

**Unprincipled Careerists or Enlightened
Entrepreneurs? A study of the roles,
identities and attitudes of the Scots MPs at
Westminster, c.1754 - c.1784.**

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Abstract

The Scots MPs of the eighteenth century have traditionally been portrayed in a negative light. In a century once noted for electoral corruption and the abuses of patronage, they were seen by contemporaries and later writers as among the worst examples of their kind: greedy, self-seeking, unprincipled 'tools of administration' whose votes could be bought with the offer of places and pensions. Lewis Namier's seminal work exposing the cynical approach to politics of MPs generally, sparked a backlash which has produced a more balanced evaluation of English politics. Strangely, although Namier exonerated the Scots MPs from the worst of the charges against them, his less judgmental verdicts are found only sporadically in more recent writing, while the older viewpoint is still repeated by some historians. There is no modern study of the eighteenth-century Scots MPs, a situation which this research proposes to remedy, by examining the group of MPs who represented Scotland at Westminster between 1754 and 1784. It re-assesses the extent to which the original criticisms are merited, but also widens the scope by examining the contribution made by Scotland's MPs, to British and Scottish political life in the later part of the eighteenth century.

A study of the social make-up and the careers of this particular cohort provides the backdrop for the two main themes: the participation of Scots MPs in the legislative process, and their effectiveness as representatives of Scottish interests at Westminster. Existing biographical information has been supplemented by an examination of Parliamentary Papers, debates, and personal correspondence to enable further analysis of attitudes, in particular with regard to politics and political mores. The research explores issues of motivation, asking questions about allegiance, identity, perceptions of government, and how conflicts of interest were resolved, before presenting a conclusion which aims to offer a revised, broader, but more nuanced, assessment of this much-criticised group, based on more recent approaches to interpretation of the period.

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Abbreviations

BL	British Library
CRB	Convention of Royal Burghs
ECA	Edinburgh City Archive
GCA	Glasgow City Archive
HCPP	House of Commons Parliamentary Papers
HCB	Journals of the House of Commons
HLJ	Journals of the House of Lords
NRS	National Records of Scotland
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NRAS	National Register of Archives for Scotland
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

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Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been completed without the patience and encouragement of my principal supervisor, Dr Emma Macleod, for whose support I am deeply grateful. Comments and suggestions from both Dr Macleod and Dr Alastair Mann along the way have been invaluable in developing my thinking about the subject.

The staff at the National Records of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland and the Millennium Library, University of Stirling, have been unfailingly helpful. Helen Beardsley at Stirling has always been ready to respond to my queries and I was invariably made welcome at the local archive centres which I visited, in Inverness, Angus, Perth, Stirling, Glasgow and Edinburgh. I would also like to thank Dr David Brown, head of Private Records at NRS for his advice on the use of Family and Estate Papers, and Dr Alison Rosie for arranging access to NRAS records. I am grateful to Keith Adam for giving me permission to consult the Adam Muniments at Blair Adam, and to the honorary archivist, John Getley, for his assistance during my visit.

I am indebted to Dr Colin Nicolson at Stirling University for his help in setting up the Scottish MPs database, and to Professor Julian Hoppit of University College, London, for his generosity in allowing me access to his own work on the legislation of the period, from which I was able to develop the Scottish legislation database. Professor P.D.G. Thomas, formerly of Aberystwyth University, very kindly responded in some detail to my request for assistance in identifying speakers in the Commons, and pointed me towards additional publications which would provide further help.

Finally, I must pay tribute to the various members of my family, who have allowed me the space to carry out this research: to my daughter, Helen, for her readiness to listen and to discuss areas where our interests overlapped, and to my husband, Bill, for his forbearance and understanding when I was immersed in another century.

Permissions and further acknowledgements

Keith Adam of Blairadam kindly allowed me to quote from the Adam Muniments.

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Appendix 3 showing expenditure on Highland Roads is reproduced from the House of Commons Journals, as digitised in the HCPP database (copyright University of Southampton and ProQuest).

Introduction

The eighteenth century in British history is one which defies pigeon-holing. Once thought of as an era of stability, dull, devoid of issues which aroused much passion, it also witnessed a new royal dynasty, widespread social and economic change, and the acquisition of a vast overseas empire. A society which interested itself in the Enlightenment and in polite discourse, which produced elegant architecture and landscaped gardens, was also noted for drunkenness and riotous behaviour. A hierarchical and supposedly deferential society was also one where key political figures were lampooned on stage and in print. Like the century itself, eighteenth-century politics defies neat classification. Was this the politics of civilised compromise and accommodation where politicians defended the constitution and the traditional liberties of free Britons against both despotism and republicanism? Or was it the politics of an oligarchy who manipulated and managed a corrupt electoral system in their own interest?

These paradoxes provide the backdrop for a re-examination of one group who have consistently been portrayed in a very negative light – the eighteenth-century Scots MPs at Westminster. This research will argue that there is another side to this particular coin. It might have been expected that Sir Lewis Namier's ground-breaking research into the nature of eighteenth-century politics would result in some re-assessment of the situation in Scotland, but compared to the scope and volume of work done on English politics and on developments in central and local government, the output has been quite meagre.¹ Namier's cynical view of politics and politicians reinforced those of earlier historians, such as the Porritts and Laprade, who had previously exposed the widespread use of 'corrupt practices' in the

¹ For the historiography of the period, Herbert Butterfield, *George III and the Historians* (London 1957), is still worth reading. Linda Colley argues persuasively for the resumption of eighteenth-century political studies in a 1986 Journal article: L. Colley, 'Politics of Eighteenth-Century British History' in *Journal of British Studies*, 25 (1986), pp.359-379. Namier's views are to be found in: L.B. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London, 1928, 2nd edition, 1957), L.B. Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (London, 1930), and later, L. B. Namier and J. Brooke (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, 3 volumes (London, 1964).

electoral system.² His belief in the predominance of self-interest led him to view eighteenth-century politics in terms of the patronage system. It was this, he concluded, which was responsible for the subservience of so many MPs to Administration (which controlled much of the patronage) and which prevented the development of political parties based on ideals and principles. His work was controversial and attracted accusations of bias, and his failure to include the contribution made to government by the House of Lords, for example, is considered a significant omission by later historians.³ But Namier's research stimulated further exploration of the nature of government. He himself argued that patronage did not simply equate to corruption and that in a country where government was based ultimately on consent, rewards and favours were the recognised way of obtaining support, and worked in both directions. His widely-quoted reference to the shower-bath and the water-spout has led to quite extensive research into the pressure which could be brought to bear on MPs from below.⁴ Of greater importance were his techniques of structural analysis which produced a huge amount of raw data about many of the individuals who formed the political class in eighteenth-century Britain and opened the door to a complete re-think about the working of the political system during this period. As a result we now know much more about the electoral system, the nature of the electorate and the existence of popular politics. There is a better understanding of what constituted acceptable behaviour at elections according to the

² E. & A. Porritt, *The Unreformed House of Commons* (Cambridge, 1903); W. T. Laprade, *The Parliamentary Papers of John Robinson, 1774-1784* (London, 1922).

³ Linda Colley's assessment of Namier's contribution to eighteenth-century history and its impact on historians is both enlightening and thought-provoking: L. Colley, *Namier* (London, 1989). NOTE: the role of the House of Lords in eighteenth-century politics has since been extensively researched: eg J. Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The peerage of eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1984); C. Jones and D.L. Jones, (eds.), *Peers, Politics and Power: the House of Lord, 1603-1911* (London, 1986); M. McCahill, *The House of Lords in the Age of George III, 1760-1811* (Chichester, 2009).

⁴ Corruption was 'not a shower-bath from above, but a water-spout springing from the rock of freedom to meet the demands of the people', Namier, *Structure of Politics*, pp. 103-4.

prevailing political culture.⁵ A further area of investigation and debate concerns the rise of political parties and the re-appearance of political principles as a means of determining allegiances. The question of party has provoked a huge volume of literature, partly to counter the old Whig view that parties continued in an unbroken line of development from the seventeenth century into the nineteenth and beyond, and partly to disprove Namier's contention that ideology counted for little in politics.⁶ With a developing interest in state formation, research has also been carried out into the development of Parliament as an institution, the huge expansion of legislation, and alongside this, the problems of integration posed by the Unions which incorporated the Parliaments of Scotland and, later, Ireland into the legislature.⁷ The linkage between centre and localities is not an area which featured in Namier's work but has since assumed some importance. David Dean has argued that the interaction between centre and locality was one of the key reasons for the success of the English Parliament.⁸ Defenders of the old (pre-1832) electoral system claimed that one of its strengths was its ability to represent a variety of interests and Paul Langford explored ways in which powerful interest groups were able to make their voices heard in Westminster, whether by means of the developing lobby system or via a local land-owning MP, who might not be the constituency MP, but who was usually willing to promote the interest of an area where he himself had property or other vested interests.⁹

⁵ F. O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties: the unreformed electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1987); J. Phillips, *Electoral Behaviour in Unreformed England: plumpers, splitters and straights* (New Jersey, c.1982); R. M. Sunter, *Patronage and Politics in Scotland, 1707-1832* (Glasgow, 1986).

⁶ See, for example, J. Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976); F. O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party in England: the Rockingham Whigs, 1760-82* (London, 1975); H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: political ideology in eighteenth-century Britain* (London, 1977); L. Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: the Tory Party, 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982); D. Ginter, *Whig Organisation in the Election of 1790* (London, 1967).

⁷ John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: war, money and the English State 1688-1783* (London, 1989), and Peter Jupp, *The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848* (London, 2006), examine the evolution of institutions, while for a developing British identity, Linda Colley's *Forging the Nation* is essential reading: L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992).

⁸ D. Dean, in D. Dean and C. Jones (eds.), *Parliament and Locality, 1660-1939* (Edinburgh 1998), p.1.

⁹ P. Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1991).

Studies of the Scottish political scene after 1707, in contrast, have been patchy.¹⁰ The political management of Scotland after the demise of the Scottish Parliament has attracted some attention, and the careers of the key political managers, in particular the 3rd Duke of Argyll, and Henry Dundas, have been the subject of a number of studies.¹¹ The concept of representation has been explored in different contexts. The part played in Westminster politics by the sixteen Scottish peers, and the issues that arose from the altered nature of their representation after 1707 have been investigated by several historians.¹² Ronald Sunter looked at relations between politicians and their electors in a series of case studies across Scotland between 1707 and 1832, while some rethinking about the lower ranks of society has occasioned a fresh examination of the role of the disfranchised in demanding political change, although these are generally nearer the end of the century.¹³ Robert Harris has more recently made the case for a growing public dimension to Scottish politics by the later eighteenth century, a fact which he attributed to the development of the press. He also detected 'a clear

¹⁰ J.C.D. Clark offered a thoughtful overview of the historiography in an article in 1989: J.C.D. Clark, 'English history's forgotten context: Scotland, Ireland, Wales', *The Historical Journal*, 32 (1989), pp. 211-228 (accessed online).

¹¹ A. Murdoch, *The People Above: politics and administration in mid-eighteenth-century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980); J.S. Shaw, *The Management of Scottish Society, 1707-1764: power, nobles, lawyers, Edinburgh agents and English influences* (Edinburgh, 1983); J.S. Shaw, *The Political History of Eighteenth-century Scotland* (Basingstoke, 1999); D. Brown, 'Henry Dundas and the Government of Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1989).

NOTE: Alex. Murdoch's excellent book, *The People Above*, remains the standard analysis of Scottish government in the mid eighteenth century but its focus on the semi-independence of Scotland, while it reveals much about administration, rather sidelines the role of Scotland's MPs and devotes only a brief chapter to the period after 1765 when there was no Scottish Minister.

¹² M. McCahill, 'The Scottish peerage and the House of Lords in the late eighteenth century', *Scottish Historical Review*, 51 (1972), pp. 72-96; W. C. Lowe, 'Bishops and Scottish Representative Peers in the House of Lords, 1760-75', *Journal of British Studies* 18 (1978), pp.86-106 (accessed online); G. M. Ditchfield, 'The Scottish Representative Peers and Parliamentary Politics, 1787-1793', *Scottish Historical Review*, 40 (1981), pp. 14-31. A more recent assessment can be found in McCahill, *House of Lords*, chapter 2. (See above, footnote 3).

¹³ Sunter, *Patronage and Politics*. Other studies include W. L. Burn, 'The General Election of 1761 at Ayr', *English Historical Review*, 52 (1937), pp. 103-109 (accessed online); W. Ferguson, 'Dingwall Burgh Politics and the Parliamentary Franchise in the Eighteenth Century' *Scottish Historical Review*, 38 (1959), pp. 89-108. See also, for studies of popular politics, R. Harris, 'Popular Politics in Angus and Perthshire in the 1790s', *Historical Research*, 80 (2007), pp. 518-544 (accessed online); J. Brims, 'The Scottish Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1983); K.J. Logue, *Popular Disturbances in Scotland, 1785-1815* (Edinburgh, 1979); C.A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: beyond Jacobitism, towards industrialisation* (Manchester, 2000).

sense of national purpose' among the Scottish political classes, while highlighting gaps in the research into Scottish political history for this period.¹⁴

There is a surprising dearth of work on the MPs who represented Scotland at Westminster and they will form the subject of this research, which covers a period of some thirty years, from the aftermath of the '45 rebellion to the fledgling government of the Younger Pitt in 1784. The dates chosen, c.1754 – c. 1784, are to an extent arbitrary, but it is a period which has received little attention, between the twilight years of the 3rd Duke of Argyll and the rise of Henry Dundas. The three decades span five parliaments, long enough to allow some assessment of change during the period, but short enough to study in some detail. Omitting the immediate aftermath of the '45 rebellion, though not of course its influence on subsequent events and attitudes, avoids any distortion which the flurry of post-rebellion Scottish legislation might have had on statistics. But the period which witnessed John Wilkes, the revolt of the American colonies, and the acquisition of a new overseas empire is by no means devoid of interesting political issues to engage the attention of members of Parliament.

The Scots MPs of the eighteenth century have not enjoyed a good press. Two strands of thought are discernible: one labels them as corrupt, the other as irrelevant. In an era once notorious for parliamentary corruption, the Scots electoral system was for long considered to exemplify the worst practices, and its product – the Scots MPs – have been similarly tainted. They have been variously portrayed as self-serving placemen whose votes were bought by Government, or as anglicised absentees who bribed their way into Parliament, then abandoned Scotland and its interests for a more comfortable and luxurious lifestyle in London. Standard histories of the eighteenth century, such as William Ferguson's, first published in

¹⁴ R. Harris, 'The Scots, Parliament and the British State', in J. Hoppit (ed.), *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1660-1850* (Manchester, 2003), pp. 124-145.

1968 and reprinted in 1990, still offer a traditional treatment of the politics of the period, describing abuses in the electoral system, subservient MPs, and the all-pervasive patronage.¹⁵ Even work such as Sunter's, which is designed to illustrate the limits of control exercised through patronage, continues to offer this as the context within which the politics of the period is to be examined.¹⁶ Much of the criticism is directed at the peers. P.W. J. Riley quoted Defoe's view of Scots peers at the time of the Union :

The great men are posting to London for places and honours, every man full of his own merit and afraid of everyone near him: I never saw so much trick, sham, pride, jealousy, and cutting of friends' throats as there is among the noblemen.¹⁷

Riley contented himself with commenting that there was some truth in this view, but Shaw, twenty years later, paraphrased Riley thus:

Noble influence from the Revolution to the Union is mercilessly assessed by P.W.J. Riley in *King William and the Scottish Politicians* and *The Union of England and Scotland*, as he cruelly and puritanically strips away the pretensions of the Scottish grandees, revealing petty motives, self-interest and venal misgovernment in the midst of factional strife...¹⁸

In a later book, Shaw concluded that 'it is difficult to disagree with the prevailing view that Scottish politics suffered from the selfish and sterile influence of the magnates in the decades after Union'.¹⁹ Bruce Lenman was openly scathing about the behaviour of the Scots MPs in general. Of the post-Union MPs, he wrote:

Neither in intent nor practice were the forty-five MPs or the sixteen Representative Peers.... serious representatives of the regions and burghs of Scotland: the vast majority..... went through the eighteenth century to better themselves by selling

¹⁵ W. Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh, 1968). See chapters 5 (Politics and the Rise of Management, 1716-1760) and 8 (Politics in the late eighteenth century: the challenge to the old regime).

¹⁶ Sunter, *Patronage and Politics*.

¹⁷ P.W.J. Riley, *The English Ministers and Scotland, 1707-1727* (London, 1964), p. 36.

¹⁸ Shaw, *Management*, p. 14.

¹⁹ Shaw, *Political History*, pp. 23-6.

their political acquiescence to English politicians in exchange for pecuniary and political favours.²⁰

Similar views are repeated in a more recent general history, where Lenman described how in the first half of the century 'the 45 notoriously venal Scottish MPs at Westminster became an important buttress of an often unpopular Whig ascendancy'. Of the peers he wrote 'by 1710 the sixteen were infamous for nearly all being tools returned on a government list put through by patronage and intimidation'.²¹

The judgments of these writers are quoted elsewhere. Daniel Szechi and David Hayton cited Lenman and Riley as their sources for statements such as 'The passage of the Union through the Scottish Parliament ultimately depended on the support of unprincipled and notoriously corrupt placemen like the Earls of Glasgow and Cromarty' and, by 1742, 'Fidelity to the Government was the only qualification a Scottish MP, representative peer or office-holder absolutely had to have'.²² J.C.D. Clark, in a more restrained review of Scottish historiography for this period commented:

Modern research bears out contemporary laments that Scotland had been deserted by its nobility and greater gentry after the Union. They left a 'void' in Scottish public life which lawyers, clergy and a secular intelligentsia were slow in filling.²³

This perception of eighteenth-century Scots politicians has a long history. In the eyes of nineteenth-century Whig historians it was simply an extreme example of eighteenth-century political corruption. But there were other influences at work. Contemporary (eighteenth-century) anti-Scottish prejudice in England was a contributory factor to the unsavoury

²⁰ B. Lenman, *Jacobite Clans of the Great Glen, 1650-1784* (London, 1984), p. 74.

²¹ B. Lenman, in R.A. Houston, and W. Knox, (eds.), *The New Penguin History of Scotland: from the earliest times to the present day* (London, 2001), p. 320.

²² D. Szechi and D. Hayton, 'John Bull's other kingdoms' in C. Jones (ed.), *Britain in the First Age of Party, 1680-1750* (London, 1987), p. 255.

²³ Clark, 'English history's forgotten context', pp. 222-3.

reputation of the Scots MPs. This was most evident in the mid-century in the English press where John Wilkes's attacks on Lord Bute in particular and Scots in general, in his satirical newspaper, the *North Briton*, are the most memorable, but by no means the only, examples.²⁴ Scots were lampooned and caricatured in the most venomous way on the English stage and in the English press. Characters such as 'Sawney Scot', 'Sir Archy Macsarcasm' and 'Pertinax Macsycophant' mercilessly depicted what were seen as the worst qualities of the Scots: uncouth, coarse behaviour, boastfulness, and unprincipled careerism.²⁵

It has to be said, however, that the Scots themselves contributed in no small measure to the criticism of their politicians. The unpopularity of the Union sparked much adverse comment on the means used to persuade the Scots MPs of the time to surrender the nation's political independence. The stigma remained long after the event and the most enduring comments are still quoted.²⁶ Political pamphlets continued throughout the century to be an important medium for expressing discontent, targeting lightly-veiled political figures. During electoral campaigns character assassination by means of heavy sarcasm regularly featured, particularly in Edinburgh where there was much political in-fighting and a flourishing press.²⁷ Scots MPs and would-be candidates added to the condemnation. George Dempster, MP for Perth Burghs, advocated reform on the basis that the Scottish electorate consisted of 'the great lord, the drunken laird, and the drunkener baillie'. James Boswell, who aspired to a parliamentary seat

²⁴ For an analysis of the reasons for English hostility to Bute, see J. Brewer, 'The Misfortunes of Lord Bute: a case-study in eighteenth-century political argument and public opinion', *Historical Journal*, 16 (1973), pp. 3-43 (accessed online).

²⁵ P. Langford, 'South Britons' Reception of North Britons, 1707-1820' in T.C. Smout (ed.), *Anglo-Scottish Relations from 1603-1900* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 143-169.

²⁶ The phrases 'bought and sold for English gold' and 'sic a parcel o' rogues in a nation' are often attributed to Burns, but are to be found in a book of Scottish songs from an earlier period: Robert Chambers (ed.), *Songs of Scotland prior to Burns* (Edinburgh, 1862), pp. 45-6. Some attempt has been made recently to counter the 'parcel of rogues' version of events in a book published on the eve of the tercentenary of the Union: C.A. Whatley with D. J. Patrick, *The Scots and the Union* (Edinburgh, 2006).

²⁷ Murdoch's *People Above* has an extensive list of political pamphlets. (Murdoch, *People Above*, pp. 182-184).

was equally critical about the system: 'As that man was esteemed the best sportsman that brought down the most birds, so was he the best representative that brought the best pensions and places to his countrymen'.²⁸ Anglo-Scots financiers were to be found complaining in 1774 of a lack of political leadership from the Scots Representative Peers.²⁹

And then there were the facts. Successive elections showed the votes of independent freeholders in many counties being swamped with the creation of 'parchment barons'.³⁰ Legislation enacted in 1743 to try to stop electors lying under oath had little effect. Evidence brought before Parliament over contested elections provided ample proof of extensive abuse of the system, from vote creation and bribery to the fraudulent manipulation of the electoral procedures themselves, including the use of armed force.³¹ Burghs such as Stirling, Inverkeithing and Jedburgh were at various times disfranchised for corruption. It would be disingenuous to suggest that the candidates and eventual MPs were not part and parcel of this abuse of the electoral system.

Alongside the wholesale condemnation of the electoral system and the MPs, there has arisen another, almost equally negative view of the Scottish political scene, which regards politics in Scotland as ending with the Union, and the Westminster Parliament as largely irrelevant to the needs of Scotland, effectively consigning Scottish politics to the historical dustbin. This was the view taken by Smout in the 1960s when he described Scottish politics after the Union as 'moribund'.³² Shaw referred to the 'trivialisation' of Scottish politics in the eighteenth century and Michael Fry, in an overview of the historiography, attributed what he describes as the

²⁸ H. Meikle, *Scotland and the French Revolution* (London, 1969), p. xviii; *Caledonian Mercury*, 16 November, 1782.

²⁹ A. MacKillop, 'The Political Culture of the Scottish Highlands from Culloden to Waterloo', *Historical Journal*, 46 (2003), p. 514.

³⁰ L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, vol.1 (London, 1964), pp. 469-512.

³¹ See below p. 33.

³² T.C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People, 1560-1830* (London, 1969), p. 201.

‘meagre’ amount of [Scots] political history published in the later twentieth century to the fact that it was seen as ‘boring and provincial’. His account of the politics of the period, however, fails to offer an alternative scenario, beyond pointing out that MPs were of some importance to their own localities.³³ Disappointingly, modern studies similar to those in England, into elections, popular politics, political allegiances, and links between central and local government seem to have passed Scotland by, as David Hayton remarked in 1996: a disparity that he, like others, attributed to:

prevailing perceptions of the artificiality of Scottish political culture in this period and the irrelevance of parliamentary representation to wider historical questions concerning the structure and development of Scottish society.³⁴

Even when Scotland was included in some of the wider ‘four nations’ studies which address issues such as legislative integration, the results seem to reinforce existing perceptions. Statistical analysis of legislation, carried out by Joanna Innes and Julian Hoppit, provides clear evidence of the abysmally small number of Scottish Acts which went through the eighteenth-century British legislature.³⁵ Recent historians, while less judgmental than some of their predecessors, have drawn their own conclusions, Hoppit commenting that ‘Scotland developed in the eighteenth century without resorting to Westminster for legislation on a significant scale.’³⁶ Alex. Murdoch, approaching the issue from a different angle, also believed

³³ Shaw, *Political History*, pp. 28-9; M. Fry, ‘Politics’, in A. Cooke, I. Donnachie, A. MacSween & C. Whatley (eds.), *Modern Scottish History*, vol.1, *The Transformation of Scotland, 1707-1850* (East Linton, 1998), p. 43.

³⁴ D. Hayton, ‘Traces of Party Politics in early eighteenth-Century Scottish Elections’, in C. Jones (ed.), *The Scots and Parliament* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 74-99.

³⁵ J. Innes, ‘Legislating for Three Kingdoms’ in J. Hoppit (ed.), *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1660-1850* (Manchester, 2003), pp. 15-47. Further analysis of the statistics is provided in a more recent article by Julian Hoppit: J. Hoppit, ‘The Nation, the State, and the first Industrial Revolution’, *Journal of British Studies*, 50 (2011), pp. 307-331 (accessed online).

³⁶ Hoppit, ‘The Nation, the State, and the first Industrial Revolution’, p 329.

that developments in Scotland owed little to the Westminster Parliament.³⁷ Devine repeats the same line:

Scottish parliamentary politics as such, disappeared [after the Union]... Westminster hardly ever spent time on Scottish business ... so it was not a question of sending MPs south to defend or promote Scottish concerns for these were rarely debated.³⁸

Instead, work on eighteenth-century Scottish history moved out of an apparent political cul de sac in the later twentieth century to the study of economic and social history, which has resulted in a generally more positive approach towards developments in Scotland, exploring themes such as emigration, radicalism, the Highlands, the improvers, and urbanisation.³⁹ This area has been extended to include cultural issues, but as yet, no real connection has been made between these developments and the political activities of Scotland's representatives at Westminster.⁴⁰

In the face of such overwhelming evidence it might seem a foolhardy task to try to present a different picture of Scottish politicians in the second half of the eighteenth century. Yet, despite the existence of much raw data, there is a lack of a modern study on the topic. There are also some cogent reasons for challenging existing perceptions. The language of the older studies is often emotive, value-laden and biased, but is still echoed in more recent publications.

³⁷ A. Murdoch, 'Scottish Sovereignty in the Eighteenth Century', in H. Dickinson and M. Lynch (eds.), *The Challenge to Westminster: sovereignty, devolution and independence* (East Lothian, 2000), p. 49.

³⁸ T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation, 1700-2000* (London, 1999), p. 200.

³⁹ T.M. Devine and J.R. Young (eds.), *Scotland in the Eighteenth Century: new perspectives* (East Lothian, 1999); T.M. Devine and R. Mitchison (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland, 1760-1830* (Edinburgh, 1988); N. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of Improvement: essays in Scottish history in the eighteenth century* (Edinburgh, 1970); T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War: the social transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester, 1994).

⁴⁰ M. Lynch, *Scotland: a new history* (London, 1992), pp. 343-362. This trend was noted in a report on a more recent conference, where it was commented that 'One of the trends most evident across the two-day event was the influence of the cultural turn on the field of Scottish history'. (K. Barclay and S. Talbott, 'New perspectives on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland: the economic and social history society of Scotland Conference 2010', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 31, (2011), pp. 119-133. (accessed online).

It is also true that the most virulent criticism is directed at those responsible for the Union, particularly the Scottish magnates, and it may be that accusations which were valid in 1707 did not apply in 1767, more than half a century later.

There are some contradictions and inconsistencies in accusations against the Scots MPs, which deserve further investigation. The Scottish elite are accused of becoming anglicised and abandoning Scotland for London yet at the same time it is claimed that both the 3rd Duke of Argyll and Henry Dundas deserve considerable credit for protecting or promoting Scottish interests.⁴¹ Shaw claimed that the dominance of the Scottish magnates limited the potential of Scots MPs who were thus marginalised, but there has been no real enquiry into either the role of the magnates or the effectiveness of the ordinary MPs.⁴² Much of what is written about this period, politically, seems based on the fact that the Scot MPs, like many English MPs, regularly supported Administration in the relatively few divisions for which we have adequate figures. Within Scotland, politics under Argyll are said to have been 'sterile' with debate and discussion effectively stifled, yet when Argyll died in 1761, Scottish politics thereafter were described as leaderless and confused.⁴³

The biggest paradox of all is the implication that the MPs, representatives of the country's ruling elite, educated in its universities and often well-travelled, were immune to the influence of the Enlightenment, whose values included, in the words of Richard Sher:

a love of learning and virtue; a faith in reason and science; a dedication to humanism and humanitarianism... a respect for hard work and material improvement ... an aversion to slavery, torture and other forms of inhumanity; a commitment to religious tolerance and freedom of expression.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Murdoch, *People Above*, pp. 83, 132-3.

⁴² Shaw, *Political History*, p. 29.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 37; Cooke, Donnachie et al, *Modern Scottish History*, vol. 1, p. 54.

⁴⁴ R. Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 8.

This research will examine the proposition that, in contrast to the relentlessly negative portrayal of Scotland's eighteenth-century MPs, there were among them men of learning and of culture, men with wide experience of leadership in various fields, both at home and abroad, men who were ambitious, principled, loyal, and that they included a few men of real ability, who had much to contribute to the developing British political system.

As regards the more recent trend to see Scottish politics as either defunct, or not worth bothering about after the Union, research into English regional politics has revealed much about local issues and the involvement of MPs in addressing these. There is no corresponding work on the Scottish dimension. Statements that Parliament was irrelevant to most Scots seem to be based on the small amount of purely Scottish legislation passed during the period in question without enquiring into what attempts were made to engage with Parliament by groups in Scotland, or conversely, how ready the Scots MPs were to pursue issues which were raised with them. Importantly, the impact of 'British', as distinct from 'Scottish', legislation on Scotland has not been adequately examined. Nor has an attempt been made to assess any contribution the Scots MPs may have made to the development of a British, as distinct from a purely English, legislature.

This research therefore aims to address the imbalance by examining the political behaviour and attitudes of the Scots MPs, both within the context of the original criticisms and also in those areas which have not hitherto been the subject of scrutiny. This should not only allow a re-assessment of the extent to which the original criticisms are merited, but also enable a wider examination of the contribution made by Scotland's MPs to British and Scottish political life in the later part of the eighteenth century. Although the main part of the research is concerned with members of the Commons, about whom much more information is available, the Representative Peers are also included, both because of the links between the two groups,

and because of specific issues relating to the election of the Scottish peers. The group of Commons MPs in the study is limited to those who represented Scottish constituencies and is therefore a readily identifiable group for reasons of statistical analysis. They were almost all Scots. Only occasionally were English MPs brought in for Scottish constituencies, usually for a single term as a favour to a minister. Scots sitting only for English constituencies (some represented both English and Scottish constituencies in the course of the parliamentary careers) have been excluded, largely because cross-border family connections make this a much more difficult group to define. Nevertheless, it is an interesting, and quite sizable group in its own right, including as it did, the elder sons of some Scots peers who were ineligible for election to Scottish constituencies, and one whose activities might merit further investigation.

For information on the members of Parliament, the key reference work is Namier and Brooke's three-volume study, *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, which contains a wealth of biographical information on the members along with descriptions of all the constituencies. A detailed critique of this work is offered in Chapter 1.⁴⁵ It has been supplemented by the more up-to-date *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, where authoritative entries on a number of the Scots MPs appear.⁴⁶ Unlike the *History of Parliament* volumes, these articles do not particularly address the parliamentary career of their subjects – in at least one case, it ignores it altogether. However, it is a salutary reminder that some MPs who were virtually silent in Parliament, were in fact commanding armies, heading diplomatic missions or financing government loans. The *Oxford Dictionary* is particularly useful for information on the Representative Peers, most of whom do not feature in the *History of Parliament* but who are

⁴⁵ Most subsequent references to this work have been accessed via the online version, <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org>>. [Accessed 22 May 2014]. The exceptions are the Introductory Survey, where the paper version is used for reference so that page numbers can be given, and the Appendices, which are more easily accessible in the printed version.

⁴⁶ H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: from the earliest times to the year 2000* (Oxford, 2004-15), <<http://global.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/>>. [Accessed 5 April 2014]. Hereafter *ODNB*.

readily identifiable from a database compiled by Leigh Rayment.⁴⁷ The History of Parliament Trust has commissioned a companion study to the *House of Commons* volumes, but this work is not yet available. Some of the gaps can be filled by the older, but occasionally inaccurate work by Sir James Balfour Paul.⁴⁸

There is an extensive range of Scottish family papers. Some of these are in private hands but the National Register of Archives for Scotland (NRAS) catalogues, some of which are very detailed, assist with identification of useful material. Much of this has previously been searched, along with the vast English collections such as the Newcastle Papers, for the *History of Parliament* volumes, but significant accruals during the second half of the twentieth century to the collections of Scottish estate papers make some additional searching worthwhile.⁴⁹ When so much of politics was personal, private family papers offer an insight into the political world, which is difficult to glimpse through official documents. Scottish papers cover a wide geographical spread from Ross-shire to the Borders, and range from the long-established families to those of less exalted status such as the newly-rich Lawrence Dundas and the middle-ranking Dundas of Arniston family.⁵⁰ As well as dynasties, individuals such as George Dempster of Dunnichen, the pugnacious MP for Perth Burghs, and William Mure of Caldwell, influential MP for Renfrewshire and baron of the Scottish Exchequer, have left

⁴⁷ L. Rayment, *The Peerages of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom* (2003), <<http://www.leighrayment.com/peers.htm>>. [Accessed 22 May 2014].

⁴⁸ Sir J. Balfour Paul, (ed.), *The Scots Peerage*, 9 volumes (Edinburgh, 1904-1914) <<http://archive.org/stream/scotsppeeragefoun02pauluoft#page/520/mode/2up>>. [Accessed 5 April 2014].

⁴⁹ This information came from David Brown, head of Private Records at the NRS.

⁵⁰ National Records of Scotland (NRS), Political and estate papers of the family of Dundas of Kerse, Stirlingshire, 1729 – 1813, RH4/203 (Microfilmed from the Dundas Family Papers, held at Northallerton); NRS, Papers of the Dundas Family of Melville, Viscounts Melville, GD51, (Melville Castle Papers).

behind a record of their involvement in public affairs. Some of these appear in printed editions.⁵¹

Modern technology assists greatly with the identification of material likely to be relevant, and offers accessibility to some of the scattered and far-flung collections, but significant difficulties still remain. Some important political material not readily available has been microfilmed by NRS but the quality is very variable and in some cases it is illegible. There are problems associated with omissions. Private collections were often acquired piecemeal, are subject to the hazards of survival and generally present an incomplete picture. Much of James Oswald's correspondence was destroyed by a fire during the nineteenth century. Personal correspondence may be among the most interesting of source materials, but there are important caveats. The information it contains is not necessarily accurate because it is contemporaneous with events. While it may reflect the frank opinions of its authors, it may, on the other hand, have been tempered to suit the recipient, or the purpose of the letter. Surviving items may also have been selected by a subsequent family member concerned about the judgments of posterity and may in fact conceal important truths. Similar cautions apply to accounts written by contemporary observers and to memoirs and family histories, often published during the nineteenth century. That said, the work of perceptive writers like Henry Cockburn, Ramsay of Ochertyre and Horace Walpole, who were part of, or close to, the political elite, does much to illuminate social conventions and bring to life personalities and

⁵¹ NRS, Papers of the Scott Family of Harden, Lords Polwarth, GD157/2250, Gilbert Elliot to Harden, 1752-1775; Sir J. Fergusson (ed.), *Letters of George Dempster, to Sir Adam Fergusson, 1756-1813* (London, 1934). For William Mure, an online edition of part of this archive (from 1765-1776) is available, as 'Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell' <<https://archive.org/details/selectionsfromfa19131914mure>>. [Accessed 22 May 2014]. The earlier section (Part 2, vol. 1, 1733-1764), is available in print in the National Library of Scotland (NLS): *Correspondence and miscellaneous papers of Baron William Mure, published by the Maitland Club* (Edinburgh, 1854).

relationships.⁵² Of particular relevance to Scotland are the writings of James Boswell, lawyer, writer and wayward son of a High Court Judge, and the Rev. Alexander Carlyle, a moderator of the General Assembly. Both men visited and stayed in London, and their vivid accounts give the reader a glimpse of the London life of Scots MPs, showing additionally that, for those at an acceptable level of society, introductions to men of influence were not too difficult to obtain.⁵³ Most valuable are letters written to family members, close friends or colleagues, which are often written with an honesty seldom found elsewhere. Into this category come Gilbert Elliot's letters to his friend Walter Scott of Harden, and George Dempster's to his friend and fellow MP, Sir Adam Fergusson.⁵⁴ Dempster was a genuinely reflective politician and his writings illustrate the conflicts of interest which confronted many conscientious MPs. Colonel Masterton's correspondence with James Grant of Ballindalloch sheds light on the often easy camaraderie which existed among the Scots army MPs, as well as revealing a thirst for information and gossip on parliamentary affairs and local elections.⁵⁵ Similar information on the Representative Peers is more difficult to find, but their desire for advancement is very obvious in Marchmont's correspondence with both his brother and with the Duke of Newcastle. The Earl of Breadalbane's correspondence with Lord Hardwicke is in a similar vein.⁵⁶

Records of the proceedings of Parliament, in particular the House of Commons Journals, have

⁵² H. Cockburn, *Memorials of His Time* (Edinburgh, 1856); J. Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 1, ed. A. Allardyce, (Edinburgh, 1888); H. Walpole, *Memoirs and Portraits*, ed. M. Hodgart, (London, 1963).

⁵³ A. Carlyle, *Anecdotes and Characters of the Times*, ed. J. Kinsley (London, 1973); F. Pottle (ed.), *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-3* (London, 1950).

⁵⁴ NRS, Papers of the Scott Family of Harden GD157/2250; Sir J. Fergusson, (ed.), *Letters of George Dempster to Sir Adam Fergusson 1756-1813, with some account of his life* (London, 1934).

⁵⁵ NRS, McPherson-Grant of Ballindalloch, GD494, NRAS 771.

⁵⁶ NRS, Papers of the Hume family of Polwarth, Earls of Marchmont, 1173-1928, GD158; BL, Hardwicke Papers, 1752-1792, Add MS 35503 – 35546.

been used extensively in this research. However, in the eighteenth century they were not systematically collected and printed at the time, and records are patchy. Sheila Lambert, in her introduction to the *Sessional Papers* offers a valuable critique of the surviving parliamentary records, and both Lambert and Peter Thomas provide much information on the practice and procedures of the Commons, which is not immediately evident on reading the original sources.⁵⁷ Reporting of debates in the press was technically illegal till 1771. Thereafter, debates are well covered in William Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, which relied heavily on press reporting, and in publications by Almon and Debrett.⁵⁸ For the earlier period, the historian is dependent on notes taken in the House by individual MPs, such as Roger Newdigate and Horace Walpole for the years 1754-68, or James Harris and Henry Cavendish for the period 1768-74. Inevitably these reflect the interests and abilities of the note-takers and have to be used with some care.⁵⁹ They were not specifically interested in Scotland and the absence of Scottish material from their reporting does not necessarily indicate that Scottish affairs were not the subject of debate from time to time.

The official papers, while extensive, are not, however, comprehensive in terms of coverage of the second half of the century. The Harper Collection, which covers private and local bills and Acts from 1685 to 1814, contains some information but most of the Committee Reports and Accounts do not begin till the 1770s. The Journals of both Houses, however, were issued from the middle of the century and contain a wealth of information about the legislative process,

⁵⁷ S. Lambert (ed.), *House of Commons, Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. I (Delaware, 1975); P.D.G.Thomas, *The House of Commons in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1971).

⁵⁸ J. Almon and others, *The Debates and Proceedings of the British House of Commons, 1743-1774*, 11 volumes, (London, 1766-75); J. Debrett, *The History, Debates and Proceedings of both Houses of Parliament of Great Britain from... 1743 to ... 1774, etc.*, 7 volumes (London, 1792); J. Cobbett, (ed.), *The Parliamentary History of England: from the earliest period to the year 1803*, 36 volumes (London, 1814). Cobbett's *Parliamentary History* has been digitised and is now searchable online via Oxford Digital Library, < <http://www2.odl.ox.ac.uk> >. [Accessed 30 May 2014].

⁵⁹ There is a careful assessment of these sources in Namier and Brooke, *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, vol. 1 App. II, pp. 522-3.

petitions presented to the House, committee work and the personnel involved in these.⁶⁰ The Journals are most easily searched by date (searching by individual names or events produces variable results) and extracting information on Scottish legislation can be slow. Historians such as Joanna Innes and Julian Hoppit have done much work on analysing legislation, including Scottish legislation, passed by Parliament during the eighteenth century and their work provides an essential context within which to examine the contribution of the Scots MPs.⁶¹ This researcher has been fortunate to gain access to Julian Hoppit's database on parliamentary legislation, from which it has been possible to extract the relevant Scottish measures with a reasonable degree of accuracy. His book on failed legislation has been used to extract Scottish bills, thus highlighting matters which were clearly of importance to various groups in Scotland but which would not have featured in a survey of successful legislation.⁶² Researching the involvement of Scots MPs in the Westminster Parliament was a significant part of this research. Apart from the Commons Journals, other official or semi-official sources used were the papers of those at the heart of government. These are often voluminous and had previously been searched by the *History of Parliament* researchers, but a number yielded useful information. Newcastle's penchant for lists produced a number of detailed division lists for the earlier part of the period, although the emphasis was often on those who had opposed Administration and they did not always reveal the expected phalanx of supportive Scots MPs. Other collections which shed further light on relationships between MPs and those at the centre of power are those of Grenville, Hardwicke and Liverpool.⁶³ Sir John Fortescue's

⁶⁰ House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (HCPP), Journals of the House of Commons (hereafter HCJ); House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (HCPP), Journals of the House of Lords (hereafter HLJ), both accessible from <http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/collectionBrowse.do?expandtolevel=0&expand=N%20-%20B>. [Accessed 5 April 2014].

⁶¹ Innes, 'Legislating for Three Kingdoms', pp. 15-47.

⁶² J. Hoppit, *Failed Legislation, 1660-1800: extracted from the Commons and Lords Journals* (London, 1997).

⁶³ BL, Official Correspondence of Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle, 1697-1768, Add MS 32686-32992; Memoranda of the Duke of Newcastle, 1667-1768, Add MS 32993-33002; Grenville Papers, 1766-1777, Add MS

edited volumes of George III's correspondence with his ministers reveal just how closely the King was concerned in the business of government and in the distribution of offices.⁶⁴

Unfortunately, Home Office correspondence relating to Scotland, invaluable for the Dundas era, dates from 1782, and is mostly too late for this period. Alex. Murdoch, however, has produced some very helpful statistical material on Scottish appointments, based on his own research. These include legal appointments between 1754 and 1765, appointments to sinecures, 1762-65, a list of government offices in Scotland and their holders in 1755, and the Scottish Civil List for 1761.⁶⁵

The sources for domestic political activity in Scotland are patchy but the records of the Convention of Royal Burghs provide much information. They are reasonably comprehensive for the period and offer an insight into the workings of this organisation and its relations with individual burghs.⁶⁶ Town Council minutes for individual burghs vary enormously. There are none at all for some, others are sketchy, and some are quite comprehensive and detailed. But there are substantial omissions. Not all centres of population were royal burghs, and expanding towns like Paisley and Falkirk had neither town councils nor separate parliamentary representation. Also, the royal burghs, in groups of four or five, returned only fifteen of Scotland's forty-five MPs. The greater part of the representation came from the counties, where the records of the Commissioners of Supply, local landowners responsible for tax collection and for the maintenance of roads and bridges in their areas, are the main official sources for local political involvement.⁶⁷ These records, however, are much less informative

42084-42087; Supplementary Grenville Papers, 1716-1789, Add MS 57820-57828; Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35450, Add MS 35451, Add MS 35503 – 35546; Liverpool Papers, Add MS 38197-38236, Add MS 38304-38311.

⁶⁴ Sir J. Fortescue, (ed.), *Correspondence of George III from 1760 to December 1783*, 6 volumes (London, 1927-8).

⁶⁵ Murdoch, *People Above*, pp. 56, 58, 61, 115, 117, 140-150.

⁶⁶ Sir J.D. Marwick, (ed.), *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland*, 8 volumes (Edinburgh, 1866-80).

⁶⁷ Perth and Kinross Council Archive, Perthshire Commissioners of Supply records, 1650-1930, CC1/1; Stirling Council Archives Services, Stirling County Council, Commissioners of Supply records, 1693-1929, SC1; Glasgow City Archive, Minute Books; Lanarkshire Commissioners of Supply, 1720-1793, CO1/1/1.

than the corresponding burgh council records and while they give an indication of how matters were conducted in some areas (for example Perth, Stirling and Lanarkshire), they seem little involved with politics at national level and it is likely that such matters were handled by more informal methods of communication. More information about political activity in the counties is to be found in the press, which reported county views on issues like banking reform and changes to the entail laws, along with complaints and calls for redress of grievance on, for example, corrupt electoral practices.⁶⁸

The press itself is an increasingly important source of information about Scottish politics. In Scotland as elsewhere, the second half of the eighteenth century saw the rapid expansion of print. Although this period is too early for the appearance of a regular provincial press, holdings for Edinburgh and Aberdeen date from the first half of the century: the *Aberdeen Journal* was first published in 1748. Glasgow papers appear relatively late, with the *Glasgow Advertiser* first appearing in 1783. But the main centre for newspaper publishing was Edinburgh where the well-established *Caledonian Mercury* (dating from 1720) and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* (dating from 1718) competed with a number of other, often short-lived, rivals. Edinburgh's newspapers in particular, with improving communications, were read well beyond the confines of the city. Much information was copied from the London press, but the result was a much better informed Scottish political public. Increasingly, newspapers not only conveyed information, they also reflected opinion as they began printing letters from readers. These, along with pamphlet literature, indicate a growing public awareness of political issues such as representation in Parliament, and the rights and liberties of individuals. While these voices became much more vociferous in the final decades of the century as the debate on the French Revolution intensified, concerns at national level in the aftermath of the Wilkes Affair, and at local level regarding unfair representation in Parliament are evident from at least the 1760s.

⁶⁸ Further discussion of local sources for Scottish political activity will be found in chapter 3.

Although still restricted in its geographical coverage and in terms of its reading public, the press constitutes a valuable resource for identifying issues of concern. Political pamphlets were also popular, particularly but not exclusively in Edinburgh, and are a good source of information about local political in-fighting and about which issues were important 'on the street'.⁶⁹ They sometimes present an alternative viewpoint against which to judge an accepted version of events. The much larger English newspaper press is an equally valuable source, particularly in relation to popular attitudes and prejudices towards the Scots displayed in the London papers and the *Middlesex Journal*. Like other unofficial resources, newspapers and their contributors require to be interpreted with care.

The research which follows is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 examines the cohort of MPs, including the Representative Peers, who represented Scotland in the five parliaments between 1754 and 1784. This is done by means of a database constructed on the basis of MPs identified by Namier and Brooke as being returned for Scottish constituencies. The intention is to analyse information relating to family background, education, careers, landownership and wealth and to discover whether, despite their perceived membership of a narrow political elite, there was more variety in background, experience and outlook among them than traditionally accepted. If this is the case, it may be possible to examine their parliamentary contributions in a different light. The database also allows some comparisons to be made between the Scots MPs in the Commons and the whole group of Commons MPs, using statistics compiled by Namier and Brooke for the latter.⁷⁰ Using a prosopographical approach to sit alongside the statistical analysis, case studies have been presented in various contexts throughout the research illustrating the careers of particular individuals. The choice of these

⁶⁹ See footnote 27, above.

⁷⁰ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, Introductory Survey.

has inevitably been constrained by the available evidence, but some care has been taken to reflect variations in background, political allegiance and affiliation, and political activity, and to take account of geographical spread, county/burgh balance, methods of election and level of economic activity. Chapter 2 focuses on the Scottish MPs at Westminster, to determine the extent of their participation, their contribution to the legislative process and to the development of a British state. It also looks at how successfully or otherwise they piloted Scottish measures through both Houses of Parliament. Namier's declared intention was to look at how and why MPs arrived in Parliament, and what they did when they got there. It is hoped, ultimately, to arrive at a more satisfactory conclusion to these questions in respect of the Scots MPs than currently exists. The third chapter investigates the links between the MPs and Scotland, asking how far the Scots MPs were in tune with 'the political nation' in Scotland, and how successfully, given the constraints, they were able to represent local or Scottish interests at Westminster. To look more closely at Scottish legislative initiatives as well as actual legislation originating in Scotland, or of major importance to Scotland, a separate database has been constructed, using Julian Hoppit's statistics and his book on failed legislation as a basis. The database contains 206 entries, from January 1755 to March 1784, and these are analysed in the course of the chapter. The penultimate chapter examines motivation, asking questions about allegiance, identity, perceptions of government, and how conflicts of interest were resolved, before presenting a conclusion which aims to offer a revised view of this much-maligned group, based on more recent approaches to interpretation of the period.

The period covered by this research saw great changes in Britain itself and in its relationship with other countries, but eighteenth-century politics was also local and parochial and MPs were involved at all levels. The Scots did not operate in isolation from the expanding Empire and the constitutional issues it raised, or from the well-documented intellectual activity and economic progress taking place across Scotland in the latter half of the century. By virtue of their position, they had their part to play in what Linda Colley refers to as the 'forging of the

nation'. Discovering what that part was is the object of this research and it is hoped that the approach adopted here will prove a sounder basis on which to judge the role and performance of mid to late eighteenth-century Scottish MPs than their voting record at Westminster.⁷¹

⁷¹ For example, David Allan refers to the 'fabled dependability of Scotland's over-managed parliamentarians', commenting that, in the main, that view was justified: D. Allan, *Scotland in the Eighteenth Century: union and enlightenment* (Harlow, 2002), p. 27.

Chapter 1 The Members

*'Them wha hae the chief direction'*¹

This chapter is largely based on existing research done for the History of Parliament Trust's *The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, edited by Lewis Namier and John Brooke and first published in 1964. While it will take issue with some of the conclusions of the authors about the Scots MPs, there is scope for much greater use to be made of the initial research which went into the biographical sections of that work. The chapter begins with a detailed critique of how Scots MPs were treated in Brooke's *Introductory Survey*. It goes on to re-examine them as a specific group from a much wider perspective, asking questions specifically relevant to Scottish history, which was not an objective of the original authors, and laying the basis ultimately for a re-assessment of their role as MPs.

The scope of Namier and Brooke's work was wide, encompassing descriptions of the constituencies and electoral practices, an analysis of the general elections and their results, the sociological composition of the House of Commons, and a study of its development, particularly with reference to the growth of party. Volume 1 consists of an *Introductory Survey* of some two hundred pages (which in effect contains the conclusions), followed by a detailed examination of each constituency. Volumes 2 and 3 contain a huge amount of well-researched biographical information on the individual MPs, much of the work on the Scots MPs being undertaken by Lady Haden-Guest. The *Introductory Survey* is organised into four sections: Constituencies, Elections, Members, and the House of Commons. For this research, the main interest is in the third section, which starts by analysing the age and experience, social standing, education, and religious affiliations of the Members. It then allocates them to various

¹ R. Burns, 'The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer', in W. Nimmo, (ed.), *The Complete Works of Robert Burns* (London and Edinburgh, 1874), p.26.

categories, namely: placemen and pensioners, lawyers and professional men, merchants, army officers, navy men, country gentlemen, East Indians, West Indians and North Americans, Irish, Scots, Welshmen, and finally suicides and madmen. Thus the Scots MPs are considered as a separate group, like the Irish and the Welshmen; but they are also embedded in what might be called the 'occupational' sections of the survey, with the careers of individual Scots being used, along with English MPs, to illustrate particular aspects of the relevant group as a whole. Neither approach is particularly satisfactory in terms of providing a picture of the Scots MPs. The compartmental approach, as the authors admit, has its limitations, as many MPs fitted into more than one category.² As regards the Scots, it does demonstrate that, like the English MPs, they could be slotted into Namier's many categories, although the small number of Scots MPs makes it unrealistic to consider most of these as separate groupings. More importantly, it fails to demonstrate the strong linkages among the Scots, which transcended these artificial divisions. There are more appropriate ways of grouping the Scots MPs. In a section on religious affiliations, other than an assumption that, without evidence to the contrary, Scots MPs belonged to the Church of Scotland, there is no discussion of a Presbyterian presence in the House of Commons.³ On the other hand, the section which does deal with the Scots as a single group is examined almost exclusively in the context of parties, political allegiance, and placemen. The reason for this is probably to be found in the barrage of criticism, contemporary and subsequent, levelled against Scots MPs, and Brooke does make an attempt to counter the criticisms. Some of his explanations are open to challenge, however. For example, the Scots MPs' support of government during the Middlesex election and the American war is attributed to their 'authoritarian' nature. The importance of 'ecclesiastical discipline' in determining this 'authoritarian' approach also invites further examination, as does the claim that Scots were

² There is no real discussion by the authors of their choice of categories, other than to say that the purpose of the survey was 'to consider the economic, social, professional and other groupings within the House, examining its composition from a sociological point of view'. (Sir L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1754-1790* (London, 1964), vol.1 p.1).

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-118.

less ready (than the English) to see the significance of constitutional issues.⁴ Both of the above approaches leave much unsaid. Namier and Brooke's stated intention was to focus on the parliamentary career of the MPs, touching briefly on their involvement in other areas of public and private life. In some respects, however, this does a disservice to many of the Scots, who have emerged as rather colourless nonentities - a number of them are described in their biographies as 'silent' or 'obscure' members. But it is clear from other sources that some of those who were not particularly visible in Parliament were figures of some importance in other areas of their life. This chapter aims to build up a more comprehensive picture of the group as a whole, including the Representative Peers, than has hitherto been available.

Whatever the shortcomings of Namier and Brooke's *Introductory Survey* in its assessment of the Scots, the excellent biographical material in volumes 2 and 3 is considerably underutilised. As part of this research, information on the Scots MPs has been put into a database, designed to enquire more closely into family background, education, and career, and to ask additional questions about education, marriage, residence, wealth, inheritance, and places of business. This will allow conclusions to be drawn about kinship ties, status and social mobility as well as anglicisation and Jacobitism which were specifically relevant to Scots MPs. It should also be possible, using additional information, to assess the extent of their involvement in agricultural improvements, and perhaps assess the influence of the Enlightenment on this important group in Scottish society.

The eighteenth-century House of Commons consisted of 558 MPs representing 314 constituencies. 45 of the 558 represented Scotland: 27 from single counties, 3 from paired counties with alternate representation, 14 from grouped burghs and one single-member burgh constituency (Edinburgh). Sixteen Scottish peers were chosen at each election to sit in the House of Lords. The database contains the names of MPs representing Scottish constituencies,

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-175.

along with all Scottish Representative Peers for the period of the five parliaments covered by this research (1754-1784).⁵ Following Namier and Brooke, it omits those who were elected on a double representation, and chose to stand instead for an English constituency. It includes the few English MPs who sat for Scottish constituencies, but omits the larger group of those Scots representing English seats.⁶ It is not that this group was unimportant – it included the elder sons of some Scots peers who were ineligible for election to Scottish constituencies, but the cross-border family connections make this a much more difficult group to define. Here, its existence is acknowledged, and where individuals are important, reference is made to them, but they are not included within the database. The database itself contains 200 records, of which 39 relate to Representative Peers. The number of Commons MPs totals 165, but this includes 4 who later became Representative Peers.⁷

There are some potential difficulties with the identification of individuals. References in the Commons Journals to ‘Mr Campbell’ could theoretically apply to half a dozen MPs in any one parliament. Happily, the eighteenth-century obsession with status and rank means that titles were almost always used and some care has been taken here to record these correctly.⁸ There are also potential pitfalls regarding army ranks, as promotions outstripped actual command of army units. Between conflicts, officers could be retired on half-pay, losing command of a regiment, but still retaining their rank. Thus, the MP David Graeme of Braco is variously

⁵ A list of Representative Peers was compiled from Leigh Rayment’s website: Leigh Rayment, ‘The Peerages of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom’, 2003 <<http://www.leighrayment.com/reppeers/reppeersscotland.htm>>. [Accessed 3 August 2014].

⁶ Around sixty (Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p.166).

⁷ John Campbell, MP for Dunbartonshire, succeeded the 3rd Duke of Argyll in 1761; David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassilis, MP for Ayrshire, 1768-74 was appointed in 1776; Hon. Archibald Montgomerie, (Ayrshire, 1761-68), succeeded his brother as 11th Earl of Eglinton, in 1769 and subsequently became a Representative Peer; Lord John Murray was MP for Perthshire till he succeeded his uncle as 3rd Duke of Atholl, 1764.

⁸ For further information on offices and office-holders, see J.C. Sainty, *Office-Holders in Modern Britain*, 11 volumes, accessible through British history online, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/place.aspx?gid=42®ion=7>>. [Accessed 5 April 2014]. The *Chicago Manual of Style* has sections on titles of nobility (8.31) and honorific titles (8.32) which are useful for identifying ranks in the peerage: *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition (Chicago and London, 2010).

referred to in the Journals as Mr Graeme, Colonel Graeme, and General Graeme. Fortunately, the *History of Parliament* compilers have been meticulous in recording details and dates of such appointments, so we know that these references are all to the same person, who was appointed colonel of the 49th Foot in 1764, a post he held till 1768, but he was also awarded the rank of major-general in the British Army, in 1762. Similar attention to inherited or newly created titles allows the progress of individuals up the social ladder to be charted with some confidence. Peers often held more than one title - for example the Earl of March became the Duke of Queensberry in 1778 - and account has been taken of this when recording information.

Namier and Brooke's *Introductory Survey* contains an extensive analysis of the composition of the House of Commons as a whole and the comparisons which follow here are the result of comparing Namier and Brooke's whole-House group with the group of Scots MPs contained in the database compiled for this research (hereafter referred to as Scots MPs database).

Interrogation of this database throws up both similarities and differences between the two groups. The age profile of Scots MPs is similar to that of the larger group, and shows little change between 1754 and 1780 (see Table 1 below). It contains no real surprises. A few men became MPs in their twenties but most were in their thirties or forties. The later parliaments show an increase in the number of older MPs.

Table 1 shows the age of MPs when they were elected. The numbers are not directly comparable but sufficiently so to give a general indication of trends. The figures for Britain are for MPs returned at each general election, and exclude around twenty on each occasion whose age is unknown.⁹ The numbers for Scotland are slightly higher as they include all those returned during the life of a parliament.

⁹ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p. 97.

Table 1 Age of MPs at time of election

Age	Scotland		Britain	
	1754	1780	1754	1780
20-29	7	8	87	95
30-39	14	14	141	133
40-49	15	10	144	125
50-59	6	13	105	114
60-69	4	7	43	43
70-79	0	2	13	12
80-89	0	1	1	6
TOTAL	46	55	534	528

However, where a difference is discernible is in the turnover of MPs. In Scotland this was unexpectedly high, both in terms of length of parliamentary service, and at constituency level. In Britain as a whole, there was a much higher degree of continuity. At each general election except 1768, around 400 MPs were re-elected, that is around four in five.¹⁰ Comparable figures for Scotland present a different picture. Of the 167 MPs, only 69 served in more than one parliament, and then, not always consecutively. Only twenty-one of the 1760s intake had served in the previous parliament. Taking account of additional parliamentary service before and after the period covered by this research and of seats in English constituencies, there were 50 Scots MPs who served a single term or less: almost one third of the Scottish cohort. Just twenty-four MPs served in three or more parliaments. Namier and Brooke do not provide statistics on constituency representation, but Scottish figures collated for this research show that the discontinuity extends to constituencies (see Table 2 below). Of the sixty-nine who

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 98.

appeared in more than one parliament, twenty-one represented more than one constituency. When this figure is added to the ninety-eight MPs who served only a single term during the period, continuity of representation is demonstrably non-existent. Most constituencies therefore had several MPs over the thirty-year period. Also noticeable is the number (around twenty-five) of stop-gap appointments ranging from a few months to two or three years to cover events such as the death or ineligibility or promotion of the sitting MP, or to make way for someone with more influence.

