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The Origins of the Scottish Conservative Party, 1832–1868

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

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September 2017



## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis has been composed by me and is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Gary D. Hutchison



### **Abstract**

This thesis examines the Scottish Conservative party between 1832 and 1868. It focuses on the party's organisation, structure, leadership, and attitudes. It begins by examining the social, occupational, educational, and religious background of its MPs, candidates, and peers. This reveals that the party's composition, while predominantly aristocratic, nevertheless boasted a range of distinctive and often competing interests. The thesis then explores the make-up, organisation and activity of the party on a local constituency level. This illustrates that the party was more inclusive and heterogeneous than might be assumed, and was very active in promoting itself through a wide variety of methods. The party thus had a notable impact on the wider social and cultural life of Scotland throughout the mid-nineteenth century. Following this, the structure and leadership of the Scottish party on a national level is examined. These could be a source of innovation and accomplishment, and their subsequent decline had a marked effect on the party's overall performance. Above this level, the party's role in parliament, governance, and in a British context is explored. It is demonstrated that the Scottish party maintained a modicum of distinctiveness even at Westminster. Moreover, its multifaceted role in Scottish governance gave it significant influence over Scottish society. Finally, the positions of the Scottish party on important political issues are examined, as are the underlying attitudes which determined these positions. The Scottish party contained many competing and overlapping factions, which held a hitherto unsuspected diversity of outlooks. Overall, this thesis illustrates that the Scottish Conservative party had a pronounced effect on many different facets of Scottish politics and wider society, and was itself more complex and more popular than is reflected in the existing historiography. It therefore counters the assumption that Scotland was almost hegemonically Liberal – a finding which has potential implications for scholarship spread across Scottish and British political, social, and cultural history.

## **Lay Summary**

This thesis examines the Scottish Conservative party between 1832 and 1868. It focuses on the party's organisation, structure, leadership, and attitudes. It begins by examining the social, occupational, educational, and religious background of its MPs, candidates, and peers. This reveals that the party's composition, while predominantly aristocratic, nevertheless boasted a range of distinctive and often competing interests. The thesis then explores the make-up, organisation and activity of the party on a local constituency level. This illustrates that the party was more inclusive and heterogeneous than might be assumed, and was very active in promoting itself through a wide variety of methods. The party thus had a notable impact on the wider social and cultural life of Scotland throughout the mid-nineteenth century. Following this, the structure and leadership of the Scottish party on a national level is examined. These could be a source of innovation and accomplishment, and their subsequent decline had a marked effect on the party's overall performance. Above this level, the party's role in parliament, governance, and in a British context is explored. It is demonstrated that the Scottish party maintained a modicum of distinctiveness even at Westminster. Moreover, its multifaceted role in Scottish governance gave it significant influence over Scottish society. Finally, the positions of the Scottish party on important political issues are examined, as are the underlying attitudes which determined these positions. The Scottish party contained many competing and overlapping factions, which held a hitherto unsuspected diversity of outlooks. Overall, this thesis illustrates that the Scottish Conservative party had a pronounced effect on many different facets of Scottish politics and wider society, and was itself more complex and more popular than is reflected in the existing historiography. It therefore counters the assumption that Scotland was almost hegemonically Liberal – a finding which has potential implications for scholarship spread across Scottish and British political, social, and cultural history.





## Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the efforts of my supervisors, Gordon Pentland and Ewen Cameron. Their unfailingly helpful advice, constructive comments on my work, and all-round willingness to go the extra mile for me has made the writing (and, not incidentally, the content) of this thesis immeasurably richer. Gordon encouraged me to continue along this path from undergraduate study right up to this point, for which I am very thankful.

More broadly, I would like to thank the University of Edinburgh and its staff, particularly Alex Murdoch and Ben Weinstein, for providing help, advice, and a genuinely collegial environment in which to develop my ideas. The postgraduate community were also instrumental to this. I would like to thank my fellow doctoral student Ben Rogers in particular for giving useful scholarly advice, and for distracting me from my work when I needed a break. Throughout my time at the university, my old partner in crime Nick Cassidy also provided help and amusement when I needed it most – it was very much appreciated.

This thesis would also not have been possible without the generous financial support of the Wolfson Foundation, for which I am sincerely thankful – particularly for the research element of the award, which enabled me to visit numerous archives, who also deserve my thanks. Noteworthy was the History of Parliament's 1832–1868 team, who went above and beyond in providing advice and assistance.

To my partner Becca, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for everything. Her love, support, (endless) patience, and encouragement were more important than words can express.

Finally, I would not be here today without the unwavering support and affection of my family. My grandparents always urged me to work towards my full potential, and provided a nurturing environment in which to do so. Above all, my parents, Audrey and Alan, gave me an ideal upbringing and constant encouragement. They deserve ultimate credit for everything that follows – this thesis is dedicated to them.

## Abbreviations

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <i>BEM</i>   | <i>Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine</i>                          |
| <i>EHR</i>   | <i>English Historical Review</i>                               |
| <i>HoP</i>   | <i>History of Parliament</i> (online)                          |
| <i>JBS</i>   | <i>Journal of British Studies</i>                              |
| NAVSR        | National Association for the<br>Vindication of Scottish Rights |
| <i>ODNB</i>  | <i>Oxford Dictionary of National<br/>Biography</i> (online)    |
| <i>RSCHS</i> | <i>Records of the Scottish Church History<br/>Society</i>      |
| <i>SHR</i>   | <i>Scottish Historical Review</i>                              |
| WS           | Writer to the Signet   |

### Textual Note

In quotations, grammar and spelling have been modernised, capitalisations altered, and abbreviations lengthened, except where doing so would have materially altered the meaning or import of the content in question. In particular, the capitalisation of party and factional labels has been left entirely unaltered, even where this may seem incongruous. Within the text itself, capitalised labels (e.g. Conservative) pertain to parties and their *de facto* members, while lower-case labels (e.g. conservative/conservatism) refer to broader sets of beliefs and their adherents. The term ‘Tory’ is used only in reference to the period before 1832.

## INTRODUCTION

The central question of nineteenth-century Scottish politics was ‘Why is Scotland Liberal?’.<sup>1</sup> This thesis interrogates the underlying assumptions of that hypothesis, seeking to problematise the simplistic but enduring ‘myth’ of liberal Scotland. Certainly, the majority of MPs sent by Scotland to parliament between the First and Second Reform Acts were not Conservative. This, however, is only a small part of a much broader story; the operation of Scotland’s electoral system concealed a multitude of complexities in its wider politics and society. Moreover, the fluid and contingent state of partisan high politics in parliament itself makes it unwise to draw clear lines of demarcation between ‘Liberal’ and ‘Conservative’. Indeed, given the moderate nature of Scotland’s Liberal MPs, Scotland’s political representatives were, in many cases, more whiggish than monolithically ‘liberal’ in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> When a spectrum running from grassroots Scottish society to the corridors of Westminster is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that Scotland and its politics were far more conservatively inclined than has been assumed. This thesis will demonstrate that this was primarily due to the character and efforts of the Scottish Conservative party.

The Conservatives were not the most popular party in Scotland. They were, in fact, less popular than in England and Ireland. As such, this thesis will also explore why the Scottish Conservative party was, nevertheless, unable to reverse the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Why is Scotland Liberal?’, *Westminster Review*, 130 (Nov. 1888).

<sup>2</sup> John Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857–1868* (London, 1966), 48–9.

political domination of the Liberals, Whigs, and radicals. As such, it will consider why Scotland was not more conservative.

The pre-Reform Tory party dominated Scotland's representation before 1832, primarily due to the exceptionally oligarchic (though not entirely closed) nature of its electoral system.<sup>3</sup> Given a national electorate which had grown to only 4,239 by the last pre-Reform election, the party was able to construct an efficient vote-management apparatus. This was headed by successive members of the Dundas family, supported by their allies in the gentry and Faculty of Advocates.<sup>4</sup> Their authoritarian hold over Scotland's representation and governance, however, engendered deep hostility among the wider population. The party was thus unpopular, to an even greater extent than in England. Because of this, the Reform agitation was particularly heated in Scotland, especially as Scottish Tories were particularly vigorous in their attempts to stymie reformist efforts.<sup>5</sup>

They were punished for their obstructionism at the polls in 1832. The passing of Reform did, however, mark the beginning of the newly christened Conservative party in Scotland. The party quickly acquired a new leader, and the relative influence of internal factions shifted dramatically. It acquired new organisational machinery, both local and national, which engaged in novel activities within a transformed electoral system. In parliament, Scottish representatives in both the Commons and Lords participated in the wider changes which were taking place in the UK Conservative party. These changes had a positive impact on the party's electoral performance, but there were clear limits to this. The Scottish party gradually

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<sup>3</sup> See Ronald M. Sunter, *Patronage and Politics in Scotland, 1707–1832* (Edinburgh, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> See Michael Fry, *The Dundas Despotism* (Edinburgh, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity in Scotland 1820–1833* (London, 2008), Chapters 2–4.

improved its performance in successive elections up to a peak in 1841, but nevertheless failed to achieve many pluralities and thus win seats in urban Scotland. The Scottish party was damaged, both internally and externally, by the Scottish Church crisis which culminated in the 1843 Disruption of the Established Church of Scotland.

After the UK party's 1846 schism over the issue of Corn Law repeal, the Scottish Conservatives followed their colleagues by splitting into Peelite and Protectionist groups. Neither of these, however, were able to develop an appealing Scottish platform, despite strenuous and occasionally innovative efforts. Thus, the party continued its gradual electoral decline. By the election of 1865, the party was reduced to a mere ten MPs out of fifty-three seats, and won only six seats in the election of 1868.<sup>6</sup> The party therefore ended the period in a worse electoral position than it had started in. Nevertheless, 1867–8 marked a new chapter in its history, with the formation of the first new national organisation since the 1830s – the Scottish National Constitutional Association. This body was intended to promote the party's prospects in an electoral system which had been again transformed. In the later nineteenth century, it would go on to significantly improve its electoral performance. Indeed, the Conservative party has been a periodically powerful force in Scotland up to the present day. Significant aspects of this force stem from its formative phase, between 1832 and 1868.

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<sup>6</sup> Even then, three of these MPs were Liberal or Independent Conservatives in 1865. See Appendix C.

## Methodology and Select Historiography

The period between the First and Second Reform Acts was an eventful one in Scottish and British political terms, generating much fruitful scholarly inquiry.<sup>7</sup> However, the wide-ranging works on broader Scottish politics by I.G.C. Hutchison, Michael Fry, and Michael Dyer, while invaluable, do not offer a dedicated examination of the Scottish Conservative party after 1832.<sup>8</sup> The party from the 1880s onwards, as it gradually improved its electoral performance, has been the subject of more thorough attention.<sup>9</sup> Nineteenth-century Scottish politics in general has, however, until recently been a relatively neglected field. As recently as 1994, historians could comment upon the lack of a coherent history of nineteenth-century Scotland, especially a political history.<sup>10</sup>

The study of modern Scottish history from the 1960s onwards was generally dominated by economic and social themes, along the lines of T.C. Smout's *History of the Scottish People*.<sup>11</sup> As such, 'politics' and 'people' were framed as somewhat separate and distinct. The more politically oriented narrative offered by the likes of

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<sup>7</sup> For the sake of brevity and clarity, more in-depth engagement with the historiographical landscape pertaining to the individual chapters of this thesis is generally contained within the chapters themselves.

<sup>8</sup> I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832–1924: Parties, Elections, Issues* (Edinburgh, 1986); Michael Fry, *Patronage and Principle: A Political History of Modern Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1987); Michael Dyer, *Men of Property and Intelligence: The Scottish Electoral System prior to 1884* (Aberdeen, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> See Basil L. Crapster, 'Scotland and the Conservative Party in 1876', *Journal of Modern History*, 29 (1957), 355–60; Derek Urwin, 'The Development of the Conservative Party Organisation in Scotland until 1912', *SHR*, 44 (1965), 89–111; Ewen Cameron, *Impaled Upon a Thistle: Scotland since 1880* (Edinburgh, 2010), Chapter 3.

<sup>10</sup> R.J. Morris and Graeme Morton, 'Where Was Nineteenth-Century Scotland?', *SHR*, 73 (1994), 89.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, T.C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People, 1560–1830* (London, 1969).

William Ferguson was out of step with then-prevailing trends.<sup>12</sup> The neglect of political history can even (arguably) be partly traced back to attitudes originating in the Victorian period itself. During this time, Scotland's political history ceased to be of great concern to Scottish contemporaries, who preferred to focus on the more romantic and obscurantist elements of the nation's history.<sup>13</sup> Michael Fry has attributed this to the overwhelming pre-eminence of an aggressive brand of intellectually assimilationist liberalism after 1832.<sup>14</sup> As this thesis will demonstrate, however, this pre-eminence was not nearly as overwhelming as has been assumed; therefore, twentieth-century post-war historiographical trends are primarily responsible for this neglect.

Work on the Scottish Conservatives during this time is almost entirely non-existent. A relatively recent article has demonstrated that the Scottish Peelites had faded away in parliament by 1857, but nevertheless retained some limited influence on a local level up to the end of the decade.<sup>15</sup> The useful works of J.I. Brash explore Scottish Conservative activities on a constituency level, illustrating the extent and variety of the party's endeavours.<sup>16</sup> However, they rely almost exclusively on a collection of papers from a single manuscript source, and discuss only the electoral side of party activity. Even this activity, moreover, is restricted to isolated Scottish

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<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, William Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh, 1968).

<sup>13</sup> See Marinell Ash, *The Strange Death of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1980); Colin Kidd, "'The Strange Death of Scottish History'" Revisited: Constructions of the Past in Scotland, c. 1790–1914', *SHR*, 76 (1997), 86–102.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Fry, 'The Whig Interpretation of Scottish History', in Ian Donnachie and Christopher Whatley (eds), *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1992), 75.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon F. Millar, 'The Conservative Split in the Scottish Counties, 1846–1857', *SHR*, 80 (2001), 250.

<sup>16</sup> J.I. Brash, *Papers on Scottish Electoral Politics, 1832–1854* (Edinburgh, 1974); J.I. Brash, 'The Conservatives in the Haddington District of Burghs, 1832–52', *Transactions of the East Lothian Antiquarian and Field Naturalists' Society*, 11 (1968), 37–70.



regions. Slightly more attention has been paid to the mid-nineteenth century Conservative party in the other constituent nations of the United Kingdom. A monograph on the Irish Conservative party has recently been published, focusing on a time when the Irish party enjoyed an ‘Indian summer’ after 1852, as opposed to its Scottish counterpart’s continued stagnation.<sup>17</sup> This work largely restricts itself to an examination of party responses to issues such as land reform and the position of the Church of Ireland. It does, however, provide a very useful analysis of the social composition of the Irish parliamentary party, facilitating fruitful comparisons with the Scottish Conservative contingent.

Scholarly works on the development of the Conservative party in general are also much more abundant.<sup>18</sup> Conservative party organisation in the ‘Age of Peel’ is an area which has received sustained attention. An emphasis on the local nature of party development has provided insights into the local and national political environments in which parties operated, during the ‘golden age of the private clubs’.<sup>19</sup> Norman Gash greatly expanded on this topic in later articles, which examined both the parliamentary and electoral organisation of the party. He demonstrated that both parts were mutually dependent, yet also possessed considerable scope for independent action in their own spheres.<sup>20</sup> More recent

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<sup>17</sup> Andrew Shields, *The Irish Conservative Party, 1852–1868: Land, Politics and Religion* (Dublin, 2007), 207.

<sup>18</sup> Older and/or more general works on this subject include George Kitson-Clark, *Peel and the Conservative Party: A Study in Party Politics, 1832–41* (London, 1964); Bruce Coleman, *Conservatism and the Conservative party in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1988); Paul Adelman, *Peel and the Conservative Party, 1830–1850* (London, 1989).

<sup>19</sup> Norman Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A Study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation, 1830–1850* (London, 1953), 393.

<sup>20</sup> Norman Gash, ‘The Organization of the Conservative Party, 1832–1846, Part I: The Parliamentary Organization’, *Parliamentary History*, 1 (1982), 137–59; Norman Gash, ‘The Organization of the Conservative Party, 1832–1846, Part II: The Electoral Organization’, *Parliamentary History*, 2 (1983), 131–52.

research has examined the party's organisation in the chaotic period after the Corn Law split in the 1850s, illustrating that it helped to stabilise the party and stave off disintegration.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Matthew Cragoe has rightly questioned the contention that local partisan loyalties in favour of national parties did not take proper root before the 1860s.<sup>22</sup> By examining the effects of Conservative Associations in the quiet periods between elections in the 1830s, it becomes clear that such bodies had an appreciable effect on broader beliefs. This, however, tended to be a one-way affair; though Associations instilled broader party loyalties downwards, they had little to no concomitant upward effect on parliamentary politics.

With regards to conservative ideology, it is intriguing to note that more has been written on working-class conservatism in Scotland than on elite worldviews, perhaps in keeping with the economic and social focus of post-war Scottish scholarship. This has illustrated that the party's aspirations did, to an extent, enjoy popular support, and led to the creation of formal working-class organisations.<sup>23</sup> Further, recent research has reemphasised that working-class conservatism in Britain more generally cannot be dismissed by academics merely as 'a form of political deviancy'.<sup>24</sup> Popular liberalism, by contrast, has never been dismissed as such, which largely explains why there a more in-depth work has been produced on the

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<sup>21</sup> Edwin Jaggard, 'Managers and Agents: Conservative Party Organisation in the 1850s', *Parliamentary History*, 27 (2008), 18.

<sup>22</sup> Matthew Cragoe, 'The Great Reform Act and the Modernization of British Politics: The Impact of Conservative Associations, 1835–1841', *JBS*, 47 (2008), 583.

<sup>23</sup> J.T. Ward, 'Some Aspects of Working-Class Conservatism in the Nineteenth Century', in John Butt and J.T. Ward (eds), *Scottish Themes, Essays in Honour of Professor S.G.E. Lythe* (Edinburgh, 1976), 141–58.

<sup>24</sup> Matthew Roberts, 'Popular Conservatism in Britain, 1832–1914', *Parliamentary History*, 26 (2007), 388.

nineteenth-century Scottish Liberal party.<sup>25</sup> Gordon Millar's PhD thesis makes great efforts to corral the numerous strands of mid-nineteenth century Scottish liberalism and overlay them onto a confusing and complex electoral landscape – one in which different brands of Scottish Liberal frequently challenged each other in elections.<sup>26</sup> It illustrates that liberalism in Scotland, as in the UK more broadly, contained a very complex and diverse set of factions. Some recent efforts have illustrated that the Scottish Conservative party also contained different brands of conservatism.<sup>27</sup> However, it was still a great deal more ideologically cohesive than its numerous opponents. This makes it a great deal easier to identify a relatively distinct Conservative party both in parliament and in Scotland after 1832.

There are many different points at which historians have suggested that this Conservative (or Tory) party began, ranging from the time of Charles I to that of Pitt, Peel, and Disraeli.<sup>28</sup> While these differing start-points each have their merits, it will be shown (in Scotland at least) that it was during the 1830s that the party truly coalesced. Given this timeline, Robert Stewart's *Foundation of the Conservative Party* remains the most useful modern scholarly work on the party, with other works periodically adding to our understanding of the party in this crucial formative phase.<sup>29</sup> Stewart's book remains the most comprehensive because it examines the party both in and out of parliament, its leadership, its backbenchers, and the

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<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, James Kellas, 'The Liberal Party in Scotland, 1885–1895', PhD thesis, University of London, 1961.

<sup>26</sup> Gordon, F. Millar, 'The Liberal party in Scotland, 1843–1868: Electoral Politics and Party Development', PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1994.

<sup>27</sup> See J.E. Cookson, 'The Edinburgh and Glasgow Duke of Wellington Statues: Early Nineteenth-Century Unionist Nationalism as a Tory Project', *SHR*, 83 (2004), 23–40; Alex Tyrrell, 'The Earl of Eglinton, Scottish Conservatism, and the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights', *Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), 87–107.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Major* (London, 1997), Chapter 1.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Stewart, *The Foundation of the Conservative Party, 1830–1867* (London, 1978); John Ramsden, *An Appetite for Power: A History of the Conservative Party since 1830* (London, 1999).

underlying worldviews which served to both unite and, on occasion, divide them. On the whole, there is a substantial amount of scholarship which examines various aspects of the UK Conservative party. While these scholarly efforts tend to somewhat underplay the distinctiveness of the different nations comprising the United Kingdom, they do point out several useful areas of inquiry and some constructive methods for doing so.

Many of these works privilege a particular definition of ‘party’, be it parliamentary, electoral, ideological, or fluctuating combinations of these categories and others. It is also, moreover, important to acknowledge that parties must be understood in terms of their function, within the constitutional context of the age. In the period in question, this was determined by the doctrine of ‘parliamentary government’.<sup>30</sup> In sum, the term ‘party’ is a flexible one, dependent upon the specific context in which it is used. It is necessary to situate the actions of parties within a broader popular political culture; here broadly defined as the various concepts and practices within the wider society existing outside of the exclusively elite political sphere. Studies of popular political culture can shed light on the political thoughts and practices of the population at large, complementing studies focusing on these themes in the arena of elite politics. As Jon Lawrence has observed, works on ‘high politics’ and ‘popular politics’ need not be separate. He suggests that one specific starting-point for reintegrating political history is to foreground the sites at which the worlds of popular and elite politics meet, such as public meetings.<sup>31</sup> On a wider

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<sup>30</sup> Angus Hawkins, “‘Parliamentary Government’ and Victorian Political Parties, c. 1830–c. 1880”, *EHR*, 104 (1989), 640.

<sup>31</sup> Jon Lawrence, ‘Political History’, in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing History: Theory and Practice* (New York, 2003), 192–9.

scale, this thesis suggests that a broadly defined ‘party’ serves to bring together these worlds, in a vast array of different contexts. Concurrently, just as important are the links which were limited, or decayed, or unexpectedly absent. A party could be integral to the worlds which surrounded it, but only if it was willing and/or able to make itself so – and if the surrounding worlds in question were also willing to interact.

This thesis is not a standalone examination of the Scottish Conservative party’s electoral apparatus, or of its electoral activities. Similarly, it is not restricted to examining activity in Westminster. Rather, it seeks to examine multiple aspects, and the ways in which these were historically significant (or notably insignificant) in their own individual contexts. As such, the Scottish Conservative party between the Reform Acts is treated as a disparate, but nevertheless discrete and holistic entity. This work makes use of a diverse range of source materials, most prominently the surviving private correspondence and papers of the figures who comprised the party. A substantial number of manuscript collections in a large number of archives have been consulted. This includes a spectrum ranging from papers pertaining to great magnates and national leaders to those of county solicitors and ordinary electors. These materials reveal the high levels of interconnectedness between the different but overlapping sections of the party, illustrating that this broadly conceived entity was vast and far-reaching.<sup>32</sup>

Public sources have also been utilised; these include the speeches, memoirs, and diaries of relevant figures, parliamentary papers, Hansard, selected pamphlets,

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<sup>32</sup>This interconnectedness is further highlighted within this thesis by the numerous footnotes which themselves direct the reader back and forth across chapters.

and articles contained in newspapers and periodicals. These primarily highlight the interconnections between the party and broader society, in Scotland and the wider United Kingdom. Conversely, this also serves to highlight the gaps between the internal world of party figures and the external worlds which they increasingly failed to understand, and thus win over. Scotland experienced transformative change during this period, which many Scottish Conservatives were unable to adapt to. The use of private source material has been emphasised in this thesis for this reason; Scottish Conservatives were anxious to keep their internal affairs insulated from public view, and were particularly (though not entirely) successful in doing so. As such, by consulting a broad range of sources in depth, a particularly clear picture of the party and its significance can be rendered.

This thesis also adopts a deliberately broad definition of what constituted ‘Scotland’. In addition to being a geographic and legal entity, it was also, among other things, a unique society and culture which generated distinctive ideas. As such, it is not merely a study of the Conservative party in Scotland; people and ideas moved freely across borders in both directions, making the Scottish party (or elements of it) felt in the wider United Kingdom, and vice versa. This thesis illustrates that ‘party’ reached into almost every aspect and level of Scottish society, politics, and culture. Moreover, ‘Scotland’ itself, through the channel of the Scottish Conservatives, exerted a limited and opaque influence over these aspects in the wider United Kingdom. Though it is not possible to explore comprehensively the ways in which this reach affected Scotland and the UK in the detail it deserves, it does point towards several areas of potential further inquiry.

That is not to say, however, that each strand of the Scottish party was equal. The electoral parts of the party, for instance, were viewed and treated as a subordinate and somewhat disreputable arm by the party in parliament. It is clear that the party's essential function was to 'protect parliamentary sovereignty from both the prerogative and the populace'.<sup>33</sup> Although it had a distinct but limited presence in Westminster, the Scottish Conservative party was an inherently subordinate entity because its main areas of strength, influence, and activity were largely outside of parliament. Even taking into account a broad definition of 'Scotland', the Scottish Conservative party was more bottom-heavy than the UK party as a whole. The importance of each element, however, depends on how that importance is defined. The electorate may have had only limited influence over the political manoeuvrings which took place within parliament. Yet, this does not mean that the electorate was entirely inconsequential. Apart from electors' restricted influence on politics, they were, after all, undeniably impacted by the results of such parliamentary manoeuvring (as were non-electors). It is necessary to analyse the interconnected facets of the party in order to fully understand its overall impact.

Chapter One begins by examining the diverse and vigorous electoral activities undertaken by party figures embedded in Scottish society, with an evaluation of their successes and failures. In Chapter Two, the changing leadership of the Scottish party is explored, uncovering the figures who led the party, and their variable success and influence in doing so. It reveals a critical, though variable and contingent, level of the party, which provided a crucial link between its constituency and parliamentary sections. Moving further towards the realm of high politics,

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<sup>33</sup> Hawkins, 'Parliamentary Government', 642.

Chapter Three explores the extent to which the Scottish Conservatives were distinctive in a parliamentary context, and the party's role in governing Scotland on national and local levels. Chapter Four explores Scottish conservatism until the party's 1846 split. It considers the ways in which different factions evolved within the bounds of the party, and how this affected its reactions to the pivotal issues of the day. Finally, Chapter Five explores Scottish conservatism after the Corn Law split, placing a greater emphasis on its efforts to lead and react to wider changes taking place in Scottish society.

In the 1960s, scholars of nineteenth-century Scotland could confidently claim that liberalism provided the 'political expression of this homogenous society'.<sup>34</sup> The mass of work undertaken since then has, however, amply demonstrated that this society was anything but simplistically homogenous. Yet, the politics and political culture which reflected and itself influenced society has not been problematised to nearly the same extent. When reminiscing in 1896, a former Editor of the *Scotsman* neatly summarised the contradictions inherent in Scotland's nature: 'The Scottish people ... are conservative in their customs, in their institutions, in the Radicalism of their politics'.<sup>35</sup> Through exploring the Scottish Conservative party between 1832 and 1868, a more nuanced picture of Scotland can be drawn.

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<sup>34</sup> Ian Budge and Derek W. Urwin, *Scottish Political Behaviour: A Case Study in British Homogeneity* (London, 1966), 4.

<sup>35</sup> Charles A. Cooper, *An Editor's Retrospect: Fifty Years of Newspaper Work* (London, 1896), 166.





## CHAPTER ONE: ELECTORAL ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITY

The electoral organisation of the Scottish Conservative party was conducted by a large and diverse body of people, ranging from tenant farmers to powerful magnates. Though the party was disproportionately aristocratic in nature, this attribute did not exclusively define it.<sup>1</sup> Interconnected groups of party adherents organised a vast range of activities, conducted within the electoral framework created by the Scottish Reform Act of 1832. Norman Gash has emphasised that the wider British electoral system retained many of the corrupt features of the pre-Reform era, but nevertheless acknowledged the extent to which 1832 was more particularly revolutionary for the Scottish electoral system, representing ‘not so much Reform as enfranchisement’.<sup>2</sup> This system was undoubtedly transformed, though some traditional influences and aspects reasserted themselves after the 1830s.

This landscape is further confused by the disparate nature of the fifty-one constituencies which comprised Scotland’s representation at Westminster. The effects of the redistribution of Scottish seats on the new electoral system were also significant. Work on this has illustrated that Reform served to partially homogenise the British electoral system, but nevertheless preserved (and in some cases further entrenched) divergent Scottish characteristics.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, it was necessary for

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>2</sup> Gash, *Age of Peel*, 35.

<sup>3</sup> See Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 42–5; Michael Dyer, ‘Burgh Districts and the Representation of Scotland, 1707–1832’, *Parliamentary History*, 15 (1996), 287–307; Michael Dyer, “‘Mere Detail and Machinery’: The Great Reform Act and the Effects of Redistribution on Scottish Representation, 1832–68”, *SHR*, 62 (1983), 17–34.

the electoral organisation of the party to be flexible and specifically adapted to Scottish conditions.

The massive expansion of the electorate in Scotland, from 4,239 to c. 65,000, led to the creation of an extensive and complex electoral organisation.<sup>4</sup> Local (and to a far lesser extent, central) organisation was now needed to win over the new electorate, whose members were themselves an integral part of a transformed political culture.<sup>5</sup> It was increasingly necessary to conduct political activity out of doors, though the formation and dissolution of governments were still in large part dependent on manoeuvres within Westminster, within the context of ‘parliamentary government’.<sup>6</sup> Though the parliamentary and electoral organisation(s) which made up the Conservative party were both parts of the same overarching entity, they did not always operate harmoniously. Nor were they, by any means, equal in influencing the party’s overall direction.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the period between 1832 and 1868, though less so after Peel’s downfall, the electoral organisation was generally considered to be the junior section of the party. Especially before the 1870s, it is necessary to appreciate the ambiguous nature of ‘party’ outside of Westminster, and therefore to

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<sup>4</sup> William Ferguson, ‘The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832: Intention and Effect’, *SHR*, 45 (1966), 105.

<sup>5</sup> Local case-studies of Scottish politics do exist, but most predate (or neglect) recent developments in the field of political culture. See Michael Dyer, ‘The Politics of Kincardineshire’, PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1975; I.G.C. Hutchison, ‘Politics and Society in Mid-Victorian Glasgow, 1846–86’, PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1974; Fiona A. Montgomery, ‘Glasgow Radicalism, 1830–48’, PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1974; David Teviotdale, ‘The Glasgow Parliamentary Constituency, 1832–46’, MLitt thesis, University of Glasgow, 1963; J.C. Williams, ‘Edinburgh Politics, 1832–52’, PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1972; Edith C. Broun-Lindsay, ‘Electioneering in East Lothian, 1836–7’, *Transactions of the East Lothian Antiquarian and Field Naturalists’ Society*, 8 (1966), 46–60; W. Hamish Fraser, ‘Politics before 1918’, in W. Hamish Fraser and Clive H. Lee (eds), *Aberdeen 1800–2000: A New History* (East Linton, 2003), 176–203; John McCaffrey, ‘Political Issues and Developments’, in W. Hamish Fraser and Irene Maver (eds), *Glasgow. Volume II, 1820–1912* (Manchester, 1996), 186–226; Ian Cockburn, ‘The Management and Government of Scottish Society as Reflected in Clackmannanshire: ‘The sma’burgh 1832–1870’, PhD thesis, Strathclyde University, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Hawkins, ‘Parliamentary Government’, 640.

<sup>7</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 131; T.A. Jenkins, ‘The Whips in the early Victorian House of Commons’, *Parliamentary History*, 19 (2000), 286.

avoid anachronistic assumptions regarding its nature and purpose.<sup>8</sup> The electoral side of the party was considered by many contemporary party leaders to be a slightly disreputable means to an end, rather than something to be actively promoted.

Moreover, whereas Westminster business was by and large continuous, the need for expensive electoral activity was sporadic, which discouraged the systematisation of electoral apparatus on local (still less central) levels.

There were Scottish elements present in all parts of the party, but this was least pronounced in parliament, an avowedly British (and imperial) institution based outside of Scotland. The electoral component of the Scottish Conservative party was hence the most distinctly ‘Scottish’, as its functions necessarily took place almost exclusively within a Scotland that possessed unique laws, institutions, and culture. These three factors also influenced the character of the broader electoral system – different types of constituency, electoral qualifications, and polling customs combined to make Scottish political culture distinctive. Philip Salmon has argued that the legislative features of the English Reform Act (particularly registration) themselves played a central role in encouraging the development of partisan loyalties – as will be shown, Scotland was affected in similar but distinctive ways by its own Act.<sup>9</sup> This distinctiveness waxed and waned as the century progressed; approaching the topic from a postmodern perspective, James Vernon has asserted that Reform in fact served to exclude ordinary people from the public political arena in England. As will be demonstrated though, while the Scottish Conservatives did promote this

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<sup>8</sup> Angus Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: ‘Habits of Heart and Mind’* (Oxford, 2015), 15.

<sup>9</sup> See Philip Salmon, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties, 1832–1841* (Woodbridge, 2003).

tendency in a limited fashion, the overall political culture in which the party operated was broadly moving in the opposite direction.<sup>10</sup>

There were, of course, strong links to the English party, and many British factors affected its electoral activities.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the Scottish party was not a mere branch office – quite apart from anything else, the decentralised nature of electoral management meant that there were no parts of the UK party that could be described as such. However, it was most definitely not ‘independent’. The best word, therefore, to describe the Conservative party in Scotland is autonomous. Both Liberals and Conservatives at times possessed separate national organisations from those in England, though these were of an informal nature for much of the period.<sup>12</sup> They existed in tandem with numerous local organisations, which themselves enjoyed significant, though varying degrees of autonomy.

This chapter will explore a number of the attributes and activities of this autonomous party on a local level. It will begin by examining the expansion of local Conservative Associations, and the gentlemen and agents who carried out party business at a local level. The next sections analyse the role of magnates and of the party’s parliamentary candidates. The second half of the chapter will then explore the various activities which these groups and organisations undertook, including electioneering, the promotion of sympathetic newspapers, attending to the

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<sup>10</sup> See James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c.1815–1867* (Cambridge, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Recent works have done much to uncover issues relating to political culture in local constituency contexts, but none which focus on Scottish seats. See, for instance, Sarah Richardson, ‘Independence and Deference: A Study of the West Riding Electorate, 1832–1841’, PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1995; Michael Markus, ‘A Pocket Borough? Reformed Politics in Ripon, 1832–67’, *Parliamentary History*, 27 (2008), 330–60; David Eastwood, ‘Toryism, Reform, and Political Culture in Oxfordshire, 1826–1837’, *Parliamentary History*, 7 (1988), 98–121.

<sup>12</sup> I.G.C. Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations in the Nineteenth Century, c. 1815–1914’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 127 (2005), 249.

registration of voters, and the manufacture of fictitious votes. Activity also extended to the application of influence and coercion on sections of the new electorate.

Overall, it will be demonstrated that a diverse and active assortment of groups and organisations orchestrated a truly extraordinary variety of activities, all of which made a substantial contribution to the politicisation of Scotland.

### **I. Associations**

Partisan feeling in the Scottish localities was considerable after 1832. However, the party was not stable or tightly structured at this local level. While definite moves were made in this direction, reverses were also frequent, especially after 1843 and 1846. In some areas, local organisations were not novel innovations – various local committees had assisted in the election of individual candidates, and some Conservative Associations were founded before Peel’s ministry of 1834–5.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the development of Conservative Associations in Scotland was significant, in that it encouraged the politicisation of electors during the quiet periods in-between elections. Moreover, by the late 1830s, these bodies had done much to integrate grassroots Conservatives into a national political culture which transcended local issues and rivalries.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 141, 143.

<sup>14</sup> Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 582–3.

It has been suggested that, in Scotland by 1841, ‘less headway’ had been made in the formation of Conservative Associations than in England.<sup>15</sup> As will be shown however, the development of Conservative Associations in Scotland was in fact advanced, and often occurred in unexpected places. In England, it was the traditionalist ultras in the localities who led in the formation of Associations. The Scottish ultras of the old Melville interest played a similar role – it may well be that their relative importance north of the border in the immediate aftermath of Reform accelerated this growth.<sup>16</sup> Having been routed in 1832, it was evident that the party would have to work very hard to regain its footing.<sup>17</sup> The Associations were, in many cases, the vehicles through which they sought to do so.

Although no formal record of Conservative Associations was ever compiled, a great many were formed in England and Ireland during the 1830s.<sup>18</sup> Many have left little evidence of their existence or activities. This was partly deliberate – Conservative activists in particular valued their privacy, as they were often unpopular among non-electors. Associations were proposed and formed across a variety of constituencies during the 1830s, including rural Fifeshire and industrial Greenock.<sup>19</sup> While the majority of Associations were formed in the 1830s and many faded away after the elections of 1841 and 1847, they never entirely disappeared – for instance, it was proposed before the 1852 contest to form one in Ayrshire after the election had concluded. Even the relatively safe seat of Aberdeenshire possessed

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<sup>15</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 145.

<sup>16</sup> Though a disproportionately powerful force in the Scottish party before 1832, their influence declined rapidly. See Chapter Four.

<sup>17</sup> Philip Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 46; Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xii.

<sup>18</sup> Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 583; Alvin Jackson, *Ireland 1798–1998: Politics and War* (Oxford, 1999), 59–61.

<sup>19</sup> *Fife Herald*, 11 Jul. 1839; Donald Horne, ‘Notes on the Scotch Representation’, 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/32.

a Conservative Society by 1868.<sup>20</sup> By 1874, only forty-four of the eighty-two English counties possessed Conservative Associations.<sup>21</sup> As such, it is fair to say that Scotland was at least as active in this area, if not more so. This was (at least in part) an attempt to compensate for the more unfavourable electoral landscape.

In England, Associations were to be found in traditional towns and new industrial centres. In Scotland, however, this was complicated by the existence of non-contiguous and often widely dispersed burgh districts. Due to their close relationship with the surrounding countryside, some county organisations took charge of burgh district affairs in addition to their own. This was true of the St Andrews Burghs, in which ‘there was a county committee formed who take charge’.<sup>22</sup> These were often *ad hoc* committees formed around the candidate of the day. Nevertheless, by the later 1830s the districts increasingly possessed their own Associations, even in the landowner-dominated Haddington Burghs.<sup>23</sup> Single burghs, such as Aberdeen, also merited their own separate machinery.<sup>24</sup>

Burgh efforts were of mixed effectiveness; the party won few elections in these constituencies. In Kilmarnock District, a lack of funds was complained of by the local party, but Sir James Graham’s assertion that their candidate was ‘quite safe at Kilmarnock’ were justified.<sup>25</sup> However, the MP then lost the next election in 1841, partly because organisational shortcomings had not been addressed: ‘Kilmarnock

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<sup>20</sup> J.D. Boswell to Charles Dalrymple Gairdner, 7 Jul. 1852, Eglinton MSS, GD3/5/1347/111; Duke of Richmond and Gordon to Disraeli, 12 Oct. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 101/2, ff. 31–2.

<sup>21</sup> Stewart, *Foundation of the Conservative Party*, 131.

<sup>22</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 144; Horne, ‘Private notes of Scotch Return’, 3 Nov. 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/34.

<sup>23</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 50; Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 11.

<sup>24</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 16 Jun. 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 278–82.

<sup>25</sup> Lord Douglas to Francis Drummond, 20 Feb. 1837, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/572/11; Graham to Bonham, 27 Dec. 1837, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 38–41.



[had] been mismanaged'.<sup>26</sup> Though their efforts went largely unrewarded, Conservative organisations made a strong contribution to the politicisation of urban Scotland. They built up a minority body of Conservative electors, and, more broadly, provided a credible opposition against which robust Liberal identities could be formed.

Parties in the UK, and Scotland in particular, had long made use of dinners to promote their aims, both among party adherents and the wider populace.<sup>27</sup> The scale of political dinners in the UK from 1835 to 1838 was, however, unprecedented, and closely connected to the burgeoning Conservative Associations.<sup>28</sup> This explosion of activity was also evident in Scotland, as apart from Peel's famous Glasgow dinner in 1837, dinners were held in numerous locales throughout the period. They did much to increase Conservative support in Scotland, and to reinforce organisational cohesion. They occurred frequently in constituencies that were not contested. As such, they played a major role in maintaining a modicum of party solidarity in areas where they were not well-organised or electorally successful. Though they declined in significance after 1840, dinners were still used to mobilise local opinion and bolster local party unity, in places such as Kirkwall in 1853.<sup>29</sup>

The structure of these Associations was similar throughout the UK, often comprising a general committee of a few dozen prominent locals, alongside a smaller finance or subscription committee.<sup>30</sup> These arrangements were duplicated in different

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<sup>26</sup> Graham to Bonham, 29 Jul. 1841, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 214–15.

<sup>27</sup> See Trent Orme, 'The Scottish Whig Party, c. 1801–20', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2013, 151–89; Keisuke Masaki, 'The Development of Provincial Toryism in the British Urban Context, c.1815–1832', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2016, 79–140.

<sup>28</sup> Cragoe, 'Conservative Associations', 593.

<sup>29</sup> Brett, 'Political Dinners', 547–8; *John O'Groat Journal*, 26 Aug. 1853.

<sup>30</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xlvi; 'Minutes of the Conservative Committee at Forfar', 28 Jul. 1832, Airlie MSS, GD16/40/58.

constituencies throughout period.<sup>31</sup> These were largely inspired by Archibald Alison's second 1835 article in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Alison, a prominent intellectual, bestselling historian, and Sheriff of Lanarkshire, was effectively the Scottish party's leading thinker. His first article was a call to arms, urging party figures to retake the initiative through press activity and increased party organisation, while the second provided a broad plan of action for local leaders to follow in achieving this.<sup>32</sup> Thus, the organisational structure adopted by much of the wider UK Conservative party was rooted in practices and experiences originating in Scotland.

These similarities highlight that constituency organisations did not exist in a vacuum. There were important links between different constituencies, nearby cities, and London. This reflected the cross-county and cross-national nature of many social circles, and political links with parliamentary-level politics. Hence, in 1832 there were sufficient numbers to make up an entire 'committee of those Roxburgh gentlemen who reside in Edinburgh' to assist with the canvass in that county, and it was felt that a personal canvass of them by the Roxburghshire candidate, in Edinburgh, was necessary.<sup>33</sup> Stretching the geographical nature of 'local' organisation to its limits was the proposed formation of a London committee composed of Inverness-shire gentlemen residing in the capital, to fund battles in the county registration courts.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> See, for instance, Sir G.H.A. Douglas to (?) Rolson, 1868, Small Collections MSS, GD1/631/1/15.

<sup>32</sup> Archibald Alison, 'Change of Ministry', *BEM*, 38 (May 1835); Alison, 'Conservative Associations', 11.

<sup>33</sup> (John Gibson?) to Lord John Scott, 9 Jul. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1126/277.

<sup>34</sup> (?) to James Grant, 6 Aug. 1835, Warrant of Bught MSS, GD23/6/703.

Scottish Conservatives progressed from loose, informal arrangements in 1832 towards a more formalised style of organisation by the later 1830s, and, in doing so, managed to partially overcome the problems thrown up by a hostile political environment. They often organised or funded electioneering activities such as canvassing, treating, transporting electors, and printing handbills. They also, in many cases, played a prominent role in such inter-election activities as the registration of electors. In other areas of activity, such as the management of electoral influence, and the promotion of partisan newspapers, they were peripheral. The organisation of Associations occasionally took the form of unstructured meetings and correspondence between those in overlapping social networks. More often, they were made up of *ad hoc* committees and formally constituted local groups. However, no party after 1832 had either the expertise or desire to organise the registration of new voters on a comprehensive or systematic national basis. As such, the effectiveness of the various local organisations was dictated by their individual local context.<sup>35</sup>

## II. Gentlemen and Agents

All local Associations were dependent on the goodwill and energy of volunteers. Consequently, the actions and effectiveness of the party organisation was largely dictated by its composition. Moreover, local Associations and committees were not merely the tools of local magnates. Their very function and the collective nature of

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<sup>35</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, liv; Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 59.

their work were indicative of increased grassroots involvement in politics.<sup>36</sup> This was more so in the case of Scotland, as the oligarchic nature of the electoral landscape before 1832 meant that the change was more pronounced.

As one Conservative squire wrote in 1832, ‘It is now or never that those who have property to lose or rank to maintain must exert themselves’.<sup>37</sup> This group included wealthy territorial magnates, but also a large and fairly diverse body of property-owners and wealthy tenant farmers. Moreover, it also encompassed those without land but with close connections to the propertied and landed interests. Some of these groups were, however, of greater prominence than others. Prospective candidates such as George Hope felt that it would be no use contesting seats ‘unless I can get the support of county gentlemen ... or whoever may be sounded out as carrying weight in the county’.<sup>38</sup> The party in the localities was dominated by those who owned land, and/or resided within the bounds of the traditional elite.

Relative social homogeneity, buttressed by ties of marriage, experience, and interest, offered several advantages, including ample material resources.<sup>39</sup> It also, however, brought disadvantages. Some outside of traditional groupings took a keen interest in party matters, but were very rarely incorporated into its inner circles, at least in rural areas. This hindered party efforts, as there were simply too few gentlemen willing to undertake party business. The 1835 defeat of the Edinburghshire candidate was attributed to the ‘inactivity of the gentry’, while an

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<sup>36</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 63; Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 587.

<sup>37</sup> John Spottiswoode to Adm. David Milne, 6 Jul. 1832, Home of Wedderburn MSS, GD267/14/16/20.

<sup>38</sup> George Hope to Charles Hope, 23 Feb. 1852, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/1037.

<sup>39</sup> See Appendix G.

1836 party meeting in that county ‘had only Eight instead of twenty-four summoned’.<sup>40</sup> The passing of time does not appear to have prompted a broadening of their social base; even by 1854 in Edinburghshire, ‘county politics was still the preserve of a small group of interested gentlemen’.<sup>41</sup> This situation prevailed in many Scottish counties up to and beyond the Second Reform Acts, and contributed to their lacklustre electoral performance.

Many of the inactive Conservative gentlemen were reluctant to contribute to party finances. The majority of proprietors exhibited a general reluctance to contribute, despite their political beliefs. Edinburghshire was a prominent example of this.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, in Roxburghshire, Donald Horne complained that ‘it is truly surprising to find, that in so rich and extensive a county, there should be so few proprietors, from whom to expect considerable subscriptions’.<sup>43</sup> Though a small number of county gentlemen directed party activity, much of the funding came from major magnates. This was in large part why these magnates exerted a disproportionate influence over some local party organisations.

In some other seats, the wealthier aristocracy did not direct the party at all, the expense and effort being the preserve of a larger group of minor lairds. Party funds were drawn from a broad base in Ayrshire, Fifeshire, Lanarkshire, Stirlingshire, and Forfarshire. Conservative organisational deficiencies were, moreover, trifling in comparison to the Liberals – in Roxburghshire, the Earl of

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<sup>40</sup> Alexander Hope to George Hope, 10 Mar. 1835, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/160; John Hope to Buccleuch, 14 Jun. 1836, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/1/39.

<sup>41</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, liv.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Houston to Alexander Hope, 22 Nov. 1838, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/287; Alexander Hope to Robert Houston, 12 Dec. 1838, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/287.

<sup>43</sup> Horne to Lothian, 27 May 1839, Lothian MSS, GD40/9/364/6. Donald Horne of Langwell was effectively the Scottish party’s chief electoral specialist, paid by Buccleuch and reporting directly to him.

Minto's brother thought that it was 'high time that the [Whig] gentry of the county should be told that their hands ought to be in their pockets'.<sup>44</sup> Though the Conservatives did not enjoy unlimited funds, they were nevertheless by far the most generously and efficiently financed of the parties in Scotland.

In the subordinate local committees, Conservative activity was not entirely in the hands of leading gentlemen. Even as early as 1835, it was recognised by the 'executive officers' that party success was dependent on the 'keenness and goodwill of many of the minor proprietors'.<sup>45</sup> These did not necessarily hail from the traditional elite; many of these proprietors were more farmers than gentry. In Edinburghshire, they were the best represented group on committees after larger proprietors.<sup>46</sup> In some cases, an even wider social group was evident, as in Forfarshire where District Officers were instructed to include in their local committees 'such tenants or proprietors in their respective districts, as may be useful, and willing to give their assistance'.<sup>47</sup> Below the level of central committees therefore, the grassroots personnel of the Conservative party were far from exclusively aristocratic, or even propertied. Rather, the party drew on the efforts of the broadly constituted 'agricultural interest'. In some urban areas, it went beyond even this – in West Kilbride (Ayrshire) for instance, the 120-strong Conservative Association was open to all. Its committee of eighteen contained only seven or eight members of the gentry.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 9; Rev. George Elliot to Minto, 11 Feb. 1837, Minto MSS, 11789, ff. 163–4.

<sup>45</sup> John Hope to Alexander Hope, 13 Mar. 1835, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/160.

<sup>46</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xviii.

<sup>47</sup> 'Minutes of the Conservative Committee at Forfar', 28 Jul. 1832, Airlie MSS, GD16/40/58.

<sup>48</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 10.

Local Conservative party organisations cannot be described as popular – but then, neither can most Liberal organisations. Nevertheless, Conservative bodies did contain considerable (though subordinate) popular elements. The efforts of these bodies were, however, not enough on their own. One of Buccleuch’s Factors in Roxburghshire summed up the situation succinctly: ‘I think it would be impossible to conduct an election in such a county as this, without some agents. There are very few gentlemen in our county who will work on such occasions’.<sup>49</sup> In the UK more broadly, Conservatives were more willing to recruit paid workers than the Liberals – this was also the case in Scotland. Some of the senior agents were also a part of the committee members’ social world – one, the Edinburghshire Agent James Hope, was the son of the Lord President, brother of the Dean of Faculty, and son-in-law of the Lord Justice Clerk.<sup>50</sup> Paid agents were not a novel development, but the formalised organisations which they interacted with were. After Hope’s dismissal in 1836, it was intended that his successor would take closer instructions from the committee. Hope was let go because he was considered to be too independent and opinionated, and was not a good canvasser.<sup>51</sup> After 1832, principal agents became more responsible to the wider party, rather than to the candidate or landed patron.

There was one glaring exception to this trend – Donald Horne of Langwell. Horne was the single most important Conservative Agent in Scotland after 1832, though his work has been virtually unacknowledged. A Writer to the Signet, he took over the agency of Roxburghshire in 1833.<sup>52</sup> When he took on the concurrent agency in neighbouring Selkirkshire, it was recognised by his opponents that he was a

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<sup>49</sup> William Ogilvie to Buccleuch, 16 Dec. 1842, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/18.

<sup>50</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 63; Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xlviii.

<sup>51</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, 1.

<sup>52</sup> John Gibson to John Smith, 22 Jan. 1833, Kelso MSS, Collection 11.

formidable operator: ‘Donald Horne (I think) is appointed political agent for Selkirkshire ... [he] will not fail for want of activity’.<sup>53</sup> In addition to his Lowland responsibilities, he was also a member of the Caithness-shire Constitutional Association.<sup>54</sup> As a Highland landowner in addition to a WS, Horne personified both the professional and social roles of party figures. Nevertheless, he found it necessary to sell the Langwell estate for £90,000 in 1857, indicating that his legal work was a necessary addition to his income.<sup>55</sup> Rural lawyers were often landed proprietors as well, and ‘formed an essential support to an oligarchic power structure’.<sup>56</sup> As the most senior agent in Scotland, directly assisting his patron Buccleuch in political matters across the country, he had a great deal of autonomy and authority.

At a lower level, party activities were generally undertaken by members of local law firms. The quality of these agents could vary, such as in Edinburghshire, where Harry Inglis, Horne’s chosen successor to Hope as Agent, complained to Horne that ‘he has slow coaches to work with’.<sup>57</sup> Committee members and their agents often had considerable latitude in executing their day-to-day business. For instance, one Roxburghshire committee-member and agent wrote to another that: ‘as we (that is our chairman and myself) disapprove of the present address I intend very much to use my discretion as to circulating it’.<sup>58</sup> He thus indicated that he would quietly downplay the address of his candidate, and moreover, implicitly suggested that the local District Agent follow his lead. It would hence be too simplistic to

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<sup>53</sup> Adm. George Elliot to Minto, 1 Mar. 1833, Minto MSS, 11750, f. 47.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Caithness-shire Constitutional Association’, 12 Dec. 1835, Loch MSS, GD268/139/11.

<sup>55</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lvi.

<sup>56</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 88.

<sup>57</sup> Horne to Francis Drummond, 3 Jul. 1837, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/572/10.

<sup>58</sup> (H. Blair?) to John Smith, 27 Jun. 1841, Kelso MSS, Collection 11.



describe Scottish Conservative party in the localities as a top-down hierarchical structure. Personnel on the ground possessed considerable *de facto* independence of action.

