

The ‘Silver Jack’ trophy of the Edinburgh Society of Bowlers

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*‘ . . . doucer folk wysing a-jee
The byas bowls on Tamson’s green.’
Allan Ramsay*

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a description of an 18th-century sporting trophy and investigates the history of the society to which it was presented.

INTRODUCTION

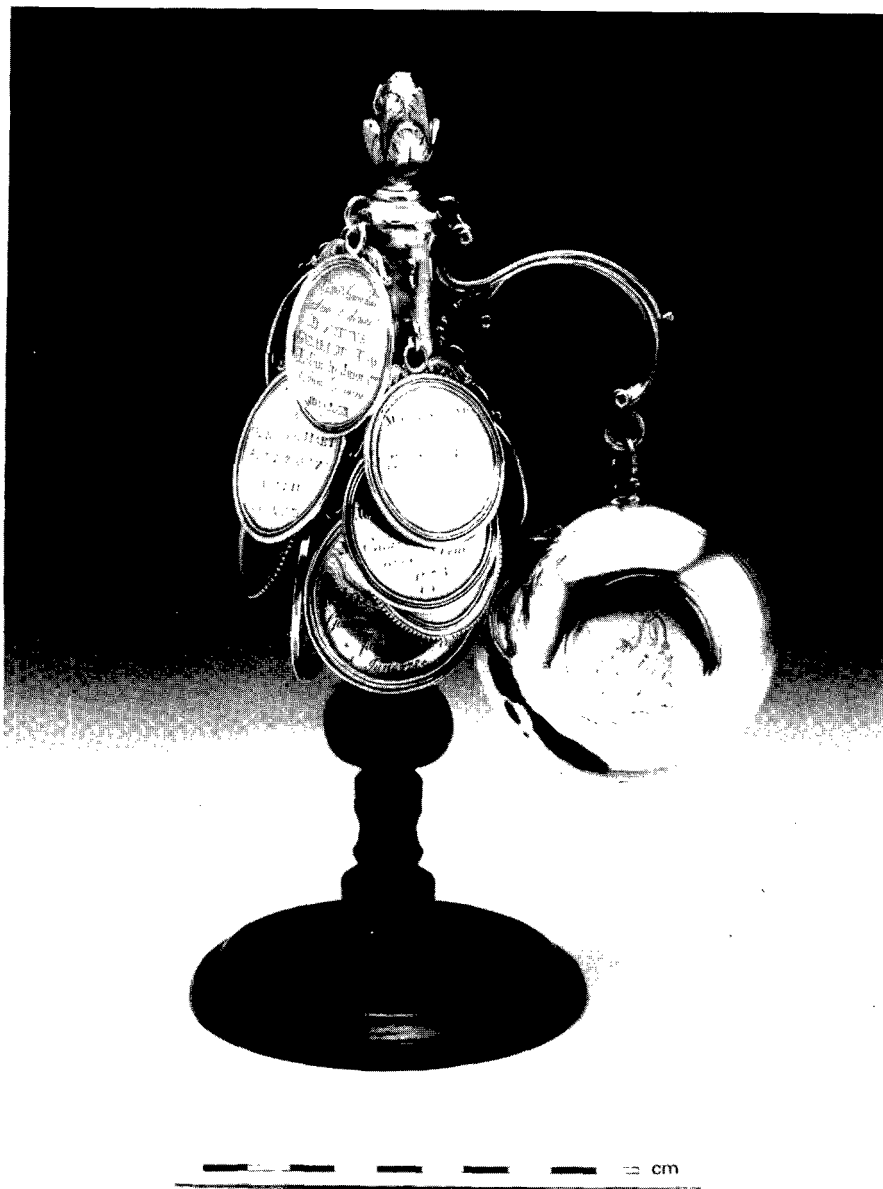
In April 1986, the National Museums of Scotland bought, from a silver dealer in London, a unique 18th-century bowling trophy. Known as the ‘Silver Jack’, it was originally presented as an annual trophy to the Edinburgh Society of Bowlers in 1771 (NMS registration *MEQ 1594*). The year before the Museums acquired it, it had appeared in an auction of Important English and Continental Silver held by Christie’s in New York (Christie’s 1985, lot 1167). Enquiries into the history of its previous ownership have, unfortunately, proved inconclusive, although it does seem it was in the possession of a London collector some time prior to its export to America.