Table 2 Scottish Constituencies and their MPs

<i>Number of Constituencies</i>	<i>Constituencies</i>	<i>Number of MPs</i>
1	Banff	1
5	Aberdeenshire, Forfarshire, Perth Burghs, Selkirkshire, Stirlingshire	2
8	Dunbartonshire, Edinburghshire, Glasgow Burghs, Inverness Burghs, Inverness-shire, Ross-shire, Roxburghshire, Sutherland	3
9	Berwickshire, Dysart Burghs, Elgin Burghs, Kincardineshire, Lanarkshire, Linlithgow Burghs, Linlithgowshire, Perthshire, Wigtownshire	4
13	Aberdeen Burghs, Anstruther Easter, Argyllshire, Ayrshire, Dumfriesshire, Dumfries Burghs, Elginshire, Haddington Burghs, Haddingtonshire, Kirkcudbright, Orkney and Shetland, Tain Burghs, Wigtown Burghs	5
6	Ayr Burghs, Edinburgh, Fife, Peeblesshire, Renfrewshire, Stirling Burghs	6

NOTE: the total of forty-two constituencies does not take account of the six counties which had alternate representation: Bute/ Caithness, Kinross/Clackmannan, and Nairn /Cromarty.

There was fierce competition for the Scottish seats. Because of the grouping of the burghs, each election became a contest between competing interests for control of the individual burghs. Even the single-member burgh, Edinburgh, had ballots in three of the five elections during this period. In England, by contrast, 62 of the 196 boroughs saw no electoral contests at all, almost one in three.¹¹ In bald figures, the number of county contests is roughly similar, 30 in Scotland against 31 in England (Table 3, below). But there were 40 English counties, each returning two members, so the English contests over the period involved 400 member election opportunities (40 seats, 5 elections, 2 members per seat) as against Scotland's 150, statistically increasing considerably the element of competition in Scottish county seats.

Table 3 Electoral contests

<i>Year</i>	<i>Scottish Counties (30)</i>	<i>English Counties (40)</i>
1754	2	5
1761	5	4
1768	9	8
1774	8	11
1780	6	2

¹¹ For studies of electoral rivalry in Scotland, see R.M. Sunter, *Patronage and Politics in Scotland, 1707-1832* (Glasgow, 1986); D. Brown, "Nothing butt Strugalls and Corruption": The Commons' Elections for Scotland in 1774', in C. Jones, (ed.), *The Scots and Parliament* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 74-119; W.L. Burn, 'The General Election of 1761 at Ayr', *English Historical Review*, 52 (1937), pp. 103-109 (accessed online); A. Murdoch, 'The importance of being Edinburgh: management and opposition in Edinburgh politics 1746-1784', *Scottish Historical Review*, 62 (1983), pp. 1-16 (accessed online); A. Murdoch, 'Politics and the People in the Burgh of Dumfries, 1758-1760', *Scottish Historical Review*, 70 (1991), pp. 151-171.

As in England, most of the contests were decided before the actual election, and few went on to a ballot but the competition in a number of Scottish counties was particularly fierce.¹² The reasons for this are not hard to find. There were only about 6 'pocket' county constituencies in Scotland, where the landowner could be sure of having his nominee returned.¹³ Elsewhere small electorates and the growing practice of vote creation meant frequent legal challenges to names on the lists of freeholders, and sometimes, as in Cromartyshire in 1768, actual violence.¹⁴ There were also contested results. In 1774, at the height of the animosity over fictitious votes and in the absence of a political manager, there were challenges to at least a dozen Scottish electoral results (almost one in four), as against forty such challenges to English seats (about one in twelve).¹⁵ Again the reasons for the differential are easy to find. In England, county electorates were much larger, with upwards of 3,000 voters, making challenges to the voters' roll much more difficult. Also, the fact that there were two members per county meant that compromises were more easily achieved.

Two factors which stand out from these statistics are, firstly, that a seat in Parliament was an attractive proposition for many Scots and there was no shortage of candidates. Ninety-five of those elected were first (or first surviving) sons, an indication of the importance attached to obtaining a seat in Parliament. Secondly, many of the Scots spent a relatively short time as MPs. This lays open the possibility of a division among the Scots between those whose main interests were outwith Parliament, and a relatively small number who, if they chose, had the opportunity to take a prolonged and active part in Westminster politics. The high turnover of

¹² Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, pp. 38-9

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁴ History of Parliament Trust (1964-2015), History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Cromartyshire, <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/research/constituencies/constituencies-1754-1790>>. [Accessed 9 August 2014].

¹⁵ Wigtown (B), Clackmannanshire, Lanarkshire, North Berwick (B), Stirling (B), Selkirk (B), Dysart (B), Edinburgh, Dunbartonshire, Tain (B), Nairn, and Elgin (B): HCJ, Nov-Dec 1774. [Accessed 9 August 2014].

Scots MPs therefore has implications for both their behaviour in Parliament, and also any relationship with constituents.¹⁶

In theory, the Scots peers were also elected to Parliament, but in practice, despite periodic complaints, a government list of those thought suitable for selection was generally accepted by those eligible to vote. Unlike the MPs, there was much more continuity of service among the Representative Peers, despite the large number of potential contenders (over 150). The list was usually compiled in consultation with the Scottish Minister, if there was one, or with senior political figures in Scotland. Changing political influence accounted for some of the new faces. At the time of the 1761 election, when the Earl of Bute was the rising influence and his uncle, the Duke of Argyll, was at the end of his career, it was Argyll who decided which peers would go, but it was Bute who chose the replacements.¹⁷ Occasionally peers were dropped for opposing government policy, as happened to the Earl of Stair in 1774 when he was less than supportive of Lord North's treatment of the American colonies, but generally, once appointed, a representative peer could expect to retain the position for many years. Of the thirty-nine Representative Peers, nineteen served more than twenty years, three served more than forty years and eighteen died in post.¹⁸ The Representative Peers were, in fact, a fairly homogeneous group. They included dukes, marquises, earls, a viscount (Stormont) and a lord of Parliament (Cathcart).¹⁹ Many came from long-established Scottish families, with names such as Hamilton, Campbell, Stuart, Gordon, Douglas and Murray. Most (thirty-two) of their

¹⁶ These implications are explored in chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁷ A. Murdoch, *The People Above: politics and administration in mid-eighteenth-century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980), pp. 98-99.

¹⁸ L. Rayment, *Peerages*. [Accessed 5 April 2014].

¹⁹ See Shaw for an analysis of noble families in Scotland after the Union: J.S. Shaw, *The Management of Scottish Society, 1707-1764: power, nobles, lawyers, Edinburgh agents and English influences* (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 1-17, 192-3.

fathers held a similar rank, and there were no newly-created peers among them.²⁰ Only one or two acquired their titles unexpectedly. Thomas Kennedy (Representative Peer, 1774-5), already a wealthy baronet, inherited the Cassilis earldom from his father's fifth cousin (after a court battle with the Earl of March). John Dalrymple (1771-74), the son of George Dalrymple of Dalmahoy, a baron of the Court of Exchequer, inherited the family estates following the death of his uncle, the 2nd Earl of Stair, in 1747, and the earldom, as 5th Earl, in 1768.²¹

The Representative Peers were the official representatives of the Scottish aristocracy in Parliament. But, as Table 4 shows, aristocratic influence extended beyond the House of Lords. Thirty-eight of the Commons MPs came from aristocratic backgrounds. Seven were the sons of dukes: Argyll (3), Atholl (1), Gordon (2), Queensberry (1). Nor was the aristocracy a closed society. Marriage into its ranks offered opportunities for social advancement and there were many inter-connections between peers, baronetage and gentry.

*Table 4 The social status of fathers of Scots members of the Commons, 1754-84*²²

<i>Status of Father</i>	<i>Number of MPs</i>
dukes, earls, lords of Parliament	38
baronets (38) or knights (6) *	44
untitled	85
<i>Total</i>	<i>167</i>

* Knights' titles were not hereditary

Four of the baronets' sons and fifteen MPs with untitled fathers married into the aristocracy, but not usually the top ranks. Only the American, Staats Long Morris, married a duchess. Three

²⁰ W.C. Lowe, 'George III, Peerage Creations and Politics, 1760-1784', *Historical Journal*, 35 (1992), pp. 587-609. (accessed online).

²¹ Philip Carter, 'Dalrymple, John, 5th Earl of Stair (1720-1789)', *ODNB*, 2004. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

²² Statistics in this section come from interrogation of the Scots MPs database.

made English alliances, including Thomas Dundas, son of the fiercely ambitious Sir Lawrence Dundas, who married a niece of Lord Rockingham. Other alliances were with the daughters of earls or lords of Parliament. The connections were deeply embedded. John Anstruther's father may have been only a 1st Baronet, but his maternal grandmother was a daughter of the 2nd Earl of Hyndford.²³ When grandparents, spouses, and unexpected inheritance are taken into account, over fifty per cent of the Scots MPs in the Commons could claim links with the aristocracy.

The vicissitudes of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish history were not conducive to familial stability, but of the thirty-eight sons of baronets (who were mainly first sons), the vast majority came from fairly well-established families: that is, their fathers were 2nd or 3rd Baronets, although some, like the Grants in the north-east, were of much longer standing. Sir Ludovick Grant and his son, James, were 7th and 8th Baronets respectively. The majority of the rest were landed gentry. Although untitled, they were recognised as men of substance by the addition of their land to their names; for example, George Abercromby of Tullibody. As noted above, social divisions were fluid, and substantial numbers of these men had titled antecedents. Ramsay Irvine's father, described as a merchant in Montrose, was also the son of a 3rd Baronet. James Mure Campbell of Rowallan was connected to the Earls of Loudoun, and, in 1782, succeeded his cousin as 5th Earl. Some had made money in a variety of commercial activities and become wealthy landowners in their own right. Lawrence Dundas of Kerse (Stirling) and Aske (Yorkshire) was the son of a draper in Edinburgh. George Dempster of Dunnichen inherited his wealth from his grandfather, a grain merchant in Angus, and James Oswald of Dunnikier's father had been a wealthy Kirkcaldy merchant and MP. There were only about a dozen MPs whose fathers were simply named (in the *History of Parliament*) without any amplification or reference to landed estates. Most of these had commercial

²³ Sir John Anstruther (1718-99) 2nd Baronet, of Anstruther and Elie, Fife, MP for Anstruther Easter Burghs, 1766-74.

backgrounds. William Alexander (Edinburgh, 1754-61), a wealthy merchant and former provost of Edinburgh, was the second son of a Glasgow merchant. James Coutts (Edinburgh, 1762-1768) was the son of a banker and former Edinburgh Lord Provost. One or two had a legal background such as William Miller, whose son, Thomas (Dumfries Burghs, 1761 – April 1766), became Lord Advocate, or Staats Long Morris, whose father was a New York judge.²⁴ Andrew Mitchell's father was minister of St Giles' Church in Edinburgh (Andrew Mitchell, Elgin Burghs, 1755-1771).

Despite the fact that the MPs as a whole belonged to a small and privileged group at the top of Scottish society, not all could be considered wealthy. All MPs, of course, were landowners. The Parliamentary Property Qualification Act of 1711 set the rate at £600 a year (from income) for county MPs, and £300 for borough MPs but even in the relatively poor Scotland, there were wide variations in wealth among the MPs. The Duke of Queensberry's income was estimated at around £18,000 p.a. The Earl of Abercorn's wealth at the time of his death exceeded £200,000, excluding the value of his estates. The Earl of Marchmont's 20,900 acres in Berwickshire compared unfavourably with the 250,000 acres of the Kennedy estate of Culzean in Ayrshire, to which was added the Cassilis lands inherited by Thomas Kennedy.²⁵ Some of the recent arrivals among the landowning classes were also extremely wealthy. In 1781, Sir Lawrence Dundas died, leaving an estate worth £16,000 p.a. and a fortune of £900,000 in personal and landed property. James Coutts, the banker, was believed to be worth £100,000 in 1767.²⁶ Some inherited estates, however, were encumbered by debts. When the 9th Earl died,

²⁴ Staats Long Morris, the American who married the Dowager Duchess of Gordon, represented Elgin Burghs, 1774-1784.

²⁵ William C. Lowe, 'Douglas, William, 4th Duke of Queensberry (1725–1810)', *ODNB*, October 2008; David Huddleston, 'Hamilton, James, 8th Earl of Abercorn (1712–1789)', *ODNB*, January 2008; Ian Maitland Hume, 'Campbell, Hugh Hume, 3rd Earl of Marchmont (1708–1794)', *ODNB*, 2004; Michael S. Moss, 'Kennedy, Thomas, 9th Earl of Cassilis (1726–1775)', *ODNB*, October 2008. [All accessed 10 August 2014].

²⁶ History of Parliament Trust, 1764-2015, 'The House of Commons, 1754-90', <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/research/members/members-1754-1790>>, Sir Lawrence Dundas (c. 1710-81); *Ibid.*, James Coutts (1733-780). [Both accessed 9 August 2014].

the Kennedy estates were indebted to the tune of £30,000, an amount which had more than doubled on the death of the 10th Earl, who embarked on building the ruinously expensive Culzean Castle. Alexander Montgomerie, 10th Earl of Eglinton, inherited debts of £18,000 from his father, in 1729. This was the result of the 9th Earl's attempt to make provision for his many children.²⁷ Ludovick Grant owned large estates in Morayshire and beyond, but his accumulated debts on his death totalled £130,000. Others, for a variety of reasons, usually to do with extravagance or poor business decisions, found themselves in financial difficulties. John Murray of Philiphaugh, Selkirkshire, (1726-1800) from an old and well-connected Borders family, came into the latter category, largely as a result of his fondness for gambling and unwise ventures in land speculation in America. George Dempster had to sell off a major part of his estates to meet the expenses involved in electioneering.

Large families, the need to provide for daughters and younger sons, and to bring additional wealth into some of the more cash-strapped estates, allied to the social ambitions of the gentry, all acted as an impetus to further the links between old-established landed families and recent arrivals. For those in straitened circumstances and dependent on land for their income, one means of addressing the problem was to marry an heiress. The total number of advantageous marriages by Scots MPs in the Commons was not large – less than twenty. Few were as successful as William Johnstone, third son of Sir James Johnstone, Baronet, of Westerhall, Dumfriesshire, who unexpectedly inherited, through his wife, the vast wealth of William Pulteney, Earl of Bath. Johnstone was a young Edinburgh lawyer when a series of early deaths in his wife's family dramatically altered their lifestyle – and their name. As William Pulteney, he became an active and independent MP, representing Cromartyshire from 1768 to

²⁷ Ronald M. Sunter, 'Montgomerie, Alexander, 9th Earl of Eglinton (c.1660–1729)', *ODNB*, 2004. [Accessed 9 Aug 2014].

1774 and Shrewsbury from 1775 to 1805.²⁸ Several of the other Commons MPs who attracted wealthy wives already had aristocratic connections, and it is not surprising to find that the Representative Peers proved particularly adept at finding socially aspiring heiresses to marry. The Earl of Strathmore married Mary Eleanor Bowes, who inherited her father's 'vast wealth' in 1760. The 8th Earl of Home married the widow of a governor of Jamaica, with a settlement of £7000 p.a. The 7th Earl of Lauderdale's wife was the daughter of a silk manufacturer, who inherited a third share of her father's £120,000 on his death. The 3rd Earl of Rosebery married the daughter and heiress of an English baronet, while Lord Ingram's wife was the illegitimate but wealthy daughter of a London merchant and MP.²⁹ None rivalled the 3rd Earl of Bute (Prime Minister, 1762-3), who married Mary Wortley Montagu (1718–1794), only daughter of Edward Wortley Montagu of Wortley, Yorkshire, whose wife who was the eldest daughter of the first Duke of Kingston. Through this marriage the Bute family ultimately acquired the huge Wortley estates. For most, however, who did not have the advantage of a title, other methods had to be found to recover, or make, the family fortunes.

The ethos of the later eighteenth century was 'improvement' and there were many opportunities for those prepared to take the risks involved. Improvement took many forms. For those wealthy enough or with good contacts there were opportunities to travel abroad to study or simply to experience other cultures. The growing Empire opened up the prospect of commercial ventures, land speculation, employment in the armed forces or as government contractors supplying their needs. Colonial administrators were increasingly required, and the East India Company with its seemingly endless access to the riches of the sub-continent,

²⁸ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, William Pulteney (1729-1805). [Accessed 9 August 2014].

²⁹ Rosalind K. Marshall, 'Bowes, Mary Eleanor, countess of Strathmore and Kinghorne (1749–1800)', *ODNB*, 2004; T. F. Henderson, rev. Stuart Handley, 'Home, William, 8th Earl of Home (d. 1761)', *ODNB*, 2004; R. B. Prosser and Susan Christian, rev. Maxwell Craven, Susan Christian, 'Lombe, Sir Thomas (1685–1739)', *ODNB*, 2004; Cracroft's Peerage, < <http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/online/content/rosebery1703.htm>>; E. H. Chalus, 'Ingram, Francis, Viscountess Irwin (1734?–1807)', *ODNB*, January 2008. [All accessed 10 August 2014].

provided the English language with a new word – nabob – to describe those who returned laden with the spoils. Scots were not slow to take advantage of these opportunities. Success could mean a grander lifestyle, a mansion built by one of the Adam brothers and, at some point in the process, a seat in Parliament.

On the whole, the Scots MPs were well-educated. At least a third of the Representative Peers and over half (eighty-eight) of the MPs are known to have enrolled in a university, in Scotland, England or abroad, with several attending more than one institution. This compares favourably with about two in five of the Commons as a whole, although it says nothing about the quality of the education in either country.³⁰ Scots, however, were attending university in the heyday of the Scottish Enlightenment, which was dominated by such well-known scholars as Adam Smith, William Robertson, the philosopher Adam Ferguson, Joseph Black, Colin Mclaurin and Hugh Blair, all of whom held university appointments.³¹ Traditionally, for those who could afford it, university was followed by the Grand Tour. Despite claims that the Tour was no longer fashionable in the later part of the century and was seldom undertaken by younger sons or those intended for business or the professions, the Scots continued to travel abroad.³² Of those attending university, at least twenty MPs undertook a Grand Tour, sometimes curtailed if money ran out. They were from a mixture of backgrounds: aristocratic (Lord Frederick Campbell was a second son and struggled to afford it) and commercial (James Oswald, his son, and the younger William McDowell all spent time in Europe). Some were interested in classical literature and architecture, such as James Duff, Earl of Fife, and Charles Hope Weir, who was accompanied (and bankrolled!) by the architect, Robert Adam.³³ Others

³⁰ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p.111.

³¹ For connections between Scots MPs and leading Enlightenment figures, see R.B. Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: the Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1985), pp. 15, 90, 96-99, 134-5, 224.

³² Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, pp. 112-3.

³³ Hon. Charles Hope Weir (1710-91), second son of the 1st Earl of Hopetoun, MP for Linlithgowshire, 1743-68. In return for his financial support, Hope Weir was supposed to provide Adam with introductions to the rich and

were students continuing their education, including George Dempster and his friend Adam Fergusson. A few were simply out for a good time. John Craufurd (Renfrewshire, 1774-80, Glasgow Burghs, 1780-84) 'spent most of 1765 with Horace Walpole and David Hume in Paris ... Early in 1766 he returned home, deeply in debt, to face an irate father'.³⁴ Representative Peers known to have embarked on a continental tour included the 4th Duke of Gordon and the 3rd Duke of Argyll, Viscount Stormont, and the Earls of Morton, Cassilis, Eglinton, Sutherland and Rosebery. The 18th Earl of Sutherland was accompanied by James Grant of Ballindalloch, subsequently a general and MP for Tain Burghs, as his 'travelling tutor'.³⁵ More may have done so, and others certainly studied abroad, while some travelled extensively during their lifetime.

Fluency in foreign languages is a feature noted in the career of a number of the MPs. Some facility with other languages was not necessarily unusual during this period when French in particular was widely spoken in royal courts, but the fact that it was remarked on in the case of several Scots suggests either a particular aptitude, or that it was unexpected. Admiral Charles Saunders valued James Douglas's knowledge of French and found him 'very useful' in dealing with the French pilots. James Duff's fluency in both French and German is noted by the editors of his correspondence. They commented that command of two foreign languages was unusual, citing Fox as 'almost the only other political man' of whom the same could be said. Andrew Mitchell's command of both French and Italian is commented on by H.M. Scott, his *ODNB* biographer. Robert Murray Keith (MP for Peebles-shire, 1775-80), the son of an ambassador, is described as 'able, industrious, and an excellent linguist'. He himself spent many years abroad as an ambassador, serving in Dresden, Denmark and Vienna. Rather more

famous who could commission work from him, but according to the Head Guide at Hopetoun House, Hope Weir failed to fulfil his side of the bargain.

³⁴ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Craufurd (?1742-1814). [Accessed 9 August 2014].

³⁵ History of Parliament online, 1754-1790, James Grant of Ballindalloch (1720-1806). [Accessed 10 August 2014].

unusual was the role of John Johnstone (MP for Dysart Burghs, 1774-80). During his time in India, he was an interpreter of Persian correspondence.³⁶ Like Mitchell and Murray Keith, some of the Representative Peers also held diplomatic posts. This could be desirable from a financial viewpoint, but Scott, *ODNB* biographer of Mitchell, Lord Cathcart, and Viscount Stormont, claims it was seen as a route for advancement in government service at a time when Scots were unpopular in England. The Earl of Hyndford (a representative peer from 1738 till his death in 1767) held posts variously in Berlin, Russia and Vienna.³⁷ Charles Schaw Cathcart, 9th Lord Cathcart (1721–1776), army officer and diplomat (Representative Peer from 1752–1776), spent four years as an ‘undistinguished’ ambassador in St Petersburg.³⁸ David Murray, Viscount Stormont (later 2nd Earl of Mansfield), was appointed to posts in Saxony-Poland, Vienna (during the period of the Partitions of Poland) and Paris. Like his colleagues, Stormont combined his career with that of a representative peer for Scotland, from his appointment in 1754 till his death in 1796.³⁹

Only a few Scots MPs, mostly peers, were wealthy enough to live off the income from their lands, leaving them free to indulge their interests in the arts, architecture, the natural sciences, or classical learning. For the rest, some activity to improve the family finances or enhance their lifestyle was either desirable or necessary. Nor was it only younger sons who

³⁶ Ruddock Mackay, ‘Douglas, Sir James, 1st Baronet (1703–1787)’, *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 August 2014]; A. and H. Tayler, (eds.), *Lord Fife and his Factor: being the correspondence of James, second Lord Fife* (London, 1925), pp. 1-2; H. M. Scott, ‘Mitchell, Sir Andrew (1708–1771)’, *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014]; History of Parliament online 1754-1790, Sir Robert Murray Keith. [Accessed 24 July 2014]. E. Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires: an eighteenth-century history* (Princeton, 2011), p. 178.

³⁷ T. F. Henderson, rev. Karl Wolfgang Schweizer, ‘Carmichael, John, 3rd Earl of Hyndford (1701–1767)’, *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

³⁸ H. M. Scott, ‘Cathcart, Charles Schaw, 9th Lord Cathcart (1721–1776)’, *ODNB*, September 2013. [Accessed 10 August 2014].

³⁹ For a full biography of Stormont, see H. M. Scott, ‘Murray, David, 7th Viscount Stormont and 2nd Earl of Mansfield (1727–1796)’, *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014]. NOTE: Scott has him appointed in 1763, but Leigh Rayment puts the date at 1754, in place of the Earl of Leven, who died in September 1754. The latter seems correct as Stormont’s attendance is recorded on nine occasions in HLJ between November and December 1754.

trained as lawyers, bought commissions in the army or had some involvement in commerce. Over 120 of the Scots MPs in this study (including peers), were first sons and over three-quarters of those had some occupation other than simply landowner. For those with connections or influential patrons, there was the possibility of a government post, contract, sinecure, or pension. Some of these could be lucrative, ranging from the £3000 p.a. paid to the Keeper of the Great Seal, to £200 p.a. for the ‘Conservator of the Privileges of Scotland in the Netherlands’ (both of them sinecures).⁴⁰ Table 5 shows what might be described as the ‘other’ occupations of Scots MPs in the Commons.

Table 5 Occupations of Scots MPs in the House of Commons

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number of MPs</i>
Legal training	47
Army/navy service	65
Involvement in commerce	22

The figures do not represent separate individuals. There is much overlapping, and some members fit into all three groups. In addition, all the MPs were landowners. Sir Henry Erskine (1710 - 1765), 5th Baronet, of Alva, Clackmannan, well-educated and well-connected, entered Lincoln’s Inn in 1728. Seven years later he was an ensign, embarking on an army career. He was also an active politician, representing Anstruther Easter Burghs, Fife, from 1754 till his death, by which time he had reached the rank of lieutenant-general in the army. Those MPs with a commercial background included merchants, bankers and army contractors,

⁴⁰ The issue of pensioners and placemen is discussed in greater depth in chapter 4.

but there is also a blurring of the lines between army/navy service and commercial involvement.

Of the forty-seven MPs with legal training, more than half came from the gentry, and some had trained at the English bar. The legal profession offered several routes for advancement. The Lord Advocate (at £1000 p.a.) was the government spokesman on Scottish affairs in the House of Commons, and the post was occupied successively by a number of distinguished lawyers. Sir Robert Dundas of Arniston (1713 – 1787), came from a well-established Scottish legal family. He served a single term in Parliament as Lord Advocate (1754-61), but chose to pursue his career within the Scottish legal profession, successfully pressing his case in 1760 for the presidency of the Court of Session, a post about to become vacant and one which he held with distinction till his death. Sir James Montgomery (1721-1803, MP for Dumfries Burghs, 1766-68, and Peeblesshire 1768-1775), a competent and active Lord Advocate, was also a wealthy landowner in his own right and a committed agricultural improver.⁴¹ George Dempster disliked legal practice and went into Parliament with the intention of making a political career for himself, as did Sir Robert Dundas's half-brother, Henry, who succeeded Montgomery as Lord Advocate in 1775. Alexander Wedderburn, however, opted to seek his fortune through the English bar, obtaining the post of Lord Chancellor in 1793, as well as a peerage (as Baron Loughborough, 1780), and further elevation to an earldom (Earl of Rosslyn, 1801).⁴² A few of the Representative Peers also had a background in law. John Dalrymple, 5th Earl of Stair, and George Ramsay, 8th Earl of Dalhousie, were members of the Faculty of Advocates. Neither of these was the eldest son of a peer, and would not normally have expected to succeed to a title. However, some of the more prominent Representative Peers had also studied law, including

⁴¹ He bought the estates of Stobo and Stanhope in Peeblesshire for £40,000 in 1767. (J. A. Hamilton, rev. Anita McConnell, 'Montgomery, Sir James William, first Baronet (1721–1803)', *ODNB*, 2004). [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

⁴² Alexander Murdoch, 'Wedderburn, Alexander, first Earl of Rosslyn (1733–1805)', *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

Archibald, 3rd Duke of Argyll, his nephew, John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, and Hugh Hume Campbell, 3rd Earl of Marchmont.

Many more Scots took advantage of the opportunities offered by Britain's expanding overseas Empire. Only six of the fathers had army or navy careers, but sixty-seven sons served in the armed forces. To this figure can be added a further fourteen from among the Representative Peers. The army was an attractive option for Scots, who had a long tradition of military service, often as mercenaries in continental armies. Both the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) and the Seven Years' War (1756-63), followed a decade later by the revolt of the American colonies, provided opportunities for action, advancement and, for some, the chance to demonstrate their loyalty, and that of their family to the Hanoverian monarchy. Lord Cathcart (the ambassador to Russia) was wounded at the Battle of Fontenoy, during the war of the Austrian Succession. Thomas Kennedy, 9th Earl of Cassilis, also fought in this battle. The 4th Marquis of Lothian and the 4th Earl of Loudoun were in action against the Jacobites: Lothian fought at Culloden, where his brother was killed. Loudoun spent much of his life as a professional soldier, with service in America, Canada and Portugal, but was also one of the longest-serving Representative Peers, from 1734 till his death in 1782.⁴³

Scots MPs in the Commons made up one in four of the total complement of officer-MPs, a much higher percentage than for any other group in which the Scots were represented.⁴⁴

Influence of some kind was essential to achieve promotion, and while being an MP may have helped, a titled parent was a distinct advantage. Lord William Campbell (c. 1732-1778), fourth

⁴³ Jonathan Spain, 'Kerr, William Henry, 4th Marquis of Lothian (c.1712–1775)', *ODNB*, 2004. [Accessed 10 August 2014]; Stephen Brumwell, 'Campbell, John, 4th Earl of Loudoun (1705–1782)', *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 27 July 2014].

⁴⁴ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p. 141.

son of the 4th Duke of Argyll, entered the navy as a lieutenant in 1760 and received a command two years later. Promotion to the governorship of Nova Scotia followed swiftly (1766-73), then of South Carolina (1773-6).⁴⁵ James Douglas, on the other hand, the son of an untitled laird, had more of a struggle to make his way. Entering the navy in 1715, it took seventeen years for him to be commissioned, and a further thirteen till his first command. Initial promotions were achieved due to his patrons, the Earl of Morton and the Earl of Bath. His abilities, including the earlier-mentioned fluency in French, seem then to have been recognised. He sat on Admiral Byng's court martial in 1756. Further commands and rewards followed, culminating in promotion to admiral in 1778 and a baronetcy in 1786.⁴⁶

Not all MPs in the forces saw active service, but for some it was their main career. Namier and Brooke concluded from the statistics that the army was more of a profession in Scotland than in the remainder of Great Britain, and the biographical studies of the Scots confirm this. The Earl of Loudoun, Simon Fraser of Lovat and Archibald Montgomerie all raised regiments or battalions for the army.⁴⁷ Most acquitted themselves well, but few achieved the fame of Ralph Abercromby (1734–1801). Son of George Abercromby of Tullibody, he studied law at Edinburgh and Leipzig before entering the army, serving in Germany, Ireland, the West Indies, Holland, and finally as commander of Britain's troops in the Mediterranean, where he led the attack on the French at Aboukir Bay in 1801. Disembarking his thousands of troops in a single day, he went on to lead them to victory at Alexandria, where he was fatally wounded. Heroic paintings, monuments in St Paul's and St Giles' Cathedrals, and a title (baroness) for his widow

⁴⁵ William Campbell served for two years as MP for Argyllshire, from 1764-1766, resigning on his appointment to Nova Scotia. He returned to active service on the outbreak of rebellion in 1776, was wounded, and died two years later.

⁴⁶ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir James Douglas (1703-87). [Accessed 10th August 2014].

⁴⁷ These came after the success of the 42nd Highlanders (later the Black Watch) in the otherwise disastrous battle of Fontenoy in 1745. The Earl of Loudoun's Regiment of Foot (Loudoun's Highlanders) was raised in 1745. At the start of the Seven Years' War came Fraser's Highlanders, and Montgomerie's Highland battalion. By 1759, Sir Hector Munro of Novar was serving in the newly raised (by Staats Long Morris) 89th Highland Regiment.

were evidence of his stature. From another perspective, however, he was an unremarkable MP for Clackmannanshire from 1774 to 80. Sir John Lindsay (Aberdeen Burghs, 1767-68) was an MP for little over a year, but served in the navy at Louisburg and Quebec during the Seven Years' War. He was in India as Naval Commodore at Madras, served with Admiral Keppel in the American war and was Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean fleet in 1783.⁴⁸ The Scots generally were well-rewarded for their service with steady promotions through the ranks. Loudoun and Montgomerie became generals (1770, and 1793 respectively), as did James Grant of Ballindalloch (1796) and Hon. James St. Clair (1761). As well as James Douglas, both Francis Holburne and Keith Elphinstone (who had a relatively brief period of active service), were promoted to admiral. There were enough Scots MPs with active army and navy service to suggest that, while they might well be infrequent attenders, their experiences might also inform their views and encourage them to contribute to parliamentary debate, an aspect which will be investigated later.

The Empire created further career opportunities, as army suppliers, colonial governors and additional East India Company employees were all required in increasing numbers. A search of lists of colonial governors shows about half a dozen Scots in such posts during the period, four of them appointed by Lord Bute during his brief time in office. Most of the colonial governors were MPs, and almost all came from a military background, with active army or navy service.⁴⁹

Many did well out of it, from salaries, grants of land, prize money and private ventures.

Archibald Campbell (1739-91) of Inverneil, was a typical 'nabob'. Son of a lawyer in Inveraray,

⁴⁸ Lindsay, a nephew of Lord Mansfield, has more recently become known as the father of Dido Elizabeth Belle, whose portrait inspired the film, 'Belle'.

⁴⁹ John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore (SRP) was Governor of New York in 1770, then Virginia, 1771, and of the Bahamas in 1786. George Haldane served as Governor of Jamaica (1758-59), while William Campbell, (of the titled parent, above) held Nova Scotia (1766-73), then South Carolina (1773-6); James Grant of Ballindalloch (the travelling companion of the Earl of Sutherland) was Governor of East Florida (1763-1771). Archibald Campbell of Inverneil, was Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica 1781-2, then Governor, 1782-4, and Governor of Madras, 1785-9. Sir George Macartney, who was able, ambitious, and Irish, was Governor of Grenada (1775-79), and of Madras (1781-5). He held a Scottish seat, Ayr Burghs, courtesy of Lord Bute for two years, from 1774-76. He also had postings in Russia, China and Africa.

and university-educated, he then joined the army, where his abilities as a military engineer led to his secondment to the East India Company as chief engineer in Bengal, 1768-72. While there he was quick to seize the opportunities for personal gain and became involved in various commercial ventures. Returning home in 1773 with a huge fortune, he proceeded to use it to buy himself a seat in Parliament, wresting control of Stirling Burghs from the Dundas family (Lawrence Dundas) in 1774.⁵⁰ The careers of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, Stirling, and Hector Munro, Novar, Ross, followed a similar pattern. Robert Haldane, a tenth son, was returned for Stirling Burghs in 1758 when his nephew, George, was appointed Governor of Jamaica. He only served 3 years in Parliament. Desperately unpopular, he never found another seat.⁵¹ Hector Munro was MP for Inverness Burghs, 1768-1802.

While the 'East Indians' were almost entirely army or navy men, those with financial interests in the West Indies or America were mainly merchants. The group as a whole was not large. Brooke calculated there were never much more than a dozen in the House at any one time and very few were Scots. Mostly they were younger sons who went out to make money and sometimes it was the second generation who entered Parliament. William McDowall (MP for Renfrewshire, 1768-74) inherited from his father 'a vast commercial empire in the sugar, rum and slave trade, together with extensive property in the West Indies and Glasgow'.⁵² James Dickson (Linlithgow Burghs, 1768-71), Alexander Grant (Inverness Burghs, 1761-68) and James Abercromby (Clackmannanshire, 1761-68, colonial agent and uncle of Ralph, above) all returned home with considerable fortunes. George Graham (1730-1801) of Kinross (MP for Kinross-shire 1780-84 and 1790-96) was a London-based merchant who developed commercial interests in the West Indies, India and the Portuguese wine trade. His acquisition of the estate

⁵⁰ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Archibald Campbell of Inverneil (1739-91). [Accessed 21 August 2014].

⁵¹ His *History of Parliament* entry describes him as 'arrogant, ambitious and purse-proud': History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Robert Haldane (1705-67). [Accessed 1 March 2015].

⁵² History of Parliament online, 1754-90, William McDowall (c.1719-84). [Accessed 10 August 2014].

of Kinross in 1777 gave him political control of that county. The real success story among the army contractors was Lawrence Dundas whose father had the draper's shop in Edinburgh. Dundas did spectacularly well for himself and his many relations. Entitled 'the nabob of the North', he made a fortune from army contracts for the Government.⁵³ Deeply distrusted in government circles, his wealth nevertheless put him in a position of considerable power which he exploited to the full, as he ruthlessly pursued advancement in the form of titles and honours. He purchased landed estates, setting up his son, Thomas, in Stirlingshire, himself in Yorkshire, and another branch of the family in Orkney and Shetland, which he bought from the Earl of Morton in 1766. With land came votes and Sir Lawrence, as he became, eventually controlled about eight seats in Parliament, which further enhanced his influence. He served as MP for Linlithgow Burghs briefly in 1747-8, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1762-68, Edinburgh, 1768-80, and again in 1781 till his death later in the year.

Equally enterprising but less well-known were the Johnstones of Westerhall, Dumfries, a large family of modest means. The eldest brother, James, inherited the baronetcy on the death of their father, and remained primarily a landowner. But among them, the six Johnstone brothers developed widespread inter-linked financial and commercial interests stretching across Florida, the West Indies and India.⁵⁴ Entry to Parliament was important to this family firm, and four of the brothers secured seats for themselves: James, the 4th Baronet, represented Dumfries Burghs, 1784-1790, John, of Denovan and Alva, Stirling, (the translator of Persian) sat for Dysart Burghs from 1774-1780, William (Pulteney, who inherited his wife's fortune) was MP for Cromartyshire, then Shrewsbury, while George, the colonial governor, sat entirely for English constituencies, mainly rotten boroughs: Cockermouth (1768-74), Appleby (1774-80), then Lostwithiel (1780-84). Although influential briefly, in their own fields, they did not go on

⁵³ G. E. Bannerman, 'The 'Nabob of the North': Sir Lawrence Dundas as government contractor', *Historical Research*, 83 (2010), pp. 102-123 (accessed online).

⁵⁴ See Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires*, for a detailed study of this enterprising family.

to acquire great political power or to lay the foundations of a commercial dynasty. Like the McDowalls, or James Cockburn, an army contractor who sat for Linlithgow Burghs, 1772-84, their wealth was quickly made and quickly dissipated. However, the fact that among these middle-ranking Scots families, a number were able to acquire considerable wealth and, through Parliament, to access those with political power, demonstrates the extent of the opportunities available to ambitious Scots in the later eighteenth century, and the power they themselves had, through their widespread contacts, to influence the lives of others.

Banking was another important part of the developing Scottish economy which demonstrated the same inter-connectedness among Scottish families as was observable among those engaged in overseas commerce. By the terms of the Treaty of Union, Scotland retained its own banking system, which was less closely regulated than the system south of the border. By the mid-eighteenth century, there were, in addition to the Bank of Scotland and the Royal Bank, a growing number of small banks around the country, including Douglas Heron and Co. in Ayr, and the Dundee Bank set up by George Dempster. Excluding Dempster, who had wide business interests, there were four Scottish bankers among the MPs, all connected with Coutts Bank. James Coutts (Edinburgh, 1762-68), and his brothers inherited the business from their father, an Edinburgh banker and Lord Provost of the city. In 1755, James became a partner in a London bank whose customers included Lord Bute.⁵⁵ Six years later, after some reorganisation, Coutts and his brother, Thomas, were running the original family business, with branches in London and Edinburgh. Bute's patronage brought the King's account to Coutts Bank, and a seat in Parliament for James. Among the partners in the bank were James Hunter Blair, MP for Edinburgh 1781-84, and Robert Herries, MP for Dumfries Burghs 1780-84.⁵⁶ Herries had extensive business interests in Europe, America and the West Indies. He engaged in far riskier

⁵⁵ The head of this bank was George Campbell, whose niece (and heiress) James had married in 1755.

⁵⁶ James Hunter Blair (1741-87), second son of John Hunter of Milnholm and Brownhill, merchant, was an apprentice in Coutts Bank in Edinburgh.

activities than his partners were prepared to countenance, and they ultimately withdrew from the business. Herries and his partners then went on to join with, among others, Sir William Pulteney to found the London Exchange Banking Company, which pioneered an early version of travellers' cheques. With the assistance of Hopes of Amsterdam (a Dutch banking company founded originally by Scots, and connected with the Hopes of Hopetoun) they were able to set up exchange facilities across Europe.⁵⁷ Also associated with Coutts was Adam Drummond (1713-86) of Lennoch and Megginch, a former army contractor returned to Parliament regularly for English seats from 1761, on the interest of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Bolton. Drummond joined Thomas Coutts in 1775, and was MP for Aberdeen Burghs from 1779 till 1784, when he was again returned for an English seat.

Although only about twenty of the Scots MPs could be described as engaged in banking or commerce, the number virtually doubles when families whose wealth had come from commerce are included. By the second half of the eighteenth century, Scotland's economic development was accelerating rapidly and sons and grandsons of some of the original wealth creators, like the McDowalls and the Dundases, were enjoying the proceeds, living the lives of country gentlemen and joining the political elite. Most of them had extensive commercial enterprises and had wide business experience, but without the 'clout' of the large English trading companies such as the Merchant Adventurers. Although several of Edinburgh's MPs had commercial backgrounds, the Scots merchant MPs were by no means all based in Glasgow and Edinburgh.⁵⁸ They sat for Scottish constituencies where they or their influential friends had political interests. John Pringle of the Haining, Selkirk, made his money in the wine trade in Madeira and had commercial interests in London, but represented Selkirkshire for almost twenty years. Others were not particularly Scottish, despite their origins. Robert Herries, the

⁵⁷ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir Robert Herries (1730-1815). [Accessed 10 August 2014].

⁵⁸ William Alexander, James Coutts, Lawrence Dundas and James Hunter Blair were all MPs for Edinburgh during this period.

banker, was in Parliament for only four years. He had retired to Cheltenham by the end of the century and spent the rest of his life there. For men such as Herries or Drummond, as Brooke observed, a seat in Parliament was a useful way of furthering their businesses, or a recognition of their status, rather than a means of acquiring political power.⁵⁹

Agricultural improvers constituted a large interest group among the MPs. Colonel Fullarton was a member of the Ayrshire gentry who had a varied career as landowner, diplomat, army officer and MP. An enthusiastic advocate of the benefits of improvement, he sent his own observations on agriculture in Ayrshire to Sir John Sinclair in 1793 for consideration by the Board of Agriculture. Even allowing for some hyperbole in his comparisons between past and present, his comments, echoed by many of the ministers who contributed to the Statistical Account, provide a graphic illustration of the perceived importance of agricultural improvement to the country's economy:

Forty years ago, there was hardly a practicable road in the county. The farmhouses were mere hovels, moated with clay, having an open hearth or fireplace in the middle; the dunghill at the door; the cattle starving; and the people wretched. The few ditches that existed were ill-constructed, and the hedges worse preserved. The land overrun with weeds and rushes, gathered into very high serpentine ridges, interrupted with large baulks such as still disgrace the agriculture of some English counties. The little soil there was collected on the top of the ridge, and the furrow drowned with water. No fallows, no green crops, no sown grass, no carts or wagons, no strawyards; hardly a potato or any other esculent root, and, indeed, no garden vegetables; unless a few Scotch kail, which, with milk and oatmeal, formed the diet of the people.⁶⁰

Although an interest in agricultural improvement in Scotland predated the founding of the Select Society of Improvers in 1723, it was not till much later in the century that tangible

⁵⁹ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, pp. 134-36.

⁶⁰ William Robertson, *Ayrshire, Its history and historic families*, vol. 2 (Kilmarnock, 1908), pp. 107-8; D. McClure, (ed.), *Ayrshire in the Age of Improvement: contemporary accounts of agrarian and social improvement in late eighteenth century Ayrshire* < http://www.ayrshirehistory.org.uk/Bibliography/aanhs_monos.htm >. [Accessed 18 February 2015].

results became evident. MPs were particularly well-placed to discuss and disseminate information about developments in agriculture. As well as being landowners themselves, they also had the opportunity to observe changes in England through travel or through their involvement in English enclosure legislation. In Ayrshire, during the latter part of the century, the Earls of Eglinton, Loudoun and Cassilis were all considered to be improving landowners. Alexander Montgomerie, 10th Earl of Eglinton, 'exemplified the tendency for Scotland's often politically reactionary aristocracy not only to countenance but, indeed, actually to implement and promote revolutionary agrarian change. He was responsible for substantial tenurial developments and enclosures on his own lands by the early 1750s'.⁶¹ Right across the country, MPs demonstrated their commitment to improvement.⁶² They included the Earl of Hyndford (the diplomat) in Lanarkshire, and James Dickson and James Montgomery (the Lord Advocate) in Peebles. Hamilton, Montgomery's *ODNB* biographer, specifically mentions that Montgomery 'travelled widely through England to study improvements in farming'.⁶³ In Lothian and Berwickshire, which were among the earliest counties to introduce modern crop rotations and new machinery, the advances were continued by Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, Hugh Hume Campbell, Earl of Marchmont, and his son-in-law, John Paterson of Eccles. Further north were John Anstruther (the elder) in Fife, George Dempster in Angus, Alexander Garden of Troup in Aberdeenshire, and, in Morayshire, James Grant, son of Sir Ludovick and founder of Grantown-on-Spey. James Grant spent only a single term in Parliament, thereafter becoming increasingly involved in the management of his estates. In the west, the Dukes of Argyll, through their factors, had long been trying to maximise income by improving their extensive lands. James Grant was advised by Lord Deskford to consult the Duke of Argyll about tree-planting, 'for in that matter he must be allowed to have merit, even by those who might think it undecent [*sic*]

⁶¹ MacKillop, Alexander Montgomerie: doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/19055 [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

⁶² The following are all described as 'improving landlords' in History of Parliament online biographies.

⁶³ Hamilton, rev. McConnell, 'James Montgomery: doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/19071 [Accessed 6 April 2015]

for them to allow him merit as a statesman'.⁶⁴ James Duff, 2nd Earl of Fife, corresponded extensively with his factor on improvement to his estates.⁶⁵ The 3rd Duke of Atholl tired of politics in the 1760s and retired to Perthshire, planting many thousands of trees on his estates. His neighbour, the Earl of Breadalbane, probably also introduced changes to his Perthshire lands. An Act of Parliament was passed in 1766 allowing him to consolidate some of his land. He certainly made considerable improvements to his Sugnall estate in England and income from the Breadalbane lands had increased hugely by 1815.⁶⁶ Even the far north was not without its improvers. Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster was MP for Caithness, 1780-84, and much of his work belongs to a later period. He lived mainly in London and his contribution to agriculture came largely from his writings. He believed that central government should develop policies on agriculture, fisheries and transport, and his *Statistical Account* was an attempt to provide the information on which such policies could be based.⁶⁷ Christopher Smout, in a recent re-assessment of the improvers, suggests that in certain areas of the country, agricultural changes were driven by the farmers rather than the larger landowners, who were not necessarily involved in the day-to-day running of their estates, having other commitments as bankers, merchants or lawyers.⁶⁸ While this is no doubt true - the author of the *Statistical Account* entry for the parish of Eccles, Berwickshire, certainly comments on the increase in the number of gentlemen farmers over the previous twenty years - it is also the case that some of these

⁶⁴ Eric Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll', in N. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of Improvement* (Edinburgh, 1970), pp. 5-23; NRS, GD248/672/4/30, Deskford to James Grant, 22 February 1761.

⁶⁵ See below, pp. 58-61.

⁶⁶ HCJ, 14 February 1766. [Accessed 11 August 2014]; M. McCahill, *The House of Lords in the Age of George III, 1760-1811* (Chichester, 2009), p.34. [Online edn, accessed 26 September 2014].

⁶⁷ See Rosalind Mitchison for an assessment of Sinclair's contribution to both politics and economic development: R. Mitchison, *Agricultural Sir John: the life of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, 1754-1835* (London, 1962), pp.36-7, 50-52.

⁶⁸ T.C. Smout, 'A New Look at the Scottish Improvers', *Scottish Historical Review*, 91 (2012), pp.125-149 (accessed online); *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, 'Eccles, County of Berwick. Account of 1791-99' < <http://stat-acc.scot.edina.ac.uk.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/sas/sas.asp/?account=1&accountrec=006362&action=display&county=Berwick&monospace=&naecache=4&navbar=&nohighlight=&pagesize=&parish=Eccles&session-id=0267da4a7bd127a639dd7559d6fae2a7&transcript=&twoup=>>. [Accessed 29 July 2014].

tenant-farmers attained the wealth and measure of independence necessary to manage their lands as a result of earlier changes driven by the landowners. Evidence found during this research suggests strongly that the MPs, including the peers, were among the instigators of the essential changes such as enclosures, and longer leases. This group also included those with sufficient wealth to embark on large-scale schemes such as tree-planting, drainage, and the importing of adequate quantities of lime to improve the soil.

Improvement during the eighteenth century was not simply to the land, but also to the mind. A number of MPs found time to take part in Edinburgh's lively cultural life. Some lived within reach of the city, others rented houses there or stayed with friends. They mixed with the scholars, thinkers, scientists and lawyers who were part of the Enlightenment, dining at each other's houses or in taverns, or meeting up at the Select Society or the Poker Club. The Poker club members were mainly from the gentry but there is a sprinkling of aristocratic names including the Duke of Buccleuch and Lord Mountstuart (Bute's eldest son). A list of 1768 named as members, the MPs George Dempster, William Pulteney, Andrew Stuart (Lanarkshire 1774-84), Baron Mure (William Mure of Caldwell, MP for Renfrewshire, 1742-61, and, effectively Bute's man of business in Scotland), Henry Dundas and his friend Sir Adam Fergusson, and Robert Campbell of Finab (Argyllshire 1766-71).⁶⁹ When not in personal contact, they shared books and exchanged views through their correspondence. William Mure was a close friend of David Hume and features regularly in his correspondence. Other MPs with whom Hume corresponded included Gilbert Elliot of Minto, James Oswald of Dunnikier, Sir Henry Erskine, Andrew Stuart and, later, John Craufurd, son of Patrick Craufurd of Auchinames.⁷⁰ Three others who made a substantial, if more distanced, contribution to the Scottish Enlightenment,

⁶⁹ The list, of 66 members, is reproduced in: A.F. Tytler, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Honourable Henry Home of Kames*, Appendix VIII. Vol. 2, 1807, from an original in the manuscript of the *Memoirs of the Reverend Dr Alexander Carlyle*. *Jamesboswell.info*, '<<http://www.jamesboswell.info/content/poker-club>>'. [Accessed 12 August 2014].

⁷⁰ A list of David Hume's correspondents can be found in J.Y.T. Greig, (ed.), *The Letters of David Hume* (Oxford, 1932), vol.1 pp. viii-xx. Some of the letters are academic discussions, some are business letters to his publisher, some are requests for favours, others are social exchanges, commenting on family affairs or current events.

all Representative Peers, were the 3rd Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Bute and the 14th Earl of Morton. Both Bute and Argyll were, themselves, considerable scholars. Argyll had a huge private library which reflected his wide interests covering classics, history, law, mathematics and botany. Bute, deeply interested in natural history, published a nine-volume work on botanical tables. Both were generous patrons of the arts and of Scottish educational institutions.⁷¹ Morton (James Douglas's patron), was another noted academic and patron of the arts. Educated at Cambridge, his interests were mainly scientific: he helped set up the observatory at Edinburgh University. He was a member of the Society of Improvers, and in 1764 was elected President of the Royal Society. In his capacity as Lord Clerk Register, from 1760, he instigated plans, put into effect by his successor, Lord Frederick Campbell, for the preservation and storage of Scotland's archives.

Wealth, allied to a classical education, exposure to European culture, and living in London society allowed some to emulate the fine buildings and landscaping which characterised the homes of the English landed classes. William Adam and his sons, Robert, John and James, were responsible for the building of some of the great Scottish country houses during the eighteenth century. The Earl of Hopetoun (father of MP Charles Hope Weir who travelled across Europe with Robert Adam) employed the Adam family to work on Hopetoun House, Queensferry. Later came Duff House, near Banff, for the 1st and 2nd Earls of Fife, and Culzean Castle, Ayrshire, for David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassilis.⁷² Robert Adam's neoclassical style, which encompassed interiors and furnishings as well as bricks and mortar, became very popular and the list of buildings on which Adam and his brothers worked is extensive, from major public buildings and country houses to minor additions or alterations. Robert Adam was employed by Bute to work on his mansion at Luton Hoo, Bedfordshire, while Capability Brown

⁷¹ Karl Schweizer's long *ODNB* entry on Bute is detailed, sympathetic and balanced and does much to enhance the reputation of this much-criticised individual: Karl Wolfgang Schweizer, 'Stuart, John, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713–1792)', *ODNB*, Oct. 2009. [Accessed 11 August 2014].

⁷² See, for example, Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd and Christopher Simon Sykes, *Great Houses of Scotland* (London, 2001).

designed the grounds. Lord Frederick Campbell, who was instrumental in the choice of Adam for Register House, Edinburgh, had commissioned work from him for his residences at Ardincaple, Dunbartonshire, and Coombe Bank, Kent.⁷³



Duff House, Banff

James Duff, 2nd Earl of Fife (1729-1809), was a quintessential Scottish aristocrat. His lifestyle, which emerges in considerable detail from correspondence with his factor over a number of years, offers an invaluable insight into the attitudes and behaviour of the landed elite who sat

⁷³ Among the other Scottish buildings attributed to the Adam family are Edinburgh University Old College, Gosford House, East Lothian, for the Wemyss family, Yester House for the Marquis of Tweeddale and Airthrey Castle for the Haldanes.

in Parliament.⁷⁴ Duff's father, a loyal Hanoverian MP under Walpole, was created 1st Baron Braco, in 1735, then 1st Earl of Fife in 1757. The peerage was an Irish one, allowing the son to sit in the Commons, which he did as MP for Banffshire, 1754-84, then Elginshire 1784-90, at which point he received a British peerage. The family's wealth came from trade and money-lending, and it bought them estates in Moray, Banffshire and Aberdeenshire. The family seat was Duff House. Other residences included Mar Lodge, purchased from the Earl of Mar's estate after 1715, and Balmoral, which later trustees sold to Prince Albert in 1848. James Duff also built a house in Whitehall (which he named Fife House) for use as his London residence.

The pattern of his year followed that of his class. He left Scotland for London in early January, remaining there till May or June, attending Parliament and court functions, such as levees, to which his station in life gave him an entry. Although he held no 'place' in the royal household, he was personally known to the King and his correspondence records occasional conversations with the monarch. The summer months were divided mainly between Duff House and Mar Lodge, where he could engage in his favourite pastimes of shooting and deer-stalking, often staying on in Scotland during the autumn for this reason. He also enjoyed travelling on the continent, and made several lengthy trips to France, Luxemburg and the Netherlands. During his absences, he kept in close touch with his factor, William Rose, and his letters reveal much about the man and his life: his troubled marriage, his personal involvement in the training of servants, and his constant concerns over money.⁷⁵ Many of his interests were centred on enhancing his own lifestyle, and hence his comfort and his importance.

⁷⁴ Tayler, *Fife and his Factor*, *passim*.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, e.g. Fife to Rose, 5 February 1765, 8 April 1766, 6 April 1769.



James Duff, 2nd Earl of Fife

Duff House was designed by William Adam for the 1st Earl, but was unfinished at the time of his death and his son continued with the task, completing the upper floors and adding the main staircase.⁷⁶ He shopped abroad for his furnishings and adornments, spending money in Paris on furniture, damask, glasses, tapestry, and clothes for his wife, and smuggling wine from France, via Rotterdam.⁷⁷ In 1777 he was making a collection of books, pictures, coins and

⁷⁶ Montgomery-Massingberd and Sykes, *Great Houses of Scotland*, pp. 153-159.

⁷⁷ Tayler, *Fife and his Factor*, pp. 23,39. His letter to Rose about the smuggling has a conspiratorial note: The matter 'must be kept secret as Baillie Hay [in Banff] would be very pleased if our little Cargo was seized [*sic*]'.

medals. He was a member of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries, and was known to Dr Charles Burney, whose son stayed with Lord Fife while on a visit to Scotland.⁷⁸

He was closely concerned in the running of his household and his estates, from the planting of trees on fourteen thousand acres of barren ground to instructions to Rose that nobody was to shoot the partridges (presumably before he got the chance to do it himself) and to Thomas, the gardener at Duff House, to cut the top off the evergreens and take care of the rose bushes. In a reminder to the modern reader of the realities of eighteenth-century life, he complained, 'The Pipes [at Duff house] often want attention, for the Stink is intolerable when they are not right'. He also sent orders to hire a Park Keeper. 'There is nothing makes the Place so disagreeable to me, as that constant crowd of idle people that are walking over my grounds when I am at home'.⁷⁹ His letters to Rose are letters to an employee, and an upper-class sense of entitlement is seldom absent. When three months in Paris proved more expensive than anticipated, it is clear that Rose was expected to find additional money from the estates to fund Duff's lifestyle. But the letters themselves were written without flourish, and instructions issued with humour. He signed himself 'Your Friend'.

He was a man of considerable political power in the north-east of Scotland, and ruthless in protecting his electoral interests there against the Grants and the Gordons. Although he had relatively few close personal ties – his marriage, to Lady Dorothy Sinclair, only daughter of the Earl of Caithness, ended in separation in 1771 and there were no children from the marriage - he came from a large family and was the recipient of frequent requests to procure favours for his family, his kinsmen and acquaintances and their dependants. He was not unaware of a

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.126.

⁷⁹ Tayler, *Fife and his Factor*, pp. 15-16.

responsibility to his tenants, reducing rents and importing corn from England at his own expense when times were hard.⁸⁰

It takes a rounded picture of the life of James Duff, to understand why, for him and others like him, being an MP was a part, but only a part of their lives. Affairs of Parliament were not initially a major concern for Duff, and he had no wish to be in government. He was an MP from 1754; the letters to Rose start in 1759, but the first mention of Parliament does not occur till December 1766, by which time Bute's ministry had come and gone, Wilkes had been charged with seditious libel and the Stamp Act had been introduced and repealed.⁸¹ The American war, with its impact on trade, however, concerned him greatly, and the later letters are much more taken up with the issues raised by the conflict. His loyalty was a very personal one, to the King, and it troubled him to see division and dissension at the heart of government, and his contribution to Parliament, which is considered in the next chapter, has to be seen in that context.

The Duff family had a history of loyalty to the Hanoverians, but scattered through the various groupings of MPs were those families with Jacobite connections. There were over twenty MPs and Representative Peers with close family connections to the Jacobite movement, more when wider family relationships are taken into account. Some MPs were the sons of active Jacobites. Simon and Archibald Fraser and Lord Boyd, Earl of Erroll (a representative peer) were the sons of men executed for their role in the '45. The Murrays were also tainted with Jacobitism. The 3rd Duke of Atholl (who was MP for Perthshire before inheriting the peerage), and his brother, James Murray were sons of Lord George Murray, the Pretender's General.

David Murray, Viscount Stormont, that most committed of Hanoverians, came from a family

⁸⁰ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon. James Duff (1729-1809). [Accessed 21 August 2014]; A. and H. Taylor, *Book of the Duffs*, pp.171, 173. Prior to Duff's marriage, there were three illegitimate children, whom he acknowledged, and whose education he paid for. The eldest ultimately succeeded Duff as MP in Banffshire, and received a knighthood: History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir James Duff (1753-1839). [Accessed 21 August 2014].

