

The Court and Household of James I of Scotland, 1424-1437

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, and that the work which it embodies has been done by myself and has not been included in any other thesis.

Signed_____ Date_____

Abstract

This thesis examines the importance of the royal court and household in Scotland during the reign of James I (1424-37). The medieval royal court and household has received little concentrated attention in recent Scottish studies. However, a significant body of published research exists elsewhere in Britain and Europe which shows the importance of this arena for other kingdoms at this time. These studies have emphasised how the court and household was an important centre for politics and culture in the medieval period, indicating how a similar study of the Scottish evidence is essential for a fuller understanding of James I's reign.

Through a variety of sources, the composition of James's household and court affinity has been examined. It is evident from this that James lacked an appropriate body of companions and high-status administrative officers for a medieval ruler and this was to have significant consequences for his reign. Additionally, by looking at some of the cultural aspects of the royal court, in particular the architecture, literature and religion, a clearer picture of the socio-political dynamics and tensions of James I's reign emerges. In contrast to the generally held view of James as a politically successful, strong and active monarch for much of his reign, this study instead indicates a king who failed to establish an attractive and useful court and household that could be exploited for royal political gain. With his failure to establish a suitable court and household, James was a king incomplete and it is the contention that this contributed significantly to the king's assassination.

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This thesis is dedicated to my grandfather, Archie Scott (1919-1995), who first introduced me to Linlithgow Palace.

Abbreviations

Allmand, <i>Henry V</i>	Allmand, Christopher, <i>Henry V</i> (London, 1992)
APS	<i>Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland</i> , T. Thomson & C. Innes (eds.), 12 vols. (Edinburgh, 1814-75)
Asch & Birke, <i>Princes Patronage and the Nobility</i>	Asch, R.G. & Birke, A.M. (eds.), <i>Princes Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c.1450-1650</i> (Oxford, 1991)
Balfour-Melville, <i>James I</i>	Balfour-Melville, E.W.M., <i>James I, King of Scots, 1406-1437</i> (London, 1936)
Boardman, <i>Early Stewart Kings</i>	Boardman, S., <i>The Early Stewart Kings, Robert II and Robert III</i> (East Linton, 1996)
Boece	<i>The Chronicles of Scotland Compiled by Hector Boece, translated into Scots by John Bellenden, 1531</i> , Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1941)
Brown, <i>James I</i>	Brown, Michael, <i>James I</i> (East Linton, 2000)
CDS	<i>Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland</i> , J. Bain (ed.), 5 vols. (Edinburgh, 1881-8)
<i>Chron. Bower</i>	Bower, Walter, <i>Scotichronicon</i> , 9 vols. D.E.R. Watt <i>et al</i> (eds.) (Aberdeen, 1987-1998)
<i>Chron. Wyntoun</i> (Laing)	Wyntoun, Andrew of, <i>The Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland</i> , 3 vols. D. Laing (ed.) (Edinburgh, 1872-9)
CPR	<i>Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Papal Letters</i> , W.H. Bliss, <i>et al</i> , (eds.), 16 vols (London, 1893)
CSSR	<i>Calendar of Scottish Supplication to Rome</i> , 4 vols. A.I. Dunlop <i>et al</i> (eds.) (Edinburgh & Glasgow, 1934-1983)
Devon, <i>Issues of the Exchequer</i>	Devon, F., <i>Issues of the Exchequer; Being a Collection of Payments Made out of His Majesty's</i>

- Revenue from King Henry III to King Henry VI inclusive* (London, 1837)
- Downie, ‘Sche is but a Womman’ Downie, F. “‘Sche is but a Womman’: the Queen and Princess in Scotland, 1424-63’ (Unpublished University of Aberdeen PhD thesis, 1998)
- Downie, *She is But a Woman* Downie, F. *She is But a Woman: Queenship in Scotland, 1424-1463* (Edinburgh, 2006)
- ER *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, J. Stuart et al (ed.), 23 vols. (Edinburgh, 1878-1908)
- Fasti* Watt, D.E.R. & Murray, A.L. (eds.), *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotincanae Medii Aevi ad Annum 1638*, Revised edition, Scottish Record Society (Edinburgh, 2003)
- Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King’s Affinity* Given-Wilson, Christopher, *The Royal Household and the King’s Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360-1413* (New Haven & London, 1986)
- Harris, *Henry V* Harriss, G.L. (ed.), *Henry V: the Practice of Kingship* (Stroud, 1993)
- The Kingis Quair* McDiarmid, M.P. (ed.), *The Kingis Quair of James Stewart* (London, 1973) [Unless otherwise stated.]
- McGladdery, *James II* McGladdery, C., *James II* (Edinburgh, 1990)
- MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications: Scriptural* MacKinlay, James Murray, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Scriptural Dedications* (Edinburgh, 1910)
- MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications: Non-Scriptural* MacKinlay, James Murray, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Non-Scriptural Dedications* (Edinburgh, 1914)
- NAS National Archives of Scotland
- Nicholson, *Later Middle Ages* Nicholson, Ranald, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974)

Oram, 'Community of the Realm'	Oram, R. D., 'Community of the Realm: the Middle Ages' in <i>The Architecture of Scottish Government</i>
RCAHMS	<i>Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Reports</i>
RRS	<i>Regesta Regum Scottorum</i> , vol.6, B. Webster (ed.) (Edinburgh, 1982)
RMS	<i>Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum</i> , J.M. Thomson & J.B. Paul (eds.), 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1882-1914)
Rot. Scot.	<i>Rotuli Scotiae in Turri Londinensi et in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi Asservati</i> , D. MacPherson (ed.), 2 vols. (London, 1814-1819)
Shirley, <i>The Dethe of the King Of Scotis</i>	Shirley, John, 'The Dethe of the Kyngs of Scotis', in L.M. Matheson (ed.), <i>Death and Dissent: Two Fifteenth-century Chronicles</i> (Woodbridge, 1999)
SHR	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i>
SP	Paul, J.B. (ed.), <i>The Scots Peerage</i> , 9 vols. (Edinburgh, 1904-14)

Chapter 1 – The Court and Household of James I: Historiography and Sources

The reign of James I has received some significant attention from historians of medieval Scotland, not least from that king's two biographers, E.W.M. Balfour-Melville and Michael Brown. Balfour-Melville, writing in the 1930s, was the first to give an account of James's reign while Brown in the 1990s produced an updated account of James's personal rule. Other writers, such as A.A.M Duncan, Ranald Nicholson and Alexander Grant, have also discussed the rule of the first James in a significant amount of detail.¹ However, as Grant himself has noted, the focus of all these works has primarily been on the political aspects of the reign, largely sidelining the role and significance of the royal court and household.²

Balfour-Melville concentrates particularly on the constitutional nature of the reign, making little reference to the court or household, except in passing. For instance, he briefly discusses the main household officers but does not analyse the exact relationships between the officers and appears to ignore lesser positions. Balfour-Melville also declines to explore how James chose his household officers and does not examine changes throughout the reign. There is also no real concern in this work to place the court and household within the context of the reign as a whole or to suggest what implications this may have had for James's rule. Brown also writes from a political viewpoint, focusing on magnate relations and exploring the court only in

¹ E.W.M. Balfour-Melville, *James I, King of Scots 1406-1437* (London, 1936); M. Brown, *James I* (East Linton, 1994, 2000); A.A.M. Duncan, *James I: King of Scots, 1424-1437* (Glasgow, occasional paper, 1984) 2nd ed.; R. Nicholson, *Scotland. The Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974); A. Grant, *Independence and Nationhood, Scotland 1306-1469* (Edinburgh, 1984).

² A. Grant, 'Service and Tenure in Late Medieval Scotland, 1314-1475' in Curry & Matthew (eds.) *Concepts of Service in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2000), 145.

relation to its political function, stating, for example, that by 1430 the court was the renewed focus of magnate activity as a result of the displays of royal power in the preceding years.³ Brown highlights this argument with a discussion of a situation in 1429 when a 'complex family quarrel' was creating problems in Carrick, resulting in the 'unparalleled attendance of James's earls on his daily council'.⁴ However, there is no systematic analysis of court attendance during the whole reign and thus there is little discussion of the extent to which nobles wished to be at court or whether they were driven there by political necessity. This makes it difficult to determine precisely how accurate Brown's picture is. Court style is discussed only briefly in Brown's study, focussing upon a limited account of funds spent on the building of Linlithgow Palace, and James's expenditure in Flanders, and has little to say on the court's cultural significance or on household organisation.⁵ Thus, James's two main biographers are generally unconcerned with a key facet of medieval kingship.

Other historians follow a similar line. Nicholson, for example, scarcely goes beyond a statement that items imported from Flanders suggest a luxurious court.⁶ Grant discusses household administration briefly but again detailed analysis is absent and there is no real attempt in either of these general works to place developments in the household and court within the context of the reign as a whole. The only thorough published study of the household in this period focuses on one specific officer, the Comptroller.⁷ The office of Comptroller originated in England where he was in charge of 'the receipts and issues of the treasurer's office of household', and was third in power

³ Brown, *James I*, 113.

⁴ *Ibid.* 125-129.

⁵ *Ibid.* 113-114.

⁶ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 319.

⁷ A. Murray, 'The Comptroller, 1425-1488' in *Scottish Historical Review*, vol.52 (1973), 1-29.

after the Steward and Treasurer, although in Scotland, he soon came to be the chief accounting officer of the household.⁸ Murray's paper is a ground-breaking study, as it details the development of one of the key offices of the medieval Scottish household. However, it far from aids the understanding of the royal household as a unit in this period or its relationship to the court. This is especially the case for James's reign, as much of the paper is concerned with the period after 1437. Only recently have studies appeared that have begun to redress this imbalance, notably Katie Stevenson's recent articles on the court of James I and on chivalry at the court of James II.⁹ However, a large-scale study of the medieval royal court in Scotland is still wanting.

The fact that so much of Scotland's medieval history has been written from a political viewpoint is not particularly surprising, given Richard Evans' contention that many still view history as being essentially political history.¹⁰ Partly, this is due to surviving evidence, which makes a political route the most obvious choice; charters and Acts of Parliament, for example, easily lend themselves to discussions of the politics of a period. However, this gives a somewhat unbalanced view of an important period in Scotland's history. The household was the centre of government in the medieval era and the court provided visual confirmation of the monarch's status. This was important in the medieval period as it acted to pronounce and promote a prince's reputation both within his own kingdom and in the wider international context. A study of the royal

⁸ A.R. Myers, *The Household of Edward IV. The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478* (Manchester, 1959).

⁹ Stevenson, K., 'Contesting Chivalry: James II and the Control of Chivalric Culture in the 1450s' in *Journal of Medieval History*, 33 (2007), 197-214; Stevenson, K. "'Recreations to refresh the spirits of his followers': Walter Bower's revelations on cultural pursuits at James I of Scotland's court' in *Recherches Anglaises et Nord Americaines* (2007), vol.40, 197-214

¹⁰ R. J. Evans, *In Defence of History* (London, 1997), 162.

court and household is thus essential for a fuller understanding of the successes and failures of James I's reign and its violent conclusion.

A key problem that emerges when studying the court is the lack of any universal model from which to proceed. Norbert Elias's thesis was, until recently, extremely influential for court historians.¹¹ Elias's argument, based on the court of Louis XIV of France (1643-1715), saw the court as an instrument used by the king to control the nobility.¹² However, Jeroen Duindam has recently weakened this by disproving the thesis with specific studies of French and German courts between 1450 and 1800, concentrating on the later seventeenth century.¹³ John Adamson has provided further support for Duindam's view by arguing against the idea that monarchs, to centralise their authority, exploited the court,¹⁴ pointing out the dangers of imposing modern ideas of the growth of the centralised state onto past societies. Ronald Asch has also pointed out the difficulty in transferring this idea to other courts at other times.¹⁵ As Rosemary Horrox states, there is a tendency to see 'the court' as an early-modern phenomenon, an idea predicated on the change in style that was evident over the centuries.¹⁶ However, as Horrox again points out, it is not correct to say that just because seventeenth century Versailles was a court that anything from an earlier period was not.¹⁷ Thus, it would seem there is great difficulty in arriving at a single model for the study of the princely court. Accordingly, it may be that even if the royal court in

¹¹ M. Vale, *The Princely Court: Medieval Courts and Culture in North-west Europe* (Oxford, 2001), 17.

¹² N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford, 1994).

¹³ J. Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam, 1994).

¹⁴ J. Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe, 1500-1750* (London, 2000), 10.

¹⁵ R.G. Asch, 'Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth centuries' in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*, 3.

¹⁶ R. Horrox, 'Caterpillars of the Commonwealth? Courtiers in Late Medieval England' in Archer & Walker (eds.) *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England* (London, 1995), 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Scotland at this time was different to other European courts of the same period, it is not satisfactory to say that there was no court in Scotland.¹⁸

However, there is perhaps one suggestion that may bear particular examination in relation to Scotland. Werner Paravinci has argued that as the power of the Dukes of Burgundy grew, they sought to integrate the nobles into court life as a means of binding them to the dynasty and that in doing so, were able to increase their influence further.¹⁹ They achieved this in part through an expansion of bureaucracy, increasing the number of positions available at court through the introduction of part-time service; Paravinci suggests a fourfold increase in the size of the Burgundian court between 1426/7 and 1474.²⁰ This provided the dukes with a greater opportunity to influence nobles and the localities. The nobles would be in a situation where they could carry information to the court from the various regions of the duchy, as well as report to the dukes about local issues. Such knowledge was essential for the duke to rule effectively. Furthermore, the dukes retained the court as the centre of political power despite an increasing tendency to separate administrative functions from the court. There does need to be some distinction here between hereditary nobles, and those men who achieved status through service to the ruler. The extent to which James utilised these distinct groups can reveal much about his relationship with such men and the possible consequences this created.

While the different political and geographical circumstances in Burgundy prevent it from being used as a direct model for Scotland, the situation there does provide a useful starting point. How far Scotland's rulers were attempting to centralise

¹⁸ It should be noted that there is no specific argument that medieval Scotland had no royal court. However, the topic has received little attention.

¹⁹ W. Paravinci, 'The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy: a Model for Europe?' in *Princes Patronage and the Nobility*, 69-102.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

government in this period has been a matter of some debate. Some historians have suggested that there was no pressure or desire for centralisation of government in Scotland, while others have argued that the opposite was in fact the case.²¹ However, Michael Brown has argued that James I was acutely keen to focus authority in his own person, making a study of his reign particularly helpful in testing current assumptions regarding monarchy and government in later medieval Scotland. Indeed, the fact that James introduced new household positions such as the Comptroller and Treasurer does imply that he was seeking to expand government administration. This, combined with his ultimately unsuccessful efforts to reform parliament would suggest that James was indeed trying to centralise authority.²² However, the extent to which this occurred is something that requires further investigation, particularly with reference to the court and household.

Uncertainty over a model for the study of the court and household is further emphasised by the problems that arise in determining precisely what these terms mean. Walter Map, a 'gossip writer, courtier, ambassador, and itinerant justice' in the administration of Henry II (1154-1189)²³, writing on the court, could only state 'in the court I exist and of the court I speak, but what the court is, God knows, I know not'.²⁴ This uncertainty is understandable. While there is general agreement among historians that the court was wherever the prince was, in fact, that it required the king's presence,

²¹ R.S. Rait, *The Parliaments of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1924); Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*; J. M. Brown, 'The Exercise of Power' in J. M. Brown (ed.), *Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1977); M. Brown, 'Scotland Tamed? Kings and Magnates in Late Medieval Scotland: a Review of Recent Work' in *The Innes Review*, vol. XLV (1994), 120-146.

²² An Act of 1426 stated that all prelates, earls, barons and freeholders who were tenants in chief were bound to personally attend parliament. This proved unpopular and a compromise was reached in 1428 that meant barons and freeholders would be represented by elected members from each Sheriffdom.

²³ W.L. Warren, *Henry II*, new edition (Yale, 2000), 301.

²⁴ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, quoted in Vale, *The Princely Court*, 16.

and comprised not only the location but also the circle of companions that accompanied him, it is not so straightforward.²⁵ It is impossible to define this arrangement with any precision. As Horrox has pointed out, courts were protean places and varied according to the preferences of the ruler, as well as the size of his income.²⁶ Gervase Mathew illustrates this point with a comparison of the courts of Edward III (1327-1377) and Richard II (1377-1399).²⁷ Mathew argues that Edward's court was geared more to war, while Richard's was more formal and marked by elaborate ceremonial. This, he suggests, was due to the long minority that Richard experienced, making him more anxious to emphasise his status (a point that may also be true of James I of Scotland), and to Edward's greater preoccupation with the French wars. Yet, some recent work has suggested that this view needs to be revised and indicates that Edward III's court did possess a more ceremonial atmosphere. Excavations at Windsor in 2006 revealed foundations for a Round Table building, at which Edward and his court would have participated in jousts, feasts and dances.²⁸ However, it should be noted that this structure was not long-lived. Additionally, there were still very strong military connotations to Edward III's chivalric interests. It has been suggested that the chivalric festivities of 1344 were part of a 'recruitment drive' to win support for a forthcoming

²⁵ A. Weir, *Henry VIII: King and Court* (London, 2002); Vale, *The Princely Court*; D. Loades, *The Tudor Court* (1986); Horrox, 'Caterpillars of the Commonwealth?'; J. Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe, 1500-1750*; Asch & Birke, *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*. A similar idea seems to have been held in fifteenth century Scotland. Although referring to a noble rather than the king, Andrew of Wyntoun refers to those accompanying the Earl of Mar to England as his 'Court'. *Chron. Wyntoun* (Laing), iii, bk.9, l.2890.

²⁶ Horrox, 'Caterpillars of the Commonwealth?', 2. David Loades also suggests this in 'The Renaissance Court: England, Florence and Burgundy, c.1420-1520' in *Medieval History*, Vol.1, No.3. (1991), 106-120.

²⁷ G. Mathew, *The Court of Richard II* (London, 1968).

²⁸ J. Munby, R. Barber & R. Brown, *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor* (Woodbridge, 2007).

campaign in France and that tournaments were usually held to mark the end of military campaigns.²⁹

Different political circumstances could also affect the court. Malcolm Vale has indicated this with reference to France, where the king could spend more lavishly as there was no parliament to call for a reduction in expenditure as there was in England and Scotland.³⁰ There is thus a good case for determining how the particular politics of the reign affected James I's court and in turn how the court affected the political climate. Furthermore, some historians have attempted to argue that there was no such thing as a royal court in the medieval period,³¹ contending that the royal court was simply a grander version of the noble household.³² Again, this necessitates an examination of James's court, particularly as it has been suggested that James was seeking to elevate himself above the level of his nobility in terms of status. Both of James's immediate predecessors, Robert II and Robert III had to contend with being perceived as little different from their great nobles, although their courts were probably not significantly different to other European courts of the period, in terms of the type of issues that were important.³³

²⁹ *Ibid.* 77-8.

³⁰ M. Vale, *Charles VII* (London, 1974), 219. For a full examination of the Scottish parliament in this period see R. Tanner, *The Late Medieval Scottish Parliament, Politics and the Three Estates, 1424-1488* (East Linton, 2001), which argues for a stronger role for the parliament than allowed by earlier historians such as Rait in *The Parliaments of Scotland*.

³¹ For the Lancastrian court, see Scattergood & Sherborne (eds.), *English Court Culture*; D.A.L. Morgan, 'The House of Policy' in Starkey (ed.), *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*.

³² L. Hopkins, *Queen Elizabeth I and her Court* (London, 1990). For the view that the royal household was intrinsically different to the noble see K. Mertes, *The English Noble Household, 1250-1600* (Oxford, 1988).

³³ As discussed in the following chapters, Robert II and III and their sons were clearly interested in tournaments, hunting, literature, music, architecture and displays of piety, all important in the medieval royal court. However, there would necessarily have been differences between their courts and those of their southern and European counterparts, due to finance issues and also the fact that Robert II and III were forced into political exile for significant periods of their reigns. The precise level of continuity as

Further confusion arises from the difficulty of separating the court from the household. It has already been stated that the court existed wherever the king was, and Asch has suggested that the household could exist without the king.³⁴ However, the court was dependant on the household for organisation and administration.³⁵ Thus, no study of the court can be complete without a similar undertaking concerning the household, particularly with regards to medieval Scotland where the household was still nominally peripatetic, although it was becoming increasingly static in this period.

The household performed several basic functions, making it much easier to define. These included catering for the domestic needs of the king, serving as the centre of government, acting as the personal finance department of the king and providing him with a bodyguard at all times and with the core of his army in times of war.³⁶ Indeed, Christopher Allmand has stated that an able household was important in helping the king to rule and Balfour-Melville argues that the household was still the core of executive government in James's reign.³⁷ Since the aforementioned areas were functions that had to be performed on a regular basis, the household had to be a much more stable entity, while the court could change on an almost daily basis depending on the time, place and occasion. The military role of the household was particularly important, and Given-Wilson has argued that this capability was crucial in the establishment and maintenance

opposed to change between the courts of James I and his father and grandfather is difficult to determine as little work has been undertaken on the Scottish royal court as a whole for the earlier period.

³⁴ Asch & Birke, *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*, 9.

³⁵ Vale, *The Princely Court*; Asch & Birke *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*; A.G. Dickens, *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400-1800* (London, 1977).

³⁶ C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity* (Yale, 1986), 1; J.O. Prestwich, 'The Place of the Royal Household in English History, 1066-1307' in *Medieval History*, vol.1, no.2 (1991), 37-52; J. Catto, 'The King's Servants' in G.L. Harriss (ed.) *Henry V: the Practice of Kingship* (1993); Loades, 'The Renaissance Court'; J. MacKinnon, *The Constitutional History of Scotland* (London, 1924); C.M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven & London, 1999), especially chs. 2 & 3; Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe*.

³⁷ C. Allmand, *Henry V* (London, 1992), 2; Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 354-5.

of kingship.³⁸ Additionally, Jeremy Catto has emphasised this with reference to Henry V, whom, he feels, would have been unable to achieve military victory in France without the organisational skills of his household.³⁹

The household could have a more symbolic function as well. Richard Firth Green has suggested that a large household was essential to the king who wished to display his status and authority.⁴⁰ Chastellain, a fifteenth-century chronicler in the service of the Dukes of Burgundy wrote, ‘after the deeds and exploits of war...the household is the first thing that strikes the eye, and which it is, therefore, most necessary to conduct and arrange well’.⁴¹ Awareness of this issue in medieval Scotland can perhaps be seen in the efforts of David II and James I to limit the size of nobles’ armed retinues.⁴² Models for the study of the household are perhaps easier to find, studies by Christopher Given-Wilson and Christopher Woolgar, providing royal and non-royal examples respectively. Both of these works highlight the practical and symbolic functions of the household, as well as changes that took place in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁴³

³⁸ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King’s Affinity*, 6. This was especially so in Scotland, where the general host was comprised of those giving their required annual service, since the Scottish king could not afford to pay for prolonged military service.

³⁹ J. Catto, ‘The King’s Servants’, 75-6. Henry’s household did have a significant number of military figures among its staff; all three Stewards of the Household and four out of five Treasurers of the Household were knights and had active military experience, remaining with the king while he was in France. See Allmand, *Henry V*, 357.

⁴⁰ R. Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980), 17.

⁴¹ Quoted in J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London, 1924), 31. For the latter part of the century, A. R. Myers suggests that a magnate in the ‘lethally competitive society’ of the fifteenth century had to ‘impress men by his ostentation and attract them by his hospitality’, *The Household of Edward IV. The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478* (Manchester, 1959), 2.

⁴² M. Brown, *The Black Douglasses: War and Lordship in Late Medieval Scotland, 1300-1455* (East Linton, 1998), 163; APS, ii, 16.

⁴³ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*; Woolgar, *The Great Household*. It should be noted that both of these studies are able to draw on the greater depth of primary source material that is available for England and which is not extant for Scotland.

However, the fact that the household did have a more clearly defined purpose should not be taken to mean that the court had no specific function, as it performed an important role as a political centre.⁴⁴ The court also provided the king with a link to the localities through those who attended him in addition to the links provided by his household officers.⁴⁵ Additionally, the court was an arena for ceremony, display and education, a place for the king to advertise his status to domestic and foreign visitors alike.⁴⁶ It is simply that the how and why of these functions varied considerably depending on the realm, monarch and the situation. An example of the way in which the court could be utilised can be seen in Henry V's preparations for the visit of Sigismund to England in 1416. Henry arranged for the emperor-elect to be met in London by a large court and postponed that year's meeting of the Order of the Garter so that Sigismund could be inducted into the Order, giving the English king the opportunity to display his wealth and status.⁴⁷ Furthermore, household officers could have considerable political power (though some did not) and courtiers may have held household titles, though not actually performing the tasks implied in those titles.⁴⁸ The Chamberlain, for instance, was entrusted with making purchases for the household and regulating the king's residence in order that purveyance did not cause an unnecessary burden on the country. However, neither the Duke of Albany nor the Earl of Buchan, who both held this post between 1382 and 1424, carried out these duties, leaving them to

⁴⁴ Adamson, *The Princely Courts of Europe*, 7

⁴⁵ Horrox, 'Caterpillars of the Commonwealth?', 8-9.

⁴⁶ N. Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven & London, 1997), 327.

⁴⁷ Allmand, *Henry V*, 105-6. James was lodged in London for most of 1416 and may well have witnessed Sigismund's entry into London. At the very least, he would have been informed about the occasion from servants.

⁴⁸ Horrox, 'Caterpillars of the Commonwealth?', 3.

deputies.⁴⁹ In Scotland, the problem of separating household and court is further exacerbated by the fact that there was no administrative centre, the government instead usually following the king. However, Richard Oram has recently suggested that Scotland was not entirely without a capital in this period.⁵⁰ Oram highlights that Scone had served as the traditional inauguration site for Scottish kings and was also a favoured site for meetings of the Three Estates. Perth also featured as a common site for meetings of the estates and despite disruption caused by the Wars of Independence, Perth/Scone does appear to have acted as a bureaucratic centre along the lines of the English model of Westminster. This is an area that needs particular consideration in the context of James I's reign, in view of his lengthy experience of English government and his interest in Perth as will be discussed in chapter seven.⁵¹

The court had many different functions in this period, not just as a venue for political intrigue. It also acted as a centre for chivalric culture, which found expression in literature and tournaments. Chivalry could provide a unifying force, bringing political stability to a nation.⁵² Tournaments could be utilised by princes to advertise their chivalric characters, consequently increasing both their domestic and international prestige. Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy, for example, had a strong interest in tournaments and in the revival of chivalry, using it to re-assert the value of the knight to

⁴⁹ Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*, 149. A further example would be the position of Steward, originally an important officer, though subservient to the Chamberlain, in charge of ordering the household. By the end of the 13th century this had become a hereditary title, and it would be difficult to argue that thereafter domestic duties predominated. It is highly unlikely, for instance, that Robert the Steward (later Robert II), took personal responsibility for the duties implied in his name.

⁵⁰ R. Oram, 'Community of the Realm: The Middle Ages' in M. Glendinning (ed.), *The Architecture of Scottish Government: From Kingship to Parliamentary Democracy* (Dundee, 2004), 15-81.

⁵¹ See chapter 7, section iii.

⁵² D. Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe: the Medieval Kingdom and its Contacts with Christendom* (East Linton, 2000), 101.

society.⁵³ This aspect has been largely neglected in relation to the royal medieval court of Scotland. Carol Edington has looked at tournaments in medieval Scotland generally, but over a long time period, and more recently Katie Stevenson has examined chivalry amongst Scotland's nobles in the later medieval period.⁵⁴ Stevenson does look at royal chivalry, however on this aspect her focus is chiefly post-1437. Scottish literature has received much scholarly attention both in terms of studies of specific works and in terms of literature's relationship to the royal court. However, there has again been no rigorous examination of this area in relation to James I's court and thus no effort to determine what role this component of medieval life had in his reign.⁵⁵

Another area to be examined in relation to the court is architecture. It must be noted that there are limitations on such a study for James I, as documentary evidence is restricted to a few entries in the exchequer accounts and many modifications have been carried out to those residences that survive, which can sometimes obscure precisely what features were in existence during James's reign. The problem is intensified where the building no longer remains, as with the Charterhouse in Perth and the King's House in Leith, both of which are discussed in chapter five. However, several historians and archaeologists have pointed to the importance of buildings as a manifestation of royal power, both through the buildings themselves and in the manner in which they were

⁵³ R. Vaughn, *Philip the Good: the Apogee of Burgundy* (1970), 146; Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe*.

⁵⁴ C. Edington, 'The Tournament in Medieval Scotland' in M. Strickland (ed.), *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France* (Stamford, 1998); K. Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland, 1424-1513* (Woodbridge, 2006).

⁵⁵ R.J. Lyall, 'Politics and Poetry in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Scotland' in *Scottish Literary Journal* (December, 1976) vol.3, no.2, 5-29; G. Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations, 1430-1550* (Cambridge, 1980); S. Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature in Fifteenth-century Scotland?' in *Studies in Scottish Literature*, vol.xxvi, 1991, 410-422; R.D.S. Jack (ed.), *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol.1 (Aberdeen, 1988); J.D. McClure, & M.R.G. Spiller, (eds.), *Bryght Lanternis: Essays on the Language and Literature of Medieval and Renaissance Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1989).

used for ceremonial purposes.⁵⁶ John Dunbar has discussed the function of the various principal rooms, highlighting, for example, the role of the hall in the ceremonial life of the court, while Geoffrey Stell and Richard Fawcett discuss how the size and design of a building can be taken as an indication of the status of the owner.⁵⁷ Fawcett also stresses that many of James's noble contemporaries had quite elaborate residences, particularly the two main branches of the Douglas family. Tantallon Castle, for instance, appears to have had separate chambers for the family and senior members of the household, something that was also in evidence, for example, at Richard II's residence at Sheen. This is suggestive of a growing level of planning in noble accommodation and an increasing desire for privacy amongst noble society in the fifteenth century.⁵⁸ James appears to have been trying to integrate these issues of courtly display and expression of power in his palace of Linlithgow, which has been the focus of much architectural study.⁵⁹ Studies from other countries have highlighted the importance of these aspects of court life to the country as a whole so it is clearly necessary to construct a similar study for Scotland.

⁵⁶ Mathew, *The Court of Richard II*; Weir, *Henry VIII*; S. Rees Jones *et al.* (ed.), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (York, 2000); A.A. MacDonald, 'The Chapel of Restalrig: Royal Folly or Venerable Shrine?' in L. Houwen, A.A. MacDonald and S. Mapstone (eds.), *A Palace in the Wind: Essays on Vernacular Culture and Humanism in Late Medieval and Renaissance Scotland* (Copenhagen, 2000), 27-59.

⁵⁷ J. G. Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces: the Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods* (East Linton, 1999); G. Stell, 'Architecture: the Changing Needs of Society' in J. Brown, (ed.) *Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1977). The implication is, of course, that the grander the design, the more powerful the owner, thus making it necessary for James to outdo his nobles in terms of building; R. Fawcett, *The Architectural History of Scotland, from the Accession of the Stewarts to the Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1994).

⁵⁸ D. Starkey, 'Court History in Perspective' in Starkey (ed.) *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London, 1987), 4. This topic is also covered by Woolgar, *The Great Household*, ch.4, where he highlights the transformation of noble castles into dwellings suitable for near-continual habitation, as well as the increasing complexity of their design in order to accommodate members of the household and visitors.

⁵⁹ In addition to the works by Dunbar and Fawcett already mentioned, see I. Campbell 'Linlithgow's 'Princely Palace' and its Influence in Europe' in *Architectural Heritage*, IV (1995). The specific relation of Linlithgow to court life has received little sustained attention, particularly in the context of a general examination of the court.

Royal piety also needs to be examined in this context, as it can reveal much about the atmosphere at court, and how the monarch wished to portray himself. As will be shown in chapter seven, devotional activity could, if used properly, serve to unify subjects and ruler behind a common cause, as is exemplified, for example, by Edward III of England's use of religious devotions.⁶⁰ Of course, the opposite effect could be produced, resulting in the monarch's behaviour alienating his subjects. Given the way in which James's reign ended, it is important to determine the extent to which his devotional interests had an impact on his subjects' actions.

For Scotland, the lack of extant sources for the period does create some difficulties, which perhaps helps to explain why the court and household have not received the attention they deserve. However, there is much that can be discovered and inferred from the documents that do survive, particularly the *Exchequer Rolls*, as these provide the main source of information regarding the King's expenditure. Unfortunately, the *Exchequer Rolls* for James I's reign are not complete, those for the audits of 1424, 1427, 1432, 1433 and 1436 being lost, and the others are often lacking in detail.⁶¹ Nonetheless, they can help in constructing a picture of the court, revealing details of just how opulent life at court actually was and enabling its style to be determined. The *Exchequer Rolls* can also be used to gain an insight into household administration, as they provide information on who was in office and when and how their duties changed throughout the reign. Brown has suggested that James looked to the area around the Forth for his power base. However, this assertion has not been fully analysed with reference to the household and court and a closer examination of

⁶⁰ W.M. Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III' in *Speculum*, vol.64, no.4 (1989), 849-877.

⁶¹ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

household officers should provide a much more detailed picture of the geographical and social backgrounds of James's associates.⁶²

An examination of other contemporary sources, however, will also be necessary. Abbot Walter Bower of Inchcolm's *Scotichronicon* is a valuable chronicle for the period, the author having been a part of James's administration, and provides a narrative account rather than a financial one.⁶³ Thus, it reveals more about what contemporaries felt and believed about the events of the period, which, as John Tosh has pointed out, can often be as important as what actually happened.⁶⁴ The *Exchequer Rolls*, as government accounts, are far more prosaic in nature. Use will also be made of other chronicles, such as John Shirley's 'The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis', written in the 1440s. Despite its relatively short length, this provides a picture of James in the midst of his household. Additionally, James's own composition, the *Kingis Quair* and earlier literary works such as Barbour's *Bruce*, may reveal some of the ideals held both by the monarch and by contemporary society.⁶⁵ Barbour's *Bruce* certainly concerns itself with matters of kingship, chivalry and knighthood, themes that were of importance to international court life in this period and which several historians, such as Maurice Keen, have tackled in relation to England and Europe.⁶⁶

⁶² Brown, *James I*, 203.

⁶³ *Chron. Bower*, 8 vols., *passim*.

⁶⁴ J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* 2nd ed. (London, 1991) 57.

⁶⁵ M.P. McDiarmid (ed.), *The Kingis Quair of James Stewart* (London, 1973); For Scottish literature in this period see for example H. MacQueen 'The Literature of Fifteenth-century Scotland' in J. Brown (ed.) *Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century*; R.J. Lyall 'Complaint, Satire and Invective in Middle Scots Literature' in N. MacDougall (ed.) *Church, Politics and Society, Scotland 1408-1929* (Edinburgh, 1983).

⁶⁶ A. M. McKim has discussed Barbour's portrayal of knighthood, for instance. See her chapter 'James Douglas and Barbour's Ideal of Knighthood' in W.H. Jackson (ed.), *Knighthood in Medieval Literature* (Suffolk, 1981); M. Keen, *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-arms in the Middle Ages* (London, 1996); L. Gautier, *Chivalry*, J. Levron (ed.) (London, 1959), largely concerned with France and examining *chansons de geste*. Also, Mathew, *The Court of Richard II*.

Further government sources that require examination are the *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*.⁶⁷ Although earlier historians have made extensive use of these for political studies, the information that they can reveal regarding the court and household has, again, been largely overlooked. Balfour-Melville, for example, does mention three Acts that were concerned with the type of clothing permitted to different ranks but fails to analyse in any detail what significance this may have for the court.⁶⁸ Additionally, charters reveal those who were receiving patronage from the King and it may be possible to determine from them how significant the court was in helping the king's subjects to gain such patronage.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the locations from which charters were issued, in combination with information from the *Exchequer Rolls* can help to determine the location of the court and whether it followed any particular schedule in its movements. This should also reveal if certain locations were favoured at particular times of the year, allowing a tentative determination to be made of the religious feasts celebrated by James.⁷⁰

As Scotland was very much a part of Europe in the medieval period, it is necessary to compare and contrast the situation in Scotland with that in her European neighbours, particularly England, since James spent eighteen years as a prisoner in the southern kingdom.⁷¹ The introduction by James of the household offices of Treasurer and Comptroller is an indication that his time in England did affect him, but the extent of

⁶⁷ APS, 12 volumes, (Edinburgh, 1814-1875). Volume 2 will be the primary volume utilised here.

⁶⁸ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 184; Duncan, *James I: King of Scots*.

⁶⁹ RMS, 11 volumes, (Edinburgh, 1882-1914). Volume 2 will be the primary volume utilised here.

⁷⁰ There is some indication of this in the *Exchequer Rolls*. There is, for example, a record of offerings made on Palm Sunday, and of several payments from the fermes of Renfrew to the chaplain at the altar of St Thomas the Martyr in the church of Renfrew. (ER, iv, 450, 427, 464, 487, 516, 546, 582, 631); P.G.B. McNeill & H.L. MacQueen (eds.), *Atlas of Scottish history to 1707* (Edinburgh, 1996).

⁷¹ Brown, 'Scotland Tamed?', 120; Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*.

this has yet to be determined fully with reference to the court and household.⁷² However, other areas such as France and Burgundy also need to be taken into consideration. James was in France during his English captivity and Charles, duke of Orleans was a prisoner in England for the latter part of James's detention. Furthermore, Scotland had strong trading links with Europe, Bruges in particular.⁷³ The fact that it has been asserted that the Burgundian Dukes 'seem to have set the standard for...courtly ostentation in the fifteenth century' further necessitates that a wider comparative approach is undertaken.⁷⁴ In addition, as Joan Murray has noted in her study of the Scottish mint, the archives of other countries can be used to interpret the sparser records for Scotland, although the particular contexts and differences should always be remembered.⁷⁵ It is especially valid to do this in relation to the household as Kate Mertes has pointed out that all nobles of this period shared basic needs in common, including the provision of food and the need for personal service and for someone to provide for the religious needs of the household.⁷⁶ Thus, despite the differences in scale for Scotland as compared to England and its European counterparts, and also differences in royal as compared to noble households, there is some validity in using foreign examples to infer what James may have been doing. As James spent eighteen formative

⁷² This will require the use of studies such as Allmand, *Henry V*.

⁷³ A. Stevenson, 'Medieval Scottish Associations With Bruges' in T. Botherstone and D. Ditchburn (eds.), *Freedom and Authority, Scotland c.1050-c.1650* (East Linton, 2000).

⁷⁴ Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers*, 18. For the influence of Burgundy see also Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe*; J. Calmette, *The Golden Age of Burgundy: the Magnificent Dukes and their Courts* trans. D. Weightman (London, 2001); Asch & Birke (eds.) *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*, especially the article by Paravinci, which suggests the Burgundian Court was not as original nor as influential as is generally accepted.

⁷⁵ J. E.L. Murray, 'The Organization and Work of the Scottish Mint, 1358-1603', in D.M. Metcalf (ed.), *Coinage in Medieval Scotland, 1100-1600* (British Archaeological Report, 1977).

⁷⁶ Mertes, *The English Noble Household*, 51.

years in England, the focus will necessarily fall on comparisons with that country, as it is the one with which he had the most experience.

Influences from within Scotland cannot be overlooked, however, as it has been suggested that James was keen to establish a court superior to that of his magnates to emphasise his royal status. The earls of Douglas, for example, had a relatively sophisticated household administration, needing both a chancellor and a secretary by 1413, perhaps reflecting the power of the earls as well as their desire to increase their own influence. Additionally, the Douglas family had a strong reputation in France, the fourth earl's influence culminating in Charles VII making him Duke of Touraine. Although the duke was killed at Verneuil in 1424, the Douglasses were still admired in Europe, something James would have been keen to subvert in his attempts to increase his own prestige, since a strong Douglas court could have acted as a competing centre, having the ability to act as a magnet for artisans and as a rival military power.⁷⁷ The suggestion that the courts of his predecessors, Robert II (1371-90) and Robert III (1390-1406) supposedly differed little from those of their magnates and that these monarchs were often politically sidelined may also have acted as a motivational force.⁷⁸

The combination of a new examination of primary source material, in conjunction with secondary sources exploring comparative topics for England and Europe in this period can thus be utilised in order to determine the functions and importance of the royal court and household of Scotland during the reign of James I. By examining the organisation of the household and the composition of the court and household's personnel in conjunction with a study of the court's cultural atmosphere, it

⁷⁷ For a full discussion see Brown, *The Black Douglasses*.

⁷⁸ For a full discussion of these reigns see S. Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings: Robert II and Robert III* (East Linton, 1996).

will be possible to add to the picture of this time gained from the more purely political studies thus far conducted. Additionally, by placing this study into the context of the political events of the period, a fuller understanding of James and the legacy of his reign should be achieved.

Chapter 2 - Organisation and Personnel: Developments Under James I

i: The Scottish Royal Household Before 1424¹

As a prelude to the discussion of changes made by James after 1424, it is perhaps helpful to have a brief examination of the existing situation. The household as an administrative structure in a recognisable form in Scotland appears to date to the reign of David I, when, Geoffrey Barrow suggests, the introduction of a court and daily council modelled on English and French examples acted to enhance royal prestige.² The officers introduced in this period do reflect English and French influence, comprising the positions of Steward,³ Constable⁴ and at least one Marischal, who acted as an assistant to the Constable. These positions became hereditary from the later twelfth century, although it should be noted that even after this period several marischals can be identified.⁵ Additionally, these positions only slowly developed their pre-eminence. For instance, the fore-runner of the Steward was the dapifer, an office of lower rank, although there appears to be only limited evidence for this office prior to the rise of Walter, son of Alan, as Steward in the mid-twelfth century.⁶ Additionally, this period saw the establishment of the offices of Chancellor, Chamberlain, Justiciar and Sheriff. As they developed, these positions would become crucial in royal administration, with

¹ Barrow summarises the introduction and early development of Scotland's administrative positions, including the influence of Anglo-Norman practice in *The Kingdom of the Scots. Government, Church and Society from the eleventh to the fourteenth Century* (London, 1973, 2003). These matters are also discussed more fully in the introductions to the *RRS* volumes, especially i and ii.

² G.W.S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity. Scotland 1000-1306*, 2nd edition (Edinburgh, 2003), 46.

³ The Steward was responsible for supervising the hall and controlling the officers with the counsel of the Chamberlain. Lesser knights later carried out these duties.

⁴ The Constable commanded the king's knights and was responsible for keeping the peace at court.

⁵ *RRS*, ii, 38. Barrow suggests that under William I, there may have been several marischals operating in the localities or operating under a senior Marischal.

⁶ *RRS*, i, 31-2.

the Chamber emerging as a more formal institution in the reign of William I.⁷ Other positions appeared by the end of the thirteenth century, such as the Clerks of Liverance, Provender, the Wardrobe and the Kitchen, whose duties are described in the treatise *The King's Household* dated to between 1286 and 1309 and this document suggests the importance of these offices to the proper ordering and provisioning of the king's household.⁸ This document is perhaps a somewhat idealised picture of the royal household and the reality is somewhat less clear.⁹ Additionally, there was the king's bodyguard, described in *The King's Household* as Doorwards or Durwards, comprising a group of twenty-four men, half of whom guarded the king's chamber during the day, with the whole company on duty at night, an office which again provided a hereditary position.¹⁰ Another important officer of the household was the Butler or Pantler, who could officially expect to receive a fee of £10 *per annum*, a not insignificant sum, and who would nominally have domestic duties.¹¹

The chief non-hereditary officer was the Chancellor, usually a cleric, who was responsible for supervising the court chaplains, and was in charge of the king's writing office,¹² having custody of the Great Seal, which was used to authenticate all charters,

⁷ Barrow, *Kingship and Unity*, 46-7; *RRS*, ii, 63.

⁸ This document is discussed by M. Bateson in 'The Scottish King's Household and Other Fragments from a Fourteenth-century Manuscript' (*SHS Misc*, 1904), 3-43 and provides descriptions of the duties of all of the major and some lesser officers. The dating of this document suggests that it was written for John Balliol (1292-6).

⁹ *RRS*, ii, 35-7 discusses the appearance and the sometimes erratic usage of these offices. For example, there is little mention of the Clerk of Liverance in the reign of William I, although Barrow suggests that this position was held by the same man who held the office of Provender.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16. This position was hereditary from the time of Malcolm of Lundie in the reign of William I. Malcolm's son, Thomas, and grandson, Alan, took the surname Durward as a result.

¹¹ A.A.M. Duncan, 'The "Laws of Malcolm MacKenneth"', in A. Grant & K. J. Stringer (eds.), *Medieval Scotland, Crown Lordship and Community* (Edinburgh, 1993), 246. The fee of £10 was assigned in *The Laws of Malcolm MacKenneth*, but as Duncan highlights, officers are rarely recorded as having been paid their full fee on a regular basis. £10 was also the sum allocated as the fee of both the Constable and the Marischal.

¹² *RRS*, ii, 29-31.

briefes and letters issued by or on behalf of the king. The Chancellor also played a key role in the Exchequer audit, thus giving him considerable political power.¹³ Indeed, the Chancellor can often be found playing a significant role in political events of a reign. For example, Gilbert Greenlaw, bishop of Aberdeen became Chancellor in 1397, possibly due in part to his role in supporting the Earl of Carrick's papal supplication for the preservation of his marriage to Elizabeth Dunbar.¹⁴ Greenlaw was also 'a guest' of the Duke of Albany in November 1398 as part of an attempt by the latter to oust Robert III from the government, indicating the political importance attached to this officer.¹⁵

The chief financial officer of the kingdom was the Chamberlain, whose importance grew as royal revenues increased.¹⁶ According to *The King's Household*, the Chamberlain was responsible for collecting the proceeds of wards, reliefs and marriages, and also had a special responsibility for the king's burghs.¹⁷ The Chamberlain also administered the King's Chamber, the place where the monarch could gain relative privacy, and was the chief officer of the domestic household, using customs revenues to finance this. This role would undoubtedly have placed the Chamberlain in fairly close proximity to the king on a regular basis.¹⁸ This would have been emphasised by the fact that prior to 1424, the post of Chamberlain was usually held by a great noble, as it was considered to be high status and carried a salary of 100 merks.¹⁹ However, this led to inefficiencies in the collection of customs revenue. In the years

¹³ Professor Duncan has asserted that the Chancellor had considerable freedom over what he sealed. See A.A.M. Duncan, *Scotland. The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh, 1975), 605.

¹⁴ Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 206.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 214. Albany later supported Greenlaw over the Papal appointee Wardlaw to the vacant bishopric of St Andrews in 1402.

¹⁶ Duncan, *The Making of the Kingdom*, 600.

¹⁷ Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household', 38; Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 17.

¹⁸ Barrow, *Kingship and Unity*, 47.

¹⁹ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 22.

preceding James's return, this office was held firstly by the Duke of Albany and from 1408 by his second son, John, earl of Buchan.²⁰ Nicholson asserts that the appointment of Albany to this office led to a significant and sustained reduction in total customs receipts, as well as some large deficits.²¹ This period also saw a tremendous abuse of customs revenue, with £5000 being appropriated by the earl of Douglas, with Albany's implicit consent, between 1409 and 1420.²² The fact that Douglas and Albany were in alliance and Buchan was often absent on campaign in France, particularly in the latter years of this period, probably gave James the impression that nobles were not to be trusted in matters of finance. Under the Chamberlain was the Steward, who was in charge of organising the king's household, and was required to report deficiencies to the Chamberlain as well as carry out the latter's instructions in regards to the household.²³ The Chamberlain thus appears to have had both a domestic and non-domestic role in financial matters.

Justiciars were the highest judicial officers under the crown, required to hold justice ayres for the hearing of complaints and were responsible for a specific area. Down to the reign of Alexander III there appears to have been three Justiciar offices, for Scotia (the area north of the Forth), Lothian and Galloway.²⁴ These men acted as a conduit between the crown and the localities aiding control of the country. They also had an important political function, evidenced, for instance, by their presence on embassies and were very often leading nobles.²⁵ They were aided in the localities by the

²⁰ *Ibid.* 254.

²¹ *Ibid.* 188.

²² *Ibid.* 255.

²³ Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household', 39.

²⁴ *RRS*, i, 50-1; *RRS* ii, 43-7. See also Professor Barrow's chapter 'The Justiciar' in G. Barrow, *Kingdom of the Scots*, 2nd edition (Edinburgh, 2003), 68-111.

²⁵ Duncan, *The Making of the Kingdom*, 595.

sheriffs, who, Duncan submits, probably performed some of the Chamberlain's duties in the smaller burghs.²⁶ Their duties included the collecting of revenues and organising military levies.

The Constable was primarily responsible for the king's safety, having responsibility for keeping the peace in the Court of Verge, that is, the area around wherever the king happened to be lodged. If the king was lodged in a castle or fort, then the Constable would have chief responsibility for the security of the residence.²⁷ Nominally, the role of the Marischal was to arrange the king's hall during meals and to ensure that guests were treated appropriately according to their rank. The Marischal also had authority over the court during times of war.²⁸ It should be noted that as both of these positions became hereditary it is unlikely that the everyday duties were actually carried out by the holders of these offices. The office of macer, or standard bearer, was another key feature of the Scottish household, and this office also became hereditary, held by the Scrymgeour family of Dundee, Nicholas Scrymgeour having a charter of this office from Robert I in 1324.²⁹ This was approximately the condition of the Scottish household prior to James's return.

ii: New Offices and Administrative Reforms³⁰

Following his return in 1424, James I made a number of changes to the composition of the royal household. The most obvious of these changes was the

²⁶ *Ibid.* 159.

²⁷ Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household', 13, 39.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 17, 40.

²⁹ *SP*, iii, 304-7.

³⁰ See appendix 1 for a chronological list of James's household officers during his reign.

introduction of the financial offices of Comptroller and Treasurer.³¹ These offices already existed in England, and it is likely that they were introduced in Scotland at least partly in mimicry of English practice. James I may also have wished to limit the influence of a single financial officer by distributing fiscal duties among several men. However, these new officers did not fulfil the same functions as in England, particularly in the case of the Comptroller, who was in England only third in position after the Steward and Treasurer and who was responsible for controlling the receipts and issues of the Treasurer's office rather than having direct fiscal authority himself.³² Determining the exact functions of these new officers in Scotland and the changing role of the existing positions is made somewhat problematic by the lack of surviving evidence. For James's reign, only two Chamberlain's accounts are extant and there are no Sheriff's accounts and little detail in the *Exchequer Rolls* regarding income from royal lands, feudal casualties and the profits of justice. Athol Murray does argue that by 1434, the Comptroller had become the chief financial officer in Scotland, receiving £2,360 to account although it took several years for this to become the case.³³

One matter that is clear is that the position of the Chamberlain began to deteriorate soon after James returned from England. In the first surviving account for James's reign, 1424-5, the Chamberlain was still the chief financial officer, being

³¹ Athol Murray discusses these offices, particularly that of the Comptroller in, 'The Comptroller, 1425-1488', 1-29. Murray discusses briefly the changing role of the Comptroller and Treasurer during the reign of James I, as well as some of the implications this had for other household officers. The focus of his work, however, is the period after 1437. Murray does point out, however, that problems with the surviving evidence make it difficult to determine the precise roles of these new officers in the years immediately following their introduction.

³² According to a later fifteenth century English ordinance, the Comptroller carried out household tasks as a subordinate of the Treasurer of the Household, who oversaw his duties, so that the Treasurer did not have to attend to every small detail personally. The Treasurer of the Household was second in the hierarchy after the Steward. For a full discussion see, Myers, *The Household of Edward IV*.

³³ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 5; *ER*, iv, 507-603.

responsible for sums received by others, and directly receiving some small sums, the total being £2,896 9s 3d.³⁴ However, the following years saw a decline in the amounts for which this officer was responsible.³⁵ This does suggest that James's ultimate aim was to reduce the financial authority of the Chamberlain and some possible reasons for this will be discussed in section iii below. If indeed this was James's intention, the task seems to have remained incomplete at the time of the king's death. One of only two surviving Chamberlain accounts for this period, from 1435, shows this officer receiving a total of £1,035 19s, including arrears, the majority of which came from his ayres and from fines for forestalling in the burghs, areas for which the Chamberlain was traditionally responsible, indicating that this officer retained a significant fiscal role. However, the balance of the account was paid to the Comptroller, clearly indicating that the Chamberlain was now subordinate in status.³⁶ Nevertheless, the Chamberlain did continue to be important in other areas. Throughout the reign this officer was frequently with the king and witnessed a significant number of royal charters. This suggests that the Chamberlain was still an important individual in the political life of the kingdom.³⁷

The fall of the Chamberlain appears to have been paralleled by the rise of the Comptroller, who eventually became the premier financial officer in the household, being responsible chiefly for revenues of the great customs, burgh farms and rents from crown lands, areas previously the responsibility of the Chamberlain.³⁸ However, for the duration of James I's reign, there is some confusion over the precise role of this officer

³⁴ *ER*, iv, 379-399, throughout.

³⁵ In the next 2 accounts, the Chamberlain received £530 18s 3d and £25 15s 4d respectively. *ER*, iv, 401-451, *passim*.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 668-671.

³⁷ *RMS*, ii, nos., 1-200, *passim*.

³⁸ Murray, 'The Comptroller', *passim*; Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 255; Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 313.

and what his responsibilities were. The 1425 account indicates that the Comptroller was clearly subordinate to the Chamberlain; although the Comptroller received £833, the Chamberlain remained responsible for the amount.³⁹ This position was reversed the following year when the Comptroller received, and was responsible for, £2,066, significantly more than any other officer.⁴⁰ However, for the next several years for which records survive, the Comptroller received little more than £400 to account and in 1431 he received only £169. Most of this latter amount came from customs revenue and was connected to purchases of salmon, indicating that the office was perhaps in some way connected to provisioning the king's household at this time.⁴¹ The erratic rise of this officer's position is further highlighted by its apparent resurgence sometime between 1431 and 1434, with David Broun receiving £2,360 15s 4d, often stated as being for the expenses of the king, in 1434 and £975 9s 5d in 1435.⁴² There does seem to be an indication that this officer had a primarily domestic function as payments to him are frequently recorded as being 'to the expenses of the king's household', particularly from 1428 onwards.⁴³ However, at this point in its development, the precise role of the officer is unclear.

A similar uncertainty is evident in the position of the Treasurer. This officer appears frequently in the *Exchequer Rolls*, styled 'Treasurer of the King's Household' as

³⁹ *ER*, iv, 380-391.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 401-427.

⁴¹ 1428, 1429, 1430 and 1431. *ER*, iv, 440, 441, 447, 466, 468, 469, 473, 477, 481, 485, 497, 499, 502, 504, 507, 515, 520, 523, 544, 536, 537, 553.

⁴² *Ibid.* David Broun was Comptroller from 1424 to 1429 and then again in 1434 and 1435. John Spens held the position in the intervening years. Broun was also chancellor of Glasgow from 1428 -1435 and canon of the chapel royal.

⁴³ The entries read 'ad expensas domus domini nostri regis'. *ER*, iv, 440. After 1428, the bulk of payments to the Comptroller are described in this manner, or 'ad expensas domicilli regis', 567, for instance.

in 1425, 1426 and 1431.⁴⁴ In these years the Treasurer received respectively £160, £701 (including a payment of £145 for wine, salt, iron, almonds and sugar for the king), and £2,000.⁴⁵ The fact that the Treasurer was providing items for the king suggests that in these years he also fulfilled a fairly domestic function and was connected to the king's personal needs rather than matters of national importance. However, this officer does appear on other occasions, when he receives no direct payments from the customs or the burghs, and on these occasions he is referred to as 'Treasurer of Scotland', perhaps suggesting a more national function. Nevertheless, as Murray points out, in 1434 the Treasurer's subordinate rendered an account of revenue from crown lands and lands in the king's hands by reason of ward, the total sum of which was £823.⁴⁶ These items would previously have been the province of the Chamberlain and is a further indication of the erosion of the powers of this officer. However, the final position of the Treasurer was still not clear either. Towards the end of the reign the Comptroller was beginning to acquire authority in crown lands as well.⁴⁷ If James had a definite plan in mind for the reorganisation of his household, there is little evidence of it in the surviving records.

Nonetheless, although matters are unclear at this point, it is possible to ascertain the beginnings of a division of the fiscal duties of the Comptroller and Treasurer. During James's reign, the Comptroller received the bulk of his payments from the great customs and after 1426 these were usually said to be for the expenses of the king's household.⁴⁸ Thus it is perhaps the case that the Comptroller was introduced to have authority over household expenses, despite the apparent uncertainty suggested by the

⁴⁴ *ER*, iv, 381, 401-14, 525.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 381-390, 401-414 (the bulk received by Robert Lyntoun, clerk of the Treasurer), 526-552.

⁴⁶ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 4; *ER*, iv, 597-603.

⁴⁷ *ER*, iv, 590-6, 599-603; Murray, 'The Comptroller', 14.

⁴⁸ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

variations in amounts involved. As already stated, it is difficult to define the exact duties of the Treasurer. Of the payments recorded to him in the *Exchequer Rolls*, there is a mix of customs and fermes, with no specific designation given, although in 1434 his subordinate does account for revenues from crown lands.⁴⁹ Murray has suggested that his function was initially the same as the English Treasurer of the Household, but that when styled 'of Scotland', the Treasurer was more concerned with national matters, which seems to be a valid suggestion.⁵⁰ This uncertainty perhaps stems from James's experience in England. In 1416, the English Treasurer of the Household became Treasurer for War, so James was perhaps unclear as to the specific duties that the Household Treasurer usually fulfilled and thus later experimented to find the best system for Scotland, although it is perhaps unlikely that James did not have some plan in mind.⁵¹ James was lodged at various locations during his time in England so would not have had the opportunity to observe government in action at Westminster for any extended period of time. From June 1407, James was in the custody of Lord Grey of Codnor, the king's Chamberlain, at Nottingham Castle, of which Codnor was also keeper. In the later years of his captivity, John Waterton, clerk of the king's kitchen, John Everton, clerk, and Sir William Meryng all received payments for James's expenses, as did a Roger Aston, deputy of William Bouchier, Constable of the Tower of London.⁵² This variety of persons responsible for his expenses may well have hindered any chance of James gaining practical experience of English government, even aside from James often being lodged away from Westminster.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 597-603.

⁵⁰ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 3.

⁵¹ Allmand, *Henry V*, 350.

⁵² NA E101/407/14, E364/62, E364/52, E43/589; Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 38, 88, 92-4.

It may be that James was more fully aware of the ceremonial functions of household officers. As a guest of honour at Queen Katherine's coronation (February 1421), James would have witnessed the spectacle of regalia-bearing office-holders kneeling and standing around Katherine for the duration of the banquet.⁵³ Even if unaware of the specific duties of each of the English officers, this occasion would have given James ample opportunity to observe the formal role they could play in accentuating royal status in court ceremonial. It is possible that this played a part in James's considerations when reorganising his own household after 1424.

Another new office introduced by James was that of the Clerk of Spices, likely based on the equivalent English office.⁵⁴ This officer first appears in the 1425 audit, where he is recorded as receiving £540 on behalf of the Chamberlain. Thereafter he was responsible for sums he received, although the amounts were lower than the 1425 figure and did not reach the levels received by the Comptroller or other financial agents.⁵⁵ The largest sum received by this clerk after 1425 occurred in 1430, totalling £388 17s 8d.⁵⁶ After this the office went into decline, with the Rolls for 1431 and 1434 recording little or no activity by this officer. There is a further record of a payment in 1435 of £53 16s 6d for 'items for the expenses of the king's household' made to the Comptroller, not the Clerk of Spices, which Murray has suggested meant that this office was now subordinated under the Comptroller.⁵⁷ However, there is a further payment in 1435,

⁵³ J.F. Burden, 'Rituals of Royalty: Prescription, Politics and Practice in English Coronation and Royal Funeral Rituals c.1327 to c.1485' (Unpublished University of York PhD thesis, 1999), 198.

⁵⁴ There was certainly a well-established office of this name in fourteenth-century England, responsible for spices and wax and also the provision of medicines for the household. It was often combined with the offices of Chandlery and confectionary. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity*, 59.

⁵⁵ *ER*, iv, 381-391; Murray, 'The Comptroller', 7.

⁵⁶ *ER*, iv, 499-515.

⁵⁷ The entry reads 'diversis speciebus ad expensas domus domini regis'. *ER*, iv, 622; Murray, 'The Comptroller', 7.

made to William Norville, styled Clerk of Spices, of £23 8s 8*d*, for which he is responsible. While his position was perhaps no more stable than that of the Comptroller or Treasurer during James's reign, it cannot be certainly claimed that he had ceased to be an independent officer by 1437. The reasons for the changes in fortune of this officer are unclear and remain a matter for speculation. It is possible that James felt that this office was becoming too powerful and wished to reduce its influence or perhaps it was simply becoming too unpopular and James hoped that by reducing its importance he could win more support for his policies. Alternatively, James may simply not have had the funds available to lavish on this Clerk having spent significant sums on luxury items from Flanders. What does appear to be certain is that this officer had no more security than many others during James's reign.

The same could also be said of the position of royal Steward, held variously by James of Schaw and Andrew Young.⁵⁸ Professor Duncan has suggested that this office experienced a revival under James I.⁵⁹ Certainly the Steward received over £1,000 on behalf of the Chamberlain in 1425, but thereafter his appearances are scarce.⁶⁰ Indeed, with the exception of 1429 when he received a total of £36 16s 5*d* for the expenses of the king at Haddington, his only notable mentions occurred in connection with Schaw's £5 per annum pension, which he had been receiving since 1406 (which although clearly not at the instigation of James does suggest some level of continuity in the royal household), and with the receiving of a shipment of Rhine wine mentioned in Turyne's

⁵⁸ Schaw is named in this office in 1425 and 1429. Young is mentioned as such in the 1436 Turyne Account, though it is unclear if this meant he held the office in that year or in a year covered by the account.

⁵⁹ Duncan, 'The "Laws of Malcolm MacKenneth"', 247.

⁶⁰ *ER*, iv, 380-390.

1436 account.⁶¹ This account, rendered 5 September 1436, details the collection of money raised for the king's ransom and how much of it was ultimately spent on luxury goods in Flanders. It is also worth noting that most of these payments were made to the Steward not only by mandate of the king, but also by mandate of the Comptroller, further indicating that the Steward was now at least nominally subordinate to the latter officer to some extent. While this does indicate that there continued to be a role for the office of Steward, it was clearly in a much more limited and less regular capacity. Again, the reasons for this may only be guessed at.⁶² However, sidelining such a traditional officer may not have been generally popular among James's subjects, especially as the king was introducing a more foreign approach to household organisation.

As Balfour-Melville has already noted, the office of Steward was apparently supplanted by the introduction of the position of Master of the King's Household, which, using data from the *Exchequer Rolls*, he dates to 1431.⁶³ However, there is some indication of an earlier introduction in the *RMS*. John Forrester is five times styled 'Master of the King's Household', on 10 July 1424, 14 April 1425 and 6 November 1429.⁶⁴ This is a tentative suggestion, and may owe more to confusion over terminology

⁶¹ *ER*, iv, 477, 398, 456, 492, 552, 588, 638, 679. John Turyne was a merchant who acted on behalf of the king and the 1436 account details Turyne's purchases and expenses on behalf of James, paid for with money from tax and customs allocations, which Turyne received between 1429 and 1431.

⁶² There is perhaps a slight possibility that James's vision for his reign played some part in this. His family had of course come to prominence through its role as hereditary Stewards of the royal household. James may have preferred to keep this as a family designation, he himself being the 'Steward' of the kingdom, responsible for overseeing it. Alternatively, James may have desired to remove any reminders of his family's less-than-royal beginnings, which he may have perceived as an affront to his dignity, particularly as he was keen to emphasise his royal status.

⁶³ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 256.

⁶⁴ *RMS*, ii, 41, 4, 5, 7 135; *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis*, i, Spalding Club (Edinburgh, 1845), 222. This is almost certainly the same John Forrester who was Chamberlain, as John Forrester of Corstorphine is styled both MKH and Chamberlain within a few months. Charter 41 actually appears in the *RMS* under the year 1426. However, Bishop William Lauder appears as a witness and, since he died June 1425,

or a mistake by a scribe than a real attempt to introduce a new office. However, the fact that the new title is given on more than one occasion and with some time-lapse between the latter instances, does give a strong indication that the office was introduced almost immediately upon James's return to Scotland. This potentially early innovation adds to the impression given by his introduction of the offices of Comptroller, Treasurer and Clerk of Spices of an active king interested in reorganising his household. Indeed, the fact that these offices were introduced so early in James's reign would tend to support the suggestion that the office of Master of the King's Household was also introduced at the earlier date.

Even after this office was certainly introduced there still appears to be some uncertainty over the position. In the *Exchequer Rolls*, Walter Ogilvy is styled Master of the King's Household in 1431.⁶⁵ However, while he is styled as such in the *RMS* on 27 and 30 January 1431, on 31 January and 4 February he is referred to as Treasurer. This occurs again when he is referred to as Master of the King's Household in March and early April, but as Treasurer at the end of the latter month, before the designation once again changes to Master of the King's Household in May.⁶⁶ It is unlikely that this was a scribal error, as the two terms were often used within days of each other at the same location. This interchangeability of designation may indicate that the Treasurer was an officer principally concerned with the household. Alternatively, the converse may be true, the designation Treasurer perhaps being used when Ogilvy was performing functions *not* connected to the household. This is emphasised by the fact that it is

Balfour-Melville has suggested this and other charters must be misplaced in the register. Indeed, *Reg. Ep. Aberd.* also gives this charter and gives the regnal year of issue as 20, giving a date of April 1425.

⁶⁵ The entry reads 'magistro hospicii domini regis'. *ER*, iv, 525.

⁶⁶ *RMS*, ii, 180-189, 192-194, 197-200.

Thomas Myrton, dean of Glasgow, who in April 1431 appears as an Exchequer auditor with the designation Treasurer of the King's Household, indicating that there were distinct differences between the positions of Master of the King's Household, Treasurer of Scotland and Treasurer of the Household.⁶⁷ These differences are unclear, but it is possible to make some tentative inferences. The designation of 'treasurer of the household' may perhaps indicate some level of duties in line with those of the earlier Steward, suggesting that by renaming the office, James was seeking to give it additional prestige, thus making it a more appealing office which could be granted out as a form of patronage. There is also the possibility that the office of Master of the King's Household had a more ceremonial than practical role, at least initially. This may explain why Forrester is found with this designation in the *RMS* but not in the *Exchequer Rolls*. This, in conjunction with the preceding discussion, would seem to indicate a confusion regarding the structure of the household and a lack of consistency in household organisation during the reign of James I.

Perhaps the only exception to this is the position of the Chancellor, who retained his important political and administrative functions throughout the reign. The only year in which the Chancellor did not appear as an exchequer auditor was 1426, when the position was still vacant following the death of Bishop Lauder, although it should be noted that auditors were not recorded in every year.⁶⁸ Even in this instance, however, John Cameron, who would later hold the position of Chancellor, was present as an auditor. The Chancellor also continued to be an important witness throughout

⁶⁷ The entry reads 'hospicii domini regis thesaurio'. *ER*, iv, 525. It is difficult to be certain on this point due to the nature of the surviving evidence. In the *RMS*, when Ogilvy is referred to as Treasurer, it is that simple title that is given rather than 'of Household' or 'of Scotland'.

⁶⁸ *ER*, iv, 379, 400, 432, 465, 525.

James's reign, appearing as one of the most frequent witnesses of royal charters in this period. Additionally, Cameron was employed as an ambassador by James on several occasions throughout the reign indicating the continued importance placed on this office by the king. This also highlights that James was not seeking to change everything about the royal household and was willing to continue at least some of the conventions that had existed prior to 1424.

The difficulty in establishing the precise duties and hierarchy of the household is compounded by the use of makeshift financial officers. In 1428, for instance, Master John Winchester, canon of Glasgow, received to account £1,214 12s 8*d*, approximately three times as much as the Comptroller collected.⁶⁹ He also received significant sums in 1430 and 1435, while Thomas Myrton, dean of Glasgow, received £516 in 1429, including balances from the bailies, more than the Comptroller.⁷⁰ Neither of these men were named in office on these occasions, though Winchester was in 1426 Clerk of the Keeper of the Privy Seal, at which time he received £102 10s 9*d* and Myrton would be Treasurer in 1430 and 1431 and was an exchequer auditor on several occasions.⁷¹ The only other officer to have any significant financial role was the Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1425 and 1426, when he received respectively a single payment of £187 18s 9*d* for the king and a total of £291 11s 9*d* for unspecified reasons, although as one small payment was attested by the king it may be that this sum was again for James's own use or may possibly have been related to the issuing of charters.⁷² Murray asserts that the

⁶⁹ *ER*, iv, 434-464.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 498-524, 607-638, 468-496.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 407-423, 525, 432, 465, 525; *CSSR*, iii, 142.

⁷² *ER.*, 384, 403, 405, 407, 408, 409, 415, 416, 418, 420, 421, 422, 423, 427.

sums received by this officer were those not required directly by the household.⁷³ This officer only received such sums while John Cameron held the position and this perhaps indicates that more importance was placed on the holder rather than the office, as Cameron was an important individual throughout James's reign, as will be shown in chapter four. However, the office of the Privy Seal did retain an important administrative function, as the office was held to be 'the key and security of the great seal'.⁷⁴ The Keeper of the Privy Seal was also a frequent charter witness throughout the reign, with Cameron and William Foulis, the holder of this office after Cameron, witnessing a significant number of charters.⁷⁵ The roles of these individuals shall be discussed in more detail in chapter four. However, it is worth noting here that of these household officers, Lauder, Cameron, Foulis, Myrton and Winchester were clerics in Glasgow diocese. This may have partially been a result of Bishop Lauder's role in the negotiations to free James in the latter years of the king's captivity, leading to a relationship of trust between James and the Glasgow bishop which extended to those clerics serving alongside him.

In addition to the new offices that appeared, there also appears to be an absence of some of the more traditional offices. The Constable and Marischal do not appear to have played a prominent role in James's administration and these individuals shall be discussed in the following chapter. This is perhaps not a new development, however, as these men do not appear to have played a large role in the reigns of either Robert II or

⁷³ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 4.

⁷⁴ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 22; J. MacKinnon, *The Constitutional History of Scotland, From Early Times to the Reformation* (London, 1924), 245; Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household', 38.

⁷⁵ RMS, ii, nos.1-201, *passim*.

Robert III.⁷⁶ Additionally, the absence of the Steward and the Clerk of the Wardrobe has already been mentioned. However, also missing from the records are positions such as the Clerks of Liverance and the king's bodyguard. The fact that these officers are largely missing from the records does not necessarily mean that they did not exist at James's court. A John Scrymgeour does continue to appear as macer in the *Exchequer Rolls* during James's reign, receiving his fee of £10 *per annum* as well as an annuity of 20s from the customs and fermes of Dundee respectively, suggesting that this office was not entirely neglected.⁷⁷ However, there is some chronicle evidence to suggest that James failed to keep a bodyguard. In John Shirley's account of the king's murder, it is left to a female attendant to try and bar the door against James's attackers and there was only Walter Straiton, the king's page, to offer any other resistance.⁷⁸ This does seem to indicate that James neglected his bodyguard, or at least did not keep a significant guard with him at all times, and this perhaps suggests that he neglected other offices as well. It could be argued that Robert Stewart, the Earl of Atholl's grandson, acted in a bodyguard capacity to some extent as he was present with the king and his household at the Blackfriars in Perth on the night of the king's assassination, although as Stewart helped the assassins to gain entry to the king's apartments this was not to James's benefit. To Stewart may be added David Dunbar of Cockburn, the only man to attempt an immediate pursuit of the king's attackers. However, this is far from the 'armed group of select brave men' that Bower states should surround kings 'not only by day, but

⁷⁶ William Keith witnessed Alexander Stewart's release from excommunication in 1390 and was a member of the council appointed to advise the Duke of Rothesay in 1399. Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 176, 224. The Constable's role appears even more limited.

