Sport and the Calendar: Archery and Rifle Shooting in Scotland in the Nineteenth Century

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INTRODUCTION

In the late Middle Ages, archery emerged from being an activity of war into a sport. The men who practised after mass on Sundays must have seen it at least partly as recreation, and the spread of firearms in the sixteenth century removed the military need for bow and arrow. In the Highlands, however, the silent and rapid-firing bow remained useful in skirmishing until the very end of the seventeenth century, and there were bowmen at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689. Scots burghs had already started to have archery competitions: the earliest known was at Musselburgh in 1603. In addition, in the seventeenth century the bow was still a weapon for hunting: a carved stone of 1660-80 shows an archer with his dogs (Reid 1912: 158). Richard Holt has pointed out that historians have had a tendency to overlook the substantial extent to which old-established sports were practised in nineteenth-century Britain (Holt 1989: 54): archery is clearly an example.

Before 1850 most sporting events, in Scotland as elsewhere in Europe, were a part of the traditional calendar which was based on the farming and (to a lesser extent in Scotland) the ecclesiastical year. By 1900 this pattern had largely disappeared. The primary aim of this essay is to examine the nineteenth-century history of shooting with bow and arrow, and with rifle, to see how and why the sporting calendar changed. Its secondary aim is to integrate one aspect of the material history of archery and shooting, the prizes, into the discussion. Two of the most interesting archery competitions were in Ayrshire: evidence from that county, typical of Lowland Scotland, has been used throughout.

Many sporting events were held on holidays, either ones which were respected nationally, or others which were local. Thus ba' games were played on Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Fastern's E'en; there was cock fighting in schools on Fastern's E'en, and in the Western Isles horse racing was enjoyed on Michaelmas. An example of the holiday with sport is St Inan's Day at Beith, held on 30th August, at which there was a horse race until the middle of the nineteenth century. Dennis Brailsford has made a preliminary investigation of the relationship between holidays and sport, primarily in England (Brailsford 1991: 1-15).

In order to describe the relation between the calendar and traditional sport, two examples should be mentioned of ways in which sports did not relate to the calendar. Curling, the mostly widely-played game in Scotland between 1780 and 1880, partially breaks the pattern. Although the opportunity to play might arise at any time during the winter months, in practice curling could only be enjoyed for the short period when 'the ice was bearing' (Smith 1981: 66). Secondly, one long-standing form of competition did not depend on the calendar: this was the challenge, which stemmed from the medieval idea of a champion who retained his status until he was challenged successfully (Brailsford 1991: 13-15). It survives today in professional boxing.

THE ROYAL COMPANY OF ARCHERS

The Company of Scottish Archers was founded in Edinburgh in 1676, and Queen Anne granted it a royal charter in 1704: it is the oldest sporting society in Britain. The Royal Company's origins lie in the archery guilds of the Low Countries which had been formed between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Their first purpose was the defence of towns, but they also had the range of social functions which were common to non-trade guilds on the Continent: encouraging sociability, providing for sick members, and funding and dignifying funerals (Roussiaud 1990: 161-5). The Royal Company did not have most of these functions. While in exile in Bruges in 1656-8, Charles II and his youngest brother Henry, Duke of Gloucester, became active members of the Ghilde Sint-Sebaastiaen and Charles remained an enthusiast for archery (Vanhoutryve 1988: 26-7). The founding of the Company in Edinburgh is an example of the way in which the monarch's tastes and enthusiasms were copied.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the Royal Company had a strongly Jacobite flavour, but after the '45 this diminished and during George IV's visit to Edinburgh in 1822 it was appointed the King's Bodyguard for Scotland. For the remainder of the nineteenth century it was self-consciously an élite body. With much ceremony it presented a *reddendo* – a gift from a vassal to his superior – of two barbed arrowheads to the king at Holyrood in 1822 (Balfour Paul 1875: 141-56). It had a court uniform, and George IV gave the Captain-General of the Royal Company a gold stick as a sign of office; William IV gave another, plus two silver ones; Queen Victoria added seven ebony sticks. The Captain-General took part in Victoria's coronation procession in 1838 (Balfour Paul 1875: 165-8, 184-8, 205). These roles and rituals were all innovations, examples of the phenomenon of the 'the invention of tradition' which Hobsbawm and Ranger described (1983). The Royal Company stood at a distance from other archers. Whilst it exchanged freedoms with senior English archery societies, it did not shoot with or against any of the other Scottish archery bodies, and individual members of the Royal Company rarely appeared in more general archery competitions. Throughout its history a significant proportion of its membership has been drawn from the landed

classes. It is important to the history of archery in Scotland for two reasons: it sustained traditions, and it was a model for other societies.

The Royal Company of Archers kept archery alive in Scotland. Apart from scattered activity in country houses, and one small society in Kilwinning, it was the only group which was active in the middle of the eighteenth century. It built its own headquarters on the southern edge of Edinburgh – Archers' Hall – in 1776-7 (Balfour Paul 1875: 260-1). As the old burgh silver arrows fell into disuse, the Royal Company gathered them, preserved them in Archers' Hall, and visited their parent burghs every few years so that tradition could be seen to be active. The Royal Company is thus responsible for the continuity in shooting for the Musselburgh Arrow from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the present day, and for the Edinburgh Arrow from 1709. The Royal Company also revived the competition for the Peebles Arrow, which was in abeyance from 1664 to 1786, and for the Selkirk Arrow, which disappeared from sight from 1674 to 1818 (Balfour Paul 1875: 346-9).

