Sport and Physical Education in the Northern Mainland Burghs of Scotland c. 1600-1800

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Sport and Physical Education in the Northern Mainland Burghs of Scotland c. 1600-1800

A thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen

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Year of Presentation 2016
Declaration

I, Wade Cormack confirm that I composed this thesis, that it has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree, that the work is my own, and all quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks, and the sources of information specifically acknowledged.

Signed: .................................................. Date: ........................................
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Abstract

British sport history has become a serious branch of historical enquiry over the past three decades. Yet, many questions as regards regions, chronology, space, gender and power remain unexplored, especially in Scotland before 1800. This study examines sport and physical education in the northern mainland burghs of Scotland c. 1600-1800. It is divided into two parts. Part One investigates the national and international contexts for, and influences on, sport and physical education in northern Scotland. It covers the wider intellectual discourse, how the north was influenced by, and contributed to, the development of national and international sporting practise and culture. It then assesses how physical education was taught at educational institutions in northern Scotland and the characteristics of elite sport.

Part Two explores sport as played, experienced and regulated by ordinary people in the northern burghs. Popular sport was less influenced by an international context and was far more regionally and locally focused. Popular and festive sport were pursued for enjoyment, were organised, gendered and were a vital release for society. The authorities also attempted to control popular sport in urban communities but this study finds social control was not universal and the lower ranks had agency, resisting the authorities’ decrees as regards sport.

This study concludes that sport and physical education were a significant, although previously unexamined, component of social and cultural life in the northern mainland burghs, before 1800. In Part One sport and physical education changed considerably, both influencing, and adapting to, national and international discourses of, ‘civility’ at the beginning of the period, and towards the end, ‘politeness’. Moreover, the introduction of sports clubs from 1750 signalled a change towards a higher degree of organisation. By contrast, Part Two demonstrates popular sport practices remained relatively consistent. Thus, the thesis emphasises the need for regional studies of Scottish and British sport and physical education, examining their features across the social spectrum and the elements of both change and continuity that, together, characterised sport and physical education across the British Isles in the pre-industrial period.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

When describing the Royal Burgh of Dornoch in 1630 Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun (1580-1656), uncle and tutor to John the 14th Earl of Sutherland, wrote: ‘About this toun (along the sea coast,) ther are the fairest and largest linkes (or green feilds), of any pairt of Scotland, fitt for archery, goffing, ryding, and all other exercise; they doe surpass the feilds of Montrose or St Andrews.’¹ Dornoch was not only the principal burgh of Sutherland but also, according to Gordon, the best location for some of Scotland’s favourite sports. This quotation resonates today in Dornoch, as the Royal Dornoch Golf Club celebrates 400 years of golf in the town in 2016. Moreover, Golf Digest (2016) world ranking has placed Dornoch’s Championship Golf Course first in Scotland and fifth in the World.² However, little is known about sport or physical education history in Dornoch or any of the northern mainland burghs of Scotland, especially prior to 1800. The region’s and Scotland’s early modern sport history has largely escaped the attention of historians and this dissertation is breaking new ground for sport and physical education. John Burnett is the foremost historian on early modern Scottish sport providing excellent analysis of sport in the Lowlands prior to 1860. This dissertation is in part a response to his work. It aims to continue the examination of sport in northern Scotland and provides an alternative interpretation to his view that sport in Aberdeenshire and Moray was the same as elsewhere in the Lowlands. Moreover, it reassesses his claim that sport was not popular in the majority of northern burghs because of their small size and their reliance on the fishing industry.³

This dissertation addresses numerous other historiographical deficiencies when examining sport and physical education in the northern mainland burghs of Scotland from 1600

¹ Robert Gordon, A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland from its Origin to the Year 1630: with a Continuation to the Year 1651 (Edinburgh, 1813), p. 6.
² www.golfdigest.com (accessed, 05/05/2016).
to 1800. This is accomplished by blending social, cultural and intellectual history approaches to sport history and by examining both the elite and the lower social ranks. Specifically, this study benefits from Burnett’s historical and R.G. Osterhoudt’s philosophical conceptualisations of sport and physical education. Burnett argues that sport can be defined as a physical activity used either for recreation, leisure or physical training (the physical improvement of the body) as a release from the pressures of disciplined life. This thesis does not focus on blood sports such as bull-baiting or cock-fighting because people were not the active participants. While sport could be pursued for physical training, this was not the same as physical education. Osterhoudt contends that physical education is the combination of ‘physical training’ (for health benefits and skills acquisition) and ‘physical culture’ (part of the social acculturation process).

The physical culture, or behavioural expectation when participating in active pursuits, changed depending on social status, as will be seen. Early modern physical education programmes in northern Scotland at grammar schools, universities and, by the late-eighteenth century, academies, were created and implemented by intellectuals and educators to promote moderate ‘physical training’ supporting ‘lawful’ sports and acculturated young men into a refined or gentlemanly masculine physical culture. Furthermore, this examination of both sport and physical education uses a ‘longue durée’ approach that focuses on the urban environment, utilising Emma Griffin’s conceptualisation of space as a tool for inquiry.

The chronology for this dissertation was inspired by the well-received *History of Everyday Life in Scotland* c. 1600-1800. It thus follows the precedent set by social and cultural historians of early modern Scotland and Europe who are more comfortable with lengthy

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7 Elizabeth Foyster and Christopher A. Whatley (eds.), *A History of Everyday Live in Scotland, 1600 to 1800* (Edinburgh, 2010).
chronologies to track longitudinal changes within complex systems, such as Christopher Smout, R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte, Julius R. Ruff and Kaspar von Greyerz.\(^8\) By contrast, political historians instead focus on shorter periods demarked by important political events such as the Restoration Period (1660-1688). They generally avoid lengthy chronologies as dramatic political changes wracked Scotland and Britain, more broadly, between 1600 and 1800.\(^9\) However, social and economic historians regularly use a combination of approaches to frame their periodisation, such as Christopher A. Whatley in *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Towards Industrialisation.*\(^{10}\) Within early modern sport history the longue durée approach has been accepted within the European context in works by John McClelland, Alessandro Arcangeli and Wolfgang Behringer as well as in Britain with the works of Robert W. Malcolmson, Mike Huggins, Burnett and Griffin.\(^{11}\) Using this approach presents the opportunity to examine how people practised sport and physical education in northern Scotland, both the elite and lower ranks and also, how sporting practices were influenced by dramatic changes in Scottish education, intellectual and religious history. Simultaneously it allows this study to track continuities throughout two tumultuous centuries of British political history with: the Union of the Crowns, the Covenanting movement, Wars of the Three Kingdoms, recurring episodes of violent Jacobitism, the Union of the Parliaments and the beginnings of mass urbanisation and industrialisation.

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The urban history approach has become popular in Scottish history since the pioneering work of Michael Lynch. More recently, works by Elizabeth Ewan, Alan MacDonald and Bob Harris examining medieval and early modern Scottish burghs have covered topics of gender, crime, politics and cultural transformation, and offer strong national comparisons. As regards the north, microhistories of individual towns by James Miller and David Alston on Inverness and Cromarty, respectively, as well as the two impressive edited collections on Aberdeen’s history, have explored a variety of interwoven social and cultural themes within the urban environment. However, they all neglect sport. Addressing this disparity whilst acknowledging the cultural and linguistic nuances of northern Scotland, this study of sport and physical education narrows its parameters to focus primarily on the urban history of northern Scotland.

Griffin argues that using space as a category of enquiry is a valuable analytical tool to explore the social, cultural and geographic importance of where sport occurred. Examining where sport and physical education happened in the urban environment provides another layer of meaning to sport. It also illuminates how the same spaces can be interpreted differently depending on their use. The links, the coastal grassy coastal planes adjacent to the northern burghs, were also a unifying characteristic of the region. They were multi-purpose spaces used for sport and require examination. This approach that focuses on space, which falls more broadly into what historical geographers have called the ‘Spatial Turn’, is applied in this study to examine how changes to the urban environment affected where sport and physical education

14 James Miller, Inverness (Edinburgh, 2004); David Alston, My Little Town of Cromarty: The History of a Northern Scottish Town (Edinburgh, 2006); W. Hamish Fraser, and Clive H Lee (eds.), Aberdeen, 1800 - 2000: a new history (East Linton, 2000); E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn and Michael Lynch (eds.), Aberdeen before 1800 A New History (East Linton, 2002).
occurred and its meaning. Moreover, it is used alongside ideas of authoritative social control and popular agency. In doing so, this dissertation fleshes out the negotiations between different social groups and the relationship between where and when sport occurred are interpreted through the lenses of control, order, resistance and subversion.

Using the definitions and approaches discussed above, this dissertation asks, what were the sporting cultures of northern Scotland? How did they change over time and who was involved? Where did it occur in the urban environment? How did they compare to elsewhere in Scotland, Britain and Europe? How did the elite perceive sport and physical education? Finally, it asks how sport and physical education was organised, practised and controlled by different levels of society? It argues that sport and physical education in northern Scotland had a distinctive character that was a result of Highland and Lowland cultural fusion, aided by the environmental, geographic and political characteristics of the region. This led to hybrid sporting cultures. Within this system, sport and physical education were not solely an elite preserve and were pursued by the wider society for numerous reasons and in different forms. Moreover, there was not an identifiable linear development of sport towards its highly organised modern form. Instead multiple sporting cultures overlapped.

Before expanding on these arguments the historiographical context must be set. In doing so, this chapter presents the case for ‘Northern Scotland’ as a distinctive region and then explains the, perhaps surprising, benefits of using a largely urban focus. Second, it assesses recent trends in early modern sport history in Europe, Britain, Ireland and Scotland. Third, it explores how historians have grappled with the history of physical education. Finally, it discusses the methodology and sources used in this study while highlighting the structure of the remaining chapters.

**Northern Scotland**

Northern Scotland was not a purely rural region. It supported many vibrant, albeit relatively small, urban centres. The burghs of northern mainland Scotland, from Aberdeen to Wick, existed within a distinctive region. New conceptualisations of northern Scotland’s regions, as outlined by Ian Mowat, Thomas Brochard, Allan Kennedy, David Taylor and David Worthington, recognise the commonalities and differences between new regions are not purely defined by the Highland-Lowland binary. Instead, regions such as Easter Ross, the far north, the Moray Firth and Badenoch were distinctive and the people living in those areas had cultural, political and economic agency. Northern Scotland was bound together by cultural and intellectual networks, as ideas, goods and people frequently travelled across the region. The burghs were integral to these networks and commonalities. They were hubs for commerce, education, justice and sport. They were also centres of cultural hybridity where Highland, Lowland and International influences mixed. Aberdeen was the intellectual heart of the region with the largest grammar school and two of the country’s five universities and rivalled the southern Scottish burghs with the largest population in the north and its commercial prosperity. It trained many northern schoolmasters and ministers who then worked throughout the region, spreading the knowledge they had acquired at university. Moreover, since the fifteenth century

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18 Worthington, ‘A Northern Scottish Maritime Region’, pp. 204-206; David Worthington, ‘Ferries in the Firthlands: Communications, Society and Culture Along a Northern Scottish Rural Coast (c.1600-1809)’, *Rural History* (October 2016, Forthcoming). Worthington uses a similar argument to show the commonalities in the Moray Firth. Extensive ferry networks connected the communities in the Moray Firth and northern Scotland as the distance between locations was commonly shorter by sea than by land. This is especially true if one had to travel from the southern shore of the firth to the northern, as the Beauly, Cromarty and Dornoch firths caused long inland detours. Thank you to David Worthington for sharing his unpublished work.
Aberdeen had been regarded in official documents as the gateway to the ‘north pairt’ of Scotland, separated geographically and geologically from the south by the Mounth.¹⁹

Since the ground-breaking work of Robert Malcolmson in his national survey *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850*, Scotland’s southern neighbour has benefitted from an abundance of local and regional studies on popular recreations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.²⁰ Scotland has yet to have a national survey to match Malcolmson in depth of analysis or use of primary sources focusing on pre-industrial society. The closest to a national survey of pre-industrial Scottish sport was done by Robert Scott Fittis in 1891; however, his methodology and minimal use of primary sources is problematic.²¹ Nor does Scotland have a multiplicity of local studies. Taking the state of Scottish sport historiography into consideration, it seems that it is developing in a different direction and pace than in England. This regional study of northern Scotland addresses how social, cultural and intellectual change influenced elite and popular sport and physical education. It does so not to just fill a gap within the historiography of sport by providing local insight but establishes how the region contributed to, and was receptive of, emerging practices in the national and international context. Griffin argues that local and regional studies of popular sport provide an ‘unambiguous testimony to the variety of cultural forms that existed in different locations’, yet they fail to explain why there was regional difference or change within a wider context nor do they identify what the larger social, cultural and economic patterns were that signalled change.²²

Regional studies also contribute to the reorientation of British History and answer J.G.A. Pollock’s call to move away from Anglo-centrism. They allow historians to acknowledge how regional cultural, social and political circumstances influenced responses and

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contributions to wider cultural and political events. Since the mid-1990s, Scottish historians Allan Macinnes and Robert A. Dodgshon, following this revision, have inspired new perspectives in Scottish historiography. Macinnes and Dodgshon, and more recently Cathcart, Aonghas MacCoinnich, Kennedy and Brochard, argue that the Highlands and northern Scotland were active participants in Scotland’s and Britain’s geo-politics and should not be considered a realm apart from the Lowlands or from London. Kennedy and Brochard emphasise that the adoption of, and contribution to, seventeenth-century parliamentary and court politics by the nobility and local governments in the Highlands was indicative of the region’s transformation towards ‘civility’ and integration with the kingdom. While this transformation was varied, eventually an integrationist, or as Kennedy posits that a ‘collaborative’ rather than an ‘imperial’, agenda was adopted by the upper levels of society. Moreover, a purely ‘Highland’ identity and culture was not present among the elite. Kennedy argues that many of the leading northern families, such as the Sinclairs of Caithness, Gordons of Sutherland, Urquharts of Cromarty and, to an extent, the Frasers of Lovat, were not ‘clans’ as Dodgshon would describe them but Lowland-style families whose lands were in the Highlands. In many cases these families held influence on the other side of the Moray Firth as well and in actuality the region existed within a ‘cultural greyscale’, meaning they exhibited elements of both Highland and Lowland culture and language, as argued by Kennedy.

26 Kennedy, ‘‘A Heavy Yock Uppon Their Necks’, p. 97.
Sport in northern Scotland was inextricably tied to these ‘collaborative’ agendas; moreover, it could be a signifier of polite fashionable behaviour, respectable education, conspicuous consumption and was part of the integration of Scotland into a wider British and Imperial society. The northern elite drew explicitly and implicitly from Scottish, British and European elite and intellectual discourses when educating their children and attempting to improve their lands and sport was used to train potential warriors, build healthy bodies and to curb ‘immorality’. During the reigns of James VI and I these educational and improvement programmes were heavily politicised as regards ‘civilising’ the ‘barbarous’, which was thought to be the answer to limiting the endemic lawlessness in the Highlands, known as the ‘Highland Problem’, and bringing the region within the Crown’s control. Promoting sports perceived to be ‘lawful’ and discouraging those considered ‘unlawful’ was therefore integrated into treatises on elite education and into plans to facilitate the spread of ‘civility’ among the general population. During the Enlightenment sport began to lose its political connotations, especially after the failed 1745 Jacobite rising and its aftermath. According to Macinnnes this was the last convulsion that dismantled clan culture and ushered in commercial landlordism. However, sport and physical education retained their importance for leisure, physical training, and gender and class identity formation across the social spectrum. For the elite and the growing middling-ranks, sport was firmly entrenched in wider patterns of conspicuous consumption as detailed by Stana Nenadic.

28 See: Bruce, P. Lenman, Enlightenment and Integration: Scotland 1746-1832 (Edinburgh, 1981); Christopher A Whatley, Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Towards Industrialisation (Manchester, 2000). That being said there were contemporary opinions, such as those promoted by some Aberdeenshire ministers, that sport, specifically popular sport, was associated with violence and pagan superstitions which made it irrational. They believed that for the victory of Enlightenment rationalism and agricultural improvement the populace had to distance themselves from sport (see Chapter 5).
The burghs situated on the Moray Firth and North Sea coasts were bastions of state influence, locations of international trade, sites of governance, law, justice, education and sport, and the ruling elite sought to control various aspects of everyday life.\(^{32}\) Aberdeen was the largest northern burgh, followed by Inverness then Elgin. The other burghs, like the majority of Scottish burghs until the mid-eighteenth century, remained relatively small with populations in low thousands.\(^{33}\) Despite their size, it was important for the burghs to demonstrate to the rest of the country, and themselves, that they reflected ‘civility’ in an attempt to distance themselves from the perceived ‘barbarous’ Highlands and Islands that the Statutes of Iona targeted in 1609.\(^{34}\)

Mowat describes the Black Isle and Easter Ross as a ‘double frontier’ where Highland and Lowland culture, language and landscape intersected and the result was a region that was neither wholly one nor the other.\(^{35}\) This argument can be expanded to include a greater area that encompasses the northern burghs around the coasts, especially those west and north of Elgin. These burghs exhibited a hybridity that permeated further down through the social ranks than in the rural hinterland because of their frequent interaction and incorporation into a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic world (Highland, Lowland and international), as Scots from the north traded extensively with the Low Countries and the Baltic region before gaining access to the British Empire.\(^{36}\) When expanded to incorporate a larger area with an urban focus Mowat’s


‘double frontier’ should be expanded to a ‘triple frontier’, taking into consideration the international influence. Out of this cultural and linguistic hybridity developed regional sporting cultures influenced by all three ‘frontiers’.

**Early Modern Sport**

Despite the development of sport history over the past thirty years, its historiography of the early modern period, when compared to the modern, is limited.\(^{37}\) Mike Huggins notes the existing coverage favours its popular manifestation.\(^{38}\) English perspectives on its popular form in Britain have predominated and works by Robert W. Malcolmson, David Underdown, Thomas S. Hendricks, Derek Birley, Gregory M. Colón Semenza and Griffin have provided comprehensive coverage of social developments alongside football, bowls, cock-fighting and bull and bear baiting.\(^{39}\) By comparison, elite sport has been largely neglected within the literature in Britain, with the exception of horseracing. It was not until recently that Brailsford’s call for more elite sport and physical education studies, from 1969, has stimulated subsequent research.\(^{40}\)

Early modern Scottish and Irish national perspectives on sport history have been largely neglected in monograph-length books, with the exception of the works by Burnett, Grant Jarvie and James Kelly.\(^{41}\) Jarvie’s numerous sociological works have improved our understanding of modern Scottish sport and its social and political contexts.\(^{42}\) Burnett, Olive Geddes, David Hamilton, Roger Hutchinson and Hugh Dan MacLennan on horseracing, golf, hunting and

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\(^{41}\) Grant Jarvie and Graham Walker (eds.), *Sport Scotland and the Scots* (East Linton, 2000); Burnett, *Riot, Revelry and Rout*; James Kelly, *Sport in Ireland, 1600-1840* (Dublin, 2014).

\(^{42}\) Jarvie and Burnett (eds.), *Sport, Scotland and the Scots*; Grant Jarvie (ed.), *Sport in the Making of Celtic Cultures* (London, 1999); Grant Jarvie and Graham Walker (eds.), *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation: Ninety Minute Patriots?* (Leicester, 1994).
shinty, respectively, add to the evolving narrative of early modern Scottish sport. They rarely engage with each other’s arguments or conclusions or place sport within a wider context. Instead, they apply a more biographical approach and focus almost exclusively on their own subject. By contrast, Alastair J. Durie engages with wider arguments and themes in his examinations of late-eighteenth century sports, particularly the beginnings of sport tourism in Scotland and Ireland. However, the Mount remains a boundary in Scottish sport history and few studies venture to the ‘north pairt’ of Scotland remaining focused instead on the south and Lowlands.

Critical to recent developments in sport history have been nuanced approaches to change coinciding with the gradual abandonment of convenient yet inaccurate dichotomies that separate the pre-modern from the modern. This movement began in 1989 when Richard Holt questioned the ‘received wisdom’ that modern sport was invented during the mid-Victorian period and anything prior was ‘traditional’. Indeed, after even his cursory examination of the late-eighteenth century, he concludes there were multiple sporting cultures that persisted well into nineteenth-century Britain. Some were ‘traditional’ and others were burgeoning on ‘modern’. From a different perspective, Peter Burke reiterated the necessity for a revisionist approach in his provocative article ‘The Invention of Leisure’ in which he called for sport historians to adopt more sensitive approaches when examining change particularly with the

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onset of industrialisation and urbanisation in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{46} Neil Tranter expanded on this argument stating that eighteenth-century transformations in sport caused by industrialisation should be regarded as ‘evolutionary rather than revolutionary’, and, therefore, the discontinuity thesis, separating pre-modern from modern sport is problematic.\textsuperscript{47}

Vital to this revisionist movement is scepticism about ‘grand theories’ that have formed the basis of modern sport history, primarily those created by Norbert Elias and Allen Guttmann.\textsuperscript{48} For example, Huggins highlights the debate among sports historians regarding the term ‘sport’ within the early modern context. Modern sport specialists are largely unwilling to apply it to the early modern period because of three of Guttmann’s main influences. First, is his distinctions between ‘play’, ‘games’, ‘contests’ and ‘sports’, see \textbf{Figure 1}. Second is his creation of the epochs of sport’s development. They project linearly from Primitive to Greek to Roman to Medieval to Modern, see \textbf{Figure 2}. Finally, he created seven characteristics, which when all present, provide the definition for modern sport. They include secularism, equality, specialisation, rationalism, bureaucratisation, quantification and an obsession with records.\textsuperscript{49} While some of these definitions are problematic in themselves, particularly the equality of opportunity in modern sport, as a paradigm it is problematic because Guttmann then assesses how similar or dissimilar previous epochs were to modern sport using these seven modern characteristics. When examining \textbf{Figure 2}, it is evident Guttmann constructed these characteristics to elucidate a linear progression towards modernity. However, early modern sport historians are more comfortable using the term ‘sport’ to discuss their subject, as they

\textsuperscript{49} Guttmann, \textit{From Ritual to Record}, pp. 9, 16.
recognise its complexity, contemporary status, and functional and political roles rather than assess it through a modern lens.\textsuperscript{50}

Arcangeli, McClelland, Behringer, Alan Tomlinson, Christopher Young, and Huggins have continued revising our knowledge of early modern sport, ending around 1750 by abandoning the idea of ‘traditional’ sport.\textsuperscript{51} Arcangeli and McClelland argue that the Renaissance had a distinctive leisure culture in Europe.\textsuperscript{52} Similarly, Behringer, Tomlinson and Young argue that early modern sport was the foundation modern sport was built upon rather than being a product of mass urbanisation and industrialisation.\textsuperscript{53} Huggins then applies the term ‘proto-modern’ to denote a phase in elite sport in the mid-eighteenth century where many aspects of Guttmann’s ‘modern characteristics’ were met but elements of the early modern remained.\textsuperscript{54} This study supports this trend by sensitively applying the long durée approach, which straddles the early modern and the beginning of the modern period, to trace the evolutionary transformations of both elite and popular sports in northern Scotland. Despite the benefits of Burnett’s conceptualisation of sport prior to 1860, noted above, this study rejects his identification of it as ‘traditional’ and instead favours ‘early modern’ to create a stronger connection between sporting cultures and their specific time.

This study rejects ‘grand theories’ as regards sport and social control. Sociologists have long debated the theoretical framework. Arguments from the 1960s asserted that social control in pre-modern societies was achieved through the creation, and enforcement, of norms and the


\textsuperscript{52} Arcangeli, \textit{Recreation in The Renaissance}, p. 1; McClelland, \textit{Body and Mind}, p. 132.


identification of deviancy, which gained its power from religious authority and conformity. Marxists argue that economic forces, and those who control the means of production, use social control to oppress the powerless labour force through, for example, law and the media.\footnote{Elias’s ‘Civilising Process’ argues that with stricter controls on discipline, sentiment and increased self-control, the elite, ‘warrior class’, obtained a refinement of manners or ‘civility’ in England, moving towards the ‘courtisation’ of the nobility.} When applied to sport, following the example set by Elias and Eric Dunning, this concept has been used to examine changing sporting habits, the creation of rules, the decrease in violence as well as sport’s relationship with control and power.\footnote{Elias’s theory has come under scrutiny by historians because of methodological issues. Instead of the ‘Civilising Process’, many argue for a more nuanced approach when exploring longer-term changes.} D. Stanley Eitzen asserts that, while social control is fundamental in building consensus in society its implementation is not perfect as different groups resist and rebel. Moreover, social development does not follow, in the Whiggish tradition, a linear progression towards an ultimate goal, nor is social control universal. Instead, as Eitzen argues, it fragments and disrupts the fragile unity of separate social groups in society.\footnote{Within a Scottish context, Rosalind Mitchison, Leah Leneman and Michael F. Graham provide invaluable insight into how the Reformed Scottish Kirk approached social control and}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\footnotetext[59]{Eitzen, ‘Social Control and Sport’, p. 370.}
\end{thebibliography}
argue that the Kirk’s three main concerns were sexuality, doctrine and morality. Meanwhile, Margo Todd argues that, while the Kirk was concerned about festivities and sport, the vast majority of its interventions only occurred when these interfered with the Sabbath or when they appeared destructive or morally dubious. Otherwise, sport and physical education were left alone. This pragmatism, Todd argues, was one of the main reasons for the successful conversion of Scots to Protestantism, and indeed the continuation of many sporting practices.

The practice of sport from 1600 to 1800 contributed to gender and identity formation for men across the social spectrum. Surviving evidences indicates sport was predominately a male preserve and female involvement was limited. During the Enlightenment, the accelerated growth of associational culture, which was largely an urban male phenomenon that developed with the growth of voluntary societies, began to change ideas of identity and sociability. This movement created new literary groups, philanthropic organisations, public lecture series and sports clubs, all founded on ideas of rationalism (the idea that everything had to have a purpose), self-improvement, sociability, philanthropy and leisure. This first occurred in major British cities and then in provincial towns reaching northern Scotland by the mid-eighteenth century. Rosalind Carr argues that involvement in such organisations became integral to the formation of gender identities in the Enlightenment. Contemporaries believed women’s presence at sporting events and participation in aspects of associational culture was essential for the creation of ‘civilised’ male behaviour, by way of ‘soft’ feminine discussions and interactions. This was similar to the early seventeenth century’s idea of the opposition between the ‘fop’ and the ‘barbarian’. While lessening the aggressive and ‘barbaric’ aspects of masculine behaviour was important in polite society, overexposure to femininity, effeminacy and stereotypically

foppish behaviour was also troubling. Participation in male only societies such as sports clubs was therefore vital to counteract this overexposure. This disrupts the familiar dichotomy of the ‘barbarous’ and ‘civilised’ man. By adding a gendered element to this system it is clear that acceptable versions of ‘polite’ masculinity existed somewhere between the two stereotypical extremes. While present in the seventeenth century, this was amplified in the eighteenth century by the growth of the middling and upper-middling ranks who began penetrating previously restricted spheres with the power of moveable wealth, conspicuous consumption and refined education.

**Physical Education**

Two key locations where young men played and were taught about sport were schools and universities. Programmes of physical education at schools and universities allowed students’ minds to relax, building healthy and strong bodies and acculturating young men into a masculine physical culture which they would experience throughout their lives. Historians of Scottish education prior to the nineteenth century have focused on the provisioning of schools, the Protestant Reformation, and the Enlightenment and literacy, but there has been no examination of the role of physical education as a critical part of the curriculum.

Currently physical education history lacks the momentum it possessed between the 1950s and 1980s. Instead, the field has been subsumed under sport studies and rarely examines its history prior to the nineteenth century. For example, Murray G. Phillips and Alexander Paul Roper, in their overview of the field of physical education history, argue: ‘Some historical
periods are remembered more intensely than others, while some are not remembered at all. Their perceived value or lack of value to historians determines the intensity of their coverage.\textsuperscript{67} They then proceed to discuss physical education following Guttmann’s periodisation of sport avoiding the period between the Reformation and German Turnen gymnastic movement at the end of the eighteenth century and focus on the ‘games cult’ of nineteenth-century public schools.\textsuperscript{68} Phillips and Roper neglect the early modern period, this being symptomatic of the field in failing to acknowledge the foundations of modern physical education that continued prior trends to acculturate a style of manhood based on characteristics of decorum, discipline, courage, obedience and order, which were used to create an identity and idea of belonging.\textsuperscript{69}

That being said, there are a few works that cover the early modern period providing a framework for analysis. For example, Brailsford’s argument, and his chronology, from the reigns of Queen Elizabeth to Anne, remains convincing. He contends that the relationship between physical training and life, in general, was not clear or inevitable but instead highly conditional on individual suppositions and ideologies that were influenced by the Renaissance, Puritanism and Restoration Stuart politics.\textsuperscript{70} Furthermore, David Lunt and Mark Dyreson trace philosophies concerning sport and physical education from the Renaissance into the Enlightenment and demonstrate there was a development of ideas where contemporaries continually looked back for inspiration when conceptualising, and re-conceptualising, as to how best to train courtiers and gentlemen who could wield the pen and the sword.\textsuperscript{71} Moreover, they argue that the caricature of ‘frowning Puritans’ who hated sports has too long perpetuated an idea that they were against all forms of exercise. They demonstrate that even the most ardent reformers such as Martin Luther and Jean Calvin saw the utility of physical exercise alongside

\textsuperscript{67} Phillips and Roper, ‘History of physical education’, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid; Guttmann, Ritual to Record, p. 54.
\textsuperscript{69} Tomlinson and Young, ‘Towards a New History of European Sport’ p. 498.
\textsuperscript{70} Dennis Brailsford, Sport and Society, pp. 246-247.
academic instruction.\textsuperscript{72} Recently, Keith M. Brown, Semenza and James Williams argue that exercise was integral to male adolescent education in Scotland and England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Brown contends that it instructed life skills within a masculine physical culture that was encouraged by the Renaissance’s rediscovery of antiquity and its respect for the male body.\textsuperscript{73} Moreover, he argues that Scottish adolescent education in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was influenced by educational theorists such as Castiglione, Sir Thomas Elyot, Roger Ascham, Henry Peacham, Richard Brathwaite and John Locke who all strove to attract fathers, tutors and schoolmasters to subscribe to their style of education, acculturating youth into civil and polite society.\textsuperscript{74} However, Brown’s study of Scottish nobility from the Reformation to the Glorious Revolution fails to examine the complexities of educating young men and the nuanced intellectual motivations that led to the promotion of physical education. Semenza examines a variety of literature written from mid-Tudor England until the Restoration period to ascertain how sport was vital for the functioning of the individual and the body politic, and how conceptions transformed over the period. He argues that sport ‘bridges the chasm between the unrestrained disorderliness of carnival and the orderliness of all rule-bound phenomena.’\textsuperscript{75} He further explains that while students and adults practised sports, such as football, elements of violent disorder were matched with complex, yet largely uncodified, rules and organisational structures.\textsuperscript{76} Yet, he emphasises that this did not apply to all sports such as bowls and tennis. They were in continual contestation because of their connection to gambling and excess not violence.\textsuperscript{77} Williams argues that physical education was particularly

\textsuperscript{72} Lunt and Dyreson, ‘A History of Philosphic Ideas About Sport’, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{73} Keith M. Brown, Noble Society in Scotland: Wealth, Family and Culture from Reformation to Revolution (Edinburgh, 2004), p. 215-216; McKay, “For refreshment and preserving health”, pp.52-74. McKay provides an impressive analysis of the usage of contemporary language regarding leisure and recreation in England and demonstrates how it was part of everyday language.
\textsuperscript{74} Brown, Noble Society in Scotland, pp. 215-216.
\textsuperscript{75} Semenza, Sport, Politics and Literature, pp.13-4.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. In northern Scotland this clearly also applied to the various forms of shinty that will be discussed in Chapter Five.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p. 15. Golf could also be added to this list of sports.
important for the courtier because athletic ability could attract prestige at court. Danièle Tosato-Rigo has recently extended the examination of pedagogical texts from England and Continental Europe into the mid-eighteenth century to correctly place Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *Emile* (1762) within its context. Tosato-Rigo concludes Rousseau’s work was a product of its time, following its predecessors, and its fame was based on the popularity of the author rather than his qualification as a physician or a pedagogue. Constructing an analytical framework to examine physical education within a region, such as northern Scotland, will establish how it developed in different parts of the country. It will also identify and assess regional contributions, as numerous northern elite and pedagogues including Gordon of Gordonstoun, Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty (1611-60), David Fordyce (1711-51), George Chapman (1723-1806) and Sir William Forbes of Fettercairn and Pitsligo (1739-1806) were actively engaged with international discussions on this subject.

**Methodology and Project overview**

Studying early modern sport and physical education requires a methodology encompassing the analysis of a wide variety of sources. This is largely because sport was part of the day-to-day life of communities and individuals in northern Scotland and as an everyday occurrence sport was not regularly recorded. Moreover, there were few texts specifically dedicated to sport produced in the region, especially in the seventeenth century. Burnett applies an ethnographic approach in his work examining local histories (edited collections of burgh and church documents and contemporary accounts), newspapers and poetry. He argues that these sources are routinely neglected by historians. By contrast, Griffin and Kelly, studying English and Irish sport as a trained historians, use archival material examining civic documents,

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80 Donald E. Hall (ed.), *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, 1994).
parliamentary papers and numerous collections of estate papers, as well as local histories, newspapers and maps. This study is inclined to Griffin and Kelly’s methodology but also accepts Burnett’s argument for scrutinising more ephemeral evidence. As a result, this study knits together diverse sources constructing a narrative that is representative of a variety of perspectives across two centuries.

In general, documentary evidence survives far better from the eighteenth century than from the previous centuries in northern Scotland. Frances Shaw notes that in large areas of the Highlands there is a dearth of documentary evidence of almost every kind. This is because of a low creation rate of documents, and a low survival rate of those created, within an oral society that lacked a strong connection to a centralised government. In the burghs of northern Scotland the survival rate of civic and ecclesiastical records is somewhat better. However, the survival of civic and ecclesiastical documents is problematic for smaller burghs such as Wick, Dornoch, Tain, Dingwall and Nairn. The burgh council and kirk session minutes in these locations do not survive until the late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth centuries, although the larger burghs of Inverness, Elgin, and Old and New Aberdeen are better served.

Similarly, eighteenth-century estate papers are more plentiful than seventeenth-century records. Where they exist, this study uses both manuscripts and edited collections of family papers. Scottish historians and sport historians have yet to thoroughly examine these sources through the lens of sport in the early modern period. However, significant new information emerges from these documents when they are examined for references to sport. The meticulous care taken by William Cramond and William Fraser in their edited collections of family papers and burgh records, published in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, greatly benefits historians of northern Scotland. Barry Robertson has used these to great effect examining the

82 Kelly, Sport in Ireland, pp. 21-7.
84 Ibid., pp. 16-17.
power of the Gordons of Huntly in the region. While the examination of the surviving original documents is necessary, occasionally a reliance on these collections is required because the originals that the antiquarians had access to no longer exist, as is the case with Banff council minutes for the 1680s.

Printed primary sources such as pedagogical manuals, periodicals and the *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791-99), known as the *Old Statistical Account*, hereafter the *OSA*, offer valuable insight into elite and popular sport and physical education. Seventeenth-century manuals were commonly reprinted, so, the survival of at least one edition is common. Indeed, by examining the number of editions a particular text went through it is possible to ascertain its popularity. While the first editions are preferable to examine, because they more closely represent the cultural and political climate in which the author was writing, they do not always exist and later copies have to suffice. However, Semenza argues that many later, nineteenth and early twentieth-century, editions of pedagogical manuals do not include the original discussions of sport and physical education, and it is therefore necessary to examine older editions that do not trivialise sport within educational programmes. Newspapers were critical to the examination of sport in the eighteenth century. Burnett, Griffin, Kelly and Malcolmson have used them with great success when examining sport in England, Ireland and Scotland. As a source set they are vital when tracing the expansion of sports clubs in the eighteenth century because they notified members of meetings and promoted and recorded events. This is particularly relevant because many sports clubs and societies were short-lived and the few references to them exist in newsprint. Where meeting minutes of northern Scottish sporting

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86 There has been a concerted attempt to use first, second or third editions of pedagogical manuals depending on their availability.
societies exist they have been examined. Newspapers are also illustrative of popular sport, particularly gala days and when advertising market fair horseraces. The Aberdeen Journal is the oldest northern Scottish newspaper and began its weekly publication in 1749. Its geographic orientation to Aberdeenshire is illustrative of both elite and popular sport in that northern county. The dearth of other northern newspapers prior to the nineteenth century, unfortunately, limits our understanding of sport in the north and our ability to have comparative analysis across the region, for example comparing late eighteenth-century sport reporting in Aberdeenshire and Sutherland.

The OSA contains an account for every Scottish parish. It has become an invaluable source for Scottish historians examining a variety of themes including: geography, topography, industrial and agricultural production, population, schools, antiquarian anecdotes and culture. While the OSA is a treasure trove of information it is also problematic. While nearly all the ministers who produced an account recorded the above information, how they recorded it or the length of their discussions was not uniform. This is particularly true as regards the character of the people and their culture. Of the 160 original questions asked by Sir John Sinclair, who organised the OSA, to the authors none pertained to sport or amusement. By 1790 an addenda was circulated to the Church of Scotland ministers with six more questions, the last of which vaguely alluded to sport. Consequently, references to sport are few but when present they are usually colourfully descriptive. The inconsistent nature of the source, then, from parish to parish, hinders a comprehensive comparative analysis. Moreover, the authors’ motivations and perspectives are clearly reflected influencing how each parish is presented. Nevertheless, the OSA remains a valuable source but must be used alongside complementary sources.

89 The sixth and final questions was: ‘Are there any curious or important facts tending to prove any great alteration in the manners, customs, dress, stile or living, &c. of the inhabitants of the parish, now, and 20 or 50 years ago?’ [http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/sas/sas.asp?action=resource&naecache=16&resource=sjsquestions&resourcename=Questions%20to%20Ministers&session-id=043d2d6d3fd333ecbc3d36feca1fd6b9#addenda](accessed, 21/07/2016).
Using the above sources, this study is divided into two parts. Part One (Chapters Two, Three and Four) deals with the European, British and Scottish contexts for, and influences on, sport and physical education in northern Scotland. Chapter Two thereby covers intellectual discourse at a national and international level, how the north contributed to the development of wider national and international sporting practice and culture and, was in turn, influenced by this broader Renaissance and Enlightenment world. It does so by examining treatises, pedagogical texts and estate papers. It argues that the northern elite contributed, and drew upon, an international discourse on sport and physical education with particular interests in education for societal development, exercise for moral education and exercise for health. Chapter Three assesses how sport and physical education were taught in the rather cosmopolitan, refined, ‘civil’ and polite environment of the grammar school, university and by the late-eighteenth century the academy, in northern Scotland. It does so by scrutinising school and university statutes, contemporary textbooks, burgh and church records and town plans. It argues that early modern physical education at northern Scottish grammar schools and universities was primarily a male preserve. It offered male students respite from rigorous academic instruction, assisted their physical development, facilitated social bonding, informed behavioural development and acculturated them into a masculine physical culture. Chapter Four argues that there was a discernible but slow change in elite sport in northern Scotland towards a higher degree of organisation caused by the introduction of bureaucratic structures and sports clubs in the mid-eighteenth century. This was indicative of the region’s integration with Britain: an integration process in which many elite sought to maintain a ‘northern’ identity. This chapter utilises burgh records, family papers and local periodicals. Part One traces the movement of elite sport from a gendered expression of ‘civility’ to it being one of ‘politeness’, in which competitions obtained increasing significance, and the development of associational culture marks a turning point from c. 1750.
Part Two (Chapters Five and Six), on the contrary focuses on sport as played, experienced and regulated by ordinary people in the northern burghs. Sport in Part Two was less influenced by the international and national notions of gentlemanly conduct and was far more regionally and locally focused. Chapters Five, discusses popular and festive sport examining burgh and church records, periodicals and traveller accounts. It argues that popular and festive sport was pursued for enjoyment, was organised, gendered and was a vital release for the lower ranks of society. Furthermore, it remained relatively unchanged throughout the period unlike the elite sporting culture. Chapter Six also examines popular sport using similar sources as Chapter Five but scrutinises the intended sources through the lens of social control. It investigates how authorities attempted to control popular sport in urban communities. It argues that authorities wished to control sport to create physically capable (war-ready) members of society, to minimize disruptions to communities and to follow moral and religious expectations; however, as will be shown, social control as regards sport was not universal in northern Scotland. The lower ranks had agency, resisting, and occasionally totally disregarding, the authorities’ attempts to control what, where and when sport was to be played.
Guttmann’s paradigm is useful and requires further explanation. Play is divided into two separate categories, it can be spontaneous play (unstructured play aligning with Huizinga’s conception) or it can be organised play (Games), meaning that the play is structured upon a set of rules that create a convention of play or that the activity is done for a certain purpose. Gambolling is an example of spontaneous play whereas leap frog is a game. There then are two types of games: non-competitive games, where the point of the game is not winning but for mutual enjoyment, and, competitive games, that are contests where there is an identifiable winner or loser (a tie can also occur). This is a difference between leap frog and bowling, for example. From contests come intellectual contests, such as chess, and physical contests, such as football. The latter are described as sports.

The early modern period has been added to help illustrate its relationship to sports of other epochs.
Chapter 2: Elite and Intellectual Discourses of Sport and Physical Education in Northern Scotland

Introduction
According to Henry Peacham, in his 1622 text *The Compleat Gentleman*, the ideal gentleman was witty, multi-lingual, well-travelled, moral, kind, religiously observant, logical and athletic. He embodied what Baldassare Castiglione in *The Book of the Courtier* knew as *Sprezzatura*, a way of carrying himself and preforming actions with simplicity and ease, whether real or feigned mastery was expressed.¹ This chapter asks how, and to what extent, were the northern Scottish elite engaged in wider Scottish, English and European elite and intellectual discourses concerning physical education? This chapter examines popular English language educational treatises produced in Europe, England and Scotland. It also examines published and unpublished texts and correspondence written by northern Scots such as Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, David Fordyce, George Chapman and Sir William Forbes of Fettercairn and Pitsligo. These works spanned nearly two centuries and are vital to the intellectual, educational and political history of northern Scotland. This chapter argues that the northern elite and intellectuals contributed to, and were receptive of, an international discourse concerning sport and physical education. It is structured to analyse three themes: education for societal development, exercise for moral education and exercise for health.

Education and Societal Development
Many of the northern Scottish elite believed education directed societal development. The purpose of education as perceived in early modern Scotland, especially amongst

¹ Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione’s Cortegiano* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 154. Castiglione’s *The Courtier* was originally published in 1528 and was arguably the most influential text on education that came out the Italian Renaissance. It reverberated throughout Western Europe and the British Isles and was translated into many European languages. Castiglione’s educational philosophy gave credence to a holistic education that forged sound minds and strong, nimble and athletic bodies. This stylised sixteenth-century Italian education was mirrored by the English writer Sir Thomas Elyot in his *The Book Named the Govenour* (1531) and in Scotland by King James VI in his *Basilikon Doron*, which will be discussed in detail.
Protestants, was to create a literate, well-trained and religiously observant society. The late Donald Withrington argued that the seventeenth-century Highlands were relatively well-served by educational institutions, especially in the border regions, such as the Moray Firth and coastal Aberdeenshire. Conversely, the inland and mountainous areas of the north-western Highlands were poorly served until the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK), founded in 1709, began funding charity schools in the early eighteenth century. Prior to the seventeenth century the north had already produced three universities. Bishop Elphinstone of Aberdeen founded King’s College in 1495 and has been depicted as believing the College wold amend the ‘ignorance’ of the north. George Keith, the fifth Earl of Marischal, acknowledged the resistance to Protestantism in the north-east when founding Marischal College in 1593. His main objective was to create a university that taught a curriculum that adhered to the Reformed Church. Both of these universities were based on a European model, while the latter was more closely associated with the ‘New Foundations’ and reforms created by Andrew Melville at the University of Glasgow. Sir Alexander Fraser of Philorth also founded a college in 1597. His institution was integrated into a larger improvement initiative to erect Fraserburgh to a burgh of barony for which he was granted royal permission in 1592. The college was ill-fated and closed in 1605 after the Principal and seventeen ‘zealous Presbyterian Ministers’ were incarcerated by the Privy Council for holding a prohibited assembly in Aberdeen. The buildings were divested of their original purpose and Marischal College went unchallenged as the Reformed university in northern Scotland.

