Trades House of Glasgow
Heritage Newsletter No 9
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ARCHIVES
New Acquisitions
The archives have just received the uniform of Sir John Shearer when he was High Sheriff of Glasgow Town Council. The suit is very much like the one worn by the Deacon Convener and it was donated by Mrs Josette Bailey.

The historical background to Sir John is as follows:

> "Son of a father of the same name, the late head of the famous firm of dry-dock owners and ship repairers was born in Oswald Street, Glasgow, in 1843 and received his education at Kingston parish School, Carlton Place School, Glasgow Mechanics Institute, and the School of Art. After serving an apprenticeship as a joiner with his father's firm he became a partner in the business, beginning with a slip-dock at Kingston Dock, the firm afterwards acquired Kelvinhaugh Slip-dock and Engineering Works, and in 1902, after formation into a limited company, removed to new works at Scotstoun.
>
> Besides his active work as managing director of the business, Sir John took a wide interest in public affairs. He entered Glasgow Town Council as representative for Kingston Ward in 1883, and was a magistrate from 1884 to 1889, and a member sf the Clyde Trust from1889 to 1899. He was vice-chairman of the Glasgow International Exhibitions of 1888 and 1901, and in the latter case was also chairman of the Buildings Committee, and it was especially in recognition of his services to the great enterprise of 1901 that, two years later, he received the honour of knighthood. On his retiral from the Town Council in 1903 he was presented with his portrait, painted by Sir Jarnes Guthrie, P.R.S.A. He was a Justice of the Peace and Deputy-Lieutenant for the County of the City of Glasgow, and President of Tradeston Conservative Association. He was a devoted member of the Church of Scotland, and several times represented Glasgow Corporation at the General Assembly.
>
> By his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Mr James Dykes, Sir John had a family of five daughters and four sons. He had travelled in most of the countries of Europe as well as Egypt, Canada and the United States. Sir John died at Dowanhill, 28th February 1908."
>
> Glasgow West-End Addresses and their Occupants: http://www.glasgowwestaddress.co.uk

The dress uniform worn by Sir John Shearer when he was High Sheriff of Glasgow Town Council appears to be identical to that worn by the Deacon Convener of the time.

Ex Deacon Convener Sir William Robertson Copland

Sir William with his wife Elizabeth

We have also received a set of photographs from Dorothy Kidd of ex Deacon Convener Sir William Robertson Copland (1891 to 1892) and his family. Sir William was the Deacon of the Incorporation of Tailors in 1883. He wrote an excellent booklet which is now on the Trades House Digital Library entitled *Trades House Expenditure from 1866 to 1895*. The work lists the main expenditure of the Trades House and the 14 Incorporations from 1866 to 1895 and includes the number of pensioners each supported.

Anyone wishing to see the other photographs of the Copland family should pay the Archives a visit on any Tuesday between 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m.

To read Sir William's work, please visit:

www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/trades_house_expenditure_from_1866_to_1895__001.pdf

William, son of Sir William and wife Agnes

Sir William and his family

A short biography of Sir William can be found at:
www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/deacon_convener_sir_william_robertson_copland_biography.pdf

Photograph Album of the Deacons of the Gardeners ~ 1895 to 1956

This album has just been updated and is now available for all to see on the Trades House Virtual Museum at:
www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/deacon_of_gardeners_album.pdf

If any Incorporations etc., would like their albums or other items digitised, please let the Honorary Archivist know and we will do all we can to oblige.

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Worth a wee read.
Tradeston Fueduties
Most members of the Trades House know that the Trades House owned the land of Tradeston, but how many know its background? The following two-page booklet may be of interest to those who would like to know a wee bit more:

www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/gorbals_lands_and_tradeston_feu_duties.pdf

For those wishing to know who were paying fue duty to the House, the following will give you an idea of where our money came from:

1797 to 1846 Tradeston index of Fueduties
1847 to 1865 Tradeston index of Feuduties
1866 to 1882 Tradeston Index of Feuduties
1883 to 1891 Tradeston Index of Feuduties

The above indexes contain the names and some other details of individuals who paid feu duty to the Trades House of Glasgow. This is an ideal place to start searching for Glasgow relations and gives the years that they paid the feu duty.

