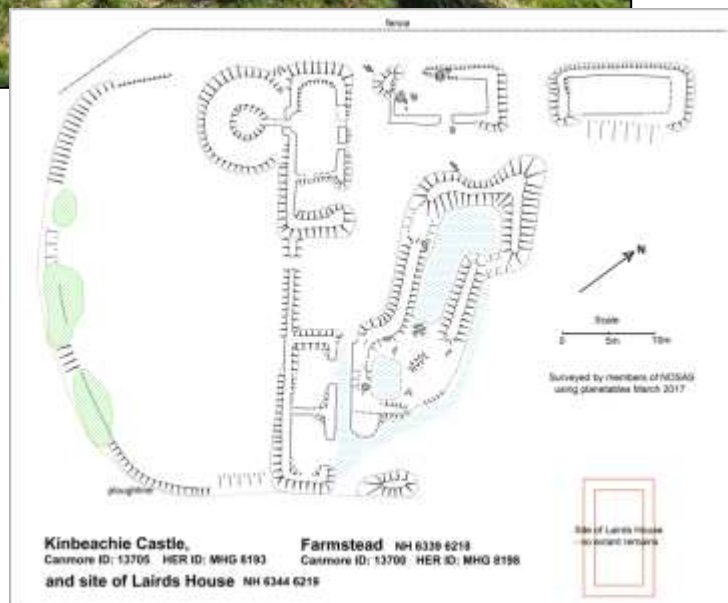


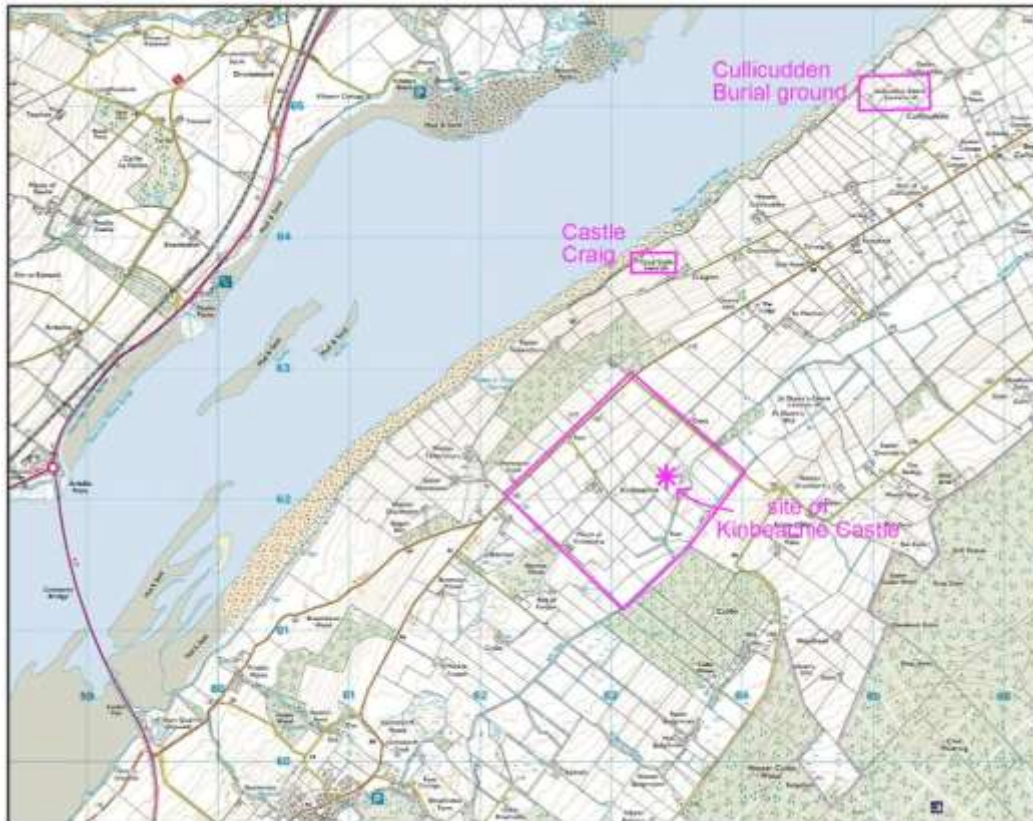
## Report of a project to survey the site of Kinbeachie Castle, Cullicudden on the Black Isle

by members of NOSAS - 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017



## Introduction

The small estate of Kinbeachie, amounting to “a half davoch”, is located in the northwest part of the Black Isle overlooking the Cromarty Firth. Today the area is productive arable land but in the 16<sup>th</sup> century there are references to “the King (*James VI*) hunting in the woodland along the Kinbeachie Burn”. The archaeological site known as Kinbeachie Castle comprises a collection of grassy humps and bumps covering an area of approximately 70m x 60m in the corner of a field.



OS 1:25,000 map showing location of Kinbeachie Castle and extent of Estate

The 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1876 (right) has a cluster of roofed buildings which is annotated “Kinbeachie Castle” and the date 1546; the OS name book of the same year reports that “the name applies to the ruins of an old castle, formerly the seat of the proprietor of Kinbeachie. The southern gable is the only portion of the building which stands in its entirety, the rest having only a foot or so above ground.....a stone with the date 1546 still remains in the standing gable just over the place where the fireplace has been”.



There are two entries on the archaeological databases for the site:

- Canmore ID 13705 (HER ID MHG8193) – Castle (Medieval) at GR NH 6343 6218
- Canmore ID 13700 (HER ID MHG8198) – Farmstead at GR NH 6339 6218

The gable noted in 1876 was still standing in 1959 when the RCAHMS photographed the building (*see photo below*) but it was demolished soon afterwards for safety reasons. The building footings were however still extant in 1966 when the Canmore entry has

“the remains of Kinbeachie Castle comprise the SE wall and the foundations of the NE, NW and SW walls. The SE wall 1.2m in width is extant to a maximum height of 1.7m and total length of 6.6m externally. It is rubble masonry but the E and S angles have been constructed of dressed stones. The inside wall is obscured in a mass of tumble”.

## Aims of the project

The project had three aims:

- To determine an interpretation of the physical remains at the site and any possible phasing
- to produce a measured survey of the archaeological remains at the castle site.
- to undertake documentary research on the estate and the Urquhart family of Kinbeachie, in the hope that this would help us in the interpretation of the remains and their various phases (*in the event the documentary researched proved to be very absorbing and a bigger task than had originally been intended!*)



## Description of the site

The site comprises a collection of humps and bumps in the corner of a field, some parts are quite low and boggy and trampled by the cattle which graze the field on occasions.



