Stranraer Kirk Session Records



Foreword

A unique set of church records providing details of the life and times of the local population focussing on their "sins" with several mentions of McDoualls/McDowalls.

The Stranraer records confirm the date of death of Patrick McDouall of Freugh on 15th October 1729 (already in the family tree). His servant, who was accused of fathering a child with Dalrymple's servant, couldn't appear before the session on the agreed date due to the death and burial of his master's father.

More significantly, we find out that John McDouall of Freugh died in May 1748, previously recorded in our family tree as 1757, also confirmed by a Wigtown Commissary Court record dated 2nd June 1748, when his final Will & Testament were officially submitted. Other sources indicate that he was born ca.1698, and that his wife lived between 1700-1768.

There are records of seats in the church, one of the Ladies of Freugh being buried in the 'isle' of the church (a donation of one guinea was given for the poor), and a number of drinking sessions, one of them including the Laird of Freugh drinking from Friday right through to Saturday night. Fortunately, these epic drinking sessions have been forgotten in the mists of time, otherwise they might not have let bus loads of us descend on these parts ever again!

The Dalrymples don't seem to have been drinkers but their troops/dragoons caused a few problems with the young ladies!

The Garthland McDowalls are also mentioned. For example, Alexander of Garthland fathered children with seven women, isn't sufficiently penitent and refuses to wear the sackcloth! He risks ex-communication – a serious blow in those times. And Willliam of Garthland is accused of insolence and blasphemy!

Rachael McDouall

Introduction: Kirk Session Records of Stranraer 1707-1767

The Kirk Session was the court of the parish. The session was made up of the Minister and the landowners and businessmen of the parish, chosen to serve on the session. It dealt with moral issues, minor criminal cases, the poor, education, discipline, and the general concerns of the parish. Kirk session records may also mention births, marriages, and deaths.

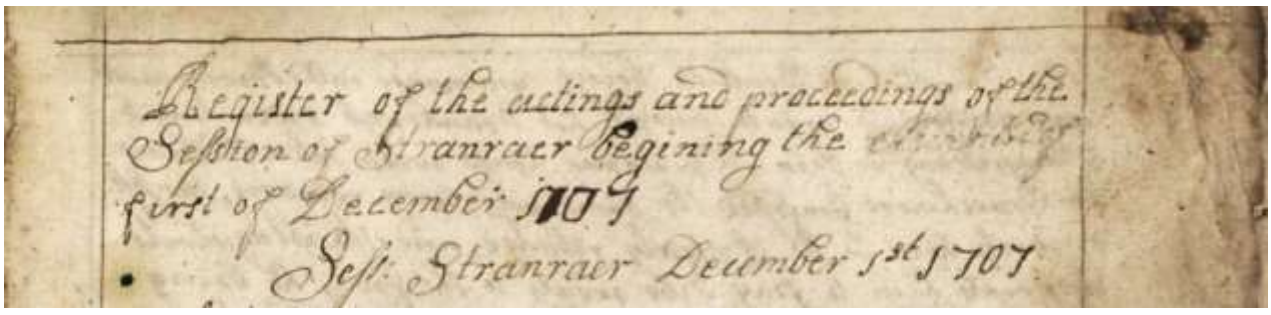
Fornication, drinking after hours and working on the Sabbath, including children labouring in the fields – recurring offences resulting in rebukes and admonishments and sometimes hefty fines.

The records span the period from 1695-1897, however the primary years of interest for the McDoualls are 1707-1767.

Links: About: Kirk session records | Scotland's People

Stranraer Kirk Session Records 1695-1897: Records for Stranraer | Scotland's People

Title page of the Stranraer Kirk Session Records 1707 of over 300 years ago!



Transcription: *Register of the actings and proceedings of the Session of Stranraer beginning the first of December 1707.*
Session: Stranraer December 1st 1707

Note: The Maitlands bought Balgreggan in 1775, therefore the only McDouall of Freugh living in the area after that was Lady Betty who died on 24th January 1781 in Stranraer.

The records reveal certain information on the McDoualls of Freugh including:
[Kirk Session Record extracts and transcriptions follow]

- The children of brother William to the Laird — Dec. 29th, 1707
- More on William McDowall — Nov. 19th, 1722
- The drinking habits of the Laird and his friends — Feb. 28th, 1709; Oct. 2nd, 1710; May 11th, 1719
- Allocation of seats in the Stranraer Kirk — Dec. 26th, 1715; Oct. 12th, 1719
- Rent paid for seats in the Kirk — Sep. 19th, 1743; 1745; 1746
- The love affairs and resulting pregnancies of some of their servants — Nov. 19th, 1722; Apr. 24th, 1729
- Their deaths — Feb. 5th, 1729; Oct. 27th, 1729; March 27, 1749
- Their donations to the poor — Nov. 20th, 1722; Sep. 22nd, 1740; Feb. 6th, 1744; Dec. 28th, 1748

Notes: Not all of the "McDowalls" mentioned are 'of Freugh', although the records lead us to believe that some are likely related. Other sample records have been included by way of illustration of the work and influence of the Kirk Sessions.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 18th century, the Kirk had considerable control over the lives of the people. It had a major role in the Poor Law and schools, which were administered through the parishes, and over the morals of the population, particularly over sexual offences such as adultery and fornication. A rebuke was necessary for moral offenders to "purge their scandal". This involved standing or sitting before the congregation for up to three Sundays and enduring a lengthy rant by the Minister. There was sometimes a special repentance stool near the pulpit for this purpose. In a few places the subject was expected to wear sackcloth. From the 1770s the Kirk Sessions increasingly administered private rebukes, particularly for wealthy men from the social elites, while until the 1820s the poor were almost always given a public rebuke, necessary 'for the terror of others', i.e. to set an example. In the early part of the century, the Kirk, particularly in the Lowlands, attempted to suppress dancing and events like penny weddings[1] at which secular tunes were played. The oppression of secular music and dancing by the Kirk began to ease between about 1715 and 1725.



Interrogation at a Kirk Session Meeting



A Penny Wedding

[1] A penny wedding (or penny bridal) in 18th-century Scotland was a large, community-funded wedding celebration where invited guests paid a small sum of money (traditionally a penny or a shilling). The local church (the Kirk) heavily criticized penny weddings, recording strict complaints in parish registers about the rowdy behavior, heavy drinking, quarreling, and "promiscuous dancing" that typically accompanied them.

Strict Sabbatarianism was vital to Presbyterian culture. For members of separatist churches, the Sunday walk to the meeting house, sometimes as much as thirty miles, was a mark of true membership. In Presbyterian worship the sermon could be several hours long!

Sinful Behaviours

These included fornication and ante-nuptial fornication (also called 'carnal dealing' or an 'act of uncleanliness'), irregular, disorderly and illegal marriages, drinking after hours, drunkenness, working on the sabbath (even farmers were not permitted to harvest, nor brewers permitted to make ale, nor households permitted to even fetch water - aka 'profanation of the Lord's Day'), pregnant out of wedlock (including prior to marriage - aka 'children begotten in fornication'), cohabiting with an unmarried man/woman, fighting on the Lord's Day, being absent from the church, cursing and swearing, adultery, beating a spouse, lying, and being declared 'fugitives from discipline', i.e. those who moved away to avoid punishment.

Those who never appeared before the Session when summoned to do so, were imprisoned by the magistrate. Unmarried men and women being seen together could result in accusations of 'committing acts of wickedness' or 'scandalous carriage' *(behaviour)*. Also frowned upon was refusing to donate money for the poor, their identities being publicised from the pulpit. And walking on the beach on the Sabbath was not permitted either.
Community "searchers" would report 'sinful acts' to the Session. Soldiers of the Regiment of Dragoons in the locality were regularly involved in 'fornicating' with the young ladies of the town and fathering children out of wedlock!
One can only imagine the lengths that some of the populace would have gone to, to drink and fornicate in secrecy, or for women to dispose of their babies born out of wedlock by going to Ireland and returning without them. However, it appears that nosy neighbours or prying eyes were quite prepared to report anyone at every opportunity. Even the Church Minister went so far as to report sinful confessions to the Session, particularly women who were pregnant.

Other duties of the Session members included donations and money paid to the poor, costs of church maintenance, financial support for those whose houses had burnt down, covering the funeral and burial expenses of the poor, issuing testificates and testimonials, selling seats in the church for an annual rent of half a crown to eight shillings, funding of poor scholars, selling burial spots in the churchyard, special collections such as for the Churches in Lithuania, the Protestants in Saxony, building a church in New York, a meeting house in Carrick Fergus, Ireland, a bridge over the River Dee in Braemar, a harbour at St. Andrews, the reformed French and German congregation in Copenhagen, an infirmary in Edinburgh, the distressed protestants in the city of Keydan in the Kingdom of Poland (Kėdainiai is now in Lithuania bordering NE Poland), the Protestant congregation in Virginia, etc.

Definitions

Testificate: In 18th-century Scotland, a "testificate" was a certificate of character issued by a Minister or Kirk Session. It was essentially a letter of good standing for the person concerned, particularly one moving to a new parish.
For people moving between parishes, a testificate served as a document certifying their good character. The poor who were allowed to beg had to carry a testificate or badge to prove their indigent status. If a person could not produce a testificate, or if they had a forged one, they were either imprisoned or banished from the area.
Certification: In 18th-century Scotland, the Kirk's "certification" for sinful behavior was the official document granted to an offender by the local Kirk Session after they had completed a public, and often humiliating, course of penance. This certificate signified that the sinner had made "satisfaction" for their offence and was restored to full standing in the church community, which was vital for most aspects of daily life.
The process was overseen by the Kirk Session, a local church court made up of the Minister and elders, and typically followed these steps:

1. Accusation and investigation: Elders of the parish would "ferret out" sin and bring the accused before the Kirk Session. The most commonly prosecuted offenses were sexual sins like fornication and adultery, though others included drunkenness, quarreling, and breaking the Sabbath.
Failure to appear after multiple summonses, would result in the person being declared a fugitive.

2. Confession and rebuke: If found guilty, the offender had to appear before the congregation for a series of public rebukes, known as a "course of repentance". The number of appearances depended on the severity of the sin. For

example, in 1801, one Kirk Session made a man and his wife appear before the congregation for the sin of "ante-nuptial fornication"—sex before marriage—which had been discovered when they requested a baptismal certificate.

3. The stool of repentance: The public penance was typically performed on the "cutty stool" or "stool of repentance," a small, low seat placed in a conspicuous area of the church, such as in front of the pulpit.
Further humiliation was endured by the more serious offenders who might face more stringent requirements, such as wearing sackcloth, standing barefoot and bareheaded, or being paraded through the streets. The ultimate ecclesiastical punishment was excommunication, which severed a person from the church community entirely.

4. Reconciliation and certification: After the required appearances and expressions of remorse were completed to the satisfaction of the Kirk Session, the individual would be formally absolved. The Kirk would issue a certificate of repentance confirming their reinstatement as a member in good standing.

The certification of repentance was a critical document in 18th-century Scottish society, and was required for an individual to take communion again, a central rite of Protestant worship.



The Black Stool, or Stool of Repentance, by David Allan (1744-96). A young bachelor, accused of fornication, is publicly rebuked by the Kirk Minister. The luckless lass, seen with her angry mother in the lower foreground, bewails her fate, while the bachelor's parents on the left hang their heads in shame.

If a person moved to a new parish, they would be issued a certificate of transference (testificate) from their old parish. This document stated they were in good standing with the Kirk and allowed them to become a communicant in their new church immediately, avoiding further suspicion or investigation. Certification was sometimes required for parents to have their children baptized.

Because the Kirk's authority touched so many aspects of life, being publicly disgraced without completing the repentance process could have severe social consequences. By contrast, a certificate of repentance served as public acknowledgment of an individual's restoration to the community.

Decline of the practice

While Kirk discipline was a major force throughout the 17th century, it began to wane in the 18th century, with the practice of public penance largely falling out of use by the beginning of the 19th century.

Working Relationship of the Kirk Sessions with the local Magistrates and the Presbytery

The relationship was one of hierarchical supervision: the Kirk Session was accountable to the Presbytery, which acted as the court of appeals and oversight of its constituent sessions. The Kirk Session, meanwhile, could request support from local magistrates to enforce its disciplinary rulings, particularly when a parishioner refused to comply.

Kirk Session to Presbytery

The Presbytery was the district-level court above the Kirk Session (which was the local parish court) and oversaw the activities of the Kirk Sessions within their district, including reviewing their records and formally visiting congregations. Parishioners could appeal a decision made by the Kirk Session to the Presbytery, and could also hear cases in the first instance if an offense involved parishioners from two different parishes.

Kirk Session to Magistrates

The Kirk Session could ask local magistrates (like a Justice of the Peace or a Burgh Court) for help in enforcing its sentences, especially if a parishioner ignored a ruling. This relationship allowed the Kirk Session to implement its spiritual and moral authority with the backing of civil power. Over time, especially in the 19th century, the Kirk gradually relegated its role as a disciplinarian to the state, and this direct involvement in civil matters diminished.

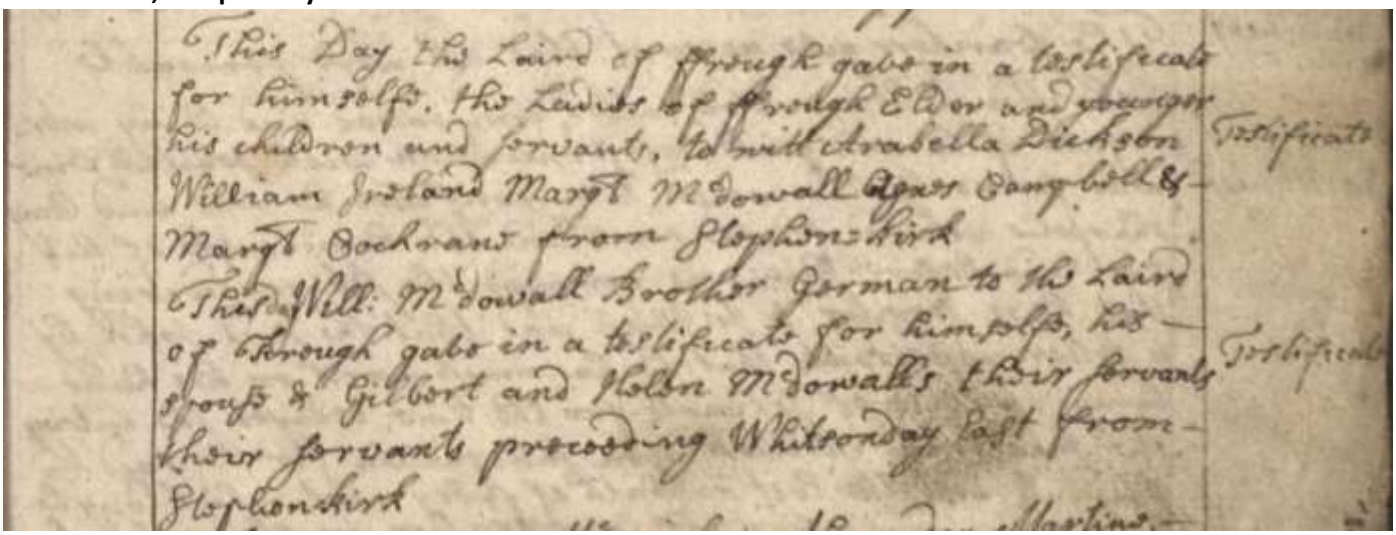
As mentioned above, Kirk discipline began to wane in the 18th century, and this appears to be reflected in the period recorded in the Stranraer Session Records, and one is left wondering just how effective the Session was, and what influence it had on society. While the public shaming and imposed fines were obviously a deterrent, many appeared to ignore the rules. Drinking, fornication, working on the Sabbath and not attending church appeared to be brought up at practically every session, which met at roughly 2-3 weekly intervals prior to 1759, and irregularly after that. Citizens who were summoned frequently ignored the appointments, with the summons sometimes being repeated for weeks on end. Once the public rebuke was endured and any fines paid, the person was 'absolved' and life continued on as before. The soldiers and their advances on the young women of the parish, were clearly a headache for the Session, however they seem to have largely escaped punishment, possibly because they were in regiments commanded by the local gentry. The women however were shamed and fined. Even in cases of alleged rape, the women were still rebuked for their 'sinful behaviour', and would have to sit on the repentance stool in church for everyone to see.



Repentance Stool, also "Black Stool" or "Cutty Stool" from Old Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh.
(Now in the Scottish Antiquarian Museum).

Extracts from the Records

December 29, 1707 - Testificates for the Laird of Freugh, Patrick MCDOWALL d.15 Oct 1729, and his brother, William MCDOWALL, and possibly his children.



This Day the Laird of Freugh gave in a testificate for himself, the Ladies of Freugh Elder and younger his children and servants, to witt Arabella Dickson William Ireland Margt McDowall Agnes Campbell & Margt Cochrane from Stephenskirk

Testificate

This Will: McDowall Brother German to the Laird of Freugh gave in a testificate for himself, his spouse & Gilbert and Helen McDowalls their servants their servants proceeding Whitsonday last from Stephenskirk

Testificate

Transcription: *This day the Laird of Freugh gave in a testificate for himself, the ladies of Freugh, elder (mother) and younger (wife), his children and servants, to witt Arabella Dickson, William Ireland, Margaret McDowall (his daughter?), Agnes Campbell and Margaret Cochrane from Stephenskirk (Stoneykirk).*

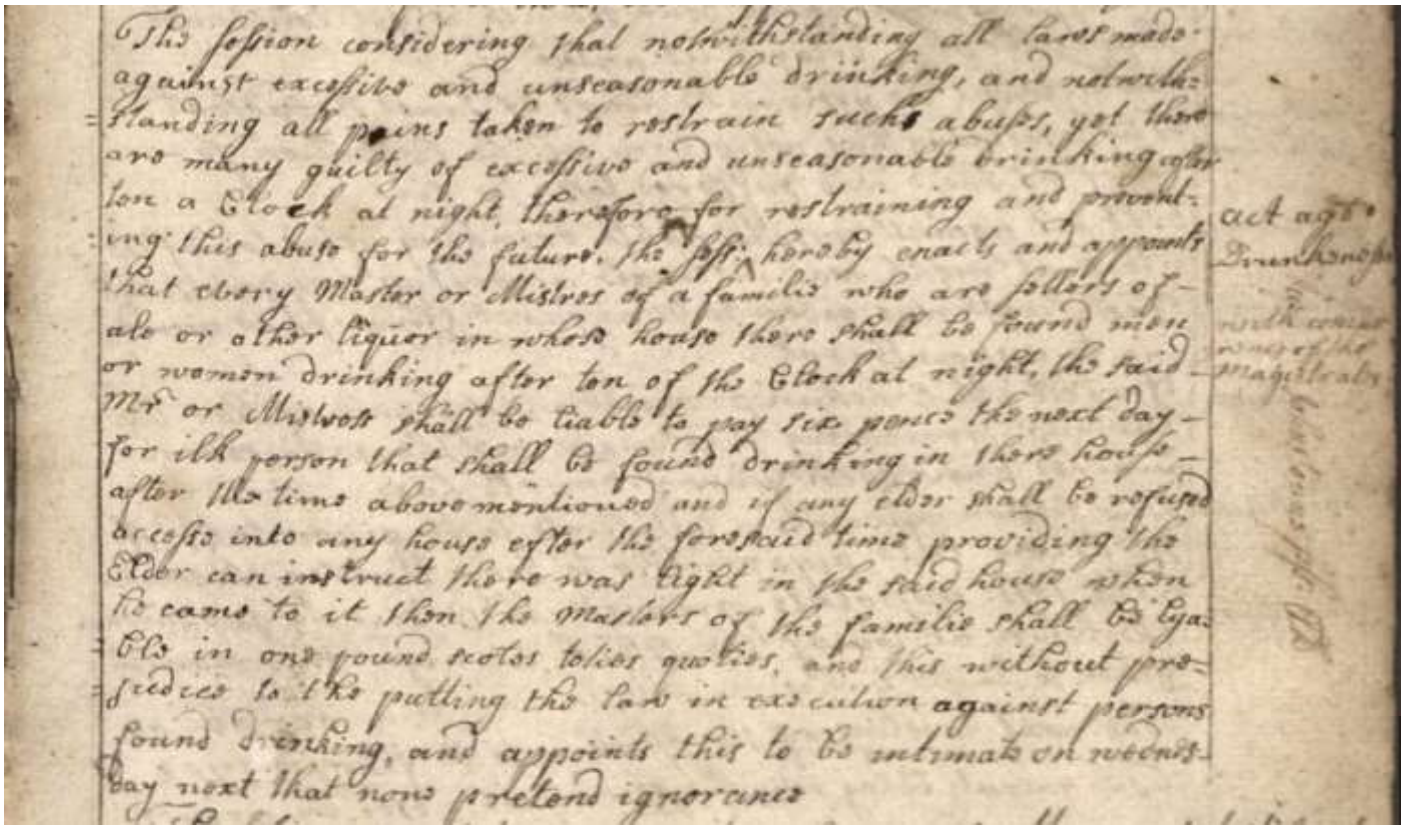
This William McDowall, brother german to the Laird of Freugh, gave in a testificate for himself, his spouse and Gilbert and Helen McDowalls (their children?), their servants, their servants proceeding Whitsunday last from Stephenskirk.

Usually, the origin of a testificate is given, i.e. location and by whom written, but not in either of these instances.

Transcript of a Typical Testificate:

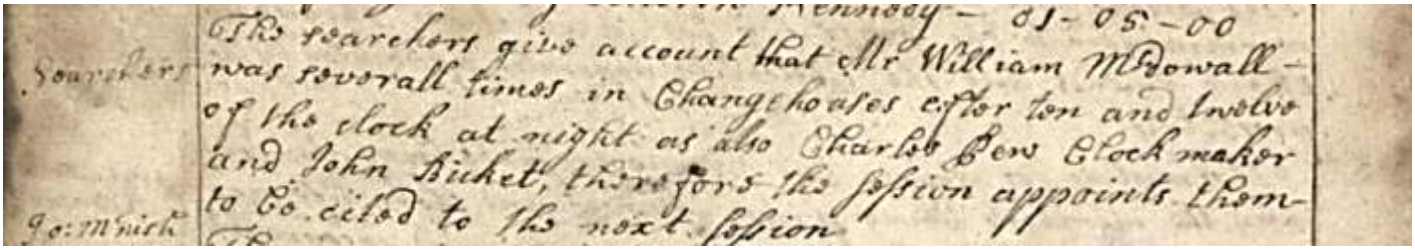
"These are to certify that the bearer hereof, John McClymont, a single person, lived in this parish of Daily from his infancy until Whitsunday last, during which time he behaved himself honestly, soberly, and inoffensively, free of any public scandal or ground of church censure known to us; so that we know no reason why he may not be received into any Christian society or congregation where Providence shall determine his lot. Given at Daily Kirk Session this 12th day of June 1774 years." *Signed: John Thomson, Minister*

Drinking Problems January 19th, 1708 and the passing of a new law



Transcription: *This session considering that notwithstanding all laws made against excessive and unreasonable drinking, and notwithstanding all pains taken to restrain such abuse, yet there are many guilty of excessive and unreasonable drinking after 10 o'clock at night. Therefore restraining and preventing this abuse for the future, the session hereby enacts and appoints that every master or mistress of a family who are sellers of ale or other liquor, in whose house there shall be found man or woman drinking after ten of the clock at night, the said Mr or Mistress shall be liable to pay six pence the next day, for ilk person that shall be found drinking in those hours after the time above mentioned.*
And if any elder shall be refused access into any house after the foresaid time, providing the elder can instruct there was light in the said house when he came to it, then the Master of the family shall be liable in one pound Scots tolios quoties, and this without prejudices to the putting the law in execution against persons found drinking, and appoints this to be intimate on Wednesday next that now pretend ignorance.

February 2nd, 1708 – Drinking in Change Houses after hours.



Transcription: *The searchers give account that Mr. William McDowall was several times in Change Houses after ten and twelve of the clock at night, as also Charles Pens, clock maker, and John Bicket, therefore the session appoints them to be cited to the next session.*

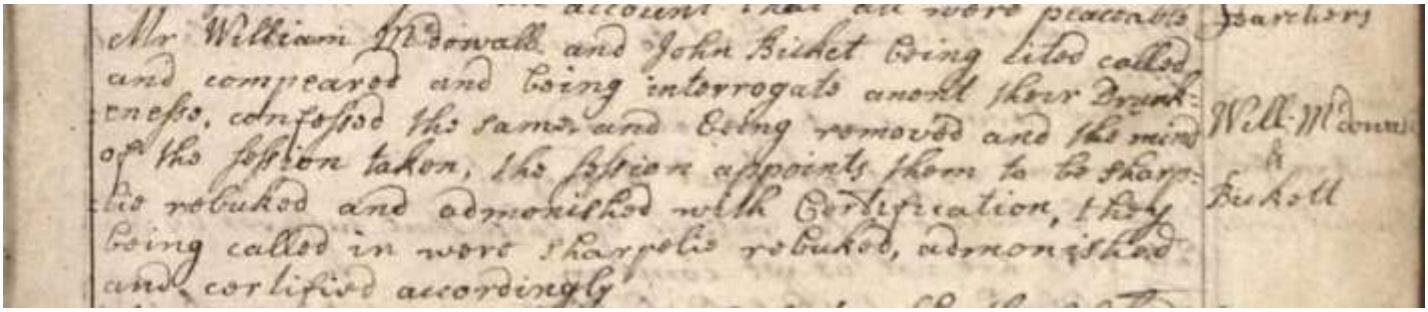
Notes: In 18th-century Scotland, a change house was a type of inn or staging post where travellers could rest, get refreshment and food, and, more importantly, change their horses for fresh ones during long journeys.
These establishments were strategically located along major travel routes, such as the military roads built across the Highlands in the mid-18th century. They served as vital links in the transport network for both private travellers and the public stagecoach system.

