

DISCOVER

CUSTOMER MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR



BOX OF DELIGHTS

Ian Rankin lifts the lid on the life of Muriel Spark

PLUS What do Brian Cox, Michael Palin and Lorraine Kelly share?

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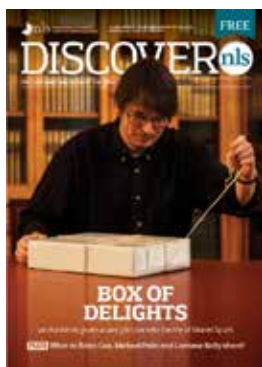
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DISCOVER NLS
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We welcome all comments, questions, submissions and subscription enquiries. Please write to us at the National Library of Scotland address below or email discover@nls.uk

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An invitation to inspiring insights

Opening up the latest book by the crime writer Ian Rankin is, for many of us, a sheer delight. In this issue of *Discover NLS* the tables are turned on the creator of *Rebus* as he delves into the archive of his literary hero.

He is given an intimate look at the life of Dame Muriel Spark as he highlights the Library's fundraising campaign to buy the last tranche of her archive. It is with respect – and glee – that he opens a box of her personal papers. Find out what happened on page 18.

Inspiration is behind so much of what we do at the National Library. Our collections are a mix of the enthralling, the precious and the curious, from original copies of classic works such as *Treasure Island*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Pride and Prejudice*, to an umbrella belonging to Muriel Spark's suffragette grandmother.

Amid this wonderful mix of manuscripts, books, publications and artefacts, stars from the arts and media have found their inspirations. Brian Cox, Michael Palin and Lorraine Kelly are among those who have visited the Library to take part in our ongoing Inspirations series. They use our collections to tell us – on page 12 – about the influences that have shaped their lives.

The acclaimed writer James Kelman meets journalist Michael Tierney in the shadow of an elephant at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. They take tea with a large helping of grammar.

Our maps curator Chris Fleet illuminates the life and work of a pioneer mapmaker from Scotland who made the world a safer place. Lastly, Dora Petherbridge discovers a diary smaller than her hand that opens up an emotive story of the American Civil War.

Inspiration, from cover to cover.



John Scally

DR JOHN SCALLY
National Librarian

PEN AND INK IN TIMES OF PERIL

1

THE QUEEN

Mary Queen of Scots wrote her last letter six hours before being executed on the orders of her cousin and rival, Elizabeth I, in 1587
<http://digital.nls.uk/mqs/>



2

THE EMIGRANT

Driven by poverty, Flora MacDonald (right) wrote this emotive letter in 1774 before emigrating with her husband to America and a new life
http://bit.ly/nls_flora



3

THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

A moving letter from Thomas Hannan to his mother Nellie in 1917, explaining his controversial beliefs
http://bit.ly/conscientious_objector

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JAMES KELMAN BY ALA SDAIR GRAY



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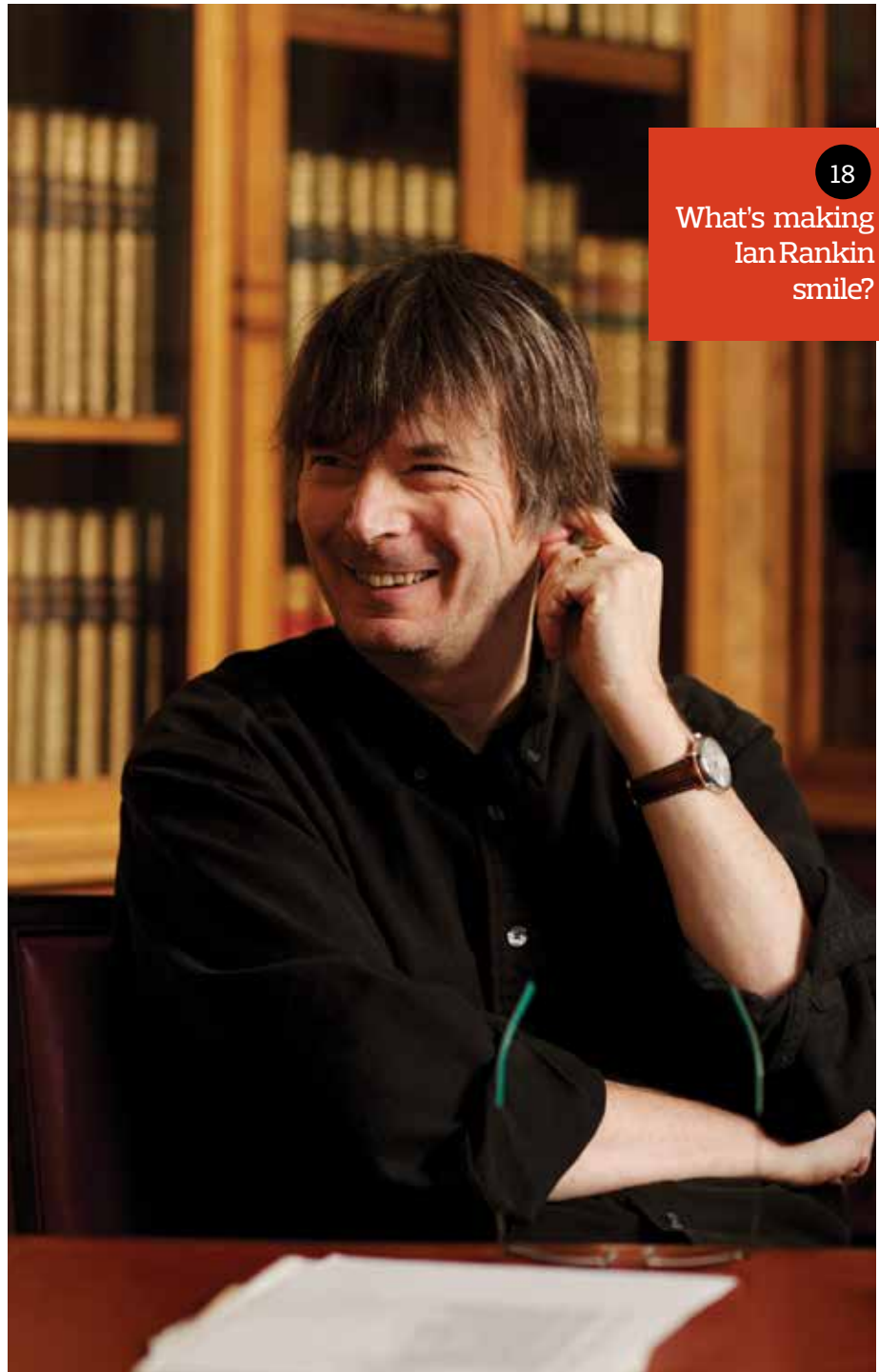
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SIMON MURPHY

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Rare Books, Maps, Manuscripts & Photographs



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RACKHAM, ARTHUR - J. M. BARRIE

Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens.

London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1906. 4to, number

287 of 500 copies signed by Arthur Rackham

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Sally Magnusson as
a baby with her parents
Mamie and Magnus



'I can hear him in these words'

Family of Magnus Magnusson donates his archive

He was best known for the catchphrase "I've started so I'll finish", which punctuated each episode of the British quiz show *Mastermind*.

Now these words, along with the papers and documents of Magnus Magnusson, belong to the nation after his family gifted his archive to the National Library.

Sally Magnusson, presenter of the BBC current affairs programme *Reporting Scotland*, explained why the family donated the copious amount of paperwork her father had kept up until his death in 2007.

She said: "My dad had such a wide range of intellectual interests and much of his writing throws light on aspects of life I believe have a place in our national memory. Everything from the landscape to church buildings to Viking settlements to place names, birds, wildlife, education ... you name it.

"My father never threw anything out – just in case he might need it for an article or a speech in the future. Every TV or book project generated a flood of research material he stowed away."

The journalist described how it took weeks to sift through her father's archive. "I kept being slowed down by stopping to read what he had written," she said. "Even in draft form, he could never write a boring sentence."

Magnus Magnusson was born in Iceland but moved to Scotland with his family when he was one. He joined the BBC in 1964 as a presenter on the *Tonight* programme and in 1972 became the face of *Mastermind*,



which he hosted for 25 years. He was awarded an honorary knighthood in 1989.

He died in his home near Glasgow at the age of 77, survived by his wife Mamie and four children, Sally, Margaret, Anna and Jon. Siggie, his elder son, had died in a road accident at age 11. Mamie, an accomplished journalist in her own right, lived

with dementia for eight years before her death in 2012.

Asked to name the most precious part of Magnus Magnusson's archive, Sally said: "Anything with my father's handwriting on it. Or indeed just anything in his own beautifully chosen words – which of course is almost everything – because I can hear him in them."

WHAT INSPIRES A COMEDIAN?

Rory Bremner to join the ranks of big name guests

EVENT

A master of satire is the latest celebrity to share their influences with an audience at the National Library.

Rory Bremner, acclaimed for his impressions of British politicians, is to delve into the Library's collections this June as part of the *Inspirations* series.

Figures from the worlds of literature, business, science, politics, film and television have contributed to the series, launched in 2009. They include the actors Brian Cox and Michael Palin, and the TV presenter Lorraine Kelly, who share their inspirations in this issue.

Each speaker links his or her inspirations to documents, books and objects they have discovered in the Library's collections.

Sarah Adwick, the Library's Development Officer, said: "An *Inspirations* event is a rare treat for the audience,



Impressionist Rory Bremner

but more importantly allows our guests to see and learn about original material from the Library's collection."

Palin, recently reunited with the Monty Python team on stage, said: "I was grateful to the National Library for helping build a bridge between me and my inspirations, and giving me the opportunity to cross it."

Kelly added: "It's a joy to talk about subjects you feel so passionate about. I also appreciated the intelligent questions from the audience."

Inspirations is part of a year-round programme of events at the Library.

Rory Bremner, *Inspirations*, 22 June, 6pm. See page 12



Party time for legendary book

RARE BOOK COLLECTION

Library celebrates treasured edition

Alice's 150th birthday is a special one and on the occasion, sitting in her fancy party dress at the head of a tea table. This is no ordinary party, though, and Alice is no ordinary girl. This is the mad tea party, featured in an illustration from the rarest edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Visitors to the Library were recently given the chance to see a first edition copy of the Lewis Carroll book. The title featured in a special display of rare *Alice* titles marking World Book Day - and celebrating the 150th anniversary of the story's first publication.

Only 22 copies of the first edition are thought to exist. One of these, Carroll's working version, sold at auction in New York 17 years ago for £1 million.

The first edition was withdrawn after its illustrator, John Tenniel, complained to the

publisher, Macmillan, about its print quality. Recipients of presentation copies were asked to return them and only a few bound copies have survived, including the Library's copy.

Dr Graham Hogg, the Curator for Rare Books, said: "The Library's copy is one of its treasures, and for security and conservation reasons is only available for consultation with a prior appointment. However, the Library has more than 300 editions of *Alice* and *Alice*-related books in its collections."

Dr Hogg explained the enduring attraction of Carroll's story, which has been translated into more than 125 languages. "Up until the mid-19th century, children's books tended to be stodgy morality tales designed mainly to educate readers. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* broke the mould. Surreal, anarchic and very funny, it has continued to entertain and challenge generations of children and adults."