Despite the lack of later provenance for the ‘Jack’ we are extremely fortunate to have considerable contemporary evidence for its original presentation and for the Society to which it relates. This article will present a detailed description of the trophy and then investigate its history, setting it within a context of the history of the sport in Edinburgh and Scotland.

DESCRIPTION (illus 1)

The trophy comprises a silver bowl, or more accurately, a ‘jack’, of flattened spherical form, 79 mm in diameter by 67 mm in width. Each side is engraved with two sets of concentric double rings, imitating the turned rings on a hardwood bowl. Within the centre of these rings is engraved: (r) the arms of the City of Edinburgh, consisting of the three-towered castle with its supporters, and the motto ‘NISI DOMINUS FRUSTRA’ above; (l) a male figure in 18th-century dress about to play a bowl (illus 2 & 3). The front of the Jack is engraved with the legend ‘Ex dono Magistri/GULIELMI TOD/ad Societatem Sphaeristarum/EDENBURGENSIS/An. Dom. 1771’ [Given by Mr William

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ILLUS 1 The 'Silver Jack' trophy, showing the Jack, the stand and winners' medals

Tod to the Edinburgh Society of Bowlers, 1771]. Soldered to the top of the Jack is a simple hook which fits into the loop terminal of the suspension arm of the stand.

The stand, 245 mm high, is of turned rosewood and is made up of a circular stepped base supporting a spool and baluster stem. The top of this stem is encased with a silver 'sleeve', 100 mm in length, terminating in an acanthus knob finial. A double-scroll, 'C'-shaped suspension arm is



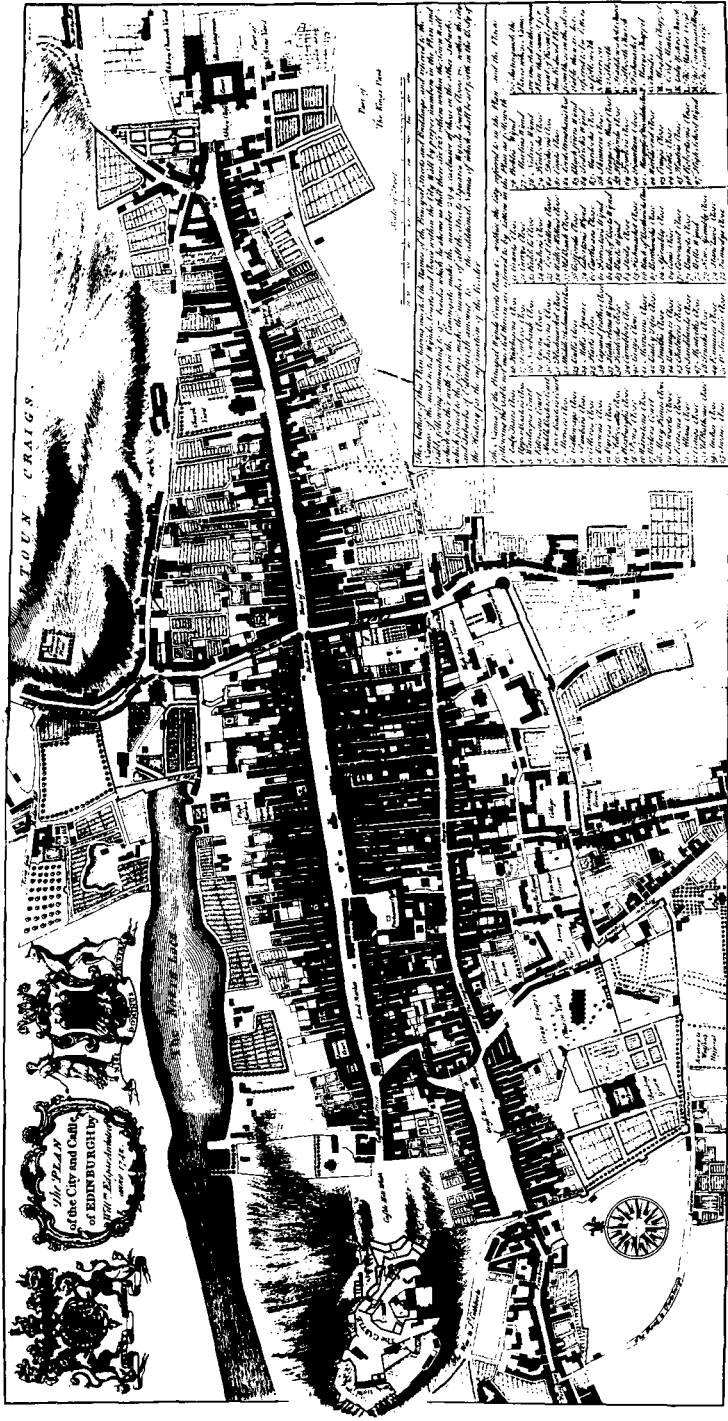
ILLUS 2 The Jack, detail showing the arms of the City of Edinburgh

