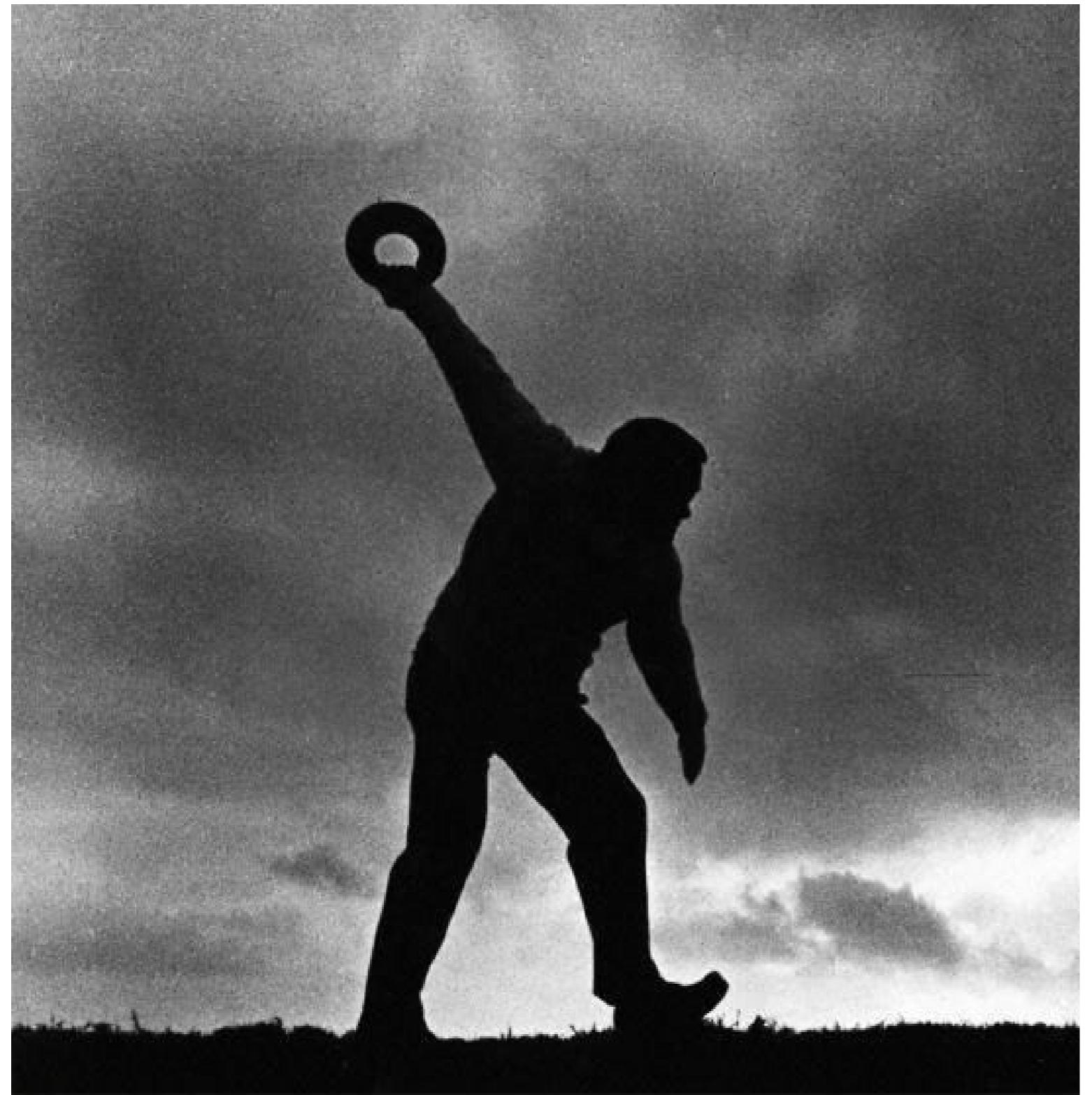


Quoiting



The sport of quoiting (pronounced “koiting” or “kiting”) was popular in mining communities throughout Scotland. At one time there were about 30 quoiting clubs in West Lothian and the game was at its most popular between World War I and World War II. Quoits is rarely played today and there are only a few clubs left in Scotland

Quoiting required a great deal of skill and strength as it involved throwing heavy iron or steel rings (weighing between 6 and 12 pounds or 2.7 to 5.5 kg) at a pin in the ground. The Scottish game used to be played by throwing the quoit a distance of 21 yards (about 19 metres) but the shorter distance of 18 yards (about 16.5 metres) was sometimes played

A game is played by 2 people each throwing 2 quoits at a 3 foot (almost 1 metre) square bed of clay or hob. The players then change ends and throw their quoits at the opposite hob. The player whose quoit is nearest the pin wins that end, scoring 2 points if both their quoits are nearest the pin or, otherwise, just one point. The game is won by the first player to reach a score limit of 21, 51, 61, 71 or 81, the limit being agreed prior to the start of the match

