

## EARLY TRADING FROM ARDCHATTAN, 1743-46

by "P.C. Merchant"

Unlike Coline Campbell's trading ventures at Inveresragan, near Ardchattan, which have a strong sense of place, the man who calls himself "P.C. Merchant at Ardchattan" gives no clues as to the location of his dealing partners or the ports from which he ships his exports or receives his imports. He also assigns code names to the merchants he deals with, except for overseas merchants, who are presumably secure from prosecution by HM Customs, and unlikely to answer awkward questions. However all his books are definitely written at Ardchattan. "P.C." has a warehouse at "Will's Court" and rents out the second storey. On good advice this enterprising man is believed to be Patrick Campbell of Ardchattan. There is, however, absolutely no overlap with the activities of Coline Campbell of Inveresragan or his business contacts, and a strong

suspicion remains that some of Patrick's ventures were with East Coast ports and merchants.

Many of Patrick Campbell's trades were quite complicated. Sometimes he shared the profit and loss on an export cargo with other merchants. There was a commission to be earned for either managing the export cargo, or selling an imported cargo on behalf of overseas merchants. Sometimes exports were paid for by barter and a profit could be made on both the outward and return cargoes when they had been sold and paid for. Sometimes Patrick Campbell received a premium for insuring other merchant's ventures. On one occasion - the loss of the Anne Galley in a storm at sea in August 1745, he compounded his loss and paid out £236. Sometimes he sold his cargo immediately "on the Key" and sometimes he stored goods in his warehouse.

Patrick Campbell took full advantage of the herring season in 1745, as an 'adventure' on his own account. On 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1745, preparing for the herring season, he bought for ready money in Sterling:

"40 lasts of empty herring barrels and 10 barrels of french salt" which cost £96.

Soon he bought , again for ready money:

On 4 <sup>th</sup> August 60,000 fresh herring at 15 shillings per thousand which cost	£45
On 10 <sup>th</sup> August he bought 60,000 more at 16s 8d per thousand .. ..	£50
On 13 <sup>th</sup> August he bought 60,000 more at 10 shillings per 1000 .. ..	£30
On 15 <sup>th</sup> August he bought 60,000 more at 8 shillings per 1000 .. ..	£24
On 16 <sup>th</sup> August he bought only 30,000 at 15 shillings per thousand .. ..	£22

Expenses were £4-6-8 per 60,000 and £2-3-4 for 30,000, which cost	<u>£19-10</u>
A total outlay of.....	£287-00

The expenses were detailed as portorage from the boat to the Cutting Hole (£1-5s), for gutting (15s), for packing (£1-10s) and for cooperages (16s 8d) per 60,000 fish. The herring gutters, salters and packers must have worked hard at the Gutting Hole (at Bonawe?) because on the 8<sup>th</sup> September Patrick Campbell shipped on board the *Happy Return* of Anstruther, James Robin her Master, 40 lasts of cured herring consigned to James Adamson, merchant at Dantzig. The cost of shipping was £11-5s making a total cost of £298-5s.

On 6<sup>th</sup> November James Adamson advised Patrick that he had sold all the herring for ready money in Polish currency - the equivalent of £353-6s-8d. This was settled by James Adamson's own bill "upon Peter Hogg of this place, payable 10<sup>th</sup> next" (i.e. December). Patrick Campbell also obtained a drawback debenture from Customs for 40 lasts at 32s per last, a total of £64, presumably for the salt used for export. This would not necessarily affect the profit, but

would reduce Patrick's liability for Customs duty already accepted. Nevertheless the clear profit of £55-1s-8d on this enterprise was quite considerable!

On occasions he undertook to supply goods by a certain date. On 16<sup>th</sup> January 1746 he "Engaged to deliver to Adam Craig on 1<sup>st</sup> August 11,000 lbs of Virginia Tobacco at £3 per 100 lbs," a total of £330, which Adam Craig paid in full on 1<sup>st</sup> September. On 1<sup>st</sup> August the deal was completed, by "adjustment of accounts with William Hardy on the tobacco assigned to Adam Craig which cost me in all £248-6s-9d". The nett profit here was £81-13s-3d, but the buying price, at less than 6d per pound could hardly have been achieved if Customs duty had been paid on the tobacco. (The duty was above 4½d per pound).

Patrick was less successful with an order from John Grant on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1746 for "12,000 lbs of raisins at 17s per hundredweight to be delivered 1<sup>st</sup> June for £102." He was unable to deliver and paid a penalty of £10.