soldered to the upper section of the sleeve. This ends with an acanthus terminal with the loop for suspending the Jack. (The shape of this arm and the fact that it is of a slightly different style from the rest of work on the trophy, suggests that it might originally have been a standard casting for a handle for a cup, reused for its present purpose.)

The sleeve also has soldered to it 14 complete simple hooks and the remains of four others which have been broken off. From these hooks hang the 12 remaining winners' medals of the trophy. These



ILLUS 3 The Jack, detail showing 18th-century bowler



ILLUS 4 William Edgar's Plan of Edinburgh, 1742 ed

are more fully described in the appendix (p 000) and are discussed below (p 000), but the following list presents a simple table of the winners' names and their date sequence:

1st	[Missing]	1771
2nd	William Tod	1772
3rd	Joseph Williamson	1773
4th	Maitland Bannatyne	1774
5th	William Beg	1775
6th	Charles Sibbald	1776
7th	[Missing]	1777
8th	John McKnight [he also won the trophy in 1785 and inscribed this on this medal]	1778 (& 1785)
9th	John Thomson	1779
10th	[Missing]	1780
11th	George Stewart	1781
12th	Orlando Hart	1782
13th	Thomas Armstrong	1783
14th	John Hepburn	1784
	John McKnight [see 8th]	1785
15th	[Missing]	1786
16th	John Thomson [also won in 1779]	1787
17th	[Missing]	1788
18th	[Missing]	1789.

There is no evidence on any part of the trophy of either makers' marks or of hallmarks.

HISTORY

Sporting trophies of this type, ie a central 'prize' which was competed for annually and then had medals appended to it recording the winners, are known for a variety of sports in Scotland from the early 17th century right up to the present day. The earliest extant trophies relate to horse racing, archery and golf. Numerous silver bells are recorded as burgh prizes for horse racing in the early 17th century, while the earliest golfing trophies comprise silver clubs with inscribed silver balls appended by the yearly winner. Silver arrows were similarly presented as prizes for archery.

Bowling seems to have been an ancient pastime in Scotland, with some authorities claiming an ancestry back to the 13th century (SNPG Cat *Sport in Scotland*, 17). Certainly by the 16th and 17th centuries there are numerous references to bowling greens existing in both the burghs and as part of the pleasure grounds of many country houses. Lady Grisell Baillie went to considerable effort and expense to lay out and maintain a green at Mellerstain. This cost some £7 3s 1d sterling in the years 1710 and 1711, and there are notes of additional costs in subsequent years to maintain it (Scott-Moncrieff 1911, LXII, 251ff). Archbishop James Sharp also seems to have been a keen bowler, purchasing numerous sets of 'byas boullis' during his visits to London. Five pairs of bowls, for example, bought in July 1666, cost him £21 Scots (Stirton 1929, 226).

