Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of regret to all of us that the history of Scottish bookbinding should be so incomplete. Dr Mitchell has surveyed the field up to 1650 and has shown what can be done even where there is no great wealth of material. There is no coherent continuous account of Scottish Bookbinders and bookbindings in the second half of the seventeenth century or in the great period of Scottish decorative bindings - the 18th Century. Before this gap can be filled preliminary studies will have to be made of the Scottish bindings of the period in our National and University libraries. My purpose to-night is a limited one - to give you an interim report on some investigations I have been making recently into the bookbindings, plain and ornamental, done for St. Andrews University by its beadle-bookbinders over a period of about 200 years. This interesting race of men, who were employed by the University in this double capacity of Beadle and bookbinder, and who were very often booksellers as well, are not, as far as I know, found in the other Scottish Universities.

My starting point is c.1680 and it is not an arbitrary one. It has been thrust upon me by the accident of the survival of University Muniments. St. Andrews has been fortunate in many ways in the preservation of its old records. The Acta of the Faculty of Arts go back to 1413 and are amongst the oldest in Europe. Dr. Annie Dunlop is now editing the earliest period. The Acta Rectorum are almost equally impressive in range and give us
matriculation lists and Rector's elections from the 16th to the nineteenth century. But there is massive gap in some of the detailed records for the first three-quarters of the 17th C. e.g. The Senate Minutes do not start until 9th March, 1696. The Revolution of 1688 may have something to do with this. It is discouraging to think that there may be bindings in the University Library from the shops of Rev. Lapraik and Edward Haban when they were printers in the city, which now cannot be identified. The Senate Minutes, which carry on in a largely unchanged form to 1859 when the University administration were a useful source of biographic detail, but for the actual identification of bindings by the beadle-bookbinders, the vouchers which lie behind the Library-quaestor account books proved invaluable. These exist in a very scrappy form for 1683, 1684, 1692 and 1697, and right through from 1720 to the end of the 19th century in ever-increasing detail and complexity. There is too a Library-quaestor account book for the period 1729 to 1809, which was itself bound in calf by a beadle-bookbinder. These were the main sources.

The office of bedellus or beadle in the University is a very ancient one, tho' strangely enough its history has never been written. One of Br. Wardlaw's natural sons was a beadle—Wardlaw, Bp. of St Andrews was the first Chancellor of the University—, and the name of one 16th century beadle—Allan Budge is known. After the 17th century gap in the records, we begin to hear in the Senate minutes of the appointment of Archbeadles right up to the end of the 19th century when the post degenerated into the modern University
The first college bookbinder we came across was not an archbeadle—he aspired only to the humble office of porter to the New College, i.e. the college now called St. Mary's Divinity. His first appearance in his capacity as binder was in 1684 when he was paid 31 pounds 4 sh. Scots for binding 16 folios at 3 sh. sterling each and 3 4tos at 16 sh. Scots each. Similarly in 1692 he was paid 20 pounds, 16 sh. and 6d. Scots for binding 19 folios and and 3 4tos. In April 1696 he was paid another 8 pounds and his receipt for this money, witnessed by his son and by the contemporary archbeadle who survived (Document one). There are, unfortunately no detailed accounts naming the books bound, and although I have my suspicions, I cannot point to any particular volumes as being bound by Adamson. So he remains something of a mystery. The first three archbeadles of whom mention is made in the Senate minutes, John Muig c.1673 to 1695; John McCulloch 1695-1700, who witnessed the Adamson document, and who copied documents for the University; and William Watson, 1700-1718 are not known to have been binders, and most of the University binding in this period was done by Edinburgh booksellers.

The first archbeadle bookbinder was Alexander McCulloch, who was appointed Archbeadle in on 27 June, 1718. McCulloch was related to the two previous archbeadles; he was the son of John McCulloch and his wife's name was Margaret Watson. He claimed 'to have been bred a bookbinder in my employment'. I do not know who taught him the trade—possibly went to another Scottish city to learn it. The most surprising thing about McCulloch was that he was a University graduate. He is consistently referred to in University documents as Mr Alexr McCulloch and a student of that name matriculated at St. Salvator's College in 1716 and graduated in 1718, 6 days after McCulloch's appointment as Archbeadle. The dates and comparison of signatures make it likely that the Archbeadle and the graduate are one and the same person. McCulloch's spell as Archbeadle was not without its ups and downs. He was suspended in 1723 'ab officio et beneficio' for adultery but was re-instated a year later. The Senate minutes tell us that he 'had given all satisfaction to the public discipline of the Church by sitting in sack-cloth... according to the appointment of the Kirk Session', and had said he was heartily sorry. The Senate must have
thought his repentance genuine for they proceeded to allow him his emoluments for the year of suspension.

The first notice I have found of MacCulloch binding books for the University was in January, 1727 when he was paid £6 pounds 4 sh. Scots for binding and putting new parchment in the Acta Rectorum. Vol. II, and for binding a new book for the University minutes. At this time George Paton of Edinburgh was binding the library books, and McCulloch was only doing occasional binding for the University. Both books are stoutly bound in calf, and are pleasantly thumbed, somewhat amateurishly decorated in blind tooling. The bindings are stout and strong and have stood up well to 233 years of existence, the Senate minute-book has been retitled. (show 2 and 3) The tools used in decoration are found on many books in the University library bound between 1729 and 1745, and are a useful means of identifying other bindings done in the city of St Andrews, for McCulloch seems to have carried on a flourishing business as stationer, bookseller and binder in the town. The tools used by McCulloch on these two bindings are also found on the binding of the Minute-book of the Hammerman craft of St. Andrews, and it is obvious from the book itself which was very ancient that someone had rebound it and added extra pages about 1731. And in that year, McCulloch had become a member of the craft, which although it was essentially a Smith craft was of the omnigatherum variety and included in its ranks stationers, painters, litsters and glovers as well as smiths. Then McCulloch first entered it was on a limited basis, for he was not allowed to see a servant as a smith, and was only allowed to have apprentices to bookbinding by consent of the craft. He did indenture three, Alexander Young, David Stedman and William Arnott before 1739, when he was made a full member of the craft. McCulloch was at different times both deacon and boxmaster to the craft and was obviously a respected citizen. In 1738, when he had been Archdeacon for 20 years he made a petition to the University to be made their official agent for copyright books, their binder and bookseller. In making this petition he was cutting right across the business of John Paton, the Edinburgh bookseller and father of George Paton, antiquary who for the last twenty years had been the University's