Patrick was also ordering in advance. In January 1746 he ordered:  
 500 bolls of wheat from James Labourer at 15s ea. delivered April £375. Sold at 16s ea., realising £400  
 800 bolls barley from Andrew Tennant at 12s ea., delivered March £480. Sold at 13s ea., realising £520

On 10<sup>th</sup> April Patrick agreed to go equal half shares with "John Hodge of this place" and on the 18<sup>th</sup> grain was shipped to John Gordon of Bordeaux on the *Mermaid* of Leith, with John Brown her Master. The cost of loading was £32-10s. On 5<sup>th</sup> June John Gordon reported the safe arrival of the *Mermaid* at Bordeaux. He had sold the wheat and barley and had shipped on board the *Thunderer* of Dysart, under Thomas Taylor Master: 15 tuns of claret, to be charged at £357-10, the balance in John Gordon's hands, for Patrick, being £673-15s. The claret arrived at an unstated port on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and after adding freight of £30 and Customs duty and other charges of £3 03-15, to the buying price of £357-10, the wine was valued in Patrick's books at £691-5s. The claret was sold as 60 hogsheads as follows:

19 <sup>th</sup> July	5 hogsheads for ready money at £15:	£75
	6 hogsheads to Daniel Trader at £16:	£96
	6 hogsheads to John Don at £16:	<u>£96</u>
	a total of .....	£267

On 8<sup>th</sup> August 43 hogsheads were "racked from the Lees" at a cost of £10-9s and sold:

On 12 <sup>th</sup> August	8 hogsheads	to James Paywell at £15-10s	£124
On 12 <sup>th</sup> August	6 hogsheads	to James Largo at £15-10s	£93
On 28 <sup>th</sup> August	10 "	to Adam Lind at £15	£150
	3 "	ready money at £14-10s	£43-10s
On 22 <sup>nd</sup> September:			
	6 "	to John Grant at £14-10s	£87
	6 "	to Adam Craig at £14-10s	£87
	4 "	for ready money at £14	<u>£56</u>
		a total of .....	£640-10

The final calculation on 28<sup>th</sup> September was that the net profit to Patrick Campbell and John Hodge each was £101-1 ls-3d on the claret and £13-4s-7d on the export of wheat and barley. On 16<sup>th</sup> November Patrick paid John Hodge £514-3s-4d in full- including his original advance- but on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1746 he listed John Gordon as owing him £250 and Adam Craig owed him £87.

On 25<sup>th</sup> January 1746, Patrick went equal third shares with John Don and James Sim on a cargo shipped by John Gordon of Bordeaux on the *Janet* of Leith, James Deans Master. This comprised:

300 gallons brandy bought at 6s	£90
50 pieces Dutch linen at £7-10s	£375
100 pieces muslin at £1-5s	<u>£125</u>
a total outlay of .....	£590

By 20<sup>th</sup> February everything was sold for a total of £716-12s-6d. Patrick qualified for an agreed 3% commission on the selling price from the two partners and on 30<sup>th</sup> June he paid John Don and James Sim £34-8s-10d net profit to each. His own earnings were one-third of the gross profit of £126-12s-6d, namely £42-4s-2d plus commission of £14-6s-8d.

An almost identical purchase in 1746 "at a public sale" did not involve any travel and was carried out just as swiftly. Patrick reports in his waste book as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> October "I agreed to buy a parcel of goods at public sale in equal partnership with James Rainy and David Telfer, each at £200 and the other two to allow me £6 each for management". The very next day, Patrick bought at public sale, location not stated:

300 gallons brandy at 6s	£90
50 pieces Dutch linen at £7 each	£350
100 pieces muslin at 24s	<u>£120</u>
charges at £2-2s	a total of ...
	£562-2s

The goods were sold as follows:

10 <sup>th</sup> October	100 gals brandy to James Largo	at 8s	£40
	30 pieces muslin " "	at 30s	£45
	60 gals brandy to James Paywell	at 8s	£24
	10 pieces Dutch linen " "	at £9	£90
1 <sup>st</sup> November	60 gals brandy to Andrew Lind	at 8s	£24
	10 pieces Dutch linen " "	at £9½	£95
	30 pieces muslin ready money	at 29s	£43-10s
20 November	80 gals brandy ready money	at £7-7s-6d	£28- 2s- 6d
	40 pieces muslin ready money	at 29s	£58
	30 pieces Dutch linen to John Grant	at £9	<u>£270</u>
	a total of .....		£717-12s-6d

The profit was £155-10s-6d, and on 25<sup>th</sup> December Patrick paid each of his two partners James Rainy and David Telfer £245-6s-10d, including their stake of £200 cash. His own profit was agreed at £64-16s-10d including the management fee of £12.