During the same period bowls played a part in a premonition of an impending death. Robert Woodrow recounts that when the marquis of Argyll was playing bowls with some gentlemen of his clan

'one of the players, when the Marquis stooped down to lift the bullet [bowl] fell pale, and said to them about him, "Bless me! what is that I see? My Lord with his head off, and all his shoulders full of blood?"' (Woodrow's *Analecta*, quoted in Fittis 1891, 200).

This prophecy, if such it was, proved accurate, as Archibald eighth earl and first marquis of Argyll was executed for his adherence to the Covenants after the restoration of Charles II in 1660.

In Edinburgh, bowling greens had been available from at least the mid-16th century. In October 1552 a tax was proposed to pay for the setting up of grounds for bowling and other 'necessaris and plessouris, betwix the Grey Freyr Porte and the Kirk of Field' (*Edin Recs*, 2 Oct 1552). Judicial attempts to control or prohibit various kinds of public sports and amusements are often useful indicators as to their general popularity. In 1581 an act of council was passed in an attempt to prevent 'profanation of the Sabbath [by] . . . discharging all kynd of gemmis and playis now commonly usit the said day, sic as bowling in yairdis, dansing, playing . . .' (*ibid*, 4 August 1581). This act obviously had little effect as it was often repeated in later years. Similarly, the keepers of billiard tables, kyle alleys and bowling greens were commanded in 1695 not to let any of the scholars of the Towns College into their establishments during term time (*ibid*, 22 May 1695).

By the first half of the 18th century there were several greens in the burgh, including three near Heriot's Hospital, two in the Canongate and one behind Holyrood House (illus 4) (Chambers 1868, 247). The most famous, however, was that run by a man called Thomson, on the area of ground behind the Excise Office in the Cowgate. Allan Ramsay commemorated it thus

'Driving their ba's frae whins or tee,
There's no ae gouffer to be seen
Nor doucer folk wysing a-jee
The byas bowls on Tamson's green.'

The green was later run by Thomson's widow, who failed to pay the half-yearly rent of £6 and became a bad debt on the Excise's books (Chambers 1868, 247).

There was therefore a long history for the sport in Edinburgh before the first reference to an organized society. The 'Edinburgh Society of Bowlers' was formally constituted as a 'a Corporation or Body Corporate' by a seal of cause granted to them by the Town Council of Edinburgh on 15 November 1769. This was the result of a petition they had submitted to the council in the previous July. It is obvious, however, that some form of organized group existed prior to this, as in 1768 they had sought and were granted a 21-year lease from the Governors of Heriot's Hospital for a fairly substantial piece of ground to the south of the Hospital (*Minutes*, 15 November 1769). This comprised an area which had originally been laid out as a bowling green but which had evidently fallen into disrepair (*ibid*, 26 July 1768). The Bowlers also leased the area known as the 'Wilderness' or inner garden area immediately to the east of the old green. The Governors of Heriot's gladly granted them this ground in order that ' . . . an exercise so beneficial to the health of the inhabitants might not be totally lost for the want of Greens' (Steven 1872, 124). The Society employed John Wood, the tenant of a house in Heriot's gardens to level and lay out two new greens. Wood was given permission by the Town Council to cut turf from an area on the west side of Leith Walk for this purpose (Armet 1956, 185). His house was also conveniently situated to be used by the Society for convivial gatherings after their sport and also for their annual general meeting on the first Friday in April (*Minutes*, 26 July 1769).

The first documentary evidence for the presentation of the Jack as their annual trophy is provided by Hugo Arnot when he states this was

' . . . gifted to the company in May 1771, by Mr William Tod, senior, merchant. The jack is played for annually [in June]; and the gainer appends a medal, with any subscription agreeable to him, the expense of the medal being defrayed by the company' (Arnot 1788, 362).

This practice is similar to a variety of other contemporary sports, including archery, where the Royal Company of Archers shot for a number of trophies including the Musselburgh Arrow, the Edinburgh Arrow and the Silver Punchbowl (Balfour Paul 1875, 305ff).

