

8: The Scientific Outlook

The Textile Industry

Little evidence remains today of the linen industry in Moray. During the 18th century it was important throughout the area, in both town and country.

1. Plaid

Woollen bed plaid woven in Elgin around 1785.

ELGNM: 1978.79

2. Sheet

Grown, spun and woven in Darnaway – note the embroidered 'D' in bottom right hand corner.

ELGNM: 1978.882

3. Curtain

Linen curtain, grown, spun and woven in Rothes, circa 1800-1850.

ELGNM: 1978.80

4. Tablecloth

Damask tablecloth woven in Elgin.

ELGNM: 1978.81

5. Spinning Wheel

Two-handed, upright spinning wheel for the spinning of flax, into linen, standing on three splayed legs. On loan from the National Museums of Scotland.

ELGNM: H.RC.23

6. Linen smoother

Glass linen smoothers were in use until the 19th century to smooth linen and to press pleats. It was especially effective on linen because it can be pleated and pressed cold as long as it is damp.

ELGNM: 1869.2

7. Bank Notes

British Linen Bank notes, 1949 and 1955. Founded as the British Linen Company in 1746, the bank was not formally chartered until 1849. The Elgin and Forres branches opened in the late 18th century when the linen trade was flourishing in Moray.

ELGNM: 2002.31

8. Spindle and whorl

From Croy, Pluscarden 1750–1850.

ELGNM: 1957.74

9. Shuttle and wool spool

Donated by Knockando Woolen Mill, of unknown date.

A waulkmill (or cloth-fulling mill; 'fulling' or 'waulking' in Scotland being a step in clothmaking which involves the cleansing of cloth, particularly wool, to eliminate oils, dirt and other impurities, making it thicker), was first referred to in the 1784 Parish records for Knockando.

ELGNM: 2003.7

The Enlightenment

10. Slave yoke

Brought home from Central Africa by Captain Walter Gordon Cumming when serving under Sir Harry Johnston in an Expedition for the suppression of the Slave Trade in 1901.

ELGNM: 1922.7

11. Book

Blair's Lectures by Hugh Blair, Professor of Rhetoric and Belle Lettres, University of Edinburgh, 1762-83. Hugh Blair was popular in his day and associated with the Edinburgh Enlightenment.

ELGNM: From Elgin Museum Library

12. Book

Ray Society Monograph of the British Nudibranchiate Molluscaby, Alder and Hancock, 1855. Donated by Miss Gordon, Gordon Street,

Elgin in 1901. It once belonged to George Gordon, Minister at Birnie.

ELGNM: From Elgin Museum Library

Brewing and Distilling

Brewing is not a new industry in Moray. There were 80 brewers in Elgin in 1687, when ale was safer to drink than water.

13. Bottle

Large bottle from the Dallas Inn.

ELGNM: 1969.7

14. Beer bottles

Two beer bottles from South Villa, Moss Street, Elgin. South Villa was the home of the Bennet family who were owners of the Elgin Brewery, founded in 1784. The Brewery stood just to the East of the Cathedral.

ELGNM: 1997.18

15. Tappit Hen

A tappit hen is traditionally a pewter tankard, usually with a distinctive knob on the lid, for drinking beer.

ELGNM: 1957.7

16. Hydrometer

For testing the specific gravity and thus the strength of whisky (see another type in the peephole to your right).

ELGNM: 1958.9

Fishing

Line fishing was an ancient skill, but the herring fisheries did not expand along the Moray coast until the middle of the 19th century. Good harbours were essential for success. Buckie's fine harbour was built in 1877.

17. Fisherman's boots

ELGNM: 1969.4

Tools of the Trade

Large wooden sailing ships were built in Kingston-on-Spey in the 18th and 19th centuries but, eventually, steam, steel and lack of harbour facilities brought the shipbuilding to an end.

18. Tools

From left to right - 4 tools from Newmill, Elgin and 1 chisel, 2 caulking irons and a set of parallel rulers from Anderson's Shipyard, Kingston.

ELGNM: 1996.8.6, 1996.8.2, 1996.8.3, 1972.3.14, 1972.3.17, 1972.3.29, 1972.3.4, 1972.3.6, 1972.3.27, 1972.3.12, 1996.8.11, 1996.8.10

19. Walking stick

Thomas Hustwick's stick with the story of shipbuilding engraved on its side. See more about Thomas Hustwick accompanying this exhibition, on the wall panel to your right.

ELGNM: 1856.2

In the Peephole

Hydrometer and book of Spirit tables for Sike's Hydrometer

A hydrometer is an instrument used to measure the specific gravity (or relative density) of liquids; that is, the ratio of the density of the liquid to the density of water. A hydrometer is usually made of glass and consists of a cylindrical stem and a bulb weighted with mercury or lead shot to make it float upright.

In the 1740s the Customs and Excise and the London brewers/distillers began to use Clarke's hydrometer. In 1802 the Board of Excise held a competition to find a better instrument, Bartholomew Sikes instrument was the winning design and was legislated in 1816 with the *Sikes Hydrometer Act* and remained the legal standard until 1907.

Both were kindly donated in August 2014 by Diageo Archives.

ELGNM: To be catalogued