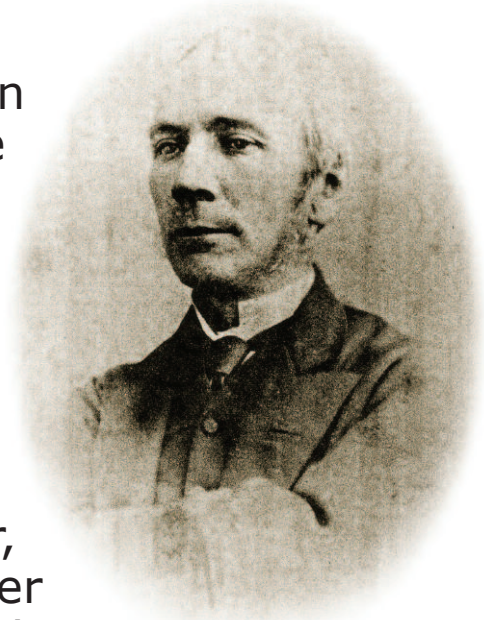


## WILLIAM HAY (1850-1926)

### *provost and general merchant*

William Hay was born in Alford in 1850, where his father founded the business of general merchant and licensed grocer in 1843.



William was educated at the local public school and later at Michie's Academy, Aberdeen. On leaving school he entered his father's business. In late 1870s, William, in partnership with his brother, Alexander, commenced aerated water manufacturing at Alford, while still retaining the general merchant's business.

The new venture prospered – a newspaper article in 1886 advises Messrs Hay & Sons, Aerated Water Works, Alford, had received an order to supply 7,200 bottles of lemonade, ginger ale etc. for the annual Haddo House games. In 1889 a new specially-built aerated water manufactory was erected at Inverurie. Later the headquarters were transferred to Aberdeen and branches were subsequently opened at Huntly and Elgin. William confined his attention mostly to the firm's interests in the Alford district, where he was exceptionally well-known.

In 1875 William married Mary A. Minto (1855-1889) at Brechin. Following Mary's death, William married again to Anne Minty in 1890 at Waterside of Forbes, Tullynessle.

For many years Provost of the Village Council, William took a leading part in everything concerning the welfare of the village. He served practically all his life on local boards, and being a fluent and pleasant speaker, his services were always in demand for social functions in the district. William took a leading part in providing the water supply of the village.

One of the pioneers of the licensed trade organisations in the North of Scotland, William was one of the founders of the Aberdeenshire Licensed Trade Defence Association, of which he was first secretary and later president.

During the First World War, William took hundreds of wounded soldiers by car to Alford where he entertained them. He was a keen motorist, and an enthusiastic curler, and much of the success of the Alford Club was due to his activities. He was an original member of the United Free Church, Alford, of which he was also a deacon, and acted for many years as treasurer.

William died in 1926 and is interred in Alford Churchyard.