In the history of sport in Scotland, the Royal Company is important because it provided continuity from the days of the burgh sport to the era of target archery. It had its uniform and its own internal traditions in the form of specific competitions for specific prizes at recognised times of the year. It was a private club in the sense that its membership was strictly defined and the members provided its sole means of financial support. It was also a public body, however, in that its existence was widely known: it appeared in printed guides to Edinburgh and the results of the more important of its competitions were announced in the press. On occasion, crowds numbering thousands watched their meetings (Balfour Paul 1875: 222).

During the growth of archery from the late eighteenth century, and down to the middle of the nineteenth century, the Royal Company was the model for other Scottish societies. Its élite nature made it an object of emulation. It did not lead actively; but others followed. The archery society at Kilwinning had been founded in 1688 by members of the Royal Company (Burnett and Urquhart 1998: 10). The Bowmen of the Border, founded at Kelso in 1788, were similarly socially exclusive. The Bowmen did not follow the Royal Company in building their own premises, but they did possess assets which similarly encouraged sociability:

> XII. The liquors are to be purchased out of the funds of the society and to be kept in a cellar appropriated for this use alone. The wine shall consist of Port, Sherry, Claret and Madeira. (Hargrove 1845: 97)

The Bowmen survived for some time: they were still meeting for dinner in 1820, and may be linked to the society of the same name which James Hogg promoted at Innerleithen from 1830 (*Kelso Mail*, 10 January 1820; Burnett and Dalgleish 1995: 1176-8; Fig. 1). The Royal Dumfries Archers and the Centre Bowmen of Dundee had shorter lives (*Dumfries Weekly Journal*, 17 June 1794; *Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser*, 7 September 1810).

Fig. 1. Silver medal of the Border Bowmen, 1835 (NMS H.1995.308).

In the 1820s the new archery clubs adopted uniforms which were similar to that of the Royal Company. When William IV came to the throne in 1822, the Irvine Toxophilites attempted to gain a status similar to that of the Royal Company, and become 'the King's Bodyguard for the West of Scotland', but they were seen off by the older society (Balfour Paul 1875: 188-92). In 1839 the Irvine archers did manage to become the bodyguard of the Queen of Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament. Most clubs copied the Royal Company in the naming of office holders, particularly the Captain or Captain-General.

The pattern of one club, whose members are drawn from some form of social élite, guiding the fortunes of a sport, can be seen elsewhere. The Duddingston Curling Society, founded in 1795, was composed of lairds, lawyers and ministers. It introduced round stones in place of water-worn *channel stanes*, and wrote the first laws of curling in 1803 (Smith 1981: 35-40). In London, the aristocratic Marylebone Cricket Club evolved into the governing authority of cricket between its foundation in 1787 and about 1830 (Holt 1989: 28). The case of the Royal Caledonian Hunt Club was different: whilst organising the largest race meeting in Scotland, which also had the largest prizes, it did not attempt to control the sport and that was left to the Jockey Club, based at Newmarket (Holt

1989: 28). Where the Royal Company took no specific action to establish its domination over the sport, the Jockey Club actively sought power, seeing it as the only method by which the widespread dishonesty of the turf could be dealt with.

THE KILWINNING PAPINGO

Two of the longest-surviving archery societies are in Ayrshire, at Kilwinning and Irvine. The Kilwinning papingo is one of Scotland's oldest sporting events, having been held, though not continuously, since 1688, and the Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers, to give the name in its present-day form, is Scotland's second oldest sporting society, being pre-dated only by the Royal Company of Archers (Ker 1894). Its trophy, the Kilwinning Arrow, dates from 1724.

The target for the papingo is a wooden parrot, though its shape has been modified so that the one which is used today has more the shape of a pigeon.

> It is ... cut out in wood, fixed in the end of a pole, and placed 120 feet high, on the steeple of the monastery. The archer who shoots down this mark, is honoured with the title of the Captain of the Papingoe. He is master of the Ceremonies of the succeeding year, sends cards of invitation to the ladies, gives them a ball and supper, and transmits his honours to posterity by a medal, with suitable devices, appended to a silver arrow (*OSA*, xi, 173).

Papingo-shooting came to Scotland from the Low Countries – it is hardly known in England – and was recorded at St Andrews (1574), Ayr (1595-1624), and Irvine (1605 and 1665) (Burnett and Urquhart 1998: 7).

Although it is clear from the medals attached to the Kilwinning Arrow that the papingo was the subject of competition throughout the eighteenth century, no printed references to it have been found in this period. Its approach was advertised for the first time in the *Ayr Advertiser* of 7 July 1808 and for twenty years these annual notices continued to be its only public appearances. The picture changed in 1828, when the Society suddenly began to see itself as a public body, and resolved:

> The uniform dress to be worn by members of the society when shooting for the silver arrow . . . to consist of a double-breasted green long coat with gilt buttons, the coat to be lined with white silk, the buttons to be made with cross arrows with points downwards, white cashmere vest with uniform buttons (Ker 1894: 333).

This was the year when the fifteen-year-old Archibald William Montgomerie, 13th Earl of Eglinton, made his first appearance at the papingo – which he won, employing a proxy to shoot on his behalf, in the same way that medieval monarchs might be represented in jousts by their champions.

Soon there is sufficient evidence to outline the day's activities. In 1830 the archers met on Thursday morning for practice, and then assembled under the leadership of the Hon. Roger Rollo. In the afternoon, they shot for the silver arrow 'and its valuable and accumulating *appendages*', and the papingo was won by David Snodgrass Cunningham

Fig. 2. The Kilwinning Papingo, from the *Illustrated London News*, 15 August 1846.

of Cunninghamhead. Rollo gave a ball in the evening. On the Friday they shot at butts for a silver dirk (*Ayr Advertiser*, 5 August 1830).