The quality of change houses varied greatly. Famously, the writer Dr. Samuel Johnson and his companion James Boswell stayed at a change house near Loch Ness during their 1773 "Highland Jaunt" and recorded their unimpressed observations of a very simple, "wretched hovel" with a smoky interior and basic fare like boiled goat's flesh. Other change houses, particularly in more populated or prosperous areas, likely offered better facilities.



An 18th Century Change House on the Manchester and Glasgow Road

March 1st, 1708



Mr William McDowall and John Bicket being cited called and compeared and being interrogats anent their Drunkeness, confessed the same and being removed and the mind of the session taken, the session appoints them to be sharplie rebuked and admonished with certification, they being called in were sharplie rebuked, admonished and certified accordingly

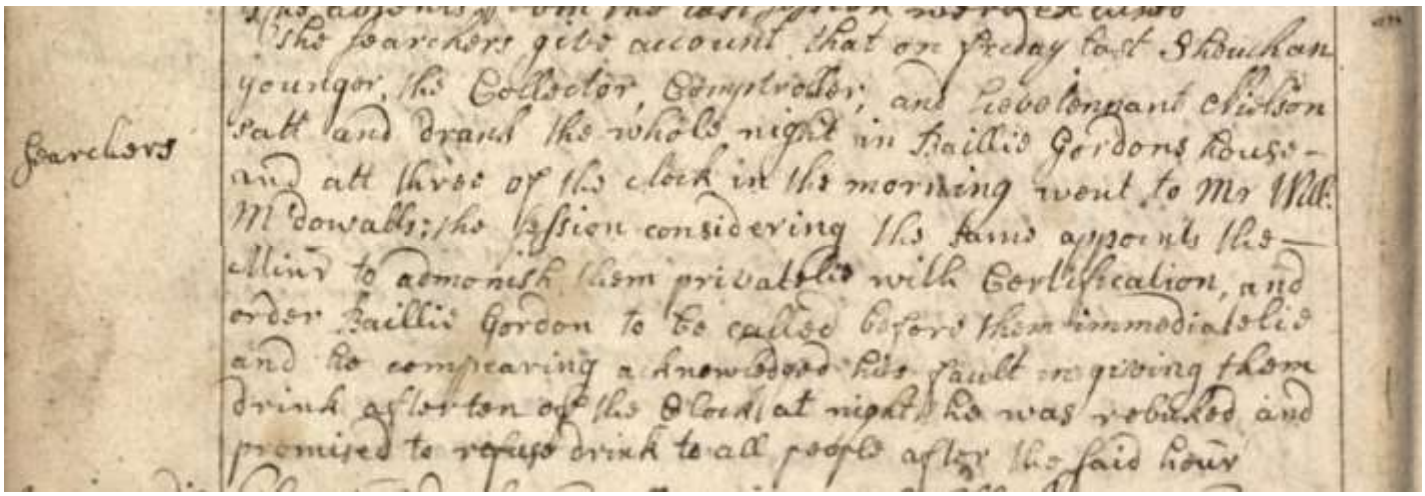
Barclays

Will. McDowall & Bickett

Transcription: *Mr William McDowall and John Bicket being cited, called and compeared and being interrogated about their drunkenness, confessed the same, and being removed, and the mind of the session taken, the session appoints them to be sharply rebuked and admonished with certification. They being called in were sharply rebuked, admonished and certified accordingly.*

June 21st, 1708 – William McDowall and his drinking friends.

'Scheuchan younger' could be the husband of Margaret McDouall (Margaret MCDOUALL m.28 Oct 1724 Robert AGNEW 3rd of Sheuchan, Stranraer) further indicating that William McDowall is likely the brother of the Laird of Freugh, rather than the other William McDowall of Garthland – see entry for May 5th, 1735 below.

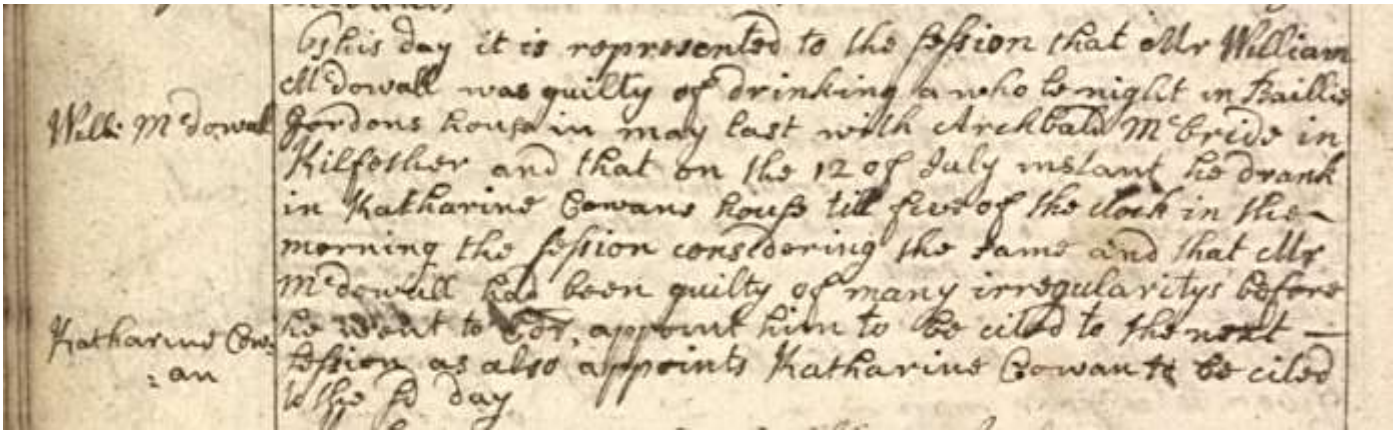


Barclays

The Barclays gets account that on Friday last Sheuchan younger, the Collector, Comptroller, and Lieutenant Clelson satt and drank the whole night in Baillie Gordons house and att three of the clock in the morning went to Mr Will. McDowalls; the Session considering the same appoints the Mind to admonish them privatlie with Certification, and order Baillie Gordon to be called before them immediatlie and he compearing acknowledged his fault in giving them drink after ten of the Clock at night he was rebuked and promised to refuse drink to all people after the said hour

Transcription: *The searchers give account that on Friday last Sheuchan younger, the Collector, Comptroller, and Lieutenant Nielson sat and drank the whole night in Baillie Gordons House, and at three of the clock in the morning went to Mr William McDowall's. The session considering the laws, appoints the Minister to admonish them privately with certification, and order Baillie Gordon to be called before them immediately, and he compearing (appearing), acknowledged his fault in giving them drink after ten of the clock at night, he was rebuked and promised to refuse drink to all people after the said hour.*

July 26th, 1708

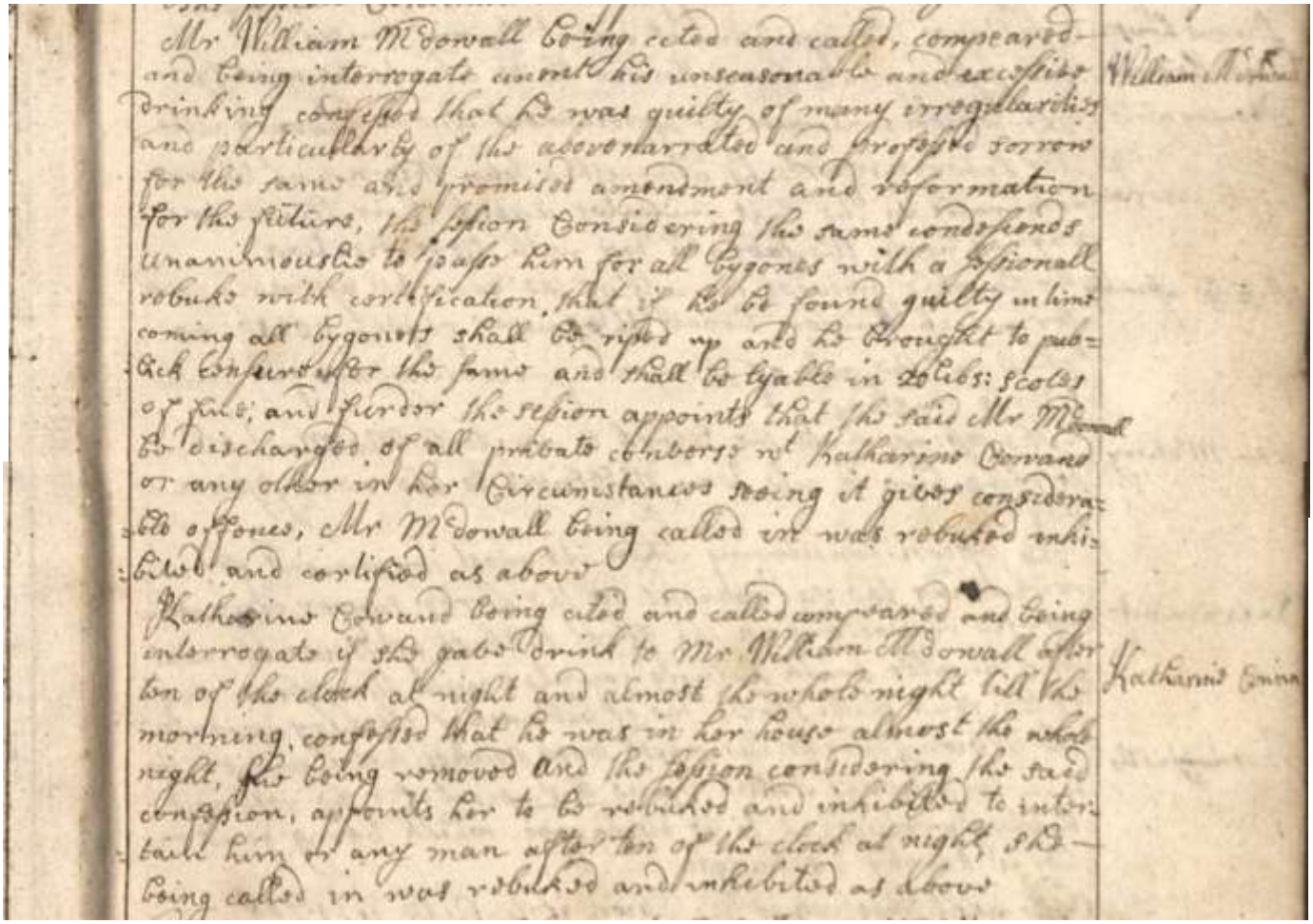

Wilk: McDowal

Katharine Cow: an

This day it is represented to the session that Mr William McDowall was guilty of drinking a whole night in Baillie Gordons house in may last with Archbald McBride in Kilfosher and that on the 12 of July instant he drank in Katharine Cowans house till five of the clock in the morning the session considering the same and that Mr McDowall had been guilty of many irregularitys before he went to Cowans, appoint him to be cited to the next session as also appoints Katharine Cowan to be cited to the session that day

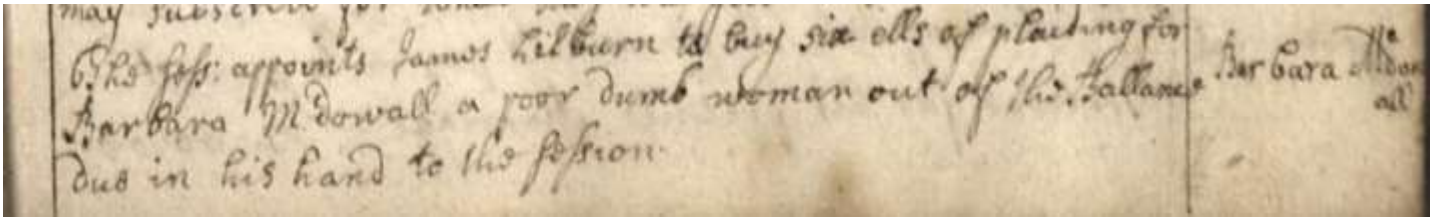
Transcription: *This day it is represented to the session that Mr William McDowall was guilty of drinking a whole night in Baillie Gordons house in May last with Archibald McBride in Kilfosher and that on the 12th of July instant he drank in Katharine Cowan's house till five of the clock in the morning. The session considering the same and that Mr McDowall had been guilty of many irregularities before he went to Cowans, appoint him to be cited to the next session, as also appoints Katharine Cowan to be cited to the session that day.*

August 16th, 1708



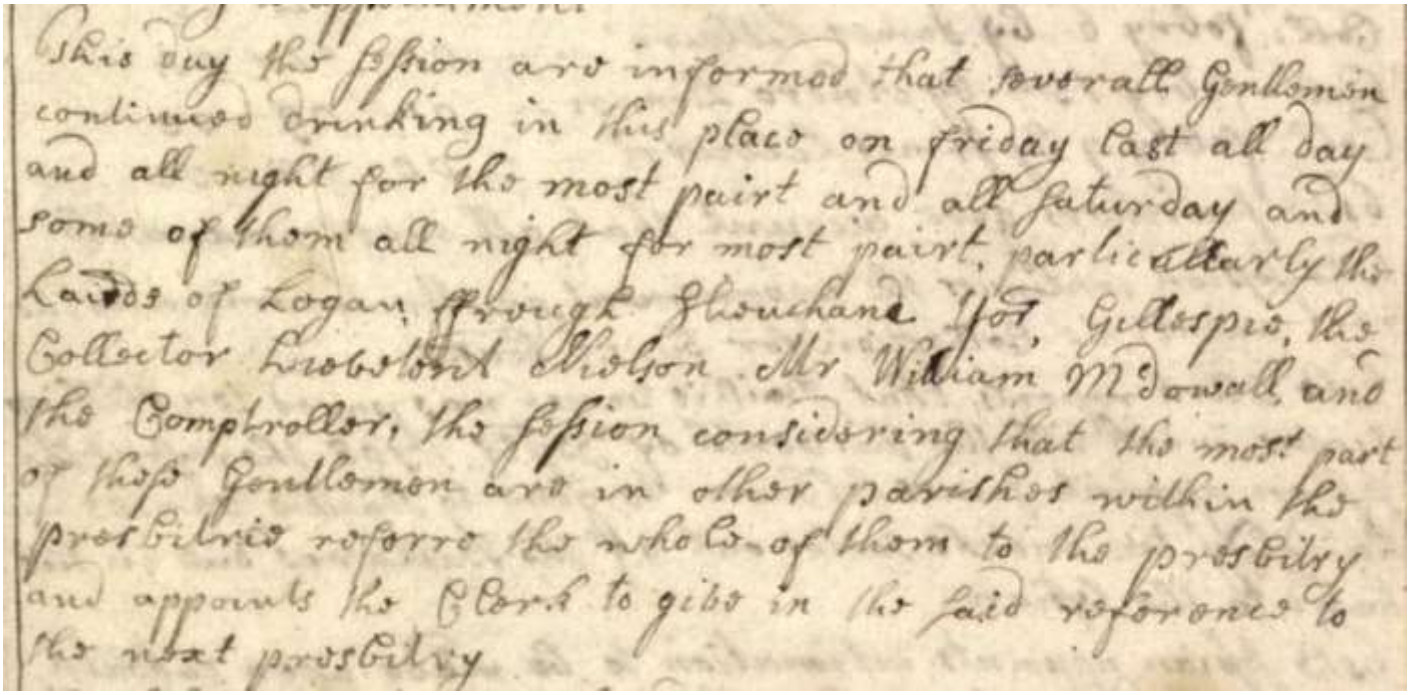
Transcription: *Mr William McDowall being cited and called, compeared and being interrogated about his unreasonable and excessive drinking confessed that he was guilty of many irregularities and particularly of the above narrated and professed sorrow for the same and promised amendment and reformation for the future. This session considering the same confessions unanimously to pass (forgive) him for all bygones with a sessional rebuke with certification, that if he be found guilty in him, coming all bygones shall be ripped up and he brought to public confession for the same, and shall be liable in 20 pounds Scots of fine, and further this session appoints that the said Mr McDowall shall be discharged of all private converse with Katherine Coward or any other in her circumstances seeing it gives considerable offences. Mr McDowall being called in was rebuked, inhibited and certified as above.*
Katherine Coward being cited and called, compeared, and being interrogated if she gave drink to Mr William McDowall after ten of the clock at night and almost the whole night till the morning, confessed that he was in her house almost the whole night, who, being removed, and the session considering the said confession, appoints her to be rebuked and inhibited as above.

February 14th, 1709 – Barbara McDowall



Transcription: *The session appoints James Lilburn to buy six ells of plaiding for Barbara McDowall, a poor dumb woman, out of the balance due in his hand to the session.*

Feb. 28th, 1709 - Drinking Problems with Freugh and others



This day the Session are informed that several Gentlemen continued drinking in this place on Friday last all day and all night for the most part and all Saturday and some of them all night for most part, particularly the Lairds of Logan, Freugh, Sheuchane Yor, Gillespie, the Collector Lieutenant Nielson, Mr William McDowall and the Comptroller, the Session considering that the most part of those Gentlemen are in other parishes within the presbitrie refers the whole of them to the presbitry and appoints the Clerk to give in the said reference to the next presbitry

Transcription: *This day the Session are informed that several gentleman continued drinking in this place on Friday last all day and all night for the most part, and all Saturday and some of them all night for the most part, particularly the Lairds of Logan, **Freugh**, Sheuchand yoor, Gillespie, the collector, Lieutenant Nielson, Mr William McDowall (likely brother to the Laird of Freugh) and the comptroller, the Session considering that the most part of these gentlemen are in their parishes within the Presbytery, refer the whole of them to the Presbytery, and appoints the clerk to give in the said reference to the next Presbytery.*

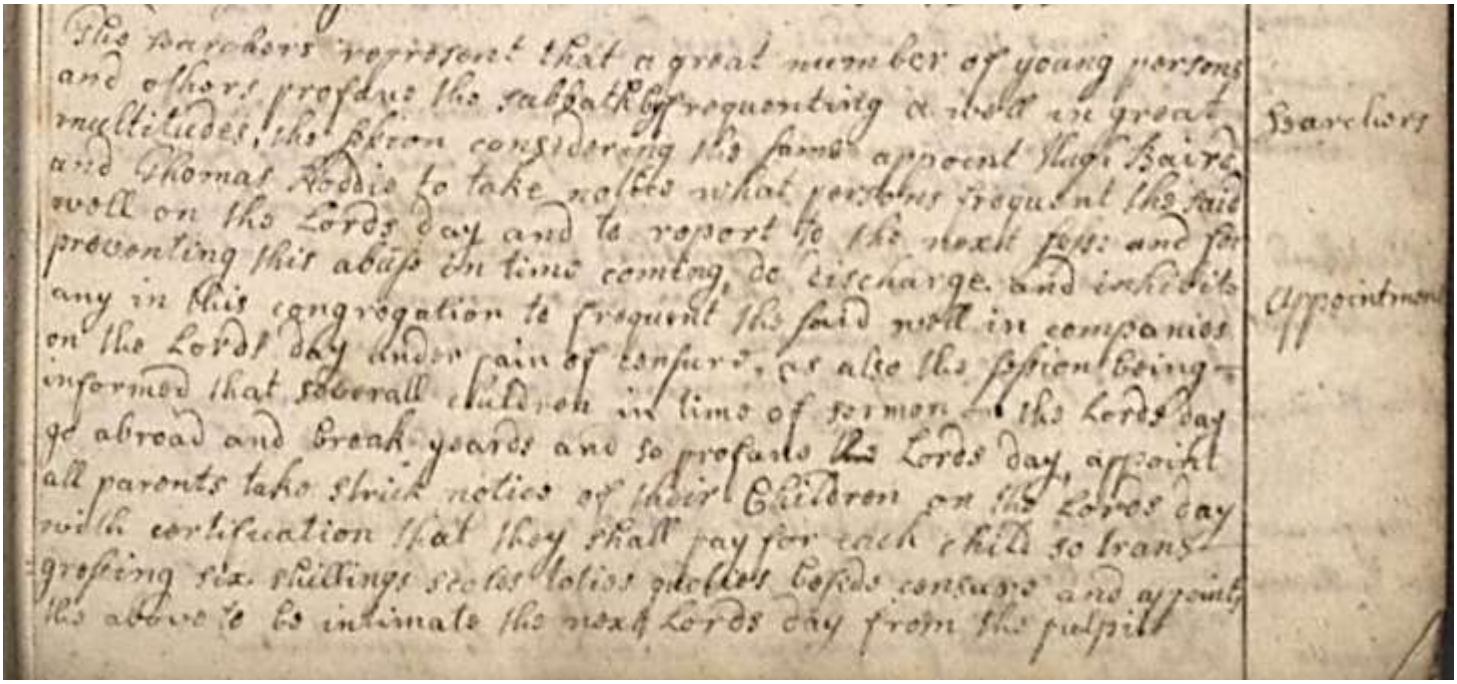
Note: Interestingly, the Presbytery appears to have declined taking on this case, as there is no mention in their minutes. It seems that they were reluctant to upset the gentry who made financial contributions to the sessions.

Several are Agnew descendants – Freugh is a grandson of Agnes Agnew, Logan is a grandchild of Agnes' sister Jean, and Sheuchan descends from Agnes and Jean's brother.



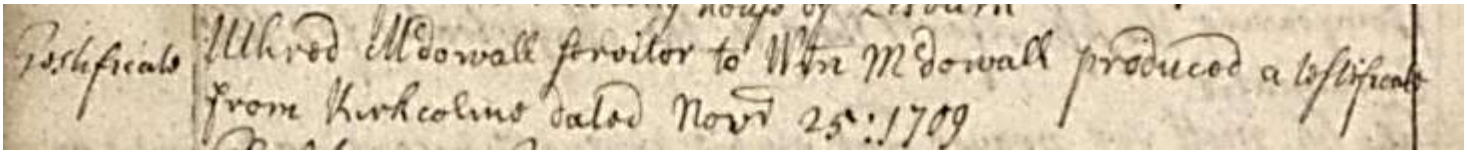
Drinking in the Lowlands of Scotland
Note the lady of the house peeking from behind the door, wondering when it will end.

May 29, 1710 - Restrictions on activities undertaken on the Lord's Day.



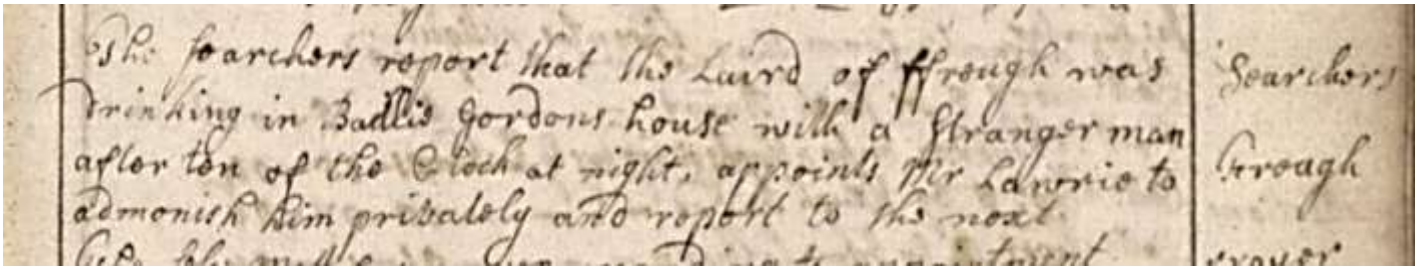
Transcription: *The searchers represent that a great number of young persons and others profane the sabbath by frequenting a well in great multitudes. The Session considering the same, appoint Hugh Baird and Thomas Roddie to take notes what persons frequent the said well on the Lord's Day, and to report to the next Session. And for preventing this abuse in time coming, to discharge and inhibit any in the congregation to frequent the said well in companies on the Lord's Day, and on pain of censure. As also the Session being informed that several children in time of sermon on the Lord's day go abroad and break yeards (ship breaking), and so profane the Lord's day, appoint all parents take strict notice of their children on the Lord's day, with certification that they shall pay for each child so transgressing, six shillings Scots totios quelios bofids censure, and appoints the above to be intimate the next Lord's day from the pulpit.*

May 29, 1710 Testificate for Uchred MCDOWALL, servant to William MCDOWALL.



Transcription: *Testificate: Uchred McDowall, servitor to William McDowall, produced a testificate from Kirkcolm dated Nov. 25th, 1709.*

Oct 2nd, 1710 The Laird of Freugh, Patrick MCDOWALL d.15 Oct 1729, drinking at night.

