hundred and fifty and two hundred and suggest that attending members often brought parties, sometimes large, made up of family members and their friends and that some guests attended year on year. By contrast, guests at Little Dinners seem to have been from friends and colleagues from the male dominated worlds of office, gentlemen's club, golf course and kirk session. Notably, the 1926 Festival was delayed until early June due to the general strike that year and, at the 1927 event, in responding to the toast to the guests, the Duchess of Atholl made what may have been the first major speech by a lady.

The volume of the Chronicles covering the years from 1905 until 1921 was probably published during 1926-1927. Charitable business continued as customary and the minutes tell us that the Society's November subscription list for the Royal Scottish Corporation yielded between £1300 and £1750 annually. We also know that the annual donation from Society funds was forty guineas to each charity. The continuing and growing waiting list led to the introduction of a new, and what was to be only short lived, category of Temporary Overseas Member for appropriate persons from overseas whose length of stay in the country precluded the waiting list route. Only two men ever held this type of membership – Sir Walter Leitch, Agent General for the State of Victoria in Australia and The Honourable JW Downie, High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia.

THE
CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

FOUNDED 1837.

16, FLEUR-DE-LIS COURT,
FETTER LANE,
E.C. 4.

5th January, 1928.

THIRD ORDINARY MEETING of SESSION, 1927—1928.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to intimate to you that the Third Ordinary Meeting of Session, 1927—1928, will be held at the Holborn Restaurant on **Thursday, 12th January, 1928.**

Meeting of Council	6.15 p.m.
General Meeting	6.30 „
Dinner	6.45 „ prompt.

The cost of the dinner is now 8s. 6d., **exclusive of wines or other liquors.**

After Dinner a Sentiment will be given by WILLIAM WILL, Esq., entitled "The Scottish National Memorial," illustrated with Lantern views.

Please return the enclosed post card not later than 10th inst., stating whether it is your intention to be present and giving the number of guests, if any.

Badges should be worn by Members at all Meetings of the Society. These should be worn on the right breast. Badges may be purchased from the Hon. Treasurer, at the above address.

Copies of Volumes I. and II. of the "Chronicles of the Caledonian Society" may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, price 10s. each.

Dates of future Meetings during the Session :—

9th February.	8th March.	19th April (Festival).
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Believe me,

Yours very faithfully,

P. N. McFARLANE,

Hon. Secretary.

Calling Notice for Meetings and Little Dinner January 1928
(With reminder that Society badges are worn on the right breast)

The first nine years of the nineteen-thirties, leading up to World War Two, saw the Society in continuing good shape. The waiting list had peaked at the start of the period when it would have raised membership to a record one hundred and sixty-two if it had been added to the actual total strength. However, the list had disappeared by the end of session 1932-1933. Thereafter, ordinary membership remained a little below the constitutional maximum of one hundred, partly due to no fewer than fourteen names, in two tranches, being removed from the role for non-attendance, the only time we know of this happening.

Dinners followed the now well established pattern and the limited evidence available indicates that attendances may have been generally similar to, or even better than, those of the previous ten years. However, their venues did change. After some three decades, the Holborn Restaurant was condemned as no longer providing acceptable accommodation and a

move was made to the Connaught Rooms in Great Queen Street at the end of 1934. In a sense this was a return to history as the Rooms were on the site of the old Freemasons' Tavern but the move was not wholly successful and only four years later further change took the Society to the Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych. Two centenary sessions were noted albeit without ostentation. Session 1936-1937 celebrated the initial informal association in early 1837, and 1937-1938 commemorated Gray's date of 1838 for the first dinner. The February 1936 dinner had as its theme the London Scottish Regiment, a precursor of what became an annual event more than a decade later. The December 1936 dinner was historic as it fell on the day that Edward VIII abdicated. This may have presented a challenge concerning the wording of the second loyal toast but there is no record of what was actually said. However, what was perhaps the most notable Little Dinner of this history took place in March 1938 when the Sentiment 'The Essential Scot' was given by His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Cosmo Lang, himself a Scot. The holder of that post was, then even more than now, a major public figure and Lang had taken a leading part in the recent Abdication crisis. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he asked that no publicity be given to his address. The dinner had been moved to the Hotel Great Central, Marylebone in anticipation of an abnormally large attendance and the Chronicles say that the figure was over five hundred¹⁰⁸.

Charitable activity seems to have remained healthy also. The only records of Society subscription lists indicate that these remained at their usual levels and, in 1933, the Society transferred five and three hundred pounds of its War Loan investment to the Royal Sottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools respectively. Annual donations to these charities also continued. In 1938, a legacy of two hundred pounds had been received and this was passed to the Corporation for investment to enable the establishment of a Caledonian Society of London pension, to be administered by the Corporation, and this was done in April 1939¹⁰⁹. However, the Society turned down requests to support the Scottish National Dictionary and the Caledonian Society of France.

In 1933-1934 a committee was set up to list and locate all items of Society property but the work does not seem to have been completed until 1937 when a list and insurance cover were established. Further presentations received at this time were a set of twenty-two volumes of the Proceedings of the Antiquaries of Scotland (not referred to subsequently and may have been given to a library), a framed photograph of Presidents during the Society's first fifty years (conjecturally, may have been passed to the Corporation) and an oak ballot box for use at meetings, the gavel still used at dinners and three other items of antiquarian interest now held at the Caledonian Club.

The volume of the Chronicles for the years 1921-1930 is believed to have been published towards the end of 1931 and the outgoing Honorary Historian, John Douglas, was awarded a third bar to his Gold Badge. The original badge award had been for five years' service as Honorary Secretary prior to 1913, the first bar for his further term as Secretary in the war years and the second bar for his year as President. At the November 1932 Annual General Meeting, the exclusion of Gold Badge holders from eligibility for Life Membership was removed, and the following year witnessed the addition of a bar to the Gold Badge of the immediate Past President Peter McFarlane, whose earlier award had been as Honorary Secretary. Also on the subject of Gold Badges, it was decided to bring forward the award to Presidents so that future presentations could take place during the recipient's year of office.

¹⁰⁸ Chronicles 1931-1938, page 397.

¹⁰⁹ Chronicles 1938-1945, page 17 - although what happened subsequently has left no trace.

The Year Book for 1936-1937 included a photograph of the President, the Rules, historic annual lists of office bearers and other members of Council from 1855 onwards, and a list of members as at the start of the session. In late 1938 or early 1939, the Chronicles for 1931-1938 were published and, at about the same time, the rule concerning nationality of members was altered from 'must be Scotsmen by birth or near descent' to 'must be Scotsmen' – without attempting to define 'Scotsmen'. Meanwhile, loyal greetings had been sent on the occasions of Edward VIII's accession and, a few months later, on the announcement of Coronation arrangements for George VI.

Various other administrative matters included awarding the Gold Badge to Vice President Walter Leitch when his recall to Australia prevented him from taking the Chair, and in 1938, the Society responded to a request for affiliation from the Melbourne Scots Society by deciding that any member accredited by the Melbourne Society would be made an honorary member of our Society during that member's presence in London. There is no evidence that this arrangement was ever taken up but it does not seem to have been rescinded.

Yet again, war broke out during the summer recess, this time in September 1939 and a special meeting of Council was called later that month. The Society make a slightly different response to that in the previous conflict; with London itself now under direct threat, a spirit of defiance may have led to the decision to continue a limited social programme. With business meetings moved to the middle of the day, these would be followed by lunches as circumstances might allow. The Honorary Secretary was asked to convene a meeting of representatives of all Scottish societies in London and Greater London to consider forming an organisation representative of all such societies for charitable war work (as a successor to the Federated Council of Scottish Associations in London of the previous war), and this meeting took place on 12th October and agreed that such an organisation should be formed (it became the Association of Scottish Societies in London). Further decisions, at the September meeting, were that elected members of Council, with the exception of the President and Vice President, should be re-elected en bloc and that postal voting was to be put in place for the Annual General Meeting in November.

The last formal meetings of session 1938-1939 were that of Council and the Annual General Meeting on 2nd November 1939. It was decided that 'For the duration of the War the Council be empowered to decide all matters which they consider will be in the best interests of the Society taking care to safeguard the ancient usages and established customs of the Society'. In effect, this removed the need for general meetings from that date although such meetings were still held to keep members informed.

Of the twenty-one Presidents during the inter-war period, one was in the Church, one in banking, two were senior consulting engineers, one was a horticulturist and gentleman farmer, one was the general manager of an insurance company, one was the Secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation and fourteen held proprietorial, director or senior management positions in a wide range of businesses. John Douglas was still Honorary Secretary for the first year of the period, followed by JF McLeod for five years, PN McFarlane for six years and John A Brown for just under five years after which PN McFarlane, as a Past President, returned for the last five years. The post of Honorary Treasurer changed more frequently but RR Wilson filled the post for five years. Robert Davidson continued as Auditor until 1933, having completed twenty years in office. The new post of Honorary Historian was filled by John Douglas from 1923 until 1930, assisted by William Will for his last three sessions, after

which Past President Will took over on his own. As was then customary, Gold Badges were awarded to McLeod, Davidson, McFarlane, Brown and Wilson, and as we have already noted, John Douglas received a further bar to his existing Badge. Pipe Major GR Smith ceased to be Society's Officer at the end session 1921-1922 and was replaced by Peter McLean until his untimely death in 1926. Pipe Major Clancy seems to have acted in a temporary capacity for two years until Pipe Major Murdo McKenzie was appointed at the start of 1928-1929 and would remain in post until 1945.

Britain had emerged from World War One victorious but economically weakened, and not just by the direct cost of conflict. Her pre-war global trading organisation had suffered badly as a result of the reduction of free trade due to the wartime and post-war protectionism, and countries such as Japan and the United States had replaced Britain in international markets during the war, thus undermining British advantages in activities such as cotton textiles and international lending. Post-war, British heavy industry struggled to re-establish itself against similar competition and in the face of a cessation in armament production. Ireland divided with only Northern Ireland remaining within the United Kingdom. Imperial duties had increased in Africa and the Middle East at a time when resources to meet them were reducing. War time casualties had been disproportionately high among those who might have been expected to be future leaders in all walks of life. As the first nation to industrialise, Britain's manufacturing infrastructure was badly in need of investment and reform of its archaic working practices, the latter relating to both managements and work forces. Meanwhile, the best of the young engineers and scientists were more likely to be attracted to the new industries – aeronautics, the automotive industry and embryonic electronics. On the positive side, suffrage was now wider and social involvement by the state gradually increased. After a partial recovery during the 1920s, progress was again blighted by the depression at the end that decade and then diverted, after 1935, by the growing threat of another war. Against this background, London remained a major national and international centre and its population grew further to more than eight and a half million during the period of this chapter, with an extended underground system supporting new suburbs. Scotland suffered more than most among these difficulties. Shipbuilding and textiles were badly hit and coal exports reduced sharply, while the new industries hardly featured. Population growth slowed with high migration in the 1920s but the latter reduced in the 1930s in light of the international recession and the population was just over five million in 1939.



Lord Alness

CHAPTER 8

Wartime Again – 1939 to 1945

The Annual General Meeting in November 1939 voted James Thomson into office as President and the Right Honourable Lord Alness as Vice President. In accordance with the principle that the other elected members should remain unchanged for the time being, Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor and Historian continued to be PN McFarlane, John M Swan, JL Stewart and William Will respectively. In addition to the decisions to switch to midday meetings followed by lunches and delegating full power to Council, it had also been agreed to appoint two members to represent the Society in the Association of Scottish Societies in London, and to send a letter of good wishes to the London Scottish Regiment. However, the new Association was short lived as it soon united with a separate initiative. The latter had been launched by Sir Andrew Duncan, Minister of Supply, who collected substantial funds for a home or hostel for Scottish servicemen and servicewomen passing through London, and the Duke of Buccleuch had donated use of his town house. The two organisations merged, probably quite early in the War although we have no date, under the title 'Caledonia' with Lord Alness and our Society's Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer as Caledonia's head, secretary and treasurer respectively¹¹⁰.

There was more of a business as usual tone than in 1914 and this may have been due to recognition that the conflict was unlikely to be over quickly, that there was thus a need to ensure that the Society could continue to operate effectively in war time circumstances, and that London itself would come under direct attack meaning that a limited social programme could be seen in a spirit of defiance rather than of unacceptable frivolity. The November business meetings were followed by the first wartime lunch. It had been decided that these should be quite affairs and there was no piping or other musical entertainment although Auld Lang Syne was sung at the close.

The December Council meeting approved a donation of one hundred pounds for comforts for military personnel and also the usual donations to the Corporation and the Schools. In a further measure of support, the Society purchased a number of copies of the Scottish Year Book, sales of which had been severely reduced by the emergency. Lunch again followed but, as a mark of wartime austerity, Auld Lang Syne was deliberately omitted, although this seems to have been recognised as an over-reaction as it was restored to the programme the following month when the first wartime Sentiment was also included. The February Council meeting suspended the rule allowing the expulsion of members for non-attendance, the lunch again included a Sentiment that now became routine and the March meeting and lunch were similar, with Gold Badges voted for the President and also for veteran member and long-time counsellor David Boyd.

Hitherto, wartime disruption had been much less severe than feared, this being the time of the 'Phoney War', and a full season of lunches closed with a ladies luncheon in April 1940, in place of the Festival dinner normally held that month, which included a musical programme.

¹¹⁰ Minutes of Council meeting on 28 September 1939 and Chronicles 1938-1945, page 171.

The relatively quiet, initial period of the War finished in the spring of 1940 and by mid-summer Germany was occupying Northern France and the Battle of Britain was imminent. The case of the Society's Honorary Secretary, PN McFarlane, may illustrate the time that followed. Speaking in September 1945, he said, inter alia, 'Five years ago, almost to a day, I took such a journey out of the lights of London ----- having lost my wife, my home, my business----¹¹¹'. Given the date of September 1940, it seems likely that at least part of this tragedy was due to enemy air attack. The journey he describes was to Scotland where he took up war work. Future meetings and lunches would be much more difficult to arrange but it was possible to convene a Council meeting in October 1940 at which session 1940-1941 was launched. Lord Alness became President with John M Swan, who had been Treasurer, as Vice President. WM Miller, who was Secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation, became Treasurer and also agreed to cover for the Honorary Secretary during the latter's absence in Scotland.

