

**William Kirkcaldy of Grange's memorandum of the contents of Mary's jewel coffer in Edinburgh Castle, 1 March 1570.**

**National Records of Scotland, E35/9/3.**

**Transcript, modernised text, images,.**

**Michael Pearce**

**Transcript**

Endorsed: Memoire of the Jowells that ar furth of the coffer

Item Mr Nycoll Elphingston<sup>1</sup> sauld the pearll in London for xiii or xiiii<sup>ct</sup> li qlk the Q[ueen] of Engl[and] hes for hir self & causit by them.

Item Mr John Wood<sup>2</sup> tuk with him in engl xix dyamants & rubeis with tua uthir stanes on a hingar<sup>3</sup> qlks Cornelius estemit worth xxiiij<sup>ct</sup> crowns, the qlks wer all brocht home againe be [me] Lord<sup>4</sup> quha at the same tyme tuk with him self the principall jowall callit the H the qlk me Lady Murray<sup>5</sup> hes with xij of the fornamed Rubeis & dyamants with syndrie uthir jowalls as the belt of curell and syndrie uthir stuff that was in Servays keiping.

Item the tresaurer hes the cross of dyaments with syndrie uthir stanes qlks he laid in wed to James Barron.<sup>6</sup>

Item ther was deliverit to William Birnye certan garnessings<sup>7</sup> of gold in wed of a thousand li.

Item ther is nane of the jowells owt of Scotl[and] nor yit wes ther ony put away in Engl[and] except the pearll qlk wes sauld as said is,

As to all the rest of the jowalls that wer aither send to engl with Mr Nycoll Elphinston or Mr John Wood wer brocht home at me L returnyng out of Engl[and].

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<sup>1</sup> Nicol Elphinstone of Schank, who worked for Regent Moray, and sold Mary's pearls to Elizabeth I.

<sup>2</sup> John Wood, secretary of Regent Moray, who was killed on 15 April 1570, Jane Dawson, "A Fife 'Murder Mystery'", *Gender in Scotland, 1200–1800, Place, Faith and Politics* (Edinburgh University Press, 2024), pp. 13–30.

<sup>3</sup> "hinger", a jewel such as a hat badge or pendant.

<sup>4</sup> "my Lord", Regent Murray brought home to Scotland jewels which he had taken to England.

<sup>5</sup> Agnes Keith, Countess of Moray, who retained the jewel known as the Great H or Harry of Scotland.

<sup>6</sup> Jewels were pledged for loans with the Edinburgh merchants James Barron and William Birny.

<sup>7</sup> A garnishing is usually a woman's headdress, suitable for wearing on a French hood.

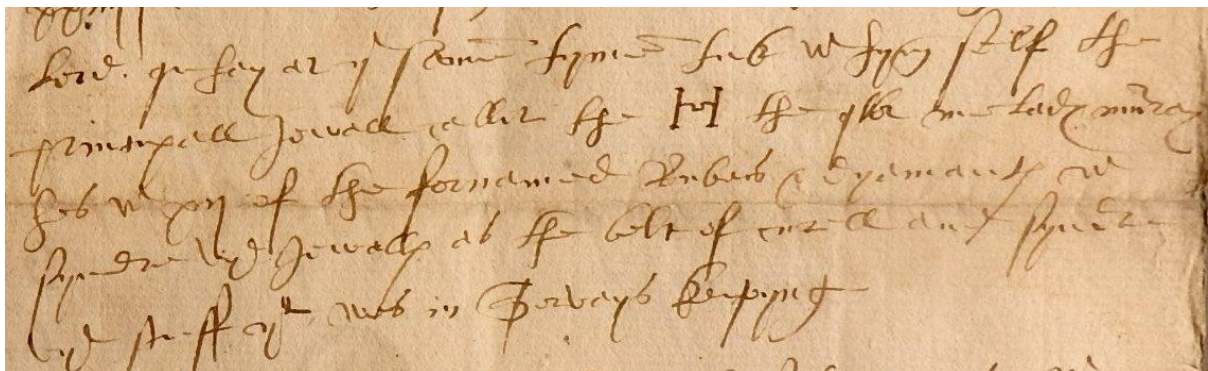
Sua me Lady Murray, the tresaurer Mr Nycoll, James of Murray of Polmayss<sup>8</sup> can tell if is been of all the jowalls that wer resavit fra Sir James Balfour<sup>9</sup> but specially Mr John Wood giff he haid bene alyf quha haid the inventorye of all the jowallis that wer tane furth of the coffer qlk inventorye is amangs his writyngs for he promesit the same to me .