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3 Colin A. McLaren, Aberdeen Students 1600-1860 (Aberdeen, 2005), pp. 4-5.
development required robust education, not just rudimentary literacy, therefore had a firm foundation prior to the seventeenth century in northern Scotland.

Alongside the initiatives to provide university education to develop northern Scotland, James VI and I’s ‘civilising’ political agenda was also reverberating throughout northern Scotland and the Western Highlands and Islands. This was partially accomplished through the creation of ‘plantations’. James VI believed that by planting ‘civilised’ god-fearing, rent-paying Lowland subjects amongst ‘barbaric’ Highlanders and Islanders he would imbue them with the qualities of loyal Lowlanders and they would assimilate into the Scottish realm. The first attempted plantation was on the Isle of Lewis after the lands of Torquil MacLeod, chief of the MacLeods of Lewis, were forfeit to the crown. The participants, known as the Fife Adventurers, having heard of the necessity to bring civility to it, planted a colony in 1598. However, it did not succeed and members of clan MacLeod killed some of the settlers and drove the rest from the island. Not deterred by this fierce opposition of the locals, another failed attempt to colonise the island occurred in 1604. The Ulster Plantation (1609) was a continuation of this crown agenda and planted Protestant Scots and English in Northern Ireland. James’s strategic and political agenda for assimilation after his coronation to the English throne in 1603 should be seen within the context of the Three Kingdoms approach to British History. From this context arose the influential Statutes and Band of Iona (1609). This was a famous attempt to bring the Western Isles in line with the crown. It mandated that assimilation would occur, in part, through education, namely the eldest son from elite families was to be sent to the Lowlands to learn to read, write and speak English.

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7 Gordon, Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland, p. 270.
9 Ibid., pp. 17-21.
10 Goodare, ‘The Statutes of Iona in Context’, p. 52; Macinnes, Clanship and Commerce, p. 65. Macinnes argues that the Statutes of Iona applied primarily to the Western Isles rather than the mainland Highlands.
Sir Robert Gordon, as a Jacobean courtier, a knight of the garter, a baronet of Nova Scotia, and uncle and tutor to John the 14th Earl of Sutherland, was intimately aware of the ‘Highland Problem’. In 1620 Gordon wrote a lengthy letter to his nephew devising a sophisticated development strategy for Sutherland. He encouraged the Earl of Sutherland to adopt the plantation strategy as well as using English education to transform Gaelic society. As such, he wanted the Earl ‘to take away the reliques of the Irishe barbaritie which as yet remains in your country, to wit, the Irishe langage, and habit.’\(^\text{11}\) The initiative was two-fold. First, the Earl was to elevate Sutherland economically, by raising Dornoch to Royal Burgh status, which occurred in 1628. Second, he was to improve Sutherland’s educational infrastructure by planting schools throughout his lands, the chief being in Dornoch, which would ultimately encourage English literacy and inspire local gentlemen to send their children to school so they would be fit for his service. As part of the latter objective, Dornoch was to have a library ‘to amend ther ignorance which increases through laik of books’.\(^\text{12}\) Once the people were fit for service the earl was to plant them along the coasts of his lands from Craigbeg to the Ord to maintain control and order in the region.\(^\text{13}\) While Gordon disparaged the Gaelic language and wanted it extinguished from Sutherland, he knew the Earl needed to know the language of his people.\(^\text{14}\) Evidently, Gordon recognised his improving initiatives would occur slowly and John’s linguistic and cultural hybridity was required if he wanted to administer his lands effectively. Brochard, Cameron, Cathcart and Kennedy argue that this bicultural approach was typical of the northern Scottish elite in the seventeenth century.\(^\text{15}\) The Earl of Sutherland

\(^\text{11}\) Robert Gordon to John, 13th Earl of Sutherland, ‘Sir Robert Gordone his Fearweell, conteyning certane precepts and advertisments to his nephue Jhon, Earle of Southerland’ c. 1620’, in William Fraser (ed.), *The Sutherland Book* (Edinburgh, 1892), pp. II, 359. The ‘Irishe barbaritie’ in this context was not an indication of Irish migration to Sutherland but referred to the Highland Gaelic language and culture.

\(^\text{12}\) *Ibid.*, pp. II, 359, 365. Gordon copied *Basilikon Doron* nearly verbatim as regards how the earl was to act and speak to his peers and his people.


\(^\text{14}\) Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), *The Sutherland Book*, pp. II, 357, 359.

continued to adopt the advice of his uncle in later life, as regards plantations, and by 1649 he had also placed a garrison on the land of Lord Reay, leader of their rival family Mackay, as a demonstration of his power and influence in Caithness.\textsuperscript{16}

Gordon simultaneously directed the young earl’s personal education. His plans were heavily influenced by his own experience. He had been educated in Dornoch and then attended university at St. Andrews and Edinburgh before travelling to France to study law. It was there he experienced the neo-stoic movement. He was also very knowledgeable about contemporary European, English and Scottish pedagogical discourse.\textsuperscript{17} His recommendations as regards physical and academic education for the young Earl were strikingly similar to those of Castiglione, Elyot and James VI.\textsuperscript{18} The Earl was encouraged to enjoy reading and become knowledgeable in cosmology, geography, history and European languages ‘which becomes a man of your qualitie’.\textsuperscript{19} To acquire this knowledge, Gordon sent John and his brothers to the Dornoch Grammar School and then to Edinburgh and St. Andrews for their university education.\textsuperscript{20}

Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, thirty years later, promoted a similar development strategy for his burgh but he did not express the same suspicion towards Gaelic as Gordon. Urquhart, an author, translator, traveller, Royalist soldier and self-professed duelling aficionado, was enmeshed in northern Scottish politics and court life and believed robust

\textsuperscript{16} Gordon, Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland, pp. 550-1.
\textsuperscript{17} David Allan, “‘Ane Ornament to Yow and Your Familie”: Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun and the “Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland”’, The Scottish Historical Review, Vol. 80, No. 209, I (2001), pp. 33-31; J. G. Cochrane, A Catalogue of the Singular and Curious Library, originally formed between 1610 and 1650, by Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun... With some additions by his successors (London, 1816), pp. 5, 31, 45, 53, 58, 73, 104, 105, 120, 142. His collection of pedagogical texts revealed his personal interest and intimate knowledge of contemporary views on education, sport and civility. They included: Ascham’s The Schoole or Partitions of Shooting (1571), Castiglione’s The Courtier (1580 in French), Elyot’s The Boke Names the Governour (1556) and Castel of Health (1595), King James VI and I Basilikon Doron (1603, in English and French), Machiavelli’s The Prince (1622), More’s Principles for Yong Princes, Collected out of sundry Authours (1611 and 1622), as well as Peacham’s Compleat Gentleman (1627). In addition, he owned The King’s Majesties Declaration to his Subjects, concerning Lawfull Sports to be used, known as The Book of Sport, written by James VI and I and reprinted by Charles I (1618 and 1633 respectively).
\textsuperscript{18} Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), The Sutherland Book, pp. II, 337-368.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., pp. II, 343-4, 364-365.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. I, 216.
education of the mind and body allowed men to improve themselves. Unlike the Earl of Marischal and Sir Robert Gordon, Urquhart was an Episcopalian and his acceptance of the ‘improvement’ of men through education demonstrate that this idea in northern Scotland was motivated by more broadly Protestant, rather than Presbyterian, reforms. Urquhart’s Logopandecteision or an Introduction to the Universal Language (1653) discussed his development strategy to ensure prosperity and growth. Pivotal to his plan was the foundation of a university, similar to Fraser of Philorth’s vision to improve Fraserburgh. Urquhart encouraged a broad education emulating the contemporary educational discourses. He wrote: ‘I would have encouraged likewise men of literature, and exquisite spirits for invention, to converse with us for the better civilizing of the country’. This was indicative of his artistic as well as scientific inclinations and was matched, as will be seen, with comprehensive physical education. The creation of such an institution would have dramatically improved the educational infrastructure in northern Scotland, but Urquhart’s plans were not realised.

During the Restoration period there was a re-emergence of Jacobean discourse as regards education, both academic and physical. This was most prominently seen when Charles II republished James VI and I’s Basilikon Doron in 1682. There was a lull in pedagogical productions in northern Scotland at this time; however, texts from elsewhere continued to inform the elite of the most fashionable styles of education. Opposition towards Stuart courtly fashions began to grow in the later years of Charles II’s reign and growing concerns over morality began exerting more pressure on educational developments. For example, Jean Gailhard in The Compleat Gentleman was critical of Restoration politics. He condemned

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21 Sylvester Douglas Stirling (ed.), The Works of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, Knight Reprinted from the original editions (Edinburgh, 1834), pp. 310-2, 401-2. Urquhart claimed when he was young and travelling Europe he entered into three duels in defence of Scotland’s honour and each time he disarmed his opponent and let them live. He also notes that after his travels he had amassed a library of hundreds of books.
23 Ibid., p. 396.
24 Ibid.
25 James VI and I, Basilikon Doron (London, 1682).
opulence and immorality, and encouraged education based on morality to avoid such pitfalls.

He argued that young gentlemen should earn their place in society rather than inherit it based on the prestige of their title. 26 His criticism, tied to strict Protestant reform, continued to ferment throughout Britain during the reign of James VII and II and was part of the ‘Reformation of Manners’ after the 1689 revolution. 27

In northern Scotland, the lives and works of individuals such as Francis Grant of Monymusk, Lord Cullen (c. 1658-1726), offer insight into how educational discourses were politicised at the turn of the eighteenth century. Grant, having graduated from King’s College as a staunch Presbyterian during the Restoration period, found refuge in the Low Countries studying law at Leiden. 28 He returned to Scotland in 1687 and began his career as an advocate in Edinburgh, writing many tracts concerning law, politics and sabbatarianism. Grant was instrumental to the expansion of educational infrastructure in Scotland, as a founding member of the Edinburgh Society for the Reformation of Manners (1700) and a director of the SSPCK. 29

His influence shaped educational reform in Scotland and helped spread the Protestant and Whig agenda. Moreover, his work Law, religion, and education, considered: in three essays (1715) remained relevant into the 1740s as James Todd author of The School-Boy and Young Gentleman’s Assistant Being a Plan of Education (1748) encouraged his readership to consult Cullen’s work. 30

26 J. Gailhard The Compleat Gentleman: or Directions for the Education of Youth as to their Breeding at Home and Travelling Abroad. (London, 1678), preface.
30 James Todd, The School-Boy and Young Gentleman’s Assistant Being a Plan of Education. Containing the Sentiments of the best Authors Under the Following Heads, viz. Health Manners, Religion, and Learning (Edinburgh, 1748); Francis Grant, Law, Religion, and Education, Considered: in Three Essays: With Respect to the Youth; Who Study Law: as a Principal Profession, or Accessory Accomplishment (Edinburgh, 1715). This work unfortunately does not include the third essay. The publisher notes that this was due to the untimely death of
The purpose of education remained heavily politicised and engaged with philosophical trends during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. For example, proponents of Locke argued that fundamentalists were incorrect to judge man as inherently sinful or that man from birth knew the difference between right and wrong, as posited by Plato. Instead, man’s knowledge, capacities and understanding came from his experiences and education. Locke called this the ‘association of ideas’ and it was imprinted upon a ‘blank slate’ not one prefigured before birth.  

This philosophy required society to have the infrastructure to support a moral education because the experiences of youth directly influenced the attitudes and actions of adult life. This philosophy was further popularised by Locke in his *Some Thought’s Concerning Education* (1694), which remained popular in northern Scotland throughout the eighteenth century amongst the nobility, lairds and clergy.

In the north, Fordyce’s *Dialogues Concerning Education* (1745), which was popular across Britain, espoused enlightened ideals of discipline, logic, virtue, rationalism and culture while maintaining a political message. Fordyce was a native of Aberdeenshire, educated at Aberdeen Grammar School and Marischal College, where he eventually became a Professor of Moral Philosophy. Alan Ruston notes that many contemporary commentators believed *Dialogues* was a precursor to Rousseau’s *Emile*. Fordyce’s work was influential for English dissenting academies and found relevance in the Scottish movement towards vocational rather
than purely academic training. It followed the Baconian equation of knowledge equalling power and was possibly the first to promote student-centred learning.35

The third edition of *Dialogues* (1752) was dedicated to William Grant, Lord Prestongrange, the second son of Lord Cullen, and illuminates Fordyce’s academic and political network in northern Scotland.36 Prestongrange, a Whig, advocated for a civilising agenda against ‘the barbarous’ Highlands which he believed were ‘in need of being better civilised’ after the 1745 Jacobite rising.37 The Grant-Fordyce networks demonstrate that even in the north-east where Jacobite sympathies were strongly felt, some actively pursued educational theories characteristic of Hanoverian, Unionist and Moral Reformation ideologies. Their ‘civilising’ rhetoric was different than Gordon’s seventeenth-century thoughts because those that required ‘civilising’, the Jacobites, could hardly be labelled ‘barbarians’ (illiterate, lawless and uncultured) because they included many of the north-eastern elite, especially during the 1715 rising. Instead, their ‘barbarity’ was related to their Jacobitism and religion that posed an immediate threat in northern Scotland and Britain, more broadly, during the first half of the eighteenth century. Many believed, following Locke’s argument, that if the educational structure was stripped of ‘subversive’ and ‘barbaric’ elements (namely Jacobitism and Catholicism) ‘civility’ could be obtained because youth’s educational experiences directly influenced their later life. While swords, muskets, cannons and cavalry quelled the Jacobite threat physically, Whig intellectual networks such as the Grant-Fordyce one combatted the ideology intellectually and through educational discourses. That being said, Jacobite networks within northern Scotland and abroad in France, Italy, Sweden and Russia, from 1690 to 1750,

repeatedly attempted to assert their position and use international hostility towards the
Hanoverians to their favour when attempting a second Stuart Restoration. Indeed, many
Jacobites in-exile were taught the opposite ideology to Grant-Fordyce and led influential lives
as merchants, professionals, soldiers and courtiers abroad.\textsuperscript{38}

Another mid-eighteenth century educational development was the emergence of the
democratic scholar or the ‘lad of parts’, who elevated himself from the lower ranks into the
professional class.\textsuperscript{39} Fordyce was sympathetic to this development and \textit{Simplicius}, the
protagonist in his dialogue, observed at his school:

\begin{quote}
I was very agreeably suprized with the Sight of so many young Gentleman, some of
them of Rank and Fortune, who were come hither from all Quarters to imbibe the
Principles of Science and Virtue, in order to qualify them for the Service of their
Friends and Country.\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

This passage illuminates the presence of democratic scholars as the majority rather than those
of ‘Rank and Fortune’. Fordyce also added a patriotic tone by stating that the education of a
gentleman was his duty to the wellbeing of his country, not just for the benefit of his king as it
had been stressed in the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{41} This passage also indicates the return migration
of young gentlemen coming back to Scotland from abroad for their training. After their formal
training many of these young men went on the ‘Grand Tour’, travelling Europe learning about
art, culture and language, and occasionally sport, in different countries.\textsuperscript{42} Examples of return
migration to northern Scotland in the late-eighteenth century were not uncommon. Children
were sent home from the West Indies and British North America for their schooling. Moreover,
northern Scots abroad, frequently entrepreneurs that had ventured to the Caribbean, often sent

\textsuperscript{38} Steve Murdoch, \textit{Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe, 1603-
\textsuperscript{39} R.D. Anderson, ‘Scottish Education Since the Reformation’, \textit{Studies in Scottish Economic and Social History},
No. 5 (1997), p. 11; Houston, \textit{Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity}, pp. 255. While the proliferation of the
‘lad of parts’ has been contested, there was an expansion of the middling sort who benefited the educational
opportunities and succeeded in upward social mobility.
\textsuperscript{40} Fordyce, \textit{Dialogues} (1745), p. 10.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 9-10, 22.
\textsuperscript{42} See: Jeremy Black, \textit{The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century} (Stroud, 2003); John
money back as mortifications or subscriptions to help fund schools, academies and universities.\textsuperscript{43} This occurred in the seventeenth century but the source of the students and funds were from the wider North Sea and Baltic region and demonstrates a change in focus of Scottish migration between the two centuries.\textsuperscript{44}

Increasingly, professionals and those coming from the lower ranks wished their sons to take advantage of the opportunities offered by a refined education. For instance, George Chapman, the author of \textit{A Treatise on Education} (1773), was the son of a Banffshire farmer who was educated at the Banff Grammar School before receiving a bursary to attend King’s College in 1737.\textsuperscript{45} His \textit{Treatise}, written when he was the schoolmaster in Dumfries, was very popular reaching its fifth edition by 1792. Chapman returned to Banff in 1786 and was hired as the schoolmaster, after considerable negotiations and with a generous salary.\textsuperscript{46} Chapman, who had himself exercised considerable upward social mobility and was informed by the late eighteenth-century elite and intellectual discourses, argued that education was vital for societal development and in particular, followed Locke’s ‘association of ideas’.\textsuperscript{47} Sharing Fordyce’s belief in a student-centred education, he encouraged pupils to be inquisitive, creative and


\textsuperscript{46} Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives (hereafter ACAA), Burgh of Banff Records AS/Bbnf/1/3 pp. 305, 325, Burgh of Banff Minute Book 1776-1792.

\textsuperscript{47} George Chapman, \textit{A Treatise on Education in Two parts. With the author’s Method of Instruction, while he taught in the School of Dumfries; and a view of other books on Education} 5\textsuperscript{th} ed. (London, 1792), pp. I, 4-5, II, 1-120. The second part provided the titles and a brief synopsis of thirty-two other works on education, most of them printed after 1760.
critical in their studies, not simply memorising the classics. Through a positive educational experience, students would become useful members of society.

These ideas were also spreading to non-educationalists in northern Scotland. Forbes of Fettercairn and Pitsligo, the son of a Professor of Law, was educated in Aberdeen before becoming a successful Edinburgh banker and philanthropist. Forbes, having grown up fatherless from a young age, ensured his children would not lack paternal guidance and drafted *Letters to my Children* (1778) offering advice on numerous topics. The *Letters* are critical to understanding the intimate thoughts of this northern professional and laird. They show how he interacted on a personal level with pedagogical theories and how he intended to use them. Forbes’s *Letters*, in this way, are strikingly similar to Gordon’s advice to his nephew. Both of these men were influenced by, and clearly used, widely known educational texts to inform their own writing as regards education programmes. Forbes, similar to Fordyce, wanted his sons to be mindful of their privilege and believed it was their duty to take advantage of the possibility of a refined education. Forbes also shared Chapman’s and Fordyce’s confidence that education could improve society. He personally applied this philosophy and sat on the board of governors for numerous philanthropic organisations in Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

From the Renaissance to the end of the seventeenth century Elphinstone, Marischal, Philorth, Gordon and Urquhart believed educational institutions were vital for stimulating growth, prosperity and civility, while also retaining young intellectuals in the north. These examples of the development of educational institutions prior to the Enlightenment demonstrate

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48 Ibid., p. 1, 3.
49 National Library of Scotland (hereafter NLS) Fettercairn Papers Acc.4796/107-111, Letters to my Children. This remains an unpublished manuscript in the NLS.
50 NLS, Fettercairn Acc.4796/110, Study Letter Ordinary Observations Vol 2 Letters to my Children, 1777. The disciplines he encouraged them to pursue were moral and religious studies, French literature, the classics, art, arithmetic, geography, history and poetry.
an impressive degree of personal and intellectual investment in education in northern Scotland. They also point to significant involvement in international pedagogical trends. The Scottish Enlightenment re-invigorated intellectual life towards education and its purpose in society. For the elite, this aim remained relatively similar: to learn the required skills to administer estates and engage in politics. However, with the growth of the professional classes these ideas began filtering down through society.

**Exercise for Education**

Interwoven in the above discourse was the utility of physical education, as a complementary branch of education to academic pursuits. Exercise was conceptualised in multiple ways and thus it served many different purposes. Osterhoudt’s definition of physical education requires reiterating. Physical education is the combination of physical training and physical culture. This section introduces what the northern elite believed was beneficial for physical training and why exercises and sports were taught to boys and young men introducing them into a masculine physical culture.

First, however, it is necessary to examine the Scottish context of elite physical education at the beginning of the seventeenth century. James VI’s *Basilikon Doron* (1599) was an educational treatise for Prince Henry (1594-1612), James’ eldest son and heir. It was intended only for Henry and a select number of courtiers; however, in 1603 this intimate discussion was distributed internationally as 16,000 copies were printed for James VI and I’s English coronation. Furthermore, its 1603 edition was read across Europe translated into Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, German and Swedish. The reception of the text in England was less favourable but among Scottish courtiers the reception was more positive. It was viewed

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52 James VI and I, *Basilikon Doron. Or King James’s Instructions to his Dearest Sonne, Henry the Prince* (London, 1682), p. A6. It should be noted that the frontispiece states ’Now reprinted by His Majesties Command’. Charles II’s command for a reprint of his grandfather’s work demonstrates an important Stuart legacy which held in reverence the attitudes and prior concepts of what made a successful prince and heir.

as practical guide rather than a treatise on absolute monarchy and it directly influenced the Scottish elite’s ideas about sport and sport as a political tool.⁵⁴

Part three of Basilikon Doron discussed courtly behaviour and sport. Appropriate physical education would be essential to Henry’s success. Moderate use of sport was expedient for health, improved ability and would strengthen the body while also banishing idleness. The Prince was instructed that exercise would improve his ability for office rather than distracting from it.⁵⁵ Evidence suggests the Prince ignored this advice and was a tennis fanatic, playing for hours at a time.⁵⁶ Adolescent disobedience perhaps matched the irony of some of his father’s suggestions, as James frequently went riding and hunting with his advisors, something he expressly warned his son not to do.⁵⁷ The King carefully selected the appropriate sports and wrote:

I debarre al rough and violent exercise, as the foot-ball; meeter for laming, then making able the users thereof: as likewise such tumbling trickes as onely serue for Comedians & Balladines, to winne their bread with. But the exercises that I would have you to use (although but moderatelie, not making a craf of them) are running, leaping, wrastling, fencing, dauncing, and playing at the caitch or tennise, archery, palle maille, & such like other faire & pleasant field games.⁵⁸

Henry was also to be a great horseman, skilled at tilting and accustomed to using a sword on horseback.⁵⁹ James, as a huntsman, believed hunting was an honourable pursuit especially when it was done with hounds. He believed using bows and guns instead was ‘a theivish forme of hunting’.⁶⁰ James did not as passionately endorse hawking ‘because it neither resembleth the warres so neere as hunting doth, in making a man hardie, and skillfullie ridden in all grounds; and is more uncertain and subject to mischance’.⁶¹ James did not want Henry to make these

⁵⁵ James VI and I, Basilikon Doron, p. 90.
⁵⁶ Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 21.
⁵⁷ Brailsford, Sport and Society, pp. 71-2.
⁵⁸ James VI and I, Basilikon Doron, p. 90.
⁵⁹ Ibid.
⁶⁰ James VI and I, Basilikon Doron, p. 91.
⁶¹ Ibid.
endeavours ‘crafts’, meaning he did not want the Prince to master any particular task but pursue them all in moderation. James evidently supported Castiglione’s *Sprezzatura*.

The sports James promoted had a visible hierarchy. While Prince Henry was encouraged to wrestle, fence and hunt, all dangerous activities in preparation for war, he was discouraged from ‘rough and violent exercise’, namely football. The distain for football, or at least the folk ‘footba’, was its association with riot and disorder. James believed only ‘civilised’ sports were appropriate for his son. This intellectual current was a reflection of previous ideas and reverberated throughout Scotland. ‘Civilised’ sport was for the betterment of society, was believed to facilitate ‘civility’ and was interwoven with the elite discourse in northern Scotland highlighted in the last section.

In northern Scotland, the elite and intellectual discourse of physical education created programmes to ensure male youth, across the social spectrum, were physically hardy and adept at martial and civilian exercises; however, which exercises those were depended on social rank. For example, a son from a middling or lower social ranks was likely to be taught to play tennis and to tilt. Gordon, enmeshed within the Stuart courtly culture, advised his pupil on the most fashionable and appropriate athletic pursuits, similar to his own experiences. He was a prize-winning archer. While in France, Gordon practised ‘in all exercises fitt for a gentleman of his birth and quality’ and continued to take dancing and fencing lessons.\(^62\) He was particularly adept at archery. In 1617, he won a silver arrow in Edinburgh during James VI and I’s visit to Scotland besting both English and Scottish nobility.\(^63\) Gordon, influenced by his own experiences and knowledge of contemporary pedagogy, instructed John to run, jump, fence, wrestle, dance, play tennis and practise archery. He was also to be an accomplished horsemen and practise the chivalric pursuit of tilting at the ring, a sport in which a mounted rider with a lance would charge


\(^{63}\) James VI and I, *The Kings Maiesties Declaration to His Subiects, Concerning Lawfull Sports to Be Vsed* (London, 1866). James received a petition from his Lancashire subjects while travelling back south after his visit to Scotland.
down a field and instead of attempting to un-horse his opponent would use his dexterity to put his lance through progressively smaller rings. Gordon also encouraged hunting, ‘which is a martaill sport, and resembleth the warres much; for it maketh a man hardie and skilfull in all grounds.’

The encouragement of these exercises were taken virtually verbatim from James VI’s *Basilikon Doron*, demonstrating Sutherland’s involvement in early modern courtly sporting fashions, and Scotland’s engagement in wider European courtly culture as Sutherland’s list of sports could have easily been drafted for a nobleman in England, France or Spain. Additionally, Gordon promoted golf, a particularly Scottish game and the Earl’s expenses show he practised the links game and archery while at school in Dornoch and at university in St. Andrews.

The Sutherland house continued to promote these sports for physical education in subsequent generations. For example, from 1654 to 1656, the future Earl of Sutherland and his brother travelled to London to continue their education and experience the capital, possibly living in Westminster. Their expenses illuminate the leisured life of these two young nobles with charges for sightseeing, clothing, books, entertainment and sport. While in the city they continued their learning with French and English grammar, mathematics and took fencing and dancing lessons. They frequently played golf and bowls and spent a substantial sum on riding gear. The financial strain of this expensive education and sporting experience caused the 14th Earl of Sutherland, who was already buried in debt, great stress. He bemoaned his sons’ expenses and wrote: ‘Iff I wer al[way]s exorbitant in my spending as they ar, I wold be called

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65 NLS, The Sutherland Papers Dep.313/1598, Sir Robert Gordon Tutor Compt; Fraser (ed.), *Book of Sutherland*, pp. I, 214-216; Mark Napier (ed.), *Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose* (Edinburgh, 1851), pp. I, 43-49. There is little doubt that the young Earls of Sutherland and Montrose took to the links of St. Andrews for golf as well as their documented archery and hunting.
66 Fraser (ed.), *Book of Sutherland*, p. I, 282.
67 NLS, Sutherland Papers, Dep.313/497, Accounts of travelling expenses probably of George, 14th Earl, 1654-56; Fraser (ed.), *Book of Sutherland*, p. I, 282.
68 Fraser (ed.), *Book of Sutherland*, p. I, 282.
a destroyer of the house. Nevertheless, this experience was essential for their education and their inclusion in fashionable elite society.

Physical training was also associated with morality and was used in characterisations of the ‘compleat’ gentleman. James VI had argued that idleness was the ‘mother of all vice’ and believed moderate participation in sport was the solution. Nevertheless, courtiers’ over-indulgence in sport was equally criticised as immoral by ardent Protestants reformers, Puritans and strict Presbyterians during the mid-seventeenth century and during the Restoration period. These criticisms were put into print in Brathwaite’s *The English Gentleman* (1630) and John Dury’s *The Reformed School* (1649), and Gailhard *The Compleat Gentleman*. In northern Scotland, Gordon shared the king’s belief that sport was a solution to immorality. In his *Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (1630) he promoted courtly masculine ideals including athletic ability when describing his brother, the deceased 13th Earl of Sutherland, and their deceased cousin, Ludovick Stuart Duke of Lennox and Richmond, a renowned courtier and relative of the King. Gordon presented both men as role-models for Sutherland as ideal men. Accordingly, they were loved by their equals and by their people, religiously observant, moral, intelligent and proficient at all the manliest bodily exercises.

Jim Casey’s argument as regards physical training in early modern England, that ‘no sooner was a young male breeched than he began training to charge into the breach’, while a hyperbole, highlights the masculine and martial nature of boyhood games and physical training and is applicable to seventeenth-century northern Scotland. Martial training prepared men for military service at home and it was not uncommon for northern Scots to find employment

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69 Ibid., pp. 1, 270-271.
70 James VI and I, *Basilikon Doron*, p. 90.
71 Williams, ‘Sport and the Elite in Early Modern England’, p. 396
abroad as mercenaries.\textsuperscript{75} For example, Colonel Robert Monro, a son of the Cromarty Firth, went abroad with MacKay’s Regiment during the Thirty-Years War. He made an account of his expedition and provided instruction on martial training and the organisation of armies.\textsuperscript{76} Gordon likewise promoted martial training of the lower social ranks, alongside their English language education, to improve morality and ensure Sutherland had skilled and able-bodied men. He urged the Earl of Sutherland to ‘cherishe your countreymen and train them vp in all kynd of honest exercise, such as hunting, ryding, archerie, shooting with the gun, gofing, jumping, running, swimming and such lyk.’\textsuperscript{77} Likewise, Fraser of Lovat had argued in 1570 that martial exercises were physically beneficial and were important ‘for polishing and refining yowth and to keep them from effeminacy, baseness, loitering and idleness, which fosters vices and inclines men to all evil.’\textsuperscript{78}

Morality was firmly associated with the encouragement of exercise and was emphasised by Gordon’s promotion of golf and his discouragement of football, similarly to James VI and I.\textsuperscript{79} Football was discouraged because of the belief, and the reality, that it often unravelled into a riotous melee causing disruption and damage to communities.\textsuperscript{80} Gordon’s low opinion of the sport was also confirmed by the behaviour of his family’s rivals, the Sinclairs of Caithness, in particular, their ‘barbaric’ behaviour at a late-sixteenth century match where George, 5\textsuperscript{th} Earl of Caithness, killed two of his kinsmen in cold blood during a match after a wedding feast

\textsuperscript{76} Robert Monro, \textit{Munro his expedition vvith the vvorthy Scots Regiment (called Mac-Keys Regiment)... Collected and gathered together at spare-houres, by Colonell Robert Monro ... for the use of all worthic cavaliers favouring the laudable profession of arms. To which is annexed the abridgement of exercise, and divers practicall observations, for the young officer his consideration; ending with the souldiers meditations goin on service} (London, 1637), pp. 183-92.
\textsuperscript{77} Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), \textit{The Sutherland Book}, p. II, 359.
\textsuperscript{78} William Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers: the Wardlaw manuscript entitled ‘Polichronicoseupolicraticatemporum’ or The true genealogy of the Frasers’}, 916-1674 (Edinburgh, 1905), p. 171.
\textsuperscript{79} Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), \textit{The Sutherland Book}, p. II, 359; Brown, \textit{Noble Society}, p. 216.
because he believed them loyal to Sutherland.\textsuperscript{81} Another reason for Gordon’s admonishment of the game was the memory of the fifth Earl of Huntly dying from a stroke during an enthusiastic match in 1576.\textsuperscript{82} Gordon, because of his dislike of football, instructed the Earl and his people to abstain from it and instead pursue appropriate and less chaotic sports.

In the 1650s Sir Thomas Urquhart envisaged a comprehensive physical education curriculum for his proposed university. Profitable physical training and refined education were for ‘enriching of men in their fortunes, or pro-moving them to deserved honours.’\textsuperscript{83} He wrote:

I had also procured the residence of men of prime faculties for bodily exercises, such as riding, fencing, dancing, military feats of mustering, inbattleing, handling the pike and musket, the art of gunnery, fortification, or any thing that in the wars belongeth either to defence or assault, volting, swimming, running, leaping, throwing the bar, playing at tennis, singing, and fingering of all manner of musical instruments, hawking, hunting, fowling, angling, shooting, and what else might any way conduce to the accomplishment of either body or minde.\textsuperscript{84}

Despite his university never being realised, his plans resembled those of Spanish military academies.\textsuperscript{85} Moreover, his plan to hire sports masters to train students further supports Behringer’s claim that early modern sport and indeed physical education training was professionalised, albeit not to the same extent Guttmann envisaged for modern sport.\textsuperscript{86}

Urquhart’s impressive initiative reflected his ambitions to educate courtiers, gentlemen and proficient soldiers. His list of exercises also illuminates that imposing modern categorisations on elite seventeenth-century physical pursuits would be an anachronism, if not done carefully. Urquhart provided only a vague indication of any categorisation of particular activities, switching back and forth between martial and civilian exercises and artistic pursuits. This

\textsuperscript{82} Brown, \textit{Noble Society}, p. 216.
\textsuperscript{83} Stirling (ed.), \textit{The Works of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty}, p. 397.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} Behringer, ‘Arena and Pall Mall’ pp. 331-357. Behringer discusses the prevalence and competition between European universities to secure students by enticing them with the best sports masters.
interplay was characteristic of seventeenth-century pedagogical discourse.\textsuperscript{87} It highlights the versatility of courtiers and gentlemen, as they shifted between different worlds, one of violent hand-to-hand fighting, fortifications and musketry, to another which involved playing tennis, singing and playing instruments, then back to hunting, fishing and hawking. However, a sharp mind was also required as athletic prowess and intellectual achievement were expected of courtiers and gentlemen as they navigated through noble society.\textsuperscript{88}

Changes to physical education in northern Scotland had begun in the mid-seventeenth century with developing ideologies and technological changes on the battlefield. Football had clearly been targeted as inappropriate but other exercises began to be discouraged too because they were no longer fit for the elite. For example, Henry Peacham, popular with Stuart Royalists, argued that wrestling was for the common soldier, not the noble or gentleman (in the position of officer or commander).\textsuperscript{89} Brailsford argues that this change coincided with aggression and strength being surpassed in social prestige by style and grace, even in defeat. He further implies this transformation contributed to the growing separation between elite and common sports.\textsuperscript{90} After Urquhart’s contribution to the northern Scottish discourse, martial training for the elite slowly disappeared from discussions of their physical education. Fencing, although a social imperative, was only promoted if educators believed young men had the correct temperament and would not place themselves at unnecessary risk at the sharp end of a duel with the combination of an ill-temper and an over-confidence in ability.\textsuperscript{91} For example, the Duke of Gordon clearly believed that his son and his retinue had the correct temperament and should be trained to fence and from 1713-15 he hired James Maurice, a fencing master, to

\textsuperscript{87} Todd, \textit{The School Boy}, pp. 60-61; demonstrates that this fluidity continued in the eighteenth century even for the more common gentleman.

\textsuperscript{88} Williams, ‘Sport and the Elite in Early Modern England’, pp.390, 409-10.

\textsuperscript{89} Brailsford, \textit{Sport and Society}, p. 80.

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., pp. 81-4.

\textsuperscript{91} R. Brathwaite, \textit{Times Treasury or Academy for Gentry Laying downe excellent grounds both Divine and Humane, in relation to Sexes of Both Kinds ... Summing up all in an exquisite Character of Honour} (London, 1652); John Locke, \textit{Some Thoughts Concerning Education} 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (London: 1695), pp. 181, 349-51. Both texts were widely read in the north.
teach at Gordon Castle. 92 Fencing was also encouraged at academies by the late-eighteenth century, as will be seen.

While some martial exercises for the elite fell into disuse, exercises such as angling, archery, badminton, billiards, bowling, fencing, fowling, golfing, hunting, hawking, riding and tennis continued and retained their connection to respectability and morality. Fordyce supported many of the above exercises as ‘innocent Amusements’ but argued that they were secondary to academic pursuits. 93 His discussion as regards exercise was not as comprehensive as previous works. As a Professor of Moral Philosophy, he was firmly entrenched in the Enlightenment and the growth of ‘rationalism’, which associated excessively strenuous sport with irrationality and he therefore dismissed it. 94 Chapman, conversely, not part of the intellectual elite, added more detail about exercise and promoted Gailhard’s and Locke’s argument for building children’s constitutions through moderate exercise and exposure to the environment. 95 For older students he encouraged moderate exercise ‘that they may be strengthened, and not exhausted’ and listed outdoor and indoor sports such as handball, bowls, riding, badminton and weightlifting. 96

Forbes encouraged many different exercises for his sons in the late-eighteenth century and was directly influenced by Locke’s theory to keep children happily engaged with sport and academic subjects. Forbes insisted intervals of leisure at grammar school should be devoted to ‘manly exercises of riding, fencing, dancing [and] walking’, in addition to swimming. 97 Curiously, and unlike others mentioned above, Forbes promoted skating as a healthy exercise

92 NRS, Papers of the Gordon Family, Dukes of Gordon (hereafter Gordon Castle Muniments) GD44/51/542/12, Cuttlebrae’s Vouchers December 1713; GD44/51/544/6, Vouchers of Cuttlebrae’s vouchers June 1715; NRS, Gordon Castle Muniments GD44/51/543/7, Vouchers of Cuttlebrae’s accounts July 1714.
93 Fordyce, Dialogues, (1745), pp. 29-30.
94 Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 219.
96 Ibid., pp. I, 116-117.
97 NLS, Fettercairn Papers, Acc.4796/110 p. 54, Letters to my Children Vol 3 Amusement Letter; NLS, Fettercairn Papers Acc.4796/111, Miscellaneous bundles of materials used for the Letters on Studies & Amusements & miscellaneous loose tracts on religions & philosophical topics. Forbes’s notes demonstrate he had read and taken extensive notes on Locke’s essay Some Thoughts Concerning Education.
and an inexpensive mode of winter transportation. He also encouraged playing golf, as a founding member of the Fraserburgh Golf Club in 1777 (see Chapter Four).

Forbes was sensitive to the changing attitudes towards hunting and cruelty to animals in the late-eighteenth century. He only half-heartedly supported field-sports and angling, although he believed they were conducive to health. He wrote to his sons, ‘I shall not be displeased if you possess a tenderness of feeling, as well as a sense of propriety that shall prevent your joining in that wanton and indiscriminate slaughter of dumb creatures’. Forbes’s acknowledgement of the criticisms towards blood-sports coincided with a larger ideological change in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century in Britain. This was especially seen in relation to popular sports, where violence against men or animals was no longer equated with enjoyment. In general, the Scottish Kirk had long discouraged cruelty to animals in sport such as bull and bear-baiting, dog fighting and cockfighting. As a result, these sports have a relatively silent and underground history in Scotland, by comparison to England. English puritans attempted similar discouragements but they were relatively late, eighteenth-century, developments. While this change in attitudes was effecting perceptions of blood-sports, hunting remained a staple sport for the northern elite and by the end of the eighteenth century became essential to the growth of the Scottish tourism industry.

The northern Scottish nobility and elite conceived of sport, education and civility in very similar ways to their counterparts elsewhere in Britain and Europe. While the northern

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99 NLS, Fettercairn Papers Acc.4796/124, Minutes & Membership list of Fraserburgh Golf Club 1777;
100 NLS, Fettercairn Papers Acc.4796/110 p. 61, Letters to my Children Vol 3 Amusement.
101 Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, pp. 95-7.
102 Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, pp. 92-98, 262-263; Malcolmson, Popular Recreations, pp. 106, 111; Griffin, England’s Revelry, pp. 223-249. Griffin dedicates a full chapter to the demise of bull-baiting.
elite and educators followed wider trends they also contributed to the international discourse. Education served an important purpose in society and when joined with appropriate exercise it produced useful male members of society. The exercises promoted during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gradually changed, along with technological advances and changing attitudes to what was deemed appropriate. However, the core exercises of archery, dancing, fencing, golf, hunting and riding remained essential for the gentleman. These exercises were also supported because they introduced adolescent males into a masculine physical culture believed to assist bodily development and instil healthy habits, as a cure for idleness and immorality, and to signify the quality of refined education.

**Exercise and Health: Body and Mind**

The northern Scottish elite also engaged with British and European discourses of physical education as regards the health benefits of exercise. Moral philosophers, pedagogues and Galenist physicians believed moderate exercise reinforced proper conduct, banished idleness, improved skills and refreshed the mind. Writers often engaged with the medical discourses to demonstrate their arguments. Hippocratic and Galenic medical theories, along with Arabic infusions from the late-medieval period, influenced medical practices and concepts of education throughout medieval and early modern Europe. Humoral theory was central to this and was based on the balance of the humours, elements and their qualities. Imbalances of the humours were thought to cause a variety of ailments and diseases. When balance was restored, proper health could be obtained and was being achieved by applying opposites. For example, if a person had too much phlegm, being cold and wet, it could be remedied by

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something hot and dry. Exercise was regularly prescribed as part of these humoral treatments to heat up the body and agitate the humours.  

In northern Scotland, Highland and Lowland medical practices occurred simultaneously in the region as a result of its cultural hybridity. The Scottish medical profession was tightly intertwined with Continental practices. For example, Lowland medicine, even after the founding of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh in 1681, remained closely connected to the university at Leiden, which attracted significant Scottish enrolment, especially to the lectures by the famous Professor Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738). In parallel the hereditary clan physicians, the Beatons or Bethunis, who were historically based in the Western Highlands and Islands (from the medieval into the early modern period), incorporated Galenic and Arabic humoral theory into their Gaelic medicine. Specifically, John Beaton of Islay’s Regimen Sanitatis (c. 1563), or ‘Rule of Health’ written in Gaelic promoted exercise and good hygiene for the Highland chiefs. This family also had two branches in Easter Ross, at Culnaskea and Delny which served as physicians and married extensively into the Munros of Foulis, and were important contributors to society as physicians, teachers and preachers in Dingwall, Alness and Tain, as well as further north in Sutherland.

In the seventeenth century humoral theory was also frequently used as justification in terms of promoting exercise for physical health by non-medical professionals. For example, Sir Robert Gordon wanted the Earl of Sutherland to practise numerous sports in moderation for their health benefits. He then warned the Earl to not abuse his body through excessive eating or drinking, as he had a history of illness. Neil Beaton, from the above named family of

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105 Francis Fuller, Medicina Gymnastica: Or, A Treatise Concerning the Power of Exercise, with Respect to the Animal Oeconomy; and The Great Necessity of it, in the Cure of Several Distempers 4th ed. (London, 1711), preface.
106 Ewen Cameron, ‘Embracing the past: the Highlands in nineteenth century Scotland’; Cathcart, Kinship and Clientage: Highland Clanship; Kennedy, “‘Heavy Yock Uppon Their Necks’”.
107 Dingwall, A History of Scottish Medicine, pp. 73, 82.
108 Beith, Healing Threads, pp. 57-8.
110 Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), The Sutherland Book, p. II, 365.
physicians, had attended the Earl in 1618 at a cost of £13, 6s, 8d Scots.\textsuperscript{111} Further south, Urquhart was knowledgeable of Galenic humoral theory and the connection between exercise and health. While his development strategy for Cromarty neglected health, his poetry did not. Urquhart encouraged moderate exercise but did not believe the strength of ‘Milo’ was required.\textsuperscript{112} His position was similar to Desiderius Erasmus’s argument that stated: ‘we are not concerned with developing athletes, but scholars and men competent to affairs, from whom we desire adequate constitution indeed, but not the physique of Milo’.\textsuperscript{113} The essence of this message was widely disseminated in Britain by Richard Brathwaite and John Dury, as regards their religiously sensitive educational philosophies contending that exercise was beneficial when performed in moderation, as the soul required a healthy vessel. Additionally, Urquhart demonstrated, similar to Brathwaite and Dury, that health was not only physical but interwoven with morality and spiritual well-being, as the soul required a healthy vessel.\textsuperscript{114} His contribution, as an Episcopalian, to this discourse, which was predominately touted by Presbyterians, illuminates that the purpose of physical education was generally accepted regardless of the sect one belonged to in the mid-seventeenth century.

The creation of a robust vessel to hold the soul, many argued, should begin at a young age. Gailhard believed physical education was ‘not only convenient, but also necessary to use Children to hardship’.\textsuperscript{115} This included allowing children to be exposed to the elements in moderation such as wind, rain, heat and cold, and not be constantly brought indoors and made sedentary for fear of risking their health. Exercise was also used to prepare male children for hardships including hunting, hawking, riding and running along with other fashionable activities. Locke reiterated this ‘hardening’ philosophy in Some Thoughts Concerning

\textsuperscript{111} Fraser (ed.), \textit{The Sutherland Book}, p. I, 213. From 1603 the exchange rate between Scotland and England was standardised at £ 12 Scots to £1 sterling. 1 merk Scots was 13s. 4d. Scots.
\textsuperscript{113} Lunt and Dyreson, ‘A History of Philosophical ideas about sport’, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{115} Gailhard, \textit{The Compleat Gentleman}, p.79.
Education. Chapman integrated it into his treatise, demonstrating a continuity from the late
seventeenth century into the late-eighteenth century to encourage the development of strong
constitutions from a young age.¹¹⁶ Gailhard, prior to Locke, had deep seated anxiety about the
elite’s failings in this regard and the reiteration of the ‘hardening’ theory by subsequent
pedagogues exposes that it was not fully accepted within elite society and this vexed many
educators and physicians.