After the opening of the Glasgow and Ayr Railway in 1840, the Ayrshire archery competitions were, in terms of the numbers of competitors, dominated by archers from the commercial world of Glasgow. At Kilwinning in 1846 there were men from the Glasgow Archers, the St Mungo Archers, and the Partick Archers (Figs 2 and 3). They travelled by train, and as the *Illustrated London News* commented, 'A fine band of music was waiting at the Kilwinning Station, and they marched into the town headed by the Captain-General, and playing appropriate airs' (15 August 1846, 108). A ticket for the Captain-General's ball survives (Glasgow City Archives TD 200/88, illustrated

Fig. 3. Target shooting at Kilwinning, from the *Illustrated London News*, 15 August 1846. The prize that year, a silver jug, is on the pole in the middle of the picture.

in Burnett 1995: 27). It shows the archers in uniform, watched by spectators in medieval dress (including a man in full armour), Kilwinning Abbey tower, and the distant mock-medieval Eglinton Castle – but not the contemporary town of Kilwinning, and its industrial surroundings.

Behind the nineteenth-century growth in archery lies the medieval revival in art and literature, and particularly the figure of Walter Scott (Burnett and Dalgleish 1995: 1177). His ideas appealed particularly to the urban middle classes who, living in noisy and smoky cities, were able to believe that life had been simpler in the Middle Ages. Their archery was not particularly competitive: handicapping was often used to make it likely that the winner of a competition was someone who had not won it before. The emphasis on uniform, ritual and dining stressed the historical and social elements of the event, rather than the competitive ones. To break away from their annual meetings and compete more regularly would have removed one of the illusions on which their medievalism was based, that they lived according to the medieval calendar.

THE IRVINE TOXOPHILITES

In 1665 the town council of Irvine had arranged for 'the Pappingoe to be sett up and that whasoever burgessis pleasit to adres thamselffs thairto with thair bowis and arrows for schooting thairat' (Strawhorn 1985: 60). Ker suggested that the steeple of the old

parish church was used until it was taken down in 1721; Strawhorn alternatively proposed that it was set up on the Tolbooth (Strawhorn 1985: 98, Ker 1894: 327). Whichever is right, the Irvine papingo was shot in the middle of the town.

Archery at Irvine recommenced in 1814, with target archery rather than the papingo (Buchanan 1989: 24). The Irvine Archers remained an inconspicuous local group until 1839, when they were chosen to form the bodyguard of the Queen of Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament.

> Some suggested their turning out in ancient Burghal costume; others, their equipment and performance as a body of craftsmen, in the style of good King Crispin. But the suggestion of Baillie Dick, that it would be excellent in keeping with the whole arrangement, to assume the garb, and appear equipped, as a body of ancient Archers, met with unanimous approval. (Hargrove 1845: 149).

There is nothing to suggest why they, rather than the Kilwinning men, were chosen, but the decision changed the character of the Irvine meeting. In 1840 it was deemed to be 'commemorative of the Eglinton Tournament': the Earl took control, encouraged the wearing of uniforms, and presented prizes. He wore a dark green frock coat with matching facings, a broad belt with a silver clasp and long white gloves, plus the president's white silk sash and a feather in his bonnet (*Ayr Advertiser*, 3 September 1846). This was a sporting gathering, but also something of a pageant.

The meeting of the Irvine Toxophilites in 1846 illustrates the ritual and pageantry which Eglinton encouraged: he would have been satisfied with his obituary which referred to 'the archery meetings so suggestive of the merry greenwood of long-gone summers' (*Ayr Advertiser*, 10 October 1861). It was a two-day meeting, on 28 and 29 August. The Glasgow and Ayr Railway brought competitors from Kilwinning and Glasgow. Dressed in club uniforms, they assembled at the Eglinton Arms. The Glasgow club wore dark green, 'profusely braided on the breast'; the Partick, light green with gold facings; and the Irvine Toxophilites themselves were also dressed in light green.

They marched in procession to the butts, preceded by the Kilwinning Instrumental Band. The butts were in the playground of Irvine Academy, where there was a marquee in which refreshments were served. There was a new banner displaying Latin mottoes. Competition was for a medal, and the winner held the Eglinton Gold Belt, 'of elaborate workmanship, richly set with studs, and carved in the most beautiful manner', for a year. Second prize was a bow, and third, half of the stakes. The medal and belt were won by William Ferguson of the Partick Club: in the competition he scored the fifth largest number of points, but he was behind four previous winners who were handicapped. Finally, Captain White, the victor in the previous year, returned the Gold Belt to the Earl of Eglinton, who then presented it to Ferguson, in a ceremony which reflected the Earl's wish to project himself as feudal superior (*Ayr Advertiser*, 3 September 1846). The clearest indication of his position is shown in the fact that one of the prizes at Irvine was a framed portrait of Eglinton himself (Hargrove 1845: 149).

The Earl's domination of the Irvine Toxophilites fixed them in the neo-medieval

world which he fashioned for them. Feudal tributes might be expected either annually or on the installation of a new lord: by preferring the former, and by linking sport to feudalism, Eglinton created a picturesque structure which was sustainable provided all concerned were prepared to subscribe to certain cultural values, and to accept their artificiality. Yet the mining and iron working industries were growing in north Ayrshire: archery seemed increasingly incongruous.