For those who would like to see where Tradeston is and the plots we sold, please visit:

http://www.tradeshouselibrary.org/trades-house.html

This shows the map of Tradeston in 1856.

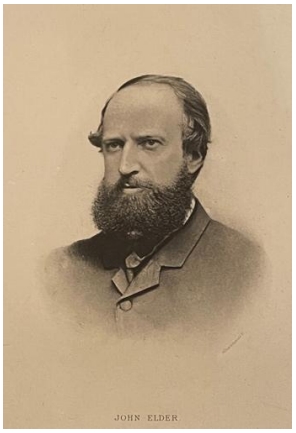
LIBRARY

The Trades House Library has recently been donated five past copies of *Scottish Local History*, the Journal of the Scottish Local History Forum. The articles in the journal cover the whole of Scotland and often include items relating to Glasgow and its environs. These will be added to earlier copies already in the Library. An article in the Spring 2024 edition provides a history of the early days of Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, previously known as John Elder and Co. By the late 1870's John Elder and Co employed about 5,000 workers, the site at Fairfield occupied over seventy acres, and vessels were built for some of the largest shipping companies in the world. The name was changed in 1886 to the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company.

Apart from describing the early history of the firm, the article also lists some of the charitable acts of Isabella Elder (1828-1905), the wife of John Elder (1824-1869). Isabella Elder was particularly interested in the education of women and purchased North Park

house and presented it to Queen Margaret College to enable women to have access to higher education in Glasgow. In addition, she gifted Elder Park opposite the Fairfield site to the inhabitants of Govan and Elder Cottage Hospital in Govan in memory of her husband. Several of the illustrations in the article are taken from *The Bailie* and *Memoirs and Portraits of One Hundred Glasgow Men*, 1886. These are available online at from the Trades House Library website at http://www.tradeshouselibrary.org. *The History of Govan*, 1905 and *A Memoir of John Elder*, 1883, both quoted as sources in the article, are available to view in the Trades House Library.

The Trades House Library holds the following copies of *Scottish Local History*: Issues 1-29; 31; 46; 49; 50; 54-56; 59; 88; 92; 117-119. We are keen to obtain a full set so if you have any of the missing copies you would be willing to donate, please email info@tradeshouse.org.uk. Further information about the Scottish Local History Forum can be obtained at https://slhf.org
For further information about Fairfield Heritage Shipbuilding Museum see:www.fairfieldgovan.co.uk



Portrait of John Elder from
Memoirs and Portraits of One Hundred Glasgow Men, 1886

MUSEUM
The elaborately carved oak benches in the entrance corridor have been a mainstay of Trades Hall since they were donated by former Deacon of the Cordiners, Alexander Walker CBE in 1937.

During the First World War, Walker was secretary and treasurer of a committee of magistrates set up by Glasgow Corporation to look after the welfare of some of the 20,000+ Belgian refugees who fled to Scotland after the occupation of their country. A large number of these refugees settled in Glasgow and by the end of the war a remarkable sum in excess of £200,000 (the equivalent of over £12m today) had been raised for their welfare by the city and its various charitable organisations. At the same time a committee of ladies was set up to organise sales of the various goods produced by the refugees, to visit and superintend the refugee hostels and “many other tasks”.

According to Jacqueline Jenkinson, Senior Lecturer in Modern British History at the University of Stirling, who has researched extensively on the subject of Scotland’s Belgian refugees, it’s very likely that Walker came into direct contact with many skilled Belgian craftsmen (and women) who arrived in Glasgow during this time. Following these

Gaps in benches

introductions it's likely that Walker commissioned one or more of these refugees to make the highly decorative benches which could well have been intended for his own substantial west end property at 18 Queen's Gate, Glasgow (now 118 Dowanhill Street), a building designed by respected local architect David Barclay.

Bench under repair

Sadly, the names of those responsible for making the benches remains unknown and correspondence in the Trades House archive referencing the gifting of the benches gives no indication as to exactly where these had been prior to their arrival into Trades Hall.