⁸¹ It is the editors who draw the reader's attention to the first mention of Parliament in Duff's correspondence: an important point since there is much material omitted in the selection made for the book.

with strong Jacobite sympathies, while John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, Representative Peer, 1761-74, and 1781-1790, had been a Page of Honour to Prince Charles Edward, at Holyrood in 1745. Despite his father's views, the family kept the title to which John succeeded in 1756. John Stuart, Earl of Moray, William Maule, Earl of Panmure, David Kennedy and his brother, Earls of Cassilis, Archibald Douglas of Kirkton, and William Douglas of Kelhead (both Dumfries), David Graeme of Gorthy, Alexander Grant of Dalvey, and Robert Hepburn of Rickarton, Kincardine, all had Jacobite fathers. Penalties imposed on the offenders themselves ranged from the ultimate - execution - to attainder of estates or imprisonment for 'dangerous activities'. Some connections dated back to the 1715 rising. The family of John Gordon of Kenmure, Kirkcudbright, was attainted in 1716 as was that of Kenneth McKenzie, Lord Fortrose. Others were more recent rebels. John Mackenzie, Lord Macleod, and his father both fought for the Jacobites in the '45. When captured, they pleaded guilty and the father was attainted and lost his Cromarty estates. The family had connections to the Dundases of Arniston, however, and the son was pardoned but forced to abandon any claims to the family estates (which he, nevertheless, was able to buy back in 1784). Like the Murrays of Atholl, other families had hedged their bets. James St. Clair had a Jacobite brother, as did Francis Charteris and James Wemyss (sons of the 5th Earl of Wemyss), whose elder brother, Lord Elcho, was attainted after the rebellion. The presence of these men in Parliament may seem at first sight surprising, given the nearness in time of the 1745 rebellion. It is now recognised that Culloden was the last gasp of a moribund cause and that by the 1750s Jacobites among the Scottish aristocracy were coming to accept the Hanoverian monarchy, but the fear of a continuing Jacobite threat existed at central government level certainly till the late 1750s.⁸² In 1759 there were concerns about a possible French invasion in support of the Pretender and one of the key reasons for government opposition to a Scottish militia was the fear of arming

⁸² R. Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2002), p.23.

the Scots, particularly the Highlanders. The memories lingered and as late as 1778 Horace Walpole could still comment on Henry Dundas's protection of 'Scotch outlaws'.⁸³

On the other hand, there were various reasons why individuals might be acceptable, or at least tolerated, as MPs. Most of the active Jacobites belonged to a previous generation. Some, like the Mackenzies, had supported the '15 but their families had since demonstrated their commitment to the new order. One or two of the younger generation had been unwilling participants – Simon Fraser, the Earl of Dunmore, and Lord Fortrose all claimed to have acted under duress and were similarly anxious to prove their loyalty. Simon Fraser (1726-1782) first son of the executed Lord Lovat, was educated at Eton and attended university firstly at St Andrews, then Glasgow. He was called to the English bar in 1756, but the following year embarked on an army career, recruiting from the Fraser lands in Inverness-shire (there being no objection to Highlanders serving abroad). He rose from being a lieutenant-colonel in 1757 to lieutenant-general in 1777, with active service in both Canada and Europe. Nevertheless his proposed candidature as MP for his home county in 1754 brought strong opposition from key government figures (Hardwicke, Pelham and Newcastle) and was finally vetoed by Argyll after a face-to-face meeting. There were still objections in 1761 but by this time Argyll was dead and, in the end, nothing was done to prevent Fraser's election, which was strongly supported by the gentlemen of Inverness-shire. He served as MP for the county from then till his death in 1782.

More difficult to understand is the success of Kenneth Mackenzie, Lord Fortrose (Inverness Burghs 1744-7, Ross-shire 1747-61) and his son, also Kenneth, 1st Viscount Fortrose (1744-81), MP for Caithness, 1768-74, the latter being an example of the worst kind of Scots MP, with many of the attributes of the typical caricature of the time. The family, Earls of Seaforth, were Catholic and Jacobite till an attainder after the 1715 rebellion deprived them of both title and

⁸³ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Mackenzie, Lord Macleod (1727-89). [Accessed 11 August 2014].

estates. By the time of the '45 rebellion they had turned Protestant, been pardoned, bought back the estates, and were active government supporters. Kenneth, the son, lived abroad for much of his youth, then moved to London where he spent his time in the company of the fashionable, high-living and high-spending young men of the capital. When proposed for a seat in Parliament in 1768, at the age of twenty-four, it was not for his own county of Ross-shire, where James Stuart Mackenzie was the preferred candidate, but for Caithness. He made little contribution either to Parliament, which he attended only occasionally, or to his estates in Ross-shire, which, due to his huge accumulation of debt, he was forced to sell to a cousin in 1779. Nevertheless, in 1766 he obtained an Irish peerage, as Viscount Fortrose. It was with government support that he came in as MP for Caithness in 1768, and in 1771 his viscounty was raised to an earldom, when he was created Earl of Seaforth, but still in the Irish peerage.

The key to the success of these former Jacobites lies in the patronage system – they had powerful protectors or patrons, in England as well as Scotland. One of the best examples is David Murray, Viscount Stormont (1727–1796), whose uncle was William Murray, Lord Mansfield, a formidable individual, highly respected for his keen legal mind, who served as Lord Chief Justice of England, 1756-1788. Stormont was also connected by marriage to Lord Rockingham. Kenneth Mackenzie's connections were different but equally powerful.

Interested in neither career nor his estates, rank was obviously important to him. His marriage to a first cousin of the Duke of Grafton brought him his viscounty the following year (1766). He was brought into Parliament in 1768 as a government supporter, and it was when Grafton came back into Government in 1771 that he received his earldom. Simon Fraser was initially under Argyll's protection and it was through this that he was offered command of one of the new Highland battalions in 1757. He had obviously impressed Pitt who supported his candidature in 1761 for Inverness-shire. Despite his absences abroad, Fraser was quite capable of making his own connections. Accommodating in his dealings with those in power and suitably subservient in his manner, he endeared himself to both Grenville and Lord North, who

helped him, finally to re-acquire the Lovat estates. The primary aim of most Jacobite families was recovery of their titles, and their estates which had been forfeited to the Crown and were being administered by the Annexed Estates Commission. The King's permission and an Act of Parliament were required before former landowners were allowed to re-purchase their estates. This became easier with the accession of George III in 1760, and it explains the eagerness with which such men sought seats in Parliament. In 1764, amid much publicity, both William Maule of Panmure, and James Carnegie, who had become heir to the Southesk Estates, were able to buy back their lands at an auction in Edinburgh.⁸⁴ Simon Fraser re-acquired the Lovat lands in similar fashion ten years later. Titles, on the other hand, were much more difficult to regain. George III in any case disliked creating peerages and attainder was still considered a grave matter. Although Mackenzie was compensated with an Irish title, none of the attainders was reversed in the lifetime of those incumbents. From a general rather than a personal standpoint, the inclusion of Jacobite families in the 'ruling class' by the later eighteenth century can be seen as another factor in the gradual removal of some of the deep cultural and geographical divisions which had for long been a feature of Scotland.

The objective of this chapter was to add more depth to the traditional picture of Scots MPs in terms of their background and experience, and certainly to add to the rather one-dimensional approach of Namier and Brooke's treatment of the Scots as a parliamentary group in their *Introductory Survey*. What emerges is altogether more complex. They were a constantly changing group, but with some individuals providing a degree of continuity. Although they were members of a small elite, there were fairly wide gaps within the group in terms of wealth and even rank. By the standards of the time, the gulf between grandees such as the Dukes of Argyll and the untitled country laird was very considerable. Aristocratic influence was widespread, but the divisions between aristocracy and gentry were not fixed, and there were

⁸⁴ *Scots Magazine* 26 (February 1764), pp. 108-9.

many family interconnections. As a group, they were well-educated, benefiting from the interest in learning and the inquisitiveness about the natural and the social world that came with the Enlightenment. To this, many brought solid personal experience across many different fields, both at home and abroad. Another feature of the group was the importance of personal connections, as amply demonstrated in Emma Rothschild's study of the Johnstones of Westerhall. This was not of course unique to the Scots in the eighteenth century, but the strength of such connections was sufficiently striking as to attract comment from Namier and Brooke, who claimed that 'the spirit of the clans' was still 'vigorously alive' in Scotland, and that compared to English MPs, the Scots were much more the representatives of their families than their constituents.⁸⁵ While this latter point may have had something to do with the electoral system and the size of the electorate, and the presence of 'the spirit of the clans' in much of the Lowlands is questionable, kinship ties and business connections do emerge strongly in the biographical sections of the work, and in private correspondence generally. The whole patronage system was built round personal applications and recommendations, and it is likely that either the ties were stronger or simply more visible in a small group such as the Scots. Increasingly, however, such connections were not purely Scottish, but spilled over into England and beyond, as both families and businesses spread into the Empire.

Those, then, were the men who represented Scotland at Westminster in the second half of the eighteenth century. Selected from the upper ranks of society, they were a mixture of landowners great and small, lawyers, army and navy officers, East India Company directors and employees, colonial governors, bankers, merchants, plantation owners, Enlightenment figures, patrons of the arts and a famous architect. Their combined experience suggests they were in a position to make an informed contribution to the governing of Britain – not just as representatives of Scotland, but also of a variety of different interest groups. How well they

⁸⁵ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p. 172.

did so, and how they perceived their roles in parliament will be addressed in subsequent chapters.



The House of Commons, 1793-4

Chapter 2 A British Parliament?

'It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches while others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges or whatever else is in season....the really rude things which the Members said to one another struck me much... It is astonishing with what violence ... they push and jostle one another'.¹

The above description offers a glimpse of the Commons Chamber as seen by a foreign traveller in the later eighteenth century. This is the arena in which Scots MPs operated, making their own contribution to the developing legislative arm of government at Westminster and this chapter aims to discover the nature and extent of that contribution. The role of government itself was changing in Britain during the course of the eighteenth century, and traditional areas of concern - defence of the national interest, the preservation of law and order within the realm and the raising of sufficient revenue to meet these obligations – were inevitably affected in scope by developments such as the expansion of the Westminster Parliament after 1707, the effects of rapid economic change throughout Britain, and the consequences of the acquisition of a large overseas empire in the latter half of the century. The nature and extent of Parliament's authority and the limits of the royal prerogative continued to be debated, while new constitutional issues arose: the liberty of the subject, parliamentary privilege and the rights of electors took up many hours of parliamentary time during protracted exchanges over John Wilkes and the Middlesex election.² When American colonists challenged the right of the British Parliament to tax them, questions were asked about the nature of parliamentary representation in Britain itself. This was the political climate which Scots MPs at Westminster faced in the latter half of the eighteenth century, along with the residue of hostility and suspicion which remained from the Jacobite rebellion of 1745-6, the dislike of London Scots

¹ Karl Philippe Moritz, *Travels in England in 1782* (London, 1886), pp. 28, 30, 31

² Wilkes was a controversial figure in British politics from the publication of his *North Briton* no. 45 in 1763 till he finally secured his election for Middlesex in 1774.

‘on the make’ and the personal unpopularity of individuals such as Lord Bute, who was seen as arrogant and haughty.³ The chapter examines, firstly, attendance levels among Scots MPs to ascertain whether they were significantly different from those of English MPs, and if so why. Secondly, and crucially, it attempts to assess the extent to which the Scots actually participated in and contributed to the ongoing work of Parliament, and finally it explores how, and how successfully, legislation of particular relevance to Scotland was piloted through both Houses of Parliament. In the process the working relationship between representative peers and Scots members of the Commons is also examined.

The traditional view of Scots peers as a ‘solid phalanx’ supporting the government has been modified somewhat by studies of attendance levels.⁴ The House of Lords in the second half of the eighteenth century consisted of some 160 English peers, bishops of the Church of England, and 16 Scottish representative peers, giving a total of around 200. Working out the attendance of the peers is relatively easy as a daily attendance was recorded. It might be anticipated that the Scottish peers, who were virtually hand-picked by Administration, and were presumably selected for their willingness to attend and to support the government of the day, would be better-than-average attenders. This is not confirmed by the research. Lowe’s work on the period 1760 to 1775 concluded that attendance was ‘disappointing’, with average attendance ranging from 62% during 1767-8 to 30% in 1772-3. Over the period, attendance was around 45%.⁵ A search of the House of Lords Journals shows that the picture was similar for other parliaments (see Tables 6 and 7 below). These statistics do not support the

³ H. Walpole, *Memoirs and Portraits*, ed. Hodgart, M. (London, 1963), p. 106; P. Langford, ‘South Britons’ Reception of North Britons 1707-1820’ in Smout, T.C. (ed.), *Anglo-Scottish Relations from 1603 to 1900* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 146, 151, 159.

⁴ W.C. Lowe, ‘Bishops and Scottish Representative Peers in the House of Lords, 1760-75’, pp. 97-100; G.M. Ditchfield, ‘The Scottish Representative Peers and Parliamentary Politics, 1787-1793’, *Scottish Historical Review*, 40 (1981), pp. 14-31.

⁵ Lowe, ‘Bishops and Representative Peers’, pp. 99-100.

contemporary claim that 'Together with the bishops, they threw a great weight into the scale of the Crown'.⁶

Table 6 shows attendance levels for Representative Peers in the 1754 Parliament. The months selected are those when most peers might expect to be in attendance. Some did not arrive till after Christmas, and by Easter were returning to their family estates. The maximum possible attendance for January-February 1755 is 29 days, and for January-February 1757, 30 days.

Table 7 shows attendance levels in the 1774 Parliament. There were five surviving peers from the 1754 Parliament, but four deaths between 1775 and 1776 meant that twenty peers served in the 1774 Parliament. Maximum possible attendance for 1775 was 23 days, and for 1778 was 19 days.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.87.

Table 6 Attendance levels of Representative Peers: 1754 Parliament

<i>Name of Peer</i>	<i>SRP service</i>	<i>Attendance Jan-Feb 1755</i>	<i>Attendance Jan-Feb 1757</i>
Archibald Campbell, 3 rd Duke of Argyll (1682–1761)	1707-1713 1715-1761	18 days	10
William Kerr, 3 rd Marquis of Lothian (c.1690–1767)	1730-1761	27	0
James Ogilvy, 5 th Earl of Findlater and 2 nd Earl of Seafield (c. 1689-1764)	1734-1761	0	0
John Campbell, 4 th Earl of Loudoun (1705-1782)	1734-1782	10	0
James Douglas, 14th Earl of Morton (1703-1768)	1739-1768	12	12
William Home, 8 th Earl of Home (d. 1761)	1741-1761	11	11
James Stuart, 8 th Earl of Moray (1708-1767)	1741-1767	11	0
John Hay, 4 th Marquis of Tweeddale (1685-1762)	1742-1762	0	0
George Gordon, 3 rd Earl of Aberdeen (1722-1801)	1747-1761	19	19
James Maitland, 7 th Earl of Lauderdale (1718-1789)	1747-1761	14	15
John Leslie 10 th Earl of Rothes (c.1698-1767)	1747-1767	4	0
Hugh Hume Campbell, 3 rd Earl of Marchmont (1708-1794)	1750-1784	1	27
John Campbell, 3 rd Earl of Breadalbane and Holland (1696-1782)	1752-1768	15	23
Charles Schaw Cathcart, Lord Cathcart (1721-1776)	1752-1776	14	17
David Murray, 7 th Viscount Stormont (1727-1796)	1754-1796	10	0
John Carmichael 3 rd Earl of Hyndford (1701-1767)	1738-1767	8	6

Table 7 Attendance levels of Representative Peers: 1774 Parliament

<i>Name of Peer</i>	<i>SRP service</i>	<i>Attendance Jan-Feb 1775</i>	<i>Attendance Jan-Feb 1778</i>
James Hamilton 8 th Earl of Abercorn (1712-1789)	1761-1787	22	17
George Gordon 3 rd Earl of Aberdeen (1722-1801)	1774-1790	21	0
John Campbell, 3 rd Earl of Breadalbane and Holland (1696-1782)	1774-1780	0	0
John Stuart, 3 rd Earl of Bute (1713–1792)	1761-1780	0	0
Thomas Kennedy, 9 th Earl of Cassilis (1726–1775)	1774-1775	8	n/a
David Kennedy 10 th Earl of Cassilis	1776-1790	n/a	13
Charles Schaw Cathcart, Lord Cathcart (1721-1776)	1752-1776	19	n/a
George Ramsay, 8 th Earl of Dalhousie (d.1787)	1774-1787	19	7
John Murray, 4 th Earl of Dunmore (1732–1809)	1776-1790	n/a	12
Archibald Montgomerie, 11 th Earl of Eglinton	1776-1796	n/a	0
John Stewart 7 th Earl of Galloway (c.1735-1806)	1774-1790	20	13
Alexander Gordon, 4 th Duke of Gordon (1743-1827)	1767-1784	6	7
Charles Ingram, 9 th Viscount Irvine (1726-1778)	1768-1778	0	0
William Henry Kerr, 4 th Marquis of Lothian (c.1712–1775)	1768-1775	0	n/a
John Campbell, 4 th Earl of Loudoun (1705-1782)	1734-1782	15	7
William Douglas, 3 rd Earl of March, 4 th Duke of Queensberry (1725-1810)	1761-1787	4	7
Hugh Hume Campbell, 3 rd Earl of Marchmont (1708-1794)	1750-1784	15	14
Neil Primrose 3 rd Earl of Rosebery (1729-1814)	1768-1784	7	0
David Murray, 7 th Viscount Stormont (1727-1796)	1754-1796	0	0
John Bowes Lyon, 9th Earl of Strathmore & Kinghorne (1737-1776)	1767-1776	0	n/a

This research into the earlier and later period shows a similar pattern. Levels of attendance varied, but not hugely. There were usually about five or six Scottish peers in the House and a Call of the House in March 1765 could summon only nine of the sixteen.⁷ Most attended from time to time, but there were also some long-term absentees. Some were assiduous attenders for a period, then disappeared, to be replaced by others, suggesting possibly some organisation, or arrangement among them. In fact, their record is little different from that of the peers as a whole. Daily attendance in the Lords rarely exceeded a quarter of the membership.⁸ A typical attendance would be around thirty to fifty peers, but could fall as low as ten on days where there was little business. When attendance generally was high on particular days, more of the Scots peers were there also.⁹

A closer look at the personnel involved shows a variety of reasons for irregular attendance. Tweeddale was not active in the 1750s and was blind towards the end of his life. A number of other peers held overseas appointments concurrently with their roles as Representative Peers: the Earl of Rothes was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces in Ireland in 1758, Loudoun held a similar post in America, 1756-7, and Stormont was appointed envoy to Saxony-Poland at the end of 1755.¹⁰ Political disengagement was another factor. Bute played little part in the House of Lords after his resignation as Prime Minister and the Duke of Atholl,

⁷ House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, Journals of the House of Lords, 12 March 1765, <<http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/collectionBrowse.do?expandtolevel=0&expand=N#N>>. [Accessed 25 September 2014].

⁸ M. McCahill, *The House of Lords in the Age of George III, 1760-1811* (Chichester, 2009), online edition, *Parliamentary History*, 28 (2009), p. 98, <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/parh.2009.28.issue-s1/issuetoc>>. [Accessed 24 March 2015].

⁹ E.g. HLJ, 19 January 1764, 21 February 1764, 3 February 1766, 4 February 1778. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

¹⁰ Henry Paton, *rev. Jonathan Spain, Leslie, John, 10th Earl of Rothes (1698?-1767)*, *ODNB*, 2004. [Accessed 25 September 2014]; Stephen Brumwell, 'Campbell, John, 4th Earl of Loudoun (1705-1782)', *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 27 July 2014]; H.M. Scott, 'David Murray, 7th Viscount Stormont and 2nd Earl of Mansfield (1727-1796)', *ODNB*, January 2008. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

among others, preferred attending to his estates to life in London.¹¹ The 3rd Marquis of Lothian, having almost a full attendance in 1755, made no appearance in the following session, after his (forced) resignation as Lord Clerk Register in 1756.¹² Although a degree of regularity in attendance was valued, it was obviously not seen as a requirement for holding the position by either Administration or the peers themselves. Despite periodic complaints about the government practice of nominating the Scots peers, most of them saw their appointment primarily as an honour, but not one which required their unfailing attendance at Westminster. It is scarcely surprising that a degree of non-attendance was tolerated and even expected, since the Government had an inbuilt majority in the Lords, and divisions were few. Some Scots peers - probably the majority - combined attendance with a multitude of other interests and responsibilities, sometimes over a long period of time. In addition to the diplomats and army officers mentioned above, were the colonial governors and those, such as Argyll and Morton, who patronised or actively participated in a variety of scientific and cultural organisations.

One of the long-serving peers was John Campbell, 3rd Earl of Breadalbane and Holland (1696-1782).¹³ He belonged to a well-connected and influential branch of the Campbells, with the family seat at Taymouth Castle in Highland Perthshire. He was an Anglo-Scot, educated in England, and made two English marriages, the first to the daughter of the Duke of Kent, the second to an heiress, who brought him the estate of Sugnall in Staffordshire. His political career began well before his time as a representative peer. As Lord Glenorchy, the eldest son

¹¹ J. Dwyer and A. Murdoch, 'Paradigms and Politics: Manners, Morals and the Rise of Henry Dundas, 1770-1784' in J. Dwyer, R. Mason, & A. Murdoch, (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 218.

¹² His post was wanted for Alexander Hume Campbell.

¹³ The title was created in 1681 for Sir John Campbell, 5th Baronet, of Glenorchy. The "of Holland" part of the title derived from the fact that Campbell was the husband of Lady Mary Rich, daughter of Henry Rich, 1st Earl of Holland: the Peerage, <http://www.thepeerage.com/p15041.htm#i150406>. [Accessed 3 March 2015].

of a Scots peer, he was MP for the English constituencies of Saltash, 1727-1741, and Orford, 1741-1745. He saw diplomatic service in both Denmark and Russia, and served, briefly, on the Admiralty Board, while, from 1756 till 1765, he held the English sinecure of Justice in Eyre, South of Trent, which was worth £100 p.a.¹⁴ Succeeding to the peerage on the death of his father in 1752, he served as a Representative Peer between 1752 and 1768, and again from 1774 till 1780. The marriage of his daughter to Philip Yorke, son of the Earl of Hardwicke in 1740, gave him a degree of political influence outwith, but not entirely independent of, Scottish political circles.¹⁵ This relationship resulted in correspondence over some twenty years between Breadalbane and Hardwicke, of both a personal and a political nature, and offers a fascinating glimpse of the life of a Scottish peer who was close to the centre of power. Like other aristocrats, Breadalbane travelled frequently. His letters to Hardwicke are written variously from Taymouth, Sugnall, Edinburgh, Bath and in 1745, from Inveraray, where he had to flee from the approaching Jacobite army. In October 1765, he was off to Nice for an extended stay with his 'young folks' just as he was offered the post of Privy Seal of Scotland.¹⁶ In fact, the tone of his correspondence raises the question of how seriously he took his appointments and responsibilities. As a young diplomat in Denmark, he had left his secretary to do his work, for which he was reprimanded by George I, and was later dismissed from the post by George II.¹⁷ There was also a reluctance to attend Parliament. In 1742, he wrote to Hardwicke from Edinburgh, hoping that he would not to have to attend the beginning of the

¹⁴ For a history of this post, see <<http://www.history.ac.uk/publications/office/justices>>. [Accessed 30 August 2014].

¹⁵ Philip Yorke, 1st Earl of Hardwicke (1690–1764), was an English lawyer and politician who served as Lord Chancellor from 1737 to 1756. He was a close confidant of the Duke of Newcastle, Prime Minister between 1754 and 1756 and 1757 until 1762. Breadalbane's first wife was a daughter of the Duke of Kent and the marriage alliance with the Yorke family may have been due to the influence of the Kent relations who brought the girl up after her mother's death. (Peter D. G. Thomas, 'Yorke, Philip, 1st Earl of Hardwicke (1690–1764)', *ODNB*, October 2007). [Accessed 25 Sept 2014]; James Collett-White, 'Yorke, Jemima, suo jure Marchioness Grey (1722–1797)', *ODNB* 2004. [Accessed 25 Sept 2014].

¹⁶ BL, Hardwicke MS, 35451, f.161, Breadalbane to his son-in-law, 10 Oct 1765.

¹⁷ History of Parliament Trust (1964-2015), History of Parliament online, 1715-54, John Campbell, Lord Glenorchy (1696-1782). <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/research/members/members-1715-1754>>. [Accessed 30 August 2014].

new session. As a Representative Peer, his attendance was better than that of some in the 1754 Parliament (his first session), but in the later Parliament, he made no appearance in the periods examined. In 1759, he was at Bath by mid-March (leaving proxies with Hardwicke), and by June Hardwicke was commenting on his extended absence from London. In November that year, he wrote from Sugnall that he did not believe there would be any business requiring his attendance in the House of Lords, and that he was intending to stay longer in the country. In 1768, he wrote to his son-in-law, proposing himself as a Commissioner for the Board of Trustees, but admitted that he would seldom be in attendance.¹⁸ Three years earlier, when offered the post of Privy Seal, he clearly had no intention of interrupting his planned excursion to Nice on account of it, and, before accepting, was careful to check that it would be a sinecure and would not involve the 'disagreeable' work undertaken by his predecessor, Stuart Mackenzie.¹⁹

Breadalbane was seen as having some importance to Administration because of the size and position of his Scottish estates, situated as they were in a potentially troublesome part of the country. Valued as a government ally during the '45, he was also expected to raise troops from his Perthshire lands in the case of an anticipated French invasion in 1759. Typically, he seemed in little hurry to comply, making slow progress from Sugnall to Taymouth, and presenting various excuses for not rushing to help, while at the same time jostling for position against his more powerful neighbours, the Duke of Argyll and the Duke of Atholl.²⁰ Despite his protestations in 1765 about being ignorant of Scottish affairs, his correspondence shows that this was not the case and he was probably using it as an excuse for not getting involved in the petty politics associated with the management of Scottish patronage. This anglicised MP

¹⁸ The Board of Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures, which was set up in 1727 to improve Scottish economic activity by making grants available for specific projects.

¹⁹ BL, Hardwicke MS, 35451, f.161, Breadalbane to his son-in-law, 10 October 1765.

²⁰ BL, Hardwicke MS, 35450, f. 261, Hardwicke to Breadalbane, 30 June 1759, f. 270, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 26 July, 1759.

retained an interest in Scottish politics and there are frequent snippets of political gossip in his letters – about appointments in Perthshire, about Lord Craigie’s prospects as Lord President, and on Simon Fraser as prospective MP for Inverness-shire. He was obviously pleased that his support was sought by both the Duke of Atholl and his opponent, Lord John Murray, in the 1761 Perthshire election.²¹ The reader is also aware of someone on the cusp between Highland and Lowland Scotland at a time when Jacobitism could still arouse strong emotions. A firm supporter of the Hanoverian succession, he was conscious of the changes taking place in the Highlands in the wake of the ‘45 and wary of doing anything which might reverse attempts to ‘civilize’ the Highlands and provide work for the inhabitants. He fully recognized the importance of cattle to the Highlanders, and opposed the Irish Cattle Bill of 1759, fearing that ‘people will grow wild, and return to a state of barbarism if their trade is destroyed’.²² When a French invasion seemed likely in 1759 and the proposal for a Scots militia was high on the agenda of Scots MPs, he expressed some concerns about arming the Highlanders in their own country.²³ Other than proposals which might directly affect his own lands, however, he made little reference to the general business of Parliament or to government policy.

Breadalbane was not a particularly committed Representative Peer, but was very protective of his own position as a major landowner and the influence which his political status conferred on him. He was anxious, also, to enjoy the tangible rewards which came from being part of the ruling class, without apparently feeling the need to make much of a contribution to it. While this image accords with the traditional one of grasping Scots aristocrats, not all the Representative Peers were of quite the same mould, and there were a few who were prepared to make a more substantial and sustained contribution to the work of Parliament itself.

²¹ Ibid., f. 242, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 3 October 1753, f.243, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 20 October 1753, f. 300, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, August 1760.

²² Ibid., f. 258-9, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 3 March 1759.

²³ Ibid., f.261-2, 270, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, July 1759.

It is now recognised that much of the power of the House of Lords was due to the influence wielded by individual members who occupied the great offices of state in politics, the army and the Church, as well as controlling the election of large numbers of MPs to the House of Commons.²⁴ More recently, however, greater emphasis has been laid on the contribution made by the Lords to the legislative process, pointing to their generally efficient working partnership with the Commons.²⁵

A small group of peers conducted the day-to-day business of the Chamber, supported by others familiar with the procedures and willing to attend sufficiently frequently to allow business to be completed as necessary. As well as processing the increasing number of bills which came up from the Commons, they also took on the task of revising poorly-drafted legislation, often within a short period of time as bills crowded in from the Commons at the end of each session.²⁶ Among those peers were one or two of the Scots, generally from the lower ranks of the peerage.²⁷ Few of the Representative Peers in this period have attracted the attention of parliamentary historians. The well-known names, John Stuart, Earl of Bute, and Archibald Campbell, Duke of Argyll, came to prominence for reasons other than their contribution to the work of the Lords. The Scot who did make a major contribution, acting on occasion as Lord Chancellor, was William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, but he was not a Representative Peer. Mansfield's nephew, Viscount Stormont, although nominally a Representative Peer in all five parliaments under consideration, was inevitably absent for long periods on diplomatic service, and his involvement in domestic politics did not properly begin

²⁴ See, for example, Cannon, *Aristocratic Century*.

²⁵ McCahill, *House of Lords*, p. 279. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

²⁶ Chancellor Hardwicke complained, during debates on the Militia Bill in 1757 that MPs, 'being destitute of the advice and assertions of the judges, are too apt to pass laws which are either unnecessary or ridiculous, and almost every law they pass stands in need of some new law for explaining and amending it'. (McCahill, *House of Lords*, p.280). [Accessed 26 September 2014].

²⁷ McCahill is of the view that duties such as the charring of committees were carried out by impoverished peers, who were rewarded with sinecures. (McCahill, *House of Lords*, p.323. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

till his return from Paris on the outbreak of war in 1778. As Secretary of State for the Northern Department (October 1779–March 1782), he was effectively Foreign Secretary during the American war. Stormont acted as leader of the House of Lords 1779-82.²⁸ He was briefly Lord President of the Council in 1783 (April–December), but it was the next decade which saw his main contribution as an opposition speaker in the House of Lords, ‘speaking often and usually well’.²⁹

There were other Scots, however, who were prepared to undertake the repetitive, humdrum business that made up the bulk of the work of the House of Lords - sitting on committees, occasionally chairing them, acting as tellers, piloting Scottish legislation through the House, occasionally intervening in debates. Those most involved were Hugh Hume Campbell, 3rd Earl of Marchmont (Representative Peer, 1750-1784), and James Hamilton, 8th Earl of Abercorn (Representative Peer, 1761-1787). Abercorn, another Anglo-Scot, was born and educated in England. The family records are in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, and the 8th Earl held at various times Irish, Scottish and British titles with estates in all three countries. He did certainly have Scottish roots: his Paisley estate, which he bought, consisted of former family lands, and he was buried in Paisley Abbey. He also purchased an estate at Duddingston, near Edinburgh, and had some electoral influence in both areas. He is described in the introduction to the Abercorn Papers as ‘a figure of some significance in Scottish political and administrative history’ but his actual involvement is more difficult to gauge. During his time in the Lords he chaired over fifty committees and in the 1780s belonged to ‘the small but coherent group which managed Scottish business in the Upper House’.³⁰ He helped promote the demands of

²⁸ C. Jones (ed.), *A Pillar of the constitution: The House of Lords in British politics, 1640-1784* (London, 1989), p.213.

²⁹ Scott, David Murray (1727–1796):doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/19600. [Accessed 10 Aug 2014].

³⁰ Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, D623, Introduction to the Abercorn Papers, p.15, <http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction_abercorn_d623.p.df>. [Accessed 26 September 2014]; David Huddleston, ‘Hamilton, James, eighth earl of Abercorn (1712–1789)’, ODNB, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [Accessed 4 June 2015]

Paisley textile manufacturers (1771, 1779, 1784), secured legislation to improve amenities in both Paisley and Leith (1771) and assisted with Scottish bankruptcy legislation in 1784.³¹ His long political service was recognized in the form of a British title, Viscount Hamilton, in 1786.

However, it was Lord Marchmont who was by far the most active of the Scottish peers.

Generally regarded as one of the 'also-rans' in politics, he was perhaps, ultimately, rather more than that, despite his failure to attain high political office.³² Hugh Hume Campbell succeeded to the earldom of Marchmont on the death of his father in 1740, but despite his family's long political history, his career suffered through its association with the opponents of Walpole, and recognition of his political abilities was long in coming. He had to wait till 1750 before being appointed as a Representative Peer, but from the mid-1750s his very regular attendance and willingness to take part in the day-to-day business of the House of Lords resulted in a gradual rise in his status. His usefulness was recognised by Bute and his successor, Grenville, and from the 1760s Marchmont was at his most active in Parliament. He was one of a handful of peers who regularly chaired committees (almost three hundred during his parliamentary career), and apparently was the holder of a cabinet post, 1763-65.³³ On a single day, in 1770, he reported on no fewer than thirteen bills.³⁴ He was involved in organising peerage elections and vetted the Government List in 1774.³⁵ He was also active in piloting important Scottish legislation through the House, reporting on the crucial Forth and Clyde Canal Bill in 1768, and assisting

³¹ McCahill, *House of Lords*, pp. 378-9. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

³² Maitland Hume, his *ODNB* biographer, dismissed his political career in the Lords with the comment that 'he was never to play a decisive role in this sphere', and devotes no space to his work in the Lords beyond commenting that as a result of his appointment as Keeper of the Great Seal in 1764, 'he achieved something of a reputation as an elder statesman.' (Maitland Hume, 'Hugh Hume Campbell (1708–1794)', *ODNB*, 2004). [Accessed 10 August 2014].

³³ J.C. Sainty, *The Origin of the Office of Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords* (House of Lords Record Office, 1974), < <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/chairmn.pdf>>. [Accessed 26 September 2014]; I.R. Christie, 'The Cabinet during the Grenville Administration, 1763-65', *English Historical Review*, 73 (1958), pp. 86-87 (accessed online).

³⁴ HLJ, 30 March 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014]. In an attendance of around 30, the Scots were represented by Marchmont, Abercorn and Rosebery.

³⁵ McCahill, *House of Lords*, p.49. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

with the passage of the Clyde Bridge (Glasgow) Bill, the Monklands Canal Bill, and various road bills.³⁶

A trained lawyer, Marchmont was also involved in legal cases. Among its other roles, the Lords also acted as a court of appeal, and this is an aspect of its work which was particularly relevant to Scotland. Since 1707, the Lords had been the final court of appeal from the Scottish Court of Session, an option which became increasingly popular during the course of the eighteenth century. The result was that by the end of the century the House of Lords

could justifiably be described as ...to all intents and purposes a Scottish Court.... In the early years of the nineteenth century almost eighty per cent of the House of Lords' business originated in Scotland, and the sheer numbers of Scottish appeals had become a major problem for the effective administration of justice across Britain.³⁷

This view is confirmed by even a quick browse through the Lords Journals, where, day after day, session after session, appeals requesting that the interlocutors of the Scottish courts be 'set aside', are referred to the jurisdiction of the House of Lords. The 3rd Duke of Argyll, in addition to all his other duties, spent much time judging appeals in the Lords but Marchmont's papers, too, contain a reminder of his own contribution to this aspect of the Lords' work, in the form of his own notes on a number of legal cases.³⁸

Through his correspondence, and that of others, we can glimpse something of the man. David Hume described him, in 1748, aged 40, as 'the ambitious, the severe, the bustling, the impetuous' Marchmont. This last quality was in evidence in his private life, as the 'severe'

³⁶ HLJ, 22, 25 February 1768, 11 April 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014]; R. Renwick (ed.), *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow, 1739-1780* (Glasgow, 1911-12), vol.7, p.321. (Appreciation recorded of the efforts of Lord Frederick Campbell and the Earl of Marchmont in getting the Clyde Navigation bill passed).

³⁷ Scottish Government, 'Final Appellate Jurisdiction in the Scottish Legal System, Appendix 1: Historical Development of Appeals from Scotland, <<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/01/19154813/9>>. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

³⁸ J.S. Shaw, *The Political History of eighteenth-century Scotland* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 65,.95; A. Murdoch, *The People Above: politics and administration in mid-eighteenth-century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980), p.8; Humes of Polwarth, GD 158/2545; See also J.S. Shaw, *The Management of Scottish Society, 1707-1764: power, nobles, lawyers, Edinburgh agents and English influences* (Edinburgh, 1983), p.25.

Marchmont, to Hume's astonishment, fell head over heels in love with a young girl he saw at the theatre one night, and married her some three weeks later. The same man, in later life, disinherited his grandson for daring to contest Berwickshire in opposition to Marchmont's own, quite unsuitable, candidate, an action which ultimately destroyed the long-standing family interest in the area.³⁹

By upbringing and conviction a supporter of the Hanoverian monarchy and the Union, as a Representative Peer Marchmont was a reliable government supporter. In Scotland he was a political figure of some importance, but never in charge. He controlled no parliamentary seats outwith his own lands in Berwickshire and initially he was overshadowed by the wealthier, higher-ranking, more powerful 3rd Duke of Argyll. On Argyll's death in 1761 Newcastle wanted him to have control of Scottish affairs, but probably because he saw him as amenable to direction from above.⁴⁰ In Parliament he was similarly overshadowed by the highly respected Mansfield, who also had a good knowledge of the Scottish legal system. Gradually, however, with dogged determination, persistence and hard graft, he carved out a place for himself, as a senior Scottish politician and a figure of some authority in the Lords. In 1764 the status he sought was finally acknowledged with the post of Keeper of the Great Seal in Scotland, the highest which the monarch could bestow. Although not a minister, he had access to those who were, and by 1769, his name was placed alongside the Duke of Queensberry's as someone with influence over the disposal of Scottish patronage.⁴¹ Marchmont's name was among those mentioned in 1770, along with the next generation of Campbells (the 5th Duke of Argyll, formerly Lord Lorne, and his brother, Lord Frederick) as somebody who was in a position 'to

³⁹ J.Y.T. Greig (ed.), *Letters of David Hume* (Oxford, 1932), vol. I, p. 110, Hume to Oswald; R.M. Sunter, *Patronage and Politics in Scotland, 1707-1832* (Glasgow, 1986), pp. 113-133.

⁴⁰ Murdoch, *People Above*, p. 100. At the time however, Bute was in the ascendant, and his recommendation carried more weight with the King.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126. The comment, by Lord Garlies, was really a sideswipe at the perceived power of Lawrence Dundas.

speak for the Scots'.⁴² In Parliament, Marchmont's legal training, together with his knowledge and experience of parliamentary procedures, brought him similar recognition, leading a parliamentary historian to describe him recently as 'a formidable presence' in the House of Lords in the 1770s.⁴³

The picture which emerges, here and in Chapter 1, of the Scots Representative Peers, challenges the older one of mere colourless sycophants, and hangers-on. In their patterns of attendance and participation they were little different from their English counterparts. The rounded picture reveals more interesting individuals, with a variety of experience, expertise, and expectations. The selection of two ambassadors, a colonial governor and four generals to serve in the 1768 and 1774 Parliaments may simply illustrate how successful the Scots were as place-seekers, but Crown service was not unusual, and English peers held similar posts.⁴⁴ The Scots were neither narrowly focussed on Scottish affairs, nor ignorant of them. They were well-educated, and widely travelled, and if they displayed, in fair measure, the unattractive features of the age - its pomposity, snobbishness and pursuit of self-interest - many also shared its beliefs in progress and improvement. While a few showed commitment to their role as legislators in Parliament, others also contributed to the service of the Crown in different fields.

Estimating attendance levels for Scots MPs in the Commons is a much more difficult task than for the Lords, since no record was kept of daily attendance. No existing study has been found. Three sources of information are available: division lists, published debates, and select committee lists, but there are difficulties in using each of them. Detailed division lists are valuable, but few in number, and, although increasing by the later parliaments, are often

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.11.

⁴³ McCahill, *House of Lords*, p.325. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.16, 59. [Accessed 26 September 2014].

incomplete, and tend to focus on opposition MPs. Reporting of parliamentary debates also increased during the later parliaments, but they often reported only the contributions of the best-known speakers and key government members. Full committee lists were recorded for the first two parliaments only, and are useful for indicating the more active MPs, but leave no trace of those who did not contribute. Despite their limitations, however, these sources, taken together, reveal something of the attendance levels and the contribution made by the Scots MPs to the work of Parliament.

*Table 8 Scots attendance in known divisions, 1754-1784*⁴⁵

<i>Date</i>	<i>Parliament</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Scots Present</i>		<i>Total Votes (if known)</i>	
			<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
24/3/1755	1754-61	Mitchell election	37	82.2	394 (209:185)	70.6
7/2/1766	1761-68	Stamp Act	37	82.2	404 (274:130)	72.5
8/5/1769	1768-74	Middlesex election	33	73	373 (221:152)	66.8
9/2/1773	1768-74	Navy Captains' petition	23	51.1	201 (154:47)	36
26/4/1773	1768-74	Rights of Electors	34	75.5	352 (151:201)	63
25/2/1774	1768-74	Astley's motion	29	64	372 (250:122)	66.8
12/2/1779	1774-80	Contractors' Bill	20	44	305 (145:160)	54.7
3/3/1779	1774-80	Keppel's expedition	26	58	374 (170:204)	66.8
21/2/1780	1774-80	North's amendment	25	55.5	374 (188:186)	66.8
6/4/1780	1774-80	Dunning's motion	32	71	448 (233:215)	80.3
15/3/1782	1780-84	Rous's motion	34	75.5	463 (236:227)	82.9
27/11/1783	1780-84	East India Bill	23	51	349 (229:120)	62.5

⁴⁵ See Appendix 1 for the origin and the date of the various lists along with background information on the events.

Other than the total number of votes cast, for and against a measure, no official record was kept of divisions, and many of the surviving parliamentary lists were originally compiled for government ministers, anxious about support in Parliament. Some were merely indications of likely voting intentions, for example listing all MPs, and labelling them P (Pro), C (Con), D (Doubtful) or A if a known absence. Table 8 excludes such lists and others indicating only general support, and includes only those which claim to record actual voting. Even then, the lists cannot be said to be completely accurate, as the existence of different versions of some lists illustrates. The table is based simply on the best evidence available and any inaccuracies are unlikely to affect the overall pattern of attendance which the information records.⁴⁶ The percentage calculations are based on Namier's figure of 558 for the total number of parliamentary seats during this period.⁴⁷

There are relatively few division lists but they are spread throughout the period giving some indication of patterns of attendance. The statistics show some interesting trends. In general, attendance was variable, from around half to over 80% for both groups, the Scots MPs and the whole body of MPs. As might be expected, MPs generally turned up in large numbers for the big occasions, such as the repeal of the Stamp Act, Dunning's motion on the power of the Crown, and Rous's motion of no confidence in the Government. Even with the disappearance of a Scottish manager after 1765, the Scots could still turn up in significant numbers, but whereas up to 1773 a higher proportion of Scots apparently attended than of MPs generally, thereafter the situation was reversed. The reasons for this remain to be examined. It is known, however that, on occasions, some Scots absented themselves rather than vote against government. The Mitchell election vote in 1755 took place against the background of a dispute between Newcastle and the Duke of Argyll. In the event, only seven of the thirty-seven Scots MPs present supported Newcastle. Of the eight absentees, at least three had agreed to absent

⁴⁶ The date recorded in column 1 is the date on which the vote was taken.

⁴⁷ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p.2.

themselves (James Campbell of Ardkinglas, David Scott and William Mure of Caldwell).⁴⁸ The Contractors Bill of 1779 showed the government being heavily defeated, as it opposed a motion designed to restrict MPs bidding for government contracts. Of the twenty Scots present, eighteen appear to have supported Lord North's position on the bill; only two actually voted against Administration, but twenty-four were absent. There does not seem to have been any concerted rebellion over the bill: six (mainly soldiers) were abroad, some were poor attenders, but a number of independent-minded men who were normally Administration supporters failed to put in an appearance, among them James Duff, Henry Dundas, Alexander Garden, John Pringle and Gilbert Elliot's son ('a silent but unenthusiastic supporter of Administration'), while Lawrence Dundas's entire group of MPs was missing.⁴⁹ The existence of one or two specifically Scottish lists illustrates the importance of Scots votes to Administration at critical periods.⁵⁰ But on these occasions large numbers of English MPs turned out, too. The figures do not bear out contemporary allegations of Scots placemen regularly trooping into the lobbies in unthinking support of Administration. In fact, Scots attendance was not consistent, nor did it mirror English attendance and it fell below the norm for the last third of the period, raising other questions about motivation and allegiance. Attendance did not necessarily equate to support for Administration (seventeen of the twenty-three Scots present at the vote on the Navy captains' petition voted with the majority, against Administration), but absence may also indicate undeclared opposition.⁵¹

⁴⁸ L. Colley, 'The Mitchell Election Division 1755', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 44 (1976), p. 82. James Masterton made the same point in 1769, about James Murray of Broughton and John Hope, who 'pretended to be sick' to avoid voting over the expulsion of Wilkes. (NRAS771 Macpherson-Grant family, of Ballindalloch, Bundle 552, Masterton to Grant, 30 January 1769).

⁴⁹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Gilbert Elliot (1751-1814); *Ibid.*, Sir Lawrence Dundas (c.1710-81). [Both accessed 26 September 2014].

⁵⁰ BL, Newcastle Papers, Add MS 32974, f.23-4, Sir Alexander Gilmour to Newcastle, 18 February 1766.

⁵¹ See chapter 4 for discussion of allegiance.

Important as the division figures are, given the scarcity of other evidence, they only provide a snapshot of attendance on specific dates, when large numbers might be expected, either because the issue was of real significance, such as the repeal of the Stamp Act, or because the government was under threat. There would be other occasions which attracted a large Scottish attendance, such as votes on the militia issue, or on the Forth and Clyde Canal. It is, however, virtually impossible to locate other than fleeting references to MPs who perhaps attended with some degree of regularity, but made no contribution to the proceedings. Records of the debates, and of select committees, however, shed some valuable light on those who did.

This was an era which valued oratory and reports of debates concentrated on the great speakers of the day – Chatham, Burke, Fox – who often spoke for hours, without notes. Given this standard, it is not surprising that many MPs found intervention in debates in either House a daunting experience. Like its modern counterpart on occasions, the eighteenth-century House of Commons could be a noisy and ill-disciplined place. The comments which open this chapter come from a German pastor, travelling in England in 1782, who recorded his impressions during a visit to the Commons. He contrasted the oratory, and the respectful atmosphere in which good speakers were heard, with the noise and bursts of laughter which accompanied those less accomplished, attempting to make themselves heard. Most Scots, many with a distinctive Scottish accent, must have found the experience particularly trying, and several expressed their diffidence about addressing the House, among them James Coutts, Sir Alexander Mackay and the younger Gilbert Elliot.⁵² Assessing the spoken contribution of Scots members, as indeed of many English members, is problematical.⁵³ Few Scots came to the attention of the diarists, and for many of the Scots entries in the *House of Commons* volumes,

⁵² Eliminating Scotticisms from their speech and writing was a concern of a number of Enlightenment figures, including David Hume. See Richard Sher, *the Enlightenment and the Book* (Chicago, 2006), p.52. See also *History of Parliament online, 1754-90*, James Coutts; *ibid.*, Gilbert Elliot (1751-1814). [Both accessed 26 September 2014]; Simmons and Thomas, *Proceedings and Debates*, vol.3 p. 219.

⁵³ See Introduction, pp. 14-15.

there is no record of any intervention in the House. One or two had a higher profile. Walpole, in his *Memoirs*, lists among the thirty best speakers in the House in 1755, Hume Campbell, (Alexander Hume Campbell, MP for Berwickshire, brother of the earl of Marchmont), Oswald (James Oswald, MP for Dysart), Elliot (Gilbert Elliot, MP for Roxburgh) and the Lord Advocate (Robert Dundas of Arniston, 1713-1787) without further explanation or tag of 'Scotch' as if they were sufficiently well known not to require further comment.⁵⁴ A study by P.D.G. Thomas of speakers in the House of Commons of 1768-74, offers a valuable insight into a later Parliament and allows some assessment of what the Scots MPs contributed.⁵⁵ Thomas calculated that of the total of 692 MPs eligible to sit in that Parliament during its life, the proportion known to have spoken in public business or during Committees of the Whole House is forty-four per cent, thirty-five per cent if we discount those who spoke only once. By comparison, Scots MPs do not come out particularly well. Of the fifty-two eligible to sit in the Parliament, there is evidence that only fifteen spoke at all, just under thirty per cent. Discounting the two who made only one speech, the total is twenty-five per cent.

On the other hand, some of those who did speak were quite prolific contributors to debates. George Dempster, Gilbert Elliot and William Pulteney among them made 531 speeches. If added to that are two further Scots representing English constituencies, Alexander Wedderburn (193 speeches) and George Johnstone (151 speeches), the total rises to 875 speeches/interventions in debate.⁵⁶ All these men were university educated, and trained in the law, while Dempster and the Johnstone brothers also had considerable expertise in business.⁵⁷ All, with the possible exception of Wedderburn, demonstrated a degree of independence in Parliament, were knowledgeable, by no means parochial, and could hold their

⁵⁴ Walpole, *Memoirs and Portraits*, p.51.

⁵⁵ P.D.G. Thomas, 'Check List of MPs Speaking in the House of Commons, 1768-74', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 35 (1962), pp. 547-60.

⁵⁶ James Oswald was not a member of this Parliament, having retired in 1768, due to ill health. He died in 1769.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 1, p.37. Pulteney was the Johnstone brother who inherited the wealth of the earl of Bath.

own on American and Indian affairs - Dempster was a director of the East India Company – on banking, agriculture, or the textile industry. They all sat for several parliaments, although William Pulteney, like his brother, later represented an English constituency. Alexander Wedderburn was MP for Ayr Burghs, 1761-8, and thereafter sat for English constituencies till 1780. Elliot and Dempster continued to represent their Scottish constituencies of Roxburghshire and Perth Burghs respectively. The sheer number of interventions in debate by these few high-profile Scots MPs indicates also a high level of attendance.

While records of the debates highlight the more visible MPs, it is the Commons Journals which give an insight into the activities of the majority. Up to 1768, we can glean some idea of those who attended from the daily lists of those appointed to select committees, which were recorded in the Journals. It was not mandatory that someone nominated to a committee should actually be present: the committee would probably be scheduled to meet on another day.⁵⁸ But it seems reasonable to assume that an MP nominated to serve on several consecutive committees was actually in attendance, and the pattern of Scots nominations to committees would seem to confirm this. However, extended lists of committee members were not recorded beyond 1768. Thereafter only two names were normally listed, followed by '&C' but we still know who chaired committees, reported from them, and assisted in the preparation of bills, and from this we can identify those members who piloted bills through the House, and those who were regularly involved in committee work.

Systematic searches of the Commons Journals were conducted for two terms of each of the first two Parliaments, 1754-61 and 1761-68 (those for which extended committee lists are available), in an attempt to discover which Scots were named on committees. Searching by an MP's name did not produce very reliable results. Such searches, tried out for a small number

⁵⁸ P.D.G. Thomas, *The House of Commons in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1971), p. 266.

of MPs over a specified period, produced fewer instances of attendance than a day-by-day search of the Commons Journals, therefore the latter method was adopted. It was, however, very time-consuming, so names were recorded from two sample sessions in each Parliament: 1755 and 1757, then 1764 and 1766. Although a session generally began in November or December and some MPs would have gone down to London for the opening of Parliament, others delayed their journey till January and most business was carried out between January and the end of the session. The figures arrived at can no more than give a suggestion of the pattern of attendance. Some MPs cannot be clearly identified from the committee lists. Only occasionally does the recorder differentiate between the Campbells (there were 6 in the first Parliament). In the 1754 Parliament, the scribe made no distinction between Mr Gilbert Elliot of Selkirkshire, and Mr Edward Elliot (usually thereafter Eliot), an influential Cornwall MP. They were careful, however, to accord people their proper title, so, for example, Lord John Murray is distinguishable from Mr Murray, and Lord Frederick Campbell is identifiable from various individuals named 'Mr Campbell'.

Table 9 shows Scots MPs who were nominated to committees in the 1754 Parliament. The sessions sampled were 7 January - 16 April 1755, and 7 January - 6 June 1755.

Table 10 provides similar information for the 1761 Parliament. The sessions sampled were 16 January - 13 April 1764, and 14 January - 6 June 1766.

Key

- 0 no record of nomination to committee
- na not a serving MP for this session.
- u not clearly identifiable - eg Campbells. However, some Scots in this category were known from other sources to be quite regular participants. These included Gilbert Elliot, Pryce Campbell and James Stuart Mackenzie, brother of Lord Bute.

Table 9 Scots MPs nominated to committees: 1754 Parliament

<i>MP</i>	<i>Constituency</i>	<i>1755*</i>	<i>1757*</i>
William Alexander	Edinburgh	13	17
James Campbell	Stirlingshire	u	u
Dugald Campbell	Argyllshire	u	u
John Campbell	Inverness burghs	u	u
John Campbell	Glasgow Burghs	u	u
Pryse Campbell	Inverness-shire	u	u
James Carnegie	Kincardineshire	0	1
John Campbell	Dunbartonshire	u	u
James Duff	Banffshire	0	0
Robert Colvile	Kinross-shire	0	0
Hew Dalrymple	Haddingtonshire	1	0
John Dickson	Peebles-shire	0	2
Archibald Douglas	Dumfries Burghs	u	u
James Douglas	Orkney & Shetland	u	u
Robert Dundas (LA)	Edinburghshire	13	2
Gilbert Elliot	Selkirkshire	u	u
Sir Henry Erskine	Anstruther Easter	11	9
Andrew Fletcher	Haddington Burghs	2	2
Lord Adam Gordon	Aberdeenshire	0	2
Sir John Gordon	Cromartyshire	0	9
Sir Ludovick Grant	Elginshire	1	0
George Haldane	Stirling Burghs	17	20
Robert Haldane	Stirling Burghs	na	na
John Hamilton	Wigtown Burghs	3	15
Charles Hope Weir	Linlithgowshire	0	2

Alexander Hume Campbell	Berwickshire	3	14
Hon. Thomas Leslie	Perth Burghs	7	1
George Mackay	Sutherland	0	5
Kenneth Mackenzie	Ross-shire	u	u
John Mackye	Kirkcudbright	1	3
William Maule	Forfarshire	2	0
Andrew Mitchell	Elgin Burghs	1	0
Harry Munro	Tain Burghs	0	3
William Mure	Renfrewshire	0	15
James Mure Campbell	Ayrshire	0	0
Lord John Murray	Perthshire	3	0
John Murray	Linlithgow Burghs	0	1
James Oswald	Dysart Burghs	24	35
James St. Clair	Fifeshire	0	0
David Scott	Aberdeen Burghs	u	u
Walter Scott	Roxburghshire	u	u
John Scott	Caithness	u	u
James Stewart	Wigtownshire	2	0
James Stuart Mackenzie	Ayr Burghs	u	u
James Veitch	Dumfries-shire	na	4
James Vere	Lanarkshire	0	0

* Figures in these columns show the number of committee nominations for the period

Table 10 Scots MPs nominated to committees: 1761 Parliament

MP	Constituency	1764	1766
James Abercromby*	Clackmannanshire	10	7
John Anstruther*	Anstruther Easter	na	3
Lord Frederick Campbell*	Glasgow Burghs	49	44
James Campbell	Stirlingshire	u	u
Daniel Campbell*	Lanarkshire	u	u
Pryse Campbell	Nairnshire	u	u
William Campbell*	Argyllshire	u	u
James Carnegie	Kincardineshire	0	na
James Coutts*	Edinburgh	14	14
Patrick Craufurd*	Renfrewshire	1	0
Hew Dalrymple	Haddington Burghs	13	1
George Dempster*	Perth Burghs	30	11
John Dickson	Peebles-shire	0	0
Archibald Douglas	Dumfries-shire	u	u
Sir James Douglas	Orkney & Shetland	u	u
James Duff	Banffshire	7	0
Archibald Edmonstone*	Dunbartonshire	65	46
Gilbert Elliot	Selkirkshire/Roxburghshire	29	14
Sir Henry Erskine	Anstruther Easter	1	na
Andrew Fletcher	Haddingtonshire	5	0
Simon Fraser*	Inverness-shire	0	1
Alexander Gilmour*	Edinburghshire	30	19
Lord Adam Gordon	Aberdeenshire	2	1
David Graeme*	Perthshire	na	10
Sir Alexander Grant*	Inverness Burghs	14	18

James Grant*	Elginshire	22	16
John Hamilton	Wigtownshire/Burghs	9	3
Francis Holburne*	Stirling Burghs	0	0
Charles Hope Weir	Linlithgowshire	1	0
John Lockhart Ross*	Linlithgow Burghs	4	0
Alexander Mackay*	Sutherland	2	0
John Mackye	Kirkcudbright	1	2
William Maule	Forfarshire	0	1
Thomas Miller (LA)*	Dumfries Burghs	2	na
Andrew Mitchell	Elgin Burghs	1	2
Archibald Montgomerie*	Ayrshire	2	0
James Montgomery (LA)*	Dumfries burghs	na	5
James Murray*	Wigtownshire	2	1
James Oswald	Dysart Burghs	31	21
James Pringle*	Berwickshire	1	0
John Pringle*	Selkirkshire	na	0
Alexander Ramsay Irvine*	Kincardineshire	na	0
David Scott	Aberdeen Burghs	u	u
Walter Scott	Roxburghshire	u	u
John Scott	Tain Burghs	u	u
James Stuart Mackenzie	Ross-shire	u	u
Henry Wauchope*	Buteshire	0	0
Alexander Wedderburn*	Ayr Burghs	18	18
James Wemyss*	Fifeshire	0	0

* denotes new MPs.

The statistics suggest that Scots MPs generally were not regular participants in committee work. However, only a handful made no contribution at all, and a third or more were at least

occasional contributors, while a few MPs were heavily involved in the work of the Commons. In the 1754 Parliament in particular, there were only a few regular contributors, among them George Haldane (son of an MP, whose diligence probably explains why he was appointed to the governorship of Jamaica in 1758), and James Oswald, the hard-working man of business.⁵⁹ There are some irregular patterns of behaviour. One of the easier to explain is Alexander Hume Campbell's, whose attendance level shot up after he and his brother engineered his appointment as Lord Clerk Register in 1755.⁶⁰

As in the House of Lords, there were perfectly good reasons for poor attendance. As noted earlier several of the 'absentees' held other posts, often in the armed forces: for example, Adam Gordon, Simon Fraser, General James St. Clair and Admiral Francis Holburne. Andrew Mitchell was a diplomat and rarely attended. Lord Duff (Earl of Fife) and Charles Hope Weir were men of independent means and chose to spend time travelling abroad. Hope Weir disliked attending Parliament, as did William Mure, who preferred to remain in Scotland managing affairs behind the scenes. Two facts stand out clearly, however, from the statistics: firstly the effect that the increased volume of legislation from the 1760s had on the workload of committed MPs, and secondly, the number of the new intake of MPs who shouldered this workload. Of the twenty-six new Scots MPs, names such as Archibald Edmonstone, Lord Frederick Campbell, George Dempster, Sir Alexander Gilmour, Sir Alexander Grant and his kinsman, James Grant (son of Ludovick), featured with some degree of regularity in the 1761 Parliament. They would be joined, in later years, by men like Sir Lawrence Dundas and his son, Thomas, Henry Dundas, and his friend, Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran, and William Adam of Blairadam (of the Adam family of architects).

For the majority of the MPs, however, absence from committee lists cannot be equated with absence from the House, as the division lists indicate. The two division lists we have for 1755

⁵⁹ See below, p. 104-5.

⁶⁰ See below, pp. 181-2.

and 1757 show that James Duff, Adam Gordon, James St. Clair and Andrew Mitchell all voted in the Mitchell election division (as did the normally invisible James Vere, MP for Lanarkshire, 1754-1759). In the later Parliament, Andrew Mitchell and Francis Holburne voted in the Stamp Act division. Nor do the select committee figures take account of Committees of the Whole House, or committees inviting 'all the Gentlemen of North Britain' to attend. They do, however, allow us to draw some conclusions about active participation rates.

From these figures it can be suggested, tentatively, that more than a third of the Scots MPs were at least occasional contributors to the proceedings, with a small, but growing, group, making quite a regular and sustained contribution, not only to Scottish legislation, but to the work of the House as a whole. This could include proposing motions, introducing petitions, piloting private legislation through the House, acting as tellers, and chairing and reporting on the recommendations of a committee, including Committees of the Whole House. Holders of official posts might introduce and pursue items of government business. The remainder of this chapter will examine in more detail the contribution that some Scots MPs made to the procedures which surrounded and shaped the operation of parliament, to the legislative process itself, which has received little attention, and also how effectively they were able to secure the passage of Scottish legislation through a predominantly English Parliament by the second half of the century.