⁷⁷ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

⁷⁸ J. Shirley, 'The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis', in L. M. Matheson, (ed.) *Death and Dissent; two Fifteenth-century Chronicles* (Woodbridge, 1999), 36.

especially at night' and who do seem to have accompanied the Dukes of Burgundy.⁷⁹

This position may simply be due to a deficiency in the extant records. Bower, however, is quite critical of this aspect of James's household. He states that on the night of his murder, James 'had forgotten to have the comforting presence of brave men with him'.

The chronicler goes on to state that

kings could learn to have select men always by their side, whom they never allow to leave their company, because it is an act of forethought and caution to provide in advance for those things which from time to time, even if rarely, actually come about when they are not anticipated.⁸⁰

James appears to have lacked the ability to understand the long-term consequences of his actions, which could have helped bring about his murder. Certainly, he seems to have lacked the 'forethought and caution' that Bower views as a mark of good kingship, at least in this instance. It may also be that James had an aversion to being surrounded by armed men, whatever their status, following his years as a captive in England. Although the circumstances were different, there may have been enough similarities to discourage James from taking appropriate precautions. Of course, James may simply have been over-confident and felt that such precautions were unnecessary.

⁷⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 329. Although he states that the guard was not officially instituted until 1474, Paravinci shows that the ducal guard comprised twenty-four archers in peacetime during the reign of Duke Philip (1419-67). Paravinci, 'The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy', 73-4. In England, there was also a system of protection for the king, with chamber knights having responsibility for this task, there always being four with him. Allmand, *Henry V*, 350.

⁸⁰ *Chron. Bower*.

iii: Reasons for Change

The reasons James undertook these changes are not entirely clear. Murray has suggested that the lack of active royal government in the period before James's return provided the opportunity for reform.⁸¹ A series of lieutenants or governors had been in effective power since before James's birth and it is probable that he was eager to restore royal government, particularly following his observation of English practice. However, this is too simple an explanation, as it may have been easier to continue some of the pre-Albany system, although it is possible that the length of the Albany governorship meant that there were very few men left with enough working knowledge of the pre-1406 system. Yet, it is unlikely that opportunity was the only rationale. The introduction of the Comptroller and Treasurer to the Scottish system may provide some clue. Nicholson suggests that these offices were intended to reduce the role of the great nobles in crown finance, which would help prevent the abuses of the Albany era and would have given James more control.⁸² Nevertheless, new posts were not necessary to achieve this as finances could be improved in other ways. For example, although the Chamberlain was usually a great noble, Walter of Biggar, who was not, held this post almost continuously between 1359 and 1376 and managed royal finances with great skill, contrasting sharply with the poor returns experienced under the Earl of Fife's administration after 1382.⁸³ James's financial resources were limited at the start of his personal reign and he may have believed that a great noble was unable to effectively manage the Great Customs. James may initially have been hampered by the fact that the post of Chamberlain was held by the Earl of Buchan. However, Buchan was in France when James returned to

⁸¹ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 1.

⁸² Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 313.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 165, 188.

his kingdom and effective control of the office rested with his deputy, John Forrester of Corstorphine, who was soon promoted to full Chamberlain after Buchan's death in August 1424, having already apparently been given the position of Master of the King's Household as well. This does suggest that a desire to reduce the influence of great nobles in crown finance was a factor in James's reorganisation of the household, though this may have been prompted by a simple desire to improve efficiency rather than wholesale distrust of the nobles. Still, the great men do appear to have been largely absent from James's court, as will be shown in the next chapter, so the possibility of hostility cannot be discounted.

Further explanation for the reorganisation is needed, though, as these seem relatively minor reasons for such significant changes. Murray suggests that James wished to reduce the power of the Chamberlain. Grant agrees with this, pointing to the domination of that office by Albany and Buchan between 1382 and 1424 as James's motivation: the office had become tainted by the actions of these two nobles.⁸⁴ This at first appears a more likely explanation, but again does not offer a fully satisfactory rationalisation for why James effectively sidelined this office and introduced several new offices and officers. Simply appointing a civil servant rather than a noble to this position would have made this office more amenable to royal demands, the former being more reliant on the king's favour than the latter, and would have had the advantage of minimising any upheaval. The motivations for reform must therefore be more complex than these explanations suggest.

James was clearly following English practice with the introduction of the Comptroller and Treasurer and his general reorganisation may have been prompted by

⁸⁴ Murray, 'The Comptroller', 1; Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*, 149.

an active desire to reproduce the level of control that the English king held over government. James was exposed to this to an extent during his eighteen-year captivity, having spent time in the courts of both Henry IV and Henry V. This may have given James the opportunity to learn of the contrasting fortunes of those kings in the area of finance, either through direct observation or more likely through rumours reaching him wherever he was lodged. This source of information may have been particularly strong during the periods in which James was lodged at Westminster, the centre of English government bureaucracy, although James's status as a prisoner may have limited the detail available to him. As a usurper, Henry IV alienated portions of the royal estate in order to win support, thus reducing his income and forcing him to seek support from parliament to enable him to meet his ordinary expenses. By contrast, Henry V consciously sought to reduce crown expenses: he not only reduced the number of annuitants but improved resources by limiting corruption with the introduction to office of men of lesser birth known personally to him, and by improving efficiency.⁸⁵ In some ways, James's position on his return to Scotland was more akin to that of Henry IV than Henry V, as he needed to win the support of his nobles following a long period in which the Scottish magnates were used to managing their affairs without the interference of the monarch. However, instead of using royal resources to buy support, James dramatically reduced the burden of annuitants on crown finances. Even a general survey of the *Exchequer Rolls* for the reigns of James and his father and grandfather highlights this.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ For a full discussion of the finances of Henry V's reign see Allmand, *Henry V*, 384-403 and G.L. Harriss, 'Financial Policy' in *Henry V: the Practice of Kingship*, 159-180. An annuitant was a person in receipt of an annual payment from the crown.

⁸⁶ *ER*, iii & iv, *passim*. The *ER* editor, G. Burnett, notes in his introduction to volume 3 that the bulk of payments out from Chamberlain and customars' accounts were in the form of annuities. Burnett lists 38 men who were recipients of annuities during the reigns of Robert II and III. He further states that while

Yet while Henry V's reduction of annuities proved popular in England, it is possible that James's efforts were less welcome, particularly as he then diverted this income towards the expenses of the royal household as opposed to matters of national importance or the ordinary business of government.

Henry V also aimed to 'live of his own', medieval ideals of kingship holding that a king was required to use income from his lands and areas such as feudal casualties to support his household and government and reward supporters.⁸⁷ James rather missed the point of this, aiming to increase 'his own' through dubious forfeitures such as annexing Albany Stewart lands to the crown in 1425 rather than granting them out and doing the same with the earldom of Mar after the death of Alexander Stewart in 1435. James also desired to keep the whole of the Great Customs for his own use. Even in England, the king was only granted the customs by the grace of parliament. James may have felt that by increasing the level of bureaucracy and maintaining control over it he could effect similar financial success in Scotland. However, it appears that James did not absorb Henry's ability to calculate the long-term consequences of his financial planning and gain awareness of the different circumstances which existed in England at that time. A major problem for James was that he lacked direct experience of royal government due to his eighteen year captivity in England. A similar problem was also faced by Henry IV before he usurped the throne in 1399, since he had had poor relations with Richard II (culminating in Henry's exile), despite his position as a major noble and cousin of the king. Additionally, James would not have had the opportunity to observe Henry V in action at any length, since the English king was so often absent in France.

individual payments were relatively small, together they 'greatly weakened the resources of the Crown'. *ER*, iii, lxxxii-lxxxv.

⁸⁷ Harriss, 'Financial Policy', 168.

For example, prior to his return to England at the end of 1420, Henry had not been to England for over three years.⁸⁸ Thus, although Henry was able to effect good control over government, it was not something that James would have been able to witness directly until near the end of his captivity when Henry brought him to France to try and undermine the Scots troops fighting for the French.

A strong government would have been essential if James were to achieve greater financial security and this was distinctly lacking for Scotland in 1424, although it is perhaps the case that increasing centralised authority was a main aim of James's changes. The complexities of the hierarchy described above may also be connected to this, in that no single officer was able to gain supremacy in financial matters, potentially leaving James as the sole authority in this area. More ominously, the vagueness of officers' duties and of entries in the *Exchequer Rolls* raises the possibility that there was no detailed accounting at the various audits. As a result, only the specific officers involved would have had a clear understanding of what was being purchased and how much was being spent on specific items and then only in relation to their own purchases for the king. For example, the Clerk of Spices received payments of £100 and £283 in 1429, but the purpose of the payments is not specified.⁸⁹ It is perhaps worth noting that the individual officers are likely to have possessed more detailed records than they provided at the annual audits but which no longer survive, so it is possible that more detail was available to contemporaries than is now extant. However, as the auditors of

⁸⁸ C.T. Allmand, 'Henry V the Soldier, and the War in France' in *Henry V: the Practice of Kingship*, 128.

⁸⁹ *ER*, iv, 472, 508. Discussing the Durham Cathedral Priory in the later fifteenth century, Miranda Threlfall-Holmes arrives at a figure of around £25 p.a. on spices, inc. dried fruit, for around 40 monks. Even allowing for a greater number of people to be supplied at the Scottish court, this would still be a significant sum. See *eadem* 'Durham Cathedral Priory's Consumption of Imported Goods: Wine and Spices, 1464-1520' in M. Hicks, (ed.), *Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2001), 141-158.

the Exchequer, when they were appointed, were often themselves members of James's administration in other areas it is uncertain that the details of these records were widely circulated, if at all. Yet there is little record in the *Exchequer Rolls* of regular overspending, suggesting that there was some level of control in royal finances, although there is some suggestion of overspending towards the end of the reign. The 1435 accounts of Robert Gray and John of Fife, of money they had received from the customs in order to make purchases for the king, do record overspends of £148 18s 3d (reduced to an overspend of £88 18s 3d by an extra payment of £60 to Gray by the Treasurer) and £218 15s 5d respectively.⁹⁰ Furthermore, overspends of £66 15s 3d, £30 18s 11d and £59 10s are recorded at various times during the reign, in the accounts of Linlithgow (1431), Perth (1435) and the wool custom account of Edinburgh (1435) respectively.⁹¹

Nicholson has stated that in financial matters, James 'believed in keeping his left hand ignorant of what his right hand was doing'.⁹² This would appear to be a fairly accurate assessment. By preventing any individual officer gaining the dominant influence in crown finance, James effectively prevented any single officer, and consequently parliament, from gaining a detailed knowledge of his own expenditure. Obviously, total expenses were available through the audits, but the vagueness and complexity probably aided James in concealing his spending patterns. Audits do appear to have been held on an annual basis during James's reign although not all records are extant.⁹³ Furthermore, a survey of the auditors of the Exchequer accounts, where the information exists, reveals that these men were nearly all members of James's

⁹⁰ *ER*, iv, 625-28. Fife's purchases included £72 worth of wine for the king's use.

⁹¹ *ER*, iv, 528-30, 612-4, 624.

⁹² Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 313.

⁹³ See appendix 2 for dates and locations of exchequer audits with a list of auditors where named.

household, and increasingly so towards the end of the reign. This weighting may have allowed the king to better conceal the levels and direction of his expenditure of customs revenue from his noble subjects.

The variety of men who acted as financial officers throughout James's reign also suggests that he was seeking to surround himself with a variety of men from whom to obtain money, in contrast to the days of his captivity when he would probably have been given his allowance from one officer, and a fairly minor one at that, depending on the person in whose keeping he happened to be. While there does appear to be a contradiction here, in terms of James introducing a wider range of financial offices, but at the same time keeping these officers as an exclusive group, the two ideas are not mutually exclusive. The men James employed in this capacity were men known to him, men whom he presumably trusted, and most importantly men whom *he* had chosen himself. It is possible to infer that James was seeking a balance between a broad range of revenue sources while at the same time ensuring that only those whom he trusted would have authority in financial matters. In this context, the decision of parliament in October 1431 to restrict the king's access to the tax raised for a further northern expedition by having it placed in a kist under the control of Bishop Wardlaw of St Andrews would have been viewed as a significant insult by James. Parliament had publicly proclaimed its distrust of the monarch.

Of course, it could simply have been that James was playing with the structure in an attempt to find the best system to suit his own particular circumstances, as it would have been difficult to establish the ideal arrangement straight away. However, if this had been the primary motivator then surely there would not be so much uncertainty over

the precise role of the various officers, nor would there have been the need for the *ad hoc* officers utilised by James. Indeed, these issues were more likely to have hindered long-term progress, even if they did perform a function in the short-term. The desire to keep his officers in their place must remain a factor for consideration. Michael Brown has further suggested that James was eager to focus authority in his own person rather than the nobles and the first major political event of the reign, the destruction of the Albany Stewarts, would tend to support this view. James's efforts to gain dominion over the Highlands and Islands in 1428-31 further add to this impression.

What seems to be the case is that James returned to his kingdom in 1424 full of enthusiasm for reform, fuelled by a desire to replicate in his own kingdom the levels of monarchical authority that existed in England. The number of changes that took place in the early years of his reign and which were clearly intended to emulate the situation in England tends to support this. However, as his rule progressed, James appears to have lost interest in reorganising his household. The lack of continued reform amongst the king's financial officers suggests that James was less concerned with how his finances were administered than he was in making sure he had money to spend. This pattern is also suggested by the fact that the number of extant charters issued by James declined during the 1430s as did his efforts to gain control in the Highlands. Whether hampered by resistance from his subjects or simply due to an increasing lack of interest and an increasingly indolent lifestyle, James's reign appears to be one of two halves. It is tempting to speculate that the parliament of 1431 was a turning point, with James losing momentum for change in the face of such strong opposition from his subjects. It is interesting to note that after the 1431 account in April/May of that year, no further

auditors are recorded in the *Exchequer Rolls*. It is possible that James was even more determined to keep parliament in the dark regarding the royal finances following what he perhaps viewed as an affront to the royal dignity.

The introduction of new officers can be linked to James's political situation post-1424 in a broader way. Green has speculated that a large household was essential to a king who wished to display his status and authority.⁹⁴ As Myers further suggests, a magnate in the 'lethally competitive society' of the fifteenth century had to 'impress men by his ostentation and attract them by his hospitality'.⁹⁵ This need would have been amplified for the Scottish king. On his return to Scotland, James's status was by no means uncontested, the great families of Douglas and the Albany Stewarts having grown used to being the dominant influence in Scottish politics. James had to act swiftly to impose his own mark on the kingdom, his attack on the Albany Stewart family exemplifying this. The fact that the Douglasses had a highly developed household, with multiple officers used by the Douglas earl to control his numerous and geographically disparate lands, would surely have influenced James and motivated him to attempt to surpass a mere noble family to accentuate his own *royal* status, particularly in light of the strong reputation the Douglas family enjoyed in Western Europe in this period.⁹⁶ On a purely practical note, James, too, would have needed to make changes to his household in order to accommodate the increased bureaucratic burden created by his acquisition of

⁹⁴ Green, *Poets and Princepleasers*, 17.

⁹⁵ Myers, *The Household of Edward IV*, 2.

⁹⁶ Brown, *Black Douglasses*, 157-165. The fact that the fourth earl of Douglas was granted the Duchy of Touraine by the French king is illustrative of this family's status on the Continent.

the Albany Stewart lands, just as the Douglas family had been required to do in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁹⁷

James's desire to develop central government may also help to explain the king's attitude towards the burgh of Perth. Scotland had no official capital at this time, although Michael Brown has shown that 190 royal documents in James's reign were issued in Edinburgh, eighty-seven from Perth and fifteen from Stirling, with several other locations having smaller numbers, indicating that Edinburgh was perhaps the favoured location for daily royal business.⁹⁸ However, fourteen of the eighteen parliaments, which were more extraordinary gatherings, of James's reign were held at Perth, although it was not the sole location, as Stirling and Edinburgh were also chosen to host parliaments. Additionally, four Exchequer audits were held at Perth, although again it was not the only choice as Edinburgh, Dundee, Linlithgow and Stirling were also sites for audits. This does indicate, however, that Perth was a highly favoured location for conducting necessary aspects of government administration.⁹⁹ In addition, James's efforts to have the university moved from St Andrews to Perth, as well as his choice of Perth as the location for the Charterhouse, does indicate that the burgh was James's choice for his capital or at least that he had plans in this direction. James may have been trying to mimic the English example at Westminster or may have been influenced by the interest in Perth of Robert II and III. This is explored in more detail in

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 162. Brown suggests that the division of duties between chancellor and secretary was a result of both the greater power and greater pretensions of the fourth earl.

⁹⁸ Brown, *James I*, 202.

⁹⁹ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 258. The *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, 171-177, shows that Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth had been favoured administrative centres during the reigns of David II, Robert II and Robert III. The use of Perth as an administrative centre is examined in Oram, 'Community of the Realm', 15-81

chapter seven.¹⁰⁰ In England, the Exchequer had been moved permanently to Westminster in the early years of the reign of Henry II and was the most usual location for meetings of Parliament.¹⁰¹ The stationary nature of English bureaucracy may have given James more opportunity to learn something about it during the periods in which he was lodged in London. James may have been quite happy with the Scottish situation by 1426, however, as it allowed him access to large amounts of money, without having a regularised bureaucracy that would clearly highlight any irregularities. The changing roles and levels of authority of the various household officers could perhaps, at least for a time, be explained by James as part of the process of reform.

However, while James may indeed have intended to make Perth the capital of his kingdom, as implied above, he did also visit several other locations during his reign. At first glance, the number of places visited by James during his personal reign appears rather limited. The king issued acts from only fourteen different locations during his thirteen-year personal reign, compared to thirty-two for fourteen years for David II between 1357 and 1371, fifty-six for Robert II (nineteen years) and thirty-three for Robert III (sixteen years).¹⁰² Just how important moving around the country was for a medieval Scottish monarch is clear from a comparison of James III (1460-1488), who

¹⁰⁰ See ch.7, section iii. The development of a central location for Scottish government is also discussed in Oram, 'Community of the Realm'.

¹⁰¹ J. Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (London, 1993), 83; M. Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 2002), 93-4.

¹⁰² *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, (eds.) P.G.B. McNeil & H.L. MacQueen (Edinburgh, 1996), 172-175. For Robert II and Robert III, many of the locations from which they issued charters were part of the Stewartry territory, the traditional centre of their lordship (14 and 15 locations respectively). This may be reflective of their periods of political exile and the greater attachment which they felt to this region. James I's movements suggest very little attachment to this area. The 14 locations for James I were Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling, Aberdeen, St Andrews, Inverness, Linlithgow, Melrose, Falkland, Ayr, Holyrood, Dunfermline, Auchterhouse and Brechin. Significantly, with the exception of Auchterhouse, all of these locations are royal and/or ecclesiastical sites, suggesting that James I did not engage in spontaneous gift-giving and also that he made his subjects come to him for patronage. This is entirely in keeping with the lack of patronage given by James during his reign and also his general pattern of attempting to create a more monarchy-centric political climate in Scotland.

had a majority lasting nineteen years, and James IV (1488-1513), whose majority lasted for eighteen years. While Edinburgh was the most common place from which a royal act was issued, the unpopular James III issued acts from only fifteen different places while his son issued from fifty-seven locations.¹⁰³ Indeed, this contrast is evident even by comparing James II to his father. Between 1450 and 1460, James II issued 823 acts from thirty-three places, implying that he was much more active than his father.¹⁰⁴ This is quite likely to be one of the reasons for James II's relative success during his personal rule when compared to James I.¹⁰⁵

Yet evidence from the *Exchequer Rolls* does highlight that James visited other locations during his reign although he did not issue charters there, suggesting that he was more active than a charter survey suggests. Between his coronation on 21 May 1424 and the commencement of parliament on 26 May, James resided at Dundee, for which £37 was paid out for his expenses.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, the audit of 1425 reveals that a payment was made for transporting James's silver cups to Glasgow indicating that the king was present there in that year.¹⁰⁷ Inverkeithing was also visited by the king, the *Exchequer Rolls* for 1428-9 recording a payment for the hire of boats to transport him there from Leith, along with the Queen and two of his daughters.¹⁰⁸ James also appears to have visited Inverkeithing again in 1434-5, as the 1435 audit records that horses were acquired for the king to go from Inverkeithing to Perth.¹⁰⁹ James also visited Haddington in 1427-8 and again in 1428-9. In the latter year, James was also at

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 180-1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹⁰⁵ It is worth noting that James II's success may not have been so clear had he not emerged triumphant from his conflict with the Douglas family in the 1450s.

¹⁰⁶ *ER*, iv, 383.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 398.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 482.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 618.

Coldingham and Dunbar for a day of truce.¹¹⁰ The summer of 1429 saw James in the north of his country again for a battle against the Lord of the Isles and his forces at Lochaber on 23 June.¹¹¹ Michael Brown states that the king was present at Dingwall and Urquhart Castles and also visited Darnaway and Spynie at this time.¹¹² The king also made a trip to Ayr in 1433-4 and to Kildrummy in 1436, and visited Linlithgow and Perth numerous times throughout the reign without issuing charters.¹¹³ However, while these places do add considerably to the list of locations visited by James, the majority of these journeys took place in the first half of his reign. Furthermore, of those places visited outwith the area south of Perth, the visits appear to have been of limited duration and frequency. Indeed, as regards Dingwall, Urquhart, Darnaway and Spynie, these visits appear to have been confined to the brief period during which James was personally involved in campaigning in the Highlands. It would thus seem that James was relatively inactive during his reign, a fact that perhaps proved unpopular or at least failed to win him support. This seeming inertia on James's part is highlighted by the distinct contrast between his recorded movements and those of his son, although many of James II's movements were due to political or military necessity.

James was also concerned with centralising authority in and around the person of the monarch and not just centralising bureaucracy in one location. The different situation in Scotland did mean that the king's personal household was far more closely linked to the business of government than would have been the case with a separate

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 441, 466-7.

¹¹¹ Brown, *James I*, 102; *Chron. Bower*, viii, 263.

¹¹² Brown, *James I*, 103, 108n. *ER*, iv, 509-10 records that malt and meal were delivered to Dingwall and Inverness Castles in the year 1429-30 and salt purchased for the king's larder at Inverness, Darnaway and Spynie in the same year.

¹¹³ *ER*, iv, 570, 390, 449, 450, 485, 513; *ER*, v, 60.

capital. It is thus entirely plausible that James saw the reorganisation of his household as a means to display his superior position. It had certainly been the case in England during the thirteenth century that this need had led to a growth in the size of a ruler's household and this continued thereafter. Given-Wilson has estimated that by the end of the 1300s, most English earls would have had around eighty to one hundred people staffing their households.¹¹⁴ James, as a king, would have been anxious to compete with this as far as his resources would have allowed, particularly as his own nobles, such as the Earl of Douglas, were developing such structured households.

Aside from the general reorganisation, James's use in particular of a Clerk of Spices, was surely meant as a means of displaying *royal* status, given that spices were expensive and exclusive in the Middle Ages.¹¹⁵ If the point of this officer were not to somehow boast of James's royal position, then surely he would have chosen a different name. Furthermore, there already existed a position in the household that could take charge of spices, namely the Clerk of the Wardrobe. *The Scottish King's Household* lists the keeping of spices among that clerk's duties.¹¹⁶ There is no mention of the Wardrobe Clerk in the rolls for James's reign. However, there is reference to Lewis, the Queen's Wardrober, in 1435. This indicates that there may still have been such an officer employed by the king and also highlights that the king and queen had separate households to an extent, further suggesting that James was seeking to create a more elaborate royal household.¹¹⁷ Even if the pragmatic explanation is taken, that James purchased so many spices he had need of a dedicated clerk, this would beg the question

¹¹⁴ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity*, 259.

¹¹⁵ Ditchburn has emphasised this point by showing that merchant guilds and burgess-ships sometimes used spices as the entry price; Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 157.

¹¹⁶ Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household', 41.

¹¹⁷ *ER*, iv, 622.

why buy so many spices if not to make a statement about disposable income? Still, James does indeed seem to have had an interest in food, as by the end of his reign James could be described as ‘oppressed by his excessive corpulence’ by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II.¹¹⁸ This is hardly the image of an athletic and energetic monarch as painted by Bower.

It is apparent that as well as the circumstances of his reign, his early childhood and period in captivity influenced James’s actions in this area to some extent. As well as gaining first hand exposure to the English way of government, James’s captivity removed him from effective political power. Referring to Henry V, Allmand has suggested that living in style was an important function of the heir to the throne, a way of reflecting his status in society.¹¹⁹ James’s status before his coronation was that of a prisoner dependent on the goodwill of the English king for his sustenance and would have been in marked contrast to the lifestyle of Henry V before and after his accession to the throne. Surely, this must be at least a partial motivation for James’s changes to his household after 1424, just as his extended absence from power pushed him to stamp his authority so strongly on his nobles. His memory of the early years in his father’s court may also have been an influence in this regard.¹²⁰ Robert III had only periodic authority and James, given his exposure to English government, would have been anxious not to become trapped in a similar situation.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Aeneas Sylvius, ‘Scotland: It’s Climate, its People and their Habits’ in P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1978), 25.

¹¹⁹ Allmand, *Henry V*, 17.

¹²⁰ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 28. Records suggest that James was in his father’s court for the first ten years of his life.

¹²¹ There is some suggestion to the contrary on this point, specifically Robert III’s creation of a regality for James in 1404, which encompassed a huge area in the south and west of the country, including the lands and the earldom of Carrick. This suggests a degree of power being regained by Robert and also corresponds with the point raised in regards to the lifestyle of the heir to the throne. However, the lengthy

iv: Conclusions

Clearly, much could have motivated James's reorganisation of the royal household after 1424. The opportunity afforded him by the breakdown in royal administration in the preceding years was important but was not in itself the impetus to reform. Rather, it was James's exclusion from power during his captivity, combined with the knowledge he gained of the English system and how it linked to the strength of the English monarch that played a leading role. A large household was an important status symbol for any ruler, and James would have wished to act swiftly to impose his authority on a kingdom and nobles accustomed to life with an absentee monarch. The household also provided him with a ready source of support, both political and, perhaps, military, crucial for a king in this period and especially so for James given the strength of the great noble families in Scotland. It also gave him a ready means to reward good service, as will be shown in the following chapters. Clearly, James's household was influenced by his childhood, the political background of his reign, and was expected to fulfil a variety of functions. However, it is also evident from the patterns of reorganisation that James failed to develop fully whatever ideas he returned to Scotland with. While the first years of his reign suggest a king full of enthusiasm, ready to implement new ideas in an effort to raise royal prestige, evidence from the latter years suggests just the opposite. From the early 1430s it is possible to detect a reduction in the king's interest in completing his reforms. The use of *ad hoc* officers and the absence of auditors for the latter accounts suggest, perhaps, that James was more interested in getting and controlling money than in completing a full restructuring of his household,

period of captivity is likely to have negated the effect of this to a significant extent. See Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 281-282.

and also prevents a full understanding of the specific duties that his officers were to provide. It is these officers, the men who populated his court and household, that will form the subject of the next two chapters.

Chapter 3: The Greater Nobility ‘at Court’ and in the Royal Household

i: Introduction

An examination of the personnel of James I's reign must include a survey of those who may have comprised the king's regular council after his return from England. In order to do this, witness lists of surviving royal charters have been utilised in order to discern who was with the king at any given time, and how often. J.S. Hamilton has argued that during the reign of Edward III in England, the presence of a name on a witness list was not necessarily evidence that the particular individual was present at the granting of the charter, only that they were present at the Chancery when the charter was lodged.¹ Professor Duncan also states that witness lists are not always reliable as a record of court attendance for the reign of Robert I so some caution must be exercised.² However, Duncan further asserts that witness lists are generally reliable for tracking an individual's location on a given date. This would be particularly true for Scotland in the medieval period, where government administration was less centralised than in England, which meant that the location of the household was more closely tied to the location of the king. Additionally, Bruce Webster argues that for the reign of David II, witnesses to charters rarely seem coincidental. As there is little evidence to suggest that witness lists for James I's charters are in any way fictitious, it is likely that they are a fairly accurate representation of who was in attendance at James's court.³ Thus the 198 acts with witness lists currently known for James's reign can be used to give a fairly reliable

¹ J.S. Hamilton, 'Charter Witness Lists for the Reign of Edward III', in N. Saul (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England I* (Woodbridge, 2000), 1-20.

² A.A.M. Duncan (ed.), *RRS*, v, pp.110-118.

³ B. Webster (ed.), *RRS*, vi, 9.

indication of his council, as there do not appear to be instances of the same witness appearing on different charters in different places on the same day.

The 198 witness lists equate to approximately two-thirds of surviving royal documents issued during James's reign. The *RMS* for James I lists seventy-six different witnesses. This compares to 201 for James II, 152 for James III and 120 for James IV. It should be noted that there is some repetition in these lists as they often give the same person under a different designation. There appears to be sixty-four individuals appearing as witnesses in the case of James I. A closer examination would be required to establish the precise number of individuals concerned for the later reigns.

However, witness lists give a fairly restricted view of who was with the king and who was important in his reign. This is particularly true for James I, for whose reign there is a limited number of extant charters. The last charter recorded in the *RMS* is dated March 1432, some five years before the end of James's reign, although there are a number of extant charters for the latter years of the reign that do not appear to have been registered. Still, the total number available for these latter years is lower than the total number that appear in the register for the period 1424-1432. 200 charters appear in the *RMS* alone, which covers registered grants to 31 March 1432, while for the latter years approximately forty charters represent the extant record of royal grants. It is impossible to tell if this apparent decline is due to fewer charters being issued or down to a lack of survival. Still, the editors of the Register make no mention of lost rolls for James's reign, so it is possible that the reduction is partly due to fewer charters being produced. Additionally, Bruce Webster has highlighted that charters were usually recorded in the Register at the insistence of the recipient of the grant. This may suggest

that some grantees were less concerned with gaining the royal seal of approval in the later years of James's reign.⁴ However, the disparity in the numbers is so great that it must indicate that there has been a significant loss of royal charters for the latter years of James's reign.

The problems with extant charters make it necessary to use other sources to provide a clearer picture of the royal affinity. Chronicles provide significant information regarding the men who were attending the king, particularly as there is a contemporary chronicle written by a member of James's own fiscal administration, Walter Bower. Furthermore, it is possible to collect information regarding the role and importance of several of the household officers from the records of the Exchequer audits. It is also possible to determine whether the various officials and nobles who attended James had a long-standing relationship with him, dating from the years of his captivity, by utilising records such as the *Rotuli Scotiae* and the *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*. These help to reveal those who visited James in England. Clearly, it is necessary to use a wide variety of sources in order to create as accurate a picture as possible of James's personnel. In order to do this, the key groups of men around James will be examined in turn so that their relative importance can be established.

It will not be possible to examine in detail every individual who appears in the records in this way but it is hoped that by covering those people who occur on a regular basis or who may be considered of significance in some other way, it will be possible to reveal something of James's intentions during his reign, as Jean Dunbabin has argued it

⁴ B. Webster, *Scotland from the eleventh century to 1603* (London, 1975), 147-8.

is possible to do studying the thirteenth century household of Charles I of Anjou.⁵ Dunbabin had suggested that a new ruler's entourage was intended as a political statement and that knowing something about a ruler's personnel and favourites can reveal his awareness of the political climate during his reign. Dunbabin is dealing with the specific example of a ruler taking command of an area that he had just conquered rather than the more peaceful return of James to Scotland. However, a similar argument can be used in the context of James's reign, as the personnel of his court and household may reveal his awareness of the political realities facing him upon his return.

ii: Earls

The first group of individuals to be considered here are the earls, that is, identifying the earls who appear to be at court and the regularity with which they appear. It is particularly important to examine this group in the present context, as Michael Brown has suggested that within a few years of James's return, the royal court had become a renewed focus of magnate activity.⁶ Alexander Grant, in his study of the acts of the fourth Earl of Douglas (d.1424), has suggested that charter witnesses may be ascribed to inner and outer circles of that earl's affinity according to the frequency with which they appear in witness lists, a frequency of 10% or more of charters witnessed being required for allocation to the inner circle.⁷ Present on surviving witness lists for

⁵ J. H. Dunbabin, 'The Household and Entourage of Charles I of Anjou, king of the Regno, 1266-85', *Historical Research*, vol.77, no.197 (August 2004), 313-336. Furthermore, as S. M. Mitchell has stated, court life cannot be separated from government and politics and it is thus essential to look at the personnel of the court as well as the household in order to more fully understand the politics of James's reign, S.M. Mitchell, 'Some Aspects of the Knightly Household of Richard II' (Unpublished University of London PhD thesis, 1998), 87.

⁶ Brown, *James I*, 113.

⁷ A. Grant, 'Acts of Lordship: the Records of Archibald, Fourth Earl of Douglas', in *Freedom and Authority: Historical and Historiographical Essays Presented to Grant G. Simpson* (East Linton, 2000),

James's reign are the Earls of Atholl (with a frequency of 8%), Douglas (5%), Orkney (4%), Angus (4%), Mar (3.5%), Crawford (0.5%) and March (0.5%).⁸ From Bower can be added the earl of Moray, who is included amongst those at St Andrews with James in 1425.⁹ This is a fairly small number of earls in attendance at court. From witness lists alone, around double this number appear in the reigns of James II, III and IV although it should be noted that the contrast may be distorted by the creation or revival of a number of earldoms in the reigns of James II and James IV.¹⁰ However, it is still a fairly striking difference and the fact that James I did not use earldoms as a form of patronage in the manner of his successors is also potentially significant.¹¹ Additionally, of those earls who appear on witness lists, three (Atholl, Douglas and Angus) were closely related to the king, being an uncle and nephews respectively, and two (Mar and Crawford) were cousins, although Mar was illegitimate, indicating that James was relying on his extended family to a great extent.¹²

It should be noted, however, that there were a limited number of adult earls in Scotland at this time anyway. Atholl, in addition to this earldom, also held Caithness

249. Grant states that 92 complete acts survive, with 23 others surviving in note form, making this earl's tenure one of the best documented of the medieval period according to Grant. *Ibid.* 235.

⁸ The Table of witness lists for RMS, ii, identifies Alexander earl of Angus and William earl of Angus as being witnesses to charters of James I. Since there was no Alexander as an earl of Angus, and this name is given only once, it is most likely an error for William or possibly for Alexander earl of Mar. The table also identifies Henry earl of Orkney as a witness on 4 February 1425. However, Henry died in 1418 so this is probably an error for his son William, who is found as a witness to charters of James I. The Earl of March appears only on the foundation charter for the Perth Charterhouse, dated 31 March 1429. This charter is not recorded in the Register for the reign of James I but appears in a confirmation charter of James V dated 7 March 1538/9, RMS, iii, no.1928. March's appearance in this instance perhaps says more about James I's desire to have as many notable men as possible as witnesses to this foundation than about cordial relations between the king and the earl.

⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 257.

¹⁰ RMS, ii, *passim*. A more detailed study would be needed to determine the frequency with which these earls appear in each case.

¹¹ It should be noted that earls and other nobles had a number of local responsibilities that may have prevented them from being regularly in attendance at court. See for example, Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*, ch.5. However, there is still a striking difference between the level of noble attendance at James I's courts as compared to those of David II and James III that needs to be explained.

¹² Brown, *James I*, 87.

and Strathearn, the latter as tutor to its heir, Malise Graham, although this was granted to Atholl in life-rent in 1427.¹³ The Earl of Sutherland was a hostage from 1427 until the 1440s.¹⁴ Fife and Lennox were annexed to the crown following the king's destruction of the Albany Stewart family and the Earl of Buchan died at the Battle of Verneuil (1424), whereupon James interfered to prevent the earl's brother inheriting.¹⁵ The earldom of Ross was claimed by the Lord of the Isles, a man with whom James was in conflict for the majority of his reign.¹⁶ It thus appears that of those earldoms in possession of an earl resident in Scotland during James's reign, most are represented on James's witness lists.

There appear to be several different explanations behind noble attendance at court. For instance, the Earl of Douglas's appearance on 27 July 1429 at Inverness indicates his presence on campaign rather than just a presence at court, and this appears to be true also of the Earl of Crawford who was also present on this date, especially as Crawford would have had a specific interest in the pacification of the Highlands.¹⁷ Of Douglas's remaining occurrences, several were at areas in which the earl had a landed interest, for instance at Melrose on 12 October 1424 and four at Edinburgh, three of which were in August 1429 and one in January 1430.¹⁸ This implies that the court's proximity to his location was of importance rather than that he made a particular effort to attend the king. However, it should be noted that Douglas's main lands were still in the south-west, with the residences at Bothwell and Threave being those most commonly

¹³ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 149; Brown, *James I*, 86. Graham was given the earldom of Menteith in compensation and promptly sent to England as a replacement hostage for the king's ransom

¹⁴ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 294.

¹⁵ Brown, *James I*, 57.

¹⁶ See Brown, *James I*, *passim*.

¹⁷ *RMS*, ii, no.127.

¹⁸ *RMS*, ii, nos. 11, 128, 129, 130, 142; *Rose of Kilravock*, 129-30.

utilised. Nevertheless, it is possible that Douglas inherited an interest in Edinburgh following from his father's time as keeper of Edinburgh Castle and role as 'principal protector' of Holyrood Abbey.¹⁹ Another appearance by Douglas at Perth, 6 October 1429, can easily be explained by the holding of a parliament in that burgh in that month, and this also accounts for the Earl of Orkney's appearance on the latter date. Furthermore, a majority of Sinclair's appearances occur in Edinburgh, which further highlights that the king's proximity to an earl's landed interests could be an influencing factor.²⁰ In fact, the only earl to appear with any regularity outwith his area of territorial interest was the Earl of Atholl, whose appearances occurred mainly in Edinburgh, with twelve of his seventeen appearances taking place there, and the remainder at Perth. This is perhaps not surprising as he was the king's uncle and thus had more reasons than the purely political to be in attendance, unlike other earls. This would appear to support Michael Brown's suggestion regarding James's attempts to create a royal kindred as a wider support base.²¹

There are thus clear reasons for earls being at court that appear to have little to do with them actually wanting to be there for non-political reasons. This picture also emerges from the information given by Bower. Also in St Andrews at Christmas 1425 were Flemish ambassadors, in Scotland to discuss the restoration of trade links and it may have been the desire to establish or reaffirm links with these foreign visitors that was the attraction.²² There may also have been individual agendas. For instance, in the case of the Earl of Moray, he may have been hoping for some sign of favour from

¹⁹ Brown, *James I*, 27.

²⁰ RMS. nos.9, 10.

²¹ *Ibid.* 87.

²² Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 129.

James, as the earl would have been fairly newly returned to Scotland following his year as a hostage in England as security for James's ransom.²³ James may also have wished to enlist the aid of this earl in securing the northern portion of his kingdom, perhaps as an alternative source of authority to the Earl of Mar. However, Brown asserts that Moray lacked the resources to be truly effective in this arena.²⁴ If indeed James was seeking to cultivate Moray in the early years of his personal reign, it perhaps suggests the king's lack of awareness of the political realities he was facing. Additionally, it is possible that Bower was exaggerating noble attendance at the royal court in order to educate James II as to what the composition of the monarch's court *should* be and that the earls specifically named by Bower were in fact the limit of noble turnout. As Bower's assertion of James being attended by 'nearly all the princes and magnates of the kingdom' does not correspond to the charter evidence it does seem reasonable to conclude that Bower's statements in this area are fictional to some extent.²⁵ A similar chronicle picture of nobles at court can be found in Andrew of Wyntoun's work, suggesting that this was a normal picture to give of a monarch. This chronicler gives a picture of Robert II at Dunfermline with his magnates, where he received messengers

²³ Grant includes proposed hostages for the fourth Earl of Douglas in his analysis of the earl's inner circle. Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 249. This probably does not apply to James, as it would have been more difficult for these men to say no to the king's request that they serve as a hostage, regardless of how closely they were allied to him. Four earls do appear as hostages for James, namely the Earls of Moray and Crawford amongst the first list in 1424 and the Earls of Sutherland and Menteith in the exchange of October 1427. Also, the heir of the Earl of March was sent as a hostage in the August exchange of 1425. Of these, only Crawford appears as a witness to any royal charters, as discussed above. None of these men received any significant grant from the king during the reign and therefore it is difficult to suggest that they were part of any royal affinity. Indeed, Malise Graham's loss of the earldom of Strathearn to the Earl of Atholl (1427) and the forfeiture of the Earl of March (1435) are well known. Brown, *James I*, 85-6, 156.

²⁴ Brown, *James I*, 81. Also, Steve Boardman states that in the later years of the 14th century, the earldom of Moray was held by men with few ties to Gaelic society, whose political interests lay mainly in the southern half of the kingdom. Boardman further states that both John and his son Thomas 'displayed a rare talent for leaving Moray totally unprotected at critical junctures'. Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 88, 260

²⁵ *Chron.Bower*, viii, 257.

from France, perhaps reflecting that kings should present a grand court to foreign visitors.²⁶ Another idealised image of attendance at James's court can be found in the fresco commissioned in Sienna by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who visited Scotland in 1435. The image shows James as a venerable old man, surrounded by his courtiers, and is at odds with the impression gained from the documentary evidence but may represent what Piccolomini observed during his visit.²⁷ However, Piccolomini makes no comment on court attendance in his written account of his Scottish travels, implying that the fresco is a rather contrived picture.

It is evident from this survey that no major earl, other than the king's uncle the Earl of Atholl, can reasonably be said to be in regular attendance at court and even then Atholl's attendance appears limited. Indeed, no earl appears as a witness at all after 30 May 1432.²⁸ This is somewhat unusual for the Scottish court, in contrast to earlier and later reigns. Even just utilising charter data, it is possible to ascertain that earls were in much more frequent attendance at court in other reigns. In Michael Penman's study of witnesses to charters of David II (1329-1371), for example, earls appear with much greater frequency.²⁹ At least one earl, usually more, appears in every year for which witness lists survive, and each earl nearly always witnesses at least 10% of charters in any given year, often more. Looking towards the end of the fifteenth century, T. Chalmers has identified a greater frequency of appearance by earls between 1463 and 1490, when again at least one earl appears in every year. Furthermore, in the later

²⁶ *Chron. Wyntoun* (Laing), bk.9, ll.1033-1044.

²⁷ See appendix 3.

²⁸ C. Innes (ed.), *Genealogical Deduction of the Family of Rose of Kilravock*, Spalding Club (Edinburgh, 1848), 129/30.

²⁹ M. Penman, 'The Kingship of David II, 1329-71' (Unpublished University of St Andrews PhD thesis, 1999), 'appendix 2'.

period, earls are often found witnessing up to 100% of charters for which there are lists surviving. However, it is interesting to note that the most frequent witnesses in this class were also named in household office.³⁰ Other earls, not named in office, are sometimes less evident in witness lists for this period. For instance, the Earl of Atholl in 1487 only appears on 7% of lists and even in his capacity as chamberlain the Earl of Buchan appears on only 6% of lists in 1480. However, taken as a whole, it is clear that in this later period, earls generally appear more often and more regularly than is the case in the reign of James I. Interestingly, Chalmers' data also reveals that more significant magnates are to be found in household office than was the case in the earlier part of the century. James I's choice of household officers and their role in the king's affinity shall be discussed in a subsequent section.

As regards those who were knighted by the king at his coronation celebrations, Bower does list several earls as receiving this honour at this time, namely the Earls of Douglas, Angus, and March and possibly also the Earl of Crawford.³¹ According to Watt, Wigtown (Douglas) was almost certainly a knight already by this point and March was too old for knighting in 1424.³² Furthermore, Crawford was a hostage in England at the time of the ceremony, and was deleted from some versions of the manuscript,

³⁰ For instance, Colin, earl of Argyll, witnessed a high proportion of charters between 1463 and 1482, his lowest proportion being 71% in 1464, but during this time he held the office of Master of the King's Household. From 1484, Argyll, as Chancellor, is found as a witness on 100% of charters, except for a brief period in 1488. T. Chalmers, 'Daily Council from RMS testation, 1463-1513' in 'The King's Council, Patronage and the Governance of Scotland, 1460-1513' (Unpublished University of Aberdeen PhD thesis, 1982). 12 different earls appear in the witness lists for James III's charters as given in *RMS*, ii. 13 earls appear in the lists of James II and James IV respectively.

³¹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 243. D.E.R. Watt states that the naming of Archibald, earl of Douglas is an error for the earl of Wigtown.

³² *Ibid.* editor's notes, 352. In some of these examples it may have been the heirs to the earldoms who were knighted. Certainly, Crawford's heir, David, was of age to be knighted and was a knight by 17 November 1425. Angus's heir, James, succeeded in 1437 although it is not entirely clear how old he was in 1424. It should also be noted that Katie Stevenson has recently suggested that despite the usual age for knighting being around 16 to 20 years of age, there was no set age for knighting and examples of men being knighted into their 30s and older can be found. Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood*, 17-19.

making his knighting at this point doubtful. This really only leaves one earl who may be said with any certainty to have been knighted by James at his coronation. At the knighting ceremony accompanying the baptism celebrations for his twin sons in 1430, the closest James came to knighting an earl was the heir of the Earl of Douglas.³³ It would appear from a variety of sources, then, that there is little evidence of earls forming a regular or important part of the king's affinity in this period.

This does raise the question, though, of why Bower felt the need to, at best, augment the lists of those men who were present at court on different occasions. It is perhaps the case that Bower was seeking to obscure the fact that James had largely ignored his great nobles. It is well known that James was parsimonious with the granting of patronage, with Grant identifying only five crown grants of land during the reign, and suggests that the underlying circumstances of these grants mean that they are not actually that significant.³⁴ Of these five, two were to family members, his sister Margaret, widow of the fourth Earl of Douglas, and his uncle Walter, earl of Atholl.³⁵ A further two can clearly be seen to have been motivated by political expediency. In January 1427 Alexander, earl of Mar was granted the lordship of Badenoch, no doubt in recognition of the role the earl would play in controlling the Highlands, and later that same year the earldom of Menteith was granted to Malise Graham, for reasons that have

³³ *Ibid*, 263.

³⁴ Grant, 'Service and Tenure in Late Medieval Scotland', 170.

³⁵ *RMS*, ii, nos.47 & 93. Margaret received a grant of the Lordship of Galloway for her lifetime, placing a significant Douglas family territory outside of the immediate control of the fifth earl of Douglas. Michael Brown states that, although not specified in the charter, the lordship would likely have passed to the earl on his mother's death (Brown, *James I*, 78). However, given James's actions regarding the lands of other nobles, it is entirely possible that he intended for the lordship to come into royal hands upon his sister's death. It should be noted that in the mid-1300s, the lordship was essentially split, with the sector west of the Cree becoming part of the earldom of Wigtown. Atholl received the earldom of Strathearn for his lifetime, again indicating that James intended to acquire this earldom for the crown after Atholl's death.

already been mentioned.³⁶ It may be that some of the household reorganisation that took place after 1424, as discussed in the preceding chapter, was intended by James to offer patronage without the expense of large royal grants, as it allowed those who had offered loyal service to be rewarded with household office. However, this still ignored the great nobles and actively changed the role they had held in the household pre-1424, particularly with reference to the office of Chamberlain, as mentioned in the previous chapter. In this context, it is not surprising that James would seek to reduce their influence in this area.

Additionally, there is not a significant amount of evidence to suggest that household officers received much in the way of patronage over and above their offices, although some exceptions are discussed below. For instance, there is nothing in the surviving *Exchequer Rolls* to suggest that household officers or others regularly received grants of robes or livery, although it should be noted that payments may have been made in years for which records no longer survive. The only indications of such patronage are a payment of £21 20*d* for nineteen robes to the keepers of the Queen's horses for accompanying her to Inverness and a payment of £371 7*s* 10*d* for cloth for the use of the king and his servants.³⁷ These are significant sums and do suggest that a large number of outfits were produced. In the first instance, the sum allows for just over £1 per robe, a not unreasonable allowance if the servants are not of a particularly high status.³⁸ For the larger sum, this would have allowed for a significant number of officers to receive gifts

³⁶ *RMS*, ii, 76; *Red Book of Menteith*, ii, 293. The exchange of these two earldoms also brought the wealthier earldom back into the male line of royal Stewarts, Walter being the younger brother of David, earl of Strathearn (d.1389x90).

³⁷ *ER*, iv, 473, 575-6. The proportion of the latter sum allocated to the king's servants is not recorded.

³⁸ In England in the later thirteenth century, robes could cost between £5 7*s* for the controller of the wardrobe and 5*s* for lower classes of huntsmen. F. Lachaud, 'Liveries of Robes in England, c.1200-c.1330' in *English Historical Review* (April, 1996), 289.

of cloth.³⁹ Thus, while James does seem to have been generally disinterested in patronage, there are instances when he did give gifts.

There do appear to be political motivations behind these examples, however. Obviously, in the case of the robes given to the keepers of the Queen's horses, James hoped to create the impression of a striking royal household to the northern nobles at Inverness. Lachaud suggests that as robes could be used as a reward for service, they could be used by a lord to increase the size of his retinue for a specific occasion. Lachaud also states that this was done by Edward I for a parliament at which a formal judgement was to be passed against William Wallace.⁴⁰ In the case of the larger sum in James's reign, the amount is recorded in the account for the year 1433-34, the same account in which payments for James's tournament are recorded. It is possible that this payment was intended to provide new clothes for the household in order to make a statement about its power and unity to others attending the event. This may not have been popular with his subjects, particularly towards the very end of James's reign, especially after an account was given of the money the king was spending in Flanders to purchase luxury goods for himself and his wife. This was possibly given extra impetus as a large proportion of what the king spent came from the money raised to pay his ransom. Additionally, it may well be that different members of the household were to be dressed differently, providing visual confirmation of the hierarchies the household contained. Such a hierarchy of differential clothing was something that was of concern to James, as evidenced by the parliamentary acts passed in 1430 stipulating the manner

³⁹ Again, a comparative figure for England suggests that the highest sum received by an individual in any year for robes was around £10 at the end of the thirteenth century. Even allowing for changes in currency and for exchange rates, £371 Scots would have allowed for new clothing for at the very least the chief members of the royal household. Lachaud, 'Liveries of Robes', 289.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 285.

in which people of different income levels should dress.⁴¹ This question of liveries or robes does indicate that Grant's method of identifying James's court circle only gives part of the picture.

However, there are further indications besides the picture given from witness lists that James did not have a particularly cordial relationship with his earls. Bower relates a tale of 'a certain great nobleman, a near relative of the king' (not named although the Earl of Douglas is clearly intended), who, having struck another man (again, not named but is most likely John Kennedy, the king's nephew) was exiled from the court for a period. James initially tried to have the stricken individual stab the great man through the offending hand with a knife, but was supposedly prevented from doing so by the intervention of the queen, her ladies and clerics present at court.⁴² There is further indication in Bower's work of unpleasantness between Douglas and Kennedy. Bower relates that in 1431 'for certain reasons' the two men were arrested, with Douglas kept in custody in the Castle of Loch Leven and Kennedy at Stirling Castle. Douglas was released later that year 'while Kennedy was kept still in custody'.⁴³ The reasons are unclear, although Brown's suggestion that the arrest was related to renewed tensions in the south-west, particularly in Carrick, does seem reasonable.⁴⁴ Writing in the 1440s, Bower may have been offering instruction to the young James II on a more appropriate way to treat his great men, in order to avoid the fate that had befallen his father.⁴⁵ There is also an intriguing comment by the sixteenth century writer Hector Boece who states

⁴¹ *APS*, ii, 18.

⁴² *Chron. Bower*, viii, 321.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 265.

⁴⁴ Brown, *James I*, 133-4.

⁴⁵ M. Brown, 'Vile Times': Walter Bower's Last Book and the Minority of James II', *SHR*, vol.lxxix (Edinburgh, 2000), 165-188.

that ‘King James...past oft tymes as ane privatt man amang his lieges, specialie amang his merchandise, because thair howsis war biggitt with mair magnificence than vtheris’, suggesting that the king preferred the company of lesser men.⁴⁶ However, it should be noted that this was written some time after James I’s death, and is thus likely to be unreliable to a great extent. Additionally, the image of a king passing among his subjects privately was a common literary motif, further hindering the dependability of Boece’s comment. However, the latter part of this statement does offer some insight into how James I was viewed by later generations, that is, as someone interested in being surrounded by wealth.

It is important to try to understand why the earls should have played such a seemingly limited role in James’s circle. That they were still a politically important group is undoubted, especially given Michael Brown’s examination of the politics of James’s reign. It therefore needs to be determined why they appear to have played such a small role in court life, especially given the disparity between this reign and the earlier period under David II, Robert II and Robert III, and also with the latter half of the fifteenth century, as discussed above.⁴⁷ One possible explanation may be that James did not want them at court. As discussed previously, James wished to reduce the influence of the great nobles in household government and it may be that he was seeking to restrict their political role by limiting their appearances at court, attendance at which in the medieval period was one of the chief means for a noble to obtain influence with the

⁴⁶ *Chronicles of Scotland* compiled by Hector Boece, translated into Scots by J. Bellenden, 1531, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh and London, 1941), 3rd series, ii, E. C. Batho and H. W. Husbands (eds.), 394. It is possible that if James was presenting himself as a private man, he may not have dressed in his royal finery and thus his social status may not have been so visually evident. It is also possible that Bellenden may have been thinking more of James IV so care should be taken using this later evidence.

⁴⁷ For earls in the reigns of Robert II and Robert III, see Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, *passim*. As discussed below, pg.79, n.56, many of Robert II’s sons gained earldoms.

monarch. It may also be that James was deliberately seeking to hide the mechanics of government from his great nobles. As suggested in the previous chapter, James may have been trying to conceal his financial management from parliament and it is possible that he was doing a similar thing in this instance with non-financial matters and that this is behind the limited use of earls as witnesses to royal charters. Yet, it should also be noted that Alexander Grant has suggested that in the reign of David II, earls were able to maintain a presence at court despite royal indifference.⁴⁸ If correct, this would suggest that there was in fact little desire on the part of the earls of James I's reign to be at court on a regular basis and their apparently reduced presence at court during James's reign was not simply down to James's wishes.

It is difficult to determine precisely why this distancing took place, due to the nature of the surviving evidence. It is possible that the Scottish nobles did not approve of the style of court that James was fostering. As discussed throughout this thesis, James appears to have been introducing a much different style of court life than what had come before, that is, it was much more English in style, with a high level of expenditure going towards luxury items such as jewels and tapestries. For the eighteen years of James's captivity there had been no royal court in Scotland. Additionally, both Robert II and Robert III experienced periods where they effectively lacked political control and were both more plain in their courts than James was seeking to be.⁴⁹ Although magnificence was expected of a medieval monarch, it is possible that the Scottish nobility disapproved

⁴⁸ Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*, 176, quoted in Penman, 'The Kingship of David II', appendix 2.

⁴⁹ There is some indication that royal court life did not cease to exist entirely during the reigns of the first Stewart kings. The reign of Robert II saw the commissioning of one of the finest works of medieval Scottish literature, John Barbour's *Bruce* while tournaments appear to have taken place during Robert III's reign. Indeed, while still earl of Carrick, Robert II utilised the court to establish his position, as subsequently did Robert, earl of Fife. These aspects of court culture are discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters. For this period see Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*.

of their king spending such a high proportion of his limited income on such items. There is no conclusive evidence to support this, although the fact that James was not using the money to provide patronage for his nobles is unlikely to have been welcomed. James is well-known for having cancelled a large number of crown annuities and having failed to offer any significant new grants.⁵⁰ Furthermore, James was effectively spending his nobles' money, which was supposed to have gone to England to pay his ransom, on extravagant items for the court that were not generally benefiting the country as a whole. Additionally, in their own localities, earls were used to occupying the highest position and may have been unwilling to attend a royal court where they would have been forced to adopt a subservient status.⁵¹ This could have been unwelcome to men who had little experience of this. Interestingly, the only man who would have had knowledge of a 'proper' royal court in Scotland would have been Atholl, the earl appearing most frequently at James's court. It is therefore possible that James's earls had simply become used to remaining in their own local spheres of influence and were disinclined to attend court, despite any efforts by James to attract them.⁵²

What also appears to be the case is that James was only interested in his earls when they were of use to him politically. For instance, James showed some interest the Earl of March for the role he could play in the south. However, the eleventh Earl of March was forfeited in 1434 on the grounds that his father's (the tenth earl's) reinstatement to the earldom in 1409 (following from his forfeiture in 1400) was

⁵⁰ Grant, 'Service and Tenure in Late Medieval Scotland', 170.

⁵¹ Brown, *James I*, 88.

⁵² It should be noted that the Earl of Douglas would probably have been aware of the French royal court from his time on the continent and from his father's promotion to the Duchy of Touraine. However, it should be noted that this would have been different to the Scottish court in terms of the resources available to the French king.

invalid.⁵³ For so long as March could be an antidote to Douglas authority in the South, James was prepared to tolerate him. Yet, when March's strength in this area became more of a threat, the king did not hesitate to take advantage and remove a powerful magnate and simultaneously add to his own revenues. This seems to imply that James lacked an ability to understand the long-term impact of his plans. The king's fear that the March earls would ally themselves with England came true following this forfeiture, an eventuality that may have been averted had James shown a little more favour to this southern magnate. It is possible that James was influenced by the actions of the tenth earl, who was one of those to whom James wrote in 1412 regarding efforts to obtain his release.⁵⁴ As there is nothing to suggest that the earl made any real effort in this direction, it is possible, but not certain, that the king harboured some resentment over this, which was directed at the eleventh earl, although economic concerns were a clear motivation for James's actions in this instance.⁵⁵

Indeed, such lingering resentment may provide an explanation for James's attitude towards his earls generally. James had only limited personal contact with this group during the years of his captivity, and what contact there was is unlikely to have left a positive impression on the young king. The fourth Earl of Douglas had been captured by the English in 1402 following the Scottish defeat at the battle of Homildon Hill. However, by 1407, Douglas had managed to obtain his release, leaving James in England while he himself returned to Scotland. Henry Sinclair, earl of Orkney (d.1418) was in England with James for the first years of his captivity, having been captured along with the king in 1406. However, he too left James to return to Scotland. There is

⁵³ Brown, *James I*, 155.

⁵⁴ W. Fraser (ed.), *Red Book of Menteith*, vol.1, 285.

⁵⁵ Brown, *James I*, 154-6.

nothing to suggest that beyond this James had any significant contact with any major noble, with the exception of Murdoch, son and heir of Robert, duke of Albany, who was governing Scotland in James's absence. The fact that Albany managed to obtain Murdoch's release but not James's is unlikely to have left the king with a positive attitude towards his greater nobles, who could not (or perhaps in his view would not) effect his release. It is interesting to hypothesize that James resented this class of his subjects for effectively abandoning him to English captivity until such time as it was politically expedient for their own purposes to work for his release.⁵⁶ Even when the Earl of Douglas did begin to pursue negotiations for James's liberation, the earl's preoccupation with military matters in France meant that the bulk of the contact between himself and the monarch took place through the earl's household, the men who would later be absorbed by James into his own royal household after 1424.

James's distrust of his earls is evident not only in their general absence from his court but also in the fact that he did not create any new earldoms as patronage for his key supporters. Robert I and David II established the earldoms of Moray, and Douglas and Wigtown, respectively, while Robert III elevated David Lindsay to the earldom of Crawford and also created the dukedoms of Rothesay and Albany for his son and brother respectively. Robert II's accession to the crown also saw a strengthening of power for some earls, as the king's sons secured numerous earldoms for the royal family.⁵⁷ Significantly, several earldoms were established during the reign of James's son, James II. For example, the earldoms of Argyll, Rothes, Marischal and Errol all date to this

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 23, 26-7.

⁵⁷ The earldoms of Carrick, Fife, Menteith, Buchan, Strathearn, Atholl and Caithness were held by sons of Robert II in the latter 1300s. See Boardman, *Early Stewart Kings*, *passim*.

reign.⁵⁸ The latter two are particularly significant, as the families who were thus promoted were important hereditary officers distinctly ignored by James I during his reign.⁵⁹ Additionally, although James II would have had little input into the decision personally, James Douglas of Balvenie was created Earl of Avondale just months after the death of James I. The large number of earldoms created after February 1437 suggests that there was a hunger among the higher levels of the nobility for this level of patronage and indicates that there was a desire for a resurgence in the power of this class of noble. This may have been due in part to the distinct lack of adult earls in Scotland by 1437, resulting in a striking lack of political leadership during the minority of James II. However, this was to some extent a situation of James I's making through, for example, his annexation of the earldom of Mar to the crown and the forfeiture of March. The king's reluctance to part with earldoms when they came into his possession and his failure to reward supporters with new creations does imply that James I had at best an ambivalent attitude towards earls. What appears to be the case is that while James was willing to use them when it was politically expedient, he did not have a personal liking for this group and was reluctant to award it any more authority than it had come to possess by 1424.

This pattern can also be seen with James's actions regarding the earldom of Mar. Following the death of Alexander Stewart in 1435, James absorbed Mar as a possession of the crown, rather than granting it out. Robert Erskine had a strong claim to the earldom and this was supported by numerous northern lords such as Alexander Forbes, yet James ignored this. Although the king did attempt to give the Earl of

⁵⁸ McGladdery, *James II*, 79, 104, 109.

⁵⁹ The Marischal and the Constable are discussed in more detail in section iii below.

Orkney some authority to replace Mar as his lieutenant in the north, as a primarily southern magnate, despite the indications of his title, Orkney had little real claim to be a leader of men in the north. Erskine at least had a legitimate claim to lordship.⁶⁰ James preferred to bolster his own coffers rather than fill the power vacuum left by Mar's death and the consequences of this for the position of the Lord of the Isles can be seen throughout the fifteenth century. Additionally, the fact that Fife and Lennox were annexed to the crown rather than being granted out further suggests that James was seeking to improve his own financial position at the expense of his nobility. This can also be seen in the grant of Strathearn to Atholl in life-rent. Atholl was by this point elderly, and was presumably not expected to live much longer, giving James the opportunity to add another earldom to the royal collection. Even when earldoms were granted out, for example the grant of Menteith to Malise Graham, much of the wealth of the earldom was retained by the crown. On one level, this was a sensible policy for James, as by increasing the number of crown lands in his possession, he was increasing royal revenues and this would have helped him and subsequent monarchs to 'live of their own', rather than having to seek taxation from their subjects or appropriate money from the customs for ordinary household expenditure. However, the way in which James pursued this strategy was clearly unpopular.

⁶⁰ Brown, *James I*, 156-60.

iii: Barons and Knights

In addition to the earls, there are a number of ‘lesser’ nobles and knights who appear as witnesses on James I’s charters and these must also be examined.⁶¹ Grant’s methodology can again be used to make a determination regarding their place within the king’s regular council. There are thirty men from this group whose names appear on witness lists for this reign, not including appointed officers of the king’s household, (who shall be dealt with in a subsequent chapter). The most frequent appearance is by John Seton, knight, who witnessed nine charters on a total of four days. This equates to around 4.5% of the total, which, according to Grant’s approach, means that no member of this group can be said to be part of the king’s regular or close council. However, there is still important information to be gleaned from a closer study of these men, as it may reveal something of James’s geographical interests. Furthermore, by examining precisely when these men can be placed at court, it may be possible to understand more about what was drawing them to the king’s presence.

John Seton was a member of what Grant terms the ‘inner circle’ of the affinity of the fourth Earl of Douglas, witnessing fifteen of the earl’s charters, significantly higher than the number of times he appeared as a witness on royal charters, and being named as a hostage for the earl five times, as well as receiving a grant of land from the earl.⁶² Seton was also originally designated as one of the hostages for James but was not one of the finalised list of those who were actually sent to London.⁶³ Seton also represented the Lothian area in geographical terms, his lands being concentrated in the

⁶¹ The term ‘lesser’ is used to denote that these men were lower in rank than the earls, and is not necessarily a reflection of their landed status or political power.

⁶² Grant, ‘Acts of Lordship’, 246.

⁶³ Brown, *James I*, 42.

sheriffdoms of Edinburgh, with four baronies in Haddington Constabulary and one in that of Linlithgow.⁶⁴ For James, Seton thus no doubt represented both a connection to the Black Douglas family and a potential agent in the Lothian area. As the Douglas family were particularly powerful in the southern area of the kingdom it was particularly important for James to form a connection with the new earl, the south being the wealthiest area of Scotland and the newly returned king being eager to take control of the kingdom's finances. However, from the evidence of surviving witness lists, Seton made only four appearances at court, all of them between 10 July and 25 October 1424. The penultimate appearance by Seton took place on 12 October 1424, at Melrose Abbey. While there, one of James's deeds was to confirm the new Earl of Douglas in his position, the fourth earl having been killed at the Battle of Verneuil in August of that year.⁶⁵ It may be that Seton was present more due to the wishes of the new earl than to attend the king and his final appearance, at Ayr on 25 October may be for similar reasons. On his first appearance, on 10 July, Seton can be found witnessing five charters. However, these were all confirmations of grants to John Forrester of Corstorphine in Midlothian, who was also a member of the affinity of the fourth Douglas earl, and one of these charters was originally granted by John Seton.⁶⁶ Forrester was also the Chamberlain, and he shall be discussed in more detail below. Seton's only other appearance, on 26 July when he witnessed two charters, could perhaps be explained by proximity, his lands being near to Edinburgh as already discussed.⁶⁷ Thus it is possible to explain nearly all instances of Seton's appearances as a witness to royal charters as

⁶⁴ A. Grant, 'The Higher Nobility and Their Estates, c.1371-1424' (Unpublished Worcester College PhD thesis, 1975), appendix 2, 365-369; *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, 204.

⁶⁵ Brown, *James I*, 53.

⁶⁶ *RMS*, ii, nos. 4-8; Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 246.

⁶⁷ *RMS*, ii, nos. 9-10.

being for reasons other than a wish to be at the royal court. It should be noted that as Brown points out, it was not insignificant that Seton was released from the obligation of serving as a hostage and suggests that James was showing some favour to this man. However, it was perhaps his connection to the powerful Douglas family and James's desire not to alienate this important faction that motivated him. As Brown also highlights, relatively few Douglas adherents were sent to England.⁶⁸

Thomas Somerville of Carnwath was the next most frequent of the signatories in this category, with seven appearances on three days, representing approximately 3.6% of the total. Somerville is also placed by Grant within the affinity of the fourth Douglas earl, though in the outer rather than the inner circle.⁶⁹ As with Seton, Somerville's landed interests lay in the southern half of the kingdom with two baronies in the sheriffdom of Lanark, one in the sheriffdom of Roxburgh and one in that of Stirling, again areas where James was keen to establish his own authority and men such as Seton and Somerville would be an important source of information regarding events in those areas.⁷⁰ Additionally, Somerville was a former councillor of David, duke of Rothesay (d.1402), James's brother, suggesting, according to Brown, that James was looking to men known to him from his youth to assist him in the early part of his reign.⁷¹ Certainly Somerville's last appearance as a witness took place on 24 April 1426, placing his importance at the beginning of the reign.⁷² Relying on men with whom he was already familiar was not an unreasonable course of action for James. In England, for example, Henry IV relied mainly on men who had served him during his exile before he claimed

⁶⁸ Brown, *James I*, 42.

⁶⁹ Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 247.

⁷⁰ Grant, 'The Higher Nobility and their Estates', 383, 394, 397.

⁷¹ Brown, *James I*, 51.

⁷² *RMS*, ii, no. 45.

the throne.⁷³ As with Seton, most of Somerville's appearances can be attributed to other factors. His three appearances as a witness on 4 February 1425/6 were for two confirmation charters to John Forrester of Corstorphine, another member of the Douglas affinity as mentioned above and one to Forrester's daughter and her husband which was originally made by Somerville. His three occurrences as a witness on 7 March 1425/6 may also be due to similar circumstances, with the three charters in question being grants and confirmations to James Douglas of Balvenie, brother of the fourth Earl of Douglas. Only his single instance as a witness on 24 April 1426 could potentially be linked to a desire on his own part to be at court.⁷⁴ The concentration of Somerville's appearances in the early years of the reign may be due to his age. Born c.1370, he would have been in his early to mid 50s at the start of James's personal rule, which may have prevented him from playing a significant role. However, Somerville did not die until 1444 and in 1433-4 was Justiciar south of the Forth, indicating that he was still active despite his age.⁷⁵ Clearly, Somerville was politically important during James's reign, gaining a significant show of trust from the monarch. Yet this was not enough to ensure his presence at court throughout the period.

Balvenie himself also witnessed seven of James's charters. The first of these was 3 June 1424 at Perth, following the coronation and first parliament of James upon his return, when Douglas was styled James Douglas of Abercorn in Midlothian. The next three of his appearances were on 4 February 1424/5 in Edinburgh and may be due to similar reasons as described above for Somerville on this date. On 8 January 1426/7 Balvenie witnessed two charters, both in Edinburgh, but his presence can perhaps be

⁷³ Rogers, 'The Royal Household of Henry IV', 465.

⁷⁴ *RMS*, ii, nos. 15-17, 38-40, 45.

⁷⁵ *Scots Peerage*, viii, 7-9.

explained by the fact that just a few days earlier he himself had received a grant of lands in Lanark, resigned by Elizabeth Murray and was in receipt of another confirmation on 12 January.⁷⁶ Balvenie's final occurrence as a witness on 4 February 1430/1 was again to a charter of John Forrester of Corstorphine.⁷⁷ As brother to the fourth Earl and uncle of the fifth Earl of Douglas, Balvenie was a man of great influence in fifteenth century Scotland. As Grant has shown, Balvenie possessed a significant amount of land in both the north and south of the country, with lands in Banff, Aberdeen, Inverness, West Lothian and Lanark. Grant describes these possessions as 'worthy of an earl', which Balvenie indeed became in 1437, after the death of James I, with his creation as Earl of Avondale, and he later inherited the Douglas earldom following the execution of the young sixth earl and his brother.⁷⁸ This wide powerbase would make him an attractive potential ally for James. Balvenie also appears as a witness in a greater number of years than many others in this group, despite a low number of instances as a witness (he is present at the beginning of 1424/5, 1426/7 and 1430/1). This perhaps suggests that he was more willing to be at court, although as already stated these instances can be explained by other factors. It is thus possible that it was Balvenie's ambitions for his own status that motivated him, realising the political advantages that could be acquired through the court milieu, rather than a personal fondness for James and his court. To these appearances should be added the four days when he was present receiving grants or confirmations of earlier grants, three on 7 March 1425/6, one on 18 April 1426, one on 5 January 1426/7 and one on 12 January 1426/7.⁷⁹ This places Balvenie at court on

⁷⁶ *RMS*, ii, nos. 72, 74, 75, 77.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* no. 186

⁷⁸ Grant, 'The Higher Nobility and their Estates', 224-5.