Lord Alness was to prove a most effective President during the difficult five years that followed. Robert Munro was born in 1868 in Alness, Ross-shire where his father was the Free Church minister. He was educated at Aberdeen Grammar School and Edinburgh University where he graduated in law. He was admitted to the Scottish Bar, as an advocate, in 1893. He became a Counsel to the Board of Inland Revenue and, in 1910, King's Council. Also in 1910, he embarked on a political career as a Liberal Member of Parliament for a Scottish seat. Appointed Lord Advocate, and a Privy Councillor, in 1913, he then held cabinet rank as Secretary for Scotland from 1916 until 1922. In the latter year he was appointed to the Bench as Lord Justice Clerk and President of the Second Division of the Court of Session, and took the judicial title of Lord Alness. He retired from the Bench in 1933 and was raised to the peerage as Baron Alness. He returned to political office in the wartime coalition government of 1940 when Winston Churchill appointed him a Lord-in-Waiting (a government whip in the House of Lords) and remained in that office until 1945. During this career, he was chairman of many important national committees, the most notable being wartime president and chairman of the Scottish Savings Committee. Away from work, he was a senior office holder in a number of law associations and societies and of the National Safety First Association. He was also active in many Scottish associations in London including Sons of the Manse, Aberdeen Grammar School Former Pupils, the Burns Club of London, the Scottish Clans Association and the St Andrew Society. He was a vice president of the Royal Scottish Corporation and a governor of the Royal Caledonian Schools. He joined the Society in 1935-1936 and first served on Council, as Vice President, in 1939-1940. Lord Alness died in October 1955.

Lord Alness would be persuaded to stay in office until the end of War and there would be no further changes in office bearers during the period. The difficult circumstances made the dates on which one session gave way to the next less clear and session lengths also varied. The usual Year Book was published for session 1940-1941, the last time for several years, but the only gathering that session, the winter season of which coincided with the Blitz on London, was held in May when a Council meeting was followed by the Annual General Meeting and a ladies luncheon, all on the day leading to the night of the last major raid on London of the campaign on 10/11th May 1941. Thereafter, conditions eased slightly. The intent at the meeting in September 1941 was that, with the Blitz over, an attempt should be made to return to monthly meetings and lunches but labour and food rationing difficulties in catering establishments were found to make this impracticable.

¹¹¹ Chronicles 1938-1945, page 154.

A successful ladies' luncheon followed that meeting but subsequent meetings were at more than monthly intervals, in December 1941 (three days after the United States entered the War), January 1942 (with ladies), September 1942 (with ladies), January 1943 (with ladies), September 1943, September 1944 (with ladies), January 1945 and (as a victory celebration) September 1945. Until January 1942 accommodation had continued to be provided by the Waldorf Hotel but later meetings had to use whatever premises were able to provide service and were spread between Grosvenor House and the Connaught Rooms as well as the Waldorf.

The Caledonian Society of London.

*Royal Scottish Corporation,
Fetter Lane, E.C. 4.*

TELEPHONE
CENTRAL 9889.

5th Dec 1941

PROPOSAL FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP.

I desire to be enrolled as a Member of the Caledonian Society of London, and if elected I agree to abide by the Rules of the Society which are now, or may be, in existence during the currency of my Membership.

Name in full *Walter B Morrison*

Address _____

Qualification *Scotsman*

Signature of Proposer *W. B. Morrison*

Signature of Seconder *W. Davidson*
(Who must be Members of Council.)

Date *5th Dec 1941*

To the Hon. Secretary,
THE CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

ENTRANCE FEE - THREE GUINEAS. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - ONE GUINEA

1931

A wartime application for Membership

The Society leaders of the time were probably able to use their contacts to facilitate meeting arrangements, in particular the President as a Lord-in-Waiting and the Honorary Historian as Chairman of the Newspaper and Periodical Emergency Council. This may have helped not only to make the meetings possible but also to secure some notable guests and speakers for the lunches. These included RA Watson the radar pioneer, Donald McCulloch the BBC's Brains Trust presenter, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh William Y Darling, Dr Jan Masaryk

Foreign Minister of the Czechoslovak Government in Exile, Sir Harold Mackintosh Vice President of the National Savings Movement, Sir Kingsley Wood Chancellor of the Exchequer, Brigadier General F Anderson Commanding 8th Bomber Command United States Army Air Force, Major General Douglas Wimberley Commandant Army Staff College and formerly General Officer Commanding 51st Highland Division at the Battle of El Alamein, Thomas Johnston Secretary of State for Scotland and Sir John Anderson formerly Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Admiral Stark commanding United States naval forces in Europe had been a late call-off on one occasion. After being omitted in early wartime lunches, piping was restored to programmes by the end of 1941 and other musical entertainment was included when ladies were present.

Annual donations from Society funds to the Corporation and Schools continued and Society subscription lists raised £2800 for the Corporation during the six war years. The 1939 donation of one hundred pounds to the Association was followed by one for the same amount to Caledonia. The London Scottish Regimental Benevolent Fund also received one hundred pounds and the work of the Thistle Foundation in establishing homes with medical attendance for long term severely disabled Scottish servicemen was commended to members for their support¹¹².

Victory over Japan Day on 15th August 1945 signalled the end of hostilities. Business meetings were held in September, October and November and among the decisions made were to resume annual election of Council members but, for the time being, to continue the suspension of sanctions for non-attendance. Authority was given for the publication of the Chronicles covering the war years and Lord Alness was awarded a single bar to his Gold Badge to recognise his additional years as President, more modest than similar action after the previous conflict and the last occasion on which a bar has been added.

It is clear that the Society had found maintaining momentum to be very much more difficult than in 1914-1918 despite the decision to continue the social dimension. This time the War had been longer, there had far greater disturbance in an around London and social attitudes had been more those of weary acceptance rather than the more enthusiastic approach some twenty-five years earlier. We heard earlier of PN McFarlane's experience and there may have been others with similar stories, or even worse. Speaking in May 1941, the President had commented that the enforced reduction in Society activity had led to contact with some members being lost and it clear that this may be one reason why membership fell during the War from one hundred and thirty at its start to one hundred and twelve by its close. A letter reproduced in these pages outlines some of the more mundane difficulties being experienced in Society administration at the end of the period, and a more subtle sign lies in the absence of bills of fare in later menu cards, at a time when restaurateurs may not have known what they might be able to serve from day to day.

It may also be significant that while the Chronicles summary for World War One concentrates on corporate support of a charitable nature, that for the later conflict refers instead to war work carried out by individuals. LD Bennett and JC Thomson, both later Presidents, were mobilised with the 1st Battalion London Scottish, the former as Commanding Officer, and served throughout the war. Bennett finished as a temporary brigadier in Italy and in 1945 Thomson was a lieutenant colonel and Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. A further half dozen members, not

¹¹² Chronicles 1938-1945, page 171.

including many who joined the Society post-war, served in the Armed Forces with about two dozen others in the Home Guard, Civil Defence or Police reserves. No member is reported to have died as a direct result of enemy action but at least eight sons of members were lost. Among those who also served was our war time President Lord Alness who, in addition to his Westminster duties, was president and chairman of the Scottish Savings Committee. From January 1941, Lord Alness was assisted by Past President Peter McFarlane as Savings Development in Industry in Scotland. Others included Captain JJ Cameron, Deputy Chairman Shipwrecked Mariners Society, Sir Alexander Gibb whose firm of consulting engineers took a major part in meeting war time construction requirements, William Miller who was vice president of Caledonia, John M Swann who worked with the Association of Scottish Societies in London and then Caledonia from the formation of the former and until after the War and Past President William Will who was chairman of the Newspaper and Periodical Emergency Council, chairman of eight press committees to the Ministry of Labour and represented the Press on the London Regional Advisory Committee and on the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry Press Committee.

The letter just mentioned, and reproduced on the next page, may also provide a clue to the answer to one of the Society's mysteries. Neither the Chronicles nor, after 1924, the minutes of business meetings report the further loss of minute books after that which occurred about 1875. The book that contains the minutes from 1924 until 1945 is inscribed 'Minute Book Number Four' and it seems that the missing books numbers One to Three were those for the years from about 1875 until 1924. The reference in the letter to a loss of earlier volumes of the Chronicles as a result of enemy action in 1941 almost certainly refers to results of the incident when the premises of the Royal Scottish Corporation were badly damaged on the night of 10/11th May 1941¹¹³ and it is likely that any Society archive material was destroyed at the same time.

¹¹³ A Cup of Kindness 2003, page 210.

3rd December 45.

Dear Major Miln,

I am asked to inform you that at a Council Meeting held on 30th ulto., you were elected a member of the Society.

No doubt you know that the Entrance Fee is £3/3/- and the Annual Subscription £1/1/-. At your convenience perhaps you will let me have your remittance for these amounts.

In addition, you are expected to purchase a badge of the Society which costs 17/6 and, if you desire, you may be supplied with a copy of the last issue of the Chronicles which contains a record of the Society's activities for the years 1931/38 and which cost 10/6. Unfortunately earlier records contained in previous issues of the Chronicles were destroyed by enemy action in 1941 and have not yet been reprinted. Moreover owing to the paper restrictions it has not been possible, since 1941, to issue the Rules and List of Members, but it is hoped, at an early date, to remedy this deficiency.

It may be that your father will be able to pass on to you the members badge which he had before he was elected President. If so I shall be relieved because our stock is now reduced to one, and the cost of the new badge is prohibitive.

Until you are formally received by the President, may I, on behalf of the Society, welcome you as a new member.

Yours sincerely,

(W.M. Miller.)
Hon. Secretary.

Major M.V. Miln,

Honorary Secretary's letter to a new Member in December 1945



William McCallum Miller

CHAPTER 9

Austerity and Resurgence – 1945 to 1967

The forty-seven years between the end of the War and the events of 1992, as recalled in a later chapter, saw many changes in the Society. The period was clearly more than one era but it lacks an obvious dividing point, thus the choice of the end of session 1966-1967 for this purpose is to some extent arbitrary. Main sources for the period are the Chronicles and other records left by WM Miller who, having already been Treasurer and acting Secretary for five of the six war years, continued as Secretary for a further fifteen years of this period, doubling as Historian during the last three sessions, before continuing as Historian only for a further five years.

The economic exhaustion of the country in 1945 caused the Society's return to normality to be much slower than it had been in 1919 with stringent food restrictions, in some respects greater than those imposed while the War was still in progress, greatly limiting the ability of restaurants to accommodate large parties. Victory over Japan Day on 15th August 1945 might have allowed a reasonably normal 1945-1946 season starting in mid-November 1945. This was not to be and the first post-war Little Dinner could not be held until March 1946, followed by a second the following month. Due to the restrictions, only a few establishments were able to cope with parties of more than twenty or thirty; this dictated where our dinners could be held and the Waldorf Hotel was abandoned. The March dinner was held at the Rembrandt Hotel in Kensington and its April successor at Pimm's Restaurant in Bishopsgate. Business meetings that year took place in March, April and November.

In 1946-1947, there were Little Dinners in January, February and March, all at the Rembrandt Hotel. There was still no Festival. The remaining war time adjustments to the Rules were rescinded in February 1947. Service close to normal was finally restored in 1947-1948 with a Little Dinner in November 1947, business meetings and a Little Dinner in January, February and March, the first post-war Ladies' Festival in April and a Council meeting and the Annual General Meeting in November 1948. The Rembrandt Hotel was now confirmed as the main social venue, despite its position well to the west of the Society's traditional grounds.

There were only minor changes to dinner routine. From 1947-1948 onwards, the Society's Strathspey would be played at the close of all dinners, the November Little Dinner was given a London Scottish regimental theme, which would become permanent, and Robert Burns was restored to an annual celebration in January, when for some years 'The Year that's Awa' was again sung by a senior member. The officers were still thanked in March. A toast to one of the charities and reply on behalf of that charity at one of the dinners was introduced in the early 1960s, and an interval during dinners was first trialled in 1950 and then made standard. The form of Auld Lang Syne was reviewed in 1952-1953 and adopted as still used today with its researched words printed on the menu card, use of soloists and strict prohibition on the final chorus being sung in quick time. Other dinner details are a little sparse for much of the period. Pre-war, menu cards had been produced by the restaurant but this was no longer possible with post-war austerity. The Society now did this separately but did not include details of the meal, perhaps because, initially, food control measures forced last minute changes.

GRACE

*Some hae meat, and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thanket."*

Toast List and Programme

Toast	<i>"The Queen"</i>	The President
Toast	<i>"Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, The Prince Philip The Duke of Edinburgh, The Duke of Rothesay, and the other Members of the Royal Family"</i>	The President
Song	<i>"The Hundred Pipers"</i>	Kenneth Atkinson
Sentiment	<i>"Highland Dress and the Tartan"</i>	J. Telfer Dunbar

INTERVAL

Piping Selection and Toast	<i>"The Badge of Scotland"</i> Pipe Major L. V. N. de Laspée <i>"The Inverness Gathering"</i> Pipe Sergeant W. Ferguson <i>"The Market Place of Inverness"</i> Pipe Corporal D. Duncan <i>"The Piper of Drummond"</i> (London Scottish) <i>"Leaving Port Askaig"</i>	
Toast	<i>"The London Scottish Regiment"</i>	The President
Song	<i>"The Bonnie Lass of Ballochmyle"</i>	Kenneth Atkinson
Toast	<i>"Our Guests"</i>	Bro. Caledonian The Rev. J. Fraser McLuskey, M.C., D.D.
Response		Ben Warriss
Toast	<i>"The New Members"</i>	The President
Responses		Bro. Caledonians D. W. Imrie Brown, B.L. T. S. Crawford, T.D., B.Sc., F.C.I.S. John Marshall, M.R.C.V.S.
Strathspey	<i>"The Caledonian Society"</i>	Pipe Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E.
	<i>"Auld Lang Syne"</i>	
At the Piano		Bro. Caledonian Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Little Dinner Programme November 1964

Not until the move to the Kensington Palace Hotel, in 1964-1965, did fare details re-appear and by this time dinners had been reduced to four courses with coffee, extended to five courses with the addition of haggis in January and for the Festival only. Prices, still less wine but including gratuities, rose steadily, from 14/6 (£0.725) in 1946-1947 to 16/6 (£0.825) by 1950-1951, £1 in 1960-1961, £1 1s (£1.05) for the next two years and then £1 2s (£1.1), £1 5s

(£1.25) and £1 7s 6d (£1.375) in the last three years respectively until 1966-1967 when it was nearly three times the immediate pre-war rate, and for fewer courses. It seems that dinner charges were collected at table, apparently by the Society's Officer.