Evidence for widespread trepidation concerning the physical inadequacies of the elite
in Europe is found in the Abbot Claude Fleury’s 1686 work. Abbot and his contemporaries
were worried that the honourable exercises of antiquity (running, jumping, swimming and
wrestling etc.) were no longer being used and argued that the soul could not function well with
an unfit body. Tosato-Rigo further evokes Fleury’s argument, with which Gailhard would have
concurred, that the ‘privilege’ of the rich drove them to wallow in ‘sluggishness’.¹¹⁷ This kind
of social commentary persisted for over a century and reveals a European-wide problem.
Portions of the elite believed that bodily exertion was unbefitting of their position, a belief based
on the social stratification of physical hardship and labour, where the common people worked
with sweat on their brow, not the rich. Fleury believed this was a detriment to society and
lamented the practises of elite parents:

They cover them [children] up to the tips of their fingers, they do not let them exercise
out of fear that they might hurt themselves or get worked up, they regularly purge
them during certain seasons, and they persuade them so effectively that they have a
feeble and delicate complexion, that the poor children believe it for the rest of their
lives, and attempt to distinguish themselves from the common folk through this as
well as throughout their possessions and condition.¹¹⁸

Gailhard would have agreed with this as he wrote: ‘the greatest Kings in the world, when they
are put upon action, are glad of a body to endure hardship; the greatest Conquerors do share in

¹¹⁷ Tosato-Rigo, ‘In the Shadow of *Emile*, p. 454.
¹¹⁸ Tosato-Rigo, ‘In the Shadow of *Emile*, p. 454. Fleury, however, criticised military academies for not striking a
balance between exercising the body and the mind.
it: not only the common Souldiers, but also Officers undergo it'.

Fordyce in 1745 also bemoaned parents who over-indulged their children, giving them little discipline and sheltering them from hardship. The result he witnessed was ill-behaved, haughty and disrespectful children who approached every task given to them with distain. William Buchan two decades later, in his *Domestic Medicine*, continued this criticism towards the elite in mid-eighteenth century Britain. His words were critical of the social and economic transformation occurring in Britain that only continued with the catalysing effects of industrialisation and urbanisation. He believed that urbanisation, spurred on by capitalist motivations, caused exercise to be neglected by the common person and the elite, where ‘sedentary employments prevent two-thirds of mankind from either taking sufficient exercise themselves, or giving it to their children’. The increased sedentary life was also a result of the growing popularity of Enlightenment ‘rationalism’ that viewed strenuous exercise for amusement as irrational, that it had little purpose and should be avoided.

Despite these tensions it is clear that many were engaging in an active life. Moreover, the northern elite and intellectuals were adding to the discourse connecting physical exercise to mental health. In 1605 Gilbert Gray, Principal of Marischal College, encouraged his students to exercise after intensive study to restore humoral balance. His position, as Chapter Three will demonstrate, was fully accepted by northern educators for the remainder of the seventeenth

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120 Fordyce, *Dialogues*, pp. 174-8. This particularly occurred, Fordyce argued, when parents inherited a wealthy estate and were themselves not properly educated.
121 William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine Or a Treatise on the Prevention and Cure of Diseases By Regimen and Simple Medicines with An Appendix, containing a Dispensatory for the use of Private Practitioners 5th Edition Corrected* (London: 1776), p. 24. Buchan’s massively popular text *Domestic Medicine* had twenty-two editions between 1769 and 1826 and numerous elite owned copies and it was sold by local booksellers such as Isaac Forsyth in Elgin. See: NRS, Seafield Papers GD248/204/10/11, List of New Books, Stationary and Music on Sale at Isaac Forsyth’s, Elgin; NRS, Seafield Papers GD248/1069, Account Books c 1709-1814; NTS, Castle Fraser CAFCat2, Library Catalogue Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; or, Parish Life in North of Scotland* (Wick and Edinburgh, 1889), pp. 178-179. Sage recounted when he was a child in the late-eighteenth century in his home parish of Kildonan Mr. MacLeod, the schoolmaster and Sunday school teacher, was a keen reader of Buchan’s *Domestic Medicine* ‘all whose instructions he rigidly, and often successfully, practised’.
122 Burnett, *Riot, Revelry and Rout*, p. 219; Sinclair (ed.), *OSA*, p. XXI, 146.
century. Similar sentiments connecting mental and physical health continued in the eighteenth century. For example, Fordyce asserted when educating the gentleman that to ‘call forth its most latent Seeds, and ripen them to a full growth’ it was necessary to, ‘unbrace the Mind, that it may act with more Vigour, when it is bent again’.124 Simultaneously, Buchan’s vastly popular text, which went through many editions, read from the Strath of Kildonan to London and throughout the Empire, argued that exercise was: ‘the best guardian of virtue, and the greatest preservation of health’.125 As regards studious people and students he argued:

Intense thinking is so destructive to health that few instances can be produced by studious persons who are strong and healthy. Hard study always implies a sedentary life; and, when intense thinking is joined to the want of exercise, the consequences must be bad … Perpetual thinkers, as they are called seldom think long. In a few years they generally become quite stupid.126

Chapman and Forbes echoed this sentiment and encouraged pupils to pursue various exercises along with their studies to keep their minds’ sharp.127 Buchan encouraged hunting, shooting, playing cricket, and hand-ball as beneficial for health.128 For those lacking bodily vigour, Buchan believed golf was best, arguing ‘it is well calculated for exercising the body, and may always be taken in such moderation, as neither to over heat nor fatigue. It has greatly the preference over cricket, tennis, or any of those games which cannot be played without violence’.129 Not only was golf seen as a fashionable pursuit, but it was one of the most beneficial for health, especially for those who could not withstand the ‘violent’ actions of cricket or tennis. These eighteenth-century perspectives, which many emulated, resembled Gailhard’s and Locke’s theories of the previous century and provide further support to Lunt and

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124 Fordyce, Dialogues, pp. 29-30.
125 Buchan, Domestick Medicine, p. 93.
126 Ibid., pp. 57-8.
128 Buchan, Domestick Medicine, p. 91-92.
129 Buchan, Domestick Medicine, p. 92.
Dyreson’s claim that pedagogues and intellectuals frequently looked to the past for inspiration when creating plans for physical education or promoting exercise.  

After experiencing physical education in adolescence many northern gentlemen continued to practise sport for its health benefits. From the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the period, the northern elite also did so while taking spa treatments. The benefits took time to mature, so visitors to spas, baths or healing wells often stayed for extended periods and regularly found time for exercise. Their actions were not censored by the Kirk because they distanced themselves from pre-Reformation superstition and idolatry associated with wells and stressed their medicinal benefits. For example, Lord Alexander Brodie of Brodie, an ardent Presbyterian, used a healing well near Forres in 1672 to ‘prevent the diseas which I am subject unto of the stone’. While there, he also played golf with a companion. His diary illustrates his rationale towards using the well for its medical purposes. It also highlighted his enjoyment of sport caused him significant guilt, as he wrote: ‘Lord! let this be noe snar to me’. In the eighteenth century this health practice of taking to the waters continued. For instance, in 1716, the 16th Earl of Sutherland advised his son, Lord Strathnaver, to refrain from spirits and heavy drinking and encouraged him to ‘walk about […] moderate exercise is good’. Strathnaver, however, continued to experience poor health and eventually died at Dunrobin Castle in 1720, never making it to the healing waters at Peterhead as he had planned.

Peterhead was a popular destination for spa treatments and sea-bathing for the northern elite, much like the spa town of Bath, with archery, bowls and golf, and various horse and foot

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133 Fraser (ed.), The Sutherland Book, p. I. 392.
races regularly pursued by visitors. Treatments that included sea-bathing were not uncommon elsewhere in northern Scotland too. For example, Sir John Gordon of Invergordon had been prescribed by his physician a lengthy regimen to take at Scarborough in 1755. It included water drinking sea-bathing and horseback riding. In subsequent years, Gordon built bathing machines on his estate on the Cromarty Firth. Clearly, this had its practical advantages as he could keep a close eye on his estate while improving his health. It also saved him money as he no longer had to travel to England for such treatments. This also demonstrates the mobile nature of the northern elite at this time as well as their incorporation of new popular health and leisure practices. By 1766 the Honourable Company of Water Drinkers at Peterhead had formed and organised the social events of the town. A decade later the burgh of Banff attempted to attract some of the Peterhead patrons with its own bath house. At the end of the century, other spa resorts began appearing in the region, such as Strathpeffer, and the northern elite continued to embrace fashionable health and leisure pursuits.

Physical education clearly had its health benefits for the body and mind. The northern elite incorporated and contributed to the wider intellectual discourse in this regard. However, not all believed exercise or exposing children to the elements were beneficial and there were clearly tensions between pedagogues and physicians on one side and the sedentary elite on the other. Nevertheless, as has been shown, texts such as Buchan’s Domestic Medicine were vastly popular and informed his audience that the benefits of exercise were vastly preferable to a sedentary life. Many followed this advice and pursued healthy leisure practices in the eighteenth century, some of which were essential to the development of the sea-side tourism industry.

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136 The Aberdeen Journal (hereafter ABJ), 15 September 1766, p. 4; ABJ, 5 September 1768, p. 4.
137 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives (hereafter ACA), Burgh of Banff AS/Bbnf/1/2 p. 346, Minute Book 1765-1776; ACA, Burgh of Banff AS/Bbnf/1/3 p. 8, Minute Book 1776-1792.
138 Nenadic, Lairds and Luxury, p. 203.
Conclusion

The education of the Scottish courtier and gentleman was complex and required substantial monetary investment from parents and the keen eye and diligence of personal tutors and schoolmasters. The programmes for physical education promoted by the northern elite aimed to introduce young men to a masculine physical culture that built strong bodies, curbed immorality and instilled healthy habits. It should be clear from the above discussion that the northern elite carefully planned their sons’ education, as well as the education of the local inhabitants.

During the two centuries covered, there was an evident transformation in the purpose of education in northern Scotland. In the seventeenth century Gordon, similar to the founders of the northern colleges, wished to ‘civilise’ the ignorant and ‘barbarous’ population. This was closely attuned to a solution for the perceived ‘Highland Problem’ during the reign of James VI and I. During the eighteenth century, this changed as political distinctions between Jacobites and Hanoverians were emphasised and the Whig agenda to ‘civilise’ became instead to eliminate the subversive movement. However, not all Jacobites would have been deemed ‘barbarous’ by seventeenth century standards as many, especially in the 1715 rising, included members of the north-east elite. As the threat of Jacobitism abated, education was no longer to ‘civilise’ but to build an enlightened, polite, rational and moral society where refined education was becoming more accessible.139

Critical to all these programmes of education was physical education that promoted among others, archery, bowls, fencing, golf, handball, hunting, riding and swimming throughout the period. Pedagogues, intellectuals and the northern elite, more widely, argued that moderate exercise was vital for a moral education. Athletic ability, or at least participation in sport, was a social imperative of the northern elite; however, excessive engagement was

morally dubious. While athletic ability at court could attract prestige in the seventeenth century, engagement in sporting clubs, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, was equally important to lubricate social networks, foster friendships and at times stimulate rivalries.

In northern Scotland, similar to elsewhere in Europe, there was a clear acceptance that education had to be holistic, where the mind and the body worked harmoniously. Moderate exercise was encouraged because it helped build constitutions and create healthy bodies. Exercise along with medical regimes, fusing Highland and Lowland approaches, were commonly prescribed for the elite as they attempted to preserve or obtain health within the humoral framework. This was most pronounced as regards spa treatments, either at local wells, individual bathing machines or at larger more elaborately organised locations such as at Peterhead or Bath. Physical education was also required to relax the mind. Buchan made that clear in his evocative quote about studious people. Physical training was not just about skills acquisition in the short term but to teach students that exercise was beneficial for their overall wellbeing.

From the above examples, it seems that parents’ and tutors’ wishes and expectations to educate their sons and pupils were frequently discussed. The creation of the ‘Compleat Gentleman’ was the goal of many parents but this relied on the cooperation of their sons. A cursory survey of personal correspondence between parents and tutors demonstrates that this did not always occur. To be successfully and properly educated a programme of physical education that promoted moderate and appropriate sport, diligence in the classroom and moral and religiously observant conduct, was required. If successful, this form of education was the gateway into a civil and polite society as well as court life. For the northern elite, the physical distance from courtly, civilised and enlightened culture found in the major urban centres in Scotland and England did not deter them from engaging in intellectual debates and discussions as regards sport, education and civility. While their contributions to the discourse resembled
wider trends in Britain and Europe they were reflective, in other ways, of northern Scotland’s political climate.
Chapter 3: Physical Education at Educational Institutions in Northern Scottish Burghs

Introduction

‘Procul excussisti pilam, *that is a good stroak*’ and ‘Factum quod volui, *I would not wish a better stroak*’ were two of many phrases seventeenth and eighteenth-century schoolboys were instructed to say in Latin by David Wedderburn’s *Vocabula* (1636). Elite and intellectual discourses concerning physical education discussed in Chapter Two demonstrated many considered moderate exercise beneficial for physical, spiritual and mental health. However, few elite in northern Scotland discussed how and when to teach young men about sport and instead focused on what and why. While not all grammar school and university students came from the elite ranks of society, the framework in which they learned about sport was centred on European notions of civility and a refinement of manners that continued from Renaissance and into the Enlightenment. There was a clear difference between what occurred at schools and universities and the popular forms of sport (see Chapters Five and Six). This chapter examines what physical education programmes at grammar school, universities and later academies were like in northern Scotland. Thus, it is more focused on the practicalities of physical education rather than the intellectual discourse. However, this chapter remains grounded in the national and international context and continues to demonstrate northern Scotland’s place in Scotland, Britain and Europe. It asks, was the elite and intellectual discourse applied in the classroom? What were students taught? What were the provisions for physical education, as regards time and space? It argues that early modern physical education at northern Scottish grammar schools and universities was primarily a male preserve offering male students respite from rigorous academic instruction and that it: assisted their physical development; facilitated the growth of

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2 Poorer students who demonstrated an aptitude for learning had the opportunity to compete for bursaries to help defray the cost of attending grammar school and university. While the middling sort and the elite made up the majority of students, some students from the lower ranks were also present because of the generosity of these bursaries.
their comradery and social bonding; informed their behavioural development; and finally, prepared them for the masculine physical culture they would encounter in later life.

Again, this type of study has yet to be completed for early modern Scotland, let alone northern Scotland. Both Education History and Sport History have neglected early modern physical education. In terms of the educational background, the post-Reformation Church in Scotland advocated for widespread education and the seventeenth-century Scottish Parliament established the legal precedent for planting parish schools. It did so with the statutes of 1616, 1633 and 1646, culminating in the 1696 act, which R. D. Anderson argues sought to ‘entrench the victory of Presbyterianism’ to ‘impose conformity and root out dissent’ after the 1688 Revolution.\(^3\) Clearly, as Chapter Two demonstrated, the 1696 act had not been entirely successful and Whig educational discourses remained concerned with subversive Jacobitism which continued to hold influence in some parts of northern Scottish society. Already, by the mid-seventeenth century, the northern burghs had well-established institutions, many of them grammar schools. Shona Vance argues that the patterns, procedures and goals of educational reform developed in accordance with broader societal developments, at first religious, but eventually commercial. The Church was the initial provider of education in Scotland, supplemented by adventure schools. However, during the Enlightenment, secular authorities increasingly began to direct reform. Simultaneously, vocational education, with greater focus on practical knowledge training, for business and commerce, became increasingly important in urban society and helped facilitate Scotland’s integration into British society and Empire.\(^4\) This was initially accomplished in the eighteenth century with the assistance of the SSPCK. It focused its efforts funding schools in the poor rural Highland parishes to teach English reading and writing for basic utilitarian purposes rather than in preparation for university education.\(^5\) In

\(^3\) Anderson, *Education and the Scottish People*, p. 3.
the urban environment the creation of academies offered vocational education such as book-
keeping, geometry and navigation. Missing from this general historical overview of education
in Scotland is the presence of physical education.

The characteristics of early modern physical education at northern Scottish educational
institutions are visible in Wedderburn’s *Vocabula* and Thomas Watt’s *Vocabulary* (1712), both
Latin-English phrasebooks complementing popular Latin grammar treatises.\(^6\) Wedderburn’s
*Vocabula* was the first published instruction manual for football and golf.\(^7\) Written by the
Aberdeenshire native, when he was schoolmaster of the Aberdeen Grammar School, it was
exceptionally popular and influential across the country and was printed at least five times
between 1636 and 1713 in Edinburgh and once in Glasgow.\(^8\) Watt’s text written in Edinburgh
eventually superseded Wedderburn’s and was also popular with its fourth edition being printed
in Aberdeen in 1805. Similarly to *Vocabula*, *Vocabulary* was also widely known in northern
Scotland.\(^9\)

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\(^8\) Wedderburn, *Vocabula* (Edinburgh, 1685, 1695, 1700, 1713); Wedderburn, *Vocabula* (Glasgow, 1691). It is assumed the original was printed in Edinburgh in 1636. Between 1636 and 1685 it is likely that more editions were printed based on the quick succession of printing between 1685 and 1700; however, they have not been found.

Wedderburn’s and Watt’s texts provided common phrases and indicate the popular grammar school sports when they were in use. Wedderburn included four nationally popular sports: *arcus, baculus, globi* and *pila pedalīs* (archery, golf, bowls and football).\(^\text{10}\) Watt took a wider approach discussing numerous sports but in less detail. They included bowls, fishing, golf, handball, hunting, jumping, running and swimming.\(^\text{11}\) Judging by *Vocabula*’s popularity, archery, bowls, golf and football were taught in a fairly consistent manner across Scotland. National patterns of physical education instruction, therefore, at least in part, owe their foundations to Wedderburn and Watt. By comparison, northern Scottish students participated in similar sports to their European counterparts including racquet sports, hunting, jumping, running and swimming and ball and stick games.\(^\text{12}\)

Using Stolz’s and Osterhoudt’s definitions of physical education and Griffin’s use of space as a category of enquiry, this chapter begins to fill the present voids in Scottish sport, physical education and education history.\(^\text{13}\) The chapter is organised into four sections. First, it assesses the language used when instructing physical education and the characteristics of the sports taught in the classroom. Second, it examines how physical education was regulated to foster positive behaviour. Third, it ascertains what amount of time was given for physical education. Finally, it investigates where physical education occurred. To do so this chapter scrutinises student textbooks, university statutes, burgh and church records along with personal recollections and town plans.

\(^{10}\) Wedderburn, *Vocabula*, pp. 36-8.


Language and Physical Education

Prior to the seventeenth century many of the northern burghs had a grammar school. From the age of nine many boys began attending these schools to learn the rudiments of Latin, literacy, numeracy and writing, and experienced a programme of physical education. This instruction lasted until about the age of thirteen and was in preparation for university and occasionally apprenticeships. Proficiency in Latin was paramount because the vernacular was not used in the classroom at university and being caught using it was a punishable offence.14 Conversational Latin instruction was therefore provided and the students’ vocabularies were bolstered with phrases to invite peers to play sport, to identify types of equipment and to discuss strategies. Vance argues that Latin instruction remained popular in northern Scotland during the eighteenth century and was supported by local authorities even though there was increased demand for vocational education. Despite rapid social and economic changes, the grammar school experience remained relatively unchanged from the sixteenth century.15 Exercise, then, also remained integrated into the educational experience and this section therefore examines how the language used for classroom instruction shaped the character of physical education at grammar schools and universities.

Aberdeen’s intellectual influence was felt throughout the northern Scottish burghs and Wedderburn provided a nationally supported Latin curriculum. Aberdeen’s two universities matriculated thousands of northern students over the two centuries and its professors were major contributors to the Scottish Enlightenment.16 Moreover, the colleges trained many northern schoolmasters. Colin McLaren explains how northern pupils formed a considerable proportion of the student population at King’s College and a ‘Moray’ or ‘Northern’ political identity was present as regards student involvement in university affairs.17 This connection

14 McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 167. The penalty was 1d.
15 Vance, ‘Schooling the people, pp. 324-5.
16 Robert Douglas (ed.), Annals of the Royal Burgh of Forres (Elgin, 1934), pp. 264-5. This text demonstrates that of the majority of school masters of the burgh of Forres were educated at King’s College.
17 McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 5.
continued into the early nineteenth century. This intellectual network between Aberdeen and the northern burghs informed both the academic and physical education provided at the region’s grammar schools.

The language used when practising sport for physical education at grammar schools and universities differentiated it from popular sport. Archery instruction had been universal for Scottish youth since the medieval period and James I reissued a previous piece of legislation through parliament in 1424 that reiterated that it was mandatory for all boys over the age of twelve to practise archery. It is also clear that golf was ubiquitous in Scotland, as a similar statute in 1457 banned golf because people were neglecting their archery. The difference between shooting at the butts or swinging golf clubs in the church yard, or on the links, and learning the intricacies of the sport at grammar schools is important, the language used, Latin. Grammar school instruction in Latin added an intellectual refinement or ‘civility’ to sport. From the seventeenth century onwards, when using Wedderburn’s text, students were equipped with terms and phrases to discuss the parts of the bow, arrow and golf club, as well as help others aim and to commend competitors on their skill. Wedderburn, however, clearly favoured archery as he included the phrase ‘I like the archery with all my heart’. These phrases aided students practising for archery tournaments such as those held at Aberdeen Grammar School and King’s College. They also prepared them for their potential membership in the Royal Company of Archers in Edinburgh, formed in 1676, which included many northern Scottish members.

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18 Hugh Miller, *My Schools and Schoolmasters or The Story of my Education* (Edinburgh, 1859), pp. 45-6; McLaren, *Aberdeen Students*, pp. 170-1. McLaren examines the geographic origins of Arts students at King’s College from 1720. Aberdeenshire and the North East and the North and Highlands comprised of the largest percentages respectively and together made up nearly 90% of the student population.


20 Ibid.

21 Wedderburn, *Vocabula*, p. 35.

Prior to Wedderburn, golf in Scotland had not been covered in print. Archery, on the other hand, had been covered nearly a century earlier by Roger Ascham in the popular, *Toxophilus* (1545). Hamilton and Geddes, to a lesser extent, have examined *Vocabula* and deduce that seventeenth-century golf played by pupils was quite sophisticated. They learned how to hit and speak about different types of shots, from various lies and use of different clubs. Hamilton argues that not all students or the general public could afford the expensive equipment that Wedderburn described, such as feather filled balls and multiple types of jointed clubs, variations on equipment were available at a reduced cost. Equipment, as Chapter Seven demonstrates, was available from local merchants who imported it from St. Andrews or Leith or from local craftsmen who were active in the northern burghs. Golf, similarly to archery, was treated as a competitive sport and pupils were taught to count strokes. However, making the sport competitive was slightly problematic from the perspective of school officials, as it could lead to gambling if unsupervised, something many believed immoral.

Wedderburn’s and Watt’s texts demonstrate school sports, in general, followed accepted rules or ‘Laws of Game’. These outlined a common code of practice sports used for physical education at grammar schools and universities. Golf and archery were embraced by educators following these codes of practice because they taught students patience, perseverance, strategic thinking and were considered healthy exercises. Furthermore, if the sports were practised and discussed according to these texts it elevated them to represent a refined or ‘civilised’ education.

The relatively high degree of organisation and the recording of rules were other defining characteristics of refined physical education programmes at northern institutions, this is

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*Scottish Culture*, Vol. 11 (1998-9), pp. 4-12. Shooting for the papingo, or parrot, occasionally real otherwise an effigy, was a common form of archery competitions throughout Europe as far east as Cracow, south to Savoy and throughout Western Europe including the British Isles.


24 Gambling while playing golf was well known in Scotland. In the most famous case, the future James VII and II teamed up with a Cannongate resident and played against two English nobles. The future king and his companion won the purse which was large enough that the shoemaker was able to build a tenement house ‘Golfers Land’.

particularly apparent for football. When integrated into programmes of physical education in northern grammar schools and universities, pupils were taught a different form of football than the popular game, which had its own complexities and organisation. The refined version did not resemble James VI’s and Sir Robert Gordon’s depictions of it as riotous and dangerous. It was the organisation, limited violence and the language used that distinguished this style of football from its popular form. When examining organised school football, it is evident that this version was foundational to the modern sport, as regards Guttmann’s characteristics of modern sport. First, the sport was played in a largely secular manner, multiple times a week, and was not connected to festive periods or holidays associated with religion. Second, Vocabula demonstrates that there was a specialisation of roles, specifically the position of goalkeeper. Football was also quantifiable and pupils were taught to keep score in Latin. This differed from popular forms of the sport because the game was normally concluded when one team got the ball to the opposition’s goal. Third, when played at schools or universities it was ‘rational’, having a semblance of rules. Fourth, a quasi-referee, the hebdomadar, who was a member of staff, ensured student discipline while out on the playing field by supervising and joining in the games. Vocabula indicates the northern Scottish version of the game was played by kicking and passing the ball rather than a more rugby style game. This precedes the English public schools’ encouragement of the ‘dribbling game’ by two centuries. This evidence of a formalised form of football supports and extends J.A. Mangan’s argument that there were formalised sports integrated into education curricula at schools prior to the nineteenth century in England, and in particular they were popular in northern Scotland since at least 1636.

26 Semenza, Sport, Politics and Literature, pp.13-4.
27 Elias and Dunning, ‘Folk football in medieval and early modern Britain’.
28 Guttmann, Ritual to Record, p. 16.
29 Wedderburn, Vocabula, p. 37.
30 McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 150.
Social segregation in seventeenth-century programmes for physical education was most apparent when students played football. For example, at Marischal College the students were divided into two groups, according to their social status, and elder students were given special responsibilities to care for the balls provided by the first year students. If a first year student failed to provide the balls for their exercise they could be publically punished for neglecting their responsibilities. At grammar schools and at both of Aberdeen’s colleges the hebdomadar stopped students of different abilities from mixing. They also stopped interlopers from joining the games. This was obviously for physical and moral safety, but they also would have discouraged players who were ignorant of the rules of the game. Consequently, football when part of physical education in the north did not provide everyone an equal opportunity to play. Equality of opportunity is one of the most problematic and unconvincing of Guttmann’s characteristics of modern sport, as it is regularly unsatisfied.

Watt’s text provided students with a framework to organise competitive and quantitative sports such as jumping and pedestrianism. Pedestrianism later became ingrained in the commercial consumption of leisure and was largely predicated on gambling in Georgian and Victorian Britain. Running and jumping were frequently discussed in the elite and intellectual discourse of physical education because they improved fundamental motor skills. Oddly, it was not until the eighteenth century that students received Latin instruction in these sports, while the complex sports, such as golf and football, had been covered in detail in the previous century. As regards jumping, students practised different types, for height and distance. Watt provided students with the phrases ‘what sort of jumping do you like?’ and ‘the usual way with your feet close?’ As a competitive sport, pupils were taught to discuss the outcomes of jumping. For

32 McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 150.
example, phrases such as ‘Me saliendo superat’ were used, which Watt translated to ‘He jumps farther than I’.\textsuperscript{34} Watt also provided students with vocabulary to assign starts and finishes for foot races and speak the phrase ‘Liberalius est certare cursu’, which he translated to ‘It is better to run Races’.\textsuperscript{35} As will later be demonstrated, Watt’s encouragement of competition differed from Wedderburn’s because he provided phrases for gambling. This element of instruction when combined with pedestrianism, for example, was quintessential to changing patterns of physical education, elite sport and leisure culture in northern Scotland and Britain, more broadly, towards conspicuous consumption in the later eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{36}

In-class instruction prepared students to practise a variety of sports. Training pupils to discuss sport in Latin was logical for grammar school instruction; moreover, it politicised sport and connected it to a specific identity, one of refinement pursued by the middling and upper classes of society. When pupils practised and discussed sports in Latin they indicated to others that they possessed a classical education and a knowledge, and possible proficiency, at a variety of sports. Both Latin phrasebooks examined above highlighted the sophistication of the programmes of physical education at northern, and more broadly, Scottish grammar schools. Applying the ‘proto-modernity’ concept, similarly to Huggins, in many cases helps to characterise these sports which exhibited many modern qualities, as described by Guttmann, while acknowledging their early modern features.\textsuperscript{37}

**Behaviour**

Maintaining discipline in the classroom appeared in nearly all early modern regulations at northern Scottish educational institutions and programmes of physical education often

\textsuperscript{34} Watt, *Vocabulary*, pp. 34-5.


\textsuperscript{36} Walter Thom, *Pedestrianism: or, an account of the performances of celebrated pedestrians during the last and past century; with a full narrative of Captain Barclay’s public and private matches; and an essay on training* (Aberdeen, 1813). The sport was clearly well known in northern Scotland, as the book was written and published in Aberdeen. Moreover, its history would have been read by a northern and, more widely, British audience. Also, this is a clear indication that by 1813 significant training was required to do well at the sport.

\textsuperscript{37} Mike Huggins, ‘Racing Culture’; Guttmann, *Ritual to Record*, p. 16.
outlined the expected gentlemanly behaviours of the period. The school authorities designed regulations to introduce pupils to what they considered ‘civil’ and ‘polite’ society. Wedderburn’s and Watt’s texts extended this idea to cover what was deemed acceptable sporting behaviour, while the hebdomadar kept order on the field. This corresponds to Osterhoudt’s definition of physical education that included a component to teach students how to behave when practising sport. Stolz, while supportive of the claim that physical education can be a vehicle to instil positive moral qualities, argues that its ability to target the development of the positive character traits, such as decorum, discipline and perseverance, is not unique. Nevertheless, he asserts that physical education offers the opportunity to cultivate good habits and behaviours through repetition, acculturating youth into a specific physical culture. To understand this within to context of seventeenth and eighteenth century schools and universities it is necessary to explore how the school authorities instructed physical education as regards behaviour, specifically, appearance, speech, discipline and gambling.

A specifically masculine physical culture was apparent in regulations concerning sport and behaviour. Gilbert Gray’s ‘Statutes for Marischal College’ (1605) demanded students refrain from ‘feminine attire’ because he did not want them to appear as ‘a flamboyant or foppish knight’ and bring disgrace to the college. Moreover, students were to keep their hair short. In 1641, King’s College drafted their own statute stating ‘all [students were] to be dressed gravely and neatly’. This consisted of a gown and hat when on campus. A further stipulation indicated that a type of uniform was required for physical training, a cloak and cap. King’s and Marischal College expounded a particular masculine physical culture, seeking uniformity

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40 Stolz, The Philosophy of Physical Education, pp. xxi, 139, 144.
41 McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 141.
42 Cosmo Innes (ed.), Fasti Aberdonenses: Selections from the Records of The University and King’s College of Aberdeen 1494-1854 (Aberdeen, 1854), p. 34.
43 Innes (ed.), Fasti Aberdonense, p. 36.
and discipline amongst its students. It did so by contrasting what students should look like against what they believed inappropriate. Wearing a particular uniform while practising sport, then, was a way to enculture boys into this system. It is unclear whether King’s attempted to create equality amongst its students when instituting uniforms but it would have created a semblance of order and regularity with students’ appearances.

Instilling civil and polite behaviour and learning sportsmanship were important features of physical education programmes and pupils were taught how to engage with, and discuss, sport politely. At King’s College, the 1641 regulations demanded that the students embody ‘civility’ at all times. As regards sport, the hebdomadar was to ensure that ‘modesty and gentleness be observed’.\(^4^4\) This was especially important for archery as its purpose was changing from lethality to leisure. As a relatively new polite and fashionable sport, knowing how to behave and speak appropriately was required. Learning how to assist fellow archers to aim embodied this mentality.\(^4^5\) This was also evident when students were instructed to play golf and bowls in the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, according to Vocabula.\(^4^6\) As noted above, the instruction of football differed greatly amongst the elite as against popular practice. As opposed to a riotous, violent melee, which James VI and Sir Robert Gordon discouraged, students were encouraged to practise sportsmanship, more broadly, with phrases to praise fellow players while maintaining a competitive edge.\(^4^7\) As well, there were rules against purposeful violence with the aim of injuring other students while playing games. If caught the offenders, especially the elder students, were physically punished in public to demonstrate the seriousness of their wrongdoing.\(^4^8\) This form of football was not a free-for-all but an organised match resembling a genteel sport acceptable for grammar school and university students.

\(^{4^4}\) Innes (ed.), *Fasti Aberdonense*, p. 34.
\(^{4^5}\) Wedderburn, *Vocabula*, p. 36.
\(^{4^7}\) Wedderburn, *Vocabula*, p. 37.
Gambling was an important component of gentlemanly sporting behaviour; yet, at school and university it was widely condemned in the seventeenth century and schoolmasters attempted to instil an aversion to it at a young age, as did the Church.\textsuperscript{49} For example, Wedderburn, aligned with moralists, discouraged gambling, stating of bowls, ‘let none play for silver’. While particularly focused on bowls, once that phrase was learned it could be applied to any sport.\textsuperscript{50} Wedderburn’s attempt to disassociate bowls from gambling may have also been an effort to recover it as an acceptable sport, similarly to football. He did so just three years after Charles I reprinted James VI and I’s \textit{Book of Sports}, which condemned bowls as unlawful because it was played by the ‘meaner sort’, referring to morally dubious characters.\textsuperscript{51} Likewise, seventeenth-century regulations at King’s and Marischal Colleges imposed harsh penalties to dissuade students (who were more boys in age than adults) from squandering their money on wagers, and, likewise, to stop canny gamblers from making their classmates penniless.\textsuperscript{52} Marischal College was the most severe and threatened students with expulsion if they were caught gambling and did not reform.\textsuperscript{53}

Local authorities also attempted to distance the ‘meaner sort’ from students. For example, outside school hours in 1605 public houses in Old Aberdeen were not to sell to students. Similar acts were proscribed to stop young men from playing cards.\textsuperscript{54} This disdain for gambling in the north was widespread and Church and Burgh officials frequently admonished

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{49} McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students}, p. 149; Innes (ed.), \textit{Fasti Aberdonenses}, p. 34; See Huggins, ‘Racing Culture’.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Wedderburn, \textit{Vocabula}, p. 38.
\item \textsuperscript{51} James VI and I, \textit{The Kings Maiesties Declaration}, p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Innes (ed.), \textit{Fasti Aberdonenses}, p. 34; McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students}, p. 167
\item \textsuperscript{53} McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students}, p. 167.
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gamblers from the lower social ranks in public houses and in private residences. The elite were relatively unmonitored by the Church in this regard and gambled at their leisure. A laird losing a wager at cards or bowls did not experience the same detrimental effect on his family as would someone from the lower social ranks or a student. Of course, that depended on how large the wager was lost by the laird. The Church admonished gamblers because their actions were immoral but also because they recognised, pragmatically, that a bankrupted labourer and his family, for example, would add strain to the Church’s poor roll. The Church helped to mitigate this situation and the fines levied against guilty sportsmen and gamblers regularly bolstered the poor relief fund.

The aversion towards gambling at grammar schools began to change in the eighteenth century. Watt, unlike Wedderburn, taught students general Latin phrases for gambling that, once learned, could be used for any sport or activity. They included how to ask if a wager was accepted, the value of the wager and how to congratulate a fellow player on their victory, being a better gamester. Watt also introduced phrases for students to use if disputes arose when gambling such as ‘you are a quarrelsome fellow’ and ‘he lives only by Couzening and Cheating’. While Watt did not explicitly endorse gambling, he aimed to educate youth about this common feature of sport, how to discuss it honourably and how to chastise poor sportsmen. Local authorities, however, remained vigilant when protecting students from advantageous gamblers. For example, at Cullen in 1756 gamesters ran students into debt playing cards for gingerbread and were found guilty of their crime. As punishment, they were paraded throughout the burgh wearing signs saying ‘A Receipter of Stolen Goods and Corrupter of Youth’.

56 Sexual deviancy was targeted for the same reason, especially if children were born out of wedlock.
57 Todd, ‘Profane Pastimes in the Reformed Community’, pp. 137, 139, 144.
58 Watt, Vocabulary, p.30.
59 Ibid., p. 38.
60 William Cramond (ed.), Annals of Cullen 961-1904 (Buckie, 1904), p. 84.
these gamesters had emptied the pockets of adults they likely would have been left alone, as cards and gambling were becoming popular and accepted eighteenth-century recreations in northern Scotland. However, it was their targeting of students that was offensive to the burgh officials.61

The physical culture taught in northern institutions illustrates that educators aimed to instil what they believed to be moral behaviour, discipline and decorum among pupils while engaged in physical education, and did so in multiple ways. First, in the classroom, students were instructed to dress and attend classes and practise sport in the appropriate attire. Second, they were taught to speak properly about sport, adopt sportsmanship and a genteel behaviour when dealing with others. Third, the hebdomadar supervised students, ensuring they did not stray from their intended task and their sports did not descend into violence and chaos. Finally, in the seventeenth century, it placed restraint on gambling. Watt’s eighteenth-century text was more pragmatic and prepared young gentlemen and courtiers for the reality of the physical culture they would inhabit in later life. The instruction of gambling in Latin elevated that component of sport from being morally wrong to being part of acceptable masculine behaviour in polite society. Despite the different opinions on gambling, seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century physical education programmes attempted to bestow on students, prior to their physical involvement in sport, what was deemed to be ‘civilised’ sporting behaviour. If done properly, physical education within the nurturing environment of the school provided students with various opportunities to acquire good moral habits through their academic performance and their behaviour in social and physical activities. This was strikingly similar to the objectives of the elite and intellectual discourse discussed in Chapter Two.62

61 Sinclair (ed.), OSA, pp. IV, 85-6; Sinclair (ed.), OSA, pp. XXI, 145-6
Time

James VI’s 1598 Act of Parliament ‘Regarding a Pastime Day Weekly’, was the first national provision for physical education at schools. It decreed that teachers were to dismiss their classes on Monday afternoons for sport. This was also part of his strategy to curb the profanation of the Sabbath by providing an acceptable time for sport. Other than in Aberdeen and Elgin, its implementation in the north is unknown because few burgh records survive prior to 1600. Subsequent Acts of Parliament pertaining to the provisioning of schools and education fail to address physical education again. However, by examining institutional regulations it is evident that early seventeenth-century northern grammar schools and King’s and Marischal Colleges allowed students far more than the mandatory time requirement for sport, providing them regular periods for physical education.

The elite and intellectual discourse concerning the medical benefits of exercise (explored in Chapter Two) were clearly applied within the classroom. The daily schedule for grammar school and university students was exceptionally full. Students living on campus at university began their studies at 5am and were dismissed at 9pm. The intervening hours were spent at lessons, prayers and examinations. It was expected that non-class time be devoted to studying. Students living off campus were given slightly more leniency but their days were still extremely structured. Built into this busy schedule were periods for physical exercise to burn excess energy and relax the mind. Seventeenth-century grammar school and university students were normally given two to three hours of exercise three days a week. At Marischal College from 1605 students were allowed sport on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and the

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64 John Stuart (ed.), Extracts from the council register of the Burgh of Aberdeen 1570-1625, p. 179; Cramond, Kirk Session of Elgin, p. 58.
hebdomadar escorted them to the links for supervised games from 2pm to 4pm.\textsuperscript{67} King’s College scheduled the alternative days for exercise, thus ensuring their students did not clash with Marischal College students on the links.\textsuperscript{68} Similarly, in Elgin students were given ‘playdays’ on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, as the contracts between the provost and grammar schoolmaster stipulated from 1604.\textsuperscript{69} The Elgin Presbytery reconfirmed this schedule in 1649, decreeing scheduled weekday and weekend exercise would last two and three hours respectively.\textsuperscript{70} If the schoolmaster wished to award further ‘playdays’ a licence was required from the burgh, and was frequently given prior to Yule from 1603 to 1645.\textsuperscript{71}

Compared to England, around 1600, physical education in northern Scotland was quite different. While the northern elite generally educated their sons at local schools, following the above noted schedule, their English counterparts preferred private instruction. This had obvious ramifications for English physical education because private tutoring was incompatible with learning team sports and demonstrates an important difference between northern Scottish and English sporting cultures. Furthermore, the private instruction of the English elite accentuated social stratification, as the social ranks did not interact as classmates.\textsuperscript{72} The experience at grammar schools was different than at university, as there is little explicit indication of social segregation there.

Compared to other Scottish institutions, the northern grammar schools and universities were quite similar, as regards designated periods for physical education. For example, the University of Edinburgh’s 1628 regulations released students for exercise on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from noon to 3pm during the winter and to 4pm during the summer. Again, the hebdomadar oversaw the pupils’ sport, which took place near the present-day

\textsuperscript{67} McLaren, \textit{Aberdeen Students}, pp. 16-7, 149.
\textsuperscript{68} Innes (ed.), \textit{Fasti Aberdonense}, p. 437.
\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Ibid.}, p. II, 434-6.
\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Ibid.}, p. II, 75, 119, 130, 137, 146, 153, 234, 251.
\textsuperscript{72} Brailsford, \textit{Sport and Society}, p. 33.
Bruntsfield links. Similarly to elsewhere, they stopped students from wandering the streets or entering ale houses.\(^73\) This did not stop John Ross of Pitcalnie, a law student from Easter Ross, from missing classes and staying out past midnight visiting local taverns and alehouses when he was supposed to be completing his Law degree in 1773.\(^74\) Likewise, the University of Glasgow administrators in September 1642 recorded ‘that the schollers be exercised in lawful games, such as Gouffe, Archarie, and the lyk; and that they absteine from all games that are unlawful, as Carding, Dicing, and such other as are discharged by there lawes.’\(^75\) This was their attempt to stop students from gambling while simultaneously promoting acceptable sports. By contrast, at the Continental Scots Colleges, which 2,000 Catholic Scots attended from 1575 to 1799, periods for exercise were minimal.\(^76\) For example, the common exercise given to students throughout the week was walking. In Rome, students were given the weekends to visit different churches and attend services. Substantial exercise was only permitted during holidays and feast days, Christmas and two weeks around Easter. In the summer, when classes had finished, as with northern Scottish universities, more regular exercising occurred.\(^77\) This demonstrates that King’s and Marischal College, and northern grammar schools, were participating in national trends as regards the timing for physical education.

Sporting competitions were also given time at schools. The Aberdeen Grammar School archery contest for a silver arrow is the best recorded of these events, followed by the silver arrow competition at King’s College in the 1630s.\(^78\) Between 1664 and 1699 the Aberdeen Grammar School hosted fourteen archery tournaments for its senior students, likely held in June

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\(^73\) Alexander Bower (ed.), *The History of the University of Edinburgh: Chiefly Compiled from Original Papers and Records, Never Before Published* (Edinburgh, 1817), pp. 159-163.

\(^74\) NRS, Pitcalnie Papers, GD199/89, Personal Correspondence 18\(^{th}\) century.

\(^75\) C. Innes (ed.), *Munimenta Alme Universitatis Glasguensis: Records of the University of Glasgow from its foundation till 1727* (Glasgow, 1854), pp. II 464-66.


\(^78\) Mackay (ed.), *Chronicles of the Frasers*, p. 258.
or July, following the custom at St. Andrews.  

**Figure 3** Identifies the names and dates of the winners and **Figure 4** is an example of one of the medals won. Each winner was awarded a silver medal engraved with their name and family crest, and was attached to the silver arrow kept in the school’s possession. Alexander J. S. Brooke argues that the winners of the medals are suggestive of the high social status of the pupils; however, this only applies to the winners’ status rather than the school’s population, or to those who competed, as it is likely less affluent boys also participated.  

This extensive record also indicates how seventeenth-century sport was occasionally quantified as the names and the dates were engraved on the medals. Moreover, the presentation of the medals, attached to a silver arrow, alludes to the importance of the trophy as well as the retaining of a record of past victories. While Guttmann would not classify this as ‘an obsession with records’, these silver trophies were revered and the victors would have been aware they were continuing a sporting tradition at the Aberdeen Grammar School.