THE DECLINE AND DEMISE OF THE AYRSHIRE ARCHERY COMPETITIONS

Around 1860 the Kilwinning and Irvine archery meetings were fashionable events, yet their demise was less than a decade distant. In 1859 there was a 'Numerous and brilliant assemblage' at Kilwinning. The following year there was 'One of the happiest meetings which has taken place in Kilwinning for many years', and the report gave a long list of landed gentry and numerous prizes including the Eglinton belt, the Captain-General's fish knife and fork, the Tournament medal, a silver quaich, two silver cups, a silver medal, a quiver, and a set of arrows. About 1855 ladies' competitions had been added, for which the prizes were brooches (*Ayr Advertiser*, 1 September 1859 and 30 August 1860). The following description of the rapid decline of the Ayrshire archery competitions is based on newspaper reports (*Ayr Advertiser*, 30 May 1861, 31 July 1862, 3 September 1863, 31 July 1864, 27 July 1865, 26 July 1866, 25 July 1867).

Although the papingo attracted interest, there were few competitors. In 1861 only four shot for it, although 50 sat down to dinner in the Masonic Hall. The difficulty was that the winner was captain the following year, and was obliged to pay for dinner for the whole company. It was thus essential for the captain to be a man of some wealth: competent archers thus shot on behalf of those who were willing to be captain. For example, when in 1859 the Papingo was won by Robert Wylie of Kilwinning, he was acting as proxy for Hugh Montgomerie of Bourtreehill. Wylie's profession is unknown, whilst Montgomerie was a minor laird with an estate east of Irvine.

Before the 1860s, the papingo had been organised by men from Ayrshire, and visitors from elsewhere had been welcomed. However, Glasgow archers including John Findlay, a manufacturer of gingham and pullicate [both kinds of coloured cloth], were now members of the Committee. At the 1864 dinner Captain M'Allister proposed the memory of Hugh Montgomerie of Bourtreehill, 'all that mortal man could do to perpetuate such meetings had been done by their deceased friend'. In 1865 Findlay, offering the toast of the Society, said it would have failed if Glasgow gentlemen had not supported it. In 1866 'On the suggestion of past Capt. J. Findlay, a committee, consisting of three gentlemen from Glasgow and three from Ayrshire, were appointed to meet with the Irvine Toxophilite Society to take steps for the purpose of resuscitating the annual meetings of that society which have been dropped for three years in consequence of the death of Captain-General Hugh Montgomerie of Bourtree Hill, who had been the society's main support.'

The last nineteenth-century shooting of the Kilwinning papingo was held on 28th July 1870. Before dinner, nine archers shot at butts for a quaich presented by the oldest member. They then marched from the Cross to the Abbey behind Kilwinning Band. Six shot for the papingo, but no one wanted to shoot for the office of Captain-General. In the chair at the dinner William Brown of Saltcoats gave the toast of 'The Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers', and recognised that the society was in difficulty (*Ayr Advertiser*, 4 Aug 1870, Ker 1894: 338). The next shoot for the Kilwinning papingo took place in 1948, and the Irvine Toxophilites were revived in 1964 (Strawhorn 1985: 212).

A less than robust tradition is vulnerable to the weather. In 1862, for the papingo, it was bad. 'There were certainly as many villagers congregated, but the attendance of the neighbouring gentry was *nil*, and of the members of the society many were conspicuous for their absence.' At the dinner, Lieutenant Meikle, speaking on behalf of the Volunteers, said that he hoped that the archers would stand better to their colours than the archers did that day: although the elements had been against the archers, he trusted that a shower would not scatter them completely. The meeting of 1863 was cold and wet, and despite having been moved from Friday to Saturday, attendance was lower. In 1865 the falling bird knocked one of the spectators unconscious: it was an unhappy omen.

What had once seemed based in the historic past now appeared merely odd. The archers wore 'quaint attire' or 'Picturesque costumes'. The passion for Scott's novels and poetry had abated by 1860. Where he had given a vivid picture of life in the Middle Ages, Tennyson in 'Morte d'Arthur' and 'Idylls of the King' wrote about the medieval from the outside, sometimes with heavy nostalgia. At Kilwinning, the tradition of the archers marching through the town and standing outside each public house while a dram was drunk became a 'questionable practice'.

The Ayrshire archery competitions faced three threats: from target archery, from the Volunteer movement and its shooting competitions, and from other forms of sport.

An annual archery competition fitted the lives of the Ayrshire lairds who sustained the meetings at Kilwinning and Irvine. They were as interested in sociability and tradition as in competition, and there is no evidence that, apart from the 13th Earl of Eglinton, they attended archery meetings elsewhere. By the 1840s, however, there were frequent archery competitions in Glasgow and Edinburgh: archers from one club could shoot throughout the summer in meetings organised by the others. The archers all over Britain who took part in these, more overtly competitive, events, were the men and women who supported the national archery competitions to which we will now turn. They diverted attention from traditional archery, as did the expansion of the rifle Volunteer movement and the growth of other sports, which we will examine later. All of them involved more frequent events.

TARGET ARCHERY NATIONAL MEETINGS

The *Ayr Advertiser* said that one of the reasons for the poor attendance at the 1862

papingo was the conflict of its date in the last week of July with the Grand National meeting in England, and the expectation of the meeting of the National Archery Society of Scotland in Edinburgh in early September (*Ayr Advertiser*, 31 July 1864).

The sport of archery developed radically in the 1840s. The focus was the annual Grand National Archery Meeting: the first was held at York in 1844. Instead of archers competing in local clubs, they met for a contest which admitted archers from all over Britain. The competition was in the form of a 'Double York Round', a York Round consisting of 20 arrows at each of 100, 80 and 60 yards. Standards rose very dramatically, particularly because of refinements in technique made by Horace Alfred Ford, son of a Glamorgan solicitor, who was champion for ten consecutive years (Hardy 1976: 150-3). Scotland was included in this development: the seventh Grand National was held at Edinburgh in 1850, in Warrender Park. Before the Grand National meetings, each club had had its own method of scoring (Hargrove 1845; Soar 1995: 24): the new meetings helped to promote consistent methods.