Agents were not tasked with undertaking all party activities, partly because of the ruinous expense of doing so. Buccleuch was all too well aware of this problem – in Roxburghshire, after the incumbent candidate’s withdrawal in 1847, he told Lord Polwarth that he could ‘be party to no contest for the sake of a contest ... no one would gain by it except the Writers’.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, they were an even more uncommon feature of Liberal organisation, as Minto complained that their reintroduction into the party’s management would ‘again rally round ... all the harpies of his profession whom we have with so much difficulty shaken off’.<sup>60</sup> Throughout the period, complaints that their bills were ‘very extravagant, and very objectionable, and much overcharged’ were fairly common.<sup>61</sup> Though both parties disliked the expense, the Conservatives made more extensive use of agents, which had a marked effect on the character and efficacy of the party’s activities.

The relative lifelessness of electoral politics (in the Scottish localities at least) from the middle 1850s onwards was both caused and exacerbated by the decline in party organisations. Many of the greater magnates followed Peel on Free Trade, leaving the Protectionist county gentlemen more in control of the party than before. The apparent decline in Scottish activity after 1846 was at least partly deliberate: ‘It is scarcely necessary for me to add ... it is more than ever essential that all our communications should continue to be strictly private, and the knowledge of what is

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<sup>59</sup> Buccleuch to Polwarth, 31 Mar. 1847, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/19.

<sup>60</sup> Minto to J.E. Elliot, 5 Feb. 1841, Minto MSS, 11754, ff. 123–7.

<sup>61</sup> Ogilvie, ‘Memorandum’, 9 Sep. 1861, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/45.

going on confined exclusively to members of committee'.<sup>62</sup> The close-knit social circles which had been broadly Conservative were now split between Protectionists and Free Traders, and, crucially, there was no clear line of demarcation between the two groups. Combined with the fact that they continued to inhabit the same overlapping social circles, maintaining the privacy of party business became a much more difficult task. This may well be why Conservative newspapers, such as the *Edinburgh Advertiser* and *Edinburgh Courant*, were far less informative about their party's activities, than the Liberal newspapers were of theirs.<sup>63</sup> The need for confidentiality served to restrain the activities of Conservative organisations, and to conceal their extent from subsequent scholarly inquiry.

The tentative revival of electoral activities from the early 1860s onwards was partly due to revived links between local and national politicians, as a result of renewed interest in constitutional reform. As late as 1864, however, Scottish pre-election activities still involved 'earnestly, but quietly preparing – I say, quietly because the plan, – a very mistaken one in my mind, – was to establish a Conservative Club for the sake of concocting and forwarding over a years or half years dinner!'.<sup>64</sup> The apparent decline in formal Conservative organisation from the middle of the century onwards was, in the opinion of Lord Home, a deliberately pursued strategy. Though formal electoral organisations were somewhat less disreputable by this time, the fact remained that bustling activity could provoke Liberal mobilisation in safe or marginally Conservative seats. Moreover, Conservative action in seats held by

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<sup>62</sup> Harry Inglis to Buccleuch, 18 Jan. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/2.

<sup>63</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 56n.

<sup>64</sup> Cragoe, 'Conservative Associations', 603; Lord Home to Buccleuch, 31 Mar. 1864, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/23/4–6.

moderate Liberals might encourage radical forces to challenge the Whig dominance in many Scottish burghs. Angus Hawkins has observed that the parliamentary-focused strategy of Derby throughout this period involved ‘masterly inactivity’.<sup>65</sup> It may well be that local party figures were following his lead, in adapting a variant of this strategy to their own local electoral contexts. Given the hostile electoral landscape and hotly contested battles for dominance within the Liberal party, this may have been the most effective strategy open to the party in the localities.

Scottish Conservative party members were a varied and complex grouping. Though the main directors of party activities were members of the rural gentry, this broadly defined group embraced very wealthy landowners and relatively minor proprietors. Tenant farmers and even some people outside of the vast ‘agricultural interest’ also played a limited role. On the professional side, personnel ranged from members of the landed class to ordinary Writers. Ultimately, the voluntary and participatory nature of parties on a local level meant that strict hierarchical authority was a practical impossibility. Hence, this diverse range of people, from a diverse range of backgrounds, had significant effects on both the activities and the efficacy of the party. While there is strong evidence of change, however, it remains the case that, as in England, organisational growth after 1832 did not entirely transform the traditional landscape of county politics.<sup>66</sup> Though far from powerless, the party and its personnel were still generally subordinate to the great territorial magnates, such as Buccleuch and the Earl of Aberdeen.

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<sup>65</sup> See Angus Hawkins, *The Forgotten Prime Minister: The 14th Earl of Derby: Achievement, 1851–1869* (Oxford, 2008), Chapters 2 and 5.

<sup>66</sup> David Eastwood, ‘Contesting the Politics of Deference: The Rural Electorate, 1820–60’, in Jon Lawrence and Miles Taylor (eds), *Party, State and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), 31.

### III. Magnates

Most English Conservative organisations were founded with the support of local magnates, who often thought of constituencies as *de facto* personal fiefdoms. In pre-Reform Scotland, larger proprietors had also exercised influence over county politics, though this was complicated in many areas by the existence of the electoral management system operated by the Melville interest. The Scottish Reform Act destroyed the limited national coherence fostered by the Melville interest, leaving a patchwork of local influences.<sup>67</sup> As has been shown, party organisations possessed far more autonomy than has previously been assumed. Nevertheless, the opinions and decisions of local magnates created and defined the basic framework within which party activists exercised that autonomy.<sup>68</sup>

Magnates often held honorary positions in party organisations, though it was very rare for them to undertake any actual electoral-related work.<sup>69</sup> In Scotland, their position was not unlike that of non-executive board members and chairmen. Even this negligible degree of party connection was a step too far for some, ‘Lord Lothian having ... expressed doubt whether it would be proper for a peer to place himself at the head of a political association as the party had uniformly discountenanced such an act’.<sup>70</sup> Lord Melville, the former leader of the old Scottish Tory party, asserted that with regard to party business in Edinburghshire, he could not ‘consent to be

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<sup>67</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 60, 50; Urwin, ‘Conservative Party Organisation’, 93; Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 6.

<sup>68</sup> See Chapter Four.

<sup>69</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 48.

<sup>70</sup> William Forbes to Buccleuch, 4 Feb. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/4.

mixed up as a committee-man in these matters. I have never interfered in that capacity'.<sup>71</sup> Melville, however, did play a sort of diplomatic role, acting as a mediator between the gentry-dominated committee and the county peers.<sup>72</sup> Some counties were almost entirely controlled by single powerful magnates. Although some of these magnates, notably the Duke of Buccleuch, possessed influence over several seats, most peers were confined to influencing the local party in single constituencies.<sup>73</sup> They guarded their position, often resisting outside interference.

This resistance could even lead to pacts between county families to divide spheres of influence. The Conservative Duff family, Earls of Fife, and the Liberal Seafield family both possessed influence in Elginshire and Banffshire. Harry Inglis, Agent for Edinburghshire, acted on the behalf of the Fife interest and negotiated a truce – the Seafield interest thus dominated Banffshire, and the Duffs held sway in Elginshire.<sup>74</sup> Though it is unclear how long after 1846 this pact remained in place, it is notable that each county was held by the same parties until after 1868.

This cooperation was, however, something of an exception to the rule – unless landowners had an overwhelming influence over a seat, the general pattern was one of conflict – occasionally between Liberal and Conservative landowners, but more often internal disagreement between Conservative magnates. This was true of Lord Selkirk and Lord Galloway in Kirkcudbrightshire. Hence, Sir James Graham was well aware that, in meddling with local politics, 'care must be taken in managing these two peers, where interests in the Stewartry have long been rival; and our

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<sup>71</sup> Melville to Francis Drummond, 14 Feb. 1836, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/1/3.

<sup>72</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxix.

<sup>73</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>74</sup> J. Stewart Mackenzie to John Fraser, 30 May 1846, Seafield MSS, GD248/3395/5.

success depends [on] this entire bona fide function'.<sup>75</sup> Similarly, in Ayrshire, Graham thought that 'Lord Ailsa, Lord Eglinton, and Lord Belhaven should, if possible, act together; but I suppose as usual, mutual jealousies and hatred will supersede any other consideration'.<sup>76</sup>

Magnates also maintained their authority over local parties by financing them. This state of affairs continued up to and beyond 1868; the list of contributors to the 1868 election fund in North Ayrshire was topped by Lord Eglinton, followed by Lords Ailsa, Portland, and Bute.<sup>77</sup> These peers (or their predecessors) had been listed in 1853 as the principal holders of influence in the county.<sup>78</sup> This reliance on rural proprietors partially explains the lack of party activity in the burghs – magnates were unwilling to fund contests outside of their spheres of influence. One aspiring candidate for St Andrews Burghs was in fact unable to 'afford the expense of a contest' – though he was willing to stand, 'in short friends are required'.<sup>79</sup>

The Duke of Buccleuch made by far the most important financial contributions to the party. Before the 1847 election, he contributed generously to contests across Scotland. This made him a crucial figure, as local organisations generally refused to fund contests outside their own immediate area, even for promising seats. As early as 1832, Buccleuch informed one recipient of his largesse with regret that 'numerous calls upon me both in England and Scotland prevent me

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<sup>75</sup> Graham to Bonham, 5 Nov. 1837, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 26–8.

<sup>76</sup> Graham to Bonham, 3 Jan. 1842, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 242–3.

<sup>77</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxvii; 'Notes of the contributions [to the Conservative party] at successive North Ayrshire elections', Cuninghame of Caprington MSS, GD149/410.

<sup>78</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>79</sup> Horne, 'Notes on the Scotch Representation', 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/32.

making it a larger sum'.<sup>80</sup> Although there was a shadowy central electioneering fund in London after around 1835, it would appear that none of its funds were dispensed in Scotland.<sup>81</sup> Rather, Buccleuch appears to have personally acted as a central Conservative financier. It is notable that such a mammoth undertaking, by a single very wealthy individual, took place in no other part of the United Kingdom. Indeed, he was thought to have spent £20,000 on the 1837 election alone, 'besides having stood various contests'.<sup>82</sup> By 1840, however, he was growing increasingly tired of the constant demands on his purse.<sup>83</sup>

After the Corn Law split, his Scotland-wide contributions ended, though he continued to maintain his influence in counties where he had significant landholdings. This was perhaps the most significant practical factor in ending offensive operations in marginally Liberal seats, as he had been the most significant source of Conservative funds for non-county contests. More broadly, the disproportionate number of wealthier magnates who followed Peel meant that their funding of the party declined steeply after 1846.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the fluidity of proprietorial influence over Scottish counties, the predominant pattern was one of continuity – Lord Elcho continued to be returned for Haddingtonshire, for instance, though he was 'very unpopular in East Lothian and is becoming more so every day, but his family connection in the county is very powerful'.<sup>85</sup> This connection was so strong that he was able to continue representing

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<sup>80</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 8; Buccleuch to James Cruickshank, 19 Aug. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/4.

<sup>81</sup> Gash, 'Electoral Organization', 138.

<sup>82</sup> *Queen Victoria's Journal*, 30 Oct. 1838.

<sup>83</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lvii.

<sup>84</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 85.

<sup>85</sup> R.A.C. Dundas to William Jolliffe, 20 Nov. 1857, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/24/9/67.

the county until 1883, when his son succeeded him as MP.<sup>86</sup> However, many lairds were uninterested in politics – this, combined with internal dissension, meant that their relationship with the party was not one of outright dominance. Their actions were restricted by a plethora of financial, practical, and social factors.

#### IV. Candidates

Although in most cases they needed the support, or at least the acquiescence, of local magnates, the candidates themselves exerted a significant influence over the party at a local level. Unlike the Liberals, who possessed an overabundance of candidates, Conservative candidates were in short supply. The wealthy social strata from which the party recruited their candidates did not contain enough personnel who fitted the ideal (or at least the Conservative ideal) of an MP.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, when Sir James Graham informed Francis Bonham, Peel's chief electoral specialist, that in Dunbartonshire, 'a difficulty had arisen not from the want of candidates but from the rival claims of more than one', the situation was noteworthy for its exceptionality.<sup>88</sup>

Their extremely unpopular position in 1832 led to the party to put forward perhaps the least suitable candidate of the post-Reform era Scottish party. James Cruickshank, a local Forfarshire landowner, managed to convince the Duke of

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<sup>86</sup> F.W.S. Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results, 1832–1885* (London, 1977), 587.

<sup>87</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>88</sup> Graham to Bonham, 21 Oct. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 105–7. For a summary of Bonham's role, see Norman Gash, 'F.R. Bonham: Conservative "political Secretary", 1832–47', *EHR*, 63 (1948), 502–22. More recently, Philip Salmon has argued persuasively that the influence of Bonham and his central electoral organisation was more limited than Gash asserted. See Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 47–53.



Buccleuch to offer £300 in support of his election efforts in that county, by using the names of mutual acquaintances in correspondence without their permission.<sup>89</sup> Upon further inquiry however, Buccleuch discovered that he was ‘quite out of the question as a candidate’, and ‘by no means, I understand, well looked upon in the county’.<sup>90</sup> Thwarted, Cruickshank offered to stand for ‘the Conservative party in Scotland’ in the Ayr Burghs if Buccleuch would induce Lord Eglinton to support him.<sup>91</sup> Eglinton would go on to become leader of the Scottish party after 1846. Buccleuch instead informed Eglinton that Cruickshank was ‘a man of no property or influence and I am informed inclined to be dissipated and has run through almost everything he had’ – he went on to warn that Cruickshank had ‘less chance and is a less fit person than almost any conservative that could be started’.<sup>92</sup> Despite this, Eglinton informed Buccleuch that ‘as he is the only person who really has come forward, it appears to me I have no choice left but to support him’.<sup>93</sup> This was a sign of how desperate the party was for candidates, especially in burgh seats. Cruickshank did go to the poll but came in at a distant last place, garnering only thirty-three out of 572 votes cast.

The pre-eminent position of local magnates in constituency affairs often resulted in the heirs of peers standing for election. Over-reliance on this group hobbled the party’s long-term fortunes in Scotland, as otherwise talented members moved from the Commons to the Lords on their accession to the peerage. The biggest factor which shrunk the pool of viable candidates, however, was the expense of contesting a seat. Already-sitting members might avoid this expense, such as Sir

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<sup>89</sup> Cruickshank to Buccleuch, 3 Aug. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/1; Buccleuch to Cruickshank, 19 Aug. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/4.

<sup>90</sup> Lord Wharncliffe to Buccleuch, 6 Sep. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/6.

<sup>91</sup> Cruickshank to Buccleuch, 27 Oct. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/8.

<sup>92</sup> Buccleuch to Lord Eglinton, 11 Nov. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/17.

<sup>93</sup> Eglinton to Buccleuch, Nov. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/667/9/19.

George Clerk, Peel's sometime chief whip and a longstanding MP for Edinburghshire. Though he was re-elected for the county in 1835, Clerk was 'cramped in money matters, his estate being entailed', resulting in the local party stepping in.<sup>94</sup> His defeat in the next election of 1837, however, suggests that only those MPs so popular as to pre-empt contestation could make do without substantial personal resources.

The proportion of expenses that a candidate was expected to pay was a hotly contested matter throughout the period. In Edinburghshire, the candidate in 1841, William Ramsay Ramsay, thought that 'he should not be called upon to pay more than one half of the expenses as the Conservative candidate, and that in no circumstances should the call upon him exceed £1,500'.<sup>95</sup> In 1839, Lord John Scott thought it advisable that 'it would be better not to mix up registration with the question of candidate, and election expenses', as there would be a better chance of forming a permanent committee if the issue was avoided.<sup>96</sup> This fudging of the issue continued throughout the period, with the burden on individual candidates increasing as time progressed. Sir James Fergusson, for instance, contested Ayrshire in 1857 and 1859, both contests costing him 'almost £6,000 ... he only got £1,000 to assist in the first, and ... he has not received any assistance whatever towards the expense of the last'.<sup>97</sup> He won the seat, holding it from 1859 to 1868. His tenacity was, however,

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<sup>94</sup> John Hope to Buccleuch, 24 Nov. 1836, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/1/51; John Gladstone to William Gladstone, 22 Dec. 1834, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/638.

<sup>95</sup> 'Note of Expenses, Midlothian', 1841, Clerk of Penicuik MSS, GD18/3380.

<sup>96</sup> John Scott to Lothian, 22 May 1839, Lothian MSS, GD40/9/365/4.

<sup>97</sup> John Hope to Jolliffe, 15 May 1858, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/18/12/51.

exceptional; the increased financial burden on candidates was thus a further disincentive after the party split.

Apart from possessing sufficient wealth, it was a definite advantage for Conservatives to be local, or to have strong local connections. In contrast to a large number of English Liberal MPs sitting for Scottish seats, Scottish Conservatives were all Scottish. Indeed, of the party's seventy-seven MPs to sit during the period, only Lord Lincoln and William Howard can be counted as authentic carpetbaggers.<sup>98</sup> When Thomas Gladstone considered standing for Orkney, his father was advised by a local Conservative landowner, through his brother William, that 'the people of Orkney would not like to return one unconnected with them', and that 'it was very singular for a person not having property in the county to come forward for it'.<sup>99</sup> This was a prerequisite that disproportionately harmed Conservatives – many Scottish Liberal MPs were not local, or not Scottish. Partly, this reflected their dominance in burgh districts, which were less discerning when it came to the provenance of candidates.

The party hindered its own chances in neglecting a type of candidate which the Melville interest had assiduously cultivated – competent professionals. This was perhaps a result of the shifting balance of power in the party, from the Faculty of Advocates and Melville to the various local magnates in the counties. Interestingly, Thomas Mackenzie of Applecross, minor landowner and MP for Ross and Cromarty, was also a WS. He thus had the singular experience of arguing in the registration

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<sup>98</sup> See Appendix F. Lincoln served as MP for Falkirk for five years, while Howard served as MP for Sutherland for only three.

<sup>99</sup> William Gladstone to John Gladstone, 23 Dec. 1834, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/223, ff. 244–5.

courts over who qualified to vote in parliamentary elections, in which he himself was the incumbent candidate.<sup>100</sup>

Quite apart from the above considerations, it was necessary for candidates in burghs and burgh districts to possess additional qualities. It was felt in 1832 that the party needed to find ‘proper candidates for such places as Leith, Perth, Dundee and these large naval and commercial towns who are now to return members for the first time’, and that the best candidates would be ‘mercantile men in London of great wealth and extensive connections, men of known standing and weight in the commercial world, – or young men of high rank, and good talents and fortune’.<sup>101</sup> The writer was correct in assuming that these types would stand a good chance in these places – he was incorrect in assuming, though, that these candidates could be Conservative.

While James Ewing, successful candidate in Glasgow in 1832, was not a Conservative *per se* (Michael Dyer describes him as ‘a kind of Conservative’), he was able to win his seat through his strong local reputation as a Lord Provost. Though he had supported Reform, he only did so along strictly constitutional lines, and as an extremely rich former West India trader, he had a great deal of sympathy for Peel’s economic policies.<sup>102</sup> Later unsuccessful Conservative candidates for Glasgow also drew their wealth from outside the landed interest, including Robert Monteith, whose fortune came from the Glasgow textile trade.<sup>103</sup> Hence, the charge

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<sup>100</sup> E.D. Sandford to J. Stewart Mackenzie, 26 Aug. 1835, Seaforth MSS, GD46/4/14/18.

<sup>101</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.

<sup>102</sup> Irene Sweeney, ‘The Municipal Administration of Glasgow, 1833–1912: Public Service and the Scottish Civic Identity’, PhD thesis, University of Strathclyde, 1990, 48.

<sup>103</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 91; McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 189; Bernard Aspinwall, ‘David Urquhart, Robert Monteith and the Catholic Church: A Search for Justice and Peace’, *Innes Review*, 31 (1980), 158.

that the Scottish Conservative party was singularly unprepared for the changing economic and ideological currents of the Victorian age is somewhat unfounded. The party was entirely willing to put up candidates representing and embodying the new interests which had been enfranchised by the Reform Acts. Indeed, the old and the new could stand for the party side by side, as in 1835, when William Learmouth, ‘an opulent citizen of Edinburgh (a bookmaker) ... was candidate with Lord Ramsay to represent the city’.<sup>104</sup>

Circumstances in the single burghs could, however, negate the party’s enthusiasm for such candidates. Aberdeen Conservatives twice put up landowners from the surrounding county.<sup>105</sup> In Greenock, the unpopularity of the sitting Liberal, Robert Wallace, led one of his party activists to state that ‘many of the Liberals will not again submit to Bobby’s quackery, and unless we move, some influential mercantile Tory will be invited to stand, and probably would sit’.<sup>106</sup> Horne also noted that ‘all screws are loose with Wallace’, and that ‘It is the opinion of the best informed that a merchant of note with some connection with the trade of the port would carry the seat’.<sup>107</sup> Yet, by the 1841 election the best candidate available was Sir Thomas Cochrane, an admiral who unsuccessfully sought to curry the favour of electors by asserting that the town had been ‘for centuries the abode of his ancestors’.<sup>108</sup>

In the absence of someone who could appeal to present economic ties, Conservatives were forced to rely on a candidate with tenuous ancestral ones.

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<sup>104</sup> Melville to Robert Peel, 2 Dec. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 274–5.

<sup>105</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 72.

<sup>106</sup> Patrick Stewart to Fox Maule, 31 Dec. 1839, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/646.

<sup>107</sup> Horne, ‘Notes on the Scotch Representation’, 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/32.

<sup>108</sup> John Donald, *Past Parliamentary Elections in Greenock* (Greenock, 1933), 24.

Though Conservatives were more than willing to put up candidates representing the ‘new’ economic interests, these were, on occasion, hard to come by. This stands in stark contrast to municipal politics, in which candidates of less elevated social status contested wards across Scotland, though again this met with mixed success. In 1837, for instance, a manufacturer, grocer, and lime burner comprised three of the five defeated Conservative municipal candidates at Stirling.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, after the Corn Law split, Free Traders of varying stripes were the only viable candidates for non-county constituencies.<sup>110</sup> Conservatives did have limited urban support – in Kilmarnock for instance, though an attempt on the burghs was thought ‘hopeless’, Lord Eglinton was sure that ‘a Conservative would have a majority at Port Glasgow’.<sup>111</sup>

Some candidates were unwilling to undertake the vigorous electioneering involved in winning a post-Reform electoral contest. Sir George Clerk was thought to have lost Edinburghshire because of ‘his own want of personal attention to his constituents’, while Sir Hugh Hume Campbell was ‘himself his greatest enemy’, being ‘very unpopular, – and does not visit people enough or appear to care whether they vote for him or not’.<sup>112</sup> In addition to vigour, many candidates also needed to possess patience. The need to contest some seats repeatedly without immediate hope of success discouraged many. As can be seen in Appendix A, candidates such as Sir James Fergusson and Alexander Smollett undertook this onerous task, but they were

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<sup>109</sup> *Scotsman*, 8 Nov. 1837.

<sup>110</sup> Buccleuch to Sir John Maxwell, 6 May 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

<sup>111</sup> Eglinton to Col. Taylor, 1 Apr. 1855, Hughenden MSS, 101/1, f. 57.

<sup>112</sup> Bonham to Peel, 5 Aug. 1837, Peel MSS, 40424, ff. 10–11; Lord Dunglass to Buccleuch, 24 Jul. 1841, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/7/5–7.

exceptional. The most determined was William Forbes in Stirlingshire. He polled a mere 465 voters to 995 for his opponent in 1832, yet topped the poll by twenty in 1835. He then won by a single vote in 1837 and was unseated on petition, but stood again and won by 124 votes in 1841. Thereafter unopposed, he held the seat until his death in 1854. Derby was informed on his passing by the former MP for Peeblesshire that ‘no one will [have] ... so sure a hold of it as he had’, and that ‘a Whig told me once that even if the Tories were to be annihilated, the ten pounders would return Forbes’. He ended by lamenting that Forbes’s seat ‘never would have been meddled with again. We had not many like him’.<sup>113</sup>

One other such case of cultivation was that of Sir John Hope in Edinburghshire. He was, by the 1850s, so impoverished and unwell that he was obliged to reside on the continent. He was also, as he himself admitted, ‘deaf and seventy’.<sup>114</sup> Because he was a long-standing and popular MP, it was felt that ‘he would again be returned without opposition’.<sup>115</sup> Though he was indeed elected unopposed, the combination of the Corn Law split, the after effects of the Disruption, and general attrition meant that MPs such as Hope were increasingly rare as time progressed.

The candidates put forward by the Conservative party varied depending on the characteristics of individual constituencies. County seats tended to select those closely connected with local magnates or the traditional elite. In burghs and burgh

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<sup>113</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 605; William Forbes Mackenzie to Lord Derby, 25 Feb. 1855, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/154/9/10.

<sup>114</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxv; Sir John Hope to Harry Inglis, 13 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/16. Sir John Hope, MP for Edinburghshire, is referred to in the footnotes as Sir John Hope. Sir John Hope, Dean of Faculty and subsequently Lord Hope of Craighall, is referred to as John Hope. The Edinburgh-based party lawyer of the same name is referred to in both the text and footnotes as John Hope WS.

<sup>115</sup> George Clerk to Harry Inglis, 6 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/6.

districts, however, there was an intermingling of this group with others, who more closely reflected mercantile and industrial Scotland. This applied to some individual candidates who had a foot in both camps, illustrating that there was (and is) no simple contrast to be made between 'traditional' and 'progressive' Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century. What was always necessary, in some form, was property or capital, and a local connection. These were, however, not quite so necessary for Scottish Liberal candidates.

## **V. Electioneering**

Local elites, agents, magnates, and candidates were the main driving force behind the party's electoral efforts. They often carried out party activities and jockeyed for power within the framework of local Conservative Associations. The relative prominence of each of these groups depended on the type of organisation, nature of the constituency, character and power of the magnate(s), and the attributes of the candidate at each particular election. Activities directly related to elections included canvassing, treating, public speaking, and transporting electors to the poll.

Electioneering activities in Scotland were broadly comparable to other parts of the UK. However, the different relationship of Scottish parties to these customs and processes was very much determined by Scottish distinctiveness.

It has been asserted that the canvass was the 'defining institution' of county electoral politics, rather than the poll. Indeed, this was the main activity of candidates and party activists in the run-up to elections, both in pursuing new votes and in



reviving dormant ones.<sup>116</sup> As the success or failure of a canvass could often pre-empt a contest, both sides canvassed creatively and competitively. It was a ‘highly ritualised custom, providing an almost ceremonial form of contact between voter and candidate’.<sup>117</sup> As such, it was the main site at which the parties interacted with the wider electorate on a personal level, bridging elite and popular politics.

In the Lowland counties, whether a personal canvass of each elector was undertaken depended on the size of the constituency in question – in the 1832 Berwickshire contest for instance, the Conservative candidate thought it his ‘duty to take the earliest opportunity of waiting upon you in person’.<sup>118</sup> This, however, became less common as the nineteenth century progressed. During an 1840 by-election, the candidate for Perthshire, one of Scotland’s most populous rural seats, pleaded in a handbill that it was ‘impossible to accomplish a personal canvass of all the voters in so extensive a county’.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, a personal canvass was often expected by electors, especially in small seats.<sup>120</sup> Of particular interest is the unique nature of Highland constituencies – they were geographically vast, but tended to have small and dispersed electorates. Despite this, MPs who sat for Highland seats were expected to personally visit electors. Given their vast size and poor transport infrastructure, this irritated the MP for Inverness-shire: ‘I am obliged to go off to Scotland to visit my people in Skye, who I am told are disposed to be rebellious,

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<sup>116</sup> Eastwood, ‘Politics of Deference’, 30; James Fergusson, “‘Making Interest’ in Scottish County Elections’, *SHR*, 26 (1947), 129.

<sup>117</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 93.

<sup>118</sup> Alexander Maitland, ‘To the Electors of the County of Berwick’, 8 Jun 1832, Home of Wedderburn MSS, GD267/14/16/3.

<sup>119</sup> Henry Home Drummond, ‘To the Independent Electors of the County of Perth’, 22 Feb. 1840, Abercainey MSS, GD24/1/1068/4.

<sup>120</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 97.

because I have not visited or taken notice of them!'.<sup>121</sup> Even the Highland burgh seats presented their representatives with similar problems – Wick Burgh District, for instance, was non-contiguous, and comprised the towns of Cromarty, Dingwall, Dornoch, Kirkwall, Tain and Wick. Canvassing these burghs involved traversing distances across land and sea of over 150 miles.<sup>122</sup>

Personal canvassing was perhaps more desirable in Scotland because the structure of the electoral system meant that it could be conducted with greater accuracy. In contrast to England's largely multi-member electoral landscape, Scotland's constituencies were almost all single member seats.<sup>123</sup> The ensuing straightforward party contests, without the possibility of compromise, served to increase partisan feeling. Although Michael Dyer has noted that the counties in particular were characterised by two-party rivalry, these amplified sentiments were not reflected in the rates of county and burgh contestation, which remained significantly lower than England's throughout the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>124</sup> The canvass agitated local passions and served to further disguise the heated nature of Scottish politics by ensuring that candidates could accurately predict the outcome of a poll. This was neatly illustrated by the Conservative party's efforts in double-member Glasgow. Despite a very costly series of defeats after 1832, the local party repeatedly went to poll because they nursed hopes that divisions between whig and radical electors would garner enough split votes in favour of their candidates.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Henry Baillie to Disraeli, 23 Aug. 1852, Hughenden MSS, 117/2, ff. 99–100.

<sup>122</sup> Gordon Pentland, 'By-Elections and the Peculiarities of Scottish Politics, 1832–1900', in T.G. Otte and Paul Readman (eds), *By-Elections in British Politics, 1832–1914* (Woodbridge, 2013), 278.

<sup>123</sup> Edinburgh and Glasgow were the only double-member Scottish constituencies.

<sup>124</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 51–61.

<sup>125</sup> McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 193–5. Up until 1842, it was also thought that religious divisions might bring split-voters into the Conservative camp.

Firstly, in single-member seats, local Conservative parties frequently, quietly, and efficiently gauged their chances of success by engaging in thorough and extensive canvassing, and then withdrawing before a contest. Secondly, the generally smaller size of Scottish constituency electorates meant that it was more practicable for candidates and agents to conduct thorough canvasses. Finally, Scotland's enfranchised middling classes were more circumscribed than in England, and therefore often more socially intertwined. For this reason, voters more commonly expected canvassing to be carried out by the candidate or by a canvasser intimately known to the individual elector. The canvass was, therefore, in some ways more central to Scotland's electoral culture than it was elsewhere in the UK.

A great deal of canvassing was undertaken by party adherents – this was crucial, as the local reputation of canvassers was an important factor in swaying electors.<sup>126</sup> Scottish Conservatives made greater use of professional canvassers than did the Liberals. Electors' requests for the party not to advertise their allegiance appear repeatedly in party records, as Haddingtonshire electors requested of Lord Ramsay: '[I'll] let you know the result of my canvass of the Coalstoun tenants ... all wish that their vote should not be made public till the time comes'.<sup>127</sup> In this case, their votes were made public on polling day, but in many aborted contests the need to do so never arose. As the prevailing mood in many parts of Scotland, especially amongst the unfranchised, favoured the Liberals and radicals, this is not surprising. Yet, given this widespread desire for confidentiality, it had the effect of masking the extent of Conservative support in Scotland's public culture.

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<sup>126</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 98.

<sup>127</sup> Lord Ramsay to Alexander Hope, 20 Dec. 1834, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/156.

Despite engaging in canvassing activity, Lord Ramsay declared in an address that this was in response to Liberal action: ‘it is attempted from the silence and *apparent* stillness of his party, to lay on our shoulders the responsibility of first taking the field’ – he reminded electors that ‘votes may be solicited although there is no published committee’.<sup>128</sup> The line between passively participating in county society and actively canvassing electors was a fine one.

Given that the mood in burgh districts was even more liberal and radical than most counties, it may well be that the experience of Conservatives in those seats was more distressing. In the single burghs, personal canvasses were possible, such as in 1832 when James Ewing and his committee embarked on an extensive personal canvass of Glasgow, claiming to have gained over 2,000 pledges by the December of that year.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, this required many collaborators. Indeed, Ewing’s effort may only have been possible because of his strong municipal links – many of his canvassers went on to stand as candidates for the Town Council.<sup>130</sup> This illustrates that efficient municipal party organisation could, under certain circumstances, be harnessed in order to promote party activity on a higher electoral level.

Apart from the canvass, one of the main party election activities was treating – that is to say, paying for drinks, dinners, and other refreshments for voters, as part of a campaign of ‘legitimate’ influence.<sup>131</sup> Unlike in other parts of the United Kingdom, where larger electorates had been more common before 1832, this practice

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<sup>128</sup> Lord Ramsay, ‘To the Loyal and Independent Electors of the County of East Lothian’, 19 Dec. 1836, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/287.

<sup>129</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 190.

<sup>130</sup> Sweeney, ‘Municipal Administration of Glasgow’, 48.

<sup>131</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 161.

proved entirely novel in many Scottish constituencies, as there had been no need to treat electors in any organised fashion. It was immediately recognised as necessary by party agents such as Patrick Wilson in Roxburghshire, who informed a fellow agent in November 1832 that ‘it was the opinion of those, who took the deepest interest in the success of Lord John Scott that eating and drinking should be resorted to whenever it was thought expedient’. The Liberals, he claimed, had ‘set us the example not only of giving public entertainments, but of having private parties to secure voters’ in the county, but it was the Conservatives in Roxburghshire – and throughout Scotland – who eventually proved more willing to entertain and treat electors.<sup>132</sup>

This practice continued to be employed throughout the period, and was often in excess of party expectations and wishes: ‘The voters have always been accustomed to get refreshments on the polling days. To stop this altogether would give them great offence and to keep it within bounds is very difficult’.<sup>133</sup> In an 1846 by-election for the Falkirk Burgh District, the party’s Chief Agent for the west of Scotland thought that ‘the publicans’ bills are shameful,— and the amount in any one of their towns is large enough for the reasonable expense of an ordinary contest of a single seat’.<sup>134</sup> This suggests that it was more of an expense in the burgh districts. Generally, Scottish Conservatives were similar to their English and Welsh counterparts, in that they increased their popularity through lavish entertaining, though this may have declined later in the period as contested elections became more

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<sup>132</sup> Patrick Wilson to John Gibson, 27 Nov. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1126/220.

<sup>133</sup> James Blackwood to Buccleuch, 11 Sep. 1845, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/5.

<sup>134</sup> Robert Lamond to G.E.H. Vernon, 24 Jun. 1846, Newcastle MSS, Ne C 4662/2.

infrequent.<sup>135</sup> Overall, it was the Scottish Conservatives who were generally more willing to entertain and treat Scottish electors throughout the period.

While the overall costs of contestation in Scotland remained fairly consistent between 1832 and 1868, spending patterns changed over time, particularly as contested elections became more infrequent. They also gradually became more restrained in character. Though high transport costs were also a factor in elections elsewhere in the UK, the cost of transporting electors to the poll generally constituted a somewhat larger proportion of Scottish election spending; this was especially true in borders constituencies whose electorates contained a large number of outside voters, and in geographically vast Highland seats. One Renfrewshire election agent complained in 1852 that ‘the great extra expense at the election ... [was] caused by the number of horses and carriages engaged and the number of agents required to bring the voters to the poll’.<sup>136</sup> In addition to their greater expectation of a personal canvass, Scottish electors may have more keenly anticipated party assistance in travelling to their closest polling place.

The cost of elections was similar to those in other parts of the UK, such as Wales. It was thought in 1845 that a complex county such as Roxburghshire would cost £2,500, or £2,000 at most.<sup>137</sup> At the higher end, contesting Peeblesshire in 1837 cost £5,256.19.10 from the commencement of the contest.<sup>138</sup> While county contests may well have been occasionally cheaper than those in burghs, it was estimated that

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<sup>135</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 64; Matthew Cragoe, *Culture, Politics, and National Identity in Wales 1832–1886* (Oxford, 2004), 134–5.

<sup>136</sup> J.D. Boswell to Charles Dalrymple, 18 Aug. 1852, Eglinton MSS, GD3/5/1347/62.

<sup>137</sup> Cragoe, *National Identity in Wales*, 135; Polwarth to Buccleuch, 20 Dec. 1845, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/5.

<sup>138</sup> Peeblesshire election expenses, 1837, Sprott MSS, GD504/6/22/1.

in Dumfries Burghs, a Conservative challenge would cost at least ‘two thousand (£2000) pounds’.<sup>139</sup> Overall, costs of this nature stayed fairly constant throughout the post-Reform period in Scotland. With the possible exception of burgh districts, which (when contested) seem to have been costlier to secure, the cost of elections was comparable to those in other parts of the UK.

Although the political meeting did not overtake the canvass until after 1868, it nevertheless increased in importance as the century progressed, and was always an important aspect of party activity during election periods.<sup>140</sup> After 1832, the hustings, particularly those events which took place as part of the nomination, were a pivotal feature of Scottish elections, exhibiting many similarities to those which had taken place elsewhere. Some Scottish constituencies had experienced public nominations before 1832, but in others, including many of the previously closed oligarchic burghs, they were an entirely new phenomenon.<sup>141</sup>

Frank O’Gorman has established the vibrancy of English elections before 1832, but this vitality was notably absent in Scotland – at least outside of the larger counties.<sup>142</sup> Even small English boroughs had experienced large and publicly attended nominations, whereas the introduction of post-1832 election practices represented a more jarring change for Scotland. Indeed, many of the largest Scottish burghs had not previously held public nominations in the presence of electors and non-electors. For instance, the nomination and election for Edinburgh took place

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<sup>139</sup> William Maxwell to Buccleuch, 11 Apr. 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

<sup>140</sup> W.I. Jennings, *Party Politics*, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1960), i. 116.

<sup>141</sup> *Scotsman*, 22 Dec. 1832.

<sup>142</sup> See Frank O’Gorman, ‘Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: The Social Meaning of Elections in England 1780–1860’, *Past & Present*, 135 (1992), 79–115.

within the council chambers before 1832, with candidates both nominated and elected exclusively by members of the Town Council.<sup>143</sup>

Public speaking was an extremely useful talent for Conservative candidates to possess, especially in a political culture which now valued it to a much greater extent.<sup>144</sup> This skill was especially necessary when candidates might have to overcome a hostile audience composed of electors and non-electors. This was an additional handicap for Conservatives, as non-electors were far more likely to support non-Conservative candidates. Given their inability to express their sentiments in the polling booth, they did so boisterously during public occasions. If candidates were not good speakers, they often complained of being drowned out by the crowd. Even good speakers, such as Hay Macdowall Grant in Banffshire, were often heckled and prevented from making themselves heard.<sup>145</sup> There are numerous examples of poor speakers standing as Conservatives in this period, such as Forbes Hunter Blair for Edinburgh in 1832 and Sir George Campbell for Glasgow in 1868.<sup>146</sup>

It is notable that this type of candidate was particularly unsuccessful, suggesting that speeches by parliamentary candidates, especially nomination-day orations, did have an effect on electoral outcomes in Scotland. They were not, therefore, merely a venue for ritualised verbal (or, occasionally, physical) abuse. The

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<sup>143</sup> A. Nicholson (ed.), *Memoirs of Adam Black* (Edinburgh, 1885), 77.

<sup>144</sup> George Kitson-Clark, 'The Romantic Element, 1830 to 1850', in J.H. Plumb (ed.), *Studies in Social History: A Tribute to G.M. Trevelyan* (London 1955), 220; Joseph S. Meisel, *Public Speech and the Culture of Public Life in the Age of Gladstone*, (New York, 2001), 225–8.

<sup>145</sup> H. Macdowall Grant, 'To the Electors of Banffshire', 17 Jul. 1852, Abercromby of Forglen MSS, GD185/31/49. Later to become a compelling evangelical lay preacher, Grant's talents were likely more suited to the pulpit than the hustings. See Chapter Five.

<sup>146</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 116; Hutchison, 'Mid-Victorian Glasgow', 406.



novelty of the public nomination in many Scottish seats therefore had two main effects. First, Scottish electors and non-electors, already having experienced boisterous public meetings in other political contexts, very quickly adapted to the new state of affairs. They made the nomination a more animated affair, bringing Scotland more in line with other parts of the UK. Second, many Scottish candidates, particularly Conservative ones, failed to adapt along with their new audience. As a result, their electioneering strategies showed a more marked preference for personal and individual activities, such as canvassing.

Overall, the electioneering activities carried out by the Scottish Conservative party were wide-ranging, encompassing (among other things) canvassing, treating, transporting electors, and public speaking. Generally smaller electorates, a preponderance of single-member seats and non-contiguous burghs, and greater geographical dispersal of constituency electors led to specific tactical responses by the Scottish Conservatives. They placed particular emphasis on the canvass, often withdrawing before polling to avoid unnecessary expenditure when a seat was thought unwinnable. The party treated electors more than their Liberal opponents, and later placed a proportionally greater emphasis on organising the transport of electors to the poll.

Nevertheless, the gradual deterioration of some of these aspects mirrored the decline of party activity generally. In part at least, this decline was due to their retreat from activities which brought them into close and personal contact with the electorate and wider society. The sites at which the elite and popular connected moved away from the physical, as activities such as orations gradually gave way to

the written word.<sup>147</sup> This was true of both parties, but more pronounced for the Scottish Conservatives, who continued to nurse an elitist worldview throughout the period.<sup>148</sup> As such, the space between the ‘formal’ politics of the party and the ‘informal’ political word of those that they sought to represent widened significantly as the period progressed.<sup>149</sup>

## VI. Newspapers

The party operated in a national landscape in which the newspaper press was gradually expanding, due in no small part to the gradual reduction and eventual abolition of duties.<sup>150</sup> While *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine* could assert in 1836 that newspapers might only reflect the feelings and tastes of the middle classes, rather than the wider populace, the steady expansion of the press made this assumption increasingly inaccurate.<sup>151</sup> They reflected the reading tastes of the middle-class social strata who possessed the vote, and, increasingly, those who did not.

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<sup>147</sup> Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 131.

<sup>148</sup> See Chapters Four and Five.

<sup>149</sup> Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867–1914* (Cambridge, 1998), 61.

<sup>150</sup> For the political press in a wider British context, see Arthur Aspinall, *Politics and the Press c.1780–1850* (London, 1949); Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain, Volume One: The Nineteenth Century* (London, 1981). The nineteenth century Scottish press is, by contrast, is an almost entirely unexplored topic, with the exception of one case-study article and two post-war monographs. See Fiona A. Montgomery, ‘The Unstamped Press: the Contribution of Glasgow 1831–1836’, *SHR*, 59 (1980), 154–70; William Donaldson, *Popular Literature in Victorian Scotland: Language, Fiction and the Press* (Aberdeen, 1986); R.M.W. Cowan, *The Newspaper in Scotland: A Study of its First Expansion, 1815–60* (Glasgow, 1946).

<sup>151</sup> Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot, 1996), 21; ‘Public Opinion as Indicated by the Newspaper Press’, *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*, 3 (1836), 661.

The UK party leadership was extremely suspicious of the newspaper press. After 1830, the metropolitan papers were, with a few exceptions, on the side of the Whigs. Peel asserted that he had serious misgivings about the constitutionality of extra-parliamentary efforts to promote their cause through newspapers.<sup>152</sup> Wellington also held this attitude, advising Buccleuch that ‘it is not safe to have any communication with them ... I would not recommend you to interfere in their affairs. There is not one of them who can be trusted’.<sup>153</sup>

Despite this, the Scottish party (initially at least) displayed a remarkably pioneering attitude towards the newspaper press. Alison, in his two 1835 *Blackwood's* articles, expounded on the need for a cheap and popular Conservative press, in order to define the party ideologically and to combat the efforts of hostile titles. *Blackwood's* itself was a central organ through which developing strands of conservatism were shaped and transmitted on a more elite level. Alison thought newspaper-promotion of greater importance than his more famous calls to attend to the registers and to form Conservative Associations.<sup>154</sup> The Scottish section of the party was the leading light in this sphere, with his exhortations inspired by local circumstances. Alison told Peel that he was unsurprised about his hesitance to attend a Glasgow dinner, ‘considering the impressions in regard to the political feeling of the west of Scotland which the Liberal press constantly endeavour to create’, though he did acknowledge that ‘the result of much of the elections hitherto at least has done so much to confirm [this]’.<sup>155</sup> Alison recognised that Glasgow and the west were

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<sup>152</sup> Robert Stewart, ‘The Conservative Party and the “Courier” Newspaper, 1840’, *EHR*, 91, (1976), 346; Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 51.

<sup>153</sup> Duke of Wellington to Buccleuch, 13 Sep. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/7/12.

<sup>154</sup> Alison, ‘Change of Ministry’, 813; ‘Conservative Associations’, 5–8.

<sup>155</sup> Alison to Peel, 24 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 215–17.

particularly lacking in friendly titles, though the situation was not much better in the rest of Scotland. The press could help to ‘universalize the central tenets of the Conservative credo’, and to link local actors with national politics.<sup>156</sup> Alison’s efforts played a significant role in bringing this about in Scotland, and in the wider United Kingdom.

The number of UK provincial titles expanded from 130 in 1832 to over 200 by 1840. Many were vehemently partisan, and interwove local and national issues by reprinting articles from other national journals with similar ideological slants.<sup>157</sup> In Scotland, many of these features were also evident. In Greenock, for example, there was a long dispute printed in the letters page of the *Greenock Advertiser* between anonymous writers and both the Liberal and Conservative candidates – despite these letters having to be paid for as advertisements. As such, these columns were used by both parties for ‘supplementary propagandising’. It is notable, however, that the *Advertiser* favoured the Liberals, so Conservative efforts were presumably disadvantaged.<sup>158</sup> Antipathy towards the party in popular arenas such as public meetings meant that Conservatives such as Macdowall Grant were more reliant on the press to disseminate their message: ‘Prevented, as I have already been, by popular clamour, from expressing at length my sentiments, on the hustings ... compelled to have recourse to the medium of a newspaper’.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 602.

<sup>157</sup> Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 597.

<sup>158</sup> Donald, *Elections in Greenock*, 13–16; Cragoe, *National Identity in Wales*, 208.

<sup>159</sup> Macdowall Grant, ‘To the Electors of Banffshire’, 17 Jul. 1852, Abercromby of Forglen MSS, GD185/31/49.

In places such as Dumfriesshire, it was thought that the party would meet ‘with great opposition amongst the dissenters, especially if they be roused by their clergy, and the public press’.<sup>160</sup> In addition to functioning on a (broadly defined) Radical-Liberal-Whig-Conservative spectrum, newspapers also staked out religious positions. Given the fluid nature of religious issues and their tempestuous relationship with party politics in the period, this made the operations of party-aligned Scottish titles a matter of unique delicacy.<sup>161</sup> In places such as Forfarshire, the *Montrose Review* supported the Liberals and Free Church, while the *Montrose Standard* supported the Conservatives and Established Church in the late 1850s.<sup>162</sup> Nevertheless, such straightforward dichotomies were unusual, and, moreover, the changing of owners or editors tended to exacerbate the uncertainty of press allegiances.

On a local level, party newspaper activity was notably vigorous in the early part of the period. Before 1830, the private purchase of a newspaper was considered unusual. By 1833 however, Horne urged Buccleuch to consider starting a newspaper in Dumfries, as ‘if a contest for the county began before we had such an organ, at command, the mischief might be incalculable, and it is on that ground alone that I urge it’.<sup>163</sup> Although a memorandum was drawn up, it was not until 1835 that the sympathetic *Dumfries Herald* was founded, with the poet Thomas Aird as editor. The extent to which Conservative journals were founded alongside those of other allegiances at this time was fairly consistent across cities and counties.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> J. Macalpine Leny to Buccleuch, 7 May 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/4.

<sup>161</sup> See Chapters Four and Five.

<sup>162</sup> David Bebbington, *Victorian Religious Revivals: Culture and Piety in Local and Global Contexts* (Oxford, 2012), 189.

<sup>163</sup> Jennings, *Party Politics*, i. 138; Horne to Buccleuch, 5 Oct. 1833, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/528/8.

<sup>164</sup> Cowan, *Newspaper in Scotland*, 162, see also Chapter 6.

The role played by the party in founding and promoting many of these new titles was substantial. In the case of the *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, proceedings got off to a rocky start, as some were sceptical of the new venture, it being thought that success might have been more likely ‘if we could have secured the old paper’, which had switched sides.<sup>165</sup> Similarly, Buccleuch was advised that the geographical scope of the paper was inauspicious, as near Jedburgh, ‘we have so little intercourse with Berwick that a paper established there would have no likelihood of extending its circulation very far’.<sup>166</sup> The paper was nevertheless founded with Buccleuch’s backing, in no small part because the existing radical papers in the area were ‘read with avidity by the lower classes in the villages, and even by many of the tenantry’.<sup>167</sup> This was the main reason for its foundation – the tenantry were the mainspring of Conservative support, and as such, a sympathetic channel of communication between them and the party was a top priority. The prominent role played by Buccleuch was indicative – the promotion of existing journals, and, crucially, the founding of new titles was heavily dependent on the contributions of wealthier magnates.

Conservatives engaged in such activities due to the direct competition of liberal and radical-supporting organs. The extremely fissile nature of liberalism in the period, combined with a surfeit of Liberal candidates, meant that non-Conservative titles often spent more time denouncing rival liberals than they did conservatives. In 1840, for instance, the Conservative candidate for St Andrews

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<sup>165</sup> W.J. Gilly to Buccleuch, 29 Sep. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/15.

<sup>166</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 16 Oct. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/15.

<sup>167</sup> Proposal for the *Berwick and Kelso Warder*, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/15.

Burghs was able to draw on criticisms of his opponent made by ‘his quondam friend, the *Fife Herald*’, which had made much of his ‘neglect of his constituency’.<sup>168</sup>

Conservative efforts in this area were more directed and closely controlled.

Nevertheless, Liberal infighting may have been an inadvertent advantage to that party, stimulating a profusion of journals across the non-conservative spectrum.

Party efforts also included boosting the circulation of already-existing sympathetic newspapers. In 1829, it was thought that a single newspaper copy was read by thirty people.<sup>169</sup> Consequently, this was every bit as important as the founding or funding of papers. These efforts were generally made by less senior members of the party on an informal basis, in contrast to the elite-inspired efforts to found and fund titles. In one instance, a minor Edinburghshire landowner suggested that his MP should send a Conservative paper to one of his tenants, especially as he worshipped at a dissenting church, whose liberal minister was ‘a great politician; and ... had taken a very active hand in canvassing, during the former and late election’. Further, it was mentioned that he had, himself, sent to his tenants ‘the *Edinburgh Courant*, as they thought the *Evening Post*, was rather ultra-Conservative’. Tenants thus voluntarily consumed conservative titles, but they did not do so passively at the behest of their landlord – their identification with the content was thus a matter of active choice. The extra-local nature of these efforts was emphasised by the fact that in another parish of Edinburghshire, he thought that it was best to send them ‘the *Scottish Guardian*, published at Glasgow’.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> D. Maitland Makgill Crichton, ‘To the Independent Electors of the St Andrews District of Burghs’, 2 Jan. 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/36.

<sup>169</sup> Jennings, *Party Politics*, i. 138.

<sup>170</sup> Alexander Weir to Clerk, 20 Jul. 1835, Clerk of Penicuik MSS, GD18/3370.

Local landowners, both small and large, often undertook such activity as a matter of course, as a way of influencing their tenants. Indeed, Horne advised Buccleuch that his activities in that area were misdirected: ‘some of your Grace’s copy of the *Albion* are ill placed, at this moment’.<sup>171</sup> Some senior party figures were involved in promoting circulation, such as the agent for Roxburghshire, who asked a Kelso Writer in 1832 to ‘direct the *Kelso Mail* to be sent to Mr Walter Nicol, teacher, 79 South Bridge, Edinburgh, who has declared in our favour ... if you can send him the two or three last papers also so much the better’.<sup>172</sup> Again, this illustrates that local newspaper circulation was not strictly confined to its intended locality.

The party’s forward-thinking attitudes during the early post-Reform period resulted in the formulation of some elaborate proposals. Recognising that they were falling behind in newspaper take-up, John Hope WS wrote that ‘several Conservatives ... resolved to give the plan of circulating Conservative newspapers a fair trial ... and they accordingly have placed at my disposal, a sum of money for the purpose’. The party in Edinburgh tentatively embarked on a comprehensive and organised campaign to bolster Conservative circulation. It was further proposed that this system be adopted more broadly throughout the country, and that ‘one journal [*Edinburgh Advertiser*] ... should be considered the accredited organ of the party’. This would have several potential advantages: ‘not only would unity of sentiment be produced, and the paper itself better supported, but ... the literary talent of the Conservative party would be directed into one channel’.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Horne to Buccleuch, 21 Mar. 1833, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/528/8.

<sup>172</sup> (John Gibson?) to Patrick Wilson, 19 Jul. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1126/277.

<sup>173</sup> John Hope WS, ‘To the Conservatives of Scotland’, (c. 1834–7), D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/1. John Hope WS was a party agent and Writer to the Signet, based in Edinburgh.