Visit www.nls.uk/exhibitions/treasures/alice-in-wonderland



FIVE JOIN THE LIBRARY BOARD

The National Library has welcomed five new members onto its Board, completing its line-up of 14. The Board is responsible for the vision, strategy and public accountability of the Library. Pictured are (left to right): William Shields Henderson; Carmel Teusner; Board Chair James Boyle; Helen Durndell and Amina Shah. Iain Marley (not pictured) was also appointed by Fiona Hyslop, Scotland's Culture Secretary.

Gavin Francis
takes a break
from life as a
GP and writer



BODY LANGUAGE

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

National Library proves it is just what the doctor ordered

An upcoming book on the secrets of the human body has taken its author on a voyage through the National Library's collections.

In *Adventures in Human Being*, the writer and GP Gavin Francis has drawn on his experiences as a physician to chart a cultural map of the body. His book, to be published in May, offers insights on

everything from the ribbed surface of the brain to the inner workings of the heart and womb.

Accompanying Francis's first-hand case studies are reflections about how the body has been imagined over the millennia. Many of the physician's research sources have been found on the shelves of the National Library.

"I write at the Library every week when I'm not in the clinic and it's a tremendous resource," he says. "In my essay on facial expression I did a lot of research into Leonardo da Vinci, as he's the earliest Renaissance artist to become really fascinated by the muscles of facial expression. I had access to Vasari's writings on Da Vinci and a wonderful essay by Goethe in Special Collections about his painting *The Last Supper*."

Other notable sources include *On Monsters and Marvels* by the 16th-century French surgeon Ambroise Paré, and biographies of the Argentine author and poet Jorge Luis Borges, who suffered from a degenerative eye disease.

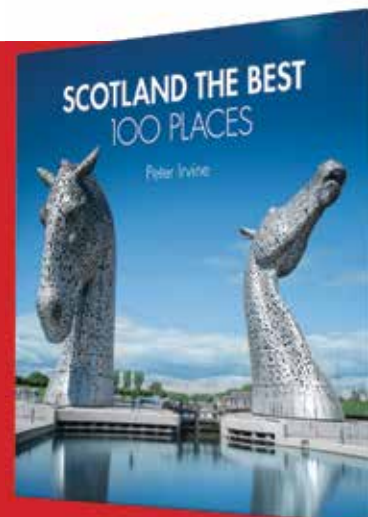


Adventures in Human Being is published on 7 May by Profile Books in partnership with the Wellcome Collection



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MAGAZINE TEAM

Discover NLS has been named customer magazine of the year at the Scottish Magazine Awards 2014. The National Library of Scotland Curator Dora Petherbridge and magazine editor Kathleen Morgan accepted the award from the comedian and BBC Scotland presenter Fred MacAulay, along with Jenny Blackwell of Midton Acrylics. John Innes, the associate director of Think, which publishes *Discover NLS*, was named publisher of the year at the awards ceremony held at the Radisson Blu, Glasgow. Visit www.ppa.co.uk/events/sma2014/winners/



COMPETITION

WIN a guide to Scotland's top locations

Peter Irvine, the organiser of major events including *Edinburgh's Hogmanay*, draws on a lifetime of experiences to write *Scotland The Best 100 Places*. Guiding you to the top locations in which to walk, eat and sleep, the writer of *Scotland the Best* focuses on "reflective, magnificent and human places".

The book, published by Collins, includes striking photography of locations from wild glens to vibrant cities.

The grand tour starts here ...

For your chance to win a copy of the book, answer this question correctly:

Q The largest equine sculptures in the world are found on which Scottish canal?

POST YOUR ENTRY, ALONG WITH YOUR ADDRESS, TO:

Discover NLS Scotland competition, Think, Suite 2.3, Red Tree Business Suites, 33 Dalmarnock Road, Glasgow G40 4LA, or email discovernls@thinkpublishing.co.uk. Please include "Scotland" in the subject line.

The closing date is Friday 8 May.

Life on the front line

CURATOR'S CHOICE – DORA PETHERBRIDGE

From the Virginia swamplands to the National Library, this pocket diary offers a glimpse into the life of an American Civil War soldier

The unknown author of this tiny, fragile diary was a Union private fighting in Confederate Virginia in 1862, the second year of the American Civil War. Irrepressible tensions between the industrial North and agrarian, slave-holding South had escalated and war broke out at Fort Sumter in April 1861.

The diary, donated to the National Library in the 1970s, fits into the palm of a hand. It is a treasured relic from the 'War of Northern Aggression' or of 'Rebellion', as the conflict is variously known. Its diminutive size is striking, but its imaginative possibilities are compelling – how old was the soldier; what was his background; did he tuck this little book

into the pocket of his blue uniform?

From deciphering the now faded handwriting on the worn, grubby pages of the diary, it's clear the soldier was in camp and battle between the James and Chickahominy rivers on the Virginia Peninsula. The brief entries, running from early May until 8 September 1862, record the soldier's duties and the highlights of his days: "inspection of arms"; "on the march"; "got Payed [sic]"; "posted a Letter home"; "got new pants and new Boots".

We believe the soldier was involved in the Union's Peninsula campaign, particularly its culmination – the Seven Days' Battles. Noting where he was "on picket", scouting and fighting, the

Dora Petherbridge with the palm-sized diary of a Union private

soldier maps his march toward Richmond, and then retreat to Yorktown as the 'Rebels' drove back Union regiments.

Richmond, the Confederate States' capital, was hugely significant for both the North and South. Hampered by stormy weather, difficult terrain, and the need for more troops, General George McClellan's efforts to seize the South's seat of power failed. General Robert E Lee and his Confederate Army held the city.

On 30 June 1862, towards the end of the Confederate counter-offensive ending the Peninsula campaign, our soldier writes, "very hard fitting [sic] we fall back weak". And again the next day, "very Hard Fiting [sic] we fall Back in

the night". Eventually, after further fighting in early July, the soldier states "all Quiett [sic]".

For troops on both sides conditions were punishing. Scant rations, exhaustion, and the spread of disease took their toll. It is against the background of daily hardship that this soldier writes, and it is the weather, the marching, issuing of whisky, and the arrival of letters from home that he finds noteworthy. He neither mentions secession nor states' rights, or the issue of slavery.

Thinking of this soldier as one of thousands who were at the mercy of political and military decisions, his entry for Thursday 17 July 1862 is particularly touching: "One Tear in my nice

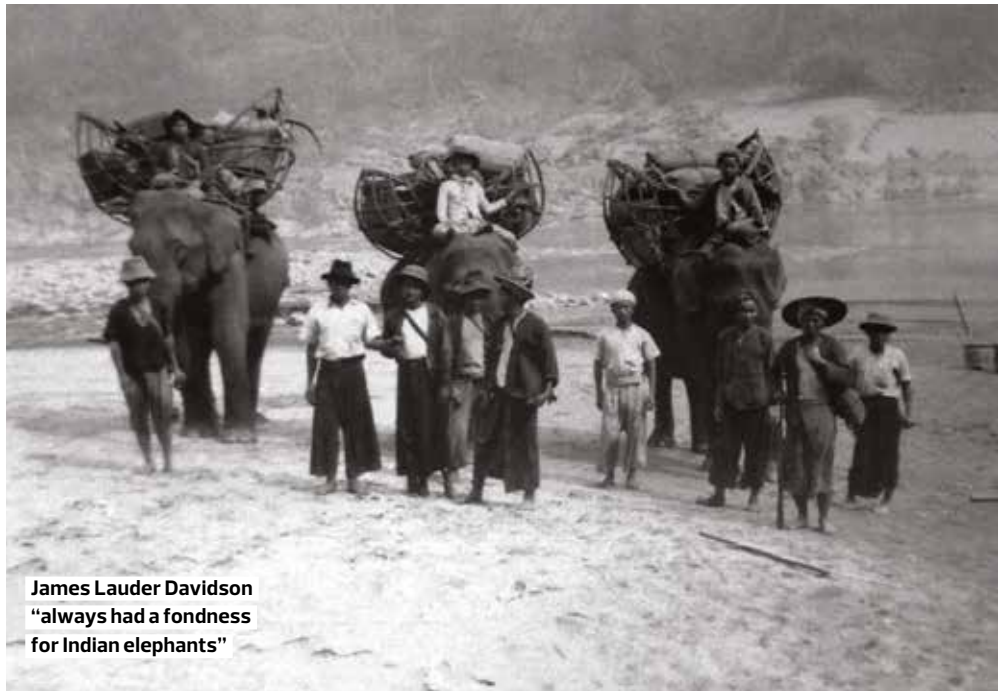


MALCOLM COCHRANE

Quilt". An acutely personal experience noted between battles which would shape the fate of the United States of America.

In transcribing this diary, I am indebted to the help of Christopher Minty, who carried out research for his PhD in history at the Library. Chris, who I have worked with on many fascinating items in our American collections, described the "visceral charge" of the item, and how it gives a sense of immediacy to a war which ended 150 years ago.

The fragility of the diary conveys the vulnerability of the private in the midst of a conflict that claimed the lives of an estimated 750,000 soldiers. It is extraordinary that this soldier's quiet, battle-worn voice has survived.



James Lauder Davidson
"always had a fondness
for Indian elephants"

OUT OF THE WOODS

COLLECTIONS

Tales of daring turn up in WW2 memento

The diaries of a forester-turned-soldier charting his escape to China from Burma during World War II have been donated to the National Library.

James Lauder Davidson, a University of Edinburgh graduate, was sent to Burma in 1938 as a forestry worker for a Scottish firm. Following the outbreak of war, his knowledge of languages led him to become chief liaison officer to the Chinese army, which was fighting Japanese forces.

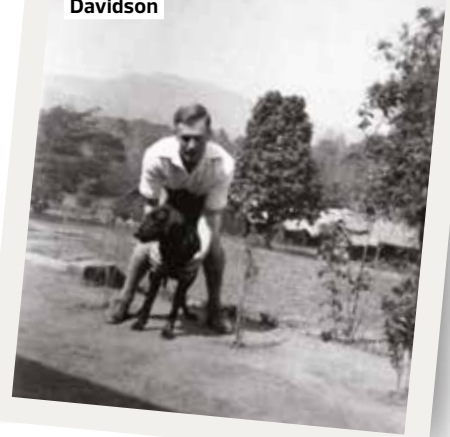
He helped the Chinese communicate with Burmese civilians before the conflict forced him to escape to China and on to India. Joining the British army in India, Davidson served as a captain in the intelligence corps and returned to Burma – now also known as Myanmar – for which he was mentioned in dispatches.

Davidson's daughter, Avril Salt, who donated his papers to the Library, said: "My decision was guided by the fact that my father was educated in Scotland and always through his life regarded Peebles as his home.

"I was always aware of my father's life

"I was always aware of my father's life in Burma as he and my mother talked about it during my childhood"

The forester-
turned-soldier
Davidson



in Burma as he and my mother talked about it in my childhood ... I never read the diaries until my mother's death last year when I came into possession of them.

"His wartime experiences were never mentioned much. Mostly he talked about his work in the jungle, and he always had a fondness for Indian elephants."

Along with the diaries, Salt donated two photograph albums, passes enabling passage through conflict zones, and a receipt for a pistol. Besides charting his wartime experiences, the material sheds light on Davidson's life as a forester in Burma before and after the conflict.