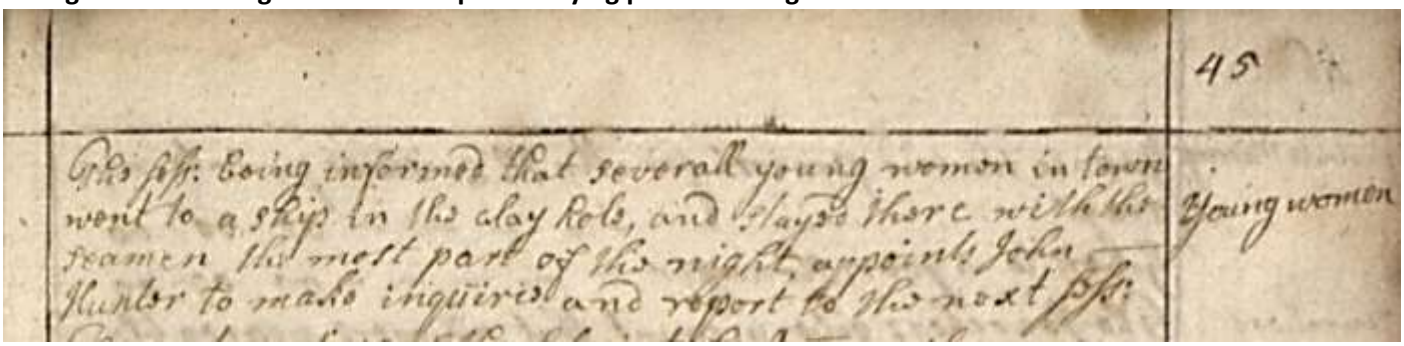


Transcription: *The searchers report that the **Laird of Freugh** was drinking in Baillie Gordon's house with a strange man after ten of the clock at night, appoints Mr Lawrie to admonish him privately and report to the next.*

Notes: Clearly the Lairds get off with a private admonishment, whereas the general public are openly rebuked and admonished in front of the session, and also in front of the entire church congregation on a Sunday, in addition to being fined in the form of an obligatory donation to the poor, typically half a crown, but occasionally as much as a guinea, and if the accused lied, then even several pounds.

Jan 22, 1711

Young women visiting sailors on a ship and staying part of the night. Scandalous!


45

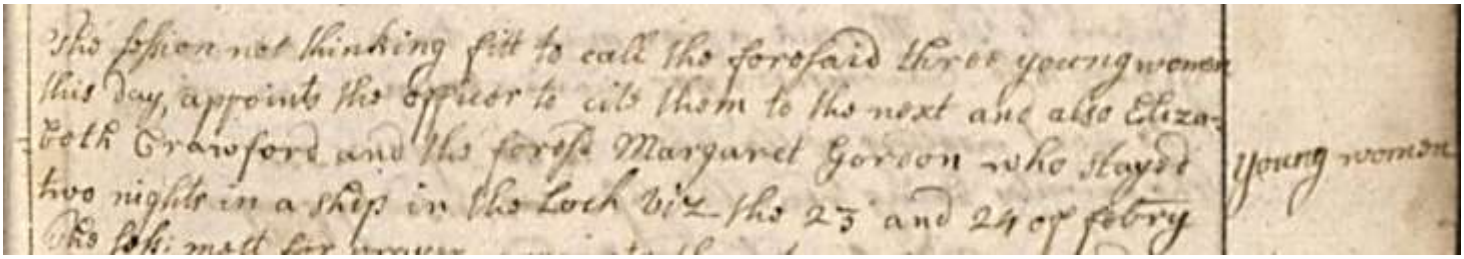
The sess: being informed that several young women in town went to a ship in the alay Rols, and stayed there with the seamen the most part of the night, appoints John Hunter to make inquiries and report to the next sess:

Young women

Transcription: *The Session being informed that several young women in town went to a ship in the alay Rols (a harbour?), and stayed there with the seamen the most part of the night, appoints John Hunter to make inquiries and report to the next session.*

March 5th, 1711

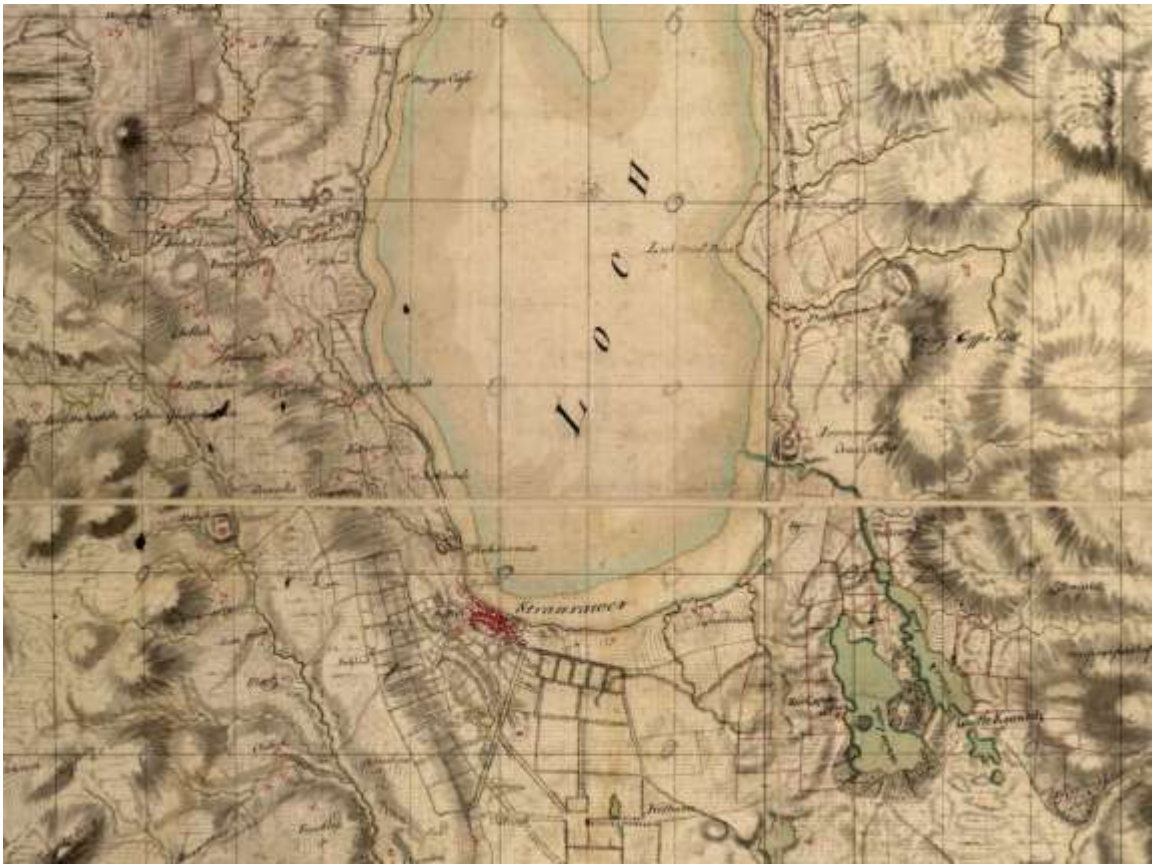
The map of Stranraer from between 1747 and 1755 isn't detailed enough to show actual structures in Stranraer, however there doesn't appear to be a wharf, jetty or pier, so ships may have had to anchor in the loch.


The session not thinking fit to call the foresaid three young women this day, appoints the officer to cite them to the next and also Elizabeth Crawford and the foresaid Margaret Garson who stayed two nights in a ship in the Loch viz the 23 and 24 of febry

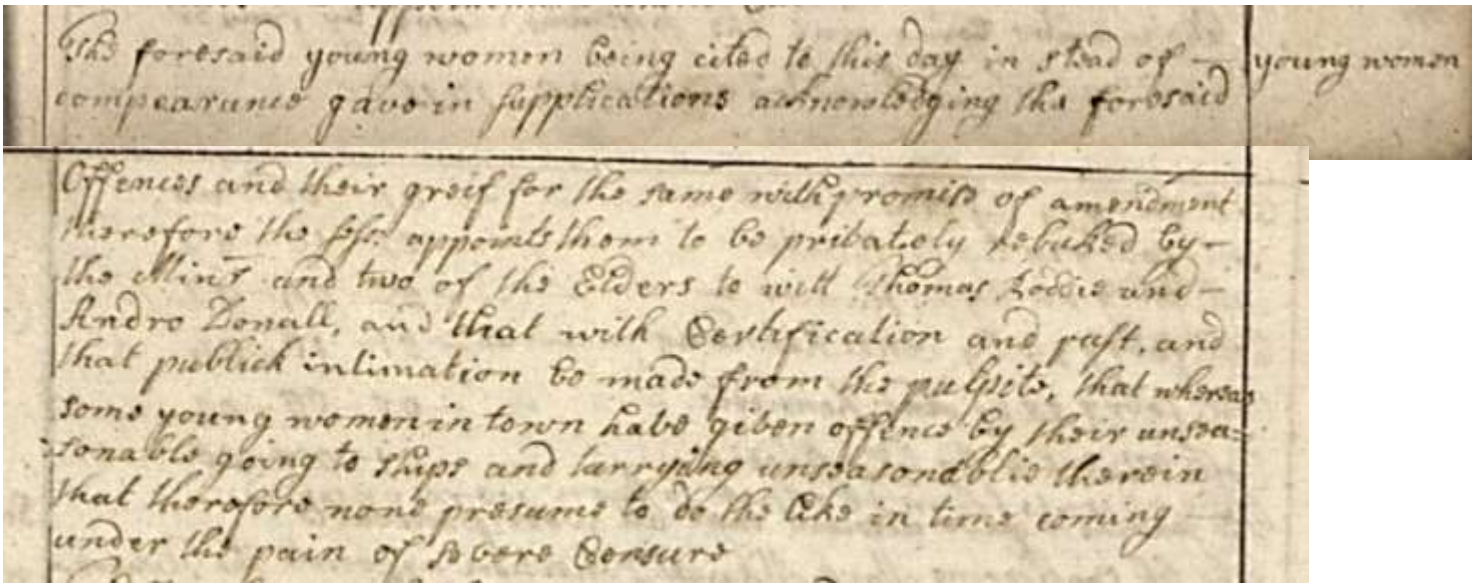
Young women

Transcription: *The Session not thinking fit to call the foresaid three young women this day, appoint the officer to cite them to the next, and also Elizabeth Crawford and the foresaid Margaret Garson who stayed two nights in a ship in the loch viz. the 23 and 24 February.*

Map of Stranraer (1747-1755) on Loch Ryan.



March 19th, 1711

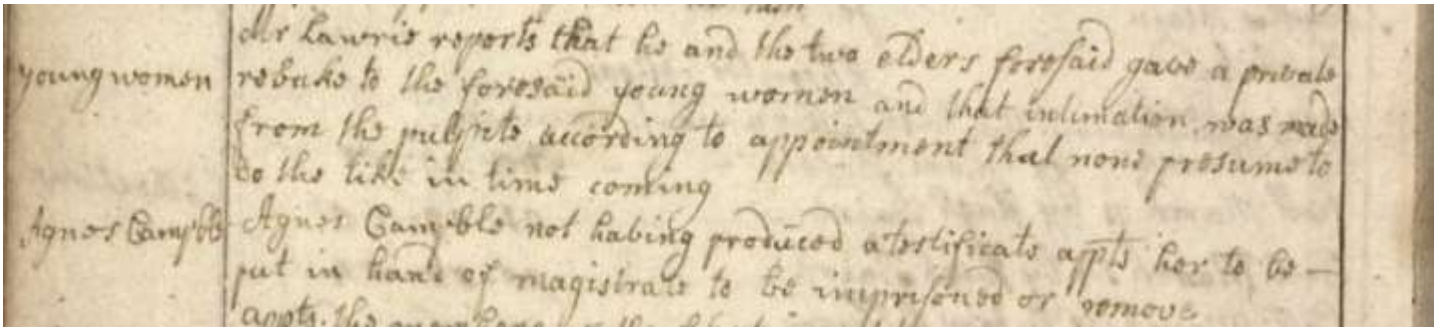


Transcription: *The foresaid young women being cited to this day, instead of appearing, gave in supplications acknowledging the foresaid offences and their grief for the same with promise of amendment. Therefore the Session appoints them to be privately rebuked by the Minister and two of the elders to witt Thomas Roddie and Andrew Donall, and that with certification and past, and that public intimation be made from the pulpit. That whereas some young women in town have given offence by their unreasonable going to ships and larrying unreasonably therein, that therefore none presume to do the like in time coming under the pain of severe censure!*



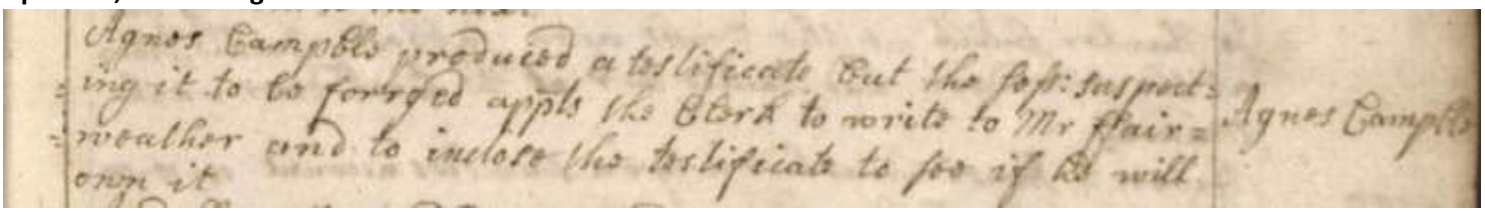
Sailors greeting young women as they board ship

April 2nd, 1711 - Young women, and lack of a testificate leading to imprisonment or removal



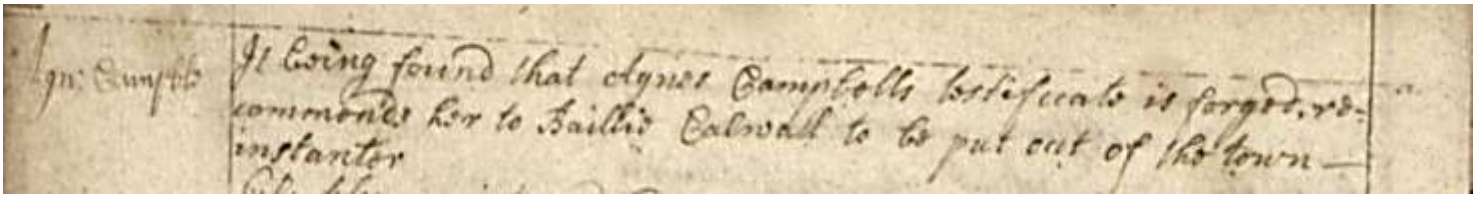
Transcription: *Mr Lawrie reports that he and the two elders foresaid, gave a private rebuke to the foresaid young women and that intimation was made from the pulpit according to appointment, that none presume to the like in time coming. Agnes Campbell not having produced a testificate, appoints her to be put in hand of magistrate to be imprisoned or removed.*

April 25th, 1711 - Forged Testificate!



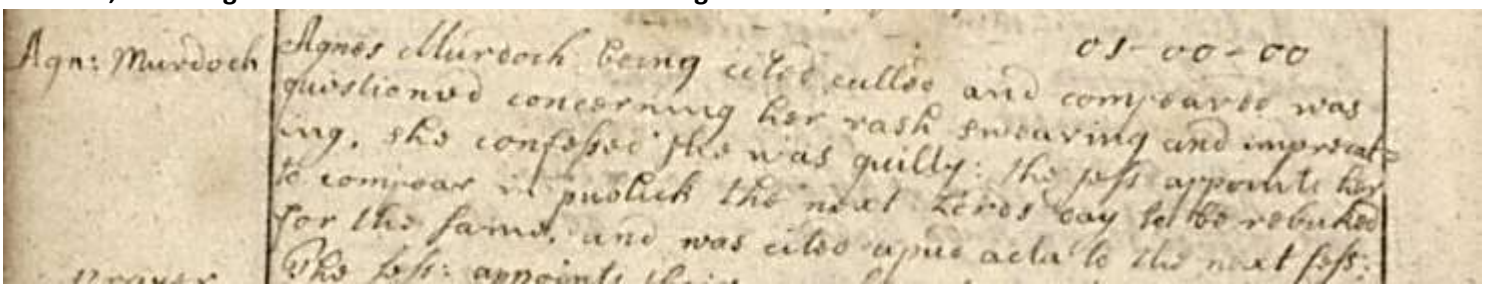
Transcription: *Agnes Campbell produced a testificate but the Session suspecting it to be forged, appoints the clerk to write to Mr Fairweather and to enclose the testificate to see if he will own it.*

May 14, 1711 – Banished from the town



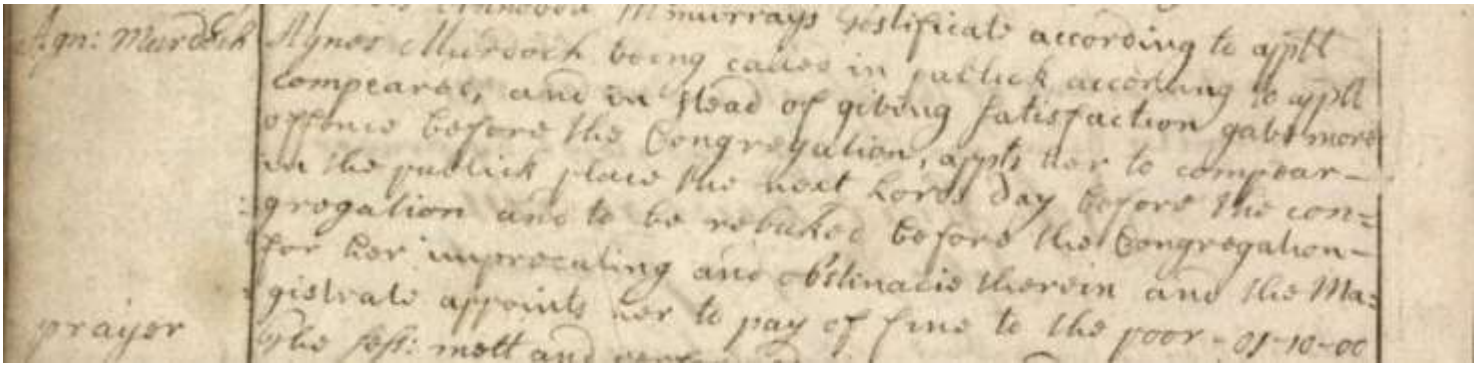
Transcription: *It being found that Agnes Campbell's testificate is forged, recommends her to Baillie Calwall to be put out of the town instantly (banished)!*

Dec. 24th, 1711 - Agnes Murdoch accused of rash swearing



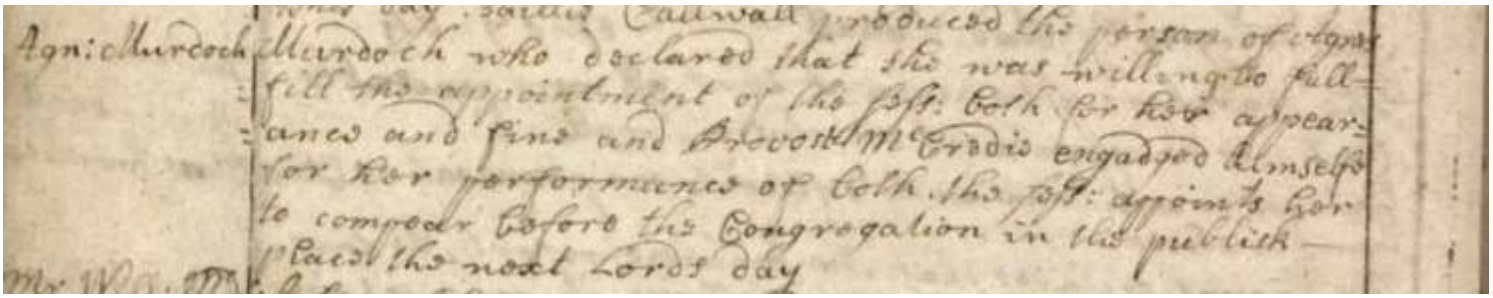
Transcription: *Agnes Murdoch being cited, called and compeared (appeared) was questioned concerning her rash swearing and imprecating, she confessed she was guilty. The Session appoints her to compear in public the next Lord's Day to be rebuked for the same, and was cited apud acta to the next Session.*

Jan.14th 1712 - Agnes Murdoch not admitting to rash swearing



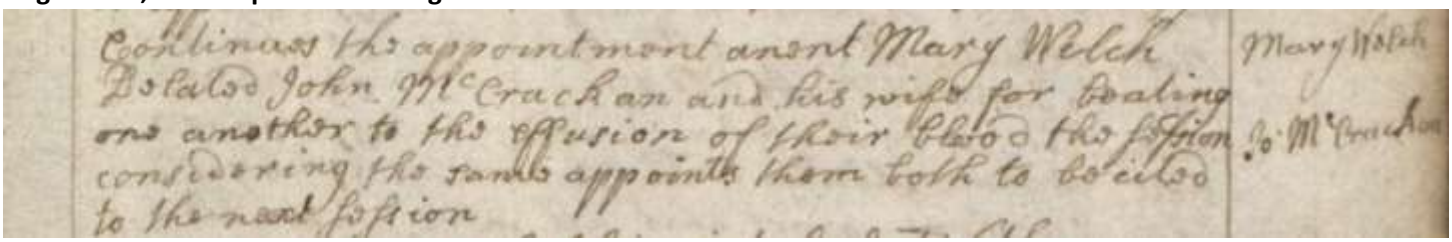
Transcription: *Agnes Murdoch being called in public according to appointment, compeared, and instead of giving satisfaction gave more offence before the congregation, appoints her to compear in the public place the next Lord's Day before the congregation and to be rebuked before the congregation for her imprecating and obstinacy therein, and the magistrate appoints her to pay of fine to the poor 01-10-00.*

Feb 25th, 1712 - Public rebuke



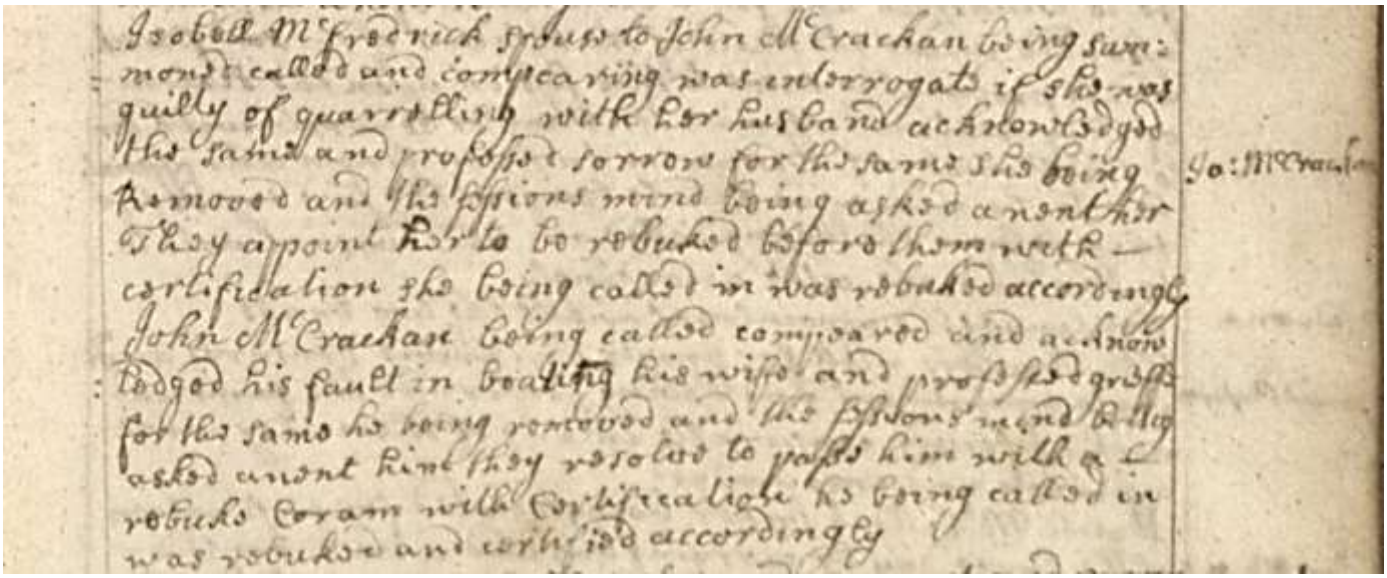
Transcription: *The person of Agnes Murdoch who declared that she was willing to fulfill the appointment of the Session, both for her appearance and fine, and Provost McGradis engaged himself for her performance of both, the Session appoints her to compear before the congregation in the public place the next Lord's Day.*

August 16th, 1714 - Spouses 'beating one another to the effusion of blood'.