During the early eighteenth century, although physical education continued to be organised at grammar schools, specific references to the designated periods for sport become sparse, except during holidays. For example, Aberdeen council, on 23 October 1700, along with the Principal and Regent of Marischal College, provided an updated schedule for the grammar school.  

Wedderburn’s *Vocabula* was still a mandatory text, which pupils had to memorise, and sports instruction continued. Periods of physical education were still given at the school but the dates were not specified. Nevertheless, new regulations specified students’ holidays, given quarterly starting with the first three days of January. Not all schoolmasters considered

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80 Brooke, ‘An Account of the Archery Medals’, pp. 456-457, 464. Brooke surmises that the arrow was likely given by a rector or regent of Marischal College and possibly a by a member of the Earls of Marischal family. Three of the medals 1666, 1670 and 1677 were crafted by William Scott, possibly the same Scott that crafted the first trophy for the Huntly Horse Race in 1695.
81 Guttmann, *Ritual to Record*, p. 16.
holidays beneficial. John Laing, the newly appointed Inverness schoolmaster in 1710, lamented the long Fastern’s E’en holiday given to students. He argued that this holiday and its association with cockfighting was ‘a great hindrance to their education … by which they lost a great deal of their learning & did nothing else but beg [for] cocks up and down the country to the great hazard of their health & incurred their parents displeasure.’ Laing was perhaps influenced by the Reformation of Manners movement in Edinburgh, which had made its way to Inverness in the early eighteenth century. Nevertheless, Candlemas and Fastern’s E’en cockfighting survived into the nineteenth century in the north but as will be seen in Chapter Five not all pupils and parents approved.

In the later decades of the eighteenth century, designated periods for exercise were frequently reduced to Saturday afternoons only, as was the case at Robert Gordon Hospital. Robert Gordon was a successful Aberdeenshire merchant who made his money trading in the Baltic region. He left a mortification to build a school focused on morally-driven vocational education. He envisioned an institution similar to those developing in Edinburgh and Glasgow that encouraged discipline and practical skills training for impoverished burgesses’ sons to gain apprenticeships rather than attend university. The Hospital’s 1784 regulations stipulated Saturday afternoons, until the early evening, be given to the students for their leisure. If the students behaved well, the schoolmaster could award an extra period of exercise a week.

86 Sage, Memorabilia Domestica, pp. 159-60. See Chapter Five for a more extensive discussion on cockfighting in the northern burghs of Scotland.
88 Aberdeen University Library (hereafter AUL), Foundation Statutes and Rules of Robert Gordon’s Hospital in Aberdeen (Aberdeen, 1784), pp. 67-70, 73-4. According to these regulations the students were taught: reading, writing, arithmetic and church music, and if they had the aptitude they would learn book-keeping, French, geometry, trigonometry, navigation, geography and drawing.
The Banff Academy may have offered an alternative programme in 1786, as Banffshire native George Chapman, discussed in Chapter 2, was appointed schoolmaster with a generous salary.⁸⁹ His education style was very similarly to Comenius’s and Locke’s, as regards building strong adolescent constitutions through exposure to the elements and moderate exercise.⁹⁰ Chapman encouraged his pupils to practise handball, bowls, walking and riding, and if the weather was poor, indoor activities such as badminton and weightlifting. If parents were inclined, Chapman implored them to hire tutors for dancing and fencing classes because ‘they contribute, like other exercises, to health; but they also contribute, above all others, to a genteel air, and a graceful carriage of body.’⁹¹

The demands of ‘polite’ society were increasingly felt from the Restoration period onwards. In response, new instructors for fashionable pursuits such as fencing and dancing were required.⁹² This changed the student experience in northern Scotland. For example, in 1636 Simon Fraser, Master Lovat, was enrolled as a King’s College student. It seems he spent little time studying and instead excelled at ‘ballown, cachpole, byars, bowls, the goffe, and arching’, all sports that a young laird would have been expected to know.⁹³ By contrast, by 1663 King’s College students, such as Hugh and John Rose practised their swordplay and were instructed by a fencing master.⁹⁴ Moreover, the experience of John Munro, younger of Newmore (near Alness), while attending King’s College between 1719 and 1720, was markedly different from Lovat’s. His expenses show he paid extra fees for two and three months of private dance and fencing lessons, respectively, in addition to purchasing new golf clubs and balls and riding equipment.⁹⁵ Fencing and dancing instruction increasingly featured amongst student expenses...

⁸⁹ ACAA, Burgh of Banff AS/Bbnf/1/3 p. 305, Minute Book 1776-1792.
⁹⁰ Sinclair (ed.), OSA, p. XX, 361; Chapman, A Treatise on Education; Lunt and Dyreson ‘A History of Philosophic Ideas about Sport’, p. 22. See Chapter 2 for a further discussion on Comenius and Locke.
⁹¹ Chapman, A Treatise, pp. 116-117.
⁹³ Mackay (ed.), Chronicles of the Frasers, p. 258.
⁹⁴ McLaren, Aberdeen Students, p. 46.
⁹⁵ W. Macgill (ed.), Old Ross-shire and Scotland, pp. 64-5. Document No. 157 provides an extensive list of expenses for this young gentleman. Munro’s expenses were not as extravagant as those belonging to the son of the...
expenses because defending one’s honour as well as knowing the fashionable dances were
becoming social imperatives in elite society. The former occurred outside the college, as
carrying weapons on campus was against regulations.96 Dancing lessons for boys and girls in
Aberdeen were given privately by a Mr. Batham in the 1690s.97 The demand increased
throughout the eighteenth century and more masters were required. For example, in 1770 Mr.
and Mrs. Paterson taught numerous forms of dancing at their rented studio on Marischal
Street.98 Similarly, John Annand later that decade instructed both dancing and fencing and
James Rose, who moved from Glasgow, also taught dance.99 Elsewhere in the northern burghs,
Banff magistrates had advertised for a dancing master in Edinburgh in 1765 because it was ‘a
very necessary article of Education’.100 Inverness, by 1791, had a designated dancing school
which the council partially funded.101 Many other communities benefited from itinerant dance
masters.102

Northern grammar schools and King’s and Marischal Colleges expanded on James VI’s
Act ‘Anent ane pastyme day oulklie’ provisioning for three, two hour, periods of physical
education a week in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, this began to change
and designated periods of exercise diminished to only Saturdays and holidays. This change in
attitude towards physical education corresponded to changing social patterns, which some
health professionals, such as Buchan, lamented as excessively sedentary.103 With an increased
endorsement of rationalism during the Enlightenment many people withdrew from physically
demanding recreations as they were seen as irrational and unfashionable, especially for adults.

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96 Innes (ed.), Fasti Aberdonenses, p. 34.
98 ABJ, 16 April 1770, no 1162.
99 ABJ, 17 May 1779, no 1636; ABJ, 14 June 1799, no. 1640.
100 ACA, Burgh of Banff AS/Bbnf/1/2 p. 7, Minute Book 1765-1776.
101 HARC, Burgh of Inverness BI/2/1/2, Treasury Accounts 1787-1822.
102 Sinclair (ed.), OSA, p. XXI, 146.
103 Buchan, Domestic Medicine, pp. 87-93.
Instead, more sedentary activities such as cards and drinking, and the occasional dance, were pursued. This change was reflected in the amount of time given to students for exercise.¹⁰⁴

**Space**

Using space as a category of enquiry helps ascertain where physical training occurred in the northern burghs and its importance. This is accomplished with a combination of textual and cartographic analysis. Griffin argues that spaces for sport in the urban and rural communities of England (such as market squares, village greens and commons in the late-eighteenth century) were increasingly under threat due to land enclosure, expanding commercial development and population growth causing urban sprawl.¹⁰⁵ This section tests this argument’s validity in northern Scotland against examples from northern burghs as regards sites for physical education. Sites for physical education are divided into two categories: common and designated spaces.¹⁰⁶ The former refers to areas that held no formal connection with physical training while the latter were named spaces such as playgrounds and play greens. Examining where physical training occurred deepens our knowledge of the characteristics of physical education in northern Scotland, improves our understanding of how land was used, and, uncovers the cultural value assigned to spaces in the burgh landscape.

In the seventeenth century physical training frequently occurred on the edges of the northern burghs and largely followed the seasonal and cyclical pattern of common land use. For example, the links were socially and culturally significant multi-purpose spaces that were regularly used for grazing livestock, drying fishing nets, as a source of household building material, and, for many, a site for sport. Without buildings to damage, sports and physical training went relatively unhindered there. For example, the Dornoch links were frequented for sport from at least 1604.¹⁰⁷ In Aberdeen, both colleges used the links on alternating days during

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¹⁰⁴ Sinclair (ed.), *OSA*, p. XXI, 146.
¹⁰⁵ Griffin, *England’s Revelry*, pp. 192-3;
¹⁰⁷ Gordon, *A Genealogical History*, p. 252; NLS, Sutherland Papers, Dep.313/1598, Sir Robert Gordon Tutor Compt. It is very likely the Dornoch links had been used for sport in sixteenth century when Bishop Robert Stewart
the seventeenth century. **Figure 5**, illustrates a portion of James Gordon of Rothiemay’s 1661 map of Aberdeen, and the likely route students would have travelled from Marischal College to the links or to their archery butts for their exercise. However, students were not alone on the Queen’s links as Gordon’s description of the burgh attests. Burgh inhabitants and visitors also enjoyed this space for archery, bowls, football, golf and walking. From at least 1625 there was a known golf course on the links with a number of holes including ‘the Quenis hole’ and the boundary between the first hole and the ‘Quenis hole’ was used as the meeting place for the burghs wappinshaws.

For many adults the time spent exercising as students on the links remained a cherished memory. In 1715 Sir Samuel Forbes of Foveran reminisced about school sport on the links where he played the ‘healthfull summer recreation of short bowls; and the […] like healthfull winter recreation of the gowff ball’. In Forbes’s mind, the space was associated with sport and its health benefits. His account provides further evidence for Geddes’ claim that golf was commonly played from the autumn until the spring and was only stopped by snow. Golfers took advantage of the shorter grass and avoided the summer seasons when livestock grazed on the rich grasses. More broadly, Forbes provides further evidence of a cyclical pattern of common land use in the northern burghs that reduced the risk of different activities interfering with one another. This facilitated community cohesion as ‘the inhabitants of this city should have a convenient intermixture of profit and pleasure.’

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held his post in Dornoch, as well as in the 1590s when the 13th Earl of Sutherland and his brothers, including Sir Robert Gordon, attended the Dornoch Grammar School.


The links’ proximity to water could also pose a danger and although pupils were supervised, unfortunate incidents occasionally occurred. For instance, on 3 August 1661 the Inverness Grammar School students went to the links, which ran from the north edge of the burgh along the Beauly Firth and southwards up along the banks of the River Ness, for their exercise. On this Saturday there was a high-tide which caused the Ness to rise more than usual. Donald Bain and Hugh Fraser entered the water with their classmates to swim but went too deep. Alexander Fraser, hearing his students’ cries, discarded his book, stripped off his clothes and dived in but began to struggle. Bain was saved by the current and was pulled to shore and safety but the schoolmaster and the other pupil were drowned.\textsuperscript{113} Events such as this demonstrate that while the commons were an easily accessible space it was difficult to always properly supervise students if they were not bound within the confines of the school or in designated areas.

Designated sites for physical education in the north first emerged in Aberdeen. The Grammar School required a location for students to exercise but it was across the burgh from the links and it was a considerable distance to escort the students, so an alternative location was required. Gordon’s map seen in \textbf{Figure 6} illustrates a substantial play green a short distance north-west of the school. It was in use from at least 1645 until the early eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{114} While designated places for physical education were often to keep students safe, it was occasionally to keep the community safe. For example, in Elgin in 1601 the schoolmaster was approached by the town council to keep his students from throwing stones with slings at the edges of town in presence of bystanders and townsfolk because it was dangerous.\textsuperscript{115} In 1671, 

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{113} Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, p. 442; Dennis Brailsford, \textit{Sport and Society}, p. 43; Christopher Middleton, \textit{A Short introduction for: to learne to Swimme}. (London, 1595). The dangers of swimming were well known at schools and universities across the British Isles. The University of Cambridge’s Vice-Chancellor even banned swimming in 1571. Yet, many others promoted swimming because it more often saved lives. Christopher Middleton, in London, believed swimming instruction was essential and translated Digby’s \textit{Art of Swimming} (1587) from Latin to English in 1595 so it could reach a larger audience. Even an illiterate audience would have been able to use the book as it was full of woodcut images illustrating different swimming techniques.
\textsuperscript{114} Stuart (ed.), \textit{Extracts From the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen 1643-1747}, pp. 40, 328-332.
\textsuperscript{115} Cramond (ed.), \textit{Records of Elgin}, p. II, 91
\end{flushright}
Aberdeen Grammar School students exercised their freedom while being poorly supervised on a play-day. Reportedly, they caused disturbances in the burgh and made ‘outbreakings among themselves, but also with schollars of the gramer school of the old toune’. The students were clearly unsupervised as the students had enough time to travel the 1.5 miles to reach Old Aberdeen and instigate ‘outbreakings’. The council sharply reprimanded the schoolmaster and reminded him to keep his students in the ‘ordinarie places of playing, and vseing such recreation as sould not be prejudicill to themselues or ther fellowes’.

Such demands to ensure student discipline at sporting spaces also occurred at King’s College in Old Aberdeen. The College fined students to discourage them from exercising on campus near fragile buildings and desiring them to use the links instead. The exception was at the bowling green, established by 1675 and managed by John Ross on the College’s behalf. The green remained in use until at least 1702 and the community also used it, as the Old Aberdeen burgh council banned bowls and bullets on the streets. However, at a cost of 3s. per person to play, less affluent players continued to take to the links or the streets to play for free. They often played a similar version of the sport as was played on the green, as highlighted by Forbes above.

In response to the pressures on land use, numerous northern burghs secured spaces for pupils’ exercise, acknowledging the importance of physical education, this coinciding with increased urban growth especially from 1750 onwards. For example, in 1712 the Banff council prepared a new lease scheme for the links. A condition of the new agreement stipulated that leaseholds should not restrict students’ access to the burgh’s archery butts on the links which had been in use from at least 1684. It appears that students’ archery went unhindered

for a time but the continual development around the burgh, especially on the property owned by Lord Braco, son to the Earl of Fife, added pressure on the space occupied by the butts. Eventually, Braco flattened a new piece of land near to the butts for the students to use instead in 1731. However, this space continued to be disrupted. In 1753 Lord Banff built a road through the butts and in 1763 the larger Bridge Street was created, running again, though the butts area.

The development of designated spaces continued apace in northern Scotland. When Robert Gordon Hospital opened in 1750 it included an enclosed playground for its students and just outside the walls was a public bowling green, seen in Alexander Milne’s map Figure 7. Gordon had wanted his institution to resemble southern developments and it therefore mimicked the plan of Heriot’s Hospital in Edinburgh, down to the playground and bowling green. The enclosed space kept the pupils within eyesight of the teacher, kept out unwanted school visitors and also gave them access to the bowling green.

Elsewhere in the northern burghs, Wick councillors in 1756 were resolute in maintaining the boundaries of the school’s playground when a merchant applied to expand the warehouses near the shore, threatening this space. They decreed that the playground was to remain undisturbed, within eyesight of the school. This also safeguarded a popular place for recreation in the burgh. Likewise, the Inverness Academy, founded in 1792, created a playground. Within the enclosures, students played games against the ‘ball wall’, likely playing a form of caiche or other racquet sports rather than against the building itself, seen in Figure 121.

122 ACAA, Burgh of Banff AS/Bbnf/1/1 p. 220, Minute Book 1740-1746; ACAA, Burgh of Banff, AS/Bbnf/1/2, pp. 124-5, Minute Book 1765-1776.
124 Highland Archive and Registration Centre, Morris Pottinger (transcribed), Second Counsell Record Book of Wick, 1739 to 1772 (Reay, 1997), p. 79
The playground was away from the river and created a safer place to play. This space also helped to mitigate damage to the Chapel yard and the High Church where scholars frequently played as seen in Chapter Six.\textsuperscript{126} This space behind the Inverness Academy had expanded to include both a girls’ and boys’ playground by the mid-nineteenth century. This however, was not to last as the Inverness train station was built on the site.\textsuperscript{127}

Common and designated spaces for physical training in the urban landscape provided pupils with areas to exercise and practise their Latin phrases. The links were the most popular area for this to occur in the north and this adds to our understanding of how, and when, these common lands were used. However, their proximity to deep and fast-moving tidal water posed a danger. Designated spaces for exercise became increasingly important in the eighteenth century because of urban growth and many burghs attempted to secure lands for the pupils’ benefit. The Aberdeen Grammar School’s provisions for a separate play green in the mid-seventeenth century remains an outlier. It was because of their physical distance from the links, rather than rapid urban growth, that they required a designated space. It is also evident that the green was used to contain the pupils, so that they did not create havoc in the burgh, ignite violent rivalries with Old Aberdeen grammar students or interfere with the students from both colleges. Griffin’s argument, that urban growth and commercial enterprise encroached on common lands, is applicable to the northern Scottish burghs. In response to these pressures, schools and local authorities created designated areas for physical education because they valued their importance. These new spaces allowed for better supervision of students as class sizes grew with an increased urban population.

\textsuperscript{125}John Wood, \textit{Survey of Inverness}, (Edinburgh, 1821) \url{http://maps.nls.uk/view/74400037}, (accessed 03/12/2015). Issues concerning appropriate places for students to play continued well into the nineteenth century in northern Scotland and many schools did not have playgrounds. For example, the Cullen burgh council in 1866 was forced to stop students playing shinty on the streets and began planning to find a playground outside of the town for the pupils to play. See: Cramond (ed.), \textit{Annals of Cullen 961-1904}, p. 99.

\textsuperscript{126}Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, p. 165. Since the late sixteenth century the Chapel Yard had been used for games of football, archery and putting the stone.

\textsuperscript{127}‘\textit{Inverness Mainland Sheet XII.1 (Combined)}’, \textit{Ordnance Survey} (1867) \url{http://maps.nls.uk/view/74478984} (accessed, 13/05/2016).
Conclusion

The historiography of Scottish education has overlooked the place of physical education in the student experience and sport histories rarely examine physical education in the early modern period, more broadly. Nevertheless, Griffin’s, Osterhoudt’s and Stolz’s analytical frameworks provide a starting point towards filling the historiographic void between the Reformation and the late-eighteenth century in Western Europe. Wedderburn’s *Vocabula*, when used with his nationally supported Latin Grammar, led the way for physical education instruction for at least eighty years across the country and demonstrates the importance of northern Scots to the development of physical education in Scotland more broadly. Likewise, Watt’s text was used for at least a century. These works began the process of standardising the instruction of sport and provided technical information on sports equipment, strategies and how to measure outcomes, all characteristics of ‘proto-modern’ sports. Classroom instructions expanded students’ vocabularies to include sport and elevated its practise and discussion so it could become identified with a refined classical education.

During the seventeenth century it was common for grammar school pupils and university students to have three, two hour, periods of exercise a week; on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or, on the alternative Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, leaving Sunday for divine worship. As the eighteenth century progressed, fewer references to specific days for exercise can be found and frequently only Saturdays were offered unless students were well behaved. When engaged in sport, students trained their bodies while simultaneously being encouraged to remember, and to practise, proper gentlemanly behaviour that was influenced by European notions of civilised and polite conduct. The result were programmes of physical education that married physical training with an introduction to a masculine physical culture that prepared boys and young men for later life similar to the arguments seen in Chapter Two. Moreover, institutional regulations occasionally engaged with the elite and intellectual discourse of sport, although, physical education instruction at schools and universities did not entirely adhere to
the plans. Martial exercises were rarely practised during school hours, and, therefore, programmes of private instruction outside of the institutions were required.

Spaces for physical training were valued by the students, teachers and burgh magistrates. They were largely protected areas where students’ access went unhindered. For many communities the links were commonly used even though their proximity to water posed risks. Designated spaces near schools reduced risk and were preferred when school sizes became large and proper supervision difficult. The importance of these spaces for communities was also reflected in their inclusion on contemporary town plans. Provisions for physical education trained generations of gentlemen and courtiers in the fashionable and appropriate sports and behaviours. Despite the seemingly rigid structure proposed in the statutes, students were able to bond with their classmates and learn vital leadership skills, while improving their physical health. Finally, the relatively democratised access to academic and physical education in northern Scotland contributed to the upward social mobility of the non-elite into the professional classes.
FIGURES

Figure 3 Aberdeen Grammar School Silver Arrow Winners¹²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1664</td>
<td>Georgius Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>Thomas Fraser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1666</td>
<td>John Bannerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1667</td>
<td>Andrew Skene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>Adamus Gordonus, Glenbucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672</td>
<td>Joannes Gordoune Breachly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1673</td>
<td>James Moir of Stoneywood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1674</td>
<td>Johannes Skene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1675</td>
<td>Walter Ogilvy, Lord Deskford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1676</td>
<td>John Undy of Undy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1677</td>
<td>Lord Keith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1678</td>
<td>Alexander Fraser of Strichen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1679</td>
<td>Sir John Ogilvy of Inverquharity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1699</td>
<td>Theodore Morison, Bogne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 Walter Ogilvy, Lord Deskford’s Medal (1675)

Figure 5 James Gordon of Rothiemay, ‘Abredoniae novae’ (1661): Route to the Queen’s Links

Figure 6 James Gordon of Rothiemay, ‘Abredoniae novae’ (1661): Letter ‘h’ represents the Grammar School in New Aberdeen
Figure 7 Alexander Milne, ‘A plan of the City of Aberdeen with all the inclosures surrounding the town to the adjacent country, from a survey taken 1789’

Figure 8 John Wood ‘Survey of Inverness’ (1821)
Chapter 4: Elite and Organised Sport

Introduction

It is, indeed, a grievous error to imagine that [religious] devotion enjoins a total contempt of all the pleasures and amusements of human society: and they who look with a severe judgement [all] eye upon all the recreations by which the cares of men are relieved, & the union of society cemented, are not aware of the injury they do to Religion by such conduct. ¹

The words of Sir William Forbes of Fettercairn and Pitsligo, seen above, highlight a focal point of this chapter, sport and its role in facilitating societal cohesion. This chapter argues that elite sporting practices in northern Scotland changed slowly prior to 1750 but then rapidly accelerated with the expansion of ‘associational culture’, the predominantly male urban-based phenomenon that created formalised clubs and societies, and was indicative of the region’s integration with the rest of Scotland and Britain. However, many among the elite sought to maintain a ‘northern’ identity within the country. The sporting practices of the nobility, gentry and professional classes in this chapter are captured under the heading of ‘elite sport’. In general, this form of sport was more organised, expensive and received greater monetary patronage than the popular sport of the lower social ranks, seen in Chapter Five and Six. This chapter demonstrates that the sports the elite of northern Scotland practised were part of a wider framework of elite sport in the country. However, the cultural and political contexts in which they were practised differentiated them from elsewhere. This chapter’s argument, for the rapid development of elite sport after 1750, distinguishes the trajectories of elite and popular sport in the eighteenth century as the former changed quickly while the latter remained relatively continuous. This chapter is divided chronologically, c. 1600 to 1750 and 1750 to c. 1800 to make this turning point explicit. In doing so, it asks how was elite sport organised? How did it prompt social cohesion? Finally, how was it gendered? While this study, generally, does not focus on blood-sports this chapter discusses hunting of deer, fox and hare because, as seen in Chapter Two, hunting was engrained in elite sporting practices alongside other sports. Moreover, it is

critical to acknowledge the importance of sport in the countryside as it demonstrates the northern elite’s split urban-rural life.

Huggins argues that there are still substantial gaps in the history of elite sport in Britain. Those holes are exceptionally wide in northern Scotland from c.1600-1800 and this chapter begins to address this disparity. Elite horseracing in early modern Scotland has predominately been studied as a southern and Lowland sport by Burnett and Eila Williamson, with prestigious events held at Coupar Angus, Leith, Montrose, Paisley, Peebles and Stirling. Burnett argues that most literature on British horseracing has focused on the race or the race horse, and, to acquire new perspectives, historians must ‘look at racing from a distant hilltop not from the grandstand or paddock’ to illuminate the social history of the sport. This societal approach is vital to understanding the sport but it is necessary, in the case of northern Scotland, to first acknowledge the presence of horseracing and then its place in society. A similar argument must be made as regards sporting societies that formed alongside the development of associational culture in the eighteenth century. While there is substantial literature on associational culture, particularly Peter Clark’s *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800*, sport in Scotland has yet to be examined through this lens.

**Elite Sport, 1600-1750**

This section is divided into two parts. First, it explores how elite sport was organised. Second, it discusses how elite sport facilitated social cohesion, both familial and political. Among the most popular organised elite sports were deer-hunting and horseracing. Both demanded extensive organisation and fostered social cohesion in northern Scotland, similar to

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5 Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*. 
their function at the seventeenth-century Stuart and the eighteenth-century Hanoverian courts.\textsuperscript{6} Competitive horseracing regularly occurred in the northern burghs; whereas hunting gatherings were largely rural. Evidence of racing events in northern Scotland, particularly for prize money and annual trophies affirms Behringer’s claim that competitive sport for prestigious prizes was widespread throughout Europe from the Renaissance and challenges Guttmann’s misconception that early modern sport was unquantified.\textsuperscript{7} The quantification of sport, however, did not spread throughout the social ranks and most competitive events for prestigious and valuable prizes were reserved for the urban professional class, magistrates and landed elite.

\textit{Organisation and Prizes}

Competitive races, prior to the 1780s, were held on festive days or as a component of civic celebrations for royal honours, riding the marches or holding wappinshaws. Many of these important civic gatherings occurred during the spring season and built on fifteenth-century foundations set by the Scottish Parliament (see Chapter Six). For example, the Bell Race of Tain was first run in April 1616. It was the first competitive race established in the north and its regulations stipulated that it was to be held on the third Tuesday of April annually. Only the original warrant for organising the event has been unearthed and it is therefore unclear whether the race continued annually. However, by 1763 horseracing in Tain seems to have been popular among the local gentry.\textsuperscript{8} Elsewhere, Banff also held races in April during the Restoration period and the revived Inverness Race was held to celebrate the birthday of Charles II in May 1662, 1663 and 1669 and presumably the celebrations continued for the coronation celebrations of James VII and II in 1685.\textsuperscript{9} The Huntly Race, on the other hand, occurred at the St. Charles Fair in late September.

\textsuperscript{7} Behringer, ‘Arena and Pall-Mall’, pp. 351-3.
\textsuperscript{8} W. Macgill (ed.), \textit{Old Ross-Shire and Scotland}, p. 156.
The races were typical of national Scottish trends, more broadly, and were run over four miles. At Tain, the course followed a portion of the marches, from Blackhill near Loch Slyine (now known as Loch Eye) and Fearn Abbey back towards the burgh. The Inverness Race ran from the port around Tomnihurich Hill and back. Courses were not specified at Banff or Huntly but the Aberdeen Races followed the ‘four mile heats’ style, and, therefore, it is likely the Banff and Huntly Races followed suit, tracing the marches. These events would have been excellent for spectators, with the final stretches close to the heart of the burghs. Indeed, spectators in Inverness would have greatly benefitted by the natural features of the landscape to watch the progress of the race from Tomnihurich Hill, the mid-point of the race, or on Castle Hill, on the east-side of the River Ness.

Large deer-hunting gatherings were also seasonal, frequently occurring in August, and were integrated into elite wider hospitality practices. For example, the Marquis of Huntly took advantage of his Highland holdings and famously hosted massive hunts at Braemar in August. John Taylor, a London-based travel writer, provides an excellent account of the Braemar hunt in 1618, which was followed by five more days of hunting in Badenoch. Taylor illuminated the logistical complexities of the massive annual event which included the Marquis of Huntly, Earls of Mar, Murray, Enzie, Buchan and a hundred Knights, with their retinues totalling 1,500 men and horses along with an additional 200 Irish greyhounds. The party travelled together from the south and were provisioned with food and drink by the Marquis’ people. On the day of the hunt, a third of the party drove the deer to the hunters where they ‘let loose as the occasion serves upon the herd of deer, so that with dogs, guns, arrows, dirks, and daggers, in the space of two hours, fourscore fat deer were slain.’ Taylor was so impressed he wrote ‘Lowland, your sports are low as is your seat, The Highland games and minds are high and great.’ The lesser northern

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12 Ibid., p. 53.
elite also organised such events but on a smaller scale. For instance, in 1642, Hugh Fraser, Master of Lovat, ten gentlemen and a retinue of 300 men-at-arms gathered at Dores near Loch Ness for their journey to the deer-hunting grounds around Loch Killin, east of Fort Augustus.\(^\text{13}\)

Elite sport was an expensive business. Hunting, prior to formation of sporting societies, seen later this chapter, was a large financial burden on the host but equally demonstrated wealth and power.\(^\text{14}\) By contrast, the cost of seventeenth-century horseracing in northern Scotland was commonly spread amongst the participants (local gentlemen, lairds and the nobility) by collecting entry fees for horses and subscriptions for the maintenance of races and trophies. Many racing trophies were used annually and increased the prestige of the event while reducing cost. The Tain Race subscribers were required to present a horse and pay the entry fee of ‘ane angell of gold’, the equivalent to 10 shillings sterling, yearly, whether they were entering a horse or not. If they failed to pay the fee they were liable to pay £20 Scots to the winner.\(^\text{15}\) Banff also organised a subscription for its race but the event lost its way. By 1681, the subscribers were reluctant to provide their fees and the burgh council, worried about the future of the race, appointed the dean of guild to enquire about the deficiencies. He was successful in collecting the outstanding subscriptions, amounting to 1,240 merks, from the Marquis of Huntly and the Earl of Airlie and the local lairds.\(^\text{16}\) The race continued until at least 1684, the last year of Charles II’s reign when the council minutes for 26 April recorded ‘[i]t is to be remembred that the silver cup prepared for the horse race and run for this yea wes gifted back be My Lord Huntly, winer theiroff, to the toune.’\(^\text{17}\) This entry implies Huntly did not want to deprive the burgh of its valuable trophy, which he had already paid for.

\(^{13}\) Mackay (ed.), *Chronicles of the Frasers*, p. 279.


\(^{15}\) NRS, Warrant and Deeds, RD11 reg 7, ‘Anent the bell race of Tayne 1616’.


\(^{17}\) Ibid., p. I, 163. Wagers were likely placed on the day as betting on horseracing was not uncommon; however, no evidence has been found.
Prior to the development of sporting societies, single patronage of trophy events was also important in northern Scotland. Racing had occurred in Inverness since the 1570s along with tilting, but in 1616 a specific silver trophy for the races was used.\textsuperscript{18} The Marquis of Huntly presented a silver cup as the trophy. Huntly honoured his friend, Simon Fraser Lord of Lovat, by engraving the cup with his name and coat of arms. The trophy remained in use until at least 1622. The Laird of Inverallochy, Lord Lovat’s second son, was the best of the horsemen, winning the race in three consecutive years. Lord Lovat’s eldest son, Master Lovat, won the next two years, followed by the Laird of Grant and the Earl of Seaforth.\textsuperscript{19} When the race was restored in 1662, on the first day four men entered the race: Lord Lovat, the Laird of Grant, the Laird of Kilravock and Captain Man, an English officer who had, with a contingent of soldiers, travelled north from his base at Inverlochy Castle near Fort William. The Episcopalian Reverend James Fraser of Kirkhill (1634-1709) a provided a detailed account of the races:

> All the riders in whit, their distinction blew, reed, yallow, and green ribbons. The Lord Lovat rode in person, as also Mr. Man. The sign given, near ten of the clock, they start, and closed at 11 houres. The compeating riders got off first, and a great number of gentlemen riding after in their reer. At first Mr. Man seemed to carry the Laird of Grants horse outran him quit in a short Time. Lovat, who came short of no rider in Brittain, cunning enugh for them all, kept closs in the reer of all till within halfe a mile of the port, and then, to the admiration of all the beholders, takeing the start of them, like a bird upon wing outran them a full quarter of a mile neare, and riding back gave them his conge [his ceremonious bow].\textsuperscript{20}

Fraser of Kirkhill then added ‘I hear Captain Man avow that all England over he never saw a better horseman than Lovat, nor a swifter fourfooted beast than his brown mare’. Lovat’s prize for the day was a cup worth £7 and a saddle worth £3 Scots. After the race concluded the magistrates provided ‘a sumptuous treat’ for the elite and revelry and entertainment continued for the remainder of the day.\textsuperscript{21} The following day, a second race was held with Bailie Finlay Fraser of Inverness riding against the Master of Lovat and the Lairds of Kilravock and Innes.

\textsuperscript{18} Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, pp. 164-5.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 247.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 448.
\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Ibid.}.
This race began at 10:30am and finished near noon with Finlay Fraser the victor: his prize was a cup and sword. After the events the Laird of Grant purchased Lovat’s horse for £13 Scots, which was a fine investment as Grant entered the horse and won the race the following year. Fraser of Kirkhill and others believed the restored race, if promoted properly, would rival the Cupar Race, also popular in the 1660s, following wider Restoration period sporting trends.

This marvellous account of the two days of racing at Inverness offers countless insights into the organisation of the events. First, the riders wore specific costumes while riding and different coloured ribbons distinguished who each rider was, not dissimilar to what happens today. This would have been particularly important for spectators who were not familiar with the horses or riders. Second, while races were normally a few miles long, these races were not as they lasted an hour and an hour and a half, respectively. Fraser of Kirkhill did not mention the riders racing laps of the approximate four mile course but it must have occurred to account for the length of time of each race. Also, there was a distinction between the actions of the crowds watching and the gentlemen who rode behind the race. This form of physically active spectatorship was not recorded anywhere else in the north. It certainly gave the affluent a totally different experience and possibly the feeling of inclusion in the race. The quality of the Inverness Race definitely rivalled all the northern races and would have been a contender against the Cupar Race, especially if it attracted more northern nobles, who would have definitely heard about the event from friends and family. However, after the Restoration period references to horseracing fall silent in Inverness for a century although it is likely smaller races continued following this tradition and escaped record.

23 Ibid.
The Gordons of Huntly continued to patronise northern horseracing, particularly at Huntly.\textsuperscript{25} From 1695, the trophy for the Huntly Race was a thistle mug crafted by William Scott of Banff. Subsequent prizes of silver hilted broadswords were crafted by Scott, who had relocated to Elgin, and by James Tait of Edinburgh.\textsuperscript{26} Between 1734 and 1748 the Huntly Race was not run, possibly because the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Duke of Gordon (1720-1752) lacked his father’s passion for racing, compounded by the chaos of the Jacobite rising and its aftermath. The Duke revived the race on 12 October 1749. The prize was a purse of fifty guineas rather than the trophy won at the St. Charles Fair. The contest was advertised in two Edinburgh newspapers and \textit{The Aberdeen Journal}, beginning 22 August until the race.

It is evident elite horseracing was not divorced from its festive roots but built upon them. Competitive races were largely held on days of civic significance, and were part of celebrations and revelries. Some races reused trophies annually to minimise cost and Burnett argues that reusing ‘ancient’ trophies brought both the events and the burghs prestige, attracting more attention and spectators.\textsuperscript{27} Many races relied on subscriptions while others benefited from single-party patronage. By the eighteenth century, prizes, especially those prepared for the Gordons, became increasingly expensive and eventually, with the rise of sport clubs, as will be seen, subscriptions were reinstated. Hunting gatherings were likewise complicated events to organise because of the sheer number of participants, the amount of land and game required. The provisioning of food and alcohol, the keeping of horses and dogs and providing suitable accommodation was a monumental task for a household to undertake. These events were expensive and excellent sport was expected; therefore, they required careful management of significant deer forests. Hunting and horseracing were essential to elite sporting practice in

\textsuperscript{25} F. Marian McNeill, \textit{A Calendar of Scottish National Festivals from Candlemas to harvest home} (Glasgow, 1959), pp. 102-3.
\textsuperscript{26} NRS, Papers of the Gordon Family, Dukes of Gordon (Gordon Castle Minuments), GD44/51/461/2 ‘Household Account and Personal Accounts’.
\textsuperscript{27} Burnett, \textit{Riot, Revelry and Rout}, p. 170.
northern Scotland and required substantial organisation. In this regard, the practices of the northern elite were not unique but instead demonstrated their involvement within wider British trends. While horseracing and hunting were pleasurable, they were also important for displaying wealth, power and affirming familial and political ties, as will be seen.

*Social Cohesion*

Elite horseracing and hunting gatherings were not parochial affairs and considerable distances were travelled to attend meetings. Travelling over 100 miles was not unheard of and the elite did so fairly often to see friends and family or move between their holdings and urban residences in Edinburgh or London, as required of their mixed rural-urban lives. For example, Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney travelled from Birsay Palace in Orkney to visit Dornoch in 1604 for the baptism of the 13th Earl of Sutherland’s eldest son. Sutherland offered Orkney lavish hospitality and he was ‘honorablie intereyned with comedies, and all other sports and recreations that Earle John culd make him.’ Moreover, deer-hunting gatherings attracted the elite from great distances and political and familial relationships were strengthened. For example, Sir Robert Gordon travelled from Sutherland to Badenoch for hunting in 1619 when the Duke of Lennox and Richmond had made the journey north which was an even larger occasion than that recorded by Taylor in 1618. However, Gordon preferred Sutherland’s cherished sporting holdings near Durness, where when ‘wearied by the excess of pleasure’ of hunting, he and the party practised archery, wrestling and dancing. Using these hunting grounds near Durness also sent a strong political message to their rivals the MacKays of Reay by demonstrating their power and dominion over large swathes of land north and west of the Dornoch Firth.

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Likewise, the Frasers of Lovat held and attended many extravagant hunts as part of larger social events.\textsuperscript{31} In the summer of 1642, Hugh Fraser, Master of Lovat, and his bride Anna Leslie, daughter of Lord Alexander of Leven, along with eleven peers, arrived in Inverness from Edinburgh. They were met by 400 men-at-arms to escort them to Beaufort Castle, Lovat’s stronghold near Beauly. The last leg of the procession with the honourable escort was a clear demonstration of Lovat’s power, wealth and military might, as Fraser of Kirkhill recounted, ‘it’s true, some of the Lowlanders [those who were in the bridal train] never saw such a sight of Highlanders in armes; and all present declared that the best peer in the nation might be vain of and glory in such a brave guard and attendants.’\textsuperscript{32} When they arrived at their destination lavish hospitality immediately ensued. Along with feasting and drinking a variety of sports were offered to the honoured guests. Fraser of Kirkhill noted, ‘the fishing of the river and linn was charming; hunting, fishing, fouleing, arching, good divertisments; nor was tilting, riding, jumping, combating, wanting’. At this time the 14\textsuperscript{th} Earl of Sutherland and Ross of Balnagown with Munro of Fowlis came south to join the party.\textsuperscript{33}

It is clear that longstanding chivalric sports were still pursued in northern Scotland at this time. Tilting had, since the medieval period, developed into a sophisticated sport. A point system had been established whereby different marks were awarded to participants depending on where their lances hit their opponent’s armour, or if they un-horsed their opponent.\textsuperscript{34} Williams demonstrates that the sport was as much theatre as contest in England. The nobles were able to demonstrate their wealth by wearing their finest and most expensive armour, have the best horses and offer the greatest prizes. This was on top of the opportunity the sport gave to show off their horsemanship and skills as a warrior.\textsuperscript{35} Indeed, etiquette guides and manuals

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 278.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 279.
\textsuperscript{34} Williams, ‘Sport and the Elite’, p. 394.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 404-5.
had discussed this sport since the fifteenth century. Williams notes that contemporaries believed the popularity of such texts did not demonstrate the sport’s popularity but was a reflection of the diminished quality of knights who required reminding of the proper etiquette. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the sport was in decline because of its cost, a loss of interest among the English and Scottish nobility and the martial purpose of the heavily armoured warrior was diminishing across Europe. This was directly the result of the rise of high-powered muskets. Nevertheless, these events provide a glimpse into the social aspects of sport for the northern elite. The friendly banter, gifting of hounds and birds of prey all solidified loyalties.

Hunting in the eighteenth century remained a staple part of elite hospitality. For example, in 1730, Captain Edmund Burt was received at Culloden House near Inverness and after an evening of copious drinking and jesting Burt and other visiting officers retired in preparation for their hunting the following day. Burt wrote to his friend in London about his experience stating ‘I think a pack of hounds were never kept cheaper than here … or that this is better hare-hunting in any part of Britain than hereabouts.’ He was thoroughly impressed by the size and number of the hares and noted there were so many hares within ten miles of the coast that there was little entertainment in hunting. This was partially because the hounds did not have the discipline to pursue one hare and were distracted by all the others. He seemed slightly annoyed at this fact and wrote ‘then the pack is divided, and must be called off, &c. insomuch that a whole day’s hunting had been entirely fruitless.’ Burt, although annoyed by the hare-hunt, enjoyed fox-hunting in the environs of Inverness and noted the curious behaviour of the people when a fox was killed, ‘it is carried home, through the blessing of the people, like

36 Williams, ‘Sport and the Elite’, p. 394
38 Brown, Noble Society, p. 214.
a dangerous captive in a Roman triumph.’

Offering this style of hospitality to visiting gentlemen was expected in eighteenth-century polite society and invitations to military men especially were important to remain on good terms with the authorities. With little doubt, the Forbes of Culloden would have openly hosted Hanoverian officers, whereas eighteenth-century Tories and Jacobites would have been less inclined.

Hunting gatherings were also indicative of the elite’s continuing cultural Highland-Lowland hybridity. For example, Taylor’s account of the Braemar and Badenoch meetings illustrates the nobility and gentry divested themselves of their finery and dressed, and in all likelihood, spoke as Highland-Gaelic men. Together, this evidence extends Michael Newton’s claim that ‘Hunts were spectacles of ritualised violence, aristocratic splendour and clan unity that combined the spirit of both feasting and fighting’, to also include the culturally mixed northern elite. Not only were the actual hunts ritualised but also the events surrounding them, as was the case for the Frasers of Lovat. Lengthy wedding celebrations incorporated ritualised hunting and sport as demonstrations of power and influence. These demonstrations by the northern lord were not lost on his Lowland bride’s family. As indicated above, they were clearly impressed by the show of force at Inverness and likely the sport at Beaufort.

Hunting parties were also quite factional at this time and could exacerbate strained relationships, especially when hunting was a smokescreen used to disguise more nefarious activities, such as seizing land. The fighting, rather than feasting, aspect of hunting quickly came to the fore in Sutherland in 1601. The Earl of Caithness gathered men and entered Sutherland for a second time in a thinly disguised hunting expedition to assert his power. This time, he was promptly met by the 13th Earl of Sutherland, who had been in France the year prior when Caithness had attempted the same. A battle ensued between the two factions with heavy

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losses on both sides.\textsuperscript{44} This was perhaps what Sir Robert had alluded to when he wrote to his nephew in 1620 that ‘hunting is a martiaall sport, and resembleth the warres much’\textsuperscript{45}

Northern Scottish horse races were also significant occasions for social cohesion. Familial ties were common among participants while they were also indications of political factionalism. For example, the Tain Race organisers included: Simon Fraser of Lovat and his son Hugh Master of Lovat, David Ross of Balnagown, Colin MacKenzie the Lord Kintail (the future first earl of Seaforth and nephew of Balnagown), Robert Munro of Foulis, Donald MacKay of Strathnaver (brother-in law to Colin Mackenzie), Sir William Sinclair of Cadboll (also known as Sir William Sinclair of Mey, the brother-in-law to Balnagown), George Munro of Tarbat, as well as a number of other members of Clan Munro and Sinclair.\textsuperscript{46} The race’s complex web of familial relations between the leading households of northern Scotland was clearly also political. It did not extend to Sutherland men or their powerful relatives the Gordons of Huntly but included their rivals: the Sinclairs of Caithness and Lord Reay. Perhaps, the organisers wanted swords left in their scabbards.