The son of a British tea planter in India, Davidson returned to the UK to work for the Forestry Commission. Awarded an OBE in 1976, he died in 1992.

MOVING STORIES

What does a Shakespearean actor have in common with a queen of daytime TV and a *Monty Python* legend? Their inspirations are all found in the Library collections. Brian Cox is first to share his influences with Kathleen Morgan

It's rare to see a Hollywood star sauntering down an Edinburgh street with a bag of groceries, but that's just how we first meet Brian Cox, who nods hello from beneath his tweed newsboy cap, drops his bag and negotiates the front door of the Georgian townhouse he is borrowing overnight.

Minutes later, the star of *Braveheart*, *The Bourne Identity* and *X2: X-Men United* settles on a large sofa beside a log burner, explaining that he has just arrived from London. Groceries forgotten, he prepares to talk about the touchstones of his life – including cinema, Edinburgh and hotel rooms – to celebrate the *Inspirations* programme for the National Library of Scotland. The ongoing series of audience events has featured well-known figures, including Michael Palin, Lorraine Kelly and Nigel Planer. The roll call will this summer include impressionist Rory Bremner.

FAMILY MAN

Life has moved on since Brian visited the Library in 2010 to share his inspirations with an audience. The Dundee-born actor, who travels the globe to work on film, television and theatre productions, is spending more time than usual at home in Brooklyn, New York, where he lives with his second wife, German actress Nicole Ansari, and their two sons. He is shooting *The Slap*, a US television series about the reverberations of a child being hit after misbehaving at a family

wedding. This trip to Scotland is to attend the memorial of a friend, and to visit his older sister in Dundee.

He speaks affectionately of his sons Orson, 12, and Torin, 10, describing them as "the anchors of my life – and necessary, otherwise I would probably spin into outer space". They are becoming more blasé about their father being away from home, he laughs.

Brian, who has won acclaim for his portrayal of King Lear on stage, admits he misses aspects of British life, particularly the theatre. "I miss the culture – it's very vibrant. I try to split my time between the two places."

WHERE DREAMS ARE MADE

Brian, who began his working life at 15 as a message boy for Dundee Rep theatre, cites cinema as one of his biggest inspirations. He comes to life as he tells how he visited picture houses with his mother and aunts from the age of six, later playing truant from primary school to watch films such as *Giant* and *On the Waterfront*.

Cinema was a staple in his otherwise unsettled childhood. His father, Chic, who ran a grocery shop in Dundee, died very suddenly from pancreatic cancer when Brian was eight, leaving his mother struggling with grief and a legacy of debt. "He was ill for three weeks and then he was gone," says the actor, who describes his father as generous, sociable and too soft on his customers.

Brian Cox with a copy of Charles Edward's plan of Dundee 1846, presented to the actor by the Library



“My sons are the anchors of my life. Without them I would spin into outer space”

Brian Cox, acclaimed for his portrayal of King Lear, reads some of the Library's collection of Shakespeare



"My father gave a massive amount of credit to people and they didn't pay their bills," explains the actor. "He was the kind of patriarch in this area, but he was let down very badly and my mum couldn't collect the debt once he died. The pressure on my mum was huge."

Struggling with both physical and mental illness, Brian's mother was unable to cope with looking after her youngest child – his sisters were leaving home

to marry, and his brother to join the army.

His sister Betty stepped in to help raise him along with her own children, and, at 85, remains central to his life.

TALE OF TWO CITIES

He softens as he speaks about Dundee, describing his boyhood as "ostensibly a happy one", in spite of the economic and emotional turmoil. "I spent all my childhood running on the beaches," he says. "We had a

wee hut at Broughty Ferry and used to go down there for seven weeks in the holidays. That whole stretch of the Tay there is just a fantastic resource. I go back and go, 'God, I was born here, and I took it all for granted!'"

Brian describes how he devoured up to eight films a week at two cinemas on his street. "I suppose it was a way of escaping, but it was also just a world I loved. I loved the cinemas, the dark, the lady selling Ki-Ora."



It is the capital, though, that inspires him most. "I love Edinburgh," he says. "I love its design, its geography. Edinburgh is the city of Robert Louis Stevenson, David Hume, John Knox. It's where Burns had his success as a poet. It's also the light – I am a man of the east because of the light."

HOW THE LIBRARY INSPIRED US



KING LEAR

Brian Cox

Shakespeare's tragedy, dated 1608 though first printed in 1619, was titled the 'true chronicle history of the life and death of King Lear and his three daughters'. Brian Cox was acclaimed for his King Lear.

Visit http://bit.ly/shakespeare_nls



TELEVISION

Lorraine Kelly

This first edition of *Television Journal*, published in 1928, tapped into the excitement surrounding the little box that changed domestic life forever. Find out about the technology behind TV.

Visit http://bit.ly/television_nls



THE GOON SHOW SCRIPTS

Michael Palin

This edition of *The Goon Show Scripts* is written and selected by Spike Milligan, a hero of Palin. The Library has various collections of scripts from the radio show that revolutionised British comedy and was broadcast between 1951-1960.

THE POOR HOUSE

In contrast, his family history has left him with a gloomy perception of Glasgow, which he associates with suffering and darkness. Brian explains his great-grandfather, a canal worker from Derry, Northern Ireland, fell on hard times after moving to Glasgow. "He had a rough time in Glasgow. By



Robert Louis Stevenson,
with his wife Fanny
and friends, on the
Marquesas Islands

the time he was 39, he'd lost his wife and five of his eight kids, and was in the poor house with his six-year-old boy and couldn't get a job ... He died at Gartcosh asylum at the age of 53, thinking he was a 14-year-old boy back in Derry."

Brian's maternal grandfather moved to Dundee, which offered a safety net if you were poor. "I remember Billy Connolly telling me his great-grandmother tried to get into Dundee because it had these asylums, which were these kind of homes for people who had nothing ... Glasgow was an unforgiving city.

"There's that heaviness in Glasgow – that glowering thing," he says. "Glasgow

"In *Travels With a Donkey*, Stevenson writes, 'I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake ...'"

glowers." There is a hint of mischief in his eyes and the actor acknowledges the city is also renowned for its friendliness and community.

Whichever city the actor finds himself in, from Glasgow to Budapest, he will find a place of sanctuary. "I love hotel bedrooms," he says, citing another of his inspirations. "I love their anonymity. I love that the beds are done for me, that they get made every day. I love the fact it's all tidy when I come back at night, and that it's impersonal and doesn't make any demands

on me other than just to lie there, relax, watch the telly, order room service and have a jolly nice time. It really comes from my background, because of my issues of poverty when I was a child."

NEST FOR NOMADS

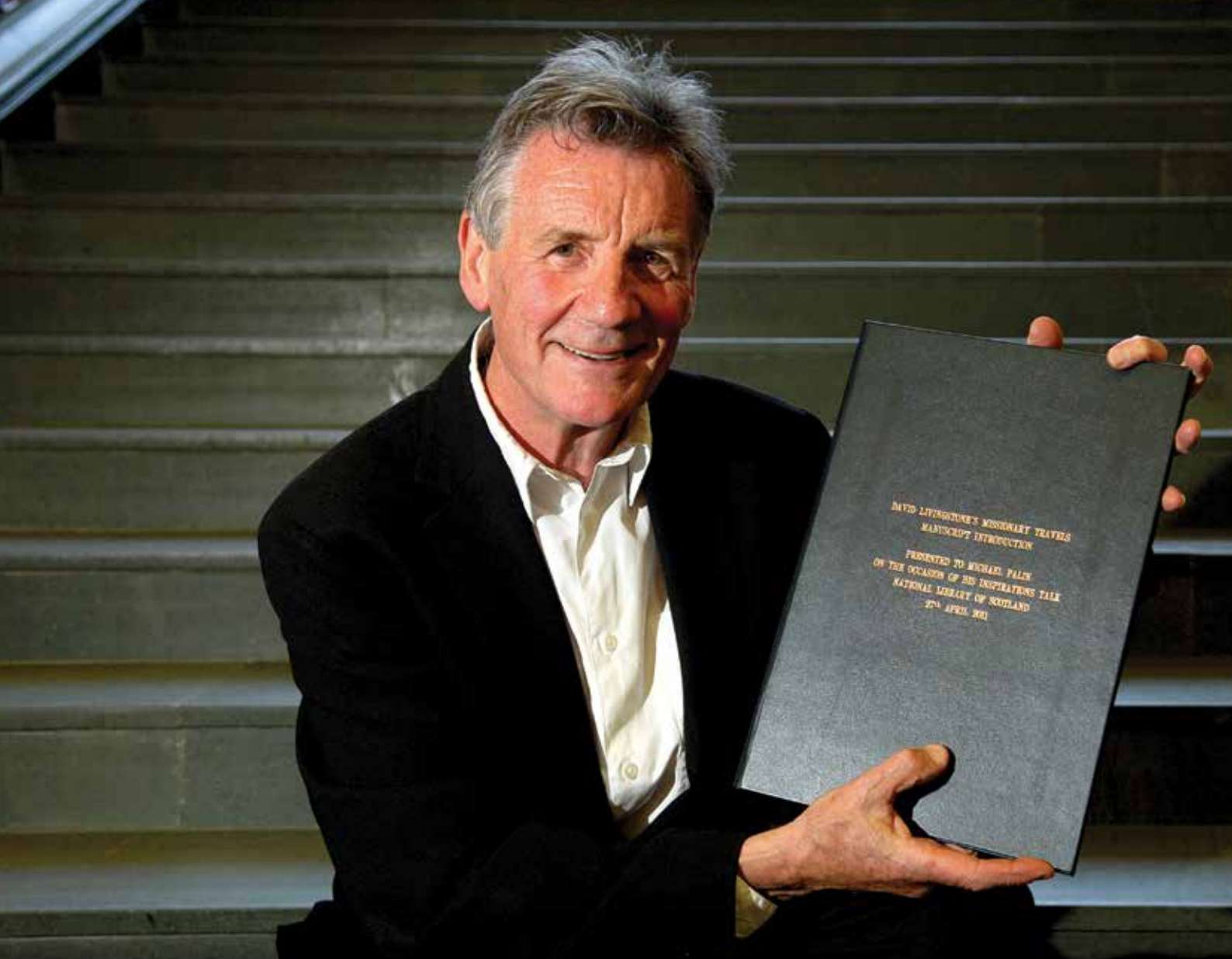
The actor describes himself as a restless soul. A recent *New York Times* article about his family's home life in a high-rise apartment in Brooklyn was headlined "A Nest For Nomads". "That really summed us up," he says, explaining that his sons are a fusion of Scots,

Irish, German, Persian, Polish and Russian blood. "We're like birds that nest: we sit down then we bugger off."

Shifting on his sofa, Brian returns to his literary hero, Stevenson. The writer of *Treasure Island* was born a few streets away from where he sits in Edinburgh's New Town and died at 44 in Samoa after a lifetime of travel. He quotes the first lines of Stevenson's *Travels With a Donkey*: "I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The greatest affair is to move."

And with that, it's time for him to move. Now, where was that bag of messages?

Visit <http://digital.nls.uk/rlstevenson>



MICHAEL PALIN

The actor, presenter and diarist who recently reunited with the team behind *Monty Python* reveals his biggest influences at the Library

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

The Oxford University Revue at the Edinburgh Festival in 1964 was my first exposure to a non-university audience. The reception to the revue was so warm that for the first time in my life I entertained the possibility that I could make a living from writing and performing.