By the 1960s, as well as adding an interval, the start time for Little Dinners had been put back from 6:45 to 7:00 pm, with business meetings held between 6:00 and 6:30, but the number of slots for singing or recitation had been reduced from three to two post-war and the number of toasts was reduced, in 1950-1951, when that to the Author of the Sentiment was replaced by words of thanks from the President. The Society stayed at the Rembrandt Hotel until moving to the nearby Kensington Palace Hotel for 1964-1965 and the final two sessions of this period, apparently because the accommodation and facilities promised to be more attractive and comfortable than those at the Rembrandt. Any business meetings not held prior to dinners generally took place at the Royal Scottish Corporation.

Most Sentiments were given by guest speakers. Whenever possible a member provided piano accompaniment for singers and occasionally members also sang. No attendance figures for Little Dinners are available until the last five years of the period when they were at, or approaching, all-time record levels with annual totals of about six hundred and fifty and individual dinners recording between ninety and one hundred and eighty. The lack of earlier data suggests that there was no concern then either, even although membership numbers were quite low for much of the time. There were no changes to the detail of the Ladies' Festival and the few attendances known suggest that its traditional success continued, the final Festival of the period even reviving the Ceremony of the Dirks.

The month of the Annual General Meeting was changed from November to June in 1962-1963. There was now an even greater interval between the end of the presidential term of office and the Festival at which the Gold Badge could be presented. The principle, that presentation should take place as soon as practicable after award was re-iterated in 1967 but continued to be an issue.

There were no changes to the structure of Council, a notable feature being that the office of Honorary Secretary was held by only two members during these twenty-two years at a time when the office was also responsible for the dinner secretariat function, William Miller (who had previously been acting in the role) from 1945 until 1960 when George Deans took over. A less obvious bonus was that both these stalwarts also held the post of secretary of one of our two main charities, the Corporation and Schools respectively. It is clear that that both these Secretaries were particularly pro-active in their duties and very much the key figure in the routine functioning of the Society. Their roles included identifying, and often inviting, speakers on behalf of Presidents, inviting members to join the presidential succession after recommendation by the Past Presidents and, increasingly from 1960, approaching and, if necessary, proposing or seconding new members. Miller was presented with the Gold Badge for these services, together with those of Treasurer and Historian at various times. Securing new entrants to the presidential succession may occasionally have been a little more difficult, or it may be that just that we now have greater visibility, but challenges were quickly overcome.

There were no fewer than seventeen further additions to the Society's artefacts and other property during the period, fifteen by presentation and two by purchase. Five of these items are still held and insurance or other replacements exist for a further three but the remainder have been lost over the years. The custom of Gold Badges of late members being returned by

their families became established after 1945 – without it, presentation of the Badge might have ceased to be viable.



The 1961 (Thomson) Pipe Banner¹¹⁴

The rule for life membership was amended in 1948 to reduce the qualifying period from twenty-five to twenty years. The concession of paying no further subscriptions was withdrawn but it was made clear that sanctions for non-attendance did not apply to such members. The provision for honorary membership, first made in 1899, was thus removed but would be re-instated in January 1954. In 1961, discussion in Council included a statement by WM Miller, then Honorary Historian and an officer since 1940, that the custom by which members were selected for invitation to join the presidential succession by a meeting of the President and Past Presidents, had been in place for forty years or more. The practice was formally confirmed the same year.

The long, slow decline in membership numbers that had started in the early 1930s continued until the mid-1950s, reaching a nadir of just over one hundred and then levelled out for another half dozen years. A subcommittee of Council examined the situation in 1959-1960 when a distinguished Past President suggested that it might help if dinners were to finish not later than 10 pm, with the Sentiment limited to twenty minutes and the interval to five minutes, and if the venue for meeting were further east than Kensington and more convenient for railway termini. He also commented that a significant part of the then membership also belonged to one or more of the Harrow Caledonian Society and congregations of St Columba's and the Presbyterian churches at Harrow and Northwood, but recommended that recruiting effort should not be too wide spread and should concentrate on attracting prominent London Scots whose presence would then encourage others to apply. The consensus was that no radical action was necessary but that the Honorary Secretary, in

¹¹⁴ Purchased by the Society using funds presented by Past President JC Thomson and his brother W Thomson in 1961 in memory of their father Past President James Thomson (see Chronicles 1956-1961, page 204 and minutes of AGM 01 November 1961 and of general meeting 16 November 1961).

consultation with the President, was to be authorised to invite a small number of official guests who might become useful members, existing members being invited to make proposals for such invitations to the Secretary. This policy seems to have worked and membership rose to just over one hundred and forty towards the close of the period.

The entrance fee remained at three guineas until 1966-1967 when it was increased to five guineas (£5.25). Annual subscriptions remained at one guinea at the start of the period but was raised to two guineas (£2.1) for 1948-1949 and was three and a half guineas (£3.675) from 1951-1952 until 1966-1967 when it increased to five guineas (£5.25). We also know that a members badge cost forty-nine shillings and six pence (£2.475) in the mid-1960s and that considerable effort was applied by the Honorary Secretary in requesting that resigning members return their badges as part of a drive to control costs.

In 1946, Past President TM Stephen resigned his membership on returning to Scotland. This seems to be the first recorded case of a Past President resigning and, contrary to later practice in such cases, his name no longer appeared among ex-officio members of Council.

In 1947, the Honorary Secretary had assisted the Caledonian Society of Norway, then in the process of formation, and our Society's President and Honorary Secretary were subsequently offered, and accepted, ex-officio honorary membership of the Norwegian society. These appointments do not seem to have been rescinded although there is no evidence that they were ever acted upon.

In 1949, a Past President was expelled from the Society for 'conduct derogatory to the well being or good repute of the Society' on the grounds that he had admitted, in court during an action against him for breach of promise of marriage, to having had sexual connections extending over some years with a named woman during the lifetime of his late wife¹¹⁵.

Corporate support to the Charities was provided by annual donations, from Society funds, to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools. Rates were £25 in 1945-1946, £50 in from 1946-1947 to 1960-1961, and £150 (including a special addition of £100) in 1961-1962, back to £50 in 1962-1963 until 1965-1966 and £75 in 1966-1967. Annual presidential appeals called for support by individual members for both charities. In the case of the Corporation, these showed recorded total figures from £421 in 1945 to £1355 in 1965. There was still less visibility of similar assistance for the Schools. However, we know that, in 1965, Society members contributed £1230 to the 150th anniversary appeal by the Schools and another appeal raised £1085 in 1966.

In 1947, the Society, in the persons of the President and Vice President, represented London Scots at the Guildhall on the occasion of the arrival of the 'Fiery Cross', transmitting the message of the exhibition of Scottish Industrial Design, 'Enterprise Scotland 1947', en-route from Edinburgh to Scottish communities overseas. The Society also entertained, to lunch, the runners and officials involved in carrying the Cross from Scotland. In 1958-1959, the Society presented a drum major's mace to the London Scottish Regiment to mark its centenary and the part played by the Society in the Regiment's formation. In 1964, Brother Caledonian Sir James Miller was elevated to the office of Lord Mayor of the City of London.

¹¹⁵ Minutes of Special Council Meeting on 28 September 1949 and of a General meeting on 12 October 1949.

The Chronicles continued to be published, the first mention of the use of a tape recorder to assist in recording speeches being found in 1959-1960. Publication of the Year Book had lapsed after 1940-1941, due to war time conditions, but was resumed in 1952-1953. In 1947 Past President William Will gave the first of his two Sentiments that would later be the basis of the Society's first short history¹¹⁶. Subsequently he was invited to compile a history of the Society and agreed to do so¹¹⁷. However, although Will delivered a second historical Sentiment in 1951¹¹⁸, his further preparation of the history seems to have been limited to the 'extract' concerning the Society's connections with the London Scottish Regiment distributed within the Society in 1947 and attached to minutes of the time¹¹⁹. The publication of the first short history had to wait until 1964 when, after Will's death, the then Honorary Historian, William Miller, edited the content of Will's two Sentiments¹²⁰.

The time saw the Society emerge from the restrictions of wartime and post-war austerity, eventually arrest the decline in numbers and emerge numerically stronger than for many years. Dinner attendance data is sparse but we do know that the figures at the end of the period were well above previously recorded levels. However, allowing for the complications of inflation, recorded support for the Charities seems to have been rather lower than pre-war.



The President with the Fiery Cross
11th August 1947



Drum Major's Mace presented to the
London Scottish Regiment 1959

¹¹⁶ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 31.

¹¹⁷ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 43.

¹¹⁸ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 279.

¹¹⁹ Minutes of the meeting of Council on 14 November 1947.

¹²⁰ Caledonian Society of London, Short History dated February 1964. The sources used by Will seem to have been almost entirely from the Chronicles, the main addition being the record of the 1844 court case.



The President welcomes Brother Caledonian the Lord Mayor 18th March 1965

The wider background to this period saw the end of the British Empire. Britain itself was financially and intellectually exhausted in 1945 and had great difficulty in meeting the combined challenges of economic and industrial recovery, the creation of a modern welfare state and the defence and diplomatic requirements of imperial demands for independence and the perceived threat of Communism in Europe and Asia. Individual points of crisis included the partition of India with the emergence of India and Pakistan as independent nations, Palestine left to be divided between Israel and Arab Palestine, the Berlin Air Lift, the Korean War and the Suez Crisis. Eventually, the United Kingdom ceased to be a world power and instead, of necessity, became a team player in organisation such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. All this had to be faced with an ageing infrastructure and largely obsolete heavy industry. More recent technology such as aeronautics and electronics had more potential but investment capital was lacking and home markets were financially constrained. Post-war austerity and rationing continued into the 1950s and many bombed sites remained gaps. Nevertheless, London was relatively unchanged. Scotland continued to suffer from an ageing industrial base and a weakening fishing industry, the new developments of forestry and hydroelectric power providing only a few long term jobs.



George Deans

CHAPTER 10

Changing Times – 1967 to 1992

The period between 1967 and 1992 was one of considerable change for the Society, perhaps partly reflecting economic, and other, factors effecting the country as a whole. There were several financial downturns during these years and, for a time, high inflation. London and Londoners were changing and London Scots were not exempt. Some factors were common to all similar organisations – the continuing movement of homes away from central London, longer office hours and more business travel, changing patterns of family life, less congenial late night travel and rising costs. The Scottish dimension may have been affected by improving communications that led Scots in London to feel less isolated and hence less driven to associate with fellow countrymen, with declining church attendance that reduced Presbyterian foci, and with a gradual reduction of the number of overtly Scottish businesses in the South. A specific event was 1986 deregulation of the London stock exchange which, together with developing computer communications, would lead towards globalisation of London financial life and its working hours.

Rising costs resulted in the publication of both the Chronicles and the Year Book ceasing early in the period but minutes, menu cards and some Secretary's files survive and archive material also includes magnetic tape recordings of some dinner speeches. A key personality was George Deans. Having already held office as Honorary Secretary for seven years, he would continue to do so for a further ten sessions, including his year as President.

What seems to have been an unsolicited offer led to the main meeting point being moved to the Hotel Russell, in Russell Square in Bloomsbury, at the start of the period. It was considered that the accommodation was more easily able to take the recently increased attendances, was more central and, in what were then still very early breathalyser days, offered easier car parking. In 1974, discussion in Council recorded that, for very many years, the headquarters of the Royal Scottish Corporation had also been considered that of the Society. Given the then recent move of the Corporation to Covent Garden, this now had to be reviewed. It was agreed to seek to continue the arrangement and a Past President who was also Senior Vice President of the Corporation undertook to facilitate this. The arrangement was again confirmed in 1978. The first recorded use of the Caledonian Club, for business meetings, was in October 1970 and, initially occasionally only, for dinners in 1990.

A number of significant changes were made to routine. In 1968-1969, an additional general meeting was added in October to allow non-Council members more time to express views. The following year a more radical change separated dates for routine Council and general meetings, thus Little Dinners were no longer automatically preceded by Council and general meetings as had been the case for many decades. In 1971-1972, routine general meetings (other than the Annual General Meeting) ceased to be held and the December Little Dinner was replaced by one in October. High inflation was a particular challenge in the 1970s, not least for members who had retired from business and might be on fixed incomes. In 1975-1976, this led to temporary reduction in the number of Little Dinners to four, with the Festival moved to March. The following year only three Little Dinners were held with an informal gathering, for members only, replacing the February dinner. In 1977-1978, as a result of experience in the previous two sessions, the annual programme reverted to a full

programme of Little Dinners in October, November, January, February and March with the Festival in April. Occasional less formal gatherings were held in an effort to allow members to know each other better – a reception followed the Annual General Meeting in 1981, 1982 and 1983, and an annual summer golf outing was held from 1980.

Dinner prices, still less wine but including gratuities, again rose steadily from £1.50 in 1967-1968 to £17.50 in 1990-1991. The only change to the standard dinner menu pattern and programme was that the separate starter and soup were replaced by a single first course in the mid-1970s. Sentiments, now part of Festivals as well as of Little Dinners, were given by guest speakers. Unsuccessful attempts were made to invite Royal guests. The Queen Mother was invited to the 1987 Festival, in what was then considered to be the 150th Anniversary year, and the event moved to the Merchant Taylors' Hall to provide more appropriate accommodation; the Duke of Edinburgh for a Little Dinner in 1987-1988 and the Duke of Rothesay in 1987 and 1991. Whenever possible a member continued to provide piano accompaniment for singers.