Despite the apparent factionalism and use of sport to disguise aggression, the majority of events were peaceful. For example, Fraser of Kirkhill wrote the 1622 Inverness race was a ‘wonderfull concord’ and many of the same men as at Tain participated, with the addition of the Gordons, the Earl of Murray and the Laird of Grant. The restored Inverness Race in 1662 attracted the subsequent generation of these families in addition to the Lairds of Foulis, Balnagown, Mackintosh and the English officers from Inverlochy.\textsuperscript{47} Fraser of Kirkhill’s recollection of the 1662 race also demonstrates the community’s involvement in, and pageantry

\textsuperscript{44} Gordon, \textit{Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland}, pp. 240-1.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 363.
\textsuperscript{47} Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, pp. 447-8.
of, the races. The Provost and Magistrates paraded through the streets with the trophies, followed by the inhabitants of Inverness who ‘with the usual ceremony, hung the silver cup with blew ribbons upon the hookes off the painted port, the Sadle and the Sourd set uppon the top of it’. Fraser, as an Episcopalian minister, active during the Restoration period, clearly encouraged this celebratory event. This interpretation supports Burnett’s claim of the re-emergence of horseracing during the Restoration period as a fashionable Royalist sport in Scotland. The size of the crowd of Invernessians was small, compared to the masses who watched the Leith Races, but it is evident the spectators were socially varied and substantial in number for the burgh. Fraser of Kirkhill’s acknowledgement of the prestige of the crowd demonstrates the intermingling of different social orders and nationalities, Scots and English, and the creation of a regional event for social interaction and cohesion, with Inverness as a regional centre of power.

Seventeenth-century sporting practices dictated that women’s involvement was peripheral. This was certainly the case with horseracing as no women entered horses; however, wives would have likely been present as marriage bonds tied many of the participants’ families together, as seen at the Bell Race of Tain. Furthermore, traces of direct female involvement in hunting in northern Scotland illuminates their untold sporting legacy. For example, Fraser of Kirkhill recorded a legend in which Lady Lovat cleared the Caiplich range of hills, between Loch Ness and the Aird, of wolves in the fifteenth century. Likewise, during the meetings at Braemar and Badenoch the nobility were accompanied by their wives, and, therefore, also their ladies in-waiting and these would have been important opportunities to solidify friendships.

Moreover, Lovat’s 1642 hunting forays near Beaufort and elsewhere were, evidently, to entertain his new bride as much as himself!\(^{52}\)

Horseracing and hunting remained social events in the eighteenth century and continued to be steeped in politics. Jane How argues that, prior to 1745, the Huntly Races were largely a Clan Gordon affair embroiled with Jacobitism. This was especially true before the 1715 rising. In fact, at least two past winners were taken prisoner or surrendered during the rising, with James Drummond even carrying the sword he had won at the Huntly Race.\(^ {53}\) The use of sport to cover up acts of subversion was not unique to northern Scotland and was a widely known Jacobite tactic to gain supporters. For example, a horserace at Lochmaben outside of Dumfries was a thoroughly Jacobite affair. The event was so evocative that it was the inspiration for a Jacobite poem entitled ‘Lochmaben Gate’, see Figure 9.\(^ {54}\) The participants raced for two silver plates. One was engraved with numerous men with their heads bent in a ‘tumbling posture’ with one standing straight accompanied by the passage from Ezekiel 21.27: ‘I will Overturn, Overturn, Overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose Right it is, and I will give it him.’\(^ {55}\) This passage would have been immediately interpreted as the pledge to return James Francis Edward Stuart to the throne. After the races, the zealous Robert Balfour, Master Burleigh (\(d.\) 1757), drank to the health of his king and damned all those who would not participate.\(^ {56}\) Another famous instance of Jacobites using sport to cover their subversion was when the Earl of Mar raised the Jacobite standard in September 1715 during a thinly veiled hunting gathering at Braemar.\(^ {57}\) This type of action was clearly known by authorities prior to

\(^{52}\) Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, pp. 110, 278.


\(^{54}\) \textit{The Songs of Scotland, Chronologically Arranged, with Introduction and Notes} (Glasgow, 1871), pp. 515-516.

\(^{55}\) Peter Rae, \textit{The History of the Late Rebellion; Rais’d against His Majesty King George, By the Friends of the Popish Pretender} (Dumfries, 1718), pp. 49-50.


\(^{57}\) John Struthers, \textit{The History of Scotland from the Union to the abolition of the Heritable Jurisdictions in MDCCXLVII} (Glasgow, 1828), pp. I, 208-9, 231, 294-7; Bruce Lenman, \textit{The Jacobite Cause} (Glasgow, 1986), p. 46.
the rising as restrictions were placed on the nobility by the Lord Justices. Even loyal Hanoverians, such as the Earl of Sutherland, were instructed to refrain from having large hunting parties. This message was rather ironically received by Sutherland from the Earl of Mar in 1714.\(^{58}\) Despite being occasionally associated with Jacobitism, hunting and horseracing remained popular sports among the elite.\(^{59}\)

Between 1734 and 1748 there was a lull in horseracing in the north but the revived Huntly Race of 1749 was attended by the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, along with ‘a great Number of Quality and Gentry’.\(^{60}\) The Duke of Gordon and Francis Charters of Amisfield, Gordon’s brother-in-law and second son of the Earl of Wemyss, were the only competitors to enter horses. The race was won by the latter.\(^{61}\) Following the main event, foot-races were run for unspecified prizes, ‘which with the good Company and fine weather, made the whole Entertainment very agreeable.’\(^{62}\) After the athletics, a dinner and ball were held at Huntly Castle, the last major occasion to brighten its hall.\(^{63}\) Stripped of its Jacobite connections, horseracing from 1750 onwards in the north, especially the north-east, was reintegrated into mainstream politics, received significant patronage and was quintessential of late eighteenth-century elite sporting culture.

Competitive horseraces were public events and were an opportunity for social cohesion for communities as well as political and familial networks. Similar to the festive sports to be discussed in Chapter Five, spectatorship and pageantry were important. The existing sources, other than the record from Banff in 1681, where subscriptions were slow to be paid, demonstrate there was considerable enthusiasm for the horseracing and hunting. More scepticism is required

\(^{58}\) Fraser (ed.), *The Book of Sutherland*, p. II, 44.


\(^{60}\) *ABJ*, 17 October 1749, p. 4.


\(^{62}\) *ABJ*, 17 October 1749, p. 4.

as to the friendly nature of the events, as it is clear they were used as guises for aggression and subversion. On a smaller scale, records of individual squabbles did occur as spectators and participants could become irritated if luck was not with them. For example, at Cupar the Earl of Melville’s mare was injured when a fight broke out between Earl of Linlithgow and Lord Carnegie. The use of surviving Court of Session records may help to uncover the less amicable side of competitive racing and hunting, as conflicts frequently required litigation. However, it is clear elite sport, by and large, facilitated social cohesion, strengthened friendships and solidified family networks.

**Sport Clubs and Societies, 1750-1800**

Associational culture was an urban phenomenon characteristic of the Enlightenment in Britain with its roots tracing back to the aftermath of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. It facilitated the widespread creation of voluntary associations which contemporary members named clubs, societies, companies, academies or fraternities. Voluntary associations were founded upon ideas of leisure, philanthropy, philosophy, rationalism, self-improvement and sociability, and were a quintessential part of polite society. Urbanisation, especially of the affluent, cannot be overstated as a contributor to the rise of associational culture. Capital cities first experienced the phenomenon followed by provincial towns and smaller centres. It developed more rapidly and expansively in Britain than on the Continent. Clark estimates, that by 1800, there were upwards of 25,000 different clubs throughout the English speaking world, demonstrating associational culture’s influence across the British Empire. Its proliferation succeeded because of: the relative lack of government intervention, the propagation of non-censored print media, the degree of urban affluence and, from 1750 in Scotland, when more liberal or ‘Moderate’ Presbyterian views were popularised, new forms of secular sociability and

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64 Fraser, (ed.), *The Earls of Melville and Leven*, pp. I, 196-7.
65 Clark, *British Clubs*, p. 10.
leisure which went relatively unhindered outside of Orthodox Calvinist strongholds. Among the new foci of sociability were commercial coffee and public houses. They were spaces for the dissemination of knowledge as customers discussed local affairs, business, politics and philosophy. The coffee houses also served as ticket-offices for assembly hall dances and concerts, which were organised for cultural promotion and philanthropy. Public houses were popular meeting places for sporting societies for their general meetings, to accept the admission of new members and to drink and eat after their sport had finished.

This section traces the growth of sporting societies in northern Scotland, seen in Figure 10. In doing so, it explores how these societies transformed how sport was organised and how it was controlled. Moreover, it examines how this movement was characteristic of the gradual integration of the region into wider Scottish and British urban culture. Historians largely neglect this aspect of associational culture in Britain, and in Scotland more specifically. Perhaps this has happened because of the incorrect assumption that northern Scotland was non-urban. This section begins to address this disparity while testing if Huggins’s use of ‘proto-modernity’ is appropriate when examining late-eighteenth century elite sport in Scotland. It also serves as a comparison to Stefan Szymanski’s work examining the importance of the rise of sporting societies in modern sport in England. It also assesses Carr’s assumptions as regards the formation of gender identity and the interactions of men and women in polite society during the Enlightenment.

Organised sport

Elite leisure patterns in northern Scotland began to rapidly change in the 1750s with the growth of associational culture, which embraced Enlightenment philosophy, and formalised the

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67 Harris, ‘Cultural Change in Provincial Scottish Towns’, p. 116.
68 ABJ, 12 February 1751, p.4; ABJ, 27 August 1751, p. 4. There were at least two coffee houses in Aberdeen in the 1750s the Exchange Coffee-house and the Royal Coffee-house.
70 Huggins, ‘Racing Culture’.
organisation of sporting practices. It did so by adding new bureaucratic structures; namely, formalising subscriptions and creating membership structures. Moreover, these societies introduced club constitutions and followed codified rules of play. When analysed against Guttmann’s seven characteristics of modern sport (secularism, equality, specialisation, rationalism, bureaucratisation, quantification and an obsession with records) it is evident the use of such bureaucratic structures and the codification of rules were significant developments in the progression to modern sport.\footnote{Guttmann, \textit{From Ritual to Record}, p. 16.} Northern sporting societies first developed in Aberdeen and then spread across the region. The first northern clubs engaged with sport as a secondary leisure pursuit. For example, ‘The Club’, formed in 1718 in the north-east, primarily organised dinner parties, drinking, card-playing and focused on local philanthropy. By the 1790s, the Club sponsored horseracing. Likewise, the ‘Honourable Company of Water-Drinkers’ at Peterhead, who were dedicated to healthy practices, as seen in Chapter Two, engaged in sport while waiting for their treatments to mature.\footnote{Fraser (ed.), \textit{The Sutherland Book}, p. I. 392; NRS, The Seaforth Papers, GD248/565/82/5, ‘Letter from Deskfoord to his father from Leyden August 10 1734’; Macgill (ed.), \textit{Old Ross-Shire}, p. 346; Peter Buchan, \textit{Annals of Peterhead}, from its foundations to the present time: including an account of the Rise, progress, improvements, shipping, manufactures, commerce, trade, wells, baths &c. Of the town. Also, a sketch of the Character of the inhabitants, their civil and ecclesiastical state (Peterhead, 1819), p. 30. Also see: Alastiar J. Durie, James Bradley, and Maruerite Dupree, \textit{Water is Best: the Hydros and Health Tourism in Scotland 1840-1940} (Edinburgh, 2006).} For instance, in September of 1766 and 1768 they raised subscriptions and hosted gala days, which were well received.\footnote{\textit{ABJ}, 15 September 1766, p. 4; \textit{ABJ}, 5 September 1768, p. 4.} It was related that ‘the Approbation of some Strangers of Distinction, who have seen the higher Sphere of publick Amusements, […] declared they were never better diverted in their Lives’.\footnote{\textit{ABJ}, 15 September 1766, p. 4.} Horseraces and footraces, for men and women, as well as a boat race were held with modest prizes for the local people, who were enthusiastically engaged in the day’s sport and placed many wagers.

The formalisation of subscriptions defrayed the cost of sports patronage across a wide membership and was critical to changing patterns of elite sport. Moreover, because sporting societies had a secure financial base they were often involved in multiple sports and annual fees
as well as one-off subscriptions to raise money for different events were common. For example, The Northern Shooting Club functioned similarly to the Royal Caledonian Hunt Club (1777) based in Edinburgh but on a smaller scale. They both organised hunting and horseracing meetings.\textsuperscript{75} Subscription based horseracing continued to increase in complexity as multiple organisations became involved. The Northern Shooting Club organised the Aberdeen Races (1790-99) held in early October and were reported on in \textit{The Aberdeen Journal} and the \textit{Racing Calendar}.\textsuperscript{76} The Northern Shooting Club and the members’ wives for a number of years gave £50 sterling purses. In addition, they petitioned various bodies for other prizes. The Club initially provided a £50 sterling plate for one race but reduced its donation to £25 sterling in 1795, topped up by private subscriptions from its members. It finally withdrew its support in 1799 to refocus its fundraising for the Lunatic Asylum and the Infirmary.\textsuperscript{77} Aberdeen burgh council was also requested to supply a purse and allow the Town House to be used for evening entertainment. Initially, they refused because of the cost and because some magistrates believed the races would have: ‘prejudicial consequences to the interest of manufactures, by introducing and encouraging for some days annually, idleness and dissipation among the lower ranks of the inhabitants’\textsuperscript{78}. By 1793, the opinion of the council had changed and it supplied purses of either £25 or 30 Guineas annually, as well as the use of the Town House for dinner parties during race week.\textsuperscript{79} Furthermore, the ‘Citizens of Aberdeen’ subscribed a generous purse of £25 sterling.

\textsuperscript{75} Mike Huggins, \textit{Flat Racing and British Society, 1790-1914: A Social and Economic History} (London, 2014), p. 44.
\textsuperscript{76} Edward Weatherby and James Weatherby, \textit{Racing Calendar: Containing an account of the Plates, Batches, and Sweepstakes, Run for in Great Britan and Ireland in the Year 1795} (London, 1796), pp. xxvii-lii; \textit{ABJ}, 28 June 1796, p. 1. The integration into the wider racing calendar altered the organisation of the meeting. In 1796, the Northern Shooting Club amended the date of the races, abandoning the Michaelmas racing tradition, moving the events to begin on 29 August. According to their advertisement, this was to interfere less with the harvest period and to attract competitors from the southern races at Leith and Montrose.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{The Journal of the County Club of Aberdeen} 1718-1876 (Edinburgh, 1878), pp. 192, 203-4
\textsuperscript{78} ACAA, City of Aberdeen Council Register CA/1/1/66 p. 103, Minute book from 3 June 1788 to 9 October 1793.
\textsuperscript{79} ACAA, City of Aberdeen Council Register CA/1/1/67 pp. 76, 121, 151, Minute book from 29 October 1793 to 21 May 1800.
All told, five prizes were to be run for.  

Evidently, the planning of the Aberdeen races relied on shrewd negotiations between multiple civilian and government organisations, and demonstrates the growing bureaucratisation of sporting events in northern Scotland.

While highly organised races depended upon the cooperation of multiple groups, there were occasionally independent races among the elite that requiring less organisation. For example, in 1769 a thirty mile race occurred north of Aberdeen with only two participants. This race arose out of a challenge between two gentlemen. The wager was recorded as ‘considerable’. The first competitor was to ride his pony over the thirty mile course while the second competitor was on foot. The latter won the race ‘to the general satisfaction of a crowd of spectators’. This style of challenge race was not uncommon in Britain during the eighteenth century. Steven Cock demonstrates that one-on-one contests or solo challenges, over a specified distance or in an allotted time, were common in competitive swimming contests. However, because of the relatively light newspaper coverage in northern Scotland during the eighteenth century, where evidence of challenge races can be found, more references to this type of race have not been produced.

The Aberdeen Races, similar to the Peterhead and Turiff Races in the 1760s and the early 1770s, provided a space and audience for the elite to practise public displays of philanthropy. For example, although attendance at the Aberdeen Races had fallen at the 1793 meeting the ‘Race Week Charities’ continued to provided financial aid to marginalised groups residing in Aberdeen. It was reported a ‘brilliant company who adorned our turn, and who, in

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80 ABJ, 12 September 1791, p. 3. The organisation of the horseraces followed a fairly standard procedure. The purses would be run for by the best of two out of three heats over the four mile track. Stipulations were placed on the weights the horses carried and the different types of horses run. It is not the intent of this study to examine the individual winners of these events as these details add little to the context of the races.

81 ABJ, 17 April 1769, p. 4.


83 ABJ, 9 Oct 1769, p. 4; ABJ, 15 September 1766, p. 4; ABJ, 3 September 1768, p. 4; NRS, Gordon Papers GD44/43/65/22, 22 May 1772 Lord Erroll, Slains Castle, to James Ross.
the midst of innocent mirth and rational festivity, did not forego that greatest of all pleasures—remembering the sick, the needy, and the cheerless prisoner’. Their charity included £10 10s. sterling each for the Infirmary, Poor-house and Dispensary. In addition, £5 5s. sterling was given to poor prisoners and £20 5s. sterling was distributed to the spectators by the race stewards.\(^8^4\) The following year the sums increased for the Poor-house and £31 10s. sterling was distributed to the needy crowd.\(^8^5\) The distributions to the crowd was also a cunning way to increase attendance of the lower orders, a plan which would have clearly dismayed some involved in burgh politics who did not want to encourage idleness among the poor.

Piping competitions were also a common amusement to attract an audience during these race weeks. This aligned with the increased migration of Highlanders to urban centres prompted by the beginning of small-holding tenant evictions. However, the presence of Gaelic culture in Aberdeen was not new. Highlanders had worked, traded and learned in both Old and New Aberdeen for centuries.\(^8^6\) The presence of piping competitions was more likely connected to the increased concentration of their presence and the promotion of Highland culture by interested societies, such as, the Highland Society of London. They had already begun promoting Gaelic culture by organising piping competitions in Falkirk around 1781.\(^8^7\)

Other sports clubs also relied on subscriptions, particularly hunting clubs. The Northern Hunt, also known as the Turriff Fox Hunt, formed in 1768, drew its membership from the urban and landed elite. They met at Turiff and Elgin in late October and in the spring, accompanied by their families, horses and hounds, similar to earlier seventeenth and eighteenth century gatherings.\(^8^8\) However, the organisation and financing of the event was spread between the committee and membership, rather than relying on the generosity of a host. At a time before

\(^8^4\) *ABJ*, 9 Oct 1769, p. 4; *ABJ*, 7 October 1793, p. 3.
\(^8^5\) *ABJ*, 7 Oct 1794, p. 4.
\(^8^6\) *ABJ*, 12 September 1791, p 4; See: Withers, *Urban Highlanders*.
\(^8^7\) *ABJ*, 2 September 1781, p. 4.
widespread land enclosures in the north the Hunt traversed a wide landscape. Nevertheless, they were advised not to stray from the moorland and to avoid worked fields because the Hunt would be held accountable for farmers’ losses. This was particularly important for the Hunt’s spring meeting.\(^89\) This warning was evidently the result of prior issues concerning the Hunt and aggrieved farmers wanting compensation. The Northern Meeting also met after the harvest to hunt around Inverness to minimise disruptions to farmers. For male members of the Northern Meeting, this was their prime amusement until horseracing and then highland games became popular in the late-1790s and nineteenth century. Drawing on a wide membership for subscriptions evidently defrayed the cost of hunting from a single patron to a membership. This did not end single patronage hunts but supplemented older practices (especially for deer hunts) that continued into the nineteenth century becoming embroiled in the growing tourism industry in the region.\(^90\)

The formalisation of club constitutions and the further creation of designating spaces for sport were also changing elite sporting habits. For example, The Fraserburgh Golf Club created a seven point constitution, see Figure 11. From their first meeting, 14 April 1777, they agreed to meet on the third Tuesday of each month, from April to September, for a round of golf following the written rules of the game, perhaps those that had been created by the Honourable Company of Gentlemen Golfers in Edinburgh in 1744. They then dined at Mr. Donaldson’s at 3 o’clock. This format was a continuation of sporting habits, seen in Cromarty in the 1750s, prior to club formations.\(^91\) The cost of membership to the Fraserburgh club covered their entertainment and an extra shilling a year, per person, was given to a greens-

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\(^{89}\) ABJ, 26 April 1773, p. 4.

keeper, the first reference to such a position in northern Scotland. Further developments in organised golf occurred when the Society for Golfers in Aberdeen, advertised, on 28 August 1780, ‘A Proper Course for playing Golf being now made out by Appointment of the Club its requested all the Members and others who play will follow the same, to prevent in future, any disagreeable Interferences.’ Nevertheless, ‘disagreeable Interferences’ continued and, on 19 February 1781, the club offered the public a 3 Guineas reward for information about the removal of hole markers at the south end of the links. Evidently, some were displeased about the golfers taking control of the links. Furthermore, the Aberdeen Golf Club’s advertisements illuminate that the practice of golf was not restricted to its membership, as they encouraged all other golfers, either playing as guests or local townsfolk, to use the course in the 1780s.

The rules of golf further developed in northern Scotland and the Society for Golfers at Aberdeen was instrumental. For example, in 1784 they published ‘Laws of Golf to be observed by the Society of Golfers at Aberdeen’. It was longer than any other contemporary club rules with twenty-three articles. The club added new regulations which survive in the modern sport such as a limit of five minutes for searching for a player’s ball, that the winner of the previous hole has the ‘honour’ of playing first on the next hole and that the ball furthest from the hole be played first. Also, beating down the ground or moving sand to improve a player’s lie was forbidden. These additions to the rules of the game demonstrate the continuity of Aberdeen’s influence on golf’s development, as the city had already had the first named golf holes and had produced the first text on discussing the sport, Wedderburn’s Vocabula.

Elite sport in the late eighteenth century was markedly different than in the decades and the century prior in northern Scotland. The creation of sporting societies, as a branch of

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92 NLS, Fettercairn Papers, Acc.4796/124, ‘Minutes & Membership list of Fraserburgh Golf Club 1777’.
93 ABJ, 28 August 1780, p. 4.
94 ABJ, 19 February 1781, p. 4.
96 Ibid., pp. 4-5
associational culture, organised sport in new ways. They formalised subscription structures, which decreased the financial burden of single party patronage, provided spectator sport, and, in the case of golf, created new courses to play on. The rise of golf societies serves as an excellent comparison of the difference between northern Scotland, and Scotland more generally, and England. In Scotland the growth of golf clubs, throughout the country, occurred at a similar time to cricket clubs in England and this is representative of the popularity of the games on either side of the boarder. Despite the difference of sport being played, the organisational structures, as evidence suggests, were fairly similar and other sports such as horseracing, which seems to have been ubiquitous throughout Britain, followed in this organisational pattern. In addition, they demonstrated a commitment to assisting their local communities. Finally, they created constitutions to govern themselves bureaucratically, to maintain proper behaviour and rationalised, and codified, rules of play. These all contributed to the modernisation of sport; yet, older elements remained and an obsession with records and equality of opportunity did not exist. Huggins use of ‘proto-modern’ to classify this form of elite sport, especially from 1750 onwards in northern Scotland, is therefore appropriate as it was developing quickly into modern sport while maintaining some older features.

Gender and Membership

This section considers the gendered spaces sporting societies created as well as their membership. Eighteenth-century associational culture was a largely male urban phenomenon. It created, and reinforced, gendered spaces. For example, the sexes mixed at assembly halls, dances, celebrations, and philanthropic clubs, but many voluntary societies, including sports clubs, were homosocial spaces for expressions of masculinity. Carr argues that involvement in such organisations was integral to identity formation during the Enlightenment. Through participation in sports clubs, assigned gender roles were performed, repeatedly, facilitating the

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The opposition between the Fop and the Barbarian remained prevalent in eighteenth-century Scotland, where the ‘civilised’ man, who embodied ‘polite’ masculinity, existed somewhere between the two stereotypical extremes. As seen in Chapter Three, this distinction was taught to young men at northern grammar schools and universities. During the Enlightenment this was amplified by the accelerated growth of the middling and upper-middling rank who were penetrating previously restricted spheres with the power of moveable wealth, conspicuous consumption and the opportunities gained from a refined education.

Members of northern sports societies included the nobility, gentry and the growing professional class but remained relatively exclusive. Admission procedures for new members varied from society to society and were frequently detailed in the club constitutions. For example, the Fraserburgh Golf Club had twenty members and only admitted guests when introduced by an existing member. The Northern Meeting was a much larger organisation and included members from the counties of Inverness, Ross, Elgin and Nairn but oddly not Sutherland or Caithness. Prospective members submitted their applications to the secretary prior to the annual meeting when voting occurred. During balloting, white and black balls were used to indicate if the applicant was acceptable or not. If an applicant received five or more black balls they were ‘black balled’ and not admitted. Voting in of members could quickly become politicised, as members could essentially block all new entrants or block those that they did not agree with.

Membership of multiple northern societies was common and was an expression of masculinity. For example, the 4th Duke of Gordon, an avid sportsman, was a member of the

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98 Carr, Gender and Enlightenment, pp. 2-3.
99 Ibid., p. 177.
100 Ibid.
Turiff Hunt, the Club, the Northern Shooting Club and the Northern Meeting. The gentry also frequently were engaged in multiple sporting associations. For example, Alexander Garden of Troup was both a steward for the Honourable Company of Water-Drinkers at Peterhead and a member of the Fraserburgh Golf Club. Some of the pioneers of the sociability of golf in the north, such as Sir Charles Ross of Balnagown and George Munro of Poyntzfield, members of a Cromarty golfing clique, were also founding members of the Northern Meeting. Duncan Munro of Culrain was also one of the founding members of the Northern Meeting and was the croupier, the master of ceremonies, for the Fortrose Golfing Society in 1793. The urban elite, wealthy merchants and professionals, were also involved. For example Forbes of Fettercairn and Pitsligo, with his banker’s mind, was a valuable asset to both the Club and to the Fraserburgh Golf Club, as well as being the treasurer of multiple Edinburgh philanthropic organisations. Dr. Alexander Dauney, Professor of Civil Law in Aberdeen, was the secretary of the Society of Golfers in Aberdeen and for the Northern Shooting Club. It was characteristic of societies to place members with applicable skills in important roles; therefore, many such as Dauney and Forbes were secretaries or treasurers. Membership of multiple societies offered the benefits of sociability by increasing personal networks and business contacts, and proved beneficial for aspiring gentlemen. Through membership of multiple sport societies northern men were able to express and reinforce their masculine identities in different, yet often connected, social circles. However, membership and the opportunities it provided was at a financial cost. By the end of the eighteenth century this expression of sporting-masculinity

102 ABJ, 5 September 1768, p. 4; NLS, Fettercairn Papers, Acc.4796/124, ‘Minutes & Membership list of Fraserburgh Golf Club 1777’
103 Miller, Memoir of William Forsyth, p. 80; Fairrie, The Northern Meeting, p. 219.
104 HARC, The Northern Meeting, D25/1/1/1, ‘Northern Meeting Minute Book 1788-1818’; Caledonian Mercury, 27 June 1793. I would like to thank Neil Laird for directing me to this source.
added a further burden on many households who struggled to keep pace with fashionable and conspicuous consumption.106

Attendance at club meetings was normally regulated. For example, absent members of the Northern Meeting were fined 2 Guineas, twice the annual subscription fee, excepting military officers below the rank field officer. This fine proved a vital source of income for the Northern Meeting’s treasury.107 During the war with France in the 1790s the exception proved damaging because many of the members, following the Highland military tradition, obtained new commissions or came out of retirement to join the war effort and were absent but not liable to pay the fine.108 Evidently, many northern gentlemen chose to express their masculinity through military action, serving their country, rather than staying at home. This came to a head in 1795 when the stewards proposed the suspension of the meeting because of low attendance and funds. Their proposal was rejected by the general membership during the annual general meeting and the Northern Meeting continued but on a tighter budget.109 Similarly, the Society for Golfers in Aberdeen struggled to maintain interest, and reference to their activity after 1792 fades. They were dissolved, not reforming until 1815.110 The Aberdeen Races struggled for attendance between 1792 and 1796. In 1797 the races started to recover and it was reported ‘the races afforded excellent sport, to a more numerous assemblage of Ladies and Gentleman than have for some years attended’.111 Attendance issues were not new to the 1790s. The Northern Hunt had attendance problems in the 1770s as well and it had to advertise that quorum was required to admit new members.112 As a result of turnout problems, sporting societies in the

107 HARC, The Northern Meeting, D25/1/1/1/1-5 ‘Northern Meeting Minute Book 1788-1818’.
109 Ibid.
110 Edward, The Royal Aberdeen, p. 4. ACAA, City of Aberdeen Council Register, CA/1/1/66 p. 193, Minutes from 3 June 1788 to 9 October 1793. Edward notes that little is known about the club between 1784 and 1815; however, the Aberdeen Journal repeatedly advertised meetings for the club at Mr. Masson’s on Queen Street until at least August 1789 and the club secretary petitioned to move a road on the links in 1792.
111 ABJ, 8 October 1792, p. 3; ABJ, 2 September 1797, p. 1.
112 ABJ, 24 September 1770, p. 4.
northern burghs regulated attendance to maintain funds and to admit new members, although, wider geo-political events had a detrimental effect on attendance and many clubs struggled to maintain interest.

While evidence indicates sport was primarily a male preserve, women regularly attended week long meetings along with their families as wives, mothers, daughters and, occasionally, widows. Carr suggests female participation was largely peripheral in associational culture. As regards sporting societies, on the surface, this seems correct, as they did not actively participate in sport or voting. However, labelling of their involvement as peripheral downplays their significant engagement with these societies. For example, Dr. John Alves, the first secretary of the Northern Meeting, in 1788 recorded its mission was to enliven the social scene of the north with ‘Pleasures and Innocent Amusement’, and vital to this social scene were women. Dinners, card-games and balls were important social events during club meetings. They offered the opportunity to rekindle and ignite friendships as well as find prospective marriage partners and generally have fun. Expectations of polite society, however, remained at the fore and at the balls held by the Northern Meeting the behaviour of the dancers was monitored by the master of ceremonies and the stewards. This supports Carr’s argument that contemporaries believed the sexes mixing essential for the creation of ‘civilised’ behaviour; nevertheless, occasional chaperoning was required. This was to ensure male-female interactions remained modest and courteous, behaviours expected in polite society. The master of ceremonies also ensured that the appropriate dances occurred and information pamphlets were circulated prior to events. While the mixing of the sexes was essential for building a polite society, exclusively male spaces, the hunting parties, were also perceived to be necessary. The

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113 HARC, The Northern Meeting, D25/1/1/1/1-5, ‘The Northern Minute Book 1788-1818’.
114 Fairrie, The Northern Meeting, p. 3.
115 Ibid., p. 3.
116 Carr, Gender and Enlightenment, pp. 175-6.
117 Fairrie, The Northern Meeting, p. 3.
creation of male spaces, many believed, was to counteract the effects of overexposure to femininity, effeminacy and stereotypically foppish behaviour while expressing and reaffirming expected forms of masculinity.\textsuperscript{118}

Archery was perhaps the only fashionable late eighteenth-century sport elite women could openly practise in northern Scotland, although, by comparison, this occurred much later in the region than on the Continent. For example, the 1716 account of Lady Mary Montagu (bap. 1689, d. 1762), an English traveller, provides a wider European context for female archery practises. When visiting the ‘Empress Dowager’, Wilhelmine Amalia of Brunswick-Lüneburg (1673-1742), in Vienna, women gathered almost monthly for archery and shooting competitions for precious prizes in the formal gardens of the Empress. Montagu observed an inversion of British practices as only women had permission to shoot and men were the spectators; moreover, the other women thought her fear of firearms was humorous.\textsuperscript{119}

Evidently, this English traveller was not accustomed to sport herself but the example demonstrates that female participation in sport could be highly organised and formalised in early modern Europe. The acceptability of female participation in archery entered Britain by the later-eighteenth century. In 1787 The Aberdeen Journal printed an account of the ‘British Archers in North Wales’, expressing local interest in the sport. The events were, reportedly, in ‘the highest degree elegant, liberal and sociable’ with gold and silver medals shot for at ninety and sixty yards for men and women respectively.\textsuperscript{120} A few years later, Aberdeen had its own archery society, ‘The Bowmen of Mar’. It survived into the early nineteenth century, practising and promoting the ancient sport but as their name suggests, this club did not seem to have

\textsuperscript{118} Carr, Gender and Enlightenment, pp. 175-6.
\textsuperscript{119} Letters of the Right Honourable Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Written during Her Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa to Persons of Distinction, Men of Letters, &c. in Different Parts of Europe, (London, 1775), pp. 23-5.
\textsuperscript{120} ABJ, 28 August 1787, p. 4.
included the ‘Bow-women of Mar’ even if it is likely that women were also shooting at the butts.  

Sporting societies created new gendered spaces and membership was important for identity formation, demonstrations of wealth and polite sociability. Membership to one or more sports clubs was fairly common for the northern elite, especially for those who had frequent interactions with burghs and were wealthy enough to pay multiple subscription fees. The addition of the professional urban elite to sport associations, rather than only relying on the landed elite for their membership, benefited the societies functionally. These professionals frequently put their professional skills to use within the bureaucratic structures of the organisations as clerks and treasurers, for example. Surviving evidence shows sport remained largely a male preserve but men and women mixed regularly at social dinners and balls. Female participation in sport was most evident as regards archery, but was relatively limited. Female patronage of horseracing, especially in Aberdeen in the 1790s, demonstrated that while not physically racing they were just as involved as many men, raising subscriptions for purses.

Integration with Scotland and Britain

The creation of sporting societies in northern Scotland contributed, as noted above, to a British Empire-wide phenomenon and was indicative of northern Scotland’s increasing integration with the rest of the country from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. This occurred among different northern elite social circles as they assumed a British identity through engagement with government, trade, colonial expansion and the military. This integration with Scotland and Britain occurred simultaneously with another movement that promoted a specific ‘northern’ identity. Characteristic of the northern elite’s integration with the rest of the country,

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121 ABJ, 18 May 1859; ABJ, 28 September 1896. ‘Extracts from a Hundred Years ago 20 September 1796’. The Bowmen of Mar regularly met at Adam’s, a public house, in Aberdeen, as did other sporting societies in the city. By 1859 allusions were made to the company when discussing the Volunteer Corps in Aberdeen. The martial legacy of archery remained strong into the nineteenth century in northern Scotland. However, the reverence of the sport was transforming in the nineteenth century as it was becoming associated with militaristic patriotism.
not all of the members permanently resided in the region, and were, like those from the Western Isles and Lowlands, drawn to Edinburgh or London for business, education, law, commerce and ‘High’ society.\textsuperscript{122} In response to the dual residency of club members, many sports clubs had to advertise the dates for their meetings in multiple newspapers to reach their membership. For example, the Northern Meeting resolved in 1794 to advertise its reminders in \textit{The London Chronicle, Mercury & Courant} (in Edinburgh) and the \textit{Aberdeen Journal}.\textsuperscript{123} The need to advertise in the major urban centres reflected the mixed urban and rural lifestyle of the Scottish elite. This was not new to the eighteenth century but had certainly increased by the late-eighteenth century.

By the 1790s, northern Scotland boasted no fewer than eight different sporting societies and three of them, The Northern Hunt (Turiff and Elgin), the Northern Shooting Club (Aberdeen) and the Northern Meeting (Inverness), made a conscious effort to create a regional identity. By naming their clubs ‘Northern’, they were publicly demonstrating their ‘Northern’ Scottish-British identity, and importantly, separating themselves from a Highland identity. The uniforms worn by the members were symbolic of this gesture. For example, the Northern Hunt had had a particular non-tartan uniform from 1769.\textsuperscript{124} Likewise, the Northern Meeting initially adopted the ‘Man about Town’, Lowland-Urban, fashion with a uniform which consisted of a green jacket and black breeches.\textsuperscript{125} Across the Highlands and northern Scotland the elite’s adoption of the Lowland fashion was common and wearing the ‘traditional’ Highland garb occurred only as occasion required.\textsuperscript{126} This was a conscious distinction from Highland fashions.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} Nenadic, \textit{Lairds and Luxury}, pp. 198-204.
\item \textsuperscript{123} HARC, The Northern Meeting, D25/1/1/1, ‘Northern Meeting Minute Book 1788-1818’, pp. 66, 79.
\item \textsuperscript{124} \textit{ABJ}, 28 August 1769, p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Fairrie, \textit{The Northern Meeting}, p. xvi.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Nenadic, \textit{Lairds and Luxury}, pp. 152-4.
\end{itemize}
and was not relaxed at the Northern Meeting until 1820, only two years prior to George IV’s famous visit to Scotland which was instrumental in the reinvention of tartan.\textsuperscript{127}

While the membership of the Northern Meeting were attempting to distance themselves from a Highland identity, the Highland Society of London worked for the rehabilitation of the Highland image.\textsuperscript{128} This involved shifting it away from its rebellious, subversive and barbaric associations towards a new image, predicated on the Highlanders’ military involvement in the British Empire, largely based on courage and loyalty.\textsuperscript{129} Despite the Highland Society of London re-popularising tartan, it was something entirely different to wear the previously subversive clothing and gather in large numbers only six years after the repeal of the Act of Proscription, especially since the Northern Meeting convened only eight miles from the Culloden battlefield and was established in a region previously labelled rebellious by the government. The government subdued the region physically, in the reprisals after Culloden, and symbolically, with the new gargantuan twenty-one year build project at Fort George near Ardersier, although its north-facing position was misaligned to the real location of the threat of Jacobitism. Wearing the urban British fashions and holding horseraces at Fort George were explicit symbols of loyalty and the integration of northern Scotland with Britain.

Not only were the northern sporting societies following wider Scottish and British cultural trends, with their fascination or perhaps obsession with creating formalised societies, they were also symbolically demonstrating their integration into British culture. This was indicative of Highland and Northern political engagement with the British ‘fiscal-military state’

prior to, and, more significantly after, Culloden. This distinctive ‘Northern’, rather than ‘Highland’, or, indeed, ‘Jacobite’ identity was also important to the societies until the popularisation of the Highlands and Balmoralisation of Scottish culture in the nineteenth century, when the Highlands became more accessible with infrastructure and communication improvements.

Conclusion
This chapter has charted the characteristics and developments of elite organised sport in northern Scotland and has demonstrated how the region was both influential on a national scale but also receptive of wider Scottish, British and international trends. Sport was pursued as a form of active recreation interwoven with northern elite cultural hybridity and was an expression of masculinity. Sport was vital for social cohesion and facilitated and strengthened familial and political ties. However, at times it was also used to disguise sedition, most famously Jacobitism, and attempts to seize land. Sport was predominately practised by men but female involvement, although limited, was important for creating a social atmosphere at sporting events whether women were spectators, dancers or patrons. Contemporaries believed both male and female participation in sport societies was critical for creating and reinforcing gender identities as well as civil and polite society. Future research will, it must be hoped, uncover much greater detail about women’s physical participation in sport in the early modern period, as it is evident they did partake on occasion.

Elite sport gradually became more organised prior to 1750 but that decade marked a watershed as it quickly became more organised and bureaucratised in the decades following. It

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130 Andrew Mackillop, ‘The Political Culture of the Scottish Highlands from Culloden to Waterloo’, The Historical Journal, Vol. 46, No. 3 (2003), pp. 514-7, 521-5; Bruce P. Lenman, Integration and Enlightenment: Scotland; Whatley, Scottish Society, pp. 142-211. While there was more engagement and integration with Britain after 1707, this was largely high politics and the elite, with the significant exception of Jacobite sympathisers. The economic instability, which lasted for decades after 1707, caused significant social disruption and discontentment; therefore, the integration with Britain should not be regarded as a smooth transition for all social ranks.

quickly began exhibiting elements of proto-modernity that were grounded in Enlightenment philanthropy, rationalism and sociability. It is clear that the growth of sporting societies in northern Scotland was similar to England as Szymanski demonstrates, although in northern Scotland the creation of clubs was at a slightly later date and at a slower rate because of relatively size of the urban populations and distance from major urban centres, other than Aberdeen.\textsuperscript{132} What differentiated the northern Scotland from England was the popularity of golf.\textsuperscript{133} Elite sport dramatically changed but Chapter Five and Six will demonstrate that this accelerated development towards modernity did not reach popular sport prior to 1800. Elite sports, predominately archery, golf, horseracing and hunting, were integrated into a national sporting culture and did not exhibit as much regional variation as popular sport. The creation of sport societies was an extension of this sporting culture and was connected to broader British phenomenon of associational culture. The formation of a ‘Northern’ identity and its separation from a ‘Highland’ identity, until the nineteenth-century popularisation of the Highlands via literature and the Highland Society of London, offers insights into how the elite in the north were navigating the politically sensitive period in the years following the 1745 Jacobite rising. Despite the fact that the Highland Society of London was advocating for Highland culture, it was much more important for the elite, while in the north, to demonstrate their loyalty and integration with the rest of the country. Many chose to do this practically and symbolically through sport.

\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Ibid.}
Figures

*Figure 9 Lochmaben Gate*

As I came by Lochmaben gate,
It’s there I saw the Johnstons riding;
Away they go, and they fear’d no foe,
With their drums a-beating, colours flying.
All the lads of Annandale
Came there, their gallant chief to follow;
Brave Burleigh, Ford and Ramerscale,
With Winton and the gallant Rollo.

I asked a man what meant the fray?
‘Good Sir,’ said he, ‘you seem a stranger;
This is the Twenty-ninth of May;
Far better had you shun the danger.
These are rebels to the throne,
Reason have we all to know it;
Popish knaves and dogs each one,
Pray pass on, or you shall rue it.’

I look’d the traitor in the face,
Drew out my grand and ettled at him:
‘Deil send a’ the whiggish race
Downward to the dad that gat ‘em!’
Right sair he gloom’d, but naething said,
While my heart was like to scunner,
Cowards are they born and bred,
Ilka whinging, praying sinner.

My bonnet on my sword I bare,
And fast I suppr’d by knight and lady,
And thrice I waved it in the air
Where a’ our lads stook rank’d and ready.
‘Long live King James!’ aloud I cried,
‘Our nation’s king, our nation’s glory!’
‘Welcome, welcome, gallant Tory!’

There I shook hand wi’ lord and knight,
And mony a braw and buskin’d lady:
But lang I’ll mind Lochmaben gate,
And a’ our lads for battle ready.
And when I gang by Locher Brigs,
And o’er the moor, at een or morrow,
I’ll lend a curse unto the Whigs,
That wrought us a’ this dool and sorrow.\(^{134}\)

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\(^{134}\) *The Songs of Scotland*, pp. 515-516.
**Figure 10 The Dates of Foundation for Sport Societies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Club</th>
<th>Year founded/First Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The County Club</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Honourable Company of Water Drinkers at Peterhead</td>
<td>1766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Northern Hunt</td>
<td>1768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fraserburgh Golf Club</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Society for Golfers in Aberdeen</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Northern Shooting Club</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Northern Meeting</td>
<td>1788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortrose Golfing Society</td>
<td>1793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bowmen of Mar</td>
<td>c. 1790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11 Meeting Minutes and Regulations of the Fraserburgh Golf Club 14 April 1777**

The subscribers hereby agreed to meet at Fraserburgh the third Tuesday of every Month of April, May, June, July, August & September of the Current Year and thereafter during the pleasure of the Majority of Subscribers for the purposes of playing Golf & Dinning Which meetings are to be under the following regulations.

1. That Dinner is to be on the Table each of the above days in the House of John Donaldson [...] in Fraserburgh precisely at Three OClock & that each member of the Company or Subscriber is to pay for his Club one shilling sterling whither present or not.

2. That no person who is not a member of the Club shall be intitled to Dine unless introduced by and the Guest of one of the members.

3. That the subscribers agree that no more Drink shall be calld for or Drunk during the Subsistance of the Club for the Day, then one Bottle of Claret for each member present with one Bottle Either pint or Chopen in the option of the Company Present,

4. That the Company mett each Day shall elect a Person for [continued on page 2] for that Day with power to regulate all matter relating to the Play at Golf and of the Company present during the time of meeting.

5. That a Treasurer shall be annually Elected to whome each member is to pay in his subscription for Dinners for the Curr"n year, upon the first meeting in April yearly with power also to him to appoint a proper person for taking care of the Links, to whome each Member is to pay a shilling Yearly, to be given in to the Treasurer the first meeting in April as said is.

6. That with regard to the Rules of Playing Golf the subscribers shall observe the Printed Regulations first in the hands of the Treasurer for the Time.