Terry Jones was also in the cast, and he and I went on to write for David Frost's *The Frost Report* where we met Eric Idle, John Cleese and Graham Chapman. In 1969, we agreed to write something new and fresh – this was *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. The best



The Edinburgh Festival in 1964 sparked Michael Palin's career

part of the reunion in 2014 was a reaffirmation of the sheer enjoyment of writing and performing comedy, which began for all of us at university.

THE GOON SHOW

The Goon Show had a powerful influence on my own writing. There was a great freedom and inventiveness about Spike Milligan's humour. He created a gallery of extraordinary comic characters, which he could take in any direction and place in any situation. The more far-fetched it was, the more I revelled in it.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

I first read Ernest Hemingway when I was in my teens, but it was much later when I was researching my novel *Hemingway's Chair* that I discovered just how important travel was to his life and work.

I was drawn to his world because beneath the macho image was a far more complicated man who suffered from depression for much of his later life.

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

When I was young, my ambition was to be an explorer and David Livingstone was one of the

LORRAINE KELLY

The presenter tells of being inspired by Hollywood idols, a great explorer and TV

SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON

I am in awe of this incredible, complex, brave man. Shackleton's plan to cross the entire Antarctic continent ended in failure with his ship *The Endurance* crushed and sunk by the ice. He managed to get his men to Elephant Island and underwent an 800-mile sea voyage to South Georgia that should not have been possible. Once he landed there, he and two of his men had to scale a mountain range to reach the whaling station and get help. His leadership skills were second to none. He didn't lose a single man.



Explorer Ernest Shackleton's leadership skills saved his men

HOLLYWOOD

I admire the legendary Bette Davis. When I was appointed Scottish correspondent for *TV-am* in 1984, I came to London to meet everyone and watch the show being broadcast. The guest that day happened to be Miss Davis. She had battled breast cancer and a stroke, but had so much charisma. She was also smoking a cigarette and even back then you weren't allowed to



smoke in the studio. No one had the nerve to tell her to put her fag out.

TELEVISION

My inspiration as a viewer would have to be the moon landings, which I watched

with my dad in 1969. It really was an event that changed the world.

As a reporter, covering the Lockerbie bombing and shootings in Dunblane were events I will never forget. As a presenter, I will always remember the fall of the Berlin Wall, the horror of 9/11 and the London bombings of 2005, and the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

TV has changed; people watch in different ways. I sit down with my husband and binge-watch *House of Cards*, *Breaking Bad* and *Orange is the New Black*. It's good that TV has evolved.

As a boy, Michael Palin dreamed of living like the explorer David Livingstone

people I wanted to emulate. He was the first non-African to see Victoria Falls – exploration could hardly have been more thrilling than that.

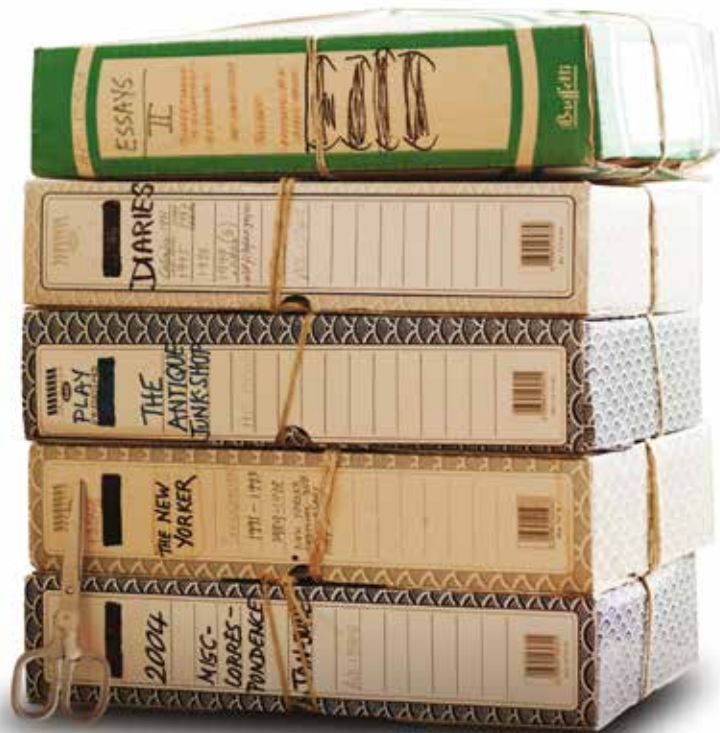
VIRGINIA WOOLF

Virginia Woolf's diary really is an extraordinary resource. She writes with such flair and fluency that there's never a dull day, but what makes the diaries remarkable is how candid she is about her own life. This is a great work of self-examination, rare in someone of such talent and ability. There is so much to learn here.

Among the influences of Lorraine Kelly are Bette Davis, above



STEVE MEDDLE/ITV/REX



BURIED TREASURES

The crime writer Ian Rankin gets a glimpse into the life of his literary hero Muriel Spark as he backs the Library's campaign to complete her archive. Bryan Christie looks on

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMON MURPHY

Mystery and suspense are the crime writer Ian Rankin's stock in trade but rarely does he get the chance to star in his own real-life drama. That opportunity arrives when he agrees to support the Library's £250,000 fundraising campaign to pay for the last instalment of the archive of the celebrated writer Muriel Spark, a self-confessed hoarder of documents.

The Library has taken delivery of dozens of sealed boxes containing the final set of papers. Rankin becomes the first person to peek inside when he opens one of the boxes to reveal its contents.

"This is great," he says as he unknots the twine securing a standard document box marked "diaries", unsure of precisely what treasures lie within. The opened box reveals a selection of diaries, big and small, along with fan letters and other correspondence. "This is just like my boxes at home," says the writer, who has a collection of his own papers. "Some of them are just like this."

He has been offered a selection of five boxes to open and chooses the box of diaries, partly because of his own experience in penning a diary from the age of 12 until his early 30s.

Rankin confesses the material from his teenage years would provide little reward for any contemporary reader and he finds more of interest

in Muriel Spark's diary entries. A quick glance from 1995 shows excerpts such as lunch with John and Penny Mortimer, her near neighbours in Tuscany, a meeting with Lord Gowrie at the Arts Council and arrangements for a BBC interview. Interspersed with these are the more commonplace recording of everyday life in the villa she lived in near Florence – the wedding of "the butcher's daughter" and "Adolpho finishing the olive pruning".

Rankin is like a child at Christmas as he picks through the contents of the box. "I like the fact that, on the same page, you get information about a media interview and a flat tyre – all the domestic as well as the literary stuff. It will be rarer and rarer to find an author's complete life recorded in this way as email and tweets take over from letters and paper."

DEEP ADMIRATION

He and Muriel Spark are both Scottish writers who have achieved international fame but the connection goes much deeper than that. Rankin spent three years – mostly in the National Library of Scotland – studying Spark's work for a PhD which he never completed. His own writing took over, leaving the thesis unfinished. What has stayed with him is a deep admiration for the work of Muriel Spark, widely



Ian Rankin becomes the first person to get a peek into one of Muriel Spark's box files



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P.B.F.A.

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- June 2015** Sat 20
EDINBURGH
Radisson Blu Hotel, 80 High Street, Royal Mile,
Edinburgh EH1 1TH
10am-5pm. £1
- August 2015** Sat 8
GLAMIS FORFAR
Bridge View House Glamis, Forfar DD8 1QU
10am-5pm. £1
- Sun 9
BALLATER
Victoria Hall, Station Square, Ballater
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Clockwise from right: Robin Smith, Head of Collections at the Library, shows Ian Rankin the archive; Muriel Spark freewheeling as a child; striking a pose; and at her desk



“Her novels read like a poet’s novels. They are very short but packed at the same time. *Jean Brodie* is only about 125 pages long but it reads like a 400–page novel”

regarded as one of the most important post-war British novelists.

During his studies he was given an address for her in Rome and considered writing to her but never did. They met only once, in 2004, when Spark made a rare public appearance at the Edinburgh Book Festival, two years before she died. By this time Rankin was a highly successful author but he went along as a fan and got her autograph on his first edition of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. “She knew who I was and I think she knew about the PhD.”

He still has the essays he wrote for the thesis and the card index that maps its structure as part of his own literary archive. “It was fascinating to work on the thesis and to look at her progression as an author. Her novels read like a poet’s novels. They are very short but are packed at the same time. *Jean Brodie* is only about 125 pages long but reads like a 400–page novel because there is so much going on at the margins.”

There was no Muriel Spark archive at the Library when Rankin was doing his research, which took him down some blind alleys. He recalled an interview he read which mentioned a newspaper poetry prize won by a young Muriel Spark. He decided to try to track down the winning entry. “I went through every edition of

every Edinburgh paper for a year looking for that poem but never found it,” he says.

Rankin is supporting the fundraising campaign to help pay for the remaining part of the archive and catalogue all the contents – an estimated four years’ work – which will make life much easier for the researchers of the future.

“It will help people to get a better understanding of her as a human being as well as giving new insights into her books through studying the notebooks she used,” he says. “It will also be interesting to people who are interested in the lives of authors.”

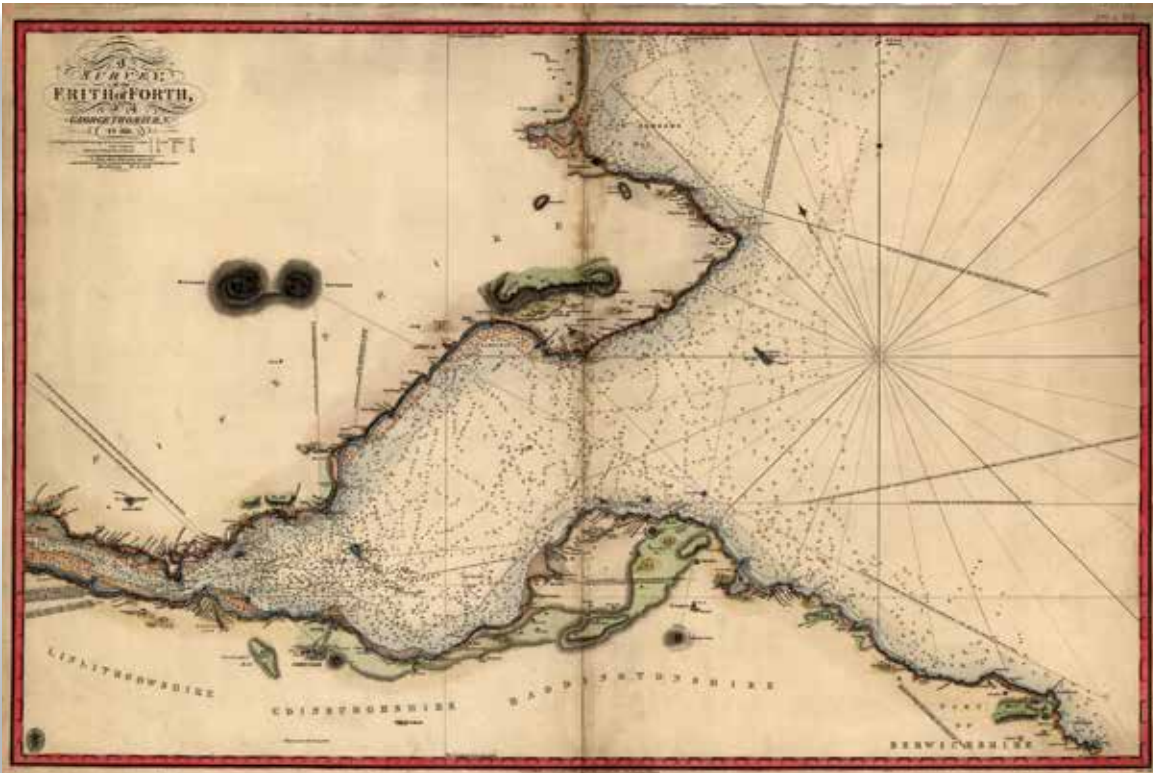
INVALUABLE INSIGHT

Until that work is completed, much of the detail of the archive and the remarkable stories it tells will remain undiscovered and inaccessible.