⁷⁹ *RMS*, ii, nos. 38, 39, 40, 43, 72, 78.

several more occasions to which can also be added the baptism of James's twin sons in 1430 at which Balvenie's heir was knighted.⁸⁰ It should perhaps be borne in mind, however, that royal confirmations were an important part of possession in the medieval period and necessity may well have drawn Balvenie to court. Furthermore, all of these confirmations took place in Edinburgh, so Balvenie did not have to go out of his way to reach the king, as he had lands at Abercorn, a few miles from Edinburgh. This can also be seen in the instances in which Balvenie appears as a witness. Balvenie's limited role in James's reign, and the fact that he had to wait until after the king's death for promotion, was no doubt evidence of the king's lingering distrust for the role Balvenie had played in the killing of David Fleming in 1406; Fleming had at that time been James's custodian.⁸¹

Somerville and Balvenie do have in common, however, the fact that they were among the greater barons in the country in c.1424 and beyond.⁸² This would surely have meant that James would be pleased to have them at his court, whatever the reason, as it would have given him the opportunity to build a relationship with two important men from the south of the country, an area that he was seeking to increase his own power in, and hopefully attract them to his court on a more regular basis. However, the infrequency of appearances by these most frequent of witnesses would tend to suggest that James failed in the latter of these objectives. As should become evident throughout the present work, this was perhaps due to the style of court life that James was developing after 1424.

⁸⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 263.

⁸¹ Brown, *James I*, 16.

⁸² Grant, 'The Higher Nobility and their Estates', 37.

Alexander Forbes of Forbes appears as the next most frequent in this group, with five witness lists bearing his name, representing 2.6% of the total. It should be noted, though, that all of these occur in August 1426, with two instances occurring at Aberdeen (12 August), reflecting Forbes' landed interest in the north, and one at Auchterhouse (21 August), probably as a result of Forbes accompanying James on his return to Edinburgh. Alexander's barony of Forbes was located in the sheriffdom of Aberdeen, on the border between the Earldom of Mar and the lordship of Garioch, which helps to explain his appearances as a witness in Aberdeen.⁸³ Forbes did return to Edinburgh with the king, to appear twice as a witness there on 28 August. Of the two appearances on 12 August 1426, one involved a confirmation of a grant by Alexander, earl of Mar, of lands in the sheriffdom of Aberdeen.⁸⁴ This perhaps suggests that Forbes was primarily concerned with local rather than national politics and service to the king. Michael Brown argues that Forbes was a close councillor of the king and was an important link between James and Alexander, earl of Mar and it was Forbes' influence with the king that was crucial for Mar being able to retain his position in the period immediately following James's return.⁸⁵ There is some suggestion that Forbes was a close adherent of the king as he had served in James's military retinue in France in 1421 and he had a grant from the king on 6 October 1430 of the barony of Forbes, to him and his wife Elizabeth, a granddaughter of Robert III (and therefore a niece of James himself).⁸⁶ Forbes was also referred to as 'the king's knight' and 'our dearest bailie' when James appointed two men to act as Forbes' deputies in his position as bailie for the

⁸³ *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, 203.

⁸⁴ *RMS*, ii, no.56.

⁸⁵ *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, 49-50.

⁸⁶ Brown, *James I*, 24; *Antiquaries of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff*, iv, 391-2.

lands of the bishopric of Moray in May 1426.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Forbes had strong links to the Earl of Mar, serving with him at Harlaw, and maintaining this link throughout the reign, so Brown's suggestion has significant merit.⁸⁸

However, by the mid 1430s, James had failed in his efforts to control the Highlands, as shown in his inability to permanently suppress the Lord of the Isles, and it is possible that Forbes felt that the king was no longer a reliable prospect for preserving his own interests in the north.⁸⁹ That local concerns were much more important to Forbes than serving the king is shown by his support of Robert Erskine in the latter's attempts to gain the earldom of Mar following Alexander Stewart's death in 1435.⁹⁰ Brown attributes this to the unpopularity of James's annexation of the earldom to the crown but it may be that James's other actions throughout his reign contributed to the alienation of an apparently loyal supporter. Furthermore, the king's spending habits would have been increasingly apparent, although a full accounting of his spending in Flanders was not rendered until 1436. That James was diverting a significant amount of resources towards luxury items at the expense of sustained patronage and controlling a problem area may well have been resented by men such as Forbes, particularly given Michael Brown's suggestion that nobles expected to be rewarded for their service.⁹¹

These men were the most frequent of witnesses among the 'lesser' noble group and as can be seen there is often a rational explanation for their attendance at court that did not include them being attracted to a revived and spectacular royal court. There are

⁸⁷ '*noster miles balliuis consanguinei nostri*'; *Antiquaries of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff*, iv, Spalding Club (Aberdeen, 1862), 389-90.

⁸⁸ Brown, *James I*, *passim*.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 160.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 159.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 112.

twenty-five other men who may be placed in this group who appear as witnesses to royal charters, six witnessing three, eight witnessing two and the remaining eleven witnessing only one each.⁹² At 1.5% of the total for those witnessing three charters, clearly these men cannot be placed among the king's regular council, according to the methodology employed by Grant. There is perhaps one of this group who may be considered, however, namely John Semple of Eliotstoun. With only three appearances on witness lists, all of which occurred on 7 March 1425/6 there may appear to be little reason to include him in any potential royal affinity.⁹³ However, Semple is referred to as the king's esquire and is present in Edinburgh, not an area close to his lordship of Largs in the sheriffdom of Ayr or to Renfrew of which he was sheriff.⁹⁴ Furthermore, the previous year, Semple had been involved in the siege of Inchmurrin Castle, being held by supporters of James Stewart, son of the Duke of Albany.⁹⁵ The fact that James I himself had been granted the lordship of Renfrew in December 1404 probably also helped to forge a closer relationship between the two.⁹⁶ However, the few instances of Semple appearing as a witness would suggest that he was not a regular member of James's court, despite his usefulness as a political ally. Indeed, even his only day as a witness could simply be due to his being present at Edinburgh on his way to Perth for the parliament that would be held there a few days later, although this would have required Semple to deliberately detour east.⁹⁷ Brown states that the main purpose of this particular parliament was to discuss raising money to pay the king's ransom, so it is not

⁹² One of these is described as James Douglas, knight, and may or may not correspond to James Douglas of Balvenie.

⁹³ *RMS*, ii, nos.38, 39, 40.

⁹⁴ *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*, 205; Grant, 'Higher Nobility and their Estates'; Brown, *James I*, 67.

⁹⁵ Brown, *James I*, 67.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 13. James was given this lordship, along with many other Stewart lands, as part of his entry into political life following the death of his elder brother, the Duke of Rothesay.

⁹⁷ *APS*, ii, 9.

unreasonable to expect that Semple would be in attendance. James may have wished to apprise supporters of his plans prior to the parliament which could explain Semple's attendance in Edinburgh in the first instance, making political expediency a strong explanation for this man's appearances at court. This could also apply to other witnesses on this occasion. It is thus becoming apparent that James, despite his apparent efforts to establish a luxurious royal court, was either failing to appeal to his subjects and draw them to his court on a regular basis or that he did not particularly want them there on a regular basis.⁹⁸

There is a possibility that James simply did not want his noble subjects at court on a regular basis. James may have distrusted his nobles, resenting at least some of them for not securing his release from England more quickly. That it was the Douglas family which was instrumental in gaining James's release and Douglas men who subsequently came to dominate the royal household would tend to suggest that events of James's captivity continued to have a strong influence on the king.⁹⁹ Certainly his attack on the Albany Stewarts may be connected to this and collusion with the governor may have been cause for suspicion of others. However, James maintained a connection with the Earl of Douglas and his family, suggesting that this could be overcome. Yet, it should be noted that with the death of the fourth Earl of Douglas, his heir was perhaps free of the taint of association with the Duke of Albany. Additionally, James would not have been able to destroy the Albany Stewart family so comprehensively without

⁹⁸ James's efforts in architecture, literature and religion are discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters. The king's spending spree in Flanders is well known and is recorded in *ER*, iv, 672-685 and is discussed in Brown, *James I*, 112-3 and Nicholson, *Later Middle Ages*, 319. The *ER*, although incomplete, records further purchases of wine, food, cloth and other luxuries for the royal family.

⁹⁹ Brown, *James I*, 76.

powerful help, which came in the form of the Douglas family and their adherents.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, having spent so much time in England it is unlikely that James would have been unaware of the important political role of the court. Having been absent from his country for so long, James could not have afforded to discourage his nobles from attending him at court, not least because it was to their noble subjects that all princes looked to control their kingdoms. It is most likely the case, therefore, that James had failed to draw his nobles to court unless they had something specific to gain from it, as in the case of Forbes looking to protect the interests of the Earl of Mar or in the case of Balvenie as discussed above.

It is also interesting to note the general timing of appearances by nobles at the royal court. The appearances of these men as witnesses tend to be very much concentrated in the first few years of the reign, declining substantially, if not altogether disappearing in the later years. It appears that not only were these men not attracted to James's court but they were actively alienated from it. As already noted, James's lack of effective patronage may have played a part in this. Initially, men would have attended the king hoping for some favour from him, but when this failed to materialise they became disenchanted and absented themselves from court. This, combined with the failure of James's Highland policy, his mismanagement of the ransom money and offensive forfeitures would no doubt have estranged many of his subjects, resulting in their absence from court.

Generally absent from the events of James's reign are Robert Keith, the Marischal, and William Hay of Errol, the Constable, two hereditary officers historically

¹⁰⁰ At least 12 and as many as 18 of those who sat on the assize that passed a guilty verdict against the Duke of Albany can be connected to the Douglas family. W. Stanford Reid, 'The Douglasses at the Court of James I of Scotland' in *The Juridical Review* (1944), 83.

of great significance in the royal household.¹⁰¹ Their apparent disappearance during the reign of James I needs to be explained. The same is true for the Steward in this reign. Aside from the fact that he was sent to England as one of the initial hostages for James's ransom, where he stayed 1424-5, the Marischal does not appear to play any significant role in the king's administration or indeed in the politics of the reign generally. The only noteworthy appearance by him was as an attendee at parliament on 10 March 1430, although he also appears in a charter dated 21 August 1426, confirming a charter made by him on 1 April.¹⁰² Keith's attendance at parliament does suggest that he retained some political role, but it is revealing that James was willing to forsake a key military household officer as a hostage, although by this time the office was largely a ceremonial title. Furthermore, the Marischal played no major role in any of the military campaigns of the reign, either in the Highlands or in the ill-fated 1436 siege of Roxburgh. Instead, on the latter campaign, Robert Stewart, grandson of the Earl of Atholl, was apparently placed in charge. *The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis* cites Robert as being a servant of James's Chamber and whom the king appointed as 'constable of al his oost at the seege of [Roxburgh]' on account of 'the tender love that he [James] had to him [Robert]'.¹⁰³ Perhaps the fact that the position was still hereditary motivated James, it proving easier to sideline the position rather than attempt to remove a long-entrenched family from the office, in an effort to staff his household with men guaranteed to be loyal to the king and to follow James's own policies and strategies. That this was an error of judgement on James's part is perhaps evidenced by James II's elevation of the Keith family to an

¹⁰¹ The traditional duties of the main household officers are discussed by Bateson, 'The Scottish King's Household'.

¹⁰² CDS, iv, nos.970, 973 & 983; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 242; *APS*, ii, 28; *RMS*, ii, no.57.

¹⁰³ Shirley, 'The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis', 32, 37; Brown, *James I*, 164.

earldom, named after their hereditary household position. Christine McGladdery suggests that Keith was promoted to comital rank as a reward for loyal service to James II, indicating that Keith was willing to support royal interests.¹⁰⁴ However, that no opportunity to earn such a reward appears to have been available to the family under James I may be significant. In any case, it is unlikely that Keith would have gained such a promotion under James I, since that king had shown a distinct unwillingness to offer significant patronage as discussed above.¹⁰⁵

The Marischal was nominally subordinate to another officer, the Constable, who was traditionally responsible for commanding the king's knights and keeping order at court. Hay does not appear to have been sidelined in the way that the Marischal was. The Constable was among those stated by Bower to have been knighted at the king's coronation, though the unreliability of Bower's list has already been discussed.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, Bower names Hay as one of the men sitting on the assize responsible for the trial of the Duke of Albany and his kinsmen.¹⁰⁷ This would perhaps indicate that James intended for the Constable to continue carrying out his traditional role. This is further supported by the suggestion that Hay was with James for the Inverness parliament and that he was appointed to be one of the March wardens in 1430.¹⁰⁸ However, Hay does not appear to have played a significant active role in any of the military campaigns of the reign, indicating that his position was intended to be purely symbolic, although the fact that he was not involved in command at the later campaign

¹⁰⁴ C. McGladdery, *James II* (Edinburgh, 1990), 109.

¹⁰⁵ See pg.65 above.

¹⁰⁶ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 243.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 245. Bower actually names Gilbert Hay, but his editors state that this is most likely an error for William, whose heir, Gilbert, was a hostage in England.

¹⁰⁸ Brown, *James I*, 96; *Scots Peerage*, iii, 562-3.

at Roxburgh may well be due to the fact that he died some time in 1436.¹⁰⁹ The fact that Hay retained some level of importance in James's reign is perhaps because he was a relative of the king, being a nephew of Robert III, James's father.¹¹⁰ Returning to Scotland after an eighteen year absence, James was entering a country and political climate that was essentially foreign to him. Thus he was perhaps willing to retain the Constable close to him, believing that a family member was more likely to be loyal to him. This did not save the Albany Stewarts, although Hay's less powerful position and the fact that he was not accused of working against James during the latter's captivity apparently acted in the Constable's favour.

iv: Conclusions

What this survey appears to suggest is that James's court failed to attract the greater Scottish nobles on a regular basis. The king's earls appear at court only rarely and apparently not at all in the later years of the reign. A similar pattern is evident with the greater barons and knights. Thus, the group who would normally be expected to make up the larger proportion of the king's social affinity are absent from the royal court. The system used to great success by the Burgundian dukes, that of making the court a place of entertainment and patronage to draw the nobility to court and thus engender noble support, does not seem to be one that James was able to implement.¹¹¹ It also appears that James's court and household was, militarily speaking, rather weak. Although Bower does have James knighting a large number of men, the conferring of knighthood did not necessarily mean that these men had the military skills and

¹⁰⁹ *Scots Peerage*, iii, 562-3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe*, 58.

capabilities of a knight. This, plus the marginalisation of the Marischal and Constable, may help to explain the eventual failure of the Highland campaign and the collapse of the siege at Roxburgh, as James's household knights did not have the practical military capabilities that were of such use to Edward I, Edward III and Henry V.¹¹² Of course, the royal household was not the only component in military operations. The Highland campaigns were led by the experienced Earl of Mar and the siege of Roxburgh was a national endeavour. However, the military capabilities of the household were of great importance, as they provided both a nucleus for the national host and evidence of the military skills of the king. This may also partially account for James's lack of interest in tournaments, discussed in chapter six. Alternatively, James's lack of interest in tournaments may have meant that he had little regular use for the Marischal and Constable. This failure may also have contributed to the assassination of James. In peacetime, the household provided the king's bodyguard, but this appears to be lacking for James. Shirley describes James as being in the company of 'the queene...other ladiez and gentillwemmen' when he had retired for the evening and not trained guards, a fact of which Bower is critical as already discussed.¹¹³ James failed to utilise the full potential of the royal household as a military unit. This led to his failure in one of the key features of military kingship, that of being an effective military leader, and also contributed fairly directly to his death in that he failed to protect himself with a sufficient number of skilled men. The skilled men that he did employ are discussed in the next chapter.

¹¹² Prestwich, 'The Place of the Royal Household in English History', 37-52; Catto, 'The King's Servants'.

¹¹³ Shirley, *The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis*, 38; *Chron. Bower*, viii, 329.

Chapter 4 - Officers and Administrators

i: Lay Household Officers

Although an examination of the magnates and nobles who were present at James I's court does suggest much that is of significance, it is also necessary to look at those men who formed his household government. These men formed the core of the royal court, being those men who were in most regular attendance with the king. They also carried out the administrative duties associated within the court and also within government in general, the two still being closely associated in Scotland in this period. Scotland had not yet developed a centralised bureaucracy as had arisen in England with the growth of Westminster as the centre of administration. Furthermore, as mentioned in chapter one, the household had a number of other functions in this period, including military service, being involved in embassies, and more generally, providing a means for the king to display his status. It is thus crucial to study those men who performed these duties for James I throughout his reign. A similar methodology to the preceding chapter will be used, looking at the frequency with which these men appear as charter witnesses, and also at any patterns that may be evident in this concerning their initial appearances or any absences that occur throughout the period. Also, other duties with which they were involved will be examined, for instance, identifying as far as possible how the Scottish household operated in diplomatic and military terms and whether this corresponded to the English and Continental courts of the day as outlined in chapter one. By identifying these men and establishing the role they played in James's reign it is hoped to add to the knowledge of this period gained in earlier sections. As well as their duties, it is also necessary to ascertain the backgrounds of these men as this will aid in

determining the geographical and social composition of the court and household. This will help in determining what political aims James had in mind and may help to explain other events that occurred during his reign.

A particularly close councillor of James was John Forrester of Corstorphine, a member of an Edinburgh burgh family. Prior to 1424, Forrester held the position of Deputy Chamberlain to the Earl of Buchan, the Duke of Albany's son. James promoted Forrester to Chamberlain following the death of the earl at Verneuil (1424).¹ The fact that Forrester was an important part of the pre-1424 administration, and thus had ties to the Duke of Albany, appears to have been outweighed by his experience in government. The absence of Buchan on the Continent meant that Forrester effectively already held the position of Chamberlain and was responsible for this office for some time before James officially promoted him. This would have helped James to maximise customs revenue and presumably Forrester's mercantile background also gave him a good level of financial knowledge and experience. In the course of the reign, Forrester appears as a witness on a striking 86.5% of surviving lists, again suggesting that he was a particularly close councillor of the king. Unlike many of the nobles whose appearances tended to cluster in the 1420s, Forrester's, like John Cameron's (discussed below) are spread throughout the entire reign, indicating that he remained in favour with the king and that he was willing to remain with James. Unlike many of James's subjects, Forrester was fortunate enough to receive some patronage from the king, though not any major grant. Forrester received his lands of Corstorphine back from the king as a barony in February 1431 and early in the reign received confirmations of a number of grants made to him, including lands in Kincardine resigned by the Earl of Orkney

¹ Forrester is first found as Chamberlain as a witness to a charter dated 8 January 1425 and also appears as such in the exchequer account of 1425. *RMS*, ii, no.13; *ER*, iv, 380 onwards.

and lands in the sheriffdom of Edinburgh resigned by the Earl of Douglas. Forrester's relations also received confirmations from James, for instance, his son Henry received a charter in October 1425 confirming a grant of lands made to him by Robert Cunningham.² Indeed, members of the Forrester family appear relatively often in this position during James's reign, indicating that James looked upon his Chamberlain with some favour. That James trusted Forrester is further suggested by his employment of the Chamberlain as an ambassador to talk with the English in July 1429 and December 1430 when he was chosen by James as one of four special envoys to discuss an extension to the truce and to seek a final peace.³ James's connection to this burgess family may help to explain Boece's otherwise unfounded claims in the sixteenth-century regarding James's relationships with merchants, as already discussed, although this is speculation.⁴

Possibly this close relationship began while James was still captive in England as Forrester visited England as part of the campaign to secure the release of the Scottish king, having a safe conduct to negotiate the release of James on 26 April 1416 and again in February 1422/3.⁵ Furthermore, Forrester had another safe conduct to go to Pontefract with James in May 1423 and to go to Durham to meet James after his release from captivity.⁶ Also, in June 1424 Forrester was selected to be an ambassador to Rome though it is uncertain whether he actually went.⁷ However, it was shortly after this, in July, that he received several charters from James and was promoted to Chamberlain in August of that year. This strongly

² *RMS*, ii, nos.4-8, 16-17, 23, 25-6, 33, 35, 74, 121.

³ *CDS*, iv, no.1037.

⁴ *Chron. Boece*, 394.

⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 217, 234-5.

⁶ *Ibid.* 236, 244; *CDS*, iv, no.941.

⁷ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 248; *CDS*, iv, no.962; *Scots Peerage*, iv, 82-4.

suggests that Forrester owed his position to proven good performance in the king's service.

His position may also have owed something to his connections. As already mentioned Forrester had received lands resigned by the Earls of Orkney and Douglas, suggesting a link to these nobles. This is further indicated by a loan of 300 English nobles made by Forrester to Orkney in 1407 to allow the latter to pay his ransom.⁸ This point also indicates that Forrester was fairly wealthy, a factor that may have contributed to James's interest in this individual. Furthermore, Forrester's second wife was a daughter of Henry, earl of Orkney.⁹ Also, Grant places Forrester within the inner circle of the fourth Earl of Douglas's affinity, witnessing eight charters and being referred to as 'kin' of the earl.¹⁰ This would have made Forrester an attractive vehicle for creating links between the king and two significant nobles. Additionally, Forrester had a kinship link to William Lauder, James's first Chancellor, which James may have felt would allow for greater efficiency in government and would have strengthened the household as a unit.¹¹ Allmand suggests that one of the criteria important to Henry V when choosing his officers was that they be known to each other in order to facilitate their working as part of a team and James may have been mimicking this to some degree, English practice being that with which he would have been most familiar by 1424.¹²

Also witnessing 86.5% of charters for which lists survive was Walter Ogilvy, who initially held the position of Treasurer and was later Master of the King's Household. Ogilvy also appears throughout the reign, first appearing as a

⁸ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 39.

⁹ *Scots Peerage*, iv, 82-4.

¹⁰ Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 246.

¹¹ Lauder's cousin was married to Forrester's daughter. Brown, *James I*, 27, 37.

¹² Allmand, *Henry V*, 355. It should always be borne in mind that by the time of his return to Scotland in 1424, James had spent considerably longer in England than he had in his own kingdom.

witness on 10 July 1424 and finally on 30 January 1433/4.¹³ As with Cameron and Forrester, Ogilvy's status as a trusted servant of James is highlighted by his role as an envoy for the king. On 8 June 1424 a safe conduct was issued for Ogilvy and others to go to Flanders/Rome.¹⁴ It was the following year that Ogilvy was appointed to the household, first appearing as Treasurer in the witness lists on 8 January 1424/5.¹⁵ Another safe conduct was issued for him on 24 January 1429/30 as one of the Scottish commissioners to meet with the English and on 11 December 1430 letters patent of James appointed him one of his special envoys (named as Master of the King's Household) to discuss a final peace with Henry VI.¹⁶ Walter Bower further lists Ogilvy as one of those accompanying the king's daughter, Margaret, to France in 1436 for her marriage to the Dauphin.¹⁷ Additionally, Ogilvy was one of those serving on the assize at the trial of the Albany Stewarts in 1425. This clearly indicates that Walter Ogilvy was a trusted member of James's circle for the duration of the reign. The link would have been beneficial for the king, as his connection to the Ogilvy family is the only strong indication that James was trying to establish a tie with a family outwith the Central and Lothian areas, albeit in a limited way. The Ogilvies were based in Angus, just north of Dundee.¹⁸ This was as far north as any major household officer originated from, clearly outlining the geographical limitations of James's household, which no doubt goes some way towards explaining the king's lack of success in trying to combat the power of the

¹³ *RMS*, ii, no.4; NAS Inventory of family papers and charters from Haddo House, GD33/11/1.

¹⁴ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 248a states Flanders; *CDS*, iv, no.962 states Rome.

¹⁵ *RMS*, ii, no.13.

¹⁶ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 269; *CDS*, iv, nos. 1032 & 1037.

¹⁷ *Chron. Bower*, viii 249.

¹⁸ The actual seat of the Ogilvy family is unclear. Airlie certainly became the chief lordship, but it is not certain when this occurred. Walter Ogilvy may have initiated this, seeking a licence to crenellate, raising the status of his tower at Airlie. However, his father is often given the designation 'of Auchterhouse', suggesting that this was the chief lordship. More work needs to be undertaken to properly understand the complexities of this family. I am grateful to Professor Richard Oram for this information.

Lord of the Isles in anything more than the short term. While it is true the support of the Earl of Mar would have alleviated this for part of the reign, the fact that the king had done little to gain support in the north meant that after the earl's death in 1435, there was no-one in a position to check the Lord of the Isles.¹⁹

Again, this close relationship with Walter appears to have originated prior to 1424. On 26 April 1416 a safe conduct was issued to commissioners treating for the release of James from English captivity and these included Walter Ogilvy, with a further issue naming Ogilvy on 21 February 1422/3 and also on 18 May 1423.²⁰ James would no doubt have been inclined to look favourably post-1424 on someone who had been active in attempting to obtain his release and on someone who had proven diplomatic credentials. Interestingly, also named among the commissioners on 26 April was John Forrester of Corstorphine. This adds to the impression that James was seeking to populate his household with men already known to each other as suggested above. Ogilvy also provided connections to other nobles, an advantage to a king largely inexperienced in the ways of local politics in his country. In 1414, Ogilvy received the barony of Lintrathen in Angus from the Earl of Douglas, giving a connection to this powerful family.²¹ However, he was also the second son of Walter Ogilvy of Auchterhouse, making him uncle to Patrick Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus, an important connection for James to the northern portion of his kingdom.²² Also, the Ogilvies provided James with a link to the Earl of Mar, the Ogilvies being vassals of this earl. For instance, Walter is found as a witness to a charter of the Earl

¹⁹ James's relationship with the Earl of Mar was somewhat complicated, with the king distrusting Mar due to his actions during the king's captivity. It took some time for the earl to win any sign of favour from James and then it was only after the king had eroded the earl's powerbase to such an extent that the earl was compelled to attend James. As Brown points out, this highlights James's inability to realize the long-term consequences of his actions. See Brown, *James I*, *passim*.

²⁰ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 217b, 235b; *CDS*, iv, no.927.

²¹ *Scots Peerage*, i, 111-12; Grant, 'The Higher Nobility in Scotland', 376. This does not appear to be recorded in *The Douglas Book*.

²² *Scots Peerage*, i, 108-9.

of Mar on 1 January 1417/18 and Patrick and his wife Christian were given rights to the salmon fishing belonging to the barony of Mountblair in Banffshire by the Earl of Mar in October 1422.²³ Mar was the most important northern noble during James's reign and was the king's chief agent in the north in his efforts to control the Highlands. Walter Ogilvy was thus a skilled and well-connected man, making him an attractive ally for the king. Walter also appears to have continued in government for a time after the death of James I, as he acts as a witness to a charter of James II on 1 June 1437, although he is named as Treasurer which he had ceased to be in the early 1430s.²⁴

Walter's loyalty no doubt partially stemmed from the patronage he received from James. Bower lists Ogilvy as one of those knighted at James's coronation, as incidentally was Patrick Ogilvy.²⁵ There is of course some doubt as to the accuracy of Bower's list, as explained earlier, but the most recent editors of this chronicle do not appear to doubt the validity of the inclusion of these two men on the list. While largely symbolic this was still a fairly significant mark of favour from the king to this family. Furthermore, James granted to Walter on 1 May 1431 the right to erect his tower of Airlie into the form of a castle, a rare mark of favour from this king.²⁶ Walter also had his Forfarshire baronies of Formal and Lintrathen regranted to him after he resigned them for new infeftment in February 1429, in which charters he is described as 'our dear and faithful Walter Ogilvy of Lintrathen'.²⁷ Furthermore, he had his establishment of two chaplains at the church of St Mary of Auchterhouse for

²³ Brown, *James I*, 80; *Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff*, iv, 142; *Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff*, iii, Spalding Club (Aberdeen, 1857), 578-9.

²⁴ W. Fraser (ed.), *The Melvilles, Earls of Melville and Leslies Earls of Leven*, iii, (Edinburgh, 1890), 23. It is possible that Ogilvy was temporarily re-employed in this position during the turbulent period immediately following James I's assassination.

²⁵ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 243. *Pluscarden* follows Bower, 279.

²⁶ NAS Papers of the Earls of Airlie GD16/1/1. *Scots Peerage* states 1432.

²⁷ The entry reads 'dilecto et fideli nostro Waltero de Ogilvy de Lintrethin'.

celebrating for the salvation of the king and queen and of his own family confirmed in February 1426/7.²⁸ Ogilvy also received a grant of lands in the earldom of Menteith in May 1432.²⁹ From a king well known for his lack of generosity in the area of patronage, this does constitute considerable partiality towards Walter. It should be noted that Patrick Ogilvy was also in the king's service, holding the position of sheriff of Angus, as well being Justiciar north of the Forth by 1427. Patrick also acted as an ambassador for the king, going to France in 1425 and was appointed to be constable of the Scots in France in 1429 but died shortly thereafter.³⁰ However, he only witnessed three charters in the course of the reign, on 8 January 1426/7, 26 May 1427 and 17 July 1428, suggesting that he was not a close daily councillor of the king as his uncle was, although his absence from Scotland in the later years of the reign must also be borne in mind.³¹

John Spens, a burgess of Perth, needs to be considered within the household category, despite the fact that he was not a frequent witness. In fact, Spens is found as a witness only twice in the whole reign. On 31 March 1429 he was a witness to the foundation charter of the Perth Charterhouse and again on 15 May 1430 he witnessed a charter to Alan Stewart. By the time of the later charter, Spens was certainly serving in the household as Comptroller, a position he held at least between 1429 and 1431.³² In this capacity, Spens was responsible for fairly large sums of money, often being paid for the expenses of the king and receiving foodstuffs for the king as well. For example, in 1430, £15 of dried fish was delivered to Spens and £122 4s 8d was paid to him for the king's expenses at Linlithgow.³³ Spens would

²⁸ NAS GD16/3/11, GD16/3/10.

²⁹ NAS GD16/3/12.

³⁰ *Scots Peerage*, i, 109.

³¹ *RMS*, ii, nos.73, 88, 108.

³² *RMS*, ii, 152; *ER*, iv, 465-553, *passim*.

³³ *ER*, iv, 512, 513, 519.

have to have been considered a trustworthy individual as a receiver, particularly as it seems to place him close to the household and the royal family. This is further evidenced by the fact that Spens later became Steward of the household of James's heir, the Duke of Rothesay, some time between 1431 and 1434.³⁴ Obviously, James was unlikely to entrust the wellbeing of his heir to someone who did not have his complete confidence. Furthermore, Spens was among the nine chosen at parliament in January 1435 to carry out the judicial work of the parliament.³⁵ Michael Brown suggests that Spens owed his position in government to his relationship with the Earl of Atholl, of whom he was a loyal and long-standing adherent.³⁶ This is not unlikely, as there is nothing to suggest a relationship between the king and Spens prior to James's return, although Spens undoubtedly had to prove himself in service to maintain his position. Brown further states that it was his prior loyalty to Atholl that led to Spens' apparent involvement in the plot to assassinate James.³⁷ Again, this is quite plausible, but as Spens had benefited quite well from his service to the king, more explanation is perhaps needed. It is possible that James's actions during his reign, particularly in the latter years, had prevented the king from winning Spens' full loyalty, despite the patronage that Spens received. In addition to household offices, Spens also received a grant of lands in the earldom of Menteith (in 1426) and lands in the earldom of Fife (in 1433).³⁸ As discussed in preceding chapters, James's financial mismanagement, his attacks on powerful nobles and his lack of military success in the north, as well as a lack of proper patronage, combined in the 1430s to isolate the king from his subjects and this may have influenced Spens as well.

³⁴ Spens is found as Comptroller in 1431 and as Steward of the Duke of Rothesay in 1434. There are no extant accounts for the intervening period. *ER*, iv, 537, 544, 553, 603, 622.

³⁵ *APS*, ii, 22-3.

³⁶ Brown, *James I*, 86, 185.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 185-6.

³⁸ *RMS*, ii, no.45; NAS GD1/1042/3.

The Clerk of Spices was another officer who may be considered in this area. This office first appears in Scotland, perhaps based on the English office, in the year 1424-5, when it was held by John Livingston.³⁹ Livingston held this office until around 1427, as Nicholas Kirkdale is found in this position for the exchequer account for the period 1427-8. This Clerk first received £540 on behalf of the Chamberlain but was thereafter responsible for sums he received.⁴⁰ However, the largest sum received by this clerk after 1425 occurred in 1430, totalling £388 17s 8d.⁴¹ There is a further payment in 1435, however, made to William Norville, styled Clerk of Spices, of £23 8s 8d, for which he is responsible. Although the sums received by this clerk were not normally particularly large, he was still of importance in the financial aspects of the reign. Furthermore, at least one and perhaps two of the men who held this position had connections to the Douglas family. In 1417-18, Livingston was Steward of the Household of the Earl of Douglas and a possible local origin of the surname Kirkdale is Kirkcudbrightshire, an area associated with the Black Douglasses.⁴² This again highlights the prevalence of Douglas men in the royal household that is evident amongst the men discussed in this chapter. Although not acting as witnesses throughout the reign, the men holding this office were clearly important to James, both through their financial role and through the further connection they may have provided to the Douglasses.

ii: Clerical Household Officers

In addition to lay subjects, James employed a number of clerics in his household. The principal household officer in Scotland at this time was the

³⁹ *Ibid*; As already noted, this office was established in England by the fourteenth-century.

⁴⁰ *ER*, iv, 381-391; Murray, 'The Comptroller', 7.

⁴¹ *ER*, iv, 499-515.

⁴² G.F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland*, (New York, 1962).

Chancellor, of which James had two, William Lauder, until his death in 1425, followed by John Cameron for the remainder of the reign. Both men held the position of Bishop of Glasgow while holding the office of Chancellor. This may be significant in itself, as James may have wished to avoid including the Bishop of St Andrews in his administration, despite the fact that Henry Wardlaw had been his guardian for a time before 1406 and that it was Wardlaw who crowned James in 1424.⁴³ This would perhaps have made Wardlaw a logical choice for James, being an experienced man and holding the premier bishopric in the country. However, Wardlaw was also influential in the University of St Andrews, which James wished to move to Perth, causing discord between the king and this bishop. Also, as Balfour-Melville has stated, James was distrustful of Wardlaw, viewing him as too Papalist.⁴⁴ As evidenced by the anti-barratry legislation introduced by James, the Scottish king was seeking to limit the influence of the Pope in Scotland and would not have wished to have a papal supporter in such an influential position in his government. However, Cameron was obviously favoured by James before his promotion to the bishopric, and it is possible that he became Chancellor and Bishop of Glasgow as a reward for good service, the positions being conveniently vacated by the death of Lauder. There is also the fact that James may simply have considered Wardlaw too old to be actively involved in government on a regular basis; Watt places Wardlaw in his 60s by the later 1420s.⁴⁵

Lauder was initially appointed Chancellor by Murdoch, duke of Albany, which would appear to make his adherence to James I somewhat incongruous, given James's attack on that family after his return to Scotland. However, Lauder was closely involved in seeking the king's release from captivity, efforts which no doubt

⁴³ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 61, 221.

⁴⁴ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 129.

⁴⁵ D.E.R. Watt, *A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410* (Oxford, 1977), 564.

endeared him to the king and helped him to retain his position after 1424.⁴⁶ Lauder is found several times as one of the Scots' commissioners for talks with the English and as the recipient of safe conducts allowing him to go to England. For example, Lauder is named as a commissioner on 24 September 1411 and received a safe conduct to go to England to treat for James's release on 17 February 1422/3.⁴⁷ This close and relatively regular contact between James and the bishop no doubt helped the Chancellor to avoid being tainted by his association with the Albany Stewart family. It was surely Lauder's willingness to seek James's release that salvaged his position. That James was familiar with Lauder through the latter's efforts would also have helped to maintain Lauder's importance after 1424 as it provided James with a skilled and supportive Chancellor to help him in running the country at a time when he himself lacked experience in government, having had little opportunity to actively participate in this area either during his time in Scotland or his period of captivity in England.⁴⁸ The fact that Lauder was a close councillor of James in the period immediately following the king's release is evident from his appearances on witness lists. Even in the short period between the return of the king and his own death, Lauder appeared on 12.9% of witness lists that exist for the whole reign more than any earl managed in the whole course of the reign. This equates to 96% of lists for the duration of Lauder's life. Furthermore, Lauder appears to fit with the general pattern of James favouring Lowland men, the Lauder family being primarily

⁴⁶ Brown, *James I*, 27; Rev. D. Shaw, 'The Ecclesiastical Members of the Lauder Family in the Fifteenth Century' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, vol.xi (Glasgow, 1955), 163-4.

⁴⁷ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 197b, 234b.

⁴⁸ Until the death of his brother, Rothesay, just before his 8th birthday, James was simply the heir to the throne. Even after Rothesay's death, James had little opportunity to be involved in politics due to the dominance of his uncle, Robert, duke of Albany. See Brown, *James I*, 9-39 for James's experiences before the commencement of his personal rule.

associated with the Lothians and Borders area, having lands in Midlothian, Pebbles and Lauderdale.⁴⁹

Lauder's successor as Chancellor, John Cameron, was already a part of James's administration by the time of his promotion to the Chancellorship and Bishopric of Glasgow, initially appearing as Secretary to the King and Keeper of the Privy Seal before taking over Lauder's role. Cameron first appears as a witness to five charters on 10 July 1424, with his final appearance on 4 September 1431. This relatively early disappearance is explained both by the decreasing number of extant charters in the latter part of the reign and by Cameron's absence on the Continent after 1434. However, during his time in the king's service, Cameron witnessed a total of 88.6% of charters for which witness lists are extant. This is a significant proportion and indicates that Cameron was in very close contact with the king, although, as mentioned above, the Scottish household was still peripatetic in this period, so it is not particularly surprising to find the Chancellor, and indeed the other household officers, witnessing a high proportion of royal charters as they would have been convenient witnesses for the king. In the latter part of the fifteenth century, the Chancellor can also be found witnessing a high proportion of charters, usually 100% in any given year.⁵⁰ However, in that later period, the Chancellorship was usually held by a secular individual as opposed to a cleric, with Andrew, lord Avondale and later Colin, earl of Argyll, most regularly holding this office, although John Laing bishop of Glasgow, James Livingstone bishop of Dunkeld and William Elphinstone bishop of Aberdeen did respectively hold the position in 1482, 1483 and 1488. Yet Elphinstone is only found as such in two charters of April that year.⁵¹ It is thus perhaps not appropriate to consider these bureaucrats as part of James I's social

⁴⁹ Shaw, 'Ecclesiastical Members of the Lauder Family', 160.

⁵⁰ T. Chalmers, 'Daily Council from RMS testation, 1463-1513'.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

affinity in the way that earls and other nobles would traditionally be viewed. Nevertheless, the lack of great nobles at James's court does suggest that, by default, his household officers were the men with whom the king would have spent much of his leisure time.

Nonetheless, it is still important to consider these men as the very fact that they were in such close and continual contact with the king can aid an understanding of the wider politics of the reign; these men were in a particularly advantageous position in regards to having the opportunity to influence the king. Furthermore, James chose these men to aid him in the business of government and so a study of them can perhaps be used to reveal James's beliefs and intentions in relation to what he hoped to achieve in his personal reign. These points shall be returned to in more detail below.

Like Lauder, Cameron probably had a Lothian origin, his surname most likely indicating a connection to the village of that name outside Edinburgh, although it could also suggest a link to Cameron parish near St Andrews.⁵² Furthermore, Cameron had a connection to the Douglas family, serving as secretary to the Earl of Wigtown before entering the king's service post 1424.⁵³ This was an important link for James as Wigtown became Earl of Douglas after the death of his father at Verneuil. Having Cameron as such a close advisor would perhaps have provided the king with a strong conduit for communication between himself and the earl. As well as being a close daily councillor of the king, Cameron was also involved in other duties aside from those associated directly with the Chancellorship. Cameron served several times as an ambassador to England, in 1429, 1430 and 1431, receiving

⁵² Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 138.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 138-9; Brown, *James I*, 51; *Douglas Book*, iii, 51-2, 414.

several safe conducts for this purpose.⁵⁴ This raises the possibility that Cameron was in England attending James prior to 1424, although the fact that he only graduated in 1419 may preclude this. However, he was secretary to the Earl of Wigtown by 1423, and may have been utilised by the earl's father in his efforts to secure the king's release. That Cameron was a particular favourite of James is indicated not only by his active role in government but also by the events surrounding his elevation to the bishopric of Glasgow, a position to which he was raised by James himself, despite the Pope having the right to select the new incumbent to that see. The fact that James persisted in promoting Cameron in the face of papal resistance is indicative of the favour the king showed to this cleric, and also of the strained relationship between the Scottish king and the papacy.⁵⁵

Another clerical figure who is worthy of note in James's reign is Master William Foulis, Keeper of the Privy Seal. Foulis was the most frequent witness after Forrester, Ogilvy and Cameron, appearing on just under 54% of surviving witness lists. He first appeared as a witness, already holding his office, on 1 September 1426 and was present, as far as can be determined, for the duration of the reign.⁵⁶ That he was in the king's service before commencing his role as a regular councillor to James is exemplified by his presence on an embassy to Norway in the summer of 1426 in order to discuss matters concerning the Hebrides.⁵⁷ Foulis continued to serve on embassies throughout the reign, evidence suggesting that James often chose him as a Scottish representative in talks with the English, for example in July 1429 and December 1430.⁵⁸ Michael Brown also suggests that Foulis, along with John

⁵⁴ *Bishops of Scotland*, 319-22; *CDS*, iv, nos. 1030, 1032, 1037, 1041; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 265-272.

⁵⁵ Balfour-Melville, *James I.*

⁵⁶ *RMS*, ii, no.60.

⁵⁷ *Scots Peerage*, iii, 57; *Chron. Bower*, viii, 319.

⁵⁸ *CDS*, iv, nos.1030, 1032, 1037, 1041. See also *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 266, 269, 272.

Winchester, bishop of Moray, took over Cameron's role while the Chancellor was absent on the Continent.⁵⁹ Clearly Foulis was a trusted advisor.

As with many of the other officers so far discussed, this relationship began during James's imprisonment. Safe conducts were frequently issued to allow Foulis to visit England in the early 1420s, for example on 12 July 1423, to treat for the release of the Scottish king.⁶⁰ Additionally, Foulis also provided yet another link between James and the Earl of Douglas, as Foulis had previously been secretary to the earl and was promoted to chancellor of the earl as a result of his efforts.⁶¹ Again, James is evidently relying on men from a limited group. James also petitioned the Pope for Foulis's provision to the perpetual vicarage of the parish church of St Giles in Edinburgh before he even returned to Scotland, a petition that was granted on 28 March 1424 and that the Earl of Douglas later requested be made for life on 14 April 1424.⁶² A distinct pattern appears to be emerging of James looking to men post-1424 with whom he had become familiar before his release. This implies that James maintained a distinct level of distrust towards many of his subjects throughout his reign, especially toward those who had not proven themselves concerned for his welfare during his captivity and who had not appeared to actively seek his release. The men James chose as his household officers were of course agents for the Scottish nobles who had the power to work for James's release and it would perhaps be expected that James's gratitude would be directed towards their masters. However, James's perceptions may have been influenced by the fact that it was these officers, and not their lords, with whom he had the greatest level of contact during his captivity. There is also a very strong impression of James seeking to employ men

⁵⁹ Brown, *James I*, 195.

⁶⁰ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 233/4, 235, 238; *CDS*, iv, nos. 915, 919.

⁶¹ Brown, *James I*, 37; Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 248; *Copiale Prioratus Sanctiandree*, J.H. Baxter (ed.) (Oxford, 1930); *CSSR*, ii, A.I. Dunlop (ed.) Scottish History Society (1956), 55.

⁶² *CSSR*, ii, 55, 63.

who could link him to the powerful Douglas earl. As an added bonus, these men would have been highly trained providing James with a cadre of seasoned administrative officers with whom he was familiar and comfortable.

However, James was not above appointing his own relations to household office. In 1432, Walter Stewart, dean of Moray, James's half-uncle, was appointed to the position of Treasurer. He is first found in this office as a witness to a royal charter to John Ogilvy on 1 September 1432.⁶³ He was not in the position long, as he was dead before 9 January 1433/4.⁶⁴ However, in this short time he still managed to appear on five witness lists representing about 2.6% of the total. The timing of the dean's appointment is significant as it follows a period of particular turbulence for James. With most, if not all, of the money raised to pay his ransom having been spent, James was forced to seek financial aid from parliament in October 1431, and the estates made their distrust of the king clear by insisting that any money raised be kept locked in a kist, so that James could not spend it without approval.⁶⁵ There is also a statement by Bower regarding a tax in 1433, which James ordered to be returned after 'the people began to mutter against the king', complaining that they were being taxed too highly, although the idea of James returning money once collected does not seem particularly credible.⁶⁶ James was clearly distrusted in financial matters. Furthermore, James had seen the defeat of royal forces under the Earl of Mar at Inverlochy a short time before the 1431 parliament. Also, James was at odds with the country's most powerful noble, the Earl of Douglas, as his arrest of this earl illustrates. Significantly, Douglas gained his release in time for the October parliament where James 'at the urging of the queen, bishops and prelates, earls and

⁶³ *Douglas Book*, iii, 419.

⁶⁴ *Fasti Ecclesiae Scotincanae Medii Aevi ad Annum 1638*, Revised edition, D.E.R. Watt & A.L. Murray (eds.), Scottish Record Society (Edinburgh, 2003), 286.

⁶⁵ *APS*, ii, 20.

⁶⁶ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 241.

barons' forgave Douglas.⁶⁷ It thus makes sense that James would turn to a family member, whose loyalty he could presumably count on. Incidentally, the timing of Walter Stewart's death may account for why there is no named Treasurer for 1434, and why John Winchester, later bishop of Moray, is found as an ad hoc financial officer for that year.

Winchester is another officer frequently employed by James in diplomatic matters although he was not a regular witness to royal charters, his name appearing on around 4% of charters throughout the reign. However, it is necessary to also consider household officers who do not appear on witness lists, or who appear on the lists only a few times, as they could still be expected to have some contact with the king and also were sometimes utilised in ways other than as daily councillors. Winchester was a bachelor of Canon Law, and was at various times, Chancellor of Dunkeld, a Canon of Glasgow, a Canon of Aberdeen, and was also the King's Secretary and Clerk of the Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1426.⁶⁸ Also, in a charter dated 14 April 1435 Winchester is referred to as Clerk of the Rolls and Register.⁶⁹ Clearly this was a man with considerable administrative experience which would make him useful to James. By continuing his loyal service, Winchester was able to win favours from the king. This is evident in James's request that Winchester be allowed to hold benefices in plurality in August 1426 and again in October 1430.⁷⁰ Winchester was also present at Basle in December 1431 and at Rome in the early 1430s, and later received a payment for his expenses while carrying out the king's affairs in Rome on the same day that he was provided to the Bishopric of Moray

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 265.

⁶⁸ *Fasti*, 10; *RMS*, ii, nos.1-200, *passim*; *Calendar of Papal Registers, Letters*, viii, 423; *CSSR*, ii, 144; *CSSR*, iii, 143; *ER*, iv, *passim*.

⁶⁹ *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Sixth Report, MS of Sir Robert Menzies*,

⁷⁰ *CPR*, vii, 437-8, 467; *CSSR*, ii, 144; *CSSR*, iii, 143.

early in 1436.⁷¹ The connection to Moray and Aberdeen may have been attractive to James as he sought to gain connections with the northern territories of his kingdom, particularly in later years when it was becoming evident that royal policy was not having success in that region. However, Michael Brown states that Winchester was recruited from service in the Black Douglas household, providing yet another link between the king and this family.⁷² A number of factors clearly influenced Winchester's inclusion in the royal household.

Another household officer closely linked to James was Thomas Myrton, a member of the Crail (Fife) family of that name, variously described as the King's Clerk and Chaplain of James I.⁷³ Myrton also held the position of Treasurer by late 1430, though is described as 'alleged Treasurer of James king of Scotland' in a petition to the Pope regarding the deanery of Aberdeen in November 1429.⁷⁴ During the reign Myrton witnessed around 13.5% of charters, a small amount compared to other officers, but still significant and more than any person outwith the household. Myrton was also employed by James in diplomatic endeavours, for instance, a safe conduct was issued for him to go to Rome in June 1424 and again in December 1425.⁷⁵ Myrton did indeed go to the Papal court and is found there petitioning the Pope in June 1426, and in August 1426 is referred to as having been 'recently sent to the Pope as ambassador of James, king of Scotland'.⁷⁶ Also, he was one of those listed in January 1429/30 to be a Scottish commissioner for talks with England.⁷⁷ As with other officers, this appears to be a relationship that began during James's imprisonment. In January 1421/2, a safe conduct was issued to 'Master Thomas

⁷¹ Balfour-Melville, *James I, King of Scots*, 199, 238.

⁷² Brown, *James I*, 79.

⁷³ Watt, *Scottish Graduates*, 394-8.

⁷⁴ CSSR, iii, 50-1.

⁷⁵ CDS, iv, nos.962, 988; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 248a, 253a.

⁷⁶ CSSR, ii, 137; *CPR*, vii, 167/8.

⁷⁷ CDS, iv, no.1032; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 269.

Mirton, chaplain and servant of James I to go to Scotland and return to his master', and again on 24 November 1423 for 'Thomas Mirton, clerk to the King of Scots to go to Scotland with four servants and return to England', suggesting that Myrton stayed with James during his time in England.⁷⁸ There is a further record of a safe conduct issued to Myrton as James's chaplain going to join him in France.⁷⁹ This suggests that there was particularly strong relationship between James and Myrton, with the added attraction of Myrton being able to act as a messenger for James while the latter was in England. It would have provided James with a valuable source of information regarding events in Scotland and again adds to the very clear impression that James was highly inclined to employ in his personal reign those men who had proven their allegiance prior to 1424.

Another Glasgow cleric to serve James was Master John Scheves, canon of Glasgow. Scheves appears on only three witness lists, but was also active in royal administration. In 1426, he is found as Clerk Register and an auditor of both the Exchequer and of the Chamberlain's account.⁸⁰ Scheves is also described in witness lists as Clerk of the Rolls.⁸¹ He is found as an auditor again in 1428, 1429, and 1431 and appears to have held the office of Clerk Register until November 1452.⁸² Furthermore, Scheves was appointed to be an auditor of the tax raised for James's ransom, indicating that he was a widely trusted individual.⁸³ Bower further states that Scheves was an auditor for the 1433 tax, which was apparently returned

⁷⁸ *CDS*, iv, nos.912, 936.

⁷⁹ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 233.

⁸⁰ *ER*, iv, 400, 428. A position at this level was more likely to be chosen by the Chancellor rather than the king directly, although given James's desire to increase his own authority it is unlikely that he did not at least give a final approval of the decision, particularly as he utilized Scheves in other areas.

⁸¹ *NAS GD16/3/140, GD16/3/12.*

⁸² *ER*, iv, 432, 465, 525; Watt, *Scottish Graduates*, 480-83.

⁸³ *APS*, ii, 5.

following complaints.⁸⁴ Scheves was also trusted enough by James for him to be chosen as an ambassador for the Scots several times, firstly in June 1425, when a safe conduct was issued for him to go to Rome, although Watt suggests that he probably did not go on this occasion.⁸⁵ Scheves is found in a similar capacity on two further occasions, in June 1429 and January 1430, suggesting again that he was a trusted and skilled individual. Combined with the longevity with which he served in the household, it is clear that Scheves may have been a close adherent of the king, and this despite his earlier service in the administration of the Duke of Albany.⁸⁶ This indicates that James was willing to overlook an Albany Stewart connection, at least in some officers, in order to perhaps preserve some level of continuity within the household, despite changes in most of the major offices. The fact that Scheves held a relatively minor office possibly helped as well, as it did not give him too much power.

Master John Benyng may also be considered within this group. Benyng witnesses only two charters, in December 1429 but as secretary to the king, a position he held from at least 1426 until 1430 and most likely until his death sometime before September 1432, would probably have been in fairly close contact with James on a regular basis.⁸⁷ That Benyng was important to James is indicated by the support the clerk received in his efforts to gain patronage at Rome. In May 1426, Benyng was granted permission to hold benefices in plurality, a not insignificant mark of favour.⁸⁸ Among the benefices held by Benyng were the perpetual vicarage of the parish church of Lintrathen, St Andrews diocese, and the vicarage of

⁸⁴ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 241. The tax was ordered to raise funds for an embassy to discuss the marriage of Princess Margaret to the Dauphin.

⁸⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 253; Watt, *Scottish Graduates*, 480-83.

⁸⁶ Watt, *Scottish Graduates*, 480-83; *Papal Letters to Scotland, 1394-1419*, 375.

⁸⁷ *ER*, iv, 681; *CSSR*, ii, 142; *CSSR*, iii, 117, 132, 146, 251.

⁸⁸ *CPR*, vii, 437-8; *CSSR*, iii, 126.

Kilpatrick, Glasgow diocese. Lintrathen was a free parsonage as late as 1274 and by 1431 had been annexed to Inchmahome, possibly by royal grant and as a result of James's control of the earldom of Menteith. This suggests a fairly strong connection between Benyng and the king. Kilpatrick probably refers to the vicarage in Lennox, the parsonage being annexed to Paisley Abbey, another Stewart connection. Benyng was also a canon of Moray, holding the prebend of Duffus.⁸⁹ Additionally, in 1430 through a petition by James, Benyng was granted the parish church of Linlithgow, a place that held particular significance in James's reign as the site of his newly built Linlithgow Palace, as will be discussed in chapter five.⁹⁰ There was some dispute regarding the vicarage of Linlithgow. A John Feldeu, stated to be a chaplain of James I, argued that he had been granted this vicarage by Bishop Henry Wardlaw of St Andrews, and that Benyng intruded himself into this benefice.⁹¹ Perhaps James's support of Benyng in this benefice was a symptom of his tense relationship with the Bishop of St Andrews.⁹² It is apparent that although he was fairly insignificant as a witness to royal charters, John Benyng was fairly close to the king, thus making him a relatively important individual in the reign before his death in the Roman Court sometime by 7 September 1432.⁹³

In addition to these men, there is another officer who must be considered to be of importance in the reign but who does not appear at all on witness lists. The first man to hold the new position of Comptroller was David Broun, Canon of the Chapel Royal. Broun would probably have been in a position to have fairly regular contact with the king. He appears to have held the office of Comptroller until 1429,

⁸⁹ CSSR, ii, 142; CSSR, iii, 117, 251; I.B. Cowan, *The Parishes of Medieval Scotland* (Scottish Record Society, 1967), 49, 108, 133.

⁹⁰ CSSR, iii, 117.

⁹¹ CSSR, iii, *passim*; CPR, *Letters*, viii, 399-400.

⁹² See Balfour-Melville, *James I*, and Brown, *James I*, for James's relations with Wardlaw.

⁹³ Benyng is referred to as having died in a petition of Thomas Grenlaw given on this date. CSSR, iii, 251.

although in this year John Spens is also found in this office.⁹⁴ His attainment of the position of Chancellor of Glasgow from 1428 may account for his departure from the office of Comptroller for a time.⁹⁵ Broun returned to this office in 1434 and is also found in this position for the exchequer account of 1435, the last full account surviving for the reign.⁹⁶ Broun does not appear to have lost his position at the Chapel Royal when gaining the Chancellorship of Glasgow.⁹⁷ James may have asked Broun to return to the household as he was looking for support at this time, his actions in the preceding years having done little to improve his popularity. The king may have felt that he would gain more loyalty from someone who had been part of his administration in the early years of his reign. Although there is little direct evidence of the role played by Broun beyond that in a financial capacity, it is possible to infer from his offices that he was a fairly significant individual. The Comptroller was an important financial officer in James's reign. As discussed in chapter two, the Comptroller was initially subordinate to the Chamberlain, but thereafter became an important, independent financial officer.⁹⁸ Money management was a significant concern for James throughout his reign, so the fact that Broun was entrusted with such large sums, as discussed in chapter two, is an indication of the level of trust placed in him by the king. Significantly, the largest sums received by this officer occur during Broun's tenure, with the amounts being much reduced when Spens held the position, and increasing again once Broun returned to the office. This indicates that perhaps James trusted the person more than the office itself, although Spens did become Steward to James's heir after he left the position of Comptroller. Benyng's transfer to the office of Chancellor of Glasgow would have allowed

⁹⁴ *ER*, iv, 379-484.

⁹⁵ *Fasti*, 209.

⁹⁶ *ER*, iv, 557-637.

⁹⁷ *CSSR*, iii, 97-8.

⁹⁸ See ch.2.

contact between these two men to continue, through James's Chancellor, John Cameron, bishop of Glasgow. An individual clearly did not have to be a witness to be of importance.

A final entrant in this category is Edward Lauder, possibly a nephew of William Lauder the bishop, who is found in a minor household office during James's reign. He appears as a witness to six royal charters, representing just over 3% of the total.⁹⁹ This is a small proportion but Edward was clearly trusted by the king in the 1420s. Safe conducts were issued to him in June 1424 and June 1425 as one of those selected to go to Rome, that of June 1424 specifically identifying him as an ambassador for James I.¹⁰⁰ Walter Bower also names Edward as one of those chosen as an ambassador to the king of France in July 1428 (although he misdates it to 1425), to discuss, among other things, the marriage of James's daughter Margaret to the Dauphin.¹⁰¹ This was a particularly important issue and Edward's inclusion in this embassy clearly highlights that he held a position of trust with the king. Furthermore, in the latter half of 1429, Edward is found as procurator of James I at the Roman Court.¹⁰² Edward was apparently an important part of James's administration but died before August 1430.¹⁰³ It seems likely that had he lived, he would have continued to serve the king. In addition to his being a member of the powerful Lothian Lauders, Edward was linked to the Douglas family, as he is found as chancellor to the Earl of Douglas in May 1426.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, he is also found in the king's household in February 1426, serving as Clerk of the King.¹⁰⁵ This

⁹⁹ Edward refers to himself as William's nephew. Shaw, 'Ecclesiastical Members of the Lauder Family', 160.

¹⁰⁰ *CDS*, iv, nos.962, 979.

¹⁰¹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 247-9.

¹⁰² *CPR, Letters*, viii, 155; *CSSR*, iii, 46, 54, 58.

¹⁰³ Edward is stated to be deceased in a petition of a Simon Bowmaker dated 8 August 1430, *CSSR*, iii, 125.

¹⁰⁴ *CSSR*, ii, 130.

¹⁰⁵ *RMS*, ii, nos.32-35.

would seem to suggest that there was little conflict in Edward serving both the king and the earl at the same time, and perhaps indicates why James was keen to employ Edward, as it provided him with another connection to both the Lauders and Douglas in one go. Clearly, despite his lack of appearances as a witness to royal charters, Edward Lauder was an important part of James's household in the early years of his reign.

iii: Lay Administrators

In addition to those employed in a specific household office, James was served by a number of other men in various administrative capacities. One notable example of this is Robert Lauder of the Bass, who was a frequent witness to royal charters, appearing on just over 37% of extant witness lists, far higher than any of the earls or other nobles managed in this period, indicating that he was a close councillor of the king. Lauder also held the positions of Justiciar south of the Forth and also for a time immediately following James's return was joint keeper of Edinburgh Castle, an important royal residence. Lauder was also sheriff of Lothian and kin to Bishop Lauder of Glasgow. This obviously made him an attractive ally for the newly returned king, giving him yet another associate with knowledge of and ties to the Lothian area and another tie to his Chancellor. Brown also suggests that Lauder's status as a former retainer of James's deceased brother the Duke of Rothesay was a factor in his position as a councillor in the first years of the reign.¹⁰⁶ This would certainly have been logical for James, as he would have been looking to men with proven loyalties to his family, particularly immediately following his return to Scotland. Furthermore, Lauder had contact with James during the latter's time in

¹⁰⁶ Brown, *James I*, 51.

England. In May 1423 he and others were issued a safe conduct for going with James to Pontefract and he was a member of the commission appointed by the Duke of Albany in August 1423 to discuss James's release.¹⁰⁷ Lauder first appears as a witness late in 1424, and is named as southern Justiciar from May 1425. His last recorded appearance as a witness is on 4 February 1430/1.¹⁰⁸ Significantly, it is about this time that Lauder was replaced as keeper of Edinburgh Castle by William Crichton, suggesting that Lauder was somewhat alienated by his loss of position, though old age may have contributed to his disappearance from James's administration; Lauder was old enough to have taken part in, and been taken prisoner at, the battle of Nisbet in June 1402.¹⁰⁹ Any alienation was perhaps exacerbated by a lack of patronage directed towards Lauder, as he received only one charter, of his lands of the Bass and Edrington, in December 1425.¹¹⁰ This would appear to fit with the pattern seen above for the nobles, whose attendance seems to be concentrated in the 1420s, with many outside of the household staying away from court in the 1430s.

William Crichton of Barnton and Crichton (essentially making him a close neighbour of John Forrester and James Douglas of Balvenie) was not a frequent witness for the duration of the reign, appearing on only 6.7% of witness lists, placing him outside the king's inner circle according to Grant's methodology. His first appearance is not until 27 July 1429, though he is there with some regularity thereafter.¹¹¹ Crichton, however, is a further example of James's reliance on men from the south of the country, the family name being derived from lands in Midlothian, and this is reflected in his subsequent appointment to the positions of

¹⁰⁷ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 236a; *CDS*, iv, no.932.

¹⁰⁸ *RMS*, ii, no.186.

¹⁰⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 43-5; Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 22.

¹¹⁰ *RMS*, ii, no.29.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* no.127.

sheriff of Edinburgh and Keeper of Edinburgh Castle.¹¹² Crichton was in the king's service prior to becoming a regular councillor, as he was appointed with William Foulis to go on the embassy to Norway in 1426.¹¹³ He also appears as one of those knighted at the king's coronation in 1424.¹¹⁴ This may have been due in part to his being one of those who went to Durham to meet James upon his release from captivity, a safe conduct being issued to him for this purpose in December 1423, James looking favourably on a man who knew that the way to improve his position was to seek the good favour of the king.¹¹⁵ Later in the reign, Crichton was appointed, in January 1429/30, as one of the commissioners for talks with England and was sent by James with the Earl of Angus and Adam Hepburn to take Dunbar Castle in 1434.¹¹⁶ Crichton seems to have had ties to the Earl of Angus, the Red Douglas, acting as a witness to a confirmation charter of the earl dated 20 February 1434/5, a time when Crichton was very much part of the royal administration.¹¹⁷

Brown has suggested that Crichton was aware that he owed his position to royal favour and there does appear to be a correlation between his service and his growing status throughout the reign. For instance, his appointment as keeper of Edinburgh Castle appears to follow from his acting as a daily councillor and as an ambassador to England and it is following this in the latter half of 1432 that Crichton is first found as Master of the King's Household, replacing Walter Ogilvy who had previously held this office.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Crichton's heir was among those knighted at the baptism celebrations for James's twin sons in 1430.¹¹⁹ This indicates

¹¹² *Scots Peerage*, iii, 57-61.

¹¹³ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 319.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 243.

¹¹⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 244.

¹¹⁶ *CDS*, iv, no.1032; *Chron. Bower*, viii, 291; Brown, *James I*, 154.

¹¹⁷ *Douglas Book*, iii, 421-2.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* 419.

¹¹⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 263.

that Crichton was able to make the switch from a general administrative position to a high household position and gain fairly significant favour from the king. It is worth highlighting that the loss of the position of Master of the King's Household does not appear to have alienated Ogilvy, as he did not cease to be a witness and continued in the king's service as illustrated above. Crichton's adherence to the queen in the period following the murder of James I is perhaps further testament to his awareness that he owed his position to royal service.¹²⁰ It should also be noted that Crichton had links to the Earl of Douglas, Grant placing him within the outer circle of the earl's affinity.¹²¹ This is not a particularly close link, but is again another example of James employing men with some connection to the Douglas earl, and the Douglas family in general.

One factor that is evident here is the seeming lack of sheriffs utilised by James in his household. Caroline Shenton highlights the fact that in the reign of Edward III, between 1327 and 1345, one fifth of all sheriffs appointed were members either of the household or of the royal family, most being appointed after 1341.¹²² Additionally, Richard II followed a policy of appointing his household knights to various sheriffdoms in order to improve his control of the country, by putting trusted men into locally powerful positions. However, this did prove to be unpopular and Mitchell suggests that this played a part in the king's eventual dethronement.¹²³ Mitchell further asserts that Richard's use of household men in the localities was increased following the Appellant crisis of the later 1380s, with thirteen household knights appointed to peace commissions in formerly Appellant counties, as he sought

¹²⁰ Brown, *James I*, 198-9.

¹²¹ Grant, 'Acts of Lordship', 247.

¹²² C. Shenton, 'The English Court and the Restoration of Royal Prestige 1327-1345' (Unpublished University of Oxford PhD thesis, 1995) 36.

¹²³ S.M. Mitchell, 'Some Aspects of the Knightly Household of Richard II' (Unpublished University of London PhD thesis, 1998), 217.

to regain control. Nonetheless, this did not avert his eventual displacement from the throne.¹²⁴ In contrast, only three, Robert Lauder, William Crichton and Patrick Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus can be seen to have played any significant role in the James's household, and this amounts to only one tenth of the total number of sheriffs in the kingdom. Of course, it should be noted that sheriffs did play an important political role in the reign generally. For example, Hugh Fraser, sheriff of Inverness after 1429, was a key ally of the Earl of Mar in resisting the Lord of the Isles, and John Lumsden, sheriff of Fife, was significant in helping the king to gain control in that area after he annexed the earldom to the crown following the execution of the Duke of Albany.¹²⁵ However, the fact that James did not utilise such a useful group for creating links between his household and the localities is striking.

iv: The King's Confessor

The king's confessor was an important office, as by its very nature the holder would have had close contact with the king. Notably, James's choice of confessor, John Fogo, abbot of Melrose, provided another link to the Douglas family: Fogo had previously been confessor to the fourth Earl of Douglas.¹²⁶ There is also an indication that Fogo remained close to the fifth earl, as he is found as a witness to a Douglas charter in February 1433, although this was a grant to the Perth Charterhouse, so may be equally representative of his tie to the king.¹²⁷ As well as spiritual counsel, Fogo was involved in the more political aspects of the reign. On 9 June 1425, Fogo was among those for whom a safe conduct to go to Rome was

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 190.

¹²⁵ Brown, *James I*, 74, 102, 104.

¹²⁶ Brown, *James I*, 52; *CSSR*, i, 102.

¹²⁷ *Douglas Book*, iii, 420-1.

issued, though it is not clear if he actually went.¹²⁸ Later in the reign, in November 1432, a further safe conduct was issued for Fogo to travel to Basle with Walter Ogilvy and Master Alexander Lauder.¹²⁹ Fogo was a well-respected individual, to be selected for these ambassadorial duties, and this is further suggested by comments by Bower, who refers to Fogo as ‘a most worthy master of theology’ and as the ‘most worthy abbot of Melrose’.¹³⁰ Additionally, in 1433 when the English were making proposals for a final peace, Fogo was the one to support the pro-English position in the debate about the proposal.¹³¹ As Brown has suggested, Fogo’s position as confessor to James makes it likely that he was in fact espousing James’s own position.¹³² Bower also presents James as an observer in this debate, with Brown suggesting that James was attempting to win support by prolonging the discussion. It would also have had the benefit of distancing the king to an extent from a proposal that was unlikely to gain a great deal of support among his subjects.

v: Conclusions

This survey clearly highlights the importance of the household and its personnel in the medieval period. Not only was a lavish household an important means of display, but its members obviously influenced and were influenced by the politics of the reign, allowing a deeper understanding of this area to be achieved. By identifying the personnel who attended James, it is possible to add to existing knowledge of the political atmosphere at the Scottish court and in the country in general during his reign. It is evident that despite the large amounts of money James was spending on his court (as will be discussed in more detail in the following

¹²⁸ *CDS*, iv, no.979; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 253a.

¹²⁹ *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 280b.

¹³⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 89, 289.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 289.

¹³² Brown, *James I*, 153.

chapters), the Scottish king was failing to attract a wide range of subjects to his court on a regular basis. This would imply that either the type of court he was creating was unattractive to his subjects or that he was not actively trying to attract them at all. It does seem unlikely that James did not want his nobles at court, as he would have been aware of the important political role of the court from his time in England. The court was an important place for important men to come together to discuss politics and strategy and to influence and be influenced by the king. However, it is possible that by 1424, Scottish nobles did not know how to work within the context of a royal court, having operated successfully without one since at least 1406, and arguably since the 1380s. Additionally, as is apparent from the foregoing discussion, James appears to have had an almost neurotic reliance on men with whom he had contact prior to 1424, indicating that few men were permitted to enter the king's close political circle. This may not be the only explanation, however, given Grant's contention regarding David II's nobles as outlined above. Therefore, it appears that James had also failed to create an atmosphere at his court that was appealing or even acceptable to his nobles. As will be apparent throughout this thesis, James was introducing to Scotland a brand of royal court that was largely alien to his people (an example of this with regards to the household was his introduction of English offices) and this may well have estranged at least some of his nobles; only his household officers, men essentially paid to be at court, were with the king with any regularity. However, these men did gain importance from their association with the king, as is clear from the above discussion. Another factor that is evident from the above data is the general reliance by James on men from the Douglas affinity. This may perhaps be due to the experience these men would have gained serving in the household of a great noble. Nonetheless, the sheer volume of Douglas men in the

household would seem to imply that other factors were important.¹³³ For instance, it is Douglas men with a stronger link to Central Scotland (with connections to Glasgow or the Lothians) rather than those from the Borders who appear to be particularly favoured by the king. This is perhaps because James felt these men were more likely to support a pro-English policy than those with a history of more direct cross border conflict or those who had been more closely tied to the fourth Earl of Douglas's active support of the French war effort against England. Although agreeing a treaty with the French that involved the marriage of his eldest daughter Margaret to the Dauphin, James was not fully committed to this policy and sought to prolong peace with England, despite diverting much of the money raised for his ransom towards the purchase of luxury items for his own use. The death of the fourth earl may have meant that men previously in his employ were more easily drawn into royal service, not having the same links with the fifth earl as they had with his father, and were perhaps looking to advance their own positions through royal service. Additionally, this focus on men from a limited geographical area very probably contributed to James's failure to gain control of the entirety of his kingdom, particularly the north, as he would not have the extensive connections that were required for him to be well informed about the local politics of the region. Nor had James cultivated a loyal following from that area that he could trust to carry out royal instructions, although James clearly had made some effort in this area with his inclusion of the Ogilvies in his household. Indeed, following the death of Alexander Stewart, earl of Mar, James missed an opportunity to gain a loyal lieutenant in the north by granting the earldom to Robert Erskine who had been campaigning for this

¹³³ The distinct lack of opportunities for men who had experience of other households is significant. For instance, there is little to suggest any large-scale rehabilitation of former Albany-Stewart men, although some instances can be discerned, despite the fact that this was also a premier family pre-1424.

for some time.¹³⁴ James instead worsened the situation by annexing Mar's estates to the crown. This is in direct contrast to the actions of his predecessors who showed a much clearer awareness of the need for geographical diversity amongst their supporters. For example, Robert I created the earldom of Moray both as a reward for Thomas Randolph, giving the king a staunch supporter in the north and to fill the power vacuum left by the destruction of Comyn power in the area. Even James's supposedly less astute father, Robert III, showed more appreciation of this issue with his patronage towards the Lindsay family in the north east, particularly in the creation of the earldom of Crawford. Indeed, Caroline Shenton has argued that mismanagement of this issue led to Edward II, Henry VI and Richard III losing their thrones.¹³⁵ James's fate may have been influenced in part by his own mismanagement. James obviously had some notion of the importance of the household and of appropriate personnel and in the early years of his reign appears to have made a concerted effort to reform the royal household along English lines in an attempt to enhance its power and thus its usefulness to him. However, James lacked the detailed knowledge and political skill to have this institution and its men work efficiently to the royal advantage and this failure to grasp the wider implications of his actions is a theme that permeated his entire reign.

¹³⁴ Brown, *James I*, 156-60, 200.

¹³⁵ C. Shenton, 'The English Court and the Restoration of Royal Prestige 1327-1345' (Unpublished University of Oxford PhD thesis, 1995), 36, 89.