7. That the subscrib[ers presenc have Unanimously Elected Mr John Dalrymple Merchant in Fraserburgh Treasurer for the Current Year.\footnote{NLS, Fettercairn Papers, Acc.4796/124, ‘Minutes & Membership list of Fraserburgh Golf Club 1777’.}
Part 2
Chapter 5: Popular and Festive Sport

Introduction
This chapter begins Part Two of this dissertation which centres on the regional, local and idiosyncratic nature of popular and festive sport of the lower social ranks. It argues that popular and festive sport was practised for enjoyment, was organised, gendered and was a vital release for the lower ranks of society. It differed from sports practised for physical education (Chapter Three) because they were not pursued within an educational context, with the exception of cockfighting. Moreover, popular sport, as opposed to elite sport (Chapter Four), was relatively continuous, changing little throughout the period and was distinctive to the region. Bakhtin’s and Burke’s exploration of the ‘carnivalesque’ offers insight into the popular culture of early modern Europe, which was firmly associated with sport, and contextualises festive sport in northern Scotland. The carnival period occurred in the weeks prior to the self-denial of Lent with Shrove Tuesday, the last day of pre-Lent festivities as its climax. The ‘carnivalesque’ was characterised by the ritual and symbolic inversion of society and, for those involved, was very physically active. Gender roles, morals, norms and spaces were consciously subverted when a large portion of society participated in revelry, masquerading, costuming, dancing, music, sex, drinking and sport. It served as a release for society, was an opportunity to subvert its structures and create temporarily social levelling. Yet, when it concluded power structures and hierarchies were re-established and the respite served to reinforce their existence.1 Elements of the carnivalesque, though, persisted outside of this time and were interwoven in other festive periods, such as Hogmanay.

This chapter asks, when were popular and festive sports practised; where were they practised; how were they expressions of a masculine physical culture; and, finally, how did the aftermath of Culloden and the popularisation of Enlightenment philosophic movements of

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‘rationalism’ and ‘improvement’ change the sporting practices of the masses. Rationalism demanded that everything had a purpose. The movement believed the frivolous activities of the ordinary people and ‘pointless’ pastimes were irrational. This chapter shifts the focus away from the elite and gentlemanly physical culture to a popular one demonstrating there was not a hegemonic masculinity in northern Scotland. It is divided into four sections to examine popular sport as regards time, space, physical culture and, finally, to assess the influence government-led punitive cultural coercion, rationalism and ‘improvement’ had on popular sport.

Within each section popular and festive sport is represented in two forms: ‘top down’, events legitimated by the authorities, and ‘bottom up’, events legitimised through the actions of the people. Williamson argues that there is no straightforward division between the two types of popular and festive sport. Nevertheless, the division provides an important differentiation between sports officially patronised by the civic elite such as market fairs, wappinshaws, royal coronations and royal birthday celebrations, and those that were largely controlled by the people including Christmas, New Year’s Day, Eastern’s E’en and saint’s days. While the Reformed Church heavily influenced the ‘bottom up’ festivities, it is critical to acknowledge, as is done in Chapter Six, that the ecclesiastical authorities pragmatically approached ‘superstition’ and ‘popery’ and left popular and festive culture relatively unaltered because many reformers believed the doctrinal conversion of the Scots would occur more completely if their culture remained intact. Elements of the carnivalesque, then, were most explicit in ‘bottom up’ revelries.

**Time**

Everyday life in early modern Scotland followed the agrarian, cyclical patterns, of the seasons. Urban Scots followed similar patterns although they were not as intimately connected to the land as their rural relatives. Whatley argues that periods of intense work were interspersed

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with periods of relaxation, alcohol infused revelry and festive celebration (see Figure 12 for a sample calendar).³ The beginning of the period covered by this research connects with an important event in the Scottish Calendar. Prior to 1600, the New Year began on 25 March but as of 1600 the Julian calendar was amended in Scotland and 1 January became New Year’s Day.⁴ This calendar was used for a further 152 years, until 1752 when the Gregorian calendar was instituted to synchronise with the rest of Western Europe. The Gregorian calendar had become out of sync with the solar calendar and it was necessary to delete eleven days (3-13 September) from the calendar. This change created confusion as regards the timing of celebrations across Scotland and areas such as the north-east of Scotland celebrated holidays according to the old style. For example, many communities continued celebrating Old New Year’s Day on 12 January.⁵

Events held during the festive calendar enlivened early modern Scottish life and the cultural hybridity of the north meant overlapping Gaelic and Lowland-Scots, Celtic and Latin Christianity customs were present for ordinary people as well as for the elite.⁶ Festive sports provided time for the lower ranks of society and youth to cast off the burdens of everyday life and indulge in sport and diversions. These festivities can be seen as events legitimatised ‘from below’.⁷ Despite the disorder of these days, they were not truly chaotic but followed well-established patterns particular to specific holidays.⁸ Festive days were significant for religious life and celebrations occurred at Christmas, Easter, Beltane and Lammas as well as individual saint’s days. After the Reformation, Scottish Calvinists

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⁶ Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 80.
⁸ Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 173.
sought to lessen the stature of popular religious celebrations such as Easter, Whitsun and Christmas. As a result the sporting culture of Scotland’s ordinary people was affected. In Scotland, because of the success of the Protestant Reformation, much of the carnival period prior to Lent was limited by comparison to Catholic countries. Yet, Fastern’s E’en, the climax of the carnival period, remained an important day for sport throughout Scotland where wider social equality and acts of aggression were more acceptable than during day-to-day life.

Burnett argues that Fastern’s E’en’s stature in Scotland was greater than elsewhere in Britain because the Calvinists left it relatively untouched. During the years when the Convenanting Government and Presbyterian Church were in control, Fastern’s E’en along with other festive holidays were suppressed more vigorously. However, in 1661, at the onset of the Restoration period, the *Mercurious Caledonius* from Edinburgh reported that festivities had been revived. Even during the years of the Covenanters, Episcopalian Scots, such as Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, continued to support the carnival period and Catholic European popular culture. Urquhart did so by translating *Rabelais* into English, which made the text more widely accessible. It was by examining *Rabelais* that Bakhtin added to the academic understanding of the carnivalesque. Aspects of the festive calendar were dampened by the Reformation; however, the repeated attempts by the Kirk to diminish their importance demonstrates a persistence of pre-Reformation beliefs and practices. While this illustrates the limitations of Protestant cultural transformation during the period, festive days had changed, incorporating more secular rather than ‘popish’ customs.

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9 Burnett, *Riot, Revelry and Rout*, pp. 80, 181.
11 Burnett, *Riot, Revelry and Rout*, pp. 80, 84, 181.
Secular civic celebrations also served as a release for the populace. The quarter days of Candlemas, Whitsunday, Lammas and Martinmas denoted the time for rental payment and hiring of labour. Market fairs also frequently occurred then, as well as on saints’ days. They were vital social events mixed with business and entertainment. Merchants, revellers, friends and potential marriage matches met, socialised, held business and practised sport. Williamson argues that civic holidays and festive days associated with the monarchy can be regarded as ‘top-down’ celebrations, as the local elite and the crown legitimised the events through charters, royal honours and holding wappinshaws.15

At the civic events, the rational thoughts and actions of the burgh elite were drowned in the excessive consumption of alcohol during frequent toasts to each other and the monarchy. During the period of Cromwellian occupation, toasting the monarchy would have been problematic. Moreover, during periods of Jacobite influence in the north not all magistrates toasted the same monarch. Nevertheless, the escape of James VI from the Gowrie conspiracy, followed by his narrow miss from the Gunpowder plot in 1605, offered a justification for two ‘King’s Nights’ on 5 August and 5 November respectively. Bonfires were lit, toasts were made and revelry continued late into the night.16 In northern Scotland, celebrations as regards the Gunpowder Plot began in 1605 and the survival of the contemporary records demonstrate they lasted until at least 1662.17 Even in the most Catholic area, Aberdeenshire, the burgh council of Aberdeen held these events burning the effigy of the Catholic Guy Fawkes. This was a clear demonstration of the Protestant affinity of the burgh council and not a night for Catholics to be celebrating. Bonfire Night, as it is known today, remains a large public event in northern Scotland and is a modern manifestation of this 400 year-old custom. From the Restoration

16 Ibid.
period onwards royal celebrations intensified. The records after 1688 provide exact expenses incurred by burghs when hosting such events. Along with excessive consumption of alcohol the events included mass revelry, the raising of flags, fireworks, military parades and bonfires.\textsuperscript{18}

The civic events associated with the monarchy continued relatively unchanged from 1660 to 1800; however, after 1688, with the rise of Jacobitism they became a political imperative.\textsuperscript{19} Amid the threat of Jacobitism, municipal celebrations served as important demonstrations of loyalty to the government and crown. The public in northern Scotland were reminded of each ‘royal’ day in popular periodicals, such as \textit{The Aberdeen Almanack}.\textsuperscript{20} Burgh coffers were opened wide on such occasions. For example, Banff spent £7 17s. 4d. Scots on the celebration of King George’s coronation on 21 October 1714.\textsuperscript{21} Inverness, far wealthier than Banff, celebrated the royal days with enthusiasm and in 1732 the annual expense amounted to £1176 17s. Scots for alcohol and luxury foodstuffs.\textsuperscript{22} In 1737 the council had purchased five and a half dozen bottles of strong claret and one bottle of strong white wine at a cost of £60 6s. Scots for the King’s birthday celebrations.\textsuperscript{23} Similar expenses continued to accumulate in the following decades. The careful account of these expenses serve as evidence of the burghs’ loyalty, in the aftermath of the 1715 and 1745 rebellions.

After the last Jacobite rising, celebration for royal honours continued for the remainder of the Georgian era. On George II’s 68\textsuperscript{th} birthday Aberdeen held extensive celebrations beginning at noon by ringing the bells, hoisting colours and flags and toasting to the health of the monarchy. A military parade followed in which soldiers fired a three volley salute. In the evening, the soldiers ‘made a circle round the great Bonfire, and gave loud demonstrations of

\textsuperscript{19} Burnett, \textit{Riot, Revelry and Rout}, pp. 170-1.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{The Aberdeen Almanack for the Year MDCLXXIV} (Aberdeen, 1774).
\textsuperscript{21} Cramond (ed.), \textit{The Annals of Banff}, p. I, 186. The records does not specify if this amount is in Scots or Sterling. The entry above, 2 October ‘£6 18s. 8d Sc. Paid for treading, expendit when the news of his Majesties arrival at London came to town’, is an indication that the Coronation celebration costs were likely in Scots pounds as well. From hereafter all currency will be in sterling unless otherwise stated.
\textsuperscript{22} HARC, Burgh of Inverness, Bl/2/1/1 ‘Treasurer’s Accounts Inverness Burgh’, 1732-90.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}
their Loyalty, in drinking off about a dozen Barrels of strong Beer, given them by their Commander in Chief.’ A fireworks display then entertained the revellers. Celebrations of this magnitude were common in Aberdeen. In following years the Aberdeen Journal simply recorded the celebrations occurred ‘as usual’. By 1783, the celebrations became more exclusive and admission tickets were required to enter the assemblies in the council chambers and the Mason’s Hall, as the formalisation of sociability grew. Likewise, Inverness royal celebrations remained intoxicating affairs and significant funds were allocated to paying for drink for toasting. Using relatively new technology, the magistrates also demonstrated a forethought as they readied the fire engines with water drawn from the river to extinguish the bonfires in the burgh when celebrations ended.

Examining when popular and festive sport occurred helps to uncover what festive periods were like and provides new understanding about the everyday life of the burgh elite and the lower ranks. Interspersed within the calendar year, times for relaxation, sport and entertainment served as a release valve for society and would have been eagerly anticipated. After the Reformation, festivities continued albeit in a more secular form and elements of ‘superstition’ and idolatry were removed. These celebrations were from the ‘bottom-up’ and the elite temporarily relinquished power for the day to the lower orders. Civic holidays such as market fairs brought the region together as people travelled over great distances to do business and meet friends. Frequently, burghs organised the dates of their fairs to ensure that there were not conflicting with others nearby. This not only offered the opportunity to visit a greater number of markets within the region but also increase attendance. Royal celebrations were

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24 ABJ, 6 November 1750, p. 4.  
25 ABJ, 5 November 1751, p. 4.  
26 ABJ, 13 January 1783, p. 4.  
27 HARC, Burgh of Inverness BI/2/1/2, Treasurer Accounts 1787-1822.  
28 HARC, Burgh of Inverness BI/1/1/9 p.10, Town Council Minutes 1702-20.
opportunities to demonstrate loyalty and alongside civil holidays authorities legitimised sports and revelries for the enjoyment of the burghs.

**Space**

The physical location where popular sport occurred directly influenced its meaning and how it was perceived, as it did for students, seen in Chapter Three. Public spaces in northern Scottish burghs were seldom constructed with sport in mind. Markets and streets were created for commerce and transportation, not sport. However, on festive days these spaces were turned over to the lower ranks for sport and revelry, and their official purposes were suspended. In many cases in Britain work, trade and commerce were halted on festive days for ball games, dancing and feasting and drinking. Occasionally, shop owners barricaded doors and windows to protect their property from potential damage. As hundreds and possibly thousands of people gathered to spectate and participate in these events the distinction between spectators and participants was often blurred. The size of festive sporting matches, as Griffin indicates, was largely influenced by the concentration of populations; therefore, urban contests were generally larger and more disruptive than in the countryside. However, rural matches could still be large, especially when patronised by the elite. One such event was recorded by Elizabeth Grant at Christmas 1813 when over a hundred men played shinty all day at Rothiemurchus, her family’s home, before attending the feast set out in the barn.

The difference between urban and rural festive sport, Griffin argues, is drawn out of their physical context. The conscious inversion of power, as regards public space in the urban setting, added meaning to the activities. Participants recognised these days offered a temporary suspension of regular norms and they took liberty with their freedom over the streets, churchyards and market places. This power was reassumed by authorities when festivities

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29 Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations*, p. 36.
30 Griffin, *England’s Revelry* p. 35
concluded and business went on as usual, with the spaces reverting to their primary function. This power transfer between the burgh authorities and the people served to reinforce the structures of society. Yet, in the rural context, with wider open spaces and without the confines of narrow streets, festive sport did not hold the same subversive element. In northern Scotland, declarations against festive sport occurring in the urban landscape by authorities, who did not want to temporarily relinquish control, are few. By contrast, the massive Fastern’s E’en football games in large cities caused significant damage and were censured. The smaller provincial burghs in northern Scotland appear to have experienced less disruption on the streets. The likely reason for this was that authorities, such as the Elgin Kirk Session in the early seventeenth century, had pushed the revellers and Chew (a form of shinty) players out of the kirk yard and streets to the easily accessible links which were, as Chapter Three demonstrated, an open landscape near the burgh used for sport and physical education. Alternatively, burgh authorities may have simply let the festive sport go unimpeded.

The common lands and beaches were also popular sites for festive horseracing, in particular during Fastern’s E’en celebrations. For example, Kilmarnock held annual foot races, and horseraces continued until 1842. In the northern burghs Fastern’s E’en horseracing was slightly different. Sir Robert Gordon, in 1630, described a peculiar Fastern’s E’en sporting event on the north shore of the Dornoch Firth at Meikle Ferry, where in the spring and summer when the streams ran into the firth at low tide, six to seven hundred of:

the commoun sort of inhabitant doe convene on hors-bak... and so doe swim to[w]ards these sands; and when they doe aryve upon these beds of sand, incontinent they run their horses at full speed, stryveing who can first aryve at the fishing place, wher they doe indevoar, with all dilli-gence to tak these [sand eels].

33 Malcolmson, Popular Recreations, p. 37; Griffin, England’s Revelry, pp. 105-6.
35 McNeill, A Calendar of Scottish National Festivals, p. 41; Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, pp. 166-9.
36 Gordon, Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland, p. 5.
The race quickly became chaotic ‘as they doe run their horses, the rest doe tak no notice thereof to res-cue them, bot suffer them to ly ther among the horse feitt, and run on their intendit course’. Gordon’s language indicates this was a form of popular horseracing, not just a curious social event. Undoubtedly, this race would have gathered a large number of spectators to watch the six to seven hundred participants. The trophies, unlike the silver cups of the elite, were full bellies for the winner. However, the event was not just about stocking the larder. There was a clear connection to gathering fish for the period of Lent, as ‘they tak such abundance during some few days, that it sufficeth them for pro-visions of that kind of fish during lent, and most pairt of the yeir following’.

Unfortunately, histories of popular racing of this kind in the seventeenth century are obscured by the dearth of documentary evidence, as Burnett argues that such folk races were largely ‘incidental to the main purpose of the day on which they were held’. They were but one of multiple activities occurring on festive days and were not recorded. Nevertheless, glimpses such as this demonstrate the different levels of significance of such popular sports. While it was a break from the everyday, this race also held a deeper meaning and connection to pre-Reformed religious practices as well as the natural cycles of the seasons.

While festive sport took periodic control of the urban landscape, market fairs and quarter days offered respite for the people in a less subversive manner. After the Reformation these events, which had previously contained highly ritualised pageantry, became more secular. Nevertheless, they retained their religious, Catholic names and were held on saints’ days such as St. Charles Fair in Huntly, held in September, and St. John’s Fair in Banff, held in January. These secularised events maintained many familiar elements from pre-Reformation Scotland such as revelry, feasting, sport and drinking. During these civic events, public space obtained a

37 Gordon, Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland, p. 5.
38 Ibid.
dual purpose and was shared between revellers and retailers, as revelry and business occurred simultaneously.\(^40\) Donald Sage’s account of Dornoch’s Fair, likely St. Barr’s Fair, held in the un-walled kirk-yard, depicted a cheery atmosphere. The fairs attracted large numbers of men, women and children from across northern Scotland, travelling great distances utilising local ferry services on the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet. The two-and-a-half day fair commenced at noon and ‘every sort of saleable article was bought and sold, whether of home or foreign manufacture’.\(^41\) It was also exciting for single people. Sage noticed ‘a bevy of young lasses, in best bib and tucker, accompanied by their bachelors, who treated them with gingerbread, ribbons and whisky’\.\(^42\) Travelling these distances and using ferryboats in northern Scotland was not without risk. On 16 August 1809 ninety-nine people crossing the Dornoch Firth at Meikle Ferry drowned on their way to the Lammas Fair in Tain.\(^43\)

Horse and foot-racing at Whitsunday markets was common, and like ‘bottom up’ festivities the links or seaside were used as the racecourse. Their occurrence from the 1750s can be traced in Aberdeenshire in *The Aberdeen Journal*. Aberdeen’s magistrates advertised, in 1753, a horserace for a new saddle, with foot-races for men and women scheduled for the second day of the Whitsunday horse market. This was to attract greater attendance, a tactic Burnett notes was rarely used at horse markets in the Lowlands.\(^44\) Similarly, rural villages in the north-east such as Strichen, inland from Peterhead and Fraserburgh, hosted races to popularise their Rood Market, held mid-May. It was advertised on 11 May 1772:

> for the Encouragement of said Market, there is to be run for, on Wednesday the 20\(^{th}\), by Horses belonging to Tenants, which have been in their Custody for 4 Months preceding, and wrought by them, - A Riding-Saddle to the first Horse, a cart-Saddle to the second, and a Bridle to the third Horse; Five Horses belonging to different Owners to start, or no Race. – After which, there will be run for by men, a great Coat to the

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\(^{42}\) Ibid.  
\(^{43}\) Worthington, ‘Ferries in the Firthlands’ (forthcoming).  
\(^{44}\) *ABJ*, 24 April 1753, p. 4; Burnett, *Riot, Revelry and Rout*, p. 103.
first man, a Silk Handkerchief to the Second, and a Pair of White Stockings to the third man. Seven men to start, or no Race. The race was clearly organised for local tenants with more modest prizes than the elite races seen in Chapter Four. Nonetheless, the prizes awarded at Strichen were still of significant value for the participants. Stipulations at popular races frequently ensured the events remained for local tenants who had little formal racing experience. Regulations occasionally decreed that no horse could be entered which had been previously entered into a race for purse or plate. A more lenient rule was also used: that no horse could be entered which had won more than 20s.

Popular and festive sports derived their meaning, in part, from their physical environment. The conscious subversion of space by the lower ranks and youth when engaged in sport during festive days, such as Eastern’s E’en ball games, was essential to the meaning of sport. When the authorities resumed power within their communities and the markets and streets were turned back to commerce, the power structures of society were reinforced. However, not all popular sport was subversive as regards space. Civic authorities legitimatized celebrations and market fairs and provided a time and space to relax. Bonfires were lit, toasts were drunk and sport was practised with the encouragement of the elite. While Chapter Four discussed horseracing’s elite form, market-day races on the commons were equally important for the lower ranks because they gave them the opportunity and space to physically participate, rather than only spectate.

Physical Culture
A masculine physical culture was entrenched in popular sports and festive revels. While at school, physical education helped to acculturate pupils into a type of masculine culture that defined sport in terms of gentlemanly behavioural norms including discipline, decorum and politeness (see Chapter Three). The masculine physical culture present during popular and

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45 ABJ, 11 May 1772, p. 1.
46 ABJ, 15 November 1757, p. 4; ABJ, 16 May 1774, p. 4.
festive sport, especially at events from below, was identifiably different. It was infused with far more aggression and used violence, and lacked the same degree of discipline.\textsuperscript{47} Thus, there was not a hegemonic masculine physical culture in northern Scotland but a variety based on age but more particularly on class. Popular sport was used to introduce a different masculine physical culture from the elite; provided social levelling through aggression; and was used, and legitimised, by authorities to ensure men were war-ready.

Examining how the public behaved during festive revelries and sport demonstrates how they were a safety-value for pent-up aggression among the ordinary people. The people’s response to the suspension of pre-Reformation traditions by ardent reformers serves to help accentuate this point. In post-Reformation Scotland, the observance of Christmas became problematic especially when some reformers wanted all celebrations stopped. The sports practised during this period were all very physical and offered entertainment prior to, and following, feasts and drinking. In 1609 and 1612 Aberdeen headmasters cancelled Christmas holidays. In response to the cancellation of their holiday, students vented their aggression in two exceptionally violent episodes where they threatened the schoolmasters and teachers with dirks, pistols and swords. As a result twenty gentlemen’s sons were expelled.\textsuperscript{48} Elsewhere, the authorities seem to have only met with disobedience, as a form of resistance, rather than violence when curbing festive sport. For example, in 1618 the Kirk Session of Elgin ‘ordenit that the superstitious observation of auld rits and ceremonies expressly forbidden during the tyme callit Yooll’. These ‘auld rits’ included carolling, guising, dancing, snowball-throwing, football, and hurling at stools (an early form of cricket).\textsuperscript{49} Between 1645 and 1677 Elgin had a particularly zealous Presbyterian minister, Murdoch M’Kenzie, who despised ‘holy days’. In

\textsuperscript{47} Ruff, Violence in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800. Ruff provides a European context for changes of violent patterns of behaviour in Europe over three centuries and engages with Elias’s ‘Civilising Process’.

\textsuperscript{48} Todd, Culture of Protestantism, pp. 186-8.

\textsuperscript{49} John Stuart (ed.), Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery and Synod of Aberdeen (Aberdeen, 1846), pp. 47-9, 77; Cramond (ed.), Records of Elgin, p. II, 158; Griffin, England’s Revelry, p. 48. Griffin notes that hurling at stools was a variation on cricket played in England by the lower orders.
1659 ‘he searched many houses of the town that the inmates might not enjoy eating a Christmas goose’. More pragmatic reformers ‘left the Christmas Goose on the Spit’ believing less resistance to doctrinal conversion would occur if festive celebrations continued, and in many places Christmas Day football and shinty matches (see Chapter Six) continued into the nineteenth century. However, with the added pressures against Christmas, Hogmanay, the secular end of the Yule period, became the outlet for the festive revelry and increasingly became the more accepted time for the aggressive sport of the season.

In addition to this list of activities typical of northern yuletide celebrations, cross-dressing was a particularly troubling act for the authorities who believed it immoral and socially subversive. Cross-dressing in northern Scotland was, by and large, an extension of a wider European ritual of protest among the lower ranks. In seventeenth-century Aberdeen the Kirk took exception to this act and also found guising and masquerading problematic because people could conceal their true identity and carry out mischievous and subversive acts with less risk of detection. This gender inversion, which also occurred at the beginning of August, persisted in the Highlands for centuries. However, in the nineteenth century it lost its association with revelry and became a feature of riots and unrest during Clearances. Cases of cross-dressing and unrest occurred in Easter Ross at Culrain (1820) and at Gruids in Sutherland (1821). Moreover, women led attacks against eviction parties and humiliated constables at Durness and Ullapool in 1841 and 1852-3 respectively, while men waited to see what would transpire, or donned female clothing and joined in on the attacks.

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50 Cramond (ed.) The Kirk Session of Elgin, p. 348.
51 Todd, ‘Profane Pastimes,’ p. 152.
52 Adair, ‘Calendar Customs’, p. 126.
54 Eric Richards, Debating the Highland Clearances (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 70-2. In this case, it was fairly common for men to cross-dress and participate with the women and boys in acts of defiance and abuse targeting incoming eviction parties and the authorities. It was believed, by both sides, that constables were less likely to injure or incarcerate women than men, and, clearly, some men were taking advantage of this supposition and disguised their true sex.
Eastern’s E’en and Candlemas cock-fighting were a popular expression of the gendered physical cultures of northern Scotland and was part of a British cultural phenomenon.\textsuperscript{55} Cockfighting at grammar schools during the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries occurred often on these days in Banff, Inverness, Fortrose, Cromarty and Dornoch.\textsuperscript{56} By comparison, the sport outside of these dates was not as popular or as organised as it was in early seventeenth-century England, and no Scottish equivalent to George Wilson’s \textit{The Commendation of Cockes and Cock-Fighting} (1607) was produced.\textsuperscript{57} Sage, in later-life, recalled a highly ritualised and organised Candlemas cockfight that took place when he attended the Dornoch Grammar School in the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{58} Each pupil obtained a cock, sometimes having to barter with their parents and neighbours. Then, the ‘good Sheriff MacCulloch’ relinquished his court room which was converted into a ‘battle field’ and the schoolmaster and his friends acted as judges for the day. The schoolmaster was paid in ‘fugies’, birds that would not fight, for his services. The pupil whose bird was victorious was named king and second place named queen. After the ‘battles’ were over, they were crowned with laurels made by local women and a procession followed throughout the burgh:

The town drummer and fifer marched before us and gave note of our advance, in strains which were intended to be both military and melodious. After the procession was ended the proceedings were closed by a ball and supper in the evening. This was duly attended by the master and all the “Montagues and Capulets” of Dornoch.\textsuperscript{59} Aside from the Shakespearean factionalism apparently present in Dornoch, the cockfight was an impressive and gruesome affair.

Clifford Geertz’s ‘thick description’, the detailed social and cultural analysis of a single account, is helpful in analysing this ritualised and highly organised event, which was infused

\textsuperscript{55} Griffin, \textit{England’s Revelry}, pp. 34-5.
\textsuperscript{57} George Wilson, \textit{The Commendation of Cockes and Cock-Fighting} (London, 1607).
\textsuperscript{58} Sage, \textit{Memorabilia Domestica}, p. 159.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 159-160.
with symbolic meaning.\textsuperscript{60} The space used for this event was essential to its meaning. While the schoolmaster took the place of judge in the courtroom, it was also the space used that legitimised this pursuit and gave it local importance. The students crowned king and queen obtained prestige and inverted the power structures for the day, as children rather than adults were revered. The gender hierarchy of the patriarchal society was present at these events and first place was given to the king. Further analysis illuminates the differentiation of gender roles of the participants. Young men fought, through the actions of their ‘feathered representatives’, while women ‘applied their elegant imaginations to devise, and their fair fingers to construct, crowns for the royal pair’.\textsuperscript{61} This corresponded to conception of male physical masculinity and female elegance, imagination and creativity. The cockfight could be interpreted as a schoolboy amusement but its symbolic nature illustrates its greater importance. It was a release from the everyday, which large numbers of Dornoch’s people enjoyed, and was embroiled in pageantry. The burgh and the surrounding area was involved by: providing the cocks, temporarily surrendering their seat of law and justice, fashioning crowns, observing the processions and participating in the evening dinner and ball. Thus, the cockfight was more than a blood-infused amusement, but an event that temporarily inverted power structures, while reinforcing gender roles, was an opportunity for social cohesion and an introduction into a masculine physical culture for school pupils. It is clear an event of this sophistication required a substantial amount of organisation.

While Sage provided evidence of the opportunities of social cohesion facilitated by cockfighting, Hugh Miller’s account of his schoolboy experience in Cromarty 1812 suggests not everyone was as enthusiastic or participated as implied by Sage. Miller and his uncles, who were influential to his upbringing, after his father was lost at sea, detested the sport and their

arguments were decisive for their nephew. Miller paid the entrance fee to the schoolmaster, as was expected of schoolboys, but he did not participate or enjoy the fights. He craved exclusion rather than inclusion in these events. He believed the sport was a relic of a ‘barbaric’ and ‘intolerant’ age. The changing attitudes against animal cruelty in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, seen in Chapter Two, and importantly for Miller, who became an evangelical journalist, the Christian and Presbyterian values of kindness and gentleness evidently influenced at least two generations of Miller’s family. Moreover, the indictment of the sport as ‘barbaric and from an ‘intolerant’ age was also used by the Millers’ to express their own enlightenment which they had obtained through their passion for reading.

Regional variations, as regards festive ball (as well as ball and stick) games, illuminates the richness of the sporting cultures throughout Scotland and opportunities for temporary social levelling through aggressive play. Eastern’s E’en cockfights were frequently followed by violent ball games facilitating temporary social levelling as apprentices, labourers and artisans, young and old, regularly practised the sports. The teams were drawn in multiple ways. In many cases single men clashed against married men. Alternatively one parish was split in two along a natural border and the respective sides were pitted against one another. Parish-versus-parish shinty matches also occurred across the region. In some cases long distance matches were played where the goals were miles apart and the players met in the centre. Near Dingwall, one eighteenth-century match was played over a ten mile wide area. The play was so furious only one man remained uninjured and he was left to peacefully strike the ball as far as he could until he reached the neighbouring parish to claim victory. By the later eighteenth century, the improved transportation infrastructure in the north facilitated more of these type of matches.

62 Miller, My Schools and Schoolmasters, p. 49.
63 Ibid., p. 28.
64 Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, pp. 80, 84, 181.
However, it was not until the nineteenth century, with the assistance of railway networks and the creation of the Camanachd Association, that a sophisticated shinty league developed. In the Border towns men spent the Eastern’s E’en playing handball. Throughout much of the central belt, much like England cockfighting was followed by football matches. The celebrations in East Lothian offer insights into women’s rare physical involvement in these sporting days. At Inveresk, near Musselburgh, Eastern’s E’en was celebrated by married women playing against single women in a football match. However, this was not an expression of annual gender inversion, as the local fisherwives were known for their strength and their affinity for sport year round, especially playing golf.

In northern Scotland, local variations of the sports played were indicative of the cultural hybridity of the region. This also distinguished ordinary people’s sport from that of the elite sport which was far more generic. Around Aberdeen, football matches were common but outside the city, cockfighting and ball and stick games were popular. Adding more complexity to these variations, three different ball and sticks games resembling modern shinty were played in different locations around the Moray Firth. For example, in Peterhead, Keith, Kinneddar and Elgin ‘chew’ was played with a stick and a cork float. Likewise, knotty was played in Caithness throughout the year with a stick and cork float. Shinty, played with a hair or wooden ball, was also popular around the Moray Firth. Hutchinson further demonstrates that Dornoch’s version of the game resembled west-coast traditions where the ball was partially buried in the sand or moss at the beginning of play and the team captains fought to dig it up and gain control.

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67 Charles Rogers, Scotland, Social and Domestic: Memorial of Life and Manners in North Britain (London, 1869), p.151; Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 84; Sinclair (ed.), OSA, p. XVI, 19.
68 Sinclair (ed.), OSA, p. XVI, 19.
69 McNeill, A Calendar of Scottish National Festivals, pp. 39-41; MacLennan, Not an Orchid, p. 355; Cramond (ed.), The Kirk Session of Elgin 1567-1779, pp. 56, 66, 77-8, 90-1, 152. The spelling of chew was not standardised and it appears as chow, Cheaw and cuttie soo.
70 Morris Pottinger (ed.), Cannesbey Session Records. Mar 1652/Feb. 1666 (Reay, Caithness, 1993), p. 99. The parents to two boys were reprimanded for the children playing knotty on 19 February. Similar charges were laid against Elgin parents in February and March, coinciding with the period around Eastern’s E’en.
This was opposed to the ball being elevated on a ‘coggie’, the Lowland word for a golf tee, at the beginning of play. The latter was characteristic of Lowland styles of play.\textsuperscript{71} 

There was also identifiable cultural hybridity in certain parishes in relation to sport. For example, Miller wrote that his relation, Donald Roy, was a renowned shinty player in the ‘semi-Celtic parish of Nigg’ in the late eighteenth century. Miller further noted the games frequently occurred on the Sabbath, ‘as King James’s “Book of Sport” was not deemed a very bad one.’\textsuperscript{72} As is shown in Chapter Six, James VI’s \textit{Book of Sport} had advocated Sunday sports after church service had concluded.\textsuperscript{73} International elements were also added to these regional variations and cultural hybridity. For example, evidence from Elgin suggests international connections with ball and stick games. The first reference of chew being played in Elgin was by the sons of Edward ‘Dutchman’ Auldcorne, suggesting his interaction with the Low-Countries. It is also possible he brought this style of game with him, as the name ‘chew’ was perhaps derived from the French sixteenth and seventeenth-century ball and stick game known as ‘La soule’.\textsuperscript{74} The variations seen above and the interplay between Gaelic, Lowland and international cultures demonstrate a visible cultural hybridity within the region, and more specifically in certain parishes.

The physical environment and local economies were determining factors as regards the style and equipment of the above variations on shinty. This again demonstrates the localised nature of popular sport in the region that differed from elite sport which followed national and international trends. For example, locations where chew and knotty were played had stronger maritime economies and an abundance of cork floats were available, making them a sensible choice for a ball. By contrast, shinty was played in more upland regions and areas without a

\textsuperscript{71} Hutchinson, \textit{Camanachd!}, p. 34.  
\textsuperscript{72} Miller, \textit{My Schools and Schoolmasters}, p. 31.  
\textsuperscript{73} James VI and I, \textit{The Kings Declaration}, p. 7.  
strong maritime economy, such as Dornoch which was situated by the sea but had no harbour, using a wooden or hair-filled ball. Moreover, environmental characteristics of the region influenced where the sports were played. Along the North-Sea coast the temperature stayed relatively consistent and the winters, when shinty style games were regularly played, were not as severe as at higher altitudes. This made playing the sport on the streets or links feasible. In upland areas away from the coast the flat surfaces of frozen lochs were used instead of the snow-covered undulating terrain adjacent. However, this was dependent on long periods of sub-zero temperature and the unreliability of the weather, even in mid-winter, made using these frozen spaces problematic. How sports developed was clearly influenced by their local economies as well as their physical environment.

Violent festive sports in burghs, as noted above, offered the opportunity for social levelling, especially of age, as youth and adults played together and power structures, other than the selection of a team captain, were abandoned temporarily. This masculine physical culture was far different from that taught at schools. At school and university there were rules against, and punishments for, students using violence during sport; conversely, festive sports permitted violence. For example, chew was played with aggressive enthusiasm in Elgin. On a few occasions the Kirk Session of Elgin intervened for the spiritual and physical safety of the community.

On 12 March 1602 they decreed masters to control their apprentices and servants and ‘play nocht thairat upoun any day to rais tumultis [fights]’, after a match where the teams led by ‘Capitane Duchemané’ against ‘Capitane Patrie’ clashed violently. Similarly, shinty was played violently and players experienced social levelling as ‘gray-headed grandfather to

75 Aeneas MackIntosh, *Notes Descriptive and Historical principally relating to the Parish of Moy in Strathdearn and the neighbourhood of Inverness* (1892), p. 32.
76 Todd, ‘Profane Pastimes and the Reformed Community’, pp. 126, 152-6; Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, pp. 185-6;
77 Cramond (ed.), *The Records of the Kirk Session of Elgin*, p. 91.
the lightest-heeled Stripling’ amassed on the links with their clubs on Old New Year’s Day in Dornoch. Sage recounts:

The method we observed was this- two points were marked out, the one the starting-point, and the other the goal, or “haile.” Then two leaders were chosen by a sort of ballot, which consisted in casting a club up into the air, between the two rank into which the players were divided. The leaders thus chosen stood out from the rest, and, from the number present, alternately called a boy to his standard. \(^{78}\) The game was dangerous for young and old alike. Sage observed, ‘accompanied by shouts, with which their forefathers had wielded the claymore […] with their blood up, their tempers heated, and clubs in their hands, the game then assumed all the features of a personal quarrel’.\(^{79}\) These quarrels unfortunately were the cause of some grievous injuries and death. After Sage’s account of the ferociousness of play he noted that the father of one of his schoolmates had died from a shinty accident when he received fatal trauma to his skull from the impact of the ball. \(^{80}\) Other head injuries were common as well. John MacDonald, the future minister of Helmsdale, at the age of eighteen lost sight in his right eye after suffering a blow to the head while playing in the New Year’s Day shinty match. His biographer wrote that he believed the injury he obtained in 1818 was God’s punishment for disobeying his parents’ wishes and joining the game.\(^{81}\) While fatalities were rare, injuries to extremities were more common. Sir Aeneas Mackintosh of MackIntosh writing between 1774 and 1783 recorded that when the winter game was played on ice ‘they come to blows if intoxicated. The players’ legs being frequently broken, may give it the name of shiney’.\(^{82}\) Hutchison notes MackIntosh’s etymology for ‘shiney’ was incorrect but it is very possible MackIntosh was saying this tongue-in-cheek. He more reliably demonstrates the risk involved when playing the sport; moreover, that alcohol flowed freely during, not just after matches were finished.\(^{83}\) The prospect of danger among the participants

\(^{78}\) Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica*, p. 158.
\(^{79}\) Ibid.
\(^{80}\) Ibid.
\(^{81}\) George Macdonald, *Men of Sutherland: Sketches of Some of Them* (Dornoch, 2014), pp. 23-4
\(^{82}\) MackIntosh, *Notes Descriptive and Historical*, p. 32.
\(^{83}\) Hutchison, *Camanachd!*, p. 44.
and especially the pervasiveness of intoxication led some eighteenth and nineteenth-century ministers to criticize the sport.\textsuperscript{84} Nevertheless, these events were clearly a pressure release for society. They were opportunities to, in an acceptable and legal way, express virile and violent masculinity. Evinced by Sage’s account, this sport was only once removed from hand-to-hand combat and it is clear why authorities, other than the Kirk, encouraged or did not impede such masculine pursuits, especially if they wanted battle-ready men, particularly raising regiments to fight in the Seven Years War and Napoleonic Wars.

Northern Scottish authorities, similar to their southern counterparts, supported martial sports and legitimated the use of aggression in their communities when they held wappinshaws. Wappinshaws often occurred on festive days but with more frequency when the threat of war was imminent. The sports practised included archery, fencing, jumping, riding, running, throwing the bar, shooting guns, swimming and wrestling. Inverness, in the 1570s, was used as a meeting place for the clans of Frasers Mackenzie, Mackintosh, Munro and Ross.\textsuperscript{85} These events would have brought the clans together in the burgh and no doubt a few toasts were drunk to good health but they also encouraged rivalries amongst each man and each clan as the men wanted to establish, and assert their martial masculinity.\textsuperscript{86} Likewise, these sports were practised by men around Dornoch as Sir Robert Gordon encouraged the 14\textsuperscript{th} Earl of Sutherland to promote these sports in the 1620s.\textsuperscript{87} In 1625 the Aberdeen authorities designated specific grounds for wappinshaws on the Queen’s Links.\textsuperscript{88} In Aberdeen the wappinshaws were rigidly organised and the burgh expected all men able to fight to participate. In August 1638 when war was imminent the burgh levied £40 Scots fines against those who were capable but did not attend.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{84} Hutchison, \textit{Camanachd!}, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{85} Mackay (ed.), \textit{Chronicles of the Frasers}, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{87} Gordon to Sutherland, ‘his Fearweell’ in Fraser (ed.), \textit{The Sutherland Book}, p. II, 359.
\textsuperscript{88} Stuart (ed.), \textit{Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen 1625-1642}, pp. 2, 12.
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Ibid}., p. 132.
These gatherings occasionally inspired competitions. For example, in 1635 Simon Fraser, Master of Lovat, had archery butts set up in every parish in his father’s lands and ‘keep a weekly muster of his men, training them to arching, hagbuting, jumping, wrestling, putting the stone, throwing the barr, and all the manner of manly exercise’ which ‘caused the young gentlemen to draw on bonspales and wagers’.\textsuperscript{90} Individual rivalries would have also occurred during clan wappinshaws. MackIntosh of MackIntosh wrote ‘before the 1745, the young men practised firing at a Target with a Bullet, for a present made by the Chief.’\textsuperscript{91} The amounts wagered were not specified nor were descriptions of the trophies provided. This distinguishes the northern events from the popular Dumfries Siller Gun, the Kilwinning Papingo and the open competitions hosted by the Royal Company of Archers, in Edinburgh which all had well known trophies and prizes.\textsuperscript{92} Unfortunately, there are no records of competition of this sort for the lower ranks outside of Aberdeen until the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{93}

Wappinshaws frequently coincided with riding the marches or royal birthdays and coronations. As Chapter Four has illustrated, these days were also commonly used for horseracing, especially during the seventeenth century. The picture emerging is of busy festive and sporting days where all ranks of society participated simultaneously; however, not always in the same capacity. These events were essential in the social calendar of northern Scotland, not only for the burgh dwellers but also those who came into town from the nearby villages, fermtouns and fishertouns in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{94} By the end of the period, the wappinshaws were transforming into more professional affairs. The regiments raised in the north as well as those from elsewhere stationed in burghs and forts were frequently paraded and fired volleys during royal celebrations, as recorded by the \textit{Aberdeen Journal}.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{90} Stuart (ed.), \textit{Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen 1625-1642}, 255, 257.
\textsuperscript{91} MackIntosh, \textit{Notes Descriptive and Historical}, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{93} See Chapter Three.
\textsuperscript{94} Burnett, \textit{Riot, Revelry and Rout}, p. 170
\textsuperscript{95} \textit{ABJ}, 6 November 1750, p. 4.
Festive sport acculturated youth into a masculine physical culture and offered an opportunity for social cohesion but unlike the school experience festive sport encouraged aggression and the subversion of social structures, although, it is clear not everyone wanted to participate. The regional variation of festive ball games played on Christmas, New Year’s Day and Eastern’s E’en was indicative of the cultural hybridity of the region. These violent games were an opportunity for social levelling and a release of aggression. The local authorities legitimised violent martial sports to ensure men were war-ready, and wappinshaws created a much broader atmosphere of sport and revelry on civic days. Wappinshaws encouraged men, young and old, to participate in a form of martial masculinity, were associated with competitive sport and were used to keep the adult male population physically ready for the king’s service.

**Jacobitism, Rationalism and Popular Sport?**

The mid-to-late-eighteenth century ushered in a sea of change in Scotland but how did this affect popular sport in northern Scotland? Answering this question requires the assessment of the aftermath of Culloden and the influence of the Enlightenment philosophy of ‘rationalism’. Highland-Gaelic culture was attacked in the aftermath of the Jacobite defeat at the Battle of Culloden on 16 April 1746. This date has become an important demarcation point in Highland history. Macinnes argues that the ‘indiscriminate repression by the victorious Whig forces in the aftermath of Culloden ushered in a fifth and final convulsion in which the accelerated pace of change can constructively be depicted as effecting a dramatic social revolution.’ Indeed, the Acts of Proscription 1747 disarmed Highlanders, whether they were from loyal clans or not, and banned the wearing of their customary clothing. The proscriptions went further to suppress social gatherings of more than five men at a time if they did not want to be subject to the inspection of crown officials. This, in combination with ‘genocidal intent

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96 Macinnies, *Clanship, Commerce*, p. 210. Other ‘convulsions’ included: first, the legislative and military offensive on the Western Isles after the Union of the Crowns; second, the War of the Three Kingdoms causing significant social dislocation and mounting debts of the elite; third, the Restoration’s reorganisation of the Highland economy and the instigation of the removal of tacksmen; forth, the resurgence of absentee landlordism and the estates accumulating crippling debt through conspicuous consumption.
that verged on ethnic cleansing’, had a dramatic effect on the social and cultural life of the Gaelic Highlands.\textsuperscript{97}

Despite the repressive treatment of Gaelic people and the Acts of Proscription, the identifiably Highland, and northern, sport of shinty only experienced a brief hiatus.\textsuperscript{98} This fact is at first puzzling. The Whigs knew that sport had been used to thinly veil Jacobitism before, as in the case of horseracing and hunting, seen in Chapter Four. These sports, however, were not distinct to the Jacobites, were vastly popular, and, therefore, harder to control. How then did a sport as identifiable with northern Scotland and the Highlands as shinty survive and escape irreparable damage in the aftermath of Culloden, especially since it required large numbers of men to play, was exceptionally violent and had martial connotations? A possible answer to this was that shinty, in its various forms was not just a Gaelic sport. It was played by Gaels and Scots speakers and Whigs and Tories alike in northern Scotland. Even in areas which had men ‘out’ in the 1745 rising shinty went relatively unmolested. For example, the minister of Laggan in Badenoch in 1747 allegedly played the sport before and after sermon with his male parishioners, making sure that, when they were tired from playing in the morning, they would hear the reformed Word. When they became restless they resumed play until dark.\textsuperscript{99} What was important for the minister was that the parishioners heard the tenants of the Word in some form rather than dismantle their culture.