In emulation of the Grand National, the National Archery Society of Scotland (NASS) was set up in the summer of 1855. Its membership tended to be drawn from commercial men in the cities, rather than from the country gentlemen who formed much of the membership of the Royal Company, and who sustained the two Ayrshire competitions. Yet it was to an extent a sport for an élite: each competitor paid target money of half a guinea (a guinea from 1866). Several of its annual meetings were held on cricket grounds: at Kinning Park, Glasgow, the home of Clydesdale C.C.; at Raeburn Place, Edinburgh, on the Edinburgh Academicals' ground; again in Edinburgh, at Grove Park, where the Grange club leased land; and at Livilands, where Stirling County played. Others were at country houses. (NASS Minutes, passim)

The NASS meetings continued until 1879, but their zenith had passed in 1863-5. At the peak of the NASS's existence, archers came from clubs in Edinburgh (the Royal Company, Salisbury Archers, Edinburgh Toxophilites, Meadow Grove Archers), Glasgow (St Mungo, Kinning Park), Paisley and Stirling. (NASS Minutes, passim) Yet, though target archery had less ritual and uniform than the Royal Company of Archers or the Ayrshire competitions, it still had a historical image. When the NASS met at Stirling in 1865, John Murie, Provost of the burgh, said:

> I think Stirling is peculiarly adapted to such meetings, from its central position, and having railways converging to it from all points, and also from its historical associations. We still have the butts at the foot of the old castle wall, where many a splendid feat in archery was performed in the days of yore. (Cheers.) We still have our old walls, from which many a well-aimed arrow has flown with more deadly effect than has been shot in these two days. (Cheers.) . . . too much praise cannot be awarded to the ladies for the skill which they have displayed on this occasion ... A lady who is a good archer is no ordinary character. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I recommend the ladies to continue their practice, for like Cupid of old, they will learn to fix their arrows in the right place, and lead captive at their will the lords of the creation. (*The Field*, 12 August 1865, in TASS Minutes, 95)

Before the third NASS meeting (1857) prizes were offered for three ladies' competitions, and the following year they did compete.

Peter Muir (1809-86) was the most significant figure in the National Archery Society of Scotland. He was bowmaker to the Royal Company from 1829 to 1877, and he won the Grand National in 1845, 1848 and 1863. He was trained in Kilwinning as a wright and became a craftsman of the highest skill (Soar 1995: 21). He was one of the six who founded the NASS, he often set up the butts and made other preparation for the shooting, and he was the judge at almost all of their meetings. In 1863, he won the Championship medal by scoring 380 for a York round. In 1865, when he was one of the two judges (presumably he judged the ladies' archery), he won again with a score of 820 for a double York round (*The Field*, 12 August 1865, in NASS minutes, 95). In his period he was second only to Horace Ford as an archer – and Ford used Muir's arrows (Ford 1856: 115).

Muir died at his home at 15 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh, a few hundred yards from Archers' Hall, on 21 March 1886 (Fisher 1894: 284-5). An obituary said:

> his reputation as a bowyer and fletcher was not confined to Scotland, but was known throughout Great Britain, and whenever a bow had the magic stamp 'Muir' on its back there could be no doubt of its excellence; better workmanship was never turned out from the hands of any man (*The Field*, 27 March 1886, 397).

Throughout the eighteenth century the Royal Company's bowmakers had had difficulty in surviving financially. Muir, however, made an adequate living. This was partly because of his skill: his bows and arrows sold all over Britain. At the same time there were more archers competing more frequently: weekly competition created a larger demand for his craftsmanship.

THE VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT AND RIFLE SHOOTING FOR LEISURE

In 1859, at the dinner after the Kilwinning papingo, T. M'Farlane of Edinburgh said archery was becoming much more popular, with two or three new clubs being founded every month, and that it was popular because both men and women could enjoy it (*Ayr Advertiser*, 4 August 1859). On the first point, he was exaggerating and, as events were shortly to demonstrate, wrong.

The military volunteer movement was stimulated by fears of French invasion, fears which emerged in 1859 and were strengthened in following years by the xenophobic Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston. Rifle corps were established in every county, sometimes several of them. The rifle was seen as the weapon with which the individual Briton could repel the foreigner. Soon after, the National Rifle Association (NRA) was founded to organise shooting competitions, and it initiated a series of annual meetings at Wimbledon. They were moved to Bisley in 1890, and are still held there today. The meetings had the open support of royalty. Queen Victoria started the first meeting by pulling a cord attached to the trigger of a fixed rifle: the rifle scored a bull's eye. There

were dozens of competitions within the Wimbledon meetings, and the most prestigious was the Queen's Prize – the winner received the quite staggering sum of £250 (Cunningham 1975: 113-4).

Rifle shooting attracted the same kind of man to whom archery appealed: one with a little money and a little time to spare. The Volunteers were not equipped by the government, for they paid for their own arms and uniforms: thus a rifle was a common prize in NRA competitions. But to be a Volunteer was to be an active patriot, when the archer could only say that he was following a national tradition.