It was also proposed to encourage the circulation of the paper through the formation of reading clubs, in which copies would be passed around districts according to a pre-determined list – a practice often associated with readers of radical titles. It was thought that this would have the appreciable effect of expanding the party to include a significant popular element, as ‘friends would be known, and in communication with each other twice a week: the transmission of the newspaper would be a bond of union’ – as such, ‘in the event of a sudden vacancy ... these committees of friends would be ready to canvass the whole county in half a day’. Though there is no evidence that these more ambitious notions were acted upon, they illustrate, if nothing else, the ambition of party activists at the time. They also highlight the contemporary belief of party members that newspapers were a vital tool not only in winning over the electorate, but also in building up a resilient party organisation.

These proposals were intended to combat the unpopularity of the party, which was thought to have been ‘brought about chiefly, if not solely, by means of the whig and radical press’.<sup>174</sup> As in the rest of the UK however, Conservative organs exerted an increasingly peripheral influence over the expanding and industrialising Scottish cities, though their reach remained stable in the counties. By 1859, despite all efforts, the idea of a cheap Conservative party newspaper in Edinburgh was still only at the proposal stage.<sup>175</sup> In Scottish cities more generally, Conservative titles had stagnated – in Aberdeen for instance, the lively local debate of the 1830s had been maintained by the whig *Aberdeen Herald*, conservative *Aberdeen Journal*, and the Non-

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<sup>174</sup> John Hope WS, ‘To the Conservatives of Scotland’, (c. 1834–7), D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/1.

<sup>175</sup> Jones, *Powers of the Press*, 160; George Thomson to Buccleuch, 20 Jul. 1859, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43.

Intrusionist *Aberdeen Banner*. By 1857, though the *Journal* was still conservatively inclined, the opposition had added the *Aberdeen Free Press* to its stable.<sup>176</sup> Limited progress was made – in Glasgow, a group of Conservative businessmen founded the moderate *Glasgow Constitutional* in 1835 as a counterweight to the more reactionary conservative *Glasgow Courier*. Nevertheless, the *Courier* was struggling by 1857, the same year that the *Constitutional* was wound up. Its demise was blamed on the reluctance of prominent Conservatives in western Scotland to finance its conversion to a daily publication.<sup>177</sup>

Horatio Ross, former MP for Montrose, complained to Buccleuch that though the Scottish were ‘a reading and a thinking people ... all the newspapers which they get are of a democratic character. I believe it is very much owing to this that there is not a better feeling amongst the working classes’.<sup>178</sup> His assertions were reasonably well-founded; by 1862, the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* was the only remaining conservative daily in Scotland.<sup>179</sup> Even then, it was not well thought of, as one Scottish MP informed Disraeli that the liberal titles were generally ‘the best conducted and clearest written papers, and too many Conservatives I am sorry to say take the leading whig paper the *Scotsman* in preference to their own leading journal’.<sup>180</sup> By 1867, the *Courant* was sold on by a committee of prominent Scottish Conservatives who had collectively owned its shares. It was claimed that this ‘committee are in no way responsible for the past management as it was left to the

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<sup>176</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 69, 182.

<sup>177</sup> Gerald Warner, *The Scottish Tory Party: A History* (London, 1988), 126; Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 463.

<sup>178</sup> Horatio Ross to Buccleuch, 7 May 1859, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43.

<sup>179</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 152.

<sup>180</sup> Graham Graham-Montgomery to Disraeli, 21 Jun. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 137/1, ff. 81–8.

proprietors and they certainly have made a mess of it'.<sup>181</sup> Want of attention on the part of the committee almost certainly accelerated its decline, as did a lack of financial support from the party. Efforts were made by 'some independent members of the Conservative party' to save the paper, however, and it carried on.<sup>182</sup>

Large numbers of newspapers outside of London had been founded after 1855, the majority of which were liberal-leaning. In the wider UK party, it was recognised by party managers that the lack of Conservative journals was a 'great existing anomaly'.<sup>183</sup> In Scotland, this anomaly was even more pronounced, as the vast majority of new titles were liberal in inclination. Ultimately, the Scottish Conservative party went into the 1868 election with a similar metropolitan newspaper presence than it had possessed in 1832, despite the massive expansion of the sector. This was largely due to a lack of financial support – splits in the party had severely impacted on the willingness of prominent Conservatives to finance the foundation of new papers and the expansion of existing ones.

In attempting to discourage Buccleuch from founding the *Berwick and Kelso Warder* in 1835, William Scott had stated that those in Teviotbank 'will not read a conservative paper at all unless they get it for nothing, and even if they do they will not believe a word its contents'.<sup>184</sup> Yet, the paper, once founded, was successfully printed and distributed until 1858, and continued under similar names until 1899.<sup>185</sup> Although the party's potential readership was a minority of the Scottish populace, it

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<sup>181</sup> F. Peterman to W.S. Walker, 18 Mar. 1867, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43.

<sup>182</sup> 'Memorandum for *Courant* Debenture Holders of 1865 and 1866', 16 Feb. 1867, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43.

<sup>183</sup> Jones, *Powers of the Press* 145; Jolliffe to Derby, 4 Nov. 1857, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/158/10/36.

<sup>184</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 16 Oct. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/15.

<sup>185</sup> *British Museum. Catalogue of Printed Books. Supplement* (London, 1905), 443.

was, particularly in the early part of the period, a significant minority. As in Wales and other parts of the UK, many Scottish counties and towns possessed one paper promoting each side, one conservative and one liberal/radical.<sup>186</sup> Quite apart from their role in shaping political identities, they were a constant feature of local life, and thus needed to reflect the practical requirements and conceptual outlooks of their readers. As such, they arguably both reflected, and themselves shaped, the political make-up of local areas. That the majority of localities had at least one Conservative organ in circulation is indicative; even in many areas which consistently returned Liberals to Westminster, there were a sufficient number of conservatively inclined readers to keep these titles in circulation. Or, at least, enough readers to encourage local party figures to subsidise their operation.

While their opponents may have claimed that Conservative electoral support was borne of intimidation, influence, or apathy, the purchase and consumption of newspapers was in most cases an entirely voluntary action. The partial commercial success of Conservative titles, though bolstered by significant party efforts, depended on the existence of a sympathetic readership. The role of the press in connecting local and national politics also affected the party internally – the reporting of national issues in local contexts bolstered the unity of party's grassroots.<sup>187</sup> The breakdown in party organisation after 1846 and the decline in the Scottish Conservative press were therefore mutually reinforcing.

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<sup>186</sup> Cragoe, *National Identity in Wales*, 208.

<sup>187</sup> Cragoe, 'Conservative Associations', 602.

## VII. Registration

Outside of election periods, Scottish parties, like their counterparts in the rest of the UK, needed to attend to the registration of voters. Voter registration, as in England, was an entirely new phenomenon after 1832 and was a difficult and lengthy process. Parties took the lead in registering sympathetic voters, as well as objecting to the inclusion of hostile ones on the electoral roll. Moreover, as registrations were conducted annually, between elections, it became necessary for parties to undertake near-constant activity.<sup>188</sup> By 1835, the most important feature of Scottish electoral politics, in both county and burgh, was the battling between the parties in the registration courts. Indeed, Archibald Alison wrote that with regard to Conservative Associations, the registration courts were the ‘great theatre of their exertions’.<sup>189</sup> Though he was referring to the UK more broadly, Alison was very well aware of the effects of the new Scottish electoral laws. Registration provided the main impetus for the expansion of Conservative Associations across the UK from 1835 onwards. Attending to the register was to become their main function, and in some cases their sole function.<sup>190</sup>

This was the domain of local party organisations, as opposed to candidates, magnates, or the almost non-existent central party apparatus. The Conservative party’s Scottish leader, the Duke of Buccleuch, was advised by a former Conservative MP in 1835 that the principal object of the Scottish party should be to

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<sup>188</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 40.

<sup>189</sup> Alison, ‘Conservative Associations’, 9.

<sup>190</sup> Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 585; Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 142.

‘choose a commercial agent in each county to attend to the registrations’.<sup>191</sup> While national figures such as Buccleuch were peripherally involved, however, registration activity was largely organised at the individual constituency level. In the Scottish counties at least, the Liberals were less active in this sphere. This was largely due to the cost of fighting court battles, combined with a lack of organisational capacity, a situation similar to that south of the border.<sup>192</sup>

The strength of Conservative organisation meant that by 1839, matters were sufficiently coordinated that Sir James Graham was able to inform Francis Bonham of the state of the registers in sixteen seats across the south of Scotland. Many of these were constituencies in which the Conservative party’s presence has been underestimated or overlooked – Glasgow, for instance, was described as ‘Register much improved. Prospects good’.<sup>193</sup> The Scottish party was extremely active across a great many constituencies throughout the 1830s. In seats where neither party was completely secure, attending to the registers was essential.

The peculiar legal complexities of registration meant that the party in Scotland was particularly reliant on lawyers, given the legal confusion generated by the vague wording of the Scottish Reform Act. The lack of legal precedents meant that, in the early years at least, registration criteria varied from county to county. Norman Gash has described registrations as ‘a matter of local tactics that could only be effectively conducted by local men’.<sup>194</sup> This was disproportionately true in

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<sup>191</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 52; W.R.K. Douglas to Buccleuch, 9 Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/5.

<sup>192</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 76.

<sup>193</sup> Graham to Bonham, 5 Sep. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 69–72.

<sup>194</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 147.

Scotland. John Hope WS wrote that ‘Since the passing of the Reform bill there never has been so much keenness displayed as in the Lothian Appeal Courts, as on the present occasion. No point could be decided without four speeches of counsel’, and that ‘the ablest men will make mistakes when they are forced to give summary judgements upon an infinite variety of points’.<sup>195</sup> The judgements made in registration cases were not, however, always the result of impartial deliberation. Party politics infected the very machinery of registration, an area which previous scholarship on Scottish registration has neglected. It was noted in 1832 that ‘the whig and radical press teemed with the abuse of the Tory Sheriffs and the Tory registration courts, accusing them in no measured terms of partiality to their own party’.<sup>196</sup>

John Cay, Sheriff of Linlithgowshire, made decisions which greatly displeased the party. He also published a book on Scottish registration law, derided by Hope as an attempt to ‘persecute the community with a Dictionary of decisions’.<sup>197</sup> Hope’s derision reflected the fact that it was not in the Conservatives’ interest to consolidate or provide clarity to registration law, as they benefitted disproportionately from ambiguities across different local areas. Moreover, it was also extremely lucrative work for lawyers like Hope. Indeed, before Archibald Alison was appointed Sheriff of Lanarkshire, his retaining fee for revising the Aberdeenshire registers on behalf of the Conservative interest was 200 guineas.<sup>198</sup> After he was appointed Sheriff in 1834, Alison was swamped from 12 August to 15

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<sup>195</sup> John Hope WS, ‘Appeal Monstrosities’, 1835, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/12.

<sup>196</sup> John Hope WS, ‘Impartiality with a Vengeance’, 1835, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/10.

<sup>197</sup> John Hope WS, to (?), D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/23; John Cay, *An Analysis of the Scottish Reform Act, with the Decisions of the Courts of Appeal*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1837 and 1840).

<sup>198</sup> Archibald Alison, *Some Account of my Life and Writings: An Autobiography by the Late Sir Archibald Alison*, ed. Lady J.R. Alison, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1883), i. 311.

October each year when the registers were under revision. He claimed in his memoir that before party activity had died down in the 1850s, there were sometimes 6,000 claims and 4,000 objections per annum in Glasgow alone, along with 3,000 claims in the other constituencies within his jurisdiction.<sup>199</sup> The electorate of these counties and burghs only amounted to around 10,000 in 1832, suggesting that Alison was exaggerating – nevertheless, it does give an indication of the industrial scale of registration activity.

Cay's book reflected an increasing level of consistency across legal jurisdictions after the chaos of the 1830s. However, the Sheriffs remained influential in determining the outcome of registration battles throughout the period, as they retained significant leeway in deciding individual cases, within a more slowly evolving legal framework.<sup>200</sup> The majority of the Scottish bar, from which Sheriffs were drawn, was Conservative, as were the majority of Sheriffs already in place.<sup>201</sup> As such, the party enjoyed an inbuilt institutional advantage in registration battles during the 1830s and 1840s.

By 1840, Conservative efficiency in the registration courts was reflected in the increasing accuracy of Horne's predictions; out of thirty counties, he correctly predicted the results of twenty-five in 1835, twenty-six in 1837, and twenty-eight in 1840, for the 1841 election.<sup>202</sup> Combined with electioneering activities, the notable resurgence of the party was in large part due to registrations. The limits of this,

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<sup>199</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 85.

<sup>200</sup> Material on registration law was therefore published throughout the period. See Archibald Campbell Swinton, *Digest of Decisions in the Registration Appeal Court at Glasgow, in the years 1835 and 1843, with Notes of Decisions in Other Districts* (Edinburgh, 1844); J.B. Nicholson, *A Practical Treatise on the Law of Parliamentary Elections in Scotland*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1865).

<sup>201</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 9.

<sup>202</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lxi.



however, were illustrated by their experience in the Haddington Burghs. The Conservative victory there in 1837 was largely due to registration activity, putting them nine votes ahead of the opposition. This wafer-thin majority was achieved at a ruinous registration cost of over £10,000.<sup>203</sup> Gaining burgh district seats by this method was prohibitively expensive. Moreover, rural landowners had less connection and interests in the burghs, and therefore had less incentive to fund such activity. The party's focus on registration could not deliver long-term electoral success, as it restricted them to the counties. Though to a lesser extent, costs were nevertheless still formidable in rural seats.

The cost and effort of attending to the registers meant that in some seats there was little party activity. This inactivity spread after the 1830s, as costs spiralled. The Corn Law split effectively ended registration efforts in many constituencies. While Buccleuch thought that it would 'not be politic at this moment to give up the registration fund' in Roxburghshire, the lack of a candidate effectively rendered it redundant.<sup>204</sup> By 1852, he was informed that the Conservative registration fund was unviable, as 'the contributions have fallen off more than one half, and which of course has increased the expense to those who remain'.<sup>205</sup>

Registration activity was not, however, the only means by which Conservatives won elections, though their Liberal opponents often claimed that this was the case. In places such as Kirkcudbright, it was thought that 'the registrations have not been attended to, but the county is said to be Conservative'.<sup>206</sup> After 1846, the more fluid nature of political allegiances made party registration work more

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<sup>203</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 549; Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 58.

<sup>204</sup> Buccleuch to Charles Baillie, 24 Dec. 1846, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/19.

<sup>205</sup> Ogilvie to Buccleuch, 3 Apr. 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

<sup>206</sup> Horne, 'Return from Scotland', [1836–8], Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/31.

uncertain – put simply, it was difficult to convince Conservatives to fund the registration of voters whose loyalties were, or could become, suspect. However, the effects of such activity often had a lingering effect – where the party had been previously active in attending to the registers, Protectionists could win with little trouble, such as in Peeblesshire, where William Forbes Mackenzie easily saw off a Liberal challenger in 1847.<sup>207</sup>

The overall electoral effects of such activities were mixed; attending to the registrations could only make a noticeable difference in seats balanced on a knife-edge, and with relatively small electorates. Nevertheless, in being so active in this regard across Scotland, the party must be given significant credit for politicising a large number of electors, thus widening and polarising the political culture of the Scottish counties. Further, their limited activities in cities such as Glasgow and Aberdeen, though electorally unrewarding, had a similar effect on urban electorates.<sup>208</sup> If there had not been a Conservative ‘other’ in these places, the residents of urban Scotland would have had less incentive to adopt self-consciously ‘Liberal’ identities on a local level. New voters after 1832 constituted the ‘catalyst for political change’, and these voters in Scotland were, in a very large number of cases, enfranchised due to, or in spite of, Conservative registration efforts.<sup>209</sup> Significantly, while these efforts had become less vigorous by the late 1840s, they had already politicised large numbers of Scottish electors (and would-be electors).

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<sup>207</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 223.

<sup>208</sup> See Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 69–88; McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’.

<sup>209</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 78

Registration activity prior to 1846, therefore, was crucial in terms of entrenching the partisan tone that defined Scottish political culture up to 1868, and arguably beyond.

### VIII. Vote-Making

Apart from registering those who were ‘legitimately’ qualified, the Scottish Reform Act, unsurprisingly, created significant opportunities for the creation of voters who were not. These were known as ‘fictitious’ or ‘faggot’ voters. The Act was partly intended to bring Scotland’s electoral framework more closely into line with England’s, and it did do so in many ways. Unintentionally though, it also preserved and even intensified one of the most distinctively Scottish parts of political culture. This was particularly true in the counties, as the section of the Act concerned with the rural franchise consisted of ‘ill-assorted nonsense’.<sup>210</sup> The importance of vote-making was recognised by the party in addition to legitimate registration activity: ‘The experience of the last few years, has shown ... that the Conservative interest can be best and cheapest and most effectively supported by attending to the registration courts and making votes’.<sup>211</sup> Vote-making was a well-established feature of the electoral system long before 1832. Having spent most of the previous half-century creating parchment votes to bolster the oligarchic Dundas interest in Scotland, the party was uniquely positioned to take full and early advantage of the opportunities presented by voter creation.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Ferguson, ‘Intention and Effect’, 109.

<sup>211</sup> John Hope WS to William Baillie, [Nov. or Dec.], 1835, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/18.

<sup>212</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xlvi.

One vote-making method was to buy the properties of individual opposition voters, often above market value, as a way of depriving them of the franchise. Properties offering a single qualification could be bought for as little as £150. However, evidence from Edinburghshire suggests that this method was not very successful, and in fact aggravated previously uninterested voters.<sup>213</sup> This practice was embarked upon throughout Scotland, including by Lord Elcho in Haddingtonshire.<sup>214</sup> The purchase of non-rural property was recognised as necessary even in very rural counties such as Selkirkshire, which could not, ‘with any degree of certainty, be commanded without considerable acquisitions of house property both in Galashiels and Selkirk’.<sup>215</sup>

The most effective purchases, however, were of medium to large-sized estates. Such purchases did however, in the understated words of Horne, ‘require great capital’.<sup>216</sup> William Ogilvie, a Borders proprietor and Buccleuch’s chamberlain, was considering the purchase in 1845 of ‘a small property in the neighbourhood of Melrose for about £2,000, which would qualify eight or ten’.<sup>217</sup> Even to the local gentry, such sums for even a ‘small’ property were excessive. This type of vote creation was therefore largely undertaken by wealthier county magnates. Moreover, this method appears to have been more widespread in the Lowlands – there were few instances of large-scale political purchases in the Highlands, perhaps because of the

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<sup>213</sup> Ferguson, ‘Intention and Effect’, 110; Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxi.

<sup>214</sup> Alexander Hope to George Hope, 10 Mar. 1835, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/160.

<sup>215</sup> Horne to Buccleuch, 21 Jan. 1833, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/528/8.

<sup>216</sup> Horne to Lothian, [c. 1839], Lothian MSS, GD40/9/364/10.

<sup>217</sup> Ogilvie to Buccleuch, 29 Dec. 1845, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/491/11.

unique character of land ownership in that region. Highland land was cheaper, but of generally lower value; vote-creation may therefore have been more inefficient.

Properties could be used to multiply votes through the creation of joint tenancies. There were ample opportunities ‘for strengthening the conservative interest by the conjoining of tenants – by proprietors giving votes to their sons and brothers’.<sup>218</sup> This was recognised as a useful tool by party activists, and encouraged in almost all counties in which the party had a significant presence. Tenants of Conservative proprietors were also strongly pressured to add others when their leases were up for renewal.<sup>219</sup>

By far the most controversial method of vote-making was the manufacture of ‘fictitious votes’. While other methods relied on the creation of £50 leases of nineteen-years duration, tracts of land could also be split up into £10 so-called ‘liferent’ leases of fifty-seven years duration.<sup>220</sup> Both leases qualified their holders for the rural franchise. As such, landowners could theoretically divide up their holdings into numerous £10 portions in order to create votes. The rents were paid by those who, though nominally possessors of a property, might never work on their land, or indeed, ever set eyes on it. Conservatives were not alone in employing such methods. In fact, Liberal efforts were used as justification for Conservative vote-making: ‘[the] opposite party have been making some exertions to create votes’.<sup>221</sup> While Liberals such as Roxburghshire candidate J.E. Elliot stated that he had ‘always abused the system and both in private and public have raised my voice against it’, in

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<sup>218</sup> John Hope to Alexander Hope, 13 Mar. 1835, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/160.

<sup>219</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 39.

<sup>220</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, x; 2 & 3 William IV, c. 65, ‘An Act to amend the Representation of the People in Scotland’.

<sup>221</sup> ‘Memorandum for the private consideration ... County of Midlothian’, Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/24.

practice Liberals also used the same pretexts to justify their efforts: ‘Every possible exertion has been made on the other side ... The People are very anxious to keep the upper hand’.<sup>222</sup>

The geographical spread of liferenters, like the purchase of estates, was uneven – they were far more prevalent outside of the Highlands. There were, however, instances of the practice in constituencies which were consistently and securely Liberal, such as Forfarshire.<sup>223</sup> This suggests that at least some vote-creation was speculative, carried out in the hope that there would also be wider shifts in the allegiance of constituency electorates. The majority of outside liferent voters were residents of the main cities, thus able to travel with relative ease to a county in case of a poll.<sup>224</sup> Hence, the most concentrated numbers were to be found in south-eastern Scotland, particularly in the counties of Linlithgow, Edinburgh, Selkirk, Peebles, and Roxburgh.<sup>225</sup> A parliamentary select committee revealed in 1837 that both sides were equally complicit in the practice, and equally enthusiastic about it. Liberals, however, were less active in this regard because they had fewer allied landowners and less plentiful funding.<sup>226</sup>

While the registration and defence of manufactured votes in the courts was a matter for the local party machinery, vote-making was not. Landowners were needed to ‘provide the necessary funds to meet the expenses, it being apparent that the ordinary subscription to the registration fund would be quite inadequate’.<sup>227</sup> Given

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<sup>222</sup> J.E. Elliot to Minto, 14 Jan. 1839, Minto MSS, 11754, ff. 76–9; Adm. George Elliot to Minto, 27 Aug. 1833, Minto MSS, 11750, ff. 70–5.

<sup>223</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 4.

<sup>224</sup> David Hume to George Hope, 6 May 1839, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/047.

<sup>225</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xlii; Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 41.

<sup>226</sup> *Select Committee on Fictitious Votes*, P.P. 1837 (590) XIV.

<sup>227</sup> ‘Note of Expenses’, 1841, Clerk of Penicuik MSS, GD18/3380.

the symbiotic relationship between vote-making and landownership, it is unsurprising that, when combined with the financial outlay needed, it was the more prominent landowners who undertook such activities. The importance and necessity of these activities served to bolster landowner authority over the party machinery. This partially explains why the Scottish Conservative party was even more landowner-dominated than its English counterpart.

However, this was not unchallenged. Numerous proposals were made which would have placed the party apparatus at the centre of these activities. One of these, by James Thomson of the Forfarshire Militia, proposed the purchase of estates by companies consisting of over 100 subscribers, who would then gain the vote.<sup>228</sup> This general desire to formalise vote-making was shared by agents such as John Hope WS, who thought that these efforts should not ‘be the result of the political exertions of any individual family, but that they should be a result of a general conservative movement throughout the country’.<sup>229</sup> Though not put into operation, these plans do illustrate the ambition of party activists. One complex vote-making method that was put into action was the creation of interposed trusts, in which a number of liferenters on an estate established a trust which named the landowner’s agent as the trustee, and assigned him any rents which were owed. Although the Conservatives used this type of manoeuvre to greater effect than the Liberals, it was originally pioneered by the latter party in Edinburghshire.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> James Thomson, ‘A plan, for extending and securing Political Interest’, 24 Feb. 1835, Airlie MSS, GD16/40/65.

<sup>229</sup> John Hope WS to William Baillie, [Nov or Dec], 1835, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/18.

<sup>230</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 39.

Vote-making, though more frequent in counties, was not confined to them, as the definition of the £10 householder franchise in burghs as set out in the Scottish Reform Act was also ‘riddled with ambiguities’.<sup>231</sup> Aborted schemes such as James Thomson’s also sought to create companies for vote-making in the burghs, but generally speaking the Conservative party did very little in this area.<sup>232</sup> The most prominent exception to this was Haddington Burghs, where Conservative peers such as Lothian and Buccleuch had manufactured eighty votes in Jedburgh by 1841. They did so, however, at a cost of £7,600 – this suggests that the prohibitive cost of urban vote-making made systematic activity unappealing.<sup>233</sup> The Liberals were far more active in urban vote-making, assisted by their general popularity and the willingness of sympathetic burgh dwellers to assist them.

By 1840, even the extremely wealthy Buccleuch seems to have tired of the great expense, complaining that ‘I cannot go on doing it, the burden has become too great’.<sup>234</sup> When he complained to Horne of a six-month delay in receiving accounts, Horne replied that ‘I am not exclusively to blame, having had much difficulty in getting the necessary explanations from the local agents’.<sup>235</sup> Vote-making could be unreasonably expensive, though profitable for professional agents and property-owners who wished to sell.

The practice of creating votes could also impact on the long-term profitability of estates. To take one instance, the Dalglish estate in Selkirkshire was bought by

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<sup>231</sup> Ferguson, ‘Intention and Effect’, 113.

<sup>232</sup> James Thomson, ‘A plan, for extending and securing Political Interest’, 24 Feb. 1835, Airlie MSS, GD16/40/65.

<sup>233</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 58.

<sup>234</sup> Buccleuch to Horne, 28 Dec. 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/10/13.

<sup>235</sup> Horne to Buccleuch, 18 Jan. 1841, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/10/14.



Buccleuch in the 1830s, and served to qualify fifty-six liferenters. It is worth noting also that the total county electorate in the 1835 election was 423, meaning that the Dalgleish liferenters alone made up over ten per cent of the electorate.<sup>236</sup> By 1861, its rental income was inadequate, but it was thought impossible to reform its running ‘owing to the peculiarly fractured legal ownership of the estate, belonging as it did, to a great number of liferenters’. Each and every liferenter had a say in the running of the estate and there was not, in the opinion of the Factor, the ‘slightest chance of getting their unanimous consent’.<sup>237</sup>

After the Corn Law split, the party found that, at least in problematic constituencies, the voters they had made were no longer entirely dependable. Given the disproportionate number of wealthy magnates who followed Peel on Free Trade, this disconnect was particularly damaging, as those enfranchised through vote-making were far more likely to be Protectionists. The case of the Selkirk Inn, owned by Buccleuch, is indicative; the liferenters all wished ‘to get quit of their votes’ because they were ‘all red hot Protectionists ... even should they remain on the roll, I should not be surprised to see them support some Protectionist candidate the very first opportunity, without any regard for your Grace’s opinion’.<sup>238</sup>

Despite these drawbacks, such issues did not have an appreciable effect on the representation of Selkirkshire, which continued to return Conservative members to Westminster until its abolition in 1868. The manufacture of votes continued there on a smaller *ad hoc* basis, and in other seats where a safe majority was to be maintained. Local Selkirkshire Writers were in fact still purchasing properties on

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<sup>236</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 604.

<sup>237</sup> Ogilvie, ‘Memorandum’, 9 Sep. 1861, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/45.

<sup>238</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lvi; Ogilvie to Buccleuch, 1 Oct. 1847, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/7/4.

which to make votes in 1862.<sup>239</sup> Yet, by 1865 John Hope WS told Buccleuch that ‘I do not think vote making in any county can now keep pace with the natural increase of the constituencies’.<sup>240</sup> While he may have overstated his case, it was nevertheless true that the organic and gradual increase of electorates had rendered vote-making less effective by the 1860s.

Significantly, despite their own vote-making activities, the Scottish Liberals were particularly successful in impressing upon the public mind the notion that it was a generally Conservative practice.<sup>241</sup> The Conservatives occasionally tried to combat this: ‘Lord Lothian seems to be very averse to the example set by their opponents being followed by the Conservative party’ – he thought that if they did not follow suit, then ‘it will entitle our candidate to allude with more effect to their swamping operations’.<sup>242</sup> Conservatives sporadically eschewed large-scale and conspicuous vote-creation and instead adopted a superficially piecemeal approach. These efforts were, however, in vain. Vote-making helped the party to recover ground in the 1830s, and its long-term effects meant that it protected some Conservative seats long after these activities had died down. Vote-making benefitted the party in the short-run, and in certain counties, though only in conjunction with other factors.<sup>243</sup>

However, on balance, the declining effectiveness of the tactic, and the all-round criticism it attracted up to 1885 and beyond, permanently stained the party’s

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<sup>239</sup> William Rutherford to W.S. Wauchope, 8 Aug. 1862, Strathearn and Blair MSS, GD314/70.

<sup>240</sup> John Hope WS to Buccleuch, 13 Sep. 1865, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1033/1/10.

<sup>241</sup> See, for instance, *Caledonian Mercury*, 20 Aug. 1836; *Stirling Observer*, 26 Sep. 1867.

<sup>242</sup> Horne to Buccleuch, 9 Jan. 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/15.

<sup>243</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 4.

reputation in Scotland, already sullied from opposing Reform in 1832.<sup>244</sup> Party figures believed that they could maintain their position through such means, but this meant there was less motivation to develop the party along more appealing ideological lines. With the bad publicity stemming from it, it also removed their ability to do so, meaning that tactics of declining effectiveness remained at the centre of the Scottish Conservative electoral strategy into the later nineteenth century.

### **IX. Influence**

Given its concentration in county constituencies and the propertied nature of its members, the party excelled at exercising influence over tenants on the estates of its adherents. This was a crucial voting bloc, as the largest single body of new electors were tenant farmers – an analysis of Scottish county electors in 1832 has estimated that 52.12% were farmers, most of whom were tenants.<sup>245</sup> The party utilised a variety of tactics in order to bolster their electoral fortunes, to varying extents. These ranged on a spectrum from soliciting voluntary deference, to various types of influence, to outright coercion.

Initially, it was thought that Scottish tenants would voluntarily follow their landlords' political wishes without much need for cajoling.<sup>246</sup> However, it quickly became clear that the tenantry could by no means be taken for granted. Sir Robert

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<sup>244</sup> Vote-making played a prominent role in aiding Gladstone's Midlothian campaign, despite both sides having actively engaged in the practice. See David Brooks, 'Gladstone and Midlothian: The Background to the First Campaign', *SHR*, 64 (1985), 42–67.

<sup>245</sup> J.I. Brash, 'The New Scottish County Electors in 1832: An Occupational Analysis', *Parliamentary History*, 15 (1996), 122, 127.

<sup>246</sup> Peel to Buccleuch, 24 Aug. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/5/1.

Peel was informed by a Perthshire Conservative in 1836 that ‘the Scotch are too proud of their reasoning powers to follow when their understanding is not directly or indirectly complimented’.<sup>247</sup> This factor, already peripheral, had all but disappeared by the 1850s. Robert Abercromby, for instance, claimed in 1851 that after his tenants had misled him as to their voting intentions in 1841, ‘I made a resolution never again to ask a tenant for his vote’.<sup>248</sup> Philip Salmon has asserted that electoral deference in the counties, as conceived by D.C. Moore, was almost non-existent in 1830s England.<sup>249</sup> Though I.G.C. Hutchison has suggested that deference ‘played its share in explaining voting patterns’ in Scotland, the share in question was minimal, and it was not an unequivocal deference.<sup>250</sup> Rather, it was a specific type of ‘legitimate’ deference which ‘arose naturally from wealth, public service, and a persistent presence’.<sup>251</sup> Unlike its English counterpart, the Scottish Reform Act did not include a provision for the printing and distribution of pollbooks. As such, quantitative analytical techniques are inapplicable to Scotland, as very few of those that were printed have survived.<sup>252</sup> Other surviving evidence nevertheless indicates that deference in Scotland, as conceived by D.C. Moore, was marginal.

However, it was patently the case that many tenants cast their ballot for Conservative candidates in tandem with the wishes of their landlords. Party activists and landowners employed a variety of techniques in order to influence electors. New electors were in many cases apathetic; the Agent for Roxburghshire thought that

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<sup>247</sup> D. Morrison, to Peel, 31 Jan. 1836, Peel MSS, 40412, ff. 281–4.

<sup>248</sup> Abercromby to Macdowall Grant, 29 Oct. 1851, Abercromby of Forglen MSS, GD185/31/168.

<sup>249</sup> D.C. Moore, *The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Mid-Nineteenth Century Political System* (Hassocks, 1976); Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, Chapter 4.

<sup>250</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 6.

<sup>251</sup> Eastwood, ‘Politics of Deference’, 42.

<sup>252</sup> Brash, ‘Occupational Analysis’, 123.

‘many of them care little or nothing about it and will only come at the insistence of their landlords or other friends of ours who have influence over them’, and, crucially, ‘from finding that it is their interest to vote for us’.<sup>253</sup>

Magnates exercised considerable authority through the use of informal influence. The lists of influential figures in Scottish constituencies contained in Dod’s 1853 *Electoral facts* are largely confirmed by both contemporary newspaper reports and surviving private papers. The numerous memoranda on the state of Scottish representation compiled by Donald Horne for the Duke of Buccleuch make repeated reference to this in the first decade after Reform. In 1834, for instance, he stated that Lanarkshire would be contestable ‘with the Duke of Hamilton’s approbation ... this, with the support of Lord Douglas, would carry the county’. Even to party leaders, however, it was not always clear who exactly possessed local influence, and in what quantity. This was true of Wigtown, where, ‘It is believed Lord Galloways interest predominates in this county’.<sup>254</sup> By 1853, Galloway’s influence had largely been supplanted by the Earl of Stair.<sup>255</sup> Although influence could be a powerful factor, it was opaque, and, moreover, was subject to significant change over time.<sup>256</sup>

The ambiguous nature of influence was particularly evident in burgh districts, where the limited influence which did exist was usually exercised by Liberal

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<sup>253</sup> James Blackwood to Buccleuch, 11 Sep. 1845, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/5.

<sup>254</sup> Horne, ‘Memorandum of the State of the Scotch Representation’, Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/21.

<sup>255</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>256</sup> This is similar to the practice of ‘legitimate’ political influence in England, as discussed in A.J. Heesom, ‘“Legitimate” “versus” “Illegitimate” Influences: Aristocratic Electioneering in Mid-Victorian Britain’, *Parliamentary History*, 7 (1988), 282–305.

proprietors.<sup>257</sup> While influence lingered in even the populous Scottish counties, it rapidly declined in the districts as the nineteenth century progressed. Horne thought that, with regard to the Ayr Burghs, the ‘state of parties [was] not well known and registrations not attended to; but a Conservative supported by the Duke of Argyll and Lord Eglinton would, it is said, carry the seat’.<sup>258</sup> In the Ayr District, like many others, little influence remained by 1853.<sup>259</sup> In the single burghs, this was even more pronounced. Aberdeen, for instance, was the subject of a battle in the 1830s between the allies of the Conservative Hadden family and the Whig Blaikies.<sup>260</sup> This family conflict was, however, superseded after the 1841 election.<sup>261</sup>

Exerting positive influence involved careful negotiation and nuanced persuasion. While a landowner might state that their tenants were ‘heartily welcome to choose for themselves, and will give me no offence whatever by voting differently from their landlord and friend’, informal ties of friendship and formal ties of economic interest played a definite role in winning over electors.<sup>262</sup>

Though many contemporaries believed that bribery was more prevalent after 1832, they also thought that it was exceedingly uncommon in Scotland. The scant work carried out on this topic has suggested that there were only ‘rare instances’.<sup>263</sup> Indeed, the only reference in the party papers of Scottish Conservatives alluding to

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<sup>257</sup> See, for instance, Henry Miller, ‘Elgin District’, in *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1832–1868*.

<sup>258</sup> Horne, ‘Return from Scotland’, 1 Nov. 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/33.

<sup>259</sup> Dyer, ‘Detail and Machinery’, 29; see Appendix B.

<sup>260</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 71.

<sup>261</sup> Henry Miller, ‘Aberdeen’, in *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1832–1868*.

<sup>262</sup> Alexander Young to Clerk, 30 Dec. 1834, Clerk of Penicuik MSS, GD18/3350. See also Robert Abercromby’s letter to his tenants, 2 Nov. 1851, Abercromby of Forglen MSS, GD185/31/169–72.

<sup>263</sup> Fergusson, ‘Scottish County Elections’, 130. For such practices elsewhere in the UK, see K.T. Hoppen, ‘Roads to Democracy: Electioneering and Corruption in Nineteenth-Century England and Ireland’, *History*, 81 (1996), 553–71.

the practice is contained in a letter from an unknown writer to Sir Francis Drummond in 1835, asking that ‘some friend should come over to Cupar on Monday with power to use ... £500 for influencing certain votes here, here and on the coast’. However, the writer went on to state that he knew it was the candidate’s ‘fixed intention to keep himself clear of any pecuniary involvements of the nature I allude to’.<sup>264</sup> It is not, however, to be expected that written references to such illegal activity would have been preserved in the records of party members, or even committed to paper in the first place. More likely is that any such activities were carried out by local agents with the tacit consent (or at least wilful ignorance) of their party employers, with expenditure listed under other account headings such as transport and tavern bills. Indeed, this may partly explain the perennial complaints of party financiers that local Writers charged them exorbitant sums for their services. If bribery was practiced by the party in Scotland, it was on a small, *ad hoc* level.

In many cases, financial incentives of a less explicitly criminal nature were offered to electors. In one memorandum, the candidate for Selkirkshire emphasised how much of county business depended on the custom of large landowners. This was not confined to tradesmen; one ‘highly educated’ farmer, Walter Tod, who was also known ‘for his attainments to men of science’, was suggested as the perfect candidate to rearrange Buccleuch’s library, especially as he had ‘never hesitated to lend us his personal influence which in some cases is powerful’. The level of influence which electors might have over their fellows also affected their potential reward – significant compensation was requested for a ‘Mr Simpson of Caulderhope’, as he was the ‘best canvasser and most experienced politician in the

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<sup>264</sup> (?) to Francis Drummond, 10 Jan. 1835, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/580/12.

county'.<sup>265</sup> Patronage not only brought in votes, but also helped to maintain the cohesion of those who worked overtly for the party during elections. There was little to no distinction between those who worked for the party in influencing voters, and those who influenced voters in return for party favours. Before the rise of the professional party agent, paid agents were usually local solicitors hired on an *ad hoc* basis. Though not employed in the professional sense, both their function and their impact were roughly similar.

Archibald Alison had encouraged this in his seminal 1835 article, arguing that the party's salvation lay not in professional canvassers, but in the 'friends, neighbours and equals' of the new electorate.<sup>266</sup> Separation of the professional party agent and non-professional canvasser is difficult; estate managers, for instance, often doubled as political agents, and were also qualified solicitors, and might also hold local municipal office. This was especially true of the Highlands, which possessed a very sparse professional class. This meant that the local middle class and gentry were more likely to perform multiple overlapping roles.

Liberals often condemned their opponents for (what they claimed were) the widespread employment of sharp practices by Conservative landowners in coercing their tenants, by threatening them with eviction or the non-renewal of leases.<sup>267</sup> It would appear that this did happen on occasion in different parts of Scotland, such as in Ross-shire, where a Mr. MacIennan was 'deprived of the Letterfearn lands for his having voted for Seaforth', as the land was owned by Thomas Mackenzie, the

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<sup>265</sup> Alexander Pringle, Memorandum on 'Melrose & Selkirk tradesman', 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/18.

<sup>266</sup> Alison, 'Conservative Associations', 12.

<sup>267</sup> See, for instance, *Scotsman*, 1 Sep. 1832; *Kelso Chronicle*, 6 Nov. 1868.



unsuccessful Conservative candidate.<sup>268</sup> Similarly, when Lord Morton's Edinburghshire tenants voted against his wishes, he promised to 'lose no opportunity of purging the estate', but acknowledged that, of the tenants whose leases were not up for renewal, his only option was to make them 'pay up every farthing of rent and arrear the day it becomes due. Unluckily however my conservative tenants are those who do not pay their rents' – he lamented that 'the only hold I have on them is of that description'.<sup>269</sup> Though he would have liked to coerce his tenants, his opportunities for doing so were limited. Coercion of this sort was used to varying degrees by many Conservative landowners, but it was by no means universal, and the opportunities for doing so were very restricted. On balance, negative press coverage more than cancelled out any advantages gained through various types of coercion.<sup>270</sup>

Interestingly, rather than intimidation by Conservatives, a more common feature of Scottish political culture was the intimidation of Conservatives. While the sparse existing scholarship has suggested that Scottish elections were 'sober, almost solemn occasions', there has been no comprehensive study of this.<sup>271</sup> Though elections were not generally riotous, low-level disturbances were not uncommon. In Roxburghshire, for instance, there was a nationally famous spate of election violence running throughout the 1830s. This was also accompanied by smaller, everyday incidents, such as when the Conservative candidate, Francis Scott, was 'followed by

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<sup>268</sup> H.I. Cameron to J. Stewart Mackenzie, 17 Mar. 1835, Seaforth MSS, GD46/4/154.

<sup>269</sup> Lord Morton to Buccleuch, 17 Aug. 1837, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/1/80–1; see Appendix D.

<sup>270</sup> See, for instance, *Scotsman*, 19 Sep. 1838; *Caledonian Mercury*, 21 Aug. 1837.

<sup>271</sup> H.J. Hanham, 'Introduction', in *Charles R. Dod Electoral facts from 1832–1853, impartially stated, constituting a complete political gazetteer* (Brighton, 1972), xxi. For electoral violence elsewhere in the UK, see Justin Wasserman and Edwin Jaggard, 'Electoral Violence in Mid Nineteenth-Century England and Wales', *Historical Research*, 80 (2007), 124–55; K.T. Hoppen, 'Grammars of Electoral Violence in Nineteenth-Century England and Ireland', *EHR*, 109 (1994), 597–620.

the boys and pelted with mud'.<sup>272</sup> Party-compiled voter lists in Scotland across the period abound with examples of those thought to have been browbeaten by Liberals and radicals, with entries similar to 'Voted tho' intimidated' not uncommon.<sup>273</sup> Intimidation of Conservative electors took place across counties, burgh districts, and single burghs, such as in Greenock in 1852, where the Conservative candidate terminated his contest halfway through polling, citing 'the system of intimidation which has been pursued towards my supporters ... has completely paralysed the party who supported me'.<sup>274</sup> It is therefore not surprising that in an 1876 report on the state of the Scottish party, the secret ballot was mentioned more than once as a potential boon to Conservative fortunes.<sup>275</sup> While intimidation may have been cited by some electors as an excuse to avoid voting with their landlords, this was not exclusively the case. Further, it also likely had the effect of discouraging apathetic or lukewarm electors who would otherwise have voted for the party.

Intimidation was a near-constant feature of politics across the period. Conservatives were doubly disadvantaged by this, as their own attempts at intimidation were ineffective and commonly denounced, while Liberal intimidation was more effective and comparatively un-noted by the press. The party was particularly despised in Scotland by non-electors, to a greater degree than their counterparts south of the border. As such, intimidation by their Liberal opponents was a prominent feature of the Scottish Conservative experience. Ultimately, a

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<sup>272</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 7; George Elliot to Minto, 11 Feb. 1837, Minto MSS, 11751, ff. 9–16.

<sup>273</sup> Dunbar District List of Non-Voters, 5 Aug. 1847, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/165.

<sup>274</sup> Donald, *Elections in Greenock*, 32.

<sup>275</sup> Crapster, 'Scotland and the Conservative Party', 357.

voter's readiness to follow the lead of their landlord, customer or employer depended on a number of factors, including their personalities of both voters and influencers, the prevailing local political atmosphere, and countervailing forces such as intimidation. The employment of influence as a party tactic was to prove increasingly ineffective as the century wore on, particularly after 1846. This decline was exacerbated as Hypothec and the Game Laws became hot-button topics among the rural tenantry.<sup>276</sup> These issues drove a wedge between tenant and landowner that drastically reduced the effect of electoral influence.<sup>277</sup>

In the Scottish counties, the path to success increasingly lay in amassing numerical superiority through ideological means, though influence continued to play a significant role up to 1868. More broadly, the employment of such tactics brought politics into the practice of everyday life, and actively encouraged electors and non-electors to participate in politics, whether in acquiescing to such pressures, or in vigorously resisting them. As such, influence and coercion played a considerable role in enlarging the bounds of Scotland's political nation.

## X.

In sum, both the make-up and activities of the Scottish Conservative party exhibit strong elements of continuity and change, and illustrate that the party made a material impact on mid-nineteenth century Scottish society. Though it was never

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<sup>276</sup> See Chapter Five.

<sup>277</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 104; Ian Carter, *Farm Life in Northeast Scotland, 1840–1914: The Poor Man's Country* (Edinburgh, 1997), 68–71.

entirely exclusive nor homogenous, continuity tended to prevail in its local structures and composition. Early organisational innovations and a tentative widening of the party base in the 1830s was not sustained, and in some cases, this declined. The party went into the 1860s with largely the same personnel and organisation that it had developed in the 1830s.

Nevertheless, the structure and composition of the party's electoral apparatus was far more intricate and diverse than has been generally assumed. Landed magnates, though far less prominent than has been assumed, still played a conspicuous role in the party's activities at a local level. Its organisation was highly flexible, with significant decision-making autonomy evident at different levels. It was mostly directed by gentlemen of the 'agricultural interest', but not exclusively so. Moreover, the party's agents were integral to the party's operation, and possessed a large degree of independence in conducting their activities. Indeed, the party's candidates were themselves a diverse group, though most possessed certain shared attributes. These included local connections and the support of the landed interest, in order to be successful on polling day.

In terms of the activities undertaken by the party, the predominant theme was not one of continuity, but of change. Impressive vigour did, however, give way to relative inertia after the middle of the century. After the twin blows of 1843 and 1846, the Scottish Conservatives went from being one of the most active parts of the UK party to one of the least. Some tentative signs of revival were evident in the years leading up to the Second Reform Acts. Nevertheless, the party had lost much of its dynamism.

Despite this decline, the diversity of the party's organisations and groups was reflected in the extensive array of activities that were undertaken. The party in the 1830s and, to a lesser extent, 1840s, displayed a remarkable vigour and energy that in many cases outshone their more numerous Liberal opponents. Activity encompassed traditional and (in Scottish terms at least) novel electioneering tactics, which included treating and the transportation of electors to the poll. The party also played a significant role in expanding the reach and variety of the Scottish newspaper press. Though less successful than the Liberals in this area, they made a substantial contribution to the development of Scotland's vibrant and competitive print culture. Additionally, the existence of Conservative papers throughout the country indicates that Scotland's reading public was not quite so monolithically liberal as has been assumed.

During the traditionally quiet periods in-between elections, annual battles in the registration courts and the manufacture of fictitious votes kept politics in the public mind. These activities required a highly developed party machinery, and were the main reason for the rapid organisational expansion of the party. Finally, the various tactics used to exert influence over electors and to coerce them made the party inseparable from the wider social life and political culture of the nation. Their early activities and innovations in the areas of local Associations, registrations, and, especially, newspapers, placed them at the vanguard of the UK Conservative party. The party's strenuous and widespread activities, reaching into almost all areas of life, had the overall effect of making Scotland more politicised, as a rising proportion of electors and non-electors developed more rigidly partisan allegiances. There is a great deal of irony in this, as the Scottish Conservatives were generally opposed to

any expansion of popular politics, formal or informal.<sup>278</sup> This oppositional political culture brought ever-increasing numbers of people into the political sphere, making politics more public and more popular.

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<sup>278</sup> See Chapters Four and Five.



## **CHAPTER TWO: NATIONAL ORGANISATION, LEADERSHIP, AND ACTIVITY**

Above and outside of local constituency organisations and activities, the Scottish Conservative party also operated on a national plane. More than a regional cluster of local bodies, it operated between the local constituency level and the parliamentary summit of the party in Westminster. However, the effectiveness, independence, and unity of this strata fluctuated over the course of the post-Reform era. Furthermore, because it existed in a liminal position between the clearly recognisable and reasonably well-defined local and Westminster levels of the party, it is more difficult to locate and define. While somewhat elusive, the national layer of the Scottish party was substantial and significant.

The divisions between the local and central levels of the party were by no means absolute – central actors and institutions were closely involved in the local goings-on of the party. Similarly, local actors and their actions had a limited but noticeable effect on the workings of the party in Westminster. Likewise, the divide between the electoral and parliamentary aspects of party business was also ambiguous. These areas of activity often overlapped and changed over time, either organically, or through internal conflict. Though all of these party elements were contained within an overarching body, they did not always work together harmoniously.

This chapter will begin by examining the short-lived Scottish Conservative Club and wider party activities in Edinburgh, followed by the rise of the Scottish party in Glasgow. It will then go on to explore the leadership of the party during



Peel's ascendancy. Following this, it will scrutinise the changes to the Scottish party leadership after the Corn Law split, finishing with an exploration of the state of the Scottish party on the eve of the Second Reform Acts, again focusing on Edinburgh and Glasgow.

### **I. Edinburgh and the Conservative Association of Scotland**

The era following the Reform Acts of 1832 has been referred to as the age of 'club government'.<sup>1</sup> While the importance of clubs in party development has come under recent scrutiny, they were nevertheless important centres of organisational activity.<sup>2</sup> London's 'clubland' was extensive and closely connected to politics, in a capital city which possessed government institutions, and, most importantly, the Houses of Parliament. Nevertheless, apart from a legislature, other UK cities possessed many characteristics which encouraged the formation of clubs. Dublin possessed the Kildare Street Club, and the Sackville Club was an explicitly Conservative establishment.<sup>3</sup> Edinburgh, like Dublin, was also a former legislative capital, containing national ecclesiastical, governmental, and legal institutions.<sup>4</sup> Given Edinburgh's role as a social centre for the Scottish aristocracy and professional classes, it is unsurprising that the Scottish party followed its Irish and English counterparts in seeking to form an Edinburgh Conservative Club. The conflicts involved in its formation and the character of its eventual demise do much to

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<sup>1</sup> Gash, *Age of Peel*, 393.

<sup>2</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, Chapter 2.

<sup>3</sup> Shields, *Irish Conservative Party*, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Gray, *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh* (Oxford, 1976), 9.

illustrate the nature and boundaries of the Scottish party on a national level.

Moreover, these also highlight the existence of deep internal divisions.<sup>5</sup>

The formation of a club in Edinburgh was considered from the beginning of the period, as a proposal was discussed by several London-based Conservative figures, and was strongly backed by the Duke of Buccleuch before the final passing of the Reform bill. However, this came to naught – perhaps because William Scott, a party stalwart, informed Buccleuch that many in Scotland thought that ‘the present would not be the best time to set agoing a conservative club’. This was due to the despondent nature of party feeling on the eve of Reform, and a recognition that popular opinion, already intensely anti-Conservative, would be further exacerbated by such an action. Rather, it was suggested that ‘we must bide our time’, as once popular ire had subsided such a plan could be executed ‘steadily, quietly, and prudently’.<sup>6</sup>

These plans were not resurrected until 1834, this time packaged as a replacement for the existing Pitt Club of Scotland. A printed circular asserted that a new, more explicitly partisan Association was needed for the new political era. Signed by a mix of old Melvillites, and by rising party figures such as Donald Horne, it was evidently intended to encourage members to signal their support by transferring the remaining funds to the new club.<sup>7</sup> One longstanding member was told that ‘the time is come when it should no longer occupy the ground which may more advantageously be filled by younger men’, especially as its dwindling

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<sup>5</sup> These factional divisions over party leadership often, but not always, corresponded with ideological disagreements. See Chapter Four.

<sup>6</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.

<sup>7</sup> ‘To the Managers of the Pitt Club of Scotland’, 4 May 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/529.

membership had rendered the club ineffectual.<sup>8</sup> Scottish Conservative organisation on a national level was not entirely novel, but there was, nevertheless, significant impetus to innovate in the wake of wide-ranging political changes.

Some level of organisation had already been established by Edinburgh's Junior Conservatives, who had been holding private dinners since at least 1833.<sup>9</sup> After some ex-Pitt Club members and 'respectable Senior Conservatives' had joined, it was thought that a more ambitious project might be attempted, with 'Lord Lothian, Lord Selkirk, Lord Eglinton, Sir John Forbes and Sir Francis Drummond' as Vice-Presidents, effectively making the senior party leadership and club leadership almost concurrent.<sup>10</sup> Buccleuch was so thrilled by these events that he offered his unqualified support before being told of the details, being 'unwilling to damp in any degree the zeal which has been exhibited'.<sup>11</sup>

After these preliminaries, a general meeting of Edinburgh Conservatives reached several conclusions relating to the character of the proposed club, including that it be named the 'General Conservative Association of Scotland', in essence a national version of the Conservative Associations which were forming in many constituencies. This link was explicitly stated, as one of the chief proposed objects of the club was to 'promote and encourage the formation of District Associations having similar objects throughout Scotland'. The committee went so far as to suggest that it 'make the necessary communications with every county in Scotland, for the purpose of extending the Association'.<sup>12</sup> These resolutions illustrate that it was

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<sup>8</sup> Alexander Machonochie to (9<sup>th</sup>) Lord Dalhousie, 25 May 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/529.