The people of the parish of Moy keenly felt the aftermath of Culloden. Only 300 of the 700 men raised by Lady MackIntosh for Charles Edward Stuart returned from the battle, which was heard raging three miles away.\textsuperscript{100} MackIntosh of MackIntosh, two decades after the rising wrote:

\begin{quote}
I shall only observe that before the disarming Act took place, every Highlander went armed, and of course shot well, and killed numbers of Game, which in former times was
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{97} Macinnies, \textit{Clanship, Commerce}, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{98} Hutchinson, \textit{Camanachd!}, pp. 39-40.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., p. 42.
\textsuperscript{100} MackIntosh, \textit{Notes Descriptive and Historical}, p. 28.
their principal support. Since deprived of their Dress, much of the spirit has left the Commons, and you now see them lounging in a great coat, and afraid to wet their feet.\textsuperscript{101} While notably deflated in spirit and robbed of over half of their fighting men in the years after the battle, this did not stop the men of Moy from playing shinty or newly-weds supplying money to the school for footballs. The former, MackIntosh records, was regularly played on ice and the winner of the winter game ‘is rewarded by a share of a cask of whisky on which both partyys get drunk.’\textsuperscript{102}

Shinty in the north and particularly in the Highlands was one of the most popular sports identified by Thomas Pennant in the first three editions of his \textit{A Tour Through Scotland} (1769), alongside throwing the putting-stone, penny-stones and heavy lifting.\textsuperscript{103} In the third edition (1773) Rev. Shaw from Elgin, confirmed the sport, or a variation of it, ‘club-ball’, was also popular in Moray, as well as hunting, shooting and football.\textsuperscript{104} Miller and Sage, also point to the popularity of the game after Culloden. Despite the changes to life in northern Scotland after the battle, particularly in the Highland straths and glens, popular sports, even shinty, persisted relatively unchanged and remained quintessential to cultural expression.

The popular martial sports, however, would have immediately changed in the aftermath of Culloden. Even in the year prior to the Act of Proscription, a Highlander caught with weapons met serious repercussions, even if he had not risen against the Hanoverians.\textsuperscript{105} This would have affected an abrupt transformation to the sporting practices in the Highlands. As MackIntosh noted the Highlander took pride in his shooting skill.\textsuperscript{106} This would not change for many year, not until the Highlanders, once ‘civilised’ by the government in the decade after Culloden, were encouraged to pick up their broadswords and muskets again and fight for the British Empire in

\textsuperscript{101} MackIntosh, \textit{Notes Descriptive and Historical}, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{103} Thomas Pennant, \textit{A Tour in Scotland. MDCCLXIX}, 2nd ed. (London, 1772), p. 178;
\textsuperscript{104} Hutchison, \textit{Camanachd!}, pp. 39-40. It is possible ‘club-ball’ as a name had replaced the name chew over the years. Nevertheless, it is clear that a variation of shinty remained popular in Moray at the late-eighteenth century.
\textsuperscript{105} Macinnes, \textit{Clanship, Commerce}, p. 212.
\textsuperscript{106} MackIntosh, \textit{Notes Descriptive and Historical}, p. 32.
the Seven Years War and Napoleonic Wars. Their involvement in this regard, which many excelled at, was essential to the Highlanders’ rehabilitation into, and success in, British society.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the Reformation of Manners in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries influenced what was deemed acceptable behaviour and ‘vulgar’ popular festivities were publicly scrutinised. Nevertheless, festivities continued in northern Scotland relatively unhindered. During the Enlightenment the ‘improvement’ agenda began to be implemented throughout the country which accelerated the much longer process of change towards commercial landlordism. Improvement schemes were first experienced in the southern littoral of the Moray Firth. Indeed, some of the most notorious improvers in Sutherland came from Moray, including Patrick Sellar. The Highland Clearances have been firmly associated with the improvement agendas; however, evictions were only part of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’ schemes.

Eighteenth-century rationalist arguments were used by ministers to attack popular culture’s pre-Reformation origins and ‘superstitious’ qualities. They did this to demonstrate how the masses’ culture was irrational and served as the foil to what was rational, enlightened and polite. This rationalised perspective was evinced in the OSA submissions for the rural parishes of Monquhitter in Aberdeenshire and Drainy near Elgin, by the ministers Alexander Johnson and Lewis Gordon. They insisted their parishes were divested of ‘druidism’ along with popular culture. This ‘irrational’ popular culture included bonfires, penny-weddings and athletic contests such as football, wrestling, throwing the hammer, putting the stone and penny-

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107 Carr, Gender and Enlightenment, p. 145; Carr, ‘The Gentleman and Soldier: Patriotic Masculinities’; Clyde, From Rebel to Hero.
108 Also see Chapter Six.
110 Macinnes, Clanship, Commerce, pp. 210-1.
stones. They believed these activities were characteristic of an ignorant and idle age where irrational festivities emptied the pockets of the people ‘as the means of throwing off that languor which oppresses the mind’. 112 The only remaining participants in this popular culture were the youth. Monquhitter, through Johnson’s eyes, was rationalised through Enlightenment and improvement leaving the population hard working and only entertained by card-playing, dancing and ‘enlivened by a moderate glass.’ 113 From both accounts, the character of the people seems to have changed, or at least the character, as the ministers wished to see it, had transformed. No longer were market places buzzing with contests and revelry but places for business and commerce. 114

Burnett uses these two accounts as evidence that sport in northern Scotland was all but extinguished by rationalism; however, he neglected accounts from nearby parishes which offer contrary information. 115 For example, Rev James Lawtie of the Church of Scotland in Fordyce recorded that while the Reformation had displaced the Catholic faith in Fordyce many ‘superstitions’ continued such as the use of wells, spells, and charms. More worrying for Lawtie was the disregard of ‘decent religious observation of Sunday’, as the east played the west side of the parish in weekly football matches after divine service. 116 Moreover, to the east of Fordyce in Duffus festive football, dancing and merry making continued on St. John’s, St. Stephen’s and Christmas Day. ‘That horror at the name of holidays, which was once a characteristic of the Puritans, and the true blue Presbyterians, never took possession of our common people here’. The minister justified the continuation of these holidays as ‘they [the people of the parish] still celebrate (perhaps without ever thinking of the origin of the practice)’. 117 Most illustrative of the continuation and local importance of popular and festive sport in the region comes from

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112 Sinclair (ed.), OSA, p. XXI, 145.
113 Ibid., pp. IV, 85-6, XXI, 145-6.
114 Ibid., p. XXI, 146.
115 Burnett, Riot Revelry and Rout, pp. 218-21.
117 Ibid., p. VIII, 399.
Cullen, as recorded in the *New Statistical Account 1834-1845*. The minister, reminiscing about more prosperous and light-hearted times wrote:

> The younger part of the community resorted to the sands and links of the bay of Cullen, for the purpose of playing foot-ball, running foot races, throwing the hammer, playing bowls, &c. They left the town in procession, preceded by a piper and other music, and were attended by numbers from the adjacent districts. The games were keenly contested [on the links] and the victor was crowned by a bonnet adorned with feathers and ribbons; previously prepared by the ladies. When the games were over, the whole parties had a dance on the green, with that meriment and glee, to which the etiquette and formation of the ball-room at the present day are total strangers. Thereafter, the procession was again formed, and returned to the town, the victor preceded by the music, leading the way. A ball took place in the evening, at which he presided, and, moreover, had the privilege of wearing his bonnet and feathers.

This excerpt highlights the local festive culture around Cullen demonstrating celebrations were an opportunity for the youth to interact. Again, pageantry was interwoven with the schedule of events, with the day’s sport champion claiming prestige, honour and a feathered bonnet. The celebrations also reinforced gender roles as young men played the sports while women were spectators, crown-makers and dancers. The minister’s positive portrayal of the events was also nostalgic of former times and criticised the contemporary social practices demonstrating that not all ministers were hostile to folk culture.

If Burnett had examined more accounts from the region he would have likely come to different conclusions. That being said, the frustratingly inconsistent nature of the *OSA*, as regards materials concerning sport supplied by parish ministers, obscures the nature of sport at the end of the century. Variations within the region, from parish to parish, indicate distinct local popular cultures. However, this variability was reflective of each ministers’ attitudes towards popular culture and sport, the length of time they had spent in the parish, how well they knew the people and how they wanted their parish to be perceived. Consequently, similarities and differences between locations are muted by the irregularity of sporting anecdotes in the *OSA*.

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The Influence of rationalism and cultural change on popular and festive sport in the mid-
to late-eighteenth century were also illustrated in local periodicals. Chapter Four demonstrated
that elite sport societies were also interested in entertaining the lower ranks. They became the
patrons of revelries, celebrations and sport for the lower ranks, as the burghs had been
previously. For example, the Honourable Company of Water Drinkers at Peterhead organised
horseracing, footraces and boat racing for men and women in the 1760s, with gender
appropriate prizes. For example, the horserace winner and runner up were awarded, £3 10s. and
a saddle and bridle respectively. For the men’s footrace, first place won cloth for a new coat,
bonnet and shoes. For the women, a piece of cloth for a gown and a silk-napkin were given to
the victor. The *Aberdeen Journal* recorded:

> The Betts run very high among the Footmen, and some of the poor sort of Farmer from
> a neighbouring Parish; but the Nobility and Gentry, not ambitious of Newmarket Glory,
> enjoyed the Pleasure and Sport of the Turff, unmixed with the polite Anxiety of ruining
> one another.\(^{121}\)

Gambling was an important element of the sports days and the cultural reference to ‘Newmarket
Glory’ would have been immediately understood by the readership of *The Aberdeen Journal*.
Oddly, it was the labouring and ‘poor sort’ who placed, relative to their personal circumstance,
large wagers on these races rather than the elite. This contrasted greatly with the characteristic
‘Newmarket Glory’ that epitomised elite conspicuous consumption.\(^{122}\) This differentiation in
class participation in gambling alludes to the associated lack of acceptance of rationalism in the
lower classes against the elite, at least according to what was recorded by *The Aberdeen
Journal*. The paper would have hardly wanted to report that the elite, role models for society,
were irrationally squandering their money, or, more correctly, the rents they had received from
the hard-working people on their lands.

\(^{120}\) *ABJ*, 15 September 1766, p. 4; *ABJ*, 3 September 1768, p. 4.
\(^{121}\) Ibid.
\(^{122}\) Huggins, ‘Racing Culture’; Wray Vamplew, *The Turf: a Social and Economic History of Horse-racing*
The aftermath of Culloden and the rise of rationalism undoubtedly altered the social and cultural practices of ordinary northern Scots. The suppression of the Gaelic Highlands deprived some northern Scots of their cultural expression and rationalism was, according to some, stripping away the ‘frivolities’ of ‘pointless’ pastimes. However, sources such as the OSA present methodological issues when assessing the acceptance of rationalism in Scotland. They recorded the minister’s perspective and as will be seen in Chapter Six, ministers’ approaches to reform and change were hardly uniform. Despite attacks on the culture of the lower ranks, their sporting practices remained relatively unchanged as they continued to celebrate festive days well into the nineteenth century with sport and revelry which was not dramatically different than it had been in centuries past.

**Conclusion**

Popular and festive sport was essential to the social and cultural life of northern Scots. The importance and meaning of these events was not only drawn from the physical act of participation but also from when and where they occurred. Events legitimated ‘from below’ occurred ritually, when the people took control of time and space practising sport. Conversely, the authorities patronised civic celebrations ‘from above’ for their communities and remained in relative control of the unfolding of events. Festive sport in the northern burghs does not seem to have been as subversive as in larger urban communities, as few records of authorities intervening exist. This could have been for two reasons. First, the northern burghs were all supplied with easily accessible links ground and participants played there instead of on the narrow streets. Alternatively, the numbers involved, and the violence of, the festive sport was not excessive requiring the authorities’ intervention. Many festive sports created temporary equality but when concluded, they reinforced the hierarchical structure of society. Gender roles, too, were inextricably tied to festive sport. Participation in the violent popular sports, with few

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123 It must be noted that a few parish accounts were written by non-ministers. However, those accounts represent a small minority of the total number collected.
exceptions, was a male preserve and often there was little distinction between spectators and players. Women rarely participated in the physical act of festive sport; however, their roles as organisers and spectators were vital.

The regional and local variations of festive sport, particularly ball and stick games demonstrates how the local physical environment and economies influenced the development of different but related sports. The variations across northern Scotland was indicative of the region’s cultural hybridity. Scotland began to change dramatically in the years after Culloden, the economic advantages of the Act of Union were finally present and industrialisation and urbanisation had begun. Despite the fact that Highland-Gaelic culture was suppressed by the Acts of Proscription, and the rise of rationalism and improvement agendas were altering how the elite were perceiving popular culture, popular and festive sport continued relatively unchanged. While Pennant lamented the extinction of ‘Ancient’ Highland sports, shinty and its regional variations persisted and perhaps flourished in the latter decades of the century. The next chapter continues this discussion of popular sport and asks the important question, who was in control?
Figures

*Figure 12 Festive Calendar*¹²⁴

New Years Day 1ُJanuary
Candlemas – 2 February
Eastern’s E’en (Shrove Tuesday) variable but always the Tuesday Prior to Lent
Easter
Beltane ‘The fire Festival’ -1ُMay
May Games
Whitsunday- 15ُMay
Midsummer (Johnsmas)- 24ُJune
Lammas- 1ُAug Quarter day –fairs frequently held
Michaelmas- 29ُSeptember - municipal election day
Hallowmas- 1ُNovember
Martinmas- 11ُNovember - quarter day
Christmas – 25ُDecember

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Chapter 6: Popular Sport and Social Control

Introduction

Play by the rules or pay the fine: that was the message sportsmen received in the northern mainland burghs of Scotland during the early modern period. Each level of government imposed its own regulations on sport in Scotland. This chapter focuses on how day-to-day sport was controlled by local burgh councils and kirk sessions in northern Scotland while acknowledging the importance of national decrees concerning sport. Despite their size, it was important for the burghs to demonstrate to the rest of the country, and themselves, that they reflected ‘civility’ within an otherwise ‘barbarous’ region. In doing so they were sites of commerce, governance, law, justice and education, and the burgh authorities sought to control various aspects of everyday life. This chapter argues, with evidence from the crown, that the Scottish Parliament, the burgh councils and the parochial kirk sessions, that sport in the north was controlled, from the authorities’ perspective, to guarantee through legal decree the training of useful members of society, to minimize disruptions to communities and to follow moral and religious expectations. However, the utilisation of a framework of oppressive and unrelenting social control is not appropriate. A nuanced approach is required to explain the authorities’ motivations in their attempts to control sport and to acknowledge that the urban populace had agency that they expressed by resisting the authorities’ attempts to govern what, where and when sports were to be played.

A theoretical framework for examining social control must be nuanced and question the ‘grand theories’ of Whig interpretations of societal development and the hegemonic power of

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2 Shaw, ‘Sources’, pp. 10-23. Shaw discusses issues surrounding records from the Highlands in this period. Prior to 1660 the burghs north of Inverness are unfortunately under-represented in this discussion because of the poor survival rate of institutional records. While non-institutional documents such as memoirs, letter-books and estate papers are intrinsic to the history of elite sport they will not be employed here in detail given they rarely reflect on how popular sports of the lower social ranks were controlled in burghs.
authorities. Likewise, it should question Marxists interpretation of social control being a universal tool used by those who controlled the means of production.\(^3\) Elias’s ‘Civilising Process’ although applied to sport to demonstrate the gradual transformation of elite fails to capture the nuances of longitudinal changes.\(^4\)

Mitchison, Leneman and Graham have demonstrated that the Reformed Church’s largest disciplinary issues were sexuality, doctrine and morality.\(^5\) Todd’s work also assesses the Kirk’s position on sport and festive revelries. Todd finds the Reformed Kirk approached social discipline, as regards sport, with pragmatism.\(^6\) Social control influenced the lives of Scots but it was not felt evenly in all aspects. Sexual and moral misdemeanours, and the practice of superstition and idolatry were censured. As will be seen, sport was only dealt with marginally and even less so in the eighteenth century. The Kirk was concerned about festivities and sport but the vast majority of its interventions only occurred when these interfered with the Sabbath or when they appeared destructive or morally dubious. Otherwise, they were left alone.\(^7\)

Following Griffin, space is again used to investigate how sites of sport were interpreted, used and controlled in the urban environment.\(^8\)

What emerges from this examination of Scottish Parliamentary legislation, the minutes of northern burgh councils and kirk sessions is that the authorities seem to have exercised a relatively ‘light touch’ when governing sport, with the use of direct and indirect methods to reinforce their assertions, and that each body had its own motivations, which occasionally overlapped. This chapter further contributes to the argument against the universality of social control. By examining the attempts made to regulate sport, it is evident the authorities’ decrees

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\(^3\) Eitzen, ‘Social Control and Sport’, p. 370.
\(^6\) Todd, \textit{The Culture of Protestantism}.
\(^7\) Todd, ‘Profane Pastimes and the Reformed Community’, p. 154.
were resisted, and, in some cases, totally disregarded. The chapter is divided into four sections to illuminate how popular sports were governed at the national level, how sport as a commercial trade was governed, where they were played in the urban environment, and, finally, when they were deemed appropriate.

**Governing National Sport**

The governance of sport in early modern Scotland was constructed upon a fifteenth century foundation. Four consecutive Scottish kings passed Acts of Parliament in 1424, 1458, 1471, and 1491, each time in the spring, promoting the practice of archery and other martial sports, as expressions of the government’s aspiration to maintain Scotland’s military preparedness, and the ‘unprofitable’ exercises of football and golf were banned because they distracted men from their martial duty. Archery butts were to be kept at each parish church and in every £10 Scots worth of land. Practice was to begin at the age of twelve. On Sundays, archers were to take a minimum of three shots. A 2d. Scots fine was levied against those absent and the funds collected purchased drink for the archers, an incentive to inspire self-regulation. Unfortunately, little is known of the effectiveness of this rule, which was also related to the repeated decrees concerning wappinshaws. Chapter Three demonstrated boys from a young age continued to practise archery in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, they were not to practise on Sundays but at school and university, reflective of the purposes of education and the expectations of the observance of the Sabbath established by the Reformed Kirk.

Chapter Three demonstrates that the 1598 Act ‘Anent ane pastyme day oulklie’ (Regarding a pastime day weekly) laid the foundations for physical education programming at Scottish schools. However, it was part of a larger decree that instructed masters to free their

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10 Ibid., 1424/21, 1458/3/7.

11 Ibid., 1458/3/7.
servants and labourers for recreation on Mondays. The time was to be spent practising with arms and armour, and at ‘lawful games and pastimes procuring ability of body whereby all persons’ minds and bodies may be refreshed’. If they were caught at unlawful activities they were to be punished ‘with all rigour’. This was King James’s public declaration of the utility of sport for the common man, an argument he expressed in further detail in *Basilikon Doron*. Physical training and military preparedness remained a concern and James VI, like his predecessors, wanted the Scots to be war-ready. It was also James’s response to the pressures of ardent reformers who generally discouraged all non-spiritual activities on Sundays such as baking bread, drawing water, tending to livestock, fishing and all manner of recreation. He hoped creating a new day for recreation would appease the reformers and make the Scots ‘more willing [to] bestow the whole Sabbath day in God’s service’. The Elgin and Aberdeen burgh councils supported this Act of Parliament and recorded it in their council registers for future reference. Despite James’s best efforts, as will be subsequently demonstrated, his attempt to stop sportsmen from profaning the Sabbath was not fully effective.

James VI and I’s tone significantly changed in the twenty years between his 1598 Act of Scottish Parliament and his publication of *The King’s Maiesties Declaration To his Subjectts Concerning Lawfull Sports to Be Vsed* (1618). Known as the *Book of Sports*, it provides a context for the arguments over Sunday sport across Britain during the reigns of James VI and I and Charles I. The *Book of Sports* was largely James’ rebuttal to Puritans supressing Sunday sports in England. While this publication was primarily aimed at an English audience, it was known in northern Scotland. Sir Robert Gordon, owned two copies, the original and its republished version from 1633. Likewise, as Chapter Five has demonstrated that the *Book of

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13 Ibid.
15 James VI and I, *The Kings Maiesties Declaration*.
Sports remained a well-known text into the late-eighteenth century and was used as carte blanche to play sport on Sunday after sermon.\(^{17}\) James rhetorically asked ‘for when shal the common people haue leaue to exercise, if not vpon the Sundayes and Holidayes, seeing they must apply their labour, and winne their liuings in all working dayes?’, an issue he had already addressed in Scotland in his 1598 Act.\(^{18}\) From his English throne, James openly expressed his disdain for puritanical protestant reform, something he had not done in Scotland to the same extent, as regards sport. He struck out against austere and complete observation of the Sabbath and did so by supporting Sunday recreations but maintained that they should only occur after divine service. He believed banning innocent pastimes and sport had serious ramifications that the puritans had not accounted for. Devoid of ‘innocent’ pastimes, he feared the people in his kingdom would become idle drunkards voicing their misgivings in public to likeminded individuals igniting social discontent.\(^{19}\) The basis for this argument, that idleness is ‘the mother of all vice’, which James expressed to his son and subsequently a wider audience in Basilikon Doron, was applicable to the general public.\(^{20}\) If they were not ‘applying their labour’ they should be allowed to play sport to improve themselves physically but also stay morally safe and busy.

The Book of Sports delineated what James and Charles saw as lawful and unlawful sports, unlike the 1598 Act. Lawful recreations on Sundays could occur only after divine service, a compromise between the wishes of the moderate and puritanical laity and the clergy.\(^{21}\) They included: all martial exercises with inoffensive weapons; recreations such as bell-ringing, dancing, leaping and vaulting; and, festive celebrations including May-games and Morris-dances.\(^{22}\) The retention of festive celebrations as seen in Chapter Five, was important in the

\(^{17}\) Miller, My Schools and Schoolmasters, p. 31.
\(^{18}\) James VI and I, The Kings Declaration, p. 7.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., pp. 6-7.
\(^{20}\) James VI and I, Basilikon Doron, p. 90.
\(^{21}\) James VI and I, The Kings Declaration, p. 10.
\(^{22}\) Ibid., p. 8.
cyclical nature of early modern life for the elite and the lower ranks alike.\textsuperscript{23} These pastimes and sports contrasted with the unlawful sports of bear-baiting, bull-baiting and bowling, which were targeted because of their close connection with gambling and ‘the meaner sort of people’.\textsuperscript{24} However, as Chapter Three demonstrated not everyone believed bowls was an illicit sport and seventeenth-century teachers attempted to dissociate it from gambling.

The 1621 Scottish Parliament acknowledged moral and financial concerns associated with gambling with the ratification of the Articles of Perth (1618) and sought to control how much could lawfully be won. Act XIV, ‘Anent playing at cardes and dyce and horse races’, stipulated any winnings above 100 merks won within twenty-four hours were, by law, to be paid to the local kirk session then redistributed to the poor.\textsuperscript{25} Clearly, the affluent were wagering considerable sums of money and the Parliament rather ingeniously sought to reduce the possibility of the elites bankrupting themselves with excessive wagers while simultaneously addressing the moral concerns of gambling and redistributing illegal winnings to the poor. Government intervention, to limit gambling associated with horseracing, further indicates the healthy state of the sport across Scotland in the early seventeenth century, as they deemed it a common and important enough issue to intervene.

Charles I had less patience than his father for puritanical reform and strict Sunday observance. His republication of the \textit{Book of Sports} in 1633 was interpreted as an attack on Puritanism, feeding social discontent among already aggrieved puritans. On the 6\textsuperscript{th} of May 1643, about nine months after the entry of England into the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, the Parliamentarians banned the \textit{Book of Sports}, called for all copies to be burnt, and passed an ordinance against Sunday sports.\textsuperscript{26} Similarly, in Scotland, the Covenanting period Parliament

\textsuperscript{24} James VI and I, \textit{The Kings Declaration}, p. 9.
adhered to strict Sunday observance and attempted to curb all profanations of the Sabbath including milling grain, fishing, drying clothes, excessive drinking and any other activity done instead of attending sermon.\textsuperscript{27}

The Scottish Parliament continued to regulate sport during the Restoration period. In 1661, it decreed Justices of the Peace were to: ‘put his majesty's acts of parliament to execution against […] users of unlawful games with setting dogs, slayers of red and black fish and smolts in forbidden times’.\textsuperscript{28} James VII and II, in 1685, passed another Act of Parliament to preserve stocks of game animals, hunted in field sports. The Act was applicable to the whole country but the Lowlands were of particular concern. His ‘Act for Preserving Game’, as well as those passed during the reigns of William II and Anne I, shows that the government was not only concerned about popular sport.\textsuperscript{29} In this case they asserted their power to ensure the survival and regulation of elite sport.\textsuperscript{30} The unfettered enthusiasm for elite sport during the Restoration had taken its toll on nature and the unsustainable hunting of wildlife and water fowl led to reduced game stocks and their slow recovery.

The Scottish Parliament asserted its control over sport until the Act of Union in 1707. It supported a form of martial masculinity whereby male Scots trained to be war-ready. It attempted to curb profane pastimes and even created a new day for recreation, sport and physical education. Gambling in elite and popular sports was also a concern and the Parliament addressed this issue while also assisting the poor. Elite field sports in the sixteenth and seventeenth century had been pursued with enthusiasm but by the 1680s the effects had begun to show and the Scottish Parliament attempted to preserve game stocks. Local attempts to preserve game stocks continued in the eighteenth century in northern Scotland. Individuals such as the Earl of Aberdeen and Lord Braco, heir of the Earl of Fife, repeatedly published notices

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 1661/1/423.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 1698/7/159, A1705/6/11; 1706/10/458.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 1685/4/47.
in the *Aberdeen Journal* for preserving game and decreeing that hunters must have express permission to enjoy sport on their lands.\(^{31}\)

**Controlling Sport as a Commercial Trade**

Placing controls on sport as a commercial industry in Scotland to maintain patronage privileges, in particular with golf, began in the sixteenth century. The history of the commercial golf industry is quite well known in Edinburgh and St. Andrews; however, northern Scotland also had an organised golfing industry prior to the nineteenth century. Numerous Scotsmen across the country were involved in crafts related to golf such as being bowlers, shoemakers, ball and club makers, and merchants. References to golf, as seen above, date back to the mid-fifteenth century but specific references to people involved in the creation of golfing equipment in Scotland do not exist for another century.

In the early stage of the golf’s development the manufacture of equipment in Scotland was controlled by the monarchy and relied on international connections. The European connections of *golf* in Scotland to *kolf* in the Low-Countries is a contentious issue for some. Robert Browning, in 1955, was extremely critical of the connection between the two sports and adamantly argued that there was little actual similarity. By contrast, Heiner Gillmeister argues that golf’s origins almost certainly lay on the Continent.\(^{32}\) Burnett argues that there is a fundamental misunderstanding in discussions of the origins of sports, insomuch as they originated and then developed differently because of physical environments, weather and available equipment rather than being deliberately invented.\(^{33}\) This was certainly the case with the variations of shinty in northern Scotland. Golf historians Hamilton and Geddes accept the Low Country connection but argue that golf developed into a distinctive ‘long-game’ aimed at

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\(^{31}\) *ABJ*, 20 August 1751 p. 4; *ABJ*, 4 June 1754 p. 4; *ABJ*, 18 September 1780 p. 4; *ABJ*, 2 Oct 1786 p.4.


targets in the ground and kolf remained a ‘short-game’ aimed at targets above.\textsuperscript{34} Sixteenth century golfers partially relied on importing equipment from the Low Countries, especially since both the balls and clubs had a relatively short lifespan.\textsuperscript{35} However, James VI and I had banned the importing of golf balls into Scotland in 1618 to protect the domestic economy. This was part of his wider recognition of the importance of the golf industry in Scotland in which he granted a licence to James Melville for a twenty-one year monopoly on ball making and appointed William Mayne Master Bower to make bows, spears and golf clubs.\textsuperscript{36}

From the sixteenth century, especially in smaller burghs, club and ball making was not always done by a professional. Instead, shoemakers with their experience of working leather, periodically stitched golf balls because they were an expensive commodity that could supplement their income. Professional ball makers did not welcome the shoemakers infringing on their monopoly and legal disputes concerning the lawful production of golf balls in Edinburgh date back to 1554.\textsuperscript{37} Making golf balls was a sought after talent but it was also dangerous.\textsuperscript{38} Pennant in 1776 described the task of making feather filled golf balls, known as ‘featheries’, and the resulting health concerns. He recounted:

\begin{quote}
the manufacturing of golf-balls which, trifling as it may seem, maintains several people. The trade is commonly fatal to the artists, for the balls are made by stuffing a great quantity of feathers into a leathern case, by help of an iron rod, with a wooden handle, pressed against the breast, which seldom fails to bring on a consumption.\textsuperscript{39}
\end{quote}

It is a suspicious statement that making featheries was the cause of artisans developing tuberculosis but the constant pressure on the chest by the wooden handle could have caused other health issues, especially for young apprentices when their bodies were still developing.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{34} Hamilton, \textit{Golf: Scotland’s Game}, pp. 27, 32; Geddes, \textit{A Swing Through Time}, pp. 4-5.
\bibitem{36} Geddes, \textit{A Swing Through Time}, p. 18.
\bibitem{37} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 36.
\bibitem{38} The process of making golf balls did not dramatically change throughout the period. Some early balls were made out of wood but more common they were featheries. It was not until the introduction of the gutta percha ball in the nineteenth century that the process of making balls changed. The advent of the gutta percha ball during the industrial revolution dramatically reduced the cost of golf balls as they were able to be mass produced. Moreover, this new technology radically changed the game as new more sturdy clubs were required and the ball could be hit farther.
\bibitem{39} Pennant, \textit{A Tour of Scotland} p. II, 199.
\end{thebibliography}
Likewise, bowers, those who made bows for archery, also turned their woodworking skill and knowledge of physics to making golf clubs, as seen in the case of the above named William Mayne. Bowers were regularly granted burgess status and were free to trade their wares. In northern Scotland, for example, a father and son team of Nicol and Thomas Mayne were bowers in Aberdeen and were admitted as burgesses in 1603 and 1627. They probably had at least one apprentice, as was the case in Edinburgh, when Donald Bayne from Dingwall moved there in 1616 to work under William Mayne the Master Bower. Bowers, occasionally specialised into designated club makers; however, some kept their older title as did the bower who worked in Dornoch during the mid-eighteenth century.

While the monopolies on crafting golf equipment were in southern Scotland, craftsmen in northern Scotland soon began to ply their trade. Some even moved north to distance themselves from old rivals and take advantage of new economies. By 1629, John Dickson and numerous other ball makers in Leith, a centre of golf, took legal action against Melville for his high-handed actions while enforcing his monopoly. In 1642 Dickson moved to Aberdeen from Leith and found a new market for his golf ball making abilities. Dickson was able to prove his good behaviour in Leith and was given a licence to trade, as the burgh was without such a craftsman. The professionalisation of the craft continued westward in the seventeenth century.

In 1649 and 1652 George Watsone, appeared in the Elgin council records as a burgess and ‘golfballmaker’. To complement the work of Dickson and Watsone, Alexander Gordon and his son James plied their trade making golf clubs as burgesses of Banff from 1652 to at least 1691. Elgin also had a number of club-makers and bowers trading during the mid-seventeenth

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41 Charles D. Bentinck, Dornoch Cathedral and Parish (Inverness, 1926), p. 442.
century. The council assured them that even in old age they would retain their status in municipal affairs being represented by the dean of guild.\textsuperscript{45}

By the eighteenth century, evidence of professional ball and clubmakers in the region diminishes. However, merchants continued to sell equipment. For example, the Earl of Seafield in 1712 ordered and was delivered a dozen golf balls from Aberdeen.\textsuperscript{46} Likewise, Cromarty golfers in the 1750s were equipped with both their wine and golf clubs by James Fraser a Black Isle merchant.\textsuperscript{47} By 1801, Aberdeen merchants were selling prized Leith-made golf clubs and advertised in the \textit{Aberdeen Journal}. Despite the fact that the Society for Golfers in Aberdeen was not active at this time, golf was still played in the intervening years and pupils could be equipped with special children’s clubs available at the shops of James Mellis and Alexander Booth.\textsuperscript{48}

Burgh council records indicate golf’s sophistication in this region through their regulation of the manufacture of golfing equipment. By providing craftsmen with burgess status they were given the licence and privilege to trade freely and to be represented in municipal government via guild association. By awarding this status, Aberdeen, Banff and Elgin controlled who could participate in the sports industry within their burghs and the accessibility of golf equipment for their, and nearby, communities. Furthermore, despite strict Covenanting ideology, Wars of the Three Kingdoms and then Cromwellian occupation in the tumultuous middle decades of the seventeenth century, golf continued and indeed thrived in the north and supported multiple craftsmen keeping them busy stitching feather-filled leather balls and joining hickory shafts to iron heads.

\textsuperscript{46} NRS, Seafield Papers GD248/598/2, Accounts paid for Seafield in London, Edinburgh and Cullen by William Lorimer 1711-1713.
\textsuperscript{47} NRS, John Fraser Merchant 1755-59, CS96/1343.
\textsuperscript{48} \textit{ABJ}, 16 December 1801, p. 1; \textit{ABJ}, 5 June 1805, p. 4. Mellis in 1801 had received a large shipment from Leith of golf clubs with a special selection of clubs for boys at a reduced rate of 8d. to 1s 6d each.
Where to Play

Northern Scottish burgh councils’ decrees concerning sports supplemented parliamentary statutes, illuminate the place of sport in society and indicate the popular and contested sites of recreation in the urban environment. Their duty was to guarantee that commerce went unimpeded, that damage to property, both public and private, was minimized, and, to an extent, that sports happened in an orderly and inoffensive manner. As such, designating appropriate sites for popular and day-to-day sport and regulating their accessibility was required. As Chapter Three demonstrated, this also related to sites for physical education. The kirk yard and the streets were more than sites of celebration and commerce. They were also the home to the labouring classes’ and children’s sport. Sport in these spaces held symbolic value and was tied to early traditions, recreations and revelry as seen in Chapter Five.49 In English towns, fairs, celebrations and sports moved away from the churchyard to the market square, but in northern Scottish burghs, similar to parish churchyards in Wales, they remained important public spaces commonly used for sport and market fairs and they soon became contested.50 Likewise the streets were a contested space for sport when it did not occur at a designated time, as sport could interfere with commerce and disrupt the everyday life of non-participants. The surviving kirk session and burgh council minutes emphasise only half of the contest, the other half must be read between the lines. Thus references to disruptions caused by sports should be interpreted within a wider framework of how public space was used.51

The burgh councils were not oppressive or anti-sport. While they attempted to stop sport on the streets and in the kirk yard, the links were offered as an alternative and acceptable place for sport, as were playing greens. The links remain a common geographic feature of the east coast of Scotland. These grassy plains were a multi-purpose space as noted previously.

51 Griffin, England’s Revelry, pp. 54-55, 84.
However, this intermixture did not always coexist harmoniously. Thomas Mathison’s *The Goff an Heroi-Comical Poem* (1743) mockingly described golf on the links around Edinburgh. However, there was much truth in his verses. His last canto demonstrated the hazards on the links.

The harmless sheep, by Fate decreed to fall.  
Feels the dire fury of the rapid ball;  
Full on her front the raging bullet flew,  
And sudden anguished siez’d the silent ew;  
Stagg’ring she falls upon the verdant plain,  
Convulsive pangs distract her wounded brain.  
The shepherd, who owned this sheep, was certainly less then pleased about his poor ewe being hit. On inspecting the object that caused the ‘convulsive pangs’, the shepherd applied his own ‘fury’ and Mathieson continued:

Then to the ball his horny foot applies;  
Before his foot the kick’d offender flies;  
The hapless orb gaping face detain’d  
Deep sunk in sand the hapless orb remain’d.  

On the links the feathery clearly could cause havoc. On 23 April 1785 an inaccurate shot on the links of Portsoy proved fatal. A group of young men gathered to take part in their favoured amusement but things soon went awry. A young girl had wandered out onto the links, unbeknownst to the golfers. One young man lined up his shot but it must not have come off the club well and rocketed towards the young girl, hitting her on the head, fracturing her skull. Unfortunately, she succumbed to her injury the following morning. The news of the incident travelled throughout the north-east and was reported in *The Aberdeen Journal* on 2 May. The newspaper did not mention the names of the poor young girl or the young gentlemen out on the links but would have served as a warning to the readership. The golfers were to be aware of the

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52 Thomas Mathison, *The Goff: An Heroi-Comical Poem. In Three Cantos* (Edinburgh, 1743), pp. 18-9. This intermixture of golfing and the grazing of livestock continues in northern Scotland. Many tourists visit the Brora Golf Club for that exact reason. Livestock continues to graze on the links and it is not unheard of for cows and sheep wander the fairways. For precautionary measures and to ensure some uniformity, the greens are protected by electric fences.  
53 *ABJ*, 2 May 1785, no. 1947, p. 4.
pedestrians on the links and the non-players needed to keep their heads on a swivel, on the lookout for feather-filled projectiles. As a result of the interaction of various activities on the links these spaces were lightly governed and regulation in relation to sport stretched to the full limits of the burghs, so play on the links would remain orderly and safe.

The kirk yard was a central and contested space in the urban landscape. It was primarily used as a gathering place on the Sabbath but it was also a popular place for sport. Burgh councils and kirk sessions were protective of their places of worship and repeatedly reprimanded and fined people caught playing there because of the possible damage they could cause. However, it must be acknowledged that the evidence of the Kirk yard as a contested space is clearly one-sided against the sportsmen and exists only when troubles arose. On 8th November 1549 the Banff council banned playing ‘hand ball and fuit ball vpon the kyrk and kyrkyard’ because of the damage done to the windows. 54 Similarly, on 22nd January 1586, the council of Forres decreed ‘no person must play in the kirkyaird at futt baw or caiche upon the kirk under the penalty of 10s’. 55 Again, this was likely the reaction to damage done to the church by a football or the smaller ball used in caiche. Inverness burgh councillors restricted access to the chapel yard because the grass was leased yearly to local merchants and craftsmen for their own use, a practice continued until the late-eighteenth century. 56 However, they passed nearly simultaneous legislation prohibiting the removal of turf on the links to protect it as an appropriate space for recreation. 57 Nevertheless, sportsmen and children continued to play nearby the kirk and damage the windows. Eventually, in 1758, £100 Scots was required to replace the glass and rebuild the dykes (walls) around the yard. 58 Elgin’s St. Giles parish church

56 Mackay et al (eds.), Records of Inverness, p. 1, 232; HARC, Inverness Burgh Council Minutes, BI/1/1/12, 2 October 1780.
57 HARC, Inverness Burgh Council Minutes, BI/1/1/5, 20 May 1666; HARC, Inverness Burgh Council Minutes BI/1/1/9, 25 March 1706.
was also damaged by stray sports balls. In 1727 and 1737 the town council declared no children or other person were to ‘play with catch ball or any other diversion at the west gavel of the high church or towards any part of the little church because it destroys the glass windows therof under the pain of five pound Scots money for each offence and parent[s] to be liable for their children.’\textsuperscript{59} It is clear children used the kirk yard as a space to play in the urban environment. These children must have been playing outside of school hours, as the schoolmasters and hebdomadars escorted, and supervised, students’ physical education which occurred either on the links or in designated areas, the Kirk yard not being one of them (see Chapter Three). The burghs expected parents to take responsibility for their children’s actions and teach them which sports were acceptable and where play was allowed. Instilling self-discipline and self-control in children, and teaching them right from wrong, was fundamental in adolescent education, critical to creating social order and acculturating youth into a ‘civilised’ society (see Chapter Two and Three).\textsuperscript{60} The burghs were not anti-sport, however, and provided alternative safe places to play. However, sport continued in this contested space, to some extent, for over 150 years in the region despite the decrees from authorities. This demonstrates that the authorities were unable, or perhaps unwilling, to wholly put an end to this practice.

Streets were also contested areas for sport. Burgh councils deemed playing in the streets inappropriate, especially when it disrupted commerce and transportation. Bowls was the most targeted sport in this regard and sportsmen were repeatedly warned and occasionally fined for not following the rules. The town council of Elgin set about controlling all the variations of bowls. On 10\textsuperscript{th} April 1654, they announced playing bowls and bullets by the burgh gates was to be prohibited.\textsuperscript{61} Five years later they increased the fine to £5 Scots if offenders were caught playing within the liberty of the burgh.\textsuperscript{62} The council clearly thought the sport was a menace

\textsuperscript{60} See: Brathwaite, \textit{Times Treasury}; Fordyce, \textit{Dialogues Concerning Education}.
\textsuperscript{61} Cramond (ed.), \textit{The Records of Elgin} p. I, 296.
\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Ibid.}, p. I, 311.
even if bowlers were of a different mind. Likewise, Old Aberdeen restricted bowls and bullets in March 1663 and again in April 1668 because bullets was, they argued, dangerous and disruptive to the community. This culminated in a ban on the sport and if anyone was caught playing, lending or hiring bowls within the town or in nearby Seaton, including college students, the penalty was £5 Scots.63 Hurling heavy iron bullets could easily cause property damage if the participant was inaccurate, could injure a participant or an unaware bystander and disrupt commerce. In Cullen, a man was killed by an iron bullet while participating in a game in the late eighteenth century, after which time the sport was officially banned.64 By the later eighteenth century, regulations for bowls eased. Possibly, as with golf, the disappearance of bowls in burgh records coincided with the sportsmen recognising the threat posed to their community, acknowledging the wishes of the council and finding appropriate venues for their pastimes.65 Two bowling greens were established in Aberdeen in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see Chapter Three).66 These established locations only offered a refuge for more affluent bowlers. Poorer players, by necessity, continued to play on the links and the streets. By the end of the eighteenth century, playing bowls on the Queen’s Links in Aberdeen was so common that there was a designated ‘Bowl Road’ as seen in Milne’s 1789 Map of Aberdeen, see Figure 13.67 In 1799 the burgh council attempted to protect this dirt road used for bowls by re-erecting wooden poles at each end of the road to stop it being damaged by carts leaving deep impressions.68 Evidently, Burnett’s argument that bowls was not well established in Aberdeen is unfounded as both Old and New Aberdeen had greens as well as a clearly designated road

67 Milne, A plan of the City of Aberdeen.
68 ACAA, Aberdeen City Council CA1/1/67, p.213, Register from 29 October 1793 to 21 May 1780.
named after the sport. Likewise, prior to 1823 Forres also had a designated ‘Bullet Loan’ for road bowls and bullets leaving the burgh to the south-east, see Figure 14.

Other sports were also played on the streets. The ‘calsay’, the paved streets, in Elgin were a popular location for sport and trade. For example, the Elgin Kirk Session attempted to stop chew, ‘portbowlis’, a type of bowls normally played by the burgh gates, and football on the ‘calsay’. In addition, foot-racing was also popular along this stretch of ground. The people clearly resisted the Kirk’s attempts to prevent their playing on the ‘calsay’ as decrees from the session were repeated frequently from 1599 to 1630. In the eighteenth century, authorities continued to stop people from interfering with places of trade. For example, in 1793 the Banff magistrates and councillors were concerned the burgh’s market place or ‘plainstones’ was being overrun by ‘disorderly boys’ playing football and other sports. They sent petitions to the various schoolmasters in the burgh to instruct the pupils to stop playing there outside of school hours to ‘keep the Plainstones clean from such disturbances’. This boyhood practice was likely a result of their play areas constantly being under pressure from urban expansion (see Chapter Three).

Football in the burgh attracted the attention of burgh councils for different reasons. Early modern popular football could quickly turn riotous and cause considerable damage to participants and property if it was not properly controlled. As noted above, games within the kirk yards were common and caused significant damage. After being ejected from the grassy yards, players took to the streets, but were then met with new restrictions. For example, on 12 January 1627 Robert Kay in Elgin was reprimanded for playing football through the town.