*The site viewed from the SE*

The site is made up of two parts;

1. The central area comprising the substantial turf covered footings of two walls at right angles to one another; they are circa 10.5m and 7-8m in length, between 0.6m and 1m in height and have a spread of 2-4m. To the south of these footings there are two linear mounds which terminate in several amorphous stone settings. These remains in no way resemble the footings described in 1966 above.
2. To the west and south of the central area there are the turf covered footings of the several buildings which make up the farmstead. Also associated with the farmstead is the raised circular platform, 11.5m in diameter, of a horse gang; it has a central depressed area with a channel connecting it to the adjacent barn. A large D-shaped enclosure 50m x 25m bounded on its south side by a sloping bank which has evidence of stone facing in places is probably also associated with the farmstead.



The site viewed from the NE

### Kinbeachie Castle or “Kinbeachie House”?

The physical remains at the site, the descriptions and the interpretations outlined above are confusing and do not concur with each other. The site is said to be “a castle” but yet the photographs of 1959 would suggest an 18<sup>th</sup> century “lairds house”.

The evidence for a castle is slender:

- Timothy Potts map of c1590 (*wrongly named as “Gordon 20” - Cunningham 2001, p15*) has a substantial building marked “Kynbeachy”
- a carved stone with the date of 1546 (right) above a fireplace in the gable end of the lairds house on the photograph of 1959. But perhaps the carved stone was moved to Kinbeachie from somewhere else?
- The only other mention of a castle in the documents is in 1876 on the 1st Edition map. The OS Name Book has 3 local people verifying that the building was known as “Kinbeachie Castle”.



On the other hand the evidence for a laird’s house is much more compelling:

- photographs (*above*) taken by the RCAHMS in 1959 show the almost complete gable of a building. The 2 storey gable with “crow steps” is typical of a lairds house.
- a vignette on an estate plan (*right*) of neighbouring Findon Estate dated 1769 with the annotation “Kinbeachie House”.
- a will of Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie (died 1840) which included an inventory and valuation of the contents of “the Dwelling House at Kinbeachie”. The house is described as having a parlour, 3 bedrooms and a kitchen with servant’s bed above, typical of a lairds house <https://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk/>
- A list of those paying window taxes in the 18<sup>th</sup> century has Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie paying for 8 windows from 1762 to 1778 – the number of windows would suggest a lairds house <http://www.scotlandspplaces.gov.uk/>



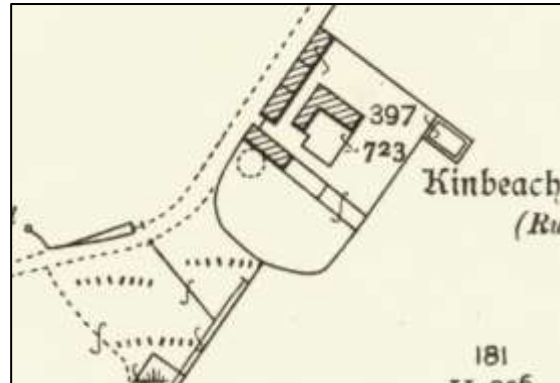
A fuller account of the history of Kinbeachie is given in a later section.

## Results

The survey was carried out using 4 linked planetables on a cold but clear day. The 13 members who turned out to help were divided into 4 teams of three. The main outcomes of the project were the conclusions of our findings, the plan, the processed aerial photographs and the historical story.

### 1. Our Conclusions

There has been significant destruction and stone robbing at the site, but after studying the remains, the documentary, photographic and map evidence it was possible to arrive at a confident conclusion. The answer to the question posed above is that there is, or has been, the remains of both a Castle and a House at the Kinbeachie site - in addition to the later farmstead. The buildings of the farmstead were not difficult to identify; their number and layout concurred with those on the early OS maps (see right). They were probably constructed circa 1818.



The footings of the “laird’s house” were apparently still extant in 1966, but we came to the conclusion that they have disappeared completely. The house was the building marked as a ruin on the 1st and 2nd edition OS maps of 1876, 1904 (*above*) and 1937-60 (1:25,000) in the east part of the site, there is no trace of the house today. The building would have been on rising ground to the east of the present remains. Study of the 1959 photographs, their background and the grid reference taken at that time confirmed this. Aerial photographs (in RCAHMS Archive Collection, Edinburgh) taken in 1946 will almost certainly confirm this too but to date they have not been consulted.

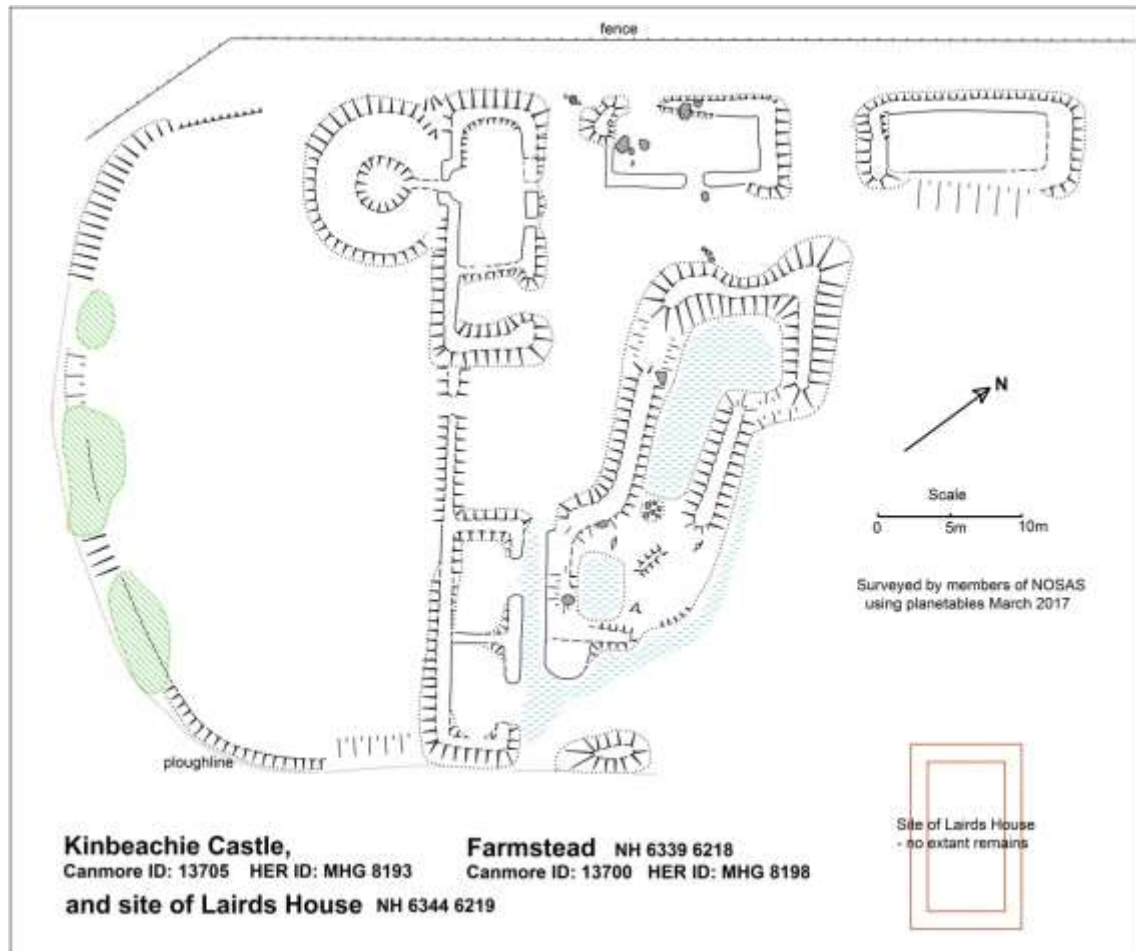
We are left, then, with the substantial remains in the central part of the site. This surely must be what remains of the old castle much altered and, as one might expect, probably re-used as a byre. The two walls at right-angles to one another suggest the foundations of a small medieval tower house which is circa 10.5m x 7-8m. The “expanded” corner is intriguing – was it a stair turret?