<sup>9</sup> *Morning Post*, 27 Jun. 1833.

<sup>10</sup> William Burn to Buccleuch, 15 Jul. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/508/1/71-2.

<sup>11</sup> Burn to William Forbes, 23 Jul. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/1.

<sup>12</sup> Resolutions of the Edinburgh committee, 26 May 1835, Warrant of Bught MSS, GD23/6/701.

seriously intended to create a unified and far-reaching central electoral organisation, with close links to local Constituency Associations. The scope of this plan far exceeded the ambitions of party managers in the Carlton Club, and such an organisational structure was in fact ahead of its time by many decades.<sup>13</sup>

These ambitions were, however, unfulfilled – while some Scottish Conservatives may have been more ambitious and creative than their English colleagues, they were constrained by the same practical and ideological objections to such plans which inhibited ambitious members of the Carlton Club.<sup>14</sup> After the Edinburgh meeting, one of its attendees informed Buccleuch that ‘it was deemed most important that when the association came to be formed it should be done in such a manner as to enable the peerage to afford their countenance and support’.<sup>15</sup> These peers, like their English counterparts, jealously guarded their local electoral authority from central interference.<sup>16</sup>

A subsequent meeting was held by prominent Scottish Conservatives in London, many of whom were more closely connected to Westminster than to the local party in Scotland. It was composed of ‘such Scotsmen as were in London’, in the Carlton Club, and a committee was formed to respond to the resolutions of the Edinburgh committee.<sup>17</sup> Further resolutions were then forthcoming from Edinburgh, including the recommendation that the club be named the George IV Club, St Andrews Club, ‘or some such indifferent name’, as ‘the word ‘association’ might be

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<sup>13</sup> See Blake, *Conservative Party*, 145–9.

<sup>14</sup> See Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 44–58.

<sup>15</sup> Patrick Robertson to Buccleuch, 27 May 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/6.

<sup>16</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 49–50.

<sup>17</sup> Account of meeting in the Carlton Club, 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/1/251.

objectionable ... giving a handle to our enemies to consider it in the light of a Political Union'. Many traditionalist party members had long thought that regular extra-parliamentary political organisation was ideologically unacceptable; as such, this represented an attempt to make such a body seem less threatening.<sup>18</sup> Avoiding such designations was also a symbolic concession to those who wished to maintain local electoral autonomy. The club's involvement in the constituencies was to have been achieved by ensuring that 'each county in Scotland [would have] two gentlemen connected with it' on the club's general committee. While the club was therefore to maintain a less explicitly political (or, rather, electoral) outward appearance, close connections with local Associations were to continue confidentially, as 'the secretary of this Club should not correspond with any other than the Chairman or Secretary of such recognised local Clubs or Associations'.<sup>19</sup>

They also recommended that the chairmen of all local Associations and members of the Carlton Club be admitted to the club when nominated. By doing so, the club's organisers were attempting to create an essentially corporatist organisation which would operate between local parties and at a central level in London, co-opting figures from both levels. In England, dislike of local interference by the Carlton Club was one of the principal reasons why national electoral organisation was limited.<sup>20</sup> Scotland's localities were to prove somewhat similar in disposition. In attempting to involve itself with, and appeal to, all levels of the party, the Scottish organisers risked appealing to none.

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<sup>18</sup> See Chapter Four.

<sup>19</sup> Further resolutions of the Edinburgh committee, 10 Jun. 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/1/251.

<sup>20</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 48.

By June 1835, 450 Conservatives had expressed an interest in membership, despite a further disagreement having arisen between London and Edinburgh over the inclusion of a club reading room in the plans. It was eventually approved despite the wishes of the London committee, and the word ‘Conservative’ was again added to the club’s title. Given the large number of prospective members, and the fact that the plans had leaked to the press, the Edinburgh committee felt able to press ahead, informing their southern counterparts that that ‘the formation of the Association or Club only awaits the sanction of the promoters in London’.<sup>21</sup>

By then, it had been agreed that the club should be explicitly focused on constituency politics, and that the reading room would contain ‘all [Scottish] provincial papers’, but only three (unnamed) English ones.<sup>22</sup> The London committee, though it repeated its objection to a reading room and the name of the club, resolved that it did not ‘wish to press it if against the feeling of those persons already members’.<sup>23</sup> The communications between the committees highlights the existence of two overlapping, but distinct, groups in the Scottish party. The first was an electorally focused and locally autonomous Scottish party, composed of minor gentry and professionals, mainly lawyers. The second was made up of aristocrats and MPs, who were more concerned with parliament and governance from a British perspective. These groups, though possessing different priorities and interests, were initially able to work harmoniously. However, the differences between and within

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<sup>21</sup> ‘Memorandum for the consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and others’, 22 Jun 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/19.

<sup>22</sup> Club-related proposals, [1835], Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/22.

<sup>23</sup> Edinburgh, ‘Minutes ... meeting ... some of the promoters of the General Conservative Association in Scotland’, 22 Jun. 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/1/251.

these two groups eventually hindered efforts to form the club. The original Junior Conservative Club (mostly composed of Edinburgh lawyers) had effectively been commandeered by the gentry and party leadership, meaning that it could not effectively expand its membership outside of traditional circles.<sup>24</sup>

The Junior Club was already in place, as a preliminary committee had been organised in June 1834, with the primary object of forming a club so that ‘young men of conservative principles might become acquainted with each other’, as it was feared that ‘without such a club, young men might be entrapped by designing whigs, or bit with the current doctrines of liberality and humbug’. Primarily a local initiative, it was intended that the club should hold a dinner to generate interest in Edinburgh, and that the promotion of party activities throughout Scotland should be ‘most unquestionably a secondary consideration’. Indeed, the plans made for the dinner indicate that great effort was to be taken to ‘make converts from the lower ranks’, by lowering the price of admission.<sup>25</sup> In recognising that they would have to adapt their tactics to attract new adherents, the Junior Conservatives showed creativity and initiative in attempting to revive the party in the city.

Initially, it was thought that it might be improper for ‘a peer to place himself at the head of a Political Association as the party had uniformly discountenanced such an act’, so action was taken to ‘organize the younger portion of the Edinburgh Conservatives without a nominal head in the meantime, till we ascertain whether we can be useful in conducting the election proceedings’.<sup>26</sup> As matters had progressed and peers indicated their willingness to join, by June it was thought that the

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<sup>24</sup> Williams, ‘Edinburgh Politics’, 56.

<sup>25</sup> John Hope WS to Charles Neaves, 8 Dec. 1834, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/6.

<sup>26</sup> William Forbes to Buccleuch, 4 Feb. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/4.

membership would include ‘all the landed proprietors with the exception of six or seven’.<sup>27</sup>

It was at this point that the Junior Club was commandeered by more senior figures. William Burn commented that there were ‘some rather unruly members amongst the committee of the Conservative Club’, but that this would be mitigated as ‘all the old, respectable and influential Tories are to join’.<sup>28</sup> The resolution that the entry fee would be at least £3, coupled with an annual subscription of £1, ended any chance of the club embracing the wider electorate.<sup>29</sup> When the idea of a club was first mooted in 1832, William Scott thought that it should contain the ‘greatest and noblest in the land; but it must not be too exclusive and aristocratic. It should in fact be open to all, ... even the decent £10 freeholder’ – in this way, such a body could ‘combine all the respectable classes in the community’.<sup>30</sup> Though such ideas were not completely unheard of in wider Conservative circles, they were evidently viewed with more disdain by those the higher echelons of the party.

The London committee was willing to allow much of the club’s character to be dictated by relatively junior Edinburgh Conservatives, indicating that the party was not strictly hierarchical. Nevertheless, the limits to this autonomy led to the squandering of a potential opportunity. Edinburgh Conservatives ultimately failed to organise themselves effectively, or to carve out a niche in what was to become a bastion of liberalism and whiggery. In commandeering an organically conceived and

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<sup>27</sup> (Melville?) to Buccleuch, 22 Jun. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/17.

<sup>28</sup> Burn to Buccleuch, 23 Jul. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/2.

<sup>29</sup> Further resolutions of the Edinburgh committee, 10 Jun. 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/1/251; Horne, notes on Edinburgh Club, [1834–5], Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/23.

<sup>30</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.



potentially accessible local organisation for national ends, the older party hands also implicitly suppressed younger conservatives who might have energised and transformed the party in the succeeding decades.

It was, however, an entirely different rivalry that led to the club's final demise, after only a few years of erratic activity. Having been initially formed by junior Edinburgh lawyers, it was appropriated by the new leaders of the party in Scotland, headed primarily by the Duke of Buccleuch, and composed mainly of substantial county landowners. Some of the old guard were also induced to join the new organisation. These included minor gentry, such as Sir Francis Drummond, and senior lawyers, such as Sir John Hope, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and later Lord Justice Clerk.<sup>31</sup> The Edinburgh club committee was composed mostly (in the early stages at least) of lawyers, and the club's initial direction was heavily influenced by what J.I. Brash has called the 'Hope clique'.<sup>32</sup>

As plans progressed further, Buccleuch and the magnates took more control of the club's direction. This was made glaringly evident by the Edinburgh committee's insistence that the Secretary of the club must under no circumstances 'be engaged in any department of the legal professional pursuits in Edinburgh'. It was mysteriously added that 'The members of the committee appointed in Edinburgh present at the meeting in London will be able to explain the inducements which has led to this recommendation'. While great pains were taken not to record on paper the

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<sup>31</sup> See Gordon F. Millar, 'Hope, John (1794–1858)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13733> [accessed 6 Nov. 2016].

<sup>32</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, li.

reasons for this resolution, the memorandum does later allude to possible ‘jealousies and dissensions likely to arise’ if a lawyer were selected.<sup>33</sup>

Francis Drummond was asked to be a Vice-President of the club, and John Hope also appears to have been involved.<sup>34</sup> By this point, however, they had been essentially side-lined. Despite the resolution that no lawyer should serve as Secretary of the club, they nevertheless put forward their own candidate, a Mr Fisher. After Fisher’s candidacy was rejected, they then pushed for the appointment of another applicant (Mr Robertson), who ‘they calculated on commanding considerable influence’. They also falsely claimed that Robertson’s candidacy had Buccleuch’s blessing. After this deception was uncovered, the final establishment of the club was stalled solely because of ‘the want of an active and efficient Secretary, as until this appointment shall be made, it is impossible to convene either committee or any other parties who will take an interest or make any exertion for its advancement’.<sup>35</sup>

In the meantime, the Hope clique took advantage of this pause to change tack. Hope now attempted to impede the club’s development, presumably as he now saw it as a threat to his influence over Aberdeen and Peel.<sup>36</sup> In the opinion of William Burn, they employed ‘every means ... to throw discredit on the association, and impute unworthy motives to its principal supporters’.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps because members of the Hope clique were the principal organisers of the local party in Edinburgh for both

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<sup>33</sup> Further resolutions of the Edinburgh committee, 10 Jun. 1835, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/1/251. The party had also publicly labelled the Edinburgh Whigs nothing more than a clique of lawyers, and possibly wished to avoid having the accusation thrown back at them.

<sup>34</sup> William Forbes to Francis Drummond 21 Nov. 1835, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/580/47.

<sup>35</sup> Burn to Buccleuch, 12 Aug. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/25.

<sup>36</sup> Williams, ‘Edinburgh Politics’, 194n.

<sup>37</sup> Burn to Buccleuch, 12 Aug. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/25.

municipal and parliamentary elections, Hope had enough influence to discourage many local Conservatives from seeking membership.<sup>38</sup>

Apart from internal party considerations, the involvement of the old guard in the club's formation also damaged its potential effectiveness in a public sense; though many electors were increasingly disillusioned with the Whigs, they nevertheless retained their passionate contempt for (what had been) the pre-Reform Tory party. This had been closely associated in the public mind with the authoritarianism of the old Faculty of Advocates from the days of Henry Dundas onwards.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the leaking of the club's prospectus led the *Scotsman*, despite there being no mention of registration or electioneering in the document, to assert that the club was formed with the sole purpose of spreading 'bribery, influence, and intimidation throughout Scotland'.<sup>40</sup>

This inertia continued into late 1836. Initial funds of 'between £400 and £500' were held by the interim Secretary and Treasurer, but with no plans to spend it – the small amount was thought insufficient to form a club, or to help with election efforts. It was suggested by Sir John Forbes that the shell of the organisation be united 'with the general association in England which would give it a better place in the feelings of the party in Scotland'.<sup>41</sup> He thought that internal relations in the Scottish party were now so acrimonious that only amalgamation with a wider UK organisation could preserve what little had been achieved. This suggestion does not seem to have been acted upon, and the club quietly perished in late 1836.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 55, 194n.

<sup>39</sup> Fry, *Dundas Despotism*, 357.

<sup>40</sup> *Scotsman*, 13 Jun. 1835.

<sup>41</sup> Sir John Forbes to Buccleuch, 6 Aug. 1836, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/26.

<sup>42</sup> It is not known what became of the remaining funds.

The circumstances surrounding the short-lived Scottish Conservative Club highlight several overlapping themes. Firstly, the relations between senior party members resident in the constituencies and London-focused magnates and MPs at the head of the party were largely amicable. Secondly, the deference which was shown to this latter group was an organisational hindrance. It obstructed efforts by members closer to the grassroots within Scotland to refashion the party. They intended to do so by appealing to, and building up, a broader base. While certainly not advocates of untrammelled inclusivity, they did have first-hand experience of navigating the new electoral landscape, and more clearly recognised that the party needed to adapt. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, intense hatred of the old pre-Reform Tory leadership was not only present in the wider electorate – it also existed, to a surprising extent, within the Scottish party itself. By this point, even Conservatives had tired of the Hopes and Dundases, and were eager to draw a line under the old Tory interest in Scotland. Conflict over the club was the arena in which internal struggles for power over the new party took place. In failing to guarantee that the club would not challenge their remaining influence, the Hope clique engineered its collapse. Though this damaged the party's prospects, it did hasten the decline of the clique, allowing Buccleuch and the county magnates to further solidify their position as the party's new leading cadre.

A local Association was founded in Edinburgh, after it became clear that the national club was unviable. It was first mentioned in the newspapers of February 1836, and it held annual dinners until at least 1838.<sup>43</sup> The last mention of the

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<sup>43</sup> *Morning Post*, 25 Feb. 1836; *Caledonian Mercury*, 24 Mar. 1838. The 1836 event attracted 250 attendees, and the 1838 dinner was attended by 200.

Association's registration activities in local newspapers was in 1847, though it also played a role in the Edinburgh election of 1852.<sup>44</sup> Its activities would appear to have been confined to the city of Edinburgh – indeed, its chairman, Robert Ritchie, was a City Councillor.<sup>45</sup> This localised focus, with an emphasis on municipal politics, may have partially insulated it from the factional squabbles and prejudices of the national party, enabling it to reach out to a wider audience. Speeches and toasts at its dinners gave extensive praise to the working classes, and at least some of its candidates were drawn from outside of the professional classes.<sup>46</sup>

The Conservative party in Edinburgh was not entirely an elite, or even a middle-class group; although very little evidence of it has survived, an Edinburgh Operative Conservative Association was founded in the 1830s, complementing its better-known Glasgow counterpart.<sup>47</sup> Conservative Operative Associations were particularly prominent in the Midlands, West Riding, and Lancashire, and were part of a broader effort by the party to foster working-class support.<sup>48</sup> Despite its less exalted status, it was more successful and enduring than the abortive Scottish Conservative Club, and possessed functioning reading and committee rooms.<sup>49</sup> It was founded in August 1837, and continued until at least 1841.<sup>50</sup> It would appear that, much like the Glasgow Operatives Association, it had a staunchly Presbyterian character.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *Scotsman*, 31 Jul, 4 Aug. 1847; J.B. Mackie, *The Life and Work of Duncan Maclaren*, 2 vols (London, 1888), ii. 34.

<sup>45</sup> *Standard*, 12 Jan. 1837; *Morning Post*, 31 Dec. 1836.

<sup>46</sup> *Morning Post*, 25 Feb. 1836; David Jamie, *John Hope: Philanthropist and Reformer* (Edinburgh, 1907), 11.

<sup>47</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 56.

<sup>48</sup> Gash, 'Electoral Organization', 145, Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 66.

<sup>49</sup> *John Bull*, 8 Mar. 1840,

<sup>50</sup> *Essex Standard*, 17 Aug. 1838; Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 56n.

<sup>51</sup> *John Bull*, 8 Mar. 1840; J.T. Ward, 'Working-Class Conservatism', 147; see Chapter Four.

It was described by the hostile *Scotsman* as an ‘Association of ninnies’, whose membership was likely composed ‘merely of a few hopeful clerks and shopmen’.<sup>52</sup> This assertion was, however, inaccurate. Many of its members were bootmakers from the area around Buccleuch Street and Potterrow, and printers and wax chandlers were also part of the organisation.<sup>53</sup> Hence, it cannot be said that the existence of the Glasgow Operative group was a singular, isolated anomaly in the history of the Scottish working class. In the late 1830s, there was sufficient support for Peelite conservatism to encourage the foundation of working-class organisations in both of Scotland’s major population centres.

This enthusiasm extended to Edinburgh’s student population. Although the activities of the Glasgow University Conservative Club are well-documented, the existence of a similar club in Edinburgh has been overlooked. It was formed in late 1837, as the ‘Edinburgh Protestant Conservative Association’. At its inaugural meeting, some of the 400 students present, who the *Morning Post* thought to be Roman Catholics, objected vociferously to the inclusion of ‘Protestant’ in the title. They disrupted the meeting for over an hour, causing much noise, disruption, and tumult – ‘Protestant’ was nevertheless retained in its title.<sup>54</sup>

It is clear that the Conservative party was active at all levels in Edinburgh. It was, however, more successful in less celebrated (and less documented) sectors, including student, working-class, and municipal organisations. These organisations illustrate that there was far more widespread support for the party (and, by extension,

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<sup>52</sup> *Scotsman*, 4 Aug. 1838.

<sup>53</sup> *Caledonian Mercury*, 25 Apr. 1840.

<sup>54</sup> *Morning Post*, 21 Dec. 1837.

conservatism more generally) than has been assumed. On a local and municipal level, they hence enjoyed a modicum of success, both in Edinburgh and in Scotland more generally. On a parliamentary and national level, organisational efforts were far less effective – no Conservative MP was elected for the city of Edinburgh until well after 1868. Attempts to create a national organisation in the city were ambitious, indicating that there was an appetite in many quarters for such an undertaking. Moreover, these efforts illustrate that many, if not most, thought it necessary for the Scottish party to possess a national apparatus separate from the Carlton Club.

The causes of its demise, however, reveals that internal divisions, mainly between the pre- and post-Reform leading lights of the party, made it impossible for the Scottish party to be headquartered in Edinburgh. Disagreements between London-focused party members and the party's junior members, though less acrimonious, were also a factor in this. Overall, the party was highly active in promoting national organisation, the mixed results of which highlight how the party was adapting (or, in some cases, failing to adapt) to the changing times.

## **II. Glasgow and Western Conservative Organisation**

While Edinburgh was still Scotland's metropolis in legal, ecclesiastical, and institutional terms, it was no longer the unquestioned centre of the country by 1832. Glasgow and the west of Scotland had an increasing claim on primacy, at least in demographic and economic terms. During the course of the 1830s and early 1840s, while Edinburgh-centred party disputes rumbled on, Glasgow effectively became a

competing centre of Scottish conservatism. The election of Derby as Lord Rector of Glasgow University in 1834 was an early indication that Scottish opinion was increasingly inclined towards political restraint.<sup>55</sup>

Peel's dinner celebrating his election as Lord Rector of Glasgow University was, however, the most prominent manifestation of this emergence. Peel's speech on this occasion built upon Derby's earlier work, by espousing a similar message of political and religious moderation.<sup>56</sup> This, and the internal party discussions which preceded Peel's trip to Scotland, illustrate that the leaders of the UK party were more than aware of the Scottish party's internal deficiencies. Encouraged by ample evidence (including a flourishing Glasgow Operative Association) that the city was a fertile seeding ground for a broader Scottish liberal conservatism, central party figures forged direct links between Glasgow and Westminster.<sup>57</sup> Glasgow was, in many ways, on the verge of usurping Edinburgh as the centre of Scottish conservatism. Thwarted by the events of 1841, 1843, and 1846, however, this never came to pass.

The primary role of Peel's 1837 Glasgow dinner was to promote the interests of the party in Scotland and the UK. The Scottish party might also have felt that it was falling behind in terms of competitive dining, given the successful Edinburgh festival in Grey's honour (among others). Despite the Edinburgh party's efforts to promote dining, that event had 'eclipsed all these victories, so if even there was

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<sup>55</sup> Angus Hawkins, *The Forgotten Prime Minister: The 14th Earl of Derby: Ascent, 1799–1851* (Oxford, 2007), 154. For the sake of clarity, the fourteenth Earl of Derby will be referred to by this title regardless of the period discussed, even when (as in 1834) he had not yet acceded to the earldom, and was known as Lord Stanley.

<sup>56</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 192.

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of liberal conservatism in Scotland, see Chapter Four.



anything in the boast, there is nothing now but emptiness'.<sup>58</sup> The Glasgow dinner built on previous goodwill from 1834; one Glasgow professor advised Peel that Derby's 'acceptance of the Lord Rectorship and visit to Glasgow did much good', which would be 'confirmed and extended' by Peel's attendance.<sup>59</sup> Dinners were an invaluable part of the political process at this time, especially useful in creating and solidifying partisan loyalty. Moreover, as an 'intersection between metropolitan or national politics and local political concerns', their effects could operate on multiple levels.

Beyond the 3,400 guests who attended the dinner, the content of Peel's speech reached out to electors throughout the UK, and more specifically to those of Glasgow and Scotland.<sup>60</sup> After his election, he received a great many letters informing him of the local importance of this victory, suggesting that it was a strong 'indication of popular feeling [which] speaks kindly for the prevalence of conservative principle, both without and within the Academic walls, over a large portion of Scotland'.<sup>61</sup> It was thought of as 'a most important change in the sentiments of the youthful part of the community, as well as of the public at large'.<sup>62</sup>

His successful speech at the dinner appealed to Glasgow (and to large sections of the country) by espousing moderate Tamworth conservatism, which found a particularly appreciative audience among Glasgow's mercantile classes. Even before Peel had agreed to attend his installation as Rector, Archibald Alison had expressed surprise that 'the sons of the reforming merchants of Glasgow who

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<sup>58</sup> John Hope WS to Neaves, 8 Dec. 1834, D. and J.H. Campbell MSS, GD253/185/1/6.

<sup>59</sup> D.K. Sandford to Peel, 15 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 160–1.

<sup>60</sup> Brett, 'Political Dinners', 528, 534.

<sup>61</sup> D.K. Sandford to Peel, 15 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 160–1.

<sup>62</sup> D. Boyle to Peel, 17 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 185–6.

were so deeply imbued with democratic principles in 1832, should so soon have so soon converted to constitutional principles'.<sup>63</sup> The mercantile classes of Glasgow were, however, far from homogenous – newer businessmen coexisted and competed with older, more established merchants, particularly in the fields of the East and West Indian trade. Some had already been traditional Tory supporters, but most were liberal in inclination – though, overall, this liberalism was far more moderate than radical.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, Alison was keenly aware of the *de facto* commercial hierarchy of Glasgow, with the sugar aristocracy at the summit and coal and iron masters at the base.<sup>65</sup> Though possessing different interests, many of these moderates were thought ripe for conversion.

Political conversion of a broader section of the populace was greatly aided by the religious content of Peel's message. Derby's speech of 1834 had begun this process, having been intended to 'unite the Tories and Church Whigs, who in Glasgow form a powerful body'.<sup>66</sup> Up to 1839, Peel appeared to be increasingly sympathetic towards Church Extension, which attracted evangelical followers to the party.<sup>67</sup> While this had positive effects in Glasgow and the west, the uniting of moderate Church Whigs and 'obstinately obsolete' Conservatives in Edinburgh seemed to be an unattainable goal.<sup>68</sup> Put simply, the generally less traditionalist Glasgow Conservatives were more willing to consider the political wishes and

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<sup>63</sup> Alison to Peel, 19 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 190–1.

<sup>64</sup> H.J. Perkin, 'Land Reform and Class Conflict in Victorian Britain', in John Butt and I.F. Clarke (eds), *The Victorians and Social Protest* (Newton Abbot, 1973), 181.

<sup>65</sup> John F. McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 191.

<sup>66</sup> Clerk to Peel, 19 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 192–3.

<sup>67</sup> McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 194. For a discussion of the evolving relationship between Peel and Church Evangelicals, see Chapter Four.

<sup>68</sup> Kitson-Clark, *Peel and the Conservative Party*, 325.

demands of the Church of Scotland's Evangelical faction, who had hitherto inclined towards the Whigs.

Glasgow was fertile ground for Peel's message at least partly because the party had fewer links to the traditional landed class.<sup>69</sup> Peel was also invited to Edinburgh shortly before his visit to Scotland. Lord Melville informed him that 'they were all very anxious that you should not decline this honour', and to that end a delegation of prominent Edinburgh Conservatives was sent to persuade him.<sup>70</sup> The habitually unsociable Peel declined the invitation to Edinburgh, but acknowledged that 'Glasgow was unavoidable'.<sup>71</sup> In encouraging Peel to disappoint the delegation, Sir John Hope stated that Edinburgh had 'no merchants – no manufacturers – no citizens of wealth or value or influence', and that 'meetings and dinners in Edinburgh on either side for many years past have been and always will be, entire failures in point of effect and impression in the country'.<sup>72</sup> Not only would an Edinburgh dinner have had little positive effect, it might also have dampened any enthusiasm sparked by the Glasgow banquet. Indeed, the Edinburgh event was to be a small and exclusive gathering, in stark contrast to the large and open dinner in Glasgow.<sup>73</sup> By attending the proposed Edinburgh dinner, Peel would have dined with 'those they [the electors] know before as the active partisans of the old and somewhat ultra Scotch Tory party'.<sup>74</sup> This point was driven home by Sir James Graham, who thought Edinburgh was the least fertile ground in Scotland for a Conservative revival: 'In the

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<sup>69</sup> Olive Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980), 312.

<sup>70</sup> Melville to Peel, 16 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 183–4; Melville to Peel, 2 Dec. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 274–5.

<sup>71</sup> Peel to Graham, 27 Dec. 1836, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 43–6.

<sup>72</sup> John Hope to Peel, 27 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 249–51.

<sup>73</sup> Brett, 'Political Dinners', 545.

<sup>74</sup> John Hope to Peel, 27 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 249–51.

rest of Scotland the distinction between the Old Tory party and the Conservative Reformers is much less strongly marked and maintained than in Edinburgh'.<sup>75</sup> Hope concurred, asserting that there was a strong Conservative feeling throughout Scotland, but that it was 'unlauded and countervailed among the middling ranks, by jealousy and distrust' of the old Edinburgh Tories.<sup>76</sup>

Key party figures were highly aware of the poisonous reputation of the Edinburgh party, and therefore actively sought to bypass it. In doing so, leading members of the UK party effectively carved out their own niche in Scotland. Though they did not (and could not) actively seek to direct the party in the western Scotland, they did circumvent both Buccleuch and the Edinburgh cliques in dealing directly with regional political actors, creating an *ad hoc* parallel hierarchy. This was aided by the existence of an established party machine in Glasgow. Extensive Glasgow-related correspondence with and between major London figures such as Peel, Graham, and Bonham commenced just a few months after Peel's banquet. This suggests that in addition to the public nature of the occasion, it was used by senior party figures to make contacts and forge relationships, leading to the establishment of an informal private communications network.

The first such surviving letter informed Peel that the Glasgow party had settled upon Robert Monteith of Carstairs as Glasgow parliamentary candidate for the 1837 election. It also revealed that Conservative business in the city and surrounding region was primarily directed by Archibald Campbell of Blythswood,

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<sup>75</sup> Graham to Peel, 11 Oct. 1836, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 41–2.

<sup>76</sup> John Hope to Peel, 27 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 249–51.

who had served as MP for the city between 1820 and 1831.<sup>77</sup> Monteith was subsequently defeated by 750 votes; Archibald Alison complained to Peel ‘either that the cause of the constitution is hopeless in the larger Scotch Boroughs or ... the moral influence of the festival here in honour of yourself was less considerable than it really has been’.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, subsequent correspondence indicates that senior party figures continued to nurse high hopes for party fortunes in the city.

The crucial factor in encouraging these hopes was the double vote; Glasgow and Edinburgh were the only two-member constituencies in Scotland. Multi-member seats had a marked effect on patterns of voting behaviour in England.<sup>79</sup> While other factors had rendered this feature irrelevant in Edinburgh, it was thought that it might bring success in Glasgow. Indeed, the tactic of ‘plumping’ for one candidate was employed by Conservative voters in the city throughout the period, as shown by the small number who did so for James Ewing in 1832, and the significant number who plumped for the Conservative candidate in 1852.<sup>80</sup> It was thought that the lead Conservative candidate in 1837, Robert Monteith, had a ‘fair chance of dividing so many liberal voters as may allow him second on the poll’.<sup>81</sup> The party had pinned its hopes on encouraging enough moderate Liberal voters to split their ballot between a Liberal and a moderate Conservative, in order to keep out the other radical candidate. Conservative candidates performed far more poorly in Scottish burghs than they did in their English equivalents. The case of Glasgow indicates, however, that this

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<sup>77</sup> (?) to Peel, 17 May 1837, Peel MSS, 40423, ff. 223–4; Terry Jenkins, ‘Campbell, Archibald (?1763–1838), of Blythswood, Renfrew’, HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/campbell-archibald-1763-1838> [accessed 28 Nov. 2016].

<sup>78</sup> Alison to Peel, 2 Jul. 1837, Peel MSS, 40423, ff. 381–3.

<sup>79</sup> See John A. Phillips, *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>80</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 190.

<sup>81</sup> Alison to Peel, 15 Jul. 1837, Peel MSS, 40423, ff. 329–30.

imbalance was at least in part due to their distinctive electoral configuration, rather than any stark difference in the ideological make-up of the Scottish urban electorate.<sup>82</sup>

Francis Bonham was also kept closely informed of party matters in western Scotland. At some point after 1835, he became a member of a small standing election committee in London along with, among others, Sir George Clerk. One of its duties was to correspond with local parties to offer advice, and in turn to collect electoral information.<sup>83</sup> It is highly significant that Clerk's name does not appear in any of the Glasgow correspondence, despite his evident interest in Scottish affairs and trusted position in the Westminster hierarchy. This was presumably due to his close connections to Buccleuch and the Edinburgh section(s) of the party.

Local figures generally retained a great deal of independence, and guarded this jealously. Despite this, the level of co-operation and understanding between London figures and those in Glasgow was notable. This is especially so when the geographical distance and unique characteristics of Scottish affairs is taken into account; as a country whose best interpreters were figures with local ties, the extent of central involvement in western Scottish politics was considerable. Certainly, it was a far closer connection than the arms-length relationship between central party figures and an 'alien and enigmatic Ireland'.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> These polling tactics were also evident in Edinburgh, Scotland's only other double-member seat. A detailed discussion of the 1852 Edinburgh election is contained in Graeme Morton, *Unionist Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland, 1830–1860* (East Linton, 1999), 101–9.

<sup>83</sup> Gash, 'Electoral Organization', 132–3.

<sup>84</sup> Gash, 'F.R. Bonham', 513.

One such figure who possessed both central influence and local ties was Sir James Graham; he had connections with Lanarkshire and Glasgow which predated Reform, and was well acquainted with the Duke of Hamilton. By 1838, he had begun to re-involve himself in the affairs of the region.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, his post-Reform connection to Glasgow was far closer than has previously been assumed. This re-engagement in Glasgow's politics may have been motivated by the death of Campbell of Blythswood, as the loss of the party's leader in the city had damaged its prospects.<sup>86</sup> Though it had lost the 1837 parliamentary election, the party did win a majority of seats on the Town Council, which suggested to many that continued effort would bear fruit: 'I find our friends clearly of opinion, that it was well to begin with the municipal majority, which in time the parliamentary cannot fail to follow'.<sup>87</sup> Though he was mostly concerned with Westminster affairs, Graham kept a close eye on the party's electoral operation in western Scotland, receiving frequent and detailed updates. Moreover, he regularly offered advice and information in return. His frequent visits to Scotland allowed him to build up close relationships with prominent western Scottish Conservatives, including Archibald Alison and Robert Lamond.

Most of Graham's Scottish intelligence came from Lamond, a local Writer who also held the position of chief Conservative Agent in western Scotland. Interestingly, although Lamond corresponded with Donald Horne, the chief agent in the east who reported to Buccleuch, it appears that he did not send any information gleaned from Horne's letters on to Graham.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, there is no

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<sup>85</sup> J.T. Ward, *Sir James Graham* (London, 1967), 165, 199.

<sup>86</sup> Graham to Bonham, 16 Oct. 1838, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 7–18.

<sup>87</sup> Graham to Bonham, 27 Dec. 1837, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 38–41.

<sup>88</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lviii.

acknowledgement of Lamond's input in Horne's frequent electoral reports to Buccleuch. This suggests that while there was a division between east and west in terms of leadership and influence, co-operation on an operational level did exist, though this was perhaps unsanctioned, or at least unofficial.

In turn, Graham seems to have been the principal conduit between the party in the west and Francis Bonham's central electoral apparatus. Graham and Bonham exchanged frequent letters which discussed various Scottish electoral matters. These were detailed from the outset, with one early letter informing Bonham of the electoral prospects of counties throughout the western region, described by Graham as the 'Heart of Scotland'.<sup>89</sup> By 1839, this link had been further strengthened; in one typical instance, Graham organised a meeting with Bonham and Granville Somerset about the choice of candidate for Dunbartonshire.<sup>90</sup> He was also able to pass on to Bonham the result of annual registrations in no fewer than fifteen lowland Scottish seats.<sup>91</sup>

Graham was increasingly influential in Scotland; hence he also, in turn, increased the Westminster party's influence in Scotland. Given the presence of Scottish party figures in London when parliament was in session, it is unsurprising that Scottish affairs were often dealt with south of the border. Horne was well aware of this, once informing Buccleuch that 'More is known in London than here' about electoral matters in the Orkney islands.<sup>92</sup> Horne himself was also a member of the

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<sup>89</sup> Graham to Bonham, 27 Dec. 1837, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 38–41.

<sup>90</sup> Graham to Bonham, 22 Jan. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 55–8.

<sup>91</sup> Graham to Bonham, 5 Sep. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 69–72.

<sup>92</sup> Horne, 'Private notes of Scotch Return', 3 Nov. 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/34.



Carlton Club from early 1838 onwards.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, this Westminster involvement was generally concerned with the gathering of intelligence and the very occasional employment of tactful influence. The Carlton Club electoral machine had even less influence over the Scottish localities than it did in England and Wales.

By the autumn of 1839, it was still thought that the party stood a good chance of success at the next Glasgow contest. Their confidence was mainly due to the belief that their efforts at the registration courts had rendered the upcoming municipal election a foregone conclusion, and that this would translate into success at the parliamentary level.<sup>94</sup> This illustrates the close relationship between municipal and parliamentary politics; registration efforts in the burghs were closely connected to the state of local and national politics. Party figures were, moreover, aware of this, and understood their significance. Monteith, one of their prospective candidates, would not agree to stand again ‘till he saw the result of the municipal election’.<sup>95</sup>

Nevertheless, the loss of Campbell of Blythswood continued to affect the party’s unity. Graham, though he possessed significant influence and acted as mediator, could not solve this: ‘The parties are so exasperated against each other, that in the absence of recognised leaders it is difficult to bring them to terms’.<sup>96</sup> Confusion in the city continued; Horne thought that it was intended to ‘bring forward Sir James Graham and Mr Monteith in the confident expectation of carrying the former’, but neither figure stood in 1841.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lviii.

<sup>94</sup> Graham to Bonham, 22 Sep. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 93–4. This was to be assisted by the party’s then-friendly relationship with Church Evangelicals, explored in Chapter Four.

<sup>95</sup> Graham to Bonham, 11 Oct. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 102–4.

<sup>96</sup> Graham to Bonham, 25 Sep. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 95–6.

<sup>97</sup> Horne, ‘Notes on the Scotch Representation’, 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/32.

Outside of internal squabbles, the party's electoral prospects appeared favourable. As a result of Peel's dinner, a Peel Club was formed at the University of Glasgow in 1837, which held annual dinners, and was likely instrumental in ensuring that Graham succeeded Peel as Lord Rector.<sup>98</sup> It is notable that a Liberal Association at the University was not founded until 1839; the Peel Club did not restrain its criticisms of the body, or of the party that it supported.<sup>99</sup> Further, while there was close and effective co-operation between professors and students in the Peel Club, Liberal academics absolutely refused to become involved in the Liberal Association. Even the pro-Liberal *Scotsman* was compelled to state that this had caused it to degenerate into 'an arena of political jangling and contention!'.<sup>100</sup> Further, the Peel Club was not an exclusively elitist organisation; its inaugural dinner, attended by professors and students, also boasted Hugh Hamilton as a speaker – a cloth-lapper by profession, he also held the position of chairman in the Glasgow Conservative Operatives Association.

In Glasgow, a group of workers resolved to form themselves into an Association, seemingly without elite prompting, on 3 December 1836.<sup>101</sup> They issued an address to Peel, to which he replied in a flattering tone, praising Glasgow, Scotland, and the working classes.<sup>102</sup> Among their other activities, the operatives heard lectures on subjects such as Chartism, and held dinners in honour of Conservative ideals, which included 'a few of the leading Conservative gentlemen of

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<sup>98</sup> *Scotsman*, 5 Apr. 1837.

<sup>99</sup> *The Peel Club Papers for Session 1839–40* (Glasgow, 1840), 1–7.

<sup>100</sup> *Scotsman*, 21 Mar. 1840.

<sup>101</sup> Minute Book of the Glasgow Conservative Operatives' Association, 1837, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>102</sup> Reply to the address of the Conservative Operatives of Glasgow to Sir Robert Peel, (1837), Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

the city'.<sup>103</sup> Its initial general committee was made up of two wrights, three warehousemen, four cloth-lappers, one fringe-maker, six printers, and one lawyer.<sup>104</sup> The Association was also involved with the wider UK party, having hosted a deputation from London which was interested in securing Monteith's return. Seventeen members offered to actively canvas for Monteith, and the operatives also offered their services to the 'Independent Registration Committee' tasked with purging the electoral roll of unqualified Liberals.<sup>105</sup> In 1839, the operatives held their second annual meeting, and with the exception of several Conservative gentlemen who had been specially invited, 'the hall was crowded by workmen'.<sup>106</sup> The organisation was by then sufficiently established and sizeable to embark upon a subscription drive for a reading room. By late 1840, enough money had been collected to establish it.<sup>107</sup>

Nevertheless, the party was less sanguine by 1840, as 'registrations of this year were not so well got up owing to the Non-Intrusion question which has split parties much in this city'.<sup>108</sup> Increasing hostility between the party and Non-Intrusionists, exacerbated by Peel's disinclination to grant lay patronage to Church of Scotland congregations, was beginning to undermine its popular support in the city.<sup>109</sup> By the election of 1841, Monteith and Graham were no longer in the running, and so the party put up a single candidate, James Campbell. Campbell came the

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<sup>103</sup> Ward, 'Working-Class Conservatism', 149; 17 Mar. 1837, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>104</sup> (Feb–Mar 1837), Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>105</sup> 3 May 1837, 14 Jun. 1837, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65; Ward, 'Working-Class Conservatism', 149.

<sup>106</sup> 'Second annual meeting', 29 Jan. 1839, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>107</sup> 15 Jun, 6 Nov. 1840, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>108</sup> Horne, 'Return from Scotland', 9 Dec. 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/35.

<sup>109</sup> See Chapter Four.

closest to winning a Glasgow seat for the party, losing the second-placed position by a mere 327 votes.<sup>110</sup> When explaining the negative parliamentary and positive municipal results to Peel, Lamond stated that their mixed fortunes were largely due to the Corn question, and that church issues had only held them back ‘to a small, but certainly to some extent’.<sup>111</sup> This was likely because of the residual religious standing of the local party – Campbell had probably benefitted from his reputation as an evangelical churchman.<sup>112</sup>

A widening ideological gap between the operatives and the rest of the local party was evident at the group’s third annual meeting, as the Conservative gentry stayed away. The Association was increasingly at odds with Peel’s government, having asserted in 1842 that ‘we regard the total abolition of the law of patronage as indispensable, not only to the peace, but also the efficiency of the Church’.<sup>113</sup> This position led to a sudden drop in membership, and rendered the organisation financially unstable.<sup>114</sup> Membership had dwindled from thirty-five in 1840 to thirty-one in 1842, and a meeting in 1843 attracted only nine attendees. While Corn Law repeal destroyed most Operatives Associations in England, it was the earlier Church question which killed off the Glasgow branch.<sup>115</sup>

The party in Glasgow peaked at the election of 1841. By the eve of the Disruption, religious tensions had further damaged both their popular base and internal organisation. Though Sir James Graham described Lamond as ‘one of the

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<sup>110</sup> Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 351.

<sup>111</sup> Lamond to Peel, 2 Nov. 1841, Peel MSS, 40493, ff. 396–7.

<sup>112</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 195.

<sup>113</sup> 21 Feb. 1841, 10 Mar. 1842, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>114</sup> Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 353.

<sup>115</sup> Ward, ‘Working-Class Conservatism’, 151.

ablest and most active of the Conservative party in the west of Scotland', he also worried that he 'rather inclines to the Non-Intrusion party'.<sup>116</sup> This general breakdown is reflected in the steep decline in the volume of correspondence. By the eve of the Corn Law split, Graham had again declined to stand for Glasgow, referring in the past tense to 'Lamond and his old Conservative party at Glasgow'.<sup>117</sup> Glasgow ceased to be a significant constituency for the party, no longer possessing the electoral, organisational, or popular base to constitute itself as an alternative centre of Scottish conservatism.

Overall, party activity in Glasgow in was, in many ways, the opposite of Edinburgh. It included elements of a newer, more commercial Scotland, both in terms of personnel and of ideology. In dealing with London more than with the rest of the Scottish party, it could sidestep pre-existing rivalries. Peel's dinner acted as a catalyst for increased activity, being a result of both top-down effort and spontaneous grassroots enthusiasm. Local, municipal, working-class, and university bodies were founded and achieved significant successes. However, many similarities to the Edinburgh party are also evident – most prominently, a lack of universally recognised local leaders, and an intensifying disagreement over major issues, particularly the Church question. Peel and Graham's close involvement with this issue initially benefitted the party in the west of Scotland. Conversely, this made the negative effects of the party's religious policies after 1839 even more keenly felt in the west. Despite strong efforts in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Scottish conservatism failed to find a national urban centre. In the absence of this, the Scottish party was

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<sup>116</sup> Graham to (?), 27 Jan. 1843, Graham MSS, 79745, ff. 47–50.

<sup>117</sup> Graham to Bonham, 24 Oct. 1846, Peel MSS 40616, ff. 324–5.

denied a single geographical base, with leadership instead being invested in various figures, spread across the Scottish counties.

### III. Scottish Conservative Leaders

Many figures held leadership positions in the Scottish party between 1832 and 1868. Of note, however, are the ways in which the extent and competency of these leading positions changed. This depended on the character and influence of those who held them and the state of the wider party. Towards the end of the period, this position became increasingly nebulous, dispersed among a wider selection of people. The period began with the retirement of Lord Melville as leader of the Scottish Tories, closely followed by rise of the Duke of Buccleuch as the most prominent leader of the Scottish party. Following the Corn Law split, the Earl of Eglinton took on this role, but to a much more limited extent. After his death in 1861, the party was left without a single leading figure. Responsibility was dispersed between individual MPs and lairds, and (to a limited extent) a more organised central party apparatus.

The Dundas interest, long dominant in Scottish politics, had been in decline long before Lord Melville's resignation from the cabinet in 1827. As a landowner of limited acreage and means, he did not possess a sufficiently large economic base to continue as Scottish manager.<sup>118</sup> Formerly in control of Edinburgh and large swathes of Scotland, the family's influence was reduced to parts of Edinburghshire.<sup>119</sup> Peel

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<sup>118</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxix.

<sup>119</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 54.

had hoped to keep Melville involved in Scottish affairs, but Melville evidently had no wish to continue: ‘When I quitted it in 1830, it was really a bona fide ... in the intention of never returning to it, and of passing the remainder of my days, not likely to be very many, at this abode’.<sup>120</sup> Apart from a letter to the speaker of Edinburgh Town Council about the city’s creditors, it appears that he did indeed confine himself to Edinburghshire politics.<sup>121</sup> It was perhaps this vacuum which encouraged the ill-fated activities of the Hope clique – certainly, there was no love lost between Hope and Melville, and the latter’s retirement may have emboldened Hope.<sup>122</sup>

Sir Francis Drummond of Hawthornden also came to prominence in the Scottish party, taking an active interest in Conservative politics in the city and county of Edinburgh, as well as in the Haddington Burghs.<sup>123</sup> He also took an interest in party affairs more broadly – Lord Wharncliffe was advised that Drummond ‘takes charge of the great Conservative interest in Scotland’.<sup>124</sup> His surviving papers contain a great deal of correspondence and electoral information on constituencies across the country. He corresponded on election matters with Lord Rosslyn, one of the chief members of the London elections committee, but not, crucially, Bonham, Graham, or Peel.<sup>125</sup> His reputation was perhaps tainted by his association with the Hope clique, and his later collusion in trying to foist a pro-Hope Secretary on the Edinburgh Conservative Association.<sup>126</sup> This Hope-Drummond alliance is probably

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<sup>120</sup> Melville to Peel, 30 Dec. 1834, Peel MSS, 40408, ff. 97–8. Melville would, in fact, go on to live a further seventeen years.

<sup>121</sup> Melville to (?), 21 Mar. 1838, Melville (NLS) MSS, MS. 1054, ff. 205–6.

<sup>122</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxix.

<sup>123</sup> Williams, ‘Edinburgh Politics’, 56.

<sup>124</sup> (?) to Wharncliffe, Nov. 1834, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/580/30.

<sup>125</sup> Gash, ‘Electoral Organization’, 132; Francis Drummond to Rosslyn, 28 Nov. 1834, Rosslyn MSS, GD164/1801/3.

<sup>126</sup> Burn to Buccleuch, 12 Aug. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/25.

why, despite his spending large amounts of money on the creation of votes in the Haddington Burghs, Buccleuch and the Marquess of Tweeddale prevented Drummond's son from standing as the Conservative candidate in 1841.<sup>127</sup> This rival electoral activity ended with Drummond's death in 1844.<sup>128</sup>

Similarly, after the Edinburgh Conservative Association debacle, Hope was reduced to a marginal figure in the Scottish party, though he continued to have considerable influence over Lord Aberdeen, especially on church matters.<sup>129</sup> After the Disruption, Hope had largely exhausted his influence, perhaps because, in the words of Buccleuch, he 'keeps quite aloof from the rest of the world, mixes very little in Society, and consequently does not know so well the general feelings of the country'.<sup>130</sup> This decline was exacerbated by his antagonistic role in the Church crisis, which had made Hope extremely unpopular among the wider public.<sup>131</sup> The efforts of Drummond and Hope illustrate that the leadership of the Scottish Conservative party was by no means uncontested. Nevertheless, the marginal nature of these challenges, and their near-total lack of success, underlines the extent to which the Duke of Buccleuch was the clear leader of the Scottish party.

In seeing off various challenges to his authority, Buccleuch ensured that the Scottish party generally looked not to Edinburgh or Glasgow, but to Drumlanrig Castle. As such, Buccleuch, with the general support of other Conservative magnates in the counties, effectively took over the party from the old lawyer set, 'the other

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<sup>127</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 136.

<sup>128</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 58.

<sup>129</sup> See the extensive correspondence between Aberdeen and Hope contained in Aberdeen MSS, 43202–43206, 43327.

<sup>130</sup> Buccleuch to Peel, 18 Jul. 1843, Peel MSS, 40525, ff. 55–6.

<sup>131</sup> Robert Buchanan, *The Ten Years Conflict*, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1876), i. 480–487. Of all those responsible for the Disruption, Buchanan (and many others) placed the most blame on Hope.



great source of Scottish Conservatism'.<sup>132</sup> Though he was effectively the most prominent Scottish Conservative from 1832, it was not until 1834, with an election looming, that he actively grasped the reins. The prominent Conservative William Burn was able to state in mid-1834 that 'the Duke of Buccleuch is of all others the individual to whom the conservative party here, and I may say in Scotland, have to look to as their head and main rallying point'.<sup>133</sup> Buccleuch effectively became leader by general consensus in both Scottish and Westminster circles, rather than by any active effort on his part. A former MP requested that Buccleuch aid in 'establishing a useful concert in the Scotch elections', and Horne wrote to him on his own initiative to state his hope that Buccleuch would 'take control of Scotch patronage, otherwise I fear our party here will not be strengthened'.<sup>134</sup>

Within Edinburgh, Buccleuch had in fact already 'organised a system of correspondence and communication, which will keep our friends together and enable them to act in concert', and was planning to gather information for the rest of Scotland.<sup>135</sup> Having also taken charge of the election of Scottish representative peers, he agreed to engage in 'frequent confidential communication' with Peel on patronage and appointments, effectively confirming his willingness to act as leader.<sup>136</sup> While J.I. Brash describes Buccleuch as 'essentially a territorial magnate' without any claim to an actual leadership position, this presupposes that any such formal

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<sup>132</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 9; Derek Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation', 106.

<sup>133</sup> Burn to William Forbes, 23 Jul. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/1.

<sup>134</sup> W.R.K. Douglas to Buccleuch, 18 Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/4/5; Horne to Buccleuch, 31 Dec. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/4/17.

<sup>135</sup> Buccleuch to Rosslyn, 25 Nov. 1834, Rosslyn MSS, GD164/1801/2.

<sup>136</sup> Lord Strathallan to Buccleuch, 13 Dec. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/4/14; Peel to Buccleuch, 6 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40409, ff. 172–173. For the role of the Scottish Representative Peerage, see Chapter Three.

positions existed, or could exist, given the contemporary nature of political parties.<sup>137</sup> Peel himself was not elected or appointed leader of the wider Conservative party – he held the position because others recognised him as leader. It is illustrative that when William Gladstone wished Buccleuch to intervene in a distant electoral contest in Orkney, he wished him to do so ‘in his character of government agent for Scotland, (respectfully) assuring him ... By “respectfully” I mean, avoiding any appearance of authoritative interference’.<sup>138</sup> Buccleuch can be described as leader of the Scottish Conservative party, insofar as contemporary parties had leaders. Indeed, on his death the *Scotsman* acknowledged that ‘there can be no doubt, that, for many years, the Duke of Buccleuch was, in a very real sense, the head of our northern Conservatism’.<sup>139</sup>

At the beginning, Buccleuch’s knowledge was ‘not very extensive as to the state of Scotland’, but his selection of Donald Horne as the *de facto* chief Conservative Agent for Scotland ensured that he was soon well-informed on the wider state of the party.<sup>140</sup> Numerous detailed reports were prepared for Buccleuch by Horne, beginning in late 1834. These covered the state of the constituencies, registrations, candidates, local parties, and the shifting influence of landlords.<sup>141</sup> While J.I. Brash suggests that these were mainly prepared with the object of keeping the Duke up-to-date, they were in fact also used to direct activity – Horne was occasionally informed that, as a result of his memoranda, the ‘Duke will see what

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<sup>137</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lix.

<sup>138</sup> William Gladstone to John Gladstone, 24 Dec. 1834, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/223, ff. 246–9.

<sup>139</sup> *Scotsman*, 16 Apr. 1884.

<sup>140</sup> Buccleuch to Rosslyn, 25 Nov. 1834, Rosslyn MSS, GD164/1801/2.

<sup>141</sup> Horne, ‘Memorandum of the State of the Scotch Representation’, Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/21. These are contained in the file GD224/582/2, ‘Election memoranda’.

can be done'.<sup>142</sup> This activity reached from the Border constituencies to Orkney and Shetland.