Muriel Spark corresponded with prime ministers, film stars and literary greats including Graham Greene, John Updike and Kingsley Amis. Her notebooks record her painstaking research and illustrate the development of her most famous novels. The archive also contains everything from restaurant receipts and old passports to telegrams and used train tickets. It is the complete record of the life of one of Scotland’s literary giants.

MURIEL SPARK CAMPAIGN

The National Library is raising funds to buy the last tranche – and catalogue the contents of – the Muriel Spark archive. For information about the campaign, please email the National Library at development@nls.uk or call 0131 623 3733. To contribute please go to <http://www.everydayhero.co.uk/event/murielspark>



MAPPING A LIFE

He was orphaned, shipwrecked and rescued before reinventing himself as a mapmaker. Now the pioneering work of George Thomas can be discovered online, writes Chris Fleet

It is 200 years since a mapmaker and accidental adventurer created an Admiralty chart of the Firth of Forth. With its muted colours and delicate lines, the map, created by George Thomas, was the first of what was to become a large family of such charts reaching to the present day.

As a legal deposit library, the National Library of Scotland has a significant collection of these charts – some 25,000 covering the world’s oceans and ports. For the first time, though, they are a click away, with an initial 1,000 charts covering Scottish waters now accessible on the Library’s website.

If the first chart of the Firth of Forth is fascinating, so is the story of its creator. Appointed head maritime surveyor for home waters in 1810, Thomas spent the next 36 years almost continually at sea, surveying the Scottish east coast from Berwickshire to Angus, then Shetland and Orkney. This was a significant achievement in itself, due to the relatively inhospitable coast and



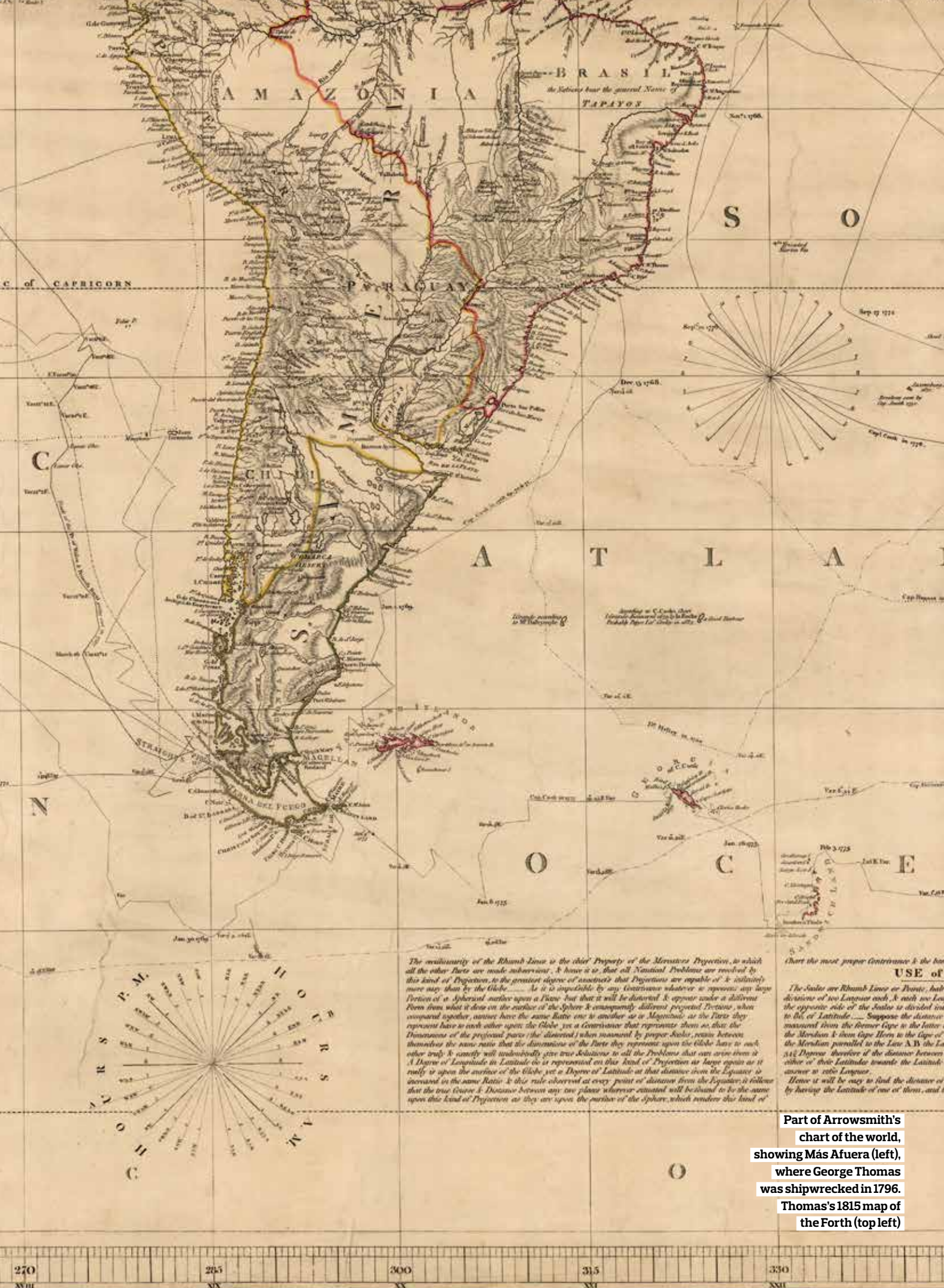
strong tides, especially in the Pentland Firth and around the Northern Isles.

The life of a hydrographer could be perilous. Commander Slater, a contemporary of Thomas who charted other parts of the Scottish east coast, fell from a cliff near Thurso Bay to his death in 1842.

George Thomas’s early life – and his journey into the Admiralty – contained much drama of its own.

Thomas was born in London in 1781 and, despite being orphaned, gained a liberal education at the Blue Coat School. At 15 he joined

“Their boat was wrecked in the Pacific and the survivors rescued by a passing American merchant ship. Then, due to a lack of water supplies, they were abandoned on the island of Más Afuera, 500 miles west of Chile”



The incurvature of the Rhumb Lines is the chief Property of the Mercator's Projection, in which all the other Parts are made subservient, & hence it is, that all Nautical Problems are resolved by this kind of Projection, to the greatest degree of exactness that Projections are capable of, & certainly more easy than by the Globe. — As it is impossible by any Construction whatever to represent any large Portion of a Spherical surface upon a Plane, but that it will be distorted, & appear under a different Form from what it does on the surface of the Sphere, & consequently different projected Distances, when compared together, cannot have the same Ratio one to another as in Magnitude, as the Parts they represent have to each other upon the Globe, yet a Construction that represents them so, that the Dimensions of the projected parts (the distorted) when measured by proper Scales, retain between themselves the same Ratio that the dimensions of the Parts they represent upon the Globe have to each other truly, & exactly will undoubtedly give true Solutions to all the Problems that can arise from it. A Degree of Longitude in Latitude 60 is represented on this kind of Projection as large again as it really is upon the surface of the Globe, yet a Degree of Latitude at that distance from the Equator is increased in the same Ratio, & this rule observed at every point of distance from the Equator, it follows that the true Course & Distance between any two places wherever situated will be found to be the same upon this kind of Projection as they are upon the surface of the Sphere, which renders this kind of

Chart the most proper Construction & the best
USE OF
The Sales are Rhumb Lines or Points, both divisions of two Languages each, & each use has the opposite side of the Sales is divided into 100 of Latitude. — Suppose the distance measured from the former Cape in the letter of the Meridian & from Cape Horn in the Cape of the Meridian parallel to the Line AB the Latitude 54½ Degrees, therefore if the distance between either of these Latitudes towards the Latitude answer in ratio Languages. Hence it will be easy to find the distance of by having the Latitude of one of them, and

Part of Arrowsmith's chart of the world, showing Más Afuera (left), where George Thomas was shipwrecked in 1796. Thomas's 1815 map of the Forth (top left)

the Southern Whale Fishery, sailing in *Commerce* under the command of Welham Clarke. In 1796 the ship was wrecked in the Pacific, 18 months after leaving England. Thomas was among survivors who were rescued by a passing American merchant ship but, due to a lack of water supplies, were abandoned on Más Afuera, some 500 miles west of Chile.

ESCAPE ROUTE

Thomas spent his time there usefully, collecting seal skins. Around three years later another ship put into the island and he was able to buy his passage to China by selling a share in the skins.

From there Thomas secured a cabin on the next boat bound for England. When it reached the English Channel, though, the boat was boarded by a press gang. Thomas was captured and detained on a naval frigate. A dispute over Thomas's use – without permission – of a midshipman's sextant brought him to the attention of the captain. Instead of punishing him, the captain spotted Thomas's abilities and promoted him to the quarterdeck, where he trained others in surveying techniques. A year later Thomas was made a nautical surveyor, after successfully piloting the

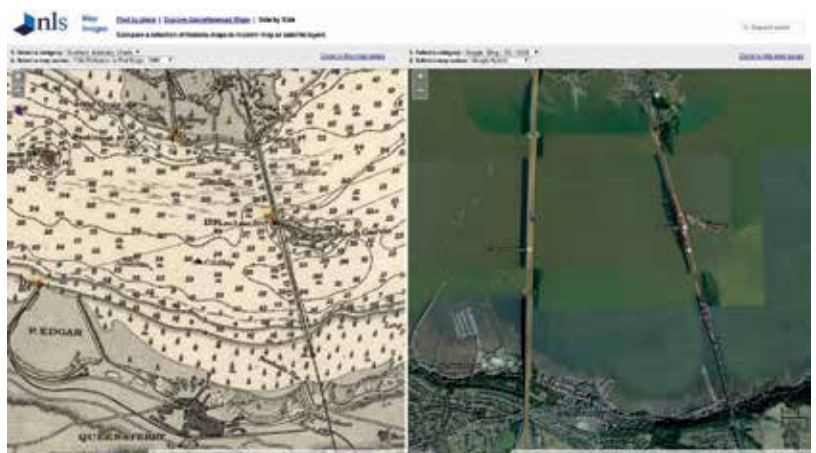
A dispute over Thomas's use – without permission – of a midshipman's sextant brought him to the attention of the captain

British fleet up the River Scheldt – today running through the Netherlands and Belgium – as part of the Napoleonic Wars blockade of continental ports. The following year, 1810, he was appointed head maritime surveyor, commanding the surveying vessel *Investigator*, a brig of 150 tonnes. The ship would be his home for the next 26 years.