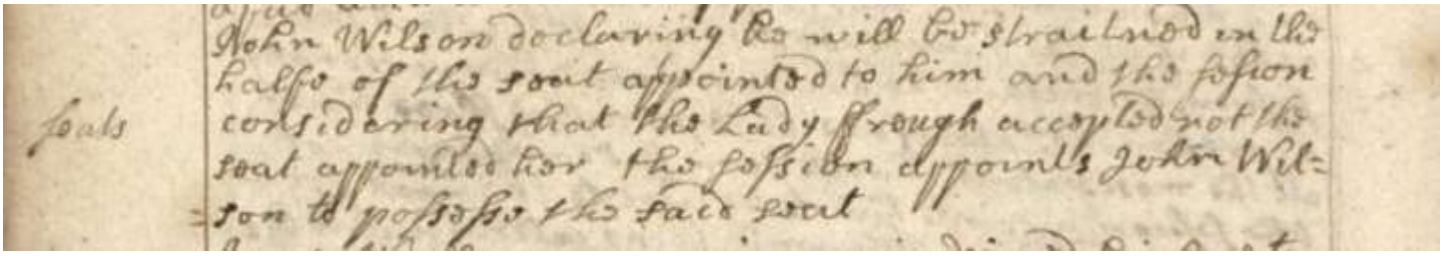
Transcription: *Continues the appointment anent Mary Welch dolated John McCrackan and his wife for beating one another to the effusion of their blood, the Session considering the same, appoints them both to be cited to the next Session.*

April 4th, 1715 – Spouses quarelling



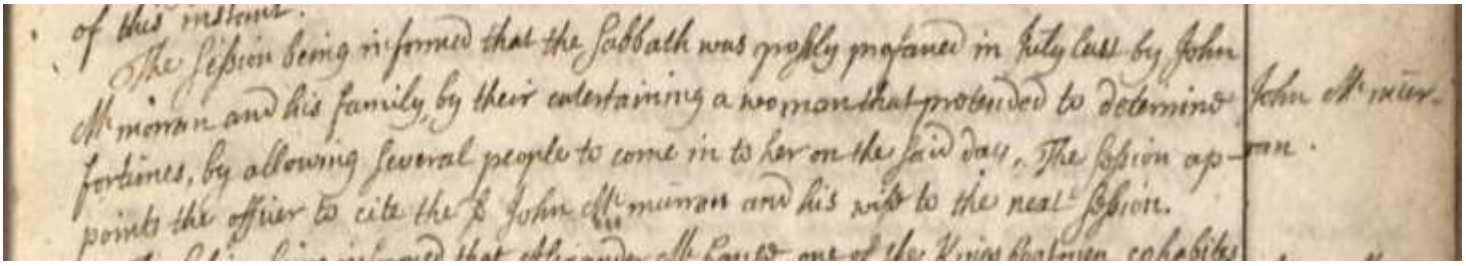
Transcription: *Isobel McFrederick, spouse to John McCrackan, being summoned, called, and compearing, was interrogated if she was guilty of quarreling with her husband, acknowledged the same and professed sorrow for the same. She being removed and the Sessions mind being asked anent her. They appoint her to be rebuked before them with certification. She being called in, was rebuked accordingly.*
John McCrackan being called, compeared and acknowledged his fault in beating his wife and professed grief for the same. He being removed and the Session's mind being asked anent him, they resolved to press him with a rebuke coram with certification. He being called in, was rebuked and certified accordingly.

Dec. 26, 1715 – Lady Freugh, Margaret HALTRIDGE, did not accept her seat in the Kirk



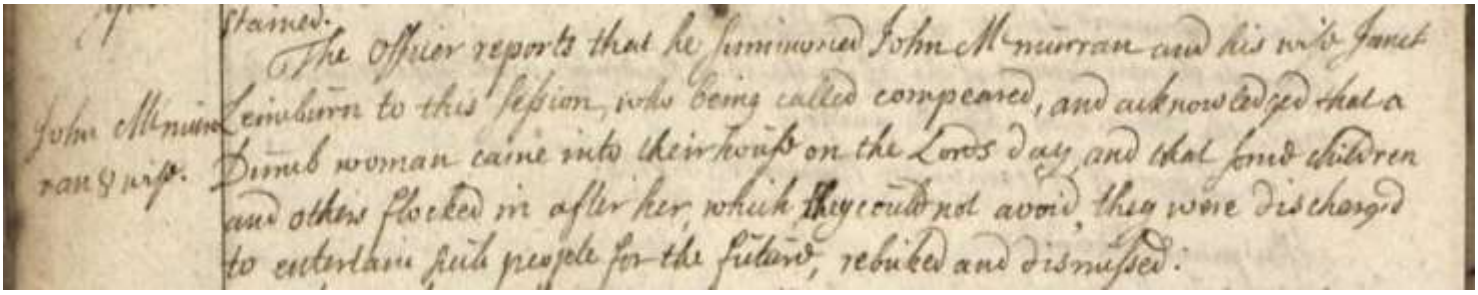
Transcription: *John Wilson declaring he will be straitned (in straits) in the half of the seat appointed to him, and the Session considering that **Lady Freugh** accepted not the seat appointed her, the Session appoints John Wilson to possess the said seat.*

October 6, 1718 – Fortune Telling not permitted on the Sabbath



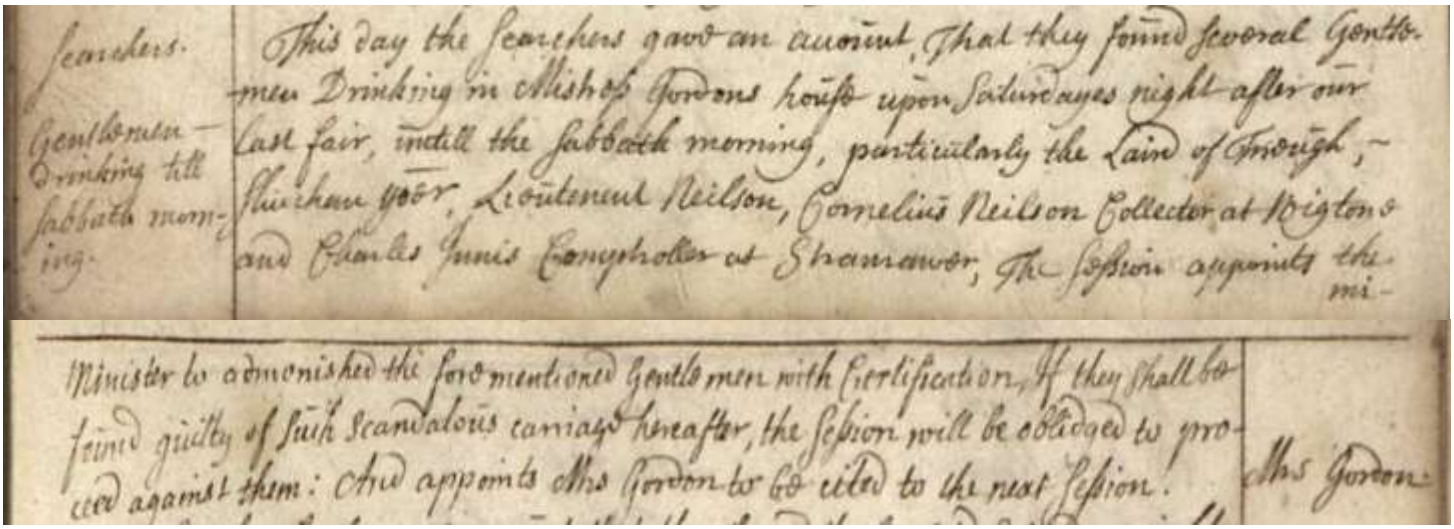
Transcription: *The Session being informed that the Sabbath was grossly profaned in July last by John McMurran and his family by their entertaining a woman that pretended to determine fortunes by allowing several people to come in to her on the said day. The Session appoints the officer to cite the said John McMurran and his wife to the next Session.*

Nov. 16, 1718



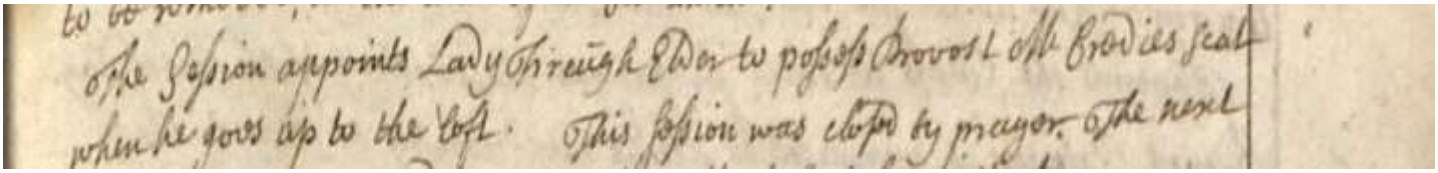
Transcription: *The officer reports that he summoned John McMurran and his wife Janet Lemburn to this Session, who being called appeared, and acknowledged that a dumb woman came into their house on the Lord's Day and that four children and others flocked in after her, which they could not avoid. They were discharged (ordered not) to entertain such people for the future, rebuked and dismissed.*

May 11th, 1719 – The Laird of Freugh, Patrick MCDOWALL d.15 Oct 1729, accused of drinking through the night with friends into the sabbath morning.



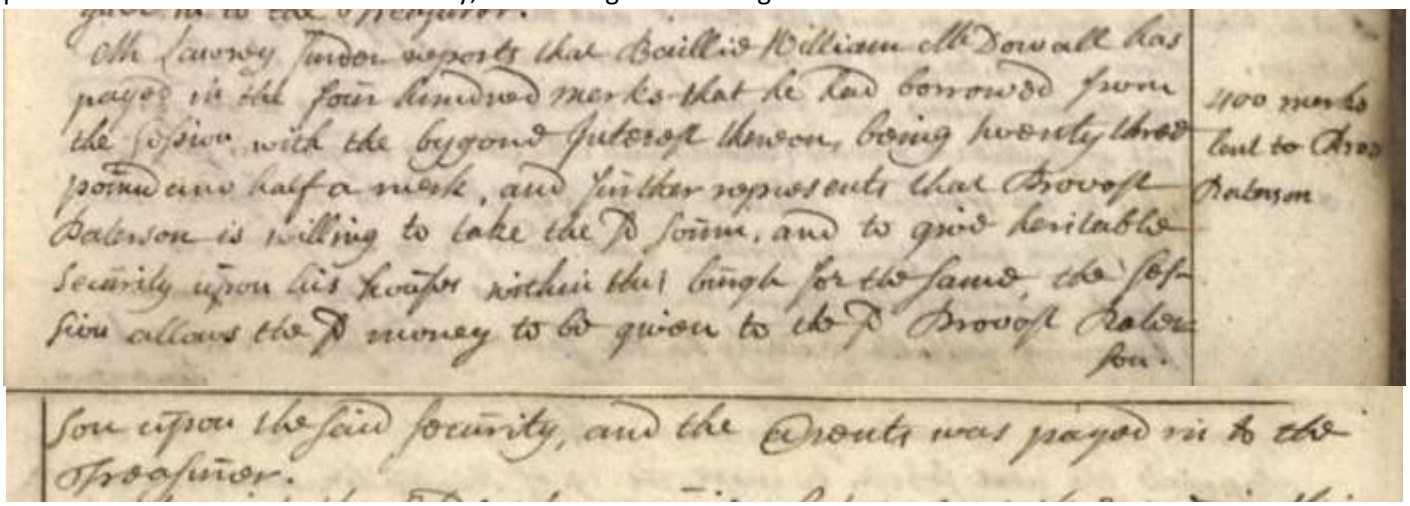
Transcription: *This day the searchers gave an account that they found several gentlemen drinking in Mistress Gordon's house upon Saturday night after our last fair, until the sabbath morning, particularly the* ***Laird of Freugh****, Schuchan yoor, Lieutenant Neilson, Cornelius Neilson, Collector, at Wigtown, and Charles Innis, Comptroller at Stranraer, the session appoints the Minister to admonish the forementioned gentlemen with certification. If they shall be found guilty of such scandalous carriage hereafter, the session will be obliged to proceed against them; And appoints Mrs Gordon to be cited to the next Session.*

Oct 12th, 1719 – Lady Freugh elder, Barbara FULLARTON, given a seat in the Kirk.



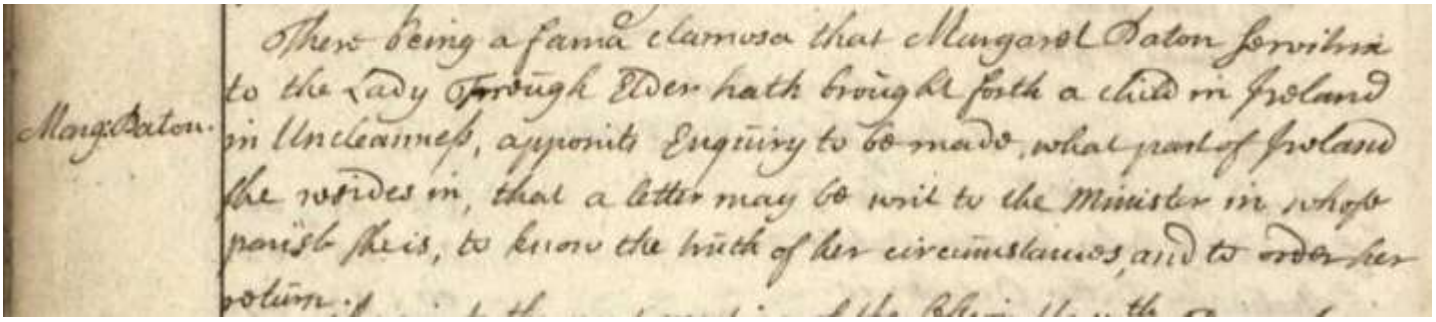
Transcription: *The Session appoints* ***Lady Freugh Elder (senior),*** *to possess Provost McCredies' seat when he goes up to the loft.*

Nov. 19, 1722 – **Baillie William McDowall**; In 18th-century Scotland, a Baillie was a civic officer who functioned as a magistrate in a burgh (town). The position held significant administrative and judicial authority. His Will dated 1728 provides little indication of his ancestry, even though both Freugh and Garthland McDowalls are mentioned as creditors.



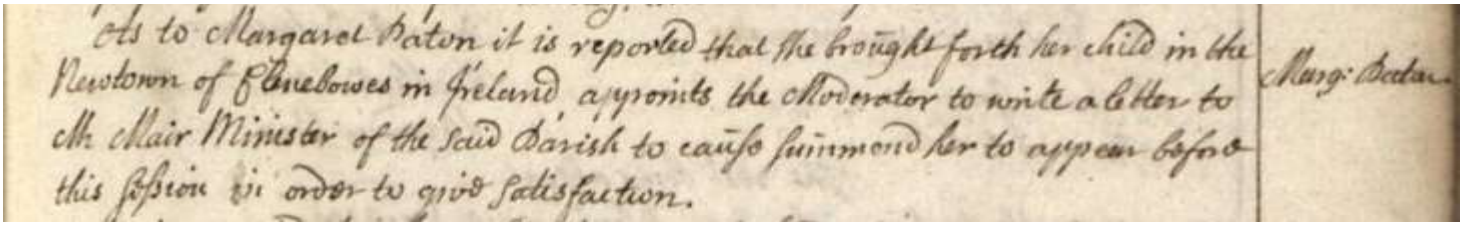
Transcription: *Mr Lawry further reports that Baillie William McDowall has paid in the four hundred merks that he had borrowed from the Session with the bygone interest thereon, being twenty three pounds and half a merk, and further represents that Provost Paterson is willing to take the said sum, and to give heritable security upon his house within this burgh for the same, the Session allows the said money to be given to the said Provost Paterson upon the said security, and the @rents was paid in to the treasurer.*

Margaret Paton, a servant to **Lady Freugh**, elder (Barbara FULLARTON), had a child in Ireland. It would appear that unmarried women, who became pregnant, sometimes fled to Ireland either to give birth and have the child adopted, or to obtain an abortion, a risky procedure back then.
A "fama clamosa" is a scandalous rumour. Lady Freugh would have dismissed her to avoid embarrassment.



Transcription: *There being a fama clamosa that Margaret Paton, servant to the **Lady Freugh Elder**, hath brought forth a child in Ireland in uncleanness, appoints enquiry to be made what part of Ireland she resides in, that a latter may be writ to the Minister in whose parish she is, to know the truth of her circumstances, and to order her return.*

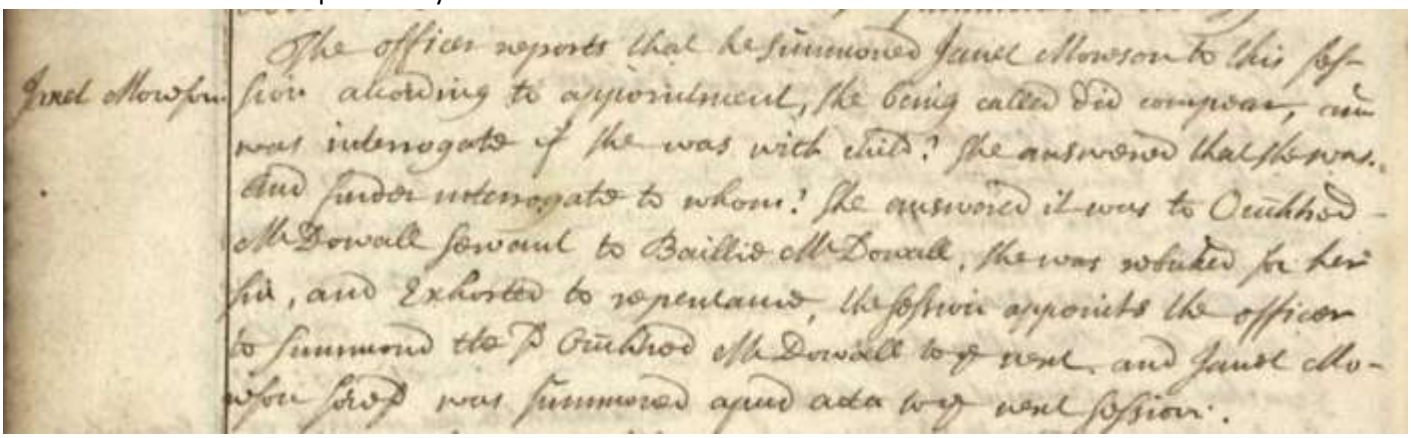
Dec. 17, 1722



Transcription: *As to Margaret Paton, it is reported that she brought forth her child in the Newtown of Clenebowes in Ireland, appoints the moderator to write a letter to Mr Mair, Minister of the said parish to cause summoned her to appear before the Session in order to give satisfaction.*

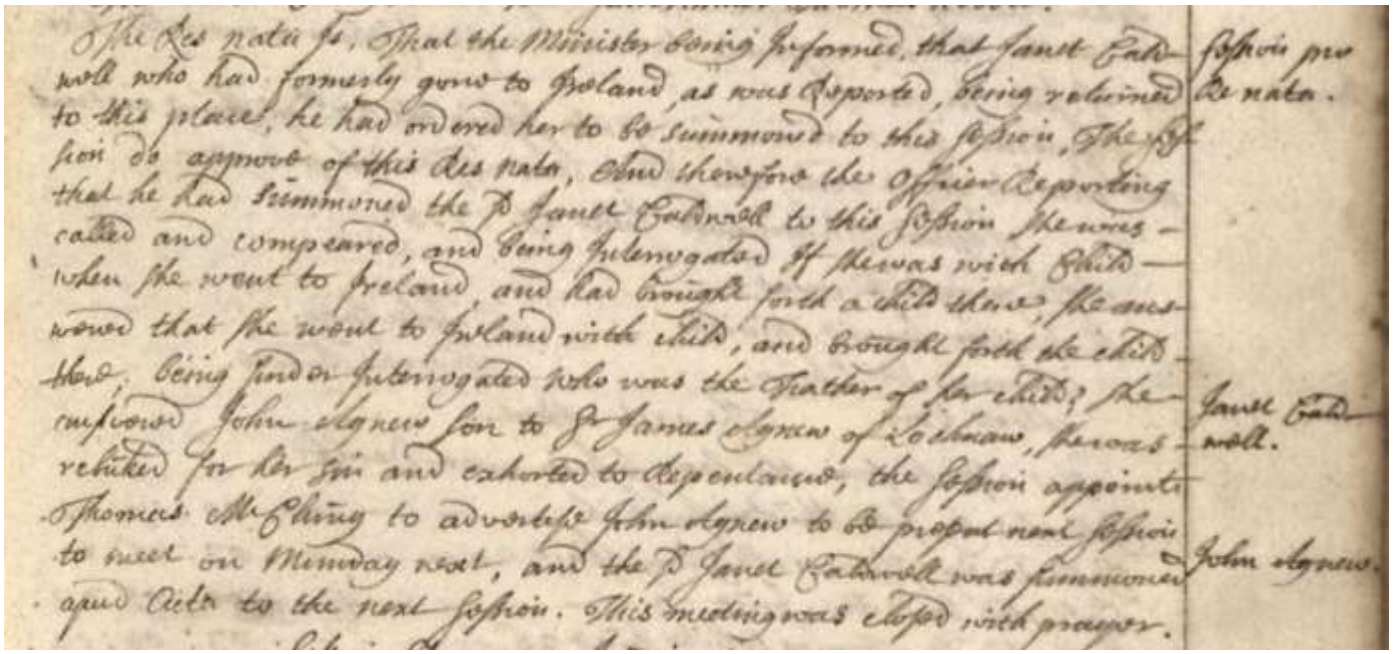
Notes: The Session never received a reply, so the case was dropped. However, almost two years later on Aug. 31st, 1724, it states that she appeared voluntarily before the Session and admitted to delivering a child (although there is no mention of what happened to the child) and was rebuked and interrogated as to the father, a carpenter now residing in Wigtown, who was to be summoned to appear.
Pregnancy outside of marriage in 18th-century Scotland was met with intense social and religious disapproval, primarily from the Kirk (Church of Scotland). Women faced public shame and ostracism. Unwed pregnant women were often called before the Kirk session, publicly admonished, and forced to wear "marks of reprehension and infamy" (such as a specific cap) to signify their "fallen" status. They also faced economic ruin, with pregnancy often leading to dismissal from jobs (e.g. as domestic servants), leaving them with no means of financial support.

April 6th, 1724 – **Janet Moreson and Uchtred McDowall**, both servants to Baillie William McDowall, accused of fornication, Janet being pregnant with Uchtred's child. They were publicly rebuked in the church and Uchtred had to pay a crown for the use of the poor. They were married in 1728…



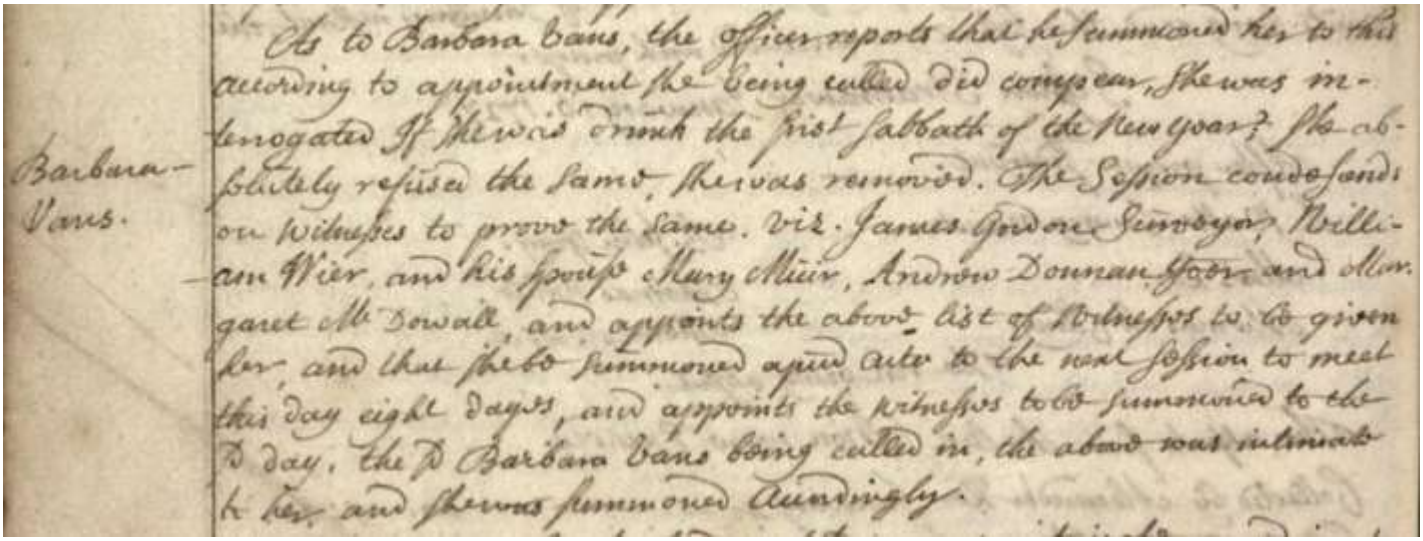
Transcription: *The officer reports that he summoned Janet Morrison to this Session according to appointment. She being called, did appear, and was interrogated if she was with child? She answered that she was, and further interrogated to whom? She answered it was to Ouchtred McDowall, servant to Baillie McDowall. She was rebuked for her sin, and exhorted to repentance. The Session appoints the officer to summon the said Ouchtred McDowall to the next, and Janet Morrison was summoned again to the next Session.*

May 31st, 1725 – **Son of Sir James Agnew of Lochnaw, Sherriff of Stranraer, accused of fornication.** Patrick McDouall of Freugh (d.15 Oct 1729), in his role as Justice of the Peace for Stranraer, reported to Sir James Agnew.