A few, often the titled or more experienced members, or those who were Privy Councillors, assisted with formal procedural matters, for example deputising for the High Steward in the swearing in of MPs (twelve Scots MPs were nominated in November 1774, according to the Commons Journals), serving on the Committee of Privileges, helping prepare a response to the King's Address to Parliament at the opening of a new session, drawing up messages of congratulation to the monarch or his family on important occasions such as a royal marriage, the birth of a child, or a victorious military campaign. Some acted as tellers during a division, a

useful indicator of interest or stance since tellers were usually allocated to the 'side' they supported. There is a noticeable increase in Scots acting as tellers in the second Parliament, corresponding to the higher level of involvement by some Scots MPs in this parliament, although it may also be due in part to a greater number of divisions in the 1760s.⁶¹ These were often also the MPs who played a prominent part in committees and some were frequent contributors to debate. For most Scots, however, their most active contribution would be through the select committees which progressed most of the business brought before the House. Members were either chosen formally by ballot, or less formally by nomination.⁶² Select committees varied in size from four or five to over fifty, and when a piece of local legislation was under consideration, were usually open to all members from whichever areas were affected. Sometimes they included the instruction that all those who attended should have 'a voice', though this did not extend to a vote, which was limited to the named MPs.

Select committees dealt with a wide variety of legislation but categorising this is something of a minefield. Contemporary classification of laws as 'public' or 'private' can be quite misleading, as what we might consider to be private or local measures (eg settlement of a private estate or maintenance of a local road) would be classed as public measures if they involved any royal lands or 'the King's highway'. Instead it is proposed here to follow Julian Hoppit's categorisation, distinguishing between 'specific' (ie with a specific local or personal application) and 'general' (with a wider, usually national application) legislation.⁶³ Thinking in

⁶¹ The HCJ searches carried out above (for Tables 9 and 10) revealed five instances of Scots MPs acting as tellers in the 1754 Parliament, involving three MPs (Gilbert Elliot, George Haldane and Alexander Hume Campbell); for the 1761 Parliament there were fifteen instances, involving eight MPs (Pryce Campbell, George Dempster, Archibald Edmonstone, Gilbert Elliot, Sir Alexander Gilmour, John Hamilton of Bargany, James Oswald and Alexander Wedderburn).

⁶² The Commons Journals describe in great detail the time-consuming process of balloting, used in more controversial issues, where the procedure, with its six sealed glass jars, was clearly the result of attempts to eliminate fixing.

⁶³ J. Hoppit, 'Patterns of Parliamentary Legislation, 1660-1800', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), p. 116 (accessed online).

this way will make it easier to address a number of questions about Scots' involvement in committee work. Did they limit themselves mainly to Scottish laws? Did they participate in 'general' (i.e. British-wide) measures? Did they serve on committees dealing with English local legislation? This will give an indication of how much integration of the Scots there was in Parliament, and of their status, if, for example, they were assigned to the more important committees.

There was a large increase in legislation generally during the eighteenth century, particularly from 1760. Ministerial legislation increased, sessions were longer, stretching into June and July rather than finishing just after Easter, and private and local bills continued to take up much of Parliament's time. Much of this rise in legislation was due to an increase in local (including personal) legislation.⁶⁴ Such legislation usually resulted from petitions, traditionally requesting redress of some grievance, but by the eighteenth century they were a means of effecting change. Much of the personal legislation, but by no means all, was initiated in the House of Lords. Local legislation was frequently concerned with economic improvement, mostly with enclosures and turnpike trusts, although canals, bridges, and harbours featured increasingly in the later part of the period. There were also some civic improvement schemes as towns and cities expanded and the inadequacy of existing provisions for street cleaning, lighting, and crime prevention quickly became obvious. Although local bills made up the major part of legislation, general bills were increasing steadily, perhaps unsurprisingly given the acquisition of the Empire in the 1760s, which occasioned further trade regulation and additional defence measures. There was a wide variety of general bills, whose topics ranged over revenue raising, military matters, the maintenance of law and order and the administration of justice, regulation of trade, of banking and the postal system, as well as constitutional matters such as the limits of royal authority, reform of parliament, and freedom of the press. The most

⁶⁴ Ibid., p.116; J. Innes, 'Legislating for Three Kingdoms', in J. Hoppit (ed.), *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland 1660-1850* (Manchester, 2003), pp. 20, 26, 29.

important measures, such as supplies, originated with government ministers, but others came in the form of motions from individuals or resulted from petitions, where the legislation was framed to have general application.

The sampling of the Commons records shows that Scots MPs, generally, served on a whole variety of committees, dealing with Scottish and English legislation - on roads, harbours, private bills, civic improvements and other pieces of local legislation.⁶⁵ They usually began on roads committees. Twenty-one Scots in the first parliament served on them. The flood of petitions for permission for turnpike trusts, to extend their powers and raise tolls, continued, and between January and the end of March 1764, Scots MPs found themselves dealing with requests for road improvements from Whitby, Lincolnshire, Southampton, Burton on Trent, Nottinghamshire, Doncaster, Sussex, Lambeth, Somerset, Lancaster, Dover, Tewkesbury, Shrewsbury, Watling St, Bideford, Beverley, and Cardiff.⁶⁶ Few Scots MPs in the first parliament (six only), however, took much to do with enclosures which were a purely English matter. Ten years later, that number had more than doubled, and they were doing more of them – Lord Frederick Campbell, George Dempster and Archibald Edmonstone each appeared on six committee lists. Nor was there any real incongruity in this since the purpose of the committees was not to judge the merits of each case before recommending legislation or considering a draft bill, but to ensure that the procedures, such as obtaining in advance the consent of all parties involved, had been properly followed. It is also true that a number of Scots MPs had lands in England, acquired by marriage, inheritance or purchase, and these MPs would be included in any legislation affecting their English lands. While some MPs would have been allocated to particular committees because of their interest or expertise, other appointments appear simply a matter of convenience. It looks as if some Scots, who were

⁶⁵ See Appendix 2: Committee Work of MPs.

⁶⁶ H CJ, January – March 1764. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

clearly in Parliament to pursue Scottish business in their own constituencies, found themselves nevertheless nominated to several other, unrelated, committees as well. When the Scottish legislation was completed, they disappeared from the committee lists – and perhaps from Parliament, for a spell. William Mure, for example, is not listed on any committees between November 1754 and December 1755 and was absent for the Mitchell election (24 March 1755). In 1757 he was in Parliament in connection with petitions on Renfrewshire roads (his own constituency) and Glasgow University benefactions. As well as committee work on these bills, he was also nominated to the Ribble Bridge, Hertford Road, Alconbury Roads and Kew Bridge committees. After ‘his’ bills were passed in April, he made no further appearances that session.⁶⁷ Some, however, were very closely involved in the work of Parliament.

One of the most assiduous of committee men was Archibald Edmonstone (1717-1807) of Duntreath, near Killearn, Stirlingshire. He sat in four of the five parliaments, representing Dunbartonshire (1761-1780, and 1790-96) and Ayr Burghs (1780-1790). His father had been an Irish MP but his mother was a sister of the 4th Duke of Argyll and he was consequently a cousin of Lord Frederick Campbell and his elder brother, Lord Lorne (later the 5th Duke). Although Edmonstone attended Glasgow University and had some legal training, like many of his contemporaries, he married into English wealth, and entered business with his father-in-law, being described in 1761 as ‘a man of considerable property’. Upwardly mobile, his second marriage was to the daughter of an English baronet. He was brought into Parliament by his uncle in the expectation that he would be a dependable supporter of the Argyll interest.⁶⁸ In return, the family looked after him. He was appointed Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod (I) in 1763 but lost this post two years later when Rockingham came into power. In 1771, again through the Argyll interest, he was awarded a half share in the £1500 p.a. Receiver-Generalship

⁶⁷ HCJ, 7 February- 27 May 1757. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

⁶⁸ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Archibald Edmonstone (1717-1807). [Accessed 27 September 2014].

of Scottish Customs, and three years later he was created a baronet. Edmonstone's profile fits, in many respects, the much-complained-of Scots stereotype: greedy, self-seeking, holding their sinecures in return for supporting Administration. He at least worked for his. He was nominated to over one hundred committees in the two years researched (1764 and 1766) for his first Parliament. In addition to routine work on road improvements, he assisted with nineteen enclosures, examined Knaresborough Waterworks, lawn manufacture in Sussex, and legislation dealing with the poor in several different areas. He chaired what would clearly be an important committee on paving Westminster streets, and served on committees considering river navigation, and the fraudulent weighing of coals in London, as well as sitting on at least seventeen committees dealing with private business.⁶⁹ Working at times with his cousin, Lord Frederick Campbell (MP for Glasgow Burghs), he was closely concerned with improvements in communications in Scotland, and was one of a handful of Scots to be involved with general bills.⁷⁰ It is impossible to determine whether this rate of committee work continued in later sessions, since, as noted, earlier, the practice of recording full committees was discontinued after 1768. However, Edmonstone was a very experienced parliamentarian and can still be traced taking part in the business of the House, acting as a teller in divisions, taking the oaths of MPs at the start of a new session, preparing bills and, in the final parliament, participating in yet another committee on the Forth and Clyde Canal.⁷¹ Edmonstone appears to have been exceptionally conscientious without rising to any higher political office, if indeed he had wished to do so. As in the Lords, few Scots were to be found at the higher levels of government. Their role was very much a supporting one. The general legislation which came before select committees on which they served was of a minor nature. More important

⁶⁹ H CJ, 16 January – 19 April 1764, 14 January – 6 June 1766. [Accessed 27 September 2014].

⁷⁰ For Edmonstone's involvement with legislation on Scottish roads, see, for example, H CJ, 19 January 1764, 21 February 1764, 14 February 1766, 21 March 1766, 3 June 1767, 14 January 1768, 21 January 1768; for public bills, concerned with matters such as trade regulation, highways, the postal service, see for example, H CJ, 5 April 1764, 19 April 1764, 17 April 1766, 29 January 1767, 19 April 1771, 11 March 1779. [All accessed 28 September 2014].

⁷¹ H CJ, 11 June 1784. [Accessed 28 September 2014].

matters went before Committees of the Whole House and, while not unknown, it was rare for Scots to chair these.

It is not difficult to see why so few Scots MPs were appointed to positions of importance. They were a very small minority, operating in an overwhelmingly English institution, and, although in the Chamber itself, anti-Scots prejudice did not appear to be particularly prevalent or overt, it did exist, as the press frequently demonstrated, and Scots MPs themselves recognized.

Treatment of the Scots is the subject of extended comment in Namier and Brooke's section on Scotsmen in *The House of Commons, 1754-90*. Here it is amply demonstrated that, while they may not have suffered harassment, they were certainly discriminated against in terms of promotion.⁷² Even the 3rd Duke of Argyll was not officially a government Minister, and was not held in particularly high regard in England, despite his reputation as 'the Great Man' in Scotland. The Earl of Bute's brief tenure of office was as a royal favourite rather than a public figure and his unpopularity for this and for his nationality was in many respects counter-productive in terms of the advancement of other Scots.

But rank was another factor affecting prospects of promotion. Eleven of the thirteen members of Bute's cabinet in 1761 were titled. Of the fourteen Administrations formed between 1754 and 1784, only two were led by commoners (George Grenville, 1763-5, and William Pitt, 1783-1801).⁷³ In fact, the number of untitled English MPs who held the highest offices during the period covered by this research, was less than a dozen. Some owed their appointments to influential patrons or aristocratic connections, others were promoted for their ability, particularly their powers of oratory. William Pitt the Elder and Edmund Burke were powerful speakers in the House, and Pitt, who had no following of his own in Parliament, was

⁷² Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, pp. 168-9. For an example of press bias, see the *Middlesex Journal*, 7 May 1774. See also Ch. 4, pp. 217-18, for further discussion of discrimination against Scots MPs.

⁷³ J.C. Sainty (ed.), *Office-Holders in Modern Britain*, (London, 1972), vol. 1: Treasury Officials 1660-1870. Online edn, British history online, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/office-holders/vol1>> . [Accessed 11 July 2015].

nevertheless popular as a war leader. George Grenville owed his promotion to Pitt, then Bute, but he was also an able man of business, well versed in the working of Parliament. Henry Fox was himself well-connected and married into the aristocracy, while Isaac Barre, from a family with Huguenot origins, and William Dowdeswell, were protégés of Lord Rockingham.⁷⁴

There was a larger, but still small, number of English MPs from non-aristocratic backgrounds – probably around fifty – who occupied, from time to time the lower echelons of government office and this is where the few Scots who held government posts are to be found.⁷⁵ Like their English counterparts, most depended on connections for their posts. Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran (1733-1813), and Andrew Stuart (1725-1801), both friends of Henry Dundas, were appointed to the Board of Trade.⁷⁶ Francis Holburne, who rose through the navy to the rank of Admiral in 1768, was appointed a Lord of Admiralty in 1770 (but died in 1771). Pryse Campbell, from a political, but strongly anglicised family with connections to the Pelhams as well as Argyll, followed his father into Parliament, serving successively for Inverness-shire and Nairnshire. An active parliamentarian, he was appointed to the Treasury in 1766, but his career was cut short by his early death two years later at the age of forty-one. It cannot be said, in all honesty, that these men made much impact on the British political scene. On the other hand, one or two displayed real ability. The career of Henry Dundas is already well-documented, but

⁷⁴ William Pitt sat in the Commons from 1735 to 1766. He held the post of Secretary of State (southern department) between 1756 and 1761; George Grenville, commoner but brother of Lord Temple and brother-in-law of William Pitt, served as Lord of Treasury 1747-54, Treasurer of the Navy at various times between 1745 and 1762, Secretary of State, 1762, first lord of Admiralty 1762-3 and first lord of Treasury 1763-65; Henry Fox, MP from 1735, held a succession of posts including Secretary of State (southern department, 1755-6), paymaster-general 1757-65, was government spokesman in the Commons, 1762-3; Isaac Barre was an MP from 1761-1790; vice-Treasurer Ireland 1766-68, Treasurer of the navy 1782, paymaster-general 1782-3; protégé and friend of Shelburne and his chief spokesman in the House of Commons, William Dowdeswell, country gentleman, was a frequent speaker in Parliament. His main interest was finance and he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Rockingham's first ministry; Edmund Burke came from a middle-class Irish family. He was paymaster-general, briefly in 1782, and again in 1783: Sainty, *Office-Holders*. [Accessed 28 September 2014].

⁷⁵ Since this section of the research is concerned particularly with those who made a contribution to the work of Parliament, it excludes diplomatic posts, and the very many sinecures.

⁷⁶ Fergusson, a lawyer and active committee man, served as a Lord of Trade from 1780-82. Andrew Stuart, another of the Dundas circle, was better known as the lawyer for the Hamilton family in the famous Douglas case. His place at the Board of Trade, from 1777-79, was obtained for him through a deal done by Dundas, and not as a result of any particular ability or even interest on Stuart's part and in fact he contributed little to Parliament during his time as an MP. (History of Parliament online 1754-90, Adam Fergusson (1733-1813), Andrew Stuart (1725-1801). [Both accessed 29 September 2014].

both Gilbert Elliot and James Oswald also merited their positions in government. Already noted as a speaker in the House, Elliot rose to be Treasurer of the Navy in Lord North's Administration, in 1770, a post which he held till his death in 1777. Elliot also served as a Lord of Admiralty between 1756 and 1761, and, from 1762-1770, he was Treasurer of the Chamber, a post in the royal household. Close to Bute, he assisted briefly with the distribution of Scottish patronage till this was taken over by James Stuart Mackenzie, but was not given any Cabinet office in Bute's administration. Disenchanted with factional politics during the 1760s, he distanced himself somewhat from the key players and was not afraid to take an independent line.⁷⁷ At the same time, however, he continued to be active on committees, dealing with public as well as local English and Scottish legislation, chairing committees, presenting reports, and preparing bills.

Elliot's role model, when entering Parliament, was James Oswald (1715-1769) of Dunnikier, Fife, who, more than any other Scots MP at this time, was a part of the inner circle of government.⁷⁸ He was a lord of Trade 1751-59, lord of Treasury 1759-63, became a Privy Councillor in 1763 and held the sinecure of joint vice-treasurer of Ireland 1763-7. He was universally held in high regard by key figures across several Administrations both for his ability and his dependability as a 'safe pair of hands'. Had he not been a Scot, he would probably have been appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer following Bute's resignation in 1763. What little remains of his correspondence gives a glimpse of the great range of people with whom he had dealings.⁷⁹ As well as letters from personal friends, local constituents, and fellow MPs, there are items of correspondence from Newcastle, Bute, Grenville, Halifax, and an astonishing

⁷⁷ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Gilbert Elliot (1722-77). [Accessed 29 September 2014].

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ J. Oswald, *Memorials of the Public Life and Character of Right Hon. James Oswald of Dunnikier* (Edinburgh, 1825).

number from Scots peers.⁸⁰ While some are typical of the very many begging letters which people in Oswald's position regularly received, others are directed to a man who, people knew, was familiar with parliamentary procedures and could get things done. He developed a close and apparently friendly working relationship over several years with George Montagu-Dunk, Earl of Halifax, head of the Board of Trade (some of his letters began simply 'dear Dunk'), and was government spokesman in the Commons on trade and colonial matters.

What was remarkable about Oswald's career was his background. Son of a Kirkcaldy merchant, he entered Parliament on the family interest in Fife, which gave him, at times, a degree of political independence to speak his mind. But he had no powerful family connections or aristocratic patrons to protect his interests. Those who did so, and they included the King, promoted him for his abilities and his knowledge. He was active as both a public servant and as a parliamentarian. He served on innumerable select committees, chairing some, reporting, preparing and presenting bills, and occasionally chairing Committees of the Whole House. He sat on many committees dealing with matters affecting Britain as a whole, and introduced a number of general measures on topics ranging from whaling to abuses in the Post Office. He presented information on colonial affairs to the House, but acted also as a government spokesman on other matters, contributing, for example, to the debates on Wilkes and General Warrants.⁸¹ There is a sense, however, that he belonged to a lower rank in society. Fox neatly encapsulated this in a letter to Bute in March 1763:

I do not propose Mr. Oswald to have a levee and manage, as it is called, the Members of the House ... but Oswald will on all occasions take the lead and will be supposed to speak your sense ... The House of Commons will ... gain

⁸⁰ The list includes the Dukes of Argyll and Queensberry, the Earls of Morton, Buchan, Wemyss, Craufurd, Moray, Lauderdale, Leven, Eglinton, Haddington, Elgin and Findlater, and Lords Deskford, Sinclair, Elibank, Dupplin, Belhaven and Cathcart (*Ibid.*, *preface*, *p.iii*).

⁸¹ H CJ, 18 January 1757, 2 March 1757, 21 March 1757, 3 May 1757, 9 December 1762, 16 March 1764, 2 April 1764, 9 April 1764. [Accessed 29 September 2014]; History of Parliament online, 1754-90, James Oswald (1715-1769). [Accessed 29 September 2014].

great credit by the ability with which business will be planned and the steadiness with which it will be pursued.⁸²

While Gilbert Elliot, a baronet, got the coveted post of Keeper of the Signet, and his son received a peerage, some limited financial provision was made for Oswald and his son was taken care of, but no honours followed.⁸³ Instead of being Chancellor of the Exchequer, Oswald received merely a sinecure in 1763, a post from which he was removed in 1767 when his usefulness came to an end, through illness. It was not unique for 'men of business' from less exalted backgrounds to reach such positions. Anthony Chamier and Thomas Bradshaw, both members of Lord Frederick Campbell's 'Gang', did so.⁸⁴ But, given the double disadvantages of his rank in society and his nationality, it is a tribute to Oswald's abilities that he should have occupied positions close to the centre of power over an extended period of time, and perhaps also one indication of a steadily growing acceptance of the political Union on both sides of the border several years before the appearance of Henry Dundas on the British political scene.

While the Scots holders of government office were few in number, several others were in a position, often because of their overseas experience, to offer advice on colonial and commercial affairs to various administrations. Sir Alexander Grant (Inverness Burghs, 1761-68) was a wealthy merchant, due to his profitable business interests in the West Indies. Well-connected in London society, he attended Parliament conscientiously, but made few recorded

⁸² E.G.P. Fitzmaurice, *Life of William, Earl of Shelburne* (London, 1875), vol.1 pp. 142-6, quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754-90, James Oswald (1715-1769). [Accessed 29 September 2014].

⁸³ He had already received a promise for his son of the reversion of secretaryship of the Leeward Islands, and further secured, through the King's intervention, another reversion, that of Scottish auditor-general, for which his son had to wait till 1779 (Ibid.)

⁸⁴ Chamier, MP for Tamworth 1778 - 1780, secretary to the commander-in-chief at the War Office 1763-72, deputy secretary at war 1772-5, under-secretary of state 1775-*d*; Bradshaw, MP for Harwich, 1767 - 1768, Saltash, 1768 - 1774, Clerk in the War Office c.1757-59, first clerk 1759-61, chief clerk at the Treasury, 1761- 1763, commissioner of taxes, 1763- 1767, secretary to the Treasury, 1767- 1770, lord of Admiralty 1772- *d*: History of Parliament online 1754-90, Anthony Chamier (1725-80), Thomas Bradshaw (1733-74). [Both accessed 29 September 2014]. For the 'Gang', see below pp. 210-11.

interventions. He was, however, an active, behind-the-scenes adviser to governments in the 1760s on West Indian and Canadian affairs. Both he and James Abercromby, another plantation owner and colonial agent, attended a Board of Trade meeting in February 1760 to offer advice on Jamaican currency. They also acted as intermediaries for their American contacts in their dealings with the Board, Abercromby sending Newcastle a memorandum on sugar exports from Martinique and Guadeloupe in 1762 and providing evidence to the Board of Trade on Virginia's currency in 1763.⁸⁵ Other Scots were knowledgeable about Indian affairs. Henry Dundas made use of both Archibald Campbell of Inverneil and Adam Fergusson. Sir Robert Herries, the banker with contacts in London, Europe and America, passed to Jenkinson, in 1781, his proposals on the reorganisation of the East India Company. While some appeared happy simply to offer advice without looking for any return, others were undoubtedly looking to their own advantage, few more blatantly than James Abercromby. Finding himself faced with conflicting interests as the American dispute developed, he proposed offering his expertise of thirty years in a document on royal revenues in America, in return for quitting his position as an agent and receiving adequate compensation in return. His offer, however, was not taken up.

One post which did require a visible Scottish presence in the House was that of Lord Advocate, which invariably went to a Scots lawyer. As government speaker on Scottish affairs in the Commons, the holder was expected to be a Government supporter.⁸⁶ Four very different men held this post between 1754 and 1784, and none of them could be described as nonentities. Robert Dundas (Lord Advocate, 1754-1760), half-brother to Henry, was a strong personality, able and ambitious, and in many respects he showed himself to be more of a unionist than a defender of what others saw as Scottish interests. He was described in General Bland's letter

⁸⁵ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Alexander Grant of Dalvey (1705-1772), James Abercromby (1707-75), Archibald Campbell of Inverneil (1739-1801), Adam Fergusson (1733-1813), Sir Robert Herries (1730-1815); David Hancock, 'Grant, Sir Alexander, fifth baronet (1705-1772)', *ODNB* Jan 2008. [All accessed 20 Dec 2014].

⁸⁶ The role of the Lord Advocate from a Scottish perspective will be explored in the next chapter.

of introduction to Newcastle as intent on pursuing ‘the true interest of Great Britain’, and of ‘knowing the interest of Scotland to be inseparable from that of England’.⁸⁷ In Parliament he proved to be a good speaker, introducing the amendments to the Heritable Jurisdictions Bill (20 February 1755) and a bill to improve collection of the window tax in Scotland. More controversially, he spoke and voted against the Scots militia bill in 1760, one of the few Scots to do so. However, despite his apparent British outlook, his real interest was in the Scottish Bench, and, as noted above (chapter 1 p. 44), when the opportunity arose, he applied for and received the post of Lord President of the Court of Session, introducing during his tenure some much-needed reforms. His successor, Thomas Miller, was less ambitious and, although competent and respected, was less visible in Parliament, but James Montgomery, who was Lord Advocate for almost ten years (1766 – 1775) played a leading part in the passage of some important Scottish legislation, while regularly supporting Administration in Parliament on such matters as Brass Crosby’s case in 1771, the Royal Marriage Bill in 1772, and less wholeheartedly, Lord North’s Boston Port Bill.⁸⁸ It was Henry Dundas, however, Montgomery’s Solicitor-General, and Lord Advocate from 1775, who demonstrated most clearly the ability of Scots politicians to operate on a British platform. A first-rate speaker, who never gave up his Scottish accent, he was a much more visible figure in the Commons than his predecessors and although he, too, promoted a number of Scottish measures, not always successfully, he soon occupied a larger stage, defending the government over the American war and against accusations of extravagant spending and increasing royal power, before moving to be Treasurer of the Navy in 1782.

⁸⁷ BL, Add MS, 32737, ff. 483-4, quoted in Murdoch, *People Above*, p. 52.

⁸⁸ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, James Montgomery (1721-1803). [Accessed 30 September 2014]. Brass Crosby’s case arose over an attempt by the Commons, to prevent the reporting of Parliamentary debates, a move of which Montgomery must have approved. The judges, however, dismissed the case, and reporting of debates continued from then on.

Linda Colley made a strong argument for the creation of 'Britishness' during the latter part of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth centuries, an important part of which was participation by Scots in both the 'British' army and the 'British' Empire. The retention of a separate Scottish legal system after 1707 perhaps prevented a similar degree of uniformity from developing in the legislature, but it also ensured that the Scots' distinctive institutions received some recognition. It allowed the Scots MPs to work as partners, albeit very unequal ones, with their English colleagues and ensured that the Westminster Parliament evolved, slowly, into a British legislature, reflecting, if only occasionally, the different cultures represented there. It also allowed them to make common cause in areas where their interests coincided – on economic progress, agricultural improvement, better banking regulation, protection of commercial interests. Even the idea of a Scots militia was ultimately conceded. Many derogatory comments have been made over the years about the self-serving nature of Scots MPs at Westminster, but this research has demonstrated that, alongside this, there existed a relatively small number of Scots MPs, from a variety of backgrounds, who made a genuine contribution to the development of a British legislature. Their work was hardly spectacular, and for some the rewards were few, or at least fewer than they thought they deserved, but the assistance of people such as the Earl of Marchmont, Gilbert Elliot, James Oswald and George Dempster with the routine, run-of-the-mill parliamentary business, which occupied so many hours of parliamentary time, deserves to be acknowledged.

The same MPs of course were also responsible for Scottish legislation and the final section of this chapter examines how successfully this was dealt with at Westminster.⁸⁹ It is an understatement to say that Scotland did not share in the legislative boom of the later eighteenth century. Hoppit calculated that a mere 123 pieces of specifically Scottish legislation were actually passed between November 1754 and March 1784. This compares

⁸⁹ The following chapter considers the performance of the MPs from a Scottish perspective.

with more than 800 pieces of legislation passed by the Edinburgh Parliament between 1689 and 1706, and over 5,500 acts going through the British Parliament between 1754 and 1784.⁹⁰ However, the remaining statistics in this section have been extracted from a database of Scottish legislation compiled in the course of this research. It is based on, but not limited to, information from Julian Hoppit's database of British legislation. The Scottish Legislation database contains not simply Acts which were passed, but legislative proposals emanating from Scotland or in which Scots were significant promoters. They include local, personal, Scottish and British (with a Scottish dimension or application) proposals. There are 206 records in this database, which, on the face of it, suggests a significant failure rate for Scottish initiatives. This is particularly true of the period between 1774 and 1784. These bald figures certainly appear to substantiate the contention that Scotland fared very poorly in terms of legislative change even allowing for the differences in size and population. A number of reasons have been suggested for this.

Firstly, is the contention that Scots affairs were of no real interest to the London-based government unless they posed a threat to the stability or prosperity of the larger nation.⁹¹ An examination of the actual laws passed largely confirms this. There was little evidence of disorder during the period and the key measures taken were in the aftermath of the '45 rebellion, such as amendments to the Disarming Act, strengthening the power of Sheriff-deputes in 1755. Other changes relating to law and order or the judicial system were relatively minor in scope and were usually introduced by the Lord Advocate – treason trials in Scotland (22 May 1760), changes to judges' salaries (1 May 1765), and legislation on

⁹⁰ J. Hoppit, 'The Nation, the State, and the first Industrial Revolution', *Journal of British Studies*, 50 (2011), p.320. (accessed online); Hoppit, database.

⁹¹ Murdoch, *People Above*, pp. 124, 134; P. Jupp, *The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848: the executive, Parliament and the people* (London, 2006), p. 148.

preventing robbery (14 May 1766) - but it is not always easy to tell at this stage where the initiative came from.⁹² Some measures mirrored English legislation in the same area and were probably produced in collaboration with the English law officers. A few others dealt solely with Scottish affairs and there the impetus may have come from the Scottish Court of Session or the Lord Advocate himself. Scottish finances, although separately administered, were not generally the subject of separate legislation. Arrangements for the raising of the cess (Scottish land tax) were part of Supply Bills. Administration did pay close attention to the money raised from Scotland's customs and excise duties and Mr Rowe, from the Scottish customs and excise, regularly provided accounts and reports on Scottish trade.⁹³ But although the extent of smuggling, for example, was an ongoing concern, there is no indication that Administrations went beyond exhortation in an attempt to reduce this. The number of 'Scottish' (ie affecting Scotland as a whole) Acts passed by Parliament between 1754 and 1784 is small – no more than twenty-seven in total, only some of which would originate from Administration.⁹⁴ Nor perhaps should more have been expected. Administration did not traditionally initiate much general domestic legislation in England or in Scotland and it was still the norm for general legislation on, for example care of the poor, or working conditions to arise from specific local initiatives.

A second reason suggested for the low level of Scottish legislation is that Scots themselves made few demands on Parliament because they had other institutions through which to operate.⁹⁵ By the terms of the Act of Union, the Scots retained their own church, legal and education structures, limiting further the areas in which Administration might intervene. But

⁹² The Legislation on judges' salaries was British in scope, but specifically included Scotland. The other two were Scottish in origin.

⁹³ For example, HCJ, 6 February 1755, 5 March 1755, 27 January 1757, 19 December 1757, 26 January 1764, 4 April 1764, 27 March 1766. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

⁹⁴ Scottish legislation database.

⁹⁵ This is the view of both Murdoch and Joanna Innes.

while it is true that Scotland's judges had considerable discretion to 'make' laws, it must be remembered that there was quite general dissatisfaction with the Scottish Bench and accusations of partiality were rife.⁹⁶ Reference has already been made to the volume of appeals from the Scots Court of Session which threatened to overwhelm the House of Lords.⁹⁷ So it would be untrue to suggest that Scots were content with legal autonomy and many more people than has been generally recognised looked to Westminster for redress. Also, the Convention of Royal Burghs was quite capable of voicing opinions on Scottish matters and lobbying Parliament, as did various other less formally constituted groups, mainly in matters of trade, as becomes obvious from reading through the content of the numerous petitions sent to Parliament.⁹⁸ So it is not quite true to say that Scots (i.e. the political nation) were largely disengaged from Parliament.

One factor which perhaps has not been sufficiently taken into account in assessing Scotland's 'share' of legislation is that laws did not have to be specifically Scottish to affect Scotland. The fact that the bulk of the legislation was not labelled 'Scottish' does not mean that Scottish interests were completely ignored, or that Scots did not fight to have their own concerns taken into account in 'British' legislation. This is particularly true where trade was concerned. Trade was a developing area of general legislation both for regulatory and revenue-raising purposes. It was of huge importance to Scotland, and access to England's lucrative overseas markets was a very significant factor in the negotiations for the Union. In mid-century Scotland's trade still depended largely on the export of cattle, and the manufacture and sale of linen. Fishing was

⁹⁶ D. Brown, 'Henry Dundas and the Government of Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1989), p.366.

⁹⁷ See above, p. 81.

⁹⁸ Robert Harris argues strongly that there was a significant increase in Scottish lobbying activities in the later part of the century. R.Harris, 'Parliamentary Legislation, Lobbying and the Press in eighteenth-century Scotland', *Parliamentary History*, 26, (2007), pp. 76-95 (accessed online).

also important, particularly herring and whaling.⁹⁹ Scots were involved in shaping legislation on all these industries, but none of them were purely Scottish preserves. And the legislation reflected that. Only occasionally were specifically Scottish Acts passed. Such success as was achieved came through a mixture of hard bargaining, luck and the tenacity of Scots MPs.¹⁰⁰

The Linen Act of 1756 is an example of a British bill which had to take account of a variety of sometimes conflicting interests. It illustrates how difficult it was to secure legislation which met Scotland's needs when other interests were involved and Scots were such a small a minority in the Chamber. In this instance success was due to the influence of the Duke of Argyll and the Scots votes he controlled, which were essential to the continuation of Newcastle's Administration.¹⁰¹ Two Scots MPs, Alexander Hume Campbell and James Oswald (at this point a Treasury official), were nominated to the committee of ten to prepare the bill, whose passage prevented the collapse of the weaving sector in the central belt. On the other hand, when adverse economic conditions led to a demand for the free import of Irish cattle in 1758, a measure which was strongly supported by London leather and tanning merchants, it was opposed by most of the Scots MPs, appreciating the damage it would cause to the Scottish Highlands whose restricted economy still depended largely on cattle sales in the lowland or English markets.¹⁰² But their influence counted for little against powerful English commercial interests and the bill accordingly passed the House of Commons. On this occasion, however,

⁹⁹ For the extent and significance of these industries, see A. Durie, *The Scottish Linen Industry in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1979), and R. Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National Revival: The Free British Fishery Society and British Politics, c.1749-58', *English Historical Review*, 114 (1999), pp. 285-313 (accessed online).

¹⁰⁰ Interestingly, Devine makes no mention of legislation in connection with the tobacco trade and it would seem that the Tobacco Lords were among those in Scotland who saw no need to resort to Parliament for legislative assistance. Although they dominated the Glasgow Council posts, they seem to have made no move to enter Parliament: T.M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords* (Edinburgh, 1975).

¹⁰¹ See Murdoch, *People Above*, pp. 68-73, for details of the political horse-trading which went into securing the restoration of the bounty on the export of coarse linen for a period of 15 years.

¹⁰² History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Pryse Campbell (1727-1768). [Accessed 30 September 2014]. The Representative Peer, Breadalbane, also appreciated the possible consequences of this measure. (See above, p.77.)

support came from elsewhere as the bill was effectively killed off in the House of Lords, where landowning interests happened to coincide with those of the Scottish Highlanders.

Obtaining support for the Scots fishing industry required persistence. When a petition asking for help was left 'to lie on the table' (i.e. ignored) for three months, in 1756, James Oswald revived it, negotiating the subsequent bill past a Committee of the Whole House - in itself no easy feat - and finally securing the desired legislation.¹⁰³ Scots influence did not end with the demise of the 3rd Duke of Argyll. By the 1760s, the herring industry was again in difficulties and further legislation was sought. It was presented as a British measure - the petition described the British white fishing industry as 'a great nursery for seamen [giving] bread and employment to many thousands'- but from its Glasgow origins, and the number of Scots on the examining committee, it was in reality a Scottish bill.¹⁰⁴ Lord Frederick Campbell and Archibald Edmonstone managed to get it past another Whole House committee. But it got no further. It was annexed to a supply bill, and two days later, this instruction was inexplicably 'discharged' and the measure fell. The Scots did not give up, however, and the following year, 'An Act for the further encouragement of the British white herring fishery' was passed. Although this committee was chaired by an English MP it again featured a significant number of Scots.¹⁰⁵ Other trade measures continued to reflect Scottish interests. A committee on whale fishery in 1768, on which the Convention of Royal Burghs had petitioned, included James Coutts and

¹⁰³ HCJ, Act to encourage fisheries in Scotland, 27 May 1756. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹⁰⁴ The petition was introduced on 19 March 1764 (but wrongly listed in the HCJ index as 19 May 1764). There were nine Scots on the Committee: Lord Frederick Campbell, Archibald Edmonstone, George Dempster, Sir Alexander Grant, Mr Mackay, Col. Montgomery, James Coutts, James Oswald and Gilbert Elliot.

¹⁰⁵ Lord Frederick Campbell, General Graeme, Alexander Wedderburn, Lord William Campbell, Sir Alexander Grant, James Stuart McKenzie, James Oswald, and Gilbert Elliot. NOTE: Hoppit has this as a piece of failed legislation, (Ref 105.034), with nothing beyond 8 March 1765 but the act appears two months later among those granted royal assent: J. Hoppit, *Failed Legislation, 1660-1800: extracted from the Commons and Lords Journals* (London, 1997), pp. 392-3; HCJ, 10 May 1765. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

Pryce Campbell.¹⁰⁶ The Atlantic trade was considerably disrupted by the American war but shortly thereafter a large committee headed by George Dempster, and including the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was set up to enquire into the state of the British fishery industry.¹⁰⁷ In 1770 the linen bounty was further renewed, with Dundas and Sir Alexander Gilmour piloting the legislation through the House.¹⁰⁸ Most legislation of this type was British-wide in its application, but it is the Commons Journals, rather than the titles of the acts passed, which show how actively Scots MPs were involved in defending Scottish trading interests.

While trade was important, the Scottish economy was developing rapidly in other directions in the latter part of the century, notably in agriculture and banking. Scotland had no need of England's vast array of individual enclosure acts - the authority of the old Scottish Parliament being deemed sufficient for this purpose - but there was one aspect of landownership where Parliament's intervention was urgently required.¹⁰⁹ Scotland's strict laws of entail imposed serious constraints on the sale of land, a matter which had been of concern to Scottish landowners for some considerable time. A bill to amend the laws of entail, introduced by Lord Advocate Montgomery late in the 1768-9 session, got no further than a first reading, but the following year a second attempt was successfully pushed through by Lord Frederick Campbell and Montgomery. It was not straightforward. The bill provoked considerable debate, and was subjected to a series of amendments in both Houses. It was passed only on the last day of the session when it was returned from the House of Lords, with sixteen amendments

¹⁰⁶ HCJ, 8 March 1768. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹⁰⁷ HCJ, 23 June 1784. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹⁰⁸ This is probably Thomas Dundas (1741-1820), son of Sir Lawrence and MP for Stirlingshire. Dundas reported from the Committee of the Whole House. Gilmour took the bill to the Lords. (HCJ, 19 May 1770, Act for the Encouragement of British and Irish Linen manufactures). [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹⁰⁹ The authority derived from an act of the Scottish Parliament of 1695 regarding Commonties: T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation, 1700-2000* (London, 1999), p.116.

which then had to be read through separately and agreed to by the Commons.¹¹⁰ In Scotland commercial enterprise and landownership were closely bound together, as the Entail Act illustrated. It was followed by two pieces of important financial legislation, fortuitously passed in the correct order. First came the 'Act for the more equitable treatment of creditors in Scotland' (9 September 1772), a good example of parallel legislation, since it was a concern on both sides of the border, and then the Ayr Bank Act (30 March 1774), hastily brought in after the bank's dramatic collapse, which affected some of Scotland's foremost landowners, including the Dukes of Buccleuch and Queensberry. Parliament's involvement began with a petition from the two Dukes in February. They presented the detailed arrangements already made for dealing with the fall-out from the collapse, but wanted legislative backing for these. By the end of March, despite a petition from London merchants objecting to part of the bill, the measure had received the royal assent. Prominent in the committee work on these bills were Lord Advocate Montgomery (Queensberry was his patron), Edmonstone, Dempster, Pulteney and Lord Frederick Campbell.¹¹¹ The passage of these measures illustrates two important points. Firstly, when Scottish legislation was urgent, as in the case of the Ayr Bank Act, parliamentary time could be found for it, in this case at the busiest time of the year for new legislation. Secondly, although Scotland had its own banking system, its activities had implications for the rest of the kingdom, and, as in the action over insolvent debtors, a degree of co-operation over the legislation was in everybody's best interests. Such measures were few and far between however, and two other bills perhaps illustrate the more typical attitude to Scotland found among English legislators, along with the need for watchfulness on the part of Scots MPs. The Universities Copyright Act of 1775 started off as a bill to grant perpetual

¹¹⁰ HCJ, 19 May 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014]. See chapter 3 for further discussion on the entail legislation.

¹¹¹ HCJ, 25 February, 8, 15, 23, 28, 30 March 1774. [Accessed 11 November 2014]. Apparently, the bill took up so much time on 28 March that there was no time for American affairs to be discussed. (Sir J. Fortescue (ed.), *Correspondence of George III from 1760 to December 1783* (London 1927-8), vol.3, p. 86).

copyright to ‘the two universities’. It emerged as an Act extending copyright to two English universities, four Scottish universities and one or two prestigious schools such as Eton. In the same year, from a petition of James Watt, ‘engineer in the city of Glasgow’, it is clear that the original patent for his steam engine applied to England, Wales, Berwick on Tweed and His Majesty’s colonies and plantations. When the Act extending his patent to twenty-eight years was passed, it included also, this time, Scotland.¹¹²

The Scots made considerable efforts to have legislation passed in areas which mattered to them. Nowhere was this more true than in local legislation which made up by far the largest number of Scottish Acts between 1754 and 1784. Here, too, the authority of Parliament was being sought to underpin changes in landownership and sanction the levying of tolls or duties necessary to achieve the various improvements. A petition from Dunbar over its water supply in 1768 made this quite explicit, stating that its citizens had made arrangements with the present proprietors to pass through their land to enable a water supply for Dunbar, but were apprehensive about the security of these arrangements without confirmation by Parliament.¹¹³

*Table 11 Scottish Legislation: categorisation of acts passed, November 1754 to March 1784*¹¹⁴

Scotland-wide Acts	39
Local Acts	77
Personal Acts	18
TOTAL	134

¹¹² HCJ, 22 May, 1775. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹¹³ HCJ, 16 January 1768. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹¹⁴ Identifying Scottish Acts of Parliament is not an exact science. Hoppit calculated 123 Scottish measures. This research has identified 134, but it includes, for example, 9 pieces of British legislation either initiated in, or of particular significance for, Scotland.

Local legislation falls into two main categories – local government and communications. Both were concerned with improvements. The traditional method of financing burgh improvements was via the ‘Two Penies Scots’ duty which burghs were authorised to levy on beer and ale sold within their boundaries. This legislation dated from the beginning of the century and many burghs took advantage of it. The laws were usually time-limited and periodically had to be renewed by a fresh application to Parliament. During the period from 1754 to 1784, eighteen such pleas were made to Parliament, most, but not all, for an extension of an existing arrangement.¹¹⁵ The petitions which accompanied these applications show the purposes to which the duties were to be put, ranging from improving harbours, or providing a water supply, to paying a minister or schoolmaster, or building a workhouse. Most also showed a keen awareness of the need to present a good case, probably in the realisation that opportunities for pieces of individualised legislation were few and far between. Later pleas for assistance with city paving, cleansing and lighting, and also a night watch, mimicked what was already under way in England and clearly reflected the population increase in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Both authorities expressed concerns about population expanding beyond the city boundaries and realised the need for parliamentary authority to extend their powers of local taxation into areas such as Edinburgh’s New Town.¹¹⁶

Almost half the local legislation was concerned with communications. The 1760s in particular saw a rash of road improvement initiatives, focused initially on the Edinburgh area and the Borders where the main road to England was obviously the crucial route. Later the pressure came from Glasgow and the central belt generally. Glasgow Council even contributed to upgrading the border crossing at Coldstream, a reminder that the main road to England was via

¹¹⁵ Scottish Legislation database. There are some surprising omissions but, for example, Edinburgh, Inverness and Haddington had previous arrangements in place. The privilege was not strictly confined to royal burghs, as Paisley is included in an earlier list (HCJ, 28 May 1753). [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹¹⁶ Edinburgh Streets petition, HCJ, 23 January 1767; Glasgow Police petition, 3 February 1783. [Both accessed 11 November 2014].

Edinburgh and the east coast.¹¹⁷ Along with road-building came the pressing need for bridges – new and repaired - across the Tweed, the Clyde and its tributaries, and the Tay at Perth.¹¹⁸ Repeated attempts were made to legislate for improvements which would benefit Clyde shipping and the towns along its banks: a lighthouse was built on the Isle of Cumbrae, surveys were carried out to deepen the river and allow ships to pass beyond Port Glasgow, and bridges planned to link Glasgow with villages such as the Gorbals across the river.¹¹⁹ In each case, the intervention of Parliament was a key factor in ensuring that due consultation had been made, local consents of interested parties obtained, and in most cases provision made locally to finance the improvements, usually recouped by means of tolls, which again required parliamentary authority. Occasionally, if the pitch was good, the Government could be persuaded to allocate funding. The Tay Bridge at Perth was a case in point where the economic advantages were cleverly linked to the Administration's interest in opening up and civilising the Highlands. The petition pointed out that this initiative would provide an important link between the developing Lowlands and the military roads already constructed in the Highlands, and funding was duly made available.¹²⁰

The economic progress of Scotland during this part of the eighteenth century is well-documented, much of it driven and financed by local entrepreneurship. It is only by linking up the major developments with specific pieces of legislation that the importance of Parliament as an enabling authority can be appreciated. A lot of the changes did not, themselves, require legislation - improvements in land use, longer leases, more compact holdings, urbanisation, the extraction of mineral resources and the development of new industries - but without the ability to connect increased production with its markets, much of the incentive to improve

¹¹⁷ Renwick, *Glasgow, Burgh Records*, vol. 7, p.200.

¹¹⁸ Scottish Legislation database.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ HCJ, 13 February 1765, 15 May 1765. [Accessed 4 Jan. 2015].

would disappear. Hence the significance of the Border roads, the Forth and Clyde Canal and all the other attempts to link in to these and take advantage of the new opportunities. As previously acknowledged, the number of Acts passed was very small, but the compact nature of the area where most change was occurring meant that extensive legislation was not required. The Government had taken over responsibility for road-building in the Highlands, and each year the Army submitted to Parliament an account of work done and money spent.¹²¹ These accounts suggest the work was rudimentary, and often done to repair previous winter damage rather than improve and upgrade, but when Boswell and Johnson took their Hebrides Tour in 1773 they made remarkably few complaints about the quality of the roads, and were able to travel as far north as Inverness by coach.¹²² Not that roads in the Lowlands were significantly better in quality. The engineering expertise of Telford and Macadam was still in the future and the turnpike trusts struggled to keep the roads in usable condition. Waterways were also important and the number of petitions (around seventy), requesting road, bridge, harbour and water transport improvements indicate that communications were a very necessary component in the economic transformation which was under way in Scotland in the later part of the century. Local legislation was traditionally the responsibility of the constituency MP, who presented the petition, helped prepare the bill and generally piloted it through the House. Even the 'absentee' MPs saw this as an important part of their duty as MPs.¹²³ For most of them, it provided an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to deliver change for whoever had put them in Parliament. Not all MPs, however, were experienced parliamentarians or even frequent attenders, and the committees appointed for Scottish

¹²¹ See Appendix 3.

¹²² S. Johnson and J. Boswell, *A journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (New York, 2008), p.19. NOTE: the edition used is a Dover Press republication of the Penguin Classics 1985 edition edited by Peter Levi.

¹²³ There are lots of instances of this, extending even to the few MPs who were largely independent, such as the Earl of Fife and Lord Panmure. The Scottish Legislation database indicates the sponsors and promoters where they are known.

legislation often also included one or two of the leading Scots MPs, which further confirms that the success rate of such bills was a matter of some importance to all concerned, most of whom were, of course landowners, whether they were sponsors or MPs.

However, no assessment of the performance of the Scots MPs can be made without looking in more detail at the quite significant failure rate of Scottish legislation.

*Table 12 Scottish legislative attempts, by Parliament **

<i>Parliament</i>	<i>Passed</i>	<i>Failed</i>
1754 -1761	26	9
1761-1768	28	12
1768-1774	43	11
1774-1780	26	20
1780-1784	11	20
TOTAL	134	72

*From Scottish Legislation database

The above table suggests that almost half of Scots measures failed. When set against Hoppit's calculation that, generally, around a quarter of all measures were unsuccessful, the Scots picture looks much bleaker. There are however, some additional factors about the calculations to be taken into consideration. Hoppit classed a measure as 'failed' if, for example, it ran out of time. A second attempt was classed as a new bill, which makes it difficult to calculate the ultimate success rate of measures which failed on their original introduction.¹²⁴ Hoppit suggested, based on his figures for British legislation, that one in three failed measures were subsequently re-introduced, but that most of them failed again.¹²⁵ It has already been

¹²⁴ Hoppit, *Failed Legislation*, pp. 2-5.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-3.

demonstrated that Scots were fairly persistent in re-introducing failed measures and the success rate of second-attempt Scottish proposals was probably rather better. Of the eight measures which failed in the 1754 parliament, four were subsequently passed, and a fifth, the Clandestine Marriages (Scotland) bill, was largely an English measure, introduced by the Bishop of Worcester, out of concern for the number of runaway marriages taking place at Gretna Green. Scotland's re-introduction rate may have been better, but it still leaves a high number of initial failures.¹²⁶

Apathy, inefficiency or disagreements on the part of the Scots promoters are possible explanations, but other factors, such as English or Administration opposition, or simply pressure of time, may have been equally, or more important. Unfortunately it is not always easy to discover the precise reasons for the failure of individual measures. One possibility is that the Scots in the House of Lords were to blame, due to their poor attendance levels and absence on crucial occasions. There were only four of the Scots Lords present when Marchmont reported on the Forth-Clyde Canal Bill (25 Feb 1768): Marchmont himself, Strathmore, Loudoun and Eglinton. More peers were in town because on the following day, eight were present to hear it have its third reading and pass (Atholl, Morton, Abercorn, Eglinton, Breadalbane, Loudoun, Marchmont, Cathcart). The Ayr Bank Bill of 1774 attracted no more than the usual half dozen Scots peers to hear Lord Boston report from the Committee of the Whole House on the bill (30 March 1774). More surprising was the passage of the Entail Act through the Lords in 1770. The bill was very heavily amended in a Committee of the Whole of House, in a Chamber with a recorded total attendance of sixteen, with not a single Scot present. The following day, a mere three Scots (Strathmore, Loudoun and Abercorn) turned up to hear Lord Boston present the report on the amended bill, to which the Commons agreed

¹²⁶ Scottish Legislation database.

two days later.¹²⁷ Against this apparent indifference, however, is the fact that few bills which passed the Commons actually failed in the Lords.¹²⁸ On the contrary, there are complaints from the Lords of poor drafting of bills sent for their consideration. Scots promoters were not exempt. Alexander Montgomerie, 10th Earl of Eglinton, is credited with considerable input into the final shape of the 1765 Scottish Banking Act.¹²⁹ According to the *Caledonian Mercury*, the committee considering the bill in the Lords sat for five hours and made significant alterations to it. The first Scottish Carters' Bill (introduced 29 January 1771) was another example of poor drafting, and in 1772 the House wanted to drop a bill regulating Scottish police for the same reason. Abercorn and a small group of peers made a series of amendments but, because these were not completed in time for the end of the session, the bill lapsed.¹³⁰ One bill which was badly drafted was Lord Mountstuart's 1775 Militia Bill, which George Dempster described as 'about as applicable to China as to Scotland'.¹³¹ Despite work on it by a number of Scots MPs it got no further than a second reading, although there were other reasons for its failure than poor drafting. Overall, there is a body of evidence to suggest that drafting of legislation left something to be desired, but this appears to be a general complaint and therefore cannot explain the relatively high failure rate of Scottish bills.

There is little evidence that English hostility was a factor, other than over the Scots militia.

Most other Scottish measures were not particularly controversial. In local legislation, there was

¹²⁷ HLJ, 16, 17 May 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹²⁸ Hoppit, *Failed Legislation*, p.14. Only two measures of Scottish origin came into this category: a petition from the Duke of Atholl went no further than a report from a Whole House committee (26 June 1781), and a petition on 'Form of Oath in Scotland' passed a second reading in the Lords (23 March 1784), just before the end of the session.

¹²⁹ MacKillop, Alexander Montgomerie (1723–1769): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/19055 [Accessed 10 Aug 2014]; *Caledonian Mercury*, 8 May 1765.

¹³⁰ For the Carters' Bill, see HCJ, 4 May 1772. No trace of the Police Bill has been found in either HCJ or HLJ records. It is mentioned by McCahill (McCahill, *House of Lords*, p.286), but the source is Abercorn's private correspondence. A subsequent measure on Glasgow police, introduced in 1783, also failed (Scottish Legislation database).

¹³¹ J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 132.

unlikely to be a conflict of national interests. In matters relating to trade, there is no evidence of any sustained discrimination against Scottish interests. Trading interests did not necessarily divide along national lines as debate over the linen bounty and petitions to secure the future of whaling illustrated. During the American revolution Scottish and English merchants and manufacturers suffered equally from the downturn in the Atlantic trade.

Apathy is a more difficult judgment to make at this stage without further information. It is true that some 'inoffensive' local bills sank without trace, and a petition from Dalkeith to renew its Two Penies tax was said to have been 'lost'.¹³² But even the failures were usually pushed through several stages in the House and most local measures were subsequently re-introduced, including the Dalkeith Bill which was passed in 1760. Mention has already been made of the group of active politicians who shared the responsibility for Scottish measures and were certainly knowledgeable about parliamentary procedures. Although new names appeared with each succeeding Parliament, there was enough continuity for the new recruits to learn the ropes but perhaps there were not enough of them. Pressure of time is a more likely explanation, given the increasing load of legislation in the later part of the century and the lengthening sessions to accommodate it. After the end of the Seven Years' War, more time was spent on India and the affairs of the East India Company, on the dispute with the American colonies and its repercussions at home, both economic and constitutional. In this scenario, it has to be acknowledged that Scottish affairs would struggle for attention. It is perhaps no coincidence that the highest failure rate for Scottish legislation coincides with the end of the American war and a period of ministerial instability. Bills which were referred to a Committee of the Whole House faced particular difficulties, as is evident from the frequent postponements of such hearings, and some never actually took place. Three Scottish bills in

¹³² For example, Clackmannanshire roads, 1767, Kincardine roads, 1770, and Aberdeen Streets, 1775. (Scottish Legislation database).

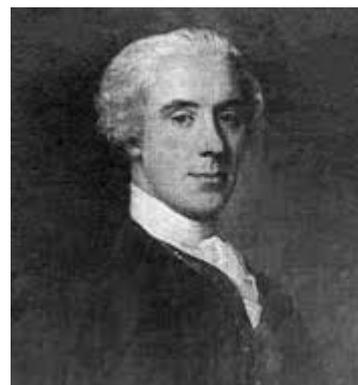
the 1774 Parliament fell at this stage.¹³³ It is noticeable, too, from the Commons Journals, that Scottish bills were often brought in late in the session, which increased the likelihood of failure. It is also possible, that there was a loss of influence at ministerial level from the mid-1770s. Oswald was dead, Sir Gilbert Elliot died in 1777, Sir Lawrence Dundas in 1781. Montgomery had returned to Scottish affairs, Lord Frederick Campbell was in poor health, while Dempster was never an establishment figure. Henry Dundas had to prove his parliamentary credentials and it was not till he obtained government office and allied himself with Pitt that Scots again had influence at the heart of government.

This chapter set out to consider the contribution made by Scots MPs to the development of a British legislature in the later part of the eighteenth century, and to assess their success in promoting and protecting Scottish interests at Westminster. In some respects it confirms existing perceptions, in others it has raised as many questions as it has answered. Attendance by the Representative Peers was little different from that of English peers. Their lordships were sporadic attenders, with only a few turning up regularly. When present, they were confirmed Administration supporters, but most had other interests or even careers, and their attendance was not normally required to secure a government majority in the strongly pro-monarchy House of Lords. Attendance in the Commons is more difficult to gauge, but evidence from division lists indicates that the Scots appeared in large numbers for significant votes, whether from choice or because they were required to do so is as yet unclear. Otherwise, it is likely that, as in the Lords, a number were quite irregular in their attendance due to other commitments or lack of inclination. Most, however, appear to have participated in committee work, if only periodically, and took responsibility for their own local legislation. On the other hand, in both Houses, there was a small group of Scots politicians prepared to contribute regularly to the work of Parliament. Along with the few who achieved ministerial office and

¹³³ They were another militia bill, a bill on the import and export of corn and a private bill requesting a name-change. Hoppit, *Failed Legislation*, pp. 436, 444.

the three or four who were well-known debaters, it is suggested that, by representing Scottish interests, their participation was of real importance in ensuring that the legislature did not develop as a purely English body, reflecting only English concerns. At the same time, they also contributed to English measures and the growing body of genuinely British legislation and it is perhaps not an exaggeration to suggest that the acceptance of Henry Dundas as a British politician owed something to the work of James Oswald and Lord Frederick Campbell.

Scottish legislation, although very much less in volume than English or British legislation was not significantly different in nature. It also went through exactly the same processes in Parliament. The small amount of Scots legislation does not necessarily equate with Scots being ill-served by Parliament. Important measures were passed to enable economic development, not all of which were specifically Scottish in scope. Some measures were timetabled late in the session, suggesting a lack of priority given to Scottish measures, but not in all cases. The high failure rate of Scots legislation raises questions about the effectiveness of the Scots MPs. There are several possible explanations, but at present there is insufficient information to provide an entirely satisfactory answer. It would be useful to know who organized the business of the House and how Scots MPs secured 'a slot', particularly when there was no Scottish manager. Yet this is the period that was most prolific in new legislation. How important was the role of the Lord Advocate? There is little overt indication of any co-ordination of activity between the Representative Peers and the Scots in the Commons nor is there any apparent correlation between the attendance of the Scots peers and the passage of Scots legislation in the Lords. There are also further questions to be asked about the demand in Scotland for legislation from Westminster. Consideration of those measures which failed gives more indication of this than simply looking at successful legislation, but it does not take account of requests or petitions which failed to get into the House at all. These questions will be addressed in the following chapter when an attempt is made to find out more about what went on behind the scenes by exploring the relationships between centre and locality.



MPs clockwise from top left: Lord Frederick Campbell, George Dempster, Simon Fraser, William Mure of Caldwell, William Adam and Robert Dundas of Arniston.

Chapter 3 The View from Scotland

[MPs] 'should be men of public spirits, well acquainted with the whole of the political and mercantile interests of Europe in general, and of Britain and her colonies in particular; and who will at all times prefer the public to their own private or personal good'.¹

This chapter will focus on the origins of Scottish legislation: who initiated it, the process by which it reached Parliament and the role of Scots MPs in that process. It will examine the relationship between MPs and those who put them there, and the extent and effectiveness of lobbying. This will allow an assessment of how far Scottish requests for legislation were actually translated into new laws, and may provide more information about the apparently high failure rate of Scottish legislative attempts. It is hoped to be able to answer such questions as whether the debate in England over the role of an MP extended to Scotland, or whether Scots MPs were universally regarded as delegates, who could be instructed by their electors. Finally it will question whether, as Michael Fry claims, Scotland was disadvantaged by the absence of a political manager for much of the period under consideration.² All of these will lead to a more comprehensive assessment of how well Scots were served by their MPs during this period.

One area of difficulty for this part of the research is the variation in the volume and quality of surviving source materials. While the Commons Journals provide a continuous record for the period, the Scottish sources are much more diffuse, and, in a number of respects, quite patchy. This is particularly true regarding evidence of communication between the county freeholders and Parliament. Unlike the burghs, they had no central institution, through which they could meet to express opinions. At local level, the more substantial landowners met as

¹ Anonymous, *Address to the Burgesses of Dunfermline* (Edinburgh, 1774).

² M. Fry, *The Dundas Despotism* (Edinburgh, 1992), p.33.