My awin hand writ is in the coffer for certen of the jowalls that wer tane out, quhairof James Murray hes the keys and quha sa ev' [ever] got me lord purs quhen he deit hes the key of the hinging lok for he ware it aw' [ever] in his awin purs.<sup>10</sup>

Item quhatso ev' hes bene tane furth of the rest of the coffres or disponit of the stuff that wes in the Abay Servays & Balthasar aucht & sould mak compt therof for thay haid the kesis & keiping of it.<sup>11</sup>

At Edr castell the first of merche 1569 yeir.

[signed: W Kyrcauld]



... the principall jowall callit the H the quhilk me lady Murray hes with xij of the fornamed rubies & dyamants with syndrie uthir jowalls ...

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<sup>8</sup> John Murray, brother of the laird of Polmaise, later master of the wardrobe to James VI.

<sup>9</sup> James Balfour had been keeper of Edinburgh Castle and the jewel coffer.

<sup>10</sup> Regent Moray kept a key to the jewel coffer in the purse he usually wore.

<sup>11</sup> Balthazar Hully was a keeper of Holyrood Palace and Servais de Condé was a wardrobe servant.

## Modernised text

Endorsed: Memoir of the Jewels that are forth of the coffer

Item Mr Nicol Elphinstone<sup>12</sup> sold the pearl in London for 13 or 14,00 pounds which the Queen of England has for herself and caused buy them.

Item Mr John Wood<sup>13</sup> took with him in England 19 diamonds and rubies with two other stones on a hinger which Cornellius esteemed worth 1,400 crowns, which weer all brought home again by my Lord [Regent Moray]<sup>14</sup> who at the same time took with himself the principle jewel called the H which my Lady Murray<sup>15</sup> has, with 12 of the forenamed rubies and diamonds with sundry other jewels, such as the belt of coral and sundry oler stuff that was in Servais' keeping.

Item the treasurer has the cross of diamonds with sundry other stones which he laid in wed to James Barron.

Item there was delivered to William Birnye certain garnishings of gold in wed of £1,000.

Item there is none of the jewels out of Scotland nor yet was there any put away in England except the pearl which was sold as said is,

As to all the rest of the jewels that were either sent to England with Mr Nycoll Elphinston or Mr John Wood were brought home at my Lord [Regent Moray] returning out of England.

So my Lady Murray, the treasurer Mr Nycoll, James of Murray of Polmayss<sup>16</sup> can tell if is been of all the jewels that were received from Sir James Balfour but specially Mr John Wood if he had been alive, who had the inventory of all the jewels that were taken forth of the coffer which inventory is amongst his writings for he promised the same to me .

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<sup>12</sup> Nicol Elphinstone of Schank, who worked for Regent Moray, and sold Mary's pearls to Elizabeth I.

<sup>13</sup> John Wood, secretary of Regent Moray, who was killed on 15 April 1570, Jane Dawson, "A Fife 'Murder Mystery'", *Gender in Scotland, 1200–1800, Place, Faith and Politics* (Edinburgh University Press, 2024), pp. 13–30.

<sup>14</sup> "my Lord", Regent Murray brought home to Scotland the jewels which he had taken to England.

<sup>15</sup> Agnes Keith, Countess of Moray, who retained the jewel known as the Great H or Harry of Scotland.