Helen Armet, in one of her illuminating and entertaining dips into the city archives published in the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, quotes extensive extracts from the Society's initial petition and their eventual Seal of Cause. These include a set of 'Regulations relative to the Exercise of Bowling' and a complete list of the 41 founder members of the Society (Armet 1956, 185). A preliminary analysis of this list along with the list of winners of the trophy allows one to make some fairly general observations about the composition of the Society and the nature of the sport.

As with most other organized sports of this period it was enjoyed and indulged in by a fairly privileged minority. The age of mass participation sport was a long way off. The majority of the Bowlers seem to have been burgesses of the city and most were from the merchant or professional classes, including several lawyers and accountants. Only one or two were craftsmen, including the exotically named Orlando Hart, a shoemaker, who gained the Jack in 1782 (see appendix, p 196) and George Stewart, a printer, who won it the previous year. All of the medal winners considered themselves to have sufficient status to have armorials, crests or mottos engraved on their medals. Some took their right to arms seriously, describing themselves as 'armiger' on their medals (Joseph Williamson 1773 and George Stewart 1781, see appendix, p 196), while at least one other seems to have approached it in a more lighthearted manner. The charming engraving of a rather sly fox with a stolen chicken in its mouth on William Tod's medal (1772) is a canting reference to the old Scots name for a fox – tod.

The social make up of the Bowlers parallels to a certain degree that of the Royal Company of Archers, and indeed several of the Bowlers were also members of the Archers (eg Joseph Williamson, admitted to the Archers 20 July 1776; Charles Sibbald, admitted 22 June 1776, the same date he won the Jack; John Hepburn, admitted 4 December 1784, again the same year he won the Jack; possibly George Stewart, admitted 6 July 1776 (Balfour Paul 1876, Appendix II, 370). Unlike the Archers, however, the Bowlers seem to have had no aristocratic members and there is a definite feeling that they were, as a group, slightly further down the social scale.

The Society continued its tenure of the Heriot greens for about 20 years until its affairs were radically altered by the advancing tide of city improvements. When the old city wall, which had previously enclosed the grounds to the south of Heriot's Hospital, was demolished about 1786, the Bowlers soon deserted their original greens, apparently because of the consequent lack of privacy (Steven 1872, 132). This also had serious consequences for John Wood, who had become in effect their clubmaster and greenkeeper. He applied to the Governors of Heriot's for a small financial compensation

'... in consequence of the privacy of the ground being thus broken in upon, and the desertion of his bowling-green, by which he lost the advantage of the bowling parties that assembled at his house after the amusement was over.' (*ibid*)

After losing their greens at Heriot's, the Bowlers were offered the use of the existing green at the rear of Archer's Hall, further evidence of the strong links between the two institutions. The Hall itself had been built in 1776/7 on ground originally feued by the Archers from the Hope Park in 1726. James Balfour Paul in his *History of the Royal Company of Archers* (1876, 265) comments that

'In 1791 (sic), the bowling green at Heriot's Hospital being abolished, the one in the grounds attached to the Hall was ordered to be put in repair "for the accommodation of gentlemen only". It was to be open to the public, archers having no special preference. It had probably not been much patronized since its construction in 1770.'

This green is still in use today by the Edinburgh Bowling Club as tenants of the Royal Company. This is now the senior bowling club in the city, having been founded on 5 June, 1848 (Hay 1951, 75–8). Despite the 50 or so year gap and although there seems to be no documentary evidence, it is more

than likely that the present Edinburgh Bowling Club is in fact the direct descendant of the Edinburgh Society of Bowlers after they moved to Archers Hall.

It is undoubtedly significant that the winners' medals on the Jack come to a halt in the last years of the 1780s. With their move to new greens, the Society may have felt they should discontinue playing for the old Jack. It is possible that they instituted a new prize trophy for their new grounds. If this was the case, however, such a trophy does not seem to have survived, making the existence of the Jack all the more significant.

The available evidence makes it difficult to say how genuinely popular bowling was among all sections of society. Certainly the large number of greens in Edinburgh, for example, would argue for a fairly widespread access. Dr Thomas Somerville of Jedburgh in his *My Own Life and Times* suggested that in 1741

'bowls were a common amusement. Every country town was provided with a public bowling green . . . All classes were represented among the players, and it is usual for players of different ranks to take part in the same game' (Fittis 1891, 200).

