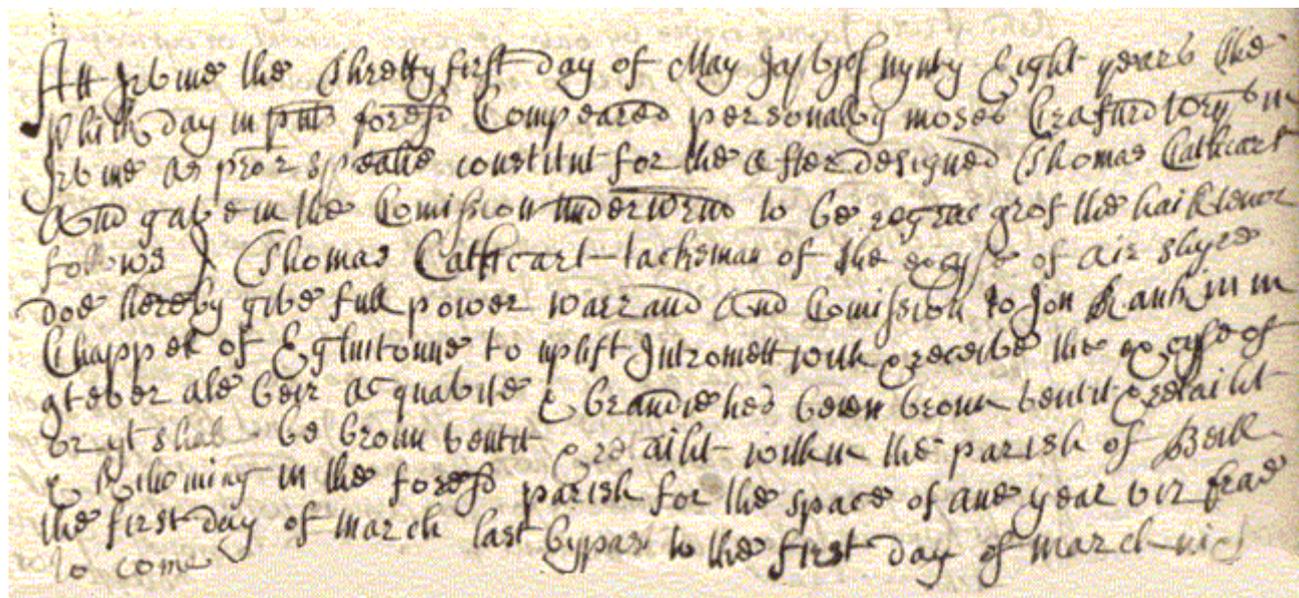


## Weekly Poser 356 - Deed from Bailliary Court of Cunninghame, 1698

This week's poser is the first part of a deed recorded in 1698 in the register of deeds from the bailliary court of Cunninghame (National Records of Scotland, RH11/19/8 page 83).



At first glance the hand might look quite modern and whole words (like *day* in line one and *power* in line 6) are immediately recognisable. However, once you begin to read the deed in detail, problems abound.

There is an issue with bleed-through from the page overleaf, which is compounded by the clerk having delayed replenishing his pen with ink slightly too long with occasional words and phrases. The last three words in this extract (*nixt to come*) is the worst example. This is a fairly common phrase in Scottish legal documents, so if you know many of the standard phrases in Scots Law for this period, you have a head start in reading these.

Abbreviations, particularly for common Scots legal terminology, are another factor but the clerk has been reasonably consistent in denoting these with heavy pen strokes above the words concerned. There is a *jaj* date in line 1 but we've already given you the year.

Double letters (especially the double-*t* and double-*l*) are occasionally hard to make out and the *h*, especially in the *th*-ligature is not written very clearly. Three separate forms of the letter *s* are used.

### This week's questions:

Who was Thomas Cathcart and what had he commissioned John Rankin to do?

<http://www.scottishhandwriting.com>

**Weekly Poser 356 - Deed from Bailliary Court of Cunninghame, 1698**

In this week's poser, taken from a register of deeds from the bailliary court of Cunninghame (RH11/19/8 page 83) we asked you who Thomas Cathcart was and what he had commissioned John Rankin to do.

**Answers:**

He was the tacksman of the Excise of Ayrshire (that is, he was in charge of collecting excise duties in Ayrshire) and he had commissioned John Rankin in Chapel of Eglinton to take responsibility for the collection (*uplift Intromett with & receive*) the excise duties due on ale, beer (*beir*), whisky (*acquavite*) and that had been brewed (*broun*), sold (*ventit*) and retailed (*retailit*) or would be brewed, sold and retailed in the parish of Beith & Kilwinning between 1 March 1698 (*last bypast*) to 1 March 1699 (*nixt to come*).

**Transcription:**

*Att Irvine the Thretty first day of May Jajvjc~nynty Eight years The  
Which day in p[rese]nt[is] fores[ai]d Compeared personally moses Craford wry[ter] in  
Irvine as pro[curato]r spe[ci]allie constitut for the afterdesigned Thomas Cathcart  
and gave in the Comission underwri[tti]n to be reg[istra]t q[uha]rof the haill tenor  
follows I thomas Cathcart tacksman of the excise of air shyre  
doe hereby give full power warrand and Comission to Jo[h]n Rankin in  
Chappell of Eglintoune to uplift Intromett with & receive the excise of  
q[uha]tever ale beir acquavite & brandie hes been broun ventit & retailit  
or th[a]t shall be broun ventit & retailit within the parish of Beith  
& Kilwining in the fores[ai]d parish for the space of ane year viz frae  
the first day of March last bypast to the first day of March nixt  
to come*

This poser was devised by Fodiator, a researcher from West Lothian.