Commissioners of Supply to set the cess annually, and to consider voter qualifications. Along with the Justices of the Peace, they also looked after roads and bridges within their own areas. Occasionally other business came before these bodies, such as army and navy recruitment, but surviving records suggest they were not generally a forum for initiating legislation. They were, however, seen as a voice for public opinion in the counties and could usually be relied on by Administration to issue declarations of support for the monarchy on suitable occasions, such as a royal birth, or a victory in war. They were also capable of publishing their views on Scottish affairs such as proposals for a militia or changes to the entail laws. For some areas, the records are fragmentary and information about contact between county freeholders and Parliament has to be sought elsewhere. A better source is the petitions which were sent to Parliament, which often list the names of their sponsors, for example on matters relating to turnpike trusts, which were dominated by local landowners. Some of the private correspondence of leading families sheds light on the many informal ways in which contacts were established and can also reveal opinions which would not have been expressed in material intended for public consumption. Much correspondence, however, is taken up with electoral concerns and 'begging' letters, which only reinforces the view that patronage was an over-riding concern with many.³

For the burghs, the evidence is rather better. Town Council minutes, which are extant for about half of the royal burghs, can be helpful in supplementing the view of legislation which emerges from the Commons Journals. They are not all complete, but enough survive to provide a picture which includes a range of burghs.⁴ Some records, like those for Glasgow and

³ The Gordon Papers, (e.g. GD44/43/48, 44/43/49, September 1771) relate the often bitter struggles to control the Elgin Burghs. Most private correspondence involving MPs contains requests for places.

⁴ Burgh records were examined for Arbroath, Montrose, Forfar, Dunfermline, Inverkeithing, Perth, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Linlithgow, Tain, and Inverness: Angus Archives, Arbroath Town Council minutes, A/1/1/2 1740-66, Forfar Town Council Minute Book, F1/1/5 1758-78, Montrose Town Council minutes, 1758-1794, M/1/1/8, M/1/1/9; Edinburgh City Archive, Edinburgh Town Council minutes, SL1/1/73, SL1/1/76, SL1/1/93; Highland Council Archive Service, Inverness, Inverness Town Council minutes, IB1/1/11, IB1/1/12; NRS, Council Minutes, Dunfermline Burgh, B/20/13/9 – B20/13/12, Council Minutes, Inverkeithing Burgh, B34/10/3, B34/10/4; Linlithgow Town Council minutes, B/48/9/13, Council Minutes, Tain Burgh, B/70/6/1; Perth and Kinross Council Archive, Perth Burgh Records,

Montrose, are detailed and informative. Those consulted cover a good geographical spread from Inverness to Linlithgow, and include small (Tain) and large (Edinburgh), wealthy and busy ports like Perth, Montrose, and Glasgow, and impoverished and corrupt towns like Inverkeithing and Stirling. In addition the burghs had, in the form of the Convention of Royal Burghs, a central institution, which met annually, could canvas opinion, take up issues of national significance, or act on behalf of large and small burghs. The records of this body provide a wealth of information about contacts between Parliament and the localities. They reveal process as well as substance and are particularly useful in the context of this research for their recording of the lobbying activities carried out by their agents at Westminster. In addition, the Scottish press was an important forum for discussion of political or economic matters, and, along with political pamphlets, is useful for identifying local issues. Although political pamphlets have to be treated with some care - they were often anonymous and seldom unbiased - they can sometimes offer a rather different perspective on important political issues and the politicians who dealt with them.

In Chapter 2 it was suggested that one of the reasons for a lack of specifically Scottish legislation was that the Scots had alternative means of effecting change, such as the Court of Session, local burgh councils, the Convention of Royal Burghs and the General Assembly. While this is undoubtedly true, it is also true that Scots had not been slow to make use of their own Parliament in the years before the Union, and when the issue of legislation during the later eighteenth century is examined from a Scottish perspective, it is apparent that there were significant disincentives to deter Scots from applying to the Westminster Parliament. One of these was timescale. Legislation could take a very long time to work its way through all the processes. Parliamentary authority for the lighthouse on Cumbrae, first mooted in 1743, was

B59/34; Stirling Council Archives Services, Council Minutes, Stirling Burgh, B66/21/11, B66/21/12; R. Renwick, (ed.), *Extracts from the records of the burgh of Glasgow*, vols.6-7 (Glasgow, 1911-12).

not received till 1756.⁵ Although a uniform system of weights and measures formed part of the Treaty of Union, complaints were regularly raised in the Convention of Royal Burghs that, in practice, this did not exist.⁶ Meetings to discuss changes in the laws governing entail were being held in the early 1760s, but legislation did not appear in the statute book till 1770.⁷ A significant number of bills failed first time round, such as Sir George Suttie's Preservation of Game (Scotland) Bill, and the bill to emancipate the colliers.⁸ Nor were approaches to Parliament always ultimately successful. The campaign for a Scottish militia is the most prominent failure, but there are plenty of other examples.⁹ However, there were occasions where application to Parliament was necessary. Tolls levied by the growing number of turnpike trusts came under the heading of taxation, which could not be levied without the authorisation of Parliament. Each trust was set up by an individual Act of Parliament, with power to collect tolls for the maintenance of a specified stretch of road. When money ran out or existing powers had to be extended, a further approach to Parliament had to be made in each case. Another example of necessary local legislation was renewal of the 'Two Penies' tax which burghs were allowed to charge.¹⁰

Applications to Parliament could come from a variety of sources. It might be imagined that those who controlled the electoral politics of the period determined the legislation, but this is certainly not the whole story. The reality is that it was not necessarily the electors per se who initiated parliamentary legislation. Redress of grievance was the traditional reason for

⁵ G. Eyre-Todd, *History of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1934), vol. 3p. 223; H CJ, 15 April 1756. [Accessed 7 November 2014].

⁶ Sir J. Marwick, (ed.), *Extracts from the records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, 1759-79* (Edinburgh, 1918) pp. 14, 499, 520.

⁷ See *Scots Magazine*, volumes 26 and 27 (1764-5); H CJ, 19 May 1770. [Accessed 7 November 2014].

⁸ Sir George Suttie made three separate attempts, 1775, 1777, 1778, to introduce this bill. Each one ended in failure. A Colliers (Scotland) petition, introduced by Lord Advocate Montgomery in 1774, got no further than a second reading. It was finally passed in 1775 (Scottish Legislation database).

⁹ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

¹⁰ See above, pp. 117-18.

petitioning Parliament, which any individual or group of citizens could do, and was the form of wording used for most applications. Discounting private petitioners, most applicants could be categorised as county freeholders, individual burghs, or the Convention of Royal Burghs. The nature of the issues raised by each of these groups has been ascertained by examination of the Scottish Legislation database and gives a better idea of what Scotland's political community thought Westminster could do for Scotland.

For the county freeholders, economic concerns were foremost. As the Scots economy developed, the poor state of the country's roads became increasingly important, accounting for more than forty legislative attempts over the period.¹¹ Most of these came from groups of freeholders, either as road users or bodies responsible for roads maintenance. The petitioners described themselves in various ways: as turnpike trustees, freeholders and heritors, JPs and Commissioners of Supply, 'gentlemen travellers', or 'persons resident and using the roads'. Scottish noblemen were strong supporters: the names of the Earls of Lauderdale, Leven, Loudoun, Eglinton and Lord Cathcart all appear in petitions. Sometimes, as in a Berwickshire petition in 1771, a long list of local 'worthies' was deemed sufficient.¹² The freeholders were also apparently strong supporters of the regulation of Scottish banknotes in 1763 and 1764.¹³ In 1765, views on proposed changes to entail came from counties all over Scotland: from the Gentlemen of Kincardineshire, Aberdeen, Ross-shire, Nairn, and Elgin, as well as those of Berwick, Peebles, Selkirk, Stirling, Dumfries, Clackmannan, Linlithgow, and Ayr. Two years later, after wide consultation, a meeting in Edinburgh took the decision to petition Parliament for a change in the law and a committee under Alexander Dick of Prestonfield was elected to

¹¹ Scottish Legislation database.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ S. Checkland, *Scottish Banking: A History 1695-1973* (Glasgow, 1975) pp. 118-9. (But see below pp. 133-5.)

pursue the matter.¹⁴

But the interests of the freeholders were not entirely personal or commercial. Freeholders were prominent in the first of the militia campaigns and meetings were held in Midlothian, Stirling, Ayr, Forfar, Fife, Peebles, and Perth in 1760.¹⁵ Mostly their interests coincided with those of the landowning class generally. The exception was reform of the county electoral system which attracted widespread support among the independent Scottish freeholders.

When the Yorkshire Association offered its support in the summer of 1782, Inverness, Caithness and Moray (Elginshire) led the way by appointing commissioners to examine the whole question of nominal and fictitious votes.¹⁶ The issue found a ready response elsewhere and a meeting in Edinburgh in August 1782 attracted delegates from no fewer than twenty-three counties. Their objections were spelt out by East Lothian freeholders who declared the creation of electoral qualifications by means of splitting superiorities 'unconstitutional'.¹⁷

Although the movement stalled shortly thereafter, the initial response reflects the unhappiness felt by a large number of smaller Scots landowners at the manipulation of the electoral system by wealthy territorial magnates, some of whom, such as Sir Thomas Dundas of Kerse, were incomers and were parcelling out superiorities for friends and relatives who had no connection with the area. In the 1774 election the agents of Lawrence Dundas carefully did the calculations to ensure that enough fictitious votes were created, in both Stirlingshire

¹⁴ *Scots Magazine* 27 (1765), pp. 251-253, 500-501, 555-557; *Ibid.*, vol.29 (1767), p.614; *Caledonian Mercury*, 25 May 1765.

¹⁵ BL, Add MS 33049, f.304; *Caledonian Mercury*, 8, 15, 22 March, 5 April 1760. NOTE: an article in the *Caledonian Mercury* on 22 March 1760 suggests that there was less unanimity than appears in support of a militia. It claimed that Edinburgh meetings represented the views of a small minority of Edinburgh freeholders and heritors, but were being presented as 'the sense of the county.' There is no indication of the author of this piece but it would be in keeping with the views of the Lord Advocate, Robert Dundas, a determined opponent of a Scottish militia.

¹⁶ H. Meikle, *Scotland and the French Revolution* (London, 1912; reprinted 1969), p.8.

¹⁷ *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 Oct 1782.

and Clackmannanshire, to ensure that his son won in Stirlingshire, and his friends, the Abercrombies of Tullibody, secured Clackmannanshire against their rival, James Erskine.¹⁸ Occasionally, other interest groups, apart from county freeholders, petitioned Parliament. These included Church of Scotland ministers looking for exemption from the window tax, parish schoolmasters seeking to improve their remuneration, Glasgow University over its finances, and the Governor and Company of the Bank of Scotland.¹⁹ However diverse the small interest groups were, their applications were ultimately to do with finance or taxation. A more significant group were the bankers who were closely involved in the bill regulating Scottish banknotes in 1765. Resolving conflicts of interest was an important part of legislation generally and the Banking Regulation Act of 1765 is a case in point. Ostensibly it was a move to deal with perceived problems arising from the unregulated banking system in Scotland, in particular the number of small-denomination banknotes issued by the increasing number of private, often small, provincial banks. In fact, it was an ultimately unsuccessful attempt by the Scottish chartered banks (mainly the Bank of Scotland and the Royal Bank, but the British Linen Company also had an interest in the outcome) to secure a monopoly of note issue in Scotland at the expense of the smaller private banks. The negotiations, which went on over two years before legislation was finally secured, reveal a great deal about the operation of a small group of powerful men: landowners who were also closely involved in commerce, banking and politics.²⁰ Between 1763 and 1765, pressure seems to have been put on various groups of

¹⁸ Ibid., 31 July, 7 August, 9 October 1782; NRS, Dundas of Kerse, RH4 203/1/8-14, correspondence between Thomas Dundas of Fingask and Lawrence Dundas, Dec. 1773; R.M. Sunter, 'Stirlingshire Politics, 1707-1832', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1972), Chapters 5,6.

¹⁹ Scottish Legislation database.

²⁰ T.B. Goodspeed, 'Upon Daedalian Wings of Paper Money: Adam Smith, Free Banking, and the Financial Crisis of 1772' (unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2014) <http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/goodspeed/files/goodspeed_-_upon_daedalian_wings_ms_november_2014_1.pdf>. [Accessed 9 November 2014]. This recent, award-winning thesis has a full account of the 1765 Act, using Lloyds' Banking Group archive, as well as parliamentary and other sources.

Commissioners of Supply to issue declarations in support of the proposal.²¹ But opinions were divided and opposition was anticipated, in particular from the powerful Glasgow merchants whose banks (The Arms Bank, the Ship and the Thistle) were among the targets of the Edinburgh chartered banks, who finally resorted to seeking legislation. A bill was brought forward in Parliament in February 1765 'for regulating the Currency and due Payment of Notes and Bills issued by the Banks, Banking Companies and Bankers, in that Part of Great Britain called Scotland', expressing concerns about the excessive amount of paper money in circulation in Scotland.²² Apart from securing control of note issue, other, subsidiary, aims were the abolition of the option clause (whereby Scots banks could delay redemption of their notes by up to six months) and the setting of a monetary limit on small-denomination notes. The issue was the subject of intensive discussion among interested parties in London and in Scotland. As well as input from the various freeholders' groups mentioned above, there was also discussion in the Scottish press while individual conversations and communications took place among the shareholders, directors, and interested MPs, some of whom were also shareholders or directors in the various banks.²³ As Tyler Goodspeed noted, the list of those involved in the preparation and promotion of the bill constituted a 'Who's who' of Scottish banking as well as demonstrating the sheer inter-connectedness of those who ran Scottish affairs. They included the Lord Advocate, Sir Thomas Miller, whose brother, Patrick, was both a proprietor of the Bank of Scotland and a partner in another Edinburgh bank, and whose father-in-law was a founding partner of the Glasgow Arms Bank. Also involved were banker and MP James Coutts, and Lord Frederick Campbell, whose father, the 4th Duke of Argyll, was one of

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.78; *Scots Magazine*, 31 January 1765.

²² H CJ, 18 February 1765. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

²³ *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 January 1765; *Scots Magazine* 26 (November 1764), pp. 595-6; *ibid.*, 27 (January 1765), pp. 27-8; Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol. 2, Glassford to Mure, 8 January 1765, Stuart Mackenzie to Mure, 11 March 1765. [Accessed 5 March 2015].

the largest shareholders in the Linen Bank. Lord Frederick was a cousin of Baron Mure (William Mure of Caldwell, the former MP for Renfrewshire), one of the founding partners of the Thistle Bank. In addition were Sir Gilbert Elliot, a cousin of Coutts and a friend of Mure, and James Oswald, whose brother was a shareholder in the Linen Bank and whose cousin was a founding partner in the Ship Bank. The group also included George Dempster of the Bank of Dundee, Stuart Mackenzie, and Archibald Edmonstone, whose cousin was a director at the Bank of Scotland.²⁴

The three men tasked with adjudicating the various claims and determining the proposals to be put before Parliament were all Scots, appointed by the King-in-council. They were the Lord Privy Seal (Stuart Mackenzie, at this time in charge of Scottish affairs), Sir Gilbert Elliot and James Oswald, both of whom were Privy Councillors and former Treasury officials. Their decision was a compromise: they refused to concede the chartered banks' primary aim, and instead went for a measure which would abolish the option clause and set a lower limit on note values.²⁵ Their reasoning provides an interesting comment on perceptions of banking, which they thought should be 'a matter not of Public favour but of Right to every subject in common', and on the need for important measures such as this to be widely accepted. They stated that 'nothing that would have the appearance of an exclusive privilege in favour of the Banks wou'd be listen'd to by the people of this Country'.²⁶

This whole campaign illustrates a feature of important legislative proposals in Scotland, which also applied to changes to the entail laws and to the proposed Scottish militia. Such changes were widely debated within Scotland and the resultant bills took account of a range of different opinions and attitudes. The fact that in this case, the MPs came down largely on what

²⁴ Goodspeed, 'Upon Daedalian Wings', pp. 57-8. [Accessed 5 March 2015].

²⁵ This is the bill which went through Parliament between February and May 1765.

²⁶ Goodspeed, 'Upon Daedalian Wings', pp. 83-4, quoting from Lloyd's Banking Group Archives, Directors' Minute Books, 26 January 1764.

might be described as the non-elitist side - on the face of it, a surprising outcome - might be attributed to the connections of key personnel with the private banks. However, close examination of Goodspeed's analysis shows that most had connections with both sides, and the resulting compromise was probably a sensible outcome.

At the last moment, however, another obstacle loomed, and the measure was almost derailed, as English merchants trading to Scotland became aware of the proposed changes and petitioned Parliament as the bill went through the Lords. They wanted to eliminate more of the small-denomination notes to reduce their own charges for currency conversion. This is one of the reasons for the delay in the bill passing the Lords, where it was heavily amended in committee.²⁷ Ultimately however, the key demand of the English petitioners, a lower-note limit of £5, was unsuccessful, and an important piece of Scottish economic legislation was passed by Parliament, initiated, debated and decided by the Scots themselves.

Fewer legislative proposals might be expected to originate from the burghs than from the mainly landowning interests. For individual burghs legislation was expensive, and often unnecessary. Town councils were accustomed to look after their own affairs, which covered a multitude of things, including building maintenance, education, local roads and causeways, quays, street cleaning, regulation of markets and slaughterhouses, weights and measures, supply and repair of fire machines, care of the poor, policing, elections for various bodies, presentations to churches and many more.²⁸ Any application to Parliament came with a price tag and, to small burghs, many of which were in perilous financial straits, it was an infrequent option. Montrose, which was relatively prosperous, paid £150 to renew its 'Two Penies' tax in 1769. The town effectively had to borrow the money from the Dundee Bank and pay the

²⁷ See above, p. 123, for the part played by the Scots Peers, in particular Lord Eglinton, who was also involved with the British Linen Bank.

²⁸ Renwick, *Glasgow, burgh records*, vol. 7, index.

interest on the loan until they had sufficient funds to settle the account.²⁹ Glasgow borrowed £1000 to pay the expenses incurred in getting a bill for a new bridge over the Clyde through Parliament and for supporting the proposal for the Forth and Clyde canal.³⁰ The Convention of Royal Burghs was not better placed financially. When its agent, John Cathcart, submitted his account for work on the herring bill, he indicated his willingness to wait for settlement for up to two years (with interest!) if the expense of the linen bill prevented them settling sooner.³¹

Of the burghs who made individual applications to Parliament, most were concerned with getting permission to raise money to finance improvements. Several, like Montrose, petitioned to renew their 'Two Penies' tax. Others requested help with particular projects: Aberdeen, Greenock and Ayr successfully sought permission to improve their harbours; Hamilton was authorised to repair the bridge over the Clyde, and Perth magistrates were part of the application for a new Tay Bridge.³² Dunbar secured its water supply, courtesy of local landowner and MP, Sir Hew Dalrymple.³³ Ayr harbour was obviously a large project which went well beyond the normal permitted tax-raising powers of a burgh and involved raising a subscription. The Ayr petition requested leave to bring in a bill which would allow them to improve and extend the harbour, to exact and collect, levy and receive duties and tolls due from ships using the harbour, and to impose 'reasonable' duties on various wines and spirits. The petition also asked for the petitioners (a large local consortium) to be granted sufficient powers, to allow them to complete the works and maintain them in good repair. Edinburgh and Glasgow were the most persistent of the burghs in applications for internal improvements. Edinburgh, still the largest of Scotland's cities, made seven applications of which five were

²⁹ Montrose Town Council minutes, 13 February 1769.

³⁰ Renwick, *Glasgow, burgh records*, vol. 7, p. 267.

³¹ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 7, p.513.

³² Scottish Legislation database.

³³ *Ibid.*

successful. Glasgow, on the other hand, initiated no fewer than thirteen, of which nine were successful.³⁴

For more general, usually trade-related issues, the Convention of Royal Burghs was the accepted route to Parliament. This institution was important for a number of reasons. As its name suggests, it represented the interests of Scotland's burghs. Delegates from sixty-six burghs were appointed each year to attend the Annual Convention in July. Attendance was good – there were generally not more than a dozen absentees – as one of its functions was to allocate the burghs' share of the Cess. The group acted as a forum not only for discussion but also for initiating action on a variety of issues which were of particular concern to burgh inhabitants. In between Conventions, business was carried on by the Annual Committee and various ad hoc sub-committees, all of which met in Edinburgh. The Annual Committee was authorised to correspond with burgh MPs concerning trade or the state of the burghs, and to request burgh councils to write to their respective MPs, asking their support for any application to Parliament. Like the Convention, the Annual Committee was chaired by Edinburgh's Lord Provost, but over the years, it appears to have drawn its membership from a wide geographical area, possibly in some agreed rotation. The Committee could number representatives from as many as thirty-three burghs.³⁵ Between 1753 and 1779, the following burghs were mentioned on either the Annual Committee or its sub-committees: Elgin, Dunfermline, Forres, Fortrose, Lochmaben, Montrose, Dysart, Inverkeithing, Kinghorn, Rutherglen, Sanquhar, Burntisland, Banff, Crail, Inverbervie, Whithorn Kirkcaldy, Peebles, Rothesay, Inverness, Dunbar, Arbroath, Kirkwall, Campbeltown, Annan, Anstruther Wester, Dundee, Irvine, Linlithgow, St Andrews, and Inveraray. The geographical spread of petitions was also quite wide. Many smaller burghs brought their own concerns before the Convention, but few were looking to Westminster for a

³⁴ Ibid. See also Glasgow case study, below, pp. 163-69.

³⁵ Five constituted a quorum, the usual attendance was between six and ten, but on 13 December 1777 nineteen burghs were represented during the Corn Law crisis (Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, p.568).

resolution. Edinburgh, with its monopoly of the chairmanship, was clearly the dominant voice, but Glasgow raised many trade-related issues. However, consultation was a recognised part of the work of the Convention, whether in discussion at the Annual Convention itself, or by letter or via the press. On receipt of a complaint by weavers in 1753, the towns concerned were asked to provide information about the extent of the abuse and asked for suggestions as to how to resolve the problem.³⁶ In 1776, when approached by the Forth and Clyde Canal proprietors (asking their support in an appeal to Parliament for further financial aid), the Annual Committee consulted with 'the principal burghs' before committing itself to action. The following year, a Glasgow Memorial (a Scots legal term meaning a statement of the case) opposing a proposed Corn Bill was also sent out for consultation.³⁷

An important part of the Convention's business was to hear petitions from its delegates and then decide how to proceed. Some were simply requests for financial assistance from the Convention itself for help with matters like harbour or bridge repair. There were also requests for legislation from small commercial interest groups or tradesmen. It was the Incorporations of weavers who protested in 1753 against an act of 1751, allowing unskilled people to set up businesses as weavers, thus bypassing the strict entry requirements of the established incorporations, and depriving them of the admission money they would otherwise have received from newly-qualified weavers. The weavers wanted the Convention to apply to Parliament to have the act repealed, 'or for some other relief'.³⁸ Colliers, seeking emancipation from serfdom, first petitioned the General Convention in 1770 indicating their intention to apply to Parliament for legislation and asking for the Convention's support.³⁹ In 1774, the

³⁶ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, pp. 450-1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 538, 542.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 423. Petitions came from Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, Dumfries, Dunfermline, Inverkeithing, Kirkcudbright and Rutherglen.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 388-9. The Convention delayed taking a decision (p.393), asking the colliers' committee to collect information for the Annual Committee, including the opinions of the coalmasters. Only then, if the Annual Committee agreed, would they support an application to Parliament.

Scottish Printers and Booksellers wanted the Convention's support to defeat a bill then going through Parliament to extend copyright protection, a measure which would 'create a monopoly in favour of a few rich and self-interested individuals'. In this case it seems that the printers, who had drafted their own petition against the bill, wanted the Convention to use its authority to add weight and further publicity to their campaign, by alerting member burghs to it, and asking them to encourage their MPs to oppose the measure in Parliament. This course of action would not have cost implications for the Convention but might enhance the campaigners' chances of success.⁴⁰

Individual burghs sometimes raised issues of national concern. Glasgow was the most prominent, reminding the Convention about expiring bounties on linen and fishing, pressing for action on statute labour on the roads and leading a campaign against the high price of grain.⁴¹ But smaller burghs were also heard. At the 1757 General Convention Forfar raised the question of distress caused by the high price of corn, blaming it on the action of ingrossers rather than a genuine scarcity and asking burghs to 'apply to the Members for Scotland' to support any law passed to prevent this abuse and make sure it extended to Scotland.⁴² In 1771 the delegate from Anstruther Easter wished Scots to add their weight to the petitioning of English whalers to have the bounty on whaling continued.⁴³ In 1772, Perth, Montrose and

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 492. This was part of a campaign to end the monopoly exercised by the influential Stationers Company. A ruling by the House of Lords on *Donaldson v Becket* in 1774 effectively ended perpetual copyright. Later that year, English booksellers sought to extend their statutory copyright to fourteen years through the Booksellers' Bill but, having passed the House of Commons, the bill was defeated in the Lords. This is the bill referred to in the Scots booksellers' petition. For historical Scottish copyright issues, see Alastair Mann, 'Scottish Copyright before the Statute of 1707', *Juridical Review* (2000), pp. 11-25.

⁴¹ Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 417-8.

⁴² The House of Commons gave consideration to just such a measure between January and May 1757, along with various other proposals. This particular bill seems to have fallen by the wayside. Forfar's intervention was perhaps an attempt to revive it, although the MP at the time, Hon. Thomas Leslie (c.1701-72), 3rd son of the Earl of Rothes, was not known for his activity in Parliament.

⁴³ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, p. 365. The request was agreed to. The petition was to be sent to Lawrence Dundas, but the cost was to be met by the whalers.

Arbroath made representations on behalf of their linen merchants, and the following year complaints came from all quarters about increased customs fees.⁴⁴ Despite the view that the Convention was dominated by Edinburgh, and its actions dictated by the interests of that city, the records suggest that the Convention was a more representative body than this, and that there were regular opportunities for burghs up and down Scotland to have their voices heard. The Convention's response to petitions was not always to apply for legislation, bearing out claims that Scotland had other means of effecting change. After several burghs expressed concern about the legality of turnpike trusts summoning town dwellers for work on roads outwith the burgh, the Lord Advocate was consulted about finding a solution through the Scottish courts in the first instance. The weavers' request for legislation (above) was referred, instead, to the Board of Trustees. When complaints were made about the unfairness of brewers' duties, application was made direct to the Treasury. When the danger of privateers increased and additional coastal protection was required, or when there was a need to have fishermen protected from the press(gang), it was Lord Sandwich at the Admiralty who was approached.⁴⁵ There was also a long-running campaign to negotiate improvements in the postal service with the Postmaster-General.

The postal service, like road transport, was an issue of considerable concern to Scotland's governing classes. In January 1760 plans to improve the postal service were the subject of negotiation between the Convention and the Postmaster.⁴⁶ Some concessions had been made in London but the Scots wanted a daily service to run to Aberdeen in the north and Greenock in the west and Mr John Davidson (WS), already going to London on his own account, was asked

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp.447-9, 480.

⁴⁵ Petitions came from Stirling and Linlithgow about work on the roads in 1753. The matter was raised again in 1755 and then referred to a sub-committee who empowered the Annual Committee to consult with Craigie, former Lord Advocate, regarding the legal situation (Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 7, pp. 424, p488-9, 495-6); Ibid., pp. 530-1, vol. 8, pp. 42, 194.

⁴⁶ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, pp. 22-26.

to co-operate with George Ross, the Convention's agent there, to try to gain further concessions. This issue was sufficiently important to merit direct approaches to the leading Scots MPs. The list of people he was given, who might be able to assist him, tells us exactly who were considered to be the people of influence in 1760: the Lord Advocate (Robert Dundas), Messrs Elliot (MP for Selkirkshire and a Lord of Admiralty), Oswald (MP for Dysart Burghs and a Lord of Treasury), Hume Campbell (MP for Berwickshire, Lord Clerk Register and brother of the Earl of Marchmont) Fletcher (MP for Haddington Burghs and Secretary to the Duke of Argyll); and also Mr Townshend (Hon Charles, Treasurer of the Chamber, married to Caroline, niece of the Duke of Argyll and mother of the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch) and Mr Miller (newly appointed Lord Advocate to succeed Robert Dundas, he became MP for Dumfries Burghs in 1761). If this produced no results he was to go higher up the chain, to the Duke of Argyll, the Secretaries of State, and finally Newcastle 'by means of some of our Members of Parliament'.⁴⁷ How many of these people were actually approached is not made clear, but the fact that he was unsuccessful is obvious by the issue of a circular letter from Convention praeses, George Lind, in January 1761 expressing concerns about the service.⁴⁸ A year later, in February 1762, the problems had still not been resolved, and Alexander Gray, the new Edinburgh agent, was delegated to travel to London to try again. He went armed with a ten-page Memorial containing very detailed instructions about the importance of speeding up the post and the route it should take. His approach was to the Postmaster in the first instance, and only if his arguments did not succeed was he to threaten a separate act of Parliament (while spending as little as possible!). Gray was assisted this time by James Stuart Mackenzie and Oswald. He received assurances that two of his four requests would be met. The other two illustrated the practical difficulties arising from Scotland's geographical position: a direct mail from London to Edinburgh would have to be achieved at the expense of by-passing York, which was not

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

⁴⁸ BL, Add MS 33049, f.329, 19 Jan 1761.

acceptable in the south, and without this, a daily postal service from London to Aberdeen and Greenock was not possible. Scotland, not York, was to be the loser. The Convention of 1762 passed a vote of thanks to both Stuart Mackenzie and Oswald for their efforts, but made clear that the issue was an on-going one.⁴⁹ When the Convention did apply directly to Parliament, it was often over matters which were of national importance, such as linen bounties, herring fishery, whaling, or the high price of grain. The question of statute labour also, eventually, went to Parliament. In other instances, as with the Printers' Bill, it lent its support to initiatives from elsewhere, such as the bankruptcy law (1771), and the Forth and Clyde Canal Bill (1777). Another tactic, when the Convention could not afford to initiate legislation, was to have an amendment inserted into another, related bill, as happened in 1760 in an attempt to adapt regulations on the assize and weight of bread to fit in with Scots law.⁵⁰

It is impossible to produce precise figures, but it is abundantly clear that requests for legislation were not the preserve of the county landowners. A comparison between initiatives which originated from magistrates and town councils or from the Convention of Royal Burghs, and petitions from county heritors, or similar groups shows very little difference in number between the two groups, around forty applications each.⁵¹ There was however, some blurring of the lines between what might be termed 'county concerns' and 'burgh business'. Glasgow council expressed its approval of the proposed changes to entail legislation in 1765.⁵² Towns and counties alike supported the idea of a Scots militia. Banking activities were self-evidently of

⁴⁹ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, pp. 105-7. NOTE: A motion from Nairn to the Annual Committee a decade later, in February 1772, complained that the postal regulations 'obtained at great trouble and expense' had 'fallen into great disorder', and asked for further action to be taken (Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, p.431). See also Inverness Town Council minutes on the inadequacies of the postal service between Inverness and Edinburgh (Inverness Town Council Minutes, IB1/1/11, p.230).

⁵⁰ Ayr Council complained that they referred to an official unknown in Scotland (Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, p. 38).

⁵¹ This information is taken from the Scottish Legislation database and relates solely to applications made to Members of Parliament. It does not at present say anything about success or failure rate.

⁵² Renwick, *Glasgow, burgh records*, vol. 7, P218.

interest to merchants and landowners, as were national projects such as the Forth and Clyde Canal. Both Glasgow and Edinburgh Town Councils had an interest in the roads in and out of their cities, particularly the number and positioning of toll barriers, as this could affect the cost of materials entering the area. The Commissioners of Supply, representing the country's landowners, were probably better placed, with their contacts, to initiate action, if they chose to do so. Often, however, they responded to issues already raised, as in the regulation of banknotes. They were consulted on various matters by the Lord Advocate, but in general showed themselves disinclined to engage in politics, other than at election times, when constituencies were fiercely contested. The county freeholders may have wielded more influence as individuals, or in ad hoc groups, but the official records of their meetings, as Commissioners of Supply, reveal little of interest to a parliamentary historian, beyond demonstrating electoral malpractice and manipulation of the voters' roll. The burghs, on the other hand, perhaps had to work harder to achieve results, but they had the advantage of a formally-constituted group in the Convention, recognised procedures and regular meetings. Only the largest of the burghs – Edinburgh, Glasgow and perhaps Perth - showed keen awareness of the implications (positive or adverse) of legislation or government intervention. But the existence of the Convention ensured that some attention was paid to other sections of the population than the landowners. It had little statutory power or authority to enforce its decisions; it was financially constrained, and not always successful, but exploited all the communication routes at its disposal to bring issues to the attention of those in power in London. Evidence of its recognition as an organisation which could represent Scottish interests lies in the number of issues repeatedly brought before it by different interest groups.

Having discovered some of the issues which were important to different groups in Scotland, it is now time to consider the response of the country's MPs to these representations, bearing in mind their reputation for being distant and largely disconnected from Scottish affairs. It was to the MPs however, that these interest groups turned for support, sometimes as a body,

sometimes as influential individuals who either were ministers, or had access to ministers. The next section examines the relationship between MPs and constituencies, firstly in the context of lobbying: the way in which people sought to add pressure to applications to Parliament or other government departments to ensure their success. It has been claimed that this process was clearly understood and well-developed in Scotland from the mid-eighteenth century.⁵³ The likelihood is that a lot of lobbying was done informally, through personal contacts, and went unrecorded, so the scale is difficult to quantify, but for those with some social standing and a few connections, it seems that entry to London political society was perfectly possible. James Boswell's picture of the life of Scots in London depicts much socialising, in taverns, coffee-houses or private residences. Introductions to, and audiences with, people of importance were much sought after.⁵⁴ The Rev. Alexander Carlyle, when in London, 'never failed' to attend a club held weekly in the British Coffee House, at 8 o'clock in the evening. Occasionally he was invited to the Duke of Argyll's London parties. Social contacts did not always take place in London. Carlyle was impressed by the wealth of travellers he met at Harrogate, where 'the estates of the people at our table did not amount to less than £50 or £60,000 pa, among whom were several MPs.' In 1765, in Scotland, he recorded a visit to Baron Mure's for dinner.⁵⁵ Even with the right connections, however, lobbying did not always bring the desired outcome. In 1758, Carlyle had been charged with making the case against the extension of the window tax to Scots clergy, who had traditionally been exempt.⁵⁶ Despite making contact with Gilbert Elliot, Marchmont and Lord Advocate Robert Dundas, he met with no success, and, more than a decade later, in 1769, he again offered his services. He contacted a Scottish lawyer working in London, for advice on a Memorial which he had prepared

⁵³ See above, p. 112. fn. 97.

⁵⁴ F. Pottle (ed.), *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-3* (London, 1950), e.g. pp. 150-153.

⁵⁵ A. Carlyle, *Anecdotes and Characters of the Times*, ed. J. Kinsley (London, 1973), pp.175, 178, 222, 241.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.179-80.

beforehand. He also met with the then Lord Advocate, Montgomery, and ‘whoever else I thought might be of use’. Again, he found politeness, good wishes, and an offer by Montgomery to introduce him to ‘the Minister’ and offer his support, but was ultimately unsuccessful.⁵⁷

The most comprehensive accounts of lobbying are to be found in the records of the Convention of Royal Burghs and of Glasgow Town Council, making it possible to reconstruct some of the campaigns. In contrast to Carlyle’s rather amateurish approach, these records demonstrate an active and enthusiastic interest in the process, a detailed knowledge of both the law and parliamentary procedures, and they reveal the many different facets of lobbying. Sometimes the objective was to ensure that potentially beneficial legislation was extended to include Scotland, or that the wording of generally-applicable laws was appropriate for Scottish conditions. Some lobbying, as with the linen bounty, took the form of widespread petitioning, perhaps across three countries (England, Ireland and Scotland) to strengthen an application, or denote urgency. But a crucial part of the lobbying process was getting the ear of the ministry. Whether the proposed legislation was a relatively minor local measure or a more contentious national issue, persuading the parliamentary managers to make time in a crowded session for Scottish initiatives was not easy. The usual practice, for significant measures, was to use an influential MP as an intermediary to gain access to a minister. A letter from Walter Hamilton, praeses, CRB, to Marchmont regarding the renewal of the linen bounty, states the procedure quite clearly:

it was suggested that the Members would probably (as has been done on former occasions) find it expedient to name some of their own number as a Committee to

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.256-257. It is unclear who is meant by ‘the Minister’. There was no Scots Minister at this time. Possibly it was the Duke of Grafton, who was First Lord of the Treasury in 1769. Interestingly, Stuart Mackenzie, in 1765 had conceived a plan to provide some relief for Scots clergy from the cost of the arrears of this tax, but he foresaw George Grenville’s opposition as a serious obstacle, and nothing seems to have come of it (Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol. 2, Stuart Mackenzie to Mure, 1 April 1765). [Accessed 5 April 2015].

wait upon Lord North in order to know his sentiments and solicit the concurrence of his Lordship and the other Lords of Treasury.⁵⁸

Other MPs, including the Representative Peers, were also an important part of the process. They had to be primed to turn up to vote for Scottish bills, and were sometimes written to en masse if the measure was a national one.

A London agent usually handled the preparation of the application for legislation, with perhaps a solicitor to help him. In addition, commissioners could be appointed by the initiating authority, whether the Convention, or a town council (effectively Glasgow or Edinburgh), to go to London to support an important application. The applicants obviously felt the need to be part of the whole process and did not simply leave negotiations to a London agent. Often they played a co-ordinating role and expected to be kept informed of developments. When Argyll was alive, he was the usual channel for requests, but the Convention did much of the groundwork, and, while respectful of the Duke's status, ensured that he was aware of the intended process. In January 1753, William Alexander, Edinburgh's Lord Provost and soon to be the city's MP, presented a draft petition on the herring fishery to the Annual Committee who approved it and sent it on to Argyll, asking him to promote the bill in both Houses. The committee also authorised the employment of Mr John Cathcart, a solicitor in London, to pursue the matter for them in Parliament. The letter to Argyll which accompanied the petition makes it clear that Argyll had already seen the petition and approved of both the petition and Mr Cathcart. It also spelt out how matters were expected to proceed in London: the city's MP, Mr Ker [*sic*] would 'probably' present the petition to the House, but would 'wait on and be guided by' Argyll.⁵⁹ While, in this instance, the Scots were looking for distinctive legislation for their own herring fishery, in November 1754, a petition from the merchants of Edinburgh 'and others' requested the Convention to act along with other British whalers to obtain a

⁵⁸ NRS, Marchmont Papers, GD158/2622, 19 Nov 1778.

⁵⁹ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 7, p.412.

prolongation of the whale bounty. The agent was instructed to promote a joint application and to meet and consult with the London Committee (presumably representing the whaling interests).⁶⁰ At the end of the meeting (of the Annual Committee), it was agreed to send letters to all Scots MPs (Representative Peers and Members of the House of Commons), asking for their support on both this, and the herring fishery (which, almost two years later, had still not been resolved). However, cost was an important factor for all applicants. Issues were prioritised, limits to expenditure were often set and the terms of an operation clearly defined. Accounts from an agent detailed his expenses, and had to be approved by the commissioning body before payment was authorised. Sometimes the Convention did not have the funds to support a full-scale lobbying campaign and simply recommended burgh delegates to write to their MPs, asking them to promote any relevant measure which would be advantageous to Scotland. Support for the linen industry in Scotland was a continuing concern for the Convention and provides a good illustration of the scale and nature of the Convention's lobbying activities.

Case Study: Linen

Linen was Scotland's staple industry, was growing at a fast rate during the century and was crucial to the growth of the Scottish economy as a whole. Within the industry there were different, sometimes competing interests: yarn was spun in Perthshire and some Highland areas, encouraged by the Board of Trustees after 1745.⁶¹ Threadmaking became established in Paisley, Aberdeen, Inverness and Banff from the 1760s. The central Lowlands - Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Forfarshire, Fife, Perthshire - produced the bulk of the coarse linen. Fancy linen

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.475.

⁶¹ 'An Act of Parliament was passed in 1753 giving L3000 per annum for nine years (in addition to the L.2000 formerly granted) to the trustees, to be applied by them for encouraging and improving the manufacture of linen in the Highlands. No part of the said sum was to be given for any other use than instructing and inciting the inhabitants of that part of Scotland to raise, prepare, and spin flax and hemp, and to weave the same into coarse linens' (D Bremner, *The Industries of Scotland, their Rise, Progress and Present Condition* (Edinburgh, 1869), p. 218, <<https://archive.org/details/industriesscotl00bremgoog>>.) [Accessed 10 November 2014].

production was increasing in the west - Glasgow and Paisley - while Dunfermline became the centre of the diaper or damask industry.⁶² However, the quality of even the coarse linen was poor and it was difficult for Scots to break into the export markets. The Board of Trustees worked hard to improve this, introducing quality control via the stampmasters. The industry benefited considerably from a bounty on the export of coarse linen, which was due to expire in 1754 and there were concerns about its renewal. The Convention of Royal Burghs took up the cause as a national concern and mounted an extensive lobbying campaign, lasting over two years, at a cost of some £1500.

Letters on the linen bounty were sent to Pelham, Argyll, and all the Scots MPs to ask for their support. The Annual Committee, in December 1753, appointed Andrew Cochran, former provost of Glasgow, sole commissioner 'for his interest and abilities' to go to London to oversee the campaign. He was authorised to borrow £500 previously allocated (23rd Oct.) for this purpose. The letter sent to Argyll on the subject was at the same time apologetic and urgent:

wee would not give yow any trouble in a session of parliament which wee see the ministry are very much in earnest to have a short one, if the necessity of the affair did not require it If something is not done all the good will be undone, ... and this trade [may]... be knockt on the head.⁶³

A year later, nothing had been achieved, but the Annual Committee paid tribute to Cochran's persistence.⁶⁴ He and William Tod (an Edinburgh linen merchant) returned to London to

⁶² NOTE: Diaper – a self-patterned, fine white linen used for tablecloths, napkins and handtowels. Damask is a more familiar term, 'diaper' and 'damask' being differentiated on the complexity of the pattern. In Scotland, although both diaper and damask had been woven in the seventeenth century, the concentration was on plain linens. But efforts by the Board of Trustees to improve the quality of Scots diaper brought an expansion of the industry, although it was not till the nineteenth century that Scottish stock patterns were able to compete with Continental designs. Dunfermline became a major centre of production: G.W.R. Ward (ed.), *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art* (Oxford, 2008), p.345.

⁶³ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, p. 440. Also, see above, p. 113, fn. 101.

⁶⁴ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, p. 453.

pursue the bill, along with other intended measures, including the herring fishery. Letters were also sent to the Duke of Newcastle, Argyll, Henry Legg (Chancellor of the Exchequer), Lord Dupplin (Newcastle's parliamentary manager) and all Scots MPs asking for their assistance with any linen manufactures bill. Two months later, in February 1755, a letter from Cochran and Tod informed them that the linen bill had been dropped at the ministry's request, with a promise that it would be brought in next session.⁶⁵ By July, the Glasgow delegate reported to the General Convention that they had good reason to think that the linen bill might be passed in the next session of Parliament, and recommended that two commissioners be sent to London to promote the application again. The request was approved and a limit of £500 was set for expenditure. Drummond and Tod were appointed commissioners in October 1755, joined the following month, at Glasgow's instigation, by Cochran.⁶⁶ At the same time, the London agent, George Ross, was authorised to appoint an attorney, presumably to assist with the drafting.⁶⁷ This time, they were successful and Drummond was able to report to the Convention on his and Tod's success in obtaining the continuation of the bounty for another fifteen years. He and Tod were each paid £300 for their efforts, with a further £331 going to Mr Yeatts, the solicitor, for his expenses.⁶⁸

The Bounty had been renewed, but on coarse linen only. Glasgow and other areas producing fancy linens or engaged in the re-export trade had further demands, and the campaigning continued. In November 1766 Linlithgow Town Council received a letter from Edinburgh's Lord Provost with a Memorial concerning a proposed application to Parliament for a bounty on

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 480.

⁶⁶ According to Murdoch, Tod and Cochran were pursuing different aims. Glasgow wanted the removal of the duty on the re-export of foreign linen to America, and by 1756, Glasgow's instructions were to employ solicitors to get an extension of the bounty to fine linen also. (Murdoch, *People Above*, pp.72-3).

⁶⁷ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, p.509.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.514. Yeatts's sum was one-third of the total legal bill, the other two-thirds being paid by the traders of England and Ireland.

exported linen, and for assistance with hemp manufacture.⁶⁹ This was the beginning of a campaign which ended in May 1770 with two bills going through Parliament, the first continuing the bounty on the export of British and Irish linen and further discontinuing the duties on the import of foreign raw linen yarn made of flax. The second authorised the appropriation of £15000 p.a. 'formerly granted by parliament [presumably to the Board of Trustees] as a fund for encouraging the raising and dressing of hemp and flax in Britain'.⁷⁰ At the committee stage, sustained pressure from the lobbyists resulted in a motion proposing, in addition, the inclusion of printed linens and diapers in the bounty, but at that point the Treasury became afraid of the increased cost this would entail. However, when the final bill was passed, the bounty now included checked and striped linens, which had been specifically excluded from the 1756 Act. The lobbying had involved letters from the Annual Committee to the Irish Linen Board, Scots MPs and Representative Peers, and a meeting in Edinburgh with the Duke of Queensberry.⁷¹ Advice was sought from the Earl of Kinnoull (the former Lord Dupplin), Sir Lawrence Dundas, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and George Dempster, and a meeting was arranged with Lord North.⁷² In the end, success was only partial. There were several other Scots bills going through the House at the same time (including the Entail Bill) and the country as a whole was occupied with the Massachusetts riots and the Wilkes affair. The credit for what was achieved is largely due to the persistence of the Convention. Given the importance of the issue, the Board of Trustees was noticeably lethargic in its support. On numerous occasions its meetings failed to achieve a quorum, and Durie comments that during the

⁷⁰ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, pp.372-378; HCl, 19 May 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

⁷¹ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, pp. 338-40.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 369-70.

important negotiations for the extension of the bounty in 1770 to checked and striped linens, the Board did not even send agents to London.⁷³

The Convention decided to continue its efforts the following session to obtain further concessions. They wanted the bounty extended to printed and stained linens, and to 'alter' (ie raise) the duty on foreign imported linens (not yarns), which was much more contentious. Again they sounded out opinion at Westminster. This time, only cautiously worded letters offering general support came in: from Kinnoull, Gilmour, Dempster, Lord Frederick Campbell, Elliot and William Pulteney (now MP for Shrewsbury).⁷⁴ Visits were arranged to English manufacturing towns to enlist their aid.⁷⁵ At this point, the effort ran out of steam – and money – and it was not till the General Convention of 1772 that a draft linen petition was drawn up. Action was now more urgent because of a depression hitting the industry. Edinburgh linen merchants Goldie and McVicar were appointed commissioners to go to London, while Spotswood, the Board of Trustees' agent in London, suggested drawing up a Memorial showing the extent of the decline of the industry, to strengthen the case for additional concessions.⁷⁶ This was to be a concerted action, with English and Irish manufacturers, and very quickly the difficulties of co-operation became evident. Various proposals were circulating among the different groups. Some wanted cotton to be included, the interests of Manchester and Irish manufacturers could not be reconciled and there was much arguing. The Scots Commissioners did what they could: they visited Newcastle, Knaresborough and Darlington,

⁷³ Durie, *Linen Industry*, pp. 68-9.

⁷⁴ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol..8, pp.407-9, 412.

⁷⁵ The Convention may have been influenced by a letter received from Mr Chalmers, a merchant in Edinburgh and previously a delegate to the Convention, expressing his view that the chief reason why linen manufacture received little support from Parliament was that it was mainly Scotland and Ireland who were interested in it, and England 'but little concerned'. But after talking to people in England, he thought they might be persuaded to take the lead in any future application to Parliament, and enclosed his own (printed) thoughts on how to encourage the English to become more involved. (*Ibid.*, p.420).

⁷⁶ The appointment of George Goldie and Neil McVicar came on a motion from Dunfermline, Goldie being Dunfermline's delegate at the meeting. (*Ibid.*, p. 447).

sent letters to the Scots MPs and visited in London all those to whom they had introductions. They reported having a good meeting with the Irish. By the following month, a joint submission had been prepared, and a meeting held with Lord North to ascertain the likelihood of success if they went ahead during the current session. Apparently the Memorial had some impact, as North, despite being pessimistic about the legislation, agreed to submit it to the Treasury. At a subsequent meeting of all concerned, the decision was taken to proceed with the application, and arrangements were made for a motion to be put forward in the House, accompanied by a number of petitions. All this information was faithfully and regularly reported back to the Annual Committee.

In the Commons, as a result of the motion, a committee, chaired by Lord Frederick Campbell, was set up to enquire into, and report on, the state of the linen industry in Great Britain and Ireland.⁷⁷ Although the committee heard evidence from English and Irish manufacturers and merchants, it was clearly driven by the Scots, beginning with evidence from linen merchants in Perth, Dundee, Edinburgh (including Goldie), and Glasgow, all of whom painted a bleak picture of the state of the linen industry in Scotland. However the Scots petitioning campaign was rather less successful, as all the petitions listed were from English counties. By the time the Report was presented to the House, it was late in the session, and no further progress was made.

The Convention dutifully continued with its lobbying activities, which this time included the counties.⁷⁸ The climax came the following session when the Linen report was considered again in the House after a motion by Sir Thomas Clavering. There was fierce opposition to the proposal to increase duties on foreign imported linen from the powerful Hamburg merchants and the Russia Company. The coup de grace came on 20 April 1774 when Mr Glover (merchant and former MP),

⁷⁷ H CJ, 18 March 1773. [Accessed 11 November 2014]. The report was presented to the House by Lord Frederick on 25 May 1773.

⁷⁸ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol. 8, p.480.

in a long speech, demolished the Scots case for raising duties on foreign linens, showing how much the linen industry in Scotland had grown over a long period, and claiming that the present decline, which affected other industries as well, was not due to the effect of imported foreign linens but, among other things, to the profligate and reckless issue of notes prevalent in the Scots banking system, linking this to the Ayr Bank collapse in 1772. '[A] torrent of ruin from the north forced a passage into your capital,' he thundered to the House. He also suggested that the Scots would evade any increased duty on foreign linen imports by their smuggling.⁷⁹ Some of the accusations were rather too close to the truth for comfort, and judging by what followed, the Scots MPs most closely involved were expecting this and had prepared a compromise position, agreed in advance with the ministry. On 17 May, Lord Frederick Campbell made a customary brief but sensible speech, conciliatory in tone. He declared that the case for a decline in the linen trade had been amply proven, but accepted that proposals to deal with the problem by raising the duty on imports had caused 'unexpected alarm'. He therefore made a new proposal, 'anticipating no opposition': a previous bounty for the export of British and Irish painted, stained and printed linens had been discontinued in 1756 for reasons he was unaware of, and he proposed restoring it, expecting this very modest proposition to be accepted. The proposal was seconded by Lord Beauchamp, supported by Lord North. Further endorsement came from the Lord Advocate, (Montgomery), Henry Seymour Conway and, to wind up, Dempster (who began by accepting that most people would have made up their minds already, but clearly wanted to make his point anyway).⁸⁰ Lord George Germain's comment, that he supported the measure, not as a cure but as an encouragement to those in distress, and proof that Parliament listened to their complaints, is at once an acknowledgement that the Scots were being fobbed off, but also a recognition by those in power of the need to make some response to genuine grievances. The motion was carried

⁷⁹ The debates on the state of the linen industry are reported extensively in Cobbett. (Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, vol. 17, cols 1110-1158, 10 March, 20 April, 5 May, 17 May, 1774). [Accessed 2 Jan 2015]. Glover was speaking on behalf of the Hamburg Merchants.

⁸⁰ Hon. Henry Seymour Conway (1719-95) was MP for Thetford, 1761 – 1774, and the brother-in-law of Lord Frederick Campbell.

on a division of 129:63. (Unfortunately, there is no division list to indicate the turn-out of Scots MPs.) From the Convention's viewpoint, another concession was won. This was what they had campaigned for in 1770. But the demand for a tax on imported linen was clearly unrealistic. Also, the suddenness with which the linen issue disappeared from Convention business and the Scottish press suggests the import duty was something of a red herring. By this time the flood of petitions from Scots towns were complaining about the high price of grain, which had become a more serious issue.

The linen campaigns showed the difficulties that the Scots manufacturers and their English and Irish allies faced in co-ordinating their activities and demonstrated that, ultimately, they could not win against the big battalions of the powerful merchants' companies, who imported linen goods from abroad. But they also confirm the extent and persistence of Scottish pressure for legislative change which would support economic activity in Scotland. Scots MPs played a crucial role in the campaign, with county and burgh MPs equally concerned. For those who represented weaving areas, supporting the key proposals for renewing the linen bounty presented little difficulty. But there were problems of conflicting interests for those who represented areas where spinning was strong or where fancy linen was important. The response of MPs varied. William Alexander and Robert Dundas chose to follow the government line rather than the demands of their constituents. Lord John Murray (Perthshire) absented himself from the vote in 1756, as did Lord Dupplin, who represented Cambridge, but whose estates were in Perthshire, where the interests of the spinners, rather than the weavers, were predominant. Lord Frederick Campbell, as in other issues, had to perform a careful balancing act between the interests of the fancy linen industry in Glasgow and the west of Scotland, and what was likely to be possible in Parliament. He and other MPs were sensible as to what were realistic demands. The tone of the correspondence in 1773-4 strongly suggests that the Scots were on weaker ground over their campaign for a duty on foreign imported linen. The MPs nevertheless made the case in Parliament as best they could, using their influence to ensure that some concessions were made. It is perhaps, however, too simple to

present the MPs as acting purely from altruistic motives on behalf of either their constituents or the Scottish nation. In fact, a number of them, including, in the early years, Argyll himself, had personal interests in the linen industry, and it takes a letter from John Mackenzie of Delvine to pull aside the curtain and reveal, yet again, just how closely personal and public interests were intertwined. McKenzie was Deputy Keeper of the Signet, 1770-1778, a position which gave him a good overview of political interests in Scotland. His letter was written in 1774 to James Grant of Ballindalloch, who had returned home from East Florida (where he was governor from 1763 till 1773) to become MP for Tain Burghs.⁸¹ To all the petitions to protect the linen industry, McKenzie added his own tongue-in-cheek plea:

You may chop and change high offices and prime ministers as you please, Only spare and support our Linen manufacture without which half the Members will not draw money in this Country to support their expenses... I except you who have indigo and the Miss Alexanders who have great plantations and easy remittance of sugars from our colonies. I beg you will send us nabobs or commissarys to Buy our Lands or enable us by agriculture and Loans to Improve it...If the House shall not only refuse an aid to our Linen Trade but by making Mr Grenville's Experimentale Act perpetual, put an end to Bribery or buying poor burrows, how shall we support that Luxury and Itch of cards which John Bull has taught us.⁸²

Along with this letter, the lobbying campaigns generally show, not that legislation was being foisted on Scots from a distant and uninterested group of representatives but quite the reverse. Legislative demands were coming regularly from Scotland. They were largely related to economic improvement, whether at a national or a local level. Some measures were incorporated in British bills, and are unlikely to show up in statistics examining Scottish legislation, but the Commons Journals and the Convention records show that the Scots were not ignored. Similarly, the increase in local Scottish legislation, previously noted from the mid-

⁸¹ History of Parliament online, James Grant of Ballindalloch (1720-1806). [Accessed 31 Dec. 2014].

⁸² NRAS, Macpherson-Grant family, of Ballindalloch, NRAS771, Bundle 550, McKenzie of Delvine to James Grant, 5 March (not 15 March, as in Catalogue) 1774.

1760s, is clearly the result of greater demands from Scotland rather than initiatives from London. McKenzie of Delvine's comment simply reinforces the community of interest on at least some major issues - the Forth and Clyde Canal would be another - between home-based and London-based Scots.

Most Scots MPs would have been targeted in the lobbying process, either for their votes, or for their influence. But the relationship was about more than just lobbying. The following section examines the relationship between MPs and their electors or patrons, placing it in the context of a wider contemporary debate about the role of British MPs, an issue much discussed during the eighteenth century. At the time, there were two opposing viewpoints: one regarded the MP as a delegate, sent to Parliament to carry out the instructions of those who were responsible for his election; the other saw the MP as someone whose primary responsibility was to take account of, and act in, the interests of the whole nation. Lord Egmont commented, 'It is the constant and allowed principle of our constitution that no man, after he is chosen, is to consider himself as a member for any particular place, but as a representative for the whole nation'.⁸³ However Paul Kelly detected a revival of the debate over instructions to MPs in the 1770s, provoked by the Middlesex election.⁸⁴ He saw an increasing use of instructions to MPs later in the century as a way of registering a complaint, mainly over increased taxes, but noted that, for the first time in England, there were demands that MPs be bound by such instructions, particularly in radical areas in and around London in the 1770s and 1780s. There were similar demands in Bristol where, in 1774, Edmund Burke refused to accept the dictates of his electors and paid the penalty at the next election.⁸⁵ Regardless of the constitutional position,

⁸³John Perceval, 2nd Earl of Egmont, *Faction detected by the Evidence of Facts* (Dublin, 1743), quoted in Paul Kelly, 'Constituents' Instructions to Members of Parliament in the Eighteenth Century' in C. Jones (ed.), *Party and Management in Parliament, 1660-1784* (Leicester, 1784), p.175.

⁸⁴ Kelly, 'Constituents' Instructions', pp. 179-80.

⁸⁵ Paul Langford, 'Burke, Edmund (1729/30-1797)', *ODNB*, September 2012. [Accessed 10 November 2014].

Dickinson, and also Paul Langford, accepted that most English MPs were well-used to receiving instructions from their constituents.⁸⁶

There is no sign of any real corresponding constitutional debate in Scotland. Kelly stated simply that 'the Scottish constitution which survived till 1832, bound Scottish MPs to serve the interests and obey the instructions of their constituents'.⁸⁷ Also, he observed that Scottish instructions were not necessarily restricted to purely local or even Scottish issues. Harris, however, while agreeing that they were delegates, thought they were accountable to their constituents for representing local interests.⁸⁸ One or two MPs were aware of the dilemma. John Hope became MP for Linlithgowshire in 1768 after his father, Charles Hope-Weir, stood down in his favour. His patron, with whom he fell out, was his uncle, the Earl of Hopetoun. In correspondence which John Hope later published to justify his own actions in siding with the opposition over the Middlesex election, he wrote, 'Your Lordship knows ... that I think myself responsible for my public conduct to the whole people of Great Britain and that is what all the representatives of the Commons *ought to be*; but in effect they are not so'.⁸⁹

As far as the electorate was concerned, the very existence of lobbying demonstrated a desire to influence, if not control, the actions of MPs. The normal practice of the Convention or its Annual Committee, was to send circular letters to its burgh members, asking them to contact their representatives. These letters were often couched in the rather formal language of the

⁸⁶ H.T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in eighteenth-century Britain* (Basingstoke, 1995), p.35; P. Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1991), pp.189-90.

⁸⁷ Kelly, 'Constituents' Instructions', p. 178.

⁸⁸ R. Harris, 'Parliamentary Legislation, Lobbying and the Press in eighteenth-century Scotland', *Parliamentary History*, 26 (2007), p.81. (accessed online).