Analysis of the membership of the Edinburgh Society of Bowlers however, suggests that, as with other organized sporting clubs, participation was confined to the middle and higher ranks of burgh society. Robert Chambers may have been alluding to this when he commented 'in those days (c 1730) bowling was a much more prevalent amusement than now, being chiefly a favourite with the graver order of the citizens' (Chambers 1868, 247–8). The desertion of the Heriot's green by the Edinburgh Society because of lack of privacy would also suggest that participation in the sport was somewhat exclusive, certainly for the members of the Society.

APPENDIX

LIST OF REMAINING MEDALS ATTACHED TO THE TROPHY

The following list gives a brief description of each medal and its inscriptions, its size in mm followed by some biographical notes on its winner. Where heraldic tinctures are given the medals are engraved with the Petra Sancta system.

The medal for 1771 is missing

Medals 1–7 are all circular with simple reeded rims and circular suspension loops supported by pierced acanthus leaves.

- 1 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'Victor Secundus/idem et donor/DOMINUS/GULIELMUS TOD/Edin: die Junii 1^{me}/Anno Domini/MDCCLXXII' [Mr William Tod, second winner and donor, Edinburgh, 1 June 1772].

Rev Plain, engraved with a fox with a hen in its mouth and in a ribbon above the motto 'OPORTERT VIVERE'.

Diam 44.

William Tod senior, was one of the founder members of the Bowlers Society and presented them with the silver Jack as their annual trophy (see above p 190; Arnot 1788, 362). He was admitted guildbrother on 4 August 1742 (*Edin Burg*). The engraving of the fox on his medal is a canting reference to his surname.

- 2 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'Victor Tertius/nec non adhuc Praeses/JOSEPHUS WILLIAMSON/Armiger./Edin': Junij die 12/Anno Dom./1773' [Joseph Williamson, esquire, third winner and also hitherto President, Edinburgh, 12 June 1773].

Rev Plain, engraved with a closed book and the motto 'CORPUS JURIS' in a ribbon above and 'QUID LEGES SINE MORIBUS' in a ribbon below.

Diam 44.

Joseph Williamson was probably the son of an advocate who was admitted burgess and guildbrother *gratis* by act of Council for good services to the town on 9 March 1763 (*Eden Burg*). A writer, he became

one of the principal clerks in the Commission of Teinds. He was one of the founder members of the Society (Armet 1956, 185; *Minutes*, 15 November 1769) and was admitted as a member of the Royal Company of Archers on 20 July 1776 (Balfour Paul 1875, 370). He married a Miss Jacky Neilson of the West Kirk parish on 5 May, 1778 (*Edin Mars*) and lived at Leven Lodge (*Directory* 1780–81).

- 3 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'Victor quartus/Mait^d. Bannantine (sic)/Edin: Junii die 11/Anno Dom./M.DCCLXXIV' [Maitland Bannatyne, fourth winner, Edinburgh, 11 June 1774].

Rev Plain, engraved with a crest – a griffin holding a sword, and the motto 'NEC CITO NEC TARDE' in a ribbon above.

Diam 42.

Maitland Bannatyne was another of the founder members of the Society (Armet 1956, 185; *Minutes*, 15 November 1769). A merchant, he became a burges and guildbrother on 20 November 1751 (*Edin Burg*) and the next year was recorded as living in Rae's land in Bull's Close East (Gilhooley 1988, 6). By 1774 he was described as a grocer at the head of Dickson's close (*Directory* 1774–5) and on 9 November 1777 he married Margaret, daughter of the deceased James Kirkland, surgeon at Gogar (*Edin Mars*).

- 4 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'Victor Quintus/William Beg/EDINBURGH/Junii Die 10/Anno Dom:/1775' [William Beg, fifth winner, Edinburgh, 10 June, 1775].

Rev Plain, engraved with arms: an oval shield with foliate swags beneath – a chevron between two cinquefoils in chief and a boars head in base; crest – a sprig of leaves; with the motto 'DETUR DIGNISIMO' in a ribbon above.