**Comment** - Newmore Castle, near Alness, has similar ground plan of 10.9m x 7.3m. It has a date stone of 1625 although it is said to have existed from 1580. Fairburn Tower too has an even smaller ground plan but is 5 storeys high; it is reported as having been built in the 1540s



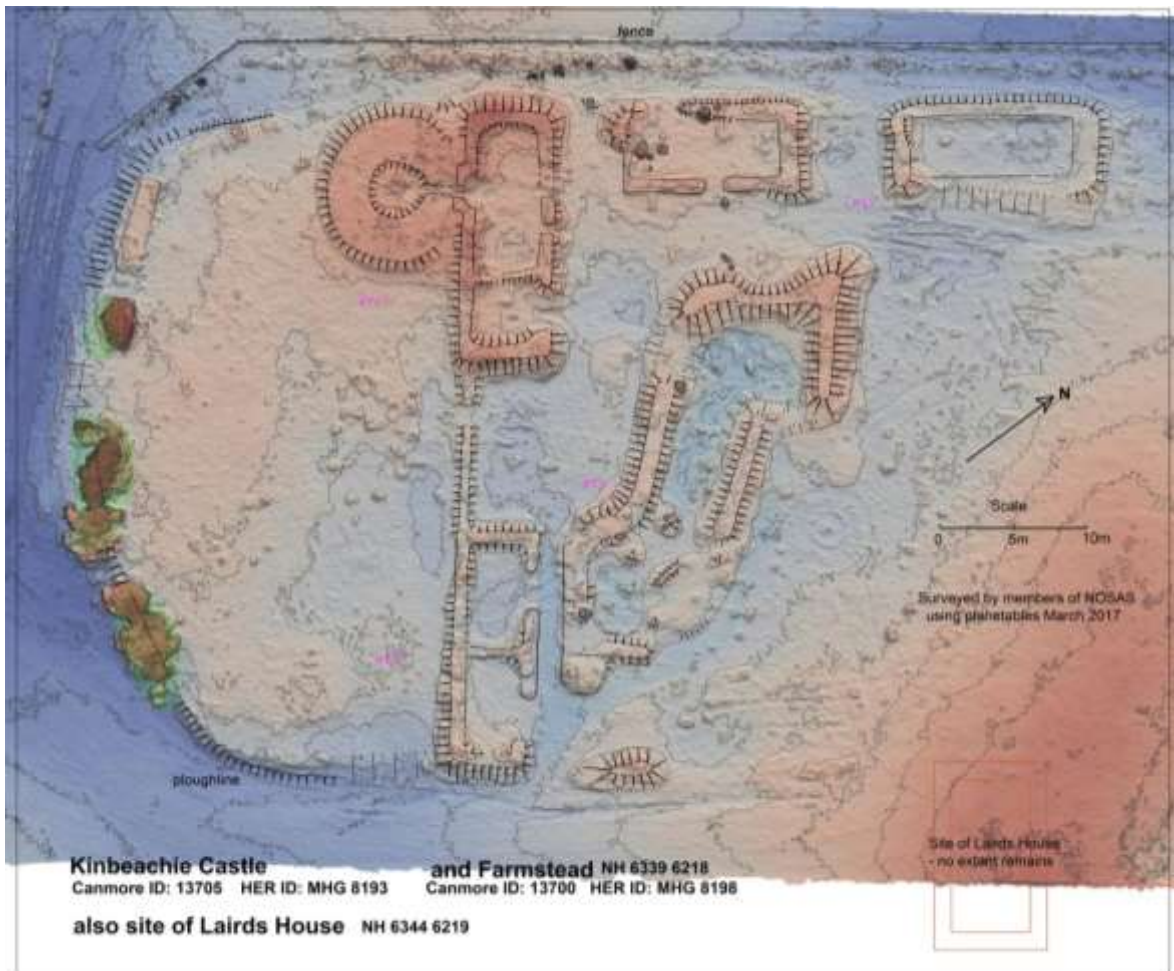
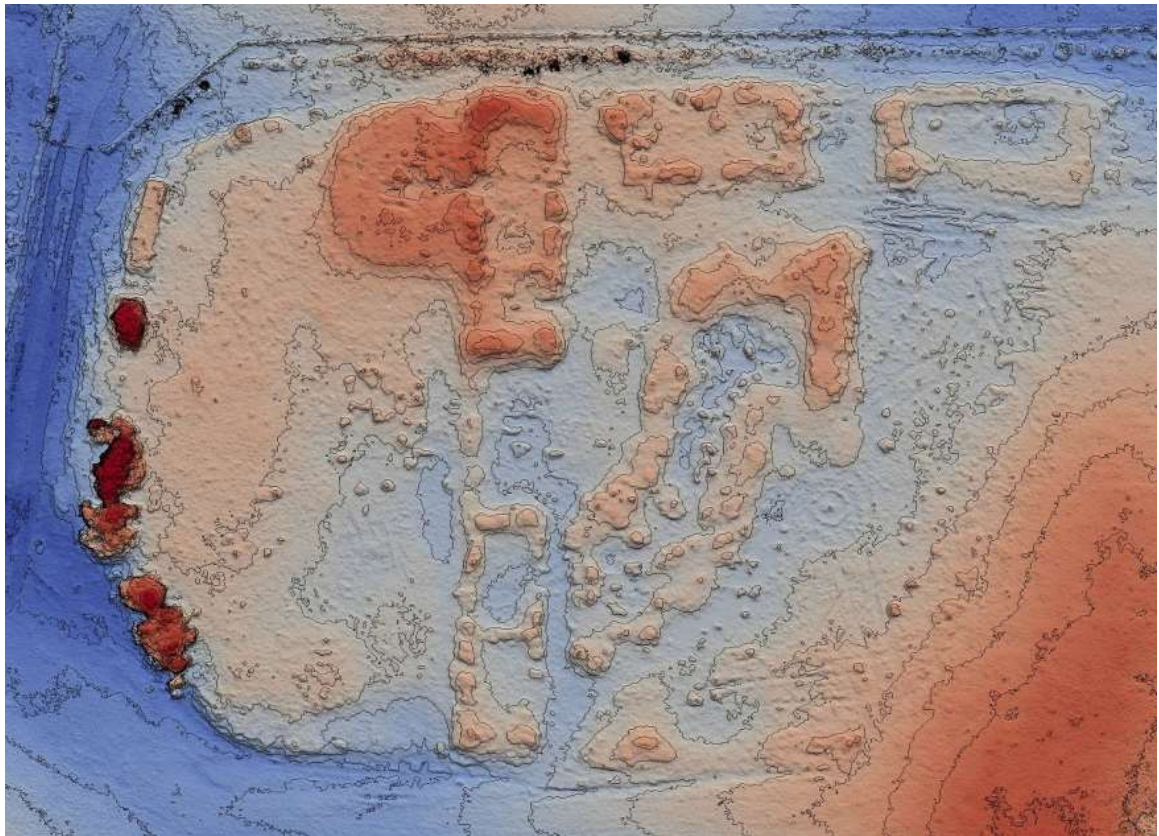
*The central area of the site viewed from the NW – these banks are believed to be the remains of the original castle, the lairds house would have been on the raised ground beyond and on the left in the middle distance*