All archery clubs in Scotland faced competition from the Volunteers, as an observer reflected:

> A few years since, degeneracy marked the archery practice of Scotland, and this degeneracy was subsequently assisted by the rifle movement, which Scotland so heartily adopted and very speedily naturalised. This movement cast a wet blanket upon both cricket and archery, the local clubs especially feeling the influence of so powerful a rival. (*The Field*, 25 July 1863, in NASS Minutes, 76)

In some places a continuity can be detected between older diversions and the new rifle competitions. In the North-East of Scotland *wad shooting* – a sweepstake for shooting with an inaccurate gun – had been common on New Year's Day, and it was supplanted by Volunteer shooting competitions. At Innerleithen the silver arrow was shot for in rifle competitions by Volunteers (Burnett and Dalgleish 1995: 1182). The largest rifle range in the West of Scotland was at Irvine, and the West of Scotland Rifle Association, an offshoot of the NRA, held their meetings there from 1864 (Strawhorn 1985: 138). These meetings were in August, so they were almost at the same time as the annual gathering of the Irvine Toxophilites. It was only too obvious that one was supplanting the other.

The model for the NRA came from Switzerland, where the arming of able-bodied men, and the creation of shooting competitions – the *tir fédéral* – were seen as essential to the defence of the country's neutrality. Sixty Swiss riflemen attended the first NRA meeting, and they lined the ground between the marquee in which the Queen received visitors, and the tent from which she watched the shooting. When the prize winners were cheered, 'the ovation ... was especially enthusiastic' for the Swiss (*Illustrated London News*, 7 July 1860, 18, and 14 July 1860, 42).

The first winner of the Queen's Prize was a Scot, Edward Ross. In 1862 the first annual competition between Scotland and England at any sport, the Elcho Shield, was inaugurated by a Scots nobleman. There were eight riflemen in each team. In 1864 Lord Elcho said that:

> The first year we had only a chalk drawing of the shield, next year a plaster cast . . . but no sooner did it appear in a tangible form than Captain Ross and his seven have exerted themselves to obtain it, and are about to take it to Edinburgh to show what they have won. (*Illustrated London News*, 30 July 1864, 125)

The Elcho Shield was a large and elaborate piece of work: it stood at the top of a large and elaborate structure of organisation and competition. The Wimbledon rifle meeting was part of two enormous structures: first, that of the whole Volunteer movement, with its platoons, companies and regiments and the publicly-recognised system of military ranks; and second, that of the Volunteer shooting competitions, which went from the local level, usually the parish or company, through regional events, culminating in annual meetings at Wimbledon. Although the largest meetings were linked with summer Volunteer camps, and lasted several days, there were others throughout the year. In Scotland, many local competitions were held on New Year's Day.

OTHER FORMS OF SPORT

Archery suffered from competition from other sports. For example, the attendance at the 1863 papingo was said to be poor because it coincided with the Glasgow v Ayrshire bowling match which, ironically, had been initiated by the Earl of Eglinton in 1857 (*Ayr Advertiser*, 6 August 1863).

This was a period of rapid growth of sport (Holt 1989: 5-6). North Ayrshire was, along with Glasgow, the focus for the development of bowling. The first rules were written by W. W. Mitchell, a Kilmarnock man living in Glasgow, in 1849. In 1857 the Glasgow v Ayrshire competition for the Eglinton jug was instituted. Two years later another competition was started, for clubs of which Eglinton was patron – Kilwinning, Irvine, Dreghorn, Ardrossan, Dundonald and the one on the Eglinton estate (*Ayr Advertiser*, 8 July 1858). In 1860 the first large open competition was held at Kirkcudbright (*Wigtown Free Press*, 30 August 1860), drawing entries from the west of Scotland and the north-west of England.

Cricket was also expanding rapidly. The game probably reached Ayrshire in the 1830s, but in 1862 there were four clubs in Irvine, and Ayr had five senior and four junior ones (Strawhorn 1985: 136; Strawhorn 1989: 202). In England the game had greatly increased in popularity in the first third of the century: the presence of English soldiers in the garrison at Ayr was a means of stimulating its growth in the county. The 14th Earl of Eglinton started in 1866 a cricket competition for a silver tankard, on the model of his father's patronage of bowling and curling (*Ayr Advertiser*, 22 August 1866).

If cricket and bowling were, in the middle of the nineteenth century, sports for the shop keeper and the professional man, most quoiters were men whose work required strength – for so did the sport. It was probably the most popular summer sport in the Lowlands in the middle of the century. Not only were there quoiting meetings at which no other sports were played, but there were also quoiting competitions at every general games day. Thus before New Cumnock games in 1862, 'The brewer's cart from Catrine brought a promiscuous freight of keen quoiters and ale barrels' (*Ayr Advertiser*, 11 September 1862).

Horse racing attracted most of the large sporting crowds before the growth of football and rugby in the 1870s. Élite race meetings were held at ten locations in Scotland in the 1850s, and two of them were in Ayrshire: Ayr itself, and Eglinton Park (or Bogside), north of Irvine. As early as 1834 there were 20,000 present at the Western Meeting at Ayr (*Ayr Advertiser*, 11 September 1834). As soon as the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway was open, spectators travelled from the capital to Bogside Races (*Ayr Advertiser*, 5 May 1842). The races at Paisley, easily accessible by rail from 1840, also drew huge crowds. Archery was squeezed out of the calendar.

ARCHERY AND SHOOTING PRIZES

The reasons why individuals take part in a sport are various. As well as the enjoyment of exercising a skill, and the pleasures of sociability, there is also the desire to win the contest. We might therefore expect the physical nature of the prizes for a particular sport to reveal something about the greater or lesser importance of winning. Futhermore, the prize is such a flexible form – in that the type of prize has to be chosen, and in the case of decorative articles their shape and decoration can also communicate messages – that it can indicate aspects of the social and cultural contexts of the sport. Many prizes were given to a club by an individual, or given for a specific event in one year, and examination of the status of the donor also reveals something of the social relationships of sport.