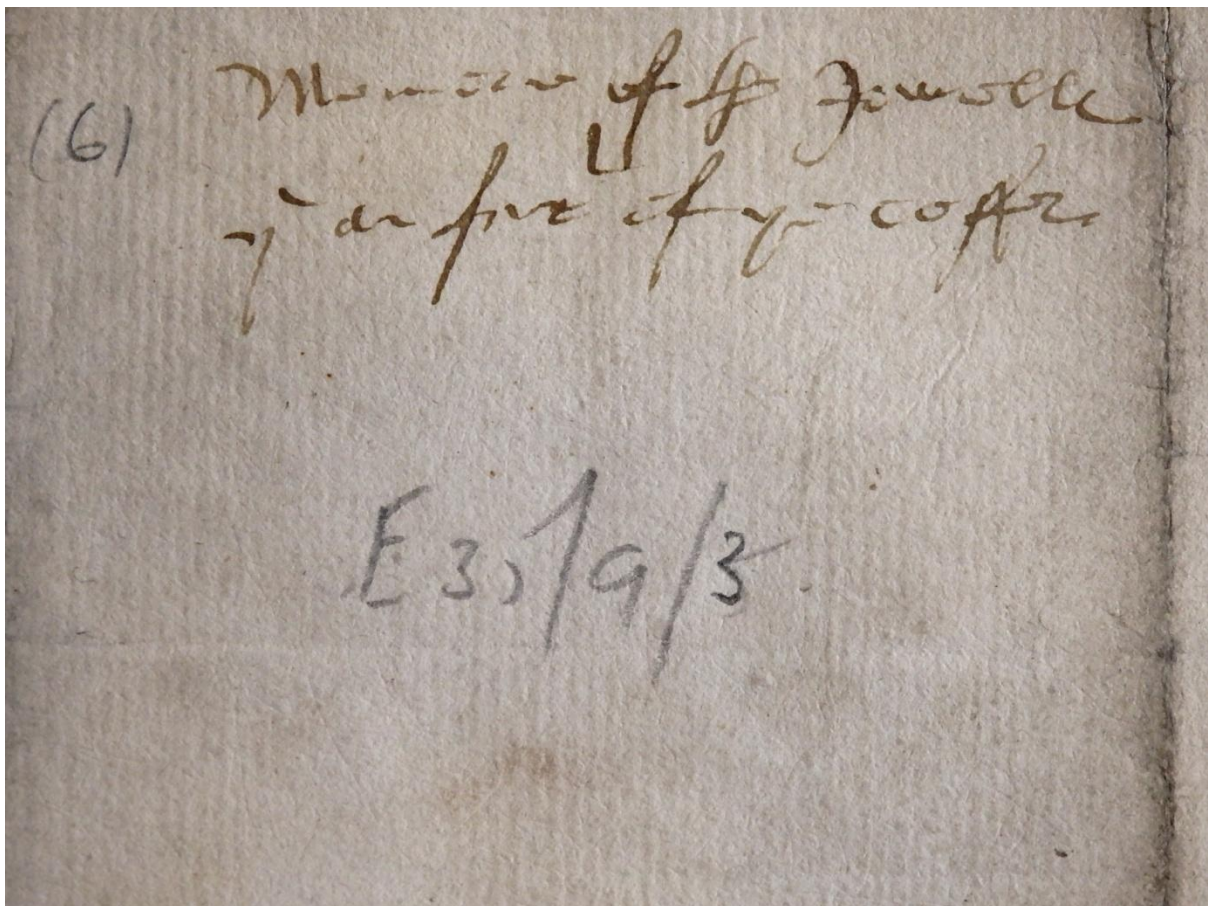
<sup>16</sup> John Murray, brother of the laird of Polmaise, later master of the wardrobe to James VI.

My own hand writ is in the coffer for certain of the jewells that were taken out, whereof James Murray [of Polmaise] has the keys and whosoever got my lord purse when he deid has the key of the hinging lock for he wore it always in his awin purse.

Item, whatsover has been taken forth of the rest of the coffers or dispoed of the stuff that was in the Abbey [Holyrood Palace], Servais and Balthasar [Hully] ought and should make compt thereof for they had the keys and keeping of it.

At Edinburgh Castle, 1 March 1569/70

W Kyrcauld



Memore of the Jowells that ar f[ur]th of the coffer