Thomas worked on mapping the approaches to the Thames and English Channel ports, but it was his work on the Scottish coasts from 1815 onwards that would become his greatest legacy.

His first Scottish chart of the Forth, in 1815, packed with useful information for mariners such as transits for safe passage, was far more accurate and detailed than previous attempts. For example, as we can see by the three transit lines on the chart, by keeping the newly constructed Nelson Monument on Calton Hill in line with Arthur's Seat, North Leith Church, or Leith Martello tower respectively, ships could avoid the Drum Sands off Cramond and the Gunnet Rocks near Inchkeith. The details of numerous conspicuous buildings and the shapes of significant hills on the land complemented the detailed depths in fathoms and offshore hazards such as rocks and sandbanks.

During the 1820s Thomas benefited from the Ordnance Survey (OS) primary triangulation of Great Britain, which involved fixing points of





Thomas gained a reputation for his meticulous attention to detail and, while his surveys “had ever the impress of accuracy and care”, they took much longer than anticipated

major heights. He carried the OS surveyors to Shetland in 1825 for this purpose. Thomas gained a reputation for his meticulous attention to detail and, while his surveys “had ever the impress of accuracy and care” according to official records, they took much longer than anticipated.

Francis Beaufort, the Admiralty hydrographer from 1829, was exasperated with Thomas during his survey of Shetland. Beaufort wrote: “There can be no possible value in inserting the minute topography of the inner faces of the hills nor is there any necessity for verifying the third angle of all the triangles in such a difficult and inaccessible country.”

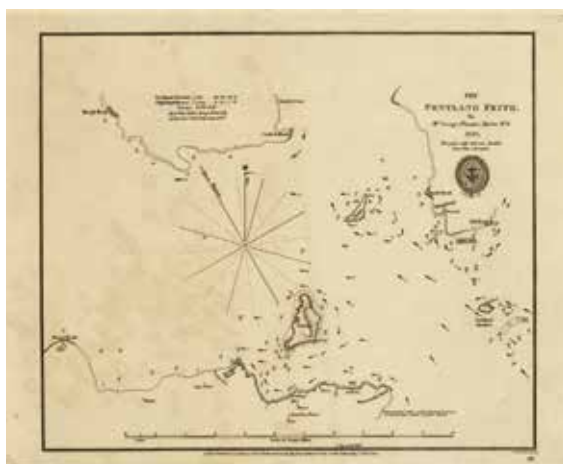
Despite Beaufort's criticisms Thomas continued his painstaking work until, in 1846, he died aboard a surveying vessel returning to Woolwich from the Orkney Isles.

The Library has put online its collection of out-of-copyright Admiralty charts – including seven produced by Thomas showing Scottish waters. This will allow access to about 1,000 maps dating from 1795–1964.

The Library has georeferenced 200 of these charts so they can be easily compared to present-day satellite images and maps, with excellent potential for viewing coastal change over time.

Clockwise, from main: Thomas's map of the Forth (1815); Alexander Dalrymple, the first Admiralty Hydrographer (1795–1808); detail of a Pentland Firth map (1830); the side-by-side viewer showing the Forth Rail Bridge in the 1890s and modern-day satellite imagery

See the Admiralty charts at http://maps.nls.uk/coasts/admiralty_charts_list, and explore the georeferenced maps in our side-by-side viewer at <http://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/sidebyside.cfm> sidebyside.nls



A MAN OF LETTERS

Lauded and misunderstood in equal measure, James Kelman is one of the nation's most significant writers. As his literary archive becomes part of the Library's collection, he tells Michael Tierney why grammar is king

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ANGELA CATLIN**

James Kelman shakes his head ruefully as we go over a little of his past work. Stereotyping can calcify creativity and Kelman is rightly tired of forever having his career associated with his fourth novel, *How Late It Was, How Late*.

It's the elephant, as it were, in the cafe of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow where we meet. Returning to *How Late It Was, How Late* provides a little context to the convenient myths and almost absurd level of vitriol he received following its 1994 publication and subsequent Booker Prize win. Kelman had done no more, said one critic, than "transcribe the rambling thoughts of a blind Glaswegian drunk". According to others Kelman was little more than an illiterate savage. In a pique of something akin to Victorian morality one observer keenly noted the number of times the main character swore.

Twenty one years on, with Kelman's archive now part of the National Library of Scotland, a little archaeology might help mitigate the chafing criticism from the past that, with the benefit of time, now seems almost quaint.

"It was difficult to react to the hostility, which was quite great," he says, smiling behind sharp, blue eyes. "It's not really ended. But I always come out of it sounding bitter and I don't feel

that way at all. I really don't care about it and it's so gone, it's so negative."

TRAILBLAZER

In truth Kelman, the only Scot to win the Booker Prize, doesn't really need to explain himself. You either respond positively to his art or not. In some sense it's much like a painting. If you don't understand it you don't understand it. Regardless, the art exists, explaining itself to you in every rhythm and cadence: the words, the structure and the grammars.

"There are different grammars," Kelman argues. "One grammar is taught. You realise so many things you take for granted in this country are basically the result of elitism and an authoritarian use of language used to restrict communities in our country from surviving, never mind thriving.

"For me grammar is the most crucial thing, really. The goal is clarity and to say what you mean. In that sense grammar has to be the greatest weapon you can have next to logic." The 68-year-old smiles again as if to say, well, if they can't see some value in my work now they never will. He's right. His work – angry, defiant, polemic or not – stands as a testimony to one of the finest literary talents the country has produced: a trailblazer who

sparked the work of Irvine Welsh, Janice Galloway, and Alan Warner, among others.

His Library archive covers everything from dogged campaigns and politicking, including draft manuscripts of his essay on the *Common Sense* tradition, the Stephen Lawrence campaign and documents from Department of Social Security versus Kelman in receipt of Scottish Arts Council bursary; a "poly bag" of *In the Night* memorabilia, screenplay for *Greyhound for Breakfast*, Polygon proofs for reissues, student essays from his student days at the University of Strathclyde; material from his university teaching days in America; letters and correspondence from a diverse group of writers; reviews and articles relating to published works and proofs; and print-outs and early drafts. And much, much more.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Sally Harrower, the Library's Curator of Modern Literary Manuscripts, believes the depth and richness of the archive firmly place Kelman in his creative, political and international context.

"Besides his own extensive literary papers, there is much correspondence and work of others, notably his Glasgow contemporaries including Alasdair Gray, Liz Lochhead, Agnes Owens, Tom Leonard and Jeff Torrington. This closeness with – and support for – other writers extends beyond Scotland to an international circle of friends.

"In a way, this is the unknown Jim Kelman, and I feel strongly that having



**“Grammar is the
essential thing.
The goal is clarity
and to say what
you mean”**

his archive in a public collection will do something to redress the general perception of this controversial figure. That said, the combative Jim Kelman is represented in the archive too. Very funnily, sometimes – exchanges with editors trying to temper his language are a hoot."

BIG ERROR

The important thing for Kelman, even now, is that he's always writing. He always has a great deal of work on the go, simultaneously, and writes daily. "It doesn't matter what emotional state you are in," he says. "Sometimes you're not up to working on some things and you can go to something else. That's how I do it."

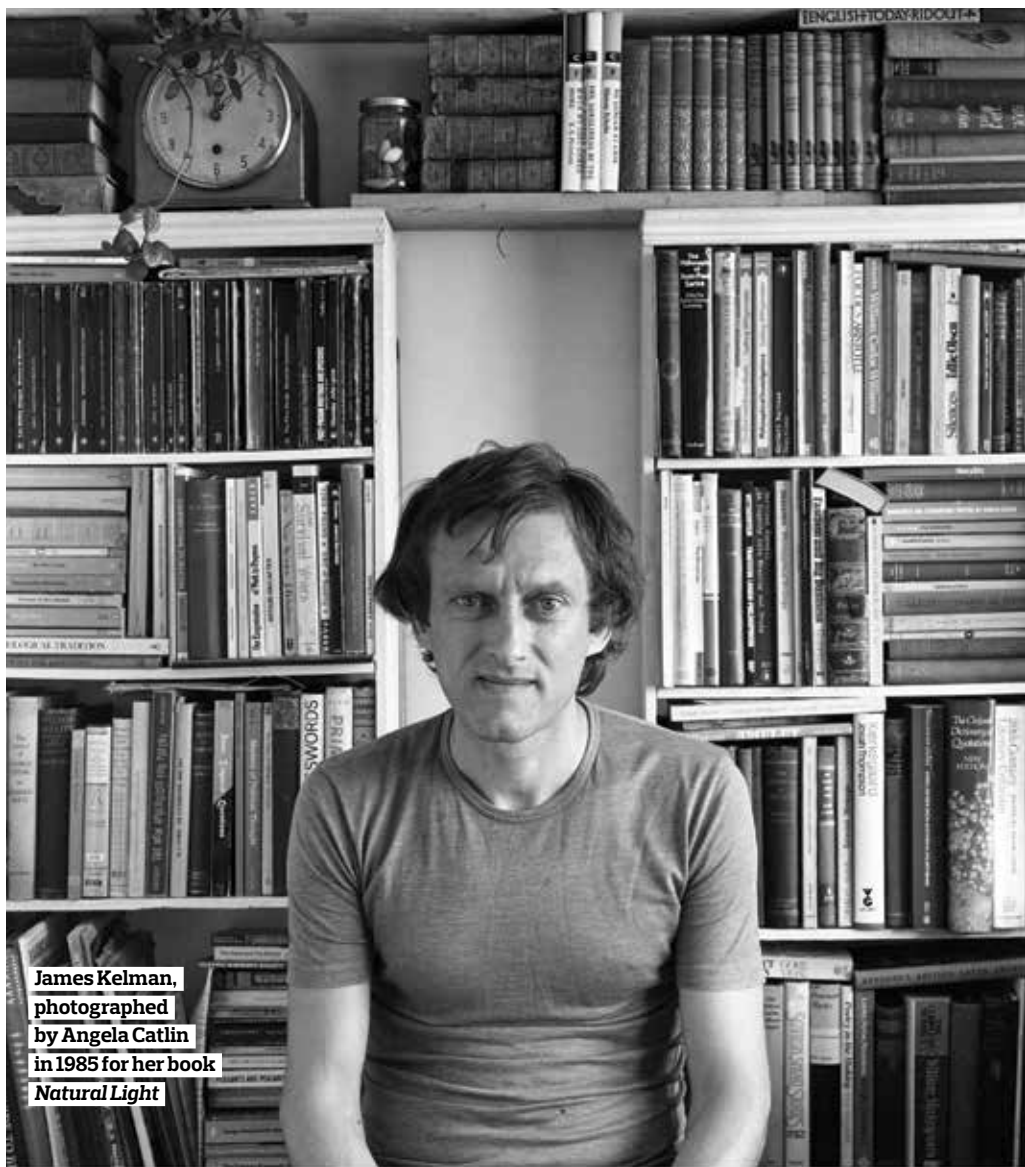
Revisiting the oft-repeated mistake – of observing his work is there to illuminate the lives of working-class people, predominately males – draws a nuanced rebuke. Crucially, he says, he has never written simply to represent people, or the voices of those he grew up around in Glasgow.