## 2. The plan



## 3. The processed aerial photographs





Processed Aerial photograph with PT survey superimposed

#### 4. History of Kinbeachie and the Urquhart family

This part of the project tells the story of Kinbeachie and its relationship with the Urquhart family. Visits to local libraries and archives were made, also a trip to Edinburgh to view documents in the Historical Search Room of the National Archives Scotland. A bibliography of the secondary sources and a list of the websites referred to is included at the end of the chapter. In general the sources were limited, however the sasines and valuation rolls in Inverness Archives were useful and there were several interesting and useful documents in Edinburgh. I am very grateful to David Alston for his help in pointing me in the direction of Mary Midgely's book "The Owl of Minerva" and for the photo of the Cromarty Stone and also to Ken Munro, local resident, for his information; Ken is a descendent of the family who lived at Kinbeachie mill.

##### Early History of the Cromarty Urquharts

William de Urchard is said to have defended the "Moote of Cromarty" at the time of William Wallace (1270 - 1305) against supporters of the English Crown. The Urquhart chiefs were hereditary sheriffs of Cromarty from the reign of David II of Scotland (1329-1370), Cromarty Castle being built by Sir William Urquhart in 1470m.

Following the Reformation in the mid-16th century, the Urquharts of Cromarty gained the lands of Kirkmichael (in 1564) and Kinbeachie (in 1568) from the Bishops of Ross. Castle Craig (Canmore ID 13702), two kilometres to the north of Kinbeachie, is known to have had connections with the Bishops of Ross and is said to have been built before 1551; today the remains still stand on the shore of the Cromarty Firth at NGR NH 63200 63813. Close by is the site of Cullicudden Kirk which is probably much earlier than the castle; the burial ground here contains a burial enclosure of Urquhart families and many early gravestones. Kirkmichael and Cullicudden parishes were combined to become Resolis Parish in 1662.

Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty (1611 – 1660) was a Royalist who was knighted by King Charles I of England in 1641. Thomas was a colourful flamboyant character who fought in the Civil Wars and afterwards fled to the Continent where he studied the work of the French poet Rabelais; his translations are considered to be masterpieces. Thomas supported the Royalists again at the Battle of Worcester in 1651 but this time was captured and imprisoned in the Tower of London. His lands were sequestrated and he died in 1660.

Financial difficulties dogged the Urquhart of Cromarty family from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and by the later 17<sup>th</sup> century they were further weakened by accumulated debt. A series of loans and legal arrangements from a consortium of creditors which included Mackenzies of Tarbat eventually throttled them, and by 1683 the ancient lands of the Urquharts had passed into the hands of Tarbat. The lands of Kinbeachie however remained with the Urquharts of Kinbeachie

##### The Cromarty Stone

The magnificent Cromarty Stone (right), sometimes known as the Kinbeachie Stone, was carved for Sir Thomas Urquhart in 1651. It was originally above a fireplace in Cromarty Castle but was moved, probably in 1818, and re-used at Kinbeachie as a chimneypiece. *(information from D Alston/Eric Malcolm in a talk to Cromarty HS 2001)*. The stone is seen here in a pre-1890 photograph most likely "in the porch of a nearby farm cottage *(at Kinbeachie)*" The stone was later transferred to the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh in 1923 *(Level 1 Ref H.KG96)*. The description on the NMS website states that it is a "carved overmantel from fireplace of the hall of Cromarty Castle dated 1651 bearing the arms and initials of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty"



##### The Urquhart family of Kinbeachie

In medieval times Kinbeachie, together with Kirkmichael, was part of the lands of the Bishops of Ross. In 1568 Kinbeachie was granted to Walter Urquhart of Cromarty and Elizabeth Mackenzie his spouse; they settled it on their 2<sup>nd</sup> son Henry (NAS GD274/20). The Pont map of c1590 ("Gordon 20") below, has a substantial building marked at "Kinbeachy" and it may be that this represents a small castle *(the same symbol marks Castle Craig and we know that a castle existed here at the time)*.