Chapter 5 – The King’s Works: Architecture

i: Introduction

The ‘building of elaborate manor-houses’ was an integral part of court life in this period, making a study of the building projects undertaken by James during his reign essential in the present study.¹ Buildings were visible symbols of the power of the ruler and as A.A. MacDonald has noted, the Stewart monarchs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries utilised architectural display as one means of reflecting their growing political authority.² Other authors, for example, A.G. Rutherford and Simon Thurley, have noted the symbolic importance of buildings. Rutherford argues that castles are a ‘vital element in the material world of medieval Scotland’, each building being a visual statement by its owner, regardless of the size of the structure, while Thurley notes that royal houses were the political power centres of the kingdom.³ Thus it is clearly necessary to examine the type of buildings James was constructing and the locations that his court was visiting in order to determine something of the nature of his court life. The favouring of large, formal residences may perhaps indicate a preference for a formal court life, for instance, since Nigel Saul has noted that it is not possible to hold elaborate ceremonies in cramped conditions.⁴ However, given the more limited nature of Scottish resources and the smaller size of the household and higher nobility in relation to England, it is possible that the situation in Scotland was different to that in the southern

¹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 255.

² MacDonald, ‘The Chapel of Restalrig’.

³ A.G. Rutherford, ‘A Social Interpretation of the castle in Scotland’ (Unpublished University of Glasgow PhD Thesis, 1998), 15; S. Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: Architecture and Court Life, 1460-1547* (New Haven & London, 1993), 1

⁴ Saul, *Richard II*, 338.

kingdom. Furthermore, an examination of James's architectural surroundings in relation to Saul's approach may help to expand knowledge regarding James's reign as a whole. The editors of *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* have noted, for example, that ritual, and the way in which buildings were designed for its performance, were central to the exercise of power.⁵ Thus it may be possible to reveal further information about the politics of James's reign and the style of his rule. There are numerous topics within this subject that need to be examined in order to accomplish this. The importance of building to contemporaries must be established. It is important to know how James's subjects would have viewed his building programme in order to determine its impact on the reign. It is also necessary to provide some background as to the general symbolism of architecture in the medieval period. Possible influences on James and his architects and masons will also be discussed. An examination of James's expenditure will follow this and, while the focus of the discussion will necessarily fall on Linlithgow Palace due to the surviving nature of the buildings themselves, some effort will be made to extrapolate what James *may* have been doing elsewhere from amounts recorded in the *Exchequer Rolls*. Possible decorating schemes will also be appraised, as will the presence of gardens at royal residences. Religious patronage, chiefly the king's erection of the Carthusian monastery at Perth, will also form part of the discussion. Throughout this chapter, comparisons will be made with contemporary structures both in Scotland and elsewhere.

Around 1470, Sir John Fortescue wrote in his political treatise *The Governance of England*, that a king should have 'such tresour, as he mey meke new bildynges whan he woll, ffor his pleasure and magnificence', highlighting one of the chief reasons for

⁵ Jones, Marks & Minnis (eds.), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe*, x.

monarchs to institute building programmes.⁶ This argument is also used earlier by Roger Dymock in *Liber contra XII errors et hereses Lollardorum*, which states that among other things, ‘a king should be in possession of sumptuous and beautiful buildings’.⁷ The concept of Magnificence was central to medieval political ideology. A prince had to emphasise his high status with *visible* displays of wealth that surpassed those of his subjects. Professor Malcolm Vale highlights this in *The Princely Court*, for instance, when discussing courtly expenditure at the Flemish court, which accounted for 44.3% of comital income. Vale states that despite this high level, it would have been ‘unthinkable’ for spending to be reduced, as display was a vital expression of authority.⁸ Failure to adhere to this concept could have serious political consequences. Henry VI, a king who did not do so, was generally disparaged for his ‘grete pouertie’.⁹ However, Henry VI did spend lavish amounts of money on his ecclesiastical foundations at Eton and King’s College, Cambridge.¹⁰ Between 1437 and 1461, at least £15,000 sterling was spent on Eton alone, yet this was criticised by the lay Commons in 1451. This would suggest that it was not just how much that was spent that was important but how and where it was spent.

Another motivation behind building was a need for the lord to establish himself in a particular locality. By constructing a residence in a particular location, the lord caused himself to be associated with that area. Indeed, Rutherford suggests that it was through the castle that a place became strongly linked with an individual and their

⁶ Quoted in Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England*, 11.

⁷ Quoted in Saul, *Richard II*, 356.

⁸ Vale, *the Princely Court*, 93.

⁹ Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England*, 12.

¹⁰ The foundation of these institutions are discussed in B. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), 135-145.

family.¹¹ Rutherford further suggests that this was the reason why many chose to build on the site of earlier castles, as a means of proclaiming the change yet continuity in lordship. He suggests that the Campbells, for example, rebuilt what is now Castle Campbell near Dollar in order to establish a power base in the Lowlands, away from the traditional Campbell centre around Loch Awe.¹² The family inherited the castle and lands here in the 1460s through the marriage of Colin Campbell, first earl of Argyll (d.1492) to Isabella Stewart of Lorn. The castle's real importance lay in its relative proximity to Stirling, giving the earl a base near the royal castle at a time when his prominence at court was rising.¹³ However, the renaming of the castle in 1489 from Castle Gloom to Castle Campbell certainly had symbolic significance, and was surely designed to impress upon local inhabitants that it was Campbell, rather than Stewart, who was now the local lord.

The Haliburton family used a similar method to proclaim their own position, instituting a building programme at Dirleton, but incorporating the thirteenth century towers as a symbol of continuity, visually legitimising their lordship by associating it with the past.¹⁴ Charles Coulson further suggests that 'great lord triumphalism' should be considered as a factor when examining the building programmes of medieval monarchs.¹⁵ These ideas shall be discussed in more detail below in order to gain a fuller understanding of the motivations behind James's expenditure on building, how this

¹¹ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle', 108.

¹² *Ibid.* 89. See also S. Boardman, 'Pillars of the Community': Clan Campbell and Architectural Patronage in the Fifteenth Century' in R. Oram & G. Stell (eds.), *Lordship and Architecture in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 2005), 123-160, for the Campbells' use of architecture generally.

¹³ The history of the Campbells is discussed in S. Boardman, *The Campbells, 1250-1513* (Edinburgh, 2006). For the first earl see especially 166-255.

¹⁴ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 143.

¹⁵ C. Coulson, 'Fourteenth-century Castles in Context: Apotheosis or Decline?', in N. Saul (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England I* (Woodbridge, 2000), 133-151. Essentially this refers to the role that buildings played in celebrating and representing the successes of their owners.

related to contemporary situations within and outwith Scotland and what impact this had on his reign.

ii: Architectural Inspiration

To aid the discussion, it is perhaps helpful to first look at possible influences that acted upon James during his reign. James's childhood, both the time spent in Scotland and in captivity in England, is crucially important in this area, as is his relationship with his queen and nobles. The aim here is to build a picture of contemporary architectural endeavours that may have had an impact on James. The first years of his life were spent in Scotland and records indicate that for at least some of this time he was at court with his father.¹⁶ Robert III was a rather reclusive king who spent much of his time at less central locations such as Rothesay, where he died. In this he was similar to his own predecessor, Robert II, who had died at his south-western castle of Dundonald. It should be noted, however, that these kings were not necessarily reclusive by choice. Both Robert II and III were removed from political power and effectively sidelined in favour of the Earl of Carrick and the Earl of Fife respectively.¹⁷ These kings did not always have free choice in where they resided. James's own buildings can thus be seen as something of an advertisement that he did not intend to allow a similar fate to happen to himself.

Also, in his youth, James was in the care of Henry Wardlaw, bishop of St Andrews. Walter Bower refers to the bishop as 'that lavish spender', and certainly he

¹⁶ *ER*, iii, 617.

¹⁷ For the politics of this period see Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*. Fife later became the Duke of Albany and was to govern Scotland during James's imprisonment in England.

lived in an elaborate residence, St Andrews Castle.¹⁸ While Wardlaw does not appear to have conducted much work at the castle himself, he benefited from the extensive remodelling undertaken by the previous bishop, Walter Traill (d.1401). Bishop Traill renovated the Fore Tower to create a four-storey private residence and was the first bishop to introduce the tower house at his residence.¹⁹ The tower house was a key feature of several important secular residences at this time and a striking example is Threave Castle, built by Archibald, earl of Douglas, in the later fourteenth century.²⁰ The royal example of David's Tower, begun before Threave, also needs to be considered in this context. Traill's mimicry of these residences can be seen as an effort to advertise his own position in the social and political hierarchy of the period. Although subsequent adaptations and ruination disguise what James would have seen it is possible to gain a strong impression of the residence as it was in the early fifteenth century and there are several aspects that are of particular interest for the present discussion.

The thirteenth-and fourteenth-century main entrance to St Andrews Castle lay in the Fore Tower but was relocated c.1400 to a position in the south-west curtain wall of the courtyard (the present one in the south-west range is a sixteenth century addition in front of the late fourteenth-century gateway). The earliest gate was on the ground floor and was served by a drawbridge, with evidence of a portcullis having been present.²¹ This possibly dates to the rebuilding of the castle conducted by the English in 1336, the Fore Tower comprising the remnants of the building following its destruction

¹⁸ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 61.

¹⁹ R. Oram, 'Prelatical Builders: a Preliminary Study, c.1124-c.1500' in *Lordship and Architecture*, 7-8.

²⁰ C.J. Tabraham, 'The Scottish Medieval Towerhouse as Lordly Residence in the Light of Recent Excavation' in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 118, (1988), 267-276.

²¹ *RCAHMS Eleventh Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Fife, Kinross and Clackmannan*, (Edinburgh, 1933), 252-4.

by Moray in 1337. This was perhaps less imposing than a first-floor entrance but its projection from the curtain wall would have alleviated this defect, particularly as the ground at the base of the tower fell away, accentuating its height. The castle was furnished with a Great Hall on the east side of the castle, now sadly lost, though Richard Fawcett suggests that it would have rivalled that at Linlithgow or Stirling.²² This is quite likely given that the bishop of St Andrews was the premier ecclesiastic in the country. That St Andrews was considered a suitable venue for entertaining the Burgundian embassy, which was in Scotland by Christmas 1425, is perhaps indicative of this building's status.²³ However, it should be noted that St Andrews may have been chosen in this instance due to a lack of suitable accommodation elsewhere.

Connected to the Hall was the kitchen tower. The kitchen itself was on the first floor, above two vaulted cellars that date to the fourteenth century, with accommodation for guests and members of the household above.²⁴ Interestingly, the fact that the kitchen was at this height suggests that the hall was also, and this is similar to the arrangement of the court kitchen and great hall at Linlithgow Palace. Furthermore, the chapel at St Andrews formed a link between Bishop Traill's private apartments in the Fore Tower and the hall block in the east quarter of the Castle. Again, this is similar to arrangements at Linlithgow Palace in the later-fifteenth century and may be suggestive of James's eventual plans for his Palace. The castle was, of course, also equipped with prison accommodation. The exercise of justice was an essential function of local lords and

²² R. Fawcett, *St Andrews Castle* (Historic Scotland, 2001).

²³ It is not clear precisely when the embassy arrived, just that they were in Scotland by Christmas 1425 and the king's location after 13 August 1425 until Christmas is unclear. It is possible that James wanted to entertain the embassy at St Andrews to emphasise the connection the two areas had through that saint. James also spent Christmas at St Andrews in 1425. Brown, *James I*, 112.

²⁴ Fawcett, *St Andrews Castle*, 7.

their residences formed an important arena for this, as shall be discussed in more detail below. St Andrews Castle was thus a very grand example of a noble residence, the home of a powerful man. It is difficult to believe that the young James's outlook was not in some way influenced by his time there, particularly when his experience in England is considered.

During his eighteen-year captivity, James had ample opportunity to experience English royal residences and observe English attitudes towards them and the monarch. James was held at various times at the Tower of London, Nottingham Castle, Stratford Abbey in London, Pevensey Castle in Sussex, Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, Westminster Palace and Windsor Castle.²⁵ These were among the grandest residences in England at that time and it may be helpful here to look at some of these buildings in a little more detail. Pevensey Castle was not an especially important building by the time of James's captivity, having fallen into disrepair after the mid-thirteenth century. It had, however, played a role in past events, being held by John of Gaunt in 1381 and in 1399 was held for Gaunt's son Henry against the army of Richard II by Lady Joan Pelham, wife of the constable. Kenilworth Castle was a favoured residence of Henry V and had been in existence since Norman times. Kenilworth is particularly significant in this context as it has a certain similarity to James's own Palace of Linlithgow, the two being constructed next to a body of water, that at Kenilworth measuring about half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide.²⁶ The Great Hall has some of the finest windows in medieval England, with fine carved stonework. Westminster was by this time the seat of

²⁵ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 38-105, *passim*.

²⁶ The loch at Linlithgow is natural – it is the *llyn* from which the full form of the town of Lithgow's name derives. The lake at Kenilworth was a mere formed by the damming of a small stream and the flooding of the shallow valley through which it had flowed. My thanks to Professor Oram for this information.

English government, which may have given James the opportunity to become familiar with the English offices that he was to institute upon his return to Scotland. Writing in the thirteenth century, Matthew Paris described Windsor Castle as ‘the most beautiful castle’ and further asserted that there was ‘no more splendid castle in all of Europe’.²⁷ Although perhaps something of an overstatement, this does give some indication of the international perceptions surrounding Windsor. English kings had used Windsor as a pleasure retreat since Norman times, taking advantage of the extensive park and woodland for hunting although it had fallen into some disrepair by Edward III’s time.²⁸ Windsor was largely rebuilt by Edward III, who seems to have been aiming to create one large palace that contained both the state apartments for official and ceremonial business as well as the King’s and Queen’s own private apartments in a single unified residence.²⁹ Windsor was also Edward’s choice for the home of his newly constituted order of knighthood, the Order of the Garter.³⁰ It was certainly a grand structure, containing many chambers and having a striking unified facade.³¹ Even assuming Matthew McDiarmid is correct in his assertion that James was kept in rather spartan conditions during his confinement, which is by no means certain, he would surely have gained some, if not considerable knowledge as to the layout and style of these buildings from his companions, visitors and servants.³²

²⁷ L. Keen, & E. Scarff, *Windsor: Medieval Archaeology, Art and Architecture of the Thames Valley* (Leeds, 2002), preface.

²⁸ C. Hibbert, *The Court at Windsor: a Domestic History* (London, 1964), 12; W.M. Ormrod, ‘For Arthur and St George: Edward III, Windsor Castle and the Order of the Garter’ in N. Saul (ed.), *St George’s Chapel Windsor in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), 12-34.

²⁹ J.M Robinson, *Windsor Castle: the Official Illustrated History* (London, 2001), 21.

³⁰ Ormrod, ‘For Arthur and St George’, *passim*.

³¹ C. Wilson, ‘The Royal Lodgings of Edward III at Windsor Castle: Form, Function, Representation’ in Keen & Scarff, *Windsor*, 79.

³² McDiarmid, *The Kingis Quair*, 42-3.

James was also in France on campaign with Henry V, giving him the opportunity to gain knowledge of French buildings.³³ This would have been augmented by the fact that the Duke of Orleans was also a captive in England from 1415 and it is possible that there was some contact between the two men, even if only through servants. James would have been aware of the status of the French monarchy in any case, but such personal experience may well have been amalgamated into his own perceptions of royal building practice. Michael Brown does suggest that James's building programme was generally influenced by his experiences in England and France, positing that Henry V's Sheen or the French Vincennes was the model for Linlithgow in terms of the ideas James was incorporating into his palace.³⁴ Ian Campbell proposes the French châteaux of Pierrefonds and La Ferté-Milon as exemplars, not an implausible suggestion given they were constructed by the Duke of Orleans, although any inspiration James received from this source is likely to have been limited.³⁵ However, further examination is necessary to fully understand why James built what he built, though it will doubtless not be possible to say with any certainty that James was copying any particular building. Nonetheless, Fawcett is quite correct to suggest that James's obvious desire for more luxurious accommodation than his predecessors possessed was stimulated by what he experienced during his captivity.³⁶ It is the only rational explanation for the different styles of James and Robert II and Robert III.

³³ James was at Abbéville, Amiens, Beaugency, Boulogne, Calais, Dreux, Melun, Montereau, Montreuil, Paris, Rouen, Sens, and Troyes at various times in the early 1420s. Brown, *James I*, 22.

³⁴ Brown, *James I*, 115.

³⁵ Campbell, 'Linlithgow's 'Princely Palace' and its Influence in Europe', 2. Brown suggests that Orleans influenced James's literary tastes. If this is the case, it is possible he influenced the Scottish king in other areas as well. Brown, *James I*, 20. However, direct contact between the two prisoners may have been extremely limited.

³⁶ Fawcett, *The Architectural History of Scotland*, 301. Dunbar also suggests that James received some inspiration from the Duke of Albany's castle at Doune and also perhaps from Sheen Palace in England.

It is also necessary to consider the role played by James's queen, Joan Beaufort. Joan was certainly influential in the reign as a whole but what part did she play, if any, in directing the design of Linlithgow and other building works?³⁷ The nature of surviving sources prevents a full understanding of the Scottish queen's patronage in this area. However, Joan was an important part of James's life and as Fiona Downie has shown, James did seek to accord her an important political role, so her influence in this area of James's reign must be considered. Furthermore, there is the fact that Joan was a member of one of England's most prominent families, a niece of Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester (later a Cardinal) and Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter. This in itself would surely have meant that some building work would have to be undertaken upon James's return in order to provide accommodation suitable for a grand English lady. This gives Joan at least a passive influence in determining the direction of James's building programme. Added to this is the knowledge that Bishop Beaufort has been described as one of the greatest English builders of the age.³⁸ In looking at Linlithgow and in speculating about other building works it is thus clearly necessary to give full consideration to English examples.

The spur provided by James's own nobles, however, should not be overlooked. Despite the fact that Duke Robert had died in 1420 and the Albany Stewart family was swiftly destroyed upon James's assumption of personal rule, the imposing Doune Castle remained. Doune was built by Duke Robert and is an impressive structure that reflected

Dunbar further posits that James may have been influenced by Episcopal Palaces, gaining knowledge particularly from his connection with Cardinal Beaufort. Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 8.

³⁷ See F. Downie, "'Sche is but a Womman': the queen and Princess in Scotland, 1424-63" (Unpublished University of Aberdeen PhD thesis, 1998), *passim*.

³⁸ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 9; T. B. James, *The Palaces of Medieval England, c.1050-1550. Royalty, Nobility, the Episcopate and their Residences from Edward the Confessor to Henry VIII* (London, 1990), 141.

in architecture the power and status of its owner. It was, as Fawcett asserts, much more indicative of what was expected of a member of the royal family in this period than the more subdued Dundonald, although the latter occupied a more prominent position in the landscape, Doune being somewhat more secluded in its location. It should be noted, however, that towers such as Dundonald were not as austere as their remains suggest and this shall be looked at below.³⁹ In this aspect, Linlithgow can perhaps be said to be similar to Albany's castle, as it, too, was in a less prominent location than other royal residences such as the castles of Edinburgh and Stirling, which can both be seen for many miles around in all directions. In terms of grandeur, Doune was more similar to two other substantial castles of this period, St Andrews and Tantallon. The latter was built by the Earl of Douglas, but had passed into the hands of the Red Douglas earls of Angus whose influence lay in the southern half of the country, precisely where James was looking to establish himself. This would perhaps have compelled James to build bigger and better than this family in an effort to stress his royal status.

iii: Architectural Expenditure

An important consideration in this architectural study is the level and frequency of James's expenditure on his building programme and the particular sites on which he concentrated. As is well known, the focus of James's efforts in this area was Linlithgow Palace. It is possible that a royal residence had existed at Linlithgow since the reign of David I but there was certainly a structure there by the beginning of the fourteenth century, as it was fortified by Edward I following his conquest of Scotland. This structure was made largely of wood and appears to have consisted of a stockade, behind

³⁹ Fawcett, *The Architectural History of Scotland*, 8.

which was a gatehouse with towers at either end. No visible remains of this earlier structure now exist as the manor house and much of the burgh was destroyed by fire in 1424. The earlier building may not have been a particularly impressive structure, as during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III it is described simply as ‘domus regis’ and during Albany’s governorship it is referred to as the ‘manerium’ of Linlithgow.⁴⁰ The destruction in 1424 gave James the opportunity to begin construction of the present palace.⁴¹

As it now exists, Linlithgow Palace is a quadrangular building, surrounding a central courtyard. James I constructed what is now the east range, which includes storage space, the kitchens and the great hall, as well as the rather flamboyant original entry gate. The first significant financial outlay on this project occurred in the period 1425-6, when £76 6s 6d was spent on stones, lime and the making of a park and fishponds there, although £10 for stone had been given out the previous year.⁴² In the next year for which records survive, 1427-8, the amount spent on Linlithgow rises sharply to a total of £606 8s 1d, including £6 for tiles.⁴³ In addition, thirty-five perches of land were purchased on the east side of the lodging at a cost of £19 17s 8d.⁴⁴ The specific purpose of the land is not stated in the accounts, though the most likely explanation is that it was to allow the creation of a new approach road to the Palace, directing visitors to approach from the east rather than the south, thus enabling James’s

⁴⁰ *ER*, ii, *passim*; *ER*, iii, *passim*; *ER*, iv, 1-378, *passim*.

⁴¹ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 5.

⁴² *ER*, iv, 391, 415.

⁴³ *ER*, iv, 434, 449, 450, 451.

⁴⁴ *ER*, iv, 450.

entrance to have a fuller impact.⁴⁵ It would be most interesting to have the intervening year to observe how the scheme was stepped up, but this is one of the years that are lacking in the accounts.

This level was maintained for several years thereafter with £753 13s 2d in the year 1428-9, the sum including payments to masons and carpenters, £637 6s 3d in 1429-30 and £642 18s 11d in 1430-1, which included £197 7s for stones, wood, boards and iron and £64 6s for lime.⁴⁶ The next exchequer audit took place in June 1434, covering the period from May 1433. Additionally, there are accounts of the Masters of Works for Linlithgow covering an eighteen-month period from June 1433 to December 1434. These accounts are divided into several different reports. From the printed rolls, a sum of £1386 10s 2d is achieved from the custumar account for Linlithgow for the year to 1434, and from two accounts of the work at the Palace, one from Robert Wedale covering the period from June to November 1433 and the second by Robert Levingstoun covering the period from November 1433 to December 1434.⁴⁷ John Waltoun also renders an account as master of the works at Linlithgow, which covers from May 1433 to June 1434.⁴⁸ This deals with the expenditure of £166 8s 10d on the works of Linlithgow, which includes £37 16s on colours for the king's painter at Linlithgow, although precisely what was painted is a matter of speculation.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 6. As it is not entirely clear from the records what the purpose of the land was, it is impossible to be certain about the use to which it was put. Dunbar's suggestion does appear to be the most logical idea.

⁴⁶ *ER*, iv, 486, 513, 524, 529, 530.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 554, 555.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 579-80.

⁴⁹ It is sometimes possible, where documentary evidence and surviving images can be combined, to come to an understanding of the type and appearance of images that may have graced medieval royal residences, as Paul Binski has done in relation to the Painted Chamber at Westminster. However, Dr Binski is dealing with a greater archival record than is the case for Linlithgow Palace and other Scottish residences of this period, so performing a similar exercise for James I's reign is impossible. It may, however, be potentially

The final payment recorded for James's reign is the £740 6s 5*d* for the year 1436-7.⁵⁰ This gives a total for the work on Linlithgow of £5039 6s. This averages to around £560 for each year of account, suggesting that up to £7300 could have been spent on this single work. While John Dunbar is correct to point out that this is not on a par with English expenditure, these figures clearly show James's commitment to this project.⁵¹ Alexander Grant estimates that the royal income was between £6000 and £8000 per year in this period.⁵² Thus, James's expenditure represents about a year's income and about 10% of his annual income during his reign. Spending remained consistent throughout the reign, with the lag in the early years easily explained by James's need to plan the building and organise its financing. A more simple explanation may even be that James needed these early years in order to reorganise royal finances following his long absence and to make arrangements for the payment of his ransom.

However, while the well-preserved ruins of Linlithgow make it easy to concentrate on this aspect of the king's architectural endeavours, there were noteworthy sums applied elsewhere, most significantly at Edinburgh and Stirling Castles. J.G. Dunbar states that James undertook no major work at Stirling.⁵³ However, at least £574 was spent on Stirling during the course of the reign, representing a substantial outlay for a cash-strapped monarch.⁵⁴ Furthermore, this is only what is specifically stated in the accounts to have been spent at Stirling. There are several payments for items that could

rewarding to consider English examples in an attempt to suggest a range of images that may have interested the Scottish king. As Dr Binski highlights, the décor favoured by Henry III and Edward I in the Painted Chamber are in keeping with their historical reputations as kings. See P. Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, Society of Antiquaries Occasional Papers, no.9 (London, 1986).

⁵⁰ *ER*, v, 11.

⁵¹ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 6.

⁵² Grant, *Independence and Nationhood*, 164.

⁵³ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 39.

⁵⁴ *ER*, iv, *passim*; *ER*, v, 4.

conceivably have been used in construction for which no purpose is openly given, for example, £5 10s for boards in 1426 and £3 4s for iron for the king in 1428.⁵⁵ Also, the gaps in the accounts distort the picture somewhat. In the accounts of 1426, 1428, 1429, 1430 and 1431, at least £70 per year is spent at Stirling, again representing a sustained level of commitment, although it is unclear if this sum was used for general watches and maintenance or to build something new. While this certainly does not match the amounts spent on Linlithgow, it should be remembered that with Linlithgow, James was starting from scratch rather than working with an established building complex, which would have undoubtedly required a greater outlay. Also, £574 would surely allow for the building of at least one substantial room, if not more. Recent archaeological work at Stirling has suggested that more work was undertaken at this castle in the pre-1424 period than previously thought and it may be that James did not need to spend a great deal at Stirling to have the residence meet his expectations.⁵⁶ £735 was enough in the 1434 account to allow for the building of a barge and a Great Chamber for Edinburgh Castle.⁵⁷ Even half the total spent at Stirling would surely allow for new building or refurbishment of some status, with the remainder allowing for the existing structures to be kept in good repair.

Dunbar does suggest that defence was the primary consideration behind the greatest single outlay at Stirling, which occurred in the final year of the reign, £176 4s 4d being spent in the year to July 1437. There is no specific information on precisely

⁵⁵ *ER*, iv, 413, 443.

⁵⁶ *Excavations in Stirling Castle: 1992-1997*, revised text, Kirkdale Archaeology for Historic Scotland, 13, 17.

⁵⁷ *ER*, iv, 579.

how the money was expended and it may represent general repairs.⁵⁸ Certainly Dunbar may be correct to argue that unsettled conditions in the southern part of the country were behind this sudden surge in outlay. The failure of James's Highland campaign was one symptom of James's increasingly fragile control and this was exacerbated by the death of his agent in the north, the Earl of Mar in 1435. Increasingly strained Anglo-Scottish relations in the latter years of the reign, culminating in the confrontation at Roxburgh in 1436, compounded this. James was also clearly concerned with increasing the military readiness of his country, as evidenced by his orders that castles should be repaired and that his subjects should practice with weapons.⁵⁹ There is also the £590 Flemish (around £1000 Scots) spent on the building of bombards and war machines, recorded in the Turyne Account of 1436.⁶⁰ The expenditure at Stirling may, in part, have represented an outlay for suitable accommodation for the king's Flemish artillery. Earlier records suggest that a keeper of guns was to be found at Stirling Castle and James may have continued this practice.⁶¹ Exchequer records for James's reign indicate that armour could be stored in several locations, as money was paid for the carriage of military items to both Perth and Edinburgh, from Dundee, Kinghorn and Inverkeithing, so it is not certain that Stirling was the location of James's new cannon.⁶² However, the established royal castles of Edinburgh and Stirling are perhaps the most likely places for artillery to be housed. This does not appear to be the only explanation, however.⁶³ General maintenance is still an equally plausible explanation for this level of

⁵⁸ *ER*, v, 4.

⁵⁹ *APS*, ii, 13.

⁶⁰ *ER*, iv, 677.

⁶¹ D. H. Caldwell, 'The Scots and Guns' in A. King & M. Penman (eds.), *England and Scotland in the Fourteenth Century: New Perspectives* (Woodbridge, 2007).

⁶² *ER*, iv, 482, 470, 491, 680.

⁶³ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 39.

expenditure. As already shown, work continued at Linlithgow until the end of the reign at a high level. Furthermore, the 1435 account shows an outlay of £199 13s 11d on the king's house at Leith. Payments for both of these projects cannot satisfactorily be explained by defensive needs, so James was clearly continuing his programme despite political uncertainty. There is no reason to assume that at least a proportion of the final year's spending at Stirling is not simply a continuation of the level of interest shown by James in the earlier years of the reign. Additionally, payments for Inverness only total £60 1s in the exchequer accounts that survive, mostly involving the carriage of lime to that castle. While more was almost certainly expended on this building, it seems difficult to tally this lesser amount spent on a castle that was in the front line of hostilities with the Lord of the Isles with the argument that the greater sum spent on Stirling in the final year was due totally to defensive considerations. Clearly, James spent considerable sums on building, adapting, maintaining and decorating suitable royal residences and this was a primary consideration throughout the reign. However, while these statistics are of interest on their own, they do not in themselves provide an insight into James's motivations. It is necessary to examine this programme in the context of the reign and to look also at *what* James built and where, not simply the sums expended.

iv: Linlithgow Palace

The only significant survival of James's building programme is Linlithgow Palace and this will be the focus of the next portion of the discussion.⁶⁴ The following will look more closely at what James perhaps hoped to achieve with this building and will place it in the context of the reign as a whole. Linlithgow was, in a sense, the

⁶⁴ See appendix 4 for illustrations of Linlithgow Palace and comparators.

perfect place for James to institute his new style of royal residence. The destruction by fire of the earlier royal manor house in 1424 meant that a new building was needed to replace the old, allowing James to start from scratch rather than working around pre-existing structures. The king visited Linlithgow soon after his return, the Exchequer account of May 1425 recording a payment of £22 13s 4d for his expenses there.⁶⁵ Although the precise date of this is not known, the fact that it took place so near the beginning of the reign does indicate an early interest in the area. James may also have held some personal affection for Linlithgow, records showing that he spent time there between July 1404 and March 1406.⁶⁶ Additionally, tradition may possibly have been a strong motivator for James to choose to construct a new manor here. As Keith Brown has noted, structures such as castles and other buildings were a visible symbol of noble authority, the means of reinforcing the continuity of a noble lineage and its association with a given location.⁶⁷ Rutherford also points to this aspect, citing several examples of castles where the presence of an earlier structure appears to have been the primary consideration in the choice of those locations for new residences. Castle Campbell has already been referred to, but to this Rutherford also adds Craginethan Castle and Dirleton, the latter of which was located on the site of an earlier castle of the de Vaux family, though defence may have been an equally strong factor in this case.⁶⁸

A particularly significant example of this is Archibald Douglas's construction of Threave in Galloway. The name, derived from the P-Celtic *tref* meaning a high status homestead, suggests that perhaps this location had connections with a much earlier

⁶⁵ *ER*, iv, 390.

⁶⁶ *ER*, iii, 617.

⁶⁷ K. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland. Wealth, family and Culture from Reformation to Revolution* (Edinburgh, 2000), 205.

⁶⁸ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 332-3.

centre of lordship for this area. The fact that no qualifying term is applied to this site in an effort to differentiate it from other *tref* sites further emphasises its prominence. There are references to a residence on the 'island of De' as early as 1174 although no physical remains of this have been found.⁶⁹ However, it appears as though this location was deliberately chosen by Douglas as a means of asserting his control over the area, having acquired the lordship in 1369, by associating himself with a traditional centre of power for the region. Threave is also important as it provides an example of the type of residence that James would be competing with in his own building programme.

Although tower houses have traditionally been viewed as rather austere structures, recent work has caused this belief to be re-evaluated.⁷⁰ Threave was a five-storey structure and although only the tower itself now remains, it was originally only part of a complex of buildings that would have provided a residence entirely in keeping with Douglas's status as a powerful noble and would have provided ample accommodation for his household and visitors. As initially constructed, Threave perhaps bore more of a resemblance to, for example, Craigmillar, probably built in the early 1400s.⁷¹ James would have been well aware of Threave, not only from his connections to the late Douglas earl during his captivity, but also through his connection to John Cameron. Cameron was originally secretary to Archibald, earl of Wigtown, grandson of the Archibald who constructed Threave and after James's return he quickly promoted Cameron into his own household, making him chancellor and bishop of Glasgow after the death of William Lauder. Indeed, Cameron's own building work on

⁶⁹ Tabraham, 'The Scottish Medieval Towerhouse as Lordly Residence in the Light of Recent Excavation' in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol.118 (1988), 267-276.

⁷⁰ See for instance, Tabraham, 'The Scottish Medieval Towerhouse'.

⁷¹ Fawcett, *The Architectural History of Scotland*, 252.

his castle in Glasgow was most likely inspired by Threave.⁷² David's Tower at Edinburgh Castle would also have provided an example of this type of residence, and would have been particularly significant as a royal example. David's construction would have symbolised the military role of the king, as it formed part of the defences of the Castle and at the same time, it provided a comfortable residence for the king and his court.⁷³ Additionally, as it was so prominent in the burgh landscape, the Tower would have served as a visual reminder of the presence and power of the king.

The continued occupation of a site was an important way of linking the present to the past. By continuing to occupy the traditional manor house site at Linlithgow James was symbolically associating himself with earlier monarchs and by doing so was emphasising his royal status and also the legitimacy of his position. Mary Whiteley has suggested that Charles V of France's continued use of old Capetian buildings was an attempt to emphasise continuity. The Valois dynasty based their claim to the French throne on descent from the Capetians and by retaining the buildings of the older dynasty the new one made a highly conspicuous link between the two.⁷⁴ This is perhaps of particular significance in relation to Robert III. James's father issued more charters from Linlithgow than any other single location, fifty-five in all.⁷⁵ Furthermore, Linlithgow was favoured largely during the last few years of Robert III's reign. Steve Boardman states that after 1404, Robert's court was almost permanently located in either

⁷² Oram, 'Prelatical Builders', 9.

⁷³ The initial discovery and excavation of David's Tower is described by W. T. Oldrieve, 'Account of the Recent Discovery of the Remains of David's Tower at Edinburgh Castle' in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, (1914), 230-271. More recent archaeological work is discussed in S.T. Driscoll & P.A. Yeoman (eds.), *Excavations Within Edinburgh Castle, 1988-91* Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1997).

⁷⁴ M. Whiteley, 'The Courts of Edward III of England and Charles V of France: a Comparison of their Architectural Setting and Ceremonial Functions' in N. Saul (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England* (Woodbridge, 2000), 158.

⁷⁵ Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 285.

Edinburgh or Linlithgow, and this was the period during which James was at court with his father. Significantly, this period also saw something of a return to power for Robert.⁷⁶ This would imply that Linlithgow was an important and favoured location for Robert during his periods of political dominance. This prominence of the two locations in the last period before his enforced absence from Scotland may have left a permanent impression on the young James. Only three of James's surviving charters are dated at Linlithgow, however, and one Exchequer audit was held there in 1434. This apparent lack of use appears to suggest that James did not in fact favour this residence. However, as the focus of this activity takes place in the 1430s, this may be explained by the fact that prior to this the building was not in a complete enough state to conduct any significant business. However, further information from the *Exchequer Rolls* indicates that James visited his new residence on a fairly frequent basis. In 1425, £22 13s 4d was paid for the king's expenses in the burgh and in November 1427 James visited Linlithgow again for a week.⁷⁷ Another visit was made mid-March 1428 and again for four days, with the household, in June of that year and again the following month. James also appears to have stopped in Linlithgow in December 1428 on his way to Stirling. Twelve days were spent at Linlithgow by the king and queen in January 1430 and the royal couple were at Linlithgow a further seven times between April 1429 and March 1430. They were also there again some time in 1430-1, as a payment is made for their horses there, although the exact date and length of their stay is not known. This would indicate that Linlithgow was indeed a favoured residence for James and his queen, but that he perhaps viewed it as a retreat rather than a place of business.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 278-297.

⁷⁷ *ER*, iv, 390, 449, 450, 484, 485, 512, 513, 529.

Although Linlithgow was not a primary seat of the Scottish monarchy, the fact that Linlithgow had been important in the last years of his father's reign may have caused James to view Linlithgow in a similar light, using it to emphasise the continuity between his own reign and that of his father, offering a sense of continuity. It was crucial for James to bolster his rather tenuous position as he had been absent for eighteen years and was returning to a country where the nobles were accustomed to limited royal intervention in their lives. Continuity is not the sole explanation, however. If this were the case then Stirling, Edinburgh and perhaps even Dunfermline would have been more obvious choices. It is possible that James wanted to establish himself somewhere that did not have such strong associations with powerful noble families, Stirling and Edinburgh Castles having been in the hands of the Duke of Albany and Earl of Douglas respectively for many years. James may have felt safer upon his return building his new Palace in a location that did not have this potential drawback. This suggestion should perhaps not be stressed too greatly, as James had already returned Stirling and Edinburgh Castles to royal hands. Yet, the returning monarch was also keen to establish a new style of monarchy, based on the English example to which he had been exposed during his captivity, particularly in that he wanted the king to be the focus of political life. In order to do this, James had to assert his position and the construction of a new palace was a highly visible and tangible means of announcing his arrival on the scene.

A further explanation for the choice of Linlithgow as opposed to either Stirling or Edinburgh may be the military connotations of these castles. In 1382, payments are recorded to an *artilarius* in Edinburgh Castle and to a carpenter active in making engines throughout the 1380s. Additionally, in 1384 an 'instrument called a gun' was bought for

the castle, along with ingredients necessary for firing the gun.⁷⁸ Stirling also had such associations, Maurice the Gunner being based there in the 1380s and also Alan, keeper of crossbows.⁷⁹ That these associations were continued into James's reign is suggested by a record in the Turyne Account of 1436, for the carriage of armour to the armoury at Edinburgh Castle.⁸⁰ Thus James's choice of Linlithgow was an effort to have a residential location without an overt military purpose, somewhere that could be used purely for court life but that was still in the wealthy southern part of the kingdom.

The overall impression of Linlithgow Palace is one of beauty and elegance, as well as functionality. This suggests that the king was looking for something of a retreat. This impression is given in the fresco of James in his court commissioned by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini in Sienna. Although fanciful, the image shows James in a grand open space, surrounded by courtiers, with gardens and a body of water showing through the windows.⁸¹ The architectural features are all factors present at the Palace as will be shown below. The rural setting idealised in the fresco is in contrast to the dirtier and more urban sights and sounds which would no doubt have been present in Edinburgh and perhaps also at Stirling, although the open area that is now the Castle Esplanade would have provided a buffer for the inhabitants of the castle. Similarly, at Stirling, the open ground between the edge of the burgh and the outerworks of the castle would have served as a barrier for the inhabitants. Additionally, Linlithgow was located near to lands held by several members of James's household, including James Douglas of Balvenie who had lands at nearby Abercorn and John Seton. John Forrester, the

⁷⁸ *ER*, iii, 672.

⁷⁹ Caldwell, 'The Scots and Guns', 7.

⁸⁰ *ER*, iv, 680.

⁸¹ See appendix 3.

Chamberlain, was also a relatively local landowner, his estates centring on Corstorphine, a few miles west of Edinburgh. A similar pattern is evident in relation to William Crichton, an important member of the household in the latter years of the reign. Crichton held lands just west of Edinburgh, with a tower at Laurieston, near Corstorphine, and was building his new castle, Crichton Castle, on lands to the south of the city. This does seem to suggest a correlation between the choice of Linlithgow and the location of the power bases of men whom James trusted. There were also several members of the household who had influence in the Lothian area, such as Robert Lauder who was sheriff of Lothian and also keeper of Edinburgh Castle for a time. James's desire to be surrounded by men loyal to him is also suggested by his efforts to establish John Benyng in the vicarage of Linlithgow, despite John Feldeu's prior claim.⁸²

Fortunately, the location for the new palace was strategic as well as symbolic. Roughly equi-distant between the royal castles of Stirling and Edinburgh and close to the harbour of Blackness and the ferry crossing at Queensferry, it meant that defence did not have to be a primary consideration in the design, as the king could easily withdraw to one of his castles should the need arise. There are numerous references in the *Exchequer Rolls* to payments for little ships and barges, suggesting that travel by waterway was not uncommon for the royal family.⁸³ There is even a specific reference for the year 1428-9 to the king, queen and two of their daughters travelling from Leith (where the king was building a house) to Inverkeithing.⁸⁴ Additionally, the *Exchequer*

⁸² See chs.3 & 4 for James's court and household personnel. Additionally, James seems to have taken care to ensure that he continued to be surrounded at Linlithgow by trustworthy men. Crichton's cousin, George, received royal favour and became sheriff of West Lothian and also lord of Blackness, the port for Linlithgow. Brown, *James I*, 132.

⁸³ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 482.

Rolls have James in Linlithgow and in Stirling on 17 December 1428, perhaps suggesting that the king travelled by boat along the River Forth, although this may also be an error in the records.⁸⁵ However, Linlithgow was on the main route between the strongholds of Edinburgh and Stirling as can be seen from invasion plans and descriptions given by an anonymous English writer in 1295.⁸⁶ The proximity to Stirling and Edinburgh may have been one reason why Linlithgow was preferred over Dunfermline despite the fact that it was on a potential invasion route, as it gave James a choice of two fortified strongholds to retreat to in times of trouble. James and Robinson suggest that this practice of choosing comfort over fortification was commonly the case in England, where the monarch relied on the authority of the crown for defence rather than on heavily fortified residences. Sheen and Westminster were undefended, as were smaller hunting lodges such as Cheddar, although the fact that hunting lodges were unfortified is not particularly surprising.⁸⁷ The English kings could simply retreat to a castle if necessary, as James could have done at Linlithgow. John Steane does argue that defence was a paramount consideration at Linlithgow, pointing to the fact that the palace sits on a natural hillock that extends on a promontory into the loch and also highlights that the site was used as a military base for Edward I.⁸⁸ While this is certainly true, other reasons could be just as important in choosing a building site as has been shown. The actual building suggests that defence was not considered important by James when building Linlithgow Palace, as it gives no appearance of being able to withstand

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 467, 485.

⁸⁶ P. Hume Brown, *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1978). The location of Linlithgow on this route was not coincidental as it lay on the main land route from Edinburgh to the lowest bridging point on the Forth. My thanks to Professor Oram for the clarification.

⁸⁷ T.B. James & A.M. Robinson, *Clarendon Palace: The History and Archaeology of a Medieval Palace and Hunting Lodge* (Society of Antiquaries of London, 1988), 2.

⁸⁸ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 86.

concerted attack. Ian Campbell argues that the absence of windows on the ground floor indicates that security was an issue, but this could have easily been determined by cost considerations as well.⁸⁹ However, the design may have been a deliberate attempt to draw attention to the first storey of the building, where the hall, the ceremonial heart of the building, was located.

There is also possibly a case for stating that a lack of obvious defensive structures was a defence in itself. Coulson has suggested that deterrence was effected by ostentatious displays of wealth and power, which effectively advertised the lord's ability to resist attack by making known the level of his wealth.⁹⁰ This is in stark contrast to the situation at Threave, for example, where the tower house comprising of thick walls with narrow windows facing the landward approach provided a defensible residence, enhanced by the addition of artillery fortifications in the mid-fifteenth century.⁹¹ The fact that this side also faced the hall and chapel complexes probably also made large windows impracticable. It should be noted that the other sides of the castle possessed large windows, giving clear views all around, suggesting that defence was not the only consideration at Threave. A large structure also required a large workforce to construct it. Thus, by building an elaborate residence a lord was proclaiming his ability to command such a force.⁹² By building such an impressive structure as Linlithgow Palace James may have hoped to fortify his position through a flamboyant display of wealth. Unfortunately, it was a rather false impression in his case, the financial history of his

⁸⁹ Campbell, 'Linlithgow's 'Princely Palace'', 2.

⁹⁰ Coulson, 'Fourteenth century Castles in Context', 147; Rutherford also expresses the view of building as a conspicuous display of wealth, 335.

⁹¹ C.J. Tabraham & G.L. Good, 'The Artillery Fortification at Threave Castle, Galloway' in D. H. Caldwell (ed.), *Scottish Weapons and Fortifications, 1100-1800* (Edinburgh, 1981); C. A. McGladdery, 'The Black Douglases, 1369-1455' in *Lordship and Architecture*, 161-187.

⁹² C. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society: Fortresses in England, France and Ireland in the Central Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2003), 68.

reign belying the image presented by the Palace. Certainly, James managed to increase the royal income by acquiring lands for the crown, for example, through the forfeiture of the Duke of Albany and also by appropriating a large proportion of the money raised for his ransom to his own personal use. Yet these were methods of increasing income that would not prove popular with his subjects and as already stated, the king's subjects clearly did not trust him in financial matters.⁹³ Still, it was essential to give the appearance of wealth in a society that was immersed in the use of visual culture and symbolism.

The symbolism of some of the key features of Linlithgow Palace needs to be examined in this context. The aspects that have been chosen are the entrance, the Great Hall, the kitchen block and the prison, as these features have been shown in other contexts to have strong symbolic as well as practical functions. The first thing that any visitor would have seen approaching the palace would have been the imposing entrance in the east range of the palace. The gateway itself survives, although now unused, but the drawbridge that serviced it is gone. From the outside, the entrance appears to be at first-floor level, however, this is a misleading impression given by the fact that land has fallen away from the side of the building and makes the gateway appear higher than it would have been during James's reign. The appearance of the entrance was crucial also. Rutherford submits that this was the most immediate way for a lord to communicate the intentions behind the structure.⁹⁴ The drawbridge, combined with the height of the entry way would have communicated immediately to the medieval visitor the idea that the owner of this building was of superior status. Even a drawbridge appears to have been

⁹³ Brown, *James I*, 139.

⁹⁴ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle', 246.

able to convey something of this idea on its own. At Tulliallan, which had three ground-floor entrances, the main entrance, for use by guests, was possessed of a drawbridge that had no practical function. The impressing of visitors would appear to be the only other explanation for its presence.⁹⁵ An impressive entrance was central to a building, as it marked the transition between the two spaces, giving it, according to Rutherford, almost ritual significance. The entrance separated the lord from those entering, made the visitor aware that they were entering another's space. Scottish examples of this are not hard to find. Although different in design to Linlithgow, the entrance to Doune Castle highlights the theatrical nature of the entranceway. The long, dark passage, barred by several doors and gates, takes the visitor from the outside into the spacious courtyard, although in medieval times it would have been less open than today as timber structures would have occupied some of the space. This was also the case at Tantallon where timber buildings have left their trace on the inner face of the east wall.⁹⁶ However, it would still have been an impressive moment. Even the modern visitor has the impression of entering the personal arena of a powerful individual, and this would surely have been amplified for the medieval caller, no doubt conversant with the language of the building and having knowledge of the power of the Duke of Albany. Doune Castle was an example that James would have been well aware of and would have seen that this was what was expected of a powerful noble of the period, and that this was something that he, as king, would need to surpass. This may account for some of the similarity between the two buildings and was one of the reasons why James kept the castle as a royal possession after he had Duke Murdoch executed. It also helps to explain why

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 247.

⁹⁶ RCAHMS *Eighth Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the County of East Lothian* (Edinburgh, 1924).

James lodged his heir there for a time. The latter action would also have had the effect of replacing Albany Stewart associations with the castle with royal ones. Linlithgow's entrance was also segmented by several doors and a portcullis, emphasising, as at Doune, that the visitor was entering a private space. This would have been compounded by the rather circuitous route that visitors were required to take to reach the entrance. Originally, guests approached from the south before diverting past the site of the church (it had burned down in 1424 at the same time as the original manor house) and then approaching the main gateway of the Palace.⁹⁷ After 1430 and the acquisition of new land to the east of the palace, visitors approached from this direction, allowing James's new façade to have a greater visual impact. The east entrance was designed to be viewed from a significant distance, not just from close up. This perhaps implies that James was seeking to stamp royal authority over the surrounding countryside, not just visitors who had arrived at the Palace. Additionally, Dunbar notes that ground level to the east of the palace was lower than elsewhere around the palace.⁹⁸ Thus visitors to the palace would have seen the king's new residence from a significant distance and as they drew closer would have had to raise their gazes up to the level of the entrance. This would have been a powerful visual symbol of James's view of his own position, emphasising his desire to be seen as a superior lord.

The location of the east entrance to the palace is also interesting. At Doune, for instance, the entryway is positioned off-centre in the wall. However, at Linlithgow, James had the gate placed in the centre of the east wing. There are not a significant

⁹⁷ *RCAHMS Tenth Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Midlothian and West Lothian* (Edinburgh, 1929), 220. It is possible that some of the funds directed to construction at Linlithgow were utilised in the rebuilding of the parish church.

⁹⁸ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 6.

number of contemporary comparisons for this within Scotland at this time, although the castles of Tantallon and Craigmillar do seem to have a similar design. There are some English examples, for instance Bodiam and the Percy possession of Warkworth, where the entrance is located in the centre of the western curtain wall. James may have become familiar with this during his time in captivity. However, French influences should also be considered within this context. The French royal residence of Vincennes also had a centrally positioned entrance. This example may also have been familiar to James through his association with the Duke of Orleans during his time in England as stated above and also from the time he spent in France in the early 1420s.⁹⁹ It is perhaps more likely that James had the French example in mind when designing Linlithgow, since this was a grand, *royal* example of this style. The symbolism of this is unlikely to have been lost on the king's Scottish subjects who had been fighting in France for some time.

The decoration applied to the entrance of Linlithgow Palace was significant as well. Heraldry was an immediate way to proclaim ownership of something in a largely illiterate age, so the presence of the royal arms above the entrance was James's way of making his ownership of the building and its surrounding lands clear.¹⁰⁰ This practice became common in Scotland by the sixteenth century.¹⁰¹ The style of this armorial work is interesting and perhaps indicates that James did have English models in mind. Richard II's work at Westminster included the introduction of carvings of the royal arms

⁹⁹ For James in France see Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 81-2, 87-91 and Brown, *James I*, 22-4.

¹⁰⁰ See for example A. Ailes, 'Heraldry in Medieval England: Symbols of Politics and Propaganda' in P. Coss & M. Keen (eds.), *Heraldry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002), 83-104; and in the same volume, M. Keen, 'Introduction', 1-16.

¹⁰¹ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 90.

supported by angels, just as is the case at Linlithgow.¹⁰² James would certainly have been familiar with the design of Westminster, having been lodged there during his captivity and most especially from having participated in the coronation banquet of Henry V's queen held in the great hall there. Denys Pringle suggests that the niches flanking the royal arms at Linlithgow were intended to hold statues of St Andrew and St James. This would certainly make sense within the context of an uncertain monarch attempting to assert his position as the association of the national saint with the royal arms and the saint sharing James's name would have been a means of visually allying the king with the nation, of binding the two together in the public imagination. This would have helped to reinforce James's position as monarch, promoting the idea of a God-supported monarchy. However, another alternative might be St Michael, which would ally the new Palace with the Parish church of Linlithgow, thus associating the royal with the religious. It is also possible that John the Baptist may have been chosen due to James's interest in this saint, as discussed in chapter seven.

The size of the armorial panel at Linlithgow is also worth noting, being the largest example of such work in Scotland at this time and obviously designed to be viewed from a distance. James was clearly making a statement with his new construction, using it to blatantly advertise his royal status. The exaggerated scale of the armorial suggests that James was perhaps insecure about his position, as such a large armorial had not previously been seen in Scotland, particularly not one with such extravagant symbolism highlighting the idea of god-supported monarchy. It is possible

¹⁰² J. Watts, 'Looking for the State in Later Medieval England' in *Heraldry and Social Display in Medieval England*, 248. Angels also appear on Richard II's Wilton Diptych which, if he was aware of it, may have helped to emphasise to James the association of royal and religious imagery and its use as a means of promoting his kingship.

that James felt a need to drive home to his nobles that the king had returned home and intended to return to power as well, although this is simply conjecture. This insecurity is also evident in James's reliance on a limited group of men, as discussed in chapters three and four. The use of architectural development to advertise status also appears to have been utilised by Walter Ogilvy, initially James's treasurer and later Master of the King's Household. In 1431, Ogilvy was granted a charter allowing him to erect his tower at Airlie in the form of a castle, indicating an awareness of the symbolism of architecture and a need for his residence to reflect his status.¹⁰³ The practice of using architecture to reflect status may also have been followed by William Crichton, who expanded Crichton Castle following his promotion to Chancellor under James II.¹⁰⁴

The fact that a charter was granted in Ogilvy's case also reflects the king's desire to control noble residences as far as possible in order to ensure that his subjects were not surpassing him in their building projects. The licence to crenellate was a defining characteristic of kingship, and James's participation in this area reflects his desire to emphasise his status over that of his nobles. James's efforts in this area met with little success, however, as there appear to be only three instances of men being granted such a licence, although there is a possibility that men applied for licences and were rejected. In addition to Ogilvy, James Dundas, esquire of the king, and William Borthwick were the only men to receive such grants.¹⁰⁵ Dundas does not appear to have played a significant role in James's reign, although his designation does imply that he was close to the king. However, Borthwick served on the assize that convicted the Duke of Albany in May 1425, was a hostage for two years from 1425, and his son and heir

¹⁰³ NAS Papers of the Earls of Airlie, GD16/1/1.

¹⁰⁴ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle', 108.

¹⁰⁵ RMS, ii, nos. 1, 157.

was among those knighted at the baptism celebrations for James's twin sons in 1430. It is difficult to make any firm conclusions from such limited evidence. Nonetheless, there is a hint that it was only men with close links to the king who participated in this procedure, embracing the king's courtly values. It is perhaps the case that James was seeking to use the licence to crenellate to create a new group within the nobility, loyal to him, and who were set apart from the rest through the design of their residences.

The Great Hall was probably the most important room in James's new Palace. The hall was the focus for the ceremonial life of the court, the place where the king could see and be seen by the greatest number of courtiers, where feasts could be held and entertainment provided. The hall could also provide sleeping accommodation as well as a venue for business. Although the hall was gradually receding in importance in this period as lords sought the greater privacy of their chambers, or separate halls such as the Duke's Hall at Doune, it was still an important venue and, of course, continued to hold a symbolic meaning.¹⁰⁶ The hall at Linlithgow was not by any means the largest known at the time, being 9m x 30m. That at Clarendon in England was 25m x 15.9m and this was smaller than at Westminster.¹⁰⁷ However, it must continually be born in mind that the Scottish king was working with much less money than the English monarchs were used to commanding. Nevertheless, Linlithgow's hall was much larger than the 8m x 17m hall at Dirleton and the 7m x 20m hall at Tulliallan.¹⁰⁸ Tantallon, one of the grander Scottish residences with which James was competing, had two halls, the lower and great, the latter being on the floor above the former and both were 7m x 17m, again smaller than that at Linlithgow, as was that at Bothwell, approximately 19m

¹⁰⁶ See for instance Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England*, 113-4.

¹⁰⁷ James & Robinson, *Clarendon Palace*, 10.

¹⁰⁸ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 169, 254.

x 7.6m. However, the hall at Darnaway was slightly larger at 26.6m x 10.7m. Linlithgow's Great Hall had a high timber roof, the impression of which remains in the west gable end and there is some evidence of a good-sized window at the east end of the Hall, overlooking the close. This would suggest that the dais end where the lord would sit was here, with the window lighting the high table. The dais is also placed in front of the great fireplace and the doorway behind it leads into the private royal chambers, further emphasising that this was the lord's position. For James to adopt a more formal court style, he would require the appropriate setting, which in the first half of the fifteenth century still meant a great hall. That this is what James built would suggest that he did desire to institute a more formal atmosphere at the Scottish royal court, although it must be noted that there is little evidence to suggest that James regularly utilised Linlithgow for formal court occasions. It has been said of Richard II that his 'refashioning of the secular ceremonial centre of the English crown was part of an attempt to establish an absolute monarchy' and while it is perhaps going too far to suggest that James I wanted to be an absolute monarch, it is clear from his efforts throughout the reign that he was keen to elevate the status of the Scottish monarchy.¹⁰⁹ The hall was literally elevated, being another level up from the entrance. Not all halls were on this level, the English examples of Westminster, Winchester and Eltham all having ground floor halls, although these are much earlier structures.¹¹⁰ However, ground floor halls continued to be built in Scotland throughout the Middle Ages, such as that at Spynie Palace for the Bishop of Moray c.1500. As well as being practical, allowing for greater security, the placing of the hall on the first floor had a symbolic

¹⁰⁹ Alexander & Binski, *Age of Chivalry*, 206, quoted in Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 76.

¹¹⁰ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 97.

function as the visitor had to rise up a level to reach the ceremonial heart of the building. Since halls were associated with the noble owner, the added height again emphasised the superior position of James as king. James may have been influenced by his experience at Windsor Castle in this instance, Edward III's Hall at Windsor being unusually located on the first floor as opposed to the ground, as well as the example of St Andrews as already mentioned.¹¹¹

While the service areas of the palace were obviously there due to simple necessity they could also add to the prestige of a building. The kitchen was a large department within the service branch of the household, many people being required to handle the baking and cooking, to look after the larder and pantry, the cellars and to take care of the washing up. The larger the kitchen area, by implication the larger the staff that filled it and again this reflected on the ability of the lord to finance the workforce and to provide provisions for them, much in the way the size of the building did itself as suggested above.¹¹² Rutherford suggests, quite convincingly, that a vast kitchen/service area was a visual expression of a lord's wealth and the hospitality of the lord. As it was essential for lords to show good hospitality in this period, in the form of food, drink and entertainment, a large kitchen and cellar would indicate their willingness to participate in this behaviour. A later description of the Earl of Huntly showing Mary of Guise around the cellars of his castle suggests that lords would display these areas of their residences to visitors, making it crucial that they reflect the image that the lord wished to present to the world. The service area of James's Linlithgow does appear to have been commensurate in standing with the rest of the palace. Comprising a larder, brewhouse,

¹¹¹ Robinson, *Windsor Castle*, 21.

¹¹² Stell, 'Architecture', 157.

lower kitchen, pantry and a court kitchen that serviced the great hall, the rooms reflect the royal status of the building's owner.¹¹³ Some effort also appears to have been made to ensure that the palace was properly provisioned. Although records are sparse, a payment for the creation of a park and fishponds at Linlithgow is recorded for the year 1425-6.¹¹⁴

The presence of a prison may at first seem an incongruous addition to a palace, which tends to have residential, elegant connotations as opposed to the functionality of a castle. However, the exercise of justice was a vital function of a lord in any locality and this would have been intensified in James's case due to the fact that he was king and was responsible for law-keeping in the country as a whole. Bower certainly praised James's efforts in this area. His epitaph for James describes the king as 'a most weighty deviser of law' and states that 'the law was available to all while he was alive'.¹¹⁵ Parliamentary records support Bower's view, with James passing a statute in July 1427, for example, requiring judges to try cases within the law and to be impartial.¹¹⁶ James also instituted a Court of Session that is sometimes regarded by historians as the foundation of the College of Justice, to sit three times a year to hear cases that did not require to be heard by parliament, thus making the judicial process somewhat easier.¹¹⁷ These two examples show that James was indeed interested in the proper exercise of

¹¹³ D. Pringle, *Linlithgow Palace: A Historical Guide to the Royal Palace and Peel* (Historic Scotland, 1989, 1998), 2-3.

¹¹⁴ *ER*, iv, 415. The park would have provided an enclosure for controlled hunting, providing fresh meat for the Palace. The fishponds were almost certainly created to ensure a supply of fresh fish.

¹¹⁵ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 335.

¹¹⁶ *APS*, ii, 14.

¹¹⁷ The session has its roots in James I's reign and eventually became formalised in the reign of James V with the foundation of the College of Justice in 1532. Oram, 'Community of the Realm', 63. Nicholson states that James's actions comprised the origins of the Court of Session, *The Later Middle Ages*, 311. Grant also suggests that James's reforms eventually led to the Creation of the Court of Session, *Independence and Nationhood*, 150. This does perhaps represent a tendency to read history backwards, as it is by no means evident that James had such an outcome in mind or that such an outcome was inevitable.

justice within his kingdom. It is not surprising that this should be reflected in his new building programme, which was designed to emphasise his royal status. The elaborate entrance to the palace may also in part be explained by the need to advertise a willingness to exercise judicial authority. Rutherford states that the gates of castles were often the site of the barony court, leading to the gatehouse becoming a symbol of the lord's judicial authority.¹¹⁸ Although very different in design to a castle, it may be that this concept was carried over to the palace, leading to the necessity for an imposing entryway.

This interest in justice also supports the idea that James was seeking to centralise authority in his own person. For the eighteen years of the king's absence the country had been ruled by a noble governor and prior to that the kings Robert II and Robert III were not discernibly different to their nobles.¹¹⁹ Indeed, the greater families tended to be stronger than the monarch. Returning from such a long period in England where the monarch was indeed the central focus of political life, it is entirely unsurprising that James would have been eager to develop a similar style of monarchy in order to differentiate his personal reign from the powerless years of his captivity and make it clear to his subjects that he intended to be an active king. It has been suggested that those at the lower end in the power hierarchy often tried to alter the dominant material culture in an attempt to improve their position.¹²⁰ It would seem that James, aware of the tenuousness of his position, took advantage of his title and the resources that it allowed him to control, in order to begin to transform the material culture of

¹¹⁸ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 166.

¹¹⁹ Brown, *James I*, 17.

¹²⁰ J.C. Barrett, 'Fields of Discourse: Reconstructing a social archaeology' in *Critique of Anthropology*, 7, 5-16, referenced in Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 45.

Scotland's kings. James no doubt hoped to set himself apart from his nobles in a visible way. The very fact that from 1431 the residence at Linlithgow was specifically referred to as a palace indicates that James was seeking to do something new, something different to what had come before in the country of his birth.¹²¹ In England only one royal residence, Westminster, was referred to specifically as a Palace, other royal residences simply having the designation 'king's *domus*'.¹²² It is possible that James hoped to create a similar aura of exclusivity for his construction at Linlithgow, in mimicry of English practice. The instances related by Bower of James personally issuing judgements upon his courtiers, although possibly conventional and stage-managed, also reflect the idea of the king as a dispenser of justice. The arrest of Archibald, earl of Douglas, and Sir John Kennedy in 1431 and the possibly fictional incident in which James threatens to cut off the hand of a courtier who had struck another, are two such examples.¹²³

v: Other Building Projects

While it is tempting to dwell only on Linlithgow Palace, it is necessary to discuss the other buildings that were recipients of James's attention. Although this is difficult due to the fact that nothing substantial survives of these works and the records are less than forthcoming with information about the projects there are still things that can be inferred simply from the choice of works themselves. The building of a new house at Leith, for instance, has several possible motivations. It provided James with somewhere suitable for him to stay while visiting the port. Also, it was close enough to

¹²¹ *ER*, iv, 529.

¹²² Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 87.

¹²³ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 265, 321.

Edinburgh to provide a retreat from the pressures of government in that city without having to travel the distance to Linlithgow. James could of course use Holyrood, and one charter is issued from that monastery.¹²⁴ Holyrood was also the place where James's twin sons were born in 1430. However, as Leith was an important port, it is interesting to speculate that the presence of a royal residence there could be seen as symbolic of James's attempts to associate himself with the nation, with a permanent presence in an important economic venue, although this is simply conjecture. This particular project may also partially explain the later chronicle suggestion already noted that James often resided 'specialie amang his merchandise'.¹²⁵ The amount spent on Leith was not insignificant, and included £199 13s 11d for the year 1434-5.¹²⁶ It is, of course, much lower than the amounts spent by English monarchs, a suite of rooms at Conwy Castle in Wales cost £320 Sterling in 1283, but is a significant outlay for a Scottish monarch, particularly in the context of the financial difficulties James was facing by this point in his reign.¹²⁷ Most of the money raised from the contribution for his ransom had gone and parliament was obviously distrustful as evidenced by their insistence on retaining control of funds raised for a northern campaign. This is particularly striking as it is in these later years that large sums are expended on the new chamber at Edinburgh Castle. 1433-4 saw £735 13s 4d spent on walls, timber, a barge and a great chamber at Edinburgh, and it is likely that the bulk of this sum was directed to the Edinburgh project; £122 the following year was enough for a barge, which, if this sum is deducted from the 1434 figure would leave around £600 for the chamber at

¹²⁴ 18 July 1425. *RMS*, ii, no.23.

¹²⁵ Boece, ii, 394.

¹²⁶ *ER*, iv, 626.

¹²⁷ £330 sterling relates to a modern purchasing power of around £179, 695, while £199 Scots only comes to around £41, 486. <http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/>

Edinburgh.¹²⁸ This is only a possible deduction, but it is doubtful that much more would have been required for the barge, and even assuming that twice the possible sum was diverted, this would still leave around £500 for the chamber. This chamber is described in the exchequer accounts as a ‘magne camere’ which implies that it was to be a substantial private room, somewhere for the king to have greater privacy. Indeed, recent work on Edinburgh Castle has suggested that this chamber evolved into the Palace Block on the east side of Crown Square.¹²⁹ It also denotes, perhaps, that James was seeking to add comfortable living quarters to the castle, in contrast to the more militaristic connotations of the past such as those discussed above. The timing of the construction at Edinburgh also appears to be significant as it was 1435 that saw the visit of the French embassy to finalise the transfer of Margaret to France for her marriage to the Dauphin. The continued construction of a substantial building would have been an impressive sight and would have been a way for James to emphasise his position to these visitors, acting as an indication of wealth. Not only were they given the opportunity to see what James had already built by a stopover at Linlithgow but they could see that he was wealthy enough to continue grand building programmes. This may help to account for the fact that this embassy was not entertained for any significant time at Linlithgow but was instead conducted to Edinburgh for the talks.¹³⁰

As already noted, the other main recipient of funds was Stirling Castle. Again, it is difficult, if not impossible, to say specifically what James did here, other than on the

¹²⁸ *ER*, iv, 579, 625-7.

¹²⁹ Driscoll & Yeoman, *Excavations Within Edinburgh Castle*, 234.

¹³⁰ Balfour-Melville notes that the ambassadors were greeted by Bishop Crannoch of Brechin, who had himself often acted as an ambassador for the Scottish king. It is possible that the ambassadors may have stopped at Linlithgow to see Princess Margaret, as it may be that Linlithgow was utilised as a royal nursery. However, there is no firm evidence to support such a supposition for this period.

rare occasion when precise mention is made, for example, repairs to the stables in 1433-4.¹³¹ It is possible that the money was simply granted to pay to keep the castle in good repair. The castle had been out of royal hands for many years and may have required significant refurbishing. However, as suggested above, recent archaeological work suggests that a significant amount of work was undertaken there in the years before 1424. Furthermore, between 1406 and 1421, £168 12s 5d was spent on repairs to dwellings and the construction of two new chambers at Stirling Castle.¹³² It thus seems unlikely that the bulk of the regular allocation during James's reign was for repairs and increases the likelihood that most of the money was given over to at least one new room, perhaps more. There was certainly a complex of separate chambers for the king and his lords at Stirling, so perhaps some of the funds went to build or develop this. There is a reference in the *Exchequer Rolls* to litter (that is, straw or rushes) being sent to Stirling for the chambers of the king and lords there in the year 1433-4.¹³³ It is not clear precisely what form these chambers took, whether they were sleeping chambers or formal reception rooms, although the timing of this payment suggests that it may have been related to the parliament held at Stirling in March 1434.¹³⁴ The 'Lords' may also refer to those men appearing as witnesses in this period. There are only around seven witness lists for 1433-4, but among those named are William Crichton, John Forrester, William Foulis, Walter Ogilvy, Walter Stewart and John Winchester, all of sufficient status within James's household to merit special accommodations.¹³⁵ The fact that there

¹³¹ *ER*, iv, 565.

¹³² *Ibid.* 45-338 *passim*.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 593.

¹³⁴ *APS*, ii, 22.

¹³⁵ *HMC*, 11th Report; *HMC*, 7th Report; *Douglas Book*, iii; NAS GD1/1042/3; GD16/6/3; GD33/11/1; GD198/11.

is specific mention of these rooms would seem to suggest that an increasing desire for privacy was a feature of noble life in this period, and James may have been imitating English practice where royal business was increasingly conducted in the Privy Chamber and this rather than the hall was becoming the hub of government. Richard II, for example, built separate royal lodgings at Sheen in order to obtain greater privacy.¹³⁶ Henry V had a similar arrangement at Kenilworth, where he built a 'Plesaunce' in an isolated spot approached only via the lake that the residence was located beside.¹³⁷ While this is rather more elaborate than what is suggested for Stirling, it does highlight the growing trend towards more private accommodation. Separate chambers for the household and visitors are something that can be seen at Tantallon, the Lothian castle built in the 1370s by the first Earl of Douglas, indicating that the trend had reached Scotland by the time construction was begun at Linlithgow.¹³⁸ James would surely have been interested in having the most modern arrangement possible in order not to be viewed as backward or out of fashion. The provision of luxurious quarters for courtiers does appear to have been considered a prerequisite for lordly residences. Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchesse* describes the ideal lodgings as highly decorated, with glazed windows and a comfortable bed.¹³⁹ There is some evidence in the accounts that these items were found in James's residences. For instance, there is a payment of 12s in the account of 1431 for glass for the Queen's chamber at Perth, presumably referring to the royal residence in the friary there.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, a sperver and two sheets were

¹³⁶ Mathew, *The Court of Richard II*, 34.

¹³⁷ James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 138; Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 121.

¹³⁸ Fawcett, *The Architectural History of Scotland*, 17.

¹³⁹ Referenced in Mathew, *The Court of Richard II*, 35.

¹⁴⁰ *ER*, iv, 533.

purchased for the king's bed from Flanders.¹⁴¹ The issue of décor is one that shall be returned to below.

Reference in the *Exchequer Rolls* for 1434 to the chamber of the Duke of Rothesay at Edinburgh further indicates that Scotland was also leaning towards separate accommodations for the various members of the household, or at least for its most important members. Unfortunately there is little detail regarding this chamber, only a record of delivery of endive for the chamber.¹⁴² Interestingly, however, there does not really appear to be any such arrangement at Linlithgow outside of the royal apartments. Of course, it is difficult to discern given the extensive remodelling that the palace has undergone since James I's time, and it is possible that the rooms in the upper stories of the north-east and south-east towers were intended to provide at least some accommodation for high status guests. It is also possible that Linlithgow was taking the search for privacy to extreme measures, with lords expected to find lodgings in the town, with only a select few actually being accommodated in the palace itself. This does not necessarily have any negative implications for attendance at court, however, as Rita Costa Gomes has shown for the Portuguese court that nobles did not have to be in the same building in order to be considered 'at court'.¹⁴³ Certainly later Scottish nobles had residences within towns in the sixteenth century, such as the Earl of Argyll's lodgings in Stirling and Edinburgh, so the lack of accommodation for the nobility within the royal residence was perhaps not a hindrance to large court gatherings. Additionally, the design of Linlithgow may have been intended to expand to include accommodation for

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 682.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 603.