"As an artist you don't represent people," he says. "All you're doing is your own thing. It so happens that you're a member of a community. You're not there to try and exhibit the community. That's a big error people do make. They think that's what your project is, to represent working-class people.

"The only thing that drives you is the same thing that drives all artists. The thing about art is it's an end in itself. You just want to write the story properly and paint the picture properly and move on to the next one and you work at that until it's finished. But it's not to do with anything other than the thing itself."

Kelman liked art when he was a young man growing up in Glasgow and he thought he was going to be a painter. His father was a frame maker and picture restorer. His grandfather was also in that trade. Kelman left school at 15 and worked as an apprentice compositor for two years before his family moved, briefly, to America. After returning he undertook a succession of other jobs before taking up writing. When he began he wasn't doing something that was completely beyond the creative pale.

"When you start to look at class you find that a lot of the things you take for granted as a working-class experience is not really. It's across the board. That easy assumption working-class people don't read is just nonsense. I mean,



James Kelman,
photographed
by Angela Catlin
in 1985 for her book
Natural Light

"When you talk about identity the thing I come back to is emigration. In my family emigration is the key. We have relations on the west coast of the States, New Zealand, Australia, Canada ... Identity is not only interesting but crucial, politically, in Scotland"

most people don't read." He laughs.

"Class really is not an issue except how do you get books? Do you use a library or not? That's kind of common.

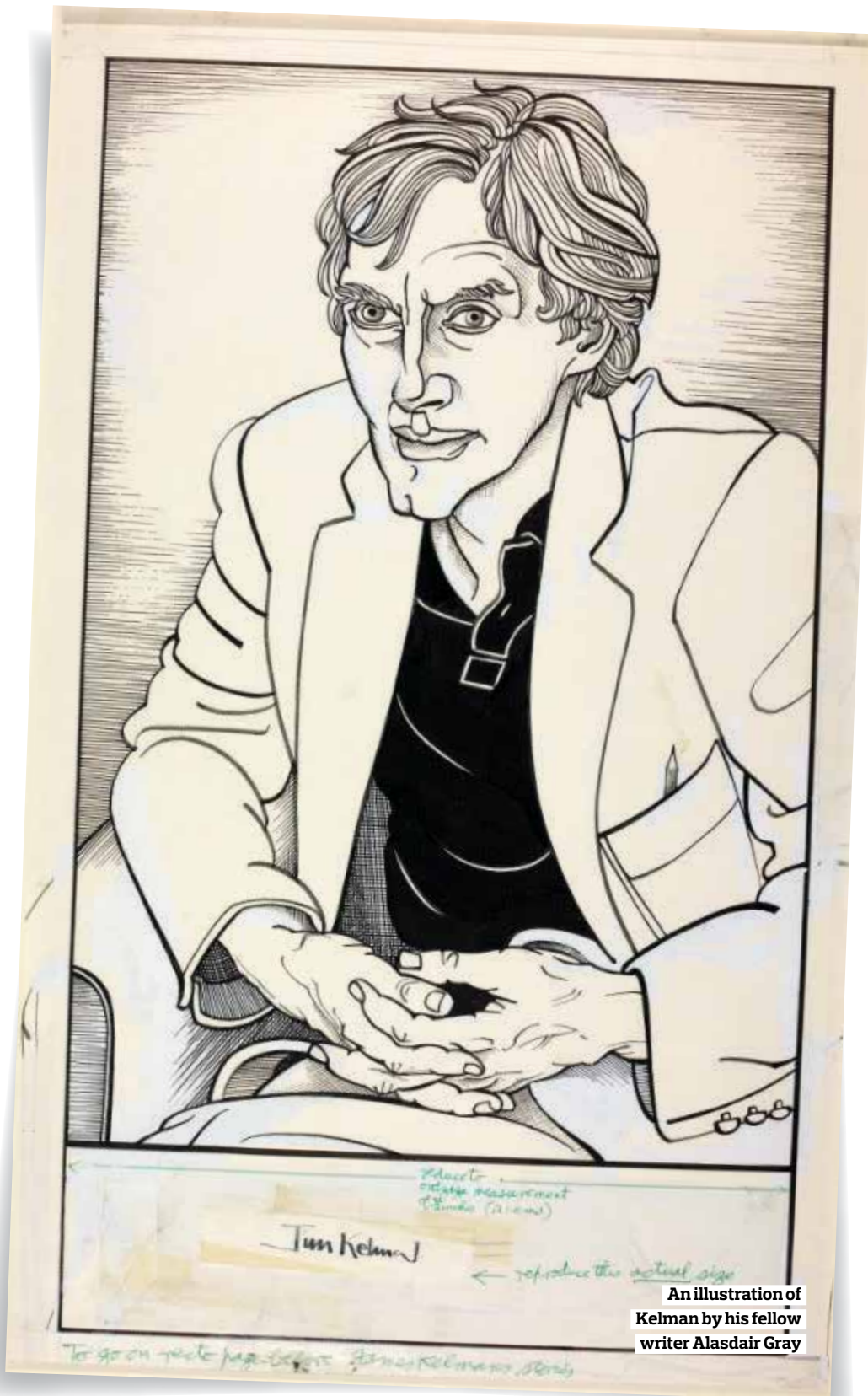
"It's working class if you accept a working-class guy reads poetry, listens to Beethoven or sings Tammy Wynette songs and reads Kafka and goes to Firhill. If you accept that as being an ordinary working-class experience then fine."

Through his archive the strength and depth of Kelman's body of work is much bigger than the perception of it as simply that of a novelist. "I've published about seven collections of short stories. I've written about eight plays. At what point does one early novel stand as a body of work? They [the critics] don't do that to the writers who fill the Sunday papers or get a decent wage."

INTO THE UNKNOWN

For the Library, Kelman's importance is hard to overestimate. "Jim's stature and influence is such that we felt his papers belonged in the national collection," says Sally Harrower. "National importance is a criterion that informs our collecting practices, though in Jim's case I think we could say he is of international importance. He's a major influence on many current Scottish writers, the only Scottish Booker-prize winner so far – a truly major Scottish writer.

"We will never be able to collect all Scottish writers' papers – we could neither afford it, nor cope with the work that would entail, but such is Jim's significance that we had to try to get his. Apparently this was our second approach to him, and I'm delighted that it worked out."



What about the possibility of Kelman perhaps looking at a kind of memoir on his life, his family life and career? "I have to some extent looked into my family already," he says. "I know quite a lot about the Lewis connection, that would be my grandmother. I would like to look into it, but I can't afford to do it. I only get a pension and what I get from my writing."

CLASS AND CLEARANCES

A little miscellany: he knows the names of his family in the Outer Hebrides going back to 1760. He mentions his great-grandfather's brother, Roderick MacKenzie, from Lewis. The conversation makes him smile. He mentions Donald MacRae, the schoolmaster who led the 'Park deer raid', and family who still have a croft in Balallan in South Lochs. His great-grandfather was also a crofter on Port Elphinstone, Aberdeenshire. Kelman's middle name, Alexander, is after him.

A little more: there were three doctors on his grandmother's side. Two brothers and a sister were doctors. The other sister was a school inspector and one of the founders of the chair of Russian at the University of Glasgow. "It was an ordinary middle-class family who had been middle class for two and a half generations. Before that they were basically a Clearances family."

He mentions Camerons and MacNicolls, from Lochaber and around the Dalmally area.

THE KEY

"When you talk about identity the thing I come back to all the time is emigration. In my family emigration is the key. We still have relations on the west coast of the States. My great aunt and her elder sister both founded the Gaelic Society in Seattle in 1920. I've family in New Zealand, Australia, Canada ... so identity I find not only interesting but crucial, politically, in a country like Scotland."

This aspect of Kelman is fascinating. It's also somewhat worrying that one of Scotland's greatest literary talents of the past 30 years can't afford to undertake such a project of work about identity (publishers, please take note).

"I've another novel," he says, genially, as he gets up. "Another collection of stories. Once that's by, maybe ..." He trails off. Maybe what? Kelman grins and he's away as quietly and unobtrusively as he arrived. Just the way he seems to like it these days.

His plays, short stories and political writings are many. Yes, they can be demotic. They are also considerable, finely honed and consummate.

"In them [the short stories] it's always been playing around with voices and just doing things that any artist does, which is new forms of experimentation and try and extend yourself in certain ways and venture into the unknown, and that's what I've always done. That's why the criticism

in terms of one novel ..." He shrugs again and smiles. "The story since my first collection, I thought, would have indicated enough of a variety of working method and technique that would interest the critics more than simply just finding a way of condemning the work."

As for the next stage of his writing, there has been enough variety in Kelman's work over the past four decades to suggest further change.

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FOCUS ON

The music collections

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for music lovers. Highlights include special early editions of works by Handel, Berlioz and Verdi, and manuscripts ranging from the early 16th-century Carver choirbook to 20th-century composers such as Robin Orr. There are 5,000 published sound recordings, including 78s, cassette tapes, LPs and videos.

Scottish content is an obvious strength – you can sample songs and music of

the 18th and early 19th centuries, including music for the Highland bagpipe. Watch out for the Library's Scottish song card index being digitalised.

Whatever your taste, from the Beatles to Bach, you're sure to find fascinating material in these collections.

For more information go to www.nls.uk/collections/music/collections



The Italian Romantic composer Giuseppe Verdi

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SCIENCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

The full text of articles or references are available in resources such as Cambridge Journals Online; Brill Journals Collection;



This propaganda leaflet published in 1943 was dropped over Nazi-occupied territory by an American bomber. Visit http://bit.ly/nls_propaganda

The Making of the Modern World; Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB); India, Raj and Empire; Sabin Americana, 1500-1926; The Scotsman Digital Archive 1817-1950; Times Digital Archive; Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals 1800-1900 and Who's Who (and Who Was Who).

REFERENCE WORKS AND CATALOGUES

Credo Reference gives you access to 400 high-quality reference books from a range of the world's leading publishers. Early American Imprints, Series 1 – Evans, 1639–

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GOVERNMENT AND OFFICIAL

A wealth of political information can be viewed online, including House of Commons Parliamentary Papers – includes reports of committees and outside bodies on public affairs; Public Information Online and The Making of Modern Law – Legal Treatises 1800-1926.

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Mark Baillie found
using the Library
opened up
a new chapter in
his family research

“He was the handsomest, best-dressed, and best-bred man. He acted the character of the gentleman, the robber, the sorner, and the tinker”

‘John Faw, Lord and Earle of Little Egypt’, in executing justice upon his company and punishing all who rebelled against him.

The seal explained a group of Gypsies had robbed Faw of money, jewels and clothes. Among the group were Towla Bailyow and Geleyr Bailyow – the name later became Baillie and Bailey.

In a chapter on the Tweeddale Gypsies, ‘Captain’ William Baillie is a larger-than-life, Robin Hood-style character of the late 17th century. Between escaping various orders for his execution or deportation, there are stories of many ostentatious good deeds, such as him paying a year’s rent to elderly widows facing eviction.

Captain Baillie was eventually killed in a sword fight in 1724 while taking on two adversaries. Even so, it’s hard to resist a feeling of pride when reading this about an ancestor: ‘He was the handsomest, best-dressed, and best-bred man ... he acted the character of the gentleman, the robber, the sorner, and the tinker whenever it answered his purpose. He was considered, in his time, the best swordsman in all Scotland. With his weapon in his hand, and his back to a wall, he set almost everything, saving firearms, at defiance.’

