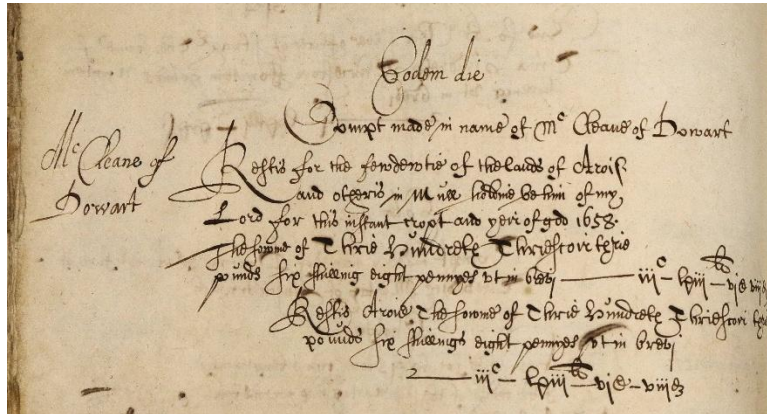


## Online Seminar: *A Secret Language? Scottish Secretary Hand*

Join us online via Zoom on **Friday 12 June 2026 at 19:30 UK time** to hear Alison Diamond speak about the joys and challenges of reading Scottish secretary hand, the style of handwriting used in sixteenth and seventeenth century historical documents.



*Detail from the 1658 rental for the Argyll estates*

During the sixteenth century, a form of handwriting was developed which became known as secretary hand. This was an administrative or business 'shorthand' which was used throughout western Europe. Scotland had its own version of secretary hand, used in a majority of documents from the mid 1500s until 1700. An ability to read and understand secretary hand is essential for engaging with documents from this period. Alison's talk will introduce Scottish secretary hand, using stories from Argyll Estates Archives to illustrate some of the joys and challenges.

### Speaker Biography

Alison has been archivist for Argyll Estates Archives at Inveraray Castle since 2016. Originally from Essex, Alison studied divinity at Aberdeen before qualifying as an archivist at University College London and is now learning Gaelic with the University of the Highlands and Islands. Alison is a self-confessed palaeography geek, enjoying deciphering handwriting in the same way as some folk enjoy sudoku or crosswords. She was tutor for the Scottish Palaeography and Diplomatic module with the Centre for Archive and Information Studies at Dundee, delivers the Scottish Records Association palaeography courses and inflicts her passion on volunteers and other willing victims.

### Booking information

This event is FREE\* for members of the Friends.

**\*Please note: Friends must be logged in to their web account to receive their discount!**

Tickets for non-members are £10. Find out more about becoming a Friend here: [Become a Friend of Argyll Estates Archives – Friends of Argyll Estates Archives](#)

Alternatively, you can book your place by emailing [friends@argyllestatesarchives.org](mailto:friends@argyllestatesarchives.org).