¹⁴³ R. C. Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal*, trans. A. Aiken (Cambridge, 2003), 340.

courtiers or, as already noted, have been designed to give the king and his family some private space where they could relax in the company of their closest associates. This would also probably have been the same at Perth, where James would reside in the royal apartments at the Blackfriars monastery and his nobles or other guests would seek accommodation elsewhere. Shirley relates that at the end of an evening occupied by reading, singing and playing chess and other games ‘euere man departid and went to rest’ leaving James alone with the queen and her ladies.¹⁴⁴

That James chose to spend money on these residences as opposed to others is also significant. Stirling and Edinburgh were traditional royal centres that had been out of royal hands for some time. Architectural display was a means of exhibiting ownership of a property or area. Thus, by investing money in these residences, James was proclaiming his ownership of them. As previously discussed, lords used building programmes to proclaim their arrival in a particular area, but these programmes did not need to consist of entirely new structures such as Linlithgow. The retention of older buildings on a site could also be a powerful symbol of continuity, perhaps more so than simply building on a traditional site, as was the case with the Haliburton family discussed above. James may well have been cognisant of this concept and so directed efforts to traditional centres. Also, it was important to regain these sites to emphasise his return to the political stage. Had these traditional royal castles remained in noble hands, it would have been a detriment to the king’s authority and this could not be borne by a king as insecure as James.

¹⁴⁴ J. Shirley, ‘The Dethe of the Kynge of Scottis’, 36-7.

The fact that James continued to divert money to building programmes even in the later years when money was less abundant deserves some consideration.¹⁴⁵ Rutherford has suggested that the material expressions of lordship were especially important when that lordship was threatened.¹⁴⁶ Since architecture was perhaps the most obvious material expression available, it would make sense for James to continue to build even when his rule was showing signs of unravelling. In addition to financial difficulties and the distrust of parliament, James had seen the failure of his Highland policy by the mid-1430s, compounded by the death of the Earl of Mar, his agent in the north. Also, uncertain foreign policy regarding England and France was not settled until Margaret was finally sent to France in 1436. However, the fact that James continued to fund his architectural schemes despite these issues was perhaps unpopular. T.B. James points to resentment over the increasing proportion of national revenue diverted to building work by Henry III as one of the underlying causes of the barons' war of 1258-65.¹⁴⁷ A similar theme may be perceived in James's reign. The Scottish king was not noted for being generous with patronage to his nobles and the knowledge that he was ploughing relatively large sums into building work may well have displeased this class to a large extent, providing further impetus to the assassins who would take his life. It is worth noting in this context that after James's death there appears to have been a moratorium on building work until the mid-1440s, at least as far as Edinburgh, Linlithgow and Stirling are concerned. For example, a payment for lead for the roof of the great chamber in Edinburgh was made in 1438, however the fact that a further payment was made for the roof in 1445 suggests that work remained incomplete during

¹⁴⁵ The pattern of expenditure has been noted above.

¹⁴⁶ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 175.

¹⁴⁷ James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 72.

the intervening period.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, following the account of the master of works of Linlithgow given in 1437, there is no further record of work undertaken there until 1446.¹⁴⁹ The political turmoil of James II's minority no doubt had much to do with this, but it may be the case that there was distaste amongst those in power for continuing James I's lavish spending in this area.

vi: Decoration

The manner in which James's residences were decorated is also of interest. Although some mention has already been made of this, it is beneficial to discuss décor in more detail here. Unfortunately, there is again limited information on this topic for the reign but by examining amounts recorded in the *Exchequer Rolls* and by looking at other royal decorating schemes it is possible to offer some speculation. As already mentioned, there is some evidence of glazed chambers at Perth. Glass was a rare commodity, so this would have had a strong symbolic function, showing that James was able to afford and obtain this item. In 1458, even the windows of the great hall at Edinburgh had to be repaired with canvas, emphasising the rarity and expense of glass.¹⁵⁰ Also, in contrast to the impression gained from existing ruins, the residences occupied by James would have been quite highly decorated. The £37 spent on paint for Linlithgow in 1433-4 would have provided a substantial amount of paints. In The Hague, £20 spent on paints included 7lbs of green, ½lb of purple and 2,100 pieces of gold leaf.¹⁵¹ Even allowing that the Scottish currency may not have stretched this far, it still allows for a good

¹⁴⁸ *ER*, v, 66, 180. Exchequer accounts are available for 1438, 1440, 1441, 1442, 1443 and 1444. They may not be a complete record of all royal/government expenditure for the period.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 5, 21, 224.

¹⁵⁰ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 119.

¹⁵¹ Vale, *The Princely Court*, 275.

supply of materials for Matthew, the king's painter. Some of this paint may have been used to decorate the statues and other carvings above the entrance to Linlithgow Palace described above, adding to the imposing nature of the façade. Rutherford states that later accounts of Masters of Works highlight that the exterior of buildings were often highly decorated in the medieval period, forming a striking contrast with the surrounding landscape. This, he suggests, would have been an important visual symbol.¹⁵² This is surely a valid point, as it would have made buildings highly visible and would have added to their imposing nature. An example of this is the lime-wash used by James IV (1488-1513) on his great hall at Stirling Castle, a feature of the medieval castle that has now been restored and allows the hall to be seen from several miles away.

Undoubtedly some of Mathew's paint was also used in the interior of the building, both in the private apartments and in the Great Hall. There are numerous examples of extravagant decorating schemes employed in English residences, not least of which was Henry III and Edward I's Painted Chamber at Westminster, described by T.B. James as one of the finest decorating schemes ever executed in England and the details of which are outlined by Paul Binski. Additionally, at Clarendon several chambers were elaborately painted, including the Antioch chamber and the King's chamber.¹⁵³ The themes of these schemes may offer some clue as to what James commissioned. At Westminster, Henry III had images of Edward the Confessor painted around the state bed, physically identifying the king with the royal saint while his son Edward I commissioned images from the Old Testament for the Painted Chamber.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle', 107.

¹⁵³ James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 75; James & Robinson, *Clarendon Palace*, *passim*; Binski, *the Painted Chamber at Westminster*, *passim*.

¹⁵⁴ Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, *passim*.

Religious imagery was also incorporated at Clarendon, where representations of Margaret the Virgin and the Four Evangelists were commissioned in the mid-thirteenth century.¹⁵⁵ As religious imagery seems to have been popular, it is possible that James had representations of particular saints painted in either his hall or private chambers, perhaps of the same saints who guarded the entrance, perhaps even of Scotland's own royal saint, Margaret. St Michael may also have been used, being a particularly appropriate choice for Linlithgow Palace, as Linlithgow parish church was dedicated to St Michael.

The theme of royal imagery may have been continued in another form, mimicking in paint Richard II's scheme for the Great Hall at Westminster of statues representing kings of England going back to Edward the Confessor. James could have sought to surround himself with the representations of such figures as Alexander II, Alexander III and Robert I, associating himself with kings of times past as a means of cementing the legitimacy and status of his kingship, although this is conjecture. However, James did seek to mimic earlier kings, such as when he arranged for his heart to be sent on pilgrimage after his death, probably following the example of Robert I.¹⁵⁶ James may even have chosen a series of paintings forming a life of one of these kings, mimicking Edward II's commissioning of such work representing his father Edward I in the Lesser Hall at Westminster, next door to the Painted Chamber.¹⁵⁷ James may also have chosen to have himself and Queen Joan depicted in the images in order to highlight their relationship and the political role he wished Joan to play in the kingdom. The royal

¹⁵⁵ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 73-5; James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 79.

¹⁵⁶ James's interest in Robert I is examined more closely in ch.7, section v.

¹⁵⁷ Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, 112.

arms may also have been used in the décor. For example, royal badges were used to decorate the windows in Henry IV's study at Eltham. As already mentioned, James used the royal arms at Linlithgow, indicating that he was interested in using such imagery. Additionally, the royal arms also formed the theme of a tapestry acquired by James from Flanders, further suggesting that this type of symbolism was favoured by the king.¹⁵⁸

In addition to permanent artwork, James's homes would have been furnished with a variety of movable goods that would have added to the ambience and there are records of purchases for such items as a worsted bed, pewter pots, brass candelabras, and seats for the queen.¹⁵⁹ Tapestries were also purchased for use in the king's homes. In 1434 tapestries were purchased for Linlithgow from Robert Levingstoun's allowance, though the amount is unknown, as is the design, although as with the painted images, royal or saintly images are both possibilities.¹⁶⁰ Additionally, the Turyne account records tapestry purchases in Flanders, with a payment of £7 Flemish to Giles for weaving a tapestry and the purchase of two tapestries woven with the royal arms, which are included in a list of goods worth over £200 Flemish.¹⁶¹ Tapestries were a common feature of medieval residences, adding colour to a room but having the advantage of being movable, so that they could be taken from one residence to another as the king required. In the first year of his reign Henry IV purchased rich embroidered cloths and tapestries for Westminster 'for the advantage and accommodation of the Lords and the

¹⁵⁸ James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 137. Chivalric motifs were a popular type of decorating scheme in England. A striking example of this is the Antioch Chamber at Clarendon, which contained scenes from the third Crusade, and similar subjects were found in chambers at Westminster and the Tower of London. However, as discussed in ch.7, James does not appear to have had a significant interest in this area, implying that such images would not have been widely utilised by him.

¹⁵⁹ *CDS*, iv, no.967; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 262, 270.

¹⁶⁰ *ER*, iv, 556.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 678, 680.

nobility' who were at Council.¹⁶² That tapestries could be and were moved from place to place is evidenced by an example from Henry V's reign. In July (1415 or 16) £20 was paid for the carriage of tents, Arras and other hangings to Calais for the king.¹⁶³ Kings were careful to present the correct image of magnificence even when living in less than royal accommodations. There is some limited evidence that James also moved items around the country according to where he was staying. In the exchequer account of 1426 there is a payment of 2s for the transport of silver cups and jewels from Stirling to Glasgow and in 1429, featherbeds were conveyed to Dunbar from Haddington and back for the day of truce to be held at Coldingham.¹⁶⁴ Such portable items would have provided James with a relatively simple way to advertise his status and in the case of any religious designs would have acted to enhance the devotional atmosphere at court and to indicate to his subjects what saints were favoured by the king. Thus, although it is difficult to form a precise picture from the nature and extent of the surviving evidence, it does appear as though James was making some effort to ensure that his surroundings were appropriate to his position, and could be used to emphasise his royal status.

vii: Gardens and Surroundings

The grounds of royal residences also received attention during James I's reign, with attempts to beautify the areas surrounding the residence itself. At Linlithgow, as has already been mentioned, a park and fishponds were constructed quite early in the project. Rutherford has suggested that parks and gardens had a powerful symbolic

¹⁶² F. Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer: Being a Collection of Payments Made out of his Majesty's Revenue from King Henry III to King Henry VI inclusive* (London, 1837), 274.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 347.

¹⁶⁴ *ER*, iv, 398, 477.

effect, as they acted to differentiate the lord's space from the surrounding area, emphasising the superior status of the lord and his control over the landscape.¹⁶⁵ Rutherford also suggests that the presence of trees in the garden would have added to this, as it emphasised the lord's control over timber, an important commodity. As an extension of this, it is possible to suggest that a fishpond had a similar effect. As well as being practical in that it ensured a supply of fresh fish for the residents of the palace, it also acted to highlight James's control of the food supply, again an important factor in a time when famines and starvation were relatively common. There was evidently such an arrangement at Stirling, as well as at Linlithgow, as a payment of 15s is made in 1433-4 for a net for the pond there and at Doune a fisher received a fee of 20s.¹⁶⁶ Rutherford's suggestions are perhaps a little excessive, and may owe more to theoretical ideas of kingship, representing ideal images rather than reality.¹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, James's efforts in these areas may represent his attempts to raise the level of his kingship, highlighting his *royal* status over the status of his nobles and also that he was attempting to place his kingship on a par with European rulers.

On a more basic level, parks and gardens provided recreational space, somewhere for the lord and his companions to enjoy their relaxation time. The park at Linlithgow may have been designed with this in mind, permitting James and his queen and a few companions to escape from the pressures of government business in Edinburgh or Stirling, without being too far away, by riding in the park perhaps. There is even some suggestion that James enjoyed gardening. Bower relates that James

¹⁶⁵ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 108, 289.

¹⁶⁶ *ER*, iv, 593.

¹⁶⁷ A similar idealised picture is evident in the Sienna Fresco, commissioned by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini.

sometimes applied himself to ‘herb-gardens and to the planting and grafting of fruit trees’.¹⁶⁸ Linlithgow may have been more suited to this than many other royal residences; being newly constructed it could take such issues into account from the start. Also, although an important burgh, Linlithgow would have provided a quieter, more rural location than, say, Edinburgh, giving the king more scope for developing this hobby. Additionally, James’s poetic work the *Kingis Quair* refers to gardens. The narrator of the poem relates that while alone in his chamber ‘despeired of all joye and remedye’, he would go to his window and look out over the ‘gardyn faire’ with its ‘herbere grene’ in the corner and enjoy the sights, smells and sounds that it provided.¹⁶⁹ It is also in the garden that the narrator first sets eyes on the beautiful woman who would lead to his freedom and whom he describes as ‘the fairest or the freschest young floure’.¹⁷⁰ This would suggest that gardens held pleasant memories for the Scottish king, prompting his interest in this area, although these are common literary images in the medieval period.¹⁷¹ While there is no documentary evidence to suggest the type of plants that were present in the Scottish royal parks and gardens, and archaeological evidence is not available, some suggestions can be made. Among the plant purchases of Edward I were pear trees, rose trees, lily bulbs, cherry trees, willows, sage and fennel.¹⁷² It is possible that some or all of these species were present in the grounds of Linlithgow Palace. It would surely have been a beautiful area. The apparently strong fascination of the king for gardening is interesting, as it is suggestive of a very private individual,

¹⁶⁸ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 309.

¹⁶⁹ *Kingis Quair*, st.30-35.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* st.40.

¹⁷¹ For example, Geoffrey Chaucer uses garden imagery in *The Parliament of Fouls*, as does John Lydgate in *The Complaint of the Black Knight*.

¹⁷² Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 118.

being something of a solitary pursuit. This almost reclusive image is something that can be perceived in other areas of James's court life, as there is little suggestion that the king actually staged regular, grand public occasions, although as the evidence regarding his tournament indicates, James was not averse to occasional events. Indeed, the design of Linlithgow Palace indicates that James may have intended to hold such occasions more regularly than was eventually the case. It is possible that this is symptomatic of the years James spent in captivity, the limited household he had during those years perhaps leaving him ill-prepared to contend with the bustle of a full royal court, although this is speculation. This may well have alienated his nobles, as they would have had little opportunity to participate in court life if James was more interested in domestic, solitary activities. The failure of the king to win the loyalty of his nobles is one factor in James's eventual fate, in addition to the political factors emphasised by Brown.

The grounds received attention at other residences as well. At Edinburgh in 1435, £8 was paid out for the completion of a herbarium at the Castle.¹⁷³ This may well have focused on herbs for use in the kitchen as opposed to a pleasure garden, although there is no reason why it could not have functioned in both capacities, as the garden is likely to have provided a quiet, private area. The herbs would also have provided a pleasant smell, which no doubt accounts for the construction of an herb garden beneath the king's chamber at Clarendon.¹⁷⁴ It also appears that there was a garden at Doune Castle, a gardener of that castle receiving a fee of 13s 4d for 1433-4.¹⁷⁵ This is perhaps surprising given Steane's contention for England that gardeners were only employed at

¹⁷³ *ER*, iv, 623.

¹⁷⁴ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 117-8.

¹⁷⁵ *ER*, iv, 593.

residences that were frequently occupied for long periods.¹⁷⁶ Although Doune Castle was for a time the residence of James's heir, it does not appear to have been a favoured lodging for the king himself. However, it may be that Doune provided a recreational retreat for the royal family, thus making the presence of a well-kept garden a desirable feature. The fact that even the rather remote residence of Dundonald received money to repair its associated park perhaps indicates the importance of this feature of the royal residences. James does not seem to have been a frequent visitor to this castle, yet it was still considered important to keep the park in good condition.¹⁷⁷ Of course, the park was important as a hunting ground and this was a popular activity amongst the nobility in this period. It would have been important for James to keep his own hunting grounds in a state of readiness to avoid accusations of neglect.¹⁷⁸

viii: The Perth Charterhouse and Religious Residences

In addition to the residential works undertaken by James, there was another significant project that should be considered, namely the foundation of the Carthusian monastery at Perth. James spent a total of around £550 on this endeavour.¹⁷⁹ Patronage of the Carthusian order was particularly fashionable in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, with many powerful families founding Charterhouses. Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, for instance, founded a Charterhouse at Dijon for twenty-four,

¹⁷⁶ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 121.

¹⁷⁷ *ER*, iv, 401.

¹⁷⁸ James's interest in hunting is discussed in more detail in ch.6. For hunting in the medieval period generally, see J. M. Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves in Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1979).

¹⁷⁹ *ER*, iv, *passim*. The precise amount in £Scots is not known as several sums allocated to this project are recorded in nobles, as they came from the ransom contribution and so have had to be converted into £Scots using John M. Gilbert 'The Usual Money of Scotland and Exchange Rates Against Foreign Coin' and exchange rates were not stable throughout the reign. The figure of 1 noble = 13s 4d Scots has been chosen for the conversion as this was the rate c.1430, by which time the bulk of the contribution had been collected and construction had begun on the monastery.

as opposed to the usual twelve, Carthusian monks.¹⁸⁰ Of greater interest, perhaps, is the fact that two figures with the chance to have great influence on James were also patrons of this Order, namely Henry V and Joan Beaufort, though in the later case it could more accurately be said that her family were patrons. On 1 April 1415, the foundation charter for a Charterhouse to be founded near the royal residence of Sheen was sealed.¹⁸¹ The choice of location was symbolically significant but this point shall be discussed below. On a more prosaic note, the location linked the Carthusians to the Beaufort family, this establishment falling within the diocese of Cardinal Beaufort. Furthermore, the house of Mountgrace in Yorkshire, which oversaw the foundation of James's Charterhouse at Perth, was itself established in 1398 by Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey and later favoured by Thomas, duke of Exeter, maternal and paternal uncles of Joan Beaufort.¹⁸² It is quite possible that Joan herself strongly influenced James's decision to found a Carthusian monastery as opposed to one of another Order. The Carthusians are also one of the strictest Orders within the Catholic faith, which is a possible reason for their popularity. Vale has suggested that the display of wealth and its denial (at Lent for instance) formed the qualifications for virtuous and pious rulership.¹⁸³ Vale posits that this is why confessors and chaplains of medieval rulers were often drawn from the Cistercian and Dominican Orders, but the same could possibly apply to the interest in the Carthusian Order. If one was going to go to the expense of founding a monastery, why not gain all the symbolic value possible and go for the most austere available?

¹⁸⁰ R. Vaughan, *Philip the Bold: the Formation of the Burgundian State* (London, 1962, 1979), 202.

¹⁸¹ Allmand, *Henry V*, 273.

¹⁸² Downie, 'Sche is Bot a Womman', 173.

¹⁸³ Vale, *The Princely Court*, 169.

By publicly associating himself with a religious foundation, a lord also symbolically associated himself with God. Rutherford has suggested this in his examination of castles, arguing that the combination of a castle and church was symbolic of the lord's authority over all aspects of life in the barony, spiritual as well as secular.¹⁸⁴ T.B. James also advocates this idea, pointing to links between royal residences and monasteries, such as the royal palace and abbey of St Denis, the residence and abbey at Dunfermline and the palace and abbey of Holyrood.¹⁸⁵ This appears to have been typical throughout medieval Europe, Gomes noting a similar desire to be near monasteries among the rulers of Portugal.¹⁸⁶ James may have taken this association to an extreme level, as he often chose to reside within a religious foundation, even when an alternative was available, for example, he preferred Holyrood to the castle when in Edinburgh.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, his twin sons were born in the former, and his predilection for the Blackfriars' house in Perth is well known, James choosing to spend significant amounts of time there and it was there, of course, that he died. The association of Linlithgow Palace with the parish church there would have acted in a similar vein, reinforcing the link between the king and God. An abortive attempt to found a college of canons within the parish church must also be viewed in this light.¹⁸⁸ Yet there does seem to be something of a contradiction between the building of a grand courtly building such as Linlithgow Palace and a distinct preference on the part of James for more domestic residences such as the Blackfriars in Perth and Holyrood. Furthermore, in the case of Dunfermline, James does not appear to have had much

¹⁸⁴ Rutherford, 'A Social Interpretation of the Castle in Scotland', 109.

¹⁸⁵ James, *The Palaces of Medieval England*, 20.

¹⁸⁶ Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society*, 325-6.

¹⁸⁷ Brown, *James I*, 114.

¹⁸⁸ Stell, 'Architecture', 172

interest in this royal centre, despite the fact that he was born there, although it should be noted that Dunfermline had become less popular during the fourteenth century. There is virtually no record for building work carried out here, except £2 15s 4d for work at the monastery in 1428-9.¹⁸⁹ Still, Dunfermline did not fall completely out of favour as a royal home in James's reign, as there is a payment in the *Exchequer Rolls* for the expenses of the king's daughter being at Dunfermline in 1429-30.¹⁹⁰ Despite this, it appears that Dunfermline had not been a highly-favoured residence for some time. David II did spend some time at Dunfermline in the early years of his reign, celebrating his eighteenth birthday there as well as Christmas in 1342.¹⁹¹ However, Robert II issued only 11 of his 397 charters from there and Robert III 15 of 271 and neither king was buried in the abbey.¹⁹² Robert II did receive French and English ambassadors there in summer 1389 but there is little further indication that Dunfermline was special to either of these kings.¹⁹³ Dunfermline also appears to have fallen out of favour as a royal burial place by James's reign. The fact that James himself was born there and that he lodged his children there for a time suggests that Dunfermline was viewed more as a nursery than as a residence for the king, although as Boardman points out the evidence for the use of Dunfermline in this manner is limited.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ *ER*, iv, 482.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 508.

¹⁹¹ M. Penman, *David II, 1329-1371* (East Linton, 2004), 88, 98.

¹⁹² Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 93, 285.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.* 167-8.

¹⁹⁴ On Dunfermline as a royal burial ground see S. Boardman, 'Dunfermline as a Royal Mausoleum' in R. Fawcett (ed.), *Royal Dunfermline*, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (Edinburgh, 2005).

ix: Conclusions

There are clearly a number of factors that have to be considered when assessing the building work undertaken by James throughout his reign. The amount of money he spent, where he spent it and what he chose to build can all be seen to be important aspects of this area. From examining the extant exchequer accounts for the reign, it is clear that James spent significant amounts of money on his residences in the course of his reign and this highlights that James was determined to provide himself with lavish residences commensurate with his view of himself and his kingship. As noted above, this was expected of medieval kings. James also directed his money towards somewhat conventional locations, Stirling, Edinburgh and to a slightly lesser extent Linlithgow, all having royal pasts. However, *what* he built was perhaps less conventional, Linlithgow Palace being a departure from the usual style of lordly residences in Scotland at this time. Indeed, the Palace is full of symbolism designed to emphasise James's *royal* status. This may not have been popular with his noble subjects, given that they were long-adapted to functioning without the presence of the monarch and may have seen James's changes as a threat to their own status. The level of James's expenditure on architectural projects, sustained at fairly significant levels throughout the reign, may also have proved unpopular, particularly as the king was raising money through dubious forfeitures and taxations. The contrast between this and the distinct lack of patronage the king gave to his subjects would no doubt have been distasteful to his nobles, particularly as it would have appeared that the king had little intention of reducing his activities in this area. Evidently, James was attempting to replicate something of what he had seen while he was in England, attempting to emphasise that his position was

higher than that of his subjects and to convey the message that he intended to be the centre of power in his kingdom. What actually emerged from James's building projects and living arrangements were two contrasting images, each equally unattractive. From Linlithgow came the image of a formal, aloof monarch, concerned with elevating himself above his subjects. This would have been anathema to nobles used to a much less formal arrangement between themselves and their king. James's preference for living in monastic houses would have been no more welcome, as it suggested a monarch who much preferred to spend time with a limited entourage in private surroundings. James's goals and the manner in which he pursued them were foreign to his Scottish subjects, indicating that this was another area that helped to create the circumstances that led to his assassination.

Chapter 6 – Literature in Court and Household

i: Introduction

Given Walter Bower's assertion that James 'applied himself with eagerness sometimes to the art of literary composition and writing', an assessment of the literature of his court is essential.¹ Richard Kaeuper has noted that literature, if used carefully, can be an important historical source, supplementing information obtained from government records and chronicles.² As L.A. Montrose further states, literature 'creates the culture by which it is shaped', highlighting that not only did literature reflect the particular courtly ethos of the environment in which it was written but that it could also serve to influence that environment by promoting ideals for princes to adhere to.³ Thus, by looking at the ideals and themes occurring in the works available in Scotland, it is possible to gain some insight into the ideals and aspirations held by the monarch and contemporary society. Furthermore, literature was a means by which the medieval community could be educated and entertained. Conduct books, for instance, instructed the members of the court in proper etiquette and the provision of entertainment was a prerequisite for any princely court in this period.⁴ Literature played an important role in this, providing both group recreation and the opportunity for solitary reading. Literature could also act as a form of propaganda, both in terms of the narrative itself and the physical article of the book that contained it. Again, this was a crucial feature in the medieval period when princes relied on such measures for displays of power and to

¹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 309.

² R. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1999), 33.

³ L. A. Montrose, quoted in Aldo Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry and Courtesy from Ottonian Germany to the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford, 1991), 3.

⁴ D. Burnley, *Courtliness and Literature in Medieval England* (London and New York, 1998), 131.

propagate their values. A non-courtly instance of this can be seen in Middle Dutch urban literature of the period c.1350-c.1550. According to Herman Pleij, towns used literature to promote and legitimise their growing influence, using tales such as the Land of Cockaigne to advocate middle-class urban ethics of hard work and polite behaviour by ironic treatment of the opposite.⁵ One Scottish instance that may be considered in a similar vein is *The Buke of the Howlat*, composed for the Countess of Moray, in the early 1450s. This is a clear example of a propaganda work which sought to emphasise Douglas family eminence in the face of James II's opposition to that family.⁶

Clearly, an examination of the court of James I would not be complete without an exploration of the literature of this period. However, this is somewhat difficult to do for the early fifteenth century, as very few Scottish works survive. The principal work for the royal court of this period is perhaps James's own composition, *The Kingis Quair*. However, there is no body of work to point to that can be shown to be a product of James's court, and even *The Kingis Quair* may be considered to be a work of the English court as will be discussed below.⁷ In addition, there is no inventory for this period to suggest books that might have been in James's possession, as is the case for several European princes and for later Scottish monarchs. For example, an extensive list of books owned by Philip the Bold of Burgundy survives as does an inventory of those

⁵ H. Pleij, 'The Rise of Urban Literature in the Low Countries' in E. Kooper (ed.), *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context* (Cambridge, 1994). The tale survives in three versions in Middle Dutch.

⁶ Nicholson, *Later Middle Ages*, 367; Brown, *Black Douglasses*, *passim*.

⁷ D. Fox, 'Middle Scots Poets and Patrons' in V.J. Scattergood & J.W. Sherborne (eds.), *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1983). Other authors also accept that the *Quair* was composed pre-1424, when James was still resident in England. However, there are arguments supporting its composition post-1424 when James had returned to Scotland. See especially W.M. Mackenzie, *The Kingis Quair. Edited from the manuscript with introduction, notes and glossary* (London, 1939); McDiarmid, *The Kingis Quair*.

owned by Mary, Queen of Scots.⁸ Some suppositions regarding works available in Scotland may be possible, however, by examining internal evidence of later works and by looking at evidence contained within printed volumes from the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁹ It is further hoped that by examining royal collections in other realms, namely England, France, and Burgundy with some reference to the court of Holland, it will be possible to supplement the conclusions gained from the Scottish evidence.

Initially, it may be of some use to expand upon those statements made above regarding the value of a study of literature. As stated, several historians have noted that literature reveals information about contemporary attitudes, an area that is poorly illuminated by official records.¹⁰ A particular example cited by both Richard Kaeuper and Malcolm Vale is the need for personal prowess in battle.¹¹ Vale, for instance, argues that chivalric literature of the period was greatly concerned with the idea that knights and princes had to confirm their nobility through honourable acts in war and peace. It is certainly well-known that medieval princes were expected to be superior war leaders and it is interesting to note that James I's rule was at its peak during the period in which he had military success against Highland dissent, c.1429-30, and ended shortly after his disreputable flight from the siege of Roxburgh. Obviously literature was not

⁸ M.J. Hughes, 'The Library of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders, First Valois Duke and Duchess of Burgundy' in *Journal of Medieval History*, vol.4, no.2, June 1978, 145-187; J. Durkan, 'The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots', in M. Lynch (ed.), *Mary Stewart, Queen in Three Kingdoms* (Oxford, 1988).

⁹ A.S.G. Edwards, 'Contextualising Middle Scots Romance' in L.A.J.R. Houwen, A.A. MacDonald & S.L. Mapstone (eds.), *Palaces in the Wild: Essays on Vernacular Culture and Humanism in Late-Medieval and Renaissance Scotland* (Copenhagen, 2000), 61-74, discusses some of the later romance works circulating in Scotland and highlights some of the difficulties in using these and other works to make a determination regarding other pieces that may have been produced or available in Scotland.

¹⁰ In addition to the works by Kaeuper and Scaglione already mentioned, see also the collection of essays by Maurice Keen in *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-arms*.

¹¹ M. Vale, *War and Chivalry. Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the end of the Middle Ages* (London, 1981).

the only factor in promoting the idea of the king as a military leader as James would also have been aware of the achievements of his Scottish subjects in France in the years preceding his return to Scotland. These included the appointment of the Earl of Buchan as Constable of France following the Battle of Baugé (1419) and the award of the Duchy of Touraine to Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas (d.1424). The fifth Earl of Douglas also had military achievements in France when still Earl of Wigtown, fighting with Buchan at Baugé. However, literature provides an important source for understanding a period more fully and can be used to place events within the context of ideals held at the time. Additionally, it is a source that has largely been marginalised for medieval Scotland, certainly in terms of a study of the court culture of the period.

Literature was not just an influence on the more martial aspects of life in the medieval period. It could also affect the physical surroundings of the court. Muriel Hughes, for instance, states that most tapestries at the court of Philip the Bold of Burgundy (1363-1404) were reflections of books held in the ducal collection, for example, the *Roman de la Rose*, histories of King Arthur and the Life of St Anthony.¹² This helps to reflect the extent to which the ideas contained within the literature of the period permeated other aspects of the court. In addition, Geoffrey Chaucer's (c.1340-1400) *The Book of the Duchesse* describes a courtier's ideal lodgings as being highly decorated, with glazed windows and a comfortable bed.¹³ As noted in chapter five, the building of elaborate residences was a feature of the period, one that James participated in with the building of Linlithgow Palace, which contained separate chambers for the king and queen. It appears to be the case that literature reflected the ideals of medieval

¹² M. J. Hughes, 'The Library of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders, 145-187'.

¹³ Quoted in Mathew, *The Court of Richard II*, 35.

courtly society and it is hopefully the case that a closer examination of Scottish literature of this period, and literature available within Scotland, may help to reveal some of the ideals to which James may have been exposed.

ii: Literature and Education

A key aspect of literature in this period was its didactic function, and the education of princes in particular was a popular genre. The *chansons de geste* were concerned to establish that knights should be educated, being instructed in writing, sciences and Latin.¹⁴ This point was emphasised by the Dutch poet, Dirk of Delft who stated that ‘an uneducated king is like unto a crowned ass’, a sentiment that is also found in the introduction to the anonymous poem in the later fifteenth century Pluscarden chronicle.¹⁵ Vale also argues that nobles were being encouraged to improve their education in order to prevent being misguided by their advisors.¹⁶ The fifteenth-century writer Christine de Pizan (c.1364-c.1430) would have agreed with this point as she stated in her *Livre du Corps de Policie* that skill in speech was necessary for a successful ruler ‘for there is hardly such great hardness of heart that it may not be softened by fine speech’.¹⁷ James I certainly demonstrated that he was skilled in the art of eloquent speech with his poetic composition the *Kingis Quair*.¹⁸ Additionally, Bower’s assertion

¹⁴ See for instance, the discussion of the *chanson* by Gautier in *Chivalry*.

¹⁵ Quoted in F. P. Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture: Dutch Literature 1350-1450*, trans. by Arnold J. Pomerans (Berkley, Los Angeles & Oxford, 1992), 30; Lyall, ‘Politics and Poetry’.

¹⁶ Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 20.

¹⁷ Quoted in Burnley, *Courtliness and Literature*, 115.

¹⁸ While there is no concrete evidence to support James’s authorship of this work, literary scholars are generally agreed that it is his work. See for example, S. Mapstone ‘Kingship and the *Kingis Quair*’ in H. Cooper & S. Mapstone (eds.), *The Long Fifteenth Century. Essays for Douglas Gray* (Oxford, 1997), 51-70; Louise Olga Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament: Arts of Rule in Late Medieval Scotland*, (Madison & London, 1991); Lois A. Ebin, ‘Boethius, Chaucer and *The Kingis Quair*’ in *Philological*

that James composed in Latin during the Inverness parliament of 1428 would seem to indicate that he conformed to the literary ideal of an educated prince.¹⁹ This would have been of important propaganda value for a king keen to establish himself on the international scene, particularly given the reputation of some European princes. Christine Pizan wrote of Charles V of France's skill that

He had a good pace, a good, manly tone, and indeed, in addition,
with his good speech so ordered and with such a good style, lacking
any prolixity of words, that I do not think that any rhetorician
whatsoever in the French language would know how to improve
it in any way.²⁰

James does appear to have been educated in the manner of other medieval princes. According to Bower, James was skilled in physical arts such as wrestling, archery, jousting and was a fast runner. However, these comments should be contrasted against those of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini who found James by 1435 to be 'robust of person, and oppressed by his excessive corpulence', hardly the image of an athletic prince, even if he was middle-aged by time of Piccolomini's visit.²¹ James could also apparently play several musical instruments, such as the fiddle, the organ, the flute and the drum 'attaining the highest degree of mastery'. Bower further asserts that James had

Quarterly, vol.53, (1974), 321-341; G. Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations, 1430-1550* (Cambridge, 1980).

¹⁹ While this conformity is suspicious, recent work by Katie Stevenson has highlighted that several of these 'ideals' as described by Bower are probably a fairly accurate representation of James's abilities. K. Stevenson, "Recreations to refresh the spirits of his followers": Walter Bower's revelations on cultural pursuits at James I of Scotland's court' in *Recherches Anglaises et Nord Americaines* (2007), vol.40, 197-214.

²⁰ Quoted in *ibid.* 103.

²¹ P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1978), 25.

a 'love of learning' and was 'gifted in moral philosophy'.²² Physical activity was recommended by medieval educational writers, as was training in music.²³ However, it is the king's musical abilities that Bower appears to emphasise most. This may have been a deliberate attempt on the part of the chronicler to draw parallels between James and Henry V, in an effort to establish that James was on a par with other European princes, thus promoting his status.²⁴ This is also an area where James may have been influenced by his father, as there are records of payments to minstrels performing at exchequer audits during Robert III's reign.²⁵ However, as the last such payment is recorded in 1400, it is difficult to determine how far this predisposed James to an interest in this field. It should always be borne in mind, however, that Bower was writing to educate James II in the qualities expected of a good king, and may not always represent the reality of James I's accomplishments.

Interestingly, neither Henry IV nor Henry V appears to have had any significant knowledge of Latin. Nicholas Orme suggests that there is no evidence to indicate that either of these kings had a good understanding of this language, nor did many of the nobility as a rule.²⁶ This could suggest that James was more highly educated in this area than his English counterparts. Furthermore, if this was the case, it would have served to distance James from some of his key noble subjects, as it would be unlikely that they

²² *Chron. Bower*, viii, 305, 313. In the medieval period, moral philosophy, or ethics as it is often referred to, was concerned with the human soul and the role of individual choice versus God's power in the role of decision making. B.B. Price, *Medieval Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, 1992), 176-7.

²³ N. Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: the Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy, 1066-1530* (London & New York, 1984), *passim*.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 166; Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, 367. Henry V was a keen harp-player. Music was also important at the courts of the Burgundian Dukes. Philip the Bold enjoyed court minstrels and Philip the Good followed this. See Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 197 and *idem*, *Philip the Good*, 160. Vaughan states that music was an essential part of court life and that most 15th century rulers and noblemen learned to play an instrument.

²⁵ *ER*, iii, *passim*.

²⁶ Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry*, 153.

would have had an advanced knowledge of Latin, although this is conjecture. Indeed, the only group likely to have a detailed understanding of this language would be the clergy. Thus, they would have been the only group to readily understand James's celebratory composition at Inverness in 1428. If this event actually took place, it would seem to be another example of the king's efforts to differentiate himself from even his great nobles as a way of emphasising his royal status.²⁷ However, it would also have presented James as distant and aloof, something that would not aid his efforts to enhance his prestige amongst his nobles. The use of Latin would have been particularly alienating at a Highland gathering where Gaelic would have been a more appropriate choice, or at the very least English. This gives some indication that James was more interested in amusing himself and displaying his own prowess than he was in creating a court with a wide-ranging appeal. The fact that Latin was still the language of law at this time may also be significant. Charters were still issued in Latin, including those of the Lord of the Isles who might be expected to use Gaelic, the native language of their territories. Additionally, despite an increase in the use of Scots, parliamentary records were still sometimes kept in Latin. James's use of Latin thus made a conspicuous connection between himself and the law, emphasising that the crown was successfully exercising its powers in this area. However, it should be noted that the vernacular was more frequently used by James, for instance in composing the *Kingis Quair* and also in the letters he wrote to his subjects while in captivity.²⁸

²⁷ It is possible that this episode is apocryphal rather than a description of actual events and is an effort by Bower to promote the Scottish king and to emphasise ideal qualities to James II. However, Sally Mapstone suggests that it is quite credible that the thought of imprisoning some of his subjects should remind James sufficiently of his own captivity to produce this 'business-like epigram'. See Mapstone, 'Kingship and the *Kingis Quair*', 67.

²⁸ *Red Book of Menteith*, vol.1, 284-287. It may be that in the case of the letters to his nobles, James chose the vernacular as the recipients may not have known Latin.

It should also be noted that there is little in the English sources to substantiate the argument that James received an appropriate education during his time in English captivity. Matthew McDiarmid is thus sceptical of Bower's lofty claims regarding James's accomplishments.²⁹ Certainly, the lack of evidence does mean that Bower's statements must be treated with some care. However, it is unlikely that James, as a king (albeit a captive one) did not receive some level of education while in English captivity, even if it was only through observance of other members of the court during those periods in which he travelled with the royal household. Additionally, as he had reached the age of twelve by the time of his captivity in 1406, it is almost inconceivable that James had not received some form of education appropriate to his status during his years in Scotland, particularly after he became heir to the throne following the death of the Duke of Rothesay in 1402. While the Scottish sources are almost equally silent on the topic of James's education, it is not impossible that he benefited from his time in the household of Henry Wardlaw, bishop of St Andrews, in whose custody the young prince was for a time from 1404.³⁰ Also, later Scottish monarchs appear to have had appropriate educations. James V, for example, though by no means a highly educated prince, had a tutor in the person of Gavin Dunbar until James was at least thirteen, and may well have received training in music, dancing and games, as well as enjoying more martial pastimes such as riding and archery.³¹ There is thus little reason to assume that James I was not well educated, at least as much as any other member of his social group.

²⁹ M. McDiarmid (ed.), *The Kingis Quair of James Stewart* (London, 1973), 42-3.

³⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 61.

³¹ A. Thomas, *Princelie Majestie: the Court of James V of Scotland, 1528-1542* (Edinburgh, 2005), ch.4.

iii: James I, *The Bruce* and Royal Prestige

The image of James as a poet, as suggested by Bower and by James's composition of the *Kingis Quair*, had a political value in that it placed him in the paternal role of storyteller. This is similar to John Barbour's account of Robert Bruce, written in the 1370s, relating the story of Hannibal and Rome in order to illustrate how mighty kings could be overthrown by a smaller force.³² Whether or not this was an intentional imitation by James would probably be impossible to say. However, James was no doubt familiar with Barbour's work, as the *Exchequer Rolls* for his reign continue to mention an annuity paid to the Dean and Chapter of Aberdeen for Barbour's anniversary, which from 1428 onwards make reference to him as 'qui compilavit librum de gestis illustrissimi principis quondam domini regis Roberti Bruys'.³³ It is perhaps reading too much into bureaucratic terminology to note that while the annuity first appears in 1396, allusions to the *Bruce* only appear from 1428, but it may be that James was actively seeking to highlight this work and associate himself with it. Clearly, this suggests that James would have had some knowledge of this poem and would not have been ignorant of the value of equating himself, even in a small way, with Scotland's heroic king, an issue that also influenced James's devotional behaviour as will be discussed in chapter seven. Barbour's description of Robert Bruce also provided James with a domestic example of ideal kingship, which may have put increased pressure on the latter to live up to this image.³⁴ In this work, Bruce is represented as a skilled and

³² W.F.H. Nicolaisen, 'Stories and Storytelling in Barbour's *Brus*' in J.D. McClure & R.G. Spiller (eds.), *Bryght Lanternis: Essays on the Language and Literature of Medieval and Renaissance Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1989), 63.

³³ *ER*, iv, 397, 423, 457, 490, 520, 550, 586, 636.

³⁴ L.A. Ebin, 'John Barbour's *Bruce*: Poetry, History and Propaganda', in *Studies in Scottish Literature* vol.IX, no.4, April 1972, 218-242.

brave military leader. Bruce is depicted showing intense courage in combat such as in the description of him single handedly fighting several hundred Gallovidians who were attempting to attack him and his small band of men (VI, ll.1-372).³⁵ Further courage is shown by Bruce in the famous scene in which he engages in single combat with Henry de Bohun just prior to commencement of battle at Bannockburn (XII, 25-72), where the Scottish king dispatches his opponent with a single blow. This would certainly seem to be in keeping with interests of European chivalric literature outlined above. Bower does not relate similar details regarding Bruce's exploits. However, this is because, Bower states, Barbour has already 'made the case adequately...about his [Bruce's] several deeds with eloquence and brilliance, and with elegance too', further suggesting a general familiarity with Barbour's work in the fifteenth century.³⁶

It is also worth noting that *The Bruce* would have provided James I with another model in the character of James Douglas, who is presented as an ideal knight.³⁷ The fact that one of the characteristics of this ideal was loyalty to the monarch may have encouraged James I to promote this literary work. Having been unable to perform the functions of a king for the duration of his captivity, James was anxious to raise his own prestige and assert his royal authority and would have hoped that his subjects would follow this model. However, some noble families were accustomed to being the political and cultural focus within Scotland and would perhaps have been unwilling to relinquish this position and the authority which accrued from it. The Douglas family in particular remained a rival for the king's prestige in this regard well into the fifteenth

³⁵ J. Barbour, *The Bruce*, A.A.M. Duncan (ed.) (Edinburgh, 1997). All references are to this edition.

³⁶ *Chron. Bower*, vi, 319. It should perhaps also be noted that the chronicler Wyntoun simply skips the years 1306-29 altogether.

³⁷ Barbour's presentation of Douglas is discussed in McKim, 'James Douglas and Barbour's Ideal of Knighthood'.

century until their destruction by James II in 1455.³⁸ Of the third earl (d.1400), Bower writes that he ‘surpassed almost all other Scots of his time in worldly wisdom, resolution and daring’ and of the fourth earl (d.1424) that he was a ‘most renowned...fighting man’.³⁹ Unfortunately, James was unable to replicate either Robert I’s or the Douglas family’s military successes. James had only limited involvement in military campaigns in 1429 and 1436. In the former instance, at Lochaber against the Lord of the Isles, James was effectively denied battle as two Clans in the opposing force fled at the sight of the royal banner. At the siege of Roxburgh in 1436 the king left the field before the campaign had even fully begun. That James desired to surpass the Douglasses in military reputation perhaps helps to explain why the king chose to appoint a member of his own household, Robert Stewart (who was also James’s first cousin, once removed), as leader of the host at Roxburgh.⁴⁰ The Douglas family had long considered themselves to be guardians of the Scottish Border and the fifth earl, as a March Warden, may have expected to receive this position rather than the inexperienced Robert.⁴¹ This would seem to be an area in which James’s desire to attain the ideals of medieval kingship blinded him to the political realities of his kingdom. Denying Douglas a position he no doubt felt to be rightfully his would have given the earl no incentive to support the king’s campaign, limiting the chances of success. Additionally, it may have contributed to the atmosphere that allowed the king’s assassins to believe they could get away with murdering the king.

³⁸ The Douglas family and its reputation is discussed by M. Brown, ‘Rejoice to Hear of Douglas’: the House of Douglas and the Presentation of Magnate Power in late medieval Scotland’ in *SHR*, vol.lxxvi, 1997, 161-184.

³⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 35, 59.

⁴⁰ J. Shirley, *The Dethe of the Kyng of Scotis*, 32.

⁴¹ Brown, *James I*, 164.

It is possible that it was a desire to promote his own prestige that encouraged James's interest in literature. The idea that poets could advertise the status of an individual prince (and thus their court and country) has been touched upon briefly with the example of Christine de Pizan's contemporary writings on Charles V, and it is an issue developed in modern times by, for example, Otto Cartellieri's discussion of the court of the Burgundian dukes.⁴² It is clear that English nobles were equally cognisant of the value of literature to this end. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester (b.1390-d.1447), leader of the pro-war faction at the court of Henry VI, was careful to foster the ideal of princely magnificence through acts of literary patronage, favouring Italian scholars and humanist texts.⁴³ Henry VI's rival and successor, Edward IV, used books themselves, rather than the literary work, as a form of propaganda. The Yorkist king purchased numerous texts from Flanders, lavishly decorated with badges representing the York dynasty and, as C.M. Meale suggests, the pristine condition of these works indicates they were intended as visual symbols of the family, a means by which the king could display his wealth and power to his subjects and other visitors to the royal court and promote the Yorkist dynasty.⁴⁴ In France also, an awareness of this is evident in Charles V's efforts to develop the library there. Clearly, medieval rulers were conscious of the fact that significant prestige could accrue to them through association with poets and works of literature, making it necessary to determine how far James participated in this endeavour. Equally, it is important to establish how far literature at the Scottish court, particularly with reference to the *Quair*, was a reflection of James's personal ambitions

⁴² Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 18.

⁴³ C. M. Meale, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: Book Production and Social Status' in J. Griffiths & D. Pearsall, (eds.) *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475* (Cambridge, 1989), 204.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 205.

as opposed to those of his subjects, though this does not necessarily mean that the two were mutually exclusive.

The level of interest in vernacular works should be gauged also, given the propaganda value of writings in the native tongue, which could be recited as well as read, and the growing significance of vernacular works in Europe in this period. Werner Prevenier has pointed to a shift towards the vernacular in the Low Countries from the middle of the thirteenth century. He suggests that this was a conscious political decision by the leaders of the courts of Flanders, Brabant and Holland in order to persuade the bourgeois political elite, who were growing in importance in the Low Countries at this time, that the rulers were attuned to the needs and desires of this social group. He further suggests that the use of the vernacular worked to idealise the prince in the eyes of all sections of the population.⁴⁵ F.P. Van Oostrom also takes a similar view, arguing that a division between the language of the ruler and that of his subjects could cause discord, as with the dominance of French at the court of Holland under the Hainault line.⁴⁶ This is particularly relevant given that the *Quair* was composed in the vernacular as opposed to Latin, which James seems to have had knowledge of.⁴⁷ There is, however, a question over which vernacular is represented in the *Quair*. Denton Fox has questioned whether *The Kingis Quair* may be regarded as Scots or English.⁴⁸ However, as Gregory Kratzmann points out, a pervasive English influence in the language is attributable to the fact that James was a captive in England for eighteen years.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ W. Prevenier, 'Court and City Culture in the Low Countries from 1100 to 1530' in Kooper (ed.) *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*, 16-23.

⁴⁶ Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture*, 11.

⁴⁷ See pp.187-90 for James's knowledge and use of Latin.

⁴⁸ Fox, 'Middle Scots Poets and Patrons', 111.

⁴⁹ Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*, 36.

Regardless of how ‘English’ or ‘Scottish’ the language is in the *Quair*, the fact remains that it would have been easily accessible to many at both the English and Scottish courts, certainly more so than scholarly Latin. Scots nobles would be more than familiar with the English vernacular, due to the long-standing links between the two countries, both diplomatic and recreational. The reverse would also be true and thus James’s choice of a vernacular dialect simply reflects his desire to obtain as wide an audience as possible for his work. Additionally, it is possible that the choice of the vernacular was more in keeping with the theme of love that is central to the *Quair*.⁵⁰ It may also have made for more pleasurable entertainment for the king and his close companions and may suggest that James’s own composition was among those works being read at Perth shortly before the king’s assassination, although this is merely speculation.⁵¹ However, while the language may have been inclusive, the topic of James’s work may have had the opposite effect. As it was very personal to the king, the *Quair* may well have appeared to be an exclusive, private work, preventing the king’s subjects from participating in its ethos, as they would have been able to do with, for example, any chivalric works.

iv: Entertainment in the Court and Household

While much of the emphasis thus far has been on the symbolic or didactic value of literature there is a further important issue that should not be overlooked, namely, the role of literature as entertainment. As noted above, courts were required to provide entertainment for those in attendance on the prince and the reading of both prose and

⁵⁰ It should be noted that the vernacular could also be used for other, more complex issues, such as its use by Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton and Nicholas Love in their works of contemplative literature in the later 14th century. See J. Catto, ‘The Burden And Conscience Of Government in the Fifteenth Century’ in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 17 (2007), 83–99.

⁵¹ Shirley, *The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis*, 36.

poetry aloud was an important part of this. Glending Olson argues that this is an aspect of the study of medieval literature that has been largely ignored in favour of more theoretical aspects such as narrative structure and rhetorical influence.⁵² While these aspects are important, the use of literature to entertain must be considered, particularly in light of the fact that, as Olson shows, medieval commentators themselves were aware of the need to make narratives enjoyable. Olson cites, for example, Richard de Bury (1287-1345), who states in his *Philobiblon* (1345), that pleasure is necessary in literature as it leads people to the allegorical meanings. Granted, this relates pleasure to learning from instructional works, but it does indicate that the medieval world was interested in gaining entertainment from literary compositions. James's court certainly did not fail to participate in this convention as Shirley has James's courtiers, including the Earl of Atholl and his grandson Robert Stewart, occupied 'in reding rommaunse', among other activities, shortly before the king's assassination.⁵³ The incident of James composing in Latin to entertain his entourage at Inverness appears to adhere to this convention as well, although the limitations of such a suggestion have already been discussed.

Another aspect of courtly entertainment closely linked to literature was drama. Again, there is nothing to suggest that James actively commissioned dramatic works for his court, and no manuscript evidence for medieval plays survives in Scotland until David Lindsay's *Ane Satire of the Thrie Estaitis*, first produced in 1535 and performed at court in 1540 and now preserved in the Bannatyne Manuscript.⁵⁴ However, James did hire 'stageplayers' to come to his court from Flanders, indicating that he wished to

⁵² G. Olson, *Literature as Recreation in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London, 1982), 35.

⁵³ Shirley, *The Dethe of the Kyng of Scotis*, 36.

⁵⁴ R. J. Lyall, 'The Lost Literature of Medieval Scotland', in *Bryght Lanternis*, 34; R.J. Lyall (ed.), *Ane Satire of the Thrie Estaitis* (Edinburgh, 1989).

provide this distraction at court. £50 was given out on uncertain dates for hiring and clothing the Flemish players, and a further £5 18s was spent in 1434 for 'the king's stage players'.⁵⁵ Actors were a normal presence at the English court, suggesting that James may have developed an interest during his time in England. In a plot against Henry in the Christmas and New Year period of 1413/14 the potential attackers were planning to gain access to the court by posing as actors, indicating that the presence of such entertainers would not have aroused undue suspicion.⁵⁶ There is a possibility that James encountered stage players before leaving Scotland, as there is a record of a payment of 20s to mimes in 1399.⁵⁷ Still, as James would have only been around five years old and the mimes were present at the exchequer audit, it is unclear whether he would have gained much exposure to them at this time.

It may also be possible to suggest that evidence is lacking due to the fact that the Scottish court was less well developed as a literary centre than other courts during this period and thus there was less produced. Joachim Bumke has suggested that there were certain conditions necessary for a court to become a literary centre, namely the creation of a permanent residence and the formation of a chancery.⁵⁸ Poets were attracted to courts where they were likely to find the prince in residence, not something

⁵⁵ *ER*, iv, 603, 678. Precisely what is meant by these terms is difficult to ascertain due to problems in terminology as well as record keeping. Entertainers in this period ranged from those with little skill who performed in their localities to those who made their living by this means. What evidence there is suggests that most entertainers would have a fairly well-rounded repertoire. As James's players came from Flanders we may presume that they come from the more highly-skilled end of the spectrum and would no doubt have been able to perform scenes from some of the more famous literary works of the time as well as various religious plays or farces. For a fuller discussion of this area see 'Actors and Acting' and 'Travelling Players' in R.W. Vince (ed.), *A Companion to the Medieval Theatre* (New York & London, 1989).

⁵⁶ Allmand, *Henry V*, 10, 298.

⁵⁷ *ER*, iii, 484.

⁵⁸ Referenced in Van Oostrom, 'Middle-Dutch Literature at Court (with special reference to the court of Holland-Bavaria)' in *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*, 37.

that was possible when the king was still peripatetic.⁵⁹ Certainly Van Oostrom suggests that for Holland, it was only when the Bavarian counts came to power that the Dutch court developed along these lines, the Bavarians developing a settled residence in The Hague. The Scottish court did not have a permanent residence in this period, but James was certainly more likely to be found in a settled, and accessible, area of his kingdom, namely around Perth or Edinburgh, and did begin to build Linlithgow Palace, the purpose-built court venue.⁶⁰ As to the need for an established chancery, the fact that several poets, for example, Chaucer and Dirk Potter (d.1428), were part of the administration in England and Holland respectively, suggests that having a stable pool of clerks could be an advantage to literary progress. James did make attempts to develop the Scottish bureaucracy, as outlined in part one of this thesis; however, it was still embryonic at this time. Furthermore, as the bureaucrats were as mobile as the king, this may have left less time for the composing of literary works. This is perhaps a tenuous supposition but should be borne in mind when comparing James's literary endeavours with those of his European contemporaries. It is possibly significant that James's *Quair* was produced during his time in captivity, when he would have been without the distraction of having to rule his kingdom.

It is also worth noting Sally Mapstone's eminently logical suggestion that the Scottish monarchs of the fifteenth century had more pressing concerns than the commissioning of literary works. Prolonged absences or minorities meant that the Stewart kings were too preoccupied with reasserting royal authority to be overly concerned with literary patronage, preferring the acquisition of land as a means of

⁵⁹ Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture*, 8.

⁶⁰ The building of Linlithgow Palace is more fully discussed in ch.5.

displaying power.⁶¹ The use of visual images may have been preferred, and this may factor into James's choice of such a grandiose coat of arms to grace the gateway to Linlithgow Palace, a topic examined in chapter five. Additionally, the fact that James found the time and money to build his new palace, conduct building works at other locations and also establish a Carthusian monastery, does indicate that he was both interested in tangible expressions of royal authority and willing and able to invest resources in cultural areas. While the lack of surviving evidence does give merit to this argument, it is perhaps reasonable to suggest that the formal patronage of literary works and the interest in literature itself can be considered as separate issues. There is also the probability that works from this period have been lost, a topic examined by R.J. Lyall.⁶² There is certainly enough information to indicate that James was interested in the composition of literary works and it is perhaps something of a disservice to his interest to become too focused on a lack of surviving manuscripts, as there are many reasons why fragile texts may not survive through time. The fact that Bower was a part of James's administration may indicate some semblance of a literary atmosphere at the king's court, or that at least the talent to produce literary works was in evidence at court during James's reign. Also, poetic works were produced during the reigns of both James III and James IV, both of whom were still peripatetic, though James III less so than his son. For example, Robert Henryson, although not a court poet in the traditional sense, was active during the reign of James III and William Dunbar during the reign of James IV, in whose court he resided and about which he wrote on several occasions, for example, *Thir Ladyis Fair* and *As Yung Awrora with Cristall Haile*. Dunbar also

⁶¹ S. Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature in Fifteenth-century Scotland?' in *Studies in Scottish Literature*, vol.xxvi (1991), 410-422.

⁶² Lyall, 'Lost Literature', *passim*.

composed the magnificent *Quhen Merche Wes with Varian Windis Past* (better known as *The Thrissill and the Rois*) to commemorate the marriage of James to Margaret Tudor in 1503. Additionally, John Ireland dedicated *The Meroure of Wyssdome* to James IV.⁶³ Clearly literature could flourish without the monarch being permanently resident in one location so there needs to be a more detailed explanation of why it appears not to have done so during James I's reign.

Additionally, Sally Mapstone has argued that the role of the court was more usually to provide a venue for dispersing literary works rather than the commissioning of original pieces.⁶⁴ This was an area in which James does not appear to have excelled. As already stated, there is a suggestion that James sometimes used Latin in composing for the wider court, limiting the number of attendees who could appreciate it, although it should be borne in mind that James was also able to compose in the vernacular as evidenced by his *Kingis Quair*. Shirley's description of James's court does seem to imply, however, that literature was something reserved for private recreation, when James was alone with a select group of companions and not at a general gathering of his greater subjects. Literature would appear to be an area in which James failed to fulfil the generally held expectations of a medieval prince, preferring a more insular experience.

The oral tradition of medieval literature may also play a role in this area. It is perhaps going too far to suggest large-scale commissioning of oral works but the fact remains that just because numerous written works have not survived does not mean that works were not composed in the court for the amusement of James and his entourage. William Dunbar in *The Lament for the Makars* names several poets for whom no work

⁶³ Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature', 413.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 422.

and no biographical details survive, so it is not outwith the realms of possibility that there were at the court of James I, men who composed poetical works that, for numerous reasons, have not survived or were never written down in the first place.⁶⁵ Van Oostrom has noted with reference to the Low Countries that literary life could bypass the written word, as people were able to listen to reciters.⁶⁶ Furthermore, as Paul Zumthor has noted, 'every medieval 'literary' text...was designed to be communicated aloud to the individuals who consisted its audience'.⁶⁷ The importance of oral traditions in Scottish literature is highlighted, for example, in Barbour's use of phrases such as 'I heard tell' and the reoccurrence of the verb 'say' in the *Quair*.⁶⁸ Therefore, the fact that no evidence survives to point to the royal court as a significant patron of literature in this period or that points to the purchase of manuscripts by James does not negate the potential for there being a distinct literary atmosphere at court. The importance of oral communication leaves open the possibility that among James's entourage were persons able to recite known works from memory or skilled enough, like James himself, to compose shorter works for the amusement of court.

v: Court Herald

The presence of heralds is another aspect that may imply a more active literary atmosphere at James's court than other sources suggest. There is a record of three payments being made to 'Dragance Pursuivant' in the *Exchequer Rolls* for James's

⁶⁵ W. Dunbar, 'I that in Heill Wes in Gladnes (The Lament for the Makars)', in J. A. Tasioulas (ed.), *The Makars: the Poems of Henryson, Dunbar and Douglas* (Edinburgh, 1999), 476-480.

⁶⁶ Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture*, 31.

⁶⁷ P. Zumthor, 'The Text and the Voice' in *New Literary History*, 16, 1984-5, 67.

⁶⁸ A.A.M. Duncan (ed.), *Barbour's Bruce* (Edinburgh, 1997), 15; Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*, 32.

reign, totalling £30 13s 4d.⁶⁹ A key function of these officers was to act as messengers on behalf of the king. Indeed, Dragance Pursuivant was sent on diplomatic missions, English records noting that the pursuivant was in England in February 1434 having delivered letters from James to the English council and was thereafter sent to the Duke of Burgundy.⁷⁰ Another Scottish herald, referred to as ‘Snawdoun’ was in England in November 1433 in order to renew a recent truce.⁷¹ This name implies a connection with the legendary British king, Arthur. ‘Snawdoun’ has been argued to be a variant of ‘Sinadon’, a place associated with Arthur and his Round Table.⁷² This would have connected James to this heroic figure, who was utilised by many Scottish writers, including Barbour and Blind Hary, to emphasise the attributes of their own heroes, namely Robert the Bruce and William Wallace respectively.⁷³ However, it may also have had another use. From the mid-fourteenth century, ‘Snawdoun’ is identified as Stirling, an idea first recorded by the French chronicler Froissart.⁷⁴ This association may have aided James in his efforts to emphasise Stirling Castle as a royal residence, wiping away associations with the Duke of Albany, in whose possession Stirling had been for many years prior to the king’s return.⁷⁵ James also created a Marchmont herald to coincide with his Roxburgh campaign in 1436, allying royal prestige to the outcome

⁶⁹ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

⁷⁰ *CDS*, iv, nos.1072 & 1077.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* no.1067.

⁷² R.S. Loomis, ‘Scotland and the Arthurian Legend’ in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1955-56, 1-21.

⁷³ Nicola Royan explores the portrayal of Arthur in some fifteenth century works in ‘The Fine Art of Faint Praise in Older Scots Historiography’ in R. Purdie & N. Royan (eds.), *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend* (Cambridge, 2005), 43-54. Royan highlights how different authors were able to incorporate the Arthur legends into their writings without giving way to claims of English superiority over Scotland sometimes implied in Arthurian writings.

⁷⁴ Loomis, ‘Scotland and the Arthurian Legend’, 15-17.

⁷⁵ James’s efforts in this area are more fully discussed in ch.5.

of this campaign.⁷⁶ As these heraldic officers appear to have participated in the martial and diplomatic duties associated with heralds, it is possible that they also took part in the more literary aspects of this office. Gerard Nijsten argues that heralds, as announcers of ceremonies and messengers sometimes presented their news in poetic form, a short step, he argues, from the composition of chivalric and other poetry.⁷⁷ Nijsten offers Claes Heynensoon as an example of this. Heynensoon produced some of the earliest surviving literary works from the court of Guelders from the later fourteenth century and also held the position of Gelre Herald.⁷⁸ It is therefore possible that the heraldic officers at James's court were also involved in producing literature in some form, or perhaps purchasing such works while abroad on diplomatic assignments, although the lack of surviving evidence means that this must remain supposition. Furthermore, it has already been stated that James hired Flemish actors to perform at his court and this may also be taken as evidence for the oral tradition of literature at the Scottish court.

vi: European Connections

In order to further determine the significance of literature and books in Europe in the period in question, the courts of England, France, and Burgundy need to be examined in more detail. Aspects of the discussion will include topics such as the development of libraries, patronage and the type of works that appear to have been

⁷⁶ Brown, *James I*, 163. Marchmont was a name applied to Roxburgh Castle and the creation of a herald with this title clearly shows that James was allying this campaign to his own military prestige: he expected to win. James may have been hoping to succeed in retaking Roxburgh in contrast to the efforts of the fourth Earl of Douglas who set out to retake it in 1417 while the Duke of Albany besieged Berwick. According to Bower, both men 'returned home in disgrace' and James may have hoped that a success where Douglas and Albany had failed would help to increase his status. *Chron. Bower*, viii, 87.

⁷⁷ G. Nijsten, *In the Shadow of Burgundy: the Court of Guelders in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. by T. Guest (Cambridge, 2004), 177-8.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 176-7.

preferred. It is hoped that this will throw light on the surviving evidence for Scotland, an examination of which will follow below. Regarding royal libraries, there is considerable evidence for the development of these for England, France and Burgundy. For the latter two cases, formal inventories survive from the end of the fourteenth century onwards. Separate accounts were made of the Louvre library in 1373, 1380, 1411, 1413 and 1424, when John, duke of Bedford as regent of France, acquired the books.⁷⁹ As previously stated, Charles V of France, who was responsible for building the royal collection, was much concerned with enhancing his own and his country's prestige in opposition to the English. Carol Meale argues that he was successful in this, citing the eagerness of the Duke of Bedford to obtain the collection in 1424 and this would seem a logical supposition.⁸⁰ Charles's brothers, Jean, duc de Berri (1340-1416) and Philip the Bold of Burgundy (1342-1404), also possessed collections, though less extensive ones than that of the king. Clearly, there was a tradition of book acquisition in the French royal family. Muriel Hughes argues, however, that Philip the Bold's library was somewhat lacking in content, despite being larger in scale than most other aristocratic libraries of the period.⁸¹ Hughes suggests, for instance, that the library of Italian ruler Giangaleazzo Visconti (1351-1402) had a better collection of Classical and Italian works, while Charles V's collection was superior in French vernacular volumes. The interest in vernacular works may have been a propaganda issue with the French king, embroiled as he was in the war with England during the period. However, a list of books included in Philip's library does support Cartellieri's claim that the Burgundian

⁷⁹ J. Stratford, 'The Royal Library in England Before the Reign of Edward IV' in N. Rogers (ed.), *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1994), 188.

⁸⁰ Meale, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners', 204.

⁸¹ Hughes, 'The Library of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders', 166.

Dukes were bibliophiles with varied interests.⁸² Religious books were the most prominent in terms of numbers, not unexpected given the period and the fact that the ducal couple were devoutly religious. James I is known to have purchased some books with a religious theme, a record from October 1424 listing two books for the chapel and a bible among a catalogue of items being transported from England to Scotland for James's use.⁸³ The titles of the two books are not recorded but they may have been Psalters, books of hours or perhaps one was the life of one of the saints venerated by James, as discussed in chapter seven. Isabella, James's second daughter, is known to have possessed or had associated with her, four Books of Hours following her marriage to the Duke of Brittany in 1442. Also after her marriage, she commissioned a copy of the thirteenth-century text the *Somme le Roi*, which dealt with the seven sins and seven virtues.⁸⁴ Fragments of a version of this text also survive in Scots transcription, suggesting a Scottish as well as Continental interest in it.⁸⁵ It is possible that Isabella, as one of James's older children, may have been partially influenced by him in her literary interests.

It was not just religious works but also chivalric works that were popular at the Burgundian court, reflecting general European trends. Classical works and chronicles also feature in the inventory. To provide just a few examples, works included Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*; Gace de la Buigne's *Deduit de la chasse* offering instruction in hunting, the arts and virtue; *Lancelot de Lac et de Saint Greal*; *Le romant*

⁸² Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 164.

⁸³ CDS, iv, no.967. There is no detail about the content of the books other than this though it is possible that as they came from England they followed the standard Sarum liturgy that predominated there and which was also commonly used in Scotland in this period.

⁸⁴ P. Bawcutt & B. Henisch, 'Scots Abroad in the Fifteenth Century: the Princesses Margaret, Isabella and Eleanor' in E. Ewan & M. Meikle (eds.), *Women in Scotland, c.1100-c.1750* (East Linton, 1999), 49.

⁸⁵ MS Laing II.318, Edinburgh University Library; MS Rawlinson Q.b.4, Bodleian. Quoted in Lyall, 'Lost Literature', 35.

de la rose; *Les chroniques de Flandres*; Aristotle's *Etiques et politiques* and works by Christine de Pizan.⁸⁶ Clearly, Philip the Bold had a diverse library, and, whatever its supposed shortcomings, it would have provided a significant level of prestige and supplied the strong foundation upon which the later dukes built.

English monarchs also appear to have been enthusiastic about collecting books. There is some debate as to the dating of the foundation of the library there, but Jenny Stratford's assertion that it should be placed in the early fifteenth century during the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V appears to be a valid one. Janet Backhouse, by contrast, follows the traditional line that Edward IV was the founder, yet while the library under Henry IV and Henry V was not as developed as it would be under the later Yorkist king, it still existed in embryonic form.⁸⁷ Kate Harris cites the fact that servants are recorded as Keepers of Books during these reigns, Ralph Bradfelde under Henry IV and John Burnham under Henry V.⁸⁸ Furthermore, in his will, Henry V left books to his son '*pro libraria sua*', which further suggests that the establishment of a permanent, royal collection was intended.⁸⁹ Additionally, Stratford points to payments in 1401-2 for works at Eltham Palace, where a new study was built for Henry IV, containing 'a great desk made of two stages to keep the king's books in'.⁹⁰ Care and attention was being given to the creation of a permanent site for the king's books, which certainly suggests the creation of a library, even if it could not compare to the three-floored

⁸⁶ A fuller account is provided in Hughes's article, appendix II, 173-186.

⁸⁷ Stratford, 'The Royal Library in England before the Reign of Edward IV'; J. Stratford, 'The Royal Collections and the Royal Library to 1461' in L. Hellenga & J.B. Trapp (eds.), *The Book in Britain, vol.III, 1400-1557* (Cambridge, 1999); J. Backhouse, 'The Royal Library from Edward IV to Henry VII' in *The Book in Britain, 1400-1557*.

⁸⁸ K. Harris, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: The Evidence for Ownership and Role of Book Owners in Book Production and the Book Trade' in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475*, 179.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 193.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Stratford, 'The Royal Library in England Before the Reign of Edward IV', 191.

building at Vincennes that housed the French collection. While the location of Eltham may have limited the access that James had to the library, it does not necessarily mean that he was unaware of its existence. However, there is nothing to suggest that James followed a similar plan after his return to Scotland.

Additionally, the interest in books of both Henry IV and V suggests a strong literary atmosphere at the English court at this time, particularly as Henry V is cited as patron of Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady* and his *Siege of Troy*.⁹¹ This, allied with his later excursion to France, would have given James ample opportunity to become aware of the princely interest in book ownership in this period.⁹² There is further evidence to show a long tradition of interest in books among English monarchs. According to Juliet Vale, there was an extensive collection of books in the privy wardrobe in the Tower of London during the reign of Edward III, most of which, Stratford states, he inherited from his father, Edward II. Little is known of these books, but they included sixty-seven liturgical books, a bible and fifty-nine books and pieces of 'romances'.⁹³ Titles are not recorded but it would probably be possible to hypothesise some titles that were contained within this collection. The numerical breakdown of book by type does seem to follow the pattern set by the Burgundian library detailed above, and it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that similar works were present in the English collection. Almost certainly the more important chivalric and classical works would have been represented at least, for instance *Lancelot de Lac et de Saint Greal*, *Le romant de la rose*

⁹¹ A. I. Doyle, 'English Books in and out of Court from Edward III to Henry VII', in V. J. Scattergood & J. W. Sherborne (eds.), *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1983), 173.

⁹² James may of course have gained some experience of this prior to 1406, particularly with the circulation of *The Bruce* in Scotland. However, James's own composition does strongly suggest that English influences were more prevalent and it is the situation in England post-1406 with which James would have been most familiar.

⁹³ J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry: Chivalric Society and its Context, 1270-1350* (Woodbridge, 1982), 49-52; Stratford, 'The Royal Collections and the Royal Library to 1461', 257.

and works by Aristotle. Perhaps Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* was also present. A list of books in the possession of Queen Isabella on her death in 1352 detailed twenty-four religious works, including three missals of Sarum use and a work on St. Mary, as well as ten secular works including *Tristan and Isolde* and a work on the Trojan War.⁹⁴ However, it seems too much to call this collection a library, as most of the volumes present were dispersed by 1341, having been given as gifts or returned to the families from which they were confiscated during the latter years of Edward II's reign and thus the volumes cannot really be considered a permanent collection.⁹⁵

As regards the type of works that would have been available at the English court in the fifteenth century, there appears to have been a wide range of interests. In addition to the chivalric works that were no doubt of some interest and religious works, there were books on hunting, chronicles, works by Christine de Pizan, and, of course, the works of Chaucer, Lydgate, Gower and Hoccleve would have been known. A 1413 case brought in the King's Bench lists two bibles, two Psalters and a work by Gower as belonging to the king.⁹⁶ Christine de Pizan sent several works to Henry IV in an attempt to retain his favour and gain the release of her son who had been taken to England in 1398 by the Earl of Salisbury.⁹⁷ This does not imply that Henry was personally interested in the works but it does show that Pizan's writings were in circulation in England and also further highlights the political uses of literature in this period.