I’ve read other books about the Gypsies that recount a grim tale of constant persecution across Europe well into the 20th century. *History of the Gypsies* is a refreshing read from an author with a fondness for the characters and tales of the community in Scotland.

Of course, the experience of visiting the Library to research a title from its rare books collection is also special. The atmosphere of the reading room, and the smell and feel of the book, make a memorable experience.

At a point when I thought my research had reached a dead end, the Library collections opened routes to the past, and so the journey into my family history still has a long way to go.

A road well travelled

Delving into his Romany family history, Mark Baillie was stunned to discover one of his ancestors was a swashbuckling rogue with a colourful reputation

It was during a visit to the Library to research my Romany background I first read about my forebears swashbuckling their way through the centuries as one of Scotland’s chief Gypsy families.

An old photograph belonging to my paternal gran and granddad of the 1886 Kelso Fair had alerted me to my Gypsy roots. The picture showed the town’s main square crowded with travellers, and their horses and trailers. In the crowd my granddad could spot his infant father, along with his grandfather, grandmother and great-grandfather. As I got older, I was inspired to delve further into Gypsy culture and history.

After recording an oral history from my granddad when he was 94, I moved on to genealogical research, tracing a direct link back as far as 1800. Having exhausted the records of births, deaths and marriages, I began some background reading with Anne Gordon’s *Hearts Upon the Highway*, published in 1980 and now out of print but held at the Library. One of its main and oldest sources was *History of the*



This photograph of the 1886 Kelso Fair put Mark Baillie on the trail of his Gypsy heritage

Gypsies by Walter Simson, published in 1865 and held in the Library’s rare books collection.

The title covers the origins of the Gypsies in India, and highlights parallels between the history of the travelling and Jewish communities. It traces the Gypsies in Europe and gives a region-by-region account of their presence in Scotland. There is even a section on Gypsy language with a list of terms.

The book reveals the Baillies were mentioned in the first document to record Gypsies in Scotland. On 15 February 1540, James V issued a privy seal calling on all authorities to assist

Illustrator Walter Crane
became the socialist
movement's 'artist
in residence'

Walter Crane fuelled the imagination with his children's illustrations. His work still captivates 100 years after his death

Bedtimes and nursery rhymes would surely be a much more humdrum affair without the images

conjured up by Walter Crane, the prolific English artist and designer.

Best remembered as an illustrator of children's books, Crane was born in Liverpool in 1845. Beginning working life as an apprentice to wood engraver and political reformer William James Linton, Crane had ample opportunity to hone his skills while studying the work of contemporary artists including the Pre-Raphaelites and Sir John Tenniel, illustrator of *Alice in Wonderland*.

In 1865 Crane was invited to contribute his own illustrations to a series of books for young children,



nursery rhymes and fairy tales, to be printed by Edmund Evans, the leading woodblock colour printer in London. Over the next 10 years Crane illustrated 37 of these toy books, as they were known, which proved hugely popular in Victorian Britain.

He also brought his sense of the fantastic to adult literature. In the frontispiece for Robert Louis Stevenson's earliest book, *An Inland Voyage*, he depicts the god Pan relaxing on a riverbank. This example of Crane's work, along with many of the toy book titles, and his theories on art, can be discovered in the National Library collections.

QUALITY AS STANDARD

Crane's professional life encompassed politics as well as painting and he became closely associated with the socialist movement, initially through his connection to designer William Morris, a leading figure in the Arts and Crafts movement. He became the artist of the cause, designing posters, trade-union banners and cartoons.

Crane did as much as Morris to transgress the boundaries between "high" fine art and "low" decorative art, making quality craft and design a part of everyday life. He embraced the eclecticism of the Arts and Crafts movement, turning his hand to designs for textiles and wallpapers, as well as producing poetry and writing.

Fuelling children's imaginations was also a serious business for Crane, who believed: "We all remember the little cuts that coloured the books of our childhood. The ineffaceable quality of these early pictorial and literary impressions affords the strongest plea for good art in the nursery and the schoolroom."

Crane's family life – with his wife Mary and children Beatrice, Lionel and Lancelot – was characterised by happy eccentricities. Their home in Holland Street, London, was full of Indian idols, a marmoset that slept in the fireplace and even a live alligator. Friends and colleagues remember Crane as lovable, relishing the chance to play the part of the artist.

A century after his death on 14 March 1915, perhaps the most fitting epitaph for Crane is the one he wrote for his friend William Morris in 1896:

"How can it be? That strong and fruitful life

Hath ceased – that strenuous but joyful heart –

That craftsman in the loom of song and art."



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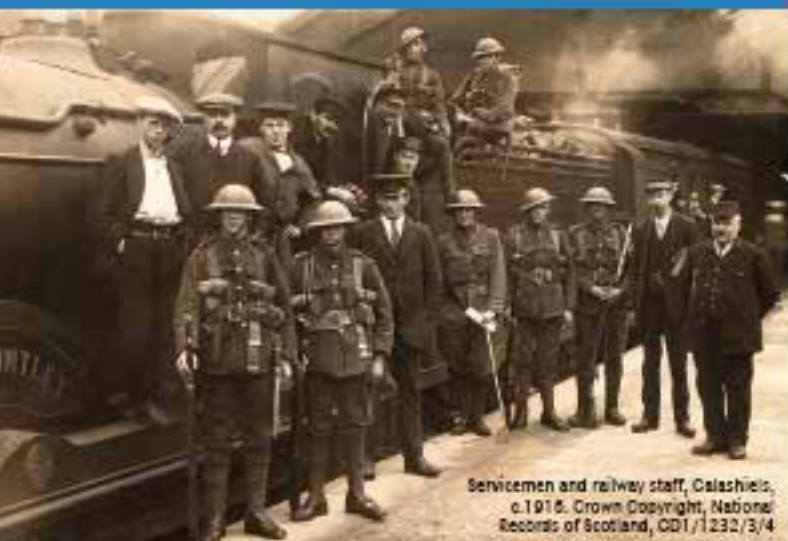


Scottish Connections?

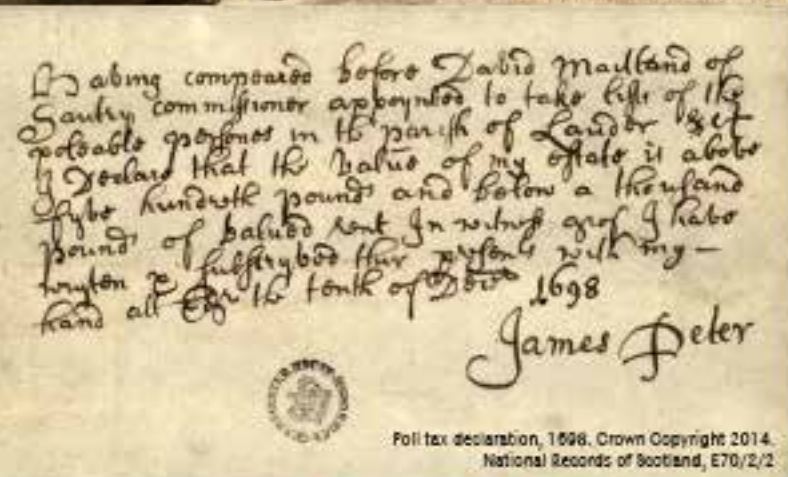
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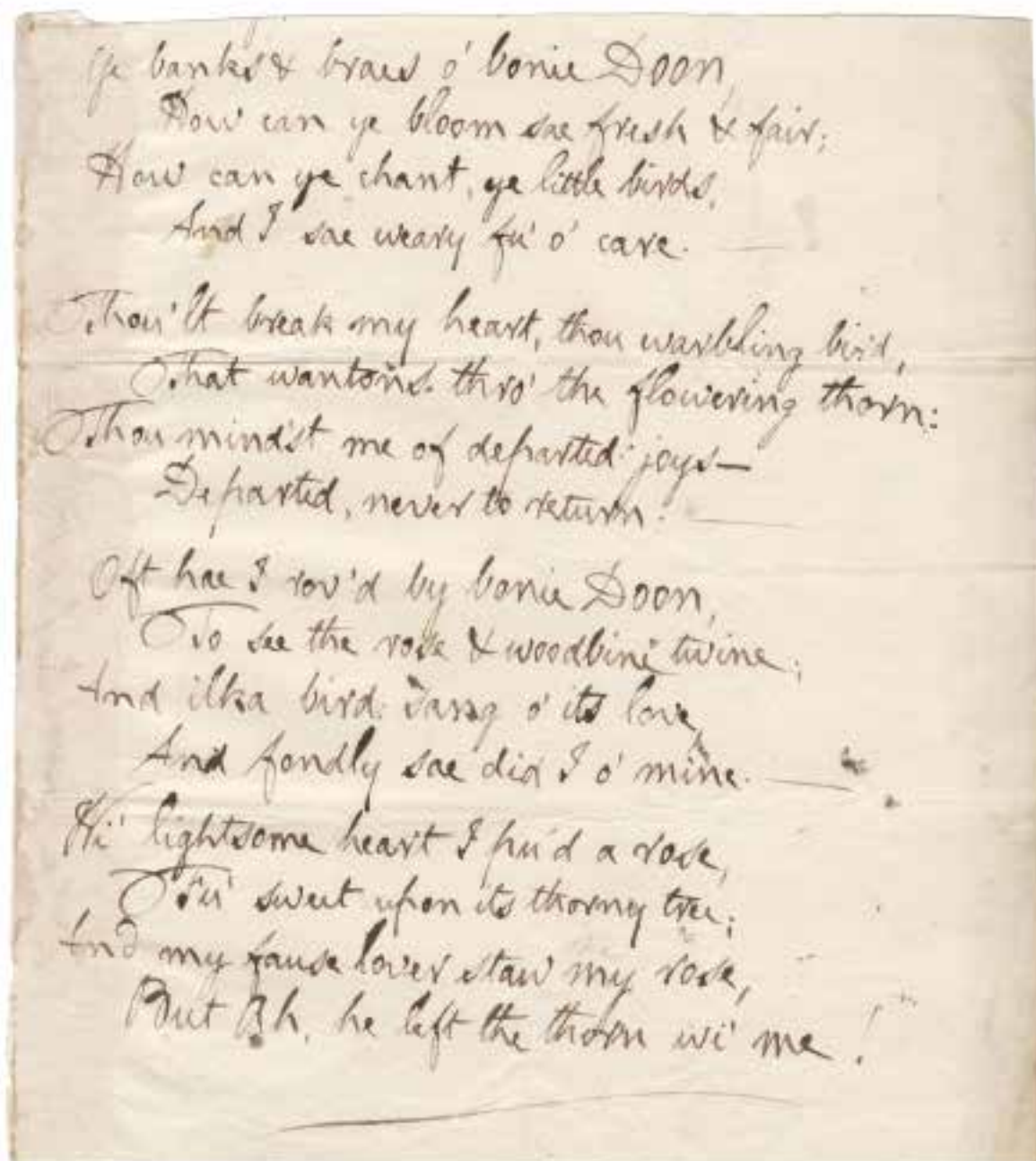
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