King James VI (1566 – 1625) visited the area in 1589 and it is possible that the castle at Kinbeachie was built as a hunting lodge for his visit; he was the “guest” of Walter Urquhart, sheriff of Cromarty and “went from Aberdeen to hunt the hart with hounds in a forest called Cromarty”. Pont refers to the “fair wood” of Brae-moir with deer found along the burn (*the Kinbeachie burn*) running from there to the sea” (*Alston p20*). It seems no co-incidence that in 1584 King James had confirmed the charter of 1568 granting Walter Urquhart of Cromarty the lands of Kinbeachie;



“by King James of All & Hail the lands of Kinbeachie extending to ½ davoch lands Brehouse of Kinbeachie crofthouse there and mill of Kinbeachie with houses biggings tofts crofts & pertinents of same” (NAS GD274/20)

In 1610 there is a further charter;

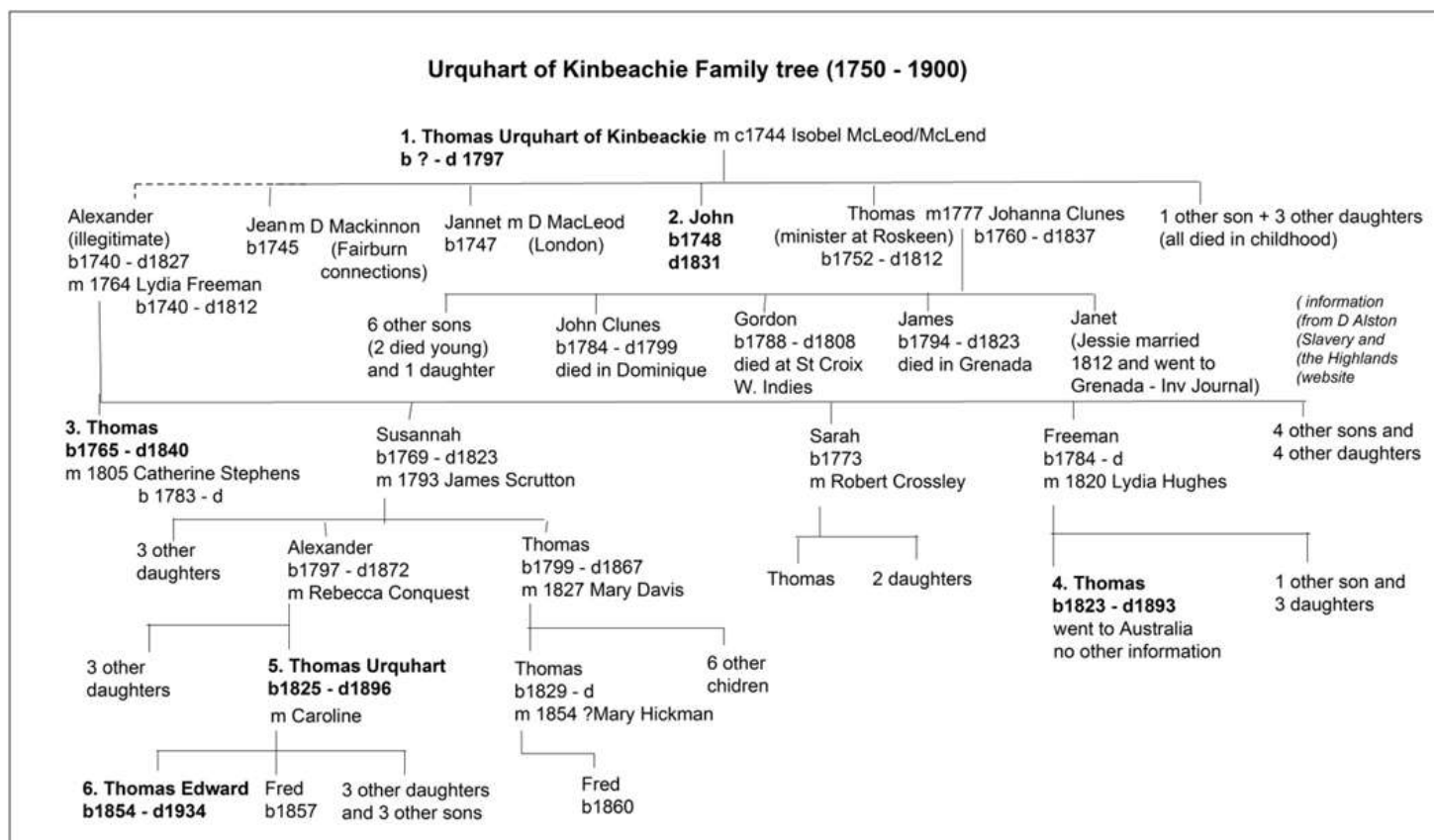
“by the said Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty in favour of the said Thomas Urquhart of Davidston of the said lands of Kinbeachy following upon the foresaid contract of Excambion”.

This Thomas is described as 1<sup>st</sup> of Kinbeachie in a later charter of 1663 (NAS GD274/20);

“Charter of Sir John Urquhart of Cromarty in favour of John Urquhart of Kinbeachie son of the last Thomas Urquhart grand nephew of the said Walter Urquhart & grandson of the said Thomas Urquhart 1st of Kinbeachie confirming 1663”.

This is further confirmed by John Bishop of Ross in a charter of 1678.

A succession of John’s and Thomas’s of Kinbeachie followed in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, but very little information of these times was located, however from 1750 the records became more fruitful



### John Urquhart of Kinbeachie (1748 – 1831)

John was the first born son of Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie and Isobel McLeod (*daughter of Donald Macleod of Geanies, Easter Ross*) who had married circa 1744. Thomas and Isobel may have built their “lairds house” at Kinbeachie soon after their marriage possibly using the dowry which came with Isobel; there seems to have been no shortage of resources in the MacLeod family of Geanies at this time. Isobel’s brother Hugh also built the original lairds house at Geanies when he married Isobel Fraser in 1742. Evidence for the house at Kinbeachie is found in a small vignette on a plan of the neighbouring estate of Findon dated 1769; the vignette is annotated “Kinbeachie House”.

Thomas and Isobel had 8 children, at least 4 of whom survived into adulthood. John born 1748, being the eldest son, was heir to the entailed estate but he did not come into possession of it until his father’s death in 1797. His whereabouts in the intervening time are not known; the Old Statistical Account for the Parish of Resolis 1795-98 has one of the heritors as “John Urquhart of Kinbeachy” but he is not resident in the parish. John seems not to have married either and no traces of a family could be found.

Of Thomas, John’s younger brother, b 1752, we know much more. He was educated at Kings College, Aberdeen gaining an MA in 1775 and entering the ministry. He was admitted to the parish of Roskeen in 1784 and was “to prove himself a faithful and zealous minister”. He married Johanna Clunes (1759 – 1837) in 1777 and they had 11 children at least 2 of whom died in infancy; of these children more later.