Though extensive, Horne's knowledge-gathering was not entirely successful – in an 1835 letter for instance, he professed to have no information on the Ayr, Dumfries, or Wigtown Burgh Districts<sup>143</sup> Similarly, in 1839, Horne was not in communication with either the candidate or committee for the St Andrews Burghs, as 'in Colonel Lindsay and Sir Ralph Anstruther's absence [he was] at a loss who to apply to'.<sup>144</sup> Thus, Horne's reach, and by extension Buccleuch's influence, was restricted by factors including the personnel on the ground and the type of constituency in question. While counties and single burghs had reliable contact with Horne, the small and dispersed nature of burgh districts seems to have made regular communication more difficult. As a landed magnate, Buccleuch was well-placed to revitalise the party in the counties, but the breaking of oligarchic monopolies in the burghs after 1832 meant that his previous experience of influencing them was now unusable. These factors largely account for the lop-sided nature of the party's advances during this period. Interestingly, there is no surviving evidence of electoral intelligence passing directly between Horne and Bonham, the information only being alluded to by the Duke in his correspondence with the latter.<sup>145</sup> While Horne may have been, in effect, Scotland's Bonham, he was firmly subordinate to the Scottish party leader, rather than the central electoral apparatus.

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<sup>142</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lviii; (?) to Horne, 4 Jul. 1837, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/27.

<sup>143</sup> Horne to Buccleuch, 20 Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/22.

<sup>144</sup> Horne, 'Private notes of Scotch Return', 3 Nov. 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/34.

<sup>145</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lvii.

Buccleuch performed various duties, including the organisation of Scottish peerage elections, dispensing political patronage, and advising the Lord Advocate and Westminster on policy matters. Nevertheless, most of his attention before 1841 was concentrated on the electoral side of party activity, which included mediating in local disputes and finding candidates for seats. The provision of financial aid across Scottish constituencies was by far his most important and effective contribution. His willingness to bankroll electioneering to such a generous extent likely strengthened his authority – though he was careful to avoid upsetting local interests, the general lack of local objections to his widespread activities is notable. Indeed, the Conservative county resurgence in the 1837 and 1841 elections can be in large part attributed to Buccleuch's efforts.<sup>146</sup> Besides directly securing Midlothian, Selkirkshire, Berwickshire, and Roxburghshire, his efforts throughout Scotland led to a revitalisation of the party more generally.<sup>147</sup> At a time when the definitions of 'party' and 'leadership' were ambiguous and subject to change, Buccleuch effectively created his own position, and a fairly comprehensive one at that.

His leadership style did, however, come at a cost – Chapter One illustrates that this revitalisation involved the extensive employment of influence and vote-making. As the largest and wealthiest landowner in Scotland, Buccleuch gained a reputation for treating tenants in a generally feudal manner, and for evicting Liberal

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<sup>146</sup> Though this resurgence could not have been fully realised without the increasing popularity of conservatism more generally. As explored in Chapter One, this popularity would not have been nearly as evident in electoral terms without Buccleuch's efforts.

<sup>147</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 65.

farmers.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, this was a frequent complaint of the non-Conservative press.<sup>149</sup> This likely made him more of a liability than an asset in terms of public opinion towards the party.

Having spent £20,000 on the 1837 election, Buccleuch withdrew abroad in late 1838.<sup>150</sup> Lord Aberdeen, ‘at the request of the Duke of Wellington and Peel’, agreed to ‘take that general charge of Scotch Conservative matters, which the Duke of Buccleuch performed so well’.<sup>151</sup> Aberdeen’s leadership, however, was of an entirely different style to Buccleuch’s.<sup>152</sup> He treated the role with disdain, bordering on outright contempt. Whereas Buccleuch was an enthusiastic participant in electoral business, Aberdeen seems to have cultivated a similar attitude to Peel with regard to this area. When discussing whether to introduce his Church bill, he dismissively stated that ‘how far this course will affect the political interests of the Conservative party in Scotland, I really do not know; and to say the truth, I do not greatly care’.<sup>153</sup> This reflected his priorities, which unquestionably prioritised parliament, policy, and governance over partisan and electoral considerations.

Though Aberdeen stated at the outset that taking on the role had been ‘sorely against my inclination’, his correspondence with Hope indicates that he was aware of Edinburgh’s municipal politics, as well as electoral affairs in Aberdeen, Banffshire,

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<sup>148</sup> K. D. Reynolds, ‘Scott, Walter Francis Montagu-Douglas-, fifth duke of Buccleuch and seventh duke of Queensberry (1806–1884)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24929> [accessed 6 Jan. 2017].

<sup>149</sup> See, for instance, *Scotsman*, 30 Jul. 1836.

<sup>150</sup> *Queen Victoria’s Journal*, 30 Oct. 1838.

<sup>151</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 29 Dec. 1838, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 99–101.

<sup>152</sup> For Aberdeen’s career more generally, see Lucille Iremonger, *Lord Aberdeen, A Biography* (London, 1978); Muriel Chamberlain, *Lord Aberdeen, A Political Biography* (New York, 1983).

<sup>153</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 25 Feb. 1839, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 102–3.

Moray, Renfrewshire, and Roxburghshire.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless, there is no indication that he acted on this knowledge, at least not outside of his local territory in the north-east. Aberdeen's short tenure illustrates a number of issues related to the position of Scottish leader. Firstly, with parliament located in Westminster, its primary role was electoral, and, to a lesser extent, policy-related. In neglecting the electoral side of the position, Aberdeen demonstrated that the role was less influential if only used to conduct policy-related business. Secondly, his leadership highlights the extent to which Buccleuch was an active, innovative, and effective Scottish leader, a role that has hitherto gone almost entirely unrecognised.

It is unclear when exactly Buccleuch relieved Aberdeen of his burden, but by the 1841 election Aberdeen had largely relinquished his former duties. As the fraught and closely packed elections of the post-Reform decade subsided after 1841, Buccleuch was able to focus more consistently on Scottish policy and governance. In the politically charged period leading up to the Disruption, Buccleuch took on a more active role in discussing, along with Sir James Graham, the Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General, the 'Poor Laws, Kirk, and other Scotch matters which are beginning to be urgent'.<sup>155</sup> Buccleuch began to act as a conduit between Graham and the Westminster party on one hand, and the Scottish law officers on the other.<sup>156</sup> During the course of the 1840s, he advised Peel on patronage matters more frequently, and after 1842 held the positions of Lord Privy Seal and Lord

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<sup>154</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 14 Nov. 1840, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 263–4; Aberdeen to John Hope, 16 Jun. 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 278–82; Aberdeen to John Hope, 11 Jul. 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 284–5.

<sup>155</sup> Graham to Buccleuch, 28 Sep. 1842, Graham MSS, 79727, ff. 179–81.

<sup>156</sup> Graham to Buccleuch, 29 Dec. 1842, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/54/1–2. For the role played by these law officers, see Chapter Three.

President.<sup>157</sup> Moreover, his wife the Duchess became Mistress of the Robes to Queen Victoria. Upon the Duke's death, the *Scotsman* asserted that, in addition to his position as party leader, 'whenever the Conservatives happened to be in power, he occupied the position, without [being] formally recognised in the capacity, of a substantially influential Minister for Scotland'.<sup>158</sup>

Overall, then, Urwin's assertion that 'no great leaders of Scottish Conservatism' had emerged is erroneous, as Buccleuch was far more than a 'nominal' leader and was, behind the scenes, notable.<sup>159</sup> He took a close interest in all aspects of party activity, encompassing electoral, parliamentary, and governmental competencies, making him one of the most active figures of the period. Certainly, he was the most active in Scotland, across all political parties. He managed to overcome fractious opposition and entrenched localism to position himself as the largely uncontested leader of the Scottish Conservative party. In doing so, the partial recovery of the party during the 1830s must in large part be attributed to him.

This relatively established state of affairs was, however, brought to an end by the party split over Corn Law repeal. Buccleuch, though unenthusiastic about free trade, remained loyal to Peel and thus gave up his position as leader of the Scottish party.<sup>160</sup> Other influential Scottish landowners, including Aberdeen, Dalhousie and the Duke of Argyll, also followed Peel – the party lost a disproportionate number of

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<sup>157</sup> Peel to Buccleuch, 29 Apr. 1843, Peel MSS, 40527, ff. 305–6; Buccleuch to Peel, 15 Feb. 1843, Peel MSS, 40525, ff. 1–2; Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxviii.

<sup>158</sup> *Scotsman*, 16 Apr. 1884. This obituary was published at a time when the formal (re)creation of such a post was being publicly debated.

<sup>159</sup> Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation', 93.

<sup>160</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxviii.

the wealthier Scottish magnates.<sup>161</sup> Despite this exodus, a great many of the lesser gentry remained resolutely protectionist in outlook, as did a significant proportion of the old Conservative electorate. Further, though there was a definite schism north of the border, most Scottish Peelites remained, essentially, moderately Conservative in outlook – as such, the magnitude of the split should not be overestimated.<sup>162</sup>

Because the Scottish party was already in a more precarious state than its southern counterpart, the split had a more damaging effect. Apart from the electoral influence which Peelite magnates held over their tenants, the loss of their financial backing also effectively precluded the party from adopting an expansionist electoral strategy.<sup>163</sup> Despite this, some Scottish protectionists thought that there was still a ‘strong party headed by ... Lord Eglinton’.<sup>164</sup> Eglinton effectively acted as a first among equals, in a group which included the Dukes of Hamilton and Montrose.<sup>165</sup> Much like Buccleuch’s initial forays into leadership, Eglinton’s first tentative steps towards claiming the position involved communication with the party leadership in parliament. He first corresponded with Derby in the August of 1846 on the upcoming election of Scottish representative peers. During a time when the loyalties of Scots peers were suddenly brought into question, Eglinton informed Derby that ‘if you think it advisable I will immediately set about quietly ascertaining who will be the most eligible, and who are genuine Conservatives’, if Derby decided to oppose Buccleuch’s list. Nevertheless, he evidently thought that his role should be a

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<sup>161</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 198; J.B. Conacher, *The Peelites and the Party System* (Newton Abbot, 1972), 16.

<sup>162</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lxiii; see Chapter Five.

<sup>163</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 222.

<sup>164</sup> Alexander Oswald to Dalhousie, 20 May 1846, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/571.

<sup>165</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 388.



subordinate one, as ‘the Duke of Richmond is the proper person to take the lead in Scotland, though of course I will take all the trouble off his hands’.<sup>166</sup>

The Duke of Richmond was generally considered to have been one of the leaders of the Scottish party, though there is little evidence to support this assertion.<sup>167</sup> It is notable that almost no correspondence from him pertaining to the Scottish party appears in the surviving collections of senior party figures. He did not even attempt to influence his own Aberdeenshire tenants, the registration of those on his estates being undertaken on his Factor’s own initiative.<sup>168</sup> Despite Eglinton’s repeated attempts to involve him in the peerage elections, by November he had still ‘heard nothing from the Duke of Richmond, but I hope he will not leave Scotland without coming here’.<sup>169</sup> Eventually, Eglinton and Buccleuch agreed not to put forward opposing lists for the election of the Sixteen. Instead, Protectionist candidates would gradually step in as natural vacancies occurred.<sup>170</sup> This suggests that the party split in Scotland had been fairly amicable. By 1853, Richmond was still reluctant to take an active role, as Eglinton complained that ‘I have nobody to consult with – Richmond is at Glenfiddich, and it takes a week at least to get an answer from him’.<sup>171</sup> After his death in 1860, the sixth Duke became increasingly interested in politics, including elections in Aberdeenshire.<sup>172</sup> He did not, however, rise to a really prominent position in politics until after 1868, becoming the first Scottish Secretary in the 1880s.

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<sup>166</sup> Lord Eglinton to Derby, 23 Aug. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/3.

<sup>167</sup> Urwin, ‘Conservative Party Organisation’, 93.

<sup>168</sup> Balmer to Richmond, 23 Jan. 1846, Gordon MSS, GD44/44/22/6.

<sup>169</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 22 Nov. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/8.

<sup>170</sup> Eglinton to Buccleuch, 2 Dec. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/10.

<sup>171</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 21 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/134.

<sup>172</sup> Duke of Richmond and Gordon to (Disraeli?), 12 Oct. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 101/2, ff. 31–2.

In 1848, Eglinton had expressed a wish to retire as a whip in the Lords, and from politics more generally, though he assured Derby that he would stay on until a suitable successor could be chosen.<sup>173</sup> Though he succeeded in resigning as a whip in 1849, he continued to act as a prominent Conservative in parliament, and a replacement figure to undertake his Scottish duties was never found.<sup>174</sup> Perhaps symbolically, in 1852 the university students of Glasgow ‘carried their threats into effect’ in electing him Lord Rector, in spite of his stated wish to give way to the Duke of Argyll.<sup>175</sup> It must be said in his favour that, while Buccleuch had never enjoyed a positive public reputation, Eglinton benefitted from genuine and widespread popularity throughout Scotland. His famous tournament of 1839 had greatly endeared him to the country, jump-started his political career, and won the confidence of Derby.<sup>176</sup> Though he evidently wished to give up the position, Eglinton did not complain about the situation, or shirk his (more limited) duties.<sup>177</sup> There is, however, no surviving record of whether he continued to perform the role during the periods in which he acted as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in 1852 and 1858–9.

His influence over electoral affairs was extensive in his native Ayrshire, and the course of politics there was in many ways characteristic of the relationship between Eglintonian Scottish Conservatives and the Scots Peelites. During the 1847 election, Eglinton was more than willing to reach out to the sitting Peelite member, Alexander Oswald, in the hope of healing divisions in the party. However, by the

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<sup>173</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 31 Oct. 1848, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/18.

<sup>174</sup> John Hogan, ‘Party Management in the House of Lords, 1846–1865’, *Parliamentary History*, 10 (1991), 130.

<sup>175</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 20 Nov. 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/116.

<sup>176</sup> Lord Lamington, *In the Days of the Dandies* (Edinburgh, 1890), 51.

<sup>177</sup> Over and above these duties, his efforts in relation to Protection and the NAVSR are discussed in Chapter Five.

election of 1852, Oswald was out of the running, and a replacement Derbyite candidate, James Hunter Blair, sought to avoid the free trade issue in the hope of healing local party rifts – his opponent, Edward Cardwell, nevertheless gained the support of both Peelites and Liberals.<sup>178</sup> The by-election of 1854, however, illustrated that the Liberal-Peelite alliance was weak, and viewed by Liberals as a short-term agreement – indeed, the Derbyite James Fergusson won partly because the local Liberals had split over the issue of whether to support the Peelite Oswald. By this point, Oswald had moved too far outside of the orbit of Scottish conservatism, whereas others, such as local landowner, Lord Glasgow, continued to be considered ‘party men at heart, who could still return to the fold’.<sup>179</sup> The nature of the division between Derbyites and Peelites often depended on local circumstances, but there were some factors which operated on a national level.

From the outset, the Scottish Conservatives were in a less secure position than the English party, as Scots Peelites possessed a slight majority of seats over out-and-out Protectionists in 1847.<sup>180</sup> Lord Advocate Duncan McNeill, having voted for free trade, informed Peel that ‘we have nowhere as yet any contest between the two sections of the Conservative party nor do I expect any such contest’, and cheerfully added that ‘In several places Whigs and other kinds of Liberals are fighting against each other. This is the case in Glasgow – Greenock – Elgin Borough and Orkney’.<sup>181</sup> The ingrained instinct of both factions was to avoid damaging rivalries. This ensured that, with the exception of a few seats such as Roxburghshire and the Haddington Burghs, the Liberals were not initially able to take advantage of the situation. The

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<sup>178</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 224, 229.

<sup>179</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 230, 235, 236.

<sup>180</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 144.

<sup>181</sup> Duncan McNeill to Peel, 20 Jul. 1847, Peel MSS, 40599, ff. 71–2.

election resulted in a slight drop in Conservative representatives from twenty-two to twenty-one, though twelve were Free Traders and only nine were Protectionists.<sup>182</sup>

Throughout the 1850s, there were continued efforts by both sides to bring about a ‘cordial union of Conservatives of all shades’ in Scotland.<sup>183</sup> More generally, Peelites throughout the UK continued to use the label ‘Conservative’, and retained their membership of the Carlton Club, which does much to disprove the theory that Peelites were part of a broad Liberal movement.<sup>184</sup> This was particularly true in Scotland, given its unique circumstances. Scottish Liberals, enjoying a particularly strong position, were far less willing to ally with Peelites on a local level.

Correspondingly, the weak position of both Peelites and Conservatives in many cases forced cooperation through sheer necessity. As Gerald Warner put it, ‘Scottish Tories had learned long ago that they must hang together or they would hang separately’.<sup>185</sup>

The case of the Midlothian Protectionist Society illustrates the nature of this cooperation on an organisational level – the local MP, Sir John Hope, was a Protectionist, as were most of the local gentry.<sup>186</sup> Reports of a steep decline in his health spurred the formation of a Midlothian Protectionist Society, which sought to ensure that any successor candidate would not be a Free Trader.<sup>187</sup> Despite an acrimonious dispute between hard-line Protectionist elements led by Sir William Drummond, Peelite grandees, and those of all shades in-between, the row was kept

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<sup>182</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>183</sup> Alexander Pringle to Buccleuch, 8 Apr. 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

<sup>184</sup> J.D. Jones and R.B. Erickson, *The Peelites 1846–1857* (Columbus, 1972), 221.

<sup>185</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 143.

<sup>186</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxv.

<sup>187</sup> Burn to Buccleuch, 2 May 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/28/1.

strictly confidential.<sup>188</sup> Drummond's main crime, in the opinion of Sir John Hope, was to be 'blindingly unacquainted with the quiet feeling of the Conservative interest'.<sup>189</sup> This interest was very broadly constituted, as Hope was supported by both avowed Peelites and committed Protectionists. He was persuaded, despite his age and poor health, to continue in office.<sup>190</sup> The local unity between different Conservative factions was thus maintained, and uncompromising Protectionists sidelined, all of which was achieved without a single mention of the row in the press.

The Scottish Peelites declined rapidly from the mid-1850s onwards. Though this decline was by no means uniform across Scotland, by 1857 the Scots Peelites had generally disappeared in a parliamentary sense. Though some MPs continued to be, in a broad sense, 'Independent' Conservatives, the few remaining local Peelite-Protectionist conflicts had been extinguished.<sup>191</sup> It is notable that the Scots Peelites, having begun in a relatively stronger position than their English counterparts, faded faster from the parliamentary scene. Also notable is the lack of movement by Scots Peelites towards Liberalism, though some magnates, such as the eighth Duke of Argyll and Earl of Glasgow, and no doubt many voters, did drift in that direction.<sup>192</sup> The majority of English Peelite MPs moved back towards Derby.<sup>193</sup> Despite the questionable allegiance of a few other Scottish MPs, the only member to explicitly move towards Palmerstonianism was Lord Elcho.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Sir John Hope to Sir William Drummond, 7 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/7; John Hope to James Drummond, 13 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/17.

<sup>189</sup> Sir John Hope to Clerk, 7, 14, 20 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/23.

<sup>190</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxxvi.

<sup>191</sup> See Millar, 'Conservative Split', 232–250.

<sup>192</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 244. The newly acceded Duke's initial vacillation in 1847 is discussed in Kirsteen Mulhern, 'The Intellectual Duke: George Douglas Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll, 1823–1900', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2006, 30–8.

<sup>193</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 198.

<sup>194</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 247. This broader movement of Scottish MPs is explored in greater detail in Chapter Five.

During this period, the Scottish Conservatives were by no means inactive in promoting Protectionism. By 1850, steps had been taken to form a Scottish Protective Association, with the Duke of Montrose as President and Eglinton as Vice-President.<sup>195</sup> Some of the gentlemen connected with this Association were involved in the formation of the Midlothian Protectionist Society. It was affiliated with the National Association for the Protection of British Industry and Capital, which existed between 1849 and 1853 – Sir William Drummond acted as the Scottish delegate to a meeting of this body, held in London in May 1850.<sup>196</sup>

These efforts, however, were largely ineffective – despite his personal enthusiasm for the issue, John Blackwood informed Eglinton that ‘There is a certain degree of apathy and down-heartedness abroad among the supporters of Protection at present’, and that a planned Edinburgh demonstration in November would be of little use, as ‘it is not so clear that our broadside would be loud enough to tell amid the general silence throughout the country’.<sup>197</sup> Despite these misgivings, Eglinton asked Derby to attend, and to bring Disraeli and Granby, in order to ‘give it the appearance of a national demonstration’.<sup>198</sup> It was thought that such an event would have the additional benefit of re-energising the party throughout Scotland, both ideologically and organisationally: ‘[in order to] set the country societies again in motion, it appears to me that some declaration from our leaders would be the best course’.<sup>199</sup> Despite there being sufficient local interest in Edinburgh for it to go ahead, the event

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<sup>195</sup> George Makgill to John Gladstone, 22 Jan. 1850, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/335, ff. 176–7.

<sup>196</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxvi.

<sup>197</sup> John Blackwood to Eglinton, 8 Oct. 1850, Blackwood MSS, 30009, ff. 231–2.

<sup>198</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 30 Dec. 1849, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/22.

<sup>199</sup> John Blackwood to Eglinton, 8 Oct. 1850, Blackwood MSS, 30009, ff. 231–2.

was cancelled, ‘as such a demonstration, held in the metropolis of Scotland, ought to bear a national character ... neither the time or the state of public feeling admitted of its being triumphantly carried out’.<sup>200</sup> There were Protectionist meetings, dinners, and deputations at places such as Edinburgh and Haddington, but generally the lack of activities throughout Scotland reflected the slow decline of Protection as a pivotal question.<sup>201</sup> Protectionism was not a sufficiently popular issue around which to rebuild the party throughout Scotland.<sup>202</sup>

The widespread malaise affecting the Scottish party extended to its wider activities. While a limited attempt was made to challenge the Liberals in 1852, by the election of 1859 the party put up a contest in only four opposition-held seats, and only six in 1865. This is partly due to the entrenchment of local majorities through long-term registration activity, and because the frenetic activity of the 1830s was the result of extraordinary conditions.<sup>203</sup> Nevertheless, it must be noted that the loss of Buccleuch as the leader (and, perhaps more importantly, financier) of the Scottish party effectively precluded it from making any electoral attacks on a national basis.<sup>204</sup> Eglinton, while influential in a few seats in the west, was not a large or extremely wealthy magnate. He does not appear to have extended financial support for electoral contests beyond his immediate sphere of influence.

This was certainly not due to parsimony, as he spent between £30,000 and £40,000 on the Eglinton tournament in 1839, and was famously extravagant when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, spending an estimated £50,000 on entertainment during

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<sup>200</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 4 Jan. 1850, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/23.

<sup>201</sup> See, for instance, *Scotsman*, 30 Apr. 1851; *Scotsman*, 1 Feb 1859.

<sup>202</sup> Chapter Five explores this in greater detail.

<sup>203</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 52, 59.

<sup>204</sup> For the effects of this loss on a local constituency level, see Chapter One.

his first period in office alone.<sup>205</sup> Rather, the lack of electoral activity during Eglinton's tenure suggests that while he was, in a nominal sense, the leading Scottish Conservative, he did not consider it to be his primary political role. His parallel and overlapping roles in Ireland, and as a prominent party member in the Lords, were his most important responsibilities. He was sufficiently involved in the UK organisational apparatus to take responsibility for organising a dinner in honour of chief UK electoral organiser William Jolliffe, to recognise his 'invaluable services to our party'.<sup>206</sup> Eglinton was, however, less active in Scotland than Jolliffe was in England, in terms of organising election activity. Though Jolliffe's apparatus did peripherally concern itself with Scottish activities, it mainly concentrated on English and Irish boroughs after 1853.<sup>207</sup>

Perhaps reflecting his prominent position in the parliamentary party, Eglinton did not attempt to continue Buccleuch's role in Scottish constituency politics. Rather, he concentrated on limited Protection-related activities, the promotion of discrete projects, such as the short-lived NAVSR, and on distributing political patronage during the short periods when Derby was in office. He also continued to manage the election and whipping of the Scottish representative peers into at least the mid-1850s.

His formal position as an assistant whip was revealing – lacking the wealth, influence, and independence of Buccleuch, Eglinton was more subordinate to the central party apparatus. Because of this, the ability of the Scottish party to act

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<sup>205</sup> Lamington, *Dandies*, 51; Mary S. Millar, 'Montgomerie, Archibald William, thirteenth earl of Eglinton and first earl of Winton (1812–1861)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19057> [accessed 21 Oct. 2016].

<sup>206</sup> Eglinton to Benjamin Disraeli, 2 Apr. 1857, Hughenden MSS, 126/2, f. 20.

<sup>207</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 141.



independently on a national level was curtailed – as Eglinton himself put it to Derby from the beginning of his tenure, ‘I wait for my orders’.<sup>208</sup> The early Protectionist party, deprived of Bonham, had only an amateur electoral and parliamentary organisation, whipped by an uninspiring William Beresford, who played a non-existent role in organising the 1852 election.<sup>209</sup> Jolliffe gradually rebuilt the English electoral organisation, and made some (limited and occasional) efforts to fill the vacuum left in Scotland by Buccleuch. Despite having no identifiable pre-existing connections to Scotland, he corresponded with the local magnates of Lanarkshire to secure the by-election candidacy of Alexander Baillie-Cochrane.<sup>210</sup>

Eglinton was therefore more of a leader of the Conservative party in Scotland, rather than leader of the Scottish Conservative party. His position was nevertheless unchallenged, in stark contrast to Buccleuch’s long struggle to overcome rival factions. This was likely because no-one wished to take on the role during a period of wider Conservative inactivity. His widespread popularity among the Scottish people and respected position in the party hierarchy must not, however, be discounted as contributory factors.

The death of Eglinton in 1861 once again left the party with a gap to fill. His funeral, attracting ‘a very large attendance of his friends and tenants, and of the country people’, was considered by Lord Colville to be a testament to his widespread popularity.<sup>211</sup> Colville, a whip, performed what had been Eglinton’s role in managing the election of the Sixteen, but he was not a leader in Scotland in any sense. Though

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<sup>208</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 2 Sep. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/4.

<sup>209</sup> J.T. Ward, ‘Derby and Disraeli’, in Donald Southgate (ed.), *The Conservative Leadership, 1832–1932* (London, 1974), 98.

<sup>210</sup> Jolliffe to Derby, 1 Dec. 1856, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/10/27.

<sup>211</sup> Lord Colville to Derby, 12 Oct. 1861, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/154/11a/9.

he was, by this time, a long-serving chief whip for Derby in the Lords, he possessed no landed base in Scotland. This was true in a very literal sense – he owned no country house, and spent parliamentary recesses residing offshore on a yacht.<sup>212</sup> Scottish business was henceforth conducted by a number of middling peers and MPs in safe seats, described by Hanham as ‘respectable lairds but nothing more’.<sup>213</sup> The overall decline in party activities and vibrancy was further exacerbated by this leadership vacuum.

By 1864, Philip Rose, the Conservative election manager, could confidently tell Derby that there was ‘never was a time in the history of the Conservative party when it was so thoroughly organised as at present’, due to ‘the continuous communications kept up during the last few years with our local representatives through the Kingdom’.<sup>214</sup> Though central organisation was reaching north of the border to an increasing extent, contact with Scotland was limited at best. The party in London was well aware of this problem; Derby lamented the abysmal performance of the Scottish party in the 1865 elections, attributing it to arrogance combined with a lack of effort.<sup>215</sup> This was perhaps why he made repeated efforts to convince Buccleuch to resume his previous role.<sup>216</sup>

Buccleuch maintained a cordial correspondence with Derby from at least the late 1840s onwards.<sup>217</sup> He gradually moved back towards the Derbyite Conservative

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<sup>212</sup> Hogan, ‘Party Management’, 131; see Appendix D.

<sup>213</sup> H.J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (London, 1959), 158.

<sup>214</sup> Philip Rose to Derby, 20 May 1864, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/113/19/11.

<sup>215</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 296; see Appendix C.

<sup>216</sup> Derby’s had a broader difficulty in finding personnel to handle Scottish affairs in parliament and governance. See Chapter Three.

<sup>217</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 338.

party over this period. Moreover, he had always used his influence to head off potential confrontations between Peelites and Protectionists, in both elections of representative peers and parliamentary contests: ‘I think it is of great importance that some understanding should be come to upon that subject ... a Conservative should not oppose a Protectionist and vice versa solely upon the grounds of their own differences of opinion’.<sup>218</sup> Though he had been a general supporter of Aberdeen’s government, he had refused repeated attempts by Lord Aberdeen to bring him into the administration, first as Master of the Horse, then as Keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland, despite these being purely symbolic positions involving no responsibility.<sup>219</sup> Indeed, he informed Eglinton that when it came to candidates, he would generally ‘support the best man without reference to which section of the Conservative party he belongs to, and if possible to prevent a split’.<sup>220</sup>

After 1855, his position changed substantially, as he once again involved himself in the promotion of the Scottish Conservative press.<sup>221</sup> During Derby’s 1858–9 administration he again refused office, stating that he would ‘never again [agree] to undertake any office of any kind in any government that might be formed’.<sup>222</sup> Despite frequent attempts to entice him back into politics, he remained steadfast.<sup>223</sup> However, he did agree to pass on election data from the south of Scotland in early 1859, and advised Derby on Scottish patronage and government

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<sup>218</sup> Buccleuch to George Hope, 15 Apr. 1847, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/525/10/5.

<sup>219</sup> Buccleuch to William Sharpe, 7 Jun. 1853, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/581/11; Aberdeen to Buccleuch, 30 Dec. 1852, Aberdeen MSS, 43201, ff. 58–62, Aberdeen to Buccleuch, 9 Mar. 1853, Aberdeen MSS, 43201, f. 79.

<sup>220</sup> Eglinton to Buccleuch, 29 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/137.

<sup>221</sup> George Thomson to Buccleuch, 20 Jul. 1859, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43; Ross to Buccleuch, 7 May 1859, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/43.

<sup>222</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 23 Feb. 1858, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/1.

<sup>223</sup> He refused, for instance, to act as President of the Irish Church Commission. See Buccleuch to Derby, 31 Jul. 1867, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/19.

appointments, including the posts of the Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General.<sup>224</sup> He appears to have volunteered his services more often in the wake of Eglinton's death, corresponding with Derby on Scottish legislation and offering 'unofficially to give you [Derby] all the information and assistance in my power upon political matters in Scotland'.<sup>225</sup> Confidentiality was perhaps necessary – by this point, Buccleuch was 'old and discredited', mistrusted by many Conservatives for his decade-long prevarication, and his reputation was damaged by the conversion of his wife to Roman Catholicism – this all 'put an end to his influence in the north', except in areas where he was a significant proprietor.<sup>226</sup> Though he once again became a prominent Scottish Conservative in terms of backroom political activities, Buccleuch was neither able nor willing to take up his former role.

Overall, the Scottish Conservative party possessed a series of leaders (or leading figures) between 1832 and 1868. Given its informal nature, the scope and influence of the role was largely dependent on the characteristics of the leader in question, and the state of the broader party. The Duke of Buccleuch took on this role initially, carving for himself a significant niche which brought him much influence within Scotland, and eventual status in the parliamentary party. After 1846, the Earl of Eglinton took on this role, but to a far lesser extent. His role was more one of a first among equals, and his influence in Scotland was more popular than electoral. After 1861, the party no longer boasted even a first among equals. Responsibility for

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<sup>224</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 245; Buccleuch to Derby, 15 Apr. 1859, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/10.

<sup>225</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 27 Jun. 1865, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/14; Buccleuch to Derby, 8 Jul. 1866, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/17.

<sup>226</sup> Hanham, *Party Management*, 158; R.A.C. Dundas to Jolliffe, 20 Nov. 1857, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/24/9/67; K.D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (New York, 1998), 77.

necessary duties devolved on a range of minor figures. This meant that any additional native activity which might have benefitted the party on a national level was out of the question.

#### IV. Organisation and Leadership in Decline

The state of the party after the 1865 election, the last before the Second Reform Acts, was similar in many ways to its state in 1832 – in disarray, bereft of leadership, and with a listless and demoralised membership. Yet, much like the early 1830s, signs of a limited recovery were evident in the years leading up to 1868. This internal rejuvenation was, however, almost entirely without external effect, at least on a purely electoral level – in winning a mere six seats in 1868, the party had performed worse than it did in 1832, and remained a socially exclusive body.<sup>227</sup> Indeed, of these six, only Donald Cameron of Lochiel and Sir Graham Graham-Montgomery were not heirs to a peerage.<sup>228</sup> Much like in the 1830s, activity in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow played a prominent role in this partial revival of activity. Moreover, the intervention of a central party leader – in this case Disraeli – was crucial in both stimulating this renewal and limiting it.

This, however, was where similarities ceased. Disraeli's intervention, this time in Edinburgh rather than Glasgow, ran into many of the same problems which had held back Edinburgh-based conservatism for decades. Its narrow support base

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<sup>227</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>228</sup> Hanham, *Party Management*, 158.

was composed of the landed and upper professional classes. The landed classes were more concerned with protecting their crumbling county powerbases than in nurturing the embryonic (or, rather, resurrected) phenomena of urban and working-class conservatism. The professionals, mainly Advocates, were as unpopular as ever among the wider electorate.

Glasgow-based conservatism, having long-since lost its broader base and connections with the central party was, if anything, more traditionally aristocratic than it had been thirty years before. Despite these drawbacks, and their attendant electoral consequences, locally inspired efforts there did inspire a partial recovery in the subsequent election of 1874.<sup>229</sup> Disraeli had not been much involved with Scottish affairs in the 1850s, either directly or through the English electoral apparatus. This was perhaps because of his cool relationship with Jolliffe. Indeed, when Jolliffe had initially been offered the UK electoral management role, he had indicated that he would only accept it if he was explicitly regarded as Derby's appointee.<sup>230</sup> By the mid-1860s, however, Disraeli seems to have taken an interest in the Scottish party on his own initiative, having written to Sir Graham Graham-Montgomery to ascertain the state of the party north of the border.<sup>231</sup>

Whether the original impetus came from London or from Edinburgh, Disraeli's attendance at a banquet in Edinburgh celebrating the new English Reform Act was a welcome event for both Scottish and Westminster sections of the party. It was chaired by William Stirling and attended by around 1,200 prominent Scottish

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<sup>229</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 103.

<sup>230</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 116.

<sup>231</sup> Graham-Montgomery to Disraeli, 21 Jun. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 137/1, ff. 81–8.

Conservatives.<sup>232</sup> As such, it was the largest and most important Conservative event to have taken place in Scotland since Peel's 1837 Glasgow dinner. Much like the Second Scottish Reform Act, the significance of the Edinburgh banquet has been generally overlooked.

As ever, the interconnections between municipal and national politics threatened to hamper the effects of the occasion. Disraeli was to be offered the freedom of the city, but the complex factional composition of the Town Council led to it being simultaneously offered to John Bright. This was not only to 'keep up an appearance of approval of what are called "liberal principles"', but also 'to spite the Whigs'.<sup>233</sup> Another correspondent thought that, interestingly, 'The Whigs will be far more angry at the Freedom being conferred on the latter [Bright] than on the former [Disraeli]'.<sup>234</sup> The timing of the visit also bolstered the attention paid to the banquet. Taking place after the passing of the English bill but before the Scottish, the Bright ploy may have been an attempt to extort additional Scottish seats from Disraeli in the upcoming redistribution, as 'a refusal to attend would be almost certain to cause great offence not only here but in other municipal bodies in Scotland'.<sup>235</sup>

Bright's absence from Scotland meant that this potentially embarrassing incident was avoided, but it underlined the fact that Disraeli was travelling to partially hostile territory. Though they had no hope of parliamentary success, Conservatives controlled around a third of the Town Council, illustrating that this hostility was far from universal – there was still a significant minority of

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<sup>232</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 155.

<sup>233</sup> Edward J Garden(?) to Disraeli, 15 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 18–20.

<sup>234</sup> W.J. Wallace to Disraeli, 20 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 21–3.

<sup>235</sup> Edward J Garden(?) to Disraeli, 15 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 18–20; W.J. Wallace to Disraeli, 20 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 21–3.

conservative support in the Scottish burghs, despite it appearing, on the surface, to be barren ground for the party. Indeed, a Scottish Conservative informed Disraeli that while he would have been pessimistic about Conservative prospects three weeks prior to his writing, ‘the movement has spread and is spreading’, as Conservative Agents were fielding numerous inquiries, and Conservative lecturers were in demand because ‘The People ask for them – their meetings are crowded – have had to send two more gentlemen, and yet, the demand is for more’.<sup>236</sup>

Disraeli himself wanted to speak at a working-class meeting, and made arrangements to do so. Unfortunately, having arranged the timing of this without taking advice from Edinburgh, the planning turned into something of a fiasco, with the main organiser in Edinburgh claiming that ‘had this affair not been proclaimed from Lands’ End to John O’Groats, I would at once have thrown it up’, but that cancelling the event would result in ‘ridicule and indignation’.<sup>237</sup> The meeting was set for 6pm, which it was thought would result in a poor turnout and cause offence to potential attendees. This incident was illustrative of the general effect of the Scottish visit – almost successful, but essentially a missed opportunity.

Despite rumblings of a broader popular enthusiasm, the guest-list for the dinner was restricted to the socially exclusive ranks of aristocratic Scottish conservatism, with a limited smattering of upper middle-class professionals.<sup>238</sup> Peel’s dinner, though hierarchical, had included a broad variety of social groups – Disraeli’s was very much in the traditional mould. Similarly, his speech was somewhat

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<sup>236</sup> Richard Nugent to Disraeli, 6 Oct. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 98–9.

<sup>237</sup> Charles Scott to E.S. Gordon, Oct. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 66–7.

<sup>238</sup> See the list of attendees published in *The Globe and Traveller*, 10 Oct. 1867.



disappointing. While Peel's was a landmark occasion, appealing to new groups in Scotland while also espousing a strong message which resonated throughout the UK, Disraeli's was focused more on personal advantage than political outreach. Though there was significant hope of extra seats for Scotland, he avoided this topic. Instead, he spent most of his speech claiming principal credit for the party's embrace of moderate parliamentary reform, obscuring the central role played by Derby in this.<sup>239</sup> Disraeli received a long and detailed set of memoranda containing suggestions on Scottish speech topics prepared for him by Archibald Campbell Swinton, a prominent Edinburgh Conservative lawyer. Despite this, he focused on English Reform (and his role in it) for the first three-quarters of his speech.<sup>240</sup> The final Scottish Act, passed shortly after his visit, gave no extra seats to Scotland, other than those which had already been promised.

Nevertheless, the visit did have some limited effects in Scotland. Much like Peel's visit, Disraeli's spurred the creation of new Conservative organisations – in this case, the Scottish National Constitutional Association. Given Disraeli's wary attitude towards later UK organisational innovations, however, it is unclear how much of a direct role he played in its inception.<sup>241</sup> It was, anyway, a largely ineffective organisation dominated, unsurprisingly, by lawyers.<sup>242</sup> Its role in the 1868 election was largely peripheral, as it offered help in only an advisory capacity, and lacked any institutional means to encourage local parties to participate. Nevertheless,

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<sup>239</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 359–60. A full transcript of the speech is contained in the *Times*, 30 Oct. 1867.

<sup>240</sup> Archibald Campbell Swinton, 'Suggestions as to National or Local topics – apart from Politics', 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 37–9; 'Memorandum as to Scotch Politics,– for information', Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 40–1.

<sup>241</sup> Angus Hawkins, 'The Disraelian Achievement: 1868–1874', in Anthony Seldon and Stuart Ball (eds), *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition since 1867* (Houndmills, NY, 2005), 35.

<sup>242</sup> Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation', 96–7.

this body represented the first serious attempt to form a national organisation since 1835, and was a precursor of more effective Scottish bodies.<sup>243</sup> More broadly, Disraeli's visit to Scotland showed the party that their electorally subordinate position was not inescapable.<sup>244</sup> A sense was imbued that sustained and long-term action could improve the party's prospects.

The banquet did not, however, spur immediate action in Edinburgh – no Conservative candidate was put up for the 1868 election, and the party did not contest the city until 1874. The 1868 election was, however, the first contest since 1852 in which the Glasgow Conservatives put up a candidate and, moreover, made strenuous efforts to get him elected. It was thought that the old Glasgow-Edinburgh rivalry might mar the Disraeli banquet, as there continued to be 'a jealousy between the two cities', but an Edinburgh deputation 'went to Glasgow ... to engage the gentlemen of that city to take part', with 'most favourable' results.<sup>245</sup> Several prominent Glasgow Conservatives attended the dinner, and it is notable that Disraeli's 1873 speech in Glasgow upon his election as Lord Rector of the university was a much more successful occasion.<sup>246</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century it seems, Glasgow was a more auspicious location for Conservative activity.

The new electorate in Glasgow enfranchised by the Second Reform Act changed the electoral framework, and challenged both Conservatives and Liberals in the city. As the booming commercial centre of Scotland, the largest group of new

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<sup>243</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 113.

<sup>244</sup> Hanham, *Party Management*, 160.

<sup>245</sup> Edward J. Garden(?) to Disraeli, 5 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 5–8.

<sup>246</sup> Hawkins, 'Disraelian Achievement', 41.

electors were incomers to the city from the rest of Scotland.<sup>247</sup> The Conservatives made renewed attempts to meet the challenge – first notice of the impending formation of the Glasgow Workingmen’s Conservative Association came during the 1868 election itself, and it was formally established at a rally in January 1869.<sup>248</sup> Its rapid and successful expansion after this suggests that it might have greatly aided election efforts if established earlier. Much like the avidly Protestant nature of the old Glasgow Operative Association, an upswing in Orange activities boosted its growth. However, this was not the main driver of the Association; rather, issues such as the teaching of the bible in schools and promotion of the Established Church were of greater importance.<sup>249</sup>

Although working-class organisation came too late for the election, there was a Glasgow Constitutional Association, composed of traditional Conservatives and some moderate Liberals, who, after much prevarication, chose Sir George Campbell of Garscube to stand.<sup>250</sup> It is interesting to note that two of their other possible choices, Sir Archibald Alison, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bt, and Colonel Campbell of Blythswood, were descendants of two of the most prominent Glasgow Conservatives in the 1830s.

Campbell of Garscube, despite possessing a promising local reputation as a local landowner and decorated veteran of Balaclava, had few other positive traits. His speeches were rambling, incoherent, and badly delivered. Moreover, having only been chosen as candidate at the last minute, he fared poorly when questioned on the issues of the day.<sup>251</sup> Despite this, the party campaigned aggressively and in an

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<sup>247</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 202.

<sup>248</sup> Ward, ‘Working-Class Conservatism’, 156; Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, 89.

<sup>249</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 201.

<sup>250</sup> Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 406.

<sup>251</sup> McCaffrey, ‘Issues and Developments’, 203; Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 406–7.

organised fashion during the election period – seven meetings were held in four weeks, and regular advertisements appeared in the press. These meetings were more than two of the three Liberal candidates had managed to organise, and no Liberal candidate was in a position to release a complete list of their election committees and supporters.<sup>252</sup>

The results of their campaign were disappointing, as despite the constituency now possessing three seats, Campbell of Garscube came in fourth. The result was nevertheless suggestive – their last serious attempt at the city, in 1841, had garnered roughly a third of voters. Garscube garnered over twenty-five per cent of the voters in 1868, indicating that a robust base of Conservative voters continued to exist in Glasgow.<sup>253</sup> Further, this electoral base was largely unaffected by the substantial extension of the franchise. Not only was there a solid Conservative vote in the city, but that vote was also partly made up of the newly enfranchised. Finally, almost ninety per cent of the Conservative vote came from plumpers, rather than Liberals splitting their votes – one estimate suggested that as many as 3,000 of the 10,000 Garscube voters were working-class voters who had not split their votes.<sup>254</sup>

The Glasgow contest reveals both the strengths and weaknesses of Scottish conservatism as a whole. In choosing a mediocre candidate from the landed gentry, the party showed that it was still insufficiently aware of the potential strength of urban conservatism. Nevertheless, the election demonstrated the existence of a solid proportion of public opinion which was sympathetic to the party. Their local efforts

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<sup>252</sup> Hutchison, 'Mid-Victorian Glasgow', 407–8.

<sup>253</sup> McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 203; Hutchison, 'Mid-Victorian Glasgow', 354.

<sup>254</sup> Hutchison, 'Mid-Victorian Glasgow', 408–9.

were rewarded in 1874, when they won a Glasgow seat for the first time since the era of the Clyde Burghs in 1821. More broadly, there was a body of Scottish opinion that was disposed towards conservatism, not only in the counties, but also in the cities. In order to access it, and to expand upon it, new personnel, more effective national organisation, stronger leadership, and the emergence of new issues and ideologies were required. The right combination of these were, however, not to be achieved until much later in the century.<sup>255</sup>

## V.

In conclusion, the national organisation, leadership, and activity of the Scottish Conservative party underwent a series of transformations between 1832 and 1868. The negotiations surrounding the foundation of the Edinburgh Conservative Club illustrate that internal party relations were far from harmonious. A publicly unified façade concealed a number of separate but overlapping factions, which alternated between cooperation and conflict. Divisions included those between larger magnates, minor gentry, and lawyers. The most damaging split, however, was between the old pre-Reform Tories, headed by the Hope clique, and the newly ascendant county potentates, headed by the Duke of Buccleuch. Despite the impressive level of local organisation achieved (as explored in Chapter One), it is clear that internal divisions prevented the party from progressing on a national level after 1832.

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<sup>255</sup> Cameron, *Scotland since 1880*, 60, 76–8.

However, the Edinburgh Club debacle does highlight several significant themes. First, the fact that the club was generally supported by so many illustrates that the Scottish party was thought sufficiently distinctive to merit a separate territorial headquarters. More than a mere Conservative regional section, the Scottish Conservative party was a discrete entity. Second, there was a strong and committed appetite to develop a complex and wide-ranging national organisation, which far exceeded the ambitions of even the party managers in the Carlton Club. There still remained many in the Scottish and British party who retained ideological objections to such extra-parliamentary organisation. Nevertheless, those who held such opinions seem to have been markedly peripheral in the Scottish party. The prevailing belief north of the border was that such activity was necessary – unpalatable perhaps, but essential, given the particularly hostile Scottish electoral landscape. As such, the overall case of the Edinburgh Conservative Club has the potential to impact on future scholarship relating to the wider British age of ‘club government’.

The failure of efforts in Edinburgh led to a focus on the promotion of a Glasgow-centred liberal conservatism, beginning with Peel’s dinner and lasting until just after the 1841 election. Though short-lived, this focus involved close cooperation and communication with a range of senior UK party figures, bringing into question the assertion that Scotland was neglected by the wider Conservative party. Moreover, the promising advances made there, though wrecked by the Church crisis, show that there was a significant potential base of Conservative support in Scotland’s industrial centre. This base was not successfully tapped into until much later in the century, but included industrial magnates, professionals, and sections of the emergent working classes.

In the absence of a consistently receptive urban centre for conservatism, the party found itself trapped in its county strongholds, led by the Duke of Buccleuch. Though not able to break his party out of the counties, Buccleuch was in many ways a remarkable leader. The short and ineffectual tenure of Lord Aberdeen as interim leader only serves to throw this into greater relief. He concerned himself with electoral politics across the country in almost all aspects, managed the peers' elections, advised on patronage and appointments, had a significant say in policy matters, and represented Scotland actively in both the Lords and cabinet. As such, he was one of the most active and effective party leaders of his era. Because, however, most of his efforts were for the territorial party, rather than on a parliamentary level, his significant contributions have been almost entirely overlooked.

The relative efficacy of Buccleuch was again highlighted by the performance of his successor, Lord Eglinton. Though he had far less claim to the leadership of the Scottish Protectionists than Buccleuch did the old Scottish Conservatives, he was the *de facto* leader of the Scottish party. Eglinton performed many duties in succession to Buccleuch, including advising on policy, patronage and appointments, publicly promoting issues such as Protection, and managing the peers' elections. His focus was also, however, more explicitly on Westminster and on Irish politics, his Scottish role being a subordinate consideration. Indeed, given his broader social position, he was more subordinate to the central party hierarchy than Buccleuch had been. Crucially, he did not, and perhaps could not, handle electoral business in the same way. Moreover, his attempts to promote conservatism through other bodies, such as the NAVSR, were largely unsuccessful. These were all contributory factors to the party's slow decline in the 1850s. Despite these conditions, Eglinton performed as

well as could be expected considering the wider political situation. He was a competent and stable central figure during a period when the UK party as a whole spent most of its time in opposition.

The necessity of his work was highlighted by his death in 1861, after which the Scottish party was left without even a nominal leading figure. It is likely no coincidence that the party's electoral decline intensified after his demise. Derby relied on some of the few remaining MPs, minor lairds, and a partially reconciled Buccleuch to deal with Scottish matters on an *ad hoc* basis. At this time, Disraeli began to take an increasing interest in Scottish affairs, suggesting that native vitality had been all but exhausted.

Disraeli's 1868 Edinburgh banquet was in many ways a missed opportunity. If executed more carefully, it might have sparked a similar effect to Peel's 1837 Glasgow banquet. It was, however, held in still-factionalised Edinburgh, restricted to Conservative social elites, and marred by internal miscommunications. Moreover, the speech was not of the same significance as Peel's, focusing mostly on England and offering no concessions to Scotland in the upcoming Scottish Reform Act. Nevertheless, the dinner itself does seem to have resulted in additional intra-party communication and activity in Scotland, and the formation of the first national organisation since the demise of the Edinburgh Conservative Club. The strenuous efforts made in Glasgow, though not fruitful, were indicative of a revived spirit.

Overall, the national leadership of the Scottish party had a pronounced effect on the organisation and activity managed throughout the period. Organisational efforts were, in many ways, abortive and ineffective. By the contemporary standards of the era, however, they were impressive, functioning fairly well in spite of (or



perhaps because of) their poor prospects north of the border. Organisation, leadership, and activity on a national level between 1832 and 1868 were characterised by initial innovation and potential, followed by overall decline, but with the tentative promise of revitalisation at the very end of the period.

### CHAPTER THREE: PARLIAMENT, LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNANCE, AND THE BRITISH CONTEXT

The Scottish Conservative party relied heavily on native leadership, activity, and organisation, especially before the 1850s. Nevertheless, the role played by the wider party outside of Scotland was also significant, and became more so towards the end of the period. The Scottish party existed not in parallel, but within the broader UK Conservative party. Further, the essential function of ‘party’ in this period must be kept in mind; the party’s core purpose was to achieve predominance in the House of Commons, which would then allow its members to govern Scotland and the UK.<sup>1</sup> English and Scottish politics were generally ‘meshed together’, whereas Irish politics were more separate.<sup>2</sup> The core role played by parliament meant that a great deal of Scottish party business necessarily took place outside of Scotland.

In addition to this, the actual governance of Scotland involved a confusing and constantly evolving jumble of institutions and figures across Scottish and British levels. At a local level, the terrain featured overlapping elected and appointed municipal bodies, sheriffs and other judicial institutions, and specialist local boards, such as the Poor Law authorities. Above this, the Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General managed much of the day-to-day and long-term national business, in conjunction with specialist central boards. Finally, providing the legislative

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<sup>1</sup> Hawkins, ‘Parliamentary Government’, 640.

<sup>2</sup> Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations’, 247.

underpinnings to these institutions and roles, and resolving the significant political questions of the day, was the responsibility of parliament.<sup>3</sup>

Though most day-to-day governance took place in Scotland on a local level, the party's input was greatest at national levels, in Edinburgh and London. This activity was primarily undertaken by figures with strong Westminster and Whitehall connections. Because the party was quite closely integrated across the United Kingdom, it follows that, to some extent, the Scottish Conservative party was not geographically restricted to Scotland. Various figures who were based outside of Scotland had a claim to membership of (and influence over) the Scottish party. This was despite often possessing weakened or tenuous Scottish connections.

This chapter will explore the various ways in which the Scottish Conservative party operated in a wider British and governmental context, situating native Scottish activity within an integrated framework of parliamentary party politics and local/national governance. First, it will examine the role of the Scottish contingents in party affairs at Westminster, touching on how the unique legislative needs of Scotland were handled. It will then uncover the party's role in the governance of Scotland, including the appointment of local and national personnel, and how the responsibility for various areas of governance shifted between different people and institutions. The interest and activity of central party leaders in relation to Scotland and the Scottish party will then be explored. Finally, it will touch on less prominent party members who, despite not residing in Scotland or representing Scottish seats, constituted a disparate but identifiable Scottish party in exile.

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<sup>3</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 43.

## I. Scottish Conservatives at Westminster

Scottish Conservative MPs and peers were firmly embedded within the wider UK parliamentary system. Nevertheless, they were also, in some ways, distinctive and separate. During a period when the reach of party machinery within Westminster waxed and waned, this distinctiveness was subject to change over time. Some aspects, however, were more consistent – for one, when parliament considered passing a bill of direct relevance to Scotland, it was felt to be important that it had substantial support from Scottish MPs. This held true of both parties, such as in 1853, when the Earl of Aberdeen’s Lord Advocate updated him on a Scottish measure which had passed ‘by a majority which included two thirds Scotch members ... the proposition was accepted by a large majority and by thirty-six to seven of the Scotch members’.<sup>4</sup> The *Scotsman* could declare confidently that same year that all of Scotland knew that no Scottish measure had ever been passed when a majority of native members were opposed to it.<sup>5</sup> It was rare for governments to press on in the face of combined opposition from Scottish MPs.<sup>6</sup> MPs from other parts of the UK did, on occasion, block Scottish legislation which had majority Scots support, such as the School Establishment (Scotland) bill; the issue of religious instruction had struck an uneasy chord among MPs from other parts of the UK.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> James Moncrieff to Aberdeen, 4 Jul. 1853, Aberdeen MSS, 43201, ff. 192–7.