Attendance figures at dinners seem to have been particularly good in the early 1970s, probably due to a strongly proactive approach by the Secretary and his assistant. However, that for 1973-1974 was described in the annual report as 'not as good as the Council could have wished', despite being the second highest ever recorded. The same report also records the aspiration of achieving Little Dinner attendances of not less than one hundred and fifty; the best actually achieved was an average of one hundred and thirty one per dinner in 1972-1973. Numbers declined later and minutes make it clear that this was causing concern.

Problems with ensuring the presidential succession led to the creation of the post of Junior Vice President in 1982, the previous appointment of Vice President now becoming Senior Vice President. George Deans continued as Honorary Secretary until 1978, being covered by an assistant secretary during his presidential year in 1974-1975. Further delegation dated from 1970-1971 when, following the Secretary's illness, a Past President agreed to assist and carried out what would later develop into the Honorary Dinner Secretariat role, a title first used in 1977. At this time the Secretary continued to identify and invite speakers on behalf of Presidents, invite members to join the presidential succession after recommendation by the Past Presidents and approach and, if necessary, propose or second new members – as an example of the latter, in 1969-1970, of twelve new members, ten had been either proposed or seconded by George Deans. In 1971, he commented that he was usually left with the task of finding members to fill vacancies on Council. After a short break until early 1990, an Honorary Secretary who was also secretary of one of the Society's main charities was again appointed, in this case Wing Commander Alan Robertson of the Corporation.

Notably, in 1976-1977, the Honorary Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor were all Past Presidents, as was the member taping speeches in the absence of a historian. Robert Eadie was awarded the Gold Badge in 1970 for many years' service as pianist. Although not an ex-officio member of Council, the appointment of Honorary Golf Secretary was created in 1979. When Lance Corporal (later Past President Pipe Major) Ian King was made Honorary Piper in 1981, he was the first to hold this appointment that replaced the previous post of Society's Officer¹²¹.

¹²¹ The Piper was now purely that and the non-piping tasks of the post of Society's Officer ceased. Furthermore, he sat at table with members and not at a table on his own. King would later become a member himself.

The tradition of property presentations to the Society continued. In 1979, the disbanding London Ayrshire Society kindly donated its golf cup, and after use as our Society's golf trophy for several years, it is now lodged in the Caledonian Club. A plaid shoulder brooch, believed to have been the property of Edward VIII, was presented in 1980 but seems to have been lost in the 1990s. Some half a dozen other items were also received. The annual inventory check ceased after that dated June 1968. There are records of further checks in 1979, 1982 and 1990 but it is clear that a number of other artefacts went missing during the period, one instance being the loss from the Hotel Russell of the Paton Cup, the 'London Scottish' Quaich and three silver menu holder; an insurance settlement was received and the Quaich, but not the cup or menu holders, was replaced.



The London Ayrshire Cup

As the cost of Gold Badges increased, so did the principle that such a badge remained the property of the Society and was merely on loan to the recipient. At the Annual General Meeting in 1979, it was commented, concerning the return of (Gold) Badges on the death of the holder, that it was felt that all Past Presidents were aware of the circumstances. Future presidents would be advised of the position and it was, therefore, agreed that no official instruction on the matter would be issued. The subject of ownership of Gold Badges was raised, again, in Council in August 1982 but inconclusively. Meanwhile, generally successful, efforts continued to recover Badges from the families of deceased recipients. Rule XVI of the 1986 Constitution and Rules had been amended to state that the Badge remained the property of the Society. The minute of the Council meeting of 6th June 1990 record that 'It was reiterated that the Gold Badges were the property of the Society'.

In 1991, the Honorary Historian reported that he held four complete sets of the Chronicles and it was decided that one set should be held by each of the Historian of the day, the President of the day, the Caledonian Club and the Royal Scottish Corporation. The Historian also reported that he held a special presentation version of the 1890 Chronicles.

Total membership fell back a little but was still maintained at between one hundred and twenty and one hundred and thirty-five until rising again in the last few years of the period. However, there was a high turnover of members – illustrated by an average outflow of more than ten during each of the first five years. At least in part, this seems to have been a downside of the head-hunting policy that brought in members who were already at the peak of their careers and tended to leave when, after only a few years membership, they retired and moved away from London. A sad occasion occurred in 1969 when the President, Vernon Eddie, died in office, with the Ladies' Festival that year cancelled as a consequence. A very much happier notable event was in 1986 when His Royal Highness the Duke of Rothesay graciously accepted the Honorary Presidency of the Society. However, it is clear that there was some confusion over this. Almost no record of the correspondence seems to have survived but there is no reason to doubt the appointment. It was then agreed, at the Council meeting on 15 October 1987, 'that the Prince of Wales continue as Honorary President of the Society for the year'. The appointment was discussed further at the Council meeting on 16 June 1988 and the record in the minutes reads 'The Prince of Wales had agreed to become Honorary President of the Society on the occasion of the 150th anniversary. He had not attended any functions and there was some concern over his continued tenancy of the title. It was agreed however that for the moment he should remain as Honorary President'. There the matter seems to have rested, with Prince Charles continuing to be shown as Honorary President on Society documents and letter heads, until early in 2008-2009 when informal contact between Past President Grahame Young and the Prince's Household indicated that the Society was not on the list of bodies with which the Prince had such links. Steps were then taken to clarify the situation and His Royal Highness accepted the office for a five year period starting in November 2009. The precise status in the intervening years remained unclear.

In 1988, the President approached the Home Secretary to investigate whether a Royal Charter might be awarded to the Society. The advice was that such charters were now rarely given and such an application would be unlikely to succeed.

The entrance fee remained at five guineas (£5.25) until 1973-1974 when it was increased to £5.50. In 1977-1978, it was reduced to £5 as part of a re-balancing of charges. Annual subscriptions remained at five guineas (£5.25) at the start of the period but were raised to £7.50 then, by stages, to £20 in 1989-1990. To assist members who had retired from business and whose pensions were being eroded by inflation, a reduced rate of £5 was introduced in 1977-1978 for those who had reached retirement age or who lived well away from London; in 1983, this was revised to apply to those who had reached the age of sixty-five and had been a member for at least five years, or who lived more than fifty miles from Charing Cross. In 1990, the rate was changed to that which had been paid by the member on the date on which he applied for the concession.

Corporate support to the Charities was provided by annual donations, from Society funds, to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools. Rates were £75 in 1967 rising gradually to £1000 in 1991. Annual Presidential appeals called for support by individual members for both charities until at least 1989, that of the latter year being a reminder to review personal support rather the traditional appeal, perhaps reflecting the move towards covenanted giving. In the case of the Corporation, £1305 was raised in 1967 and £1250 in 1968. In 1987, Society members contributed £3020 to a President's appeal that seems to have been for the Schools. A raffle in 1992 raised £424 that was split equally

between the two charities. The establishment of a Society medal, for award at the Mod, was initiated in 1991.

J Alexander Gemmell donated the cost of preparing a special presentation volume of the 1961-1968 Chronicles for presentation to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and this took place in July 1972, mirroring the similar presentation to Queen Victoria in 1890. Thereafter, publication of both the Chronicles and the Year Book ceased due to cost. The first concern over costs for the former were raised at Council in February 1970 and this was followed by inconclusive discussion over several years until the sum put aside for publication were transferred to the General Fund in July 1977. Further ideas were aired occasionally but no further progress was made. The few attempts to transcribe tape recordings were generally unproductive. One attempt, in the early 1970s, seems to have been at least partially successful, but minutes of Council meetings in September 1983 and March 1984 record subsequent failures. The then Honorary Historian reported, in 1972, that 'speeches were already in précis form' but such précis have not been found, although some full scripts from this time are held.

The first Society tie was introduced in 1980 and was expected to be worn on all Society occasions.

In this period, the Society moved into a time of change that has largely continued since. Membership numbers remained reasonably high but always with vacancies. Dinner attendances were good initially but less so later and, at times, clearly caused significant concern. The strength of charitable support is difficult to compare with earlier years as giving by individual members was less visible; much was now done privately by deed of covenant rather than by lists raised by presidential appeal.

Mention has already been made of the financial downturns, high inflation and changes in life in London. Travel between Scotland and London was now quicker, by air or rail, than ever before, and cheaper if long distance coaches were used, subscriber trunk dialling made long distance telephone calls easier and cheaper and television was becoming universal. Overseas holidays became common. The United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community in 1973. The world was becoming smaller. Less positively, coal mining, volume car production and much of heavy industry all but disappeared. New industrial developments concentrated on quality and technology and although often successful, did not always provide sufficient employment to fill the gaps left by the closures. This was particularly true in Scotland where unemployment became endemic in some areas. However, the financial services sector and the new oil and gas industry did well and better communications with modern tourism and home working at last provided some improvement in the fortunes of the Highlands and Islands.



The Society's Grant of Arms 1992

CHAPTER 11

A Long Decline – 1992 to 2008

If the dividing line between the coverage of chapters nine and ten is a little artificial, there is no such difficulty with that for this period. The sessions 1992-1993 until 2007-2008 inclusive were to see a time of generally continuing decline in the Society's attendances and, from 1995, of membership. Inevitably, this in turn reflected in the Society's administration and its ability to provide charitable support. However, it is likely that the seeds of this downturn were spread well before the effects became apparent; similarly some of the initiatives that eventually led to the later modest recovery must have been among the changes made during the years before statistics improved. Even with hindsight, it is impossible to assess confidently the degree to which the unfortunate events of session 1992-1993 were responsible for this situation and to what extent they merely exacerbated difficulties that would have surfaced in any case. The available judgement points towards the latter but there is no doubt that, for a time, the Society was seriously divided. Arguably, ripples from this were still detectable more than a decade later. In numerical terms, membership fell by about one third between sessions 1991-1992 and 2007-2008 and dinner attendance by more than a half.

The events of 1992-1993 and their aftermath¹²² need to be recorded in some detail. The year was a very busy one, opening with the annual summer golf outing in July with its dinner, with ladies, in the evening. The September cocktail party was followed, later the same month, by the presentation, at the New Club in Edinburgh, of the Society's Grant of Arms that had been donated by Senior Vice President Grahame Young, followed by a lunch. In October, the President travelled to Oban to present the new Society Mod medal, leading to future invitations to winners to entertain the Society at dinners. The usual season of six dinners ran from October to April. The charitable support of recent years was enhanced by resurrecting the tradition of a President's appeal, now to be assisted by raffles and similar. This initiative was supported by Council but with caution urged as many members now provided support in other ways and some retired members might have difficulties. The President commented that attendances at the Cocktail parties and dinners were disappointing; various changes having been made to the established routine of the dinner arrangements. Figures for the dinners fell by more than one hundred against those of the previous year and the even higher numbers for several years before that. For the time being, total membership remained steady at a record level of nearly one hundred and sixty. However, the difficulty in filling all elected Council posts became markedly worse, a trend that would continue for the rest of the period.

Charity aside, the main item of business during the session was that concerning the Gold Badge. At the start of the session there seem to have been no member's or Gold badges in stock and replenishment was urgent. At a September Council meeting, the President suggested that a new medal, in silver-gilt and incorporating the new Arms of the Society, could replace the then Gold Badge for all future recipients, thus greatly reducing the cost of maintaining the tradition while making proper use of the newly granted Arms. After discussion it was agreed that this should be carried forward as an agenda item for the next meeting of Council. Discussion at the latter meeting was inconclusive and a decision was

¹²² As described in the minutes of business meetings of that and following sessions.

deferred. During this delay, a number of Council members wrote to the President. One result was that the issue of ownership of the Gold Badge (recipient or Society) was re-opened. The outcome was an Annual General Meeting decision that the wording in the Rules concerning ownership of the Gold Badge was deleted, thus revering to the de jure situation of pre-1986 when the return of a badge was at the discretion of the recipient or his family. This was done in the light of advice that new silver-gilt badges would cost around four hundred pounds at 1993 prices and that (if sufficient badges were not returned) this would reduce funds available to charity. No action was taken on changing the design of the Badge. Normal donations were £1100 to each of the main charities with the same amount from the President's appeal. The latter had been tied to specific projects and these would be office machinery for the Corporation and a play area roundabout and training pipes for the pipe band for the Schools.

When Past Presidents met at the end of the session to consider whether they should recommend the award of the Gold Badge to the President, their unanimous decision was that they should make no such recommendation, the only known case of such action in the Society's history. Their reasons are not recorded. This led to an extraordinary Council meeting, chaired by the Senior Vice President, at which a proposal, made by the immediate past Honorary Treasurer and seconded by the then Honorary Secretary, sought to award the Gold Badge to the President despite the lack of past presidential recommendation. The motion was lost by five votes to eleven with one abstention. Following the fall of the motion, the Honorary Secretary resigned on a matter of principle.

It seems that it was not so much the President's aims for the year but the manner in which they were pursued that upset some of the more traditional members, while a number of those closer to the day to day running of the Society were supportive. In the words of the then Vice President, it was clear that there were strongly held and apparently irreconcilable views on both sides. The loss of the Honorary Secretary also brought to an end the tradition of holders of that post who were also secretary of either the Corporation or the Schools. Over the years, such symbiotic relationships had brought great benefits to the Society, which was able to take advantage of both established office support and of a Secretary who was already an integral part of Scottish networking in London, thus strengthening the support the Society could give in return. However, the charities were changing as they adapted their structures to the modern world and similar opportunities would be much less likely in future.

Sessions 1993-1994 and 1994-1995 followed the difficulties of the earlier year, starting with occupants in only nine out of the fifteen elected Council posts. A member wrote to the President querying the legality of the decision to change the rule relating to ownership of Gold Badges since Past Presidents, whose estates would benefit from retention, had voted in favour. Arguably, there had been a conflict of interest at the meeting at which twelve Past Presidents and twenty-one others were present (we are not told the size of the majority). Council agreed that the President should write to the member along the lines that his objection should have been raised at the time and that there was nothing in the Rules to prevent Past Presidents voting in this way.