The availability of a recent heritage grant from the House has allowed for the benches to have undergone some much-needed sympathetic restoration and cleaning and they look so much better. Thanks are due to Bruce Hamilton Furniture Makers for undertaking this work.

HISTORY OF THE TRADES HOUSE AND CRAFTS A few wee interesting stories taken from *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow* 1663 to 1690 edited by J.D. Marwick, 1905.

25th September 1669 ~ Sheirer to be banished
Ordains Jonet Shearer, spous to James Love, Wright, for her bais and leud carriage in her drunkenness in keeping company with sorjoris, to be banished this burgh for ever, and that ever her husband recept her hereafter he to be banished also.

25th October 1669 ~ Fleshouris
Appointis dean of guild and deacon convener to appoint to the Fleshouris such convenient roume for killing of their flesh at the back of the flesh mercat as thei think most convenient.

12th March 1670 ~ Fleshouris
Appoints the deacon conveiner to speik to the Fleshouris to provide and big themselves housis for the killing of their flesh, and to mak report thereof the next meiting.

12th November 1670 ~ Register of the dead
Provost, bailies and counsel, find it nesessar and requisite that ane register be keeped of all presones who happines to decease within this Burgh, they hereby appoint Samwell Birs to keep the said register and to have fortie shilling Scotis weekly for doeing thereof.

Trades House Regiment

Introduction

The Kings colour of the 2nd Battalion Trades House Battalion may well have been recycled from the colours which had been presented to the Trades Battalion of Royal Glasgow Volunteers in 1798. The Battalion consisted of seven companies and had a total of approximately 700 officers and men. This Battalion was disbanded shortly after the threat from the French had subsided.

When the threat of invasion once again loomed, on the 3rd August 1803, a committee of the Trades House presented a report regarding the raising of a Battalion of craftsmen and indicated that all the Incorporations except the Incorporations of Bakers and Tailors agreed to the measures in the report. The House therefore agreed to raise a Battalion of 600 craftsmen from amongst the second, third and fourth classes pointed out in the General Defence Bill. The Convener was authorised to make the offer to the Government accordingly. It was expressly understood that the Corps would have the power to choose their own officers.

To create a general fund for clothing the Trades House Battalion and other contingencies which were not funded, the House voted £500 for this purpose on 1st September 1803. The meeting also encouraged incorporations to vote sums into the general fund. A subscription was also opened to allow individuals to contribute to the cause even though they might not be able to serve.

It was also agreed that as soon as the Committee decided on the dress (which was to be neat and tidy, but not expensive) a complete suit was to be made and then estimates got from tailors or shopkeepers or both for supplying the Regiment with clothing. The whole expense was to be paid for from the general fund.

It was also agreed that as soon as 300 people volunteered and were accepted and had taken their oath of allegiance, the officers would be chosen, and the men appointed to companies for drill.

The Trades House Regiment desired to have a set of colours and it is likely that they repurposed the set from 1793. The units were for local defence only. The right-hand image of the Regimental Colour has the Trades House 14 Arrows in place of the Crown, as in the left-hand image.

In 1804 the Glasgow Volunteers along with regulars from Hamilton and Volunteers from Greenock, Port Glasgow, Dumbarton, Kilsyth, Cumbernauld, and Airdrie were reviewed on Glasgow Green by the Earl of Moira, Commander-in-Chief in Scotland. During the parade each volunteer fired ten rounds.

Three pairs of Glasgow Colours from 1803 to 1809 survive. They are the 2nd Trades House Regiment held in the Trades Hall of Glasgow, the Anderson Volunteers held within Glasgow Museum Collection in a relic condition and the Canal Volunteers, framed and held in the Glasgow Museum Collection.

The Trades House Colours are a rare and precious commodity that has survived for at least 218 years and possibly 227 years and reflects the time when the Burgess of Glasgow defended the City against all invaders.

© Trades House of Glasgow

Top: Regimental Colour. Bottom: Kings Colour.

For anyone wishing to know more about the Trades House connection to the military, please click on the following link:
www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/final_trades_house_military_story.pdf