Transcription: *The Res nata (a newly arisen matter) is, that the Minister being informed that Janet Caldwell, who had formerly gone to Ireland, as was reported, being returned to this place, he had ordered her to be summoned to this Session. The Session do approve of this Res nata, and therefore the officer reporting that he had summoned the said Janet Caldwell to this Session, she was called and compeared, and being interrogated if she was with child when she went to Ireland, and had brought forth a child there, she answered that she went to Ireland with child, and brought forth the child there. Being further interrogated who was the father of her child, she answered John Agnew, son to Sir James Agnew of Lochnaw. She was rebuked for her sin and exhorted to repentance. The Session appoints Thomas McClurg to advertise John Agnew to be present next Session to meet on Monday next, and the said Janet Caldwell was summoned apud acta (a verbal order) to the next Session.*

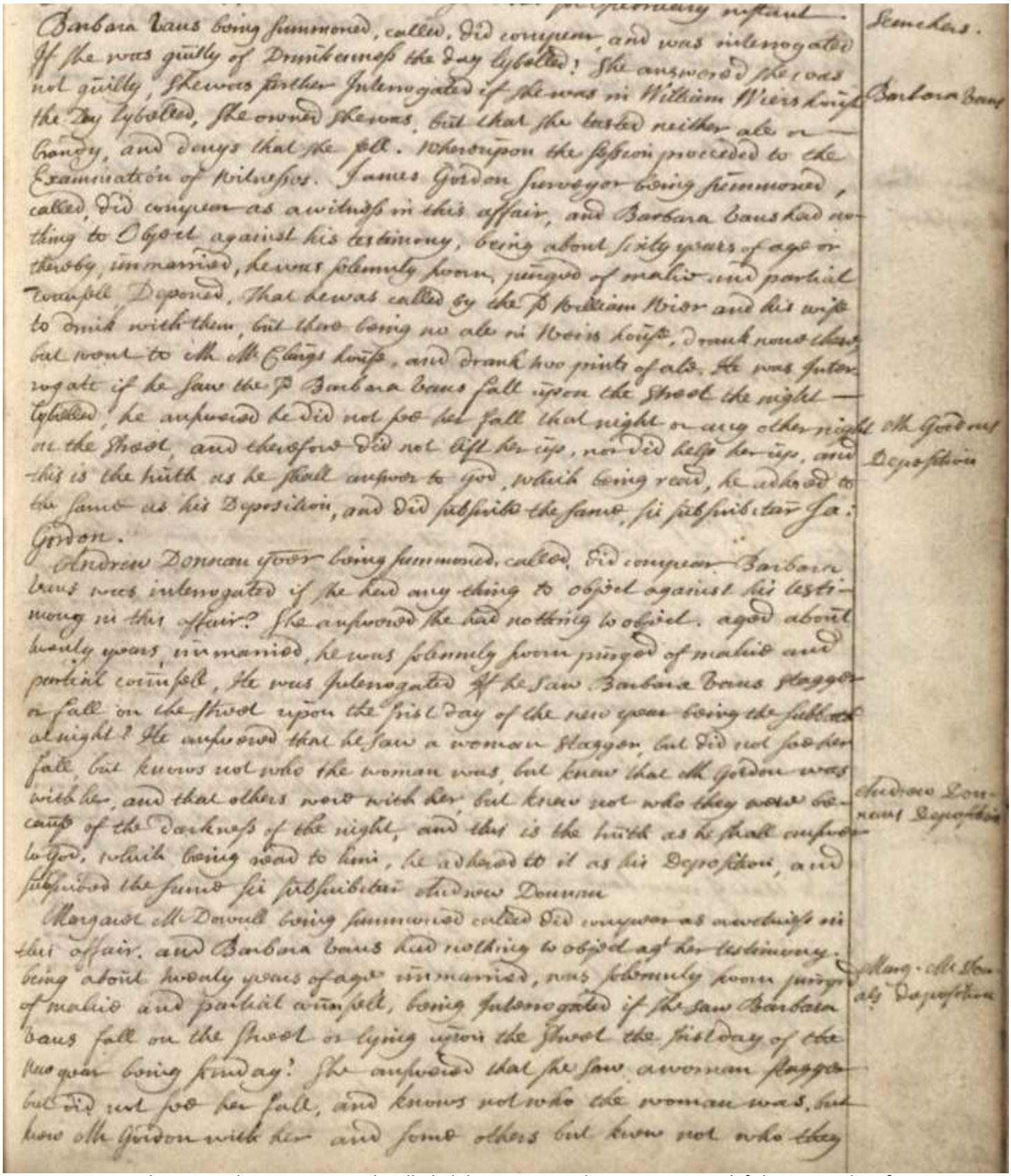
Jan. 30th, 1727 – Barbara Vans accused of drunkenness on the sabbath, but later found not guilty.



Barbara Vans.

As to Barbara Vans, the officer reports that he summoned her to this according to appointment she being called did compear, she was interrogated If she was drunk the first sabbath of the New year? She absolutely refused the same, she was removed. The Session condescends on witnesses to prove the same. viz. James Gordon Surveyor, William Wier, and his spouse Mary Muir, Andrew Dounan Yoor and Margaret McDowall, and appoints the above list of witnesses to be given her, and that she be summoned apud acta to the next Session to meet this day eight days, and appoints the witnesses to be summoned to the said day, the said Barbara Vans being called in, the above was intimate to her and she was summoned accordingly.

Transcription: *As to Barbara Vans, the officer reports that he summoned her to this according to appointment. She being called, did compear. She was interrogated if she was drunk the first Sabbath of the New Year? She absolutely refused the same. She was removed. The Session condescends on witnesses to prove the same viz. James Gordon, Surveyor, William Wier and his spouse Mary Muir, Andrew Dounan, Yoor, and Margaret McDowall, and appoints the above list of witnesses to be given her, and that she be summoned apud acta to the next Session to meet this day eight days. And appoints the witnesses to be summoned to the said day, the said Barbara Vans being called in, the above was intimate to her and she was summoned accordingly.*



Barbara Vans being summoned, called, did compear, and was interrogated if she was guilty of Drunkenness the day lybelled! She answered she was not guilty, She was further interrogated if she was in William Wiers house the day lybelled, She owned she was, but that she tasted neither ale or brandy, and denys that she fell. Whereupon the Session proceeded to the Examination of witnesses. James Gordon Surveyor being summoned, called, did compear as a witness in this affair, and Barbara Vans had nothing to Object against his testimony, being about sixty years of age or thereby, unmarried, he was solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial counsell. Deponed, That he was called by the P. William Wier and his wife to drink with them, but there being no ale in Weirs house, drank none there, but went to the Mr Clings house, and drank two pints of ale. He was interrogate if he saw the P. Barbara Vans fall upon the Street the night lybelled, he answered he did not see her fall that night or any other night on the Street, and therefore did not lift her up, nor did help her up, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God, which being read, he adhered to the same as his Deposition, and did subscribe the same, sic subscribitur Ja: Gordon.

Andrew Donnan Cooper being summoned, called, did compear. Barbara Vans was interrogated if he had any thing to object against his testimony in this affair? She answered he had nothing to object, aged about twenty years, unmarried, he was solemnly sworn purged of malice and partial counsell, He was interrogated if he saw Barbara Vans stagger or fall on the Street upon the first day of the new year being the Sabbath at night? He answered that he saw a woman stagger, but did not see her fall, but knows not who the woman was, but knew that Mr Gordon was with her, and that others were with her but knew not who they were because of the darkness of the night, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God, which being read to him, he adhered to it as his Deposition, and subscribed the same sic subscribitur Andrew Donnan

Margaret McDavid being summoned called did compear as a witness in this affair, and Barbara Vans had nothing to object agt her testimony, being about twenty years of age unmarried, was solemnly sworn purged of malice and partial counsell, being interrogated if she saw Barbara Vans fall on the Street or lying upon the Street the first day of the New year being Sunday: She answered that she saw a woman stagger but did not see her fall, and knows not who the woman was, but knew Mr Gordon with her and some others but knew not who they

Remedies.

Barbara Vans

Mr Gordons Deposition

Andrew Donnans Deposition

Marg. McDavids Deposition

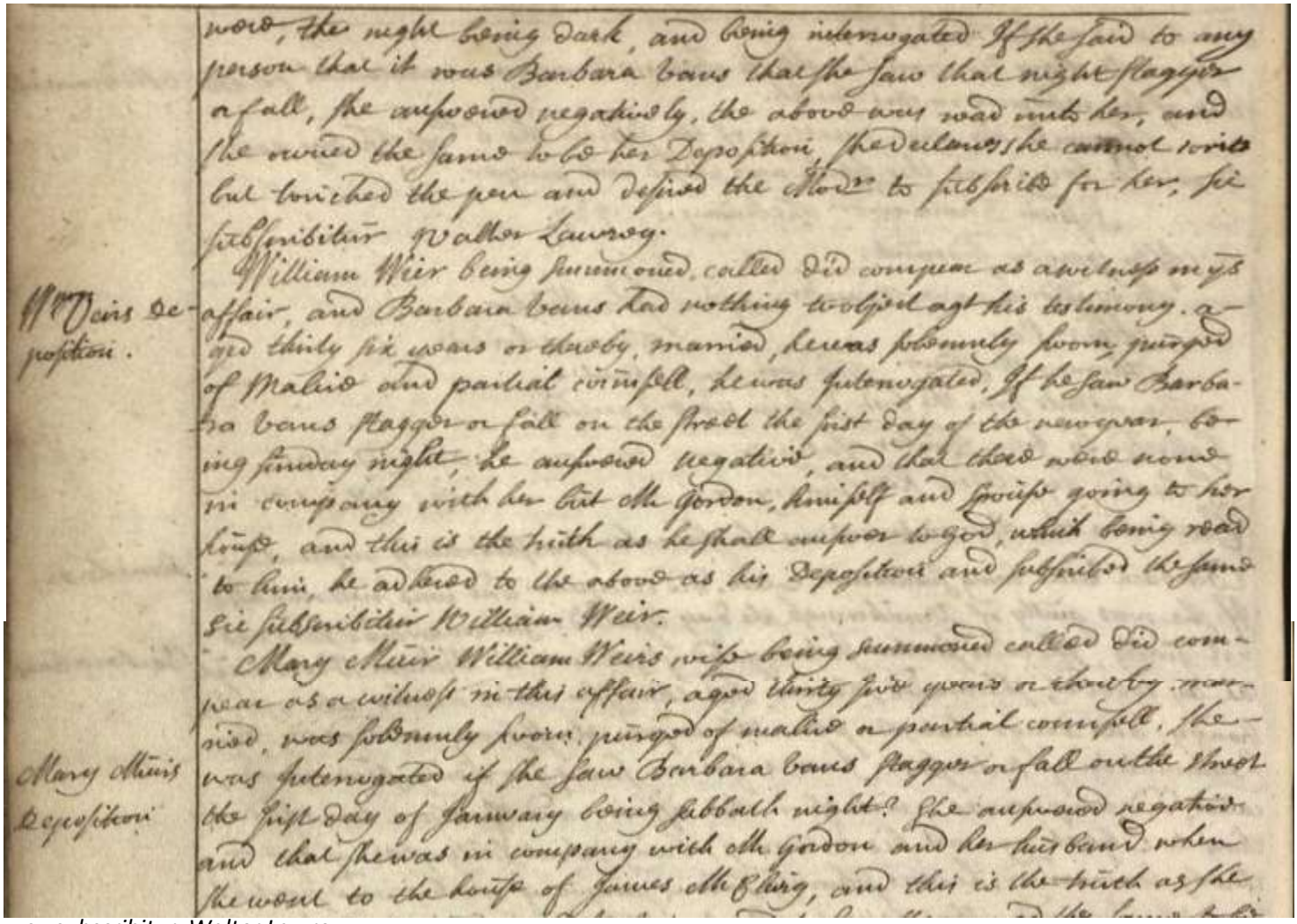
Transcription: *Barbara Vans being summoned, called, did compear, and was interrogated if she was guilty of drunkenness the day lybelled! She answered she was not guilty. She was further interrogated if she was in William Wiers house the day lybelled. She owned she was but that she tasted neither ale or brandy, and denies that she fell. Whereupon the Session proceeded to the examination of witnesses. James Gordon, surveyor, being summoned, called, did compear*

as a witness in this affair, and Barbara Vans had nothing to object to his testimony, being about 60 years of age or thereby, unmarried. He was solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial counsell, deponed that he was called by the said William Weir and his wife to drink with them, but there being no ale in their house, drank nowhere but went to Mr McClurgs house and drank two pints of ale. He was interrogated if he saw the said Barbara Vans fall upon the street the night lybelled. He answered he did not see her fall that night or any other night on the street and therefore did not lift her up, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God, which being read he adhered to the same as his deposition and did subscribe the same su subscribitur (thus it is signed) James Gordon.

Andrew Donnan, yoor, being summoned, called, did compear. Barbara Vans was interrogated if she had anything to object against his testimony in this affair. She answered she had nothing to object, aged about twenty years, unmarried, he was solemnly sworn, purged of malice, and partial counsell. He was interrogated if he saw Barbara Vans stagger or fall in the street upon the first day in the new year being the sabbath at night? He answered that he saw a woman stagger but did not see her fall, but knows not who the woman was but knew that Mr Gordon was with her, but knew not who they were because of the darkness of the night, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God, which being read to him, he adhered to as his deposition and subscribed the same su subscribitur Andrew Donnan.

Margaret McDowall (Barbara's sister?) being summoned, called, did compear as a witness in this affair, and Barbara Vans had nothing to object against her testimony, being about twenty years of age, unmarried, was solemnly sworn, purged of malice, and partial counsell. Being interrogated if she saw Barbara Vans fall upon the street the first day of the new year being Sunday? She answered that she saw a woman stagger but did not see her fall, and knows not who the woman was, but knew Mr Gordon with her and some others but knows not who they…

(cont.)



Wm Weirs deposition.

Mary Muirs deposition

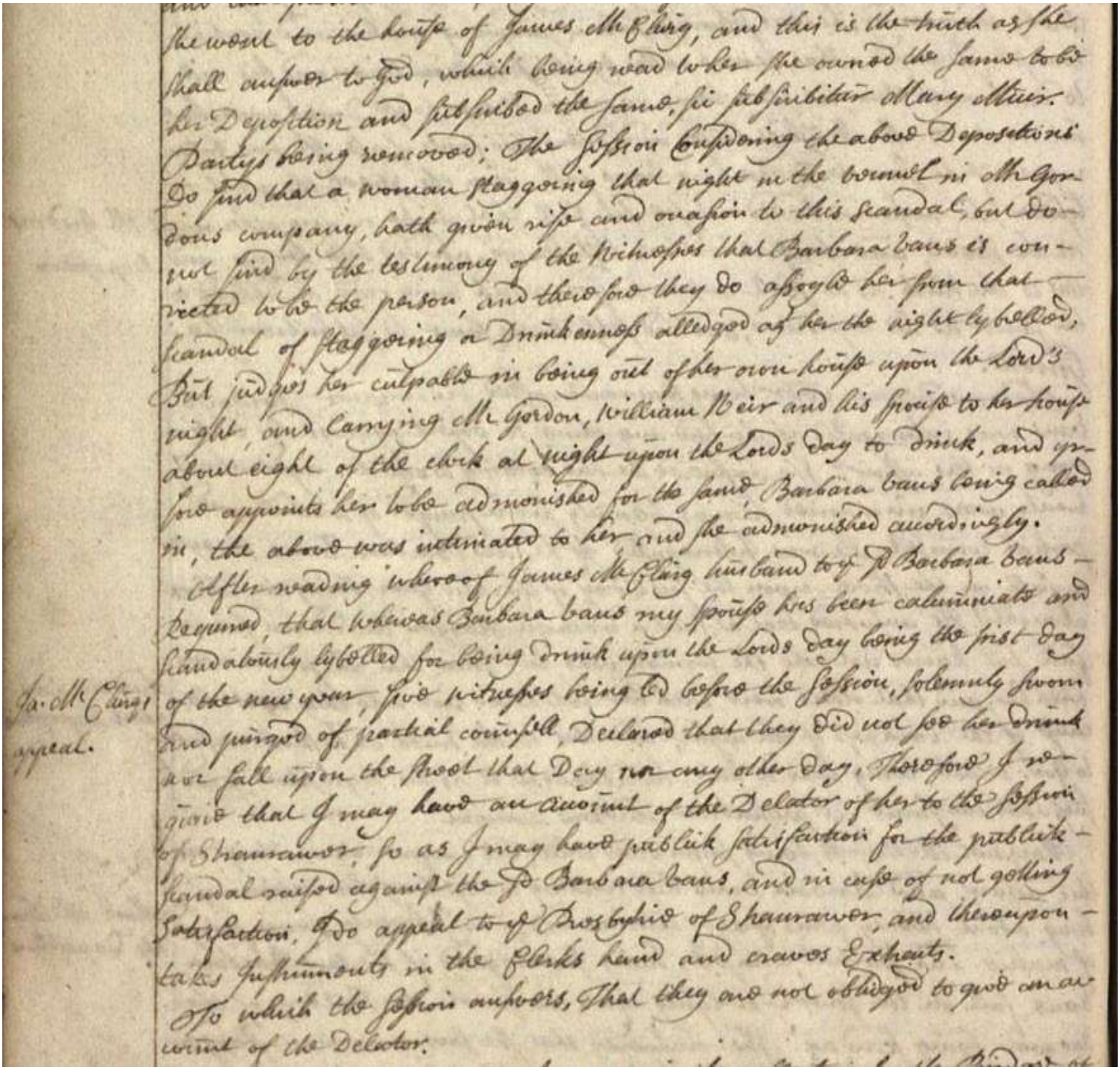
su subscribitur, Walter Lawrey.

William Weir being summoned, called, did compear as a witness in said affair, and Barbara Vans had nothing to object against his testimony, aged thirty six years thereby, married, he was solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial counsell. He was interrogated if he saw Barbara Vans stagger or fall on the street the first day of the new year being Sunday night. He answered negative and that there were none in company with her but Mr Gordon, himself and spouse going to her house, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God, which being read to him he adhered to the above as his deposition and subscribed the same su subscribitur William Weir.
Mary Muir, William Weir's wife, being summoned, called, did compear as a witness in this affair, aged thirty five years or thereby, married, was solemnly sworn, purged of malice or partial counsell, she was interrogated if she Barbara Vans stagger or fall on the street the first day of January being sabbath night? She answered negative and that she was in company with Mr Gordon and her husband when she went to the house of James McClurg, and this is the truth as she…

Women enjoying a drink



(cont.)



Ja. McClurg's appeal.

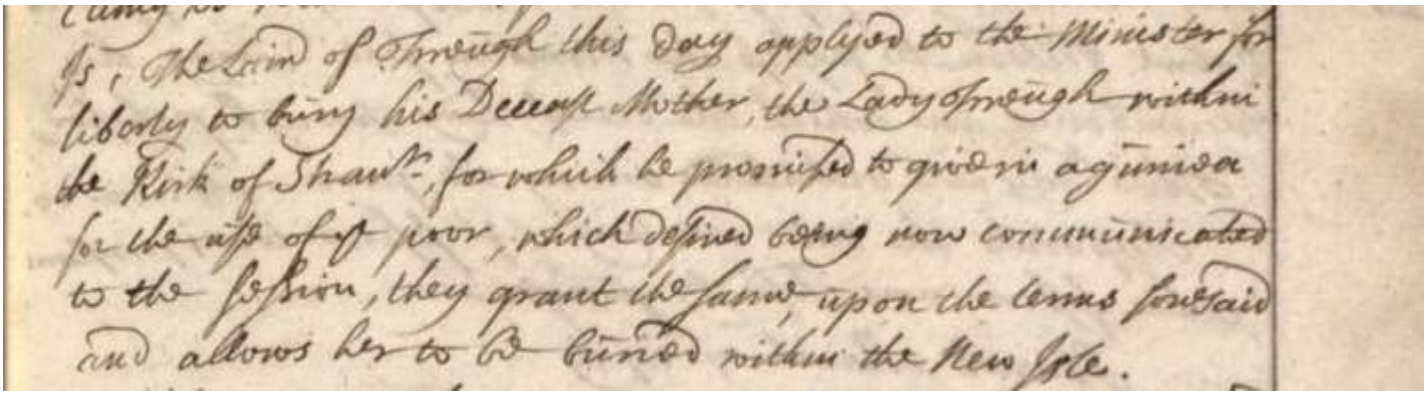
Transcription: *…shall answer to God, which being read to her she owned the same to be her deposition and subscribed the same su subscribitur Mary Muir.*

Parties being removed, the Session considering the above depositions do find that a woman staggering that night in the … in Mr Gordon's company hath given rise and … to this scandal, but do not find by the testimony of the witnesses that Barbara Vans is convicted to be the person, and therefore they do absolve her from that scandal of staggering or drunkenness alleged of her the night lybelled. But judges her culpable in being out of her own house upon the Lord's night, and carrying Mr Gordon, William Weir and his spouse to her house about eight of the clock at night upon the Lord's Day to drink and therefore appoints her to be admonished for the same.

Barbara Vans being called in, the above was intimated to her, and she admonished accordingly. After reading whereof James McClurg, husband to the said Barbara Vans required that whereas Barbara Vans, my spouse, has been calumniate and scandalously lybelled for being drunk upon the Lord's Day, being the first day of the new year, five witnesses being led before the Session, solemnly sworn and purged of partial counsell, declared that they did not see her drunk nor fall

upon the street that day, nor any other day, therefore … … that I may have an amount of the delector of her to the Session of Stranraer, so as I may have public satisfaction for the public scandal raised against the said Barbara Vans, and in case of not getting satisfaction, I do appeal to the Presbytery of Stranraer and thereupon take … in the clerk's hand and craves extents. To which the Session answers that they are not obliged to give an account of the delector.

5th Feb. 1729 - The <u>Laird of Freugh</u> applied to bury his deceased mother in the church. The Laird then was Patrick MCDOUALL d.15 Oct 1729, so this could be Barbara Fullarton. In which case she was a very ripe old age, about 90 years old. The church is probably long gone. According to The Scots Revised Reports, Court of Session, First Series, a new church in Stranraer appears to have been completed in the 1780s.

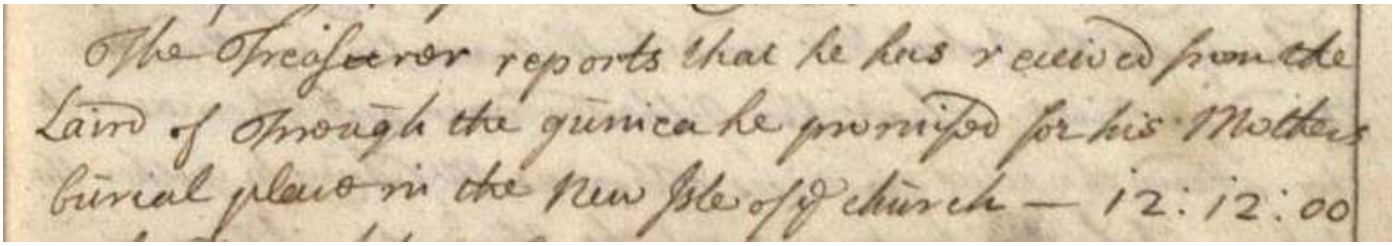


<u>Transcription</u>: *The **Laird of Freugh** this day applied to the Minister for liberty to bury his deceased mother, the Lady Freugh, within the Kirk of Stranraer, for which he promised to give in a guinea for the use of the poor, which defined, being now communicated to the Session, they grant the same, upon the terms foresaid and allows her to be buried within the new isle (aisle).*

Burial in the Aisle of a Church

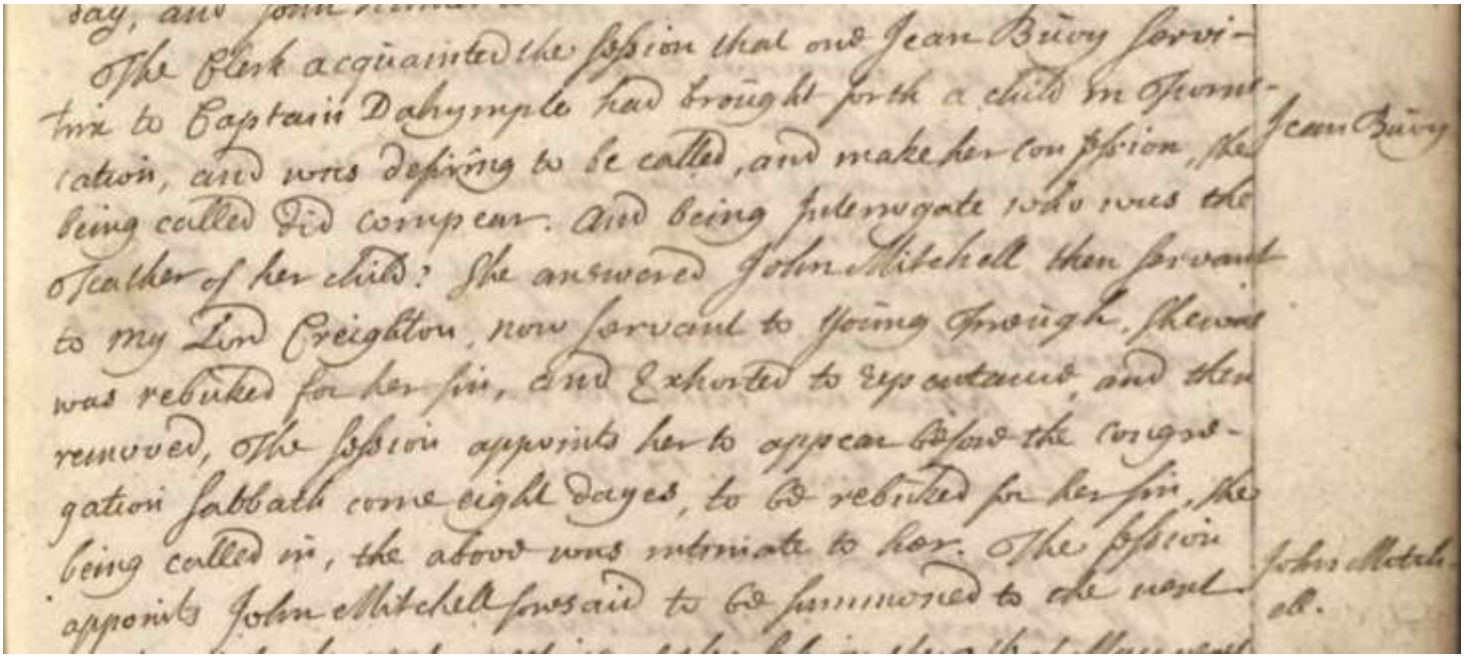


March 3rd, 1729


The Treasurer reports that he has received from the Laird of Frough the guinea he promised for his Mothers burial place in the new Isle of ye church — 12: 12: 00

Transcription: *The treasurer reports that he has received from the **Laird of Freugh** the guinea he promised for his mother's burial place in the new aisle of the church.*
Could a plaque still be in the church?