The level of activity from November 1745 to the end of 1746 was much lower than the years before the Jacobite turmoil, such as 1743, when there were many transactions with overseas merchants. Nevertheless Patrick's nett assets continued to grow as can be seen from the following summaries:

January 1745: £917-10s

July 1745: £1259-17s-8d

January 1746: £1176-12s-6¼d

December 1746: £1553-8s-2¼d

It should be noted that there are no place names in the books, and that the merchants are often given code names to protect their identity. A sample list taken at random comes up with the following: Daniel Trader, Henry Honest, George Vintner, James Grocer, Jacob Weaver, Richard Couper, Thomas Fisher, Peter Wright, James Paywell, Peter Dealmuch, John English of London, John Banker of London, Timothy Dealer of Bordeaux. Most overseas merchants are openly named, such as: John Gordon of Bordeaux, Jacques Delamotte of Bordeaux, James Gordon of Amsterdam, Adam Cruickshanks of Amsterdam, John Coutts of Amsterdam, Abraham van Hoven of Amsterdam, James Andrew of Rotterdam and Peter Johnston of Bergen.

#### *Acknowledgement*

I am indebted to Mrs Sarah Troughton for permission to examine the Archives at Ardchatten. The following appendix gives some idea of the activity with which Patrick was associated in the years 1743, 45 and 46 through a list of

voyages mentioned in the Ardchatten Records.

### 1743

- 21<sup>st</sup> January *Hopewell*, Capt Gordon Master, left for Jamaica. Returned  
9<sup>th</sup> July.  
18<sup>th</sup> April *Swan*, Robert Scot Master, left for Genoa.  
22<sup>nd</sup> July *Dolphin* left for Hamburg.  
1<sup>st</sup> September "our ship" *Britannia* returned from Barbados. (P.C. owned a  
threequarter share).  
10<sup>th</sup> August *Griffin*, John Temple Master, arrived from Amsterdam.  
30<sup>th</sup> August *Weazle* sloop, Thomas Dyke Master, left for Amsterdam.  
25<sup>th</sup> October *Phoenix* freighted for Cadiz. Returned 27<sup>th</sup> December.  
(P.C. bought ½ share on 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct for £320 & sold it on 28<sup>th</sup> Dec for £350.)  
15<sup>th</sup> November *Thistle*, Capt Bently Master, left for Lisbon

### 1745

- 1<sup>st</sup> January *Mary* of Leith, John Sailor Master, left for Amsterdam,  
returned 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. Outward cargo shipped to Bordeaux in the  
*Sea Horse*, Jan van Els Master.  
25<sup>th</sup> January *William*, James Jarden Master, returned from ?  
1<sup>st</sup> February *Anne* of Leith, John Taylor Master, left for Amsterdam.  
16<sup>th</sup> February *Good Hope*, Richard Stout Master, left for London.  
16<sup>th</sup> March *Catharine* arrived from Bordeaux.  
1<sup>st</sup> April *Mary* of Leith, John Sailor Master, left for Amsterdam.  
Returned 6<sup>th</sup> May.  
24<sup>th</sup> April *Mermaid*, Duncan Dan Master, arrived from Bordeaux.  
28<sup>th</sup> May *William*. P.C. sold his quarter share to John Stark Master, for  
£96.  
20<sup>th</sup> July *Margaret* of Kircaldy (or Leith), Robert Taylor Master,  
arrived from Amsterdam. Left for London 4<sup>th</sup> August.  
22<sup>nd</sup> July *Bon Adventure* of Aberdeen left for Rotterdam.  
22<sup>nd</sup> August *Sea Horse*, Ronald Crawford Master, left for Dantzig.  
25<sup>th</sup> August *Anne Galley*, Robert Trusty Master, left for Barbados.  
Reported 10<sup>th</sup> September "lost in a Storm at Sea".  
8<sup>th</sup> September *Happy Return* of Anstruther, James Robin Master, left for  
Dantzig.  
6<sup>th</sup> October *Success* of Bristol, John Philip Master, left for Jamaica.  
10<sup>th</sup> October *Yager* of Bergen arrived from Bergen.  
  
**1746**  
25<sup>th</sup> January *Janet* of Leith, James Deans Master, left for Bordeaux.

18<sup>th</sup> April

*Mermaid* of Leith, John Brown Master, left for Bordeaux.  
Returned 28<sup>th</sup> September.

3<sup>rd</sup> July

*Thunderer* of Dysart, Thomas Taylor Master, arrived from  
Bordeaux.