⁹⁴ Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry*, appendix 10.

⁹⁵ Stratford, 'The Royal Collections and the Royal Library to 1461', 259.

⁹⁶ Stratford, 'The Royal Library in England Before the Reign of Edward IV', 192.

⁹⁷ Downie, 'Sche is but a Womman', 37-8.

vii: Chivalry and Tournaments

Chivalry was an important issue for European nobles in the fifteenth century, both in real terms and in that it was a popular topic for literary works. Therefore, while it is not the present intention to suggest that there was a strong chivalric atmosphere in James's court, as there was in Burgundy, for instance, the likelihood of there being a significant level of interest is high. Generally, there was widespread interest in this theme during the period under examination and Scotland is unlikely to have been wholly divorced from this, despite Mapstone's warning that the scholar should not be too quick to assimilate Scotland into ideas of European 'courtly culture'.⁹⁸ From elsewhere it is possible to discern that James was interested in chivalrous activities. For instance, to celebrate both his coronation in 1424 and the birth of twin sons in 1430, James held ceremonies in which a number of nobles were knighted, although significantly fewer were involved in the later ceremony. Furthermore, while there is no suggestion that James was greatly interested in tournaments, there is a record in the accounts for 1434 of 'spars' being delivered to Perth 'for the king's tournament'.⁹⁹ It is possible that this was a continuation of an annual event from Robert III's time. Bower records that in 1397-8, an English knight came to Scotland seeking 'the king's [gold] challenge cup', suggesting, perhaps, that there was already a tradition of 'kings tournaments' and that James's tournament was an extension of this.¹⁰⁰ The only other suggestion of James's interest in this area is Bower's assertion that James was 'a knowledgeable jousting' and, as Katie Stevenson suggests, this last could just be an attempt by Bower to attribute a

⁹⁸ Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature', 414.

⁹⁹ *ER*, iv, 561.

¹⁰⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 11.

traditional skill to James rather than a statement of reality.¹⁰¹ It is possible that other expenditure on the tournament has gone unrecorded or has not been specifically listed in the accounts as being for this event. For example, £240 9s 11d was spent on wine in 1434, with £211 10s 4d spent in 1435. The highest amount spent on wine in any other year was the £21 10s expended in 1428, suggesting that the higher amounts in 1434-5 were perhaps for a particular event, though this is merely speculation.¹⁰²

This does seem to indicate a rather reduced interest in chivalry when compared to earlier and later Scottish monarchs. During the reign of David II, for example, there was clearly a strong royal interest in tournaments, with three payments recorded in 1342 and 1343 for jousting equipment and tournaments were organised for 1364 and 1365 following his return from English captivity.¹⁰³ The disparity may be in part a consequence of the different atmospheres at the English court during David and James's respective captivities. Edward III, king of England during David's time was very interested in chivalric life, as evidenced most strikingly by his foundation of the Order of the Garter.¹⁰⁴ By contrast, Henry V was largely disinterested in tournaments, preferring to utilise his knights' skills in real battle in France. For instance, following his marriage to Catherine de Valois, Henry declined a French proposal to conduct traditional celebratory jousts, preferring to have his men lay siege to Sens instead.¹⁰⁵ James was thus less exposed to this noble pastime during his time in England than was the case with David II. Henry's father, Henry IV also displayed little concerted interest in

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 305; K. Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland, 1424-1513* (Woodbridge, 2006), ch. 4.

¹⁰² *ER*, iv, *passim*. This dramatic increase in wine purchases is suggestive of an increasingly lavish court life and given Sylvius' comments regarding James's appearance it is tempting to speculate that James was perhaps overindulging on a regular basis.

¹⁰³ Edington, 'The Tournament in Medieval Scotland', 53.

¹⁰⁴ For a discussion of the formation of this order see D'A. J. D. Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (Woodbridge, 2000).

¹⁰⁵ R. Barber & J. Barker, *Tournaments* (Woodbridge, 1989), 37.

tournaments which would have compounded this. This latter example is perhaps surprising, given Henry IV's reputation as earl of Derby, when he took part in the Baltic Crusade at the end of the fourteenth century. Barber and Barker suggest that Henry's lack of interest in tournaments post-1399 may be connected to an assassination plot against the king and his sons during jousts at Windsor Castle.¹⁰⁶ James may have been aware of this plot, and it may have helped to influence his attitude towards tournaments, viewing them as a security risk. However, there is little evidence that James was concerned for his safety, Shirley's comments regarding the king's companions on the night of his murder highlighting this, as already discussed. What was perhaps more influential in James's reluctance to hold tournaments was his fear of being overshadowed by his nobles in this area. The Douglas family especially had a strong international chivalric reputation in this period, and the king would probably not have had the experience to compete with this.

Additionally, other than Bower's assertion discussed above, there appears to have been little in the way of tournament activity at the court of Robert III. Carol Edington identifies two tournaments held late in the reign of this monarch, in 1401 and 1404, although there is little detail regarding these events. Indeed, at only around ten years of age at the time of the latter event, it is perhaps unlikely that James would have been more than an observer. Additionally, Edington argues that it is unlikely that these tournaments were instigated by Robert himself. Another tournament from this period, held in 1398, is attributed to the efforts of Robert's queen, Annabella.¹⁰⁷ Edington suggests that this event was designed to coincide with the entry of David, duke of

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 11.

Rothsay onto the political stage, thus associating the duke with a revival of a chivalric court culture.¹⁰⁸ It is perhaps significant that the tournament James held came late in his reign. Several authors have highlighted the role played by the chivalric tournament in elevating the national and international prestige of a ruler and it is possible that James chose 1434 as by this time his position within his own country was beginning to weaken, with the failure of the Highland campaign and the evident distrust of parliament.¹⁰⁹ That 1434 also saw an increase in Anglo-Scottish hostility is no doubt also significant, as the tournament would have enabled the practicing of skills necessary for war and, James probably hoped, would act to unify a distrustful nobility behind royal policy. Additionally, by this time, James's court had been visited by several foreign ambassadors, including representatives from France and Burgundy and it may be that the lack of tournament activity had been negatively commented upon and James was seeking to improve his international standing in this area, although there is no direct evidence for this.

A further area that needs to be considered in this context is recent work by Katie Stevenson regarding James II's interest in tournaments and chivalric culture during his personal rule.¹¹⁰ Stevenson asserts that James II made a concerted attempt to win control over chivalric culture within Scotland as part of his efforts to establish royal authority and to make the Crown the focus of the kingdom both in politics and culture. That James II went to so much effort to supplant his nobles, particularly the Black

¹⁰⁸ Edington, 'The Tournament in Medieval Scotland', 54. Had James had a longer exposure to his older brother, it is possible he may have developed a stronger interest in tournaments.

¹⁰⁹ For example, see Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 96-103; Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 146; A.G. Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe*, 72.

¹¹⁰ K. Stevenson, 'Contesting Chivalry: James II and the Control of Chivalric Culture in the 1450s' in *Journal of Medieval History*, 33 (2007), 197-214.

Douglas family, seems to be a strong indication that James I had made little progress in this area. The fact that there is little concrete evidence for chivalric culture at the court of James I suggests that this was down to a lack of interest on James's part. That James failed to participate in such a popular area of medieval culture is surely significant in his failure to win the support of his noble subjects.

viii: Literary Works Current in the Scotland of James I

It is possible to make some inferences regarding works current in Scotland during this period by looking at works that were popular elsewhere in Europe. Hunting books, unsurprisingly, were of interest, hunting being a favourite past-time of the nobility in this period. Four treatises survive in Middle English, one of which can clearly be said to have come from the court as it was written between 1406 and 1413 by Edward, duke of York, who was Master of Game to his cousin Henry IV.¹¹¹ The book is an adapted translation of Gaston Phoebus, count of Foix's *Livre de Chasse* (c.1388). As well as highlighting the general aristocratic interest in hunting, this also indicates that works could be known and enjoyed outside of their country of origin. The interest in hunting texts is borne out by Henry V's purchase of twelve books for £12 8s in 1423.¹¹² Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence to suggest that James was particularly interested in hunting. However, as it was such a popular noble pastime it is perhaps unlikely that he did not engage in this activity at some point during his reign, particularly as he would surely have been exposed to it in England given his southern counterpart's interest in this area. Certainly James's immediate royal predecessors

¹¹¹ Burnley, *Courtliness and Literature in Medieval England*, 132.

¹¹² *Issues of the Exchequer*, 368.

participated in this activity. Both Robert II and Robert III appear to have been keen hunters.¹¹³ However, neither charter evidence nor the exchequer accounts are explicit on whether James personally took part in any hunts, although it is not impossible that he did so while visiting areas for another purpose. For example, J.M. Gilbert points out that hunting could have been undertaken during James's visit to Auchterhouse in August 1426.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, Gilbert points out that many of the lands gained by James through forfeiture throughout his reign included areas that would become hunting reserves later in the century.¹¹⁵ Clearly, it is possible that James did hunt during his reign. However, while the princely court generally was obviously a significant venue for the acquisition and commissioning of recreational works on topics such as hunting in this period, it is an area that James I does not appear to have contributed to. There are no specific references to the king participating in hunting in the accounts for his reign, although a few items may possibly be connected with this pastime and it is worth considering them here. For example, wagons were transported to Falkland in 1426 for the king's use and there are numerous references to the king's horses throughout the accounts. This latter point suggests that James may have had an interest in horses, suggesting that he possessed at least one of the essential items to participate in hunting activity, although horses had numerous other functions in this period.¹¹⁶ There is also a reference to keeping the king's horses at Dundonald in 1434.¹¹⁷ There is comparatively

¹¹³ J.M. Gilbert suggests that charter locations and evidence from the exchequer accounts frequently places Robert II in areas such as Glenfinglas and Kindrochit where he engaged in hunting pursuits. The evidence for Robert III is less extensive, but this king may have hunted while at locations such as Dundonald and Strathyre. Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves*, 36-7.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 39.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 39.

¹¹⁶ *ER*, iv, throughout. Falkland forest was certainly a hunting reserve later in the medieval period. It is discussed in Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves*, 39, 57, 215, 219-221.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* 596.

little detail about James's movements in this year, with no charter evidence between 12 March and 17 September, so it is not impossible that the king journeyed south during this period and hunted there as Gilbert suggests Robert III did in 1391.¹¹⁸ However, there are no references to the purchase or maintenance of other hunting equipment such as hawks or even arrows. It is possible that this expenditure was simply not recorded or that it was recorded in years for which accounts are no longer extant. Yet, it is difficult to support the idea that James had a strong interest in this area that has simply gone unrecorded. If hunting was a popular pastime at James's court it would surely appear more specifically and regularly in the accounts. This appears to be another area that James neglected and thus missed an opportunity to include his nobles in court life and gain their cooperation for his rule.

Other genres were also popular during this period. As previously stated, the only literary work that survives for the reign of James I is the monarch's own composition, *The Kingis Quair* and it is very different in nature to a more prosaic nature of a hunting treatise, dealing with more amorphous concepts of love and Fortune. However, the *Quair* can also be used to provide some indication of other works that would have been known in Scotland. As R.J. Lyall has shown, it is feasible to look to internal evidence from surviving works for information regarding what was known at the time.¹¹⁹ It is well known that the *Quair* contains many parallels to the works of Chaucer (c.1343-1400), for instance. Additionally, later works by poets such as Dunbar, writing in the early sixteenth century, also contain allusions to the work of Chaucer, suggesting that the English poet remained known in Scotland throughout the fifteenth

¹¹⁸ Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves*, 37.

¹¹⁹ Lyall, 'The Lost Literature of Medieval Scotland', 33-47.

century.¹²⁰ The *Quair* also refers to *The Consolation of Philosophy*, written by Boethius (c.480-524) during his time in captivity, having been imprisoned on suspicion of disloyal sympathies by the Ostrogothic King Theoderic who ruled in Italy in the early sixth century. James must have had access to this work either in England or Scotland. There were certainly several copies of this work available in Scotland in the early sixteenth century, indicating that it had some popularity.¹²¹ The themes of the *Quair* itself, which include fortune, freedom and courtly love, must be examined in relation to the court itself, not just as parallels to other literary offerings or as simple biographical details. The *Quair* perhaps gives insight into the style of court life preferred by James, an aspect examined briefly by Louise Olga Fradenburg, Gregory Kratzmann and Alessandra Petrina.¹²² As is evident throughout this thesis, James was attempting to institute a distinctly royal court that would serve to distinguish him from his great subjects and would help him to establish his authority after an extended absence. Mapstone's suggestion that this is one reason for a lack of literary patronage in the early fifteenth century royal court, that James was more focused on salvaging royal supremacy, should be borne in mind here.¹²³ However, it is evident, as discussed above, that an adroit use of literature, both in terms of the composition and the physical item of the book itself, could play an important role in promoting and advertising royal prestige. This is true both of newly commissioned works and through associations with pre-existing texts. It is possible that James I failed to fully appreciate this, which may help to explain the lack of evidence.

¹²⁰ Edwards, 'Contextualising Middle Scots Romance', 68.

¹²¹ J. Durkan & A. Ross, *Early Scottish Libraries* (Glasgow, 1961), 34, 76, 96, 135, 178.

¹²² Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament*; Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*; A. Petrina, *The Kingis Quair of James I of Scotland* (Padova, 1997).

¹²³ Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature in Fifteenth-century Scotland?', 414.

French influences should not be overlooked, albeit James had more contact with the English court milieu. Gregory Kratzmann states that a French influence is present in earlier Scots poetry, namely Barbour's *Bruce* and *The Buik of Alexander*, the latter being a translation into Scots of the French works *Li Fierre de Gadres* and *Les Voeux du Paon*, made c.1438.¹²⁴ These French works were independently translated by Gilbert Hay later in the fifteenth century, published as *The Buik of King Alexander the Conqueror*, indicating the general popularity of these French poems.¹²⁵ Bower's editors also argue that there is a distinctly French bias in the topics covered by this chronicler due to an extensive use of the French writer Vincent of Beauvais, suggesting a preference for French over English works.¹²⁶ Also, Gavin Douglas's (c.1476-1522) *The Palice of Honour* shows knowledge of various French allegorical poems stretching back to the thirteenth century, indicating that they remained known in Scotland throughout the medieval period and thus may possibly have been part of the literary culture of James's court.¹²⁷ Additionally, the long-standing diplomatic and military links with France, especially c.1415-24, make it essential that this is considered, as this would have provided an excellent method of circulation for popular literary works.

It may also be possible to gain insights from manuscripts of a later date or indeed from printed works. For example, a copy of Caxton's *The Booke of the Ordre of Chyvalry* was in Edinburgh in 1484, the year of its publication, suggesting the enduring

¹²⁴ R.L. Ritchie (ed.), *The Buik of Alexander*, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1925), xxvi.

¹²⁵ J. Cartwright (ed.), *The Buik of King Alexander the Conqueror*, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1986).

¹²⁶ *Chron. Bower*, ix. The sources used by Bower are identified and discussed in chapter 18 of this volume.

¹²⁷ Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*, 10. Certainly Douglas himself would have been familiar with such works, but the fact that he felt comfortable using these sources suggests he felt at least some of his audience would be familiar with them as well.

popularity of such works in the fifteenth century.¹²⁸ An examination of works later printed in Scotland or translated into Scots may also reveal similar works of enduring popularity. F.P. Van Oostrom, for example, states that several examples of courtly literature were translated into Middle Dutch.¹²⁹ While it is the case that the majority of Dutch nobles would not have needed a Dutch translation of the French works in order to enjoy them and so translations may not necessarily have been intended for a courtly audience, Van Oostrom argues for a tradition of interest in Middle Dutch literature at court, which blossomed under the Bavarian counts. A Scottish example, cited by Lyall, is *The Buik of Alexander*, datable by internal evidence to c.1438 but which survives only in a unique copy of Alexander Arbuthnot's edition, printed c.1580.¹³⁰ However, the earlier date of its composition allows for James I having had knowledge of this work.¹³¹ An interest in chivalric works in Scotland is also emphasised by the translations into the vernacular of Continental works by Gilbert Hay (c.1397- after 1465) in the mid-fifteenth century, for example, *The Buke of Knychthede*, which comes, via a fourteenth century French translation, from *Llibre de l'ordre de cavalleria* by a Catalan author, Ramon Llull, written 1274-1276.¹³² *The Buke of the Law of Armys*, also translated by Hay, is a translation of the French work *L'Arbe des Balailles*, written by Honoré Bonet in the late 1380s.¹³³ The translation into Scots verse of a part of the French prose work *Lancelot du*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 6.

¹²⁹ Van Oostrom, 'Middle Dutch Literature at Court', 31.

¹³⁰ R.J. Lyall, 'Books and Book Owners in Fifteenth century Scotland' in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475*, 241. This text is also discussed by Edwards in 'Contextualising Middle Scots Romance', 64, 66, 69.

¹³¹ The editor of the Scottish Text Society's edition of this work even suggested that the translator of the work may have been none other than John Barbour, though this opinion is not held by modern scholars.

¹³² J.A. Glenn, *The Prose Works of Sir Gilbert Hay*, iii, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1993).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, ii, (Edinburgh, 2005).

Lac also highlights the interest in French works.¹³⁴ This strongly suggests that the court of James I was at the very least familiar with the most popular chivalric tales of the medieval period, even if James did not own specific manuscript editions. At the very least, many of the king's subjects would have been familiar with these French works as many would have spent time in France as part of the Scottish force there c.1415-1424.

Lyall looks to the fifteenth-century inventories of books in the cathedral libraries of Glasgow and Aberdeen for clues to those works available in Scotland. It is likely that similar collections were present at other religious foundations and given the amount of time James spent at Blackfriars in Perth, this raises the possibility of his exposure to numerous works other than English literature.¹³⁵ Even if this were not the case, the fact that John Cameron, bishop of Glasgow, was one of James's most prominent advisors throughout the reign, suggests that the king could easily have had access to Glasgow's library, which unsurprisingly contained many religious items, including Lives of Saints, including a life of St Kentigern, missals for use at the various altars within the cathedral, as well as several bibles. The 1432 inventory lists 56 books associated with the Glasgow choir alone.¹³⁶ Further to this, Lyall argues that it may be taken for granted that most of the important Latin works of the Middle Ages were available in Scotland, citing the fact that John of Fordun, Wyntoun and the anonymous translator of the Scottish Saints' lives obviously had access to such works as Voraigne's

¹³⁴ The precise date of *Lancelot of the Laik* is a matter of some debate among scholars but Sally Mapstone cites an unpublished paper in which Lyall dates it to pre-1460 and possibly as early as the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Mapstone, 'Was There a Court Literature in Fifteenth-century Scotland?', 419.

¹³⁵ Lyall, 'Books and Book Owners in Fifteenth Century Scotland' 239.

¹³⁶ *Registrum Episcopatus Galsguensis*, ii, Bannatyne Club, (Edinburgh, 1843), 334-339; J. Dowden 'The Inventory of Ornaments, Jewels, Relicks, Vestments, Service-books etc., Belonging to the Cathedral Church of Glasgow in 1432', in *Proceedings of the Society and Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1899.

Legenda aurea and Bede among others.¹³⁷ Furthermore, Walter Bower references a wide range of classical sources, including Aristotle, Boethius, Cicero and Ovid, suggesting that he had access to at least one fairly well-stocked library.¹³⁸ As Abbot of Inchcolm, Bower would certainly have had access to any books held there but his ecclesiastical status would almost certainly have allowed access to other libraries at other religious houses, for example, St Andrews, Glasgow or Dunkeld, all of which would have been fairly readily accessible, particularly Dunkeld as Inchcolm lay within this diocese. The later-thirteenth century *Registrum Librorum Angliae* lists contents of some Scottish monastic libraries, for instance Kelso, Melrose, Holyrood and St Andrews, and indicates that despite a lack of survival, medieval Scottish monastic libraries were fairly well furnished with books.¹³⁹ The early fifteenth century *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiae*, which also contains entries relating to Scotland supports this view.¹⁴⁰

Of course, it is not possible to say that James certainly read all or even some of these authors, although it is well known that he was aware of Boethius's work, but the fact that these and other works were available in Scotland for the use of such writers as Bower, and that they felt comfortable referencing them in their own works, is suggestive of the fact that the general tenets of these classical creations were known in Scotland, at least well enough for the audience to understand the references. Works printed by Chepman and Myllar, the first Scottish printers, working in the early sixteenth century,

¹³⁷ Lyall, 'Books and Book Owners in Fifteenth Century Scotland', 239-40.

¹³⁸ *Chron. Bower*, ix.

¹³⁹ Savage, Ernest A., *Notes on the Early Monastic Libraries of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1928). The document gives a total of 454 works in the Scottish houses covered.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Among the works listed are numerous writings by St Augustine. Saints Ambrose, Anselm and Jermoe are also represented in the Scottish collections, as are the writings of Seneca and the Venerable Bede.

also offer some clue as to the types of works of interest in Scotland, and particularly during the reign of James IV, he being the king who granted Chepman and Myllar permission to print. Poems by Henryson and Dunbar appear, as do works by the English poet John Lydgate and the Arthurian romance *Golagros and Gawain*.¹⁴¹ Also available is a list of those books in the library of Mary Queen of Scots in the mid sixteenth century. However, it is of limited use for current purposes, as John Durkan suggests that the majority of texts possessed by her are not dated early enough to have belonged to the first James.¹⁴² However, works possessed by Mary did include translations of Livy, work by the French poet Alain Chartier, who actually visited Scotland as part of the 1428 French embassy, a Life of Alexander the Great, Boethius' *Consolation*, two volumes of *Lancelot de Laik*, and a portion of Froissart.¹⁴³ While the editions may be later than the reign of James I, it does indicate, along with those references above, a continuing interest in Scotland in Classical literature as well as books of romance. Interestingly, some of the latter were among those books possessed by James Douglas of Dalkeith towards the end of the fourteenth century and which he listed in his will along with grammar books, books of civil law and records of Scottish statutes.¹⁴⁴

x: The Kingis Quair and the Court of James I

No discussion of literature at the court of James I would be complete without an examination of the king's own composition, the *Kingis Quair*. This poem is a highly

¹⁴¹ A. A. MacDonald, 'Princely Culture in Scotland Under James III and James IV' in A.A. MacDonald, M. Gosman & A.J. Vanderjagt (eds.), *Princes and Princely Culture, 1450-1650*, vol.1 (Leiden, 2003), 153.

¹⁴² Durkan, 'The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots', 74.

¹⁴³ J. Sharman (ed.), *The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots* (London, 1889). Durkan suggests that this work needs corrections, so its entries should be treated with caution.

¹⁴⁴ 'Will of James Douglas of Dalkeith, knight, 19 December 1392' in *Bannatyne Miscellany*, ii (Edinburgh, 1836), 105-119, 107 & 114.

sophisticated work and there have been many studies conducted on it, each highlighting the skill of the poet and the complex nature of the composition as well as the range of sources utilised in it.¹⁴⁵ It is well known, for example, that James utilised Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and Chaucerian works such as *Troilus and Criseyde*. While Vincent Carretta and Clair F. James suggest that the *Quair* is intended to be an ironic poem and thus critical of the actions of the narrator of the work, most scholars agree that the *Quair* consciously re-works its sources in order to present a different viewpoint. Boethius, for example, argues that to curtail the effects of Fortune, man must cease to pursue worldly goods. Fuog and others argue that in contrast, the *Quair* reworks this so that it is not the pursuit of wealth that causes bad fortune, but this quest is instead seen as a positive thing, that the enjoyment of material goods is not something to be criticised. In light of James's spending habits, it is tempting to infer that James was seeking to ameliorate any criticism that may have been directed towards him. The conscious reworking of earlier works by James is also seen in a comparison between the *Quair* and Chaucer's *A Knight's Tale*, as shown by Lois Ebin. Ebin argues that whereas in *A Knight's Tale*, love is the source of discord between Palamon and Arcite, and that this leads to the destruction of their friendship, in the *Quair*, love for his lady is the event that leads to the narrator's release and to his becoming less subject to Fortune, that is, to

¹⁴⁵ See for instance, the notes to the Scottish Text Society edition, edited by Rev. Walter W. Skeat, (Edinburgh, 1884), Mathew McDiarmid's edition and W. Mackay Mackenzie's edition. See also, J. Boffey, 'Chaucerian Prisoners: the Context of *The Kingis Quair* in J. Boffey & J. Cowen (eds.), *Chaucer and Fifteenth-century Poetry* (London, 1991), 84-102; V. Carretta 'The Kingis Quair and The Consolation of Philosophy' in *Studies in Scottish Literature*, vol.16, 1981, 14-28; L. A. Ebin, 'Boethius, Chaucer and The Kingis Quair' in *Philological Quarterly*, vol.53, 1974, 321-341; K. E.C. Fuog, 'Placing Earth at the Centre of the Cosmos: *The Kingis Quair* as Boethian Revision' in *Studies in Scottish Literature*, vol.32, 2001, 140-149; Fradenburg, *City, Marriage Tournament*, ch.8; Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*, 24-55; A. MacColl, 'Beginning and Ending *The Kingis Quair*' in McClure & Spiller (eds.), *Bryght Lanternis*.

events beyond his control. This may partially explain James's desire to give Joan a stronger political role, as he viewed her as the means by which he escaped captivity. Sally Mapstone has recently suggested that James's poem should be viewed within the 'Advice to Princes' tradition of medieval poetry and when these deviations from the sources are considered in the context of James's reign, it becomes possible to read *The Kingis Quair* as a statement of James's personal desires for his kingship.¹⁴⁶

Many other 'guides to statecraft' were in circulation in the fifteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Some well-known examples of this genre include *De Regimine Principum* by Giles of Rome (c.1243-1316); the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*, which began as an Arabic text dating from c.941 before appearing in Latin translations from the twelfth century; the *Ludus Scaccorum*, a thirteenth century moralising text by the Dominican Jacobus de Cessolis, translated into Scots in the fifteenth century as *The Buke of the Chess*; and Thomas Hoccleve's (c.1367-1426) *Regiment of Princes*, addressed to the future Henry V.¹⁴⁸ *De Regimine* was translated into English in the early fifteenth century by John Trevisa (c.1342-1402), suggesting that there was an interest in this text, although its recent editors do not believe that the translation was widely circulated.¹⁴⁹ The *Secreta* was undoubtedly well-known and popular within Scotland in the fifteenth century, as it was translated by Gilbert Hay in 1456 to become his *Buke of the*

¹⁴⁶ S. Mapstone, 'Kingship and *The Kingis Quair*' in H. Cooper & S. Mapstone (eds.), *The Long Fifteenth Century. Essays for Douglas Gray* (Oxford, 1997), 51-70.

¹⁴⁷ P. Strohm, 'Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian Court' in D. Wallace (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 1999), 640-661, 644.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 644; Glenn, *The Prose Works of Sir Gilbert Hay*, iii; C. van Buuren (ed.), *The Buke of the Chess*, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1997).

¹⁴⁹ D. C. Fowler et al (eds.), *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa's Middle English Translation of the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus* (New York & London, 1997), ix-xi. The fact that the translation was not widely disseminated may suggest that there was little need for a translation as the work was so well known. The editors also suggest that Trevisa's death before full completion of the manuscript may have hindered circulation.

Governance of Princis.¹⁵⁰ Clearly this was a genre that James would have been quite familiar with and indeed, it is possible that he may have at least had access to, if not owned at least one of these texts or one of this genre.

As regards James's decision to alter Boethius in order to make the pursuit of objects a more positive issue, this may possibly be linked to the efforts the Scottish king would make throughout his reign to develop the royal court along English lines. As already noted, some commentators have suggested parallels between the *Quair* and the court. Kratzmann, for instance, argues that the *Quair* reflects James's desire to introduce English ideas into Scotland, citing the command of the Goddess Venus that the narrator of the poem should encourage the spread of 'the songis new, the fresch carolis and dance'.¹⁵¹ This is perhaps a tenuous piece of evidence, but when considered within the poem as a whole and in light of James's introduction of English-style household offices, his building projects and his extensive spending on luxury items in Flanders, it is not difficult to agree that the *Quair* was acting as a personal statement of how James intended to conduct his reign. Mapstone further suggests that the poem acts as a public relations treatise, as it presents the king's long captivity as a benefit rather than a detriment. She refers to the penultimate stanza where the experience of the narrator was 'Causit from hevyn quhare powar is commytt', and was thus part of God's plan.¹⁵² Certainly James would wish to put a positive spin on his long absence from his kingdom and to show himself as able to govern the country in the face of magnates long used to absentee or weak kingship. Having had experience of the English court, and no doubt having some knowledge of its French and Burgundian counterparts, James would

¹⁵⁰ Lyall, 'Politics and Poetry', 17.

¹⁵¹ Kratzmann, *Anglo-Scottish Literary Relations*, 34. The quote from *The Kingis Quair* is found in st.21.

¹⁵² *The Kingis Quair*, st.196, l.2.

have been well aware of the propaganda value of literature, making it the obvious medium for him to expound his new ideas. However, it should be noted that the *Quair* does not appear to refer directly to the court, suggesting that in this area James was not using his poetic work as a manifesto for change.

Nevertheless, the idea of *The Kingis Quair* as propaganda can perhaps be related to the king's wife, Joan Beaufort. Louise Fradenburg has suggested that the *Quair* celebrates the narrator's heaven-sanctioned love for Joan as the power that released him from prison and who inspired him to take hold of the wheel of Fortune.¹⁵³ Julia Boffey also points to the connection between the narrator's release and his love for his lady.¹⁵⁴ This obviously parallels to the biographical detail that James's release was accompanied by his marriage to Joan. Yet, it does not appear as though scholars have fully explored this relationship within the context of actual events. The explicit linking by the narrator of his release with his lady can perhaps be taken as a statement by James of the role he wished Queen Joan to take during the reign. The Scottish queen certainly had an important political role, albeit normally behind the scenes.¹⁵⁵ However, James made this more overt in the case of Joan, requiring oaths of fealty to be sworn to her in parliament in 1428 and again in 1435.¹⁵⁶ The parallel between the insinuation in the poem that it is the lady who brings the change in fortunes to the narrator and the political reality of the reign that followed makes it possible to view *The Kingis Quair* as a public proclamation of James's intentions for his queen, directed at the Scottish nobility. Internal evidence, as well as traditional practice, suggests that the poem would likely

¹⁵³ Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament*, 131.

¹⁵⁴ Boffey, 'Chaucerian Prisoners', 93. See also Ebin's argument, cited above.

¹⁵⁵ For a full discussion of the queenship of Joan Beaufort see F. Downie, *She is But a Woman: Queenship in Scotland, 1424-1463* (Edinburgh, 2006).

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 100.

have been read aloud, surely on several occasions such as the anniversary of James and Joan's marriage,¹⁵⁷ as the king sought to display his skills. This increases the likelihood that the poem was intended not only to entertain, but to educate the king's subjects as to what they could expect in the coming years. Perhaps James was aware of Richard de Burry's thoughts in this area.¹⁵⁸ The idea of the *Quair* as a work intended to portray the king's thoughts has particular resonance in light of the argument that the poem was actually composed *after* James's return to Scotland. Both W.M. Mackenzie and Mathew McDiarmid argue that the work was clearly composed after 1424.¹⁵⁹ This tends to make a stronger case for the idea that James was using his poetic work to promote his new ideas.

It is perhaps telling that just a short time after James's death Bower wrote extensively on the qualities to be considered when choosing a wife. Although ostensibly these pages are connected with David II's wife Margaret Logie, it is entirely possible that Bower had a more recent queen in mind, suggesting that James's reign may have influenced, to a limited degree, some of the literature that came after his death. That Bower was writing for a fifteenth century audience must always be borne in mind when assessing the chronicler's views on all aspects of Scottish history, particularly when he was writing on recent events. In describing Margaret Logie, Bower states that David chose her 'not so much for the excellence of her character as a woman as for the pleasure he took in her desirable appearance'.¹⁶⁰ If the *Quair* is to be believed, and taken as biographical, Joan Beaufort was certainly a beautiful woman, likened by James

¹⁵⁷ The exact date of James's marriage is unknown but it took place in February 1424.

¹⁵⁸ See above, pg.198.

¹⁵⁹ Mackenzie, *The Kingis Quair*; McDiarmid, *The Kingis Quair*. Others suggest a pre-1424 date for the composition of the *Quair*, and there are reasonably valid arguments for both positions.

¹⁶⁰ *Chron. Bower*, vii, 333.

to several different goddesses, having ‘goldin haire and riche atyre’, drawing a parallel between Joan and Bower’s later description of Margaret whom he sees as a poor choice for David.¹⁶¹ However, Bower also relates a vision given to a Scot before the Battle of Largs (1263) in which another queen, this time St Margaret (d.1093) appears ‘resplendent in full royal attire’ and the king may have hoped to promote this type of comparison with the saintly queen.¹⁶² This Margaret’s reputation for piety was celebrated in her own time, and is presented here as a royal saint, which helps to explain the lack of criticism directed towards her for her extravagant dress. While Bower was writing after James’s death, the cleric was part of the king’s administration, raising the possibility that James was aware of Bower’s views on these two Margarets, which may also have been generally held views regarding these women at this time.

Bower is somewhat scathing of other women who adorn themselves with jewels, including this in his list of the characteristics of a ‘bad woman’, whom he also likens to a serpent, this passage following his notation of David and Margaret’s marriage.¹⁶³ Interestingly, James pays significant attention to Joan’s mode of dress, including her jewellery, highlighting the king’s interest in material possessions, something that is also evident in the record of his expenditure throughout his reign, perhaps implying that Bower’s assessment of Margaret Logie is in fact a coded attack on Joan. The chronicler would have been reluctant to insult Joan openly given that he was writing in the 1440s, when Joan was the Queen Mother. This is unlikely to have been popular with the new young king. Among items purchased by James in Flanders were twenty-four Flemish ells of purple velvet for Joan and gold rings for her worth £7

¹⁶¹ *The Kingis Quair*, sts.40-51.

¹⁶² *Chron. Bower*, v, 337.

¹⁶³ *Chron. Bower*, vii, 341.

Flemish.¹⁶⁴ James also purchased a gold collar, embellished with gems and pearls, as well as one with a diamond and pearls. Individual pearls were also sent from Flanders, at least 280 small with fourteen larger ones. These items were sent in a shipment along with two tapestries, some blue velvet and a gold saltcellar, worth a total of £219 4s 3d Flemish.¹⁶⁵ The money for this came from the tax James raised to pay his ransom to England. The sight of James's English queen adorned in clothes and jewels purchased with taxation money would probably not have been popular with the Scottish nobles, particularly as there is little evidence suggesting that Joan worked for the good of the kingdom. Indeed, the efforts of James to involve his queen in politics during his reign, Joan's actions after James's death (discussed below) and what was probably a perception that Joan was promoting the English ideas that James was attempting to implement in Scotland meant that Joan would probably have been viewed with suspicion.

Bower is also critical of Margaret Logie's involvement in the political affairs of the kingdom. The abbot suggests that it was Margaret's influence that led to David's arrest of his heir in 1368. Bower further points to the strife caused within Scotland by Margaret's efforts to contest David's efforts to divorce her.¹⁶⁶ The idea that women should not involve themselves in politics appears to be continued in the *Auchinlek* chronicle. Referring to Joan Beaufort, the chronicler relates the desire of the political elites that 'scho suld nocht intromet with his [James II's] proffettis bot allanerlie with his

¹⁶⁴ Account of John Turyne, rendered September 1436, *ER*, iv, 672-685.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 680.

¹⁶⁶ *Chron. Bower*, vii, 359; General views on medieval queenship are discussed in Downie, *She is But a Woman*, ch.1.

person'.¹⁶⁷ Christine McGladdery suggests that this reflects the queen's political impotence by the early 1440s. Additionally, Joan's marriage in mid 1439 to James Stewart of Lorne is suggestive of her desire to resist both Livingston and Crichton family power and to protect her own interests, and this was viewed with suspicion by the political elite of the time.¹⁶⁸

As stated above, James was interested in developing a more magnificent court, along English lines, as can be seen from the purchase of such luxury items as the jewellery listed and from the building of Linlithgow Palace (chapter five), as well as the changes he made to the royal household (chapter two). It has been suggested that this led to an increase in eminence for Scotland on the Continent, the European marriages of several of James's children being cited as evidence of this. However, Fiona Downie has argued against this, suggesting instead that Scotland's status has been exaggerated and instead it was the ability of foreign powers to exploit Scotland that led to these advantageous marriages.¹⁶⁹ There is a certain logic to Downie's arguments and certainly the fact that James was eventually assassinated by his own subjects does suggest that, at least domestically, his actions were not popular. However, this may have been due to the fact that his innovations in court and household were more English in style and, though foreign and unpopular within Scotland, were more likely to win esteem abroad, helping James to secure international marriages for some of his children. There is some evidence during James's reign to suggest that he was not raising Scotland's status. The initial embassy that came to Scotland from France included the

¹⁶⁷ McGladdery, *James II*, 19.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* The general medieval aversion to queens remarrying is also discussed here.

¹⁶⁹ F. Downie, 'La voie quelle menace tenir': Annabella Stewart, Scotland, and the European Marriage Market, 1444-56', in *Scottish Historical Review*, vol.LXXVIII, no.206, October 1999, 170-191.

Archbishop of Rheims, at that time chancellor of the French king Charles VII, John Stewart of Darnley, constable of the Scots in France who had won lands and titles from the French king and the poet Alain Chartier, who was also Charles' secretary. The embassy was also accompanied by 'a splendid escort'.¹⁷⁰ Bower describes the archbishop as 'first of his peers...a leading personage both in spirituals and temporals, and primate under the king in the whole kingdom of France'.¹⁷¹ Clearly, the Scottish chronicler was impressed with this French embassy. The embassy that returned to Scotland in early 1435 attracted much less fulsome praise and consisted of Charles' *maître d'hôtel* (though Bower gets his name wrong) and the 'distinguished cleric' Master Aymer.¹⁷² This would tend to suggest that Downie is correct in arguing against a substantial increase in status for Scotland in foreign perceptions. However, James had clearly not abandoned hope of impressing his French counterpart, as evidenced by the embassy he himself sent to France with his daughter in 1436. According to Bower, Margaret's escort included the Earl of Orkney, the Bishop of Brechin, several 'renowned and famous men-at-arms', along with 140 'elegantly dressed' squires and a force of 1000 men in 'three splendid transports and six well-tested barges'.¹⁷³ This was an embassy designed to impress.

xi: Conclusions

Clearly, there are many problems in trying to assess the role of James I's court in literary matters due to the lack of surviving evidence. However, by examining texts

¹⁷⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 247 & 356 n.13.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 247.

¹⁷² *Ibid.* 249.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

known to be in Scotland later in the fifteenth century and by examining the types of literature available in England and Europe at this time it has been possible to make some suggestions regarding this area about the Scottish court during the reign of James I. From this examination, it has become evident that at first glance, James appears to have been part of the international scene in this area in terms of the type of works that were of interest as there is nothing particularly unusual in the genres that appear to have been favoured at his court. Religious books, romances, works of chivalry and advice texts can be said with some confidence to have been circulated at James's court and this is entirely in-keeping with the general European situation in the early fifteenth century. James's education can also be shown to be similar to that of any other medieval prince and he would thus have been familiar with the most popular genres of literature of the period. This may have been a result of the large number of leisure hours he would have had as a captive in England although the limitations of the evidence do not allow any certain conclusions in this area. Not having a country to run did mean, however, that James had more time to dedicate to his education and to leisure pursuits than he would have had he remained in Scotland. Yet while this benefited his education, it may have created problems for him later on as it reduced his awareness of the realities of government. James does seem to have had an interest in utilising the propaganda value of literature, as suggested by the argument regarding some of the subtext apparent in the *Quair*. This is also evident in his composition at Inverness to celebrate the capture of the Lord of the Isles.

However, a more detailed examination of both James's interest in literature and how his court compared to the ideals presented in that literature reveals that this was an

area in which James failed to excel. While the genres present at court were conventional, literary works appear to have been something reserved for a select few of James's supporters. If Bower is correct that James chose Latin to compose at Inverness, the king was ensuring that a very limited number, perhaps only his clerical household officers, would understand and this would serve to emphasise the king's distance from his subjects. Even with the *Quair*, this still suggests a very personal interest in literature. While in many ways a conventional work, the very personal nature of the subject of the poem and its rather stylised form implies that even if it was regularly performed at court, it is unlikely to have enjoyed popularity in the manner of, for instance, *The Bruce*, which commemorates a glorious period in the nation's past and would therefore have been much more inclusive. Additionally, the only real evidence for the enjoyment of literature at court comes from Shirley, whose description conjures an image of this as a pastime for an intimate get-together rather than something carried out at large court gatherings. This gives a picture of James's literary and cultural interests as being private and exclusive, something emphasised by his subject choice for his own poetical work. The king's apparent failure to participate in several popular medieval pastimes such as tournaments and hunting either in reality or in literary terms also suggests that James was not engaging fully with this aspect of medieval life. This seems to indicate that while James was cognizant of the importance of literature and chivalric philosophies, he failed to grasp the importance of including his subjects in these areas at the royal court, and also failed to sustain the efforts he did make throughout his reign. The king instead seems to have preferred a highly personal manifestation of this area that distanced him from his subjects. It is perhaps his failure to fully integrate his subjects into a

completely realised royal court and instead to concentrate on less popular and more private interests that helped to bring about the climate in which his own subjects decided to assassinate him.

Chapter 7 - Religion and Devotion in the Court and Household of James I

i: Introduction to Medieval Religious Practice

In the medieval period, religion was a crucial part of everyday life. Belief in the Almighty and in the powers of the saints affected and influenced every level of society and the royal court was no exception. However, little work has been carried out to determine the particular way in which this was expressed at the Scottish royal court in the late medieval period. Some recent work on the fourteenth century has begun to fill this gap in knowledge but for the reign of James I the subject remains to be investigated.¹ Michael Brown and E.W.M. Balfour-Melville focus on political events in this king's reign, discussions of religion tending to centre on the political and institutional consequences of relations with the Papacy, reform of existing religious houses, or on James's foundation of the Carthusian Priory in Perth.² This is despite the fact that the devotional life of a king can reveal much about his political objectives and, as it was such a crucial area, may have had a considerable impact on politics itself. This has been clearly and convincingly shown by W.M. Ormrod in a study of Edward III.³ Furthermore, in view of Walter Bower's (d.1449) statement

¹ M. Penman, 'Christian Days and Knights: the Religious Devotions and Court of David II of Scotland, 1329-71' in *Historical Research*, vol.75, no.189, August 2002, 249-272; M. Penman, 'The Bruce Dynasty, Becket and Scottish Pilgrimage to Canterbury, c.1178-c.1404', *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006), 346-70; S. Boardman, 'The Gaelic World and the Early Stewart Court', in D. Broun & M. MacGregor(eds.), *Mìorun Mòrna nGall, 'The Great Ill-Will of the Lowlander'?: Lowland Perceptions of the Highlands, Medieval and Modern* (Web publication, Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies, University of Glasgow, 2007).

² Brown, *James I*, *passim*; Balfour-Melville, *James I*, *passim*; W.N.M. Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse Before 1500* (Austria, 1988).

³ Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III'. Other works on this subject include M. Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I' in W.M. Ormrod (ed.) *England in the Thirteenth Century*, (Nottingham, 1985); Saul, *Richard II*, ch.13; R.G. Davies, 'Richard II and the Church' in A. Goodman & J. L. Gillespie (eds.), *Richard II: the Art of Kingship*, (Oxford, 1999), 83-106; J. Hughes, *The Religious Life of Richard III*, (Stroud, 1997); Vale, *The Princely Court*, 220-246.

that James ‘loved knowledge of the Scriptures with incredible zeal’, it is necessary to investigate just how devout James was.⁴

Firstly, it is helpful to summarise in general terms how religion was practiced in the medieval period and to look at any Scottish peculiarities. Obviously, the hearing of Mass was a cornerstone of practice in this period, being required of the laity on Sundays and feast days.⁵ Thus the medieval population would have heard Mass a minimum of once a week, although Duffy has suggested that many of the laity attended an abbreviated Mass on a daily basis.⁶ Again, however, it should be noted that not everyone adhered to this stricture and there is only limited evidence of a concerted effort by the Church to enforce this practice.⁷ The daily mass would have been a much shorter ceremony than that of a Sunday or feast day, and would have been celebrated at the altar with the congregation gathered around rather than separated from the rituals of the priests by rood screens, as was the case otherwise. In a ‘Sunday’ mass, the congregation would have had difficulty seeing and hearing the ceremony, particularly after the introduction of Low Mass, which was spoken instead of sung and thus would not have carried around the church in the same way.⁸ Attendance at Mass was not just required by the Church, but by society as well. Duffy has suggested that absence from the Sunday service could be perceived as a sign of sloth or even heresy, thus making attendance crucial for the maintenance of social standing. Furthermore, it provided an opportunity for social interaction, the church being the centre of most communities.⁹ Another reason for the importance of

⁴ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 309.

⁵ E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars; Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580*, (New Haven and London, 1992) 11.

⁶ *Ibid.* 112.

⁷ N. Tanner & S. Watson, ‘The Least of the Laity: the Minimum Requirements for a Medieval Christian’ in *Journal of Medieval History*, 32 (2006), 409.

⁸ B. Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West*, 2nd edition (London, 2003), 60.

⁹ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 126, 12.

Mass was that medieval people believed strongly in the power of masses to reduce the time a soul spent in purgatory, atoning for sins committed during life. Edward III of England ordered 900 masses in 1337 for his deceased brother John of Eltham.¹⁰ The Scots were no different in this practice, David II paying for masses for his own brother, also John, in 1342, though his death in infancy would probably have meant that he needed to atone for few sins.¹¹ Robert III also followed this practice, awarding an annuity to the chapel of St Saviour in Dundee to commemorate the death of his son David, duke of Rothesay.¹²

The actual ceremony of the Mass was fairly regularised, beginning with prayers and a general confession, followed by the *Kyrie eleison* and the hymn *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. Readings and prayers and then the process of the consecration of the host, the key element of the Mass, would follow this. The consecrated host would be elevated, allowing the congregation to observe it, the singing of the hymn *Agnus Dei*, and the taking of communion. The service would conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing. Part of the Mass did vary according to the season or particular saint being venerated and this usually consisted of variations in readings, psalms and hymns, chosen to coincide with the particular sentiments of the feast in question.¹³

The taking of communion was another facet of medieval religious practice. This was something that was actually only required of the laity once a year, as part of the festivities relating to Easter. Generally, the individual would attend confession during Holy Week and would take communion on Easter Day. It was only after this

¹⁰ Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 855.

¹¹ Penman, 'Christian Days', 254.

¹² *ER*, iii, 626.

¹³ Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West*, 58.

that they were permitted to end the 40 days of fasting that marked Lent.¹⁴ That the Church took the fulfilment of this obligation seriously is evidenced by the penalty for failing to do so; the offender would be excluded from Church and denied Christian burial.¹⁵ It is unlikely that most of the laity took communion more often than this. There is no record of how often James I took communion but Duffy relates that Lady Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509), who took communion monthly, was considered to be a particularly devout woman, while Margery Kempe (c.1373-1438) provoked a negative reaction from her community by partaking on a weekly basis.¹⁶ Bower does hint at the devoutness of James, perhaps suggesting that he partook more frequently than the annual minimum. Bower asserts that James loved Scripture, as already highlighted, and further states that an examination of the history of the Carthusian Order ‘make[s] clear the devotion of the king who brought this order to Scotland.’¹⁷ In addition, James’s literary work *The Kingis Quair* contains several biblical references such as at stanza 74 where the image of angels at Christ’s nativity is evoked and in stanza 133 where the sayings of Solomon in Ecclesiastes are referenced.¹⁸ Ecclesiastes presents itself as being the autobiography of Solomon and is concerned with, according to Michael Eaton, defending faith in a generous God by pointing out the bleakness of the alternative possibility.¹⁹ The imagery of angels is interesting, as angels are a dominant motif in the coat of arms that adorns the original entrance to James’s palace at Linlithgow. This would appear to reinforce the point suggested in chapter five, that James was seeking to make strong associations

¹⁴ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 93.

¹⁵ R.N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c.1245-c.1515* (Cambridge, 1995), 33.

¹⁶ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 93.

¹⁷ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 309, 275.

¹⁸ *The Kingis Quair*.

¹⁹ M. A. Eaton, *Ecclesiastes: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, 1983).

between the royal and the religious. However, there is no substantial evidence stating how often James would have engaged in communion.

Almsgiving and gifts to churches and other institutions were also important facets of the practice of religion in this period, being evidence of the charity of the giver. This would also have acted to imply that the giver was not accumulating wealth. Hamilton has argued that medieval people regarded this as spiritually dangerous as it would suggest that an individual had fallen prey to the sin of avarice.²⁰ Edward I gave alms to a large number of paupers, a total of 666 per week by the end of the thirteenth century.²¹ Edward's grandson, Edward III, also gave alms, receiving praise for the high level of alms that he granted to widows and orphans, as well as the various gifts of plate, books, vestments and other items that he donated.²² These gifts could represent a significant outlay of expenditure. On one occasion, Edward gifted five gold ships to various locations, each worth £53 5s 8½d.²³ There was a strong political motivation behind these objects in addition to the spiritual benefits. Edward's growing naval reputation had been commemorated in new coinage and the gift of objects in the shape of ships was clearly designed to coincide with this, to represent the English king's success on the seas. As Ormrod states, this is a perfect example of how personal piety could be combined with political motivations for maximum propaganda impact.²⁴ Richard II was also noted as an extravagant giver of gifts to religious institutions. An example of this is the portable silver altar he granted to Westminster Abbey, with the story of Edward the Confessor, a favoured saint of that king, and the pilgrims enamelled on it. Richard

²⁰ Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West*, 65.

²¹ Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I', 120-1. The sums distributed totalled around £700 per year. *Ibid.*, 122.

²² Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 850.

²³ *Ibid.*, 860.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

also gave jewellery and several sets of vestments to the monks of the Abbey.²⁵ However, Richard Davies suggests that an annual total of almsgiving of between £350 and £700 was not enough to mark Richard II out as particularly generous in this area.²⁶ Earlier kings also made a point of giving elaborate gifts to religious institutions. Henry III, for example, provided a golden cup worth around £57 in the 1240s as a vessel to contain the relic of the Holy Blood that he had recently been given. Henry also gave a cup to the monks of Westminster, as thanks for the return to life of William le Brown.²⁷ This practice was continued into the fifteenth century. Henry V spent £160 in July of the first year of his reign on a gold ornament in the shape of a man's head, adorned with pearls and jewels to be donated by him at the tomb of Thomas Becket at Canterbury.²⁸ From these examples, it is possible to see a mixture of political and pious motives in the arena of alms and gift giving. The same is true of the particular shrines and institutions that were chosen to be recipients of such bounty: this is a topic that shall be returned to in more detail below.

The extant records for James I's reign reveal little concerning the gifts and alms of the Scottish king, although there are a couple of instances suggestive of this practice. At some point between 17 May 1427 and 5 May 1428, George Crichton made offerings of 15s at an unrecorded location in England on behalf of the queen and the royal couple together offered 15s on Palm Sunday, no doubt as part of the rituals of Holy Week. The following year, the *Exchequer Rolls* record the king and queen offering 5s and 20s respectively at the church of St Michael in Linlithgow at

²⁵ Saul, *Richard II*, 313.

²⁶ Davies, 'Richard II and the Church', 84.

²⁷ N. Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic* (Cambridge, 2001), 171-2.

²⁸ Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, 321-2.

the beginning of April, which may relate to Easter in some way.²⁹ These may appear to be small sums, but even 5s would allow for 1d each to be paid to sixty paupers. For the year 1435, there is a record of Joan paying £3 (a fairly considerable sum) to a woman looking after a poor boy, which could be considered an alms payment.³⁰ These figures are of considerably lower value than many of those offered by the English king, even lower than might be adequately explained by the lower income of James and Joan. It is possible, even probable, that the royal couple made other offerings that have simply not been recorded due to the lower level of bureaucracy or were made in years for which records no longer survive. Also, there is some possibility that the lack of record was deliberate. As is discussed in chapter two, it is feasible that James actively sought to obscure royal expenditure and this perhaps resulted in limited information regarding the king's devotional behaviour being recorded. Furthermore, some payments made by English kings were of lower amounts, for instance the 6s 8d offered by Richard II to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury in 1384.³¹ However, as the English examples given above make clear, there was a significant difference in the recorded alms payments of the English and Scottish monarchs. It is possible, however, that these larger sums are indicative of the 'grand gesture' that the English monarchs were able to indulge due to their larger income and spoils of war while the small sums quoted here are exemplary of the ordinary, regular almsgiving of a monarch of this period. If so, James's offerings do not appear so contradictory. James also participated in the custom of paying for masses, for example, continuing payments to a chaplain of St Saviour in Dundee for

²⁹ *ER*, iv, 450, 485. The precise date of Crichton's offering is not stated in the *Exchequer Rolls*, but it is recorded in the Linlithgow account for the period 17 May 1427 to 5 May 1428.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 627.

³¹ Saul, *Richard II*, 317.

the soul of his deceased brother, David, duke of Rothesay.³² Obviously, the religious life of James I appears little different in expression to that of either his predecessors or his English counterparts. Thus, it is possible to arrive at a more detailed picture of the devotional life of the Scottish king by extrapolating from the evidence that does exist and comparing it to other times and kingdoms.

Masses, alms and gifts were important expressions of faith among kings in this period as they sought to accrue to themselves the blessings of God and the saints. This was a particularly important enterprise, as medieval thought seems to have viewed the king as the conduit through which God's favour flowed to his subjects. Certainly, this was the view of one fifteenth-century English preacher.³³ Belief in the intercessory powers of the saints was as real to the medieval mind as belief in the power of God and Jesus Christ. There are of course numerous examples of kings, and indeed nobles, making offerings to saints in return for their help, but one Scottish instance is perhaps sufficient to illustrate the point. The two explanations commonly proffered to explain David II's foundation of St Monans in Fife both relate to the intervention of that saint in David's life, one stating that the saint helped remove an arrowhead from the king's head after Neville's Cross and another that the saint saved David from shipwreck on a crossing from North Berwick to Earlsferry.³⁴ There is a problem, though, in determining how far spiritual motives influenced such actions as opposed to political considerations, but this point shall be explored in more detail below.

This is not to say that religious belief and practice was static in the medieval period. Changes did occur, leading in some extremes to beliefs that were considered

³² *Ibid. passim.*

³³ R.M. Raines, 'Our Master Mariner, our Sovereign Lord': a Contemporary Preacher's View of Henry V', *Medieval Studies*, xxxviii (1976), 85-96, quoted in Saul, *Richard II*, 293.

³⁴ Penman, 'Christian Days', 251.

heretical. For the period currently under consideration, Lollardy was the chief example of this and sought, Saul suggests, not the destruction of the Catholic Church as would be the case in the sixteenth century, but reform to bring it into line with changes in the beliefs of the laity.³⁵ Saul relates that piety was taking on a more personal and introspective form, with the spread of literacy and increasing use of confessors among the nobility contributing significantly to this trend. Despite its heretical nature, Lollardy was not without support at the English royal court of the fourteenth century. Both the Black Prince and his wife appear to have had Lollard sympathies, the Princess of Wales nominating as executors of her will the three knights in her entourage most closely associated with the movement, namely Lewis Clifford, John Clanvow and Richard Stury.³⁶ Richard II retained the service of these men when he acceded to the throne, along with other Lollard sympathisers, giving them positions in his chamber and granting land and title to some, for example, Haverford Castle and stewardship of its lordship to Clanvow in 1381.³⁷ This had changed by the late 1380s, possibly due to a popular conception that linked Lollardy to social unrest. Richard enforced anti-Lollard legislation, forcing Stury to swear an oath renouncing his heresy, for example, and ordering Oxford University to suspend Henry Crumpe for teaching heretical doctrines.³⁸

In Scotland, Lollardy does not appear to have gained even this minimal level of support from the upper levels of society. Indeed, David Ditchburn argues that none of the major medieval heresies gained much ground in Scotland, with Lollardy largely nonexistent in Scotland after 1408 and the burning of James

³⁵ Saul, *Richard II*, 297.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 298.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 299.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 302.

Resby.³⁹ This occurred during the governorship of the Duke of Albany, of whom Wyntoun states ‘all Lollard he hatyt and heretike’, indicating that orthodox belief was strong in Scotland.⁴⁰ Additionally, Albany’s son, Murdoch, was kidnapped in 1415 as part of a possible Lollard conspiracy, and these factors were perhaps significant in formulating James’s own attitude. It should also be born in mind that one of the stated reasons for the foundation of St Andrews University was the resistance of Lollardy. Ranald Nicholson highlights a charter of 28 February 1411 by Bishop Wardlaw, which stated that higher education was of great benefit in aiding the Catholic faith to resist heresy. Nicholson also relates the fact that in 1417, graduates of the Scottish university were required to swear an oath to ‘defend the kirk against the attack of Lollards’.⁴¹ Balfour-Melville is no doubt correct to suggest that James would have been keen to show himself equally against Lollardy, especially given his upbringing at the Lancastrian court.⁴² Indeed, James appears to have moved quickly to illustrate his anti-Lollard stance upon his return to Scotland. A parliamentary Act of 1425 required bishops to investigate possible heresies and to punish Lollards and heretics and this may have discouraged the spread of this belief.⁴³ Furthermore, Bower’s reaction towards heretics and the several pages that he devotes to attacking them gives additional strength to the idea that Jacobean Scotland was generally anti-heretical.⁴⁴ It is not particularly surprising that Scotland should be little different from the rest of Europe in its reaction towards the spread of Lollardy. Ditchburn argues quite convincingly that in matters of devotion and doctrine, the remoter kingdom followed the same pattern as the Continent in this

³⁹ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 39.

⁴⁰ *Chron. Wyntoun* (Laing), bk.9, l.2774).

⁴¹ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 241.

⁴² Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 62.

⁴³ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 40.

⁴⁴ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 277-87.

period.⁴⁵ However, Ditchburn does not contradict David McRoberts' argument that there was something of a growing nationalism in devotional behaviour in the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ The extent to which this applies to James I shall be examined in due course.

ii: Religion and Propaganda

As already stated there is some difficulty in separating the pious and political motives behind religious practices. It may be useful, therefore, to examine some of the ways in which kings could use religion as a political tool at this time. The Church was an obvious vehicle for princes to use in attempting to control and influence the opinions of their subjects. Not only was the Church a powerful force, but it also had an extensive organisation. As A.K. McHardy has suggested, the fact that Church organisation reached from the Pope all the way to individual parishes, even those geographically remote from the usual centres of power, made it a perfect channel through which to engender unity and loyalty. One of the ways in which this could be accomplished was the saying of prayers for the royal family. Edward III certainly made full use of this custom, which was increasing in use in the fourteenth century, during his campaigns in the Hundred Years War.⁴⁷

James also promoted this practice, though obviously not due to the fact that he was engaged in major military campaigns. Nicholson has suggested that James wished to cast a spiritual aura around the monarchy and publicise unity with the Church.⁴⁸ This was a perfectly logical step for James to take, as he sought to

⁴⁵ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 52; D. McRoberts, 'The Scottish Church and Nationalism in the Fifteenth Century' in *Innes Review*, vol.19, no.1 (Spring, 1968), 3-14.

⁴⁷ A.K. McHardy, 'Some Reflections on Edward III's use of Propaganda' in J.S. Bothwell (ed.), *The Age of Edward III* (Woodbridge, 2001), 171-192.

⁴⁸ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 299.

establish his authority following his long absence from Scotland. By firmly associating himself with God, James was making a powerful statement about his right to rule. James himself made provision for prayers for the royal family. A royal act of 25 February 1426 provided for £24 *per annum* to be paid to three chaplains in the chapel of St John the Baptist at the church of Corstorphine, celebrating for the health of the king and queen and for the church's founder, Adam Forrester of Corstorphine, father to John Forrester, who was James's chamberlain.⁴⁹ The *Exchequer Rolls* do record an annuity paid to this chapel in every subsequent year for which records are extant except 1431, though the amount noted is £20 rather than £24 as stated in the *RMS*.⁵⁰ It is likely that the chapel's patron saint was the target of devotion in this instance, as opposed to any other saint who may have been associated with the structure or who had an altar within it.

James also confirmed two other charters that included provision for celebrations for the king and queen. One, originally made by John Forrester of Corstorphine, provided £6 13s 4d to the church of St Giles in Edinburgh for the health of the king, queen and Forrester's parents and wife and was confirmed in February 1426.⁵¹ On 1 September of the same year, James confirmed a charter providing a chaplain to the altar of St Mary in the monastery of Holyrood in Edinburgh.⁵² Interestingly this date coincides with the feast day of St Giles, a saint particularly associated with Edinburgh and which falls between the feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity of the Virgin (15/8 and 8/9 respectively). The combination perhaps suggests particular interest in these two holy figures on the part of James. The king's apparent interest in the cult of the Virgin is particularly

⁴⁹ *RMS*, ii, no.35. This would have averaged at £8 (or 1920d) per chaplain and would most likely have allowed for at least one daily mass to be said.

⁵⁰ *ER*, iv, 425, 455, 495, 521, 638.

⁵¹ *RMS*, ii, no.34.

⁵² *RMS*, ii, no.60.

significant as this was among the greatest of the European cults in this period.⁵³ The saying of masses was one way in which the king could attempt to link himself and God more firmly together in the minds of Scotland's people.

Other forms of propaganda could also serve to link the king and God more firmly together in the mind of Scotland's people. Painted images and sculptures, royal imagery in chapels, and illuminated books could all provide visual testimony to the special relationship between the king and the Almighty.⁵⁴ For instance, two angels flank the royal arms at Linlithgow with a third supporting them from above. This is a somewhat grandiose image, being far larger than any other example of monumental heraldry known at the time and the presence of three angels suggests that James was seeking to really hammer home the point of his associations with the religious aspects of lordship. Statues of saints on either side of the arms would have underlined this. As discussed in chapter five, the saints these statues represented are not known, if indeed they were saints.⁵⁵ However, it is probable that religious images were chosen to complement the form of the royal arms. As previously discussed, Saints Andrew, James, Columba, John and of course Michael are all potential candidates for these positions. The combination of Andrew and James would certainly make sense within the context of an uncertain monarch attempting to assert his position. The association of the national saint with the royal arms and the saint sharing James's name would have been a means of visually allying the king with the nation, of binding the two together in the public imagination. However, Scotland's 'other' national saint, Columba, may also have been a possibility. Columba's relics were carried at Bannockburn (23-24 June), which would perhaps

⁵³ James's interest in the cult of the Virgin will be discussed in more detail below.

⁵⁴ Images of saints, their creation and their uses are discussed in J. Higgitt, "Imageis Maid with Mennis Hand": Saints, Images, Belief and Identity in Later Medieval Scotland', *The Ninth Whithorn Lecture*, 16 September 2006.

⁵⁵ See ch.5, section iv.

have made James interested in promoting a connection between himself and Columba. The idea that James may have been interested in Columba is accentuated by the fact that the centre of Columba's cult in Scotland was Dunkeld in Perthshire, his relics having been moved there in 849.⁵⁶ This was an area that James was greatly interested in during his reign, as evidenced by his attraction to Perth and the ways in which he interfered with the Earl of Atholl's landed interests in the area. James also interfered in the bishopric of Dunkeld, which encompassed much of Atholl's landed interests, in early 1437 after Bishop Cardeny died.⁵⁷ The use of St Michael would ally the new palace with the parish church of Linlithgow, thus further associating the royal with the religious. This would have added to the Michael dedications at Scone (Michael was an additional dedicatee of the Abbey), Rothesay and Stirling (where the castles had chapels dedicated to Michael).⁵⁸ It is possible that an interest in St Michael was a way for James to link the royal symbolism at Linlithgow with the military symbolism of Stirling Castle through these dedications to St Michael. This may have connected to the king's attempt to promote the cult of the Duke of Rothesay, through that parish's church dedication. Another possibility for the statues is St John the Baptist, as James had a strong interest in this saint, as will be discussed below.

James was not the only king to combine religious and royal imagery. At Westminster Abbey, for example, Richard II had incorporated many royal emblems into the décor and into gifts given by him to the Abbey. For instance, Richard used the white-hart badge in wall paintings and royal heraldry was incorporated into a set

⁵⁶ P. Yeoman, *Pilgrimage in Medieval Scotland*, (London, 1999), 84-5. Yeoman suggests that most Lowland and eastern Scots would have found it easier to visit Columba shrines in Dunkeld and Inchcolm rather than Iona, although the later retained importance to those in the north and Western Isles.

⁵⁷ Brown, *James I*, 182.

⁵⁸ MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications: Scriptural*, 25-6, 340.

of vestments.⁵⁹ This imagery was so extensive, Joel Burden argues, that Henry IV chose to bury Richard at King's Langley as opposed to Westminster, as the imagery, allied with the presence of Richard's body, would have presented an unacceptable threat to Lancastrian propaganda regarding the validity of Richard's reign.⁶⁰ This certainly indicates how significant the association of royal with religious symbolism could be and the effect it could have on the minds of a congregation. Edward III had earlier utilised such a method. D.M. Palliser suggests that this king was particularly fond of Westminster Abbey in terms of utilising it as a burial place. A writ of 1339 suggests that Edward wanted to be buried there and John of Reading reiterated this in 1359. Furthermore, he asked that the body of his younger brother, John of Eltham, be moved to a more prominent position among the other royal burials there.⁶¹ Palliser also seems to argue that Edward had a particular propaganda motive in his attitude towards the Abbey as a mausoleum. Edward's own desire for 'a royal tomb in the church of St Peter among our ancestors the kings of England of famous memory' does imply, as Palliser suggests, that it was traditional for English monarchs to be buried there. In reality, Edward III would be only the third since 1066.⁶² Logic suggests that the reason for the 'spin' was a desire to enhance his own status by association with the kings of the past, especially Edward the Confessor and Edward I due to their considerable reputations. Ormrod highlights that many altar frontals, vestments, chalices and books used in court rituals were decorated with the quartered arms of England and France, a powerful propaganda statement regarding

⁵⁹ J. Burden, 'How do you Bury a Deposed King? The Funeral of Richard II and the Establishment of Lancastrian Royal Authority in 1400' in G. Dodd & D. Biggs (eds.), *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406* (Woodbridge, 2003), 46.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ D.M. Palliser, 'Royal Mausolea in the Long Fourteenth Century, 1272-1422' in W.M. Ormrod (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England III* (Woodbridge, 2004), 9; P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven & London, 1995).

⁶² Palliser, 'Royal Mausolea', 10.

the worthiness of the cause in seeking the French throne.⁶³ McHardy adds that church windows could also be used in this manner, citing as an example the east window of what is now Gloucester Cathedral.⁶⁴ A further significant example of such religious propaganda is to be found in the Wilton Diptych, commissioned by Richard II in the late 1390s, which is a portrayal of pious kingship and also celebrates Richard's interest in the cult of the Virgin and may also have acted as a Crusading icon.⁶⁵

These were simple, yet effective methods of promoting the association of the monarch with God to a still largely illiterate population. There were significant political motivations for this. In discussing the religious life of Richard III, Jonathan Hughes offers a view of that king as a particularly pious individual in contrast to the usually condemnatory image.⁶⁶ Hughes suggests that it was in part the accusations against him that influenced his religious beliefs. Thus, it is perhaps possible to suggest that there was an element of propaganda in this, as Richard sought to promote a better image of himself, though Hughes does argue quite strongly that Richard was genuinely pious. This is a particularly interesting point in relation to the latter half of James's reign. With the failure of his Highland policy from c.1430 onwards, distrust from parliament that resulted in tax raised for a Highland campaign being kept out of royal control in 1431, and the failure of the Roxburgh campaign in 1436, James needed to bolster his image. Careful attention to religious matters would no doubt have been fundamental in this context: he could not afford to overlook the benefits of a suitably pious image. The propaganda element of religion is also explored in the medieval text *Secreta Secretorum*, described by Hughes as the

⁶³ Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 867.

⁶⁴ McHardy, 'Edward III's Use of Propaganda', 186.

⁶⁵ Saul, *Richard II*, 304-7.

⁶⁶ Hughes, *The Religious Life of Richard III*.

standard manual for princes of the time.⁶⁷ The text states that prayers to God could deliver a man from danger of death, protect him from the hatred of his enemies and secure victory in battle. Obviously, these would be things any individual of this period would wish to secure, but would have been especially important to a king, particularly one such as James who needed to secure his position within his kingdom. By portraying himself as a devout monarch, James could promote himself as a good king, in medieval terms, as he could represent himself as a man to whom God's blessings would accrue. The *Secreta* also could have provided James with justification for his attack on the Albany Stewart family, as it stated that it was justice *not* to spare your enemies. This text was apparently well known in Scotland in the early fifteenth century, making it likely that James was aware of it. It was certainly popular enough to warrant a translation into Scots by Gilbert Hay (b.c.1403) in 1456, known as *The Buke of the Gouvernaunce of Princes*.⁶⁸

The decoration of chapels, vestments and so on could also be used to represent and enhance the king's piety. However, there is little evidence regarding this area for the reign of James I. There are not, for instance, any detailed descriptions of purchases for the royal chapels relating how far royal imagery was incorporated into them. However, there are recorded a few purchases stated as being for the chapel. An entry in the Westminster Scottish Rolls records that in October 1424 James purchased a pair of coffers for the chapel, though it does not state which chapel.⁶⁹ It would not have been Linlithgow, the manor there having burned down and construction had not yet begun on the new Palace. Most probably, the

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 130. The *Secreta* was a pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*, which began as an Arabic text dating from c.941 before appearing in Latin translations from the twelfth century. Numerous copies are extant.

⁶⁸ A. Glenn (ed.), *The prose works of Sir Gilbert Hay. Vol. 3, The buke of the ordre of knyghthede and The buke of the gouvernaunce of princes*, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1993).

⁶⁹ CDS, iv, no.967.

destination was an established chapel at a royal residence, perhaps Stirling, where St Michael's chapel would later be constituted into a Chapel Royal (1509), or perhaps to St Mary's in Edinburgh Castle, given James's strong interest in this saint's cult. James was in Edinburgh towards the end of October so this is a strong possibility. However, the king was also in Stirling later in the year and may have taken delivery of the items there. Alternatively, the coffers may even have been intended for use at Perth, given the large amount of time that James would spend there during his reign, although it is not immediately clear that James intended to spend so much time there right at the start of his reign. It is also possible that the items may have either been added to, or constituted the basis of, the king's travelling chapel paraphernalia. The same entry also shows that James had purchased two books for the chapel and a bible. Unfortunately, no price is given for any of these items, though in the later years of his reign Henry V paid £3 6s for materials for a bible, so James's books at least represented a fairly significant investment, even if they were only standard rather than personalised texts.⁷⁰ Books could serve as propaganda objects as much as other areas mentioned. A prime, though later, example of this is Edward IV's display bible, discussed in chapter six.⁷¹

Further, though still limited, information regarding the decoration of Scottish chapels is found in the *Exchequer Rolls*. In the 1428 account, John de Camera, Clerk of the King's Chapel received furnishings worth £11 12s 4d.⁷² De Camera received a further £9 11s in furnishings the following year.⁷³ In both cases the allowance for these expenses was made from the customs of Edinburgh, perhaps suggesting that the items were destined for the chapel at Edinburgh Castle, although

⁷⁰ *Issues of the Exchequer*, 372.

⁷¹ See ch.6, section iii.