The 1993-1994 social calendar was as in the previous year less the presentation and lunch in Edinburgh and with traditional dinner arrangements re-instated. Numbers at the cocktail party were again low and the decline in dinner attendances worsened further. A working group had addressed a range of issues and had sent out a questionnaire. The main result was that a major

revision of the Constitution and Rules that would be completed the following year. Charitable support was again enhanced, this time by raffles at the January and April (Ladies') dinners, that added a further £248 to the £1250 for each charity from society funds. Despite other difficulties, recruiting of new members was still buoyant and total membership at the end of the session reached an all-time high of one hundred and fifty-eight with the constitutional limit of one hundred ordinary members being achieved briefly.

The picture in 1994-1995 was similar, with the revised Constitution and Rules being published and a raffle adding £103 to the £1350 to each charity from coffers. Membership reduced to one hundred and fifty. The new Rules introduced the Executive Committee, in some respects a standing working group; in practice, the intent was not fully implemented but periodic meetings of officers did result and seem to have been useful. At the Annual General Meeting in June 1995, the 1992-1993 Past President was, retrospectively, awarded the Gold Badge. This was initiated by an item of special business raised by the Honorary Auditor, three other elected members of Council and an ordinary member. It was clearly hoped that the action would draw a line under a divisive episode.

Reverting to the period as a whole, the September cocktail party was discontinued after 1994 due to poor support and the golf outing took place for the last time in May 1999. The pattern of dinners remained unchanged until 2004-2005 but in 1997-1998 the venue moved from the Hotel Russell in Bloomsbury to the Caledonian Club near Hyde Park Corner. This change was not universally popular but provided an excellent Scottish ambience and, perhaps more importantly, increased flexibility to deal with falling and fluctuating attendances. Despite the efforts of Presidents and Dinner Secretaries, and a positive feature of the period was a continuing improvement in the quality and variety of the musical entertainment, dinner attendances continued to fall, the session total being only just over three hundred in 2002-2003, with individual event figures as low as twenty-nine for a Little Dinner and thirty-nine for a Ladies' Festival. By that time, it was obvious that an attempt had to be made to increase numbers by varying the programme. 2004-2005 saw the February and March Little Dinners being replaced by a reception in the London Scottish drill hall and a lunch respectively and the following year the February event was a reception at the Fleming Collection and, perhaps for the first time other than during war, there was no formal Festival dinner and its place was taken by a ladies' lunch in April. 2006-2007 reverted to the traditional five Little Dinners and a Ladies' Festival, the outcome from these three years being inconclusive as a guide to a way ahead. During the session, an important policy change was made when it was agreed that ladies should be invited to some, but not all, Little Dinners and in 2007-2008, the final session of the period, ladies were invited to the January dinner that was made a black tie evening, and there was no April event. Partly due to this omission, total session attendance that year was an all-time low of two hundred and fifty seven. A further change at this time was the elimination of the second guest speaker (replying on behalf of guests) in order to streamline proceedings, and perhaps recognising that such input was not always of high quality. In 2001, the Edinburgh based President organised a small informal lunch in that city in the spring and this became an annual event.

As mentioned earlier, tape recording of speeches at dinners had started by 1960. These early recordings used magnetic tape technology and, although capable of good results, actual recordings were of very mixed quality. Thus the October 2005 change to digital recording was a major improvement.

The Annual General Meeting and its preceding Council meeting continued to be held in June with short Council meetings held before Little Dinners when necessary. Other Council meetings were held when business demanded. The use of the Executive was adopted more formally from 2001-2002.

Toast List and Programme

Toast	Her Majesty The Queen	The President
Toast	HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay and other members of the Royal Family	The President
Musical	A selection of Scots' songs	Charlotte Wooll-Rivers, accompanied by Ian Richardson
Sentiment	"Mercenary Missionary, or Missionary Mercenary?"	Tom Craig
SHORT INTERVAL		
Piping	Slow Air: Gin I were a Baron's Heir March: The 79 th 's Farewell to Gibraltar Strathspey: Munloch Bridge Strathspey: Mac An Irish Reel: The de'il among the tailors Reel: Miss Girdle March: 10 th HLI crossing The Rhine The Regimental March: Hielan' Laddie	Piper Tommy Johnston
Musical	A selection of Scots' songs	Charlotte Wooll-Rivers, accompanied by Ian Richardson
Toast	Our guests	Past President Bro Cal Allan McKelvie
Strathspey	The Caledonian Society of London	Past President Bro Cal Ian King
Finale	Auld Lang Syne and The National Anthem	Members and Guests

***Musical entertainment for this evening
has been generously sponsored
by Brothers Caledonian***

Little Dinner Programme October 2007

The presidential succession presented some problems. The Senior Vice President had to stand down in 1997-1998 and next four Presidents assumed office in difficult circumstances, starting the sessions with both senior and junior vice presidential posts vacant. To some extent this was due to the changed pattern of membership. Some members may have

considered their membership to be an extension of the business activities to cease on their, sometimes early, retirement; others did not join until at or about retirement age and had little opportunity for office. Thus there were relatively fewer long term members of quality and the increasing pressure of modern business meant that regular attendance, let alone higher office, was not always practicable for those that were. For example, only seven members who joined in the 1980s became President compared with ten and twelve from the 1960s and 1970s respectively.

Maintaining the Society's administration was also a challenge. After the resignation of the Honorary Secretary in 1993, he continued to provide informal assistance to his successor but in late 1994 resigned from the Society. However, he agreed to continue (in his post at the Corporation) to assist in the maintenance of the Society's membership records and storage of files and this seems to have occurred until at least September 1995. The new Honorary Secretary moved to Scotland in May 1997 and the post was formally gapped at the June 1997 Annual General Meeting and not filled until the following May, during which time the function was carried out by the President with assistance from the retired Secretary operating remotely from Scotland. The May 1998 Secretary was a very new member of the Society.

These difficulties contributed to administrative problems. Examples included some embarrassing shortcomings in processing new members, perhaps contributing to poor recruiting, and a less than robust list of members. Both were eventually addressed, the former by introducing a formal new members procedure and the latter by a thorough revision of the membership list, started in early 2000 and completed over a year later, which included asking members to confirm their details. However, this membership list was in the form of an Access database and, after the Honorary Secretary changed again in 2002, proved beyond the capacity of the Society to maintain adequately. Consequently, membership data again became gradually less robust. In 1997, the role of Dinner Secretary was split to introduce a Dinner Secretariat of two joint Dinner Secretaries, and the (non-Council) office of Honorary Golf Secretary seems to have lapsed about 1998-1999.

When Pipe Major Ian King took the Chair as President in session 2002-2003, Pipe Major PJ McLucas was appointed Honorary Piper in his place. Jim McLucas was Pipe Major of the London Scottish and his commitments did not allow him to pipe for the Society as frequently, but he did also act as a facilitator to find other pipers as necessary. Effectively, the long term practice of a single Society piper had been abandoned with the advantage of added variety but at the cost of additional administration.

After the peak in 1995, membership gradually declined although this was not then apparent due to weakness in the records, perhaps made worse by a less punctilious and dispersed Society and occasionally unreliable mail service that meant that not all resignations, and even deaths, were properly noted. The new list of 2001 had only one hundred and fifteen entries, the lowest since the early 1960s. Thereafter, records were again doubtful and it is likely that the true membership (those either still paying subscriptions or honorary) was only just over a hundred at the 2008 Annual General Meeting, the lowest since the mid-1950s. Perhaps more significantly, the number of ordinary members, against the one hundred permitted by the Constitution, fell from about ninety in 1995 to less than fifty at the end of the period.

Corporate charitable support continued to be provided by donations, from Society funds, to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools. Normal rates were between £1000 and £1500 annually to each charity until 1999-2000 when no donation was

possible. There was a reluctance to increase subscriptions or dinner charges due to declining attendances and membership. £500 was achieved the following year but in 2001-2002 it was again impossible to make any donation. Thereafter the introduction of sponsorship of entertainment at dinners by individual members eased the situation and after £500 in 2002-2003, £1000 was forwarded to each charity annually until the end of the period. However, given inflation, this was still a reduction in real terms. Other support raised £250 for the Gordon Highlanders' Private Findlater VC appeal in 1997 and, in 2004, £725 was raised for the Mauchline Burns Club Restoration Appeal. The Mod medal was discontinued after 1998.

In addition to the 1992 Grant of Arms Letters Patent, a new pipe banner was presented by the then Senior Vice President Pipe Major Ian King in 2002. The 1964 short history is believed to have been reprinted in 2006.

The national background to the Society's activities was quite smooth during this time. After the exit of the pound from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992, the United Kingdom economy recovered and was reasonably strong for the rest of the period. The Cold War was now over but new security challenges arose, initially in the Balkans and the Middle East. London continued to be a major international financial centre. In Scotland, Nationalism was beginning to flourish and a devolved parliament was established in Edinburgh in 1999. However, the changes in the life styles of professional men in London continued and these were not always readily compatible with participation in societies such as ours.



The 2002 (King) Pipe Banner



A convivial Little Dinner 2013

CHAPTER 12

Later Years – 2008 to 2014

The years from 2008 are still too recent to allow the writing of an objective history. Instead, a largely factual account, arranged more chronologically, is presented which may be edited further at a later date. What can be said was that these years, which take us to the close of the one hundred and seventy-five period starting from the Society's institution in February 1839, witnessed a modest but very welcome recovery in the Society's fortunes.

The start to session 2008-2009 was notably inauspicious. It followed a session with the lowest recorded attendance for many years and a continuing decline in membership, and started with no Junior Vice President or Honorary Secretary and several vacancies for elected members of Council. It also coincided with the 2008 international banking and financial crisis.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the session built on the developments of recent seasons. There were five Little Dinners with lady guests invited to the January and February evenings; January was again black tie. Thanks to the generosity of Brother Caledonian Jock Meikle, quaichs were presented to all presenters of Sentiments, and this would continue throughout the period. There was no traditional Ladies' Festival in April and this was replaced by a Sunday reception and lunch at the City Inn in Westminster. The delay in the decision on the April event may have reduced its numbers but the overall attendance for the season for the main functions was three hundred and sixty three members and guests, the best for nine years. The now usual informal lunch in Edinburgh was held in July (outside the time period of the session but belonging to its programme) and attracted a further sixteen. The Executive met twice, the Council three times, there was one extraordinary general meeting and the Annual General Meeting was held in June. Early in the session, it was found possible to appoint a Junior Vice President and an Honorary Secretary and elected members of Council were brought up to the full number of fifteen. Non-paying members were culled from the membership list thus bringing it up to date.

A fully revised edition of the Constitution and Rules was adopted, the main changes being:

- Adding provision for 'men with close connection with Scotland or Scottish institutions' to become members.
- Acknowledging the joint nature of the Honorary Dinner Secretariat and adding the Honorary Piper to the list of office bearers.
- Adding a new rule explaining the role of the Past Presidents.
- Modifying the composition of the Executive.
- Reducing from two to one the minimum number of main social events to be attended before applying for membership.
- Removing the provision for 'retired' members to freeze their rates of annual subscription (falling inflation had removed the need for it).
- Formalising provision for ex-officio honorary members.
- Reducing the quorum for a general meeting from fifteen to twelve.

- Re-instating an old provision to enable any five members to requisition a special general meeting.

Membership at the end of the session was one hundred and seven. Nine new members had joined during the year, the highest number for seven years and exceeding the break-even number based on recent rates of departure.

Session 2009-2010 was launched by reverting to an old tradition when members welcomed the new President at an informal supper immediately following the Annual General Meeting in June 2009. The session then followed the general pattern of the previous year. There were five Little Dinners with lady guests invited to the January and February evenings. The theme for the year was the Society's charitable activities. January was again black tie and the April function took the form of a most successful reception at Dover House, the Scotland Office. The overall attendance for the season for the main functions was four hundred and seventy-three members and guests, the best since 1991-1992, despite some loss of support when the date of the November dinner clashed with that of a London Scottish Football Club event. An informal lunch in Edinburgh was held in May with ten members and guests. The Executive met twice, Council three times and the Annual General Meeting closed the session in June.

Membership at the end of the Session was one hundred and seventeen. Twelve new members joined during the year, the highest number since 1990-1991, one member died and one resigned. This had been a most successful session in all respects. Statistically, attendances, new members and (as noted later) charitable support speak for themselves; less obvious was the most useful progress made in updating Society administration.

2010-2011 was another session during which improvement continued, if a little more quietly. Some dozen and a half members dined together informally following the previous sessions Annual General Meeting in June. The session then followed the now familiar sequence, with flexibility applied in the case of the April social function, and with an additional event in May. There were the usual five Little Dinners, with lady guests invited in January. The main spring function would be a reception with ladies at the House of Commons but because of House sittings, this had to be postponed until May and it was decided to repeat the 2008-2009 April Sunday lunch, also with ladies, at the Mint Hotel (formerly City Inn) Westminster. Thus the Sunday lunch was the sixth main social event of the session and the House of Commons reception was additional to the standard programme. The April lunch was poorly attended but the May reception was highly successful – the traditional six main social functions had a modestly successful attendance, seventy-five down on the previous session but still healthy by recent standards, but the additional fixture in May was attended by nearly one hundred. An informal lunch in Edinburgh took place in May. The Executive met twice, the Council three times and the Annual General Meeting was in June. Membership at the end of the session was one hundred and twenty-one. Seven new members joined during the year; two members died and one resigned.

The Rules were amended to add the Secretary of the Caledonian Club to those who might be offered ex-officio honorary membership and also to revert to the pre-1994 wording that made clear that ownership of Gold Badges remained with the Society.

Some members again started their 2011-2012 season by dining together informally following the previous session's Annual General Meeting in June. There were six Little Dinners with lady guests invited to the January and April evenings. January was again black tie. The

overall attendance for the season for the main functions was nearly four hundred members and guests, slightly down on the previous year although still good by recent figures. There was also an afternoon at the London Scottish Football Club's cup game against Melrose in December, at which the Society sponsored the match ball, and an informal lunch in Edinburgh was held again in May. During the session the Executive met twice, Council three times and the Annual General Meeting was held in June. Membership at the end of the session was slightly down at one hundred and eighteen. Four new members joined during the year and the Reverend Dr John Miller Scott was re-instated as an (honorary) member; three members died and five resigned.