Archery prizes from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries can be classified as follows. First, there was the apparatus of the sport: bows, arrows and other incidental items such as grease boxes. This kind of prize was comparatively uncommon. Next, there were silver replicas of arrows. In Scotland, these were owned by societies or by burghs, and the winner had the honour of holding the arrow for a year. The winner was bound to add a token of his victory in the form of an engraved disc, today normally, but misleadingly, referred to as a medal. The oldest, the Musselburgh Arrow, bears nearly 400 tokens, dating from 1603 to the present day. Nineteen silver arrows have been traced, of which twelve belonged to burghs, three to St Andrews University, one to Aberdeen Grammar School, and four to archery clubs. (Burnett and Dalgleish 1995: 1185-6). The Dalkeith Arrow (c.1727) was the last which came directly from the burgh tradition of archery: those at Paisley (1806), Innerleithen (1830), Kirkcudbright (1838) and Montrose (1850) can be regarded as self-conscious products of the medieval revival.

Rather than speculating about possible heraldic, literary, religious or mythological references in the choice of an arrow as a prize, we should recognise that in many pre-modern sports prizes, the apparatus stood for the activity. Thus in Cornwall, hurling matches were for a silver-coated ball, with which the game was played (Hole 1944: 41). In Scotland, two shooting prizes, the siller guns of Dumfries and Kirkcudbright, both of 1587/8, predate the first siller arrow. The silver golf clubs of Edinburgh (1744) and St Andrews (1754) follow the same pattern of a replica of a piece of equipment being used

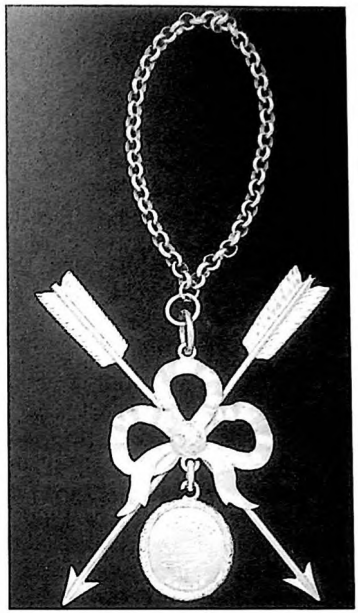

Fig. 4. Silver archery medal, Tyneside Games, 1836, with silver arrows added (NMS K.1998.1132). The medal has been converted into a wine label by engraving the word *Port* on the reverse, thus making it part of the ritual of celebratory drinking by the victor and others.

as a prize. These were all substantial trophies, the focus of their sport in their locality: in some instances, such as the Edinburgh siller club, the trophy preceded the society, which was created to administer the competition.

The third type of prize was originally intended to be worn. In some forms, such as the belt, the prize was an article of clothing. Others, including the medal and bugle, were equally objects which could be worn or displayed in the winner's home. The Eglinton Belt, which we have already mentioned, is an example; from it derived golf's Open Championship Belt which the Earl of Eglinton presented in 1860. Behind it lie the belts with which medieval knights were invested, and the collar of office which was worn by the winner or 'king' of archery guilds in the Low Countries (for example, Vanhoutryve 1989: 130-3).

The fourth group of prizes grew increasingly diverse as the nineteenth century advanced. These are objects which were for display and use in the home, particularly

on the dinner table (Fig. 4). The oldest surviving Scottish prize of this kind is the silver chocolate pot which was won at a horse race at Selkirk in 1721 (NMS H.MEQ 1065). An early archery example is a silver tray, engraved 'The King's Prize to the Royal Company of Scottish Archers, won by Thomas Charles Hope 21 July 1800'. (NMS H.MEQ 1625) Hope (1766-1844) was Professor of Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh from 1795 to 1843. A King's Prize may have been shot for in 1677, but the continuous history of the competition begins in 1787 when a prize of value £20 sterling was granted in the name of King George III. Before the winner could receive payment he was to produce a piece of plate of at least £20 value, bearing the royal arms and his own motto and device. The nature of the prize was thus the choice of the winner.

As the middle classes became more prominent in archery, this form of prize became much commoner. An early example from this phase is a silver salt cellar in a private collection, which is engraved on the base: 'KILWINNING ARCHERS BUTT / PRIZE / Presented to the Society / BY / Major George Vanburgh Brown / of Knockmarnock / Gained by Robert Knox Esqr. 19 July 1837'. After the middle of the century, there were even more. Among many others, there was a silver-plated coffee pot, 'The Captain-General's Prize, Elevated Target, Irvine Toxophilite Society, 1856' (Buchanan 1989: 24). At Kilwinning in 1860 the prize for butt shooting was a silver sugar basin (*Ayr Advertiser*, 30 August 1860). The following year, the first prize was a Britannia metal teapot, and the second and third each half a dozen spoons (*Ayr Advertiser*, 30 May 1861). In 1865 it was silver fish knife and fork (*Ayr Advertiser*, 27 July 1865). These are all the apparatus of polite socialising by the middle classes. If on the one hand they relate to the adoption of the range of table ware which had been the province of the wealthy, they are also the continuation of the long-standing practice in the sporting world, of dining after the contest. The difference is that whereas a cup or arrow would appear on the club's dining table once a year, the fish-knives were in a private house and could be used whenever the winner chose. As the nineteenth century progressed, sport was played much more often: events which had been annual, became weekly. Prizes, too, were much more frequently made to be admired. A silver flower vase was a prize at Kilwinning in 1863 (*Ayr Advertiser*, 3 September 1863).