John and Thomas had an older illegitimate half-brother Alexander Urquhart (1740 – 1827). No record of Alexander’s birth was found and nothing is known of his early life but after going to London he set up as a baker and spent some time at sea doing rather well for himself (*Midgely*). Alexander married Lydia Freeman in 1764 and had 12 children, only 5 surviving childhood. The eldest son Thomas (1765 – 1840) became a successful merchant prospering and establishing the shipping firm of Urquhart & Hope in 1802. By 1813 the company had interests in eight ships, all trading to the West Indies, and on at least some occasions their ships carried slaves (*Legacies of British Slave Ownership – ucl.ac.uk*). This Thomas Urquhart (of London) was also associated commercially with James Scrutton, the link leading to the marriage of his sister Susannah to James Scrutton. The relationship of the two families of Urquhart and Scrutton was to continue for several generations and out of it grew the large Scrutton shipping and stevedore companies. The prosperity of both families was to revolve around the owning, sailing and insuring of ships in the port of London (*Midgely*).

When Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie (father of above John, Thomas and Alexander) died in 1797 John returned to Kinbeachie but unfortunately he proved to be an unworthy landowner. After only 9 months at Kinbeachie John Urquhart’s behaviour was giving his brother Thomas Urquhart (minister of Roskeen) deep concern. Two letters (NAS SC25/71/9) written by Thomas to (*Captain*) Thomas Urquhart, his nephew (the merchant in London), dated April 1798 and Aug 1799 give an insight into the situation. In the letter of April 1798 he reports:

“I am sorry to inform you that it w<sup>d</sup> hurt your feelings to hear of your Uncle John’s Conduct since he has broke thro’ all restraint while cash stood before him – he made himself a Nausance (*sic*) to Society – a Disgrace to humanity & was literally called an abomination in the Land – not only does he Drink with the Rabble & Scum of the Creation but when he gets drunk is perfectly insane Tears Bank Notes in pieces & throws them in the fire – In short there is not one of his friends here that countenances him or ever wish to see him or hear of him – Oh! how galling how mortifying – all the Effects of vice of dissipation and Sin –.....”

“He has sold every Tree in Kinbeachie tho’ many of them are still standing – how savage - & the money amounting to upwards of a Hundred Pounds all gone .....Geanies (*Donald MacLeod, 3<sup>d</sup> of Geanies (1745 – 1834), Sheriff of Ross and Cromarty and Thomas’s cousin through his mother*) is now about arresting his Rents for £70 Sterling due him & no doubt his other Creditors will follow of Course .....

Thomas Roskeen suggests a couple of solutions:

“Geanies wishes you to come down how soon Business permits & to offer him at once £2000 for the place – which he thinks is all it is worth..... And I am sure did you not like to possess it yourself you c<sup>d</sup> Lett it at £120 By August 1799 the situation is slightly better, John Urquhart has been persuaded to go to London to meet his nephew Thomas

“rather than fight further with the Ocean – am happy my brother means to wait of you at Lond<sup>n</sup> as the last resource – had he done it sooner he might have at least saved some character by it. But I doubt much his going as he cannot be depended on. In case he does I hereby send you the Rental with what occurs to me on the subject – Any thing further on the subject Geanies will freely and frankly inform you..... I w<sup>d</sup> advise against purchasing it – As it will cost as much again before you put it in decent order at least.”

“Tho’ Cash is at present so ill to be had I presume you could easily procure it at Ed<sup>h</sup> ..... From 10 to 1200 Pounds at least and twixt yourself & Father (*Alexander Urquhart*) c<sup>d</sup>. Command any Balance to Try his (*Johns*) Fortune should he like so to do once more – But c<sup>d</sup> he be diverted from it all at once it w<sup>d</sup> be by far the most

eligible plan for him – And to bury this about I w<sup>d</sup> Propose to pay him by Instalments & Meantime to give him £5 say 600 in advance .....c<sup>d</sup> you get it at £2000 it w<sup>d</sup> I think be a good bargain – but do not part with for 3000. Beyond that I w<sup>d</sup> not advise you by any means to go - and as far below as possible the better. I do not know but Sir Hector Munro w<sup>d</sup> give a £1000 as good security

It was to be a further 18 years before the problem was resolved; in 1818 a settlement was reached which involved the estate passing to Thomas (of London) and John moving to a house at Brae not too far from Kinbeachie. The sasines have:

“Thomas Urquhart, Broker, London seises – ... Kinbeachie with principal Dwelling House, Office houses, and Mill and Mill lands thereof..... – on Disp of John Urquhart of Kinbeachie Feb 23 1818” (Abridged Sasines AS/CR/1/1 No1379)

And an inventory in the Will and Testament of John Urquhart, Esq (SC25/44/2) dated 27th June 1831 has:

“a personal bond dated 10 Aug 1818 for the sum of £800 granted by Thomas Urquhart, now of Kinbeachie, Merchant in London”

John, at the age of 70, moved to the house of Jean (spouse of Francis Mackenzie, Mason of Balblair of Newhall) and her father John MacLean at Brae on the higher ground 2kms to the east of Kinbeachie. Jean looked after John until his death in May 1831. The notice in the Inverness Journal of Fri 10 Jun 1831 reads;

“At Brae in the County of Cromarty on the 18th ult, John Urquhart Esq, late of Kinbeachie, aged 84”.

No relatives are involved, either in executing or in benefitting from Johns will and the sum of £92.12.1d was left to Jean.

The two letters (NAS SC25/71/9) above give an insight into the family politics. Quite clearly John is a disappointment to the family and in their view completely unfit to be custodian of the estate. The two letters were part of the Sheriff Court records and this would suggest that the long delay in Kinbeachie passing to Thomas of London was due to the long drawn out procedures of a Court Case. Unfortunately the court records themselves have not survived, so we can only speculate as to the nature of the case; John may have objected to the proposals, or perhaps the estate could not be sold because it was entailed (*it had to be inherited by male issue in a strict order*). Thomas of London's claim to the estate through the Entail Act was debatable; he was an oldest son but he was illegitimate, Thomas of Roskeen had a stronger claim. The two letters indicate that Thomas of Roskeen was happy for his nephew to pursue the claim but what about his own sons? And what part did cousin “Geanies” play? There are many questions that perhaps will never be answered. Whatever happened in the courts the problem wasn't resolved until 1818 when Thomas of London took over Kinbeachie and John Urquhart was able to spend the rest of his life in retirement. Unfortunately Thomas of Roskeen did not live to see the outcome of the case, he died in 1812.