April 24th, 1729 – **'young Freugh' is John MCDOUALL of Freugh (1700-1757)**

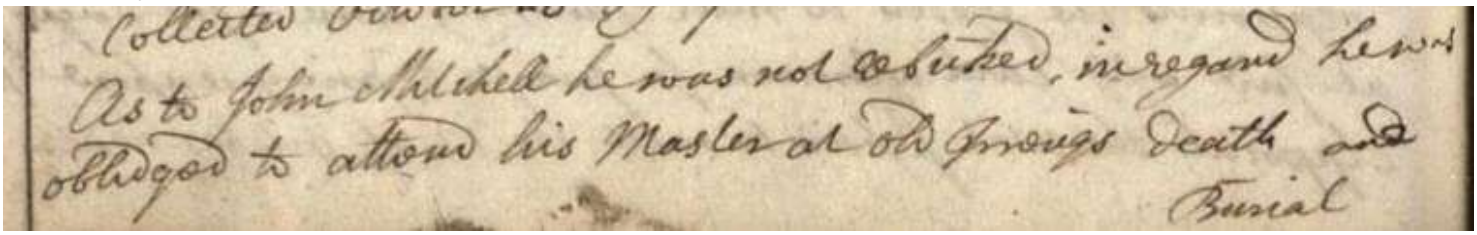

The Clerk acquainted the Session that one Jean Bury servitrix to Captain Dalrymple had brought forth a child in fornication, and was desiring to be called, and make her confession, she being called did compear. And being interrogate who was the father of her child? She answered John Mitchell then servant to my Lord Creighton, now servant to young Frough, she was rebuked for her sin, and Exhorted to repentance, and then removed, the Session appoints her to appear before the congregation Sabbath come eight dayes, to be rebuked for her sin, she being called in, the above was intimate to her. The Session appoints John Mitchell to be summoned to the next.

Jean Bury

John Mitch ell.

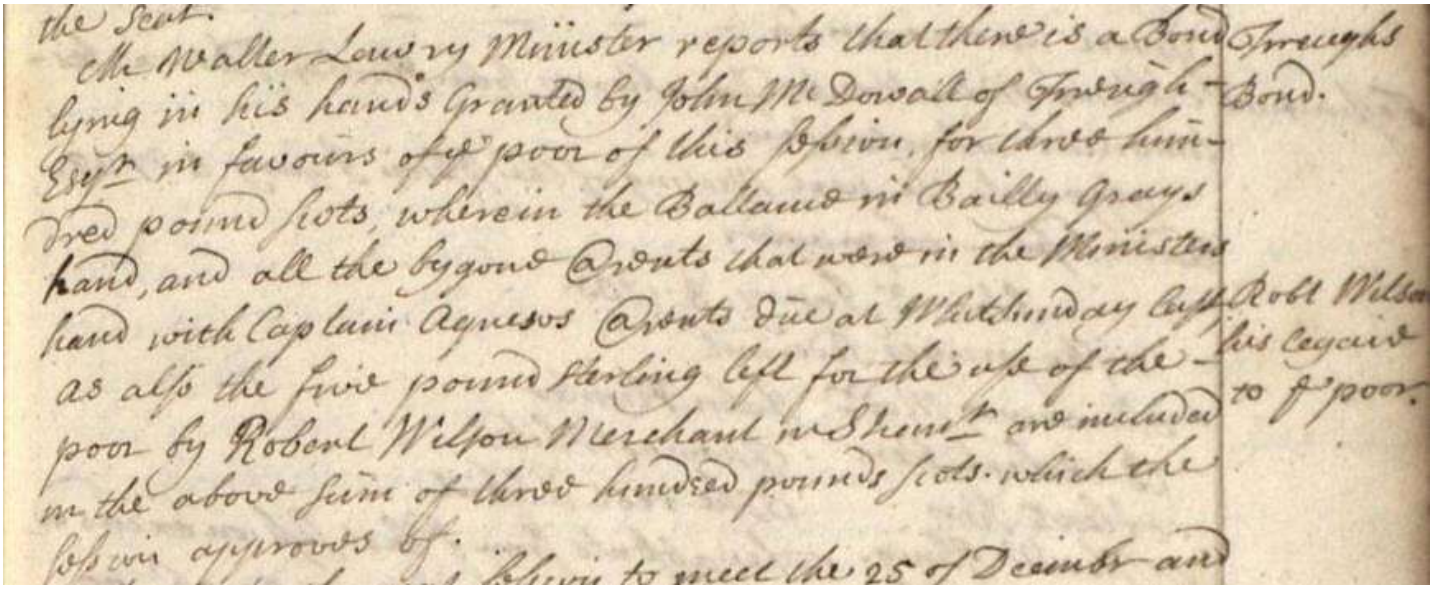
Transcription: *The clerk acquainted the Session that Jean Bury, servant to Captain Dalrymple, had brought forth a child in fornication, and was desiring to be called and make her confession. She being called, did appear, and being interrogated who was the father of her child, she answered John Mitchell, then servant to my Lord Creighton, now servant to **young Freugh**. She was rebuked for her sin, and exhorted to repentance, and then removed. The Session appoints her to appear before the congregation sabbath come eight days, to be rebuked for her sin. She being called in, the above was intimated to her. The Session appoints John Mitchell to be summoned to the next.*

October 27, 1729 – **Patrick MCDOUALL d.15 Oct 1729**


As to John Mitchell he was not rebuked, in regard he was obliged to attend his Master at old Froughs death and Burial

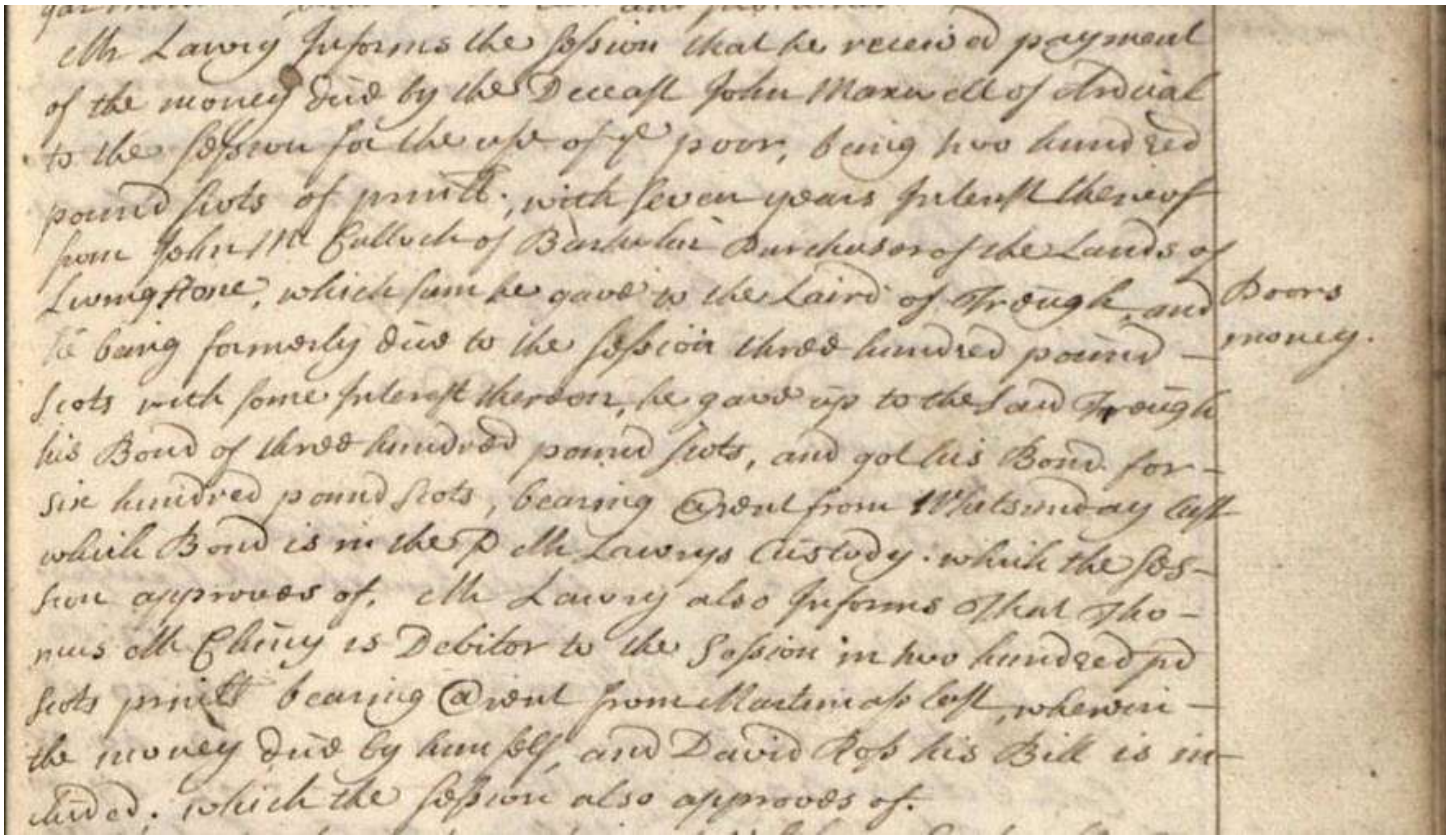
Transcription: *As to John Mitchell, he was not rebuked, in regard he was obliged to attend his master at **old Freugh's** death and burial.*

Nov. 20th, 1732 – Laird of Freugh, John McDowall, makes a very generous donation to the poor of £300 Scots.



Transcription: *Mr Walter Lawry, Minister, reports that there is a bond lying in his hands granted by **John McDowall of Freugh Esq.** in favour of the poor of this Session, for three hundred pounds Scots, wherein the balance in Bailly Gray's hand, and all the bygone @rents (kirk seat rents) that now in the Minister's hand with Captain Agnew's @rents due at Whitsunday last, as also the five pound sterling left for the use of the poor by Robert Wilson, Merchant in Stranraer, and included in the above sum of three hundred pounds Scots, which the Session approves of.*

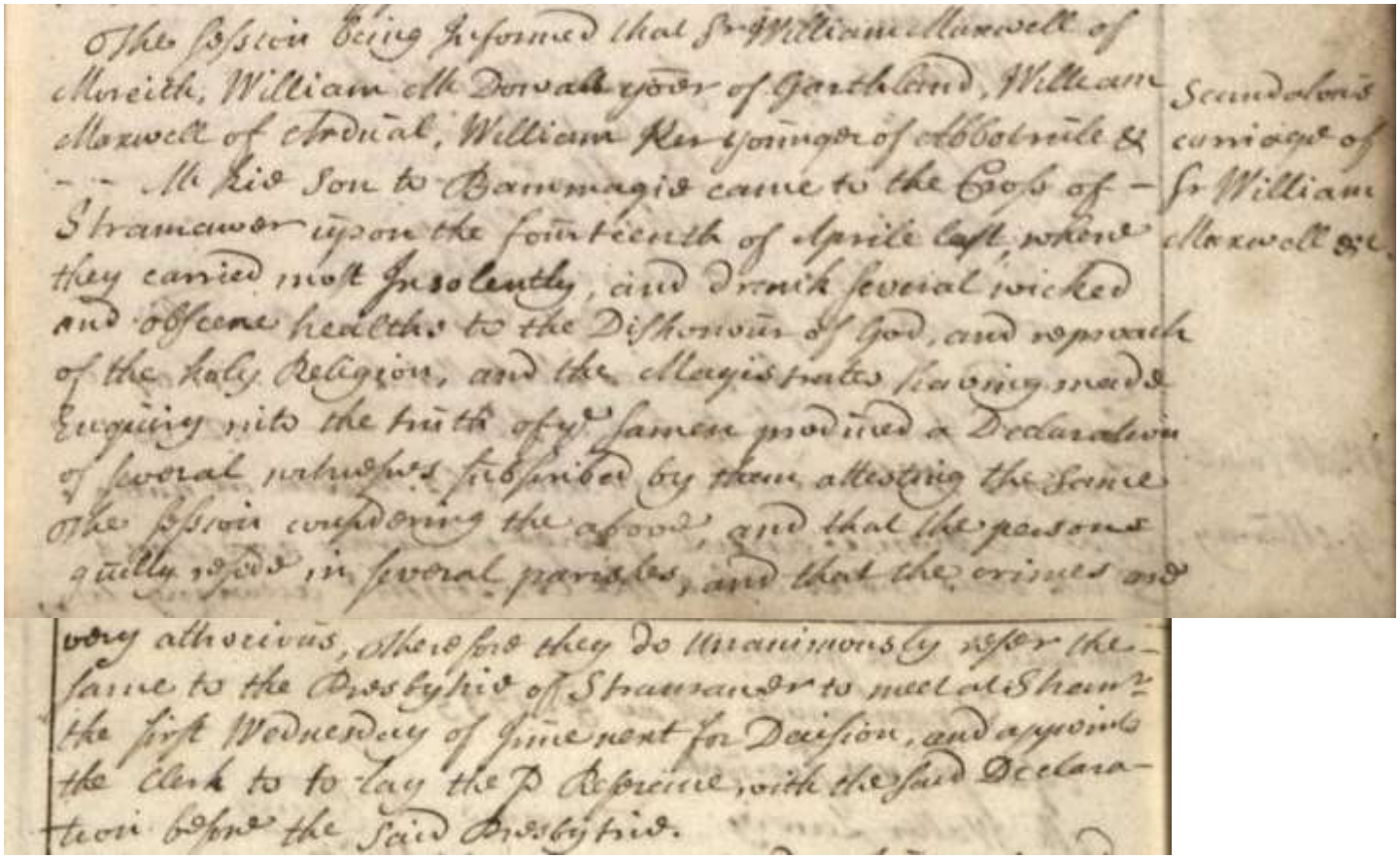
Sept. 2nd, 1734 – The Laird of Freugh receives a Bond



Transcription: *Mr Lawry informs the Session that he received payment of the money due by the deceased John Maxwell of Ardwell to the Session for the use of the poor, being two hundred pound Scots of print, with seven years interest thereof from John McCulloch of Barleton, purchaser of the lands of Livingstone? Which sum he gave to the **Laird of Freugh,** and he being formerly due to the Session three hundred pounds Scots with some interest thereon, he gave up to*

*the said **Freugh** his bond of three hundred pound Scots, and got his bond for six hundred pound Scots, bearing @rent from Martinmas last, wherein the money due by himself, and David Ross his bill is included, which the Session also approves of.*

May 5th, 1735 – William McDowall yoor (long) of Garthland was insolent together with others.



The Sessio being informed that Sr William Maxwell of Moreith, William McDowall yoor of Garthland, William Maxwell of Ardual, William Ker younger of Abbotrule & --- McKie Son to Barnmagie came to the Cross of Stranraer upon the fourteenth of April last where they carried most Insolently, and drunk several wicked and obscene healths to the Dishonour of God, and reproach of the holy Religion, and the Magistrates having made Enquiry into the truth of the same produced a Declaration of several witnesses subscribed by them attesting the same The Sessio considering the above, and that the persons guilty reside in several parishes, and that the crimes are very athrocious, therefore they do Unanimously refer the same to the Presbytrie of Stranraer to meet at Stranraer the first Wednesday of June next for Decision, and appoints the Clerk to to lay the P Reference with the said Declaration before the said Presbytrie.

Scandalous carriage of Sr William Maxwell &c.

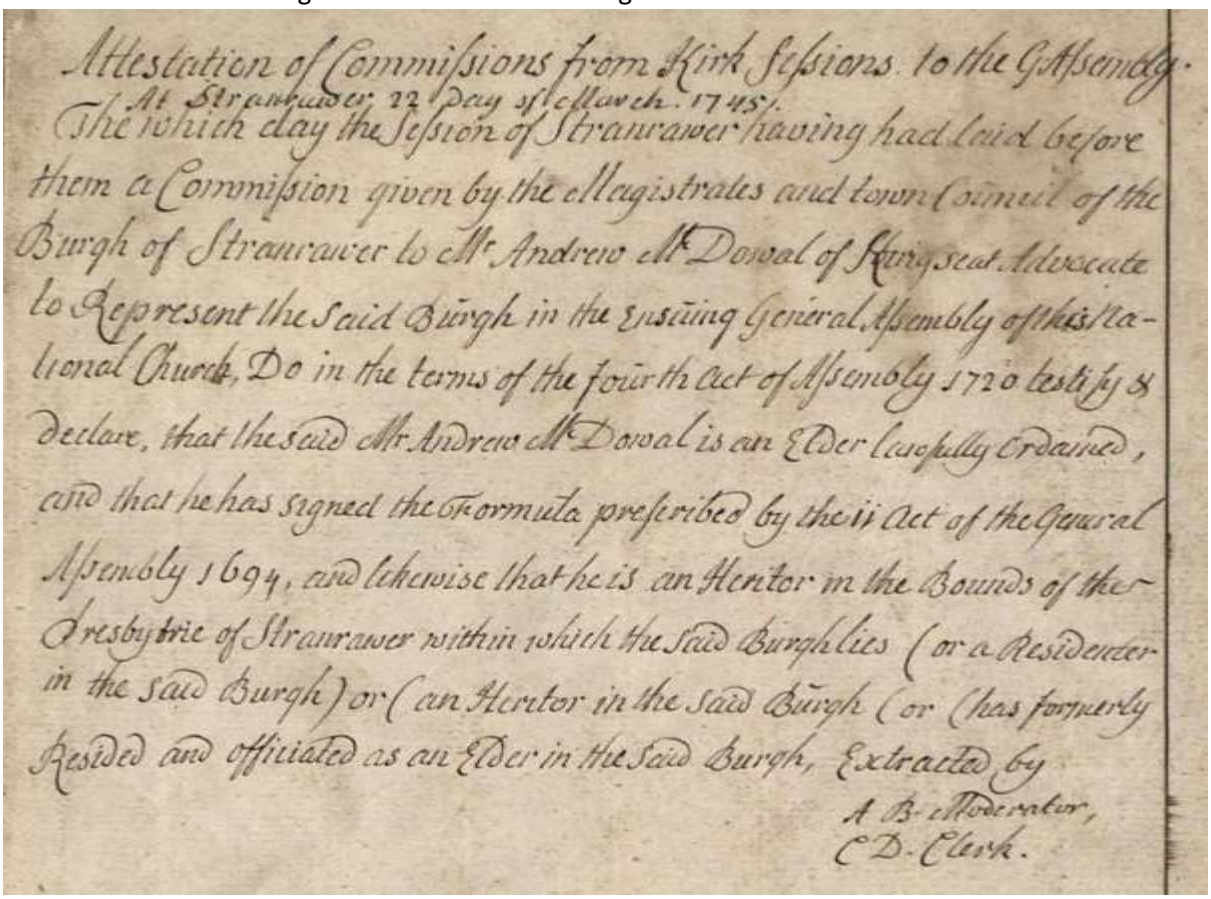
Transcription: *The Session being informed that Sir William Maxwell of Moreith, William McDowall, yoor of Garthland, William Maxwell of Ardual (Ardwell?), William Ker, younger of Abbotrule and --- McKie, son to Barnmagie, came to the cross of Stranraer upon the fourteenth of April last, where they carried most insolently, and drank several wicked and obscene healths to the dishonour of God, and reproach of the holy religion. And the magistrates having made enquiry into the truth of the same, produced a declaration of several witnesses subscribed by them attesting the same. The Session considering the above, and that the persons guilty, reside in several parishes, and that the crimes are very atrocious, therefore they do unanimously refer the same to the Presbytery of Stranraer to meet at Stranraer the first Wednesday of June next for decision, and appoint the clerk to lay the said reference with the said declaration before the said Presbytery.*

Note: Once again, there is no record in the Presbytery minutes of this case even being mentioned.



The Town Cross of Stranraer

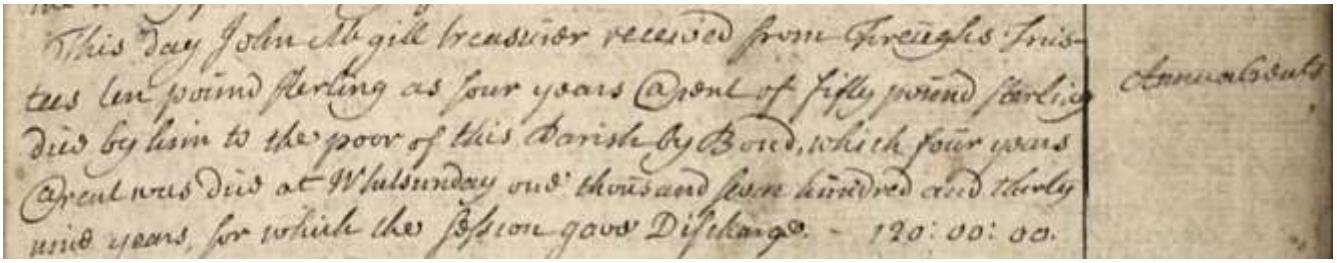
Title Page of 1740 volume mentions Andrew McDowall of Kingseat, Advocate, to represent the Burgh.
Andrew McDowall of Kingseat is Lord Bankton of Logan descent.



Attestation of Commissions from Kirk Sessions to the Gt Assembly.
At Stranraer 22 Day of March 1745.
The which day the Session of Stranraer having had laid before them a Commission given by the Magistrates and town Counsil of the Burgh of Stranraer to Mr Andrew McDowal of Kingseat Advocate to Represent the Said Burgh in the Ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, Do in the terms of the fourth Act of Assembly 1720 testify & declare, that the said Mr Andrew McDowal is an Elder Lawfully Ordained, and that he has signed the Formula prescribed by the ii Act of the Genral Assembly 1694, and likewise that he is an Heritor in the Bounds of the Presbytrie of Stranraer within which the Said Burgh lies (or a Residenter in the Said Burgh) or (an Heritor in the Said Burgh (or (has formerly Resided and officiated as an Elder in the Said Burgh, Extracted by
A B. Moderator,
C D. Clerk.

Transcription: *Attestation of Commissions from Kirk Sessions to the General Assembly at Stranraer 22nd day of March 1745.*
The which day the Session of Stranraer having had laid before them a Commission given by the Magistrates and town council of the Burgh of Stranraer to Mr Andrew McDowal of Kingseat Advocate to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do in the terms of the fourth act of assembly 1720, testify and declare that the said Mr Andrew McDowal is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has signed the formula prescribed by their act of the Genral Assembly 1694, and likewise that he is an heritor in the bounds of the Presbbytrie of Stranraer within which the said Burgh lies (or a residenter in the said Burgh) or (an heritor in the said Burgh (or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said Burgh. Extracted by AB Moderator, CD Clerk.

