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Society of Antiquaries
of **Scotland**

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A Silver Coffee-Pot and Hot Milk Jug by Colin McKenzie, 1713

by Stuart Maxwell

With the aid of generous grants from the National Art-Collections Fund, the Pilgrim Trust and this Society's Special Purchase Fund, the Museum has bought a silver Coffee Pot and a Hot Milk Jug (Pl. 24c) made by Colin McKenzie of Edinburgh in 1713.¹ Both pieces were made for George Baillie of Jerviswood and Mellerstain, and bear his arms. Baillie's heir, his daughter Rachel, married Lord Binning, eldest son of the 6th Earl of Haddington, and his plate descended in that family.

The octagonal coffee pot, in the English Queen Anne style, is the earliest known Scottish example. The jug is more unusual in shape, though similar jugs are known in England; the maker resisted any temptation he may have had to fashion what would have been a heavy, smaller version of the pot and instead produced a matching piece which stands on its own.

Baillie's wife, Lady Grisell Baillie, left 'Household Books', extracts from which were published by the Scottish History Society,² and are an important source for social history. There is no mention of this silver therein, but Lord Haddington kindly allowed the originals to be examined, and the following entry was found on page 343 of the first volume, under the general heading 'Mellerstaine Jan^y 1714 Expence Houshold Furniture' –

To Mckinzie Gold Smith for workmanship of the Silver Coffie pot & Milk pot at 2s 2d p: ounce
& there was some odds in the weight of plate I gave him to make them off they weight 50
ounces 14 drop and three handles cost 17s 6.8.3

The customer often supplied silver (plate) and was charged only for the workmanship, and usually, but not in this case, separately for the engraving. Having three handles made at once

¹ Sotheby's, London; 30th November 1967. Previously exhibited at the Royal Scottish Museum. (1921-52); see the *Burlington Magazine* for March

1936 and I. Finlay, *Scottish Gold and Silver Work* (London, 1956).

² Ed. by R. Scott-Moncrieff, 1911.

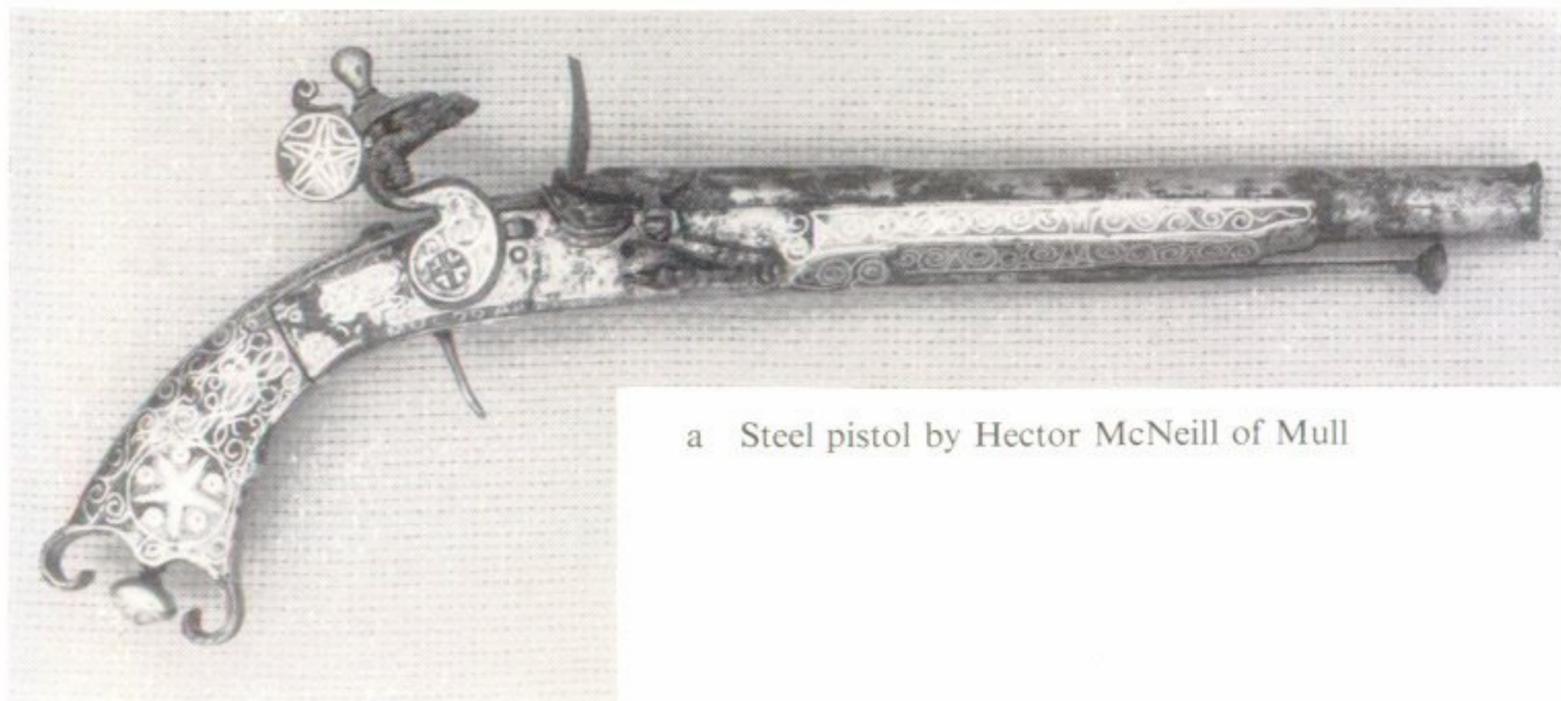
seems to show pessimism; it may, however, have been justified, for under 1715 in the Household Book¹ is the entry

For puting a handel in the Milk pot 0.2.6

Colin McKenzie was one of the foremost goldsmiths of his time.² There is a fine tankard of 1709 by him in the Royal Scottish Museum, and examples of his flat ware are in both Museums.

¹ op. cit., p. 187.

² I. Finlay, op. cit., pp. 117-29 *passim*, and plate 61.



a Steel pistol by Hector McNeill of Mull



b Detail of above



c A silver coffee-pot and hot milk jug by Colin McKenzie, 1713