### **Urquhart of Kinbeachie Family Connections in London**

By taking over Kinbeachie in 1818 at the age of 53, when he was still young, Thomas of London was able to enjoy the estate for a further 22 years. At this time he Highlands was seen as romantic and its popularity was increasing; possessing a Highland estate, even though it was a small one, would have been fashionable and attractive. It seems unlikely that (*Uncle*) John would have spent any money on Kinbeachie during his tenure. In the view of Thomas of Roskeen in 1799 the estate was rundown and in need of investment:

“I w<sup>d</sup> advise against purchasing it – As it will cost as much again before you put it in decent order at least.”

But there is strong evidence to suggest that Thomas of London did make many “Improvements” and it may be that he started a building programme before 1818; the sasines of March of that year in the transfer of land to him from John Urquhart have;

“Thomas Urquhart (his heir), Broker, London seised – in Kinbeachie principal Dwelling House, Office houses, and Mill and Mill lands thereof.....”

It is probable that the “Office houses” mentioned here are the buildings of the farmstead which surrounds the castle – a rental has the Jack family paying rent in 1820 so the farmstead must have been built before this time. Perhaps one of the first things Thomas did was to refurbish Kinbeachie House; we know that the Cromarty/Kinbeachie Stone was moved there in 1818, it is not unreasonable to think that he was responsible. He may also have acquired the 1546 datestone, building it into a new fireplace. Construction of the farm and the steadings at the Mains of Kinbeachie would probably have been carried out about this time too and two documents amongst the few Sheriff Court records viewed in Edinburgh indicate other “Improvements”:

1. A bundle of sketches and plans of houses, byres, and farm layouts at Kinbeachie dated 1829 – 1830 (*none of these could be identified at specific locations*)
2. “A catalogue of Forest and Fruit Trees” for, nurseryman, Donald Ross of Novar dated 1823.

In 1836 the New Statistical Account has:

“(Kinbeachie) the property of Thomas Urquhart Esq, who has much improved the lands, and intends soon to build a handsome mansion-house upon them”

Thomas had a philanthropic side to him. The NSA of 1836 states:

“The heritors pay no stated sum to the poor excepting one viz Thomas Urquhart Esq of Kinbeachie who in lieu of his share allotted to him of the Maoil Buidh Common in this parish pays to the poor 2 bolls of oatmeal. This he does..... Entirely of his own good will and in order to set an example to the other heritors which it is to be regretted they have not yet followed”

Thomas had been interested in and involved with his Scottish relatives for many years, it is apparent from other documents that he assisted them both financially and materially by using his influence and business connections. A letter dated 1817 from Jannet MacLeod (*his uncles' sister*) of Somerset St, London thanked him for “settling 3 bills (£82, £99 and £94.10) (*due*) to her father” (*Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie who died in 1797*). Unfortunately his philanthropy towards the family of his uncle, Thomas Urquhart of Rosskeen, was to have unhappy consequences. He secured positions for three of his uncle's sons in the West Indies; sadly none of these boys were to return. Thomas (of Roskeen's) second son John died in Dominique in 1799 at the age of 17, his third son Gordon died in St Croix, W Indies in 1808 at the age of 20 and his sixth son James died in Grenada in 1823 at the age of 29.

Thomas of London and his second wife, Catherine Stephens had no children and when he died in 1840 the estate of Kinbeachie passed to his nephew, also Thomas (b1823 - d circa1893), the son of his brother Freeman. Thomas's will has:

“the late Thomas Urquhart died in the month of March (1840) in England leaving his estate of Kinbeachie in Scotland to Thomas Urquhart his nephew under a strict Entail”.

An unusual clause was added in the will:

“All personal property I may have on the property of Kinbeachie I bequeath to that person who may become proprietor of it after my decease but not to be sold or taken away without replacing it in equal value after my decease”

This clause suggests that he remembered his Uncle John's behaviour and was anxious that it should not be repeated; his estate could not be sold because it was entailed and, by putting in this clause, the assets too could not be stripped by selling or neglecting them. This also provides an explanation for the comprehensive inventory and valuation of the contents of the house at Kinbeachie, which is part of the will – see Appendix 1

The estate does indeed appear to have been neglected following Thomas's death. The next Thomas (1823 – 1893) was only 17 when he inherited it. Jim Mackay in his book “Resolis” has:

“This Thomas married Mary MacNair Dryburgh Norrie in 1846 at Kiltearn and served as a Captain in the Crimean War. Unable to make a financial success of Kinbeachie, they emigrated to Australia and spent the rest of their lives there, Thomas dying in 1893”

Kinbeachie passed by entail to Thomas Urquhart Scrutton (1825 – 1896), a distant cousin of the previous Thomas and the eldest grandson of the previous Thomas's aunt, Susannah Scrutton (nee Urquhart). Mary Midgley writes:

“Thomas Urquhart (Scrutton) was much attached to the little estate of Kinbeachie which had long been entailed in the Urquhart family. My Aunt reports:

He frequently visited Kinbeachie and much improved the property, he intended building a handsome modern mansion on the estate possibly on the site of the old castle but he died before this could be accomplished” .....(*sounds familiar!*)

This Thomas was to enjoy the estate for only 3 years before he died in March 1896 and his son, Thomas Edward Scrutton, took over

Sir Thomas Edward Scrutton (1856 – 1934) was a very successful barrister, a Judge of the Kings Bench Division (1910-1916) and Court of Appeal (1916-1934). Mary Midgely his grand-daughter says:

(*He*) was a very practical person; he did not believe in absentee landlords and so arranged with the Lyon King of Arms that the entail should be cut and the estate was sold”

The estate was disentailed in 1897 (*Sasines*) and sold to the tenant farmers of the Mains of Kinbeachie, Murdoch Macrae and his brother Evan Mackenzie Macrae. The family had been tenants at Kinbeachie for several generations.

### **The farms and tenants**

Kinbeachie estate is quite small and a brief study of the state of the farms and their tenants using the census' and the valuation rolls between the mid-1830s and 1895 was not difficult; Thomas Urquhart's will of 1840 also provided information. It was presumed that the size of the rents reflected the size of the farms.

There was a large “Mains” farm, two smaller farms known as Lower Kinbeachie, a mill which on occasions was described also as a croft and a varied assortment of smaller tenants with agricultural employment. The acreage of the farms in general increased by small increments from decade to decade presumably as drainage improved and areas of marginal land were taken into cultivation. In the 1870s one of the smaller farms, almost certainly the one based on the Castle, was assimilated into the Mains farm. This progress of land use followed the usual pattern for that period.