⁸⁹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Hope (1739-85). [Accessed 11 November 2014]. The quotation is from a letter written by John Hope to his cousin, Lord Hope, probably late February or March 1770. The exact date is not given.

time, respectfully framing their wishes as requests. Typical was a letter asking the burghs to 'beg the good offices of your town with their representative in Parliament' to support any measures to help the linen industry in Scotland.⁹⁰ Similar letters were sent concerning the bounty on the whale fishery (1754), the high price of grain (1756), and again for renewal of the linen bounty in 1770.⁹¹ In 1771, when the matter was urgent, the praeses of the Annual Committee wrote directly to burgh MPs, asking them to halt a measure seen as damaging to the fine linen industry in Scotland 'till the manufacturers of this country fully understand it'.⁹² Occasionally, the contact was made via the London agent. In 1757, when the price of corn had risen to unacceptably high levels, the agent in London, George Ross, was instructed to pass on the details of an Edinburgh petition asking for some easing of the regulations on the import and export of corn, 'so that he can lay the particulars before our MPs, that they may have it in view now when a bill is depending in the house'.⁹³ In other words, the instruction went to the agent, the polite request went to the MPs. But the word 'instruct' is also used in the Convention records, as in July 1776, when certain burghs were to instruct their MPs to support any act discouraging small stills as 'hurtful to the health of the inhabitants and prejudicial to the revenue'.⁹⁴ Robertson suggested that counties were happy to instruct their MPs in the matter of the militia.⁹⁵

From looking at exchanges between the Convention and its member burghs, the Convention and counties, and burghs and counties to their MPs, it seems that the use of the words 'recommend', 'request', and 'instruct' reflects more the social conventions of the time rather

⁹⁰ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, pp. 430-1.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 475, 534; vol.8, p.406.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p.415

⁹³ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.7, p.540.

⁹⁴ Marwick, vol.8, pp. 533-4.

⁹⁵ J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh, 1985), pp. 109, 114.

than any constitutional niceties. The Convention could instruct its members but it was more likely to send requests to counties or county MPs. Counties, however, could send instructions to their MPs. A report to the Annual Committee in 1773 supports these distinctions: the Convention wanted support from the counties over increased customs fees. Letters were to be sent to the 'preses' of the different head counties asking them to 'please recommend the application to your MP'. Answers from counties indicated that they had had 'sent instructions to their respective representatives'.⁹⁶

Langford thought that the language used could also be indicative of a good or bad relationship between an MP and his electors.⁹⁷ This would appear to be borne out by the tone of some surviving correspondence between Glasgow's Lord Provost, John Wyllie, and John Craufurd, Lord Frederick Campbell's successor as MP. John Craufurd (1742-1814), of Errol, Perth, represented Renfrewshire, 1774-80, and Glasgow Burghs, 1780-84. Craufurd was no upstart. He came from an established Scots landed family and his father, Patrick Craufurd of Auchenames, was also an MP. 'Jack' Craufurd, nicknamed 'The Fish' at Eton for his avid curiosity, was a hypochondriac, a notorious gambler, and quite lacking in political principles.⁹⁸ As Glasgow's MP, he became involved in a battle with the Admiralty to have a frigate sent to Glasgow to protect the city's shipping during the American war. When a ship eventually arrived, however, it went to Edinburgh instead. Wyllie's impatience is clear. On 25 January 1781 a letter from Wyllie told Craufurd he 'needs to apply to [Lord] Sandwich immediately to get it sent round here'. And again, on 14 February, after a further failure, Wyllie wrote, 'You'll be necessitated to apply again'.⁹⁹ Craufurd was clearly not a frequent

⁹⁶ Marwick, *CRB records*, vol.8, p.480.

⁹⁷ Langford, *Public Life*, pp.189-90.

⁹⁸ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Craufurd (?1742-1814). [Accessed 11 November 2014]. There is a long entry on his career.

⁹⁹ GCA, Parliamentary Papers T-CN43/1, 43/2, Letters relative to the town of Glasgow, 1780-1, Wyllie to Craufurd, 14 Feb 1781.

visitor to his constituency and this, too, was unacceptable. Later in the year, Provost Wyllie wrote, in his usual fashion: 'I expect you would have paid a visit during the recess of Parliament. I will not take it kind if you do not see us next summer'. Craufurd lost the seat at the next election.¹⁰⁰ There is little surviving correspondence between the Council and Lord Frederick Campbell, but what there is carries a much more deferential tone, despite the differences between them on some issues. It could be argued that the deference was due to Lord Frederick's aristocratic connections, but when the MP gave up the seat in 1780, the appreciation expressed for his efforts on behalf of the town were more than formality would have demanded.¹⁰¹

While official correspondence was relatively restrained, there was a much more marked lack of respect shown to local MPs or candidates in the pamphlet literature produced at election times, some of it savagely satirical. A pamphlet produced at the time of the 1774 election lambasted the performance of the Dunfermline Burghs MP, Colonel James Masterton, a protégé of Sir Lawrence Dundas, whom the satirists felt equally able to ridicule. Their health was the subject of scathing comment, 'not one of these ... gentlemen... can creep down two pairs of stairs without being propped, both before and behind, by a couple of servants'.

Masterton's supposed indolence as an MP was described thus:

If Col. Campbell had not offered you his services, Col. Masterton would never have given himself the trouble of inquiring after your welfare. He would this moment have been dozing in London, and complaining of the trouble of reading the petitions or applications of individuals, unless they happened to be signed or attested by a bailie.

He was also censured for electioneering in Dunfermline when he should have been looking after the town's interests at Westminster as the Linen Bill of 1774 was progressing through Parliament:

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., Wyllie to Craufurd, 8 October 1781.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., Wyllie to Campbell, 15 November 1780, 14 March 1781, 9 April 1781.

It will surely be difficult for our pamphleteer [ie Deacon Bowie, the author of the original pamphlet] to persuade his fellow citizens that it was more prejudicial to the health of Colonel Masterton to go to the House of Commons in a sedan chair and to speak and vote in the interest of his constituents, than to engage in rioting and drinking through five boroughs.¹⁰²

Henry Dundas, involved in the in-fighting which characterised Edinburgh politics at this period, was the subject of equally vehement attack:

We have been indebted to the L.... A..... [i.e. Dundas] for the Corn Bill raising the price of grain, to oppose which the citizens of Glasgow subscribed L.1200 in half an hour; the Popish bill which has been attended with such blessed consequences over all the nation; the bill for exacting tolls amounting to perhaps L.3000 a year, from the inhabitants of Edinburgh for the purpose of building a south Bridge, and to impoverish or ruin the rest.¹⁰³

Dundas's patron was the Duke of Buccleuch, who was not immune from attack:

two years ago you and two others of your triumvirate [i.e. the Lord Provost and the Lord Advocate] construed a plan to levy a tax upon every citizen of Edinburgh to make a bridge for yourselves to ride into town in your coaches, over the heads of all these good people who were to pay for your convenience.¹⁰⁴

The pamphleteers were not impartial observers of the political scene and were evidently not constrained by fear of prosecution for libel. Their passionate and exuberant language is yet another indication of how deeply engaged some local activists were in politics. While most of the surviving pamphlets bear an Edinburgh imprint, and were officially anonymous (the writers were quite often public figures whose identity was well known) they offer an alternative view of politics from 'the People below', exposing the hypocrisy which many recognised as a feature

¹⁰² This pamphlet, 'an address to the burgesses of Dunfermline', was produced in response to one entitled 'borough politics detected' written by a supporter of Masterton, Deacon Bowie. (No copy of Bowie's original pamphlet has been traced). The second pamphlet, which extols the virtues of Archibald Campbell of Inverneil, Masterton's opponent in the 1774 election, is signed simply, A Weaver. However, its authorship was attributed to William Smellie, the well-known Edinburgh writer and printer, by Robert Kerr :R. Kerr, *Memoirs of the Life, writings and correspondence of William Smellie* (Edinburgh, 1811), pp. 220-21.

¹⁰³ 'Horatio', *A letter to the town council and citizens of Edinburgh* (1780). The author was a supporter of Sir Lawrence Dundas and an opponent of Henry Dundas and the Duke of Buccleuch. See also, 'An Old Hereditary Burgess', *Observations on the proposed bridge and bridge-tax* (1775).

¹⁰⁴ NRS, RH4 203/1, Dundas of Kerse records, *Address to the Duke of Buccleuch*, c. 1777. (Original held at North Yorkshire County Record Office, Zetland archive, ZNK X 1/3/40.)

of contemporary politics. However, regardless of the terminology used, or the nature of the relationship with their MPs, Scots counties, burghs, the umbrella Convention and other interest groups were very clear that they had a right to convey their wishes to their MPs in both general and very detailed ways. On issues which directly concerned them, there was an expectation that their interests would be looked after by their parliamentary representatives.

One of the conclusions of the preceding chapter was that, particularly regarding economic affairs, there were MPs at Westminster who worked hard to deliver for the Scots. The records of the Convention illustrate a close working relationship between this body and leading Scots MPs. The same is true in some constituency areas. George Dempster was considered a good constituency MP.¹⁰⁵ Lord Frederick Campbell was another.

Case Study: Glasgow - a city and its MP

Of Scotland's cities, only Glasgow and Edinburgh appear to have engaged directly to any extent with Westminster. As the capital, Edinburgh had its own MP, but control of the city was fiercely contested among a number of competing interests. Over the period, the city had several MPs, most of whom were local, and from non-aristocratic backgrounds. Even Lawrence Dundas, whose wealth gave him great influence, fitted into this description.¹⁰⁶ Glasgow, on the other hand, was dominated by its wealthy merchant houses, who were firmly focused on the city's economic development. It was fortunate in having, for almost twenty years (1761-1780), an able and influential MP at the heart of Westminster politics, who had the additional advantage of being son and brother to two Dukes of Argyll. An indication of Lord Frederick Campbell's close involvement with the city is seen in Stuart Mackenzie's comment to Baron Mure in 1765:

¹⁰⁵ Harris, 'Legislation, Lobbying and the Press', p. 80.

¹⁰⁶ Apart from Dundas, the city's MPs were William Alexander (c.1690-1761), James Coutts (1733-78), George Lind (c.1700-63), and James Hunter Blair (1741-87). [All accessed 11 November 2014].

‘for God's sake keep off your town of Glasgow from writing to their member, for that involves me in difficulties’.¹⁰⁷

Glasgow by the mid eighteenth century was a fast-growing and increasingly wealthy city and had a population of 44,000 by 1783.¹⁰⁸ The eighteenth century saw a burgeoning Atlantic trade, in tobacco, sugar, rum and textiles, and impressive new buildings reflected the city's growing status. It had an active Town Council, headed by a succession of equally active Lord Provosts.¹⁰⁹ It was the Town Council rather than any outside body, which authorised and regulated most of what went on in the town, and the Council maintained a close relationship with its leading merchants and manufacturers on whom the city relied to finance its many activities. Although originally a barony burgh, Glasgow had acquired the privileges and status of a royal burgh in 1611, including the right to return an MP. After 1707 it was one of a group of four burghs, the others being Rutherglen, Renfrew and Dumbarton, all situated on the Clyde. Glasgow, by virtue of its wealth and size, was by far the most important.¹¹⁰ Improving communications, by land and sea, was the main focus of Glasgow's relations with Parliament. Top of the list was the navigability of the River Clyde so that ships could sail up to Glasgow, rather than having to dock at Port Glasgow. Between 1759 and 1774 no fewer than four proposals to deepen the River Clyde went before Parliament, three of which were successful. At the same time came the prospect of canals linking the Clyde with the Forth, and the city with its coal-rich hinterland. Although Glasgow's proposal for the Forth and Clyde Canal was overtaken by the more ambitious project put forward from the eastern side of the country,

¹⁰⁷ Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol. 2, Lord Privy Seal to Baron Mure, 17 January 1765. [Accessed 5 March 2015]. The context was an application for a customs post for a friend of Mure. No further explanation is offered by Stuart Mackenzie.

¹⁰⁸ Eyre Todd, *History of Glasgow*, vol. 3, p. 328.

¹⁰⁹ Lord Provosts are listed at < www.Glasgow.gov.uk >. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹¹⁰ J.D. Marwick (ed.), *Charters and Documents relating to the City of Glasgow 1175-1649: Part 2* (1894), pp. 278-283 < www.british-history.ac.uk >. [Accessed 2 November 2014]. Unfortunately there are no relevant extant council records for the other burghs.

parliamentary permission was sought and obtained for the Monkland Canal, which would bring Lanarkshire coal into the city.¹¹¹ Meanwhile access by road was being improved through the increasing use of turnpike trusts. There were many access points into the city, and, as in Edinburgh, disputes arose over the introduction of tolls and the positioning of toll barriers. Roads came in from the east and north-east via Airdrie and Kilsyth, and from Dumbarton in the west. South of the river there were roads linking to Renfrew, Ayr, Gorbals, Cambuslang and Hamilton. Equally important were the bridges over the River Clyde, the Kelvin and the Cart. Trusts had been set up in some districts by earlier legislation (1753 and 1754), and of the eight bills in which Glasgow had an interest over the period, most were concerned with extending the terms of acts about to expire, or enlarging their powers. These changes were not achieved without a considerable amount of groundwork and expense. Two particular schemes reveal the close involvement of the MP in the detailed negotiations needed to achieve a successful legislative outcome. The first concerns the Clyde Navigation (Glasgow) Act of 1770, the second, the Glasgow and Dumbarton Roads Act of 1772.¹¹²

The deepening of the River Clyde had long been an objective of Glasgow merchants and money was not lacking for the project, which ultimately depended for success on both up-to-date engineering knowledge and parliamentary permission to raise the money needed to repay creditors who had advanced the capital. The various proposals were backed by detailed surveys and costings from the top engineers in the country, John Smeaton and James Watt among them. The legislation was not simple or uncontested, and the process of preparation of the bills, dealing with opposition and steering the legislation through Parliament involved close co-operation between the Town Council, its London agent, Henry Davidson, and the city's MP.

¹¹¹ HCJ, 12 April 1770. [Accessed 11 November 2014].

¹¹² See Appendix 4 for details of the proposals.

The 1770 Clyde Navigation Act was the result of a very major change in approach to the engineering problems posed by the river and a considerable degree of local knowledge would have been required to understand the plea for yet another Clyde Navigation Act, less than two years after the previous one. On the receipt of a report from engineer John Golborne recommending deepening the channel, rather than constructing a series of locks, the Council made an initial approach to Parliament early in 1769. The petition was referred to a committee under Lord Frederick Campbell and Archibald Edmonstone. Well briefed by the Council, the Glasgow MP gave a very full report to Parliament on 20 March detailing the changes in approach and the reasons for them. A bill was authorised but it made no further progress that session. A second attempt was begun later in the year. In November 1769, Glasgow Council appointed a committee to prepare a new Bridge bill, and in January 1770 it authorised another petition to Parliament. This was presented on 8 February and again referred to Lord Frederick and Edmonstone. Meantime the Council was busy dealing with local objections to the proposals, and by 6 March the draft bill was ready to be sent off to Lord Frederick. The Council's bridge committee was authorised to 'give all the necessary directions to him [for] carrying the said bill into a law'. The letter was accompanied by a blank mandate for solicitor and attorney. Just one week later, 13 March, Lord Frederick and Edmonstone were officially authorised by Parliament to prepare a bill.¹¹³ But the bill still faced local opposition, and was re-committed on 28 March. The town's London agent, Henry Davidson, advised the Council at the end of March, that, since it was late in the session, the bill was unlikely to pass if the opposition continued. On receiving Davidson's advice, the city then effectively bought off the remaining objectors from Greenock and Renfrew, making generous concessions 'rather than lose the bill'.¹¹⁴ By 9 April, the amended bill had passed the Commons, and two days later was approved by the Lords without further amendment, receiving the Royal Assent on 12 April.

¹¹³ Renwick, *Glasgow, burgh records*, p.318.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p 320.

Two weeks later the Council voted a letter of thanks to Lord Frederick Campbell, Lord Marchmont and Lord Kenowl (Kinnoull) 'for their good offices to the town and assistance in getting the Clyde bill passed'.¹¹⁵ The part played by Marchmont and Kinnoull is not made clear, but obviously there was more going on behind the scenes than the remaining records reveal. Yet a complex operation was conducted smoothly with input, commitment and compromise from all sides, and this despite the fact that Frederick Campbell, at least, was also heavily involved with the Hamilton Bridge Bill, along with Lockhart Ross (Lanarkshire MP), the Monkland Canal Bill, and the Entail Bill which were all before Parliament at this time.

However, distance, communication problems, and too many fingers in the pie could complicate matters considerably, as happened with the Dumbarton Roads Bill. Archibald Edmonstone, the MP for Dunbartonshire, had sent to Glasgow Town Council, in March 1772 the heads of a proposed bill. Ten days later the Council received a printed copy of the bill itself from the Provost, who was in London.¹¹⁶ Glasgow had strong objections to the proposals, spelt out in a printed report sent to their MP, 'to entreat his interest in the warmest possible manner' to intervene and have the bill amended to suit Glasgow. If he refused, the Provost was authorised to employ 'the best council and solicitor that can be had' to oppose the bill. Meantime the situation had obviously caused concern among the MPs and a meeting had already been convened in London on 12 March, attended by Lord Frederick, Provost Dunlop, Edmonstone, Lockhart Ross and Mr McDowell (MP for Renfrewshire) to try to resolve the problems. Minutes from this meeting were sent to Glasgow on 17 March, but the Council saw no reason to alter its stance and sent a petition to the Provost, to ask Lord Frederick to present it in Parliament on their behalf. If he refused, Lockhart Ross was to be approached instead. At the end of March, Provost Dunlop updated the committee on the negotiations,

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 321.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p.366-7. NOTE: The provost was in London 'looking after' four bills then going through Parliament: the Bankruptcy Bill, the Port Glasgow Harbour Bill, the Dumbarton Toll Roads Bill and another affecting Lanark toll roads.

which, for some reason, displeased them considerably. They concluded that he 'has not acted agreeable to the instructions given him by the magistrates and council' and immediately dispatched John Wilson, the town clerk, to London, with authorisation to employ Mr John Spotswood (the solicitor for the Board of Trustees, Fisheries and Manufacture), or if he refused, any other reputable solicitor to petition the House of Lords on their behalf.¹¹⁷ A week later (7 April), the Council got details of an agreement finally hammered out between Edmonstone, Davidson, and Dunlop before he left London, and dropped their opposition to the bill. A letter was sent off to Wilson by express post, cancelling his activities, and another to Lord Frederick, notifying him of the change of heart. Wilson, meantime, had already met with Lord Frederick and Edmonstone in London and obtained details of yet another set of proposals, this time from the Turnpike Trust concerned. Lord Frederick, wisely, was prepared to leave it to the Council as to which set of proposals they were prepared to accept. The Council declared themselves happy with the Trustees' new proposals and the bill proceeded accordingly.

Both these bills had successful outcomes, but might easily have failed without the commitment displayed by the MPs. The bills further demonstrate the additional difficulties faced by Scotland's burgh MPs: Lord Frederick Campbell, as well as being Glasgow's MP, was also the MP for Renfrew and Dumbarton, whose interests in both cases conflicted with those of Glasgow. His parliamentary experience would tell them of the necessity of removing any local opposition before a bill reached the committee stage, and of the need to present bills sufficiently early in the session for them to have a chance of success. On the other hand, local knowledge of the situation was essential, particularly in the case of the Clyde Navigation Act, and Glasgow Council made sure this was available. As the Dumbarton Roads Bill illustrates quite graphically, the problems of negotiating over roads improvements where several conflicting interests were involved were bad enough, without receiving conflicting instructions

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.370-1.

from one of the principal players, and without the initiative of the MPs, this is one bill which would have been timed out in Parliament.

Glasgow did not always see eye to eye with its MP. The City was among those who petitioned Parliament for redress over loss of trade due to the disturbances arising from the American Stamp Act of 1765. Despite some speculation to the contrary, Lord Campbell followed his Bedford colleagues in Parliament and voted against repealing the Act.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, a motion approving the conduct of Lord Frederick as their representative in Parliament and supporting his re-election was passed in 1774, and considerable regret was expressed when he gave up the seat for health reasons in 1780.¹¹⁹ Campbell was not only a parliamentary performer at Westminster, and an MP who enjoyed socialising with his London friends but also, an unusually (for the eighteenth century) committed constituency MP who maintained close contact with both the Town Council and its representatives, and MPs of neighbouring areas to ensure the success of key local initiatives in Parliament. He himself felt the burden of representing Glasgow, as is evident from a comment to his friend, Robert Murray Keith, in 1776: 'for a moment I regretted not having a post every day to Coombe Bank (his home in England), but the recollection of large packets from Glasgow made me comfort myself in my retreat'.¹²⁰

Appeals for assistance were not necessarily addressed to the constituency MP if someone else was better placed to use his influence. James Oswald, the Fife MP and Treasury official, was the recipient of requests from numerous interest groups. As well as his involvement in trade and colonial affairs he was active in promoting both national and local Scottish legislation. His

¹¹⁸ Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol. 2, Rouet to Mure, 10 January 1766. [Accessed 5 March 2015].

¹¹⁹ Renwick, *Glasgow, burgh records*, p.435.

¹²⁰ BL, Add MS 35451, Hardwicke Papers, f. 236 Campbell to Murray Keith, 21 July 1776.

role in the dispute with the Postmaster has already been noted.¹²¹ Edinburgh Council sought his help in making amendments to a controversial bill to upgrade Leith Harbour in 1755, and another one concerning the city's water supply in 1760.¹²² When legislation to enable the building of the New Town was at a critical stage in Parliament, Provost Gilbert Laurie appealed for Oswald's support in getting a counter-proposal from the Earl of Morton thrown out, as work on the New Town was already in progress and he did not wish to see the project held up through delays in Parliament. Lord Elgin tried to engage his support against a proposal to sell off parts of the forfeited estates to fund the Forth and Clyde Canal, while Samuel Garbett, a partner in the Carron Ironworks Company, tried to persuade Oswald to rig the evidence presented to a parliamentary committee considering navigation on the River Carron.¹²³ Thus, as Paul Langford has argued was the case in England, requests for legislation or other government intervention were not always addressed to the local MP, but to those perceived to have most influence, and, as this section has demonstrated, Scots petitioners were very good at knowing the people to whom their requests should be directed, even when there was no Scottish manager.

It has so far been argued that, despite a limited amount of legislation, Scots were nevertheless interested in local and national issues which affected their lives. Edinburgh and Glasgow Councils were particularly active politically but all the royal burghs had the opportunity to make their voices heard through the Convention. Some issues were persistently pursued, especially by larger burghs, and lobbying was an established part of the process. All this suggests that, whatever the reasons for the small number of specifically Scottish Acts passed,

¹²¹ See above, pp. 141-3.

¹²² ECA, SL 84/1/1, Minute Book of the Commissioners for improving and enlarging the harbour of Leith, 19 February 1755.

¹²³ J. Oswald, *Memorials of the Public Life and Character of Right Hon. James Oswald of Dunnikier* (Edinburgh, 1825), pp. 192-7, 212-6, 264-5.

lack of interest from the Scots was not one of them. The failure of some measures can be attributed to Westminster, for reasons ranging from ministerial pressure and shortage of time to inefficiency.¹²⁴ But there were also shortcomings at home. Both the Leith harbour and the Edinburgh Water Bills suffered from a lack of adequate preparation, as did the 1772 Police Bill. The original Forth and Clyde Canal proposal in 1767 stalled when a second initiative appeared from another Scottish consortium. There was a view that the main reason for the failure of the 1775 Militia Bill was lukewarm support in Scotland, rather than bad drafting.¹²⁵ Distance and inadequate communications were contributory factors, certainly over the Dumbarton Roads Bill. On the other hand, there were often differing opinions and interests which had to be squared before certain measures could be pursued. This was true at national level of both the 1765 banking regulation and the 1770 Entail Act, and demonstrated the commitment of leading MPs to 'take the sense of the country' in such important matters. At local level, the conflicting interests of Turnpike Trusts and landowners bedevilled some roads bills. But the work of Lord Frederick Campbell and other local MPs in negotiating a successful outcome to one such piece of legislation demonstrates again how closely some Scots MPs could be involved in Scottish affairs. Altogether, the cases examined in this chapter and the previous one show that the legislative process was long and complex, the effort which went into it was considerable, and the reasons for the ultimate failure of some measures are many. They do not indicate, however, that either the originators of Scottish legislation or the MPs charged with securing its passage through Parliament were indifferent to the outcome or unusually careless or inefficient.

¹²⁴ See above, pp. 122-3.

¹²⁵ Robertson, *Militia*, p. 134.

Michael Fry suggests that the absence of a Scottish manager after the fall of Bute in 1763 was ‘a lack acutely felt by Scots’.¹²⁶ This research would not subscribe to that view if applied to the securing of legislation through Westminster. Table 13 shows pass and fail rates for Scottish local (L), private (Pr) and public (Pu*) legislative proposals for the periods 1754-61, 1766-75, and 1775-1783. Only during the first period was there a Scottish manager, Argyll.

Table 13 Argyll, Montgomery and Dundas

	<i>Time in Office</i>	<i>Pass L</i>	<i>Pass Pr</i>	<i>Pass Pu</i>	<i>Fail L</i>	<i>Fail Pr</i>	<i>Fail Pu</i>	<i>Total</i>
Argyll	1754-61	14	5	7	4	3	2	35
Montgomery	1766-75	43	10	14	9	6	5	87
Dundas	1775-83	13	4	9	6	7	10	49

*Pu: Scottish national or British legislative proposals with a particular Scottish application

Scottish managers were not all-powerful in the matter of securing legislation. Even the 3rd Duke of Argyll had limited influence, and had to bargain hard for what he did get. He only managed to achieve a partial victory in something as important as the renewal of the linen bounty in 1756, at a time when he was politically in a strong position vis-à-vis Newcastle, and it is clear from the correspondence of James Oswald that even when Argyll was in power, not all requests were channelled through him.

On the other hand, from the mid-1760s, when there was no Scottish manager at all, there was a sudden increase in Scottish, mainly local, legislation. It coincided with the appointment of James Montgomery as Lord Advocate. Montgomery has not had a particularly high profile

¹²⁶ Michael Fry, ‘Dundas, Henry, first Viscount Melville (1742–1811)’, *ODNB*, May 2009. [Accessed 12 Nov 2014].

among Scotland's Lords Advocate. His obituarist commented that 'His propensities led him to the useful and substantial, rather than to the brilliant and splendid'.¹²⁷ His record suggests there was nothing wrong with useful and substantial. He presided over the successful passage of sixty-seven bills relating to Scotland between 1766 and 1775.¹²⁸ Since it was Henry Dundas who was his Solicitor-General for most of the period, it is tempting to speculate whether Dundas should in fact take the credit but a glance at the figures for Dundas's tenure of the office suggests otherwise. Much has been made of Dundas's use of the office of Lord Advocate to launch his career, and establish his control over Scotland. His initial steps, however, were less than successful. He was absent from Parliament for several spells in 1776, 1777 and 1779 and the number of Scottish measures, in particular local ones, actually fell during Dundas's period in office.¹²⁹ Seven of the ten proposals in 1783 were unsuccessful. The failures in private petitions were largely due to the Duke of Atholl's persistent attempts to negotiate compensation from the Crown for the loss of the Isle of Man, but more public measures failed than passed. There are few clues as to why this was so, from looking at the legislation itself. A more likely explanation is that Dundas, by 1783, was more concerned with British and imperial politics, and more interested in controlling Scottish patronage than in passing legislation. Montgomery, a wealthy landowner, well-regarded in his home county of Peebles, an active and enthusiastic improver but, with a solid legal background, was the more effective legislator. He was not part of the acrimonious Edinburgh political scene or the struggle for influence between Lawrence Dundas and the Argyll interest in the west. It undoubtedly helped that Queensberry was his patron, but he himself was a consensus politician, consulting widely about important legislation. Carlyle found him both approachable

¹²⁷ *Scots Magazine* 65 (September 1803), p. 591.

¹²⁸ Scottish Legislation database.

¹²⁹ Fry, *Dundas Despotism*, p.59.

and trustworthy.¹³⁰ The working relationship between Montgomery and the other influential Scots MPs remains largely hidden, but their names appear on bill after bill. He is normally credited with the legislation governing entail and banking, but alongside this, was also the large number of communications bills which were so crucial to Scotland's economic development. It is difficult to conceive of more being achieved by a Scottish manager.

Much of the importance of the Scottish manager came from the ability to distribute patronage and it was this aspect which Fry clearly had in mind when he commented on regret at the absence of a Scots minister. More was expected from politicians than legislation. A good MP was expected to use his influence to look after the interests of his constituency, often by advancing the careers of family members, or the sons of friends, acquaintances and dependants, when suitable posts became available, in a whole range of occupations from the Church to the East India Company. By the early 1770s, however, there is evidence of a growing sense of unhappiness at the perceived culture of corruption which almost inevitably sat alongside the system of patronage, perhaps aided by the growth of the press, perhaps the result of growing numbers of what were to become the middle class, who were wealthy and successful but increasingly aware of a largely self-perpetuating ruling elite. Attitudes were changing and there was greater recognition of the hypocrisy in public life, even among the electorate and MPs, as well as the press. The criticisms of Masterton in the Dunfermline pamphlet, Dempster's comment on the 'the great lord, the drunken laird, and the drunkener baillie' who made up the electorate, and Boswell's quip about the best representative being 'the one that brought the best pensions and places to his countrymen' all demonstrate the same point.¹³¹ Montgomery and Henry Dundas did respond to the concerns of the independent freeholders in 1775, with a measure aimed at eliminating fictitious votes in the

¹³⁰ Carlyle, *Anecdotes and Characters*, p.257.

¹³¹ See above, pp. 8-9.

counties, but as William Adam observed, '[it] will meet with great opposition from the Grandees', and in fact the petition got no further than a first reading in Parliament on 5 May 1775.¹³² The discontent continued, culminating in campaigns for both burgh and county electoral reform in the 1780s, but there was no further response from the Scots MPs. It was one area where their interests did not coincide with those of their electors, and self-interest prevailed. Even George Dempster refused to support burgh reform when it was proposed in 1787, on the somewhat specious grounds that he would be betraying his electors.¹³³ The patronage system was deeply embedded, and one of the reasons for Henry Dundas's dominance in Scotland was his ability to deliver the places and honours which many Scots had come to expect.

On most other matters, however, where there was a community of interest, they were much more responsive. Despite the small political nation and relatively few pieces of specifically Scottish legislation, politics was far from dead. Abundant evidence exists to demonstrate a keen interest in both local and national affairs and a detailed knowledge of parliamentary procedures. Access to Parliament was not limited to one social class or a particular area, although some were better served than others. Trade, communications, and banking were prominent in the legislation passed, but the colliers were emancipated and the issue of statute labour was eventually addressed, even if the pleas of the schoolmasters, the ministers and the weavers fell on deaf ears. The practice of lobbying Parliament was well-established, especially in areas where trade and manufacturing were important, but it was expensive, often long-drawn out and not always successful. Scots electors had clear expectations of their MPs, and there is ample evidence of MPs being regarded as delegates when representing local or Scottish interests. Those MPs most closely involved at Westminster were well aware of this and

¹³² Blair Adam Muniments, NRAS63, Box 1, William Adam to John Adam, 11 April 1775.

¹³³ A. M. Lang, 'Dempster, George, of Dunnichen (1732–1818)', *ODNB*, 2004. [Accessed 6 Jan 2015].

responded accordingly. Others appear only fleetingly in the surviving records as promoters of local legislation and the extent of their actual involvement is unknown. The absence of a political manager from the mid-1760s was not apparently detrimental to Scottish interests at Westminster insofar as legislation was concerned but there was still much dependence on the all-pervasive system of patronage. Towards the end of the period there is growing criticism of the corruption engendered by the system, but this has to be set against the obvious benefits which many, at different levels in society, reaped from the expanding opportunities at home and abroad available to those who had access to them.

Chapter 4 Allegiances and Identities

'If my grandson sees with my eyes, nothing done here [in Pembrokeshire] will make him insensible to the natural beauties of Calder, or slight that ancient, honourable and agreeable seat of the family'.¹

This research has argued that the reputation of the Scots MPs has suffered from a one-dimensional approach, that is, that their actions and behaviour have been judged almost entirely against the perceived corruption associated with the culture of patronage. The previous two chapters have attempted to look at their behaviour in different contexts – as legislators at Westminster and as representatives of Scottish constituencies. The final chapter returns to the subject of motivation, exploring the complex set of relationships which shaped attitudes, and determined allegiances and identities among the Scots MPs. It begins by examining the accusations of corruption and servility to determine how far they are merited. It will then consider attitudes towards political parties, and try to find out why Scots were slow to participate in party politics. Finally, it will attempt to determine just how 'anglicised' they were, or in other words, how their identity or identities might best be described.

Chief among the accusations against the Scots was that they sold their political allegiance for places and pensions. It is a matter of record that a majority of these MPs generally offered their support for whatever administration was in power.

¹ See below, p.220.

Table 14 Summary of voting in divisions on key issues ²

Year	Issue	Percentage of Scottish Members with Opposition	Percentage of whole House with Opposition
1754 (March)	Newcastle's Administration	2%	26%
1764	General warrants	13%	42%
1769	Middlesex election	11%	32%
1780	Economical reform	13%	45%
1782 (March)	North's Administration	15%	44%
1783 (February)	Shelburne's peace preliminaries	40%	40%
1783 (November)	Fox's East India Bill	15%	25%

The table is taken from Brooke's *Introductory Survey* and clearly shows that, over the period, there were, proportionately, many more opposition English MPs than Scots.³

Nor can it be disputed that a large number of government posts were held by Scots.⁴ Of the forty-six Scots MPs in the 1754 Parliament, only seventeen held posts during the life of that Parliament, but taking into account places held in previous or subsequent parliaments, the number rises to over thirty. Six of the remainder were army officers, and one, Robert Haldane, was a short-term MP. Only four Members received no tangible benefits from their parliamentary service. Of these, Kenneth Mackenzie came from a family with previous Catholic and Jacobite connections, and James Murray of Philiphaugh was more interested in his local family status than a parliamentary career. John Dickson of Kilbucho, returned on the interest

² Sir L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1754-1790* (London, 1964), vol.1, p. 171.

³ The figure of 40% for Shelburne's peace preliminaries is an anomaly, and is contradicted by Ginter's voting records, which shows the following breakdown of Scots voting: twenty-five for the government, five for opposition, four marked absentees, three non-voters, and a further seven missing from the lists - a total of forty-four (D. Ginter (ed.), *Voting Records of the British House of Commons, 1761-1820* (London, 1995), vol.5, pp. 232-42).

⁴ See Appendix 5.

of the Earl of March, was another with no interest in a parliamentary career, but, in indifferent financial circumstances, was looking for a place or pension to be obtained through his patron. The fourth was David Scott, the wealthy uncle of Lord Mansfield. Some of the positions were active posts: Andrew Mitchell and James Stuart Mackenzie were envoys, George Haldane was a colonial governor, while Gilbert Elliot, James Oswald and Robert Dundas held government offices. However, most were straight sinecures, and a favoured few held several positions. Posts were periodically re-allocated as holders died or lost influence. Twenty years later there were fewer obvious sinecures, possibly due to the reduction of Scots influence at the heart of government after the death of the 3rd Duke of Argyll and the retiral of Lord Bute. Robinson's list of Commons placemen in the 1768 Parliament, compiled during the final year of its existence, contains sixteen Scots, five of whom were army officers and one place was a reversion. However, information taken from the *History of Parliament* biographies suggests more Scots MPs than this benefited from government patronage. Where Robinson listed an army connection it was for colonel of a regiment. Namier and Brooke included all army appointments and there were over twenty army or navy MPs among the Scots in this Parliament. Some others received future preferment.

Although there may have been fewer places to go around, the place-seeking continued. Those most anxious for financial rewards often came from gentry in straitened circumstances. Sir Hew Dalrymple (who represented either Haddingtonshire or Haddington Burghs, 1741-68) belonged to a branch of the family which was not wealthy and sought various offices, being finally rewarded in 1768 with the post of King's Remembrancer in the Scottish Exchequer (a post which he sold two years later to Andrew Stuart). He obviously regarded his behaviour as no more than typical, writing to Lord Loudoun: 'Twenty-seven years in Parliament has pretty well satisfied my curiosity, during which time ... I have been as little troublesome in

solicitations and as constant in attendance as any man'.⁵ Archibald Douglas (MP for Dumfriesshire or Dumfries Burghs for twenty years, 1754-74) was himself an army man, but, with the 3rd Duke of Queensberry as his patron, was a well-known place hunter, as James Boswell recorded: 'being a man not much taken up with the gay world and enervated with scenes of dissipation, he could call upon a great man again and again and wait an hour in his parlour till he came down'.⁶ Some, like Sir Ludovick Grant, who referred to his 'dirty pension', resented the need to apply and the obligations thereby incurred, but this did not prevent him encouraging his son to seek a more lucrative post for him when the opportunity arose.⁷ For the increasing numbers with commercial interests there was probably less interest in sinecures than in lucrative government contracts, which is where Lawrence Dundas and others made their money. Others continued to seek places for themselves, family and friends. It was access to ministers which opened doors to army promotions and the many places at all levels obtainable through the patronage system, for MPs, their supporters and those to whom they were anxious to grant favours.

Place-seeking was, if anything, more blatant among the Representative Peers. In return for their support, or as they would have preferred to express it, as a mark of royal favour, a number of the most lucrative sinecures and other positions were made available to them. The top offices of the Scottish State were much prized and were usually reserved for the Grandees – Lord Justice General, Lord Clerk Register, Keeper of the Great Seal, and Lord High

⁵ Loudoun MS, Dalrymple to Loudoun, Feb. 1768, quoted in History of Parliament online 1754-90, Sir Hew Dalrymple (1712-90). [Accessed 22 Dec. 2014]. Other active place-hunters, apart from men seeking army promotions, included Ludovick Grant, Thomas Leslie, George Haldane, Alexander Hume Campbell, John Dickson (MP for Peeblesshire, 1747- 67), and Robert and Henry Dundas.

⁶ James Boswell, *Private Papers*, vol. i. pp. 73-7, quoted in History of Parliament Trust (1964-2015), History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Archibald Douglas (1707-78). [Accessed 22 Dec. 2014].

⁷ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir Ludovick Grant (1707-73). [Accessed 22 Dec. 2014].

Commissioner (the Monarch’s representative at the Church of Scotland General Assembly).⁸

In 1774, ten of the sixteen Representative Peers were in possession of an office compatible with a seat in Parliament.

*Table 15 Representative Peers who were Postholders in the 1774 Parliament*⁹

Duke of Gordon	Captain in the army
Marquis of Lothian	Col. of Dragoons
Earl of Errol	Lord High Constable of Scotland
Earl of Loudoun	Governor of Edinburgh Castle and Col. 3 rd Regt of Foot Guards
Earl of Dunmore	Governor, colony of Virginia
Earl of March	Vice-Admiral of Scotland and Lord of the Bedchamber
Earl of Marchmont	Keeper of the Great Seal (S)
Lord Stormont	Ambassador to France
Earl of Bute	Ranger of Richmond Park
Lord Cathcart	Lord High Commissioner of the General Assembly, First Lord Commissioner of Police.

While the wealthier peers such as the Duke of Gordon and the Duke of Queensberry were relatively restrained in seeking preferment for themselves, lesser peers such as Breadalbane and Marchmont had no hesitation in applying for dead men’s shoes. Lord Marchmont’s letters to ministers were written in the obsequious language of the time – flattering any who might be in a position to use their influence to his advantage. His private correspondence betrays a

⁸ For other posts see Murdoch, *People Above*, pp.140-50; see also Appendix 5.

⁹ Taken from W.T. Laprade (ed.), *Parliamentary Papers of John Robison, 1774-1784* (1922), pp. 13-14., California digital library, < <https://archive.org/details/parliamentarypap00robirich>>. [Accessed 2 November 2014].

calculating nature. Letters written to his brother, who was trying to gain advancement at Westminster, advised him how to behave:

As to your conduct, I meant your showing civility and associating yourself with apparent frankness, without confidence, to every one of your friends here at London, your affecting to interest yourself in Scots publick national matters but with coolness and often simulation...

(The last three words were added in the margin.)¹⁰ A strong sense of frustration permeates Marchmont's correspondence during the 1750s. Eventually, this feeling overtook his desire to be accommodating, and even the elaborate language in which his letters were couched barely concealed his growing frustration and his resentment, particularly at Newcastle who, he clearly felt, could have done more to bring him the recognition he thought he deserved. On the death of Argyll, who had been an obstacle to Marchmont's advancement, he thought the way was open and wrote to Newcastle:

I have served your Grace in the lowest place in this country these fourteen years [Lord of Police] andgone with all the neglect and disappointments ... I say this now, my Lord, without any diffidence of your Grace's exerting yourself for me on this decisive occasion. You are delivered from many difficulties by this event. Let me find that when your Grace is at liberty your friends will be treated with the distinction they deserve. And your Grace will surely meet with little difficulty in obtaining for me, the only person of my rank bred to the law, the office of Justice-General as the Duke of Argyll held it.¹¹

When he was unsuccessful, the reaction was one of weary resignation, with some grim irony in reference to the advanced age and failing health of the Marquis of Tweeddale who had been preferred to him:

It may indeed perhaps hardly again happen that people should be dug out of their grave to be preferr'd to me; but there will always be opportunities for those who by accident have been raised to offices they were never equal to, to

¹⁰ NRS, Papers of the Hume family of Polwarth, GD158/2599, Marchmont to Alexander Hume Campbell, 26 Oct 1755. Alexander Hume Campbell (1708-1760), MP for Berwickshire, 1734-1760, was Marchmont's twin brother. In return for pledging his support to Newcastle, Hume Campbell was given the post of Lord Clerk Register in December 1755. The letter probably refers to the brothers planning their campaign.

¹¹ Ibid., Marchmont to Newcastle, 19 April 1761.

make that a claim for getting other offices of the same kind. I say that as a simple truth without particular resentment where there are so many instances.... My only merit has been constant endeavour to perform my duty. I hope those who succeed better than I have will adopt the same principle. It is contrary to my inclination to say so much.¹²

Breadalbane, too, sought preferment for himself. Before his application, in 1752, to be made a Representative Peer, he applied, through Hardwicke for the post of Master of the Jewel Office, which he held from 1745 to 1756. In 1756, he had in his sights the ailing Lord Milton's place as Keeper of the Signet, alerting Hardwicke to this in plenty of time because many people would be after it, and hoping Hardwicke might mention it in advance (presumably of Milton's demise) to Newcastle. In 1760, when Alexander Hume Campbell, Marchmont's brother, was at death's door, Breadalbane 'applied' for his post as Lord Clerk Register of Scotland 'as it is a great deal better than mine'. Having failed to get either of these posts, when Argyll died the following year he sought the Great Seal of Scotland, writing, again from Bath, 'I think I have a right to expect it'. He was eventually offered the Privy Seal (Scotland), after Lord Frederick Campbell resigned in 1765, but held it only briefly.¹³ In this respect, his behaviour is in contrast to that of James Duff, Earl of Fife, who prided himself on his independent financial position which freed him from the need to beg for well-paid government posts.¹⁴ Both, however, used their influence on behalf of other people. While some MPs with influence in government circles were happy to do a favour for friends, Breadalbane saw it in terms of reflecting well on his own status. He adopted a similar attitude to his appointment as a Representative Peer in 1774, referring to it as 'a feather in the cap of my family'.¹⁵

¹² Ibid., Marchmont to Newcastle, 30 April 1761.

¹³ BL, Hardwicke MS, 35450, f.251, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 24 July 1756, f.297, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, July 1760.

¹⁴ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon. James Duff (1729-1809). [Accessed 25 September 2014].

¹⁵ BL, Hardwicke MS, 35421, f. 216, Breadalbane to Hardwicke, 11 Oct. 1774, quoted in W.C. Lowe, 'Bishops and Scottish Representative Peers in the House of Lords, 1760-75', *Journal of British Studies*, 18 (1978), p. 103 (accessed online).

On the face of it, therefore, it is difficult to argue with the proposition that many of the Scots MPs at this time entered Parliament primarily to serve the interests of themselves and their families. Both Brooke and Sunter attributed the Scots' reputation for place-seeking to their relative poverty, compared to their English counterparts, but there were also wealthy nabobs among them, such as Hector Munro, Archibald Campbell of Inverneil and Lawrence Dundas.¹⁶ Whether looking after family and other interests precluded acting in the public interest is a different matter altogether and will be considered later on. It will also be argued that more thought was given to decisions about loyalties than has previously been recognised.

It has to be asked, however, if the Scots were any different from English MPs. The culture of patronage was not specifically Scottish. It permeated all levels of society in both countries, and, in political terms, was the means by which an administration built support for its measures. At its best it was a way of allocating positions based on personal connection, knowledge and trust. It was of course open to abuse and was increasingly criticised by contemporaries as well as later historians. In 1770, Edmund Burke, attributed the 'evil' of growing royal power to the activities of a group of King's Friends, 'enjoying at once all the spirited pleasure of independence, and all the gross lucre and fat emoluments of servitude'.¹⁷ The theme was taken up by MP John Dunning after the failure of Burke's Economical Reform Bill in March 1780. On 6 April he introduced two resolutions, aimed ultimately at reducing the number of placemen in the Commons, and thereby striking at the Crown's perceived ability to control Parliament.¹⁸ Despite the success of Dunning's motion, the fact remains that the vast majority

¹⁶ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p.172; R.M. Sunter, *Patronage and Politics in Scotland, 1707-1832* (Glasgow, 1986), p.8.

¹⁷ Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (London, 1770), p.37.

¹⁸ The motions were, firstly 'that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished', and, secondly, 'that it is competent for this House to reform the civil list or any part of the public expenditure'. That both motions were carried perhaps called into question the point.

of such measures were defeated so English MPs, who vastly outnumbered the Scots, were voting in large numbers for the status quo.

Nor was it just the Scots who sought places. Robinson's figures showed almost 160 English MPs holding places in 1773.¹⁹ Marchmont and Breadalbane's applications for posts sound quite inappropriate to modern ears, but English grandees were no less forward in their applications. On the death of Baron Mure in 1776, Lord George Germain immediately applied to the King for his post of Receiver-General of Jamaica, worth £600 pa, for his youngest son.²⁰ John Dunning (above), despite his apparent protestations, was appointed a peer of the realm and accepted a pension of £4000 p.a.²¹ Grenville was described as 'ever greedy for offices', while the *ODNB* biographer of the Bedford Whigs commented, 'When in opposition the Bedfords' main aim was invariably to return to government, gathering as many of the spoils of office as was possible'.²²

Malpractice at elections was common in both England and Scotland. The 1774 election saw an unprecedented twelve disputed results in Scottish elections. The details are spelt out in the Commons Journals, which relate accounts of vote creation, bribery, kidnapping, and other forms of chicanery routinely practised in Scottish constituencies. Private correspondence provides further evidence of the lengths to which some candidates went in order to secure coveted seats in Parliament.²³ There was, however, a similar scramble for seats in England where fraudulent practices were just as much in evidence, with almost forty disputed election

¹⁹ Laprade, *Robinson Papers*, pp. 14-17. The figures include a couple of Scots in English constituencies – Wedderburn and Lord Mountstuart, Bute's eldest son.

²⁰ Sir J. Fortescue (ed.), *Correspondence of George III from 1760 to December 1783* (London 1927-8), vol.3, p.346.

²¹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Dunning (1731-83). [Accessed 22 Dec 2014].

²² F. O'Gorman, *The Rise of Party in England: the Rockingham Whigs 1760-82* (London, 1975), p.115; Martyn J. Powell, 'Bedford Whigs (act. c.1748-c.1784)', *ODNB* online. [Accessed 21 Dec 2014].

²³ See, e.g. correspondence in the Gordon Papers relating to the Elgin burghs: GD44/43/37, Captain William Finlason, Banff, to Alexander, Duke of Gordon, 22 February 1771, GD44/43/49, James Irvine, Elgin, to James Ross, 19 September 1771, GD44/43/130, George Bean, writer, Inverness, to James Ross, 6 October 1774.

results in 1774. Old Sarum and Dunwich have passed into legend as extreme examples of pocket boroughs but they were by no means unique. Ludgershall, Lostwithiel, Bishop's Castle and Gatton, to name but a few, merit the same description.²⁴ Boroughbridge openly 'belonged' to the Duke of Newcastle. In some burgage boroughs, such as Horsham and Cockermouth, local landowners embarked on buying sprees of burgages to give them control of the votes. Excessive Scottish corruption has often been blamed on the small size of the electorate, but larger English boroughs with quite extensive electorates were not exempt from bribery. The 1768 elections in Carlisle, Colchester, Northampton, and Preston were described as 'very expensive and riotous contests'. In Carlisle, drink for the freemen cost Sir James Lowther £4000, while the bill incurred by his rival, the Duke of Portland, for the election exceeded £8000. In Hindon, in 1774, there was no attempt to disguise the bribery as entertainment: the going rate for a vote was fifteen guineas and the parliamentary enquiry into the election (headed by Sir Thomas Dundas) declared the election void, recommended the disfranchisement of 190 voters and the prosecution of all four candidates.²⁵ A common factor in such contests, in both England and Scotland, was often the presence of returning 'nabobs' using their wealth to enter Parliament. Bribery was such an accepted part of electoral practice that when Sir George Savile, speaking in the Commons for a motion on the rights of electors, remarked, 'whoever heard of bribery being a bar to any one to sit in this House?' his comment 'occasioned a great laugh'.²⁶ On this evidence, it is difficult to see why Scots, as a group, should be accused of particularly reprehensible behaviour, either at election times or in their pursuit of rewards.

²⁴ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, vol.1, Constituencies. [Accessed 23 December 2014].

²⁵ HCJ, 14 Feb 1774.

²⁶ J. Almon and others, *The Debates and Proceedings of the British House of Commons, 1743-1774* (London, 1766-75), vol.9, p.111.

Closer examination of the individuals behind the statistics reveals that there is no one-size-fits-all explanation for the behaviour of the Scots MPs. Their positions were determined by a variety of factors, some outwith their control, others the result of personal choice or conviction. A significant number of MPs supported administrations because they had no alternative, other than not to be an MP. Among those were the Representative Peers. Unlike the English peers, who held their places for life, the Scots peers were, in effect, dependent on the Monarch for their election to the House, and, as a consequence, however patchy their attendance, they could be relied on to be largely supportive of his government's measures, as, indeed, were the peers generally. They would hardly be expected to stand up for colonists' rights or support calls for cuts to the civil list.

Many Scots MPs in the Commons depended on family or, more usually, a patron for their seat. In 1754, around three-quarters of Scots seats were under the control of either the Treasury or Scots peers.²⁷ Of the forty-five Scots MPs returned in 1774, eighteen were elected on the interest of one or more peers, and Administration was directly involved in securing the return of a further six. When elected, most were well aware of their obligations to patrons and ministers. Government Papers show regular reports to the Monarch of the names of MPs voting against administration.²⁸ Those who transgressed paid the penalty: Sir Henry Erskine was dismissed from the army in 1756 for his opposition in Parliament to the subsidy treaties, and John Hope lost Administration support, and subsequently his seat, when he supported the opposition over the Middlesex election. When Sir Alexander Gilmour voted against the government over the peace preliminaries in 1762, he was refused the post of deputy adjutant of Ireland, for which he had previously been recommended.²⁹

²⁷ A study of constituency information in the History of Parliament online shows the Treasury controlling four seats, the Duke of Argyll eight, and other Scottish peers nineteen.

²⁸ See, e.g. Fortescue, *Correspondence of George III*, vol.3, pp. 178-9, 188, 419; BL, Add MS 33001, f.200, Add MS 32955, ff 370-3.

²⁹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir Alexander Gilmour (c.1737-92). [Accessed 23 Dec. 2014].

While many, if not most, MPs simply went along with the conventions of the time, others were more acutely aware of the loss of independence which came with obligations to others and of the conflicting demands they faced. John Hope was one. Another was Gilbert Elliot. Perhaps no-one described the nature of patronage better than Elliot, writing to his friend Walter Scott of Harden:

For my own part I have no other wish ... but to keep my seat in Parliament, if possible without dependence for it on any minister or great man whatever. There is no obligation of friendship to which I cannot cheerfully submit myself because I feel the very attempt to return such obligations affords the highest satisfaction, but you know very well the exactions of Patronage are so excessive that even the basest minds can with difficulty pay them, I merely hope that neither you nor I may ever be under the necessity of showing that we would rather lose our situations than hold them on such conditions.³⁰

Patrick Craufurd expressed similar sentiments, when he opposed the subsidy treaties in 1755:

Don't imagine in the state of the times that all terminates in struggles for power. There is an ambition that soars no higher than power or wealth, however attained. There is a nobler ambition, which, tho' it also desires those objects, yet will only receive them upon honourable terms, and with the fair esteem of mankind.³¹

George Dempster, too, felt the pressures of the 'glaring contradictions' between the demands of patronage and the requirement to act independently:

It is expected that we Members of Parliament should be independent men and men of influence at the same time... that we should be ready to serve our country by opposing bad measures, and our constituents by supporting every ministerial measure. When you ask a minister to do a favour for you or your friends it founds an expectation that you will in return confer a favour upon him. True indeed that favour granted and expected are somewhat incommensurable. And one would be justified for laughing at a minister who should wonder at your

³⁰ NRS, Papers of the Scott Family of Harden, GD157/2250/3/1, Gilbert Elliot to Walter Scott of Harden, 22 Feb. 1759.

³¹ W. Mure, *Selections from the Family Papers Preserved at Caldwell* (Edinburgh, 1854), part 2, vol. 1, p. 110, Patrick Craufurd to William Mure (undated, but c. 1755), Allen County Public Library, <<http://www.archive.org/details/selectionsfromfa19131914mure>> . [Accessed 11 November 2014].

refusing him 20 millions to carry on a foolish war, because at your request he had granted Andrew Blackburn a place in the Customs worth £15 a year.³²

There were some able, but less politically ambitious MPs, who were prepared to stand aside from Parliament, rather than simply conform. Robert Murray Keith, seeking the support of Lord March, the local patron, for his attempt to win the Peebles-shire seat in 1775, refused categorically to accept any conditions Lord March might attach to his support, and was prepared to withdraw, if necessary. In the event, March agreed to offer unconditional support, and Murray Keith went on to take the seat. Murray Keith was not a wealthy man, but he was a diplomat, ambassador to Vienna, and was not thirled to the idea of a parliamentary career, as shown by the fact that he gave up the seat at the next election.³³ Others simply opted out of what they saw as an unpalatable system. John Mackye of Palgowan, an MP from 1742 to 1768 in both Dumfries-shire and Kirkcudbright Stewartry, and a place-holder from 1763, refused to use fictitious votes to secure his return in 1768, and abandoned the seat to his opponent, James Murray of Broughton.³⁴ James Grant of Castle Grant was a conscientious MP for Elginshire from 1761 to 1768, but not the most regular of attenders. He chose to give up his seat to concentrate on improving the family's estates. When he tried to return to Parliament in 1784, he also refused to make use of fictitious votes, and was defeated.³⁵

There was another group of MPs - whose numbers are difficult to quantify - for whom adherence to Administration was also a matter of conviction. They belonged to the old Revolution Whig families, whose commitment to the Hanoverian monarchy and its safeguarding of Scots Presbyterianism was firm. They included the Elliots of Minto, the Earls of

³² A.M. Lang, *A Life of George Dempster, Scottish M.P. of Dunnichen, 1732-181* (New York, 1998), p.120-1.

³³ BL, Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35509, f.266, Robert Murray Keith to Lord Suffolk, 1 Dec. 1775.

³⁴ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Mackye (1707-97). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014].

³⁵ *Ibid.*, James Grant (1738-1811). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014].

Loudoun, the Leslies of Rothes, and the Homes of Marchmont, as well as the Dukes of Argyll.³⁶

Not all have left records of their opinions, but there is some evidence of personal views.

Thomas Leslie was not a prominent politician, and is not a character who invites sympathy.

MP for Perth Burghs till 1761, he was a typical whinging Scot. The impoverished younger son of a noble family (the Earls of Rothes), he was attached to Pelham, then Newcastle. By 1747 he had secured the office of barrack-master for Scotland, which he held for twenty years. In permanent financial difficulties, he made a string of appeals to Newcastle for assistance in retaining his seat. Newcastle, reluctantly and occasionally, helped out. Once secure, Leslie then used his position in Parliament to seek pensions and preferment for his relations. What is interesting about his letters to Newcastle is what they reveal about the nature of his commitment to the Crown and the King's ministers. His loyalty to the Crown was given through the Pelhams (after the death of his grandfather, Lord Tweeddale), and seen in terms of an old-fashioned, almost feudal relationship of man and servant, with the corresponding obligations on both sides. In seeking the barrack-master post, he wrote, 'I am a Whig, and of a Whig family, ready to serve your Grace and therefore ought to be taken care of'. Facing bankruptcy in 1757, he wrote, 'I must soon be in a condition of being no longer serviceable to your Grace or be able to attend my duty in Parliament after so long a series of years'. And in another letter to Newcastle, in February 1761, he continued the same theme:

I would gladly hope that for such a small sum your Grace would not allow an old servant to be affronted and an old family who have served the Crown faithfully, beat out of their interest by an upstart.³⁷

Although often forward-looking where economic change was concerned, and British in their outlook, the Scots were generally conservative in their approach to constitutional issues and matters of law and order. Such attitudes can be detected in one or two of the army MPs who

³⁶ C.A. Whatley, 'Reformed Religion, Regime Change: Scottish Whigs and the Struggle for the 'Soul' of Scotland, c.1688 – c.1788', *Scottish Historical Review*, 92 (2013), pp. 66–99.

³⁷ BL, Add MS, 32918, f. 240, Leslie to Newcastle, 3 Feb. 1761, quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon Thomas Leslie (c.1701-72). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014]. The upstart was George Dempster.

have left records and in prominent politicians such as Gilbert Elliot and Henry Dundas. Elliot's interventions in debates were frequently on the subject of parliamentary authority. He supported Administration over Wilkes and the Middlesex election and over the printers' case, and it was his strong commitment to the authority of King and Parliament which led him to oppose the American colonists. Throughout the dispute and into the war, Elliot upheld the constitutional right of the British Parliament to tax its colonies. He voted in support of enforcing the Stamp Act, spoke in support of the government's constitutional position that colonial petitions against taxes could not be admitted, and voted against repeal.³⁸ But his principles were tempered by an appreciation of the realities of the situation and he was no hard-liner. In April 1774 he saw 'not the least degree of absurdity' in taxing subjects 'over whom you declared you had an absolute right', but went on to suggest that periods of unrest were not the best times to give effect to this.³⁹ The following year he supported North's conciliation commission.⁴⁰

Army MPs were generally strong government supporters. James Masterton, writing to fellow army officer, James Grant of Ballindalloch, declared simply, 'I am always for supporting the King and his Ministers, I detest Opposition' and was quick to dissociate himself from possible accusations of self-interest, by adding, 'What I have is my own, I have nothing from Government'.⁴¹ Alexander Mackay's allegiance to government was more considered. Fourth son of George, 3rd Lord Reay, he was MP for Sutherland, 1761-68, and Tain Burghs, 1768-73. He had served with Cope during the '45 and thereafter gave long years of service in the army.

³⁸ R.C. Simmons and P.D.G.Thomas (eds.), *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America, 1754-1783*, (New York, 1982), vol. 2, p.26.

³⁹ J. Cobbett (ed.), *The Parliamentary History of England: from the earliest period to the year 1803* (London, 1814), vol. 17, col. 1288, Gilbert Elliot, 22 April 1774, Oxford Digital Library, < <http://www2.odl.ox.ac.uk>>. [Accessed 3 April 2015].

⁴⁰ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Gilbert Elliot (1722-77). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014]. By this time he intervened rarely in debates. He died in 1777.

⁴¹ NRS, Macpherson-Grant of Ballindalloch, GD 494 NRAS 771, Bundle 553, James Masterton to James Grant, 19 Jan. 1764. However, he did not turn down the sinecure post of Barrack-master of Scotland, which Lawrence Dundas obtained for him in 1769.