A new annual social programme had now emerged; an informal supper immediately following the previous session's Annual General Meeting, six Little Dinners and the spring lunch in Edinburgh. This was followed in 2012-2013, with lady guests invited to the January and April evenings. January was again black tie. The overall attendance for the season for the main functions was just over four hundred members and guests, a little up on the previous year and the best annual total for a six dinner session since 1996-1997. There also another afternoon at the London Scottish Football Club's cup game against Gala in January. The Executive did not meet during the session, perhaps no longer necessary with Society business running more smoothly and with email contact used instead. Council met three times and the Annual General Meeting was again held in June. Membership at the end of the session was one hundred and twenty. Seven new members joined during the year, four members died and one resigned.

Session 2013-2014 was yet another good year. Thirty-seven members and guests started the session by dining together informally following the previous session's Annual General Meeting in June 2013. There were the usual six Little Dinners, with lady guests invited in January and April. The November London Scottish evening had been planned as a joint meeting with the Highland Society but few attended from the latter. January was again black tie. The overall attendance for the season for the main functions was four hundred and seventy-eight members and guests, the best annual total since 1991-1992. A party visited the London Scottish Football Club, enjoyed lunch and witnessed the Club defeat Melrose in the British and Irish Cup in October and the lunch in Edinburgh was held in May. The Council met three times (October, February and June) during the session, all meetings being at the Caledonian Club. There were two deaths and five resignations among members and ten new members joined to give a total strength of one hundred and twenty-three at the end of the session.

The six years of sessions 2008-2009 to 2013-2014 witnessed the stabilisation of the Society after more than a decade and a half of decline. The true strength at the beginning of the period, after allowance for a retrospective element among removals from membership made in June 2009, was probably just over one hundred; six years later it was twenty more. Attendances at the six main social functions were at levels not seen since the early to mid-1990s (when membership had been significantly higher). Less visibly, Society administration was much improved, with a more complete and accurate list of members, postal then email voting being used to streamline processing of new members, Council kept up or close to full strength and the Constitution and Rules revised. Appropriate attention was given to charitable support.

The re-emergence of a regular annual social programme after several years of experiment has been described. The cost of dinners remained an issue and that for Little Dinners was raised

to £55 but it was noted that, even then, dinners still required sponsorship of musicians by individual members in order to break even. Discussion on how this might be improved was inconclusive. Even with the omission of the second guest speaker, who had responded to the toast to the Guests, dinner timings were still sometimes problematic with some diners having to leave to catch trains before the close. Experience was to show that careful time management by Presidents and the Dinner Secretariat was beneficial. Five hundred pounds was invested in improving the menu cover design. During the period, all November dinners were at the London Scottish Headquarters, otherwise the Caledonian Club remained the main venue.

Annual payments from Society funds to each of the two main charities rose from £1000 to £3000 during the period and there was a further one-off payment of £2250 from drawing down Society reserves. In session 2009-2010, special fund raising added £2376. Members were reminded of their obligation to give support as individuals.

Council received a presentation from the charity Borderline and subsequently a donation of £1000 was made and the charity commended to members. Other charitable support included appeals to members that raised £1288 (including gift aid) for the National Trust for Scotland Burn's museum appeal and £1560 for the London Scottish Regiment's drums. However, it was decided the Society would not contribute to a memorial, in Southwark Cathedral, to commemorate the marriage of James I of Scotland (the appeal was later abandoned). It was also decided that the Society should become a member, at a cost of £50 per annum, of the Robert Burns World Wide Federation.

The situation regarding HRH Prince Charles as Honorary President had been uncertain since the 1980s and clarification was sought as mentioned previously. The outcome was that the Society was found not to be listed among those bodies receiving patronage of this nature but HRH graciously accepted the position for a five year period from November 2009 (and would subsequently continue for a further period).

The joining fee for new members was increased to £175. The issue of lady members was considered but no action was taken. One perceived difficulty was in being able to attract a small number of ladies with suitable interests who might join together – we were unlikely to be attractive to individuals on their own.

The provision of Gold Badges remained an issue. After a review, it was decided not to alter the design and a new provider was sourced. A register of known holders was created, the President wrote to holders reminding them of the need to make provision for the eventual return of the badge to the Society and diplomatic approaches were made to the families of a number of recently deceased holders. The Badge of Dr Guthrie Rankin, President 1901-1902, was bought at auction at a cost of £741 (less than that for a new badge) in a lot that also included a Kelvinside Academy Dux badge and a Knight Batchelor insignia. The Kelvinside badge was donated to the school and the insignia was sold on.

A determined effort had produced a definitive list of those artefacts and other property items still in the Society's possession. Those held in the Caledonian Club were now covered by a Memorandum of Understanding, between the Society and the Club, which covered security and insurance, and were subject to annual check to be reported at the Annual General Meeting.

The start of the period coincided with beginning of an initiative to record and safeguard the Society's recorded heritage. Material, in the form of paper documents and magnetic tape recordings, were received from the previous Honorary Historian, from various Honorary Secretaries and, in a reminder from when it had been the Society's business home, the Royal Scottish Corporation. Most importantly, the Royal Caledonian Schools returned the Society's 1841-1843 minute book that had been in their possession (just how or why is unclear). The first stage was an update of the 1964 Short History. This was a greater challenge than originally assumed and eventually led to all available archive material being gathered, sorted and summarised – thus leading not only to a new short history, and its later revisions, but also to the first draft of this volume.

The 2008 Short History was distributed in the autumn of that year, and would be subsequently be updated in 2012. A very short (one page version) was also produced. As part of the research, an electronic archive was produced, in an effort to capture all known information from whatever source. Progress was helped by the improving online access to newspaper archives of the Victorian period. Prior to 2015, no conclusive proof of the date of the Society's formation could be found; the evidence available indicated that an initial meeting of members took place between 1837 and 1839 with the first dinner not later than early 1840. Meanwhile, as at the close of session 2013-2014, the Society continued to recognise 1837 as its formation date.

In 2012, all surviving hard-copy and magnetic tape archive material dated prior to session 2010-2011 was collected and lodged with the London Metropolitan Archives (the archives for the City of London). Finally, session 2012-2013 saw the first steps towards the creation of a Society website.



Member's Badge, Cuff Links and Tie 2014



Believed to be the pre-1603 Scottish Royal Arms – Inscribed on the 1845 Rules and the 1890 Chronicles



Rampant Lion – Used in various formats as Society emblem from at least 1888 until 1992 (and still displayed on the Member's Badge)



Society Arms 1992

Arms and Emblems used by the Society

CHAPTER 13

Postscript¹²³

We have seen how the Society's understanding of its formation date has varied over time. Early opinion seems to have favoured 1839 but this was apparently contradicted in Gray's address of 1853 in which he stated that the first dinner had been towards the start of 1838 with the informal contacts leading to this beginning the year before in early 1837. However this had little immediate effect on the party line as the few accounts between 1853 and the late 1880s all continued to quote 1839. The first evidence of possible acceptance of Gray's dates was in 1888 when the member's badge was introduced inscribed '50th Anniversary 1888', and David Hepburn seemed to favour Gray's account when he wrote the 1890 *Chronicles*. However, this did not stop the then President writing a letter to the Editor of the *London Evening Standard* in January 1893 in which he stated that the Society had been formed in 1839, and the admission card for the Festival dinner of 1907 claims the same date. That card also states that this was the '68th Annual Festival' thus purporting a sequence counting back to a first Festival in 1840. By 1914 the menu card for the Festival of that year was now inscribed 'Founded 1837' but still indicated a Festival sequence back to 1840, exhibiting a degree of ambivalence. After that time the tradition of a first session in 1837-1838 seem to have been accepted generally and unambiguously. This remained the case until the research leading to the production of this volume when an initial search for evidence supporting the 1837 date was unsuccessful, and the contradictions described above gradually became clear. However, the breakthrough came, after the close of the period covered by this volume, in April 2015 when the 1845 Rules were recovered¹²⁴ with their inscription 'Instituted February 1839'. The following historic policy was then accepted by the Society's Council in June 2016: that 'the Society was formally instituted in February 1839 and that 1839-1840 was its first formal session', and that 'prior to February 1839, and perhaps starting as early as 1837, various activities took place that would eventually lead to that institution'.

By contrast, there is no doubt why the Society arose; to provide an alternative to the more overtly Highland associations that would be more attractive to professional Scots in London. Nevertheless, relations with the Highland Society seem always to have been cordial, and many have been members of both societies.

Calendar years 1841 and 1842, the first for which substantial records exist, each featured plans for three or four major social functions and a similar pattern seems to have been followed in 1843. In 1841 three dinners and, in 1842, a ball, two dinners and a summer fete were programmed. Standard dates for the dinners were St Andrew's Day in November, Burns' birthday in January and Queen Victoria's birthday in May, and the Ball was in February when it commemorated the Society's institution. In the first six months of 1843, there was another ball and plans for a dinner in May, followed by a further dinner in November. However, the 1845 Rules laid down a policy that there should be a ball (in February) and one dinner (in January), a reduction in earlier practice. No mention was made

¹²³ Much of the material of this chapter has already been considered, and its sources identified, in earlier chronological chapters. Only new items will be footnoted here.

¹²⁴ An original copy is believed to be held in the Goldsmiths' Library, University of London. The Society holds a pdf copy recovered from the National Library of Australia in April 2015.

of any function following the April General meeting at which officers were elected (we would now call it the Annual General Meeting) although some form of dining may have occurred. The annual routine built round one festival dinner and a ball now seems to have become established. However the detail of the new programme did not last long as the 1847 Annual Festival dinner was held in June, rather than January. Not until 1857 do we discover the Festival dinner again held in January with its celebration of Robert Burns. It then seems to have retained the January date until moving to the end of the season when social functions re-started after World War One. Suspended again during World War Two, the Festival was finally abandoned, as a victim of changing tastes, after 2007.

Ladies are first known to have attended the Festival dinner in 1845 but, in accordance with normal practice at such public functions at that time, sat separately until after dinner when they re-joined the gentlemen for conversation and dancing. The first occasion on which they sat at table with the men is recorded as having been in 1851 when the Society attracted plaudits for what was then seen as a welcome innovation. From the mid-nineteenth century until quite close to their final demise, most Festivals seem to have had attendances of between one and three hundred. Details of some individual functions make it clear that the Festival and the all-male suppers and dinners traditionally attracted very different companies. The Festival was a celebration of the Society and its objects and was supported by family groups and their friends with some guests returning year on year. For many years they were quite grand affairs, with Highland dress for gentlemen and tartan for ladies strongly encouraged, a reception line, a toast master, the Salute to the President often including the Ceremony of the Dirks and dancing after dinner. By contrast, the all-male events were very much masculine and less formal occasions. Eventually, the Festival dinners became less formal while the Little Dinners tended to somewhat greater formality until the main differences between them were the presence of ladies and the black tie dress at the Festival.

It is clear that the Balls were primarily instruments of fundraising to enable the Society's charitable activities. For many years highly successful, they eventually failed in this role, and ceased to be held in the 1890s.

We know of other functions that were held occasionally at this time, including conversaciones, fetes and summertime 'white bait dinners' but early news of the informal suppers that eventually became the Little Dinners remains elusive. The January 1843 decision to move business meetings to the establishment at which dinners were held, with the implicit opportunities for dining that this offered, is not reflected in the 1845 routine. The first definite information of an informal supper is in 1868 but there are earlier clues. The 1890 Chronicles describe gatherings at the Craven Hotel, when the Society was numerically small in the late 1840s or early 1850s, and these may have been early examples. Further evidence may lie in the press report of 1853 telling us that the Society was contemplating the introduction of essays on matters of interest to be presented at ordinary meetings. In any event, the suppers were well established by 1884 when the title Little Dinner was adopted. A further press extract reports that the 1893-1894 session was to include five 'morning dress dinners'; by the early 1900s the number had increased to six, November to April inclusive with January accommodating both a Little Dinner and the Festival. Early details are scant but proceedings may have been quite casual. Six courses were served but the function finished by ten with entertainment provided by songs and other party pieces from members and their guests.

We do not know what action, if any, followed the 1853 deliberations but records tell us of what would later be called a 'Sentiment' at the March 1891 Little Dinner when Mr George

McK Munro of the London Ross and Cromarty Association presented illustrations of Scottish music and humour using an early gramophone, and in 1894 a guest spoke of the recent Matebeleland campaign. Suggestions that such features should be added to all Little Dinners were again considered in the late 1890s and finally implemented in session 1903-1904. From then until the suspension of dinners during World War One most, perhaps all, Sentiments were delivered by members and it was not until the social programme restarted post-war that guests were again invited to sing for their supper in this way, with members still speaking occasionally.

This resumption of service also saw the Festival moved to the end of the season, usually in April, and the number of Little Dinners reduced to five, November to March. Apart from the further wartime period, this programme would remain in place, with only minor changes, until 2007. The earliest programme for a Little Dinner that we still hold is that for November 1919 and can be compared with that for October 2007. The main changes are the addition of a formal interval and the playing of the Society's Strathspey at the end of the gathering, and the deletion of the toast to the author of the Sentiment and response (replaced by thanks from the Chair) and the response on behalf of the guests. More subtly, entertainment was now usually professional and often by ladies. Dinners ceased again during World War Two but this time were replaced by lunches, often with ladies, as circumstances permitted.

A combination of changing social patterns and financial down turns led to disappointing attendances at times from the 1970s onwards and various experimental adjustments were made to the social programme. Those that were adopted longer term were the replacement of the December dinner by one in October, the substitution of the April Festival by an additional Little Dinner and the inclusion of lady guests at some Little Dinners. The January dinner, with its Burns theme, is accepted as one to which ladies are invited and is usually black tie for gentlemen, thus perpetuating, in a small way, the tradition of the pre-1914 Festival. Other social functions have always been held on an occasional basis and, at the time of writing, two that feature regularly are an informal supper to launch the new session immediately following the previous year's Annual General Meeting, and a lunch in Edinburgh in the spring.