⁷² *ER*, iv, 438.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 473

this is not an accurate way to assess this. Again, there is no detail to these entries, so it is impossible to know exactly what form these ‘furnishings’ took. It does not seem unreasonable to assume that altar cloths and vestments of some kind were in some way included. The design of these may well have incorporated some form of royal imagery, as was the case in the reign of Edward III as stated above. It does not seem likely that James would have missed this opportunity to take advantage of the benefits that such associations of the royal and religious could bring. As already stated, James incorporated these motifs at Linlithgow with the use of angels on the royal arms over the entrance, in a deliberate display of imagery.

Another method by which a king could circulate such an image was by means of the royal seal. John Steane has argued that Great Seals are an important source of information regarding medieval concepts of kingship, of which there were two basic themes, namely the king as provider of justice and the king as a military leader.⁷⁴ Seals could be used for propaganda purposes, as Steane goes on to suggest was the case for Henry IV, whose seal included images of Saints Edmund and Edward the Confessor in order to reinforce Henry’s claim of descent from Henry III who venerated both these saints.⁷⁵ It would also have provided a visible link between the royal and the religious, both due to the association of the king with two saints, but also because these were *royal* saints. While not a royal seal, that of the Perth Charterhouse performed something of a similar function, and is significant in this instance as James founded the monastery. Walter de Gray Birch states that the monastery’s seal showed the coronation of the Virgin with an effigy of James I kneeling on a cushion in worship in the base.⁷⁶ The juxtaposition of these images is

⁷⁴ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 23-26.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷⁶ W. de G. Birch, *History of Scottish Seals: Ecclesiastical and Monastic Seals of Scotland* (Stirling, 1907), 105. In describing a later fifteenth century version of the Charterhouse seal, Laing states that

remarkable, as it visually linked James to one of the most popular saints of the period, the Virgin Mary. Again, this was making a statement about the spiritual attitude and behaviour of James I. The image was a visible reminder of the foundation of the Carthusian monastery by the king.

iii: Royal Piety and Perth

The religious life of the Scottish king can also be more fully understood through an examination of the foundation of the Perth Charterhouse. The Charterhouse, as is well known, was the last monastery to be founded in Scotland and the largest since Sweetheart Abbey in 1273 so it is clearly of crucial importance in the development of religious ideas within the kingdom generally.⁷⁷ The reasons why James felt it would be beneficial to undertake the expense of founding this monastery are varied.⁷⁸ The following of fashion no doubt played some part in this scheme as the Carthusian Order received a significant amount of interest throughout Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. James was keen to establish himself as the supreme authority in his kingdom and by associating himself with powerful European princes he was making a statement to his subjects about his view of himself and how he wished to be viewed. Certainly, there is no shortage of examples of notable figures establishing Charterhouses. This supports Brown's contention that James wanted to associate himself with this trend.⁷⁹ In 1377, Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy began construction of a Carthusian monastery of Champmol at Dijon

the kneeling figure at the base is a monk, with a crown before him, H. Laing, *Supplemental Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Scottish Seals*, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1866), 207. Birch also states that the Dominican friars of Perth used images of the Virgin and Child or of St John the Baptist and St James, their patron saints. This may help to explain King James's interest in St John, given his preference for residing at the Blackfriars when in Perth. Alternatively, he may have preferred to stay there partly because of his interest in St John.

⁷⁷ Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse*, x.

⁷⁸ See ch.5, section viii for an examination of the cost of this project.

⁷⁹ Brown, *James I*, 117.

(its foundation charter was dated 15 March 1385) in honour of the Holy Trinity.⁸⁰ The construction cost more than 75,000 francs and was for twenty-four instead of the usual twelve monks.⁸¹ James may have become aware of this example during his time in France in the early 1420s or else from the Flemish embassy that visited Scotland in 1425. The strong economic connections between Scotland and the Burgundian territories would also have provided the means for this interest to be communicated. Richard II of England, although not founding a Charterhouse himself, appears to have taken an interest in the Order. Saul relates that Richard laid the foundation stone of the church of the house founded in Coventry by William, Lord Zouche, and granted the priory of Edith Weston in Rutland to the monastery.⁸² Of perhaps greater relevance to the current study, are the foundations by relatives of Joan Beaufort and Henry V. Two of Joan's uncles, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, and Thomas, earl of Exeter, were described as benefactors of the Order and another uncle, Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey, founded Mount Grace in Yorkshire in 1398.⁸³ Further, the Charterhouse established by Henry V at Sheen in 1414 was within the diocese of Henry Beaufort.⁸⁴

Furthermore, Ditchburn has argued that religion was the principal bonding agent of Christian Europe.⁸⁵ Thus the founding of a Carthusian monastery, popular at the time, would have provided a beneficial link to English and European men of power, by highlighting that the Scottish king was involved in this popular expression of piety. However, what commentators on James's reign seem to skim over is

⁸⁰ Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 29.

⁸¹ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 202.

⁸² Saul, *Richard II*, 322.

⁸³ Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse*, 2.

⁸⁴ Downie, "Sche is but a Womman", 173; N. Beckett, 'Henry VII and Sheen Charterhouse' in *The Reign of Henry VII*, discusses the early foundation of the Sheen Charterhouse. It is not clear if James actually visited this establishment personally, but he would no doubt have been aware of it.

⁸⁵ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 33.

precisely why the *Carthusians* were important in this period as opposed to other Orders. Though there has been some discussion of the foundation elsewhere, most notably by W.N.M. Beckett, there has been little effort to place the foundation firmly in the context of James I's reign. Thus it seems a little inadequate to simply state that a fashionable impulse motivated James. Determining the precise stimulus will no doubt be impossible, since no evidence has survived to say exactly why James took this course of action.

Balfour-Melville suggests that James was carrying out Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas's earlier plan of foundation.⁸⁶ However, Beckett places the emphasis on James still being in England at the time when Henry V began work at Sheen and on the influence of the Beauforts through his marriage to Joan.⁸⁷ James's rather austere lifestyle during his imprisonment may also have attracted him to an Order known for its austerity. However, the rather extravagant spending spree that the king would engage in after 1424 would tend to contradict the idea that James was rejecting material possessions, although James was perhaps seeking to offer a contrast to his own acquisitive habits with his association with the Carthusians.

The influence of Joan's family is particularly relevant given the influence the queen had with James. In 1428, for instance, nobles were compelled to swear an oath of loyalty to Joan as well as James, and again had to swear fealty in 1434, giving the queen a significant political role. Additionally, as Balfour-Melville has noted, there are several instances in the *Exchequer Rolls* where the queen's mandate was accepted for remissions of customs and she attended the Inverness parliament of

⁸⁶ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 272.

⁸⁷ Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse*, 1, 2.

1428 with her husband, though this latter activity may have been designed to draw the Highland nobles into a false sense of security.⁸⁸

Scottish nobles were also showing an interest in this Order. On 5 June 1419, the Pope approved Douglas's request to build a Charterhouse, as mentioned above.⁸⁹ Although this was never built, it does show that interest in the Carthusians existed in Scotland prior to James's return and amongst a family with whom James had a close connection, both during his captivity and after 1424. The Douglas earl was a patron of James's foundation, giving to the house, in February 1434, the 'marches' of 'Scurrikrag' close to Kelso Abbey and Redden and Hadden close to the Tweed. Balfour-Melville argues that this gift speeded Douglas' release from prison, implying, it seems, that the gift was motivated by the purely secular consideration of obtaining the king's favour.⁹⁰ However, the earlier interest in founding a Carthusian house shown by the family suggests that this was not the case. Further, in July 1439, when Archibald, fifth earl of Douglas was Lieutenant General, the Pope's vice-chancellor approved the gift to the Carthusians of the right of patronage of the parish church of St Mary in the Forest of Selkirk, worth a total of £400.⁹¹ It should also be noted that the number of former Douglas men in James's household, several of whom were clerics as highlighted in chapter four, might also have proved influential. It is possible that they informed the king of the fourth earl's interest in this order and this increased royal interest.

Diplomatic contacts with Douglas during his imprisonment, exposure to the court of Henry V and the conduit of Joan for Beaufort influence can thus all be seen to have had an impact on James in some way. The earlier examination of the

⁸⁸ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 249.

⁸⁹ Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse*, x.

⁹⁰ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 194.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 18.

household of James shows that James had a significant interest in the Douglas family, while elsewhere in this thesis it is argued that exposure to the court life of Henry V led James to emulate this king in an effort to increase his own status. Furthermore, Fiona Downie has argued convincingly that Joan was an important figure in James's life, both in politics and at court. This would have put the queen in a strong position to influence her husband towards favouring an Order patronised by her family. Thus, it does not seem likely that any one of these influences was more crucial than another.

All this assumes, of course, that political considerations were James's primary concern. However, motives that are more pious should not be overlooked and in such a religious time must be judged as at least equal or integral to secular concerns. The foundation charter of Philip the Bold's Charterhouse included the statement that 'for the soul's salvation nothing suffices like the prayers of pious monks, who, for the love of God, of their free will choose poverty and shun all the vanities of the world'.⁹² This clearly illustrates the contemporary perception that the stricter the Order, the more beneficial were its prayers. The Carthusians were certainly well known for their severity, being regarded as the only Order that had never had to be reformed as it had remained true to its initial tenets. No Carthusian monk ate meat, even when ill, whereas other orders did permit this. Further, the practice of fasting continued, even though this was reduced from four days per week to once a week at some point in the thirteenth century. Even Bower asks 'Who in his right mind can doubt the saintly quality of the Carthusian Order?' and states that they 'renounce all vainglory, riches and worldly fame'.⁹³ Later medieval houses were not always built in remote areas, however. The Burgundian foundation was in Dijon, an

⁹² Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 29.

⁹³ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 273.

important town for the Burgundian Dukes, while Henry V's foundation was at Sheen, an important royal manor, not too far from London. The Scottish foundation itself was located adjacent to the important royal burgh of Perth, hardly the wilderness. However, Glyn Coppack suggests that Carthusian monasteries were established in royal centres in this period as an expression of royal and national piety following the outbreak of plague in the fourteenth century. The severity of the Carthusians made them attractive in this context and medieval rulers viewed them as an effective means of promoting their own piety, helping to explain the popularity of this order at this time.⁹⁴

In contrast to this austerity, however, their Scottish royal patron was not known for his material restraint. Among a list of supplications made by James to the Pope recorded on 20 February 1430 is one in which the king was seeking absolution from fasting, and that he be allowed to eat 'butter, milk, eggs, cheese and other milk and flesh foods on the advice of his confessor and doctor'.⁹⁵ While the latter part of this statement may suggest at least a nominal medical reason for seeking this measure, there is evidence to suggest that James may be accused of gluttony. Visiting Scotland in 1435, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini described James as 'oppressed by his excessive corpulence', suggesting that James had not restrained himself in gastronomical matters.⁹⁶ Indeed, the *Exchequer Rolls* record numerous payments for foodstuffs such as salmon and marts as well as apples and cheese.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the accounts do not represent the entirety of James's diet, as foodstuffs

⁹⁴ G. Coppack & M. Aston, *Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in England* (Stroud, 2002), 36.

⁹⁵ CSSR, iv, 78-9. 'Confessor' presumably refers to John Fogo, who is still referred to as the king's confessor in a charter of 8 January 1430, *Liber Melros*, 493. A John Gray is found as physician of James I in May 1430 (CSSR, iii, 100-101). A James Alamanus, physician, appears in the *Exchequer Rolls*, receiving goods purchased for the king and queen in Flanders, though he is not specifically described as the king's physician. Alamanus does receive a payment of £20 for unspecified purposes in 1431, *ER*, iv, 541, 679.

⁹⁶ Aeneas Sylvius, 'De Europa', in P. Hume-Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891, 1973), 25.

⁹⁷ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

would have been sourced from royal lands as well as being purchased. It should be noted, however, that apples and cheese might have been used for devotional purposes. Duffy states that apples were offered on St James's day and cheese was often given to priests for blessing at Easter during a specific part of the Mass.⁹⁸

The Carthusians' quarters were also austere, their churches lacking the sculptures and painted images of others. The only decoration was a crucifix over the altar, though the regulations permitted monks to keep images of saints to whom they were particularly devoted in their private oratories, as they were considered stimulating.⁹⁹ This again contrasts with James's own residences. Bower does relate that there was some opposition to the Order, that some decried it as they had heard of no miracles associated with it.¹⁰⁰ The abbot argues though, that to do so was to doubt the sanctity of both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, who both followed an ascetic lifestyle. That Bower links St John to the Carthusians is particularly significant in the Scottish context, as this is a saint that James appears to have had a strong interest in. Jean Gerson also participated in this debate, arguing that miracles were only reported at saints' shrines where the sanctity of the saint was in question. Gerson cited Saints Jerome and Gregory the Great who were known to be holy but had no reported miracles.¹⁰¹ There certainly appears to have been significant belief in the sanctity of the Carthusian Order. Furthermore, there seems to have been a belief that interest in the Order signified a deep piety. Bower certainly felt this, his views on the matter having already been stated, and Beckett suggests that the

⁹⁸ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 125.

⁹⁹ E. M. Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930).

¹⁰⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 269.

¹⁰¹ J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: an Image of Mediaeval Religion* (London, 1975), 273.

strictness of the order, the fact that it had never been reformed, motivated James's interest.¹⁰²

David Ditchburn suggests that there were general efforts made in early-fifteenth century monasticism to combat the growing laxity in monastic life and to encourage study within monastic communities and it is against this background that he sets the introduction of the Carthusians to Scotland in 1429.¹⁰³ Certainly the synod of St Andrews around the turn of the century attempted to institute reforms which would return religious life to a purer form.¹⁰⁴ That James was interested in this general pattern is evidenced by his letter to the Augustinian and Benedictine monasteries within Scotland, reprimanding them for their lax observance of their Rules, particularly regarding their failure to hold general chapters.¹⁰⁵ Reform of monastic life was something that also concerned Henry V in the latter years of his reign, the time during which James was most closely connected with the English monarch.¹⁰⁶ It is thus quite likely that James was influenced to an extent by Henry's example, even though the English king's efforts were not entirely successful. The Scottish king may have felt that the Carthusians would provide a good example for the other orders to follow, thus returning them to a more traditional monastic lifestyle. As discussed earlier in the chapter, James was also concerned to eradicate Lollardy, taking steps very early in his reign to ensure this belief did not gain a place in Scotland, further highlighting his interest in orthodox religious belief.

One option that also deserves examination is the possibility that James was seeking to establish at Perth a complex similar to that at Westminster. In England,

¹⁰² *Chron. Bower*, viii, 275; Beckett, *The Perth Charterhouse*, 1.

¹⁰³ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 46-7. Ditchburn points to the examples of Bower and Wyntoun to support the idea that monastic study was encouraged earlier than previously understood by historians.

¹⁰⁴ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 237.

¹⁰⁵ *APS*, ii, 25-6; *Chron. Bower*, viii, 317-9.

¹⁰⁶ Allmand, *Henry V*, 277-9.

Westminster provided a regular location for parliament and the court as well as a spiritual role via the abbey all in close proximity. In addition, Westminster was the coronation church for the English monarchs, which perhaps adds to this supposition, Perth being close to Scone, the traditional inauguration site of Scottish rulers and where James himself was crowned. Joel Burden has shown that a ritual occasion such as a coronation was a powerful way to legitimise royal authority, as it helped give an appearance of normality.¹⁰⁷ He discusses this in relation to Henry IV, a usurper king, but it could apply to James equally well. James's coronation played a part in establishing his position in a country long used to coping without its monarch. James was at Perth on many occasions during his reign and the estates met there fourteen times, with three exchequer audits also held there, although a majority of royal charters were issued from Edinburgh as opposed to the more northerly burgh. This is indicative of Edinburgh's role as the location for the royal chancery and implies a desire for a separation of public and private matters during James's reign. Additionally, James's plan to move St Andrews University to Perth, although ultimately unsuccessful, does indicate that the Scottish king wished to make Perth the focus of his kingdom.¹⁰⁸

Although it cannot yet be claimed that Scotland had an official capital, never mind that the capital was Perth, James certainly had a particular fondness for it, suggesting that he could indeed have been following the Westminster model. This was not altogether an innovation on James's part, as Scone had long been the traditional inauguration site and in the fourteenth century was commonly used for meetings of Parliament, and the comparison with Westminster in this instance is

¹⁰⁷ Burden, 'How do you bury a deposed king?', 36.

¹⁰⁸ Brown, *James I*, 117.

strong.¹⁰⁹ Richard Oram does suggest that in this earlier period, it is unlikely that Scottish kings were consciously using Westminster as an exemplar due to the levels of hostility that existed between the two countries during the Wars of Independence. However, given James's extensive experience of England and its government, and his desire to create a closer bond between the two countries, it is entirely possible that James was consciously following the Westminster example. It should be noted that Perth had particular importance for both Robert II and Robert III, with the former issuing eighty of his 397 charters from Perth and twenty-two from Scone, and the later issuing forty-two from Perth and twenty from Scone (out of a total of 271).¹¹⁰ Continuity does seem to have been a consideration in this instance, as with the choice of Linlithgow as discussed in chapter five. However, the English exemplar is likely to have been a significant factor, given James's longer exposure to England than Scotland.

The use of the Charterhouse as his burial place also needs to be considered in this context. In contrast to many earlier monarchs, James was buried in his Carthusian foundation as opposed to Dunfermline, further indicating that James perhaps intended to create a spiritual and secular royal centre in Perth. No Scottish king had been buried at Dunfermline since Robert I in 1329 so it is not surprising that James also chose a more personal location for his burial. James's wishes may also have been influenced by the most recent burial of note in Dunfermline, that of Robert, duke of Albany (d.1420), whom James appears to have held responsible for Rothesay's death and the length of his own captivity in England.¹¹¹ The choice of the Charterhouse for James's burial is particularly interesting as it was still unusual for secular individuals to be buried in Carthusian monasteries. This is not surprising

¹⁰⁹ Oram, 'Community of the Realm', 37-9.

¹¹⁰ Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 93, 285.

¹¹¹ Boardman, 'Dunfermline as a Royal Mausoleum', 139, 148.

given that the rules of the Order prohibited secular burials.¹¹² Margaret Thompson states that it was not until the fifteenth century that the Carthusians began to allow anyone other than members of the order to be buried in their cemeteries.¹¹³ Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy was buried at his Charterhouse, however, so this was not without precedent.¹¹⁴ There is evidence to suggest that James fully intended to be buried within the Charterhouse and that this was not simply a convenient choice made after his death. A supplication made to the Pope in February 1442 by Charles, king of France, James II, the Dauphin and James I's daughter Margaret states that James founded the house 'wishing to provide a sepulchre for his body when he pays the debt of nature', although this was written some years after James's assassination and burial.¹¹⁵ It is possible, therefore, that this represents political spin after the fact. Yet Paul Binski has suggested that a king's choice of location for his tomb is generally a good indication of who they thought they were.¹¹⁶ He cites, for example, Henry III's decision to be buried at what had become the effective centre of English political power, Westminster, the first king to be buried there since the Norman Conquest. However, D.M. Palliser argues that Henry III chose Westminster because of his special affinity for St Edward the Confessor as opposed to a desire to inaugurate a royal mausoleum, although the political motives implied by Binski were no doubt as important a consideration as devotional ones.¹¹⁷ Additionally, it is possible that had Henry still held control in Anjou, he would have chosen to be buried at Fontevrault, particularly as there would perhaps have been less impetus to emphasise the legitimacy of his family's tenure in England.

¹¹² Becket, *The Perth Charterhouse*, 5.

¹¹³ Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England*, 144.

¹¹⁴ Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 35.

¹¹⁵ *CSSR*, v, 211.

¹¹⁶ Binski, *Westminster Abbey*, 5.

¹¹⁷ Palliser, 'Royal Mausolea in the Long Fifteenth Century', 4.

As is clear throughout this chapter it is difficult to separate pious from political concerns in this period. Additionally, Joel Burden highlights the case of Richard II, a deposed king who was buried at King's Langley as opposed to his own choice of Westminster.¹¹⁸ Henry IV made this decision due to the strong connections between Richard and Westminster in an effort to avoid Richard's tomb becoming a focus for dissent and opposition to the new regime and did not want the extensive Ricardian imagery at Westminster to hinder Lancastrian efforts to cast aspersions on Richard and his reign. The combination of these factors makes James's burial in the Charterhouse an eminently logical action. Known for their purity, the association of the king with the Carthusians would have been an adroit way to promote him as a pious and admired king, which James would have been keen to do in order to promote his own image, even after his death. The incorrupt reputation of the Carthusians would have been a particular contrast to the reality of James as an overweight, profligate spender. Furthermore, the queen and her supporters would have been pleased to carry out this plan after the king's assassination as promoting the devout image of James would have been essential in helping to ensure a stable transfer of power to them. This would have been particularly helpful given that Perth and its surrounds was an area in which Joan and her supporters had little influence. That James founded the Charterhouse, giving it royal connections, would have helped to make it a centre for commemorating the murdered king. The queen and her supporters may have hoped to increase support for themselves at the expense of the conspirators, by portraying them as murderers of a devout king as opposed to loyal subjects removing a potentially dangerous ruler. The display of James's body also contrasted with Lancastrian efforts regarding

¹¹⁸ Burden, 'How do you bury a deposed king?', 43-49.

Richard II, where the intention was to confirm that the deposed king was dead and thus curtail support for him.¹¹⁹ Michael Brown has already highlighted the propaganda value of the display of James's corpse to the Bishop of Urbino, who proclaimed James to be a martyr and an administerer of justice.¹²⁰

Perth does seem at first to be a peculiar choice if James's intention was to found a royal and religious centre similar to Westminster. Dunfermline had the association with the royal saint, Margaret, in a similar way to Westminster and Edward the Confessor, which would appear to make it a more logical choice. It was also closer to the royal residences of Stirling and Edinburgh than Perth. Dunfermline was not a particularly significant residence in other ways, however, as it did not hold the same historical, administrative or economic significance within Scotland that London had within England.¹²¹ In contrast, Perth had the proximity to Scone, the traditional inauguration and coronation site of Scottish kings, similar to Westminster, which had itself started out as a coronation church. Both London and Perth had similar geographical locations, being sited on major tidal rivers. Perth also benefited from its central location within the kingdom, having relatively easy access to the north and south, a main reason why it was a favoured choice of location for provincial councils of the Scottish Church.¹²² Furthermore, the lack of a significant royal residence nearby may also not have been such a problematic issue. The chief residence of Walter, earl of Atholl, Methven Castle, lay just a few miles from Perth and it is perhaps the case that James intended to replace the earl as the focus of authority in the area. James made several intrusions into Atholl's lands, annexing lands in the lordship of Methven, one of Atholl's territories, in 1434, ostensibly to

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 51.

¹²⁰ Brown, *James I*, 194.

¹²¹ Boardman, 'Dunfermline as a Royal Mausoleum', 146.

¹²² D.E.R. Watt, *Medieval Church Councils in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2000), *passim*. Watt suggests that a reference in a fifteenth century record to 'the usual place' of meeting meant Perth.

settle a dispute between Atholl and the Earl of Douglas.¹²³ Methven was a wealthy lordship so it is not unsurprising that James would seek to gain influence there. Additionally, James's actions regarding the university of St Andrews further suggests a distinct plan, as already stated. It is interesting that James abandoned his efforts to move the university in the latter years of his reign, confirming its charters in 1432. By this point, cracks were beginning to appear in James's rule and he could not now muster the support needed to carry through his plans to their conclusion.

James did not completely ignore other religious foundations, however. That James admonished the Augustinian and Benedictine Orders over the decline in their adherence to their Rules is well known.¹²⁴ This highlights that James was concerned generally with the state of monasticism in Scotland, indicating a measure of pious motivation. Not only was this required of James as a Christian monarch, but as a descendant of David I, James was actually a patron of many monasteries and therefore had a further obligation to concern himself with the health of these foundations. In addition, other Orders and foundations continued to receive patronage throughout the reign. For example, the Carmelite, Dominican and Minorite friars continued to receive annuities from the fermes, as did the abbots of Dunfermline, Scone and Cambuskenneth.¹²⁵ The amounts involved were fairly large, ranging from a total of £182 10s in 1424-5 to £337 12s 2d in 1435-6, though the latter figure is significantly higher largely due to the revaluation of the currency.¹²⁶ However, these were long-standing payments and thus perhaps do not tell us much about the interests of James himself, although the fact that he later transferred some of these payments to the Perth Charterhouse suggests that he was

¹²³ Brown, *James I*, 179.

¹²⁴ Nicholson, *The Later Middle Ages*, 298, for example.

¹²⁵ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*.

not unwilling to alter the situation according to his desire. Consequently, it may be possible to say that James was more interested from a religious perspective in those institutions that retained their annuities until the end of the reign as opposed to those who were interfered with. In addition, there were a few examples that ceased shortly after the beginning of the reign and these too may be significant. For example, an annuity to a chaplain of St Bitermanus(?) in the diocese of Brechin made its last appearance in the 1425 account.¹²⁷ James was probably reluctant to keep paying large amounts of money to religious institutions. It is well known that James considered David I 'ane sair sanct for the crown' due to the large number of grants the latter gave to the Church.¹²⁸

As with alms payments and monastic foundations, religious patronage of this nature could have political as well as pious motivations. Giving patronage was a means of building links between the king and various localities, a necessity in an era and country where central government was not particularly strong. Religion was a powerful influence in most people's lives at this time, so building up connections with various foundations was a good way of accessing the lives of inhabitants not under the immediate influence of the monarch or court. This may be why James chose Perth as the location of his Charterhouse. Although not known for their work in communities, the Carthusians were still highly admired due to their asceticism. The presence of this new, royal monastic foundation in an area dominated by the Earl of Atholl would have been a very visible way for James to promote himself in the locality, helping him to begin to supplant Atholl as the foremost power in the area. This may have been a particular goal of the king's as his deceased brother, David, had been granted control of the earldom of Atholl in 1398, highlighting David's

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 399.

¹²⁸ *Boece*, vol.2, 185. This statement may reflect early 16th century attitudes as opposed to a genuine sentiment expressed by James I.

growing role and status in the political life of the kingdom. James may have been hoping to effect a return of the earldom, or at least control of it, to royal hands.

In the same fashion, James's choice of the abbot of Melrose as his confessor may have been influenced by a desire to improve his own standing in that area over the Douglas family who had long been patrons of Melrose, which lay within the sphere of influence of the Earl of Douglas.¹²⁹ James also confirmed several grants of earlier kings to Melrose in January 1430, as well as granting to the abbot and convent their lands of Ettrick and Rodono in the Marches and lands in the earldom of Carrick in free regality.¹³⁰ This would have had an impact on Douglas's rights in the central Borders area, though it may be that Douglas was willing to allow this to happen due to his family's long association with the abbey.¹³¹ James may have been following in the footsteps of his deceased brother in this area. In 1401, Rothesay had declared Melrose a place secure from the influence of the Black Douglas family, as part of an effort to reassert royal associations with the abbey while reducing the role of the Douglas family in the area.¹³² Thus James may have been seeking to reinforce the connection between himself and his 'martyred' brother while replacing Douglas as the chief magnate associated with this Border house. James showed further patronage to Melrose in 1431, confirming a grant made by Sir David Menzies, an adherent of the king and queen, of one third of the lands of Wolfclyde in Lanarkshire to the monastery.¹³³ By confirming grants, James could show favour to Melrose at no cost to the crown.

¹²⁹ Brown, *The Black Douglases*, 189.

¹³⁰ RMS, ii, no.142; *Liber Sancte Marie de Melros*, ii, 493, 495; *The Douglas Book*, i, 410.

¹³¹ *The Douglas Book*, i, 410.

¹³² Brown, *The Black Douglases*, 190.

¹³³ *The 'Red' and 'White' Book of Menzies*, 108.

iv: The King's Devotional Calendar: Overview

The particular anniversaries and saints that received attention from James can also reveal much about the devotional atmosphere at court and the political objectives of the reign.¹³⁴ Although difficult, it is possible to gain some idea of this area. As Michael Penman has shown for David II (1329-71), a speculative calendar of 'non-business' days can be compiled by eliminating from consideration those days on which the king was occupied by official duties, such as parliaments or the issuing of charters.¹³⁵ This then leaves days on which the king could conceivably be involved in some type of devotional activity. This is a somewhat artificial exercise, prone to flaws, as the possibility exists that James was involved in non-religious activities on some of these days or indeed participated in some minor devotional activity on days that he engaged in official duties. However, the official prohibition on the laity engaging in work on holy days may have affected the king's work as well. In addition, it may be that he was not 'free' on days that appear to be so as evidence has not survived. This could especially be the case for the latter part of the reign when there are comparatively few royal acts to utilise in this approach.

Nevertheless, the approach is not without merit. It is possible to corroborate the likelihood of these 'free' days being used in a liturgical way, that is, being used to commemorate a particular anniversary or venerate a specific saint, by examining what is known of the reign in general terms and by logical deduction. It is not especially likely, for instance, that a saint known to be of restricted popularity or to have his or her cult centre in an obscure Middle Eastern location was venerated at the Scottish court. In addition, the Church itself had certain days that were required to be kept as Holy Days by the laity and this would obviously apply to Scotland as well.

¹³⁴ See appendix 5 for an extrapolated calendar of devotional dates for James I.

¹³⁵ Penman, 'Christian Days and Knights'.

Sundays were of course kept as the Sabbath and there were additionally the great feasts such as Easter and Christmas. Eamon Duffy has identified over fifty days in the year in addition to Sundays that were *festa ferianda*, days dedicated to saints on which all but the most essential work was prohibited.¹³⁶ The particular saints venerated would obviously vary from country to country and even within countries according to location or social status. However, Duffy has again suggested for England that there were about seventy days in the year on which fasting by the laity, as well as the clergy, was considered obligatory. Many, if not all of these, appear to relate to feasts of universal importance such as Lent, Ash Wednesday, Christmas Day, the Nativity of St John the Baptist and All Saints, to name a few.¹³⁷ It should be noted, however, that some recent work has suggested that many individuals were exempted from the obligation of fasting.¹³⁸ Indeed, James certainly sought freedom from this obligation, supplicating the Pope for absolution from fasting in 1430.¹³⁹

There are some difficulties in corroborating devotional behaviour suggested by this method. Unfortunately, there is little surviving evidence for this period in terms of Books of Hours or Psalters used by the royal family.¹⁴⁰ However, some suggestions may be made from examining contemporary books and mid- to late-fifteenth century additions to earlier manuscripts. This may give some indication of the popularity of particular saints among the noble classes. As a further difficulty, little remains in the Exchequer accounts of the reign to tell of offerings made. Thus, it is not possible to use the *Exchequer Rolls* to confirm that James had an affinity for any given saint. However, what financial records there are can give some indication

¹³⁶ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 156.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, 41.

¹³⁸ Tanner & Watson, 'Least of the Laity', 416-7.

¹³⁹ CSSR, iv, 78-9.

¹⁴⁰ *The Eye of the Mind: the Scot and His Books*, National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1983); D. McRoberts, 'Catalogue of Scottish Medieval Liturgical Books and Fragments' in *Innes Review*, vol.3, no.1 (1952), 49-63; J. Durkan, 'Early Scottish Libraries' in *IR* vol.9, no.1 (1958).

of James's attitude to various religious Orders, most importantly of course the Carthusian Order for whom the king constructed the Perth Charterhouse and this information can be supported with evidence from other sources such as parliament records and chronicles. Further, the king's attitude towards the heretical beliefs of the period, specifically Lollardy, can be considered as this would show how far James conformed to the beliefs of his day, as discussed above. Patronage given by James to particular Orders or religious establishments can also help to determine the king's religious interests. All these factors can serve to add to the impression gained from the calendar method, helping to limit any flaws.

v: Royal Anniversaries

The anniversaries shall be examined first as these can reveal which figures and events from Scotland's past the king wished to associate himself with and thus give some indication of the political climate at the time.¹⁴¹ In examining the religion of Edward III, Ormrod has suggested that the English king venerated the anniversaries of his ancestors in an effort to legitimise his reign following its somewhat scandalous beginnings.¹⁴² Ormrod believes that by commemorating earlier successful monarchs, Edward was able to associate himself with them in the public imagination and thus help the process of re-establishing the status of the English monarchy, something with which Edward was clearly concerned during his reign. The particular example given by Ormrod is the anniversary of the death of Edward I, which was always venerated at court. This is not surprising given the military successes of the earlier Edward and the military aspirations of his grandson.

¹⁴¹ By anniversaries it is meant dates such as the births and deaths of members of the royal family, and the commemorations of important events in Scotland's past, for example, the Battle of Bannockburn.

¹⁴² Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 868.

When looking at James's 'free' days revealed by the method outlined above, several anniversary dates relating to earlier kings are evident. The deaths of Alexander II (8/7) and Alexander III (19/3) are among those that appear always to have been kept, as no royal business appears to have taken place on those days, except for one instance of a charter of Alexander, earl of Mar, being confirmed on 19 March 1435.¹⁴³ Given the earl's Christian name, this is perhaps not inappropriate to the day, assuming the charter was confirmed on the stated date. The inauguration dates of Alexander II (5/12) and Alexander III (13/7) are also present in the projected calendar. The deaths of James's immediate predecessors, Robert II (19/4) and III (4/4), also appear, though on one occasion, in 1431, James did confirm a charter on the date of the former at Perth and in 1432 confirmed a charter on the date of the latter, also at Perth.¹⁴⁴ The coronation date of Robert III (14/8) was also observed, while that of Robert II (26/3) appears in every year except 1430, when a charter was issued at Perth.¹⁴⁵ As Robert II was buried nearby at Scone, and both Robert II and Robert III had been crowned there, it is not impossible that James commemorated these anniversaries despite issuing a grant on those occasions. It is not hard to surmise a reason for these kings being of interest to James. The two Alexanders obviously hark back to the time before the Wars of Independence, to times of relative peace and stability in contrast to the disruption and hostility of relations with England that followed. Furthermore, Bower is fulsome in his praise of Alexander II and III. The 'noble king Alexander II' is lauded as compassionate, generous, pious

¹⁴³ NAS, Papers of the Erskine Family, Earls of Mar and Kellie, GD124/1/136. Unfortunately, the location of the confirmation charter is not stated. The appearance of a single charter on the day does not necessarily invalidate it as a 'non-business' day, as it is often possible to suggest that a charter was issued as a form of commemoration for the day. If a number of charters are issued, with no apparent connection to the particular anniversary or feast associated with that day, then it is more likely that this anniversary/feast was not regularly observed.

¹⁴⁴ RMS, ii, no.189; NAS Papers of the family of Fullarton of Kilmichael, Arran GD1/19/3.

¹⁴⁵ RMS, ii, no.150.

and a giver of justice.¹⁴⁶ Of the ‘dearly beloved’ Alexander III, Bower is even more flattering, outlining his qualities as a king at some length.¹⁴⁷ Intriguingly, one of the qualities these two kings have in common, by Bower’s account, is their interest in religion. Bower notes that Alexander II had ‘a wonderful zeal for the increase of religion’ and that during Alexander III’s reign ‘the church of Christ flourished, [and] its priests were honoured with due respect’.¹⁴⁸ This would make these figures highly attractive to James as he sought to establish his own rule and reputation. Obviously, the expression of royal piety was conventional, as it was held to be one of the key aspects of medieval kingship. However, the fact that it was conventional, was emphasised so strongly, indicates just how important it was for medieval rulers to be seen to be pious in their actions. It would thus have been crucial for James to establish some level of devotional activity at court and to take an interest in religious matters. Interestingly, the eldest of James’s twin sons was named Alexander and it was he who would have succeeded as Alexander IV had he not died in infancy. This may partially explain the lapse in observance of the anniversaries of the deaths of these two kings in 1431 and 1432, as James now had a more visible link with this era in the person of his son, with their re-emergence thereafter explained by the death of the young prince in infancy. This apparent interest in Alexander II and III may also help to explain the king’s interest in Perth, as the latter king’s heart was apparently buried in Perth.¹⁴⁹

Norman Reid has suggested that Bower’s eulogies of these kings, particularly Alexander II, owe more to conventions of medieval chronicles and

¹⁴⁶ *Chron. Bower*, v, 191-2. See also S. Mapstone, ‘Bower on Kingship’ in *Chron. Bower*, ix, 321-338.

¹⁴⁷ *Chron. Bower*, v, 421-29.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 193, 421.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 421.

kingship than the reality of either king's reign.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, the fact that Bower was writing in the turbulent period of James II's minority does suggest that any comments he has to make about the strengths and successes of earlier reigns should be treated with caution in attempting to determine James I's potential motives in including these kings in any devotional calendar. However, what Bower's comments really highlight is just how important some areas were considered for medieval monarchs. Furthermore, Bower's comments also suggest that there was a generally positive attitude towards these kings in early fifteenth century Scotland. This would have given further encouragement to James's celebration of these earlier kings.

More immediately, by commemorating Robert II and III, James was emphasising the legitimacy of his Stewart reign and establishing a sense of continuity that was essential following his eighteen-year absence from Scotland. James faced an immediate need to establish his authority upon his return in an effort to gain control of his kingdom. It is also interesting to note that James may have had a very real affection for his father, having spent time at his father's court before his English captivity.¹⁵¹ Bower is generally positive in his view of Robert III, describing him as a 'wise man' and as having a 'sound conscience' and a 'love of justice', all prerequisites for a good medieval king and shows a sense of humility to Robert's character that was missing in his son.¹⁵²

There is another significant historic personage who appears to have been honoured by James, namely Robert I, one of the most esteemed monarchs in Scottish

¹⁵⁰ N. H. Reid, 'A great Prince, and very greedy of this world's honour': The Historiography of Alexander II' in R. D. Oram (ed.), *The Reign of Alexander II, 1214-1249* (Leiden, 2005), 49-78; N. H. Reid, 'Alexander III: the Historiography of a Myth' in N.H. Reid (ed.), *Scotland in the Reign of Alexander III* (Edinburgh, 1990), 181-213.

¹⁵¹ *ER*, iii, 617.

¹⁵² *Chron. Bower*, viii, 5.

history.¹⁵³ The birth (11/7), inauguration (25/3) and death (7/6) dates of Robert I are all apparent in this calendar of significant dates. Day one of Bannockburn (23/6) is also present in this suggested calendar, reflecting both James's interest in the earlier monarch and his interest in commemorating a great Scottish victory. Day two of the battle, which is also the feast of St John the Baptist, is found every year except 1425 when a charter was issued in Edinburgh.¹⁵⁴ Additionally, James's confessor was the abbot of Melrose, where Bruce's heart was buried. While it is likely that the abbot's connection to the powerful Douglas family was a stronger motivator in this instance than the presence of the Bruce heart it is possible that James looked upon this connection as a fortuitous benefit, strengthening both his *personal* interest in the cult and his *visible* interest in the cult. Melrose was also the burial place of Alexander II, perhaps stimulating and strengthening royal interest in the Alexanders as well.

It is not difficult to understand why Robert I should appear in the apparent list of devotional subjects. Robert I was a hero king, who had defended Scotland against English domination and who forged a peace treaty with the southern kingdom, something that would not have been forgotten by early-fifteenth century Scots. It seems likely that James was seeking to do something similar to what Ormrod contends Edward III was doing in the fourteenth century, that is, seeking to enhance his own position through association with glorious ancestors. This perhaps also explains why there was apparently a less strict observance of dates associated with Robert II and III than was the case with Robert I, the former two kings having

¹⁵³ The commemoration of this king in Barbour's poetic work *The Bruce*, the discovery of Bruce's shirt in the royal treasury in 1488 and the discovery of his sword on the field at Sauchieburn are just some of the expressions of royal interest in this figure in the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

¹⁵⁴ *RMS*, ii, no.22. Ormrod has shown that Edward III commemorated different saints at different times in his reign according to the political climate of the time. Thus, the fact that on one occasion, early in the reign, this date was not totally free does not necessarily mean that the day was not considered important. Additionally, there are other factors in favour of the Baptist's feast being of importance to James, so at the very least, this saint, if not the Battle, were probably a key part of devotional life at James's court.

had rather less auspicious reigns than the latter. There is also the fact that Barbour's *Bruce* was still widely known by the 1420s, both Wyntoun and Bower directing readers to the earlier account for details about Robert's life. Additionally, James continued to pay the annuity to the Dean and Chapter of Aberdeen first awarded by Robert III, as discussed in chapter six. There is of course the possibility that James commemorated these dates simply because he was expected to by his subjects.

Michael Penman's study of David II's religious devotions highlights the Robert I dates and those of Alexander II and III, as well as the death of David's mother.¹⁵⁵ It is probable that James also observed the anniversary of the death of his own mother, Annabella Drummond, although the exact date for this event is unrecorded.¹⁵⁶ James did name one of his daughters after his mother, increasing the likelihood that her death anniversary was kept, and possibly her other dates as well. It may be that this was standard practice and James was simply adhering to convention in his remembrance of these figures. Other monarchs also commemorated ancestors, the example of Edward III having already been given, and Henry V celebrated the anniversary of Henry IV, paying significant sums of money for this. It is unlikely, though, that James respected these dates unwillingly, due to the political benefits that could accrue.

In addition, James appears to have observed some key dates relating to his own life. The dates of the treaty securing his release (28/3) and his coronation (21/5), both appear to have been reserved for non-business activities. The date of James's capture by the English (22/3) is also present but it is likely that this would be a date the king would prefer to forget, as it led to his captivity and years of powerlessness. This does highlight that this methodology is not without problems.

¹⁵⁵ Penman, 'Christian Days', 257.

¹⁵⁶ Brown, *James I*, 12.

However, it may be that James remembered this date to act as a contrast between the then and now. Indeed, James may have held the view that his captivity was part of a Divine plan and thus the date of his capture would be worthy of commemoration. There is some indication of this in *The Kingis Quair*, where James gives thanks to ‘the sanctis marciall/that me first causit hath this accident’, March being the month in which James was captured by the English.¹⁵⁷ As for the release and coronation dates, these require little explanation, as their celebration was no doubt intended to act as a reminder that the king had indeed returned and was the legitimate, crowned monarch. The fact that the date on which the Papal Bull granting coronation and unction to Scottish monarchs in 1329 (13/6) was also apparently observed may well be related to this, as it helped to emphasise James’s status as God’s divinely appointed representative. This would have helped to combat accusations of inferiority from outwith Scotland and to secure his position against powerful magnates within. A sense of lineage could certainly inform devotional behaviour. Saul suggests that it was this that lay behind Richard II’s interest in Edward the Confessor.¹⁵⁸

Of particular significance, perhaps, was 25 and 26 March. In addition to the former marking the first inauguration of Robert I and the Annunciation of Mary, and the latter the coronation of Robert II, James’s elder brother David, duke of Rothesay, died on the night of 25 March and this also marked the medieval New Year.¹⁵⁹ These two dates are unoccupied in every year of the reign except for 1430 when a charter was issued on 26 March as already mentioned. This may mean that there was a particularly celebratory atmosphere at court over these two days, commemorating important dates in Bruce-Stewart family history and associating it with a key date in

¹⁵⁷ *Kingis Quair*, st.191, ll.3-4.

¹⁵⁸ Saul, *Richard II*, 311.

¹⁵⁹ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 20.

the ritual year, as well as the date the signing of the treaty that secured James's release from England. Again, this would have had significant political implications. This would be particularly the case during the times when Rothesay's anniversary fell especially close to Easter. In 1429 and 1431, Easter fell on 27 and 28 March respectively, and throughout James's reign was no later than 20 April, making this an especially important time in the devotional life of the king and court. The juxtaposition of the holiest feast in the Christian calendar with key dynastic dates would have been highly advantageous in James's efforts to promote both David and his own kingship, especially given Nicholson's argument already stated above that James was seeking to cast a spiritual aura around the royal family. Furthermore, Easter, commemorating the Resurrection, would no doubt have had a special significance for the king; in 1402, the year in which Rothesay died, Easter fell on 26 March.¹⁶⁰ This parallel may well have influenced James in his efforts to promote a cult around his brother. Steve Boardman has highlighted that those who died on holy days could be venerated with almost immediate effect.¹⁶¹ James would thus not have been hindered by having to wait for extensive reports of miracles or other evidence of Rothesay's saintliness.

James would have been particularly concerned to commemorate the death of Rothesay. As Michael Brown has noted, Rothesay's death led to James's own eventual succession to the throne. This event may also have helped to stimulate the king's hostility towards and attack upon the Albany Stewart family.¹⁶² Brown further suggests that the later view of Hector Boece that Rothesay died a martyr was

¹⁶⁰ It is also interesting to note that in 1424, Easter fell on 23 April, very soon after James's return to Scotland. He may thus have felt a particularly strong connection with this festival due to this coincidence as well as its connection to his brother's death.

¹⁶¹ S. Boardman, 'David, duke of Rothesay. Political martyrdom and popular sanctity in fifteenth-century Scotland' paper given at 'The Cult of Saints in medieval Scotland' conference, 8-9 September 2007.

¹⁶² Brown, *James I*, 13.

initiated during James's reign. The observance of the anniversary of his death would surely have been a valuable tool in this process. Furthermore, a supplication to the Pope in 1427 made by James and the abbot of St Mary of Lindores, a Tironensian Abbey in northern Fife, where David was buried, described the deceased duke as 'of happy memory', and goes on to claim that Rothesay's body was considered to be holy due to the miracles performed at his tomb. This does seem to suggest that James was attempting to create a cult around his deceased brother.¹⁶³ The fact that this abbey was founded by Earl *David* of Huntingdon, who originally intended to be buried there, may have aided James in his efforts to promote his brother's cult, by linking him to more illustrious times. Huntingdon was also the royal figure from whom the Stewarts, via the Bruces, claimed descent.¹⁶⁴ However, these statements are somewhat in contrast to the way in which chronicles portrayed the duke. John Shirley describes Rothesay as 'full vicious in his living, as in depucelling & defouling of yong maydenys & in breking th'ordre of wedloke be his foule ambycious lust of aduoutrie'.¹⁶⁵ Walter Bower states that the king [Robert III] and the council felt that Rothesay (who at the time of his death was royal lieutenant) 'engaged too often in unruly games and trivial sports' and although controlled by the council for a period, 'gave himself up wholly once more to his previous frivolity' following the death of his mother Annabella.¹⁶⁶ Clearly, these chroniclers, writing, it should be noted, after James's death, were less than convinced of David's saintly disposition. However, their opinions were likely to be as biased as James's own efforts to rehabilitate his brother. Albany and Douglas, as the architects of Rothesay's downfall, were not slow in dispersing their own propaganda in order to

¹⁶³ *CSSR*, ii, 167.

¹⁶⁴ K. J. Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon, 1152-1219: a Study in Anglo-Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1985).

¹⁶⁵ Shirley, 'The Dethe of the Kynge of Scotis', 23-56, 24.

¹⁶⁶ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 39.

justify their actions towards the duke. Bower especially is known to be an admirer of the Duke of Albany so would not be eager to advance a view that essentially had him acting unlawfully and against the interests of the kingdom. Furthermore, Stephen Boardman has shown that Rothesay was active in government and was not as debauched as the chronicles suggest.¹⁶⁷ What the chronicle opinions do seem to indicate, however, is that James was unsuccessful in rehabilitating popular perceptions of Rothesay. Nevertheless, for present purposes it was the fact that he attempted to do so at all that is important.

It is likely due to his efforts in this area that James showed an interest in augmenting Lindores' possessions. Although significant patronage is lacking, James did petition the Pope to have the church of Creich transferred to the abbey.¹⁶⁸ In the context of a king who gave very little patronage throughout his reign, this is a good indication of favour towards Lindores. Additionally, it was probably due to James's interest in developing a cult around his deceased brother that he appears to have been near Rothesay's tomb at the anniversary of his death. The paucity of source material does limit the certainty of this but what data does survive shows James almost certainly being at Perth around this date in 1425, possibly 1426, 1430, 1431, and 1432.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, the lack of data means that it is possible he was also in Perth in 1427 (where there is no location data for 16 March to 26 May), in 1433 (when there is no material for March at all), in 1434 (when he was at Stirling on 16 March with no further data until May). It is also possible James was there in 1436 when all that is known is that he was in Dumbarton in the early part of the month dealing with preparations for his daughter Margaret's voyage to France.¹⁷⁰ Perth is just over ten

¹⁶⁷ Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings*, 223-254.

¹⁶⁸ *Calendar of Papal Registers: Letters*, viii, 143.

¹⁶⁹ See appendix 6.

¹⁷⁰ In 1435 there is a charter issued on 19 March but a location is not given.

miles from Lindores, making it entirely possible that James visited the abbey when staying in the burgh. There is not a great deal of evidence to suggest that James visited Falkland with any frequency. Only one charter, dated 1 May 1425, was issued from Falkland and there is one record in the *Exchequer Rolls* for wagons sent to Falkland for the king's use.¹⁷¹ Falkland was the nearest royal residence to Lindores so would perhaps have been the most logical place for James to stay when visiting the abbey. However, James may have felt a reluctance to stay in the place that was the site of his brother's death, perhaps foreshadowing the decline in popularity of Perth after James's own murder in that burgh.

In 1428, a charter places James in Edinburgh on 27 March, making it unlikely that he was still in Perth on 25/26, although he was there for parliament at the beginning of the month. In this instance, James may have been preoccupied with diplomatic matters, as the French embassy arrived in the spring of 1428 to conduct negotiations for an alliance. It is understandable that other matters would have to be neglected for a while. Additionally, it is difficult to establish James's whereabouts in March 1429. Charters place him in Perth on the tenth and thirty-first, but evidence from the *Exchequer Rolls* also has him at Haddington, Dunbar, Linlithgow and Coldingham during this month.¹⁷² James was at the latter location early in March for talks with Cardinal Beaufort following the recently concluded Franco-Scottish alliance that stood as a potential threat to England and to Beaufort's policies.¹⁷³ Spring of 1429 also saw the failure of James's 1428 Highland settlement with the rebellion of the Lord of the Isles. Brown suggests that a statute of April 1429 showed James's knowledge of and reaction to the rebellion, so it is not impossible

¹⁷¹ *RMS*, ii, no.20; *ER*, iv, 423. The *ER* reference probably refers to the same visit as it appears in the account for the period 1425-6.

¹⁷² NAS GD68/1/2; *RMS*, iii, no.1928; *ER*, iv, 466, 477.

¹⁷³ Brown, *James I*, 111.

that the king's religious devotions at the end of March had to take a different form.¹⁷⁴

Of course, it should be remembered that just because James was not present at Rothesay's tomb did not mean that he did not still mark the occasion with the appropriate masses and prayers.

Veneration of Rothesay may also have served to rehabilitate his reputation following the explanations used by Douglas and Albany to justify their actions. Furthermore, it would have been a permanent reminder to Albany Stewart supporters of the opposition to this family by the king and the promotion of Rothesay as a victim would have aided James in justifying his own attack on Murdoch and his kin. James may also simply have wished to remember his brother as an act of piety outwith the political circumstances. Although not quite eight years old when Rothesay died, James would have had knowledge of his brother from the duke's former councillors Sir Robert Lauder of the Bass and Thomas Somerville of Carnwath, who James brought into his own retinue in 1424.¹⁷⁵ His continued payment of an annuity of £5 *per annum* to a chaplain in St Saviour's in Dundee for Rothesay's soul would have compounded the effect of the commemoration, acting as a further reminder of Rothesay's death and its circumstances.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, it points towards genuine piety, as this was still an age that believed that saying masses could speed a soul through purgatory. A final point that should be noted concerning this issue is that it provides a possible explanation for James's apparent interest in the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary as well as further evidence for it. As already stated, Rothesay was buried in Lindores Abbey, which had Mary as one of the saints to which it was dedicated, so James was perhaps keen to venerate the saint that in effect had the keeping of his brother's earthly remains. Of course, it was very common for

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 101.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 51.

¹⁷⁶ *ER*, iv, *passim*.

monastic houses to be dedicated to the Virgin so this may be taking speculation too far. However, a supplication already referred to states that pilgrims to the abbey came especially in ‘the feast of the nativity of St Mary and the octaves of the same’. James was attempting to add to this by asking the Pope to grant an indult to the prior of the convent to hear the confessions of those visiting the abbey in the feast of the Nativity of St Mary, suggesting that the Virgin was of particular interest to James.¹⁷⁷ The king seems to have been keen to boost pilgrimage related to veneration of the Virgin, and this is also suggested by indications that he constructed houses for pilgrims going to the Marian shrine at Whitekirk.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, the other dedicatee of Lindores was St. Andrew and the combination of Christianity’s most popular saint, Scotland’s national saint and his brother’s relics may have had significant resonance for James.

Two other dates of kings were possibly commemorated, namely, the deaths of Henry IV (20/3) and V (31/8). The former is observed in every year except 1430, when two charters are granted to servants for service to the king during his captivity and in 1432 when he granted exemption from royal dues and services to the members of St Andrews University.¹⁷⁹ Strikingly, that of Henry V does not appear to be neglected in any year. The commemoration of two powerful English monarchs may not have been popular among James’s subjects, as it accorded some status to the men whom many Scots would have viewed as enemies, although James undoubtedly held a different view of the English monarchs, particularly Henry V. It is not that surprising that James would wish to remember two men who were so influential in his life. It was the English kings who directed his upbringing and lifestyle for

¹⁷⁷ *CSSR*, ii, 167.

¹⁷⁸ Yeoman, *Pilgrimage*, 51; MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Scriptural Dedications* (Edinburgh, 1910), 95.

¹⁷⁹ *RMS*, ii, nos. 147, 148, 199.

eighteen years, and who informed many of his ideas regarding politics and the status of the monarch, as well as court life. The English monarchs thus had a greater impact on James during his youth than James's own father, Robert III. This perhaps gives a further insight into James's personal devotions.

In a perhaps unexpected contrast, James also apparently observed the feast day of Louis IX (25/8), the saintly French king. This may only be a coincidence but it is possible that this was a result of pressure from nobles who still looked to France and the 'auld alliance', as opposed to England, for diplomatic ties. Additionally, Louis had a strong connection to Crusading, having taken the Cross in 1244 and eventually dying while on Crusade. While he does not give a huge amount of detail about Louis's life, Bower does repeat a description of the French king, which describes him as 'the flower of princes, the glory of the magnates, the nobleness of the host, the treasure-house of the poor', suggesting that he held the saintly French monarch in some regard.¹⁸⁰ Again, however, it is necessary to consider the political situation. As has been discussed by Balfour-Melville and Brown, Scotland's foreign policy regarding relations with England and France was somewhat in flux for much of James's reign as the king sought to strengthen ties with his country's southern neighbour. There was of course the Franco-Scottish alliance of 1428 that provided for James to send troops to France to aid in her war effort and also for the marriage of James's eldest daughter Margaret to the French Dauphin. However, it was not until 1436 that this marriage finally took place and the policy became fully settled. James had, a few years prior to the marriage, shown a willingness to break the French alliance when England offered the return of Berwick and Roxburgh to

¹⁸⁰ *Chron. Bower*, v, 377. The editors have been unable to trace Bower's source for this quote, but state that Bower claims to be referring to several *Lives* of St Louis for his information on the king.

Scottish hands.¹⁸¹ Two other saints with a French association, St Denis (9/10) and St Martin (11/11), are also on the list of James's possible devotional interests, although in 1425 a charter was issued on the feast day of the latter saint. This further suggests that it is possible to see the commemoration of the two Henrys, Louis and the others as part of James's efforts to keep open the possibility of alliance with either of the two countries. Additionally, Martin was the patron saint of the cathedral-priory at Whithorn. It is possible that either Martin influenced an interest in that church, or vice versa. It is interesting to note that in his youth, Martin was imprisoned for a time, albeit under different circumstances to James. It is clear from these few examples that the commemoration of particular anniversaries could have both political and pious motives, indicating how difficult it is to separate motives in this period.

vi: Saints and Feast Days

An examination of saints that appear to have been venerated at James's court can provide similar insights to those achieved by a study of the anniversaries that were possibly observed. Saints and their cults were an important part of medieval religion and the veneration of saints was a central component of religious practice in this period. Additionally, Diana Webb has argued that 'the exploitation of the cult of saints was an integral part of the practice of medieval kingship'.¹⁸² The king was expected to lead by example to ensure the spiritual welfare of his kingdom and his people and to ensure that God's favour came to him. Again, devotion to particular saints could have significant propaganda value. The baptism of Edward III, for instance, was held to coincide with the feast day of Edward the Confessor,

¹⁸¹ Brown, *James I*, 152-3.

¹⁸² D. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (London & New York, 2000), 111.

linking the monarch to the royal saint. Additionally, during the Scottish campaigns of the 1330s, Edward associated himself with saints such as Cuthbert, who had a particular connection to Durham, and to William of York. This was clearly intended to create support among his northern subjects for the campaign.¹⁸³ Scottish kings were not ignorant of this practice. Robert I, for instance, had a particular interest in Arbroath Abbey, dedicated to St Thomas Becket, a saint who had been martyred as a result of his opposition to the English king.¹⁸⁴ Robert also made a pilgrimage to Whithorn in 1329 to visit the shrine of St Ninian there in an effort to raise support in the southwest, although the saint's reputed healing capabilities were undoubtedly a major consideration for Bruce as well.¹⁸⁵

James appears to have venerated a variety of different saints, several of whom had a particular connection to Scotland. Obvious examples of this are Fillan, (19/1)¹⁸⁶, Columba (9/6), and Queen Margaret (19/6 and 16/11, except 1431 for the latter), associated respectively with Perthshire, Dunkeld and Dunfermline. Columba also represents a link to the abbey of Inchcolm, the abbot of which was Walter Bower, who served in James's administration and may represent either Bower's influence or an attempt by James to reinforce a connection to the important cleric. This may also be true of Adrian of May (4/3), whose feast also appears and who is associated with the Isle of May in the Firth of Forth, although Bower was more interested in promoting the cult of Columba.¹⁸⁷ In contrast, there are saints that have

¹⁸³ Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 859. It is possible that it was merely coincidence that Edward III's baptism fell on the feast of the Confessor as baptisms were held soon after birth due to the high infant mortality rate. However, about 7 weeks passed between Edward's birth on 13 November and the feast of the Confessor on 5 January suggesting that there was an element of planning in this.

¹⁸⁴ Penman, 'The Bruce Dynasty and Becket'. Information regarding feast days and the lives of the saints is taken from D. H. Farmer (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, 1978), unless otherwise stated.

¹⁸⁵ Penman, 'Christian Days', 251.

¹⁸⁶ The *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* gives 26 August as Fillan's feast day.

¹⁸⁷ Yeoman, *Pilgrimage in Medieval Scotland*, 64.

a stronger connection with England. For instance, the feast date of Swithun appears (Winchester, 2/7), as do those of Hugh of Lincoln (Carthusians, 17/11) and George (England, knighthood, 23/4). These saints may appear out of coincidence. However, there are valid reasons for placing them with the king's potential devotional calendar, as his wife's uncle was bishop of Winchester, his interest in the Carthusians has been discussed and James was knighted in England on St George's day.¹⁸⁸

Additionally, universal saints also occur in this extrapolated calendar. Some examples of these are Agatha (5/2), Joseph (19/3), Benedict (21/3), John the Evangelist (6/5 and 27/12), Peter and Paul (29/6), Thomas the Apostle (3/7 and 21/12), and Matthew (21/9). The feast of John the Baptist (24/6) and the dates associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary are all feasts that appear to have been kept annually.¹⁸⁹ The feast of the Visitation of the Virgin (2/7) and the Octave of the Visitation (9/7) are also 'free' days, but it is uncertain whether these should be included as Duffy suggests that the Visitation was not added as a feast day until the end of the fifteenth century.¹⁹⁰ However, R.W. Pfaff states that this feast was officially introduced in 1389 and is to be found in the mid-fifteenth century Bute breviary.¹⁹¹ It is possible, therefore, that James was an early observer of this particular date, indicating a particular devotion to this cult. This also applies to the feast of the Presentation of the Virgin (21/11). Pfaff states that Philippe de Mézières, chancellor of the duchy of Cyprus, introduced this feast in the west in 1372, persuading Charles V of France and Pope Gregory XI to allow the feast.¹⁹² It is not

¹⁸⁸ Brown, *James I*, 23.

¹⁸⁹ The Virgin's dates are; the Purification or Candlemas (2/2); the Annunciation (25/3); the Assumption (15/8); the Octave of the Assumption (22/8); the Nativity (8/9); and the Conception (8/12), though a precept under the quarter seal was issued on the last date in 1427.

¹⁹⁰ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 45.

¹⁹¹ R.W. Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts in Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1970), 9, 40.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* 104; Apparently, a different feast based on the Presentation story, known as the 'Oblacio' was known in England before the Norman Conquest and was kept, or at least known, at St Augustine's at Canterbury from the early fourteenth century, *ibid.* 105-7.

impossible that James was exposed to this feast during his time in England and France and also through the contact his nobles had with the latter kingdom. James's affection for the Cult of the Virgin may also have been influenced by the location of James and Joan's marriage. The royal couple were married in what is now Southwark Cathedral, formerly known as the abbey of St Mary Overy.¹⁹³

Clearly, there is a great deal of variety in the saints that appear to have interested James. However, the apparent lack of particularly 'local' saints may indicate a weakness in the king's devotional policy, as it may have led to him being viewed as out of touch with Scottish interests. It has been suggested that the fifteenth century saw an increasing tendency towards 'nationalistic' behaviour in religion in Scotland, but this does not appear to be the whole story as regards James's reign.¹⁹⁴ However, as noted, there are some Scottish saints in James's calendar, which may indicate some kind of 'nationalism' on James's part. This perhaps represents an effort to reconnect with his homeland after his long absence or to demonstrate to his subjects that he had not been wholly anglicised by his captivity. James's nobles may have been concerned about the 'Scottishness' of their returning king, and devotion to particularly Scottish saints may have been a way to offer reassurance. Furthermore, among the Scottish saints named there are some that can be identified as having a particular political benefit both in national terms and regional politics and this shall be discussed in more detail below. A surprising omission from this collective calendar, then, is Andrew. It seems odd that the King of Scotland should not celebrate his country's national saint. However, further investigation reveals that only on one occasion did James conduct business on this

¹⁹³ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 99-100.

¹⁹⁴ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 52.

day, confirming at Edinburgh an earlier charter of Walter, earl of Atholl, in 1429.¹⁹⁵ It is perhaps the case, then, that Andrew's feast was observed annually, which is a much more reasonable proposition than that it was ignored. The details of the confirmation charter are not inappropriate for the date, being a grant for the sustenance of two chaplains and six boys at Brechin Cathedral, which was dedicated to the Holy Trinity.

Reinforcing the fact that James did not neglect this national saint is the use by James of the saltire on his coinage. A coin of James I belonging to the National Museums of Scotland shows a saltire to the left of the king's neck and on either side of his crown.¹⁹⁶ No doubt, this display of patriotism was gratifying to James's subjects but it may have had further political implications, by acting as a link to the Continent. Otto Cartellieri has stated that the St Andrews Cross was the emblem of the Burgundians during power struggles in France following the infirmity of Charles VI.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, Boulton suggests that St Andrew was chosen by the Duke of Burgundy to be the patron saint of his Order of the Golden Fleece, as the dukes considered Andrew to be their particular protector.¹⁹⁸ Devotion to this saint would have provided a common bond between the Scottish king and the powerful continental duke. This desire for a common bond would no doubt have been strengthened by the visit of the Burgundian embassy in the latter part of 1425, when the ambassadors joined the king for Christmas celebrations at St Andrews.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ *RMS*, ii, no.136. This was an augmentation of an earlier grant by Walter as lord of Cortachy and Brechin.

¹⁹⁶ National Museums of Scotland / licensed via www.scran.ac.uk, 000-100-052-766-C. The saltire and images of St Andrew had appeared on earlier Scottish coins so the use of this symbol by James is not entirely innovative.

¹⁹⁷ Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 8.

¹⁹⁸ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 370.

¹⁹⁹ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 255-7.

Additionally, James may have chosen particular saints for more intensive propaganda value. With regards to Adrian of May, this saint was killed on the Isle of May in the Firth of Forth, a location that by the reign of James IV was a premier Scottish pilgrimage centre.²⁰⁰ It is known that James was keen to re-establish royal authority in central and Lowland areas of the country, particularly around the Lothians. For James to focus on a saint from this region would be a powerful way of associating himself with the area. As mentioned earlier, Fillan had a particular connection to Perthshire, a district strongly favoured by James throughout his reign and this may have caused him to have some affection for this saint.²⁰¹ Also, the king's uncle, Walter, earl of Atholl was the chief magnate in that area and it may be that James was seeking some common ground with his older relative in order to gain political support. It is also possible, given James's other actions, that he was perhaps seeking to strengthen his own ties to the region at the expense of Atholl. A non-devotional instance of this would be the granting of Perthshire lands to Queen Joan for her dower lands. Fillan also had a connection to Pittenweem in Fife, an area that James now had a strong connection to following his annexation of the earldom of Fife to the crown in 1425. Furthermore, as a saint venerated by Robert I at Bannockburn, devotion to Fillan would have had national importance as well as regional, by showing remembrance of a great victory by the Scots over English forces and also by reinforcing devotion to any cult of Robert I himself.

In addition to Columba, the feasts of Donan (17/4) and Adomnan (23/9) appear in the extrapolated calendar.²⁰² These saints had associations with the

²⁰⁰ Yeoman, *Pilgrimage in Medieval Scotland*, 64.

²⁰¹ S. Taylor, 'The Cult of St Fillan in Scotland', in T. R. Liszka & L. E. M. Walker (eds.), *The North Sea World: Studies in a Medieval Context* (Dublin 2001), 175–210.

²⁰² How active the cults of these saints were during the reign of James I is not immediately clear. However, a chapel in Ayr does appear to have been dedicated to Donan in 1404 and Adomnan had

Western Isles and veneration of them may have had some role in James's Highland policy. By celebrating these Hebridean saints, James may have been hoping to improve relations between himself and the local inhabitants and make the process of bringing the Highlands and Islands under royal control a little easier. James would probably have been aware of this method from Scottish and English examples. Certainly, Stephen Boardman argues that the early Stewart lords cultivated local saints while building up power in their western lordship.²⁰³ The veneration of local saints for propaganda purposes is perhaps also behind the appearance of Blane (11/8, also known as Bláán, who was a native of Bute and founded a monastery there) and Canice (11/10). The former has some association with Dunblane while the latter gave his name to the Abbey of Cambuskenneth. As already stated, James was seeking to assert royal authority in the central and lowland areas of his country and these Stirlingshire saints would have fed into this process.

The presence of Blane (or Bláán) also suggests that the first Stewart kings may have influenced James's devotions. Bute was the historic centre of Stewart lordship and continued to be so. This is further suggested by the occurrence of Brendan the Navigator, abbot of Clonfert (16/5). This saint was popular in the Islands due to the story of his Life that related the seven-year voyage taken by Brendan in search of the Blessed Isles, which involved him sailing between many Isles. As Boardman suggests, this would have been attractive for the inhabitants of a region that was composed of many islands, particularly for the Stewart lords who were seeking to unify their lordship and increase their dominion over their lands.²⁰⁴ It was this latter point that Boardman suggests was the key factor behind the growth

two dedications in his name in the first half of the sixteenth century. *Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland*, DE/EW/5087, DE/JD/5623, DE/EW/3686.

²⁰³ Boardman, 'The Gaelic World and the Early Stewart Court'.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 7-8.

of the Brendan cult in the area. Thus, it may be that this saint appears due to an inherited interest. In addition, James may have been keen to continue this practice as a means of tying himself to this area for political reasons, much as his ancestors had done and in the way that he appears to have been doing with other saints. A further option that should not be discounted is the link that this saint provided to James's deceased brother. Bute was the location of the castle of Rothesay, nominal centre of David's dukedom. This is a particularly important consideration given the contention made above regarding James's promotion of the martyrdom of his elder brother. The inclusion of both Columba and Brendan in James's calendar is perhaps strange given Boardman's contention regarding the former in the early days of Stewart lordship. Boardman argues that their political opponents in the Clyde area used Columba as an anti-Stewart figure, while devotion to Brendan was seen as tantamount to declaring loyalty to the Stewart family.²⁰⁵ This latter point may also explain why James was interested in the saint, perhaps hoping to foster a cult around it at court to engender loyalty to himself as the latest of the Stewart kings. This may also have influenced the inclusion of Columba in some way, though of course, Columba was Scotland's 'other' national saint, his relics having been carried on to the field at Bannockburn. However, as a Stewart, James may have hoped to diminish the memory of Columba's anti-Stewart past. By venerating both Columba and Brendan, James was perhaps following a unification policy, seeking to unite all political factions behind the monarch. Given that his nobles were long accustomed to running their own affairs without having to answer to a king, this would be a sensible strategy.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 10.

In addition to the appearance of Queen Margaret's feasts, James called his eldest daughter Margaret, which further suggests that James had a particular interest in this cult, although this was a common name. This choice of name is unsurprising given that a link to illustrious ancestors could be a significant propaganda accomplishment. English monarchs used the cult of Edward the Confessor as a method of legitimising and promoting their own kingship. Even if he had been unaware of this process from Scottish examples, he would have undoubtedly encountered it in England during the reign of Henry V. Burden suggests that the English monarch associated himself particularly with royal saints, reburying Richard II at Westminster Abbey and being buried there himself.²⁰⁶ This was in contrast to the promotion of the cult of Becket undertaken by Henry IV, who established a new royal mausoleum at Canterbury where he was buried. Burden suggests that this may have been the result of the particular circumstances of their reigns. Henry IV needed to establish his own royal identity, distinct from that of Richard II, especially as Henry's reign had less than auspicious beginnings. Since Richard had been devoted to Edward's cult, Henry needed to separate himself from it. By returning to this cult, Henry V was seeking to associate his rule with an historical ancestor to increase the legitimacy of his rule as part of an effort to build support for his campaigns in France.

James also appears to have had an interest in St Ninian (26/8), whose feast was observed in every year except 1430. However, the business conducted on this day related to Whithorn, being a statement by James that the church there should be considered equal to others in the kingdom in an effort to remove doubt over the bishopric's status as ecclesiastically it was considered subject to the English see of

²⁰⁶ Burden, 'How Do You Bury a Deposed King?', 38-9.

York.²⁰⁷ Ninian's shrine was located in Whithorn, so it is not unsurprising that James should choose the saint's feast day to clarify the status of the church associated with it. Additionally, there was a payment of 13s 4d in 1434 to a chaplain of St Ninian at Dundonald Castle from the gift of the old king, presumably Robert III.²⁰⁸ However, this payment only appears to have been made in one year suggesting, perhaps, that James was not excessively interested in this saint. Conversely, the well-known instance in December 1427 of his extension of protection to pilgrims from England and the Isle of Man wishing to visit the shrine 'in honour of the said saint [Ninian]' does indicate that James was interested.²⁰⁹ It should be remembered, though, that Whithorn was part of the Douglas heartland, and James may have included this saint in his devotional life due to his connection with the Douglas family. It would have been a way to strengthen the bond between himself and this family by providing some level of common interest. Furthermore, Balfour-Melville points out that the then Bishop of Whithorn was Alexander Vaus, an advisor to the Countess of Douglas, James's sister, who also controlled the Lordship of Galloway at this time.²¹⁰ In addition, as suggested above in reference to Fillan and Atholl, James may have sought to utilise an association with St Ninian to establish himself in this area and to limit the influence of the Douglas family.

Political motives may clearly have played a role in James's interest in St Ninian. However, a genuinely pious motive may also be discerned. Ninian was viewed as a freer of captives so it is highly possible that James did venerate this saint for largely spiritual reasons.²¹¹ By the fifteenth century, images of Ninian usually depicted him with chains. John Higgitt suggests that this view of Ninian can be

²⁰⁷ *RMS*, ii, no.164.

²⁰⁸ *ER*, iv, 595-6.