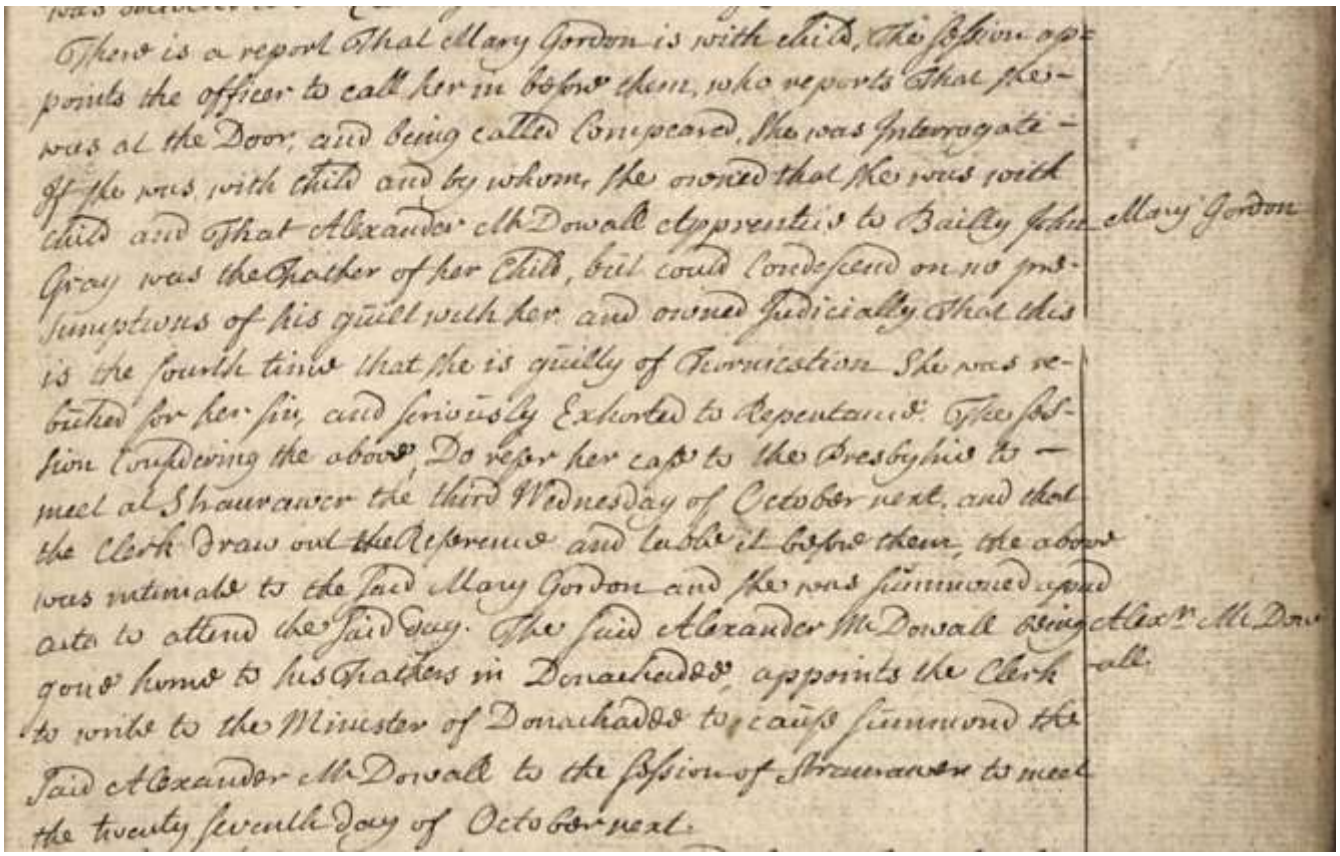
Sep. 22nd, 1740 - Received from Freugh's trustees



This day John McGill treasurer receaved from Freughs Trustees ten pound sterling as four years @rent of fifty pound sterling due by him to the poor of this Parish by Bond, which four years @rent was due at Whitsunday one thousand seven hundred and thirty nine years, for which the Session gave Discharge. - 120: 00: 00.

Transcription: *This day John McGill, treasurer, received from **Freugh's** trustees ten pound sterling as four years @rent of fifty pound sterling due by him to the poor of this parish by bond, which four years @rent was due at Whitsunday one thousand seven hundred and thirty nine years, for which the Session gave discharge – 120:00:00.*

Sep. 22nd, 1740 – Alexander McDowall fathered a child



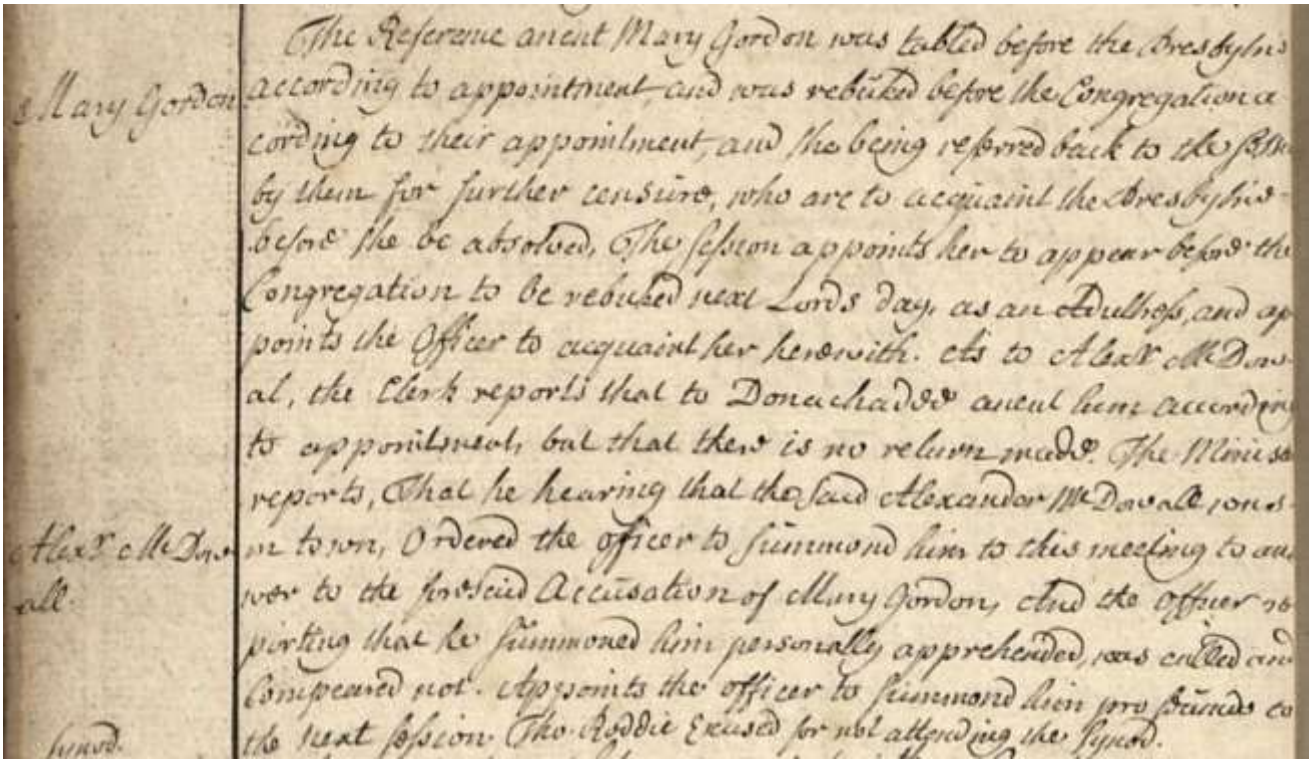
There is a report that Mary Gordon is with child. The Session appoints the officer to call her in before them, who reports that she was at the door, and being called, compeared. She was interrogated if she was with child and by whom. She owned that she was with child and that Alexander McDowall apprentice to Bailly John Gray was the father of her child, but could condescend on no assumptions of his guilt with her and owned judicially that this is the fourth time that she is guilty of fornication. She was rebuked for her sin, and seriously exhorted to repentance. The Session considering the above, Do report her case to the Presbytery to meet at Stranraer the third Wednesday of October next, and that the clerk draw out the reference and table it before them, the above was intimate to the said Mary Gordon and she was summoned apud acta to attend the said day. The said Alexander McDowall being gone home to his fathers in Donachadee, appoints the clerk to write to the Minister of Donachadee to cause summond the said Alexander McDowall to the Session of Stranraer to meet the twenty seventh day of October next.

Mary Gordon

Alexr McDowall.

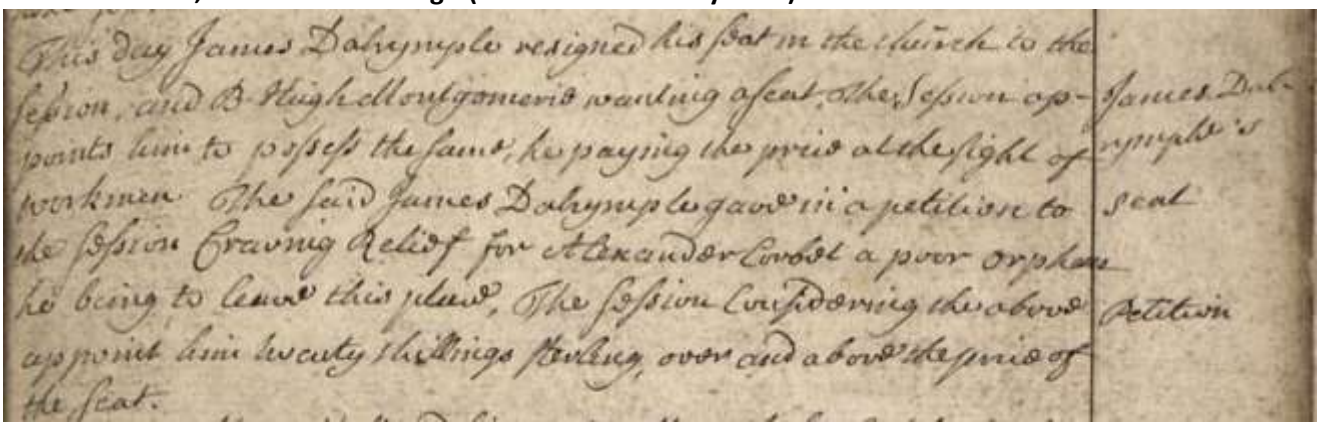
Transcription: *There is a report that Mary Gordon is with child. The Session appoints the officer to call her in before them, who reports that she was at the door, and being called, compeared. She was interrogated if she was with child and by whom. She owned that she was with child and that Alexander McDowall, apprentice to Bailly John Gray, was the father of her child, but could condescend on no assumptions of his guilt with her, and owned judicially that this is the fourth time that she is guilty of fornication. She was rebuked for her sin, and seriously exhorted to repentance. The Session considering the above, do report her case to the Presbytery to meet at Stranraer the third Wednesday of October next, and that the clerk draw out the reference and table it before them. The above was intimate to the said Mary Gordon and she was summoned apud acta to attend the said day. The said Alexander McDowall being gone home to his fathers in Donachadee, appoints the clerk to write to the Minister of Donachadee to cause summond the said Alexander McDowall to the Session of Stranraer to meet the twenty seventh day of October next.*

October 27, 1740 – Mary Gordon



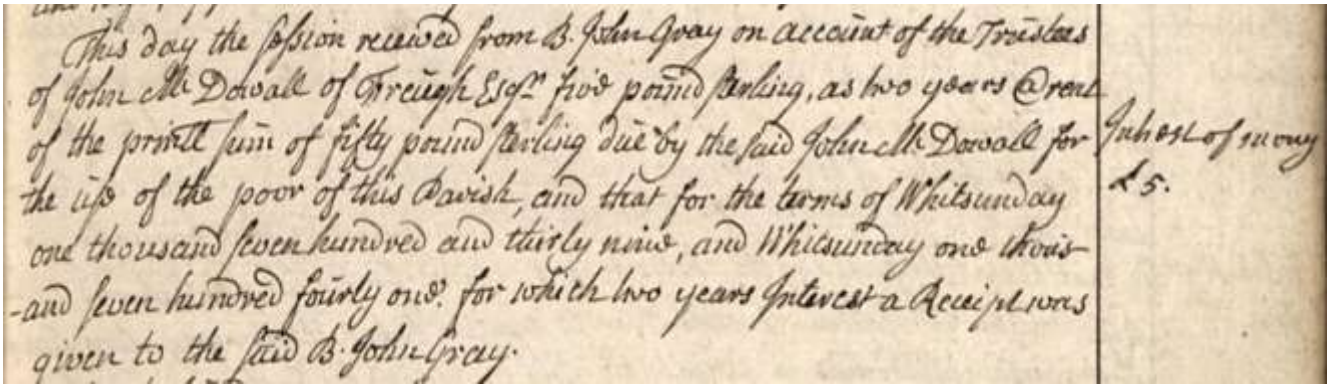
Transcription: *The reference anent Mary Gordon was tabled before the Presbytery according to appointment, and was rebuked before the congregation according to their appointment. And she being referred back to the Session by them for further censure, who are to acquaint the Presbytery before she be absolved. The Session appoints her to appear before the congregation to be rebuked next Lord's Day as an adulteress, and appoints the officer to acquaint her herewith. As to Alexander McDowall, the clerk reports that to Donachadee anent him according to appointment, but that there is no return made. The Minister reports that he hearing that the said Alexander McDowall was in town, ordered the officer to summon him to this meeting to answer to the foresaid accusation of Mary Gordon. And the officer reporting that he summoned him personally apprehended, was called and compeared not, appoints the officer to summon him pro secundo to the next Session.*

June 5th, 1741 – Possibly James Dalrymple husband to Grace MCDOUALL d.7 May 1771, m.13 Aug 1739 James DALRYMPLE Dr., 3rd Laird of Dunragit (18 Oct 1706-14 May 1776)



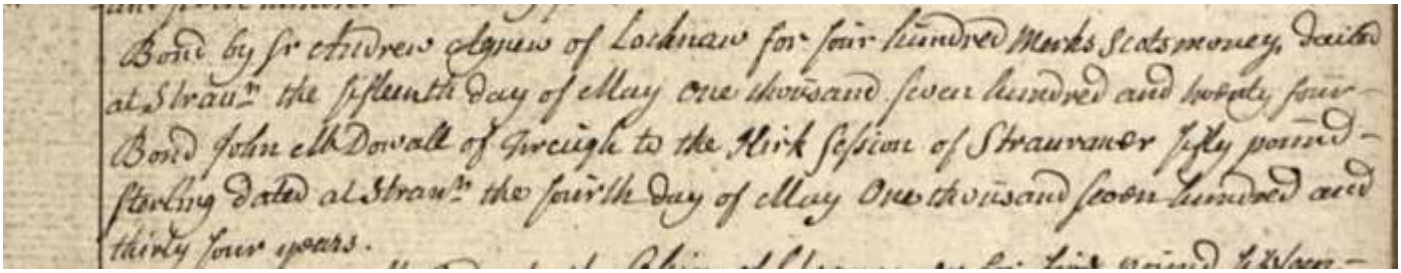
Transcription: *This day James Dalrymple resigned his seat in the church to the Session, and Baillie Hugh Montgomerie wanting a seat, the Session appoints him to possess the same, he paying the price at the sight of workman. The said James Dalrymple gave in a petition to the Session craving relief for Alexander Corbel, a poor orphan, he being to leave this place. The Session considering the above, appoint him twenty shillings sterling, over and above the price of the seat.*

Sep. 19th, 1743 – Received from the trustees of John McDowall of Freugh. [John MCDOUALL of Freugh (1700-1757)]



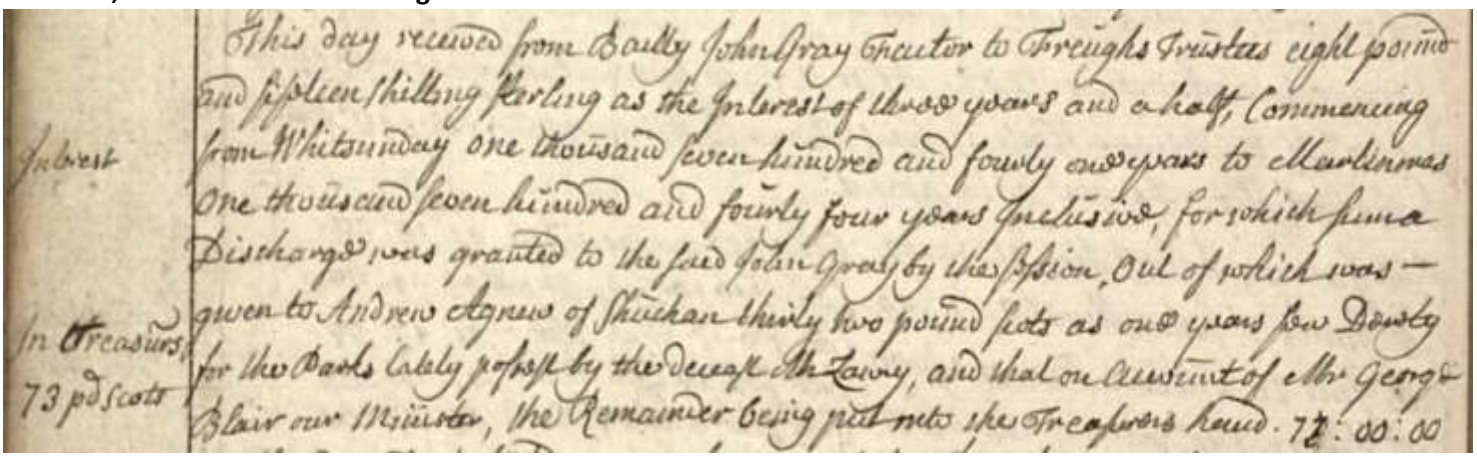
Transcription: *This day the Session received from Baillie John Gray an account of the trustees of **John McDowall of Freugh** Esq. five pound sterling, as two years @rent of the printt sum of fifty pound sterling due by the said John McDowall for the use of the poor of this parish, and that for the terms of Whitsunday one thousand seven hundred and thirty nine, and Whitsunday one thousand seven hundred and forty one, for which two years interest a receipt was given to the said Baillie John Gray.*

February 6th, 1744 – Bond from John McDowall of Freugh.



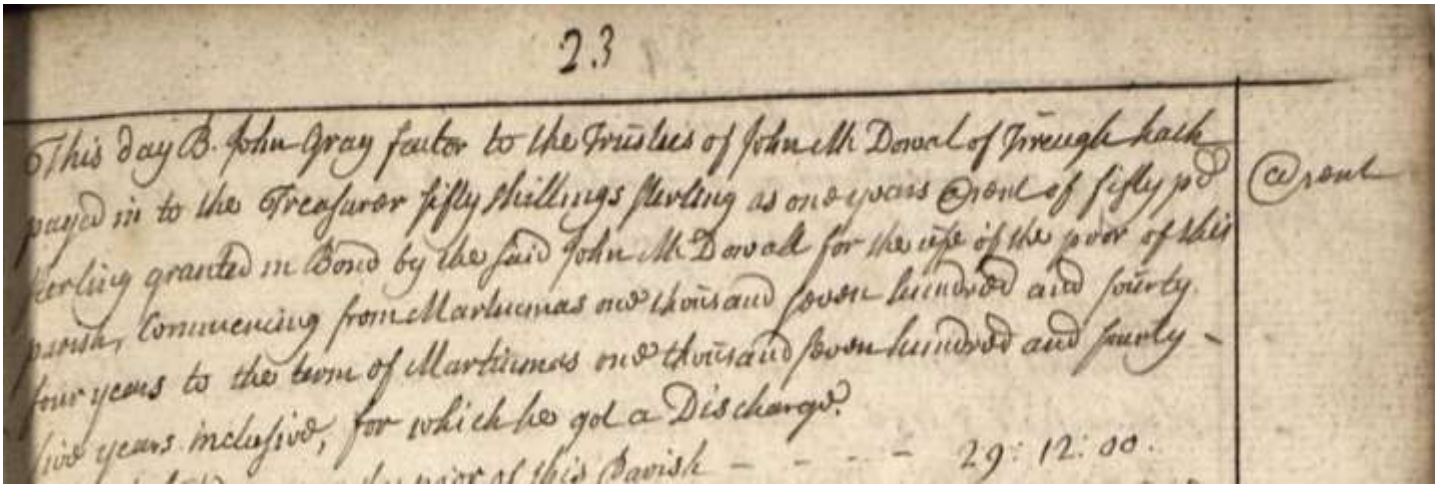
Transcription: *Bond by Sir Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw for four hundred merks Scots money, dated at Stranraer the fifteenth day of May one thousand seven hundred and twenty four. Bond **John McDowall of Freugh** to the Kirk Session of Stranraer, fifty pound sterling dated at Stranraer the fourth day of May one thousand seven hundred and thirty four years.*

June 17th, 1745 – Received of Freugh's trustees.



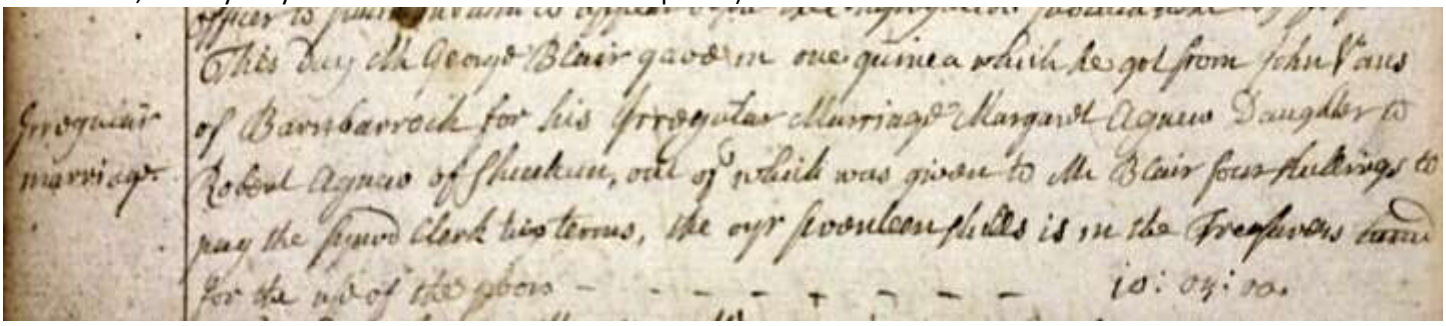
Transcription: *This day received from Bailly John Gray, factor to **Freugh's trustees,** eight pound and fifteen shillings sterling as the interest of three years and a half, commencing from Whitsunday one thousand seven hundred and forty one years to Martinmas one thousand seven hundred and forty four years inclusive, for which sum a discharge was granted to the said John Gray by the Session, out of which was given to Andrew Agnew of Shuchan their two pound Scots as one years feu duty for the parks lately possessed by the deceased Mr. Lawry, and that on account of Mr George Blair, our Minister, the remainder being put into the treasurer's hand. 73:00:00.*

June 30, 1746 – Received from John McDowall of Freugh rent for seats in the church.



Transcription: *This day Bailly John Gray, factor to the trustees of **John McDowall of Freugh** hath paid into the treasurer fifty shillings sterling as one years @rent of fifty pound sterling in bond by the said John McDowall for the use of the poor of this parish, commencing from Martinmas one thousand seven hundred and forty four years to the term of Martinmas one thousand seven hundred and forty five years inclusive, for which he got a discharge.*

Sep. 21st, 1747 - a fine for John Vans and Margaret Agnew's irregular marriage (probably wasn't proclaimed or the banns read, as they may have been married in another parish).