The awarding of prizes was one of the methods by which patronage of sport was exercised. There was a long tradition of sportsmen putting up trophies for their own clubs. The earliest archery example in Scotland was the Kilwinning Arrow itself, given in 1724 to the Archers by David Mure, a Merchant in the town, who that year won it himself (Ker 1894: 335). The first prizes given to the Royal Company were medals presented by Colonel Spens in 1793 (Balfour Paul 1875: 333). These were all prizes given to the society for annual competition. Later came the prize which was for a specific year's competition, of which an example is the pair of silver sliders – stands for bottles or decanters – given by Captain M'Allister of Kennox, won by William Ferguson of the Partick Archers (*Glasgow Courier*, 31 August 1847). Another is the Partick archery medal (NMS H.1955.322). It was presented by the engineer David Tod (1796-1859),

Fig. 5. The Eglinton Belt Medal, 1853, won by John Crichton of Linn, near Dalry (NMS H.1995.309). The winner held the Belt for a year, but kept the medal.

who had worked with the famous David Napier at Camlachie and Lancefield, and went into a marine engineering partnership with John MacGregor in 1834. Tod was Provost of Partick from 1852 to 1857, and he saw patronage as part of his role, for he also presented a pair of bowls to be competed for between the burgh's Old and New Bowling Clubs (*Partick Illustrated Journal* no. 3, Nov. 1854).

The number of prizes increased after 1830: where archers had met for one or two competitions, each with a prize, the number of events proliferated and second and third prizes became common if not quite universal. The variety of different kinds of object which were given as prizes also increased, and became more diverse. Thus on the second day of the Irvine meeting of 1846, the archers shot at targets at 100 yards for a piece of silver, an archer's grease cup presented by Dr Thomas Manners of Edinburgh, which was both ornamental and useful, with, as a second prize, a bow presented by George Johnston of Redburn. The entrance money constituted a sweepstake which made up the third prize (*Illustrated London News*, 12 September 1846).

The cup, as a sporting prize, has its origins in the medieval communal drinking cup: the modern footballer who drinks from a silver cup is performing a ritual at least a thousand years old. In sport, the cup first appears in horse racing. The earliest example relating to archery is the Kilwinning Coconut Cup, which is silver-mounted with a wooden base, 'The prize butts at Kilwinning made and sett out by Robert Fullarton of Bartonholme. Esqr. For the year 1746.' (NMS H.SJ 59). This example, however, was

not followed: the cup did not become a common form of archery prize, though at Irvine its Gaelic equivalent, the quaich, did appear in 1848 (*Glasgow Courier*, 2 September 1848).

Another symbol of triumph, the medal, was much commoner. It can be seen in several ways: as the inversion of the practice of adding a token to a silver arrow (not giving to the club, but taking from it); as the adaptation of the usual form of curling trophy of the period, the club medal; and as a reward for military achievement (Fig. 5). The medal which William Ferguson won at Irvine in 1846 is in the National Museums of Scotland (H.1955.321): it is in the form of a 20-pointed star, 3.1 inches in diameter, and Tod's medal, mentioned above, was an eight-pointed star. These medals copy the stars worn by members of orders of chivalry, such as the Order of the Bath.

SPORT AND THE CALENDAR

Traditional annual archery competitions were thus supplanted by modern archery, and by shooting events which were held more frequently. This is part of a larger pattern. The annual ba' game was joined, and in many cases replaced, by the weekly soccer or rugby match. For the professional or semi-professional Highland Games competitor who was willing to travel, there were several games each week. Yet the change in the use of time was not merely a matter of increased frequency, for it also involved the creation of a 'season' for each sport. The new use of the word may come from its use in farming or in field sports: it emerged about 1850. A sport's season was more than the time when it was conventionally played, for it helped to shape periods of office-holding, and the employment of men such as the green keeper at the bowling club. It also suggested the time at which major fixtures should be held: at the end of the season. Football was the leading innovator in developing new kinds of competition which ran through the season but reached a climax at the end. The [English] Football Association Cup was first held in 1872 – Queen's Park of Glasgow were twice losing finalists in its early years – and the Scottish Cup followed in 1873. The Football League and Scottish Football League started in 1888 and 1890 respectively (McCarra 1984: 8-16). All over Europe, folk football has close links with traditional holidays, particularly Shrove Tuesday – Fastern's E'en in Scotland – and the various midwinter holidays. Association football in Scotland initially ignored this tradition. For example, in the 1870s there were no major fixtures over the period of Christmas and New Year. New Year's Day derbies were a deliberate invention: the first New Year game between Rangers and Celtic, such a distinctive feature of twentieth-century Scottish football, did not take place until 1894.

In some instances, social change reinforced the annual pattern of events. Carters' horse races, which were common in the first half of the nineteenth century in the Lothians and in a few other places, were held on the annual meeting days of the carters' friendly societies. The games day, whether Highland, Lowland or Border, was one of the most significant innovations in sport and leisure in Lowland Scotland in the early

nineteenth century. Partly derived from the idea of the traditional Highland Games – for which eighteenth-century evidence is notably scant – games were often attached to old annual holidays, such as the Rood Fair at Dumfries, held on the first Tuesday and Wednesday on or after the 24th and 25th September (Marwick 1890: 45).

Curling, dependent on cold weather, could be enjoyed on a much larger number of days following the invention of the artificial rink, a skin of ice laid down with a watering can on an impervious surface. Although there was a seasonal pattern to the times when it could be enjoyed, it was independent of the calendar in that curlers could be in action on any day of the week: farmers and those with control over their own time could participate, but those on a weekly wage were effectively debarred. Curling thus became largely a country, or perhaps we should say 'non-urban', sport though with the introduction of indoor ice rinks, it has made something of an urban revival. Soccer grew, and rapidly replaced curling as the Scots' leading sporting enthusiasm. Archery, well supported by middle-class Scotland in the middle of the nineteenth century, has been a minority sport since the 1860s.

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