Here is a College president honoured as a physician but also remembered for his colourful past. In a sense his name said it all: Stuart, spelt in that way rather than ‘Stewart’, was a mark of his family’s devotion to the Jacobite cause – having a Catholic monarch back on the throne.

The Threipland family originated in the Borders, but around 1600 they moved to Perthshire, buying the Fingask estate and its castle in the foothills of the Highlands, between Perth and Kinross. When the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion started Sir David Threipland immediately joined the Earl of Mar and his men, hoping to reinstall a Stuart on the throne. He was captured by government troops but escaped into exile (although some have claimed that he died in captivity). In 1716 his wife had a premature son whom, not surprisingly, they called Stuart. Soon after, the family were permitted to return, not as owners but as humble tenants of their old home.

Stuart Threipland eventually entered the University of Edinburgh to study medicine. In 1737, he helped to found the student organisation later known as the Royal Medical Society and later served as its president. In 1778 the society was granted a Royal Charter, the only student body ever to be so honoured.

As he approached retirement Threipland repurchased the Fingask estate, his family’s old home, and restored it to its former glory before he died aged 89. The estate exists to this day and is again owned by the Threipland family. Threipland’s devotion to the Stuarts never faltered, demonstrated by his continuing to toast ‘the King across the water’.

**Figure 1** Threipland’s medicine chest, which was carried by him throughout the 1745 Rebellion, is thought to have been given to him by Prince Charles himself. It contains 160 remedies and numerous miniature instruments.

**Further reading**