Examination of the habitual routines at these functions shows a few enduring traditions and several customs that continued for varying periods of time. Highland Honours with toasts are mentioned in press reports as early as 1846 and Caledonian Honours in 1869 but it is seldom possible to determine their nature, the Highland variety with one foot on the chair and the other on the table, or the more restrained Caledonian Honours used by the Society today. It may be that both were in use together for a considerable time. Full Highland Honours would hardly have been acceptable at Festivals after ladies joined the gentlemen at table in 1851 but may have continued on all-male occasions. Indeed, the final event at which we can be sure that the full Highland variant applied was at such a dinner in 1904; after that date we can be reasonably certain that it was the modern Caledonian Honours that were used. The precise origin of the latter form is unknown but its three by three format is not thought to have any special significance¹²⁵.

If the history of Caledonian Honours is unclear, that of the Ceremony of the Dirks, once part of the Salute to the President at Festival dinners, is even more mysterious. It is first recorded as being used in 1889 and may have been introduced about this time. Dependent on its key participants being in Highland dress, its use may have been affected by the reduction in the

¹²⁵ Chronicles 1945-1952, page 281.

wearing of this garb and it receives fewer than half a dozen mentions before its final such in 1968¹²⁶. Its revival today would be almost impossible due the more recent legal restrictions on carrying blades.

Auld Lang Syne was first mentioned in 1846 when it was sung following the toast ‘The Land o’ Cakes’ (Scotland). It was first recorded as being sung at the close of a supper in 1870, and again at a Festival in 1875 when it was followed by the National Anthem. The Society’s current format of the song, with soloists and its prohibition of singing the final chorus in quick time, came in 1953. Meanwhile, the playing of the Strathspey ‘The Caledonian Society of London’ to precede it had been introduced in 1947. The tune is reported to have been played as a reel at a Society function in 1870 but the circumstances that led to its naming are unknown. The Selkirk Grace was said in December 1887, perhaps for the first time, and for many years was the only grace used by the Society, although this has been relaxed recently. Another custom that has seen variation in the last few years was that the President should always say grace himself. A formal interval does not seem to have been introduced at Little Dinners until 1950.

The celebration of the life of Robert Burns was first noted in January 1841 and was repeated occasionally but seems not to have become an annual event until about 1857. It then continued every year until the outbreak of World War One but did not become a regular feature again until 1948. Pre-1914 celebrations had been at Festival dinners held on, or close to, 25th January but from 1948 the date was that of the normal January Little Dinner and was sometimes referred to as the ‘Early Burns Night’. Other usual features of Festival dinners were a toast to the Society, the salute to the President, and, depending upon process at the time, the presentation of the Gold Badge to either the current President or his immediate predecessor.

In their earlier years, the first Little Dinner of the season immediately followed the previous year’s Annual General Meeting and welcomed the new President to the Chair, and in the 1890s the December dinner had been an opportunity to welcome friends from the north down for the Smithfield Show. By the 1920s, the pattern for these dinners included toasts to the new President and the Past Presidents in November, a senior member singing ‘The Year that’s Awa’ in January and the President’s thanks to the honorary office bearers in March. From session 1947-1948, the November dinner became the London Scottish (Regiment) night, remembering the part played by the Society in the Regiment’s formation and subsequent links. Various ways were used to advertise the work of the Society’s two main charities, either in Sentiments or by toasts. As we have already observed, the Festival dinners ceased after 2007 and we now have six Little Dinners annually. November is the London Scottish night, Burns is celebrated in January, the charities are remembered in February or March and the President is saluted and presented with the Gold Badge in April.

The sentiment, with a small ‘s’, expressed at the close of the 1890 Chronicles¹²⁷, that described the Little Dinners as having ‘a sameness which lacks monotony, and a repetition which we would not wish to alter’ has guided successive generations of members in their management of these occasions. Change has come but it has done so carefully and thoughtfully, and the more abrupt and less sensitive efforts have not been so well received.

¹²⁶ Minutes of Council meeting on 21 March 1968 that said the Ceremony would be used in the Festival the following month (but there is no record that this happened).

¹²⁷ 1890 Chronicles, page 179.

The Society had engaged pipers from the start, usually on a regular basis. However, it did not formally appoint its own piper until the 1900s when he was known as the Society's Officer and also carried out some other duties at dinners. The title was changed to Honorary Piper around 1980, the ancillary tasks having been shed. When a new Piper was appointed in 2002 a different approach was adopted. He would play occasionally himself but also acted as a facilitator to help the Society find other pipers as necessary.

There are two ways in which the Society has provided charitable support. Firstly, by making donations from Society funds, but also by encouraging members to contribute individually. The second approach has taken different forms over the years. President's subscription lists, in which members donated publically under the Society's auspices, were once favoured but eventually gave way to the more tax efficient Deeds of Covenant and, later, Gift Aid giving. Support was not just financial and members were also encouraged to become involved in the governance of the charities, and many have done so. Today, donations from Society funds continue and Presidents regularly remind members of their individual commitment.

The earliest known press report concerning the Society is that in the Morning Post of 4th March 1842 that includes the statement 'The object of this society is the encouragement of education in Scotland, with which view they collect subscriptions to be divided into prizes, and awarded to the most meritorious scholars in the several parish schools.' Gray's 1853 address puts it slightly differently in saying that the original support was provided by 'appropriating the surplus proceeds of the Society to the encouragement of education in Scotland by sending prizes to the parochial Schools', and then adds that this ceased after the Disruption (in 1843) when the Church of Scotland split. Thus the intent is clear but, interestingly, the minutes of business meetings between January 1841 and June 1843 contain no record of any such donations.

After the Disruption, support was re-directed. The Caledonian Asylum (later the Royal Caledonian Asylum, then the Royal Caledonian Schools and now the Royal Caledonian Education Trust) had already been presented with books for prizes in 1842, and now became a recipient for cash donations. The Royal Highland School Society was also supported between 1845 and the early 1850s and the Scottish Hospital (Royal Scottish Corporation, now operating as ScotsCare) seems to have been added sometime after 1844 and by early 1846. After the 1850s, the Asylum and the Hospital became the Society's two main charities, and their successors remain so today, while assistance has also been given to many other good Scottish causes over the years.

Records of cash donations are incomplete. Asylum, Highland School and Hospital sources give us a very few figures from the nineteenth century and research among material deposited in the London Metropolitan Archives by the Royal Caledonian Education Trust and ScotsCare might reveal more. The Chronicles and, from late 1924 onwards, Society minutes record donations from Society funds and also tell us of some subscription list yields, mainly for the Corporation. Some significant figures were achieved and long term totals were clearly substantial.

By 1841, the Society's governance was vested in a Committee, as Council was then known, comprising a chairman, an honorary secretary and eight other members. The Secretary also carried out the function of treasurer and there were also three trustees. Press reports indicate that the title of President had superseded that of Chairman by 1844. In 1845 there were also a vice president and treasurer, but no trustees, and there were now nine elected Committee

members with the Past Presidents as ex-officio members. By 1855 the title Council seems to have been adopted and two honorary auditors had been added.

Over the years leading to 1923, the number of auditors reduced to one, elected members increased to fifteen and an honorary historian was added. More recently, the Dinner Secretariat function was separated from that of the Honorary Secretary, initially as a single appointment but held jointly from 1997, a junior vice president was introduced in 1982 and a webmaster in 2015. The 1994 version of the Rules introduced the Executive Committee, drawn from the Council, but its operation has been intermittent.

For many years, business meetings were held monthly during the winter with Council and general meeting preceding all Little Dinners. Dates for Annual General Meetings were initially in February, then varied before moving to April and subsequently to late in the calendar year at what was then the start of the dinner season, in either November or December. More recently, the Annual General Meeting has been in June, and has been the only routine general meeting of the session, with Council and Executive meetings convened as necessary.

Traditional activities over the years have included loyal greetings on the occasion of notable events in the Royal Family and messages of appreciation and congratulations to the London Scottish Regiment.

The oldest item among Society regalia is the Gold Badge; routinely presented to Presidents who have performed their duties to the satisfaction of the members, it is also awarded to others who have given particularly good service to the Society. Its earliest known presentation, as recorded by David Hepburn, was to Dr Charles Hogg in 1869, following his presidency. We also believe that another early award was to Michie Forbes Gray who, although not a Past President, was an ex-officio member of Council from at least 1866. On a few occasions, a bar to the Badge has been added for those deemed to have given further major service after the first award. The member's silver badge was instituted to celebrate the Society's 50th anniversary and was introduced in 1888.

The President's chain of office came into existence gradually. The badge was presented in 1910 by President Allan Freer. The centre piece, mounted above the badge, was contributed by the Society, to commemorate the work of David Hepburn, and links, bearing the names of Past Presidents, were added until the chain was complete as we know it today. For some years, miniature versions of the gold badge, mounted as broches and originally made for use by ladies, were worn by the Vice President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer but the practice lapsed.

The Society received its first pipe banner in 1906, and replacements were presented in 1961 and 2002. A Society tie, the first of a number of designs, was introduced in 1980 and, in 1992, a Grant of (Scottish) Arms was received from the Ross Herald, courtesy of Brother Caledonian, later Past President, Grahame Young. The gift of the Society's Banner, and its fate, have been described earlier.

The earliest complete copy of the Society Rules to survive is of the edition dated 1845. The next version that we hold is that included in the Year Book for 1904-1905 and we also have most, if not all, subsequent editions. Constitution, objects, governance, membership and meetings are among the issues addressed. Most changes have been of detail rather than

substance but a number are of interest. In 1845, only membership of the Committee was restricted to Scotsmen, ordinary members could be of any nationality and there was no limit to their number. Committee members were required to wear Highland dress at stipulated events, and sanctions were imposed on a transgressor on at least one occasion, but this seems to have been gradually relaxed until made entirely optional in 1898. Today, all members must be Scotsmen or men with close connections with Scotland or Scottish institutions. Ladies are welcomed as guests but not yet as members.

Pocket size Year Books were produced until 1969-1970, when their publication ceased. The earliest known was in 1904 but they may go back much further, perhaps having developed from the card of meetings referred to in the minutes of a Committee meeting in June 1842. After 1970, the Rules and membership lists were produced separately. A short history was published in 1964, based on the two Sentiments given by William Will in 1947 and 1951 respectively; it was reprinted in 2006. A new short history appeared in 2008 and was updated in 2012 and 2016 while the 1964 version remains an interesting anecdotal record of many of the Society's early events. Ten volumes of published Chronicles cover the years until 1967.

Throughout much of its history the Society has been peripatetic. After Beattie's Hotel, meetings and dinners are known to have been held at the British Coffee House, Charing Cross (1841), Radley's Hotel, Blackfriars (1841 to 1844), the London Tavern, Bishopsgate (1845 until the early 1860s), the Craven Hotel, Covent Garden (some events probably in the late 1840s and early 1850s), the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street (by 1863 until 1893), the Holborn Restaurant, Kingsway (1893 to 1914 and 1918 to 1934), the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street (1934 to 1938), the Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych (session 1938-1939), the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place (1946 to 1964), the Kensington Palace Hotel, De Vere Gardens (1964 to 1967), the Hotel Russell, Russell Square (1967 to 1997) and the Caledonian Club, Halkin Street (from 1997) with occasional functions elsewhere. Most World War Two lunches were accommodated in the Waldorf Hotel or Grosvenor House.

Business meetings were usually held at the dinner or lunch addresses but occasional use was made of the Royal Scottish Corporation, the Caledonian Club, the headquarters of the London Scottish Regiment and St Columba's Church. For many years, the formal address and headquarters of the Society were those of the Royal Scottish Corporation.

An unfortunate result of this movement is that the Society has not always found it easy to safeguard its possessions and some have been lost over the years. Today, in addition to those items in use at dinners, a number of artefacts are displayed in the Caledonian Club and the 1906 and 1961 pipe banners are in the museum at the London Scottish headquarters in Horseferry Road, where the portrait presented to Robert Hepburn is also hung on loan from the Royal Scottish Corporation.

Surviving records are either held electronically by the Society, or as hard copy and audio recordings deposited with the London Metropolitan Archives. Current material is held by the Society's office bearers. The main sources used in preparing this history are noted at the end of the volume.

And what of the members who made all this possible? We hold complete membership records from the start of January 1841 until the beginning of June 1843, but have no record of any whose membership both started and finished before the former date. We have also been able to re-construct, with confidence, a full membership list from November 1924 onwards.

However, we have only limited knowledge of members between 1843 and 1924. A Chronicles list for 1890 and Year Books for 1904-1905 and 1913-1914 and from the early 1920s combine to give reasonable coverage back to the late 1880s. Earlier, it is limited to members who earned mention in the Chronicles or press reports as individuals. Thus the Society electronic archive records some twelve hundred names since January 1841 but there are probably about two hundred and fifty to three hundred more, from the years before 1924, who left no trace. There have been several multi-generation family involvements, and one case where a President has followed his father and grandfather into that office. Some members have remained active into their nineties and at least two memberships lasted more than sixty years, Thomas Ronaldson from 1856 until 1920 and Past President James Currie Thomson who died in 2001 having been a member since 1938. Less happily, at least three members have been expelled for misconduct, one a Past President. Since 1890, total membership at any one time seems to have varied between one hundred and one hundred and sixty.

Honorary membership has been offered to long standing members who have given particularly good support and also, ex-officio, to those whose posts are close to the interests of the Society. The latter have included the ministers of Crown Court and St Columba's churches, the Regimental Colonel of the London Scottish and the Secretary of the Caledonian Club.

Originally there was no limit on the number of members but a ceiling of one hundred was first adopted about 1863. However, this was effectively relaxed around 1872 when members of Council were made additional to the limit, again in 1885 when the number of elected members of Council were increased from nine to fifteen, when the Rules were amended in 1920 to exclude life members from the one hundred, when separate provision was made for honorary members and when new officer posts were added. Nevertheless, the restriction to one hundred ordinary members has remained, despite occasional suggestions that it be raised. A waiting list for membership is first mentioned in the 1912 Rules and is known to have existed from shortly after the end of World War One in 1918 until session 1932-1933.

