

## SCOTTISH RECORDS

### Testaments

Testaments involved only movable property such as money, goods, debts owed to / by deceased. It was (and still is) not necessary for relatives of a deceased person to draw up an inventory, unless that person had money invested in some form or was owed or owing debts. As most people only led a subsistence existence, particularly before the Union of the Parliaments (1707), this meant that a large percentage of the population did not have a testament. Most Whyte family testaments are accessible in the on-line Scottish records – see my “Notes on legal documents researched” for a summary of the points noted from those researched.

### Sassines

Heritable property (e.g. land) up to 1868 in Scotland could not be bequeathed, but automatically descended according to the laws of primogeniture. Records of inheritance and purchase of land appear in the Register of Sassines for each county (from 1617), although there are other sources that pre-date this (Protocol Books). Royal Burghs (e.g. Forfar) had the right to keep their own registers of Sassine (property transactions) and also their own register of deeds.

The Royal Burgh of Forfar has records of sassiness from 1661, but only registers of deeds from 1768. Sassines can also be found in the Particular Register of the County of Forfar, as well as Deeds in the registers of the Forfar Sheriff Court. I have had no opportunity to look at the sassiness relating to our family's heritable property.