Diam 47.

A William Beg, merchant and officer of the Excise, became a burges by right of his wife Isobel (who he had married on 9 June 1754 (*Edin Mars*)), daughter of Robert McGill, barber and wigmaker on 6 November 1754 (*Edin Burg*). Two years before this he was recorded as a gauger with the Excise living at Hallyburton's land in the Cowgate (Gilhooley 1988, 6, 81). He became a guildbrother a few years later on 20 July 1763 when he was again described as a merchant. By the time of his second marriage to Miss Marrion Trail on 3 June 1780 he had become a supervisor of Excise at Leith (*Edin Mars*; *Directory* 1774–5 & 1780–81).

- 5 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'M^R. CHA^S. SIBBALD/writer in/EDINBURGH./gain'd the Silver Jack-/June 1776.'

Rev Plain, engraved with arms: oval shield with a cross moline within a bordure chequy; crest – a hand holding a scimitar; with the motto 'SAE BAULD' in a ribbon above and 'VENI VEDI VICI' in a ribbon below.

Diam 42.

Charles Sibbald is, unfortunately, a rather shadowy figure. He is not mentioned in any of the appropriate Apprentice, Burgess of Marriage registers. He was, however, recorded as being a writer living in Byre's Close in 1774 (*Directory* 1774–5) and was admitted to the Royal Company of Archers on 22 June 1776 (Balfour Paul 1886, Appendix II, 370).

The medal for 1777 is missing

- 6 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'MR JOHN M^C.KNIGHT/Writer in/EDINBURGH/Gained the Silver Jack/June 1778 & in/June 1785'.

Rev Plain, engraved with an embattled tower, with the motto 'I HOPE IN GOD' in a ribbon above.
Diam 50.

Although unrecorded in the burges registers, a John McKnight, writer, was recorded as living in Currie's Close in 1780 (*Directory* 1780–81). Two years later, on 10 September, he married Sarah daughter of the deceased William Downie, watchmaker in the New North parish (*Edin Mars*).

- 7 *Obv* Plain, engraved with 'M^R. JOHN THOMSON/Teacher/of/MATHEMATICS/Gained this jack/19th. of June/1779.'

Rev Plain, engraved with a crest: a stags head; with the motto 'FACTO PRUDENNTIA MAJOR' in a ribbon above.

Diam 52.

John Thomson, mathematician, lived in Skinner's Close in 1780, having married, on 1 December 1778, Elizabeth, daughter of the deceased Major Hamilton of Olive Stab (*Directory* 1780–81; *Edin Mars*). He also won the jack in 1787, see no 12 below.

The medal for 1780 is missing

- 8 Oval medal with plain moulded rim, a circular suspension ring supported by pierced acanthus leaves.
Obv Plain, engraved with 'VICTOR/UNDECIMUS/GEORGIUS STEWART/ARMIGER/TYPOGRAPHIAE REGIAE/IN SCOTIA/CONDUCTOR/XVI die Junij/MDCCLXXXI' [George Stewart, esquire, the King's Printer in Scotland, eleventh winner, 16 June 1781].
Rev Plain, engraved with arms: in a circular shield – a fess chequy, surmounted by a bend engrailed charged with three buckles, and between a buckle in sinister chief and an escallop in dexter base: crest – a demi lion rampant holding a star; the motto 'SUFFIBULATUS MAJORES SEQUOR' in a ribbon above.

Height 55; Width 42.

Stewart was another of the founder members of the Society. Although there is no record of him being admitted as a burgher or guildbrother, he is noted as being a printer in Old Greyfriars parish when he married Hannah daughter of the Rev Mr Cunningham at East Barns on 19 September 1780 (*Edin Mars*). He may or may not be the George Stewart who became a member of the Royal Company of Archers on 6 July 1776 (Balfour Paul 1875, App II, 370).

- 9 Oval medal, simple moulded rim, with shaped oval suspension ring supported by pierced acanthus leaves.
Obv Plain, engraved with 'DUODECIMUS/VICTOR/ORLANDO/HART/EDINBURGENSIS/14 JUNII/MDCLXXXII' [Orlando Hart, twelfth winner, Edinburgh, 14 June 1782].
Rev Plain, engraved with arms: on a heart shaped shield surrounded by a wreath – Gules, on a chief argent, three hearts; crest – a hand holding a lance; motto above 'FORTITUDE FIDEQUE'.