In 1768 he was put in charge of the troops sent to maintain order in Boston. Back in Parliament the following year, with first-hand knowledge of the situation, he spoke in the debate on the Townshend duties, and was not afraid to be critical of the British government's actions, to which he had been party. He thought the Stamp Act, for which he had voted, had proved to be a bad measure. He now (5 March 1770) recognised the strength of feeling in America against Britain's assertion of the right to impose taxes, and felt that things had got out of hand largely due to insufficient attention paid in Britain to the situation in the colonies, with the result that the restoration of law and order should now be a prime objective.⁴² Mackay was not the only commander to understand the position in America. Ralph Abercromby, MP for Clackmannanshire 1774-80 and the hero of the battle of Alexandria, was in a more difficult position than Mackay because he was privately sympathetic to the American cause and had considered giving up his seat.⁴³ In another illustration of where Scots felt their loyalties lay, his sense of obligation to the Crown prevented him from speaking out in Parliament, while his obligations to his constituents prevented him from resigning his seat. He managed to solve his dilemma, at least temporarily, by remaining in Ireland and avoiding an American command. Uncomfortable with the complex demands of parliamentary life, he left the House in 1780.⁴⁴ In the Lords, both the Earl of Loudoun and the Earl of Dunmore were army officers on active service and both were reliable administration supporters, but Dunmore was one of the few Scots peers to vote for repeal of the Stamp Act. He subsequently, after his time as a colonial governor, campaigned for compensation for the American loyalists who had lost out when America gained its independence.⁴⁵

⁴² History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon. Alexander Mackay (1717-89). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014].

⁴³ See above, p. 46.

⁴⁴ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Ralph Abercromby (1734-1801). [Accessed 24 Dec. 2014]. Clackmannanshire, as a paired constituency, did not return a Member in 1780.

⁴⁵ John E. Selby, 'Murray, John, fourth Earl of Dunmore (1732-1809)', *ODNB* 2009. [Accessed online 24 Dec. 2014].

Like most of the Scots MPs, Henry Dundas was firmly on the side of 'authority'. He entered Parliament in 1774 as Solicitor-General (Scotland) moving to the Lord Advocate's post in May 1775. Speaking on North's American conciliation proposals, he took the same line as Elliot had done, insisting on the 'absolute supremacy of this country' and refusing to contemplate any concessions until the colonists accepted this.⁴⁶ In 1778 he again opposed North's proposal for a conciliation commission. But by 1780 he was forced to accept reality, recognising, in a letter to Lord Chancellor Thurlow that further attempts by Britain to restore its authority over the colonies would not succeed. The conflict seems to have influenced his attitudes to electoral reform at home. Having earlier in his career supported a measure of reform in Scotland, he was now firmly opposed to any democratic moves, writing in the same letter to Thurlow:

Every particle subtracted from the monarchical and added to the democratical part of the constitution of Great Britain is an addition to its ... weakness... preservation of the Monarchy is the most creditable option It is monstrous that any set of men should be so blind ... or wicked as to contend with one breath that the whole mass of the people is Dissipated and corrupt, and with the same breath to argue that the constitutional power of that mass should be enlarged.⁴⁷

The balancing act of allegiances was particularly difficult for ambitious MPs, often lawyers who lacked personal wealth and were dependent on others for their careers. Alexander Wedderburn and Henry Dundas both came into this category, where personal loyalties and beliefs clashed with self-interest. Wedderburn's early career promised much. In Edinburgh, he had mixed with the key Enlightenment figures - Adam Smith, a lifelong friend, William Robertson, and David Hume, whose side he had taken when Hume was denied a university chair. He chaired the Select Society, was a friend of Alexander Carlyle, and also of John Home, Church of Scotland minister and well-known playwright. After a much-publicised fall-out with

⁴⁶ Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, vol. 18, col. 332, Henry Dundas, 27 Oct. 1775. [Accessed 28 June 2015].

⁴⁷ HCJ, 4 May 1775; NRS, Papers of the Dundas Family of Melville, GD51/3, copy Letter from Henry Dundas, Lord Advocate, Melville, to the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, 6 Oct 1780.

the Scottish Bench, Wedderburn left Scotland for London and the English Bar. He aimed high and, during a successful career, he held a number of top legal and political posts.⁴⁸ His first seat in Parliament was for Ayr Burghs, where he was returned on the interest of Lord Bute in 1761. He then sat briefly (1768-9) for the pocket borough of Richmond on Lawrence Dundas's interest, and thereafter for various English seats belonging to Robert Clive. He was generally admitted to be a forceful and effective speaker, strongly and consistently defending government policy during the difficult years of the American war.

Yet, as Alex. Murdoch, his *ODNB* biographer comments, he has never enjoyed a high reputation, being seen as one who allowed ambition and self-interest to determine his actions, ready to press his own suit at every opportunity. He certainly switched sides on several occasions when self-interest dictated it and his reputation never really recovered from his blatant about-turn in 1771, when he accepted the post of Solicitor-General, having been a strong supporter of Wilkes and the opposition over the Middlesex election. His conduct attracted fierce criticism at the time: even the King spoke of his 'duplicity'. His reputation probably suffered further from the nature of his 'betrayal', in the eyes of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historians of the Whig school. In their view, he went from being a popular hero who supported the cause of 'Wilkes and liberty' to being a turncoat who jumped ship for the sake of government office. An entry in the late nineteenth-century of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, written by Alexander Hastie Millar, a fellow-Scot and former Dundee city librarian, commented, "This conversion [ie his acceptance of the post of solicitor-general] has justly been described as 'one of the most flagrant cases of ratting' in our party annals". The source of the original quotation is not given, but the author's view is made clear.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Among them the posts of Solicitor-General (1771-78), Attorney-General (1778-80), Lord Chief Justice in the Court of Common Pleas (1780-1793), 1st Commissioner of the Great Seal (1783) and Lord Chancellor(1793-1801).

⁴⁹ Alexander Hastie Millar, 'Wedderburn, Alexander (1733-1805)', *Dictionary of National Biography 1885-1900* (DNB00). < [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wedderburn,_Alexander_\(1733-1805\)_\(DNB00\)](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wedderburn,_Alexander_(1733-1805)_(DNB00))>. [Accessed 9 March 2015].

Henry Brougham, another Scot, and strong Whig supporter, had this to say of Wedderburn's motivation in accepting a post in Pitt's government:

He had under the Coalition [1783] enjoyed a foretaste of the great banquet of dignity and patronage, emolument and power on which he had so immoveably fixed his long-sighted and penetrating eye; having been Chief Commissioner of the Great Seal during the short life of that justly unpopular administration. This scanty repast but whetted his appetite the more.⁵⁰

His death in 1805 occasioned no eulogies, no great expressions of regret, or even warmth. His obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* simply reported the fact of his demise and recited the offices he had held.⁵¹ Yet he was not alone in changing allegiances during a period of ministerial instability and shifting factions, and he remained largely faithful to both Grenville, even when in opposition, and to North. Like most Scots, he was attached to King rather than to party, and he does appear to have been convinced of the rightness of the government's position over the American colonies. But as a lawyer, he could obviously speak to whatever brief he was handed, and the blatant nature of his self-promotion did no favours for the reputation of Scots MPs in general.

Henry Dundas, equally ambitious, has enjoyed a more mixed reputation. Aware of his own abilities in Parliament, he gambled on the fact that he was indispensable as a government speaker in the House of Commons, pursuing first the sole possession of the Signet, then, when this was reluctantly granted, possession of the Signet for life. The King was enraged at his blatant place-seeking:

The more I think on the conduct of the advocate of Scotland the more I am incensed against him; more favours have been heaped on the shoulders of that

⁵⁰ Henry, Lord Brougham, *Historical Sketches of Statesmen in the time of George III* (London and Glasgow, 1855), p. 174.
<<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=bMcxAQAAIAAJ&q=loughborough#v=snippet&q=loughborough&f=false>>.
[Accessed 10 March 2015].

⁵¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Jan. 1805.

man than ever was bestowed on any Scotch lawyer ... but men of talents when not accompanied with integrity are pests instead of blessings.⁵²

He intrigued, but without malice, against both Lords Sandwich at the Admiralty and Germain, as Secretary of State for America, attempting to pin the blame for defeat in the American war on them, and to secure their removal. When North resigned, Dundas stayed on in the Rockingham Administration which followed, till he was removed. It would be unfair to dismiss Dundas as simply another Scot on the make, although he was that, too. He was not solely motivated by personal gain, as perhaps Wedderburn was, and his reputation was tarnished by impeachment at the end of his career, but extensive obituaries recognised his personal qualities as well as his contribution to public life, without glossing over the less attractive traits of his character.⁵³ His philosophy of government was both cohesive and pragmatic, and to him is attributed the gradual development of a Scottish Tory party, based on the monarchy, upholding the law, protecting religion and property and maintaining the existing social order. Although much of this lies beyond the scope of this work, the main elements of Dundas's thinking were evident by the mid-1780s, and his beliefs were ones which many Scots MPs could support.⁵⁴

Although most Scots MPs, for a variety of reasons, were Administration supporters, there was a small, but growing group who were prepared to side with the opposition on some of the important issues of the period. The table below shows those voting against Administration in divisions arising as a result of the Middlesex election.

⁵² Fortescue, *Correspondence of George III*, vol. 4. p. 41 quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754- 90, Henry Dundas (1742-1811). [Accessed 6 Jan. 2015].

⁵³ A lengthy appraisal appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, Aug. 1811, pp. 32-40, while the *Gentleman's Magazine* offered a much more fulsome tribute than for Wedderburn (*Gentleman's Magazine*, June 1811, pp. 677-8).

⁵⁴ For Dundas's political philosophy, see D. Brown, 'The Government of Scotland under Henry Dundas and William Pitt', *History*, 41 (1998), pp. 265-279. (accessed online); also J.Dwyer and A. Murdoch, 'Paradigms and Politics: Manners, Morals and the Rise of Henry Dundas, 1770-1784' in J.Dwyer, R. Mason, & A. Murdoch, (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 210-248.

Table 16 Scots Opposition MPs on Wilkes and the Middlesex Election ⁵⁵

<i>Date</i>	<i>Motion</i>	<i>Govt majority</i>	<i>Scots voting against Administration</i>	<i>Known Scots absentees</i>
6 Feb. 1764	for the warrant for Wilkes's arrest to be produced	217:122	Pryse Campbell Daniel Campbell Sir Alex. Gilmour	James Murray (Broughton)
17 Feb. 1764	On the illegality of general warrants	234:220	Pryse Campbell Daniel Campbell Sir Alex. Gilmour, George Dempster James Grant, James Murray (Br.)	Carnegie Lord Panmure Thomas Miller (LA) Andrew Mitchell James Wemyss
25 Jan. 1770	that the Middlesex election had been judged according to the laws and customs of Great Britain	224:182	Lord Fife James Murray (Br.) George Dempster Alex. Wedderburn* John Hope William Pulteney*	
26 April 1773	leave to bring in a bill to secure rights of electors		George Dempster James Dundas Alex. Garden James Murray (Br.) Sir George Suttie	

* representing English constituencies

During the years of the Wilkes controversy, over a dozen Scots MPs are known to have recorded their dissent from the Government's position, several doing so repeatedly. It may be that Namier was right in his assertion that Scots were 'less ready to see the significance of constitutional issues' but the evidence suggests this is too generalised a judgment.⁵⁶ As constitutional issues developed, it is clear that Scots both listened and contributed to the arguments. On 12 May 1768 at a meeting of government men of business, Pryse Campbell spoke against the immediate expulsion of Wilkes. Gilbert Elliot, on the other hand, consistent

⁵⁵ BL, Newcastle Papers, Add MS 32955, ff.370-3, Add MS 32955, ff.405-7; J. Almon, *Debates and Proceedings* vol. 8, p.190; *Middlesex Journal*, 5 June 1773.

⁵⁶ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p.170.

with his principles, took the opposite view.⁵⁷ George Dempster, having initially supported Administration over Wilkes in November 1763, was unconvinced of the legality of General Warrants and both spoke and voted with the opposition in February 1764. A surprising absentee during this division was the Lord Advocate, Thomas Miller, a man of reputed independent views, whose non-attendance, it was suggested, might have been deliberate.⁵⁸ John Hope, struggling between family loyalty and his conscience, eventually voted with the opposition on 8 May 1769 on the Middlesex election and again on 25 Jan 1770.⁵⁹ However, most of the Scots in opposition enjoyed a degree of independence in exercising their votes. Dempster, Pryse Campbell, Daniel Campbell, William Pulteney, Alexander Garden and Lord Fife were, for various reasons, not closely tied to patrons. James Grant was not particularly committed to a parliamentary career, while James Murray of Broughton was, at least till the collapse of the Ayr Bank, sufficiently wealthy to risk the wrath of his Administration-supporting Galloway connections.

Most of those who opted for opposition had to abandon any ambitions of holding government office, as George Dempster came to realise. As an opposition MP, he was less open than many to accusations of self-interest. From a different standpoint to Elliot, but equally cohesive in his thinking about the constitution, he valued above all the liberty it offered, and the protection it provided from tyranny and over-powerful monarchs or nobles. He spoke in opposition to the proposed stamp duties, one of the few to do so, and predictably voted for repeal.⁶⁰ After the outbreak of hostilities, he set out his principles very clearly in 1774, opposing both the Boston Port Bill and the Bill for the impartial administration of justice in Massachusetts Bay. Arguing

⁵⁷ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Pryse Campbell (1727-68); *Ibid.*, Gilbert Elliot (1722-77). [Both accessed 26 Dec. 2014].

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Thomas Miller (1717-89). [Accessed 26 Dec. 2014].

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, John Hope (1739-85). [Accessed 26 Dec. 2014].

⁶⁰ Simmons and Thomas, *Proceedings and Debates*, vol. 2, p. 14; BL, Newcastle Papers, Add MS 32974, f. 23-4, f. 25.

that problems with the colonies stemmed from the Stamp Duty, he went on to criticise the measures proposed for restoring British authority there. On the proposal to bring Americans to England for trial, he stated this was 'not only a breach of their constitution, but a deprivation of the right of any British subject in America', reminding the House of the oppression from which many original settlers had fled. Having set out his principles, he then went on to offer detailed objections to specific points in the Bill.⁶¹ As disaster approached, he abandoned constitutional arguments, lambasting the government and army leaders for their mismanagement of the whole business and for failing to see the inevitable outcome of their policies:

The project thus blindly formed seems to have been as blindly adopted by Lord George Germain, and these two blind guides [Sandwich and Germain] seem to have led the poor army into the ditch.... Between 'em they have decided the fate of 13 provinces ... not to have foreseen that in the contest America would be almost unanimous, that the expense of sending and feeding 50,000 men across the Atlantic would be immense, that their efforts would be fruitless in a country of wood and marsh, and lastly, that half the concessions before taking the field would have been more acceptable than all that have been made at the end of an unsuccessful campaigne [*sic*].⁶²

Although Dempster was a much more forceful speaker than Alexander Mackay, a confirmed Administration supporter, their views were not dissimilar. They both disliked financial extravagance. One of Dempster's recurrent complaints was of oppressive taxation caused by the high cost of foreign wars. Mackay's concern was with wastefulness in the army, alerting Jenkinson at the War Office to hugely inflated army accounts, and suggesting reforms to the system to reduce the extent of abuse.⁶³ He returned to the subject a few months later, Jenkinson observing that Mackay was determined 'to put an end to every improper charge' and that 'these accounts will at last come before the Commissioners of Accounts, who will

⁶¹ Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, vol. 17, col. 1316, George Dempster, May 6, 1774.

⁶² Lang, *Dempster*, pp. 106-7.

⁶³ BL, Liverpool Papers, Add MS 38213, f.73, Hon. Alexander Mackay to Jenkinson, 25 Jan 1780.

discover and disclose every Extravagance or Fraud'.⁶⁴ Unlike Dempster, however, Mackay's solution was to work from within the establishment, rather than join the opposition attacks in Parliament.

In conclusion, it would be unfair to dismiss the Scots MPs as an unthinking bloc vote, or, in the light of Namier's exposé of the cant and hypocrisy present in this rank of society generally, to regard them as significantly different from English MPs. Some MPs lacked commitment, but by no means all, and most would have seen themselves first and foremost as loyal subjects of the Crown. While large numbers held places, in the state or the army, these were often regarded as a reward for service given. Many of the top posts were received late in life and held for relatively short periods of time. There were those who struggled with their consciences when faced with conflicting demands, yet alongside them were others with an ability to see through and laugh at hypocrisy, as shown by numerous comments in private correspondence and satirical pamphlets. For those who thought about their political philosophy, most were on the side of 'authority', preferring 'order' to 'disorder'. They no longer feared royal tyranny, trusting in Parliament and the Constitution to protect them from this, but had no wish to see further constitutional change, and were strongly opposed to demands for electoral reform, views in which they were confirmed by events in America and, later, in France.

Allegiance to a political party was yet another factor in the complex equation of loyalties. In Britain generally, in the later part of the century, politics was characterised by a change from one dominated by factions based largely on personal friendship and connections, to one where political parties assumed greater importance. There has been considerable debate surrounding the timing of the re-appearance of party after the political instability of the middle

⁶⁴ Ibid., Add MS 38308, f.174, 20 Feb. 1781.

years of the century.⁶⁵ O’Gorman dated the rise of the Rockingham Whigs to the period following the short-lived Rockingham ministry of 1765-6, arguing that, although based initially on the same personal friendships and connections as other factions, its long years in opposition in the 1760s and 1770s helped it shed its ‘fairweather’ friends along with some of the independent country gentlemen whose natural inclination was to support Administration.⁶⁶ At the 1768 election it was reduced to a core of some fifty committed supporters, mostly grouped around Rockingham, Newcastle, Cavendish, Portland and some other prominent families, but also including about sixteen MPs who were independent of patron influence. He argues that the party developed political principles and, through Edmund Burke, an ideology expressed most clearly in his *Thoughts on the cause of the present discontents*, first published in 1770. Donald Ginter put the arrival of party rather later, to the 1784 election at the earliest, placing more emphasis on other attributes of a political party than ideology – propaganda, popular appeal and organisation. He claimed that not till the decade following 1783 did the Whigs become the focus for ‘every opposition group of any significance within Parliament’.⁶⁷ No other political grouping of this period could really lay claim to the title of ‘party’. Linda Colley has argued that the Tory party, although proscribed, lived on till the accession of George III with an identifiable ideology and support base, but concedes that its inability to deal with the issues raised by the American dispute in the 1760s and beyond resulted in ‘confusion and dispersal’.⁶⁸ Other groupings were like the Bedfords,

⁶⁵ Peter Thomas, in a review of Namier’s *Structure of Politics*, put the debate into its historiographical context: Professor Peter Thomas, review of *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III (1957)*, in *Reviews in History* (June, 1997), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/32a>. [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

⁶⁶ O’Gorman, *The Rise of Party*, p. 223; O’Gorman, *The Emergence of the British two-party system, 1760-1832* (London, 1982), pp. 6-7.

⁶⁷ Donald Ginter, *Whig Organisation in the General Election of 1790* (London, 1967), pp. xix-xx.

⁶⁸ Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party, 1714-60* (Cambridge 1982), p. 291.

who were influential, and often in government during this period, but essentially a group of men with personal connections to John Russell, 4th Duke of Bedford.⁶⁹

Both O’Gorman and Ginter, irrespective of differences in the timing, see the rise of party as beginning with an opposition group, essentially the Rockingham Whigs. In this scenario, and given the prevailing perceptions of Scots MPs as largely placemen and pensioners, attached to Administration, it might be anticipated that Scots MPs would be unlikely to feature prominently in the early coalescing of groups into political parties. And this is largely true. That is not to say that they always voted en masse for Administration. On at least two occasions for which we have evidence in the earlier part of the period, they formed their own faction behind the Scots leader. The first was in 1755, when, in a disputed election result, thirty of the Scots MPs followed the Duke of Argyll’s lead, and voted against the Administration candidates.⁷⁰ Despite attempts to detach Scots from the Argyll camp, only seven of the Scots MPs voted with Administration, and a further three absented themselves. This, however, reflected more of a power struggle between Argyll and Newcastle than any major constitutional issue.

The second occasion occurred in a much more complex situation, the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766. The House as a whole was deeply divided over this, as were the Scots. There were several divisions and there is no definitive list of how MPs voted on the subject.⁷¹ Bute had come out of his retirement to oppose repeal, and was supported by the majority of the Scots MPs, including most of the army and navy officers, the Lord Advocate and other office-holders such as Oswald and Elliot. There were at least eight absentees, and only around eleven Scots voted for Administration. The Administration supporters were not simply placemen or reliable

⁶⁹ Powell, ‘Bedford Whigs’, *ODNB* online. [Accessed 27 Dec 2014].

⁷⁰ L. Colley, ‘The Mitchell Election Division, 1755’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 44 (1976), pp. 80-107.

⁷¹ See Appendix 1.

government supporters like Gilmour, the diplomat Andrew Mitchell and Charles Hope Weir. They also included one or two independent-minded MPs, such as George Dempster and Pryce Campbell as well as Lord William Campbell, who broke ranks with his brothers on this issue, and possibly John Pringle. Dempster was consistent in his voting. He spoke and voted against the Stamp Act, then voted for its repeal, and, on Rockingham's fall from office, followed him into opposition. Of those with places who voted against Administration, two at least put consistency and principle first. Gilbert Elliot, treasurer of the Chamber, a salaried post in the King's household, which he had held from 1762, was a firm believer in British supremacy over the colonies, a view shared by his colleague, James Oswald.

So by the mid-1760s, there is evidence that some Scots, like some English MPs, were dividing on matters of principle, rather than on the dictates of office or patron. This, however, is not the same as belonging to a political party, and there were other factors which made them disinclined to participate in emerging political parties. A number had a decided aversion to the politics of faction, or party, though this did not preclude their coalescing around a Scots leader on occasion. Lowe and Murdoch claim that the Scottish elite became disillusioned with British politics from the mid-1760s, and a number chose to opt out.⁷² Even some who did not leave Parliament became disenchanted with the demands of patronage and the prevalence of faction. Stuart Mackenzie, having thankfully been relieved of the position of Scottish Minister in 1765, adopted a much lower profile. The Earl of Eglinton, a Representative Peer, referring to the repeal of the Stamp Act, wrote of the 'damd confusion' of the political situation, where 'disunion and faction reign everywhere'.⁷³ Gilbert Elliot, having transferred his loyalty to Grenville on the resignation of Bute, was horrified by Bute's attempt, in 1763, to come to an arrangement with Pitt, and wrote to his father, disclaiming all knowledge of what he saw as

⁷² Lowe, 'Bishops and Representative Peers', pp. 99-100; Murdoch *People Above*, p.124.

⁷³ NRS, Papers of the Viscounts and Barons of Elibank, GD32/24/19, Alexander, 10th Earl of Eglinton, to General Murray, 13 March 1766.

intrigue and threatened to resign his post.⁷⁴ James Duff, independent-minded, former (if unreliable) government supporter and courtier, joined the ranks of the disgruntled, 'I wish to God party was at an end and that they would care for the country. I care not a twopence for either of them'. And, on the formation of the North-Fox coalition, he wrote to Sir James Grant, 'Thank God I am connected with no faction or party and I wish those now come in may do public service well. I have fear they won't long agree'.⁷⁵

In some respects the Scots' dislike of faction was the same as that of English MPs. They felt uneasy at the instability in politics generally, and in the minds of some, faction was still associated with unpatriotic opposition to the King's administration. Other reasons were peculiarly Scottish. From the mid-1760s, they lacked a leader of their own of sufficient stature. This is perhaps a reflection on the quality of the Representative Peers at the time who, while looking after their own interests, failed to take over from Bute, who, of course, remained a Representative Peer. Of the ducal Peers, John Murray, 3rd Duke of Atholl, and Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon, were quite recent appointees, while the 4th Duke of Argyll, father of Lord Lorne and Lord Frederick Campbell, was not politically astute, and little interested in following in the footsteps of his Argyll predecessors.⁷⁶ Among the MPs in the Commons, Stuart Mackenzie, Bute's brother, was not interested, Gilbert Elliot of insufficient rank, while Lord Frederick Campbell's tenure of the post of Lord Privy Seal in 1765, with the prospect of handling patronage, was cut short by the vicissitudes of politics at the time.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ His growing disillusionment with party politics is evident in his family correspondence: History of Parliament online, Gilbert Elliot, 1722-77. [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

⁷⁵ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon. James Duff (1729-1809). [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, John Campbell of Mamore (1693-1770). [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Lord Frederick Campbell (1729-1816). [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

Another factor in the Scots' disengagement from emerging parties was that, although there were a few exceptions, like the Campbells, most of the MPs had no personal or family connections with the main English political leaders. Nor did they sit in Parliament on the interests of these men. It might have been expected that the Representative Peers, with their greater English links, would have drawn them into English political groupings. But, as noted earlier, most of the English marriages were with wealthy heiresses of lower rank, not members of the aristocracy. In any case, the Scots Peers, with their distinctive and inferior status, were inclined to stay aloof from party politics in the Lords. At the same time, this was the period when Scots in general were subjected to fierce and continuing attacks in the English press. The quote below is from 1774, more than a decade after Bute left office:

The greatest part of our several ambassadors, envoys and governors of islands and provinces are Scotch..... Scotch Lords in the House of Peers ever vote for the Minister ... Scotch members, amounting to seventy, receive a certain stipend quarterly for the bare prostitution of their votes..... Lord Bute is director-general of the cabinet, Lord Mansfield is public guardian of our laws.⁷⁸

It is hardly surprising therefore that, on the death of Grenville in 1771, most Scots returned to supporting Administration, either from conviction, from self-interest or simply from lack of viable alternatives. This remained the case till that loyalty was strained by failure in the American war. James Duff was one of the critics:

I pray God that punishment may fall on the heads of those who have made so bad a use of the great exerted force of this country and misspent so much blood and treasure.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ *Middlesex Journal*, 7 May 1774. This journal was, of course, the mouthpiece of John Wilkes, but it was by no means unique in its attitude.

⁷⁹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Hon. James Duff (1729-1809). [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

By 1780 more Scots were to be found among the opposition. Some, like James Duff, were simply disaffected ex-government supporters, but the newer MPs, unlike the politicians of the 1750s, were much more likely, on occasions, to take an independent line in Parliament, with the result that they are difficult to pigeonhole. One of these was William Adam, son of the architect John Adam of Blair Adam, who came into Parliament as MP for Gatton, an English constituency, in 1774, but was returned for Wigtown Burghs in 1780. Initially taking an independent line, he then supported North, and later became a manager for the opposition to Pitt's Administration. Adam wrote to his father in 1775 about the move to rescind the vote on the Middlesex election, 'You will be surprised to hear that I voted in the minority', emphasising that he had done it from conviction. He had evidently been sounded out about speaking for the ministry, but, disagreeing with their position, had refused.⁸⁰

Sir Gilbert Elliot, who took over his father's seat in Roxburghshire on the latter's death in 1777, also had mixed views. Despite an initial inclination to follow the traditional Scots line of supporting Administration, he disliked North's conduct of the American war. He was also attracted by Burke's arguments on economical reform and voted with the opposition on Dunning's motion. Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran was a lawyer who made a determined and successful assault on the aristocratic hold on Ayrshire, in 1774, a seat which he held for ten years before transferring to Edinburgh.⁸¹ Generally a government supporter, and an acolyte of Henry Dundas, his contributions to debates were often on Scottish issues, but with friendships which included George Dempster and William Pulteney, he could express independent views on American affairs, the government of India and constitutional matters at home. John Sinclair of Ulbster entered Parliament in 1780, for Caithness, the beginning of a long parliamentary career during which he sat for various constituencies, Caithness being represented only in alternate Parliaments. Initially an independent, he early on associated with those from

⁸⁰ Blair Adam Muniments, NRAS 63, Box 1, William Adam to John Adam, 23 Feb. 1775.

⁸¹ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Sir Adam Fergusson (1733-1813). [Accessed 27 Dec. 2014].

commercial backgrounds. A shared interest in economic affairs brought him closer to William Pitt, but disillusionment with government economic policies saw him return to opposition and it was as an opposition MP that he embarked on the Statistical Account in 1790.

Such men were not the traditional Scots placemen, but, with the exception of William Adam, nor could they really be called party politicians. There was, however, a trickle of Scots MPs who were gradually attracted to the opposition centred round Rockingham from the mid-1760s. Among the earliest were Sir Alexander Gilmour, previously attached to Newcastle, and James Murray of Broughton (MP for Wigtonshire 1762-68 and Kirkcudbright Stewartry, 1768-74). Although no leading light in the party, Murray was a personal friend of Rockingham, and loyally supported him in and out of Administration.⁸² Gilmour and Murray were the only two Scots to oppose Bute's peace preliminaries in 1762. Gilmour, however, was little more than a placeman, and left to support the Chatham Administration. Murray remained till 1774, and was joined by George Dempster.⁸³ O'Gorman suggests that by the time of the 1780 election Rockingham was able to count six Scots MPs among his supporters.⁸⁴ Dempster remained, joined by Lawrence Dundas, now a regular opponent of Administration, his son, Thomas, who was married to a niece of Rockingham, and nephew Charles, returned in 1781 for Orkney and Shetland. James, Viscount Maitland, the eldest son of a Scots peer (7th Earl of Lauderdale), sat for an English constituency and became attached to the Rockinghams through one of its newer connections, that of Charles James Fox, of whom Maitland was a great admirer. The sixth was John Shaw Stewart, a wealthy Scot of independent views, who was returned for Renfrewshire

⁸² O'Gorman, *Rise of Party*, pp. 478-9.

⁸³ Gilmour was elected for Edinburghshire in 1761 as a Newcastle supporter. In Rockingham's administration, he received the post of Clerk Comptroller, Board of the Green Cloth, a post in the Royal Household, which he held till 1775. After the fall of Rockingham, he supported successively Chatham, Grafton, then North, till he left Parliament in 1774. James Murray, also in financial difficulties after the Ayr Bank collapse, left Parliament at the same time.

⁸⁴ O'Gorman, *Rise of Party*, pp. 429-30.

in 1780, and although, due to an electoral agreement, he sat in Parliament only till 1783, he voted consistently with opposition for the last year of his tenure of the seat.

There are differing views on when Scots fitted in to the emergent party system, but most would put a date beyond the scope of this research. Namier and Brooke's conclusion, that by 1784, 'not only were Scottish Members divided in the House along party lines, but there were in Scotland itself rudimentary party organizations' seems rather early.⁸⁵ Ginter's dating of organised opposition, generally, to this period, is admittedly based on the electoral activities of William Adam, in forty-five English and six Scottish constituencies at the 1784 election.⁸⁶ Wilkinson, Adam's *ODNB* biographer, however, is more cautious about the significance of these activities in party terms, commenting that it was not till 1790 that Adam added a Scottish dimension to the organisation.⁸⁷ David Brown is equally cautious about Henry Dundas's attitude, stating that he did not really subscribe to the notion of party politics before the 1790s, and that Scottish politicians were not sufficiently consistent in their behaviour to be safely attached to one or other political party.⁸⁸ This seems a reasonable conclusion, based on the evidence above of the behaviour of some of the new intake of MPs. Few at national level, certainly before 1784, were prepared to attach themselves firmly, consistently and from political conviction to any one party grouping. There was less automatic adherence to Administration, but it appears that, for the majority of Scots, party loyalty was not yet an important consideration, while at local level in Scotland, political differences were frequently expressed in terms of local issues, particularly the struggle of the lesser gentry against aristocratic or dominant landowner influence in elections, rather than opposing political ideologies.

⁸⁵ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol.1, p.175.

⁸⁶ Ginter, *Whig Organisation*, introduction, p. xx.

⁸⁷ David Wilkinson, 'Adam, William (1751-1839)', *ODNB* 2004. [Accessed 27 Dec 2014].

⁸⁸ D. Brown, 'Henry Dundas and the Government of Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1989), p.94.

The final section in this chapter explores the various identities open to Scots MPs in the eighteenth century, and the influence of each on their attitudes and behaviour, looking ultimately to assess both the contribution made by Scots MPs to a British state and the extent to which they retained a sense of national Scottish identity. Linda Colley's argument for the emergence of a British identity, sometime between 1707 and 1837, has spawned further works examining different aspects of the changing identities observed during the course of the century.⁸⁹ Colley saw the emergence of a genuinely British ruling class by the end of the century.⁹⁰ Leaving aside the question of how 'British' the English political classes felt themselves to be, Scots politicians were obviously an important factor in the formation of a ruling class that was not simply English. The desirability of this was not always evident. The 9th Earl of Eglinton, a Representative Peer between 1710 and 1714, had this advice for his young son:

Since we are under the misery and slavery of being united to England, a Scotsman, without prostituting his honour, can obtain nothing by following a Court, but bring his estate under debt, and consequently himself to necessity.

The Earl also counselled against an English marriage:

It will perhaps be proposed to yow [*sic*] to make an English marriage, as that which will bring yow much money. But, if English ladies bring what is considerable with them, they will soon spend it, and some of yours; for their education and way of living differs altogether from yours; therefore make choise [*sic*] of a Scots lady, of an discreet and honourable family, who will apparently be satisfied to live as your

⁸⁹ L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992). For other works, see, for example, S. J. Connolly, 'Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian State', in A. Grant and K.J. Stringer (eds.), *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History* (London, 1995); Eric Evans, 'Englishness and Britishness 1790-1870', in *ibid.*, pp.223-243; Colin Kidd, 'North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-Century British Patriotisms' *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), pp.361-82; R.J. Finlay, 'Caledonia or North Britain? Scottish Identity in the Eighteenth Century' in D. Broun, R.J. Finlay & M. Lynch (eds.), *Image and Identity: The Making and Remaking of Scotland through the Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998), pp.143-56; Alex. Murdoch, 'Scotland and the Idea of Britain in the Eighteenth Century' in T.M. Devine & J.R.Young (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Scotland: New Perspectives* (East Lothian, 1999), pp.106-21; Alex. Murdoch, *British History 1660-1832: national identity and local culture* (Basingstoke, 1998).

⁹⁰ Colley, *Forging the nation*, pp. 147-193; R.Harris, 'Parliamentary Legislation, Lobbying and the Press in eighteenth-century Scotland', *Parliamentary History*, 26 (2007), p. 78 (accessed online).

wife, and In the end yow will be richer with her than with one with an English portion.⁹¹

Later in the century, attitudes had changed and a large degree of social integration had taken place. All Scots politicians, of course, had English connections through their participation in Parliament at Westminster. But, for significant numbers, the links were much wider and, for some, long-standing. This was most noticeable among the Representative Peers. Of the thirty-nine Representative Peers, almost half (nineteen) made an English marriage. University education, where it is known, is almost equally divided between English and Scottish universities, with some attending more than one institution. Place of residence is more difficult to define as many had more than one home. With the exception of Viscount Irvine, all had Scottish estates, which were the basis of the family seat, but others, such as the Dukes of Argyll, the Earl of Bute and the Earl of Breadalbane, inherited English estates, or acquired them by marriage. As Members of Parliament, most would spend part of their year in London, while some, such as the 4th Duke of Queensberry, settled there. Others, in the diplomatic service, the colonial service or the army, or those who simply liked travelling, spent time abroad. Of the thirty-two Representative Peers whose place of death could be determined, fifteen died in England, while another three died abroad.

It is certainly true that many of those who were exposed to English lifestyles much preferred the comforts of the civilised society they enjoyed south of the border. Lord Frederick Campbell was an anglicised Scots MP whose upbringing - education at Westminster School and Oxford University, followed by entry to the Inner Temple - equipped him well for English society. A Bedfordite in the 1760s, he also belonged to a social circle known as 'the Gang' which included his great friend, the Scots diplomat Robert Murray Keith, the Anglo-Scots banker, Henry Drummond, and several English MPs. As a group, they were a mixed bunch. All served as MPs, some more briefly than others, but, like Campbell, none attained the front rank in politics. Born mainly between 1725

⁹¹ W. Robertson, *Ayrshire, Its history and historic families* (Kilmarnock, 1908), vol. 2, p. 93.

and 1730, they had common links through education or the world of finance as well as politics. Richard Rigby, son of a wealthy London woollen draper, had a long political career, from 1745 to 1788. As the manager of the Commons for the Bedfords he also held government office, as a Lord of Trade, and several (successive) sinecure posts. Thomas Bradshaw began as a contractor's clerk. Connections and patronage brought him into the War Office, then the Treasury. He became Grafton's 'Man of Business' in politics. The family of Anthony Chamier, who was related to Bradshaw by marriage, had Huguenot roots. His father was a London merchant and Chamier, starting out as a broker, became one of the leading financiers in the City. Thomas Harley, like Drummond, was the son of a peer (3rd Earl of Oxford) and was also involved in the world of finance, as an army contractor.⁹² Campbell's letters to Murray Keith, mostly written from Coombe Bank, the estate in Kent which Campbell inherited on the death of his father in 1770, and where he spent his later years, demonstrate the easy familiarity which operated among the members of the group.⁹³

While Lord Frederick was an aristocrat, Scots less elevated in the social scale were also attracted to London. Another noticeable, though not large, group with sustained English connections consisted of those with commercial interests. About a dozen Scots MPs had businesses in London, including three with legal practices (Alexander Wedderburn, John Anstruther, and Alexander Hume Campbell). The rest comprised the bankers, merchants such as Sir Alexander Grant of Dalvey and the architect, Robert Adam, representatives of the emerging capitalism which was a recognisable feature of the new British state.⁹⁴ Over thirty of the Scots MPs in the Commons also made English marriages, sometimes bringing English political connections. For example, Adam Drummond married the daughter of the 4th Duke of Bolton. Discounting the three English MPs in

⁹² History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Henry Drummond (1730-95); *ibid.*, Richard Rigby (1722-88), Anthony Chamier (1725-80), Thomas Harley (1730-1804). [All accessed 28 Dec.2014].

⁹³ BL, Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35509.

⁹⁴ Murdoch, *National Identity and Local Culture*, pp. 62-70.

Scottish constituencies, around twenty of the Scots MPs acquired English estates, either through marriage or, like the Dundases, by purchase.⁹⁵ John Sinclair of Ulbster insisted on living in Scotland for the first four years of his marriage, in the face of opposition from his wife's family.⁹⁶ But after his election to Parliament 1780, he moved, along with his family, to live in London and there he remained.⁹⁷ General James Grant (MP for Tain Burghs), a man with extensive military experience in America, also enjoyed the London social life, if not the political exertions of membership of the Commons, as he explained to his kinsman:

To tell you the Truth Parliament is no great object to me. I expect nothing from it but as I shall live in London whether I am in Parliament or not, I should rather like to have it in my Power to go down to the House of Commons as a better sort of Coffee House.⁹⁸

It is also noticeable that MPs in the later Parliaments, such as Sinclair and younger sons of earlier MPs, were more anglicised. Thomas Dundas, son of Sir Lawrence, was educated at Eton, made an English marriage, and got the British peerage his father had craved. Gilbert Elliot, son of the 3rd Baronet, was sent to Oxford, then entered the Inner Temple. He represented both English and Scottish constituencies during his career, and also acquired a British peerage. Consciously or unconsciously, many of these MPs were contributing to a drawing together of the ruling elite in both England and Scotland. This was quite evident in Parliament itself where they mixed with all MPs on committees. Bute's friends in the House included a significant number of English MPs with whom he was connected in various ways, including his son-in-law, James Lowther, an influential politician in the north of England. John Craufurd (MP for Renfrewshire 1774-1780) also had a wide circle of acquaintances, informing

⁹⁵ Scots MPs database.

⁹⁶ He married Sarah Maitland, daughter of a merchant in Stoke Newington.

⁹⁷ Mitchison, *Agricultural Sir John*, pp. 26-33.

⁹⁸ NRS, Seafield Papers, GD248/57/3/84, General James Grant, Melville St., to Sir James Grant of Castle Grant, 27 April 1780.

William Mure that 'at least forty members attended solely on my account' to support him over the Glasgow Bridges Bill in 1774.⁹⁹

Apart from social integration, politicians also learned to think in terms of 'Britain' rather than England or Scotland. This is usually dated from the time of Henry Dundas who held several high British political offices, but Gilbert Elliot, and James Oswald, at the Treasury or the Board of Trade, were also operating in the larger field. Nor were they the only ones. George Dempster regularly spoke about the need to reduce the (British) national debt. Alexander Mackay, embarking on his cost-cutting exercise in the army, wrote to Jenkinson in 1780 requesting details of procedures in England as any reforms 'must take place uniformly across Great Britain'.¹⁰⁰ John Sinclair was another who took the wider view. In 1784 he was writing his *History of the Public Revenue of the British Empire* and a decade later, in 1793, it was Sinclair who persuaded Pitt to set up the (British) Board of Agriculture, with Sinclair as its first President.

Alexander Wedderburn also appreciated the benefits of the Union. His preface to the *Edinburgh Review*, launched in 1755, is worth reading for its reflection of Enlightenment thinking, however unpalatable it may be to twenty-first century nationalist sensitivities. After a recital of the many advantages which the Union had brought, he wrote, 'North Britain may be considered as in a stage of early youth, guided and supported by the mature strength of her kindred country'.¹⁰¹ High on the list of 'advantages' were improved trade, a more civilised society and a better environment for learning and for 'progress'. Wedderburn's reference to North Britain was important. For Britishness to be created, it had to be an amalgam of different identities, not simply Englishness, and for a while, the concept of 'North Britain' offered a hybrid identity. The term had been used periodically since before the Union and is to

⁹⁹ Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol.2, Craufurd to Mure, 7 April 1774.

¹⁰⁰ BL, Liverpool Papers, Add MS 38213, f.73, Mackay to Jenkinson, 25 Jan. 1780.

¹⁰¹ *Edinburgh Review* 1 (1755), pp. 1-4. [Accessed online 18 March 2014].

be found in the House of Commons Papers as a regular form of reference for the group of Scots MPs, usually when their attendance at a committee was invited. Otherwise the terms Scotland and North Britain seem to be used interchangeably in the House of Commons Journals. North Britishness as an identity, however, was a creation of the Enlightenment in Scotland, and was in use from about the middle of the century.¹⁰² Ultimately the concept failed to gain acceptance, but its existence reveals much about contemporary thinking on the subject of Scotland's political identity. Enlightenment academics admired the English constitution. David Hume, in a sweeping survey of English constitutional history, during which he demolished several myths about continuity, concluded nevertheless that it was 'the most perfect and most accurate system of liberty that was ever found compatible with government.'¹⁰³ Economic progress was another important feature of Enlightenment thinking and, as the preface to the *Edinburgh Review* demonstrated, the purpose of emulating England was not to become English, but to take advantage of England's experience to improve Scotland's position, both economically and constitutionally.

Scottish distinctiveness still remained, to make a contribution to the wider polity which was Britain. Contrary to Bruce Lenman's claim, Scottish national identity was not 'snuffed out' in 1707 but it was the Scots who were more affected by Union, having given up their sovereignty in favour of an incorporating Union with England and a reduced representation in a Parliament based at Westminster.¹⁰⁴ The Union is now recognised to have sparked some serious debate at the time about its implications, particularly the possibility of an English-dominated Parliament

¹⁰² See Colin Kidd, 'North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-Century British Patriotisms', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), pp.361-82.

¹⁰³ David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688*, Vol. 2. (1778), Online Library of Liberty, <<http://www.libertyfund.org/online.html>>. [Accessed 1 April 2015].

¹⁰⁴ B. Lenman, 'A Client Society: Scotland between the '15 and the '45', in J. Black (ed.), *Britain in the Age of Walpole* (Basingstoke, 1984), p. 70.

being able to ride roughshod over the terms of the Treaty.¹⁰⁵ In these circumstances the Scots politicians had to determine what it was important to them to retain. While the army became a British institution, the Presbyterian church, with its responsibility for the moral welfare of its congregations and its annual General Assembly, symbolised Scots distinctiveness in an area of life which was important in the eighteenth century. The legal system, based on continental law and codified by James Dalrymple, 1st Viscount Stair, towards the end of the previous century, was a mystery to those not trained in Scotland, and its retention forced separate provision to be made for this in Parliament, in terms of the presence of the Lord Advocate, and, however imperfectly, in terms of separate legislation for Scotland, in cases where English law was inapplicable. The education system and higher institutions were an important indication of Scots' pride in their learning, as the 1755 preface to the *Edinburgh Review* also recognised. These elements remained important to Scots as subsequent events demonstrated. Disputes over lay patronage, and the alarm in Scotland at Henry Dundas's proposal in 1778 to suspend the penalties on Scottish Catholics, illustrated the depth of feeling which could still be roused by any perceived threat to the established religion. The establishment of a repository for Scotland's archives was an indication of the significance attached to the country's written heritage, as was the continued patronage of universities and the arts by the country's leading politicians. There were also, from time to time, expressions of pride in Scotland's martial past, as the row over a Scots militia showed. The point was made explicitly in a letter to Gilbert Elliot, collecting views on the Militia Bill:

There has been, always, a strange, martial, wandering [Turn ?] in our Nation so that wherever there was any broken Heads to be got in Europe , they commonly thrust in theirs without ever obtaining anything more for their country than the credit of breeding brave men.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ John Robertson, 'The Union Debate in Scotland 1698-1707', in J. Robertson (ed.), *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the Union of 1707* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 198-227.

¹⁰⁶ NLS, Minto Papers, MS 11031, f.2,3, John Campbell to Gilbert Elliot, 2 Jan. 1756. Campbell had met with Elliot (in London) the previous evening, and the letter looks like a follow-up to a conversation that took place then. It contains

Professor Smout, in a fairly sweeping assertion, saw Scottish national consciousness as widespread, writing, 'There was hardly a single articulate figure in eighteenth-century Scotland who did not at one time or another firmly, and generally approvingly, describe himself as a Scot'.¹⁰⁷ The extent to which the Scots MPs, arguably the group most exposed to Anglicisation, shared in this perception is not, on the face of it, clear-cut. An affectionate 'warts and all' attachment to Scotland can be found in some correspondence. George Dempster wrote that, on returning from his continental travels, he saw, 'the dirt of Edinburgh, the narrow closes, the high public stairs, the ill-dressed men, the inconstant weather, the cold days and long nights [with] as much indulgence as if I had never experienced better'. Andrew Pringle (Lord Alemoor, SCJ, elder brother of John Pringle of the Haining, MP) wrote to Gilbert Elliot of his 'natural partiality for this neglected and despised part of the Kingdom'.¹⁰⁸ Yet Rosalind Mitchison considered that national feeling was not a strong force in later eighteenth-century Scotland, commenting on the absence of it in the writings of Sir John Sinclair.¹⁰⁹ John Brooke also believed that inter-marriage made national distinctions 'almost meaningless'.¹¹⁰ However, national distinctions were thought sufficiently important to devote a separate section to Scots MPs in his introduction. Its focus is on anti-Scottish prejudice to be found among the English. The existence of a Scottish national identity is rather asserted, than proven. Nor are there many expressions of national identity to be found in the individual biographies, although it is possible that this was not an important feature of the

a history of Scots soldierly activity, from the early seventeenth century in various European wars, showing their martial spirit.

¹⁰⁷ T.C. Smout, 'Problems of Nationalism, Identity and Improvement in later eighteenth-century Scotland', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Improvement and Enlightenment: proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar, University of Strathclyde 1987-88* (Edinburgh, 1989) p. 5. Smout's evidence for this is from Janet Adam Smith's 'Some Eighteenth Century ideas of Scotland' in Phillipson and Mitchison's *Scotland in the Age of Improvement*, which looks at some well-known Scottish figures, including David Hume, Alexander Carlyle, the Adam Brothers, James Boswell, Allan Ramsay the elder, Fergusson and Burns.

¹⁰⁸ Lang, *Dempster*, p.37; NLS, Minto Papers, MS 11036, Pringle to Elliot, 1st March 1760.

¹⁰⁹ R. Mitchison, *Agricultural Sir John: the life of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, 1754-1835* (London, 1962), p.7.

¹¹⁰ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p.167.

research. On the other hand, it may simply be true that anglicised Scots MPs were genuinely less committed to a Scottish identity than their home-based counterparts.

Richard Finlay takes the opposite view, arguing that English hostility played a part in the survival of Scottish national consciousness, and the Scots MPs were certainly on the receiving end of this.¹¹¹ There are numerous examples of prejudice, affecting the careers of figures such as James Oswald, John Campbell of Calder, Sir Henry Erskine, Alexander Mackay, Adam Gordon, James St. Clair, Andrew Stuart, and probably also the 3rd Duke of Argyll, who was never appointed a minister.¹¹² Behind much of the prejudice was a feeling, not without justification, that Scots, once appointed, would look after their own. When Newcastle was reorganising the Treasury Board after the accession of George III, Hardwicke counselled him against appointing both Oswald and Elliot to the Board, commenting that, although rivals, 'they would hang together in all national points and be running races to make their court to their great countryman' (Bute).¹¹³

Scots politicians were well aware of a fear in government circles of putting too many Scots in positions of management, whether in administration, the army or the colonial service, accepting it with resignation and even humour. Elliot recognised that he would have risen higher were it not for his Scottish origins. In July 1764 he wrote to David Hume, 'Had it not been for the clamour of 'a Scot', perhaps indeed I might have been in some more active but not more honourable or lucrative situation. This clamour ... will in time give way to some other equally absurd'.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ R. Finlay, 'Caledonia or North Britain?', pp.143-56.

¹¹² See Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, pp.168-9.

¹¹³ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, James Oswald (1715-69). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Gilbert Elliot (1722-77). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

Quarter of a century later, the fears had not subsided - some would say they had been confirmed - when Henry Dundas wrote to Sir Archibald Campbell of Inverneil:

It is said with a Scotchman at the head of the Board of Control [Dundas] and a Scotchman at the government of Madras [Campbell], all India will soon be in their hands and that the county of Argyll will be depopulated by the emigration of Campbells to be provided for by you at Madras.¹¹⁵

Discrimination in terms of appointments was one thing, but virulent attacks in the press and elsewhere was another matter. Although it seems to be the case that Scots MPs were not generally treated with discourtesy or hostility within the House, the vilification of Lord Bute and, by extension, his countrymen, in Wilkes's publications, on stage, and in posters and cartoons, might be expected to unite the Scots. 'Maligned, insulted, and manhandled wherever he went, he suffered threats of assassination, incurred the wrath of brilliant polemicists such as John Wilkes and Charles Churchill, and was lampooned in over 400 prints and broadsheets'.¹¹⁶ Curiously, despite the general dislike of Wilkes and the attacks on Bute, there was little rancour in the reaction of the Scots MPs, and no great sense from them of a national affront.¹¹⁷ Certainly, attacks on public figures were not unknown: the Duke of Bedford's house was famously attacked during the Spitalfields riots in 1765, an event vividly described by Horace Walpole.¹¹⁸ Nor were the Scots an isolated group over the Wilkes affair. English MPs, too, were incensed at Wilkes's behaviour and the ways in which he was thought to have demeaned Parliament. Smout attributed the lack of reaction in part to the fact that Scots

¹¹⁵ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p169.

¹¹⁶ Karl Wolfgang Schweizer, 'Stuart, John, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713-1792)', *ODNB*, October 2009. [Accessed 11 August 2014]. See also P. Langford, 'South Britons' Reception of North Britons 1707-1820' in T.C. Smout (ed.), *Anglo-Scottish Relations from 1603 to 1900* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 146, 151, 159.

¹¹⁷ Searches of private correspondence produced relatively few references to Wilkes. The Scottish press, however, was much more forceful in its expressions of indignation.

¹¹⁸ H. Walpole, *Memoirs and Portraits*, ed. M. Hodgart, (London, 1963), pp. 160-62.

were too busy profiting from the opportunities offered by the Union to be put off by some periodic abuse, which certainly fits with the Namierite view of political motivation.¹¹⁹

Yet, the Scots MPs were quite capable of responding, on occasion, to perceived slights on the Scottish people or suggestions, by others, of inferiority, a trait noted in even such an anglicised MP as Lord Frederick Campbell. Horace Walpole commented of him that 'Nothing else weighed with him, except the inveteracy of national prejudice'.¹²⁰ The resentment of the Scots peers at their inferior status in the House of Lords did not disappear with the passing of time. They also resisted attempts to have aristocrats with tenuous Scottish connections foisted on them as Representative Peers - successfully in the case of Lord Dysart. The campaign for a Scots militia was another issue which, briefly, roused strong national feelings and in which the Scots MPs were closely concerned, some supporting it in the face of government opposition, claiming the right of citizens to defend their country in the face of a threatened invasion.¹²¹ However, the Scots failed to take advantage of the renewal of an English Militia Bill the following session to press their case, and, although the issue was raised from time to time over the next three decades by various MPs, including Lord Mountstuart and James, Marquis of Graham (both of whom sat for English constituencies), it failed to excite much support in Scotland. It seems that only periodically were feelings of national consciousness triggered among the MPs, as they were among the Scots generally.

A clue to a different type of Scots loyalty can be found in the comments about Scots looking out for each other.¹²² Feelings of Scottish identity were not entirely created by English hostility,

¹¹⁹ Smout, 'Problems of Nationalism, Identity and Improvement' pp. 8-9.

¹²⁰ Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of George III*, vol. 1, p. 322, quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Lord Frederick Campbell (1729-1816). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

¹²¹ There is no division list for the vote, but at least twenty-five Scots MPs were nominated to the committee to prepare the bill in 1760, and the measure, although it failed, received the support of 84 MPs in the House, including a number of prominent Scots MPs such as Gilbert Elliot, James Oswald, Henry Erskine, and William Mure of Caldwell.

¹²² See above, p. 217.

or resentment at perceived insults. For some MPs there were other, older loyalties, related to land and roots. Land itself was an important eighteenth-century commodity, but, to the Scots, not just any land. John Campbell of Calder, an Anglo-Welsh MP with Scottish roots and estates in Nairnshire as well as Pembrokeshire, had this to say to his grandson:

If my grandson sees with my eyes, nothing done here [in Pembrokeshire] will make him insensible to the natural beauties of Calder, or slight that ancient, honourable and agreeable seat of the family.¹²³

When the grandson, John Campbell, was returned to Parliament, in 1777, it was for his grandfather's former Nairnshire seat. Men from former Jacobite families, like Simon Fraser of Lovat and William Maule of Panmure, wanted to buy back their own ancestral lands, not somebody else's. Of the 'new' money, not all was invested in traditional family lands - Lawrence Dundas bought up estates in both England and Scotland and was mainly interested in buying parliamentary influence. But some was. William McDowall initially invested some of his West Indies fortune in Renfrewshire, but later added to this the old family estates in Garthland, Wigtownshire. Of the 'nabobs', Hector Munro inherited family property in Novar, Ross-shire, but Archibald Campbell, military engineer, governor of Madras and son of an Argyllshire laird, bought most of his estates within Argyll, starting with Inverneil, whose title he bore. It is easy to be cynical about the improvers, working to increase the rental income from their estates to finance grand London lifestyles, and for some this was the main objective. The Dukes of Argyll were considered by Cregeen to be innovative and energetic landlords who made some very wide-ranging and forward-looking changes to the way in which their estates were organised and managed.¹²⁴ The 10th Earl of Eglinton and James Grant of Castle Grant struggled with land which was laden with debts, but both embarked on sustained programmes of agricultural

¹²³ G. Bain, *History of Nairnshire (Nairn, 1893)*, p. 289, quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Campbell (1755-1821). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

¹²⁴ E. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll' in N. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of Improvement* (Edinburgh, 1970), pp.10, 16.

reform in which they were personally involved.¹²⁵ Eglinton's father had warned his son to take care of his inheritance and not to lose it by gambling or reckless spending.¹²⁶ In many ways, their land defined them - they were Somebody of Somewhere, whether John Dickson of Kilbucho, or Alexander Gordon, 4th Duke of Gordon, KT. Even among the anglicised dukes and earls, the Scottish roots remained: John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, Knight of the Garter, Ranger of Richmond Park, inheritor of the huge Wortley-Montagu estates in England, owner of mansions in Bedfordshire and Hampshire (where he spent the later part of his life), was buried on the island of Bute.¹²⁷

Along with land came position and status, and while many Scots MPs were of little consequence on the Westminster stage, they were much more significant figures in their own localities. Robert Campbell of Finab and Monzie (Perth) and Inverawe (Argyll) sat as MP for Argyllshire between 1766 and 1771. A wealthy man, he was said to have exercised considerable political influence in both Perthshire and Argyll, but there is no record of his having spoken in the House.¹²⁸ The scramble for parliamentary representation is in itself a good indication of how important the status of being an MP was locally. Some families considered that the right of representing their county virtually belonged to them, which is why the Hopes of Linlithgow were so angry when John Hope's behaviour in Parliament lost them the Linlithgowshire seat. John Hope, on his reluctant return to the fold, was made to see the error of his ways, writing to his cousin, Lord Hope, that he had to accept the family view that:

¹²⁵ See Chapter 1, p. 53.

¹²⁶ Robertson, *Ayrshire, its history and families*, vol. 2, p. 92. No date is given for this letter, but, according to Robertson, it was written as the earl approached the end of his life. He died on 18 Feb 1729.

¹²⁷ Burial places are more difficult to find than places of death, but statistics for Representative Peers are more readily available than for Commons MPs. Of sixteen peers' burial places found, eleven were buried on or near their Scottish estates, including the 3rd Duke of Argyll.

¹²⁸ History of Parliament online, 1754-90, Robert Campbell (1721-90). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

I was not the principal concerned ... for the honour of the family interest in the county was the chief purpose of giving me the seat in Parliament ... I ought therefore to have done nothing without their advice and approbation.¹²⁹

Hugh Dalrymple complained bitterly to William Mure, 'I am attacked in my burghs by Lord Lauderdale and in the county by Sir George Suttie'.¹³⁰ Of course self-advancement and access to patronage were key reasons for wishing to enter Parliament. But this could also be accompanied by a sense of a responsibility to provide for family, friends, constituents, and those in need: a loyalty to one's kin, as much as to the land. John Brooke noted family loyalty, rather quaintly described as 'the spirit of the clans', as a particular feature of the Scots MPs.¹³¹

James Duff considered himself fortunate in having sufficient wealth not to have to pursue preferment for himself, but as the head of a large family, he had a widowed mother, fourteen siblings, and sixty-three first cousins (and their families!) who looked to him to provide for them. Duff's letters to Rose contain arrangements for employees and for those no longer able to work. Even while out of the country he attended to such matters, making a prompt recommendation to the Duke of Grafton for an impending church vacancy, from the town of Spa in Belgium. Sometimes he was over-hasty, writing to Rose a couple of weeks later from Bomal, 'I wish Mr Touch had declared his intention to recover, before I wrote to the Duke of Grafton'.¹³²

Commitment to family was further strengthened by religion, a feature of society somewhat overlooked in the aftermath of the Namier view of politics. Religion still provided a moral framework for society, and the word 'duty' featured in instructions from father to son. The 9th

¹²⁹ Ibid., John Hope (1739-85). [Accessed 28 Dec. 2014]. See above, p. 158, fn 89 for suggested provenance.

¹³⁰ Mure of Caldwell Papers, part 2, vol. 2, p.92, Dalrymple to Mure, 15 Oct. 1766.

¹³¹ Namier and Brooke, *House of Commons, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p. 172.

¹³² A. and H. Tayler (eds.), *Lord Fife and his Factor: being the correspondence of James, second Lord Fife* (London, 1925), pp.16, 18-19, 88-90.

Earl of Eglinton instructed his son to be a good Christian, remember his mortality, honour his mother, be kind and civil to his sisters and their husbands, and love and protect his brothers.