Robert Hepburn's record of presidencies is unique but at least five others were President for three consecutive years in the nineteenth century, others completed two years at this time, and there were multiple year presidencies in both World Wars. The Society has also been nobly served by its other office bearers and twenty of these stalwarts have been awarded the Gold Badge for their exceptional contributions. The longest known terms were those of John Kilpatrick, Honorary Treasurer for at least twenty-eight years until the end of 1882, William Will who was Honorary Historian for thirty years, William Miller who was variously Treasurer, Secretary and Historian for twenty-five years and Sandy Mackenzie who was Treasurer for twenty-three years from 1992 until 2015. The names of Presidents and other Gold Badge recipients are at Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

With hind sight, the Society's life to date can be divided into three parts. The first six decades saw its birth, early exuberance until the difficulties of the 1840s, recovery and re-launching under Robert Hepburn's leadership, the further challenges of the 1870s and the establishment of the pattern of Little Dinners and an annual Festival after the Ball was reluctantly abandoned. If the interruptions of the two World Wars are disregarded, changes during the next three quarters of a century were those of detail only. The last forty years have been centred on the challenge, faced by all similar organisations, of attracting and retaining participation in an era that not only makes much more demands on the time of individuals but

also offers so many more ways of spending what leisure they do have. The need is to adjust our activities while still retaining the core qualities that have served so well.

The story continues. The creation of the Society website is allowing us to upload the Chronicles, including volumes for 1967- 1976 and 1976-1984 that have not been published in hard copy and are being made available for the first time. This volume has also been uploaded.



The screenshot shows the top part of a website. At the top left is a crest with a shield, a crown, and a banner. To its right is the text: **THE CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON** and below it, **Honorary President: HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay KG KT GCB OM**. Below this is a blue navigation bar with links: Home Page, What do we do?, How can I join?, Our History, and Contact Us. The main content area has a heading **Who are we?** in blue. Below the heading is a paragraph: **The Caledonian Society of London** was formed in 1839 as a society of Scotsmen in London with the express purpose of providing fellowship and encouraging charitable works. It is dedicated to the advancement of Scottish cultural and philanthropic interests. The next paragraph says: In 1859, the Society, in conjunction with the Highland Society was the driving force behind the formation of the London Scottish Rifles, which became the [London Scottish Regiment](#), a leading Territorial Army regiment today. The following paragraph states: At present, we support two London based Charities with Scottish recipients and in the last decade have raised over £60,000 to support their work. These are: [Scotscare](#) - A charity which provides a wide range of support to Scots in London including housing, education support, emergency grants and pensions. [The Royal Caledonian Education Trust](#) - An education trust supporting the children of Scots who are serving, or who have served, in the Armed Forces. The final paragraph reads: We are proud of our history and tradition, and continue to provide our membership with good fellowship and mutual support whilst supporting those in need.

Society Website 2016

APPENDIX 1

Chairmen and Presidents

1. Before Session 1868-1869¹²⁸

Session	Chairman or President	Remarks
1839-1840		Not known
1840-1841		Not known
1841-1842	John Gordon (Chairman)	
1842-1843	John Boucher (Chairman)	
1843-1844	James Wylie	
1844-1845	James Wylie	
1845-1846	Robert Hepburn	
1846-1847	Robert Hepburn	
1847-1848		Probably Robert Hepburn ¹²⁹
1848-1849	Captain James Lamont	
1849-1850		Probably Robert Hepburn
1850-1851		Probably Professor Richard Cull ¹³⁰
1851-1852		Probably Robert Hepburn
1852-1853	Robert Hepburn	
1853-1854	Robert Hepburn	
1854-1855		Probably Robert Hepburn
1855-1856	Andrew Maclure	
1856-1857	Andrew Maclure	
1857-1858		Probably Andrew Maclure
1858-1859	Robert Marshall	
1859-1860	Robert Marshall	
1860-1861	Robert Marshall	
1861-1862		Probably David Chambers
1862-1863	David Chambers	
1863-1864	John Young	
1864-1865	John Young	
1865-1866	John Young	
1866-1867	Dr Charles Hogg	
1867-1868	Dr Charles Hogg	

¹²⁸ There is still uncertainty for some years during this period.

¹²⁹ We are told that Robert Hepburn was President for eight sessions before the start of Andrew Maclure's tenure, thus he was probably in office for these four years although confirmation is lacking.

¹³⁰ Professor Richard Cull is reported as having been President at a dinner in July 1851 but it is unclear whether this event lay in session 1850-1851 or 1851-1852; the former seems more likely.

2. 1868-2014¹³¹

Session	President	Session	President
1868-1869	Dr FW Ramsay MD FRCP	1919-1920	Thomas Reid Moncrieff
1869-1870	Dr FW Ramsay MD FRCP	1920-1921	John Douglas FSA (Scot)
1870-1871	Dr FW Ramsay MD FRCP	1921-1922	Alexander Bruce
1871-1872	William Morrison	1922-1923	WL Brodie
1872-1873	William Morrison	1923-1924	William Jeffrey
1873-1874	Aeneas McIntyre QC	1924-1925	William Will
1874-1875	Aeneas McIntyre QC	1925-1926	Dr Cameron R Stewart
1875-1876	J Shiress Will QC	1926-1927	Rev Dr Archibald Fleming DD
1876-1877	J Shiress Will QC	1927-1928	William Blane CBE
1877-1878	J Shiress Will QC	1928-1929	JF McLeod
1878-1879	James Laurie JP	1929-1930	John Macmillan
1879-1880	James Laurie JP	1930-1931	Andrew Bain Irvine JP
1880-1881	James Laurie JP	1931-1932	Peter Neil McFarlane
1881-1882	William Morrison	1932-1933	Robert Sinclair Kennedy
1882-1883	Alexander Dunlop	1933-1934	Alexander MacDonald
1883-1884	Alexander Dunlop	1934-1935	William Miln
1884-1885	James Nisbet Blyth	1935-1936	John Bennett Rintoul
1885-1886	James Nisbet Blyth	1936-1937	Thomas Milne Stephen JP
1886-1887	R Barclay Brown	1937-1938	Sir Murdoch MacDonald CMG CB
1887-1888	William Hutton Inglis	1938-1939	John McLaren MIME MINavA
1888-1889	David Hepburn	1939-1940	James Thomson
1889-1890	David Hepburn	1940-1941	The Rt Hon Lord Alness PC
1890-1891	John Ross	1941-1942	The Rt Hon Lord Alness PC
1891-1892	John Wilson MICE MIMechE	1942-1943	The Rt Hon Lord Alness PC
1892-1893	John Wilson MICE MIMechE	1943-1944	The Rt Hon Lord Alness PC
1893-1894	Alexander Ritchie JP CC	1944-1945	The Rt Hon Lord Alness PC
1894-1895	Surgeon Gen William G Don MD	1945-1946	John M Swann
1895-1896	Dr Daniel Mackay Forbes	1946-1947	T Atholl Robertson FRGS FSA (Scot)
1896-1897	George Struthers	1947-1948	Dr Charles Stewart Hunter MD
1897-1898	John Kennedy	1948-1949	AW Russell
1898-1899	William Simpson	1949-1950	Col L Duncan Bennett OBE MC TD
1899-1900	John Imray MA	1950-1951	Rev Dr RFV Scott DD
1900-1901	W Keith Cameron	1951-1952	James Abernethy
1901-1902	Dr Guthrie Rankin MB MD	1952-1953	James R Steele
1902-1903	James Cantlie KBE FRCS	1953-1954	J Murray Napier OBE
1903-1904	Robert Henderson CB	1954-1955	William Dalgarno
1904-1905	Col John Smith Young	1955-1956	Sir George R Campbell KCIE
1905-1906	David Hepburn	1956-1957	Dr D Macrae Stewart MA
1906-1907	George W Thomson JP	1957-1958	John R Aldridge
1907-1908	James Gray JP	1958-1959	Lt Col JC Thomson MBE TD JP
1908-1909	John Matheson MA MD JP	1959-1960	Robert Alexander McWilliam
1909-1910	Allan William Freer	1960-1961	James Aitken
1910-1911	Patrick Gardiner	1961-1962	Thomas M Munro
1911-1912	Major Bernard C Green	1962-1963	William Millar
1912-1913	Loudon MacQueen Douglas FRSE	1963-1964	Alister Gladstone MacDonald
1913-1914	George William Paton	1964-1965	Douglas G Robertson
1914-1915	George William Paton	1965-1966	David Fulton
1915-1916	George William Paton	1966-1967	HR Stewart Hunter MA ARIBA
1916-1917	George William Paton	1967-1968	RY Kennedy CA
1917-1918	George William Paton	1968-1969	Vernon J Eddie
1918-1919	George William Paton	1969-1970	Alastair AM Fisher

¹³¹ Presidents for these sessions are quoted with confidence.

Session	President	Session	President
1970-1971	Donald Fraser	1992-1993	N Rutherford-Young TD FSA
1971-1972	W Alexander Law OBE FRCS	1993-1994	AGB Young MA FRSA
1972-1973	Rev Dr J Fraser McLuskey MC DD MA	1994-1995	Dr IG Livingston MB ChB
1973-1974	Robert Leitch	1995-1996	RFJ Ireland BSc LCP
1974-1975	George Deans	1996-1997	Lt Col JN Cormack MBE MC BA MIMgt
1975-1976	James Moxon	1997-1998	Wg Cdr VJWM Lawrence FSA
1976-1977	WUB Reid BSc FCIS	1998-1999	His Honour Judge I Davidson QC
1977-1978	Dr Archibald F Mc Donald TD MB ChB	1999-2000	AS Noble MA LLD FCMA FIMA JP
1978-1979	LIM Primrose	2000-2001	Lt Col HA Cowan BSc CEng MICE MIPlantE
1979-1980	Colonel AF Niekirk TD ADC DL	2001-2002	GG Fordyce FFB FIMgt
1980-1981	Sir W Slimmings CBE DLitt CA	2002-2003	Pipe Major IL King RVM BSc APMI MSFA
1981-1982	Rev J Miller Scott MA BD FSA	2003-2004	DW Guild FSI
1982-1983	Professor JAD Anderson TD MA MD FFCM	2004-2005	RD Holliday TD BSc
1983-1984	Robert Cassells	2005-2006	JC Grieve MCIBS ASIP
1984-1985	D Keith Robertson FRICS	2006-2007	AW McKelvie FCA
1985-1986	JAD Paton CA	2007-2008	N McNair
1986-1987	EEC Mekie JP	2008-2009	DT Coughtrie RIBA FCILT
1987-1988	Dr GL Park	2009-2010	Lt Col RJD Reid OBE
1988-1989	AJ Reid MA MSc FSS	2010-2011	WH Brown ACIB (Scot)
1989-1990	IC Stewart Hunter BSc AMSIA	2011-2012	RH Robinson TD MA FRSA ACIB
1990-1991	Dr DWC Smith OBE TD MB ChB MFOM	2012-2013	Brigadier MWH Roberts OBE BSc CEng
1991-1992	AW Wilson FCMA	2013-2014	J Meikle MA FRSA

APPENDIX 2

Non-presidential Gold Badge Awards

Name	Date of Award	Reason for Award	Remarks
Michie Forbes Gray	Unknown (possibly before 1866)	Member from before 1841, Hon Secretary for some years	
David Budge ¹³²	Probably by December 1868	Hon Secretary about 5 years	
J Seton Ritchie	December 1871	Hon Secretary 4 years	Total service as Hon Secretary later 7 years
John Kilpatrick	January 1883	Hon Treasurer 28 years	
William Dick	1898	Hon Secretary 5 years	
PM Shanks	1901	Hon Treasurer 8 years	
Capt Henry W Notman	November 1909	Member from 1855, Hon Auditor 18 years	Total service as Hon Auditor later 22 years
TR Moncrief	January 1911	Hon Treasurer 5 years	Subsequently President
John Douglas	January 1913	Hon Secretary 5 years	Subsequently President
JF McLeod	November 1924	Hon Secretary 5 years	Subsequently President
Robert Davidson	November 1926	Hon Auditor 13 years	Total service as Hon Auditor later 20 years
PN McFarlane	November 1929	Hon Secretary 5 years	Subsequently President; total service as Hon Secretary later 11 years
Walter Leitch CBE	May 1933	Vice President 1932-1933 but unable to take up Presidency due to his recall to Australia.	
JA Brown	March 1935	Hon Secretary 4½ years	Tenure cut short due to ill health
RR Wilson	April 1937	Hon Treasurer 5 years	
David Boyd	March 1940	40 years membership including 20 years on Council	Total Council service later 30 years
WM Miller	November 1961	Hon Treasurer and Acting Hon Secretary 1940-1945, Hon Secretary 1945-1960 and Hon Historian from 1957.	Continued to serve as Hon Historian until 1965
Robert Eadie	February 1970	(Hon) pianist and accompanist for more than 20 years	
WR Smith	September 1992	Hon Treasurer 10 years	
AMW Mackenzie	December 2007	Hon Treasurer 15 years	Total service as Hon Treasurer later 23 years

¹³² No record of award to David Budge has been found but a press report of the opening meeting of session 1868-1869, in December 1868, quotes him as an ex-officio member of Council. As he was not a Past President, this seems to infer that he must have received the Badge by that date.

MAIN SOURCES¹³³

Source	Remarks
Society Minute Book and Register of Members, January 1841 to June 1843	Original with Society material in LMA. Transcript in Society electronic records.
Rules of the Caledonian Society of London, 1845	An original copy is believed to be held in the Goldsmiths' Library, University of London. The Society holds a pdf copy recovered from the National Library of Australia in April 2015.
Minutes of Society business meetings from November 1924 onwards	All except most recent are held in LMA.
Various Society papers from 1919 onwards	Held in LMA.
Chronicles of the Caledonian Society of London (twelve volumes)	All twelve volumes are accessible online through Society website. Copies of the ten volumes published in hard copy are held in LMA.
The English Reports, Volume CLXXIV, August 1947	Records the 1844 court case.
Online newspaper archive, British Library	Short term access ticket available online.
Online newspaper archive, The Scotsman	Short term access ticket available online.
Online newspaper archive, The Times	No short term access online but can be accessed through subscribing libraries.
Archives of the Royal Caledonian Education Trust.	Lodged in LMA.
A Cup of Kindness, History of the Royal Scottish Corporation, 1603-2003	Author Justine Taylor, published by Tuckwell Press, 2003. Available in hard copy only.

¹³³ The abbreviations LMA is for London Metropolitan Archives.

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