Height 57; Width 40.

Although he is not mentioned in the Apprentice Registers, Orlando Hart became a burgher as a shoemaker on 19 January 1763 (*Edin Burg*). Twelve years before this he was recorded as a journeyman shoemaker when he married Elizabeth Henderson, daughter of a tailor in Water of Leith, on 13 October 1751 (*Edin Mars*).

- 10 Oval medal, reeded rim and beaded edge, with shaped oval suspension ring supported by pierced acanthus leaves.
Obv Plain, engraved with 'Lieu'../Tho'. Armstrong/80th. Reg'./Gained this Jack/June/1783'.
Rev Plain, engraved with arms: Azure, a fess Or, between two arms in armour; crest – an arm holding a club; with the motto 'INVICTA LABORE' in a ribbon above.

Height 60; Width 40.

Armstrong was appointed as a Lieutenant in the 80th Regiment of Foot on 27 January 1778 (*Army List 1779*). As this regiment was raised in Edinburgh to fight in the American War of Independence and was sent to New York in August 1779, he would have seen service there. He last appears on the Regimental role in 1783 and his regiment was disbanded a year later (*ibid*, 1783). Armstrong put his military experience to use a few years later, in June 1795, when he became the Captain of the East Old Town Company of the newly formed Royal Edinburgh Volunteers. He was recorded as being a coppersmith in Niddrie Street (Anon nd, List of the Corps, 24). His membership of the Volunteers is confirmed in one of Kay's Portraits of the original officers of the corps (Kay 1837, I, 237).

- 11 Oval medal, reeded rim and beaded edge, with shaped oval suspension loop supported by pierced acanthus leaves.
Obv Plain, engraved with 'June 1784/this Jack/& Prize Bowls/were gained/by/M^r. Jo Hepburn'.
Rev Plain, engraved with a crest: a tree with a saddled horse below; with the motto 'KEEP TRAIST' in a ribbon above.

Height 58; Width 40.

John Hepburn was another of the Society's founder members who won their annual competition. Unfortunately, however, the records are not clear about him. A John Hepburn, son of a tenant farmer in Bearford parish was apprenticed to George Pitcairn, a merchant, on 5 February 1752 (*Edin Apprents*). No one of that name is recorded as a burgher at this period and the next time the name is mentioned is when John Hepburn, a surgeon in College Kirk parish, married a Miss Mary Smith on 15 June 1766 (*Edin Mars*). They were living in the Fleshmarket close in the Canongate by 1775 (*Directory 1774-5*). Another John Hepburn, an accountant with the Excise Office, was admitted to the Royal Company of Archers on 4 December 1784 (Balfour Paul 1875, App II, 371) and his address had earlier

been given as the Castlehill (*Directory* 1774–5). It is more than likely that it was this last Hepburn who won the Jack, as there is certainly a precedent for the winner to join the Archers in the same year (see Charles Sibbald, No 5 above).

This medal contains the only reference to another prize as well as the Jack. It is possible that the 'Prize Bowls' mentioned were retained by the winner, whereas he had to return the Jack at the end of the year.

The winner for the year 1785 was John MacKnight, who engraved this year's inscription on this previous medal (see No 6 above).

The medal for 1786 is missing

12 Oval medal, reeded rim and beaded edge, with shaped oval suspension loop supported by pierced acanthus leaves.

Obv Plain, engraved with 'JUNE 1787/this Jack/was gained by/M^r Joⁿ. Thomson/EDIN^R.'

Rev Plain, engraved with a crest: a stag's head; with the motto 'FACTO PRUDENTIA MAJOR' in a ribbon above.

Height 61; Width 41.

John Thomson also won the Jack in 1779 (see No 7 above). There is no mention of prize bowls having been won this year.

There are broken hooks on the stand for two further medals, taking the sequence of medals up to 1789.

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