Transcription: *This day Mr George Blair gave in one guinea (21 shillings) which he got from John Vans of Barnbarroch for his irregular marriage to Margaret Agnew, daughter, to Robert Agnew of Shuchan, out of which was given to Mr Blair four shillings to pay the synod clerk two terms, the other seventeen shillings is in the treasurer's hand for the use of the poor.*

An "Irregular" Marriage in Scotland

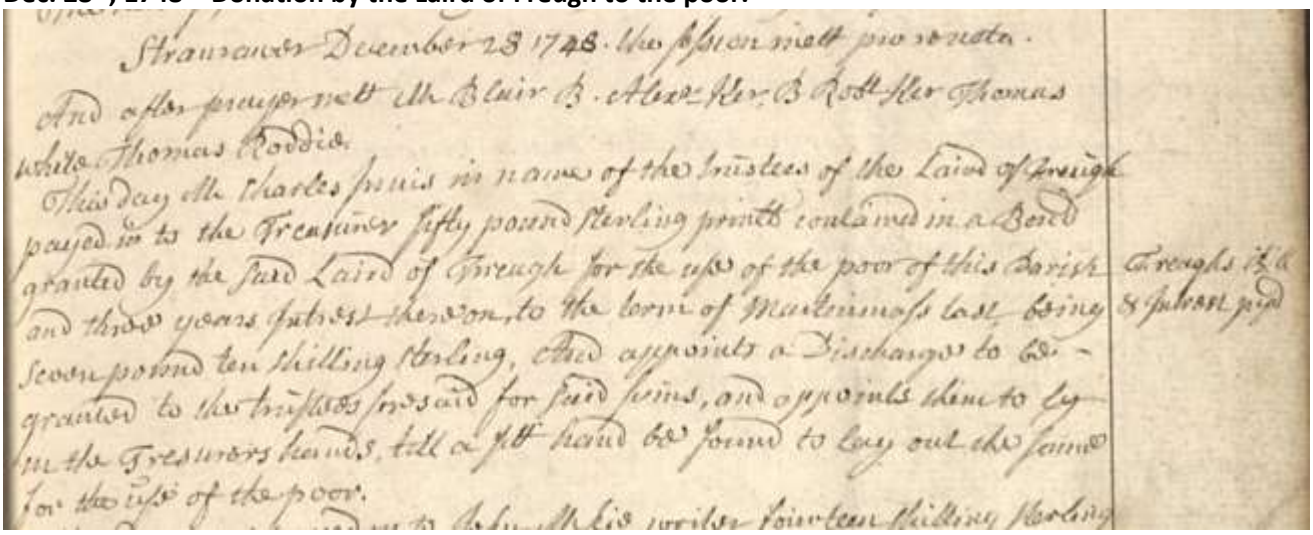


December 28th, 1748 – Laird of Freugh's donation to the poor, John MCDOUALL of Freugh (1700-1757)



Transcription: *This day Mr Charles Pruis in name of the trustees of the **Laird of Freugh** payed in to the treasurer fifty pounds sterling print contained in a bond granted by the said **Laird of Freugh** for the use of the poor of this parish, and three years interest thereon, to the term of Martinmas last, being seven pounds ten shillings sterling, and appoints a discharge to be granted to the trustees foresaid for said terms, and appoints them to be in the treasurer's hands, till a sett hand be found to lay out the terms for the use of the poor.*

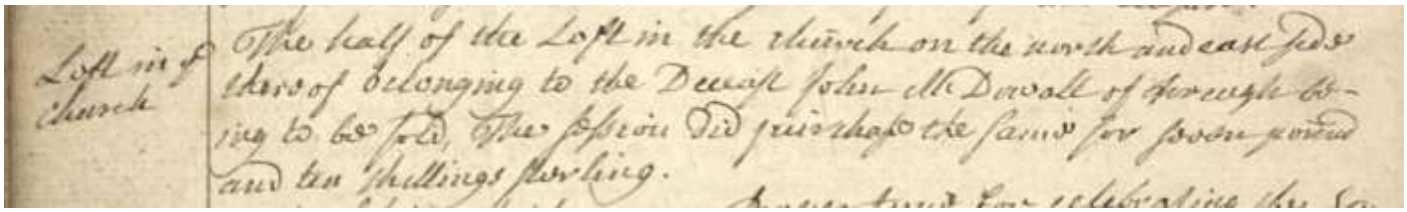
Dec. 28th, 1748 – Donation by the Laird of Freugh to the poor.



Transcription: *This day Mr. Charles Pruis in name of the trustees of the **Laird of Freugh**, paid into the treasurer fifty pound sterling print contained in a bond granted by the said Laird of Freugh for the use of the poor of this parish, and three years interest thereon, to the term of Martinmas last, being seven pound ten shillings sterling. And appoints a discharge to be granted to the trustees aforesaid for said sums, and appoints them to be in the treasurer's hands, till a set hand be found to lay out the same for the use of the poor.*

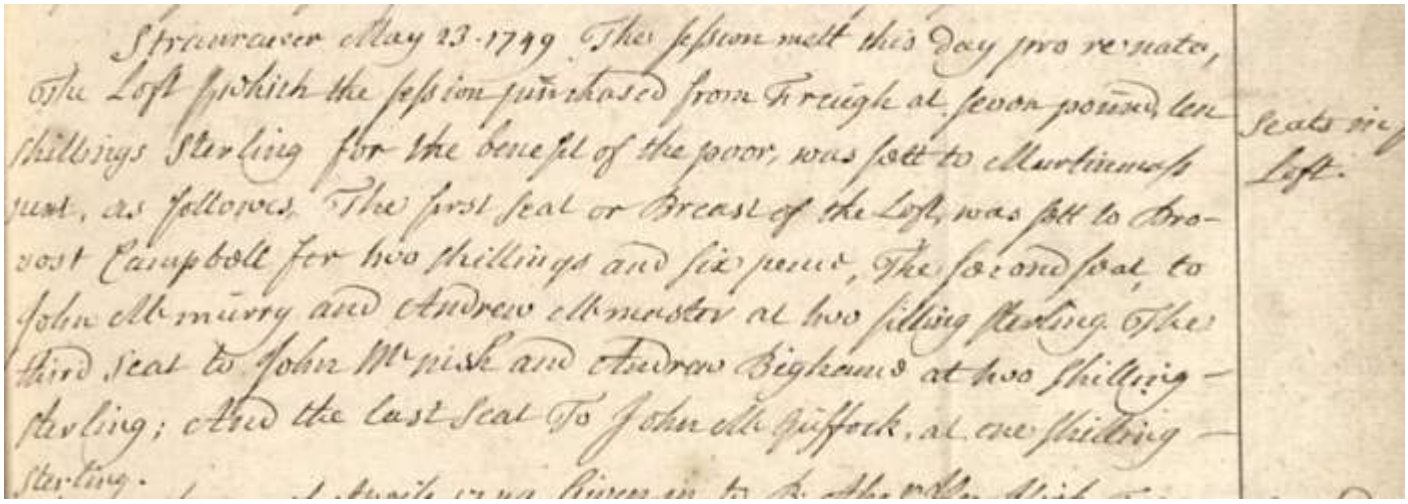
March 27, 1749 – John McDowall of Freugh deceased

This entry was the first confirmation that John McDowall died earlier than previously recorded.



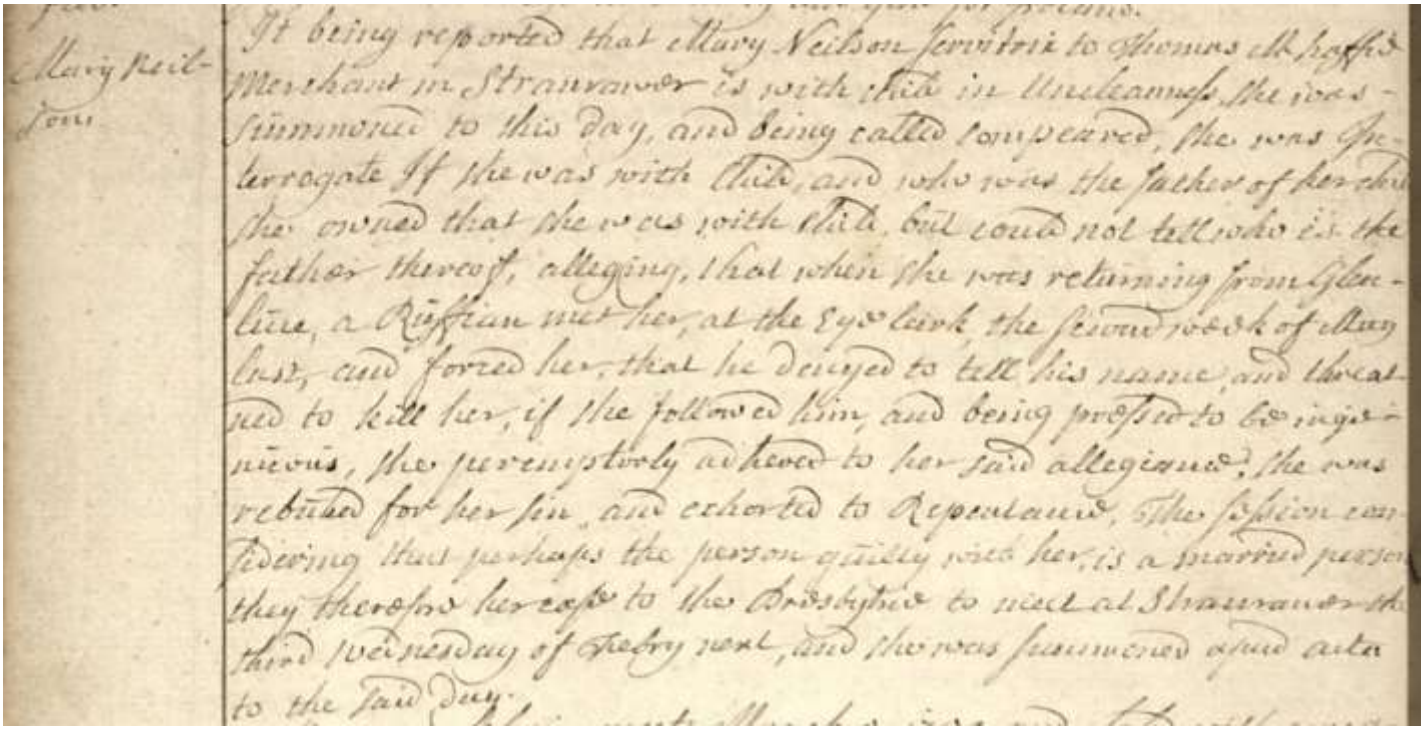
Transcription: *The half of the loft in the church on the north and east side thereof belonging to the **deceased John McDowall of Freugh** being to be sold, the session did purchase the same for seven pounds and ten shillings sterling.*

May 23rd, 1749 – The Freugh Loft



Transcription: *The loft, which the session purchased from **Freugh** at seven pounds ten shillings sterling for the benefit of the poor, was set to Martinmas next as follows; the first seat or breast of the loft, was sett to Provost Campbell for two shillings and sixpence, the forward seat to John McMurray and Andrew McMaster at two shillings sterling, the third seat to John McNish and Andrew Bighams at two shillings sterling, and the last seat to John McGuffock, at one shilling sterling.*

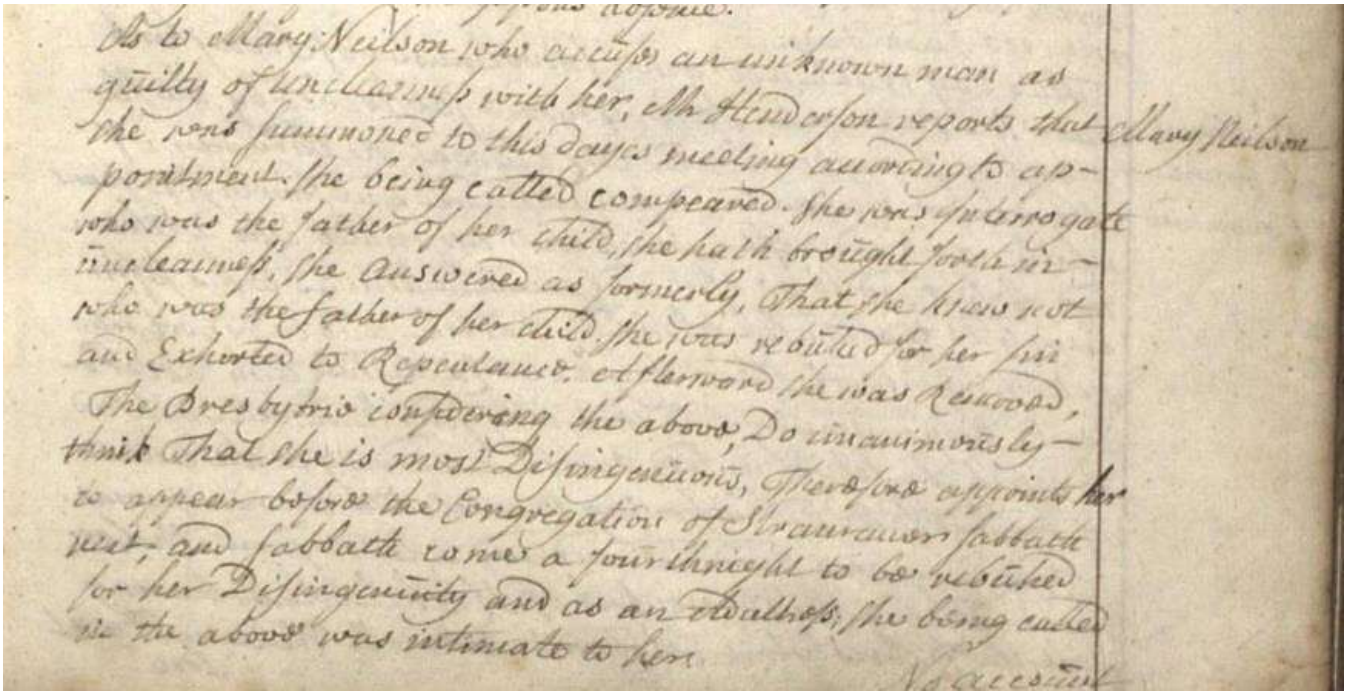
January 15, 1750 - Mary Neilson alleges that she was raped but she was still summoned, rebuked and ordered to repent.



Transcription: *It being reported that Mary Neilson, servant to Thomas McHaffie, merchant in Stranraer, is with child in uncleanness, she was summoned to this day. And being called, compeared. She was interrogated if she was with child, and who was the father of her child. She owned that she was with child, but could not tell who is the father thereof, alleging that when she was returning from Glenluce, a ruffian met her at the Eye Lark the second week of May last, and forced her, that he denyed to tell his name, and threatened to kill her if she followed him. And being pressed to be ingenuous, she peremptively adhered to her said allegiance. She was rebuked for her sin, and exhorted to repentance.*

The Session considering that perhaps the person guilty with her, is a married person, they therefore (refer) her case to the Presbytery to meet at Stranraer the third Wednesday of February next, and she was summoned apud acta to the said day.

From the Stranraer Presbytery record dated August 1st, 1750



Anent Mary Neilson

As to Mary Neilson who accuses an unknown man as guilty of uncleanness with her, Mr Henderson reports that she was summoned to this days meeting according to appointment. She being called compeared. She was interrogated who was the father of her child she hath brought forth in uncleanness. She answered as formerly, that she knows not who was the father of her child. She was rebuked for her sin and exhorted to Repentance. Afterward she was removed. The Presbytery considering the above, do unanimously think that she is most Disingenuous, Therefore appoints her to appear before the Congregation of Stranraer sabbath next, and sabbath come a fortnight to be rebuked for her Disingenuity and as an adulteress; She being called the above was intimate to her.

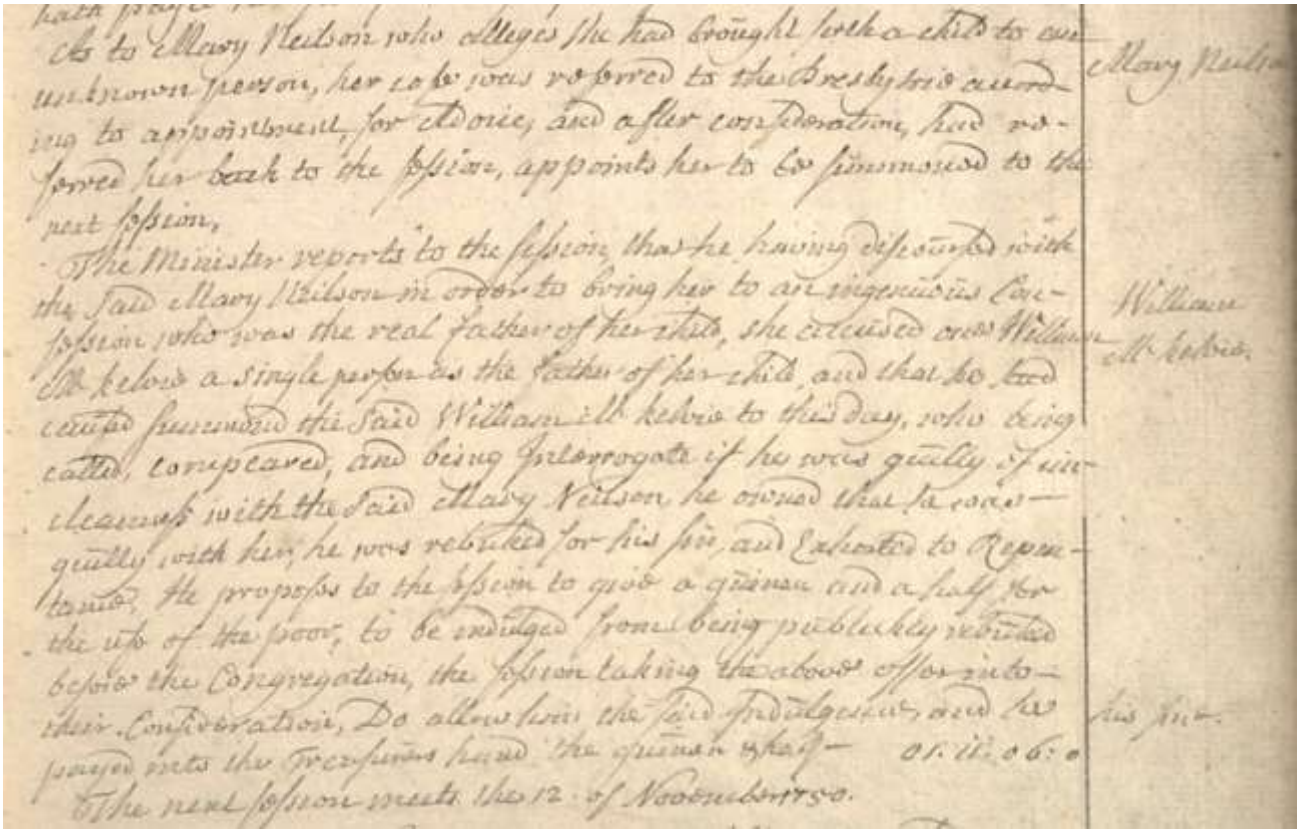
Vacuum

Transcription: *As to Mary Neilson who accuses an unknown man as guilty of uncleanness with her, Mr Henderson reports that she was summoned to this day's meeting according to appointment. She being called, compeared. She was interrogated who was the father of her child she hath brought forth in uncleanness. She answered as formerly, that she knows not who was the father of her child. She was rebuked for her sin and exhorted to repentance. Afterward she was removed. The Presbytery considering the above, do unanimously think that she is most disingenuous, therefore appoints her to appear before the congregation of Stranraer (at the) sabbath next, and sabbath come a fortnight to be rebuked for her disingenuity and as an adulteress. She being called, the above was intimate to her.*



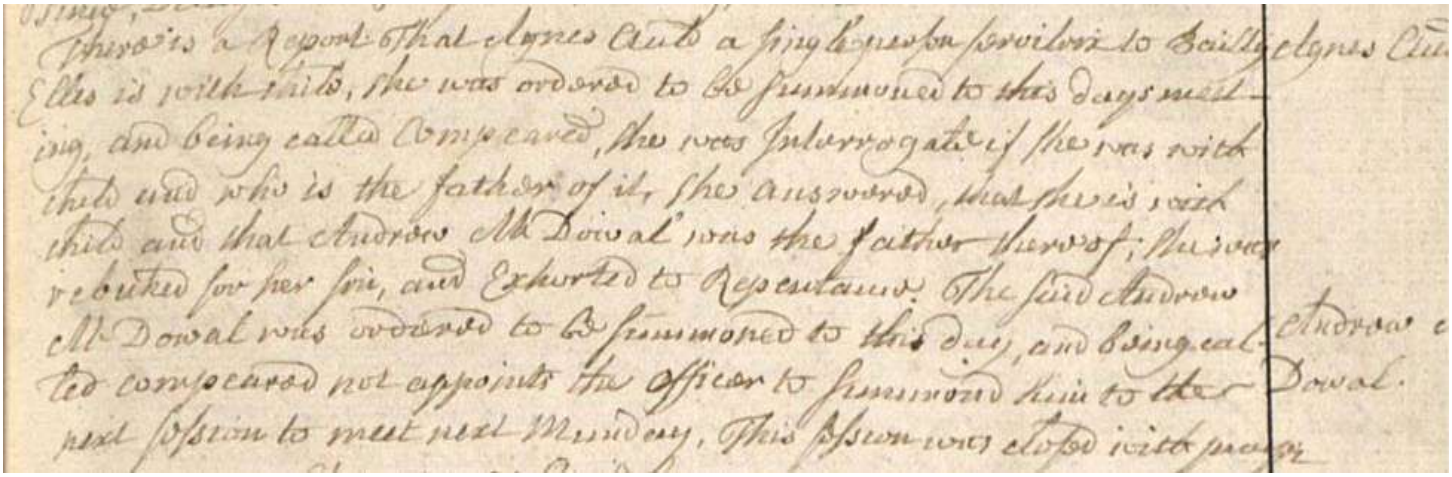
Mary Neilson, a victim of rape, was rebuked for her sin, and finally reveals who raped her.

October 15, 1750 – Mary Neilson finally confesses



Transcription: *As to Mary Neilson who alleges she had brought forth a child to an unknown person, her case was referred to the Presbytery according to appointment, for Advice, and after consideration had referred her back to the Session, appoints her to be summoned to the next Session.*
The Minister reports to the Session, that he having discussed with the said Mary Neilson in order to bring her to an ingenuous confession who was the real father of her child, she accused one William McKelvie, a single person, as the father of her child, and that she caused summoned the said William McKelvie to this day, who being called, compeared. And being interrogated if he was guilty of uncleanness with the said Mary Neilson, he owned that he was guilty with her. He was rebuked for his sin and exhorted to repentance. He proposes to the Session to give a guinea and a half for the use of the poor, to be indulged from being publicly rebuked before the congregation. The Session taking the above offer into their consideration, do allow him the said indulgence and he paid into the treasurer's hand the guinea and a half. 01:11:06:0

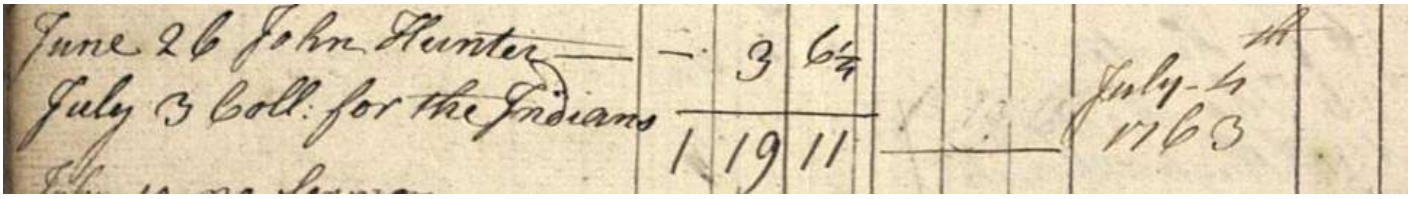
Oct. 8th, 1754 – Andrew McDowall fathers a child.



Transcription: *There is a report that Agnes Cuts, a single person, servant to Baillie Ellis, is with child. She was ordered to be summoned to this day's meeting, and being called, compeared. She was interrogated if she was with child and who is*

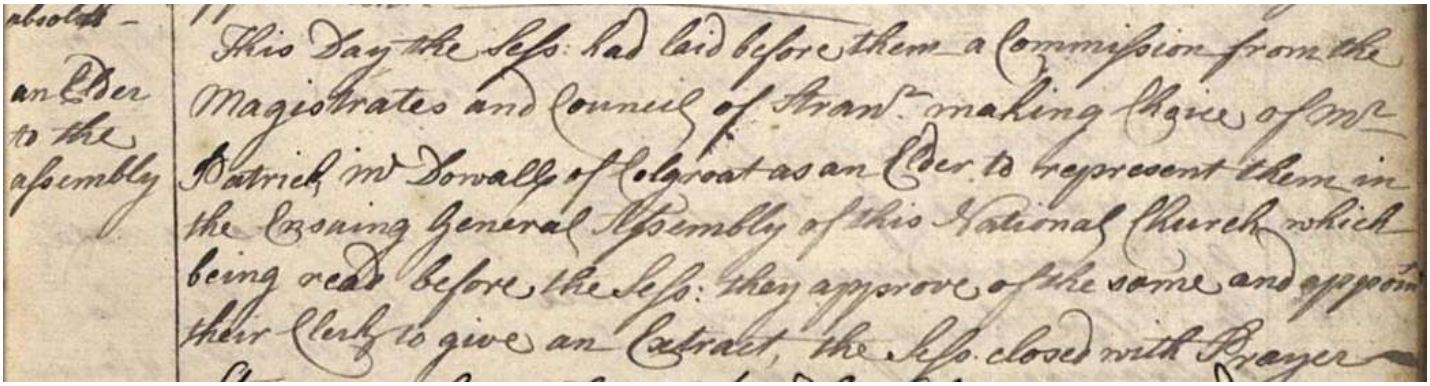
the father of it. She answered that she is with child and Andrew McDowall was the father thereof. She was rebuked for her sin, and exhorted to repentance. The said Andrew McDowall was ordered to be summoned to this day, and being called, compeared not. Appoints the officer to summon him to the next Session to meet next Monday.

July 3rd/4th1763 – from the financial accounts


June 26 John Hunter — 3 6¼
July 3 Coll: for the Indians
1 19 11
July 4th 1763

Transcription: *Collection for the Indians.* In America? Funds had been raised previously for "the poor miners in America".

March 30th, 1767 – Patrick McDowall appointed elder to the parish.


an Elder to the assembly

This Day the Sess: had laid before them a Commission from the Magistrates and Council of Stranr. making Choice of Mr Patrick McDowall of Colgroat as an Elder to represent them in the Ensuing General Assembly of this National Church which being read before the Sess: they approve of the same and appoint their Clerk to give an Extract, the Sess: closed with Prayer

Transcription: *This day the Session had laid before them a commission from the magistrates and council of Stranraer, making Choice of Mr Patrick McDowall of Colgroat as an elder to represent them in the ensuing general assembly of this national church, which being read before the Session they approve of the same and appoint their clerk to give an extract.*