James Walkinshaw (1885-1958) World Champion Quoiter

James Cranston Walkinshaw was a miner to trade and lived in Carnwath before moving to Woolfords, near West Calder. He followed in his father, Robert's, footsteps by becoming a quoiting World Champion. He won the World Championship in the late 1920s by defeating the English Champion, James Hood, a policeman from Liverpool. Throughout his quoiting career, James Walkinshaw played in a total of 112 big matches and won an impressive 85 of these

James practiced at a man-made quoiting green in a field by the burn at Woolfords. He travelled the length and breadth of the UK to play matches, mostly by bicycle, often leaving the night before to ensure he arrived



in good time for his match. During the hot summer months, the red hot tar from the road melted on to the wheels of his bike and he would have to stop and scrape it off before continuing to his match destination

As well as the often large prize money available, quoiting was commonly associated with gambling. James' daughter, Marion, recalls that most of her father's wages would go on the match and that much was riding on a win:

"When he won he would get sweets and cakes and he would return with a gill of whisky. A loss meant that food was not readily on the table. A plate of 'saps' (old bread softened with hot, sweet milk) was often served up as dinner or a boiling of tatties from the farmer's field. Dad played many matches in Shotts where the quoiting green was next to the hotel. As a young girl of 8 or 9, I remember my mother sending me to the telephone box across the street from our house to call the hotel and find out how dad's match was going so that my mother would know whether we would eat well that week or not"

This quoiting medal was presented by Alexander Ure, Solicitor General for Scotland and MP for Linlithgowshire in 1907. It is engraved on the reverse "Won by James Walkinshaw 1909, 1910 and 1911". The medal is on loan to the museum from James' family



QUOITING.

MATCH FOR £30.—A match for this stake was played at Larkhall on Saturday between James Walkinshaw, Carnwath and Robert Wardrop, Motherwell. This was the third meeting of the players, and each had a win to his credit. Saturday's game was the deciding one. Result:—Walkinshaw, 61; Wardrop, 52.

The Scotsman, Monday 14th April 1913



This watch fob was awarded by the Linlithgowshire Quoiting Association and is engraved on the reverse "Won by J Steven 1906". The watch fob is part of the museum collection

Robert Walkinshaw (1833-1904) World Champion Quoiter

Robert Walkinshaw, was a tailor to trade but his livelihood and residence (when he wasn't quoiting) was the Wee Bush Inn in Carnwath. He began playing quoits as a young lad playing with flat stones and a white feather as a tee

After playing locally in small matches for small sums of money, he started playing larger matches further away from home. Stakes of £100 to £500 were commonplace and were huge amounts of money in those days. His first big match was won at Kirkcaldy in Fife against a tanner named Boag. He then played, and won, against Kirkland, the Champion of Ayrshire, in Mauchline

Robert is pictured opposite (on the left) with B McGregor (right) at a match played in Hull in 1860 where he beat the English Champion by the extraordinary score of 61-5. In 1862 he became the Champion of Scotland by beating Gillespie in Leith

In 1870, Robert won the World Championship by defeating the English Champion from London, George Graham by 81 to 55. The match was played at Mr Melaugh's Quoiting Ground in Glasgow for prize money of £100. Robert retained the title of World Champion Quoiter for nearly 9 years



Acknowledgements:
The Scotsman
George Paul, Another Look at Carnwath, 1989
Pamela Stark, Great Granddaughter (by marriage) of Robert Walkinshaw



This trophy jug is inscribed "Won by R. Walkinshaw 3rd Sept. 1862" and "First Place for Quoiting, Leith". It was presented to Robert Walkinshaw when he won the Scottish Quoiting Championship title

When Robert's daughter, Agnes, emigrated from Scotland to America he stuffed the trophy full of pound notes and gave it to her. Agnes' descendants still live in America and kindly supplied this photograph to the museum

THE QUOTING CHAMPIONSHIP OF GREAT BRITAIN.—
Yesterday, Robert Walkinshaw, of Alexandria, Scotland, and George Graham, of London, played a match at quoits at Mr Melaugh's Quoiting Ground, Glasgow, for the championship of Great Britain and £100 a-side. According to the articles, the game was to be one of 81 points up, 18 yards distance, $\frac{8}{3}$ inch quoits, stiff sticking clay ends, pins level with clay, all clay cleared away at measurement, and quoits nearest top of pin only to count. The Scotchman was trained at Alexandria, Murray of Carron playing with him his trial games; and Graham took his breathings at London, and arrived in Glasgow last Wednesday night, since which he has met with a good reception from all classes of sporting men. Betting about a month previous to the match was at evens, but at the end of the week slight odds were offered on Walkinshaw, and one bet was then made—£25 to £20—that the Scotchman would prove the victor by at least eight shots. Before beginning the game, speculation was dull at 6 to 4 on Walkinshaw. The game began at 10.40 A.M., and finished at 5.10 P.M. in utter darkness; and throughout the play was magnificent. At the only time the game was equal was at the twelfth head, when they stood seven each; as Walkinshaw afterwards never allowed his opponent to get too near, and won by a majority of 26 shots, the final scores being—Walkinshaw, 81; Graham, 55. The weather was dry, and there were about 5000 spectators present. Mr J. T. Ferguson, of London, officiated as referee, to the satisfaction of both parties.