²⁰⁹ *RMS*, ii, no.107.

²¹⁰ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 273-4.

²¹¹ Yeoman, *Pilgrimage*, 35.

traced to the fourteenth century, when a Scots life of this saint set during the recent wars with England tells of a captive freed from violent death by the intervention of Ninian.²¹² It is not difficult to see why James may have had a personal affinity for this saint, having spent so many years as a captive himself.

Finally, the influence of Joan Beaufort and her family should not be overlooked due to the Winchester saints that appear in the calendar. The feast and translation dates of Swithun (2/7 and 15/7 respectively) a former bishop of Winchester (d.862) are both evident in the calendar, though they do coincide with the Visitation feast of Mary. However, there is no reason why both could not be celebrated on the same day. Veneration of Swithun would have been important for several reasons, not least of which was giving Joan some input into devotional life at the royal court, helping to integrate her into her new home. Perhaps more significant politically would have been the link this provided with Joan's uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, who was an English royal councillor both during and after James's period of captivity and who had played a role in securing James's release. Thus James would surely have wished to show his gratitude to this powerful individual as well as smooth the way for their future relationship. It was the Cardinal, for instance, who came north in 1429 to hold talks with James following the conclusion of the Franco-Scottish alliance.²¹³

The question arises, however, that if James was seeking to use devotions to Scottish saints in an effort to engender political unity and legitimise his kingship, why do several saints that have a stronger English connection than a Scottish one appear in James's possible devotional routine? Several saints with a connection to

²¹² Higgitt, "Imageis Maid with Mennis Hand". See also, W. M. Metcalfe (ed.), *Legends of the Saints in the Scottish Dialect of the Fourteenth Century*, ii, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh & London, 1896), 304-345.

²¹³ Brown, *James I*, 111.

Canterbury are evident in the calendar. For instance, Peter of Canterbury (6/1), Deusdedit (14/7), Tatwin (30/7, apparently not kept in 1436) and possibly Theodore (19/9) all appear.²¹⁴ These may of course be coincidences, highlighted due to the nature of extant evidence, but they are not completely impossible suggestions. The most important saint with this connection, Thomas Becket, also appears to have been venerated by James, with both the feast and translation dates of this saint being 'free' days for the king (29/12 and 7/7, respectively). Additionally, there was a local feast commemorating Becket's return from exile, the *Regressio de exilio*, which was kept on 2 December, and this date appears to have been kept by James in every year except 1429. This feast surely had a particularly personal resonance for James. Undoubtedly, James would have been exposed to the cult of Thomas Becket while in England, and may have encountered less well-known cults centred at Canterbury at the same time. James may have developed an interest in Canterbury after witnessing the level of interest of Henry IV in the cult of Becket, as mentioned above. Henry V also had an interest in the cult, paying £160 in the first year of his reign for a gold ornament in the shape of a man's head, decorated with pearls and jewels that he offered to St Thomas's tomb at Canterbury.²¹⁵

However, the fact that Becket was a figure of resistance to the English monarch may also have been important. As already mentioned, Robert I showed an interest in this saint for this reason during the Wars of Independence.²¹⁶ Perhaps veneration of this saint was now expected in a Scottish monarch as part of the national effort to resist English domination. In James's case, this may have been a consequence of the uncertain foreign policy that was a feature of his reign.

²¹⁴ However, Peter of Canterbury's feast was kept on 30/12 at St Augustine's, Canterbury, Tatwin's feast was unofficial and Theodore appears to have lacked popularity.

²¹⁵ *Issues of the Exchequer*, 321-2.

²¹⁶ Penman, 'The Bruce Dynasty and Becket'.

However, there is further evidence of a genuine pious interest in this cult. From 1426, a £5 annuity is recorded in the *Exchequer Rolls* as being paid to a chaplain celebrating at an altar of St Thomas the Martyr in the parish church of Renfrew, which may have been a twelfth/thirteenth century Stewart foundation.²¹⁷ It is possible that James was further influenced in his interest in this cult by the presence of a Becket relic in Glasgow. This was certainly in Scotland during James's reign, part of a shirt and a comb of St Thomas being included in a 1432 inventory of the Glasgow Cathedral treasury.²¹⁸ James did visit Glasgow shortly after his return, stopping there as part of his journey to Ayr in late 1424.²¹⁹ This would explain why a Renfrew church was the recipient of an annuity as opposed to any other location.

In addition, Arbroath Abbey's abbot, Walter Painter, was among those granted a safe conduct in 1423 during negotiations for James's release and in 1436, along with Bishop Cameron, asked the Pope to send a nuncio to Scotland. Additionally, in November that year the abbot was granted a confirmation of the abbey's regality, implying that James had a long-standing connection with the personnel of the abbey who may have influenced him.²²⁰ Furthermore, there is a suggestion that there was an altar dedicated to Becket in St John's church in Perth. MacKinlay relates that the *New Statistical Account* records a chapel dedicated to St James and St Thomas Becket in the south side of St John's.²²¹ However, in *Ecclesiastical Annals of Perth*, R.S. Fittis argues that it was only an altar, referred to as a chapel due to an unusual level of separation from the other altars and this would

²¹⁷ *ER*, iv, 427 and *passim*; Canterbury Cathedral Archive, Register E, f. 127a, nos. 2 & 3. I am grateful to Dr Michael Penman for this reference.

²¹⁸ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 57; A.A.M. Duncan, 'St Kentigern at Glasgow Cathedral in the Twelfth Century', in R. Fawcett (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture in the Diocese of Glasgow*, (1999), 11.

²¹⁹ *ER*, iv, 398, records the carriage of silver cups and other items to Glasgow for the king.

²²⁰ Balfour-Melville, *James I*, 93, 237-9; *Liber S. Thome de Aberbrothoc*, ii, 70.

²²¹ MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications*, i, 242-3.

be more in keeping with medieval practice.²²² This was in existence prior to James's return to Scotland. If this altar did exist, it may have helped to stimulate the king's interest in this saint, by seeing his own name saint juxtaposed with the famous Becket. The practice of screening off altars to form separate chapels was very common at this time so the idea should not be taken too far.

Some of the saints of interest to James appear to indicate an interest in chivalry. St Andrew, in addition to being the national saint, had chivalric connections, being the patron of the Order of the Golden Fleece, as discussed above. Furthermore, James may have commemorated the feast of Catherine of Alexandria, and she was popularised by the Crusaders of the medieval period. Michaelmas, the feast of St Michael (29/9) is also free, except in 1429, and Boulton suggests that this saint was viewed as the model of chivalry.²²³ Perhaps it may be considered significant also, that James constructed his new palace at Linlithgow immediately next to the parish church, dedicated to St Michael. There is not much to indicate that James was overtly interested in chivalric culture, as discussed in chapter six. However, these few examples of chivalric saints do signify that James was perhaps more interested in this area than other records suggest. It would also explain the appearance of St George in the calendar. The English national saint was perhaps a strange choice for a king of Scots. However, Boulton argues that by the early fourteenth century, George was generally regarded as the heavenly protector of knighthood.²²⁴ Furthermore, James was knighted at a meeting of the Order of the Garter on St George's day in 1421.²²⁵ It was therefore appropriate that the Scottish king mark the feast day of this saint.

²²² Referenced in MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications*, i, 242-3.

²²³ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 12.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* 124.

²²⁵ Brown, *James I*, 23.

The feast of St John the Baptist is one that appears to have been particularly important to James. A petition of 14 April 1431 stated that, motivated by ‘special devotion to St John the Baptist’, the king and queen proposed to erect the parish church of Linlithgow into a Collegiate church in order ‘to praise and glory of God Omnipotent and of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of St John and all the choir of Heaven’.²²⁶ James may have been partially following the Forrester family in this, as John Forrester had obtained permission in 1429 to erect the church of Corstorphine into a collegiate church.²²⁷ Crucially, James’s liking for Perth also suggests devotion to this saint, Perth also being known as St John’s Town. This may also have played a part in James’s choice of location for his Carthusian foundation, Bower identifying the site with one that was known as St John’s Valley.²²⁸ MacKinlay also asserts that the Charterhouse was under the invocation of St John as well as Mary.²²⁹ James may have felt some personal affinity with this saint. St John was apparently born when his mother was ‘comparatively advanced in years’ and James’s own mother was at least forty years old when James was born. Additionally, an angel was said to have chosen John’s name, which may help to explain the king’s choice of a trio of angels to grace his coat of arms at Linlithgow Palace, although this probably has more to do with the idea of a God-supported monarchy. Furthermore, before changing his name upon acceding to the throne, James’s father was called John, as was his maternal grandfather, John Drummond. It is also possible, given that the exact date is unknown, that James’s birthday fell close to the feast of St John the Baptist, perhaps half way between that feast and that of St James, after whom it is suggested James was named. John would not have been chosen due to the distasteful associations this

²²⁶ CSSR, iii, 140, 176.

²²⁷ MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Scriptural Dedications*, 321.

²²⁸ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 275.

²²⁹ MacKinlay, *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland: Scriptural Dedications*, 326-7.

name had come to have.²³⁰ John the Baptist was a popular saint in medieval times, with only saints Mary, Peter, Michael, Andrew and All Saints having more churches dedicated to them in England than John does.²³¹ It may be expected that this devotion would affect James's itinerary, the king choosing to be in a location with an association with John the Baptist at the time of this saint's feast day, the most logical location being Perth. However, the nature of the surviving evidence makes it difficult to offer any certain conclusions in this area. As far as can be suggested, it is possible that James was in or near Perth around 24 June in every year of the reign except 1425 and 1429. In 1435, the exchequer audit sat in Stirling over the period of this feast, but it is not impossible that the king may have taken time out for a visit to Perth.²³²

There is also significant evidence suggesting that James had a strong interest in the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As stated above, James apparently appears with Mary on the Perth Charterhouse seal and the feast days relating to Mary were observed by James. In addition, James called one of his daughters Mary, indicating further interest in this cult, although this was a very common name. The level of occurrence of a Christian name could be an indication of a saint's popularity. For example, Richard Marks states that George was a common Christian name in Bedfordshire, where there were at least fourteen images of the saint.²³³ However, caution is needed in using given names as evidence of devotion. Swanson argues that it was more usual in England to name children after their godparents rather than

²³⁰ The possibility of a King John was untenable in Scotland by this time due to its association with King John Balliol. This is evidenced by the fact that John, earl of Carrick, changed his name to become Robert III upon taking the throne.

²³¹ *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*. The recently launched Database of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland should provide more detail on this for Scotland. A very brief survey indicates 262, 2762, 175, 278, 231, and 325 references to these saints respectively.

²³² See appendix 7.

²³³ R. Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Stroud, 2004), 114.

any particular saint. In the early fourteenth century, one couple had to justify their choice of name for their daughter after it provoked comment in the local community; they had named her after St Catherine.²³⁴ However, Swanson does go on to say that the use of 'devotional' names became increasingly popular through time. Thus, particular given names may be taken as extra evidence of devotion to a saint but not as proof in and of itself. Additional support for James's interest in the Mary cult comes from the *Kingis Quair*, in which the narrator of the tale invokes Mary to help him on his journey.²³⁵ Given that this poem is generally held to be autobiographical, it is possible that James was interested in this saint during his reign as thanks to her intercession during his captivity. The interest shown by James in Melrose abbey as discussed above is also indicative of the king's interest in this cult. Added to this is patronage given to the abbot and convent of Dryburgh, also dedicated to St Mary. In December 1429, James and Archibald, earl of Douglas made a supplication to the Pope that he would confirm their grant of the parish church of Smailholm and the hospital of Lauder to the monastery.²³⁶

Mary was a hugely popular saint in the medieval period; for instance, Edward III visited or gave a donation to various locations associated with her in England such as her shrine at Walsingham, her statue in St Paul's and the Lady Chapel in Christ Church, Canterbury.²³⁷ Richard II also showed an interest in this cult, the Virgin appearing on the Wilton Diptych, and there is evidence highlighting payments made by Richard on various feasts of the Virgin.²³⁸ Mary was equally admired in Scotland, with a very popular shrine dedicated to her at Whitekirk in East

²³⁴ Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, 168.

²³⁵ *The Kingis Quair*, st.17, l.17.

²³⁶ *CSSR*, iii, 67-8.

²³⁷ Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 857.

²³⁸ Saul, *Richard II*, 304-5; S. Mitchell, 'Richard II: Kingship and the Cult of Saints' in D. Gordon, L. Monnas, C.M. Barron & C. Elam (eds.), *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych* (London, 1997), 123-4.

Lothian, and later the poet William Dunbar wrote a poem addressed to her.²³⁹ There is also a fifteenth-century brass chandelier in St John's church in Perth that incorporates a devotional image of the Virgin.²⁴⁰ James was not the only individual at his court with an interest in Mary and perhaps his own interest was partly motivated by a desire to fit in with the general trends of medieval piety. In June 1424, for instance, James confirmed a charter of Thomas Somerville of Carnwath that had established an altar to St Mary in the monastery of St Machutus in Lesmahagow.²⁴¹ Winchester Cathedral had a Lady Chapel with images showing the Virgin's miracles.²⁴² This perhaps adds to the suggestion above that the Beauforts had some influence on James in this area, although of course Lady Chapels were a common feature of English Cathedrals. Similarly, the devotion to Mary shown by Henry V may have been a factor as well; in his will of 1415, Henry stated that a chantry chapel should be built at his tomb and should be dedicated to the Annunciation and all the saints.²⁴³ Additionally, Henry's monastic foundation at Isleworth was to be a house of prayer, where the help of the Holy Trinity, Mary and St Bridget could be sought. The English king himself laid the foundation stone on 22 February 1415.²⁴⁴ As well as highlighting the general popularity of Mary's cult in this period, it provides another possible motivation for James's devotional habits, namely imitation of English practice, which can be seen in other aspects of his court life such as architectural endeavours and the composition of his household. It should be noted that Mary was a popular saint throughout Europe in this period, but it is

²³⁹ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 54.

²⁴⁰ *Angels, Nobles and Unicorns: Art and Patronage in Medieval Scotland* (National Museums of Scotland, 1982), 116.

²⁴¹ *RMS*, ii, no.3.

²⁴² Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 17.

²⁴³ Allmand, *Henry V*, 180-1.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 274-5.

likely that it was the English expressions of devotion to this cult that formulated James's own habits, due to the lengthy period he spent in that kingdom.

James's apparent interest in this cult may have provided him with a further link to his household officers. In a charter dated 10 September 1432, and confirmed by James in 1434, Sir Walter Ogilvy, a member of James's household, founded a chaplainry in the parish church of St Mary of Auchterhouse, for the salvation of the king and his predecessors and for the deceased Henry Guthrie, parson of the church of Fettercairn, endowing it with 10 marks annually from lands in the barony of Lintrathen.²⁴⁵ This was Ogilvy's parish church so it is not particularly surprising that he was keen to offer patronage to it though this may have served as another means of connecting James to his household. As well as representing patronage to a church dedicated to St Mary, this further emphasises the custom of having prayers said for the royal family as discussed earlier in the chapter.

The advantages of participating in one of the most popular cults of the period are clear. It helped to create a link between James and other important figures, which would have been politically beneficial. Furthermore, it helped the king to appear pious in front of his subjects and the appearance of piety was as important, perhaps even more so, than being genuinely pious. Additionally, courtly interest in this cult could be used as a model for the role of Queen Joan. Mary's associations with motherhood would have been attractive to a king seeking to secure his dynasty and it may have been to Mary that the royal couple looked to guide the queen safely through multiple pregnancies. It may also be that the king and queen sought the intercession of the saintly Queen Margaret in this area. The queens of James II and James IV both requested to have Margaret's sark or shirt brought to

²⁴⁵ NAS, Papers of the Earls of Airlie, GD16/6/3.

them during pregnancy indicating that this saint had an association with this arena.²⁴⁶ St Mary's position in Catholic belief was that of intercessor, that is, she had the power to intercede with God on behalf of an individual.²⁴⁷ Mary's powers were limited in that she could only intercede, not answer requests herself, due to the fact that God was all-powerful and could not have His authority intruded upon.²⁴⁸ This concept would have been of interest to James who was seeking a political role for his wife, as evidenced for instance by the order in July 1428 that noble heirs and new bishops were to swear an oath of loyalty to the queen as well as to James when they received their inheritances and benefices.²⁴⁹ However, James was keen to centre political authority in his own person, following his years of captivity, a time in which he had been politically powerless.

The use of the Mary cult thus gave Joan a role without lessening James's own authority. Bower records three occasions when Joan acted as intercessor between an individual and her husband. The first two are in August 1429, when she interceded for Alexander, Lord of the Isles and September 1431 when the earls of Douglas and Ross (the latter an error by Bower, referring to the Lord of the Isles) were the recipients of her favour. The final instance, which may be apocryphal, has Joan and her ladies 'prostrat[ing] themselves on the floor' to prevent James from cutting off the hand of one man who had slapped another.²⁵⁰ These incidents, obviously contrived beforehand, allowed Joan to have an important political role that augmented and emphasised the power of James without impinging upon it.

The appearance of other 'universal' saints is easily explained by the necessity of having the king appear to be pious, as well as by some level of genuine

²⁴⁶ Boardman, 'Dunfermline as a Royal Mausoleum', 147-8.

²⁴⁷ M. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: the Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London, 2000), 286.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 286, 288.

²⁴⁹ Downie, 'Sche is But a Womman', 144.

²⁵⁰ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 263, 265, 321.

piety on James's part. These saints were popular often because they were seen as being particularly pious individuals or as being otherwise important to the development of Christianity. The feast of St Mark (25/4) appears, for example, as do both feasts associated with St John the Evangelist (27/12 and 6/5). Both of these saints have had the writing of Gospels attributed to them, making them an important part of the fundamentals of Christianity. It is thus not unsurprising to find Mathew (21/9) among the list of saints possible venerated by James I. Luke (18/10) is probably also there every year. Only in 1431 is there the possibility that this feast was not kept, as James was in Perth for a sitting of Parliament that week but it is not necessarily the case that business was actually conducted that day. Thus, four key figures associated with the Holy Book of Christianity appear in James's possible devotional calendar. Other popular and universal feasts that appears to have been kept are that of All Saints (1/11), commemorating all those now residing in Heaven, and All Souls (2/11), remembering those who still remained in purgatory. Feasts such as these would have been an essential part of spiritual life at the royal court, highlighting James's participation in the conventional religion of the time, demonstrating his piety and also helping to mark the progress of the year.

vii: Royal Pilgrimage

One final issue that should be discussed in relation to James's devotional activities is the matter of pilgrimage. Unfortunately, there is not a great deal of surviving evidence that can shed light on this area of James's life. However, as stated earlier, James travelled to Glasgow as part of a journey to Ayr where he may have been exposed to the relics of St Thomas Becket and St Kentigern. This does not necessarily mean that the desire to make a pilgrimage was the reason for the stop

at Glasgow. Diana Webb has argued that a king's presence at the location of a shrine does not automatically mean that pilgrimage was a chief motive of the visit.²⁵¹ Even if James did venerate Becket's relics while in Glasgow it is possible that this was simply an action of opportunity rather than genuine devotional interest. However, the reasons for interest in this particular saint have been outlined above, so in this instance pilgrimage may have been a strong motivator for the visit to Glasgow. As with the veneration of particular saints, pilgrimage could have strong political objectives. Webb states that as well as giving the opportunity of honouring saints, pilgrimage gave the king's subjects the chance to honour him.²⁵² Part of the reason for the visit to Ayr in 1424 was the need to reassert control over the Stewart regality, lands that James had been given by his father in 1404.²⁵³ Thus the king would have been keen to display his regal status, efficiently accomplished through a pilgrimage to the relics of a popular saint. Additionally, there is the apparent pilgrimage to Rothesay's tomb described above. It should also be borne in mind that James was at St Andrews at several times throughout his reign, and may have taken the opportunity to combine his visits with a pilgrimage to the relics of St Andrew. This may have been particularly the case in 1425 during the visit of the Burgundian ambassadors, with the special interest in this saint held by the Burgundian Dukes as discussed above. James's interest in pilgrimage to St Andrews may also be evident in his continued payment of an annuity of £10 14s 8d for the maintenance of the Tay Bridge, which formed one of the main routes into Fife.²⁵⁴ Peter Yeoman has suggested that maintenance of the road network leading to St Andrews was viewed as an act of piety, so James's continuation of this sum could be understood as

²⁵¹ Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 124.

²⁵² *Ibid.* 137.

²⁵³ Brown, *James I*, 55-6.

²⁵⁴ *ER*, iv, 395, 422, 458, 488, 523, 549, 584, 633.

representing his encouragement of pilgrimage to that area. James may also have personally visited the Marian shrine at Whitekirk, a place he was certainly interested in as discussed above. In March 1429, for instance, James was in Dunbar and Haddington, places that were in the vicinity of this shrine and James may have taken the opportunity to make his devotions there at this time.²⁵⁵ This would be in keeping with his interest in this saint, especially as one of the Virgin's feasts, the Annunciation, was observed in March. Additionally, as the king was in the area on his way for a day of truce at Coldingham, a pilgrimage at this time could have a political as well as devotional motivation.

Further evidence that James at least intended to carry out more extravagant pilgrimages can be found in the *CSSR*. In the list of supplications recorded in the calendar for 20 February 1430 there is one in which James is seeking the right to have his confessor 'commute all and sundry vows, which [he] cannot conveniently keep' with the exception of 'vows of pilgrimage overseas to the Saints and Apostles Peter and Paul and St John in Galicia'.²⁵⁶ This does indicate that the Scottish king was interested in making pilgrimages, even if he did not have the opportunity to fulfil his vow. Even if James had not been particularly interested in this aspect of Christianity, it may not have been particularly detrimental to his image, as Ditchburn argues that pilgrimage was not an essential part of devotion in this period.²⁵⁷ However, the political benefits would again be something James was unlikely to have overlooked and it does appear as though he participated in this particular ritual.

The king's failure to fulfil his vow of pilgrimage overseas may have prompted the separation of his heart from his body after his death and its being sent on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. A genuinely pious desire to ensure his vow was

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 466, 477.

²⁵⁶ *CSSR*, iii, 78.

²⁵⁷ Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*, 58.

fulfilled, aiding himself in the afterlife, was surely part of James's consideration. Furthermore, the choice of Jerusalem is significant, as it was considered to be the holiest place of pilgrimage. Webb states that Richard I, Edward I and Henry IV were considered to be the highest form of pilgrims as they had visited the Holy Land, while Colin Morris asserts that Jerusalem had a special devotional quality due to being the site of the crucifixion.²⁵⁸ The desire to be included in such esteemed company, even if post mortem, could well have influenced the choice of location. In having his heart removed, James was also mimicking his illustrious predecessor, Robert I. It is well known that the earlier king's heart was removed and taken on crusade by James Douglas.²⁵⁹ James may have hoped that imitating Bruce would help to secure his own reputation. There is also the possibility that guilt motivated James's decision. Michael Penman has suggested that Robert I's request to have his heart taken on Crusade was motivated by the feeling that after his death he would have to answer for some of his actions in life.²⁶⁰ Thus it may be that James felt some pangs of guilt regarding his destruction of the Albany Stewart family and felt a need to repent for this in order to secure his eventual ascent into Heaven. There is not a great deal of evidence to suggest that James felt guilt over these actions, which he assuredly felt justified in taking in the first place, although it is a possibility given the very real belief in purgatory and Heaven in the medieval period.

²⁵⁸ Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 115; C. Morris, 'Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the late Middle Ages', in C. Morris & P. Roberts (eds.), *Pilgrimage: the English Experience from Becket to Bunyan* (Cambridge, 2002), 141-163, 141.

²⁵⁹ See, for example, G. G. Simpson, 'The Heart of King Robert I: Pious Crusade or Marketing Gambit?' in B. E. Crawford (ed.), *Church, Chronicle and Learning in Medieval and Early Renaissance Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1999), 173-86.

²⁶⁰ Penman, 'Christian Days and Knights', 252.

viii: Conclusions

Clearly, despite the apparent lack of evidence, there is much that can be said about the possible devotional life of James's court. Generally, it was entirely conventional for the period, overlooking none of the key aspects of Christianity such as alms giving and the veneration of saints. James was conservative in his attitude towards heresy and showed patronage to religious Orders, most notably of course to the Carthusians, a popular Order of the time. The king venerated a range of saints, from the universally popular Mary to those with a more local, Scottish connection. James also appears to have taken an interest in pilgrimage. In every instance, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate pious motives from political ones, which is not surprising given that this was a time when religion played such a key role in the everyday lives of every member of society. What is clear from this survey is that James missed no opportunity to promote his image and his kingship after his return to Scotland in 1424, which is again not surprising given his transparent desire to ensure that he alone was at the centre of political power in his kingdom. However, what is absent from James's devotional activity is the promotion of a unifying cult, designed to draw together the king's subjects in support of him and his plans. There is nothing here to suggest that James took care to establish a popular ethos in the devotional atmosphere of his court. This was another area in which James missed an opportunity to gain popularity and win loyalty. Not even his apparent interest in a mid-summer celebration centred on commemoration of John the Baptist and Bannockburn appears to have won over his subjects. As the preceding chapters have indicated, there was simply too much else taking place in the court and household for them to put aside their distrust of the monarch and be convinced by his devotional beliefs.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion: The King Incomplete

Michael Brown's ultimate conclusion regarding James I and his reign is that it was these short thirteen years that established the 'confident, internationally respected dynasty' that was in place in Scotland by the end of the fifteenth century.¹ Additionally, in paraphrasing Walter Bower's opinions of this first James, Brown asserts that James I helped to create the 'power and prestige of the Stewart dynasty'.² Ultimately, James I set out to alter the balance of power within his kingdom and in Brown's view met with significant successes, for example, checking the freedom of the greater magnates and obtaining the imprisonment of the Lord of the Isles. In Brown's political study it is easy to see how this conclusion is reached. James was a much more politically active monarch than his immediate predecessors, Robert II and Robert III, destroying opponents such as the Albany Stewarts, passing or re-enacting large amounts of legislation and perhaps also attempting to make the court a political and cultural centre within the kingdom, with a Stewart-family affinity at its centre.

Furthermore, Brown is mostly positive about the king's choice of location for his power base, suggesting that it was a foundation for success. Brown's assessment is that by focussing on the Central Lowlands, James was able to establish himself in an area that was not already dominated by his subjects giving the king a strong and unrivalled power base. To this Brown ascribes the beginnings of a permanent change in the composition of the Scottish nobility. To an extent, this idea is supported by the geographical origins of the king's household officers and companions, who came predominantly from Lowland areas, particularly around the

¹ Brown, *James I*, 208.

² *Ibid.*

Lothians, although also to an extent from Forfarshire and Fife. For Brown, the money spent by James on creating a 'new monarchy' also played a part in the king's successes, helping to establish the court as a political, diplomatic and cultural centre.

Indeed, James I did achieve notable successes in the course of his thirteen-year personal reign. Perhaps the most tangible example of this is Linlithgow Palace. The building's direct impact during James's reign is debatable and the form it would have eventually taken had James and not his successors completed its construction is unclear. However, the Palace begun by James I remains an enduring statement of the elevated status of Scottish monarchs. Significantly, it reveals the change in how Scottish monarchs perceived themselves and how they wished to be perceived by their subjects and the world. The Palace was radically different to other Scottish royal residences and helped to mark the arrival of Scottish monarchs on the international scene.

Politically, James did begin to change the relationship between the king and his nobles, particularly in contrast to his immediate predecessors Robert II and Robert III. James could more fully make the claim that he had been born to rule, as opposed to his father and grandfather who had come to the throne through the female line and following the unfortunate death of David II without a direct heir. James's efforts to emphasise this by attempting to take back control of the direction of politics in Scotland exemplifies this. While this did not come to complete fruition in James I's reign, it was a policy on which his successors could build. Moreover, the fact that James was able to marry a Scottish princess to the French Dauphin was a considerable coup for the kingdom and its ruler. James vacillated somewhat on this issue and there is some debate as to the strength of James's position in the negotiations and eventual conclusion of the marriage between his daughter and the

Dauphin.³ However, it was a notable step up in the world for Scotland's role in European politics. James's assured view of himself was reflected in the luxury purchases he made for the royal family in Flanders, using the money raised for his ransom. The rich cloths and jewels that were purchased give a strong indication of a monarch seeking to set himself and his spouse apart from the rest of the Scottish nobility in a very visual way. Nowhere is this perhaps more evident than in the king's interest in artillery. The purchase from Flanders of the cannon called 'Lion' is an exemplar of how the Scottish king perceived himself and wished to be perceived by his European counterparts. James sought to promote himself as a strong military leader, and the acquisition of the latest military technology was a crucial part of this.

James also appears to have had some success in establishing a culture of service amongst some sectors of the nobility. Families such as the Crichtons came to prominence in James's reign through loyal support to the king. Others, for instance Walter Ogilvy and John Forrester, appear to have attached themselves even more firmly to the king, preferring to advance themselves through royal service rather than through traditional local loyalties. This was the beginning of a change in the balance of fifteenth century Scottish politics, as hereditary nobles began to see their traditional positions being threatened. James I was beginning to undermine the control that this group had exerted within the kingdom, especially during the reigns of Robert II and Robert III and the Albany governorship.

As important as these successes were, however, they do not outweigh the negative consequences of James's actions. This detailed examination of the royal court and household in this period has revealed a fuller picture of the reign. To a point, the reorganisation of the household undertaken by James after 1424 supports

³ Downie, "Sche is but a Womman".

the general view of James as an active and authoritative monarch, who was attempting to centralise authority in his own person and using the court and household to do so. By acting so quickly to establish his position in such a basic aspect of medieval government, James was signalling his intentions regarding his rule, that is, that he intended to reverse the decline in monarchic power and status that had been a feature of Stewart rule thus far. The maintenance of a large household was an important status symbol for any medieval monarch, and this was especially important for James as he sought to establish his position. By taking control of the household, James was also able to use it to offer rewards to those who had shown loyal service, as shown throughout chapters three and four. Yet this was not sustained by James throughout his reign. The king failed to establish fully a reorganised household commensurate with those of his European counterparts, which could thus not be utilised as effectively to the king's advantage. This is particularly marked in the latter years of the reign. In terms of the personnel of the household, contrary to Brown's view, the limitations of the geographical origins of the king's officers and courtiers had a significantly detrimental affect on James I's reign. Superficially, choosing officers and advisors from the wealthy Lowlands, and with whom he had a long-standing connection, was a sensible decision on the part of the king. Initially, this gave James the strong support base that he needed in order to begin to exert his authority within Scotland. Establishing himself in the areas in and around Edinburgh, traditional royal centres, was a key priority for James, and utilising men that he trusted, with connections to this area was eminently sensible.

Indeed, James did win the support of a core group of men. A notable example from this group is William Crichton, who came to particular prominence in the latter years of the reign and who remained significant during James II's minority.

The fact that Crichton remained loyal to Queen Joan suggests that he had been persuaded by James to tie his fortunes to those of the Crown. John Forrester also remained in royal government, and James Douglas of Balvenie, who would become Earl of Avondale, remained with the queen as well.⁴ Thus, James's efforts to make royal favour dependent on service to the king appear to have been at least partially successful; some men were encouraged to become and remain loyal to the Crown. Furthermore, many of those employed by James were from relatively minor noble families, giving further indication of the insecurity felt by James upon his return to Scotland and thereafter. These men were more heavily dependent on royal favour to improve their social and political standings, unlike, for instance, the Earl of Douglas, whose abilities and status needed no royal sanction to confirm. They thus had more to gain by throwing their lot in with James and remaining loyal to the Crown and James could be a little surer of their loyalty. It is clear, however, that this elevation in status of some noble families was not welcomed by all. The Douglas family appear to have desired a greater role in the kingdom's political life, for example, as shown by their efforts to obtain control during James II's minority.⁵

The men who did support James I for any length of time, however, were from a limited group, both geographically and socially, and the fact that James appears to have maintained this pattern throughout his reign led eventually to disaster. By preventing individuals from a broad range of areas and backgrounds from becoming close enough to him to implement his policies effectively, James ensured that he would ultimately fail to gain the authority that he desired. One notable example of this is the consequences for the relationship between the Crown and the Lordship of the Isles. Although meeting with some temporary success in his

⁴ Downie, *She is But a Woman*, 141.

⁵ The political events immediately following the assassination of James I and the events of James II's minority are discussed in McGladdery, *James II*, 5-49.

efforts to subdue the Lordship, the end of James I's reign found the Lord in a stronger position than at its start.⁶ The fact that James had failed to establish durable and useful links with the area through his household placed the crown at a serious disadvantage in attempting to combat this change. The king had no way of gaining the knowledge of local politics necessary for establishing royal authority in the north. James even made the situation worse by failing to take advantage of opportunities afforded to him for averting this. Although Brown suggests that no noble of the period could effectively have taken Mar's place as royal lieutenant in the Highlands, James was seriously in error in not even attempting to find a man or group of men to take over Mar's role in the north and north-east. A case in point is James's disregard for the claim of Robert Erskine to succeed to the earldom after Alexander Stewart's death. Erskine's chief Lowland estates were in Renfrewshire and Clackmannanshire so James thus lost the opportunity to introduce a man with Lowland ties to this strategic northern earldom, a man who could presumably have been expected to be grateful for this sign of royal favour. Erskine may not have been able to immediately replace Stewart in this role. However, he clearly had significant support in the area, gaining the backing of Alexander Forbes and the burgesses of Aberdeen and also probably the Earl of Crawford. This would have been a fairly influential local coalition, and would no doubt have been more acceptable to locals than James's plan to insert the Earl of Orkney, whose main landed interest was in the Lothians, as royal lieutenant in the area.⁷ This is a clear example of how James's over-dependence on men and families he had been connected to during the years of his captivity had a detrimental effect on the later events of his reign. Orkney could not fulfil the role of

⁶ Alexander was styling himself Earl of Ross in charters by the close of James's reign, and the death of the Earl of Mar in 1435 removed the only real opposition to the Lord's influence in the north.

⁷ The Erskine claim to the earldom immediately following Alexander Stewart's death and James's plans for it are discussed in Brown, *James I*, 156-60.

leader in the north, particularly as he was dispatched to accompany the king's daughter Margaret to France in 1436 and was thus not able to even attempt to begin checking moves by the Lordship of the Isles. By relying on a limited circle of trusted servants, James was severely limiting the pool of men that he could call on to support and enforce the royal will throughout the kingdom and abroad.

The household was a two-way street, however, and if James did not use it to his own best advantage, then he was also denying his nobles regular occasions on which to use it to *their* advantage. What strikes the modern eye, and what was probably equally evident to contemporaries, was the lack of opportunity for large sections of the noble community to regularly counsel the king or simply be at court. By taking the bulk of his councillors from lowland areas, and by keeping the great nobles out of official office, James was cutting many of his subjects off from an important political forum. Indeed, as shown in the detailed examination of the king's affinity, only one family, the Douglasses, could really claim to have consistent and significant access to the king through this arena. It was from this group that James drew much of his household. Much of this was due to the trust that had been built up between the king and these men during the years, particularly the latter years, of James's captivity. However, while utilising this group of men whom he trusted was a sensible decision in the years immediately following 1424, the insecurity shown by James in his continuing reliance on these men had several detrimental consequences both for James's reign and for those of his successors. W. Stanford Reid is perhaps not far off the mark to suggest a strong role for the Douglasses in royal policy. Although charter data does not support the idea that the Earl of Douglas was a frequent visitor to James's court, he was perhaps the one major figure who did not *need* to be regularly in the king's presence, as he could act more effectively through

the king's household officers. Of course, these officers did have a stronger connection to the fourth earl than the fifth. However, the long-standing connection may have left some residual loyalty to be exploited by the fifth earl after 1424. These former Douglas advisors continued to have contact with the Douglas earl, some of them appearing as witnesses to Douglas charters even after they had entered royal service. This further signifies the extent to which James failed to win the exclusive loyalty of even his closest servants.

That James I had failed to win the support of nobles for the Crown is also an indication of his failure to create a popular court, which would have drawn nobles to him and in support of him. James's spending in this area did have some set-piece successes. The most striking example of this is the entourage gathered to escort Princess Margaret to France in March 1436. The 'distinguished following of attendants' who accompanied the princess included the Earl of Orkney and Bishop of Brechin (although these men could not match, for example, the Earl of Douglas or Bishop of St Andrews in terms of status), as well as a great number of knights and squires, dressed in matching outfits. These men, along with 1000 soldiers went to France in 'three splendid transports and six well-tested barges', and would have given a significant message regarding the king's position to all observers, foreign and domestic, not least due to the expense involved in organizing such an assemblage.⁸ This latter point highlights that James's efforts were not entirely successful. Bower records that James financed the expedition through voluntary contributions from his nobles and clergy. While this was an extraordinary expense that James could expect to receive help for, the fact that this statement is followed by a chapter entitled 'Taxes should not be levied casually' suggests that the contributions were perhaps

⁸ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 249.

not as willing as Bower would have us believe. Additionally, the fact that Orkney is the only earl mentioned in the escort perhaps indicates that James could not obtain the physical support of other earls, despite the fact that the marriage would cement a popular treaty with the French. However, it should be noted that there were few adult earls in Scotland at this time: some were captive in England (such as Menteith), or titles had been annexed to the Crown (such as Mar). While no doubt impressive, the king's approach does not appear to have won sustained and significant support from the major Scottish nobles.

The fact is, despite some successes, the overall ethos of James's court and household had failed to unite the nobility behind their monarch. Effectively, there was no royal court for his nobles to attend, as what James was creating was so alienating. In terms of his architectural programme, James was building something that was foreign in style, emphasising that James's rule itself was alien. Rather than impressing his nobles with his status and power, James appalled his nobles with his choices. The level of James's spending also contributed to this. The Duke of Albany and both Robert II and Robert III were more restrained in their spending habits and built less obviously different residences. Even Albany's castle at Doune was, at its core, a tower-house, albeit a particularly grand one. James was doing the opposite to what his subjects had become accustomed to.

At the same time, James was forfeiting subjects on dubious grounds and using large amounts of customs revenue to finance his building work. This did not go down well, especially in light of the lack of patronage being directed towards the Scottish nobility. Also, it may have appeared to the nobility that the money spent on Linlithgow was being squandered. Supposedly designed as a purpose-built court setting, Linlithgow Palace does not appear to have been put to great use, even once it

was habitable, as there is no real suggestion that large scale feasts and other celebrations were held there. This is despite the fact that the Palace was clearly habitable by the end of the reign and was considered suitable for housing French ambassadors in 1435. This may have changed had James lived longer but the impression gained from his personal reign is that the king intended to use the Palace more as a private residence. Of course, James did spend a fair amount of money on other residences, but the majority of his spending in this area was on the new construction at Linlithgow. It seems entirely possible that James's architectural endeavours were a factor in his murder, as his subjects saw the king spending huge sums on his new Palace, a Palace that they were not being given the opportunity to enjoy. This, combined with the lack of royal patronage coming their way, meant that the nobles probably resented James's activities. As James does not seem to have wanted his greater nobles at court, they were perhaps annoyed that he was spending so much without them gaining a discernible benefit from it. In the final months of the reign, this was no doubt compounded by the growing risk of open conflict with England, a situation not helped by the fact that James had long ceased paying his ransom. Not only were the king's spending habits not directly benefiting his nobles, they were actively placing them into peril. But why then did they not go to court to register their displeasure?

There are again some indications that James attracted his nobles in a limited way. For instance, Bower records that in Christmas 1425, James was joined at St Andrews by a large section of the noble community, as well as foreign ambassadors. However, it is the presence of the ambassadors that may well have drawn nobles to court. Also, this was very soon after James's return and is suggestive of his nobles wanting to gain some knowledge of the king and his plans. The knighting

ceremonies conducted at James's coronation and to celebrate the baptism of his twin sons in 1430 can also be viewed as limited successes, although problems with the supposed attendance at these ceremonies were discussed in chapter three. Additionally, the fact that Bower's list of those knighted in 1430 is so much shorter than that of 1424 suggests that court attendance had very much declined by this point.

The lack of attendance probably had a lot to do with the fact that the nobles just did not want to be there. There was nothing attractive to the Scottish nobles in their king's court. The traditional courtly pastime of tournaments appears to have been generally ignored by James, apart from what appears to be a token effort in the 1430s, perhaps at a time when James was seeking to try and win some noble support. The early 1430s had witnessed the collapse of the Highland campaign and the clear distrust of the king by parliament. James perhaps hoped that showing an interest in a popular pastime would begin to attract nobles to his court. That there is almost no information about this tournament is a strong indication that it did not have the desired effect. A grand, well-executed, well-attended tournament organised by the king is unlikely to have gone unnoticed in this period, especially by Walter Bower, who was at pains to portray James as a model king for James II to follow. It is not difficult to see why James may have preferred to steer clear of tournaments. Despite Bower's assertion that James was skilled in this area, it is doubtful that James would have been in a position to compete with his nobles in this arena. It was, after all, the fifth Earl of Douglas (while still Earl of Wigtown) who, with the Earl of Buchan, led a force of Scots to France to help the French defeat the English at Baugé in 1421. The very real possibility of Douglas further increasing his chivalric reputation, within the kingdom no less, was something that James probably could not stand to

risk. The international reputation achieved by the Douglasses is further evident from the fact that in 1449, the Burgundian knight Jacques de Lalain visited Scotland in order to challenge James Douglas, brother of the eighth Earl of Douglas, to a joust, as he had heard that Douglas was a skilled knight. This was a family with a strong and continuing tradition of chivalric endeavours.⁹

The same is also true of the king's interest in hunting and literary pursuits. There is little suggestion that he participated in the former, and in the latter, as shown in chapter six, the king preferred to restrict this to a small circle of his closest intimates. Even if the king did not want to risk a full-scale tournament, socialising with his nobles in the course of a hunt could well have served to forge stronger relationships, yet James did not take this path, at least as far as the evidence suggests. In terms of literature, the king did produce what is now one of the great surviving works of medieval vernacular literature, the *Kingis Quair*. However, this is essentially a very private work. At its most immediate level, this is a biographical love story, personal to the king and queen. This exclusivity in literature is also evident in the use of Latin by James to compose at Inverness. There is nothing to match, for example, Robert II's association with *The Bruce*, a work that celebrated not only a great king but some of the other key figures during the Wars of Independence, figures whose successors were prominent in the later fourteenth century. In a sense, James was faced with a similar issue to his predecessor, that of attempting to win the support and loyalty of the noble community. Yet James I did not utilise literature in the way that Robert II had done. Instead, James served to alienate his nobles further by keeping courtly literature as something exclusive and personal rather than public and unifying. The contrast may have been all the more

⁹ Stevenson, *Chivalry and knighthood in Scotland*, 52-3, 72-6.

marked since *The Bruce* was still a well-known work during James's reign. The only aspect of chivalric culture that James can be seen to have participated in with any regularity was the knighting of some nobles. Even here, though, there are many indications that James failed to utilise this arena to his benefit. The men who received knighthoods at the king's hand were limited in number and in origin and do not seem to have helped produce a chivalric atmosphere at court.

James also missed the opportunity to create a unifying national ethos with his religious interests. True, James did attract a good number of clerics to his service, as discussed in chapter four. However, this may well have had more to do with the opportunities the king gave them to earn positions in his household that would enhance their status than any efforts he made in his religious life. Several servants achieved bishoprics as rewards for loyalty, not least of whom was of course John Cameron who was quickly elevated to the bishopric of Glasgow. John Winchester was elected to the bishopric of Moray shortly before James I's death and was consecrated as such in May 1437. James also pursued the provision of his nephew James Kennedy to the see of Dunkeld after the death of Bishop Cardeny in January 1437. Royal service was thus, as it had long been, a way for churchmen to gain high clerical office. In spiritual terms, there are clearly signs that James was attempting to participate in the most popular religious expressions of the fifteenth century, most notably in his interest in the cult of the Blessed Virgin and in his decision to found a Carthusian Priory as opposed to one of another order. However, while James may have hoped otherwise, these conventional aspects of medieval piety were not enough to win popular backing for his administration, and would probably at best have only prevented immediate censuring of a king who did not cultivate such conventions. As with chivalric interests, James appears to have preferred a much

more personal and private religious arrangement to a public approach. His apparent interest in St John the Baptist is testament to this. John was of course an important saint in this period, but the impression is certainly one of the king preferring him for personal reasons as opposed to any notion of his cult having a unifying effect amongst Scottish nobles. There is nothing in the examination of James's devotional behaviour to suggest that he pursued popular national or local cults in an effort to unify his subjects behind the Crown. In the case of St John the Baptist, this is a prime example of where James failed to make the most of his opportunities. The king's preference for Perth and his apparent affection for the Baptist could have combined to win him strong support from the residents of Perth. Instead, numerous Perth burgesses colluded in the assassination plot against James.

Michael Brown dismisses out of hand the idea that these men were reacting to royal debts and demands as there was no precedent for this in medieval Europe.¹⁰ However, the fact that there was no precedent does not make it impossible that this was at least a partial motivation. James is known to have accrued significant debts throughout his reign and given the amount of time he spent in Perth it is not unreasonable to assume that some of this burden was felt by the Perth burgesses. If the king's debt was not an immediate spur then it at least did little to deter the Perth locals from supporting the assassins. Additionally, this would not have been entirely without precedent. In late 1407, Louis, duke of Orleans, was assassinated by John, duke of Burgundy.¹¹ This was predominantly politically motivated but the idea was circulated that Louis had embezzled state funds for his own expenses, something James I effectively did with the money raised for his ransom. The strong

¹⁰ Brown, *James I*, 184.

¹¹ Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 36-8.

connections between Scotland and Burgundy would have meant that the Scots were not unaware of this event and the rumours surrounding it.¹²

James wanted power. He actively pursued policies which, on the face of it, should have aided him in this pursuit. He reorganised his household, which could perhaps have been expected to bring about an increased separation between the household and the court. However, it was his household officers upon whom the king relied most heavily and who could be found most frequently in his presence. James utilised men that he trusted to carry out the royal will, a logical approach, but he relied on too narrow a group of men. The king spent money to increase the status of his court and at least gave an appearance of an interest in chivalry and was not ignorant of the need to present himself as a pious monarch, but failed to produce an inviting atmosphere at court. In a way, James tried to do all the things which his upbringing in England would have told him were rational and sensible. Yet the fact that James's ethos was not in tandem with that of his nobles meant that the result of his efforts was the alienation of a large segment of the political elite. The Scottish nobility had grown accustomed to exercising a significant amount of power in their localities, free from the interference of a powerful monarch. What James perceived as a statement of his position and authority, his nobles took as acts of aggression, evidence that James was seeking to appropriate *their* position and authority. James's court spending would have sent a powerful statement of intent, backed up, for instance, by the attack on the Albany Stewart family in 1425, and the forfeiture of March and annexation of Mar in the 1430s.

Furthermore, a recurrent pattern throughout James's reign is that the king was far more concerned with his own comfort and interests than he was with how his

¹² See for example, Stevenson, 'Medieval Scottish Associations with Bruges'; Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe*.

changes would be implemented and how they would function in the long term. This appears to be particularly true in the latter half of the reign. The number of charters issued appears to decrease in the last years of James's reign and this, in combination with the reduced interest of the king in campaigning in the Highlands would seem to suggest that James was retreating from public life to an extent.¹³ This is further suggested by the confusion that begins to appear in household organisation as outlined in chapter two. This highlights that James was no longer as concerned with such official matters, as does perhaps the lack of Exchequer audits in the later years of the reign (although this may be due to non-survival of the records). Nevertheless, what audits were held later appear to have been less structured, at least in terms of the fact that there were no auditors appointed to oversee proceedings. The decision to sideline Hay and Keith from the household, particularly in the decision to appoint Robert Stewart in their stead, also follows this pattern of James seeking a more private and intimate court life at which his subjects were generally unwelcome. As king, James could not avoid such official functions entirely, but the pattern does seem to be fairly consistent. It was by this point also that James had spent the money raised for his ransom, and was now in possession of many luxury items. This money was gone, Linlithgow Palace was in a good state of completion, and James was no longer interested in attempting to placate his nobles in any way. As time passed, however, James's desire to increase his own financial resources again came to the fore, leading to the forfeiture of March and the annexation of Mar. That this period also saw an increased effort by James to secure the resources of lands in Perthshire for his wife Joan also points to desire for a more secure financial future. That this was bound to antagonise the Earl of Atholl (and indeed *did* antagonise him) seems

¹³ It should be noted that the reduction in charter numbers in the later years of the reign may be due to a lack of survival of documents rather than an actual decrease in charters produced.

not to have concerned James and this appears to be a clear example of how James operated throughout his reign: financial need above other considerations. This was perhaps a consequence of the limited financial resources he had while a captive in England.

What this study of James I's court and household reveals is perhaps not totally surprising. As highlighted at the outset of this thesis, the court and household were already known to be important factors in medieval kingship, which was what necessitated that such a study be undertaken for Scotland in the first place. However, what has become evident is just how crucial it was for a medieval Scottish king to get this area right and just how dependent the royal court was on the personality of the monarch. Richard Vaughan argues that the personality of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, dominated life at the Burgundian court in the mid-fifteenth century.¹⁴ This would appear to be the case for James I's court as well. James's apparent desire for a private, exclusive court, populated by a limited circle of confidants, is evident in every aspect here examined and what has become obvious throughout this study is just how distasteful this was to other important Scots. Clearly there is a strong case for conducting similar studies for other medieval monarchs in order to determine just how the different personalities of other rulers affected the style of the court and the politics of the reign more generally.

Nonetheless, there are signs in 1436 that all was not lost regarding the ultimate outcome of James's reign. The conclusion of the French alliance with the marriage of Princess Margaret, and the fact that many nobles did obey the royal summons to campaign to retake Roxburgh does indicate that James was still actively trying, and to a point succeeding, to retain his position. Yet unlike the nobles who

¹⁴ R. Vaughan, *Philip the Good: the Apogee of Burgundy* (London, 1970), 127.

stayed on to fight at Roxburgh after the death of James II there in 1460, James I's abandoned the cause, clearly highlighting how unsuccessful the latter was at uniting his subjects. Despite the opportunities available to him, by failing to make the most of them, by failing to get the balance right, by living beyond his means and by failing to fulfil his military role, James succeeded in alienating the very men whose support was crucial to a successful reign. In the end, James's personality, his courtly ethos, was so abhorrent that all he managed to achieve was the hostility and distrust of his nobles and an ignominious end in a sewer.

'Here this work comes to an end and the author ceases to write.'¹⁵

¹⁵ *Chron. Bower*, viii, 341.

Appendix 1 - Household officers/servants of king

Data is from the *Exchequer Rolls* unless otherwise stated.

1424 (RMS, ii)

Chancellor:	William Lauder, bishop of Glasgow
Secretary of King:	John Cameron

1425

Auditors:	Sir Walter Ogilvy of Luntrethin.
	Sir John Forrester of Corstorphine.
	Walter Forrester, Bishop of Brechin
	Master John Cameron, provost of Lincluden
	William of Lauder, Bishop of Glasgow.
	William Stephen, Bishop of Dunblane
	Sir Robert of Lauder of Bass
	Sir David Broun, canon of Chapel Royal

Chancellor:	William of Lauder, bishop of Glasgow
Treasurer:	Sir Walter Ogilvy
Chamberlain:	Sir John Forrester
Deputy-chamberlain:	William Curroun
Comptroller:	David Broun
Steward of Household:	James of Schaw
King's Secretary:	Master John Cameron
Keeper of Privy Seal:	Master John Cameron
Clerk Register:	Walter Forrester
Clerk of Chancery:	William of Cadyow
King's Macer:	John Scrymgeour
Clerk of Spices:	John of Levingstoun
King's Chaplain:	William of Lany

Other:	John Pereson, Servant of King
	William Gifford, watchman at Edinburgh
	Chaplain at E/b castle, unnamed.
	John of Levingstoun, master of Works of Tay Bridge.
	Servant named Balgarvy

1426

Auditors:	William Stephen, Bishop of Dunblane
	Master John Cameron, provost of Lincluden
	Sir John Forrester of Corstorphine
	Robert of Lauder of Bass
	Sir Walter of Ogilvy

John, Abbot of Balmerinloch
 Master Walter Stewart, Canon of Glasgow and Aberdeen
 Patrick of Ogilvy of Auchterhouse.
 John Sympill of Eliotstoune
 John Scheves.

Auditors (chamberlain account):	William Stephen, Bishop of Dunblane Master John Cameron, provost of Lincluden Robert of Lauder of Bass Walter of Ogilvy Patrick of Ogilvy of Auchterhouse Master Walter Stewart, Canon of Glasgow John Scheves, Canon of Glasgow
Treasurer:	Walter of Ogilvy
Clerk of Treasurer:	Robert of Lyntoun
Chancellor:	
Clerk of Chancellor:	William Cadyow (RMS, Feb 1425-6)
Comptroller:	David Broun
Chamberlain:	Sir John Forrester
Deputy-Chamberlain:	William Currou
Clerk Register:	Master John Scheves
Keeper of Great Seal:	Master John Cameron
King's Secretary:	Master John Cameron
Keeper of Privy Seal:	Master John Cameron
Clerk of KPS:	Master John Wincester
Clerk of the King:	Edward Lauder, archdeacon of Lothian (RMS, Feb 1425-6)
King's Macer:	John Scrymgeour
Clerk of Spices:	John of Levingstoun
Keeper of Edinburgh:	Sir Robert of Lauder of Bass
King's Chaplain:	William of Lany
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis John Spedy
Justiciar of Scotland:	Sir Robert of Lauder of Bass (also referred to as Justiciar South of Forth; <i>Douglas Book</i> , vol.3)
Other:	James of Schaw, King's bailie John Yule, Servant of King John of Wellis, Servant of King, before judicial combat William Giffard, Servant of King James of Lermonth, Servant of King Robert of Lyntoun, Clerk of Avery Walter Masoun, master of works at Edinburgh John of Waltoun, master of works at Linlithgow

Alexander Gulde (later master of works at Stirling)
 John of Levingstoun, master of works of Tay Bridge
 Marjory Nortoun, Queen's attendant
 Andrew Baxter, later master of King's ship(s).

1427

Keeper of Great Seal:	John Cameron, bishop elect of Glasgow (RMS, Feb/Mar.)
Chancellor:	John Cameron, bishop of Glasgow (RMS, from 31/5/1427)
Chamberlain:	John Forrester of Corstorphine (RMS)
Justiciar south of Forth:	Robert Lauder of the Bass (RMS)
Justiciar north of Forth:	Patrick Ogilvy (RMS)
Treasurer:	Walter Ogilvy (RMS)
Keeper of Privy Seal:	William Foulis (RMS)
Secretary of King:	William Foulis (RMS)

1428

Auditors:	Master John Scheves Master William of Foulis, provost of Bothwell. John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow Master John Winchester, Canon of Glasgow Sir John Forrester Thomas of Myretoun, dean of Glasgow Walter of Ogilvy
Chancellor:	John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow
Clerk Register:	Master John Scheves
Keeper of Privy Seal:	Master William of Foulis, provost of Bothwell
Chamberlain:	Sir John Forrester
Comptroller:	David Broun
Contrarotulatore:	Henry Hervy
Clerk of Spices:	Nicholas Kirkdale
Treasurer:	Walter Ogilvy
King's Macer:	John Scrymgeour
Keeper of Edinburgh:	Sir Robert of Lauder of Bass
King's Chaplain:	William of Lany
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis
<i>Ad hoc</i> officer:	John Winchester
Other:	John Ducheman, servant of King (merchant) John de Camera, Clerk of King's Chapel William Giffard, Servant of King Buchan, Keeper of King's Horses John Waltoun, master of works at Linlithgow

Alexander Gulde, master of works at Stirling
 John of Levingstoun, master of works of Tay Bridge
 Janet, wife of Adam Liddale (later Prince James's nurse).

1429

Auditors:	Master John Scheves John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow Sir John Forrester of Corstorphine Walter of Ogilvy of Luntrethin William of Foulis, Provost of Bothwell Thomas of Myretoun, dean of Glasgow Master John Winchester, Canon of Glasgow
Chancellor:	John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow
Keeper of Privy Seal:	Master William of Foulis
Comptroller:	John of Spens David Broun also referred to as Comptroller
Contrarotulatore:	Henry Hervy
Chamberlain:	Sir John Forrester
King's Macer:	John Scrymgeour
Treasurer:	Walter of Ogilvy
Clerk of Spices:	Nicholas Kirkdale
Steward of Household:	No name given
Moneyer:	Robert Gray
King's Clerk:	Thomas of Myretoun, Dean of Glasgow
Clerk Register:	Master John Scheves
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis
Keeper of Edinburgh:	Sir Robert Lauder
Other:	John de Camera, Clerk of King's Chapel John Strang, Doorkeeper of Exchequer Alexander Cragi, apothecary Martin Cuke, King's brewer James of Schaw, Servant of King William Giffard, Servant of King Nicholas Plummar, Servant of King John of Wellis, Servant of King Andrew Buchan (in other years as Keeper of the king's horses) John of Waltoun, master of Works at Linlithgow Alexander Gulde, master of Works at Stirling John of Levingstoun, master of works of Tay Bridge Janet, wife of Adam Liddale

1430

Chancellor:	John Cameron, bishop of Glasgow (RMS)
Chamberlain:	John Forrester of Corstorphine (RMS)
Treasurer:	Walter Ogilvy (RMS) (also referred to as MKH, GD150/96)
	Thomas Myrton (in <i>CSSR</i> , iii, 142, 11/10/1430)
Keeper of Privy Seal:	William Foulis (RMS)
Comptroller:	John Spens (RMS)
Clerk of Spices:	Nicholas Kirkdale
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis,
Keeper of Edinburgh:	Sir Robert Lauder
Justiciar south of Forth:	Thomas Somerville of Carnwath
Other:	Robert Coxsell, esquire of King Dragance Pursuivant Andrew Baxter, Master of King's Ship Erland Loss, Norwegian noble, Servant of King William Giffard, Servant of King William Dicsoun, Master of Queen's Stables

1431

Auditors:	Walter of Ogilvy Master William of Foulis, Provost of Bothwell John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow John Forrester Thomas of Myretoun, Dean of Glasgow John of Scheves, Canon of Glasgow
Chancellor:	John Cameron, Bishop of Glasgow
Treasurer:	Thomas Myrton, Dean of Glasgow
Comptroller:	John Spens
Clerk Register:	Master John Scheves
Chamberlain:	Sir John Forrester
Master of Household:	Walter of Ogilvy (also referred to as treasurer – RMS)
Keeper of Privy Seal:	Master William Foulis
Clerk of Spices:	Nicholas Kirkdale John Starhede his servant
King's Macer:	John Scrymgeour
Master of Mint:	Robert Gray
Keeper of Edinburgh:	Sir Robert Lauder
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis, annuity
King's Clerk:	Thomas Rule
Clerk of Chancery:	Andrew Taillefer

King's Chaplain: Richard Crag (NAS GD20/1/192)
William of Lany

Other: Robert Nory, servant of King's chamber
James of Schaw, Servant of King
John Spedy, Servant of King
Robert Coxsell, esquire of King
William Giffard, squire of King
Alexander Gulde, Master of Works at Stirling
Payment to James Alamanus
Sir William of Kers, Comptroller of accounts of Linlithgow Palace
Marjory Nortoun

1432 (From NAS catalogue charters, Douglas Book)

Clerk of Chancellor: Richard Crag (RMS)
Chamberlain: John Forester of Corstorphine
Keeper of Privy Seal: William Foulis, provost of Bothwell
Treasurer: Walter Stewart, dean of Moray
Clerk of the Rolls: John Scheves
Secretary: Richard Crag
Master of the King's Household: William Crichton
Walter Ogilvy also referred to as such (RMS –
31/3/1432 and 30/5/1432 Rose of Kilravock)
Provost of King's Chapel, St Andrews: Robert Lany

1433 (*Historical MS Commission*, 7th Report, 11th Report, *Douglas Book*, iii, NAS GD1/1042/3)

Chamberlain: John Forrester of Corstorphine
Keeper of Privy Seal: Master William Foulis, archdeacon of St Andrews
Master of the Household: William Crichton
Clerk of Chancery: Master Richard Crag
Treasurer: Mr Walter Stewart, dean of Moray
Secretary: John Methven

1434

Ad hoc financial officer: John Wincester
Comptroller: David Broun
Chamberlain: John Forrester of Corstorphine
Treasurer:
Master of Mint: Robert Gray (also master of works at Edinburgh)
King's Macer: John Scrymgeour (also servant of King's wardrobe)
Keeper of Privy Seal: Master William of Foulis (*Red & White Menzies*)
Justiciar South of Forth: Thomas Somerville of Carnwath

Receiver General south of Forth:	Thomas of Cranstoun
Captain of Edinburgh:	Sir William of Crichton
Chancellor:	John Cameron
Master of Household:	William Crichton (<i>Douglas Book</i> , iii)
Clerk:	Master Richard Crag

Other: Dragance, Pursuivant

Archibald of Preston, King's esquire
 John de Camera, clerk of King's chapel
 John Waltoun, Robert Weddale and Robert of Levingstoun, masters of works at Linlithgow
 William Valandy, master of works of Tay Bridge
 Stephen Clerk, (referred to in Turyne Account as master of bakehouse)
 King's fisher (unnamed), at Doune
 King's gardener (unnamed)
 Garitour of Stirling Castle (unnamed)
 Mathew, King's painter
 John of St Michael, King's Procurator Fiscal
 Chaplain at Stirling Castle
 Chaplain at Edinburgh Castle
 Watchers at Dundonald Castle
 Stablers at Dundonald Castle
 Thomas Pulti, master of King's barge
 William Dicsoun, master of Queen's stables
 Janet, wife of Adam Liddale, nurse to Prince
 Martin Tailyour, Servant of King
 William Giffard, Servant of King
 John Dolas, Servant of King
 James of Schaw, Servant of King

1435

<i>Ad hoc</i> financial officer:	John Winchester, provost of Lincluden,
Chamberlain:	John Forrester of Corstorphine (NAS
GD124/1/136)	
Deputy-Chamberlain:	Alexander Nairn
Comptroller:	David Broun
Treasurer:	Thomas of Cranstoun
Keeper Privy Seal:	William Foulis (NAS GD124/1/136)
Master of Household:	Sir William of Crichton
Moneyer:	Robert Gray (also master of works at Edinburgh)
King's Goldsmith:	John Landalis
Steward of Duke of Rothesay:	John of Spens, for h/hold expenses, £11 10s 2d.
Captain of Edinburgh Castle:	Sir William of Crichton, £100.

Other:

Earl of Mar, justiciar at Inverness
 John Hog, Chaplain of Edinburgh castle
 Dragance Pursuivant
 Robert of Balmanach, Clerk of King
 Lewis, Queen's Wardrober
 John Menzies, his majesty's armour bearer
 Robert of Levingstoun and Robert of Weddale, masters of works
 at Linlithgow
 John of Peebles, master of works of Tay Bridge
 Nicholas Plummar and Walter Masoun, some work at Edinburgh
 John, painter
 Nicholas Hude, King's archer
 Martin Tailyour, Servant of King
 William Giffard, Servant of King
 John de Camera, Servant of King
 Robert Nory, Servant of King

1436

Chamberlain:	John Forrester of Corstorphine (HMC 12 th report)
Keeper of Privy Seal:	William Foulis (HMC 12 th report)
Master of King's Household:	William Crichton (HMC 12 th report)

Turyne Account, rendered 1436

Thomas Myretoun, Chamberlain
 James Alamanus, physician
 Andrew Young, Steward of King's house
 Robert Gray, moneyer
 Master John Benyng, secretary of King

Appendix 2 – Exchequer Auditors

Year	Date	Location	Auditors
1426	16 April to 4 May	Edinburgh	William, bishop of Dunblane
			John Cameron, John Forrester
			Robert Lauder of the Bass
			Walter Ogilvy, John, abbot of Balmerino
			Walter Stewart, Patrick Ogilvy
			John Sempil of Eliotstoun, John Scheves
1428	27 April to ? May	Dundee	John Cameron, John Forrester
			Walter Ogilvy, William Foulis,
			Thomas Myrton, John Scheves
			John Wincester
1429	12 to 30 April	Perth	John Cameron, John Forrester,
			William Foulis, Walter Ogilvy,
			Thomas Myrtoun, John Scheves,
			John Wincester
1430	13 to 27 March	Perth	Not recorded
1431	16 April to 6 May	Perth	John Cameron, John Forrester,
			Walter Ogilvy, William Foulis,
			Thomas Myrtoun, John Scheves
1434	12 Nov 1433 to 12 June 1434 & 27 Dec 1434	Linlithgow	Not recorded
1434	5 June	Linlithgow	Ballivi ad Extra, no auditors recorded
1435	21 June to 20 July	Stirling	Not recorded
1435	8 to 20 July	Stirling	Account of contribution from the burghs
			No auditors recorded
1435	28 July	Stirling	Chamberlain's Account, no auditors
1436	5 September	Perth	John Turyne's Account, no auditors
1436	10 December	Edinburgh	Further account regarding contribution

Appendix 3 – Sienna Fresco



Appendix 4 – Architectural Images



Bothwell Castle: Great Hall, east range, exterior view



Bothwell Castle: Great Hall, north facing, interior view



Bothwell Castle: Great Hall, south facing, interior view



Doune Castle, exterior view, north range



Doune Castle, entrance passage, in north-west tower



Doune Castle, Duke's Hall



Doune Castle, Duke's Hall



Linlithgow Palace, Royal Arms above East entrance



Linlithgow Palace, Great Hall, south facing, interior view



Linlithgow Palace, Great Hall, north facing, interior view



Linlithgow Palace, East Range, exterior view



Tantallon Castle, Interior Courtyard, west facing (Photo: Phil Kerr)



Tantallon Castle, Great Hall, east facing, interior view (Photo: Phil Kerr)



Tantallon Castle, Great Hall, west facing, interior view (Photo: Phil Kerr)

Appendix 5 – Devotional Calendar

January

4	
6	Peter of Canterbury/Epiphany
16	
18	
19	Fillan
21	Agnes
24	
26	
28	
29	

February

2	Candlemas
5	Agatha
6	
8	
9	
10	Trumwin, bishop of Abercorn
11	Gregory II
12	Ethilwald
14	
16	
17	
19	
21	
22	
27	
28	

March

2	
3	
4	Adrian of May
5	
9	
19	Death of Alexander III
20	Death of Henry IV
21	Benedict
22	James I captured
24	Dunchad
25	Annunciation/ Inauguration of Robert I
26	Coronation of Robert II
28	Release of James I
30	

April

1 Gilbert of Caithness
 3 Richard of Chichester
 4 Death of Robert III
 5
 9
 10
 19 Death of Robert II
 23 George
 25 Mark
 29

May

2
 5
 6 John the Evangelist
 10
 14
 17
 19 Dunstan
 21 William of Perth/
 Coronation of James I
 29

June

7 Death of Robert I
 9 Columba
 13
 15
 17
 19 Margaret of Scotland (tr.)
 23 Bannockburn (1)
 24 Bannockburn (2)
 John the Baptist
 29 Peter & Paul

July

2	Visitation/ Swithun
3	Thomas the Apostle (tr.)
4	
7	Death of Edward II/ Thomas Becket
8	Death of Alexander II
11	Birth of Robert I
13	Inauguration of Alexander III
15	Swithun (tr.)
20	Margaret of Antioch
23	
29	
31	

August

1	Ethelwold
3	Waldef
4	
7	
11	Blane
14	Coronation of Robert III
15	Assumption
18	
22	Octave of Assumption
25	Louis IX
26	Ninian
27	Monica
31	Death of Henry V/ Aidan

September

2	
3	
7	
8	Nativity of the Virgin
10	
11	Stirling Bridge
13	
18	
19	
21	Mathew
23	
25	
28	
29	Michaelmas

October

1
 3
 4 Francis of Assisi
 7
 8 Triduana
 9 Denis
 10
 11
 23
 24
 26 Eata
 29
 31

November

1 All Saints
 2 All Souls
 4 Birstan
 8
 12 Martin I
 14
 17 Hugh of Lincoln
 18
 21 Presentation of the Virgin
 23
 25
 27
 30 Andrew

December

3 Birnius
 5 Inauguration of Alexander II
 6 Nicholas
 8 Conception
 11
 12
 19
 21 Thomas the Apostle
 23
 25 Christmas
 26 Stephen
 27 John the Evangelist
 29 Thomas Becket

Appendix 6 - Death of Rothesay: 25/26 March

1425

12-17 March, Perth Parliament
14 April, St Andrews

1426

11 March, Perth
27 March, Edinburgh

1427

18 March, Edinburgh
26 May, Edinburgh

1428

14 March, Linlithgow
27 March, Edinburgh

1429

10 March, Perth
According to *Exchequer Rolls*, James was at Haddington, Dunbar, Coldingham, Edinburgh and Linlithgow during this month.

1430

23 March, Perth (Exchequer audit held at Perth until 27 March)
20 April, Perth

1431

17 March, Perth
19 March, Perth (Exchequer audit started at Perth on 16 March)

1432

20 March, Perth
31 March, Perth

1433

24 February, Linlithgow

22 June, Edinburgh

1434

1 March, Stirling

16 March, Stirling

May, Linlithgow

1435

20-26 February, Perth

14 April, Stirling

1436

March, James was at Dumbarton at some point during this month according to *Exchequer Rolls*.

Appendix 7 - John the Baptist: 24 June

1424

3 June, Perth
10 July, Edinburgh

1425

24 June, Edinburgh

1426

28 May, Edinburgh
18 July, St Andrews

1427

11 June, Edinburgh
1 July, Perth

1428

Records indicate that James was at Linlithgow in June but there are no specific dates.
8 May, Dundee
12 July, Perth

1429

20 June, Edinburgh
23 June, Lochaber¹
27 June, Inverness

1430

16 June, Perth
6 July, Edinburgh

1431

3 June, Linlithgow

¹ This date is taken from *Chron.Bower*, which states that the king's banner was present at Lochaber on this date. This does not necessarily mean that the king was himself present.

1432

30 May, Perth

1 September, Perth

1433

22 June, Edinburgh

31 July, Edinburgh

1434

Records indicate that James was in Linlithgow in the early part of June. No further data is currently available.

1435

21 June – 28 July, Stirling, for Exchequer Audit. James may have been able to visit Perth during this time, but this is not certain.

1436

Records indicate that James was at Dumbarton during March.

30 July, Edinburgh

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 GD1/589 - Lindores Abbey resignation of Errol church
 GD1/1042 - Spens of Lathallan Writs
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 GD11 - Papers of the Bruce Family of Kennet, Clackmannanshire
 GD16 - Papers of the Earls of Airlie
 GD20 - Papers of the Earls of Glasgow (Crawford Priory)
 GD25 - Papers of the Kennedy Family, Earls of Cassillis (Ailsa Muniments)
 GD33 - Papers of the Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair
 GD52 - Papers of Lord Forbes
 GD68 - Papers of Murray of Lintrose
 GD79 - Records of King James VI Hospital, Perth
 GD86 - Sir William Fraser Charters
 GD119 - Papers of Lord Torphichen
 GD124 - Papers of the Erskine Family, Earls of Mar and Kellie
 GD135 - Papers of the Dalrymple Family, Earls of Stair
 GD137 - Papers of the Scrymgeour Wedderburn of Wedderburn Family, Earls of Dundee
 GD150 - Papers of the Earls of Morton
 GD157 - Papers of the Scott Family of Harden, Lords Polwarth, Berwickshire
 GD158 - Hume of Polwarth Earls of Marchmont
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 GD198 - Papers of the Haldane Family of Gleneagles, Perthshire

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