I shall ever wish yow [*sic*] to live according to your quality; but remember we are but stewards of the good things of this life God is pleased to bestow upon us, and that He will require an account of how we have employed the honours and riches He has given us; for we receive not these to gratify our lusts or ambition, but to give us greater opportunity of being serviceable to Him, our country and our friends.¹³³

It cannot be imagined, however, that 'the spirit of the clans' was present across Scotland. The mid-eighteenth century was a period when traditional personal loyalties were breaking up, notably in the Highlands in the aftermath of the '45 rebellion and the abolition of heritable jurisdictions. While Simon Fraser was the choice of the gentlemen of Inverness-shire in 1761, twenty years later, that loyalty to a clan chief was much less in evidence when Inverness-shire was one of three Scottish counties in the forefront of demands for electoral reform in the summer of 1782. The situation in the burghs was worse. The grouping system made it almost impossible for a single local family to dominate even the majority of the burghs in a group, and the return of many burgh MPs was a commercial arrangement based on bribery. Land and family were important parts of the Scottish identity of some MPs but, on the evidence available, it cannot be said that this applied universally across Scotland.

What of Professor Harris's 'growing public dimension' to Scottish politics by the later eighteenth century, and the 'clear sense of national purpose' among the Scottish political classes'?¹³⁴ This research would subscribe to the view that politics in Scotland had a higher profile from about the mid-1760s. The amount of legislation increased, there was wider consultation on matters of national importance and such matters were increasingly debated and reported in the growing national press, which also carried news on the progress of

¹³³ Robertson, *Ayrshire, its history and families*, vol. 2, p.92.

¹³⁴ See above, pp. 4-5.

legislation particularly affecting Scotland, and on the political and social activities of the nation's MPs. A 'clear sense of national purpose', however, is more difficult to detect, within the timescale of this research. There are some indications of the breaking down of cultural barriers between Highlands and Lowlands. This was viewed by influential Scots as a desirable objective, and was one of the grounds put forward in the application for funding for the new bridge across the Tay at Perth.¹³⁵ The raising of Highland regiments during the Seven Years' War was also seen as a move to bring Highlanders into a useful role within a British ambit. However, it was also a long-standing British government objective as it was believed that providing better communications and encouraging the creation of employment for Highlanders would reduce the dangers of further unrest. There were periodic outbreaks of 'Scottishness', as over the Militia Bill in 1760, and in response to the attacks by Wilkes, as described earlier. There was also a sense of the Forth and Clyde Canal as an important 'national project'. But in fact most other 'national' issues could also be described as concerns of the upper and moneyed classes in Scotland: banking regulation, reform of entail laws, even aid to the linen industry if McKenzie of Delvine is to be believed. There was no great unity over the militia: it was mainly an Enlightenment project. The Forth and Clyde Canal required wealthy subscribers, not all of whom were Scottish, to fund it. Other interests remained sectional, such as the herring industry, or local, like the improvements to the River Clyde. There are further examples of areas where action could have been taken in Scotland's national interest, but was not: collection of the land tax was permanently in arrears and reform was urgently needed, a matter well known but not addressed till the early nineteenth century.¹³⁶ Attendance at meetings of the Annexed Estates Commissioners was poor, particularly, if

¹³⁵ See above, p. 137; also correspondence between James Stuart Mackenzie and William Mure of Caldwell: Mure of Caldwell Papers part 2, vol. 2, pp. 10, 14, 21.

¹³⁶ W.R. Ward, 'The land tax in Scotland, 1707-98', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 1955, <<https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/uk-ac-man-scw:1m2032>>. [Accessed 17 March 2014].

understandably, among the MPs on the Board.¹³⁷ Attempts to reduce electoral malpractice were half-hearted and ineffectual. Henry Dundas's bill in 1775 made no progress and the burgh reform movement could not persuade a single Scots MP to present its petition in Parliament. Overall, while Scotland was undergoing a period of rapid transformation, some of which required political intervention, the evidence to support the claim of a genuinely 'national' dimension to Scottish politics at this time is both limited, and capable of alternative interpretation. There was, at this period, too little separation between private and public interests to permit such a description and arguably it was not till the twentieth century that this term could be properly applied to the political scene in Scotland.

While much has been written about the subject of both Scottish and British identities, there are no clear-cut answers, nor would they necessarily be expected. Given the range of suggested identities - British, North British, Scottish, local and family - MPs probably behaved in much the same way as others of their rank in society, except that they would be more exposed to the values and attitudes of the ruling elite than home-based Scots. It is not surprising to find increasing evidence of assimilation into English society and political culture as the century progressed. However this is less complete than might perhaps be anticipated. While English hostility did not lead to huge amounts of antagonism, it may have helped consolidate the feelings of 'otherness' among the Scots that Linda Colley detected elsewhere as contributing to Britishness. Strong feelings of local loyalty were widely evident, particularly among those with deep roots in the landowning classes. There is more ambivalence regarding a Scottish political identity. There was occasional closing of the ranks in defence of their 'ancient nation', but alongside this, the main concerns centred on economic progress and removal of the various obstacles to this, such as restrictive entails. There is little sense of the Scots MPs as representatives of a political nation or their awareness of Scotland as a political entity. Ultimately they opted for a British political identity, but their attachment to their

¹³⁷ See Murdoch, *People Above*, p. 78 for statistics relating to 1755-1760.

Scottish roots, along with the continued existence of key Scottish institutions helped ensure both a distinctive contribution from Scotland's political representatives to a British state, and the survival of a national consciousness, which was further enhanced by cultural developments in the nineteenth century.

Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to re-examine and re-assess the reputation of the Scots MPs, c. 1754 to c.1784, taking account of their role at Westminster both as British politicians and as representatives of Scottish interests. The intention was to determine whether the traditional, negative portrayal of this group represents an accurate picture or if more recent lines of enquiry justify presenting an alternative interpretation. Looked at through the prism of patronage, it is easy to interpret politics in a very negative way and to find numerous examples of all the types of reprehensible behaviour of which Scots MPs were accused. This revision does not seek to suggest that the system of patronage did not exist or to deny that it had a significant effect on political behaviour. Whether its adverse influence was worse among Scots than among Englishmen is questionable. However one of the key conclusions to emerge from the research is that making judgments about political behaviour solely on the basis of the ties of patronage is to miss much that a wider survey reveals about the nature of British politics in the mid-eighteenth century, the networks which operated within it and the very complex factors which determined attitudes and allegiances.

As far as the Scots MPs are concerned, it is now possible to say much more about the nature of the group as a whole, and to point to the quite considerable variations within the group regarding wealth, background and occupations. On the whole, they were well-educated and had a wider range of life experiences and a more cosmopolitan circle of acquaintances than perhaps generally recognised. Several had close links with some of the leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment, others, with more wealth at their disposal, were noted scholars and patrons of the arts. Some men who rose to high rank in the army also had legal training. Scotland may still have been regarded as a provincial backwater, but its MPs had much more to offer than this label suggests. Over the thirty-year period, it is possible to discern tendencies towards integration, but also to identify factors promoting the continuation of a separate

Scottish identity. This makes it difficult to draw neat conclusions, but to do so would be to create artificial compartments which would not reflect the contradictions and fluidities of the period. While the men who represented Scotland were virtually all Scots, they also belonged, as Namier recognised, to other groupings which cut across nationality such as East India men, army officers, or government placemen. The existence of these communities is itself evidence of integration, or at least assimilation. Anglicisation of the Scots ruling class is a notable feature of the eighteenth century as a whole. Family ties through parentage and marriage were particularly noticeable among the Representative Peers, although at all levels links were forged through education, the legal profession or business affairs, and tended to continue and often strengthen into the next generation. English manners, culture and lifestyle were admired and widely imitated.¹ By the later part of the century, many felt that Scotland's future interests would be best served by closer ties with England, and the term North Britishness was coined by the Scots literati to signify their wish to 'complete the union'. The Scots MPs, who were simply a cross-section of the Scots ruling elite, were part and parcel of this anglicising tendency. One or two were happy to consider themselves as 'Englishmen', and references to 'this country' were intended to encompass both England and Scotland. But for most, integration had limits and a number of factors contributed to a continuing Scottish identity.

In Parliament, as well as contributing to English or British legislation, the Scots MPs were responsible for representing Scottish interests. By its attention, if only periodically, to Scottish matters, the point was made that this was not simply an English Parliament, but a British institution which had to take account of another legal system, a point emphasised by the presence of the chief Scots law officer, the Lord Advocate, in the House of Commons. There were additional factors which denoted the Scots' 'otherness'. The evidence is scattered and the

¹ See C. Kidd, 'North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-Century British Patriotisms', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), p. 373. (accessed online).

point is difficult to prove at this distance in time, but it is likely that, despite the anglicising tendency, their speech, accent and even their dress, would make many of the Scots noticeably different from the English majority, a difference exacerbated by the anti-Scottish prejudice which was at its height in the 1760s. MPs were referred to in the press as 'creatures' and 'tools' of the Favourite (Bute). It is little wonder that from time to time they displayed a herd instinct, gathering round their own leader, whether Argyll, Bute, or later, Henry Dundas, rather than participating in the factions and proto-parties to which English MPs increasingly gave their allegiance. Even their almost habitual support for Administration marked them out for criticism. Time brought changes, and it is noticeable that the younger generation of MPs from the mid-1770s was less deferential, and more inclined to take an independent line, although this, too, would change with the advent of the French Revolution and the closing of ranks against demands for change in Britain.

At Westminster, however, all Scots belonged to the group of legislators, and it is now possible to say more about the contribution they made to the developing system of British government, a topic which has hitherto received little attention. The Scots were generally regular attenders in Parliament, participating, with varying degrees of commitment, in its procedures, attending committees, and assisting in the business of legislation, with a few making regular contributions to debates. The same is true of the House of Lords, where a small core of Scots peers was regularly present. A small number of Scots MPs in the Commons could be described as Parliamentarians, spending much of their working life there, the most able of them holding appointments at the various government Boards. It is true that Scots generally supported Administration, but there were various reasons for this, other than the usual jibes about supine placemen. The Hanoverian succession guaranteed Protestantism in a society where religious observance remained important and Scots often acknowledged that their loyalty was to the monarch, and, by extension, to his Administration. It seems, too, that the natural inclination of most Scots was to the side of 'authority' and law and order (a stance in

which many more than Henry Dundas were confirmed after the outbreak of the French Revolution). In supporting the use of General Warrants and Britain's right to tax her colonies, and in upholding the dignity of Parliament during the disputes over the Middlesex election and press reporting of parliamentary debates, they could be seen as voting against the values of liberty and personal freedom enshrined in the Constitution. But there were also good constitutional reasons for taking the opposing view in those cases and most of the leading Scots, on both sides, were prepared to make their views known and defend their positions in Parliament. But regardless of the positions they adopted and the level at which they participated, the evidence from the Commons Journals shows that the Scots MPs' contribution to parliamentary life consisted of considerably more than simply trooping through the division lobbies at the behest of government ministers.

As far as Scotland is concerned, the traditional interpretation suggests that the MPs did little for Scotland. This negative view is lent credence by the small amount of Scottish legislation, and the relatively high failure rate of Scottish bills. Paradoxically, from a contemporary viewpoint, and also using more modern Namierite success criteria, they would be judged to have served Scotland very well indeed. Both James Murray of Broughton and James Boswell took the view that a successful MP was one who brought good things to his constituents, family and friends. This judgment is supported by the regular complaints from England about the number of posts in administration, the army and the East India Company which were occupied by Scots placemen. But the Namierite focus on patronage has for too long diverted historians away from consideration of other possible interpretations of Scottish politics during the eighteenth century. This research presents an alternative picture, suggesting that the Scots MPs, if not the Representative Peers, were more responsive to issues raised in Scotland, and more in tune with Scottish domestic issues than has been previously recognised. They responded to the concerns of freeholders and to the lobbying of the Convention of Royal Burghs. They persevered at Westminster when measures initially failed. They consulted with

interested parties on proposed legislation of national importance and, in the case of some MPs, were in regular communication with their constituents. The statistics show an increase in local Scottish legislation from c. 1765. Much of the emphasis was on economic affairs – improved communications, national projects such as the Forth and Clyde Canal, and protection of Scotland’s important trading interests – the linen industry, herring and whaling. The status of Scotland’s capital city was also recognised with legislation enabling the development of Edinburgh New Town. Perhaps inevitably, the interests which the MPs represented were those of their own rank in society. The concerns of those with little political power generally received much less consideration. Schoolmasters failed to receive an increase in their remuneration, ministers received no exemption from the window tax, and amendments to the corn laws were perceived to be in the interests of the wealthy rather than the needy. There were, however, some concessions to public opinion. Henry Dundas’s attempts to reduce the number of judges in the Court of Session in 1785 were dropped in the face of fierce criticism, and proposals to dispense with the penal laws against Roman Catholics in 1779 were similarly abandoned in the light of widespread opposition.

Responsiveness, however, is not the same as leadership and the question has to be asked: was there a failure of leadership? Did the Scots MPs fail to take the initiative in promoting Scottish interests at Westminster? This is an accusation which deserves examination. There undoubtedly existed an element of Scottish national feeling which was sensitive to slights or anything that demeaned Scottish national identity. Scots, even anglicised Scots MPs, took pride in their ancient noble families, their tradition of learning, their martial heritage and the fact that they were not in the Union as a conquered nation. The failure of the country’s MPs to secure the establishment of a national militia along the lines of the English militia was an issue which was extensively discussed in the Scottish press and also aroused deep feelings of resentment in the country. It was the same sense of injured pride which led to contemporary accusations of Representative Peers failing to stand up, both for themselves and for the honour

of the families they represented, when they tamely allowed successive governments to select which of their number should be returned to Westminster, rather than insisting on the free elections which were written into the Treaty of Union. The peers themselves were acutely aware of the inferior position they occupied in relation to English peers and their protests became increasingly vocal towards the end of the century, but it was a matter which went beyond the peerage and was perceived in the Scottish press as touching the honour of Scotland.

Apart from the peers however, it is difficult to sustain the argument that the Scots MPs failed to promote Scottish national interests. Firstly, there is some difficulty in identifying what Scottish national interests might have been. A developing public sphere brought about debate and discussion, but not necessarily unanimity, even among the political classes. Responses to consultation on entail legislation showed a variety of views on what changes should be implemented. Even the militia issue was more of an Enlightenment project than a national cause, and while the Scots MPs did pursue legislation, opinion at home was divided, with some opposed to the whole idea and others against arming the highlanders. More importantly, the accusation of failing to promote Scottish national interests is to misread the eighteenth-century political situation. The main goal at the time was economic improvement and Britishness was the key. Scottish interests were not generally seen as differing from English or British ones. Certainly by the second half of the century, educated Scots were interested in co-operation, not confrontation. To argue otherwise is to superimpose earlier or later concepts of nationalism onto what was an essentially different mindset. Given this context, it is arguable that, despite the failings of Representative Peers, Scottish politics was alive and well, and that while self-interest was never absent, what the MPs represented were the interests of various, often privileged groups in society. These groups might consist of their friends and acquaintances, sometimes their constituents and occasionally Scotland. The MPs of the day also seemed perfectly comfortable with the concept of multiple identities. They could

represent their local freeholders in setting up a turnpike trust, or the landed interest on entail reform. They could speak from personal knowledge or received information on military campaigns or the activities of the East India Company. They acted as legislators for an expanding and changing British state in which Scotland had a strong vested interest.

It is true however, that the business of legislating on Scottish matters seems to have fallen on a very small number of Scots MPs who had influence in government circles. Others can only be described as 'semi-detached' or passing through. For a significant number, being an MP was an episode in a career largely developed in other fields. Some of those who combined a military or business career with a parliamentary one left their mark in the Commons, but the part played by others has gone unrecorded. Namier and Brooke's 'silent' government supporters included William McDowell, the owner of a vast commercial empire in the West Indies, and Andrew Mitchell, a diplomat who spent most of his career overseas. Sir John Lindsay and Ralph Abercromby were much more celebrated for their military exploits than for their participation in Parliament. Thus two key modifications to the traditional picture of silent, subservient government supporters emerge: firstly the engagement of a small number of them at a fairly high level with the business of government, and secondly, the services to government given by a significantly larger number of army officer MPs, diplomats and colonial administrators. This imperial role has already been recognised, mainly through Scots recruitment into the army, but the wider impact on Scotland itself is perhaps only now becoming apparent.

Returning to the old accusations of unprincipled careerism among the Scots MPs, the revised picture now being offered does not alter the facts that many of the Scots MPs were habitual Administration supporters and many held government posts, but it does shed more light on the connections between these two, and suggests ways in which Scots behaviour and attitudes may have been quite distinctive. Family and kinship ties were still important. Suggestions that

Scotland's ruling class had deserted the country were no longer true by the later part of the century. The reality was that, by this time, many of the 'deserters' regularly returned to Scotland. Their estates were important to them: much family correspondence is devoted to discussion of agricultural improvements and the design and construction of new and grander residences. They were often closely involved in architectural details, choice of contractors and building materials, and readily shared information with friends about estate improvements of all kinds. Not all MPs relocated to London with their families. Some could only afford lodgings there for the duration of Parliament and were essentially based in Scotland. Even some of the grandees chose to return, from the 1760s onwards, as the attractions of London life palled and estate management offered a more profitable employment. Whether Anglo-Scots, or home-based, their private correspondence shows an intense interest in local politics. Most Scottish electoral contests involved power struggles among local families, and maintaining an 'interest' in local politics was an important part of political life. The time devoted to this, even if devoted to friends and local dependants, spread well beyond election times as constituencies were nursed, votes were created and electoral interests were constructed. Like their English counterparts, some ambitious Scots also operated in a wider world where family was almost a business enterprise – with various members playing their part, whether as MPs gaining access to those who controlled patronage, as merchants making money overseas or as soldiers extending the boundaries of the Empire. The large volume of correspondence from the period shows both the scale on which such enterprises operated, and also the importance of communication in maintaining family ties. In the letters they exchanged, local gossip and family news were at least as important as parliamentary business, or the progress of army campaigns.

Older interpretations, perhaps, take too little account of the strong sense of obligation which directed Scots behaviour: obligations to those above who had provided places, pensions or other favours, and to those below who looked to them for help and advancement. This was

seen as natural in Scottish society, and not intrinsically corrupt. Parliamentary seats therefore were highly prized for the access they provided to opportunities for advancement of all kinds and Scots were prepared to make the most of these, and to help others to do so, too. Where there were conflicts, those with a conscience had to square things as best they could. John Campbell of Calder, the Anglo-Scot and Administration supporter from an earlier generation, wrote to Newcastle towards the end of his long political career, neatly encapsulating the difficulties of conflicting loyalties:

I have sat many years in Parliament during all which time it has been my opinion that though an honest man may often comply with things not quite agreeable to him, rather than give any advantage against an Administration which he approves, yet there are some things in which he must follow his own judgment such as he has, without regard to persons. In consequence of this opinion I did in some instances vote contrary to the inclinations of Sir Robert Walpole, of your Grace, and of your beloved brother, at the same time that I was firmly and warmly attached to those Administrations.²

At the start of this research the eighteenth century was described as full of paradoxes. A similar description could also apply to Scotland's MPs. Like the century, they are difficult to pigeonhole, which is why older generalisations about them deserve to be challenged. Below is the obituary, from an English publication, of a wealthy British MP, who died in 1805, having represented Shrewsbury for over thirty years. It exemplifies both the integrationist and the separatist tendencies referred to earlier as well as illustrating changing attitudes towards the Scots.

As a politician he was upright and honest, and had long ranked as one of the most impartial and sensible members of the independent part of the House of Commons, wherein he was a useful and intelligent speaker. His language was plain and unadorned, but he always expressed himself with clearness and precision. He possessed a sound understanding, and his opinion was always received in the House with respectful attention. As a public man, no commoner

² BL, Add MS 32970, f. 103, Calder to Newcastle, 29 September 1765, quoted in History of Parliament online, 1754-90, John Campbell of Calder (1695-1777). [Accessed 18 May 2014].

understood the constitution of his country better, or more uniformly supported it by his conduct.³

This is a typical, highly-respected country gentleman, a far cry from the caricature of the greedy, unprincipled, careerist Scots with little understanding of constitutional issues. Yet this is also William Johnstone Pulteney, Scots lawyer, 5th Baronet, of Westerhall, Dumfries, and MP for Cromartyshire, 1768-74. Despite his extensive English estates and wealth enhanced by speculation in American real estate, he retained his Scottish links, with his extensive family, and his Edinburgh friends. His second marriage was to the widow of his old friend, the MP Andrew Stuart; his daughter, an only child who became Countess of Bath, married a Scots army officer. As a director of the British Fisheries Society in the 1790s, he employed his protégé, Thomas Telford, also from Westerhall, Dumfries, to design and create a new harbour and settlement to encourage the growing herring industry in the north of Scotland. Although the herring industry has long gone and Pulteneytown is now incorporated in the burgh of Wick, the name survives in the present-day Pulteneytown People's Project and the Pulteney Community Centre. As Pulteney's career shows, the later part of the eighteenth century was a period of great change, and loyalties were formed in response to a number of complex allegiances and calculations.

This research has tried to examine the careers of the Scots MPs of the later eighteenth century from a much wider perspective than has previously been attempted. As a group in Parliament, they may have been small in number, their behaviour constrained by the obligations of patronage, and the contribution of most relatively modest. But looked at in the light of the networks - whether family, local, business, Scottish, English or overseas - within which they operated, their influence was much greater, and in some respects more positive. They were people who had something to contribute, from the experience of their own lives and from their knowledge of the worlds which they inhabited. They lived their lives according to the

³ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1805, p.587. [Accessed online 2 Jan. 2015].

social mores of the time, most taking full advantage of the opportunities available to them. In a society where boundaries were just starting to be set between public and private interests, it was still easy to conflate the two, but more accountability was being demanded in a world where great riches were available to the fortunate few and some were slower to recognise this than others. Among the unprincipled, the avaricious, and the self-seeking could also be found loyal, ambitious, energetic and enterprising servants of the Crown, looking after their own interests, but also aware of the obligations their position conferred on them. They no doubt exhibited a range of behaviours from the frankly unacceptable to the impeccable, and among the pompous and the sanctimonious can also be found those who looked with honesty and a lack of hypocrisy at the world around them. Their contribution to the development of 'their country', whichever it was, deserves more recognition than it has received.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Scots MPs on Division Lists

Compilations of Parliamentary lists, including division lists, can be found in Namier and Brooke's *History of Parliament*, and in Ditchfield, Hayton & Jones's *British Parliamentary Lists, 1660-1800*. The most comprehensive source for reference, however, is Donald Ginter's five-volume study of voting which is a compilation of the different lists for each division from 1761.¹

The Mitchell election division: 24 March 1755

This is the only surviving division list for the 1754 Parliament. It concerns the disputed Mitchell (Cornwall) election of 1754. On a parliamentary division of 24 March 1755, the original result, in favour of Robert Clive and John Stephenson, was overturned, and the Administration candidates, Simon Luttrell and Richard Hussey, were declared returned. The list of thirty-seven Scots present at this vote is taken from Linda Colley's article on this division.² Unusually, because of the dispute between Newcastle and the Duke of Argyll, most Scots voted with the opposition.

¹ Sir L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1754-1790* (London, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 524-534; G.M. Ditchfield, D. Hayton & C. Jones, C (eds.), *British Parliamentary Lists, 1660-1800: A Register* (London, 1995); D. Ginter (ed.), *Voting Records of the British House of Commons, 1761-1820* (London, 1995).

² L. Colley, 'The Mitchell Election Division, 1755', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 44 (1976), pp. 80-107.

*Supporters of Administration candidates**Supporters of the Duke of Argyll*

Pryce Campbell	Lord Adam Gordon
Robert Colville	James Muir Campbell
John Campbell	Dugald Campbell
Andrew Mitchell	Capt. John Scott
James Oswald	Sir John Gordon
Hon. James Duff	Lt. Col. John Campbell
Hon. Alexander Hume Campbell	Sir Ludovick Grant
	General St Clair
	Earl Panmure
	Sir Hew Dalrymple
	Sir James Carnegie
	John Mackye
	James Vere
	Capt. James Douglas
	John Dickson
	Lord John Murray
	Lord Fortrose
	Gilbert Elliot
	Hon. George Mackay
	Hon. James Stewart
	William Alexander
	Sir Harry Munro
	Hon. Thomas Leslie
	Col. Haldane
	John Campbell
	Andrew Fletcher
	John Murray
	Archibald Douglas
	John Hamilton
	Hon. James Stuart Mackenzie

The Repeal of the Stamp Act

The repeal of the Stamp Act in February/March 1766 was a fraught period for Rockingham's administration. Several separate resolutions were debated and voted on. There is no definitive list of voting on the Repeal Bill itself, but other evidence suggests that the Scots were there in significant numbers. A list of how Scots voted on repeal was compiled by Alexander Gilmour, a Scot who was an adherent of Newcastle.³ The tables below are compiled from Ginter, who provides names for two votes in February 1766, one on 7 February, on the Address to enforce the Stamp Act, and the other on 21 February on the issue of repeal. Ginter's information is taken from a number of sources, including the Gilmour letter.⁴

Address to enforce the Stamp Act: 7 Feb. 1766

Government (Rockingham) Supporters

Opposition (Bute) Supporters

John Anstruther	James Abercromby
Daniel Campbell	James Campbell
Pryse Campbell	Frederick Campbell
William Campbell	Patrick Craufurd
James Coutts	Hew Dalrymple
George Dempster	John Dickson
James Douglas	Archibald Douglas
Alexander Gilmour	Archibald Edmonstone
David Graeme	Gilbert Elliot
Alexander Grant	John Hamilton
James Grant	John Lockhart Ross [NO]
Francis Holburne	Alexander Mackay
Charles Hope Weir	William Maule
Thomas Miller	Archibald Montgomerie
Andrew Mitchell	James Oswald
James Murray	John Pringle
John Scott	Ross Mackye
	James Stuart Mackenzie
	Henry Wauchope
	Alexander Wedderburn

Eight absentees are listed: David Scott, Andrew Fletcher, James Pringle, Simon Fraser, James Wemyss, James Duff, Adam Gordon, Ramsay Irvine.

³ BL, Add MS 32974, f. 23-4

⁴ See Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 1, pp. 51-2. Because the lists are a compilation, brackets and question marks indicate where there is uncertainty over presence, identification or voting intentions.

Repeal of the Stamp Act: 21 Feb. 1766

Government (Rockingham) Supporters

Opposition (Bute) Supporters

John Anstruther	James Abercromby [NO]
Daniel Campbell	James Campbell [NO]
Pryse Campbell	Frederick Campbell
William Campbell	James Coutts [NO]
George Dempster	Patrick Craufurd
James Douglas	Hew Dalrymple
Alexander Gilmour	John Dickson
James Grant	Archibald Douglas
Hope Weir	Archibald Edmonstone
Andrew Mitchell	Gilbert Elliot
James Murray	Simon Fraser
John Pringle	Lord Adam Gordon
Ramsay Irvine	David Graeme
John Scott	Alexander Grant [NO?]
	John Hamilton
	Francis Holburne [NO]
	Lockhart Ross [NO]
	Alexander Mackay
	William Maule
	Thomas Miller
	Archibald Montgomerie
	James Oswald
	Ross Mackye
	Henry Wauchope
	Alexander Wedderburn

The Middlesex election

The Middlesex election centred on the right of the electors to return John Wilkes, who had been arrested, briefly, in 1763 for the publication of a particularly vicious attack on the government in his *North Briton*, No.45. The fall-out from this continued in various forms for the next decade. While for some of the votes, only the opposition MPs are known, the three votes below show also government supporters. Lord Frederick Campbell, Archibald Edmonstone and Sir Alexander Gilmour were among the tellers.

On the expulsion of Wilkes from Parliament: 3 Feb. 1769

The government had a majority of 221:139 according to the Commons Journals. The lists of voters give similar numbers. Ginter indicates thirty-three Scots on a list of government supporters, with one (Dickson) uncertain. Neither George Dempster nor James Murray appears on this list.⁵

Administration supporters voting for the expulsion of Wilkes

Robt Adam	Robert Rickart Hepburn
John Anstruther	Francis Holburne
Frederick Campbell (T)	David Kennedy
Robert Campbell	John Lockhart Ross
James Dickson [aye]	Thomas Lyon
William Douglas	James Masterton
James Duff	William Maule
Laurence Dundas	William McDowall
Thomas Dundas (O&S)	James Montgomery
Thomas Dundas (Stirlingshire)	James Pringle
Archibald Edmonstone	John Pringle
Gilbert Elliot	William Pulteney
Alexander Garden	Keith Stewart
Alexander Gilmour	James Stuart Mackenzie
David Graeme	James Stuart Wortley Mackenzie
Francis Grant	George Suttie
James Wemyss	

⁵ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5 pp. 49-56.

The Middlesex election return: 15 April 1769

The vote was on a government motion declaring that Luttrell had been duly elected, and there was a government majority of 199:145, according to the figures in the Journals. The lists give 193:154, with thirty-four Scots present. George Dempster is not listed, but three others voted NO. ⁶

Scots voters in support of Administration

Scots voting with Opposition

Robert Adam	James Duff
John Anstruther	James Murray
Frederick Campbell	William Pulteney
Robert Campbell	
James Dickson	
Archibald Douglas	
William Douglas	
Laurence Dundas	
Thomas Dundas (O&S)	
Thomas Dundas (Stirlingshire)	
Archibald Edmonstone [T]	
Gilbert Elliot	
Alexander Garden	
Alexander Gilmour	
David Graeme	
Francis Grant	
Robert Rickart Hepburn	
David Kennedy	
John Lockhart Ross	
Thomas Lyon	
James Masterton	
William Maule	
William McDowall	
James Montgomery	
James Pringle	
John Pringle	
Keith Stewart	
James Stuart Mackenzie	
James Stuart Wortley Mackenzie	
George Suttie	
James Wemyss	

⁶ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5, pp. 56-63.

Luttrell declared duly elected: 8 May 1769

A petition was presented challenging the election of Luttrell. Government won the division according to the Journals by 223:154. The lists differ slightly, at 217:150. There were at least thirty-two Scots present and a large government majority, but over seventy MPs are marked absent with an explicitly declared intention of voting NO (i.e. against government), including two Scots, Simon Fraser and James Wemyss. In addition, another five Scots voted against government on this occasion.⁷

Scots voting in support of Administration

Scots voting with Opposition

Robert Adam	George Dempster
John Anstruther	James Duff
Frederick Campbell	John Hope
Robert Campbell	James Murray
James Dickson ?AYE	William Pulteney
Archibald Douglas	
William Douglas	
Laurence Dundas	
Thomas Dundas (Stirlingshire)	
Archibald Edmonstone	
Gilbert Elliot	
Alexander Garden	
Alexander Gilmour [T]	
David Graeme	
Francis Grant	
Robert Rickart Hepburn	
Francis Holburne	
David Kennedy	
John Lockhart Ross	
Thomas Lyon	
James Masterton	
William Maule	
James Montgomery	
James Pringle	
John Pringle	
Keith Stewart	
James Stuart Mackenzie	
James Stuart Wortley Mackenzie	

⁷ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5, pp. 63-71.

Navy Captains' petition: 9 Feb. 1773

The motion was on whether Lord Howe's petition for an increase in naval captains' half-pay should be referred to a committee. The King wanted the measure thrown out, but the government was defeated by a large majority in the Common (47:156). Here, Scots with strong connections to the armed forces are prominent in the opposition ranks.⁸

Scots voting in support of Administration

Scots voting with Opposition

James Cockburn	Frederick Campbell
Archibald Edmonstone	George Dempster
William McDowall	James Duff
	Gilbert Elliot
	Simon Fraser
	Alexander Garden
	Francis Grant
	David Kennedy
	Adam Livingstone
	John Lockhart Ross
	Alexander Mackay
	Kenneth Mackenzie
	William Maule
	James Murray
	John Pringle
	William Pulteney
	Keith Stewart
	William Stewart
	Patrick Warrender
	James Wemyss

⁸ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5, pp. 93-97.

The Rights of Electors: 26 April 1773

The vote, printed by the *Middlesex Journal* on 5 June 1773, was on a motion for leave to bring in a bill to secure the rights of electors. It was a further spin-off from the Wilkes affair, and was made on the day Wilkes finally took his seat in Parliament. The government won a comfortable majority of 203:153. The printed lists are reasonably complete.⁹

Scots voting with Administration

Scots voting with Opposition

Sir John Anstruther	George Dempster
Sir James Cockburn	James Dundas
William Douglas	Alexander Garden
Archibald Douglas	James Murray
Lawrence Dundas	Sir George Suttie
Thomas Dundas (Orkney and Shetland)	
Archibald Edmonstone	
Gilbert Elliot	
Maj-Gen. Fraser	
Sir Alexander Gilmour	
Gen. Hepburne	
David Kennedy	
Thomas Lockhart	
Thomas Lyon	
James Masterton	
James Montgomery	
Hector Munro	
J. Townshend Oswald	
Earl Panmure	
Jas Pringle	
John Pringle	
John Lockhart Ross	
Maj-Gen. John Scott	
Earl Seaforth	
Hon. James Stewart	
Hon. Keith Stewart	
William Stewart	
Sir Patrick Warrender	
Hon James Wemyss	

⁹ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol.5, pp.101-8.

Sir Edward Astley's motion: 25 Feb. 1774

This was an attempt to make permanent Grenville's Election Act of 1770 concerning the results of contested elections. The Government had opposed the original bill, and also opposed this motion, but was defeated here, by 252:124, according to the Commons Journals.¹⁰

Scots opposing the motion

(Administration)

Scots supporting the motion

(Opposition)

Robert Adam	George Dempster
Frederick Campbell	Lord Fife
James Cockburn	Alexander Garden
William Douglas	Robert Rickart Hepburne
Sir Lawrence Dundas	James Murray
Thomas Dundas (O&S)	James T. Oswald
Archibald Edmonstone	Lord Panmure
Sir Gilbert Elliot	John Pringle?
Francis Grant [NO]	William Pulteney
James Grant	Patrick Warrender
David Kennedy	James Wemyss
Adam Livingstone	Thomas Lyon
Mackenzie	
William McDowall [NO]	
James Montgomery	
Hector Munro [NO]	
Hon. Capt. Murray	

¹⁰ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol.5, pp. 108-115.

Contractors Bill: 12 Feb. 1779

The vote was over a motion, introduced by Sir George Savile (Yorkshire MP and supporter of parliamentary reform), requesting leave to bring in a bill restraining MPs from being concerned in any government contracts not open to public bidding. The motion passed by 160:145 and leave was given to bring in a bill. An unusually high number of Scots MPs were absent on this occasion, but an examination of the entire voting list shows around 250 MPs as absent, most marked 'NO explicit' by Ginter, indicating a position which was supportive of government. About one-third of the absentees were labelled 'AYE'.¹¹

Scots supporting Administration [NO]

Absentees marked [NO]

Frederick Campbell	Ralph Abercromby
John Campbell (Nairn)	Archibald Campbell
James Cockburn [NO]	John Craufurd
William Cunynghame	George Damer
Adam Drummond	Henry Dashwood
Arthur Duff	William Douglas
Archibald Edmonstone	James Duff
Simon Fraser	Charles Dundas
Adam Gordon	Henry Dundas
James Murray (Perthshire)	Laurence Dundas
James T. Oswald	Thomas Dundas (Stirlingshire)
James Pringle	Thomas Dundas (O&S)
William Stewart	Gilbert Elliot (4 th baronet)
James Stuart Mackenzie [NO?]	Alexander Garden
James Wortley Stuart Mackenzie	James Grant (Tain)
Andrew Stuart	Robert Laurie
Frederick Stuart	Adam Livingstone
James Wemyss	John Maitland
	William Maule
	Hector Munro
	Robert Murray Keith
	John Pringle
	Keith Stewart

Of the Scots, only Adam Fergusson and John Johnstone voted for Savile's motion. George Dempster was supportive, but absent.

¹¹ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol 5, pp. 131-142.

Keppel's expedition: 3 March 1779

The motion was one of censure against the Admiralty for sending Admiral Keppel against the French with inadequate ships. The Government won by 206:172. The list here is from Almon.¹²

Scots MPs supporting Administration

Scots supporting the motion

George Damer	Adam Fergusson
Earl of Fife	George Dempster
James Pringle	
Adam Drummond	
Sir Arch. Edmonstone	
Sir L Dundas	
Hon. Arthur Duff	
J. Townsend Oswald	
Earl Panmure	
Wm Nesbit	
Hon. Simon Frazer	
Lord Adam Gordon	
Andrew Stuart	
Sir Wm Cunningham	
John Campbell (Nairn etc)	
Hon. Jas Murray (Perthshire)	
John Crawford (Renfrewshire)	
Jas Stuart Mackenzie	
Frederick Stuart (Rothesay)	
Sir Gilbert Elliot	
Lord Frederick Campbell	
Thos Dundas	
Jas Wemyss	
Henry Dashwood	

¹² J. Almon, *The Parliamentary Register, 1774-1780*, (London, 1775-80), vol. 12, pp. 59-60. See also Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5, pp. 142-149.

Lord North's Amendment: 21 February 1780

A motion was put requesting an account of pensions granted by the Crown, but North moved an amendment that this should only refer to pensions payable at the Exchequer. North won the amendment by only two votes. The informative division list is from Almon.¹³

Scots voting for North's amendment

against North's amendment

Adam Livingstone, Argyllshire	Dempster
Sir John Paterson, Berwickshire	Lord Fife
Sir Archbd. Edmonstone, Dunbartonshire	John Johnstone
Adam Drummond, Brechin etc, contractor	Sir Gilbert Elliot
Henry Dundas, Edinburghshire, LA, clerk of the signet	
Lord W. Gordon, Elginshire, Dep. ranger of the parks	
Staats Long Morris, Elgin Burghs etc, Col. of a regt. of foot	
John Henderson, Fifeshire	
Earl Panmure, Forfarshire, Col. of regt. of dragoons	
Wm Nisbett, Haddingtonshire	
Hon Simon Frazer, Invernessshire, Col. of a regt. with 2 battalions	
Lord Adam Gordon, Kincardineshire, Col. of a regt. of foot and Governor of Timmouth Castle	
Andrew Stuart, Lanarkshire, a Lord of Trade	
Sir Wm Augustus Cunningham, Linlithgowshire, clerk of the green cloth	
John Campbell, Nairnshire	
Sir J Cockburne, Peebles, a contractor, and his lady a pension	
Hon. J. Murray, Perthshire, a regt of foot	
Rt Hon. J. Stuart Mackenzie, Ross shire, Keeper of the privy seal, bro. to Lord Bute	
Hon. Frederick Stuart, Rothesay, son of Earl of Bute	
Lord Frederick Campbell, Lord Register Scotland and a fencible regt.	
Hon. James Wemyss, Sutherlandshire, Col. of a fencible regt.	

¹³ Almon, *Parliamentary Register, 1774-80*, vol. 17, pp. 142-5.

Dunning's motion: 6 April 1780

'That the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished'. This is probably the best known in a series of attacks on what was perceived as the Crown's control of Parliament by means of placemen bought with sinecures. The vote was on an adjournment motion, the House having sat till 1.30am. The Government lost the vote by 216:234. The list comes from Almon.¹⁴

Scots voting for Administration

Scots voting for the Opposition

Adam Fergusson	Dempster
Adam Livingstone	John Johnstone
Sir John Paterson	T. Dundas
Adam Drummond	Gilbert Elliot
Archibald Edmonstone	Sir Lawrence Dundas
Robert Laurie	
Henry Dundas	
Francis Charteris	
William Gordon	
Staats Long Morris	
John Henderson	
Earl Panmure	
John Nisbett	
Adam Gordon	
Andrew Stuart	
William Stewart	
William Cunninghame	
John Campbell	
J. Murray	
James Cockburne	
James Stuart Mackenzie	
Frederick Stuart	
John Crawford	
Lord Frederick Campbell	
James Wemyss	
James Grant	
Henry Dashwood	

¹⁴ Almon, *Parliamentary Register*, vol. 17, pp. 474-85. See also Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol.5, pp. 180-190.

Rous's motion of 'no confidence': 15 March 1782

Sir John Rous, MP for Suffolk, and an opponent of both the American war and of North's Administration, moved the vote of 'no confidence' on 15 March 1782, which finally brought down the government. There are several versions of the voting. Ginter quotes the Journals which put the Government majority at 238:229. The margin was so small that North resigned a few days later. The list here is taken from Christie, *End of Lord North's Ministry*.¹⁵

Scots supporting North

Scots supporting Rous

Adam Fergusson	Alexander Garden
Staats Long Morris	Charles Ross
Archibald Edmonstone	Earl of Fife
Lord Frederick Campbell	John Shaw Stuart
Hugh Scott	Gilbert Elliot
Francis Charteris	Thomas Dundas
John Craufurd	[Chas Dundas also opposed but paired]
Robert Laurie	
Robert Herries	
Henry Dundas	
Hunter Blair	
Robert Skene	
John Anstruther	
John Henderson	
Adam Drummond	
Hew Dalrymple,	
Adam Gordon	
Peter Johnstone	
George Graham	
Andrew Stuart	
William Cunyngham	
George Ross	
Alexander Murray	
James Campbell (Culross)	
Hon. J. Murray (Perthshire)	
J.Pringle	
James Cockburn	
Keith Stewart	

¹⁵ Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol 5 pp 252-262); I.R. Christie, *The End of Lord North's Ministry, 1780-82* (London, 1958), App. 12, pp. 404-5.

Fox's East India Bill: 27 November 1783

Further regulation of Indian affairs was clearly required, but Fox's bill roused strong opposition. It was seen as a means of giving Fox and his supporters a large measure of control over the lucrative East India Company. Although the bill passed the Commons, it was defeated in the Lords, and used by the King as a reason to dismiss the much-disliked North-Fox coalition. This vote, on 27 November, 1783, was on the second reading of the bill in the Commons. A division list was printed by Debrett, on 24 March 1784. Ginter suggests a government majority of 231:122, according to the Commons Journals. The lists give similar numbers.¹⁶

For the Bill

Against the Bill

Adam Drummond	Sir Adam Fergusson
Lord Frederick Campbell	Henry Dundas
Hugh Scott	Hew Dalrymple
John Anstruther	
James Campbell	
John Craufurd	
Sir Robert Herries	
Robert Skene	
Hon. Archbd. Frazer	
Sir Archbd. Edmonstone	
George Graham	
Sir William Cunnyngame	
George Ross	
Charles Dundas	
Hon. James Murray	
Sir Gilbert Elliot	
Sir James Cockburne	
Sir Thomas Dundas	
William Adam	
Charles Ross	

¹⁶ Namier and Brooke, *History of Parliament, 1754-90*, vol. 1, p. 533; Debrett, *Parliamentary Register*, vol. 13, pp. 308-15; Ginter, *Voting Records*, vol. 5 pp. 274-281.

Appendix 2 Committee work of MPs

The following tables show the spread of committee activities among MPs in the 1754 and 1761 Parliaments, as revealed by the sample searches done for Chapter 2 above.¹⁷ The first table shows the spread of committee activities of those most actively involved in the 1754 Parliament. Not included in the table are Robert Dundas and Gilbert Elliot. Dundas, MP for Edinburghshire, should have had a higher profile as Lord Advocate, a task in which he was both proficient and respected, but was absent for part of 1757. Gilbert Elliot is also known to have been an active MP, but, as noted earlier, is difficult to identify precisely in this Parliament; therefore his contribution cannot be quantified. The second table shows the extended workload of MPs in the 1761 Parliament. As well as those sitting on committees, it also shows who were responsible for presenting petitions, preparing and reporting on bills, chairing committees and acting as tellers.

Key

<i>Enc</i>	enclosure
<i>Rds</i>	English Roads
<i>W'w</i>	English waterways
<i>Pri</i>	private petitions or bills
<i>G.D.</i>	general domestic legislation
<i>Tra</i>	trade or colonial matters
<i>Imp</i>	civic improvements
<i>Sco</i>	any specifically Scottish local or national measures
<i>Oth</i>	eg Committee of Privileges, local legislation falling outwith other categories
<i>Tot</i>	total

¹⁷ See above, pp. 90-94.

Committee work in the 1754 Parliament

<i>Name</i>	<i>Enc</i>	<i>Rds</i>	<i>W'w</i>	<i>Pri</i>	<i>G. D.</i>	<i>Tra</i>	<i>Imp</i>	<i>Sco</i>	<i>Oth</i>	<i>Tot</i>
W. Alexander	2	8	1	8	2	2	2	3	2	30
H Erskine	0	1	3	6	2	1	4	0	3	20
G. Haldane	0	12	3	8	4	1	5	1	4	38
J. Hamilton	0	7	3	5	0	0	0	1	2	18
A. Hume Campbell	0	2	3	3	3	2	2	0	2	17
J. Oswald	4	5	4	14	5	13	3	4	7	59

Committee work in the 1761 Parliament

<i>Name</i>	<i>Enc</i>	<i>Rds</i>	<i>Ww</i>	<i>Pri</i>	<i>G.D</i>	<i>Tra</i>	<i>Imp</i>	<i>Sco</i>	<i>Oth</i>	<i>Pr</i>	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>T.</i>	<i>Tot</i>
F. Campbell	12	17	13	10	3	4	3	4	12		2	5	1		86
P.Campbell	1	2	1	4	2		1	1	5					3	20
J.Coutts	9	3	4	1		4	3	1	5			1			31
G.Dempster	9	11	3	5	2	4	1	1	8					2	46
Edmonstone	19	14	7	17	9	5	6	4	16	1	3	4	2	1	108
Gilbert Elliot	5	9	2	3	4	5	4	6	19	2	2	2		1	64
A. Gilmour	3	15	4	6	1		5	4	6	1	3	1	2	2	53
James Grant	4	10	7	8	3	1	2		6						41
Alex. Grant	7	8	3	4		1	2	2	2						29
T Miller		2	1			1		2		1	1	2	1		11
J Oswald	9	7	4	2	4	8	1	4	8	2	3	3	3	3	61
Wedderburn	2	10	3	9	7	3	2	3	4					2	45

Appendix 3 Highland Roads

Information on the maintenance of roads in the Highlands was regularly presented to Parliament. This estimate is for 1770 and was prepared on the orders of the Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the 4th Duke of Argyll.

10 GEO. III.		26 ^o Aprilis.	901
ESTIMATE of the Expences of the New Roads of Communication, and Building the Bridges of the Highlands of North Britain, Anno 1770, pursuant to the Order of Lieutenant General John Marquis of Lorne commanding His Majesty's Forces in North Britain.			
<p>Highland Roads, &c.</p>			
<p>To a Party to work upon the Road leading from Fort Augustus to Bernera and the Isle of Skey, which Party to consist of 2 Subaltern Officers, 92 Days, at 3 each per Diem, 4 Serjeants, at 1 each, 4 Corporals, at 8d. each, 2 Drummers, and 100 Men, at 6d. each - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges, for Artificers, Carts, Tools, Lime, under Ground Drains, Coals, Iron, and other incident Expences - - -</p> <p>To a Party to work on the Road from Stirling, by Drummond, in Lennox, to Dumbarton, consisting of 2 Subaltern Officers, 2 Serjeants, 2 Corporals, 2 Drummers, and 50 Men, at said Rates, 92 Days - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges for said Party, for Artificers Wages, Graveling Carts, and Horses, Tools, under Ground Drains, Coals, Iron, Lime, and incident Expences - - -</p> <p>To a Party to work on the Road from Stirling, over the Black Mount, to Fort William, and from Tyndron to Inverary, and from thence towards Branden, consisting of 2 Subaltern Officers, 4 Serjeants, 4 Corporals, 2 Drummers, and 100 Men, 92 Days, at said Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges for Carts and Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To a Party to work from Dumbarton, up Loch Lomond Side, to Tarbett, and through Glenfallach and Glenfruen, to the Junction of the Roads with the Black Mount Road, consisting of 1 Subaltern Officer, 1 Serjeant, 1 Corporal, 1 Drummer, and 25 Men, at the above Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charge of Carts and Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To a Party to work from Fort George, through Strath Spey, to Corgariff Braemar Castle, and Blangowrie, to Conpar, consisting of 2 Subaltern Officers, 2 Serjeants, 2 Corporals, 2 Drummers, and 50 Men, at the aforelaid Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges of Carts and Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To a Party to carry on the Road leading over the Kerne Mount, to Strathbogie, to consist of 2 Serjeants, 2 Corporals, and 28 Men, at the above Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges of Carts, Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To a Party to work from Strathbogie to Keith and Trochabers on Spey Side, consisting of 2 Serjeants, 2 Corporals, and 28 Men, at the above Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges of Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To the like Party, from Strathbogie to Aberdeen, over the Ben Hills, at the said Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges of Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To a Party, consisting of 2 Serjeants, 2 Corporals, and 25 Men, to work from Canton to Pollews, in Ross Shire, at said Rates - - -</p> <p>Extraordinary Charges of Artificers, &c. - - -</p> <p>To finish the Bridge over the River Leven - - -</p> <p>To complete the Bridge over the River Endrick - - -</p> <p>To Piles, and securing the Bridge of Isla, in Danger of being run away - - -</p> <p>To a small Bridge of 3 Arches, at the End of the Loch Alva - - -</p> <p>To a small Bridge near Keith - - -</p> <p>To several small Arches upon the Line of Roads, from Strathbogie to Aberdeen and Trochabers - - -</p> <p>To a Bridge at Leckerie upon the Road from Stirling to Fort William - - -</p> <p>To rebuild the Bridge of Bekie in Athol, carried away last August - - -</p> <p>To 19 small Arches upon the Road from Dunkeld to Dalnacardoch - - -</p> <p>To 6 small Arches upon the Line of Road from Luss to Dalmalie - - -</p> <p>To Repairs of sundry Bridges - - -</p> <p>To building an Inn upon the Line of Road leading from Fort Augustus to Bernera, there being no Houle in 50 Miles of said Line - - -</p> <p>To the New Road carrying on between the River of Sark and Port Patrick - - -</p> <p>To Enl. Mr. Corkell and Mr. Grant for attending the Works and overseeing the Parties, 92 Days, at 5 each per Diem - - -</p>	<p>£. s. d.</p> <p>292 17 4</p> <p>239 10 -</p> <p>162 10 8</p> <p>100 - -</p> <p>292 17 4</p> <p>240 10 -</p> <p>85 17 4</p> <p>48 - -</p> <p>162 10 8</p> <p>96 - -</p> <p>93 10 8</p> <p>48 - -</p> <p>93 10 8</p> <p>48 - -</p> <p>93 10 8</p> <p>48 - -</p> <p>85 17 2</p> <p>48 - -</p> <p>800 - -</p> <p>500 - -</p> <p>180 5 -</p> <p>250 18 -</p> <p>150 6 8</p> <p>282 8 -</p> <p>110 - -</p> <p>80 - -</p> <p>75 - -</p> <p>54 10 -</p> <p>110 - -</p> <p>80 - -</p> <p>2,000 - -</p> <p>46 - -</p> <p>TOTAL - - £. 6,998 10 2</p>		
War Office, April 26th, 1770.		Barrington.	Ordered,
Vol. 32.			

Appendix 4 Glasgow Legislation

Glasgow Roads Legislation

<i>name</i>	<i>date introduced</i>	<i>royal assent</i>
Renfrewshire (Glasgow) Roads	7 Feb 1757	6 May 1757
Glasgow Roads east (Inchbelly Bridge)	14 Feb 1766	30 Ap 1766
Glasgow Dumbarton Roads	17 Feb 1770	Failed
Livingstone to Glasgow Roads	24 Feb 1771	29 Ap 1771
Glasgow Dumbarton Roads	6 Feb 1772	21 May 1772
Glasgow Cambuslang Roads	3 March 1774	5 May 1774
Glasgow Garscube Cowcaddens Roads	3 March 1774	5 May 1774

River Legislation

1759 Clyde Navigation and Gorbals Bridge Act

This authorised the city to proceed with Smeaton's plan for deepening the river by creating a series of locks. Difficulties were encountered in construction and the bridge was not built.

1768 Glasgow Exchange and Clyde Navigation Act

Entitled 'An act for explaining and amending an act passed in [1759] for improving the navigation of the river Clyde to Glasgow ... and building a bridge at Gorbals' it cost £1000 and authorised the city to widen the street from the salt market to the new church, build an Exchange in the vicinity, and stop up the fords on the river. In April 1768 Smeaton was appointed engineer and surveyor for the new bridge.

1770 Clyde Navigation (Glasgow) Act

In 1769, the Council received a report from another engineer, John Golborne, stating that the Clyde could be made navigable as far as the Broomielaw. This was ultimately a much better, but more expensive scheme at a cost of between £8000 and £10000. It meant abandoning Smeaton's plan for locks and instead making a channel deep enough for coastal ships to come up the river. The Council agreed to apply immediately to Parliament for a new bill. The proposal stalled in March 1769, but later in the year a second attempt was begun. This was passed in 1770 as the Clyde Navigation (Glasgow) Act.

1772 Port Glasgow Harbour act

Because only coastal ships could come up the river to Glasgow, the harbour at Port Glasgow remained important and in 1772 a further act was secured for deepening and improving the harbour.

Appendix 5 Postholders

The tables below gives an indication of the posts held at various times by Scots MPs who sat in the Commons in the 1754 and the 1768 Parliaments. Some of the posts were held earlier or later than these Parliaments. Many were sinecures. In addition a number of MPs also held commissions in the Army. Some were rewarded with titles and one or two had pensions from the Government.

The information is taken largely from the biographical entries in the *History of Parliament*, 1754-90, supplemented, for the 1768 Parliament, by John Robinson's list of placemen, which he compiled before the 1774 elections.¹⁸

¹⁸ See Laprade, *Parliamentary Papers of John Robinson*, pp. 9-17, for details of offices tenable with a seat in the Commons, along with the names of the office-holders at the time of the 1774 election. There is also a list of peers who held offices.

Note: Laprade (p.17) identifies the J. Pringle, Master of the King's Works(S), as John Pringle, MP for Selkirkshire. Namier and Brooke name the postholder as James Pringle, MP for Berwickshire.

Postholding among MPs in the 1754 Parliament

<i>Name</i>	<i>Posts</i>
William ALEXANDER (c. 1700-1761)	Commissioner, Forfeited Estates
James CAMPBELL (?1719-88)	Governor, Scottish Castle
Dugald CAMPBELL (1710-64)	Master of Revels
John CAMPBELL (1693-1770)	Groom of the Bedchamber
John CAMPBELL (1695-1777)	Lord of Admiralty; Lord of Treasury
John CAMPBELL (1723-1806)	Adjutant-General (Ireland); C-in-C (Scotland)
Pryse CAMPBELL (1727-68)	Lord of Treasury
James CARNEGIE (1715-65)	
Robert COLVILE (b. 1702)	
Hew DALRYMPLE (1712-90)	King's Remembrancer, Sc. Exchequer
John DICKSON (c1707-67)	
Archibald DOUGLAS (1707-78)	Aide de camp to the King
James DOUGLAS (1703-87)	C-in-C (Portsmouth); C-in-C (West Indies)
James DUFF (1729-1809)	
Robert DUNDAS (1713-87)	Lord Advocate(S); Lord President of Court of Session; Trustee (M&F)
Gilbert ELLIOT (1722-77)	Keeper of Signet[S]; Lord of Admiralty; Lord of Treasury; Treasurer of the Chamber.
Henry ERSKINE (c.1710-65)	Sec. Order of the Thistle; Surveyor, King's private roads
Andrew FLETCHER (1722-79)	Auditor-Gen. (Sc. Exch.); Clerk of the Pipe (Sc.Exch.)
Adam GORDON (?1726-1801)	C-in-C [S]; Governor, Scottish Castle; Governor, Tynemouth Castle
John GORDON (1707-83)	Chamberlain to Principality of Scotland; Sec. for Scottish Affairs to Prince of Wales
Ludovick GRANT (1707-73)	Commissioner of Police
George HALDANE (1722-59)	Governor of Jamaica
Robert HALDANE (1705-67)	
John HAMILTON (1715-96)	Master of Works
Charles HOPE WEIR (1710-91)	Chamberlain, Ettrick Forest; Commissary Gen. for Musters(S), Governor, Scottish Castle
Alexander HUME CAMPBELL (1708-60)	Lord Clerk Register; Solicitor Gen. To the PoW
Thomas LESLIE (c.1701-72)	Barrackmaster(S); Equerry to the PoW
George MACKAY (c1715-82)	Master of the Scottish Mint
Kenneth MACKENZIE (1717-61)	
John MACKYE (1707-97)	Receiver General, Stamp Duties; Treasurer of Ordnance
William MAULE (1700-82)	
Andrew MITCHELL (1708-71)	Commissary in Brussels; Envoy to Prussia; under-Sec. for Scotland
Harry MUNRO (c.1720-81)	Chamberlain of Crown lands in Ross
James MURE CAMPBELL (1726-86)	
William MURE (1718-76)	Baron, Sc. Exchequer
John MURRAY (1726-1800)	
John MURRAY (1711-87)	
James OSWALD (1715-1769)	Commissioner of the Navy; Lord of Trade; Lord of Treasury; vice-Treasurer (I)
David SCOTT (1689-1766)	
John SCOTT (1725-75)	
James ST. CLAIR (1688-1762)	
James STEWART (c.1699-1768)	
James STUART MACKENZIE (?1719-1800)	Envoy to Turin; Lord Privy Seal (S)
James VEITCH (1712-93)	Commissioner, Forfeited Estates; Dep. Governor, Royal Bank; Trustee (M&F)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Posts</i>
Robert ADAM (1728-92)	Clerk of Works to Chelsea Hospital
John ANSTRUTHER (1718-99)	
Frederick CAMPBELL (1729-1816)	Lord Clerk Register (Life)
James COCKBURN (1729-1804)	Usher, White Rod (purchased)
George DEMPSTER (1732-1818)	Secy. Order of Thistle (Life)
Archibald DOUGLAS (1707-78)	
William DOUGLAS (1731-83)	
James DUFF (1729-1809)	
Thomas DUNDAS (1741-1820)	
Lawrence DUNDAS (1710-81)	Governor, Bank of Scotland; P.C.
James DUNDAS (1721-80)	
Thomas DUNDAS (1750-94)	
Archibald EDMONSTONE (1717-1807)	<i>Reversion (Receiver-General, customs)</i>
Gilbert ELLIOT (1722-77)	Keeper of Signet; Treasurer of Navy
Simon FRASER (1726-82)	
Alexander GARDEN (1714-85)	
Alexander GILMOUR (c. 1737-92)	Clerk of Green Cloth
Francis GRANT (1717-81)	
James GRANT (1720-1806)	
Robert R. HEPBURN (1720-84)	
David KENNEDY (c.1730-92)	Representative Peer, 1776
Adam LIVINGSTON (c.1723-95)	<i>Ld. treasurer's remembrancer, Sc.Exch.1785</i>
Thomas LOCKHART (1739-75)	
John LOCKHART ROSS (1721-90)	
Thomas LYON (1741-96)	
Kenneth MACKENZIE (1744-81)	
James MASTERTON (1715-77)	Barrack-master (S)
William MAULE (1700-82)	
William McDOWALL (1719-84)	
James MONTGOMERY (1721-1803)	Lord Advocate
Hector MUNRO (1726-1805)	
James MURRAY (1734-94)	<i>Govr, Upnor (1775); Govr, Ft William(1780)</i>
James MURRAY (1727-99)	<i>Receiver of Land Tax (S), 1783-4</i>
James T. OSWALD (1748-1814)	Secy and Clerk to Leeward Is.
James PRINGLE (1726-1809)	Master of Works (S)
John PRINGLE (c.1716-92)	
William PULTENEY (1729-1805)	
John SCOTT (1725-75)	
Keith STEWART (1739-95)	<i>Receiver of Land Tax (S), 1784</i>
William STEWART (1737-97)	
James STUART (1747-1818)	
Jas STUART MACKENZIE (?1719-1800)	Lord Privy Seal
George SUTTIE (1715-83)	
Patrick WARRENDER (1731-99)	Remembrancer (S)
James WEMYSS (1726-86)	

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