<sup>5</sup> *Scotsman*, 5 Nov. 1853.

<sup>6</sup> Of course, the opposite was not true; Westminster parties could refuse to actively support measures which were desired by a majority of Scottish MPs. The most conspicuous examples of this were lay patronage and education reform, explored in Chapters Four and Five.

<sup>7</sup> Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations’, 257; See Hansard, HC Deb, 4 Jun. 1851, vol. 117, cc401–42.

When party politics was factored into this, it could further stymie legislative efforts; if a bill was treated as a party matter, it stood a very good chance of being defeated. As such, before pushing through significant legislation, successive governments up the 1880s looked for broadly bipartisan opinion emanating from Scotland. Indeed, the three Scottish Education Bills proposed between 1854 and 1865 were defeated despite each having the support of a majority of Scots members.<sup>8</sup> Given these circumstances, it was of paramount necessity for Scottish MPs to meet, both within and across party lines, in order to achieve consensus before legislation reached the floor of the House. Meetings were also likely to be needed during the passage of bills, as the scant parliamentary time assigned to Scottish legislation meant that debates needed to be as short as possible. This need was evident from the very beginning of the period; for instance, the debating time allotted for the Scottish Reform bill was merely a single hour late at night, as opposed to seven days reserved for its English equivalent.<sup>9</sup>

After 1832, party meetings were held more frequently to allow for more discussion between backbenchers and the leadership – the idea of party consultation eventually grew out of this.<sup>10</sup> Scottish Conservative MPs were, of course, involved in these all-UK party meetings, but it is important to note that separate meetings of Scottish MPs did occur, concerned with specifically Scottish issues, such as in 1842: ‘As I understand, that there is to be a meeting of the Conservative Scotch members at Sir Robert Peel’s tomorrow, the course to be adopted by the Government has, of course, been decided on’.<sup>11</sup> This meeting took place at Peel’s residence; other

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<sup>8</sup> Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations’, 255, 257.

<sup>9</sup> Dyer, ‘Detail and Machinery’, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Gash, ‘Parliamentary Organization’, 139.

<sup>11</sup> Sir George Sinclair to Aberdeen, 8 Jun. 1842, Aberdeen MSS, 43239, ff. 204–5.

meetings of the UK party more generally were held at various other houses, the Carlton Club, and other locations.

Given Peel's preference for small meetings of interested parties and debaters over more general assemblies, Scottish meetings were likely preferred over larger gatherings.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, evidence of these meetings in surviving papers is sparse, and no minutes appear to have been taken. As such, the frequency of such meetings and the issues discussed in them unfortunately remain a matter of speculation. It may well be that the lack of evidence generated or retained was somewhat intentional. Apart from anything else, the Conservative party as a whole was invested in maintaining parliament as the single centre of legislative activity for the entire UK. Moreover, within this parliamentary context, 'party' was itself neither static or rigidly defined. Such meetings may have been an occasional necessity, but such territoriality in a formal and public sense was not to be excessively encouraged. It is likely that meetings were held only when necessary, and not encouraged as a matter of course. Nevertheless, these meetings were almost certainly important occasions for Scottish (and, indeed, Welsh and Irish) members, as they could focus on a larger variety of 'local interest' concerns, often involving private bills, without the interference of English MPs.<sup>13</sup>

The distinctive nature of Scottish Conservative MPs was also recognised in terms of whipping. English MPs were dealt with by figures such as Lord Rosslyn, Hardinge, and Granville Somerset, as well as the whips. Sir George Clerk served as

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<sup>12</sup> Gash, 'Parliamentary Organization', 141.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew Cragoe, "'A cheaper sort of member'?: Welsh MPs, Select Committees and the Representation of Local Interests in Parliament, 1852–1865', *Parliaments, Estates & Representation*, 14 (1994), 133; Lindsay Paterson, *The Autonomy of Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1994), 49.

MP for Edinburghshire from 1835 to 1837 and Stamford from 1838 to 1847. He also acted as a whip, and chief whip, for Peel during and in-between his administrations (though not during the brief period when he was out of parliament).<sup>14</sup> In addition to his ordinary duties, he also took specific care of the Scottish members, just as Frederick Shaw (MP for Dublin University) did for Ireland. This indicates that much of the work of whipping was assisted by dividing up responsibilities along informal territorial lines.<sup>15</sup>

Though by no means considered to be a separate species of MP, Scots were recognised by the party apparatus as a distinctive subspecies. Clerk, as a longstanding Scottish MP, was the obvious choice to manage the Scottish contingent. He possessed an in-depth knowledge of Scottish issues and close personal relationships with many fellow Scots members – Clerk had first been elected for Edinburghshire in 1811 at the age of twenty-three.<sup>16</sup> Quite apart from conciliating overlapping national sensitivities, it made sense from a practical standpoint for Scottish managers to oversee Scottish party organisation in London. The most important duty of whips was to ensure regular attendance at votes, a more onerous task for the Conservatives given their larger proportion of country gentlemen, who often viewed being an MP as a part-time occupation.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Scottish Conservative members were slightly more likely to be backwoodsmen than Conservative MPs more generally. Unfortunately, there are few surviving papers related to the day-to-day

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<sup>14</sup> Gash, 'Parliamentary Organization', 149–53.

<sup>15</sup> Gash, 'Parliamentary Organization', 153; Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 44.

<sup>16</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xiv.

<sup>17</sup> T.A. Jenkins, 'Whips in the early Victorian House', 261.

business of whipping, meaning that much of the detail of Clerk's (and others') work is unrecoverable.<sup>18</sup>

Scottish MPs in the Commons were also partly handled by the Lord Advocate, if the party was in power. Sir William Rae, for instance, did so when the House was sitting but also when it was not; at Peel's request, he 'communicated with nearly all our good and zealous friends who were in the last parliament'.<sup>19</sup> Residing in (and governing) Scotland while parliament was in recess, Rae was better placed to manage those Scottish MPs who had returned to their constituencies. The Lord Advocate's dual role therefore enabled him to act as a bridge between Westminster and territorial party affairs, though only when in office.

The organisational formality of the party in the Commons must not, however, be overstated. Outside of party meetings and the business of whipping, ties between Scottish MPs were consistently and relentlessly reinforced by informal social relationships, in the absence of rigid organisational control.<sup>20</sup> It is notable that despite a large bipartisan turnout of the Scottish political classes at the initial meeting of the NAVSR to protest (among other things) Scotland's neglect by parliament, only a single Scottish MP attended.<sup>21</sup> Informal association within Westminster was vital to the integration of Scottish business into overall party activity. Senior party figures relied on Scottish MPs for the provision of even basic information on Scottish affairs, indicating a periodic inattention to these topics. Disraeli, for one, may have

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<sup>18</sup> Jenkins, 'Whips in the early Victorian House', 260. Clerk's papers, held by the National Records of Scotland, unfortunately include very little material on his work as a whip.

<sup>19</sup> Rae to Peel, 24 Jul. 1841, Peel MSS, 40339, ff. 376–7.

<sup>20</sup> Angus Hawkins, *British Party Politics, 1852–1886* (Basingstoke, 1998), 15.

<sup>21</sup> G.W.T. Omond, *The Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series, 1834–1880* (London, 1914), 86. The party's role in promoting the NAVSR is explored in Chapter Five.



taken a slightly closer interest in Scotland by the 1860s, but betrayed a lack of knowledge a decade earlier: ‘Your questions about local taxation in Scotland are rather vague, but I conclude you only want a general idea of our system’.<sup>22</sup>

This inattention did not escape public notice, resulting in frequent complaints from various quarters who had ‘for a long series of years seen the great inconvenience occasioned by the inadequacy of the means for the management of Scotch business in parliament’.<sup>23</sup> It often fell to Scottish members to organise individually and autonomously, in order to advance their nation’s interests. As such, separate Scottish Conservative activity at Westminster was not entirely inspired from above; it was also the result of native initiative.

Party coherence and organisation in the Commons was devastated by the Corn Law split – Peel himself averred that with regard to Peelite numbers, ‘I know not whether they are sixty or six’.<sup>24</sup> This confusion persisted for much of the 1850s, as several MPs drifted in different directions – indeed, a list of ‘Peelites regular’ in the papers of William Jolliffe included ten Scots members, of whom at least four were arguably still (or soon to be once again) Conservative.<sup>25</sup> The inclusion of Scottish MPs on such lists reveals that Scotland came under the purview of the new party organisation; Jolliffe and Philip Rose took charge of whipping and constituency matters respectively from 1853 onwards. Before this, the parliamentary organisation of the ‘unimpressive’ whip William Beresford was almost non-existent.<sup>26</sup> This

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<sup>22</sup> Henry Baillie to Disraeli, 10 Jan. 1850, Hughenden MSS, 117/2, ff. 80–3.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Extract from Minutes of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce’, 24 May 1864, Lord Advocates MSS, AD56/242.

<sup>24</sup> Peel to Aberdeen, 19 Aug. 1847, Aberdeen MSS, 43065, ff. 322–6.

<sup>25</sup> List, ‘Peelites regular’ [1853–54], Hylton MSS, DD\HY/18/8/108. Of the ten, all (with the debatable exception of Lord Elcho) were either no longer sitting for Scottish seats, out of parliament, or once again Conservative by 1860. For a more detailed discussion of this, see Chapter Five.

<sup>26</sup> Ward, ‘Derby and Disraeli’, 98.

presumably meant that the small number of Scottish Protectionist MPs were initially left to their own devices.

Though the partisan organisation of parliamentary activity expanded as the 1850s progressed, there appears to be no evidence of formal organisation or whipping based along Scottish territorial lines. Clerk's Scottish work was likely continued after 1847 by William Forbes Mackenzie, who acted as chief whip until November 1853.<sup>27</sup> After this, however, there is no evidence of a Conservative whip in the Commons with an explicit Scottish connection or designated Scottish duties. A steady decline in the numbers of Scottish Conservative MPs no doubt played a part in this. Similarly, while progress had been made, the party in the mid- to late-1850s was still diffuse, and even thought by some to be close to disintegration.<sup>28</sup>

It is perhaps more helpful, however, to view 'party' in this state as the norm, and the complex apparatus of the Peel years as somewhat atypical growths within the prevailing system of parliamentary government.<sup>29</sup> As such, informal arrangements for dealing with Scottish business by the party in Westminster should be judged in this light. Figures such as Derby (and later Disraeli) relied on advice and gossip from various Scottish MPs, at least some of whom sat for non-Scottish seats.<sup>30</sup> Towards the end of the period, Scottish business continued to be somewhat marginalised in the Commons, with debates held at the end of sittings.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the continuing existence of separate Scottish institutions, and the need for attendant legislation,

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<sup>27</sup> John Sainty and Gary W. Cox, 'The Identification of Government Whips in the House of Commons, 1830–1905', *Parliamentary History*, 16 (1997), 352.

<sup>28</sup> Jenkins, 'Whips in the early Victorian House', 271.

<sup>29</sup> Hawkins, 'Parliamentary Government', 668.

<sup>30</sup> See, for instance, the discussion on the opinions of Scottish MPs on the Reform bills contained in Alexander Baillie Cochrane to Disraeli, 28 Feb. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 41/1, ff. 80–5.

<sup>31</sup> Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 257.

meant that separate party arrangements continued to be necessary for Scottish Conservatives, however informal and restricted these might be.

Party organisation in the House of Lords was also organised, and in some ways more formalised. For general parliamentary business, by 1838 there already existed an office in Westminster, ‘maintained by subscription’, in which ‘two or three persons are employed to furnish us (Lords) with periodical abstracts of the Bills in progress through the House of Commons’; it was thought desirable by Aberdeen that an additional employee to deal with ‘Scotch business alone’ be added to this arrangement.<sup>32</sup> On the joint advice of Sir John Hope and Buccleuch, Edinburgh Advocate David Mure was recommended for the role.<sup>33</sup> Candidates for the job, it was thought, should be ‘gentlemen:— of some knowledge of life and the world combined with business talents – with whom communication (if wished by any Scotch peer) would be agreeable’.<sup>34</sup> It was also thought that no professional fee for their services should be offered. Based outside of London, and designated by Buccleuch as the ‘Parliamentary correspondent in Edinburgh’, Scottish bills and parliamentary papers were sent to him, as were reports of ‘the votes of both Houses’, and ‘the Scotch petitions’.<sup>35</sup> This position was described by Mure as a short ‘experiment’, and no record remains of whether it came to be more permanent.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, it underlines that the party in the Lords, though by no means a paragon of efficiency, was at least as organised as the party in the Commons.

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<sup>32</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 10 Feb. 1838, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 79–81.

<sup>33</sup> Lord Redesdale to Buccleuch, 4 Dec. 1837, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/14; Hope to Buccleuch, 16 Jun. 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/1–2. Mure was later to serve briefly as Lord Advocate in Derby’s 1858–9 ministry.

<sup>34</sup> Hope to Buccleuch, 16 Feb. 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/6–8.

<sup>35</sup> Buccleuch to Hope, 30 May 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/9; Hope to Buccleuch, 16 Jun. 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/1–2.

<sup>36</sup> David Mure to Hope, 6 Jul. 1838, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/22/3–4.

Though less powerful than the Commons, the Lords played an important part in executing the legislative functions of the state. Indeed, this was particularly true for Scotland in legal terms, as until 1876 the Lords acted as the ultimate appeal court for Scottish cases; the lack of a requirement for a Scottish judge on the panel led to occasional rulings which were based in English law.<sup>37</sup> Given that the Scottish Conservative leadership and many of its most prominent members sat in the Lords, it is unsurprising that the upper house was such an important centre for Scottish activity. Much like in the Commons, partisan meetings of Scots peers were held. Joint Commons-Lords gatherings were rare, yet in some instances they were held along territorial lines, such as in 1845 when a meeting of ‘Scottish peers, peers connected with Scotland and representatives of Scotland in the House of Commons’ was convened to discuss issues related to banking north of the border.<sup>38</sup>

The main difference evident in peers’ meetings, however, was greater autonomy – they were more inclined to decide their chosen course among themselves, rather than accepting the wishes of the party leadership. This tendency was exacerbated by the less than tactful persuasive efforts of Wellington and Aberdeen. Many countervailing factors, however, ensured that effective organisation of Scottish peers could be carried out. The Scottish peers (that is to say, both Scots with British titles and those elected for the Scottish representative peerage) were chiefly handled by the Duke of Buccleuch. Others, such as Aberdeen, performed this role on occasion.<sup>39</sup> Though by no means noted for his personal charm, Buccleuch

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<sup>37</sup> Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations’, 252.

<sup>38</sup> Gash, ‘Parliamentary Organization’, 142; Peel to Buccleuch, 9 Apr. 1845, Peel MSS, 40564, f. 200.

<sup>39</sup> Gash, ‘Parliamentary Organization’, 141–2, 153–4.

was not unpopular among the peers, and was certainly more personable than the cold and aloof Aberdeen, or the elderly and near-deaf Wellington. Perhaps more importantly, a great many of the Scottish Lords possessed only Scottish peerages, and therefore owed their place in Westminster to election, sixteen of their number being selected by the whole Scottish peerage. There were already institutional mechanisms to keep the Sixteen organised, which included maintaining their qualifications and organising proxy voters for their election. Initially, this work was undertaken by Advocates and paid for by the Treasury, but ‘latterly ... by each peer whom they assisted’.<sup>40</sup>

Before 1832, the Scottish representative peers had been managed by the third Duke of Buccleuch on behalf of Henry Dundas, though there were occasional upsets.<sup>41</sup> Between 1832 and 1847, every single member of the Sixteen was Conservative, at every single election; in being elected, an explicitly partisan element to their conduct was introduced. The twenty-eight Irish representative peers, on the other hand, were elected for life, and so were not nearly as influenced by this feature.<sup>42</sup> The Sixteen were effectively nominees of the party: ‘Scotch peers ... I have written to the Duke of Buccleuch to state to him my opinion that he ought to settle with the government who they wish to have returned in the event of a vacancy’.<sup>43</sup> In addition to handling the peers within the Lords, Buccleuch also took ‘an active charge in the management of the peers election. This has given me a great knowledge of that great body’; he thought that during the post-Reform Whig

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<sup>40</sup> Melville to Rosslyn, 16 Dec. 1832, Rosslyn MSS, GD164/1795/1.

<sup>41</sup> M.W. McCahill, ‘Chapter 2. The Representative Peers of Scotland and Ireland’, in ‘Special Issue: Texts & Studies 3: The House of Lords in the Age of George III’, *Parliamentary History*, 28 (2009), 45.

<sup>42</sup> McCahill, ‘Representative Peers’, 44.

<sup>43</sup> Lord Lauderdale to Rosslyn, 2 Mar. 1835, Rosslyn MSS, GD164/1801/7.

administration the Sixteen had ‘acted with a spirit of independence, I believe without a precedent’.<sup>44</sup>

Having long been accustomed to supporting the government of the day during the Dundas ascendancy, the peers had effectively been Ministerialists above all else. Their newfound intransigence during the Grey Ministry, combined with the fact that the Treasury was no longer subsidising their necessary administrative functions, was a strong indication that they were now firmly partisan – and monolithically Conservative at that. Partisan considerations now trumped personal connections and familial ties when it came to election, as in 1832 when Lord Home refused to support his brother-in-law’s candidacy, despite his being ‘one with whom I have held for years in the greatest intimacy and friendship. But no consideration on earth shall induce me to vote for him, in consequence of his having given his support to the existing government’.<sup>45</sup> A full list of the peerage compiled in 1840 indicated that forty-five were considered Conservative, eighteen ‘Whig radical’, ten ‘doubtful’, and ten unknown.<sup>46</sup> In practice, the Conservatives therefore enjoyed complete control over the election of the Sixteen. Successive voting lists running from 1831 to 1847 present a narrative of consistent and increasingly entrenched uniformity, as Buccleuch gradually refined and entrenched a partisan voting bloc which made such elections a mere formality.<sup>47</sup> The Scottish Conservative peers were a distinctive and

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<sup>44</sup> Buccleuch to Peel, 31 Dec. 1834, Peel MSS, 40408, ff. 143–7.

<sup>45</sup> Lord Home to [?] Foreman Home, 25 Jun. 1832, Home of Wedderburn MSS, GD267/14/16/7; see Appendices B and D.

<sup>46</sup> ‘List of Scotch Peers’, 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/579/6.

<sup>47</sup> Peerage election lists, 1831, 1833, 1835, 1837, 1841, 1847, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/579/7. This increase in Buccleuch’s influence went hand-in-hand with his increasing reach in other areas of the party, as explored in Chapter Two.

important part of the party in Westminster, and, moreover, perhaps one of its most organised and cohesive sections before 1847.

After the Corn Law split, the election of the Sixteen and the handling of peers in Westminster itself was taken over by Eglinton, but it was clear from the outset that Buccleuch would be a hard act to follow: 'Is it proposed to send circulars to those peers who voted with us? Who would undertake this? ... There is no one in our House at all to be compared to Buccleuch ... and influence with many of them'.<sup>48</sup> Though many of the grander Scottish Conservative magnates who held British peerages had voted for repeal, the generally less wealthy Sixteen largely came out on the Protectionist side – ten voted against repeal, four in favour, and two abstained. Eglinton thought that the 'four black sheep' should be removed, especially as one, Lord Rollo, was 'a stupid old fool whom nobody knows or likes'.<sup>49</sup> Others, however, were thought harder to shift due to their popularity with Buccleuch and the wider Scottish peerage.

The party split rendered the Sixteen vulnerable to the election of non-Conservatives for the first time since before 1832, as the loyalties of Scottish peers became more suspect. For instance, Eglinton stated that after his meeting with Lord Elgin, he 'could not fathom from him whether he was a Peelite or not'.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps because of this general confusion, it was decided that 'taking a strong line in the Scotch Peers election' was unwise, especially as the principal obstacle to securing the Sixteen, Buccleuch, was 'as much with us as he dares to be after his performance

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<sup>48</sup> Dalhousie to [?], 31 Dec. 1846, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/578.

<sup>49</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 23 Aug. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/3; See Appendix D.

<sup>50</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 22 Nov. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/8.

of last session'.<sup>51</sup> It was decided not to 'meddle with any of the sixteen, but to insist upon filling up any vacancies which may occur with men of one party', in order to 'act on the defensive with the Whigs, and to be conciliatory to any repentant Peelites'.<sup>52</sup> This cooperation between the two wings of the old party continued throughout the 1850s, such as in 1853 when the Protectionists had no viable candidate to put forward for a vacancy. It was therefore decided to allow Buccleuch to put forward a Peelite candidate, as he had 'expressed his determination always to support the best man without reference to which section of the Conservative party he belongs to, and if possible to prevent a split'.<sup>53</sup>

The uncertain nature of many peers' loyalties continued to dog party efforts to reclaim its hegemony, such as with the seventh Lord Seafield, who was thought to be a Peelite merely because he had not been 'staunch' in supporting a local Conservative parliamentary candidate, and was married to the sister of a peer whose allegiance was doubtful.<sup>54</sup> Despite these issues, Scottish Conservative peers were, relatively speaking, in a better position than the party in the Commons, with the overall Conservative majority restored by 1858.<sup>55</sup> Eglinton and Derby were close, and both in the same chamber, whereas Scottish MPs, alongside their other UK colleagues, were forced to rely on Disraeli in the Commons at a time when many backbenchers were still profoundly unsure of him. Derbyite and Peelite peers cooperated more harmoniously than their counterparts in the Commons. Moreover,

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<sup>51</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 2 Sep. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/4; Eglinton to Derby, 4 Oct. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/6.

<sup>52</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 2 Dec. 1846, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/10.

<sup>53</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 21 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/134; Eglinton to Buccleuch, 29 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/137.

<sup>54</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 25 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/136.

<sup>55</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 228, 400–1.



many of Eglinton's efforts in Westminster, including whipping, were bolstered by Lord Colville, a Scottish representative peer who was appointed a Lords whip in 1852 and 'possessed good sense, knowledge, and tact'.<sup>56</sup>

Overall, the Scottish section of the party was a somewhat distinct and cohesive entity in the House of Lords, especially as the leading Scottish Conservatives throughout the whole period were members of the Upper House. As such, it was, at times, more effective than the Scottish contingent in the Commons. After the Corn Law split, the declining number of Scottish Conservative MPs meant that, relatively speaking, this imbalance was exacerbated towards the end of the period.

As a prominent Scottish Conservative put it to the new Protectionist leader after the schism, 'bodies of men in the House of Commons, like bodies of men out of it, can effect nothing unless arranged and directed – that without the tie of party they are the bundle of sticks unbound'.<sup>57</sup> Yet the members of the party in both Houses were never entirely unbound; certainly, constraints tightened or loosened, but the Conservative party continued in some form or other to organise itself within Westminster throughout the period. Though all bound together as a British bundle, the party also accommodated some elements of territorial distinctiveness, again with varying levels of constraint.

The profound changes which took place within the party in terms of parliamentary organisation illustrate that there was no straightforward separation between its electoral and parliamentary functions.<sup>58</sup> These two broadly defined facets

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<sup>56</sup> Jenkins, 'Whips in the early Victorian House', 267; Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 127.

<sup>57</sup> George Hope to Derby, 5 Apr. 1847, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/1047.

<sup>58</sup> Gash, 'Electoral Organization', 131.

were themselves amorphous, changing both in scope and prominence as party fortunes, and the very definition of 'party' shifted. Likewise, the division between Scottish, British, and other territorial party sections was never entirely clear-cut or stable. Personnel were intimately involved in aspects which crossed lines, meaning that the Scottish Conservative party in parliament was somewhat distinctive, but only in a restricted sense.

## **II. Scottish National and Local Governance**

The activity of the Conservative party, when it was in office, was almost inseparable from much of the everyday business of government. Moreover, parliament largely operated on the premise that its purpose was to oversee the running of the Empire, leaving much domestic decision-making in local hands. In the case of Scotland, this was further complicated by the mixed division of governmental responsibilities and activities between local, Scottish and British levels, resulting in a system which arguably contained elements of an informal administrative devolution.<sup>59</sup>

The Conservative party played a prominent role in the governance of Scotland. This included the involvement of Conservative Lords Advocate and the wider Faculty of Advocates. In addition to this, the party was also involved in the everyday administration of Scotland through municipal and judicial bodies. Given Peel's long periods in office, governmental and parliamentary politics were closely

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<sup>59</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 49.

linked until 1847. After this, the short-lived nature of Derbyite governments, combined with broader changes taking place within Scottish civil society, meant that the Conservative party's formal influence over governance was reduced.

Nevertheless, the party continued even in this period to exert a significant level of influence over Scotland. There has been a heavy emphasis within Scottish historiography on the Whig dominance of Edinburgh, focusing on their prominent political lawyers. What is often overlooked, however, is that the majority of the Scottish bar in the middle of the nineteenth century was Conservative in inclination. The Liberals maintained a strong grip on the formal levers of power.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the bar and judiciary played a significant role, as 'law and politics were inextricably intertwined in Scotland'.<sup>61</sup>

The Lord Advocate was, in a formal sense, chief prosecutor in Scotland and merely an advisor to the Home Secretary.<sup>62</sup> In practice, however, he was the *de facto* Minister for Scotland at Westminster and head of governance within Scotland, exercising a substantial amount of autonomy. It was an inescapably political role, as was that of the role's deputy, the Solicitor-General. It was in the area of lesser legal appointments that the lawyer-dominated section of the party, headed initially by Sir John Hope, was most influential. Indeed, at the start of the first post-Reform Peel administration, a tussle between Buccleuch and Sir John Hope over Scottish legal appointments presaged the shift in party power from Edinburgh lawyers to county magnates.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 9.

<sup>61</sup> Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation', 106.

<sup>62</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 47.

<sup>63</sup> See also the struggle between Buccleuch and Hope over the Conservative Association of Scotland, explored in Chapter Two.

The Conservative party played a prominent role in the workings of the Faculty, but it is also true that the Faculty itself played a prominent role in the party's, and the country's workings. The partisan make-up of the Faculty was one of the biggest stumbling-blocks to decisive government action. When there was harmony of opinion in Scotland on an issue, encompassing party leaders, judges and lawyers, and popular opinion, swift action could occur. Without broad support, however, inaction almost invariably followed. The 1850s predecessor bill to the 1868 Court of Session Act, for instance, was killed off because of the objections of two senior judges, and the Act of 1868 was passed only because it enjoyed the support of leading Conservative and Liberal lawyers.<sup>64</sup> While public opinion and leading politicians were predominantly Liberal in Scotland, especially after 1847, the composition of the judiciary and faculty did not reflect this: 'There will be no great difficulty in finding fit persons to be selected for promotion to the Bench; it is curious that with the exception of Rutherford late Lord Advocate, every Advocate of eminence is Conservative'.<sup>65</sup> Many middling Conservative Lords Advocate proved to be far better members of the senior judiciary. Duncan McNeill served as Lord Justice General and Lord President of the Court of Session between 1852 and 1867, while John Inglis was Lord President of the Court of Session from then until 1891, described by Omond as 'the central figure in the legal world of Scotland'.<sup>66</sup>

This Conservative judicial predominance had a significant impact on the course of Scottish history. Indeed, because common law was an important part of

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<sup>64</sup> Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 258.

<sup>65</sup> Buccleuch to Peel, 14 Oct. 1842, Peel MSS, 40517, ff. 14–16.

<sup>66</sup> Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 219–22.

society throughout the period, much of the everyday regulation of Scottish society was undertaken by the courts, rather than parliament.<sup>67</sup> The party's influence was essentially negative insofar as it thwarted reforms, or was exercised in the courts, which were ostensibly separate from the arena of public and popular politics. For these reasons, its impact on Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century has been somewhat overlooked in subsequent scholarly work.

The talent of Scottish Conservative lawyers did, however, hinder the party's selection of Lords Advocate. The loss of them to the bench was a constant problem throughout the period. Indeed, McNeill was only appointed Lord Advocate in 1842 on the understanding that he was 'not to insist upon his claim to be promoted to the Bench, otherwise obvious inconvenience will arise'.<sup>68</sup> Scottish Conservative lawyer Archibald Campbell Swinton summed up the drawbacks of the position neatly: put off by the 'brief tenure of office which any Conservative Crown Counsel is likely to have', even those who did seek the office were eventually 'seduced ... to claim the softer cushion of the bench'.<sup>69</sup>

Quite apart from the arduous and uncertain nature of the job, Conservative Lords Advocate also had the additional insecurity of their electoral base to consider. It was expected that Lords Advocate should hold a seat in parliament, which could throw up considerable difficulties when the policy work related to the position clashed with the necessities of electioneering. Some Lords Advocate had represented English constituencies before 1832, though this was recognised as less than ideal. Francis Jeffery, for instance, had sat for the pocket borough of Malton up until 1831,

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<sup>67</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 50.

<sup>68</sup> Buccleuch to Peel, 14 Oct. 1842, Peel MSS, 40517, ff. 14–16.

<sup>69</sup> Archibald Campbell Swinton to George Makgill, 25 Feb. 1867, Makgill MSS, GD82/472/5.

while his predecessor, Rae, had represented Harwich for the last three years of his pre-Reform tenure.<sup>70</sup> Between 1832 and 1868, however, Lords Advocate of all parties sat for Scottish constituencies, with only two (Conservative) exceptions. This again underlines the ways in which both governance and party affiliations were connected across national lines.

These factors contributed to the generally underwhelming quality of Conservative Lords Advocate. The first, Sir William Rae, was described by Michael Fry as exhibiting ‘impartiality, quiet good sense, and capacity for sensible reform’, but subsequent holders of the post were less talented.<sup>71</sup> Duncan McNeill was the last Conservative Lord Advocate to enjoy a lengthy tenure; subsequent Lords Advocate only served during the brief periods when the party was in office. No subsequent Conservative Lord Advocate up to 1868 (excepting the final one) lasted more than ten months in the position.<sup>72</sup> This was indicative of the wider problems facing the party; though there were a great many capable Conservative lawyers, almost none of them wanted the job. Primarily, this seems to have been due to potential loss of income, and the difficulties involved in gaining a seat in parliament. It was definitely preferable for a Lord Advocate to hold a Scottish seat, yet a near-impossible task to find one willing to return a Conservative (and a non-local Conservative at that) to Westminster. Inglis stood for Orkney in 1852 but was narrowly defeated. He then contested the County Antrim constituency of Lisburn at a by-election, but lost by

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<sup>70</sup> Gordon Pentland, ‘The Debate on Scottish Parliamentary Reform, 1830–1832’, *SHR*, 85 (2006), 114.

<sup>71</sup> Michael Fry, ‘Rae, Sir William, third baronet (1769–1842)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23005> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015]; see Appendix E.

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix E.

three votes; a Scottish Lord Advocate seeking election for an Irish constituency was entirely unprecedented.<sup>73</sup> During his second stint in office in 1858, Inglis was forced to sit for the English borough of Stamford. The various duties performed by the Lord Advocate made the position increasingly unworkable. All of this had the effect, at least when the Conservatives were in office, of pushing the focus of governance of Scotland in two directions; towards Westminster, but also towards the Scottish localities.

The forces at play within the realm of high politics were countervailed by the high degree of governmental autonomy which Scotland enjoyed on a local level. Many of the institutions which governed Scotland straddled the line between formal and informal, were firmly embedded in civil society, and were created locally rather than imposed from on high. Even in the burghs, though political power was held by the predominantly Liberal middle-class elite, this was not hegemonic.<sup>74</sup> As has been demonstrated, Conservatives sat on Town Councils in places such as Edinburgh and Glasgow throughout the period. It seems unlikely that they had no influence at all over the operation of local governance because, as Lindsay Paterson has observed, 'The Scottish middle class was too mundanely practical to allow ideological disputes to stand in the way of getting things done'.<sup>75</sup>

In the counties, local governance was generally less dominated by Liberals, local electors being subject to the same conditions which motivated the return of Conservative parliamentary candidates. Moreover, the peculiar position of the legal profession in Scottish society again operated in the party's favour. The Sheriff was

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<sup>73</sup> See Appendix E; Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 209.

<sup>74</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 71, 54.

<sup>75</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 57.

the chief local representative of the state, involved in practically all facets of governmental affairs within their jurisdiction (though to a lesser extent in the burghs and larger cities). The appointment of Sheriffs and Sheriffs Substitute was made by the Lord Advocate, after consulting local elites.<sup>76</sup> Though they were a slightly less politicised group than the Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General, Sheriffs were still frequently party stalwarts. Their affiliations bled into the execution of their duties, most prominently in their registration court decisions, as explored in Chapter One.

The party's in-built advantage was considerable; first, having spent a great deal of time in office before 1832 and up to 1847, Conservative Lords Advocate were able to manoeuvre sympathetic candidates into these roles, many of whom served for decades. Second, with the majority of the bar (from which Sheriffs were chosen) being Conservative in inclination, this hobbled the efforts of Liberals to combat this during their own periods in office. Even after 1847, when the Conservatives were seldom in power at Westminster, the occasional appointment of party stalwarts was managed, such as the appointment of William Edmonstone Aytoun as Sheriff of Orkney in 1852. Aytoun, a prominent poet and political thinker, was a frequent contributor to *Blackwood's*. Archibald Alison had refused the Scottish Solicitor-Generalship in 1834, eschewing a national position in favour of becoming Sheriff of Lanarkshire.<sup>77</sup> The influence of Sheriffs could reach into the cities, and their actions take on national significance – Alison's jurisdiction, for instance, included the city of Glasgow. In addition to cases affecting Scotland's largest city,

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<sup>76</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 54.

<sup>77</sup> Peel to Rae, 19 Dec. 1834, Peel MSS, 40339, f. 322; Home Drummond to Rae, 21 Dec. 1834, Peel MSS, 40339, ff. 332–3.



Glasgow Sheriff Court evolved into the *de facto* chief commercial court of Scotland. Not only did this ostensibly local position in fact afford him significant national influence, it also allowed him to continue to do so during the long periods when his party was excluded from office, up to his death in 1867. Sheriffs, moreover, were always present on the parochially based Poor Law Boards which, from 1845, increasingly administered social welfare on a local level in Scotland.<sup>78</sup>

The Established Church, in undertaking many of these social functions up to the 1840s, was strongly influenced by conservatism, as the predominantly conservative gentry continued to exercise patronage over parish appointments. After 1843, the final collapse of parish relief forced the Church to give way to local Poor Law Boards (which were, however, still organised on a parish by parish basis) and the national Board of Supervision, created in 1845.<sup>79</sup> While the Board of Supervision was dominated by liberals, and local boards by the liberally inclined middle classes and the clergy, their dominance was not all-encompassing. The success of the board system resulted in it being duplicated many times to administer other areas, and new authorities were also given to existing boards. These local and national boards were composed mainly of lawyers, members of other prominent professions, and the aristocracy. Their duties were diverse, and grew as legislation accumulated. They were, among other things, responsible for the Poor Law, lunatic asylums, prisons, borstals, housing regulation and property valuation.<sup>80</sup>

It is notable that the national Poor Law Board of Supervision, arguably the most important, was required to contain the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and

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<sup>78</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 54.

<sup>79</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 47, 49. For the party's role in formulating and administering the new Scottish Poor Law, see Chapter Five.

<sup>80</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 55, 52, 51.

Glasgow, two professional officers, and – crucially – the Sheriffs of three counties from different Scottish regions.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, aristocrats were still a significant presence on such bodies. The initial commission on the Scottish Poor Law had been chaired by Lord Melville. Indeed, the first Supervisory Board contained several Conservatives, and John McNeill, the Lord Advocate’s brother, acted as Chairman of that body until 1868.<sup>82</sup> Though no definitive evidence of McNeill’s political beliefs could be found, his worldview was characterised by a mix of moderate conservatism and whiggism. Moreover, he also served on other non-governmental bodies dominated by Conservatives, including as secretary of the committee organising the erection of a Duke of Wellington statue in Edinburgh.<sup>83</sup>

Local boards and commissions dealing with the varied aspects of local governance were largely directed by local elites, and in larger burghs of over 10,000 people were entirely outside the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervision. If indeed the period between 1830 and 1860 represented the zenith of Scotland as a ‘self-governing civil society’, then private organisations and charities also played a prominent role in the everyday operation of society.<sup>84</sup> Though the elites most involved in this area of civil society were predominantly Liberal, they were not entirely so; for instance, a list of the twenty-nine most active subscribers to such organisations in Edinburgh contains several Conservative names. Some, such as the Duke of Buccleuch, acted as figureheads, but others, such as Sir Adam Hay,

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<sup>81</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 31.

<sup>82</sup> Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 140, 144. John McNeill also conducted an inquiry into the effects of the Highland Potato Famine, and later headed a sharply critical inquiry into the conduct of the Crimean War.

<sup>83</sup> Cookson, ‘Duke of Wellington Statues’, 31.

<sup>84</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 31–2, 10.

Alexander Pringle, and Archibald Campbell Swinton, were more likely active participants.<sup>85</sup> These subscribers, with the exception of Hay who served in parliament before 1832, were all Conservative MPs or unsuccessful candidates during this period.<sup>86</sup> The role of partisan allegiances in determining the character of mid-Victorian civil society is nuanced and at times opaque; it is an area much deserving of further study.

Overall, the Conservative party had a strong presence, and a marked effect, on Scottish governance at national and local levels, though this declined as their periods in office became more intermittent. Nevertheless, they continued to exert some influence, though in a less visible or formal fashion. Conservatives exerted influence using a number of positions and institutions, including through the offices of Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General, and as members of national supervisory boards. At a local level, Sheriffs, members of local boards, and contributors to Scotland's vibrant tapestry of private voluntary organisations also included a significant proportion of Conservative party members or supporters. Thus, every level of Scottish society was at least partly shaped by the Conservative party, and conservatism more generally.

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<sup>85</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 100.

<sup>86</sup> See Appendices A and F.

### III. Westminster Conservatives and Scotland

While increasing responsibility for everyday regulation was granted by the central state to local bodies, Westminster party input on Scottish governance was by no means absent. The involvement of Westminster in Scottish affairs involved all parties; the highly integrated nature of Scottish governance within the Union guaranteed that Westminster would play a conspicuous role in its management. Yet, it remains the case that seemingly static institutional structures were dependent on day-to-day political circumstances. The nature and extent of this involvement in governance was often determined by who was involved – these were often partisan figures whose positions were dependent on which party was in power. As such, Westminster's role in Scottish governance waxed and waned. The Westminster Conservative party's role in this area was significant; during the early part of the period, partisan governance carried out within Scotland was mirrored by intimate Westminster involvement in Scottish affairs.

The party in Westminster was, if anything, more concerned with Scottish matters than their Liberal opponents, despite (or perhaps because of) that party's electoral ascendancy north of the border. After 1847, long periods in opposition, combined with lacklustre Lords Advocate, resulted in more intervention from Westminster party figures. Their efforts, while of mixed effectiveness, constitute evidence of continued central interest in Scottish affairs and a willingness to adopt innovative approaches. Home Secretaries did not take a close interest in Scottish affairs – Lord Palmerston was perhaps the Home Secretary most famously indifferent

to Scottish matters.<sup>87</sup> Sir James Graham was, however, the most prominent exception to this rule, serving in that office between 1841 and 1846. As has already been demonstrated, his involvement in the Scottish party's electoral business, particularly in western Scotland, was already established after Peel's dinner, and he was elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University in succession to Peel.<sup>88</sup>

After taking over the Home Office in 1841, Graham appears to have pivoted away from Scottish electoral business, though the less frequent nature of elections after 1841 may account for this. Like his predecessors and successors, Graham did not attempt to directly administer Scotland from Whitehall; he asked Buccleuch to undertake some activity, for instance, because affairs were 'better arranged by a cabinet minister on the spot, than by letters'.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, he complained to his Lord Advocate that 'we could do more by two hours of conversation than by writing volumes'.<sup>90</sup> Though figures such as Buccleuch, Hope, the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor-General met in Scotland in order to transact Scottish business, these meetings were themselves held at Graham's behest.<sup>91</sup>

Despite this delegation to party figures on the ground, Graham was a strongly influential figure in Scottish governance, in addition to his electoral interests. As well as organising Scottish meetings in his absence, he also summoned the Scottish law officers to attend on him at his estate near Carlisle to discuss Scottish affairs.<sup>92</sup> In organising the initial Poor Law Boards, he also kept party considerations in mind;

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<sup>87</sup> Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 259.

<sup>88</sup> Margaret Escott, 'Graham, James Robert George (1792–1861), of Netherby, Cumb.', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/graham-james-1792-1861> [accessed 23 Feb. 2017].

<sup>89</sup> Graham to Buccleuch, 28 Sep. 1842, Graham MSS, 79727, ff. 179–81.

<sup>90</sup> Graham to McNeill, 30 Sep. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 63–4.

<sup>91</sup> See, for instance, Graham to Buccleuch, 29 Dec. 1842, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/54/1–2.

<sup>92</sup> Graham to Buccleuch, 28 Sep. 1842, Graham MSS, 79727, ff. 179–81.

both Peel and Graham consulted with Rae over the political composition of the Board of Supervision, to ensure that there would not be ‘too strong an infusion of our political friends’, but at the same time seeking to appoint non-Conservatives who were ‘not offensive; constantly resident, and versed in country affairs’, such as Lord Dunfermline, who was considered ‘a Whig, but not violent in his political animosities’.<sup>93</sup> The appointment of those who supervised the new Scottish Poor Law apparatus, though ostensibly bipartisan, was not completely so. The party ensured that the board was as Conservative (or, failing that, as moderately Whiggish) as possible. Such activities occasionally led to conflict between the Scottish and UK wings of the party, such as when Graham’s appointment of an acquaintance as Sheriff Clerk of Edinburghshire drew the ire of Buccleuch. Though Graham denied that his candidate was ‘a stranger in the county of Edinburgh’, he conceded that the unilateral appointment could be regarded as ‘a breach of the respect due to you [Buccleuch]’.<sup>94</sup> Graham played a prominent part in governmental business north of the border, but it was necessary for him to do so on the basis of local advice, and through negotiation with native party figures.

Lord Aberdeen also had a significant input on a legislative and governmental level. Even before his brief period acting as head of the Scottish party, he had also agreed to ‘attend to Scotch Bills which have been brought from the House of Commons’.<sup>95</sup> Aberdeen was concerned about this area, concurring with Hope’s sentiments that ‘we ought to take some means to secure Scotch business in the House

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<sup>93</sup> Graham to Rae, 29 Dec. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 72–4.

<sup>94</sup> Graham to Buccleuch, 31 Dec. 1842, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/54/5–6.

<sup>95</sup> Aberdeen to Hope, 19 May 1836, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 68–9.

of Lords, its due share of attention'.<sup>96</sup> His input on Scottish issues, most notably the Church question, was substantial – William Gladstone thought that 'the opinion which will have by far the greatest weight in determining the course of the Conservative leaders and party upon this matter, will be Lord Aberdeen's: after him I think Graham's, Clerk's, and Rae's'.<sup>97</sup> This descending list rather neatly sums up the hierarchy of party influence, though only for the Church question, and only at that precise moment in time. More broadly, the prevailing pattern was one of mixed competencies and competing spheres. This was underlined by Hope's influence over Aberdeen despite his controversial standing with the party and wider nation; he and Aberdeen exchanged hundreds of letters on the Church question.<sup>98</sup>

Before 1847, the extent of central party involvement was further complicated by the position of Peel himself. He was a frequent visitor to Scotland, and had a fairly deep knowledge of the country, going so far as to tell Aberdeen that 'there is no one, hold Scotchmen, who feels a stronger attachment to that country than I do'.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, having been Home Secretary for a great deal of the 1820s, he was well-steeped in the often murky issues of Scottish politics.<sup>100</sup> It was likely this interest and background which led him to involve himself deeply in complex party issues such as the dissemination of Scottish patronage. Even minor figures such as Scottish constituency agents appealed directly to him for favour when moving south.<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, prestigious (though symbolic) appointments also benefited from his close attention – when deciding on the next Lord-Lieutenant of Linlithgowshire,

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<sup>96</sup> Aberdeen to Hope, 10 Feb. 1838, Aberdeen MSS, 43327, ff. 79–81.

<sup>97</sup> William Gladstone to John Gladstone, 9 Dec. 1839, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/225, ff. 239–41.

<sup>98</sup> G.I.T. Machin, 'The Disruption and British Politics, 1834–43', *SHR*, 51 (1972), 21.

<sup>99</sup> Peel to Aberdeen, 11 Nov. 1849, Aberdeen MSS, 43065, ff. 391–4.

<sup>100</sup> Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 262.

<sup>101</sup> James Blackwood to Peel, 4 Mar. 1844, Peel MSS, 40541, f. 59.

he stated ‘How anxiously I have been turning in my mind the means of making an appointment ... After reviewing over and over again’.<sup>102</sup> He took extensive advice from a small number of party figures, and normally relied on Buccleuch (in addition to Rae and a few others) to make the most appropriate recommendation. Buccleuch was also a major conduit through which patronage requests reached Peel.<sup>103</sup> More general intelligence from Scotland, on the other hand, reached Peel from a wide variety of sources, including contacts presumably acquired during his Glasgow dinner. He corresponded with the Lord Provost of Glasgow and Robert Lamond, chiefly on how various Scottish and British issues were affecting popular opinion and electoral prospects in the city.<sup>104</sup>

More broadly, the party’s treatment of Scotland during the Peel years contradicts the widely held perception, exacerbated by the handling of the Church crisis, that it neglected Scottish business – three significant Scottish bills were shepherded through parliament in 1845 alone, and Peel’s government of 1841–6 contained four Scottish ministers.<sup>105</sup> The role of Westminster figures in the Scottish party during the Peel era was significant, embracing both the governmental and electoral. This role, however, was very far from autocratic; senior party members were more than willing to take advice from all levels of the Scottish party, and to devolve responsibility where appropriate.

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<sup>102</sup> Peel to Buccleuch, 29 Apr. 1843, Peel MSS, 40527, ff. 305–6.

<sup>103</sup> See, for instance, Buccleuch to Peel, 15 Feb. 1843, Peel MSS, 40525, ff. 1–2.

<sup>104</sup> See, for instance, Sir James Campbell to Peel, 7 Jul. 1841, Peel MSS, 40485, f. 79; Lamond to Peel, 2 Nov. 1841, Peel MSS, 40493, ff. 396–7; Lamond to Peel, 21 Jun. 1841, Peel MSS, 40318, ff. 263–5.

<sup>105</sup> Hutchison, ‘Anglo-Scottish Political Relations’, 259–60.



Given their long periods out of office after 1847, and the decreasing size and importance of the Scottish Conservative parliamentary contingent, it might be expected that links between senior Westminster figures and Scottish governance would be diminished. Certainly, the quality of Derby's Lords Advocate would superficially suggest that this is the case. Though there is some truth to this assumption, Derby was not entirely unacquainted with Scotland, having visited and toured the country on various occasions.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, he in fact dealt with some Scottish patronage himself, in those relatively rare instances when he was in a position to dispense it.

Indeed, he was careful to cultivate intellectual and literary Conservatives, having gone out of his way to procure a cadetship for the nephew of James Blackwood, of the publishing family behind *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*.<sup>107</sup> The patronage that he did dispense was somewhat less aristocratic in nature than Peel's. Though it is likely that this was partly due to the number of Scottish magnates who followed Peel, he nevertheless focused on prominent Scottish figures who had remained loyal after the Corn Law split. His decisions in this regard were very astute given the limited means at his disposal, and illustrate that he possessed a fairly good knowledge of the situation north of the border – or, at least, a willingness to listen to the more perceptive Scottish Conservative voices. For instance, Eglinton beseeched Derby not to 'lose sight of Alison and Aytoun, who have done so much service'.<sup>108</sup> William Aytoun was duly appointed Sheriff of Orkney and Shetland.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 197; Hawkins, *Achievement*, 118.

<sup>107</sup> Derby to John Blackwood, 30 Oct. 1858, Blackwood MSS, 30011, f. 259.

<sup>108</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 26 Apr. 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/49.

<sup>109</sup> Theodore Martin, *Memoir of William Edmonstoune Aytoun* (Edinburgh, 1867), 135.

Archibald Alison, the best-selling historian and Sheriff of Lanarkshire, was made a baronet. The knowledge and skill of Derby was particularly evident here, as Alison, though a highly capable lawyer and very deserving of favour, held traditionalist views – by giving him to a baronetcy instead of a judgeship, Eglinton wrote to Derby that he had ‘made one man extremely happy ... at the same time you leave it open to yourself perhaps to appoint a more efficient judge ... this Baronetcy removes one great difficulty’.<sup>110</sup> Eglinton himself was a skilled manager of patronage, having been notably successful in dispensing it in another national context while serving as Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland.<sup>111</sup>

Largely on his own initiative, Derby was able to placate a longstanding and staunch supporter. At the same time, he avoided the bad publicity that Alison, notorious for his hard-line stance on public order, might have garnered, and was also able to appoint another candidate to the bench. This indicates that Derby was very well aware of Scottish political currents, and moreover, was able to navigate the murky waters with skill.

He was also careful to reach out to Peelites in Scotland. Though his 1852 ministry did not attract many Peelites, Inverness-shire MP Henry Baillie did agree to become joint Secretary of the Board of Control.<sup>112</sup> His relative generosity may have hastened the reconciliation of many Scottish Peelites (at least within the Faculty of Advocates) with the Conservative party, as by the time Aberdeen had left office in 1855 they had seen little reward for their loyalty. Peelites more generally had

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<sup>110</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 13 May 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/53.

<sup>111</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 15.

<sup>112</sup> Jones and Erickson, *Peelites*, 132.

benefitted from the lion's share of offices in the Aberdeen administration, but the opposite seems to have been true with regard to Scottish appointments.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, former Peeblesshire MP William Forbes Mackenzie informed Derby that he had 'found all the Peelites in a pitiable condition:— even under Lord Aberdeen their share of the good things was very small, but now that their party is out altogether, they see no prospect of any of the Judgeships or of the Sheriffships coming their way'.<sup>114</sup>

Derby was also open to innovative ideas in terms of Scotland's place in the constitution, as he was willing to alter the structure of its governance long before the creation of the post of Scottish Secretary in 1885. The Conservative party was more open to reform than the Liberals were generally at this time, though this may be partly because that party had a very competent and dedicated Lord Advocate in James Moncreiff, who served four lengthy terms between 1851 and 1869. He was an effective lawyer, legislator, administrator, and Commons speaker, and ably carried out the onerous duties of the office for twenty years. By contrast, his Liberal predecessor, Andrew Rutherford, had been unable to handle them.<sup>115</sup>

During the Conservative 1858–9 administration, Derby seriously considered constituting the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as 'a rival Official Agent, the minister for Scotland in the House of Lords, [and] a member of the cabinet'.<sup>116</sup> Intended in large measure to supersede the role played by the Lord Advocate, the plan was, however, unfeasible.<sup>117</sup> It was also Derby who solved the problem of Scotland's position relative to the appellate jurisdiction of

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<sup>113</sup> Angus Hawkins, *Parliament, Party and the Art of Politics in Britain, 1855–59* (Stanford, 1987), 19–20.

<sup>114</sup> Forbes Mackenzie to Derby, 25 Feb. 1855, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/154/9/10.

<sup>115</sup> Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 160, 231.

<sup>116</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 12 Mar. 1858, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/2.

<sup>117</sup> The reasons for this are discussed in Chapter Five.

the House of Lords. At select committee hearings on the topic in 1856, opinions given by the Scottish judiciary were split, though Duncan McNeill favoured appointing a Scottish lawyer to the tribunal as a life peer. Nothing was done until 1866, when McNeill wrote a lengthy letter to Derby suggesting that he retire from the Scottish bench, in order to take up a seat in the Lords. Crucially, he suggested that he could be ‘useful not only in the matter of Scotch appeals but also in reference to other Scotch business’.<sup>118</sup> Though McNeill was too old in the event to be of much use in either legal or party business, Derby gave him a peerage in 1867. This was (at least in part) an attempt to alleviate the shortage of senior Scottish party figures, and possibly to reorient Scottish governance away from the Lord Advocate.

By the mid-1860s, Derby’s Scottish contacts had largely dried up through death, electoral defeat, and other forms of attrition. This was illustrated by Buccleuch’s complaint to Derby that, with regard to the Trusts Administration (Scotland) bill, ‘the progress and almost the existence of this bill had been kept so quiet, that few know anything of it ... I had never even heard of it’.<sup>119</sup> In his 1858–9 ministry, Derby had made Henry Lennox a Junior (Scottish) Lord of the Treasury. Lennox was the younger brother of the then-future sixth Duke of Richmond and Gordon, and sat for Chichester, where his family had significant influence. There had in fact been rumbles of discontent in the Scottish party that such a figure was taking partial charge of Scottish business.<sup>120</sup> After the resignation of Lennox, the role was held by Peter Blackburn, and then by Sir Graham Graham-Montgomery in the next

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<sup>118</sup> McNeill to Derby, 5 Oct. 1866, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/60/2/15.