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69 Milne, A plan of the City of Aberdeen; Burnett, Riot, Revelry and Rout, p. 220.
70 John Wood, Plan of the Town of Forres from actual survey (Edinburgh, 1823), http://maps.nls.uk/view/74400030 (accessed 02/05/2016).
72 ACAA, Burgh of Banff, AS/Bbnf/1/4 pp. 8-9, Minute Book 1792-1817.
Banff, during the Restoration period, anyone caught playing football in the streets was fined 40s.\textsuperscript{74}

Popular football was not always an unorganised affair and the separation between popular and organised or ‘school’ football should not be seen as binary. Football at educational institutions seems to have been more regulated and organised and the popular form more chaotic. However, there were definite cross-overs between the two forms as it is possible many of the same people played or had knowledge of the two styles. Moreover, Semenza argues that while students and adults practised sports, such as football, elements of violent disorder were matched with complex, yet largely uncodified, rules and organisational structures.\textsuperscript{75} This is clearly applicable in northern Scotland. For example, the Banff council was not opposed to its inhabitants playing football if it was done in an acceptable location and at an appropriate time. In fact, prior to 1629 the burgh had created a scheme whereby it organised the annual Christmas day match while simultaneously stipulating the terms of a rental agreement for a tenement it owned. When Alexander Cook took possession of his grandfather’s tenement, he had also accepted terms of his rental clause that said part of his rent was to supply two footballs for the Christmas day match!\textsuperscript{76} The Banff council embraced a tolerant approach to festive sport and extended its support to the inhabitants’ recreations by provisioning for, and organising, the yuletide football match.\textsuperscript{77} In doing so, they remained in control of sport not supressing it but setting out when and where it was acceptable. Not every burgh was the same and the reactions to popular sport depended on the opinions of burgh officials and the kirk session elders. Elgin for instance was totally opposed to yuletide football and in 1605 multiple people were brought before the kirk session for playing football in the the kirkyard ‘in the forbidden tymes.’\textsuperscript{78} These

\textsuperscript{74} Cramond (ed.), \textit{Annals of Banff}, p. I, 161.
\textsuperscript{75} Semenza, \textit{Sport, Politics and Literature}, pp.13-4. In northern Scotland this clearly also applied to the various forms of shinty.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. I, 63.
\textsuperscript{78} Cramond (ed.), \textit{Records of Elgin}, p. II, 131.
examples provide a variety of opinions on popular football, and sport more broadly, while some perceived it to be chaotic there were in fact complex organised systems at work. Moreover, the examples provide further evidence to support Griffin’s argument, that civic authorities were not anti-sport but wished to regulate where and when it occurred.79

In the northern burghs, sport occurred in a variety of locations. The links and playing greens were deemed acceptable locations by the authorities, while kirk yards, streets and causeways were not and if sportsmen and children were caught playing there they were reprimanded and fined accordingly. Stray balls damaged expensive windows in the kirk, and heavy bowls, chew and football matches and foot-races were disruptive on the streets. The repeated attempts by officials to enforce sport related decrees, however, demonstrate that they were not wholly effective and some community members were resistant to changes to their sporting habits. This interchange between sportsmen and local authorities was part of the sporting framework of the region, illustrating social control was not universal or completely effective and different social groups had agency in selecting where they enjoyed their sports.

When To Play
The Reformation transformed Scottish society. The Reformed Kirk sought to eliminate ‘superstitious’ and popish beliefs and build a Godly society based on scripture and discipline rather than on iconography.80 Attitudes towards Sunday observance also became more disciplined. Profaning the Sabbath was the charge brought against parishioners who disregarded this new discipline and participated in non-religious activities or partook in ‘scandalous’ (mis)behaviours such as drunkenness, quarrelling, travelling, labouring, swearing and playing sports on Sundays. To enforce their discipline, session elders, who were commonly the burgh elite, patrolled their communities on Sundays to enforce church attendance and sent individuals to the kirk session, if they were caught or were accused of profaning the Sabbath. Examining

how officials attempted to control when sport was played, and how ordinary people resisted these controls, offers another insight into the character of popular sport in northern Scotland.

The height of church discipline in the seventeenth century was between 1638 and 1660 and after 1690 when the Church of Scotland was declared Presbyterian. However, church discipline was not uniform across different aspects of everyday life. Reforming doctrine, morality and sexuality was the foreground while sport was in the background. Nevertheless, Sunday sport came under scrutiny by the King, the General Assembly and the parochial kirk sessions. The Kirk was generally less worried about what and how sports were played, but when they were played. For the affluent who represented the leisured class, not playing on Sundays had relatively little influence on their sporting habits. Likewise students at grammar school and university throughout the seventeenth century were regularly given periods throughout the week to play. For craftsmen, artisans and apprentices in the labouring class, surrendering their only official non-work day, except for festive holidays, to complete and strict religious observance, instead of relaxation and recreation, was more problematic, an issue James VI had acknowledged in 1598.

Kirk session records reveal many aspects of social life in Scotland. Those from the northern burghs illuminate the popular northern sports and help to identify ones that are specific to the region. The Aberdeen Kirk Session was very active against sportsmen in the 1570s and many local craftsmen were brought before the session for playing bowls, kyles (ninepins) and golf on the Sabbath. Charges against craftsmen were also common in Elgin. For example, on 19th January 1596 Walter Hay, a goldsmith, was warned of the £5 Scots charge if he continued to golf and play bowls on the Sabbath. The Elgin Kirk Session pursued an aggressive line

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84 Cramond (ed.), *Records of the Kirk Session of Elgin*, p. 31.
against Sunday sport, especially in the early seventeenth century, possibly because the memories and habits of pre-reformed religion were still fresh in the cathedral burgh and the minister and elders were staunch reformers. Despite the frequent announcements made at the sound of a hand bell, that warned parishioners the penalties for profaning the Sabbath, it continued. For example, in February 1601, Barbara Pattoun and a friend were summoned by the elders for throwing snowballs on the previous Sunday.\(^{85}\) On 22 April 1601, Thomas Makean was made an example of. He was put in the joggis (a form of public humiliation where the offender had an iron collar around their neck, attached to a chain secured to a wall or post), after being fined 10s. and held in the steeple for 48 hours for playing bowls on the Sabbath.\(^{86}\) Evidently, the humiliation and discomfort of Makean went unheeded by the people of Elgin and the session had to reiterate its ban on playing Sunday sports including caiche, bowls, kyles and portbowlis ‘or any uther lewd pastyme during the said tyme under the payne of puneishment in thair bodies and geir’.\(^{87}\) However, even the church could not keep its own in line and in 1604 session elders were found playing golf on the Sabbath when they should have been patrolling their community looking for miscreants who were not attending service! They were lambasted for their immoral behaviour and promised to amend their behaviour in future times.\(^{88}\) This example provides a humanising element to the session elders. It also demonstrates that differing perspectives on what the observation of the Sabbath meant to different members of the Kirk. Ardent Presbyterians wanted solemn worship throughout the day whereas moderate Presbyterians and Episcopalians were more lenient as to how the times after sermon could be spent.

Between 1599 and 1618 there were no fewer than seven cases of playing chew heard before the Elgin Kirk Session. Playing chew on the Sabbath as well as on Fastern’s E’en was a

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86 Ibid., p. 78.
87 Ibid., p. 79.
88 Ibid., p. 127.
In the early years of the seventeenth century, the Kirk repeatedly attempted to stop these pre-Reformation celebrations, especially when they were socially disruptive. The Eastern’s E’en chew matches were clearly that. They were, as Chapter Five demonstrated, conduits for aggression and social violence typical of the Catholic carnival season, associated with revelry and drink, and, commonly began in the kirk yards. These three characteristics, in addition to the underlying doctrinal motivation for stopping participation, added to the concerns of the elders. The continuation of this sport, despite the actions taken against its participants, demonstrates the limitations of the kirk to fully control sport and the ability of the players to resist.

Similarly to the burgh council, elders believed it was the duty of the guardians overseeing youth to instil proper discipline. In Elgin, master craftsmen were specifically reprimanded for failing in this part of their duty, as apprentices were frequently called before the kirk session. A particularly harsh admonishment occurred in 1602 in the aftermath of a violent game of chew. In Old Aberdeen, in 1646 and 1647, master craftsmen were likewise instructed to ensure their apprentices attended sermon. The kirk session’s chastisement failed to resolve the issue and young men were repeatedly called before the elders for playing bowls, golf and kype instead of attending divine service. The last was a sport where the object of the game was for the opponent to sink his ball in a hole in the ground, which was guarded by a batsman. If he was successful then they would switch positions. It was perhaps an early form of cricket in the north alongside hurling at stools, seen in Chapter Five. Similarly, guardians and parents in Forres were reprimanded for not disciplining their apprentices and children well

81 Cramond (ed.), *The Kirk Session of Elgin*, p. 91.
82 Munro (ed.) *Old Aberdeen*, II, 27, 36, 153.
enough. The burgh council on 31 December 1722 mandated that all parents and guardians were liable for the actions of their children and apprentices, specifically to ensure they attend sermon.94

Burgh magistrates cooperated with session elders, just as the Parliament aided the General Assembly, and together passed complementary statutes to stop the profanation of the Sabbath. The burgh magistrates of Chanonry of Ross, on 27 March 1647, demanded its councillors practise self-control and attend sermon. The magistrates recorded:

The counsel taiking seriouslie to hairt ye fearfull & great profaning of ye Lordis day with yis Toune When yath manie make no constraint Befoir, at ye tyme, and efter divine service to go to kaylling bowling penniestane or other Idle and prophan exercise upon ye sabbath day Thairfoir they have statute and ordeanit That if any counsellor be found at any prophan or Idle exercise such at boulling Carding dycing pennistone or ye lyke To pay for ye first fault eight pounds and if he fall in a relapse to be dischairgit of ye counsel and to lose his freidome with ye [burgh].95

The source suggests Chanonry of Ross had a serious problem as regards profanation of the Sabbath. It was not limited to the lower ranks of society, apprentices or children but included civic leaders. The focus on throwing games was exacerbated by their connection to gambling and the belief they were immoral and idle pastimes. The penalty for being caught far exceeded any other imposed by the northern burghs in relation to sport. The monetary penalty was considerable but the possibility of removal from office and the freedom of the burgh would have proved disastrous for anyone caught. The council members may have taken heed to this warning as no accounts of the full severity of this punishment exist. Alternatively, the stern penalty may have been only a final measure and the authorities were reluctant to severely punish their peers.

Elsewhere, during the covenanting period, the ardent Presbyterians in Parliament and in Kirk Sessions increased pressure on profaners, especially when it was easier to regulate physical

95 HARC., Burgh of Fortrose, BF/1/1/a, 4, C.G. Macdowall (transcribed), Town Council Minutes and Burgh Court Books of the Burgh of the Chanonry of Ross 1647-1658 and of the Burgh of Fortrose 1674-1710.
manifestations of sin (such as playing sport on Sunday, drunkenness and conceiving illegitimate children) rather than sins of the spirit. In Elgin they repeatedly fined profaners for playing sports as well as dancing and piping. In Cullen, Sunday golfers were frequently brought before the session and were remonstrated, told to repent and pay a half a merk each. During the Restoration period, when Episcopalians held greater influence, Sunday sports when played after sermon were not targeted with such enthusiasm. Nevertheless, some chew players remained troublesome and skipped sermon to enjoy their sport.

There has been significant historical debate as to the power of the Kirk in implementing programmes of social control after the Revolution, when Presbyterianism became the structure of the Church of Scotland. R.A. Houston, I.D. Whyte, and R. Douglas Brackenridge posit the Kirk’s power to enforce social control and discipline had not increased. Instead, it began to wane. Continual reiterations by the General Assembly, the Parliament, Synods, Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to enforce Sunday observance and stop festive celebrations, lykewakes (wakes), penny weddings and promiscuous dancing were not demonstrations of power but a lack thereof. It is clear that around Forres, Inverness, Dingwall, Tain, Dornoch and Wick people were resistant to reform and held onto their traditions well into the eighteenth century.

The General Assembly distributed *The Form of Process in the Judicatories of the Church of Scotland, with Relation to Scandals and Censures* to the Presbyteries to use as procedural guidelines for dealing with ‘scandalous’ behaviour and the profanation of the Sabbath.

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97 Cramond (ed.), *Annals of Cullen*, p. 95.
98 MacLennan, *Not an Orchid*, p. 348.
Sabbath on 18 April 1707, after two years of consideration and debate. *The Form of Process* demonstrated significant leniency towards lesser discipline issues.\(^{101}\) This document reflected the Kirk’s continued efforts to eliminate carnal sins, especially when a child was conceived, but reduced the severity of punishments for drunkenness, swearing, profaning the Sabbath, and implicitly, Sunday sport.\(^{102}\) First time offenders were given private rebukes and official cases were only heard when the guilty party remained disobedient. The general disappearance of these minor charges against sportsmen in session minutes coincides with this mandate.

Nevertheless, strict eighteenth-century ministers were not dissuaded and continued their attempts to reform their parishes’ and stop Sunday sport. Daniel Bethune, minister of Rosskeen in Easter-Ross, from 1717 to 1754, ingeniously halted the customary Sunday shinty match. In the early years of his tenure he approached the leader of the Ardross men, who was famed for his strength and ability at the sport. Bethune, after serious persuasion, convinced the team captain to become a session elder. Bethune then informed him his first duty as a new elder was to stop the Sunday games! The following week he walked to the playing-grounds with his shinty stick and announced to his former compatriots that if they continued at their games they would feel the full weight of his cudgel. Afterwards, ‘the players thereupon quietly retired, and never afterwards met again on the Sunday for a like purpose.’\(^{103}\) By contrast, on the west coast near Lochcarron, Donald Sage’s Grandfather, Eneas Sage, had little luck curbing Sunday sport in the 1720s. The most defiant of his congregation gathered just feet away from the door of the kirk to practise sport on the Sabbath. Rather than reprimand them further he chose to let it continue. Sage continued to encounter sportsmen who cared little for reform. For example, during the Christmas holidays around 1729 he chose to show aggrieved shinty players


\(^{102}\) Ibid. The severity and extent of the procedures for reprimanding these discipline issues paled when compared to the procedures against carnal sin with only six as opposed to nineteen measures respectively.

\(^{103}\) Alexander Mackenzie (ed.), *History of the Munros of Foulis with Genealogies of the Principal Families of that name To which are added those of Lexington and New England* (Inverness, 1898), p. 200.
hospitality at his door, to gain their trust but also shame them for having planned ‘either to burn
the Whig minister in his bed, or smoke him out in his shirt.’ Likewise, John Balfour, a
contemporary of Eneas Sage was astounded at the deliberate profanation of the Sabbath by
practising sport (when he was transferred to Nigg parish in 1729). Balfour, like Bethune, was
canny and approached the leader of the Sunday sport, leaving him responsible to ensure the
parishioners at the east end of the parish devote Sundays to prayer when he was absent at the
General Assembly meeting in Edinburgh. The ringleader demanded to know how he was to
enforce this, as he was the first to enjoy sport, Balfour reportedly said ‘I charge you before God
to do so […] let all the guilt of a refusal lie upon your conscience.’ Upon hearing this the
ringleader is said to have abandoned his Sunday sport and he discouraged many others.
However, as Miller noted Sunday sport continued in the ‘semi-Celtic’ parish of Nigg throughout
the eighteenth century.

Efforts to control when sport was played clearly had an influence on its development in
Scotland. Throughout the early modern period attempts to stop Sunday sport completely
depended on which denomination or party held power. However, participating in sport instead
of attending sermon, regardless of the denomination, landed many sportsmen in front of a kirk
session. Ministers were pragmatic and prioritised reforms to doctrine and belief, allowing those
activities considered to be more harmless to continue. After the 1690s, the limited mentions of
sport in the kirk sessions should not be interpreted as the final success of the Kirk in halting
Sunday pastimes. Instead, it coincided with increased leniency, as seen in The Forms of Process
(1707). Informal rebukes for first time offenders of minor, non-sexual, deviances became the
norm. This reduced the number of official cases recorded before the kirk sessions while still

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104 Sage, Memorabilia Domestica, pp. 13-6.
105 Ibid., p. 12.
106 Miller, My Schools and Schoolmasters, p. 31.
107 The Kirk’s distaste for premarital and extramarital physical intimacy remained pronounced and garnered great
Control, pp. 9-10.
maintaining a degree of social control over parishioners. This was clearly the approach of eighteenth century ministers such as Balfour, Bethune and Sage. Furthermore, the Toleration Act of 1712, which allowed the Episcopal Church to hold its own services and use its own texts, required inter-denominational cooperation further complicating the Kirk’s attempts to exercise church discipline.\footnote{Mitchison and Leneman, \textit{Sexuality and Social Control}, p. 28.} Finally, ministers, elders and burgh council magistrates applied indirect methods of social control on their communities by encouraging, at times forcefully, parents and craftsmen to teach their children and apprentices self-control, discipline and obedience following the regulations concerning where and when to play sport.

\textbf{Conclusion}

This chapter has demonstrated that governing sport in northern mainland Scotland began in at least the fifteenth century, when Scottish kings promoted martial activities which fostered a form of martial masculinity from a young age. James VI and I was the most publically concerned Scottish monarch when it came to sport. Through his Act of Parliament, \textit{Basilikon Doron} and \textit{Book of Sports} he provisioned for, and protected, his subjects’ access to lawful recreation. The Scottish Parliament continued to legislate for sport until the Act of Union and developed a strategy and was selective of what aspect of sport it chose to control.

Across Scotland, burgh councils and kirk sessions regulated sport in an attempt to protect the sports industry, to reduce disruptions to commerce and minimize property damage. Bowls, caiche and football were frequently targeted. The kirk yard had long been used for both religious and secular purposes but when the kirk was physically damaged it became a contested space. The streets were also contested when sport interfered with business and caused bodily harm. Despite repeated attempts by local authorities, children and sportsmen continued to use these spaces for leisure showing their defiance.
Kirk sessions were particularly concerned with Sunday sport especially when gambling was involved. They sought to transform the Scots into a godly and disciplined people. Ministers had different approaches and prioritised which reforms they sought to enforce. They were pragmatic and acknowledged a gradual transformation, in regard to festivities and sports, which would garner less resistance than a complete cultural transformation. This resulted in an unevenness of social control and sport, comparatively, was left alone, especially after the 1690s. With the ratification of the *Forms and Processes* (1707), and the increased presence of Moderates in the General Assembly, the Kirk became more lenient towards minor discipline issues and used informal rather than formal tactics to reform behaviour. This likely led to the disappearance of sportsmen having cases in kirk session minutes.

Resistance to the regulation of sport occurred frequently and some sportsmen, young and old, enjoyed their pastimes when and where they pleased. This reinforces the argument that controlling sport was not simply unidirectional but was a negotiation between multiple parties at different levels of government in the north of Scotland. To understand this dynamic relationship, a more nuanced approach than the ‘Civilising Process’ is required when examining the processes and motivations behind governing popular sport in this culturally hybrid region where it was important for the elite and burgh officials to demonstrate their integration with the state while acknowledging their surroundings. In the northern mainland royal burghs of Scotland during the early modern period the government and the local authorities sought to impose social control in their communities to create a civil society. However, they met resistance when ordinary sportsmen and children, who held limited power, exercised agency, resisting regulations by not always playing by the rules.
Figures

Figure 13 Alexander Milne, ‘A plan of the City of Aberdeen with all the inclosures surrounding the town to the adjacent country, from a survey taken 1789’
Figure 14 John Wood, ‘Plan of the Town of Forres from actual survey’ 1821. (North →). See ‘Bullet Loan’ heading south-east out of town.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

Sport and physical education history in Britain and Ireland prior to the nineteenth century remains an understudied topic. English perspectives have attracted the most attention while Scottish, Irish and Welsh studies are only lightly served. Coverage of individual sports in Scotland has begun addressing this disparity. However, their predominantly biographical approach seldom leads authors to engage with each other’s conclusions or place their sport within a wider context. Regional studies in early modern Scottish sport history have yet to flourish and the limited literature focuses on the Lowlands. This study has begun to fill these gaps. It is an original contribution to the fields of Scottish sport and physical education history, and Scottish history more broadly, as it uncovers a little known aspect of the country’s past within a distinctive region. While this study has drawn its chronological inspiration from the History of Everyday Life, it remains a concern that even works focused on detailing little known aspects of everyday life between 1600 and 1800 neglect recreation and sport almost wholly, with only intermittent references to festive revelry. Moreover, this study has demonstrated that a nuanced approach is required when examining longitudinal changes and theories that posit linear development of sport towards its modern form must be approached with caution. This study supplies further evidence, from a distinct Scottish region, to support the growing British and European discourse in sport history that argues that the change in sporting habits in Britain and Europe should be seen as evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, in the late-eighteenth century.¹

To begin understanding the history of sport and physical education in the northern mainland burghs of Scotland, this study asked what were the sporting cultures of northern Scotland; how did they change over time and who was involved; where did sport and physical

education occur in the urban environment; how did they compare to elsewhere in Scotland, Britain and Europe; how did the elite perceive sport and physical education; and finally, how was sport and physical education organised, practised and controlled by different levels of society? Answering these questions required a methodology that encompassed the textual analysis of a wide source set from family papers, burgh and church records, parliamentary statutes, periodicals and town plans. Many of them had been examined before, although few through the lens of sport and physical education. The themes of time, space, gender, intellectual discourse versus realities and social control versus agency illuminate the defining characteristics of elite and popular sport in this longitudinal study.

Part One demonstrated the international and national nature of, and context for, sport and physical education in northern Scotland and has broken new ground. No other work has provided such significant in-depth analysis of this subject for Scotland or its regions. Moreover, it provides a Scottish, particularly a northern Scottish, perspective on this subject, and when assessed alongside the works by Brailsford, Lunt and Dyreson, Semenza and Williams it helps to enhance the wider British narrative, which up until now has been overwhelmingly Anglo-centric. This study demonstrates that in northern Scotland sport and physical education was stabilising, moderating and ‘civilising’ force. This occurred largely because of the support of the crown, nobility and intellectual elite. From 1600 to 1800 the purpose of sport and physical education changed along with the wider political climate. The seventeenth-century nobility and burghs of northern Scotland embraced a ‘collaborative’ political agenda established by the crown to facilitate the spread of ‘civility’ in a region that the central government perceived as ‘peripheral’ and ‘barbaric’. Part of this ‘civilising’ agenda was the promotion of ‘civilised’ sport and physical education. This meant that the nobility, local authorities and educators encouraged ‘lawful’ sports, which from the monarchy and noble authorities’ perspective expressed ‘civility’. At this time the northern elite were developing a
hybrid identity allowing them fluid movement through courtly (Lowland and English) culture and Highland-Gaelic culture. They also encouraged this movement among their tenants and the ordinary townsfolk because they believed it would foster economic prosperity and morality. By the late-seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century the political nature of sport and physical education began to change. This was primarily because of the new political distinction between Jacobites and Hanoverians. Whig-Hanoverian ‘civilising’ agendas aimed to eradicate Jacobitism. However, during the 1715 and 1745 risings the Jacobites were not barbarous in the seventeenth century sense, as they represented a large proportion of the north-eastern elite. When the threat of Jacobitism abated in the aftermath of the 1745 rising, education was no longer to transform and ‘civilise’ but to build an enlightened, polite, Protestant, rational and moral society. The aggressive policies of the seventeenth century were no longer required or deemed acceptable.

The northern elite and intellectuals such as Sir Robert Gordon, Sir Thomas Urquhart, David Fordyce and Sir William Forbes engaged with a national and international discourse of sport and physical education and contributed to it, reflective of the political climate and cultural hybridity of the region. They argued, similarly to their English and European counterparts, that physical education was a critical element of a harmonious education which nurtured the health and ability of the body and the mind. Specifically, they believed that physical education would build strong healthy bodies; curb possible ‘immorality’ as idleness was the mother of all vice; and instil healthy habits. For the population at large it would breed ‘civilised’ sporting habits and ensure the training of useful and war-ready members of society and when combined with academic instruction improve their circumstance in life.

At northern grammar schools and universities, and later academies, teachers were knowledgeable about educational discourses and provided their male students the time and space for physical education. School sport showed elements of modern sport and was markedly
different from popular sport. This was especially seen in Wedderburn’s *Vocabula* (1636), which led the way for physical education instruction for at least eighty years across the country and was the first published text to discuss how to play football and golf. Likewise, Watt’s *Vocabulary* (1712) was used for at least a century. These texts began the process of standardising the instruction of sport and provided technical information on sports equipment, strategies and how to measure outcomes, all characteristics of ‘proto-modern’ sports. This finding is critical to the history of physical education in Scotland, and Britain more broadly; furthermore, it illuminates a period overlooked by historians who instead focus on the nineteenth century without paying significant attention to prior developments.

Seventeenth-century grammar school pupils and university students had three, two-hour, periods of exercise a week during school time. As the eighteenth century progressed, fewer references to specific days for exercise were given and frequently only Saturdays were offered, unless students were well-behaved. Throughout both centuries when school was out on holidays or finished for the year, boys and young men clearly had more time for sport. Moreover, classroom instructions expanded students’ vocabularies to include sport in Latin and elevated its discussion to become identified with a refined classical education. Finally, the relatively democratised access to academic and physical education in northern Scotland, and Scotland more generally, contributed to upward social mobility of the non-elite into the professional classes which was not seen to the same extent in England.

This study has demonstrated that there were many different forms that the same sport could simultaneously take. This was particularly evident with football. Both the ‘refined’ and festive versions of the game had complex organisational structures, the former had them written down while the latter had unwritten, although understood, rules. This study supports the work of Adrian Harvey and Mangan who argue that there were different forms of football all in a healthy state in England prior to the nineteenth century and extends their work to include
northern Scotland, and Scotland more generally. Early modern educators in northern Scotland taught an impressive ‘proto-modern’ style of football to their students that was rational, quantifiable and had a quasi-referee. This is an important contribution to football’s history in Britain, more broadly, because it demonstrates that this form of football was in a healthy state in northern Scotland over two centuries prior to its popularisation in English public schools and that its popularity did precipitate the end of the popular and festive versions of the game.

Throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries elite sport developed slowly and was not dramatically different than elsewhere in Scotland. The elite participated in a vast variety of sports including archery, bowls, golf, tennis and tilting; however, horseracing and hunting demanded the most preparation and organisation. Elite sport in the latter decades of the eighteenth century transformed rapidly alongside the growth of associational culture and the gradual integration of the region into British society. Moreover, the focus on ‘civilised’ sport was also altered. Together, this dramatically changed elite sport, as it began to show signs of proto-modernity with increased bureaucratic structures and sports clubs that improved subscription based financing and introduced the codification of rules. Northern Scotland’s sporting clubs were not dissimilar to those in England, although golf was more popular. This study provides further evidence to support Syzmanki’s argument for the importance of sports clubs in the creation of ‘modern sport’. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that the growth of sports clubs was not limited to large urban centres and their growth can be tracked regionally. While the growth of sporting societies was symptomatic of the elite’s integration into British society, many of the northern elite created a distinctive ‘Northern’ identity that was representative of their home region.

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Part Two focused on the regional and localised world of popular and festive sport, most strikingly, ‘shinty’, ‘knotty’ and ‘chew’. Ironically, despite the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, Jacobitism and the Union of the Parliaments there was more continuity in terms of popular and festive sports than seen in Part One. Part Two extended the impressive work by Burnett on Lowland Scotland to incorporate another of Scotland’s distinct regions and a national narrative is beginning to emerge, however, more regional studies are required, such as the Western Highlands and Islands, and of the Orkney and Shetland Isles. Popular sport in northern Scotland, specifically Moray and Aberdeenshire, was very different to what Burnett claimed, it was not merely like elsewhere in Scotland and was not driven out by rationalism. The region’s cultural, economic, geographic and political characteristics influenced what, when, where and how the lower ranks of society played sport. In particular, the region’s cultural hybridity created a hybrid sporting culture that was not present throughout the Lowlands, other than potentially along the Highland line. Although Arcangeli demonstrates a gradual decline in Renaissance popular sport alongside the slow ‘civilising’ of Europe towards the Enlightenment, and the gradual shift towards commercial leisure prior the industrial revolution, the idea that these wider changes extinguished centuries’ old sporting practice across Europe is certainly in need of further analysis. This study has demonstrated that popular and festive sport, despite these wider British and European changes in the eighteenth century, remained vibrant until at least the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Popular and festive sport in northern Scotland were less influenced by evolving national and international notions of gentlemanly conduct, and retained much more local, idiosyncratic character. While the Church influenced sporting practices, ministers approached sport pragmatically and did not interfere unless it occurred on the Sabbath or was felt to be morally dubious. Even when the authorities attempted to control and change sporting habits it is clear that the people exercised agency and resisted what they did not like. Scotland began to change
dramatically in the years after Culloden. The economic advantages of the Act of Union were finally bearing fruit and industrialisation and urbanisation was increasing. However, popular and festive sport continued relatively unchanged despite the suppression of Highland-Gaelic culture by the Acts of Proscription and the rise of Enlightenment rationalism and improvement agendas. While those such as Pennant bemoaned the loss of ‘Ancient’ Highland sports, shinty and its regional variations persisted and perhaps flourished in the latter decades of the century and their development, similar to the past was related to economic and environmental characteristics of different localities. This study adds to the narratives constructed by Hutchinson and MacLennan on what has been primarily seen as the Gaelic sport of shinty. Shinty and its local variations were spread throughout northern Scotland and perhaps because of their popularity among Gaelic and Scots, and Hanoverians and Jacobites, they survived relatively untouched after Culloden. While elite sport in the region resembled sport elsewhere in Scotland, the rich variety of popular sporting practices, which was the result of cultural hybridity, environmental and economic conditions created distinctive localised popular sporting cultures. This allows for a more nuanced discussion cognisant of the sheer variety of sports pursued within the region by the different levels of society.

Our evidence indicates sport and physical education were a male preserve. In Part One, physical education at grammar schools and universities acculturated adolescent boys and young men into a refined masculine physical culture. As such, students were taught how to behave as gentlemen when engaged in sport demonstrating decorum, discipline, morality and sportsmanship: all characteristics essential of civil and polite society. The acculturation process prepared youth for later life when engaged in sport at court or at sport meetings. However, this culture was not static. The ‘courtisation’ of the nobility had begun in the Renaissance and continued throughout the period. This meant, generally, that the warrior knight was transformed

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3 This was particularly seen with the variety of different sports pursued on Fastern’s E’en.
into an educated courtier who embodied *Sprezzatura*, the ability to demonstrate real or feigned proficiency when performing academic or physical tasks. Developments in battlefield technology, namely the use of firearms, also meant that chivalric martial skills were falling into disuse. However, this trend did not keep all the elite from the battlefield, as many obtained commissions and had military careers. In Part Two, by comparison, the lower ranks did not experience this transformation and their sport remained martial when they trained at wappinshaws or in shooting competitions. When not engaged in martial sport, many festive games in northern Scotland such as shinty and its variants resembled hand-to-hand combat. These outbursts of violence, however, were essential to the festive days as a release valve for society, offering a time and place where aggression could be vented in an acceptable manner. Popular and festive sport enculturated young men into a different type of masculine physical culture than that of the elite, demonstrating that there was not a hegemonic physical culture but one that was dependent on class, education and age. However, not all popular sports were violent and many enjoyed sports such as bowls, caiche and golf, which were far more subdued than the parish shinty match and could be played with more regularity because they did not require large numbers of participant to play.

Women, as the evidence suggests, were marginalised from sport and physical education, as they were in many other areas of public life, and few records demonstrate their active participation. Nevertheless, female involvement in the social events surrounding sport was essential for social cohesion in both elite and popular society. Contemporaries believed female participation in social engagements was critical for the formation of gender identities. They also argued that male and female interactions within this setting was vital for the creation of polite society, as men’s behaviour was improved when in the company of women. However, there were also concerns that over-exposure to feminine company would lead to effeminacy therefore justifying the need for male-only sporting societies.
Examining where sport and physical education occurred helps to ascertain the importance of space within the urban environment. The streets, market places and kirk yards in the northern burghs were more than transportation routes, sites of commerce and locations of worship. They were also sites of sport for students and the lower ranks of the urban populace. The intermixture of purposes did not always co-exist harmoniously and these locations became contested when property was damaged, people were injured or commerce obstructed. However, there were designated sites for sport in the urban environment such as bowling greens or along specific roads such as ‘Bowls Road’ in Aberdeen or ‘Bullet Loan’ in Forres. Moreover, on certain holidays the burghs’ public spaces were turned over to the people for their revelry and recreation, and there was a temporary inversion of power as the people took control of the town.

The community owned links adjacent to the northern burghs were a haven for sportsmen and were a distinctive feature to east coast Scotland. They created an environment for sport that was not found in inland urban centres across Britain. The links’ short grass, sandy soil and relatively flat surface, if you stayed away from the dunes, offered the perfect location for archery, bowls, golf, football, horseracing and shinty, and the nobility and lower ranks alike enjoyed this dynamic landscape. As regards physical education, the links were frequently used by students when given time for supervised exercise. In larger communities, such as Aberdeen, designated play areas away from the links were used since the seventeenth century. The number of designated places for physical education increased in northern Scotland in the latter decades of the eighteenth century as public spaces felt the increased pressure from urban growth and industrial expansion. Furthermore, the supervision of students became more difficult as schools increased in size and having the students play within a safe and designated area adjacent to the school was preferable to the links.

When sport was practised was another defining characteristic of elite and popular sport. The nobility and elite practised sport more frequently than the lower ranks and did so with fewer
institutions controlling their actions. Instead, personal piety as well as the influence of Renaissance values in terms of ‘civility’ and politeness directed what, and how often, sport was played. For the lower ranks, sport could not be practised where and whenever they liked. The Scottish Parliament, Church and Burgh authorities endeavoured to control when sport occurred, especially when attempting to maintain the sanctity of the Sabbath. However, different interpretations of what was deemed acceptable on the Sabbath meant that there were variations across the region and sport was deemed more acceptable on the Sabbath in some parishes than others. The burgh councils were more concerned with where sport occurred, especially when they had not sanctioned it, as sport could cause property damage or disrupt commerce. This study has found that the Church in northern Scotland approached sport in very similar ways as it did elsewhere in Scotland as shown by Todd. It adds to Burnett’s and Todd’s works and demonstrates controlling sport was not simply unidirectional but was a negotiation between multiple parties in northern Scotland. This demonstrates the necessity of using a more nuanced approach than the ‘Civilising Process’ when examining the processes and motivations behind governing popular sport as well as the peoples’ agency. Furthermore, this study contributes to the European discourse as regards controlling sport and has done so for large geographic region as Arcangeli called for. Its nuanced approach has avoided a binary discussion of the subject and illuminates the complexities of the negotiations of power.

This dissertation has demonstrated that numerous sports, whether practised by the elite or the less affluent, were well developed, thrived and were at times regulated in the northern burghs. Regional studies, such as this, illuminate the existence of local sports which are important in building a general knowledge about sport history in Scotland. However, this raises the question: was this local distinctiveness unique or typical of regional variations throughout the country? To answer this question more regional studies are required. To complement the

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regional approach, comparative studies of early modern sport within Britain and Ireland as well as Europe, more broadly, will provide a wider context for sport in this understudied period while highlighting similarities and differences as regards participation, gender, and sites of sport. Such approaches would help to trace larger patterns of physical education within the wider European context as well as adding local variations and interpretations.

Further research on sport and Jacobitism would also provide new avenues for sport history. When sport is examined through this prism new questions arise. They include what was the relationship between Jacobitism and sport within the context of eighteenth century Scotland and was there such a thing as Jacobite sport? How did Jacobites use sport, did it differ from Hanoverian practices and, finally, was sport part of the rehabilitation of Jacobites into British society post-1715 and 1746? Moreover, Scots’ impressions of sports abroad during the Grand Tour or as soldiers of fortune could also provide valuable insight into the history of Scotland’s sport tourism in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Studying Scotland’s contribution to sport and physical education in the British Empire may also prove fruitful. It is clear there was significant participation in sport across the social ranks in Scotland during the early modern period; however, the extent to which Scots took their sporting cultures abroad is unclear. Such a study would benefit sport historiography but also improve our understanding of the Scottish Diaspora.

This dissertation changes how we need to look at sport in Scotland, as regards regions, culture, class and gender. Sport and physical education was a significant, yet previously overlooked, component of social and cultural life in northern Scotland. It had a distinctive character. Part One demonstrated the region’s nobility and educators contributions to the national and international discourse were directly influenced by their mixed Highland-Lowland culture and by the environmental, geographic and political characteristics of the region. In Part Two, these features also shaped popular sport within in the region. This led northern Scotland
to have hybrid sporting cultures. Sport and physical education, according to surviving records, were a male preserve. However, they were not solely for the elite and were pursued by a wider society for numerous reasons and in different forms. It also is clear that there was a heterogeneous popular culture in the region representative of its hybridity and that local practices varied. There was not an identifiable linear development of sport towards its highly organised modern form but instead multiple sporting cultures overlapped. This overlap of elite sports, which were heading towards modernity, and festive sports, which remained relatively continuous, makes establishing a definite chronology of the evolution of modern sport difficult. However, what is certain, is that by the mid-eighteenth century sport in northern Scotland was in a state of both continuity and change that that differed depending on social rank. Finally, this study demonstrates that involvement in certain sports was seen as a form of class identification and that for the elite in many cases it was a statement of personal sophistication and an embodiment of civilised and polite culture.
Glossary

Archery – A sport where a participant with a bow shoots an arrow at a target. The winner is the closest to the target. This sport became a fashionable leisure pursuit especially after the bow was replaced on the battlefield by firearms.

Bowls – (bouls, boulis, portbowlis). A game played on a bowling green, the links or streets. Players alternatively attempt to roll their balls closest to the jack, or target. Bowls is a game of strategy and a player can hit the opposition’s bowl out of the way or guard his own from being knocked away with subsequent throws.

Bullets – A form of bowls where the participants hurl a heavy iron ball towards a distant target. The player to reach the target in the fewest throws wins. This was often outlawed within burghs because it could cause considerable damage to property or to bystanders. However, roads heading out of burghs were occasionally designated as an appropriate places to play this sport. A form of the game is still played in Ireland today.

Caiche – (catch ball, catch pull). Caiche was an early form of squash played with a racket or with the hand used to hit a ball against a wall. This sport caused considerable damage to local churches and fines were occasionally levied against people who were caught playing it in the church yard because of the risk of breaking expensive glass windows.

Chew – (Chaw, cheaw cuttie soo). A ball and stick game similar to Shinty and Knotty but played in the north-east of Scotland along the coast. The objective was for one team to strike the cork ball to the other team’s goal. This sport was played primarily on Fastern’s E’en. It is possible the name for the sport was derived from the French ball and stick game ‘La soule’.

Cleckin – (clekkin). A racquet sport that originated in France that resembles modern day badminton. International travel and trade brought the sport to northern Scotland in the seventeenth century.
Cockfighting – In northern Scotland cockfighting was primarily a schoolboy sport where each boy brought a cock to school on Candlemas or Easter’s E’en along with a small entry fee. A series of fights occurred and the boy whose cock was victorious was declared the winner by the schoolmaster. The cockfight was an important social event for communities and schoolmasters relied on the entry fees and the ‘fugies’, the birds that would not fight, to supplement their income.

Football – (foot-ball, foot-bal, foote-ball, futeball). A mass participation game played with two teams selected in a variety of ways and played towards each other’s goal. The ball was normally an animal bladder encased in leather. This sport was regularly played on festive days. This version was notoriously violent and caused disruptions to communities. Students also played this sport during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century as part of their physical education programmes at both grammar schools and at King’s and Marischal College. At schools and university the sport was more regulated than its festive incarnation and there were specific positions and a quasi-referee.

Golf – (gouf, goff, gowlf). Golf was played on the links in northern Scotland like elsewhere in Scotland by noble and commoner alike. Playing golf began at a young age and was incorporated into programmes of physical education among the elite and at educational institutions. The objective of the game was to strike your own ball to a hole in the fewest possible strokes. The player with the fewest stokes won the hole or match. Prior to the nineteenth century, there are few records of specific golf courses in northern Scotland, with the exception of Aberdeen. Normally, the old courses consisted of only a few holes. During the early modern period jointed hickory clubs were used as well as feather-filled golf balls. However, not everyone who played the game could afford such expensive equipment and therefore more reasonable variations were available for the less affluent.
Handball – A sport where two teams attempt to get the ball to the opponents’ goal by running and throwing the ball to teammates. In the Borders of Scotland this was a popular festive sport on Eastern’s E’en instead of football or shinty.

Hawking – A form of hunting where birds of prey were used to help track and kill game birds. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century, hawks were important gifts and status symbols for the elite.

Horseracing – Where two or more riders on horseback raced over a predetermined distance. The winner arrived at the finishing line first. The elite and the masses enjoyed horseracing both participating and spectating. Races were normally held near or on Michaelmas as well as in the spring coinciding with riding the marches, or boundaries of burghs, and wappinshaws. They were also occasionally used to help promote market fairs. Gambling on the results of the races was common throughout society.

Hunting – A sport practised by the elite to pursue and kill animals including deer, foxes or birds. Varying numbers of participants were present from a handful to large hunting gatherings for deer which could include a thousand people. By the late-seventeenth century Acts of Parliament had attempted to preserve the game animals in Scotland as numbers had likely depleted the sport’s popularity during the Restoration period.

Hurling at Stools – A game played in Elgin around Christmas by the lower ranks that resembles modern cricket. It was also played in England.

Jumping – A sport where the participant attempts to travel the furthest or highest distance propelling themselves into the air.

Knotty – A ball and stick game were two teams attempted to drive the ball to the opponent’s goal. This version was played with a cork ball similar to Chew. This sport was played throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century in Caithness, especially around Thurso and Wick.
**Kype** – A sport played in Old Aberdeen. The object of the game was for the opponent to sink his ball in a hole in the ground, which was guarded by a batsman. If he was successful then they would switch positions. Similar to Hurling at Stools it was a precursor to sports such as cricket.

**Running** – A sport that encouraged both speed and endurance while on foot. Foot-racing occurred at grammar school and was run by students and there are occasional references to foot racing being run through the burgh streets. By the later eighteenth century foot-racing for men and women frequently occurred at market-fairs as part of the days’ entertainment and was used to attract more people. The prizes reflected the gender of the racers. For example, a new coat could be won by a man and the cloth for a new dress for the women. By the end of the eighteenth century running as a sport became integrated into the sport of Pedestrianism. It was based on long distance challenges over specified periods of time. Public houses in different towns were normally the start and finish points. The sport attracted a substantial following in England in the nineteenth century.

**Shinty** – (shiney, club and shinty, Camanachd). A ball and stick game most commonly associated with the Gaelic Highlands. The objective was to drive the ball to the other team’s goal. Teams were usually created by dividing parishes in two. In larger matches of shinty one parish played against another. The sport unlike Chew and Knotty was played with a wooden or hair filled ball. In some areas it was played on the links and flat fields. When weather permitted it was also played on ice. It was regularly played on Sundays as well as on festive days. This of course depended on the influence ardent reformed ministers had in the community.

**Shooting** – Using a firearm and shooting at a target. Competitions included shooting at different distances and different size targets. Normally, the participant who was most accurate
when shooting was the winner; however, with the inaccuracy of early muskets these competitions relied on luck as well as skill.

**Shuttlecock and Battledore** – A form of badminton played in the eighteenth century by university students in Aberdeen. It likely developed from Cleckin. The game by the eighteenth century had established a terminology that is recognisable to the modern form, such as the ‘shuttlecock’.

**Swimming** – An aquatic exercise that was promoted for its ability to save lives. Races and contests in northern Scotland largely escape the records but they usually consisted of swimming as far as one could in a certain amount of time or racing over a distance against time. It is clear that swimming was encouraged from a fairly young age and school pupils occasionally were taken to local rivers to bath and swim.

**Throwing the Bar** – Also known as caber tossing where the participant throws a large wooden pole end over end with the objective that the pole lands pointing away from the thrower.

**Tilting** – A form of jousting where the rider, at full gallop, attempts to un-horse their opponent.

**Tilting at the Ring** – A form of jousting where instead of attempting to un-horse their opponent a rider at full gallop would attempt to insert their lance into a metal ring. As the contest progressed the rings became smaller.

**Wappinshaws** – A gathering of men for training purposes. They were frequently held on civic days aligning with riding the marches or on days celebrating coronations or royal birthdays. A variety of martial sports occurred on these days and occasionally there were competitions and small prizes awarded.
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