The population numbers too followed the usual pattern. They were reasonably consistent at about 80 between 1841 and 1861 but then declined to 65 in 1871. The MacRae family occupied the Mains Farm for most of the time, apart for a period of 6 years or so between 1851 and 1855. The Forbes family were in Lower Kinbeachie on the SE side of the Kinbeachie burn (*information from local resident Kenneth Munro a descendent of the family at the mill*). The only other farm of any size was that based on the Castle on the west side of the Kinbeachie burn, also known as Lower Kinbeachie. It was occupied by the Jack family from at least 1837 until the 1870s, although a rental has them paying rent in 1820. After 1870 there is no mention of the family. This fits in with the history of the farm being absorbed into the Mains Farm at about this time; the census for 1881 has Murdoch MacRae in the Mains paying £109 plus £105 (for Lower Kinbeachy). The mill was occupied by the MacRae family until 1871 when it was taken over by an Alexander Munro who had married into the Macrae family; the mill continued for a further 30 years and is described as having croft lands, but by 1904 the 2nd edition OS map has it as “disused”.

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## Appendix 1.

### Extract from the Will of Thomas Urquhart of Kinbeachie, died 29th Feb 1840

II. Inventory and valuation of household furniture ditto at The Cottage of Kinbeachie which belonged to the said deceased Thomas Urquhart taken by John Clark Cabinet maker and Upholsterer in Dingwall at Kinbeachie on the 15 day May 1840

<u>Parlour</u>	<u>Kitchen</u>
8 mahogany chairs including 2 armed ditto ----5 -----	6 soup plates-5 dinner plates-7 bowls
2 small stools -----1----	and a bassoon -----2----
1 mahogany table -----1---10--	3 pots Fish kettle and drainer
A mahogany Bureau -----2---10--	and a batchelors(?) oven ----- 15---
Tea box with flap -----12---	2 frying pans-2 saucepans and 2 tin ditto -----7-----
Carpet and hearth rug -----1---10--	1 grid iron 1 ? A spit and tin drainer -----6---
Set of steel fire iron -----12---	1 grater -----1----
Polished fender -----12---	2 coffee pots -----6
Tea tray and two servers -----7----	Drudge and pepper boxes -----8
Bread baske-----6	4 skewers-----2
Register grate -----2-----	A coffee mill -----2---
<u>14--14---6</u>	A tinder box -----2
<u>Principal Bedroom</u>	A saw -----1--6
A mahogany Bedstead without curtain-----3--10-----	6 metal spoons and 5 wooden ditto -----1--6
A feather bolster and pillow-----3--10-----	6 knives and forks -----3--6
A hair mattress -----2-----	3 large knives -----2---
Straw palliase -----15	1 dripping pan and saddle-----2----
2 toilet tables -----10----	1 lifter -----3
Mahogany basin stand -----8----	2 tea kettles -----5----
A basin ewer and two chambers -----7-----	1 plate basket -----6----
Caraf and glasses -----1---6	1 Clothes basket -----7----
A dripping? glass -----1---10---	3 Brooms -----4----
5 fluir( <i>floor</i> ) carpet (?)-----15----	1 Fish pan -----6
Hearth rug -----6----	Pair Bellows -----1--6
Set steel scissors -----8----	A chopper -----1----
A green fender -----6----	A stone jar -----1----
A register grate -----2-----	2 stacking irons -----1----
<u>16-----6---6</u>	A foot pan -----2----
<u>2nd Bedroom</u>	A clothes screen -----2--6
A tent bedstead without curtains-----15----	A paste pin(?) -----6
A basin stand -----6----	1 Dreper(?) -----12----
Basin ewer and Chamber-----4----	2 tables -----14----
A carpet -----12----	2 stools -----2----
<u>1----17----</u>	1 scraper -----2
<u>3rd Bedroom</u>	3 shoe brushes -----2----
Bedstead -----12---	3 stove brushes -----1----
2 white chambers -----1----	Scrubbing ditto -----1----
<u>13----</u>	Cork screw -----8
Stair carpet-----6---6	1 cannister for coffee -----2
Crunch(?) cloth -----1----	Fish trake (?)-----3
Passage oil cloth and mat -----5---	A knife box -----4
<u>12----6</u>	A kitchen shovel poker and tongs-----2---

Crook -----2---6	<u>Farm Utensils</u>
2 spit racks -----1---	Marking iron -----6
An old German clock -----5---	Measuring chain and 3 pins -----5---
<u>6---11-----</u>	1 iron crowbar-----3----
Servants bed above kitchen -----2---6	Hand barrow -----6
An old grate -----5---	2 stone troughs -----5---
A small kitchen grate-----3---6	5 ship blocks -----4----
10 doz common bottles -----1-----	Wooden roller without frame -----1-----
4 small jars and 3 oil cans -----5---	Hand saw old -----1---6
<u>1---16---</u>	3 hedge knives -----3----
<u>Stoneware</u>	3 carpenters planes -----2----
8 china breakfast cups and saucers -----4----	2 pike axes without handles -----2---6
9 evening cups and saucers -----3---	Pair feet measures -----1
3 china basins -----1---6	1 broom lifter -----2----
6 eggcups -----2----	Gig sadle collar and bridle -----6----
A teapot and stand -----2---	2 scrapers -----2----
A sugar and milk dish -----1---6	2 hedge hooks -----2----
10 tumblers -----10----	1 grape -----6
15 wine glasses -----11----3	1 small garden hoe -----3
2 wine decanters -----10----	2 hedge hawks -----2-----
2 wine sliders -----5----	<u>3-----1-----10</u>
2 china water jugs -----10----	<u>£52-----5-----</u>
2 salts(?) -----2---6	
2 cruet stands with christals -----10----	
{ 11 soup plates	
21 shallow plates	
11 dishes	
5 cheese plates	
11 larger ditto	
11 ashets	
A fish drainer	
1 soup tureen-----3---10---	
2 butter tureens with ladles	
2 butter ?	
4 carver dishes with covers	
1 salad dish	
5 blue jugs	
2 pye dishes }	
<u>7---2---9</u>	

At Dingwall the twenty first day of May Eighteen Hundred and forty years in presence of Charles Stewart Esquire one of her majesties Justices of the Peace for the County of Ross John Clark Cabinet Maker and sworn appraiser in Dingwall who being solemnly sworn and examined Depones that the inventory and valuation written upon this and the four preceding pages amounting to fifty two pounds five shillings sterling was made safe and prepared by the deponent and is to the best of his knowledge and judgement a true and correct valuation of the household furniture and other effects therein stated belonging to the deceased Thomas Urquhart Esquire of Kinbeachie all which is truth as the deponent shall answer to God Signed John Clark , Charles Stewart JP

Signed Catherine Urquhart Freeman Urquhart  
Thos Scrutton Tho L Thomson Ja Macdonell