<sup>119</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 27 Jun. 1865, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/14.

<sup>120</sup> Hawkins, *Art of Politics*, 114.

Derby ministry – both were effective nonentities.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, it is notable that no Scottish Conservative MP served in a full cabinet post during the entire period, though peers did do so.

It was probably this lack of Scottish confidants which prompted Derby to renew his overtures to Buccleuch. He hoped to tempt him back into his former position in the Scottish party, or at least into a more active one. Perhaps given the inadequacy of his Lords Advocate, he also offered Buccleuch's son Henry Douglas-Scott-Montagu, then resident in Hampshire, the position of *de facto* Minister for Scotland in the Commons. Derby presumably thought that Douglas-Scott-Montagu's English residency need not necessarily have been too much of an obstacle. Many Scottish Conservatives, even those with Scottish seats, spent little time in Scotland. Douglas-Scott-Montagu, however, thought himself 'unequal to take charge of and conduct Scotch business in the House', chiefly because he 'has lived but very little in Scotland, and never had the opportunity of taking any part in the ordinary county and country business'.<sup>122</sup> By the very end of the period, eminent Scottish Conservatives who actually resided within Scotland were thin on the ground; this had the effect of loosening institutional and personal ties between Scotland and the party leadership in London.

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<sup>121</sup> See Appendix F.

<sup>122</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 9 Jul. 1866, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/15.

#### IV. The Scottish Party in Exile

The main political divisions in Victorian Britain were not between its constituent nations, but instead between parties. As such, Scottish Liberals could often rely on English Liberals and religious dissenters to support their activities.<sup>123</sup> It is less recognised, however, that these cross-border linkages were perhaps even more intense within the Conservative party. The Scottish Conservative party was not confined to those MPs who sat for Scottish seats, or who possessed peerages and estates within the territorial bounds of that country. Rather, there was a group, whose size and influence varied over time, who can be reasonably designated the Scottish Conservative party in exile. The bulk of these figures resided in England, and mostly represented English constituencies, because of a paucity of winnable constituencies north of the Border. In addition to those who never held Scottish seats, eight of the seventy-seven Scottish Conservative MPs also went on to sit for English constituencies before 1868. Furthermore, most of these eight were among the more talented and active of their cohort.<sup>124</sup>

These exiles were an important, though heretofore unexamined, mirror-image counterpart to the large numbers of English Liberal ‘carpetbaggers’ who represented Scottish constituencies. Though they were less prominent in terms of influence within the territorial Scottish party, they could, at times, exert a significant influence over Scottish affairs at Westminster. This was bolstered by the relative overall size of the legislature – Scottish constituency MPs of all parties, after all, made up only

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<sup>123</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 63.

<sup>124</sup> See Appendix F.

eight per cent of the total membership of the Commons.<sup>125</sup> The relative importance of this group to the Conservatives increased later in the period; as the Conservative contingent returned by Scottish constituencies declined both in absolute size and relative talent, Scots-connected members sitting for seats elsewhere in the UK took on a greater prominence almost by default.

Who exactly held nominal membership of this group is indefinite. The Lords Advocate sitting for English seats towards the end of the period, for instance, definitely count as members of the Scottish party, despite the severing of the electoral connection to their home country. Scots sitting for English seats was by no means a new phenomenon; during debates over the First Reform Act, Sir George Murray noted that a disproportionate number of Scots sat for English boroughs. The phenomenon of Scottish MPs representing English constituencies was by no means confined to the Conservative party either; Jeffrey's defence of the Scottish Reform Act was bolstered by interventions from Joseph Hume, the Scottish radical and MP for Middlesex, as well as Sir James Mackintosh, then representing Knaresborough.<sup>126</sup> Given the initial surfeit of Scottish Conservatives, combined with a lack of contestable Scottish seats, however, this phenomenon was an increasingly Conservative phenomenon as the century wore on. While not in all cases unambiguous members of the Scottish Conservative party *per se*, they did maintain a sort of associate membership. This depended on a number of factors, but chiefly required a willingness to intervene in Scottish issues.

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<sup>125</sup> F.W.S. Craig, *British Electoral Facts 1832–1987* (Dartmouth, 1989), 153. This percentage varied slightly as some seats were disfranchised, and later reallocated to different constituencies.

<sup>126</sup> Pentland, 'Debate on Scottish Parliamentary Reform', 114, 118.

The first and most prominent of these MPs in the pre-Derby era was Sir George Clerk. Having lost his Edinburghshire seat in the 1837 election, he was brought in for Stamford at a by-election in 1838. Nevertheless, he continued to perform his Scottish-specific duties, as discussed earlier in this chapter. He remained in England for the rest of his political career, moving to represent Dover between 1847 and 1852. Nevertheless, he continued to involve himself with county politics in Edinburghshire up to and beyond the end of his career in parliament.<sup>127</sup>

Another southward-moving Conservative was John Campbell Colquhoun. Having lost his Kilmarnock Burghs seat in 1841, he contacted Bonham, hoping to find an English seat. Despite wishing to move south, Colquhoun was a fairly unusual specimen, insofar as he was a genuinely evangelical Scottish Conservative MP, though by no means a Non-Intrusionist.<sup>128</sup> He came in at a by-election for Newcastle-under-Lyme for a single term in 1842. Though he represented a Staffordshire constituency, Colquhoun contributed materially to the debates surrounding the Scottish Church question, as well as on religious matters in England and Ireland.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, he weighed in on other Scottish issues, including the proposed Scottish Poor Law.<sup>130</sup> Overall, he was generally more concerned with UK issues than Scottish issues after 1841, but nevertheless contributed significantly towards the progress of Scottish business in the Commons.

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<sup>127</sup> See the letters on Edinburghshire politics contained in Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7.

<sup>128</sup> This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>129</sup> See, for instance, HC Deb, 7 Mar. 1843, vol. 67, cc411–14 on the Scottish Church, HC Deb, 28 Jun. 1844, vol. 76, cc105–8 on English dissenting chapels.

<sup>130</sup> HC Deb, 12 Jun. 1845, vol. 81, cc419–20.



Very occasionally, Scottish politicians sitting for English seats attempted to move northwards, such as George Hope, former member for Weymouth and Southampton. He attempted to gain the favour of the local party in Linlithgowshire in 1852, hoping to play on his family connection to the Earl of Hopetoun, the county's principal grandee. However, his attempts were rebuffed by local Conservatives. This was despite his being a Liberal Conservative who would have been 'much more acceptable to the Ten Pounders' – significant elements of the local party thought that his progressive religious opinions would lead to accusations that he was 'a great deal of a Catholic'.<sup>131</sup> This illustrates that any Conservative wishing to move northwards needed strong local influence, connections, and background in order to even consider standing. Moreover, political stances, especially religious ones, which were somewhat less controversial in certain English constituencies, could be a serious electoral hindrance in Scotland.

At least a few Conservatives did, however, move northwards and take part in Scottish party business, though without seeking election. Robert Adam Christopher Dundas, for instance, intended to retire from a long Commons career, during which he had represented four English constituencies. He told Jolliffe of his intention to 'reside in Scotland', and to play a prominent role in the Scottish party, as he was 'glad to cooperate with the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Eglinton in achieving this'.<sup>132</sup> He then went on to inform Jolliffe of the state of affairs in the Scottish party. Though of little public political use, the movement of those outside of parliament

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<sup>131</sup> James Hope to George Hope, 3 Mar. 1852, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/173.

<sup>132</sup> R.A.C. Dundas to Jolliffe, 20 Nov. 1857, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/24/9/67.

between countries evidently served to create some informal ties between territorial and central branches of the party.

William Forbes Mackenzie played a rather prominent legislative role in exile, having lost his Peeblesshire seat in 1852. Despite this, the single most important contribution of his parliamentary career, the Forbes Mackenzie Act which regulated Scottish public houses, was passed in 1853, after he had returned to parliament as MP for Liverpool. This illustrates that significant legislation relating to Scotland could be passed by Scottish Conservatives no longer directly representing Scotland. Moreover, Forbes Mackenzie continued his involvement in Scottish party affairs, keeping Derby informed of the goings-on in Edinburghshire and other places.<sup>133</sup>

After 1847, the ever-decreasing number of winnable Scottish seats encouraged ambitious Scottish Conservatives to migrate southwards, resulting in a proportionately larger number of Scottish Conservatives representing English constituencies. Indeed, one of the most prominent exiles sitting on the backbenches during the second half of the period was Alexander Baillie-Cochrane, who was somewhat unusual insofar as he moved in both directions during the course of his career; he sat for Bridport between 1841 and 1847, Lanarkshire between 1857 and 1859, and then Honiton from that year onwards.<sup>134</sup> His base, however, was his estate at Lamington in Lanarkshire. His unsuccessful attempt to contest Southampton in 1852 illustrates the multi-generational diasporic nature of Scots in politics, government, and business. Baillie-Cochrane retained the strongest Scottish

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<sup>133</sup> See, for instance, Forbes Mackenzie to Derby, 25 Feb. 1855, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/154/9/10.

<sup>134</sup> M. G. Wiebe, 'Baillie, Alexander Dundas Ross Cochrane-Wishart-, first Baron Lamington (1816–1890)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5760> [accessed 23 Feb. 2017].

connections of the candidates. His two Liberal opponents, however, also retained more faded connections; Sir Alexander Cockburn was the grandson of the former MP for the Linlithgow Burghs, but had been born in what is now Romania while his father and mother were on a diplomatic posting.<sup>135</sup> Cochrane's other Liberal opponent, Brodie McGhie Willcox, was born in Belgium to an English father and Scottish mother, and brought up in northern England. He proceeded to follow closely in the footsteps of his London-based Scottish shipbuilder uncle, Augustus Brodie McGhie, and eventually co-founded P&O with Arthur Anderson, a native of the Shetland Islands.<sup>136</sup>

By the 1860s, even those Scottish Conservatives who had obstinately clung to their native residence, despairing of the situation at home, were considering migration. In 1834, Archibald Alison had refused the national post of Solicitor-General, preferring to reside in Lanarkshire as Sheriff of that county. By 1862 though, he was seriously considering responding a requisition from the electors of Lambeth to stand in a by-election there.<sup>137</sup> He eventually declined, but his son wrote to Disraeli, assuring him that his father hoped to 'have the pleasure of sitting with Disraeli on the ministerial side of the House of Commons' in due course.<sup>138</sup> Disraeli and Alison appear to have enjoyed a cordial and fairly warm relationship, despite the former having lampooned Alison in *Coningsby* as the longwinded Mr. Wordy.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Michael Lobban, 'Cockburn, Sir Alexander James Edmund, twelfth baronet (1802–1880)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5765> [accessed 23 Feb. 2017].

<sup>136</sup> Freda Harcourt, *Flagships of Imperialism: The P&O Company and the Politics of Empire from its origins to 1867* (Manchester 2006), 34.

<sup>137</sup> Alison to Disraeli, 26 Apr. 1862, Hughenden MSS, 116/3, f. 5.

<sup>138</sup> Archibald Alison [son of 1<sup>st</sup> Bt] to Disraeli, 2 May 1862, Hughenden MSS, 116/2, f. 7.

<sup>139</sup> Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby, or The New Generation*, ed. Shelia M. Smith (Oxford, 1982), 110.

Alison, by then in his seventies, did not in the event stand for election before his death in 1867.

Perhaps the single most capable Scottish Conservative MP in the mid-Victorian period was Sir James Fergusson, MP for Ayrshire from 1854 to 1857, as well as 1859 to 1868. His rocky parliamentary career illustrates why so many Scottish Conservatives had migrated, though he was only forced southward permanently after 1868. Initially brought in for Ayrshire at a by-election, Fergusson was only confirmed as MP after a hostile petition had been seen off.<sup>140</sup> Three years later, he lost the seat by a thin margin to a Liberal at the general election of 1857.

Still desirous of a career in parliament, he asked Disraeli to use his influence to find him another seat, and wrote to Jolliffe in a similar vein.<sup>141</sup> He was invited by Philip Rose to contest Cambridge, but he thought it impossible for him to run without ‘assistance from the party’, as he had already ‘stood two county contests in two years and a half almost entirely at my own expense’.<sup>142</sup> He eventually contested Sandwich in 1859, losing out on a seat by a mere fifty-four votes.<sup>143</sup> Crushed by yet another defeat, he offered abject apologies to Jolliffe, ruefully commenting that ‘Providence intended me to be a Scotch laird and not [an] MP’.<sup>144</sup> Later in 1859, however, the sitting member for Ayrshire passed away, and Fergusson was able to come in again for the county at another by-election, though again by a small margin, this time forty-six votes out of an electorate of 4,072.<sup>145</sup> Though unopposed in 1865, he left

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<sup>140</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 571.

<sup>141</sup> Fergusson to Disraeli, 4 Apr. 1857, Hughenden MSS, 127/3, ff. 153–4.

<sup>142</sup> Fergusson to Jolliffe, 10 Nov. 1858, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/18/6/65.

<sup>143</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 268.

<sup>144</sup> Fergusson to Jolliffe, 6 May 1859, Hylton MSS, DD\HY/24/16/126.

<sup>145</sup> Craig, *Election Results*, 571.

parliament altogether in 1868 when the constituency was split by the Second Reform Act. After some time out of Westminster, he spent the rest of his parliamentary career as a member for Manchester. It is notable that despite this chequered career, he did advise Disraeli on Scottish matters.<sup>146</sup> Fergusson was very much the exception to the rule; very few were willing to make such strenuous, repeated, and expensive efforts for such a tenuous hold on a Scottish seat.

English-based Scots, though often talented and possessing a deep interest in Scottish affairs, were, in the words of Hanham, ‘by no means leaders in Scotland’.<sup>147</sup> Though a significant part of the Scottish party, they could not take on a managing role. The perils of attempting to balance engaging in Scottish business with an English electoral base was amply illustrated by James Caird. A native of Stranraer, he unsuccessfully contested Wigtown Burghs as a Liberal Conservative in 1852.<sup>148</sup> He was eventually returned for Dartmouth as a Liberal in 1857, but in 1859 he decided not to recontest that seat, having irritated his constituents by spending much of his time in parliament on promoting an effort to merge the county franchise of Scotland with that of England.<sup>149</sup>

This tendency to move southwards continued after 1868; an 1878 committee of leading Scottish Conservatives, convened to assess what could be done to revive the party, were (with one exception) all Scots by education and residence, but ‘most of them had weakened their northern connection’.<sup>150</sup> This was unsurprising, as

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<sup>146</sup> Peter Harnetty, ‘Fergusson, Sir James, of Kilkerran, sixth baronet (1832–1907)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33112> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>147</sup> Hanham, *Party Management*, 158.

<sup>148</sup> Peter Gray, ‘Famine and Land in India 1845–1880: James Caird and the Political Economy of Hunger’, *Historical Journal*, 49 (2006), 196.

<sup>149</sup> G. E. Mingay, ‘Caird, Sir James (1816–1892)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4339> [accessed 23 Feb. 2017].

<sup>150</sup> Crapster, ‘Scotland and the Conservative Party’, 356.

though their numbers had recovered somewhat by the time of the report, only six Scottish Conservative MPs were elected in 1868. The existence of a large section of the Scottish party outside of Scotland serves as a useful reminder of the problematic definition of ‘Scotland’ as an entity which exists in a variety of spaces outside of the territorial.<sup>151</sup> Its reach extended beyond its borders; just as the rest of the Conservative party had a marked effect on Scotland, so did Scottish Conservatives (and Scottish conservatism) have a marked effect on the wider UK party.

Nonetheless, there were definite limits to this, as illustrated by the varied experiences of different exiles. For one, parliament, in addition to its role as national legislature, was also the arena in which many local matters were negotiated, debated, and legislated for, guarding ‘the interests of local power as a national institution serving local purposes’.<sup>152</sup> Deprived of a Scottish territorial and electoral base, the scope of activity which exiles could engage in was limited. This was a crucial distinction, as the representation of ‘local’ interests was an integral element of an MPs’ duties – indeed, it has been suggested that Scottish and Welsh MPs focused more on local issues than was the norm.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, the ties of background, family, social acquaintance, and cultural attachment were subject to deterioration; when Buccleuch’s son declined to act as Derby’s Minister for Scotland because he had little experience of local politics in Scotland, he thought it a ‘further hindrance living in Hampshire, [as] he would have every year less means of acquiring the necessary

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<sup>151</sup> Morris and Morton, ‘Where Was Nineteenth-Century Scotland?’, 90.

<sup>152</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 60.

<sup>153</sup> See Cragoe, ‘Local Interests in Parliament’, 133–48. Though this article largely focuses on Welsh MPs, it does touch briefly on Scots.

information'.<sup>154</sup> This was despite his position as MP for Selkirkshire, suggesting that even those with Scottish electoral bases could find themselves gradually moving away from the territorial Scottish party.

The Forbes-Mackenzie Act, a national piece of legislation promoted by a Scot representing English electors, was within the scope of exiles. Local activities directly affecting the individual counties and burghs were not. Exiles played a more prominent role in Scottish affairs as the period progressed, taking an active interest in Scottish parliamentary business and going so far as to spearhead Scottish legislation. However, this was an overall hindrance to the Scottish party, as these activities seem to have done little to promote the interests of the Scottish party within Scotland itself, especially on the local and electoral level. Indeed, their interventions may have been more tone-deaf than would otherwise have been the case, given their relative lack of everyday interaction with Scots on the ground. Their substantial role illustrates the extent to which Scottish Conservatives were integrated into the wider national party, and vice versa. Conversely, the limitations inherent in their activities highlights the aspects of the party that were unquestionably Scottish in a territorial sense, distinct and separate from the wider Conservative party.

## V.

Ultimately, the party in Scotland was most distinctively 'Scottish' on a local level, and least distinctive in the Houses of Parliament and the Carlton Club. Nevertheless,

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<sup>154</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 9 Jul. 1866 Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/15.

there were significant elements of the Westminster party's configuration which indicate that the separate nature of Scotland and Scottish affairs was understood and accommodated within the party apparatus. Separate arrangements were made for the organisation and coordination of Scottish MPs, both in terms of legislative activity, and within the bounds of the party. Separate whipping arrangements were pursued, and the party leadership made an effort to consult and gather Scottish MPs when a bill had particular relevance to that country. In addition to these top-down initiatives, much of the distinctiveness to be found in the Scottish contingent was independently inspired. Scottish MPs (and those MPs with an interest in Scotland) were active in carving out their own separate niche. This niche included the outside meeting of members to discuss and negotiate on Scottish legislation and maintaining lines of communication with the party leadership. The informal and strictly functional nature of this niche, however, was at least partly deliberate. Suspicion of formal territorial groupings, especially in a parliamentary context, was likely shared by many Conservatives. Indeed, the UK party itself within parliament was not a rigidly systematic entity.

In the House of Lords, party organisation was also pursued along territorial lines. This involved whipping (though of a more persuasive character), and at one time included an institutional arrangement intended to organise the legal interpretation of Scottish bills. There were also gatherings of Scottish peers – both Scots with British peerages and Scottish representative peers. The Sixteen, being elected, were perhaps the most institutionally politicised peers in the land – their places in the Lords were subject to periodic election, a process that was arranged and tightly controlled by the leaders of the Scottish Conservative party. Overall, though



operating within what might be seen as the institutional embodiment of Union, the Scottish Conservatives nevertheless managed, within wider party organisation, to maintain a modicum of distinctiveness.

The distinctiveness of Scotland in legal and governmental terms was also acknowledged by the party. The Conservative Lords Advocate and Solicitors-General up until 1847 were dedicated and largely effective administrators, in addition to being loyal party members. Indeed, partisan considerations played a central role in their appointment, election to the Commons, and the decisions which they made while in office. After 1847, however, short periods in government, the lure of the Scottish Bench, and a lack of contestable Scottish seats meant that finding effective figures to serve in these offices was almost impossible.

The party's relationship with the Scottish legal profession was less conspicuous, but nevertheless highly significant. A number of in-built advantages enabled them to exert a disproportionate sway over the legal profession, and consequently the everyday regulation of Scottish society. In particular, the favourable composition of the Faculty of Advocates and subsequent political inclinations of Sheriffs enabled them to influence county governance, as well as the work of the various local and national boards which increasingly administered Scotland's social welfare. Though these bodies were by-and-large liberal in composition, the party was nevertheless able to make its presence felt.

Conservatives influenced Scottish governance at every level, from national to local. These combined levels can arguably be termed a Scottish state. States are not 'the clear-cut entities which some political theorists have assumed', especially with

regard to Scotland in this period.<sup>155</sup> Beyond the formal mishmash of municipal authorities and boards, a great deal of Scotland's society was shaped by institutions embedded in civil society.

Much debate has been generated on the role of urban civil society in the transformation of Victorian Scotland. Graeme Morton's work concentrates on civil society in urban areas, asserting that 'however a definition of civil society is sharpened, its practical content – as far as contemporaries were concerned – existed in the town and city'.<sup>156</sup> Scotland was certainly a rapidly urbanising country, and Morris observes that the 1851 census places one in five of the Scottish population in the cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee, with 39.4 percent residing in settlements of over 5,000 by 1861.<sup>157</sup> Nevertheless, just over sixty per cent did not. They resided in rural areas, and in smaller towns, which were themselves deeply embedded in the social culture of the surrounding countryside.<sup>158</sup> Given the urban/rural partisan divide of the mid-Victorian period, the history of urban Scotland has often been, to an extent, implicitly the history of Liberal Scotland. Inadvertent conflation of the two has, perhaps, resulted in both being assigned greater prominence than they deserve. Just as Scotland was not as Liberal as has been assumed, neither was Scottish civil society as urban. The influence of the

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<sup>155</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 71.

<sup>156</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 8.

<sup>157</sup> R.J. Morris, 'Urbanisation in Scotland', in W. Hamish Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds), *People and Society in Scotland, Volume II: 1930–1914* (Edinburgh, 1990), 74.

<sup>158</sup> There is still much work to be done on examining civil society in the rural areas of Victorian Scotland. Carter, *Farm Life*, touches on this in regional terms, but there has unfortunately been no comprehensive national exploration of this, though Laurence J. Saunders, *Scottish Democracy, 1815–1840: The Social and Intellectual Background* (Edinburgh, 1950), does offer some intriguing insights up to 1840.

Conservative party, and of rural forces, on the character of Scottish civil society is thus deserving of further examination.

Alongside this, Westminster party leaders were also involved in Scottish affairs. Far from neglecting Scotland, prominent Conservatives were closely involved in Scottish politics. Figures including Sir James Graham, Aberdeen, and Peel were well-versed in Scottish particularities, often more so than their Liberal equivalents. Further, the assumption that central party interest in Scotland declined after 1846 is flawed; Derby and Disraeli showed a strong interest in Scotland. The deteriorating state of the party within Scotland itself encouraged them to innovate, in exploring new avenues of communication and potential administrative reform.

Below this senior level, moreover, MPs and other party figures with Scottish links and interests constituted a Scottish party in exile. These exiles played a prominent, though heretofore unacknowledged role in Scottish politics, despite not being resident in Scotland or possessing a native electoral base. The myriad activities of this widely dispersed group illustrate the extent to which the Scottish Conservative party was embedded within a greater UK Conservative party, and that Scots both within and outside of Scotland could have a marked effect on the character of the UK party. Conversely, the inherent limitations in the scope of their activity serves to highlight the areas in which the Scottish Conservative party was, in a territorial sense, autonomous and distinctive within the British Conservative party.

The party in its British and governmental context is the most difficult to shed light on, as the identity of discrete Scottish strands is complicated by the overarching nature of the Westminster legislative system, as well as the mixed and opaque nature of governance at different levels throughout the period. What is nevertheless clear is

that the Scottish Conservative party had notable influence over the wider party, local and national government, and wider Scottish society. Concurrently, the Conservative party's UK leadership had a marked impact on the Scottish party, and by extension Scottish affairs.



## CHAPTER FOUR: SCOTTISH CONSERVATISM IN THE AGE OF REFORM

The Scottish Conservative party (and the Conservative party more generally) was a composite entity up until the Corn Law split in 1846, both within parliament and in the country. It contained several different overlapping and fluctuating factions. These included what some historians have labelled ‘ultra tories’, ‘romantic conservatives’, ‘tory radicals’, ‘country tories’, and ‘liberal conservatives’.<sup>1</sup> The size, influence, and actions of these groups varied over time, with internal tensions being a strong indicator of the party’s internal vitality. As will be demonstrated, the Scottish party outside of parliament was predominantly country tory in character, with other brands of conservatism occupying subordinate positions. However, the party did not exhibit a separate and systematic Scottish ideology, here defined as an organised value-system underpinned by distinctive social and economic theories. Though the Scottish balance of conservatism was different to the party in other parts of the UK, it was still a variant of British conservative ideology. As such, the following discussion will primarily explore Scottish variants of a broadly defined British conservative worldview. There was no Scottish equivalent of the Independent Irish party; indeed, becoming a separate force did not enter the mind of any Scottish MP, regardless of their party allegiance. If the Scottish Conservative party had developed its own

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Cragoe, ‘Conservative Associations’, 586; Maxine Berg, *The Machinery Question and the Making of Political Economy, 1815–1848* (Cambridge, 1980), 253; F. David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (London, 1979), 211–12.

ideology, as opposed to somewhat variable attitudes on sets of issues, this would have been clearly evident in parliament.

The parliamentary Conservative party in the 1830s and, to a lesser extent, 1840s was conspicuously harmonious, and prided itself on its ability to maintain a generally united front.<sup>2</sup> This unity was aided by the very nature of the party led by Peel; as Norman Gash has pointed out, ‘Conservatism in theory and the “Conservative party” in practice were two separate things’.<sup>3</sup> As such, the superficially united broader party contained divergent strands of conservatism, which was reflected in the ‘independent’ nature of many of its adherents. Divisions within the parliamentary party, however, were generally more muted. This bolstered the ability of the those in Westminster, not strictly beholden to their party allies or wider electoral base, to follow their own course.

The most problematic issue facing the various factions of Scottish conservatism was the Church crisis, which cut across internal factional lines, as well as external party ones. This originally concerned Church Extension, which aimed to expand the Church of Scotland’s reach into the rapidly growing cities through the use of public funds. Increasing polarisation within the Church and in wider society was fuelled by the progressively more vigorous demands of Evangelical Non-Intrusionists, who infuriated the Church’s Moderate faction by attempting to prevent patrons from ‘intruding’ a minister on a parish against the wishes of its congregation. This issue was one facet of broader tensions relating to the relationship between church and state which preoccupied many throughout the UK, and which had long

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<sup>2</sup> D.H. Close, ‘The Formation of a Two-Party Alignment in the House of Commons between 1832 and 1841’, *EHR*, 84 (1969), 269.

<sup>3</sup> Norman Gash, ‘Peel and the Party System, 1830–50’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 1 (1951), 56.

been an issue in Scotland.<sup>4</sup> A combination of wider British and explicitly Scottish factors led to its exacerbation north of the border in the 1830s.<sup>5</sup> Legal rulings which thwarted Non-Intrusionist efforts in the parishes brought into question the separation of temporal and spiritual authority in relation to the Scottish Established Church. The crisis threatened to devastate the Scottish party, and set significant elements of it in direct opposition to the UK party leadership. Nevertheless, the conclusion to the crisis, though harmful to the Scottish party in a popular sense, did not create a significant internal split. As will be explored, though the party contained a wide range of conflicting views on the matter, they were ultimately more united than divided.

### **I. Traditional Tories, Ultras, and Reaction to Reform**

The attitudes of ultra tories towards Reform were not entirely the result of knee-jerk rejections of change. For various reasons, they were strongly opposed to the new electoral system, particularly the new ‘tenpounder’ voters. Though ultras were initially strong within the Scottish party, their influence declined steeply during the 1830s. Despite this, their residual power impaired the party’s attempts to rehabilitate its public reputation. Though the 1832 election in Scotland was fought on the same set of issues as elsewhere in the UK, the longstanding reputation of pre-Reform

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<sup>4</sup> See Stewart J. Brown, *The National Churches of England, Ireland and Scotland, 1801–1846* (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Brown, *National Churches*, 168–9, 217–27.



Scottish Tories as particularly reactionary and authoritarian had a marked impact; the party lost proportionately more seats than the UK party as a whole.

The rank-and-file of the post-Reform Scottish party, like elsewhere in the UK, tended towards a more uncompromising anti-reformist position than its leaders, who operated within a parliamentary context which required negotiation and compromise.<sup>6</sup> One minor Scottish laird, Sir Duncan Cameron of Fassifern, wrote to his cousin that ‘I cannot describe how much I disapprove of the Reform bill, and ... I will make every exertion ... to go and vote for a Tory candidate’.<sup>7</sup> Archibald Alison had written a series of articles in 1831 and 1832 explicitly comparing Reform at home to the French Revolution abroad, and this apocalyptic attitude lingered in the Scottish Conservative mindset for a few years at least after 1832.<sup>8</sup> Despite some obstinacy, the prevailing attitude within the Scottish party was nevertheless one of begrudging pragmatism – though the Roxburghshire Conservative committee-member William Scott might assert that, in the wake of Reform, ‘our party is entirely paralyzed, and men look to what is passing as they would do a conflagration or a flood’, his main concern was that ‘we in Scotland have little or no experience in the business of popular elections, and that we must at first feel a little awkward in setting about the work’.<sup>9</sup> In tune with (or perhaps leading) wider Conservative opinion, Alison also immediately emphasised the importance of working efficiently within the new political framework.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Coleman, *Conservative party*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Duncan Cameron to Duncan Campbell, 22 Feb. 1832, Campbell of Barcaldine MSS, GD170/2265/27.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Michie, *An Enlightenment Tory in Victorian Scotland: The Career of Sir Archibald Alison* (East Linton, 1997), 149; Archibald Alison, ‘On Parliamentary Reform and the French Revolution’, *BEM*, 29 (6 parts, Jan–Jun. 1831).

<sup>9</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.

<sup>10</sup> Alison, ‘Duties of the Conservative Party’, *BEM*, 32 (Jul. 1832); Alison, ‘Change of Ministry’.

Though even the more hard-line party members had begun to temper their public language, much of the electorate generally reasoned, not unjustifiably, that their underlying attitudes had not changed substantially. Even before the passing of Reform, some of its opponents had taken to calling themselves ‘moderate reformers’.<sup>11</sup> Though the Scottish party came to accept the new situation, it never embraced it wholeheartedly. After 1832, Edinburghshire MP Sir George Clerk warned Peel that, in Scotland, ‘the chance of any Conservative especially one who had taken any part in opposing the Reform bill, [is] extremely doubtful’.<sup>12</sup> Though new candidates might not have opposed Reform, they had not been in parliament at the time, and belonged to the party who had opposed it. This was perhaps why, on the eve of the Second Reform Acts, Disraeli was informed by a Scottish Conservative MP that the continued unpopularity of the Scottish party was partially because ‘they can’t tolerate the supremacy of a party that opposed the Reform bill of 1832 and tried to keep them out of the power in the constitution’.<sup>13</sup>

By the mid-1830s, the influence of the ultras within the Scottish party was on the wane. Sir James Graham noted that while the Edinburgh party was particularly stagnant, ‘in the rest of Scotland the distinction between the Old Tory party and the Conservative Reformers is much less strongly marked and maintained’.<sup>14</sup> Traditionalist Edinburgh party members continued to exert a disproportionate influence over the party’s overall direction, by virtue of their residence in Scotland’s capital. Locally based national bodies, such as the Faculty of Advocates, served to

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<sup>11</sup> Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*, 106.

<sup>12</sup> Clerk to Peel, 23 Dec. 1832, Peel MSS, 40403, ff. 150–1.

<sup>13</sup> Graham-Montgomery to Disraeli, 21 Jun. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 137/1, ff. 81–8.

<sup>14</sup> Graham to Peel, 11 Oct. 1836, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 41–2.

provide traditionalists (especially lawyers) with more enduring institutional bases, though change was occurring even within these groups.<sup>15</sup> Their decline in Scotland more generally, however, was quite rapid. In practice, ultras made an active effort to compromise with other emerging forms of conservatism, or at least to keep their dissension out of the public sphere.

This was all, however, generally overlooked by the public. As such, Conservatives remained useful bogeymen for other parties. Politicians such as Fox Maule in Perthshire regularly described their party's candidates as a 'real Tory sort, a remnant of the old system', and used proposers who could describe themselves as 'a strenuous advocate of the Reform bill, – he was still a Reformer'.<sup>16</sup> Though Scotland's popular politics before 1832 had been spirited, the principles of the emergent middle-class electorate had nevertheless been galvanised by the Reform issue, to the detriment of the Conservative party.<sup>17</sup> John Phillips has argued that the growth of party loyalties in the English boroughs stemmed from the heated debate over the Reform Bills themselves – this was also a significant catalyst in Scotland's cities.<sup>18</sup> There is ample evidence that electors supported the Liberals and Whigs out of gratitude for their role in passing Reform. One Ross-shire and Cromarty voter, for instance, informed the Liberal candidate that 'Were I actuated by personal feelings and friendships, I should certainly give my humble support to the Conservatives' – because, however, the Liberals had given him the vote, he would 'from a feeling of gratitude... endeavour to influence others'.<sup>19</sup> Such attitudes were present even in the

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>16</sup> Printed Report of the Nomination of Candidates for Perthshire, 5 Mar. 1840, Abercairney MSS, GD24/1/1068/8.

<sup>17</sup> McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 189.

<sup>18</sup> See Phillips, *Reform Bill in the Boroughs*; Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*.

<sup>19</sup> George Mackay Sutherland to J. Stewart Mackenzie, 30 Jul. 1832, Seaforth MSS, GD46/4/145/3.

Conservatives' most reliable voting bloc – the rural tenantry. In Perthshire, a local laird informed Peel that in 1832 the 'feuars were joined by many of the tenantry from a feeling of gratitude to the party which had extended the franchise to them'.<sup>20</sup>

Yet, even the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, Sir John Hope, who in many ways epitomised the old Scottish Tories, was aware of the 'jealousy and distrust of the constant parade in front of them of the names of those they know before as the active partisans of the old and somewhat ultra Scotch Tory party' – he went on to state that 'Of that party, I must avow, the Scotch are thoroughly tired, and that feeling was one of the strongest which actuated Scotland in 1831–2'.<sup>21</sup> He evidently did not consider himself to be one of the 'ultra Scotch' Tories. This indicates that Scottish ultras, like their southern counterparts, possessed a more complex and nuanced set of views than has often been assumed.<sup>22</sup> Though they were not merely one-dimensional reactionaries, many new electors and the Conservative gentry were, to put it mildly, not fond of one another. The Scottish Reform Act had created a new class of elector – £10 proprietors in the villages of county constituencies and burgh districts. These were proportionately more likely to be religious nonconformists and staunch supporters of Reform. Their hostility to the party was recognised, with the feuars in the villages thought to be 'with few exceptions radical in their opinions, and would at all times vote for any demagogue'.<sup>23</sup> These electors were the object of

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<sup>20</sup> D. Morrison to Peel, 14 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40410, ff. 108–9.

<sup>21</sup> John Hope to Peel, 27 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 249–51.

<sup>22</sup> See David Eastwood, 'Robert Southey and the Intellectual Origins of Romantic Conservatism', *EHR*, 104 (1989), 308; James J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: Reaction and Orthodoxy in Britain, c. 1760–1832* (Cambridge, 1993), Chapters 4–9.

<sup>23</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, x; Morrison to Peel, 14 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40410, ff. 108–9.

particular attention (and contempt) by party members because of the ability of the ‘town element’ to challenge the party’s dominance of rural seats.<sup>24</sup>

Their attitude towards this very specific group, expressed in the candour of private correspondence, reveals the core attitude of party members towards this ‘element’. A former Scottish Tory MP, W.R. Keith Douglas, told Buccleuch that ‘the feeling among the Shopocracy, the lower grades of the land, and the master tradesmen of Scotland, at least of this part of Scotland [Dumfries], is one of deep malignity and hatred towards conservatism’.<sup>25</sup> The contemptuous way in which he described the tenpounders illustrates the depth of the hostility felt by Conservatives towards their enfranchisement. He sent a subsequent letter to Buccleuch stating that ‘Democracy [was] ... desired... [by the] majority of the town population of Scotland’.<sup>26</sup> The hostility, therefore, stemmed at least in part from a belief that new urban electors would be the core catalyst for further constitutional change, which would subsequently bring about societal collapse. Lord Melville, former leader of the old Scottish Tory party, concurred in this opinion of ‘the abominable ten pounders both in counties, and still more in burghs’.<sup>27</sup> Sir John Hope was even more explicit and scathing: ‘Our £10 voters in town and country are sour, unwilling, hard, unrelenting, and conceited Democrats’.<sup>28</sup>

The Conservative party made spirited efforts to regain lost ground ‘by purchasing ten-pound properties, and thereby getting them out of the hands of a class of men who can never be depended upon, and who should never, for their own sakes,

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<sup>24</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xi.

<sup>25</sup> W.R.K. Douglas to Buccleuch, 24 Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/4/2.

<sup>26</sup> W.R.K. Douglas to Buccleuch, 26 Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/4/3.

<sup>27</sup> Melville to Peel, 27 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 252–5.

<sup>28</sup> John Hope to Peel, 16 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 167–74.

have been entrusted with the franchise'.<sup>29</sup> As Reform could not be undone, Scottish Conservatives were determined to ensure that (what they perceived to be) the destructive tendencies of the new system were minimised. As such, their vigorous efforts in fighting registration battles and manufacturing fictitious votes were not merely practical actions. Rather, these efforts were perceived to be essential to the survival of society. According to their worldview, the ideal balanced constitution of the United Kingdom, a blend of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy embodied by the Crown, Lords, and Commons respectively, had been destabilised by Reform. This, in their view, vested too much power in 'democratic' forces. Efforts to exclude new electors and create client electors were an informal way to rebalance it on a local and practical level.<sup>30</sup> The Scottish Conservative party did not, therefore, eschew a policy-centred electoral strategy in favour of such tactics. Registration and vote-making themselves constituted a fundamental political policy, rooted in a deeply held conceptual worldview.

These attitudes were the most influential, but were not comprehensively so. Opinions of the tenpounders within the party were not uniformly negative. As early as 1832, the Roxburghshire Conservative committee thought it imperative to form an association 'open to all ... even the decent £10 freeholder ... there must be no black-balling of want of birth or rank'.<sup>31</sup> There were, therefore, some in the party who

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<sup>29</sup> 'Memorandum for the private consideration ... County of Midlothian', Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/24.

<sup>30</sup> Making such arguments publicly would not have endeared the Conservative gentry to newly enfranchised electors, including their own legitimately qualified tenants. This is likely the main reason why they did not explicitly link vote-making to the defence of 'property'. Instead, they made efforts to publicly highlight (what they perceived to be) hypocritical Whig and Liberal vote-making efforts, though with little success. For this, see Chapter One.

<sup>31</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.

advocated a positive relationship between landowners and urban electors, and made practical suggestions to bring this about. There were also tentative indications that tenpounders could be successfully courted, such as in Argyllshire, where ‘a Conservative candidate has stated that a new friendly disposition has been evinced by the village tenpounders, and ... the [progress] of the canvass has greatly exceeded the most sanguine expectation of the Conservatives’.<sup>32</sup> In general, however, the new Conservative organisations tended to be somewhat, though not entirely, exclusive.<sup>33</sup>

Overall, the Scottish ultras were a strong internal force in the years immediately following 1832, but declined rapidly during the course of the 1830s. Many of these hardliners made limited efforts to engage positively with the new set of circumstances, illustrating that they were not merely simplistic reactionaries. Indeed, some gradually evolved towards a more country tory mindset. Nevertheless, their attitude towards many of the new electors, which was shared to some extent by other conservative factions, was the main impetus for the strategy of influence and vote-creation that was to define the party’s activities for the entire post-Reform period.

## **II. Romantic and Radical Conservatism**

Perhaps unsurprisingly given its situation in the country of Sir Walter Scott, the Scottish party contained a distinct vein of romantic conservatism. These

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<sup>32</sup> Clerk to Peel, 10 Jan. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 14–17.

<sup>33</sup> See Chapter One.

conservatives were particularly uneasy about the effects of industrial growth and rationalism on society, and strongly supported religion as a pillar of social order. Like country tories and tory radicals, the ideal society, as envisioned by romantics, was agrarian and deferential. However, unlike these other groups, romantics were of a distinctly literary inclination. This literary interest was expressed through the particular veneration of a supposedly utopian medieval past.<sup>34</sup> Radical conservatism north of the border was almost non-existent, but a peculiarly Scottish romantic conservatism was evident in the Scottish party. It was, however, at this time, a fairly integrated subset of British romantic conservatism. Primarily, this was because, despite spirited efforts, Scotland was not fertile ground for any sort of politicised conservative romanticism.

Unique strains of Scottish toryism before 1832 can be traced back to native forces, as it was not merely an English import.<sup>35</sup> As such, the party in Scotland owed its existence to a process of territorial diffusion, rather than outside penetration.<sup>36</sup> The association of toryism with a romantic notion of Scottish national identity had its root in the late eighteenth century, as Henry Dundas played a role in shaping a tory vision of Union. This vision promoted Scotland's imperial and governmental participation in Britain and its Empire, while still retaining many of its ancient institutions. Later, the enormous popularity of the Sir Walter Scott continued to promote, in a cultural sense, the constitutional principles of Dundas after his fall

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<sup>34</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 162.

<sup>35</sup> Colin Kidd, 'The Rehabilitation of Scottish Jacobitism', *SHR*, 77 (1998), 73.

<sup>36</sup> Alvin Jackson, *The Two Unions: Ireland, Scotland, and the Survival of the United Kingdom, 1707–2007* (Oxford, 2012), 221; Alan Convery, *The Territorial Conservative Party: Devolution and Party Change in Scotland and Wales*, (Manchester, 2016), 36.



from grace.<sup>37</sup> Scott has been credited with ‘creating the community of Scotland by imagining it’, and his influence on romanticism and Scottish conservative politics continued long after his death in 1832.<sup>38</sup>

The Scottish Conservative party sought to utilise this version of history to create an image of a ‘natural’ Scottish society which was, above all, paternal. The paternalism of Scotland’s Conservatives was typified by a desire to promote a society defined by four main characteristics. Such societies were to be authoritarian, hierarchical, organic, and pluralistic.<sup>39</sup> Thus, society would be governed with rigour by the aristocracy, and characterised by a hierarchical separation between the propertied and those who depended on them. However, each individual was thought to possess both organic duties and reciprocal rights. Additionally, such a pluralistic society would emphasise the personal and the local, with the most important hierarchical relationships existing within the bounds of landed estates, parishes, and other such immediate spheres.<sup>40</sup> This elitist and deferential model stood in marked contrast to the image of Scotland and its past which eventually found its political expression in liberalism – respectable, independent, middle class, and pious.<sup>41</sup> Scottish identity contained strong elements of an ‘Anglo-British’ identity which emphasised English constitutional history and liberties, and Scottish reformers were able to appropriate this to create a ‘patriotic consensus’, emphasising the overarching Britishness of liberty. Scottish Tory anti-Reformers, by contrast, had focused their

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<sup>37</sup> Jackson, *Two Unions*, 223; Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 123.

<sup>38</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 59.

<sup>39</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism*, 2–4.

<sup>40</sup> This broadly defined model was, however, interpreted variously by different types of conservative.

<sup>41</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 48.

arguments on the practical advantages of Scotland's de-facto 'semi-independence', an argument which by this point ran contrary to the public mood.<sup>42</sup>

This public mood effectively excluded the party from urban Scotland in terms of parliamentary elections from 1832 onwards. In promoting the erection of public monuments and buildings however, Scottish Conservatives were still able to make their influence felt in urban Scotland. One of the most prominent of these efforts was the party's role in promoting the erection of the Wellington statue in Edinburgh. Though these efforts reveal the competing forces at play within Scottish and British conservatism, they were notable failures in their political objects; such Conservative-promoted statues did not have a galvanising effect on urban opinion.<sup>43</sup> More explicitly Scottish projects were embarked upon with the aim of promoting a distinctively conservative vision of society past and present, including the Robert Burns festival of 1844, in which the Earl of Eglinton played a prominent part.<sup>44</sup> Eglinton was the most prominent Scottish party member who vigorously promoted romanticism. His political outlook was influenced, but not defined, by this; though he objected to the effects of modern technological advances on society, he did not object to technology itself, and his own business interests included iron, coal, and railways.

The Burns festival represented an attempt by the party to expand beyond their domination of Walter Scott's legacy, which had been heavily alluded to in the

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<sup>42</sup> Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689–c. 1830* (Cambridge, 1993), 214; Alexander Murdoch, *The People Above: Politics and Administration in Mid-Eighteenth Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980), 27; Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*, 54, 93.

<sup>43</sup> Cookson, 'Duke of Wellington Statues', 26.

<sup>44</sup> See Alex Tyrrell, 'Paternalism, Public Memory and National Identity in Early Victorian Scotland: The Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844', *History*, 90 (2005), 42–61.

chivalric elements of Eglinton's 1839 tournament. They sought to appropriate the public memory of Burns for their cause, despite his more general association with radical and democratic ideals.<sup>45</sup> Though the festival met with public approbation, the attempt to associate the memory of Burns with an elitist and paternalist worldview was unsuccessful.<sup>46</sup> Even *Punch*, usually tone-deaf when it came to Scottish issues, shrewdly observed that there was 'a deep meaning' in the fifteen-shilling ticket price of the festival, intended as an 'unerring test of the sincerity of the heart through the breeches pocket', ensuring that the event was socially exclusive.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, in the practical world of electoral politics, romantic appeals rarely made an appearance, reflecting the fact that romanticism, though a significant underlying element of the Scottish party, was not dominant. Isolated candidates, such as Maitland Makgill Crichton in 1840, appealed to such sentiments by calling for 'Scotland [to be] represented solely by her own true-hearted sons, and those unfruitful exotic uprooted and cast forth ... [as then] the claims of our country would command more respect', but these were very much the exceptions to the rule.<sup>48</sup> Though efforts such as the Burns festival were failures in terms of political conversion, they did reinforce the landowner's place in local county politics through the exercise of 'soft power'.<sup>49</sup> Further, they reinforced and strengthened a romantic version of Scottish national identity which would go on to play a prominent part in the party's activity in the mid-Victorian period.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> See Christopher A. Whatley, *Immortal Memory: Robert Burns and The Scottish People* (Edinburgh, 2016), Chapters 1–2.

<sup>46</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 92; Tyrrell, 'Robert Burns Festival', 42, 47.

<sup>47</sup> *Punch*, 17 Aug. 1844.

<sup>48</sup> Maitland Makgill Crichton 'To the Independent Electors of the St Andrews District of Burghs', 2 Jan. 1840, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/36.

<sup>49</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 101; Tyrrell, 'Robert Burns Festival', 57.

<sup>50</sup> See Chapter Five.

The main outlet for Scottish conservative romanticism was in the wider British party. While Eglinton's 1839 medieval tournament was distinctively Scottish in some ways, it was also part of a larger British enthusiasm for such events; indeed, one attendee commented that 'all London, if not all England, was there'.<sup>51</sup> This was perhaps because the most romantically inclined Scottish Conservatives were, in this period, almost completely integrated into the overall phenomenon of British romantic conservatism. Eglinton's neighbour and friend, Alexander Baillie-Cochrane, went on to become a member of Young England. Cochrane later spoke at length about the deep effect Eglinton's tournament had on his own ideological development, despite that fact that he had been unable to attend: 'I was a very young man then; but I heard so much about it, I feel as if I had been present at it'.<sup>52</sup> Even before the formation of Young England, some of their romantic forerunners in the political sphere had been Scottish, such as Robert Monteith, a member of the Cambridge Apostles who twice contested Glasgow for the Conservatives.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, Peter Borthwick, the romantically inclined MP for Evesham, was a Scot by birth and education.<sup>54</sup>

Though dismissed as the purveyors of 'light-hearted mysticism', Young England nevertheless represented a distinct and briefly significant strand of conservatism in the 1840s.<sup>55</sup> It sought to restore the ideal of compassionate paternalist leadership, and looked to an idealised medieval society as its model.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 93; Lord Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister* (London, 1885), 78.

<sup>52</sup> Tyrrell, 'Robert Burns Festival', 48; Lamington, *Dandies*, 51.

<sup>53</sup> Lamington, *Dandies*, 87; see Bernard Aspinwall, 'Justice and Peace'.

<sup>54</sup> Richard Faber, *Young England* (London, 1987), 116; H. C. G. Matthew, 'Borthwick, Peter (1804–1852)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2921> [accessed 9 Jun. 2017].

<sup>55</sup> R.L. Hill, *Toryism and the People, 1832–46* (Philadelphia, 1975), 385.

<sup>56</sup> Robert Saunders, 'Chartism From Above: British Elites and the Interpretation of Chartism', *Historical Research*, 81 (2008), 476; Frank O'Gorman, *British Conservatism: Conservative Thought from Burke to Thatcher* (London, 1986), 19.

Baillie-Cochrane was the oldest, richest, and ‘most obviously Byronic’ of the Young Englanders. He was certainly closer to the core group than another Scottish member, Henry Baillie, brother-in-law of Young Englander George Smythe and MP for Inverness-shire.<sup>57</sup> Though Cochrane claimed in his memoir to be an outsider, his surviving correspondence does not bear this out.<sup>58</sup> Lord John Manners, one of Young England’s core members, wrote that Cochrane should, with ‘Disraeli, and Smythe, settle what you can, draw up an alliance, enact a code of laws – and then I will do all I can to subscribe to it’.<sup>59</sup>

Cochrane had even written a novel which touched on many of the themes explored in Disraeli’s *Sybil*. Moreover, in an interesting example of intellectual cross-pollination, Disraeli recreated the Eglinton tournament in his novel *Endymion* (though without the torrential rain which had marred the occasion).<sup>60</sup> Alex Tyrrell has recently suggested that Eglinton’s tournament was intended to be a ‘Scottish version of Young England’.<sup>61</sup> In fact, as the tournament preceded the formation of Young England, it is more accurate to see Young England as a British version of Eglinton’s tournament. The procession of country house visits which had heavily influenced the Young Englanders’ worldview most definitely included Scottish estates. Lord John Manners, for instance, was a regular visitor to Scotland, and at one point in 1844 wrote to Cochrane that he had ‘been making a fool of myself at Gordon Castle’ and was shortly to be ‘off to Culloden!!’.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, Disraeli had visited

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<sup>57</sup> Faber, *Young England*, 19, 116.

<sup>58</sup> Lamington, *Dandies*, 86.

<sup>59</sup> Lord John Manners to Alexander Baillie-Cochrane, 16 Oct. 1842, Baillie-Cochrane MSS, TD1029/34/6.

<sup>60</sup> Tyrrell, ‘Eglinton’, 93; Alexander Baillie-Cochrane, *Ernest Vane*, 2 vols (London, 1849); Benjamin Disraeli, *Endymion* (New York, 1880), 245–62.

<sup>61</sup> Tyrrell, ‘Robert Burns Festival’, 48.

<sup>62</sup> Manners to Baillie-Cochrane, 25 Sep. 1844, Baillie-Cochrane MSS, TD1029/34/6.

Scotland in 1825, when he visited the Abbotsford estate to meet Sir Walter Scott.<sup>63</sup> Given Scotland's prominent role in the romantic movement, it is unsurprising that the Scottish Conservative party contained some romantic elements. What is more interesting, however, is their relative lack of prominence. Rather than build a Young Scotland, romantically inclined Scottish Conservatives instead helped to make Young England a more British movement. As such, between 1832 and the late 1840s, Scottish Conservative romanticism's most important effect was to give a noticeably Scottish colour to the wider British movement.

Another strand of British conservatism in the 1830s and 1840s, tory radicalism, focused more closely on the practical realities of living standards. This vein was distinguished by its support for popular, bordering on radical, solutions to the Condition of England question.<sup>64</sup> Peel adopted a strategy of fostering alliance between the landed and middle classes. Tory radicals, on the other hand, sought to unite the interests of the working and landed classes. Though many Scottish conservatives were distinctly uneasy about the effects of industrialisation, they balked at the idea of forging alliances with those most affected by it. Scottish conservatives were conspicuously absent in the Factory Hours movement, with only a few isolated party members outside of parliament expressing support for its aims.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the extremely negative attitude of the Scottish party towards Chartism confirms that it was particularly unsympathetic to radicalism.<sup>66</sup> While some such as

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<sup>63</sup> Disraeli, *Autobiographical Notes*, Hughenden MSS, 26/2.

<sup>64</sup> Paul Smith, *Disraelian Conservatism and Social Reform* (London, 1967), 7.

<sup>65</sup> Ward, 'Working-Class Conservatism', 141; J.T. Ward, 'The Factory Reform Movement in Scotland', *SHR*, 41 (1962), 122.

<sup>66</sup> The Chartist movement in Scotland itself featured several distinctive elements, though the Conservative reaction to it was broadly similar to England's. See D.J. Rowe, 'The Chartist Convention and the Regions', *Economic History Review*, 22 (1969), 58–74; C. Troup, 'Chartism in

Alison had limited sympathy for their general goals, they had absolutely none for the manner in which the Chartists sought to realise them.<sup>67</sup> Further, though some Chartist votes were tactically given to Conservative candidates in the election of 1841, there was little love lost between them.<sup>68</sup>

Overall, then, the Scottish Conservative party were even less enthusiastic about the prospect of radical-aristocratic alliances than their English counterparts. Rather, their efforts in Scotland were strongly focused on courting the rural tenantry, the ‘respectable’ middle classes above the tenpounder level, and on creating votes for those whom they deemed ‘respectable’. Additionally, though Scottish conservatism contained significant romantic elements, their efforts to convert this into political support were unsuccessful, and efforts were thus diverted into wider British streams of romantic conservatism. Instead, country Tories emerged as the strongest single group within the party.

### III. Scottish Country Tories

The landed class made up the bulk of the Scottish Conservative party. Their conceptual outlook, and thus the dominant outlook of the party, was profoundly influenced by their position (or self-identified position) in the social hierarchy. The

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Dumfries’, *Dumfriesshire Transactions*, 56 (1981), 100–10; Leslie C. Wright, *Scottish Chartism* (Edinburgh, 1953); Alexander Wilson, *The Chartist Movement in Scotland* (Manchester, 1970); W. Hamish Fraser, *Chartism in Scotland* (Pontypool, 2010).

<sup>67</sup> Alison, ‘How to Disarm the Chartists’, *BEM*, 63 (Jun. 1848).

<sup>68</sup> See Henry Cockburn, *Journal of Henry Cockburn*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1874), i. 296–7; Malcolm Chase, ‘“Labour’s Candidates”: Chartist Challenges at the Parliamentary Polls, 1839–1860’, *Labour History Review*, 74 (2009), 70; Fraser, *Chartism in Scotland*, 110.

dominance of this group was not completely reflected in the composition of the party's Commons cohort, but it was nevertheless significant.<sup>69</sup> The Scottish Conservative gentry, like their counterparts in other parts of the UK, viewed parliament as a vital element of the balanced constitution. Though they were perhaps slightly more influenced by Enlightenment values and authoritarian beliefs than their southern counterparts, their primary concerns remained centred on localism, hierarchy, deference, and the maintenance of an agrarian society through protection. The Scottish Conservative party, both in and out of parliament, was deeply attached to paternalist principles. As David Roberts has pointed out, the positive expression of paternalism was not easy in a parliamentary context; 'patriarchal government' was essentially a local and personal concept, inherently unsuited to the formal and national nature of Westminster governance.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, paternalism of a traditionalist 'country tory' type was the bedrock on which Scottish conservatism was built.

Some conservative squires thought that agricultural tenants should be encouraged to participate in a newly enlarged party. This view was certainly more internally popular than the courting of tenpounders. One Perthshire Conservative complained to Peel that the county gentry did not involve their tenants in local politics, 'perhaps from the remnants of feudal feelings in Scotland, are still too much looked down upon as dependants or serfs'.<sup>71</sup> There was, therefore, a section of the party which recognised that it was in their interest to involve the tenantry in politics

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<sup>69</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>70</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism*, 267.

<sup>71</sup> Morrison to Peel, 31 Jan. 1836, Peel MSS, 40412, ff. 281–4.



on somewhat more equal terms. However, this attitude was by no means overpowering. As a rule, the ‘dependants or serfs’ attitude deeply permeated the Conservative gentry’s outlook, though they took great care not to betray this in their public utterances. Even the hardliner third Duke of Montrose wrote to his Factor before an election to politely express his hope that ‘friends, tenants and followers ... will not engage themselves on the destructive side of the question’.<sup>72</sup> Many members of the new Conservative Associations were socially inferior to the gentry, though well above tenpounders.<sup>73</sup> The Stirlingshire Conservative Association, for instance, included a schoolmaster, distiller, and two land agents.<sup>74</sup>

This hierarchical and paternalist attitude was generally similar to that of the English gentry. However, one aspect which was peculiar to Scotland’s landowning class (though perhaps not to Ireland’s) was the extent to which this was bolstered by a particularly robust sense of authoritarianism. The old Dundas Tory interest had been notorious for its authoritarianism from the 1790s onwards, and though this had mellowed by the 1830s, it was still markedly stronger than south of the border. This mindset was not most evident in the generally more quiescent Scottish countryside, however.<sup>75</sup> Rather, it manifested itself in the party’s uncompromising attitude towards urban disorder. Though the Home Secretary was nominally in charge of public order in Scotland, in practice this responsibility fell to the Lord Advocate.

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<sup>72</sup> Montrose to Stuart Jolly, 20 Dec. 1834, Montrose MSS, GD220/6/538/22.

<sup>73</sup> See Chapter One.

<sup>74</sup> Conservative Association of Stirlingshire, Forbes of Callender MSS, GD171/1919.

<sup>75</sup> This was perhaps less true of the Highlands, where social unrest was somewhat more common. See Eric Richards, ‘Patterns of Highland Discontent, 1790–1860’, in R. Quinault and J. Stevenson (eds), *Popular Protest and Public Order: Six Studies in British History, 1790–1920* (London, 1974), 75–114; T.M. Devine, ‘Unrest and Stability in Rural Ireland and Scotland, 1760–1840’, in R. Mitchison and P. Roebuck (eds), *Economy and Society in Scotland and Ireland, 1500–1939* (Edinburgh, 1988), 126–39.

There was significant disorder when Conservatives were in office, such as in 1842 when Lord Advocate Sir William Rae was terminally ill but refused to delegate responsibility. Because of this, Sir James Graham wrote to Rae's deputy, Solicitor-General Duncan McNeill, ordering him to 'take charge of the Public Peace: and the Commander of the Forces has been ordered to obey your requisitions for military assistance ... The state of the country will allow no hesitation or want of vigour at headquarters'.<sup>76</sup> Though sanctioned in an official sense by Whitehall, such decisions were in practice made at the discretion of government officers in Edinburgh.<sup>77</sup>

Below the level of national governance, local law officers (a disproportionate number of whom were Conservative) were also responsible for the maintenance of local order. Archibald Alison, in addition to his intellectual pursuits, was also the Sheriff of Lanarkshire, at this time the most rapidly industrialising and restless region of Scotland. His lengthy tenure provides a telling example of how Scottish conservatism's authoritarian paternalism could impinge on urban and industrial Scotland. When responsible for maintaining order in Lanarkshire in the run-up to the 1835 elections, he believed that Liberals might even have resorted to systematised violence if their majorities had not been so secure.<sup>78</sup> Though in favour of social reforms, he also strongly believed in public executions, and that the core cause of criminal behaviour was 'human wickedness'.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, he had become notorious by the late 1840s for putting down any hint of disorderly behaviour by force, especially

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<sup>76</sup> Graham to McNeill, 30 Sep. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 63–4.

<sup>77</sup> For these officers and their relationship to the UK party, see Chapter Three.

<sup>78</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 340.

<sup>79</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 59.

during the cotton-spinners strike of 1837–8, the riot and miners' strike at Airdrie of 1842, and the local Chartist unrest of 1848.<sup>80</sup>

In the rural localities, a great many Conservatives were responsible for maintaining the peace; during the 1835 election, for instance, violence in the Roxburghshire polling town of Hawick provoked the Conservative Lord Lieutenant, Lord Lothian, to order military intervention. This action was essentially a propaganda gift to the local opposition.<sup>81</sup> The gentry were also Deputy Lord-Lieutenants, local militia officers, and board-members of a host of local institutions, such as hospitals and schools.<sup>82</sup> Their authoritarian tendencies were most strongly displayed and reinforced during times of unrest. Though the day-to-day exercise of such power was characterised by negotiation and compromise, it nevertheless reinforced their perception that their authority was legitimate and justified.

Even in the realm of private industry, Conservatives made their authoritarian leanings abundantly clear.<sup>83</sup> In 1837, the Bairds of Gartsherrie, wealthy ironmasters, dealt harshly with a strike by their colliers. As James Baird pointed out, 'The other coal masters took no steps to resist it; but we resolved that we would not, if we could help it ... and we accordingly gave every man notice to quit in fourteen days'. The colliers were defeated after fifteen weeks, on the day after the Bairds had successfully secured the return a Conservative (Alexander Lockhart) for Lanarkshire

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<sup>80</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 69, Chapter 3; see also Ewen Cameron, 'Internal Policing and Public Order, c. 1797 to 1900', in Edward M. Spiers, Jeremy A. Crang and Matthew J. Strickland (eds), *A Military History of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2012), 442–5.

<sup>81</sup> See, for instance, *Caledonian Mercury*, 24 Jan. 1835.

<sup>82</sup> See Appendices F and G.

<sup>83</sup> More generally, research has suggested that paternalism was an implicit but significant feature in non-agrarian occupational areas, such as the Midlothian coal industry. See John A. Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian. 1800–1880', *SHR*, 167 (1980), 73–91.

at the election: ‘Some of our workmen had hoisted a small flag in honour of Mr. Lockhart's return, and as the colliers came forward, one of them ... said, “Mr. James, you have hoisted your flag today, and we have hauled ours down”’.<sup>84</sup> Whether originating from the McNeills, Alisons, Lothians or Bairds of the party, it is (to put it mildly) unlikely that such authoritarian attitudes won the party many urban admirers.

If the Conservative party in general drew its support overwhelmingly from the counties and landed gentry, this was even more true of its Scottish section. While landowners in other parts of the UK also enjoyed a pre-eminent position in the social hierarchy, Scotland's landowning aristocracy was by far the most concentrated; even by 1873, more than three-quarters of Scotland's total land area was owned by only 580 people.<sup>85</sup> Most of these did not make any appreciable mark on the national stage, but were nevertheless figures of considerable importance in their own localities. They were likely of more importance than their English counterparts, given their larger average landholdings, the smaller size of the Scottish professional classes, and the relative lack of yeoman landowners in the Scottish countryside. Arguably, these local figures had more impact on the everyday life of Scots than senior political figures.

There were different varieties of paternalism within the ranks of the landed classes – Scotland, like other parts of the UK, also boasted a stable of Whig magnates.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, a clear majority of Scotland's aristocracy, from grandees to minor proprietors, considered themselves to be Conservative. They drew upon

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<sup>84</sup> A. McGeorge, *The Bairds of Gartsherrie* (Glasgow, 1875), 67, 69.

<sup>85</sup> Carter, *Farm Life*, 24.

<sup>86</sup> For such Whig magnates, who included the Earl of Minto and Duke of Sutherland, and their paternalist outlook, see Roberts, *Paternalism*, 229–236.

Enlightenment values and ideas which emphasised communitarianism, with the base political unit viewed in a corporate rather than individual sense; collective groups such as the town interest, manufacturing interest, and agricultural interest were perceived as the proper way to conceptualise politics and society.<sup>87</sup> Because landowners saw themselves as the natural leaders of the all-important agricultural interest, it is unsurprising that Scottish Conservatives thought that the ‘natural’ way of viewing society was that ‘The conservatives must always have the support of the majority of the tenantry ... and without the tenpounders the opposite party would not make any effectual struggle’.<sup>88</sup> Such statements were common in the private correspondence of the conservative gentry, but the deeper worldview which underpinned such attitudes was rarely made explicitly clear. As Robert Blake observed, ‘The great majority of the inarticulate squires who voted against repeal of the Corn Laws neither understood nor cared about ... romantic, Gothic, high Church, quasi-Jacobite notions’.<sup>89</sup> The Scottish country Tories who were the backbone of the party were not concerned with drafting and implementing national programmes or policies. Instead, they were primarily focused on working quietly towards the maintenance of the status quo in their own immediate spheres of influence.

Those who actively promoted Scottish paternalism in an intellectual sense were somewhat rare. Though he spent his career grappling with the vicissitudes of a rapidly growing industrial Scotland, Archibald Alison’s popularity among traditional conservatives on both sides of the border was rooted in his own background. Most of

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<sup>87</sup> Jon Lawrence, ‘Paternalism, Class, and the British Path to Modernity’, in Simon Gunn and James Vernon (eds), *The Peculiarities of Liberal Modernity in Imperial Britain* (London, 2011), 147–150.

<sup>88</sup> ‘Memorandum for the private consideration ... County of Midlothian’, Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/24.

<sup>89</sup> Blake, *Conservative Party*, 56.

those who wrote for periodicals, though urban intellectuals, were either raised or attended school in rural areas, and experienced paternalism, authoritarianism, and the ‘natural’ social hierarchy throughout their lives.<sup>90</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that many of the reviewers, including Alison, viewed an ideal society as one that was commercial, but also paternalist and agrarian – agriculture was held to be superior to industry.<sup>91</sup> Michael Michie has illustrated that Alison’s work points to a ‘consistent appropriation of eighteenth-century themes’. Alison had, in his youth, attended lectures by William Robertson, Adam Smith, Thomas Reid, and Dugald Stewart, and himself asserted in his memoir that he ‘took with ... ardour to the study of political economy’.<sup>92</sup>

If Alison was fairly representative of the average Scottish country tory, this illustrates how such adherents were slightly different to their counterparts in the English squirearchy. Though they both promoted the maintenance of an agrarian, paternalist, and localist society, Scottish country tories were more influenced by the tenets of the eighteenth century Scottish Enlightenment – or, at least, the more paternalist and elitist aspects of it. Alison, and, by extension, many of his influential readers, likely took as their model the agrarian but also commercial society visualised and advocated by Adam Smith.<sup>93</sup> Purist and uncompromising political economic theories, promoting commercial over deferential relationships and Free Trade more generally, made Scottish country tories distinctly uneasy. Nevertheless,

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<sup>90</sup> F. David Roberts, ‘The Social Conscience of Tory Periodicals’, *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 10 (1977), 165.

<sup>91</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 36, 160.

<sup>92</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 1, 8; Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 38.

<sup>93</sup> Michael Michie, “‘On behalf of the Right’: Archibald Alison, Political Journalism, and Blackwood’s Conservative Response to Reform, 1830–1870”, in David Finkelstein (ed.), *Print Culture and the Blackwood Tradition, 1805–1930* (Toronto, 2006), 32, 119.

their own outlook was itself based on more moderate aspects of political economy, which included an acceptance of industry and commerce as essential elements of society. This was the most fundamental aspect which separated them from the backward-looking utopianism of the Young Englanders. They did not reject modernity itself, but instead disliked the thick ideological shell which increasingly surrounded and justified its more unwholesome aspects. This was evident even in romantically inclined Scots such as Eglinton; though he may have idealised and celebrated the past, he was very closely involved in the industrial society of the present.

Strong affection for their locality underpinned their party activities. As David Eastwood has pointed out, mere landownership did not automatically translate into political influence; it also had to constitute the ‘basis of public activity rather than remaining the means of personal economic benefit’.<sup>94</sup> On one occasion, an 1837 meeting of the Highland Society was used by Sir James Graham to promote the party’s interests, but also to gauge feeling towards it: ‘We dined 1,200 in a room erected for the occasion ... The Conservative feeling was strongly underestimated: the reception of the Duke of Buccleuch was enthusiastic; and a very fine disposition was evinced towards me’.<sup>95</sup> Activity undertaken by landlords was often reciprocated in kind. This reinforced their belief in the mutually beneficial nature of hierarchical and paternalist social structures. In 1839, for instance, in the wake of electoral violence at Hawick, the Duke of Buccleuch’s tenantry gave him a dinner, at which Sir James Graham attended; he thought that it would be ‘a great gathering from the

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<sup>94</sup> Eastwood, ‘Politics of Deference’, 42.

<sup>95</sup> Graham to Bonham, 9 Oct. 1837, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 7–9.

south of Scotland; and after the Hawick affair, and all that has been said about landlords' intimidation and fictitious votes in Scotland, it will be a splendid spectacle'.<sup>96</sup>

Though self-interest certainly cannot be discounted, from their own perspectives the public activity undertaken as a 'natural' result of landownership justified their moral position as local leaders. Paternalist solutions to various problems were not national, but instead centred on local action by (usually Conservative) landowners. In 1841–2 at Sanquhar, the Duke of Buccleuch paid 120 struggling weavers to build roads and draining, and put aside £800 to keep the rest employed in weaving at a three-quarters wage rate until economic conditions had improved.<sup>97</sup> Buccleuch, and many of the Scottish gentry, viewed this as paternalist conservatism in practice.<sup>98</sup> There was, nevertheless, an unquestionable disconnect between the attitudes and actions of the gentry and the reaction this engendered among significant sections of the electorate, especially in urban areas. New electors had an invigorated sense of their own importance and agency as individuals, and the outlook maintained by the majority of landowners did not take this into account. Some prescient Conservatives did notice this, such as one who noted that during the party's Perthshire by-election victory in 1832, 'the Tory landlords found it necessary to mix much more with their tenantry and to display a familiarity with and a kindness towards ... the tenantry'.<sup>99</sup> He asserted in a later letter to Peel that the party's success

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<sup>96</sup> Graham to Bonham, 25 Aug. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 67–8.

<sup>97</sup> Ian Levitt and T.C. Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working Class in 1843* (Edinburgh, 1979), 160.

<sup>98</sup> The family's patronage of artisans was extensive and multi-generational. See Stana Nenadic and Sally Tuckett, 'Artisans and Aristocrats in Nineteenth-Century Scotland', *SHR*, 95 (2016), 206–9, 212.

<sup>99</sup> Morrison to Peel, 14 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40410, ff. 108–9.



in Scotland's counties could be assured if 'all proprietors made friends of their tenants ... saw them daily – spoke to them of passing events and convinced them by daily experience that the interests and happiness of the landlord and tenant were identified'.<sup>100</sup>

Patrician landlords were less willing to engage with electors on the more equal terms which the reformed system had created. Moreover, though many landowners were generous philanthropists, many were not, and were castigated for it. Alison may have firmly believed that 'ascendancy of democracy had uniformly terminated in public misery', but he also often complained that 'the long-established selfishness of aristocracy had frequently in past times driven the people to resistance'.<sup>101</sup> Ultimately, not only was paternalism against the spirit of the age, it was entirely unsuited to the needs and conditions of industrial, urban society and the interests of its newly enfranchised electors.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, despite the often spirited and occasionally formidable efforts of the Scottish gentry, paternalist efforts had not even been particularly effective in the counties, especially as the countryside was itself also subject to the widespread changes being wrought on society.

Localist issues and attitudes deeply affected the political fortunes of individual candidates and MPs, which often blurred party lines and created local, Scottish, and British cross-currents. The short-serving Conservative MP for Inverness-shire was an archetypal country tory, content to sit quietly on the backbenches. One of his few notable interventions, however, came in 1837 when he broke with the general line taken by his party. He opposed a committee resolution

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<sup>100</sup> Morrison to Peel, 31 Jan. 1836, Peel MSS, 40412, ff. 281–4.

<sup>101</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 435.

<sup>102</sup> Roberts, 'Social Conscience', 167.

that no Welsh clergyman be appointed who was fluent in the Welsh language, recognising from his own experience of Gaelic that Welsh-language ministers would be of greater utility in successfully preaching to such congregations.<sup>103</sup> Localist-inspired positions could thus occasionally contribute to wider issues which were national in scope and in a parliamentary context. However, almost all Scottish Conservative MPs represented rural electors who were only peripherally concerned with the great urban problems of the day. As such, they had less interest in many pressing national questions. Protection was the most prominent exception to this, as it constituted a touchstone issue for both country Tories and liberal conservatives.

Though it was a British question, the protection issue nevertheless had some distinctly Scottish characteristics.<sup>104</sup> The wider protectionist ideological argument had effects on Scotland's distinct political, social, and economic milieu.<sup>105</sup> Though the politics of ideology in the Scottish counties generally played second fiddle to the politics of registration and influence, it was of paramount importance to the internal dynamics of all parties. Moreover, given the prominent role of political parties in bringing such issues to the fore, it no doubt provided the catalyst for the politicisation of many Scots, both electors and non-electors. Kenneth Cameron has noted that the strength of support for the Anti-Corn Law League in Scotland among agriculturalists

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<sup>103</sup> James Anderson, *Memoir of the Chisholm* (London, 1842), 192.

<sup>104</sup> For the British political dimensions to this issue, see Robert Stewart, *The Politics of Protection: Lord Derby and the Protectionist party, 1841–1852* (London, 1971); Anna Gambles, *Protection and Politics: Conservative Economic Discourse, 1815–1852* (Woodbridge, 1999).

<sup>105</sup> See K.J. Cameron, 'Anti-Corn Law Agitations in Scotland, with particular reference to the Anti-Corn Law League', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1971; K.J. Cameron, 'William Weir and the Origins of the "Manchester League" in Scotland, 1833–39', *SHR*, 58 (1979), 70–91; Fiona A. Montgomery, 'Glasgow and the Movement for Corn Law Repeal', *History*, 64 (1979), 363–79. There has also been innovative recent research on the popular aspects of this issue which takes care to integrate regional specificity, going so far as to include responses to the Corn Laws from the Shetland Islands. See Henry Miller, 'Popular Petitioning and the Corn Laws, 1833–1846', *EHR*, 127 (2012), 882.

and the working classes has been exaggerated.<sup>106</sup> Conservative strength in the counties, therefore, was not entirely due to vote-making, influence and registration activity. The party possessed a genuinely popular constituency in Scotland among those for whom protection was a prime issue. Even before the overwhelming Liberal victory across Scotland in 1832, a Liberal candidate was advised that ‘advocacy of the Reform bill will [not] be sufficient ... The Corn Laws are the matter which the farmers in Easter Ross are most anxious about ... they still believe that these iniquitous laws are beneficial to them’.<sup>107</sup> Similarly, across the country in southern Scotland, the former Conservative MP for Roxburghshire stated in 1841 that ‘Roxburghshire is carried as an agricultural district’, and that ‘the agriculturalists are unanimous in support of the law as they stand’.<sup>108</sup>

Apart from political and material considerations, this support was also at least partly ideological. Conservative protectionists strove to counter the assertion that repeal would lead to an increase in ordinary living standards, asserting that it would in fact have the opposite effect. As such, protection was portrayed as a way for government to promote ‘social cohesion, economic stability and political peace’, through the balancing of interests by varying tariffs.<sup>109</sup> Such arguments, while ultimately unsuccessful, provided an ideological and moral justification for protection, which at least partly explains why such views were not entirely restricted to Scottish agricultural producers.

Even within the agricultural sector, support for the Corn Laws was also strong in many areas where mixed farming was more predominant, and cereal

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<sup>106</sup> K.J. Cameron, ‘Anti-Corn Law Agitations’, ii.

<sup>107</sup> James Beaton to Lord Seafield, 7 Jul. 1832, Seaforth MSS, GD46/4/145/76.

<sup>108</sup> Francis Scott to Polwarth, 11 May 1841, Polwarth MSS, GD157/3016/3.

<sup>109</sup> Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, 57.

production less crucial. This was partly due to the touchstone nature of the issue; farmers of all types recognised that repeal would affect the entire agricultural sector, as free trade would not be restricted to corn. Moreover, higher corn prices were thought to have encouraged the cultivation of marginally productive lands throughout the UK – lands which Scotland, particularly in Highland areas, possessed in abundance. The conservative press encouraged this perception, and suggested that Scotland's impressive achievements in agricultural improvement meant that any significant dip in prices would render investments in these lands worthless. Indeed, even on Skye some complained that reduced freight and duty paid by outside breeders would ruin small tenants. Many of these tenants depended on fishing and restricted cattle sales, especially considering the decline in the kelp trade and public works.<sup>110</sup>

The Whigs were, nevertheless, resilient in many Scottish counties, which lent some weight to their claim that repeal has support from all sections of Scottish society. However, many ostensibly 'agricultural' counties contained manufacturing towns and villages of tenpounders, and many Scottish Whigs were often careful not to associate themselves too closely with the free trade lobby.<sup>111</sup> On the ground, smaller landowners and agricultural tenants were extremely unlikely to support the Anti-Corn Law League, though the League took great care to give prominence to those few who did. These were more likely to be politically conscious Liberals, like George Hope of Fenton Barns.<sup>112</sup> Even among agricultural labourers, the League

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<sup>110</sup> Cameron, 'Anti-Corn Law Agitations', 255–9.

<sup>111</sup> Cameron, 'Anti-Corn Law Agitations', 324.

<sup>112</sup> See C. Hope, *George Hope of Fenton Barns* (Edinburgh, 1881).

failed to combat the widely held conviction that a fall in prices would lead to a decline in work and wages.<sup>113</sup> Overall, the split between rural and urban interests was in fact more complex and nuanced than repealers sought to portray. Conservative efforts to maintain agricultural protection highlights the extent to which the paternal and elitist underpinnings of the Scottish party were intimately connected to protectionism. Repeal agitation was often viewed as a threat to the primacy of the landocracy, and to property in general.<sup>114</sup>

Conservatives made great use of protection, and often explicitly linked their perceived paternal role to the issue. A broadsheet extolling the virtues of Edinburghshire MP Sir George Clerk emphasised his focus on ‘Agricultural prosperity ... He’s a kind landlord – ask his Tenants about that’, whereas his opponent Dalrymple ‘cares more for the Edinburgh radicals than for all the farmers of Midlothian.’<sup>115</sup> Despite their public avowal to defend the agricultural interest, Scottish Conservative candidates made their unwillingness to act as a mere delegate of electors repeatedly clear at the hustings. Henry Home Drummond told his Perthshire constituents that ‘I cannot bring myself to believe that the gentlemen before me would wish to send me there as a mere voting machine’.<sup>116</sup>

It was not only electors who sought to control and influence their potential representatives. One prospective candidate was told by Lord Airlie that he could not give him his support, and that he ‘was certain that the Conservatives would not do so

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<sup>113</sup> Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, 80–1.

<sup>114</sup> Cameron, ‘Anti-Corn Law Agitations’, 276, 260.

<sup>115</sup> Broadsheet, [1832], Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/9.

<sup>116</sup> Printed Report of Home Drummond’s Meeting with Constituents, 28 Apr. 1840, Abercainey MSS, GD24/1/1068/7.

either, unless he could bend himself down to certain points'.<sup>117</sup> The prospective candidate declined to 'bend himself down', illustrating that the power held by the extra-parliamentary Conservative gentry had its limits. They could prevent a candidate's election, but could not make a successful candidate their delegate. This was especially true of incumbent MPs; once in place, the local gentry shied away from the possibility of provoking an expensive contest if the current MP were to retire.

The Scottish Conservative party in the Commons increasingly trod an uneasy path as the 1840s wore on, as Peel enacted measures which were increasingly unpalatable to the landed gentry. Though the Scottish country gentlemen were generally in favour of the Corn Laws, a disproportionate number of Scottish Conservative MPs followed Peel on free trade. This split was more than one of competing views on a single issue; it was at base 'a confrontation between two differing views of constitutional authority'.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, the larger and more talented magnates, including Wemyss, Dalhousie, and Buccleuch, were increasingly drawn into alliance with Peel after 1832.

There were two main reasons why a disproportionate number of senior Scottish Conservatives voted for repeal – one significantly more influential than the other. The less powerful factor was genuine ideological conversion – Dalhousie and Lord Elcho were won over to Free Trade on this basis. Both were fairly young, and had reached political maturity after 1832 when the ideals of political economy were

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<sup>117</sup> Lord Airlie to Francis Drummond, 19 Oct. 1834, Drummond of Hawthornden MSS, GD230/580/45.

<sup>118</sup> Hawkins, 'Parliamentary Government', 654.

increasingly pervasive. Despite the continued espousal of credible protectionist arguments up to and beyond 1846, such figures were not shaped by the political debates and circumstances of early nineteenth century, as their predecessors had been.<sup>119</sup> They were also closely involved in the somewhat more moderate politics of the party in Westminster, and possessed a weakened sense of the traditional paternalism which still pervaded the party in the counties.<sup>120</sup>

These examples, however, are not representative of the Scottish party as a whole. Other Scottish Conservatives in the Commons, though they may not have been diehard protectionists in the first place, primarily voted for repeal out of loyalty to the party leader (or their patron). Duncan McNeill, as Lord Advocate, remained loyal to the government, while A.E. Lockhart's seat was effectively controlled by Buccleuch. The course of his reconciliation with Derby followed a suspiciously similar timeline to that of his political patron. Overall, the majority of Scottish Conservative repealers were Peelites only in the sense that they followed Peel.

The social and economic background of MPs was not the most salient factor in determining how parliamentarians reacted to repeal.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, with regard to the wider membership of the Scottish Conservative party, it holds firm; larger Scottish magnates and those with a particular slant towards Peelite conservatism outside of parliament followed Peel, while many tenant farmers and smaller Scottish proprietors became the nucleus of the new Protectionist party. That this occurred, despite the lesser reliance of Scottish landowners on arable production, is a testament

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<sup>119</sup> See Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>120</sup> Peter Mandler, *Aristocratic Government in the Age of Reform* (Oxford, 1990), 205.

<sup>121</sup> See W.O. Aydelotte, 'The Country Gentlemen and the Repeal of the Corn Laws', *EHR*, 82 (1967), 47–60. For the characteristics of Scottish Conservative MPs in particular, see the prosopographical data analysed in Appendix G.

to the greater extent to which Scottish Conservatives held deeply paternalist, localist, agrarian, and hierarchical attitudes. Country toryism was the single most powerful influence on the Scottish party's general direction, though this was coloured by a distinctive affinity for Enlightenment values and a slightly more authoritarian tendency.

#### **IV. Liberal and Urban Conservatism**

I.G.C. Hutchison notes on the first page of his *Political History of Scotland* that liberal toryism was not seen to develop in Scotland in the 1820s.<sup>122</sup> This branch of conservatism was generally adopted by 'responsible, prudent, and orthodox men of business'. It sought to adapt traditional toryism to the needs and conditions of urbanisation and industrialisation, and, after 1832, to do this having accepted the Reform Act. Rather than seeking to form alliances with the working classes as tory radicals advocated, it courted the emergent commercial and urban middle classes, focusing on issues such as administrative efficiency over the 'condition of the people' question.<sup>123</sup> This brand of conservatism enjoyed some growth in post-1832 Scotland, especially in Glasgow and the west. It also enjoyed significant support from both the UK party leadership and some country tories.

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<sup>122</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 1.

<sup>123</sup> Blake, *Conservative Party*, 57; O'Gorman, *British Conservatism*, 26–7; Smith, *Disraelian Conservatism*, 7.



Though liberal toryism did make significant popular inroads in 1820s Scotland, it is notable that the Liverpool ministry did garner a degree of praise for its Scottish reforms, which included its actions in reducing political patronage, its appointment of acceptable ministers to government-controlled parishes, and its appointment of Whig judges to the Scottish bench.<sup>124</sup> This progress, however, was entirely forgotten in the wake of the party's strenuous efforts to thwart parliamentary Reform. After 1832, even traditionalist elements of the party were beginning to slowly come around, if not to the concepts which underpinned liberal conservatism, then at least to its organisational accoutrements. Even the hardliner W.R. Keith Douglas thought by 1835 that it was advisable to 'form resolutions recommending the constituencies within the counties and burghs of Scotland to form Constitutional Associations to act and support the object of fair and unrestrained election'.<sup>125</sup> In addition to the liberal 'Constitutional' designation which (ostensibly) indicated forward-looking conservatism, he also thought that such Associations should be formed in the burghs, indicating that the cause of liberal conservatism was considered promising in urban Scotland.

Though Michael Michie has claimed that Alison was out of step with the liberal conservative character of the Peel's leadership, Alison and *Blackwood's* in fact moved cautiously towards Peelism in the 1830s.<sup>126</sup> Though Alison had private misgivings about its more strident aspects, he and Peel maintained a sympathetic personal correspondence during the 1830s.<sup>127</sup> Though he was a traditionalist in many

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<sup>124</sup> Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*, 56–9; Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 128.

<sup>125</sup> W.R.K. Douglas to Buccleuch, 9 Apr. 1835, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/9/5.

<sup>126</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 129; Maurice Milne, 'Archibald Alison: Conservative Controversialist', *Albion*, 27 (1995), 421.

<sup>127</sup> See, for instance, Alison to Peel, 27 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40412, f. 1; Alison to Peel, 15 Jul. 1837, Peel MSS, 40423, ff. 329–30.

ways, he did move with the times, and was even ahead of them in his own limited fashion. For one, it has been noted that his ‘Duties of the Conservative Party’ article presaged Peel’s later Tamworth Manifesto.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, *Blackwood’s* itself was anxious to promote acceptance of Reform in the party; a letter was drafted to Alison in 1835, informing him that one of his earlier and more hard-line articles had been rejected because though ‘we may deplore the popery of the English Conservative Reform bill it is now the law of the land [and] we will not better our cause by ...’.<sup>129</sup>

Though mostly dominant, aristocratic and country tories were not the only section of the Scottish party. Buccleuch was advised in 1832 that it would be necessary to find commercial and industrial figures to stand as candidates.<sup>130</sup> Despite its country tory inclinations, party members did make significant efforts to find candidates of this type to stand in urban areas. Though generally unsuccessful at the polls, it does illustrate that urban conservatism did exist in Scotland – when Conservative candidates did stand in burghs seats, they very rarely received less than one-third of the vote.<sup>131</sup> As such, not only was there an urban Scottish Conservative party, it also enjoyed a significant degree of popular support (though very rarely a plurality).

Urban candidates were closely connected to burgeoning commercial and industrial interests, which occasionally threatened vulnerable sitting Liberals, such as Robert Wallace in Greenock.<sup>132</sup> Such candidates, even those who were strangers to

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<sup>128</sup> Alison, ‘Duties of the Conservative Party’; O’Gorman, *British Conservatism*, 131.

<sup>129</sup> Draft letter, John Blackwood to Alison, 1835, Blackwood MSS, 30005, ff. 109–13.

<sup>130</sup> William Scott to Buccleuch, 8 Jun. 1832, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/650/1/30.

<sup>131</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>132</sup> Patrick Stewart to Maule, 31 Dec. 1839, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/646.

their chosen constituencies, often put a great deal of effort into electioneering: ‘Perth City ... seat contested by Mr Black, a London merchant in the Conservative interest who has made great progress in his canvass’.<sup>133</sup> They often enjoyed strong support from the central party in London; Sir James Graham, for instance, entertained a high opinion of Robert Monteith. He informed Bonham that ‘Monteith is our best man for Glasgow, and there is an advantage in keeping him steadily fixed to that single object’.<sup>134</sup> The chief source of Conservative influence in the party’s most secure urban seat, the Falkirk Burghs, acknowledged the importance of the candidate in this setting: ‘I need not tell you how capricious a constituency a burgh one is, and how much depends on the candidate, the people employed to canvas, as well as the manner for canvassing’.<sup>135</sup>

This semi-autonomous stream within the Scottish Conservative party had a generally liberal conservative character, but it was nevertheless very similar – though not quite identical – to that of the country tories. R.L. Hill has suggested that there was ‘no Industrial Tory party or Industrial Tory group with an outlook or a policy of its own’ in England, an assertion which holds true north of the border.<sup>136</sup> Robert Monteith, for one, can be most readily understood as a romantic conservative. He was heir to a substantial textile fortune and intimately involved with urban and industrial interests. Nevertheless, he was also a Cambridge graduate with a deep interest in medievalism, who resided in a neo-Gothic mansion and later converted to Roman Catholicism.<sup>137</sup> Some prominent Scottish Conservatives were, however, more

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<sup>133</sup> Horne, *Notes on the Scotch Representation*, 1839, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/32.

<sup>134</sup> Graham to Bonham, 11 Jan. 1839, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 51–4.

<sup>135</sup> Robert Baird to William Forbes, 12 Jan. 1846, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/77/1.

<sup>136</sup> Hill, *Toryism*, 231.

<sup>137</sup> Aspinwall, ‘Justice and Peace’, 58–9.

clearly defined by their industrial interests. Lord John Manners experienced this during a tour of Glasgow given by Sir James Campbell (father of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman). Campbell was the founder of a successful firm of warehousemen, a Conservative Lord Provost, and an unsuccessful parliamentary candidate for the city in 1841: ‘At Glasgow Sir James Campbell showed us over his gigantic establishment, and expounded the various causes which are driving the English and Scotch manufactures to ruin. Competition and free imports, were the two main causes’.<sup>138</sup> It was therefore possible to reconcile protectionist leanings with industrial interests. More broadly, protectionist advocates had long been active in crafting arguments which appealed to urban and industrial interests.<sup>139</sup>

The Scottish Conservatives developed a significant urban interest in Glasgow during the 1830s, despite still containing prominent members such as the Duke of Montrose, who thought that radicals in his area were ‘affected by Glasgow Notions’.<sup>140</sup> Many party stalwarts recognised that ‘there are many whigs who are now only seeking some excuse to become conservatives. The feeling for conservatism has greatly increased during the last six months, but not to the same [extent as] ... in England’.<sup>141</sup> Though less pronounced north of the border, the party sought to capitalise on the increasing popularity of moderate Peelite conservatism. In Glasgow, this was aided by the heterogenous nature of the middle classes in that city, and the fact that, for various reasons, there were sizeable pockets of protectionist

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<sup>138</sup> Lord John Manners to Baillie-Cochrane, 25 Jun. 1848, Baillie-Cochrane MSS, TD1029/34/6.

<sup>139</sup> Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, 59–64.

<sup>140</sup> Montrose to Jolly, 31 Dec. 1834, Montrose MSS, GD220/6/538/2225.

<sup>141</sup> James Lindsay to Peel, 2 Dec. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 269–70.

support among the Scottish urban middle classes.<sup>142</sup> For instance, the protection of Canadian timber over its Baltic rivals affected a large swathe of Glasgow manufacturing interests, and was second only to food as an important protected commodity.<sup>143</sup> Though agricultural protection was not very popular in Glasgow, the existence of local protectionist interests who were obliged to defend the Corn Laws on general principle bolstered the strength of broader conservatism.

Peel's election as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in 1836 was, as Professor D.K. Sandford informed Peel, an 'indication of popular feeling [which] speaks kindly for the prevalence of conservative principle, both without and within the academic walls, over a large portion of Scotland'.<sup>144</sup> As Alison acutely observed, it came as a surprise to the local party that 'the sons of the reforming Merchants of Glasgow ... should so soon have so soon converted to constitutional principles ... a situation where Adam Smith faltered, and Burke failed; which Sir Walter Scott anxiously desired'.<sup>145</sup> Crucially, Glasgow had come around to a British-inspired liberal conservatism, and elected Peel because of his leadership of the British party and seeming sympathy for Established Church evangelicals.<sup>146</sup>

The rapprochement was therefore not because of, but rather mostly in spite of, the character of the native Scottish party. Glasgow University's students, who had elected Peel as Lord Rector, were predominantly middle class, and had founded the first Conservative Club in a Scottish university – named, significantly, the Peel

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<sup>142</sup> The social attributes of the city's middle classes are examined in Stana Nenadic, 'The Victorian Middle Classes', in Hamish Fraser and Maver (eds), *Glasgow, Volume II*.

<sup>143</sup> Cameron, 'Anti-Corn Law Agitations', 217, 222.

<sup>144</sup> D.K. Sandford to Peel, 15 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 160–1.

<sup>145</sup> Alison to Peel, 19 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 190–1.

<sup>146</sup> For the organisational advances resulting from this banquet, see Chapter Two.

Club.<sup>147</sup> The established middle classes were Peel's target group, and it is notable that the Scottish party, aware of its own poisonous reputation, went to great lengths to ensure that Peel would not be personally contaminated. Even Sir John Hope noted that, should Peel's visit succeed in its objects, 'we would unite in a manner so grateful to both classes ... under the banner of ... Ultra Tories, Conservatives and Reclaimed Whigs'.<sup>148</sup>

In order to gain traction in urban Scotland, the underperforming Scottish party was open to rapprochement between factions. By the late 1830s, after Peel's visit, middle-class Conservatives had become a powerful force in Glasgow politics.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, they had gradually begun to challenge their subordination to the local conservative gentry within the party apparatus itself, dealing with them on roughly equal terms. Liberal conservatism had a potential popular base in Scotland, but it was fragile and dependent on direct links to the central UK party. This popular base, however, was also deeply religious – Peel's election as Lord Rector owed a great deal to the religious dimensions of local (and national) politics. Indeed, part of the banquet's success was due to Peel's assertion in his speech that he intended to promote 'the National Establishment which connects Protestantism with the State in the three countries'.<sup>150</sup> Most crucially therefore, the initial successes of Glasgow's emergent liberal conservative group was heavily reliant on religiously minded adherents. This factor would also, however, become the primary cause of its demise.

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<sup>147</sup> W.M. Mathew, 'The Origins and Occupations of Glasgow students, 1740–1839', *Past & Present*, 33 (1966), 74–94; Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 127.

<sup>148</sup> John Hope to Peel, 16 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 167–74.

<sup>149</sup> Cookson, 'Duke of Wellington Statues', 25.

<sup>150</sup> Kitson Clark, *Peel and the Conservative Party*, 328.

## V. Church, State, and the Westminster Party

The Scottish Conservative party contained unique and diverse viewpoints on religious issues. Conservatives made much of defending the Church of England, but this essential mainstay of conservatism was notably subdued, though not absent, north of the border. It was the most important area in which Scottish electoral politics differed from the rest of the UK. Most elections were fought on British issues, though often skewed by particular Scottish conditions. While church-state relations were a significant factor in elections across the UK in 1841, in Scotland the Church crisis was the main defining issue. This muddled the political landscape, as the contest between political parties and their worldviews was overlaid by competing religious loyalties and enmities between Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, and various nonconformist congregations.<sup>151</sup> The Scottish Conservative party initially benefitted from its religious stance, but the actions of the senior Conservative leadership from 1839 onwards severely damaged the party's nascent popular recovery. Moreover, the Church crisis cut across the party's intra-factional boundaries, seriously weakening its internal unity.

Immediately after 1832, the Scottish party, like its counterparts elsewhere in the UK, made attempts to garner electoral support through the traditional cry of 'Church in Danger'.<sup>152</sup> In 1835, the Liberal candidate for Ross-shire found his opponent boasting of his successful canvas as he 'trusts greatly to the clergy

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<sup>151</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 54.

<sup>152</sup> Hutchison, *Political History*, 16–19.

prompted by the cry of the “Church in Danger”.<sup>153</sup> Though this did not succeed in 1835, it did in 1837, with that subsequent contest also styled as a direct conflict between Protestantism and its many enemies.<sup>154</sup> New party organisations made much of the issue, and the Caithness-shire Constitutional Association even attempted to employ it to attract dissenters who were traditionally hostile to the party: ‘we hold out the hand of fellowship to those members of dissenting bodies, who wish the safety of their country, and of its protestant institutions ... the cause is theirs as it is ours’.<sup>155</sup>

It was widely recognised that church ministers could play a significant role in influencing voters. Given the smaller size of average Scottish electorates, the influence of the press was often superseded by informal conversations and interactions between minister and parishioner.<sup>156</sup> Conservatives were happy to take advantage of this, and sympathetic ministers, usually belonging to the Established Church and often appointed by Conservative landowners, guided electors in the direction of the party. However, as the demands of Church Evangelicals for Church Extension and Non-Intrusion polarised opinion, religion became an increasingly unmanageable issue for both parties. The Whig Admiral Minto was able to state in 1835 that he was ‘sorry to learn the two parties in church affairs are proceeding to such extremes. I have always avoided taking any share in their controversies’.<sup>157</sup> As the 1830s wore on, avoiding the issue became impossible for members of both

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<sup>153</sup> William Mackenzie to J. Stewart Mackenzie, 2 Jun. 1835, Seaforth MSS, GD46/4/169/14.

<sup>154</sup> Pentland, ‘By-Elections’, 280.

<sup>155</sup> Caithness-shire Constitutional Association, 27 Nov. 1835, Loch MSS, GD268/139/11.

<sup>156</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 186.

<sup>157</sup> Adm. Minto to Lord Minto, 31 Mar. 1835, Minto MSS, 11748, f. 305.



parties. By 1841, Conservative landowner Alexander Thompson of Banchory warned that ‘the last election is the first General Election in which the principle of Non-Intrusion has come into play – and this only to a partial extent – and yet the result has been most striking’.<sup>158</sup>

Though an increasing popular affinity for liberal conservatism spurred Peel’s highly successful visit to Glasgow, the most important single factor building on this affinity after the visit itself was Peel’s perceived sympathy for the Church Evangelical aims. By the time of Peel’s visit, the Whig leadership had made it clear that they were uninterested in engaging with Scottish religious issues – as early as 1835, when Aberdeen wished to discuss the nominations to the Scottish Church Commission on Religious Instruction, ‘Lord Melbourne, as usual, appeared to know little about the matter’.<sup>159</sup> The Scottish liberal press was generally hostile to Non-Intrusion, and Melbourne had made it abundantly clear that he would not bow to the demands of the Non-Intrusionists.<sup>160</sup> In the meantime, the Conservative party had been making great efforts to engage with the issue, and had quickly recognised the potential electoral advantages of this. In Paisley, it was thought that ‘There is a very strong church party in Paisley, and a liberal conservative might do’.<sup>161</sup> Peel, in conjunction with Rae, had made positive noises about Church Extension in the Commons, as had Aberdeen and Haddington in the Lords.<sup>162</sup> Even at this early stage however, Peel sought to avoid discussing Non-Intrusion, acknowledging that ‘If we

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<sup>158</sup> Alexander Thomson to Lord Aberdeen, 1 Aug. 1841, Aberdeen MSS. 43237, ff. 270–7.

<sup>159</sup> Aberdeen to John Hope, 13 Aug. 1835, Aberdeen MSS. 43327, ff. 54–5.

<sup>160</sup> Machin, ‘Disruption and British Politics’, 27–8.

<sup>161</sup> Horne, ‘Memorandum of the State of the Scotch Representation’, Nov. 1834, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/2/21.

<sup>162</sup> Thomas Chalmers, *Memoirs of Thomas Chalmers* ed. William Hanna, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1878), ii. 393; HC Deb, 20 May 1835, vol. 27, cc1260–1; HL Deb, 19 May 1837, vol. 38, cc881–9, 895–7.

touch the law of patronage in connection with our measure, we shall provoke great difference of opinion on principle'.<sup>163</sup>

This stance had first been articulated by Derby in 1834, during his Glasgow speech in which he had espoused his 'Knowsley Creed'.<sup>164</sup> This speech had served to 'unite the Tories and Church Whigs, who in Glasgow form a powerful body', and made the possibility of a broader alliance between Church Evangelicals and Conservatives seem achievable.<sup>165</sup> While the Evangelical wing of the Church was radical and democratic in principle, this went hand in hand with actual practices and beliefs which were somewhat conservative and oligarchic.<sup>166</sup> It was perhaps because of this that Peel and Thomas Chalmers, the Scottish theologian and political economist, enjoyed a lengthy and cordial relationship which predated Peel's Glasgow visit.<sup>167</sup> Chalmers had lengthy conversations with Peel during the visit itself, and was extremely pleased to discover the extent of Peel's support for Church Extension. Peel's perceived sympathies brought evangelical churchmen into the conservative fold up until roughly 1839, and it is no coincidence that this time was the party's highpoint in terms of public support.<sup>168</sup> This esteem was particularly welcome, as the evangelical churchmen in question were generally middle-class, the same social group which Peel was targeting for conversion to his brand of liberal conservatism.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Peel to Rae, 24 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40339, ff. 349–51.

<sup>164</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 157–9.

<sup>165</sup> Clerk to Peel, 19 Nov. 1836, Peel MSS, 40422, ff. 192–3.

<sup>166</sup> Budge and Urwin, *Scottish Political Behaviour*, 6.

<sup>167</sup> See, for instance, Thomas Chalmers to Peel, 22 Apr. 1835, Peel MSS, 40420, f. 49.

<sup>168</sup> Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785–1865* (Oxford, 1988), 62; McCaffrey, 'Issues and Developments', 194.

<sup>169</sup> For the social composition of Scottish denominations in the period, see A.A. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (London, 1974); Peter Hillis, 'Presbyterianism

As theorist of political economy in his own right, and an intransigent opponent of the patronage exercised by country tory landlords, Chalmers's sympathies were firmly liberal conservative. Though he had opposed Reform, he had supported Catholic Emancipation.<sup>170</sup> Even in terms of the language employed, the alliance seemed fitting – calls for Church reform were, after all, conspicuously similar in tone to critiques of old corruption before Reform, and of manifest abuses after it.<sup>171</sup> As Boyd Hilton has observed, Chalmers's positive reputation within the liberal conservative establishment has been generally forgotten, however, because of the rapidity with which it declined.<sup>172</sup> From 1839 onwards, the Non-Intrusionists steadily intensified their demands. During his speech to the General Assembly in that year, Chalmers demonstrated his willingness to support the hard-line elements of the Evangelical party, where previously it had been thought that he would act as a moderating influence on them.<sup>173</sup> Their demands seemed worryingly democratic to aristocrats, and worryingly anti-Erastian to Church Moderates.<sup>174</sup>

Chalmers's final break with the Conservative party came during his potential candidacy for the vacant chair of divinity at the University of Glasgow. Sir James Graham, now Lord Rector, ensured that he did not get the job. He was furious that Chalmers had engaged in a 'bold defiance of constitutional authorities'.<sup>175</sup> By this

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and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Glasgow: A Study of Nine Churches', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 32 (1981), 47–64.

<sup>170</sup> Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 61. See also Ian A. Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation: Scottish Reactions Part One', *Innes Review*, 24 (1973), 26–42; Ian A. Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation in Scotland: Debates and Aftermath', *Innes Review*, 24 (1973), 103–20.

<sup>171</sup> Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*, 46.

<sup>172</sup> Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 62.

<sup>173</sup> See Thomas Chalmers, *Substance of a Speech Delivered in the General Assembly, on Wednesday the Twenty-Second of May, 1839, Respecting the Decision of the House of Lords on the Case of Auchterarder* (Glasgow, 1839).

<sup>174</sup> Stewart J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (Oxford, 1982), 303; Machin, 'Disruption and British Politics', 21.

<sup>175</sup> Graham to Aberdeen, 16 Sep. 1840, Aberdeen MSS. 43190, ff. 1–4.

point, he had alienated many prominent Conservatives; both Aberdeen and Alison lobbied Graham to block the appointment.<sup>176</sup> Despite ample warning that such an explicit action would be disastrous for the party, and knowing himself that it would ‘be most unpopular’, Graham felt that ‘support of him is impossible after the part he has recently taken and his conduct to Lord Aberdeen’.<sup>177</sup> Aberdeen’s compromise bill, which sought to reconcile the different religious parties, had been rejected in 1840. This occurred after Chalmers and the Evangelicals had very publicly denounced it as unsatisfactory. Ultimately, Chalmers’s perceived wrongdoing had been as much about his methods as his aims. By courting public opinion so openly in an extra-parliamentary context, he had offended the sensibilities of senior party figures, including Peel and Aberdeen, who disapproved of such activities.

The country Tories were generally Established Church Moderates, though a disproportionate number of its leading figures were Episcopalians. Rank-and-file Scottish liberal conservatives, on the other hand, tended more towards evangelicalism and Non-Intrusion. Yet, even within their meagre ranks, liberal conservatives in the higher echelons of the Scottish party inclined more towards a Peelite view which privileged the primacy of the state over Evangelical claims. As such, Non-Intrusion created a rift within the already-limited bounds of Scottish liberal conservatism. The party leadership was well aware of how damaging a refusal to make substantial concessions would be to their electoral prospects. Despite this, the Evangelicals’ post-1839 demands constituted an intellectual red line. For those

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<sup>176</sup> Aberdeen to Graham, 11 Sep. 1840, Graham MSS, 79653, ff. 19–20; Alison to Graham, 17 Sep. 1840, Graham MSS, 79726, ff. 93–8.

<sup>177</sup> Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 63; Graham to Bonham, 6 Oct. 1840, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 169–70.

religiously minded Conservatives such as William Gladstone, the objections were primarily religious, but also concerned with the legal insubordination which Chalmers advocated: ‘The case of the supporters of the veto seems to me to be utterly weak in scripture and in reason; in law, very doubtful’.<sup>178</sup> Mainly though, opposition among the party’s higher echelons were more about democratic than Erastian concerns.

Liberal conservatives such as Graham and Peel were willing to countenance Church Extension to bolster social stability in urban Scotland.<sup>179</sup> Their version of stability, however, was predicated on the primacy of the executive state. Hence, Graham’s main complaint was that ‘the general assembly has thought fit to brave the law, and to enter in a struggle for the mastery with the instituted authorities of the state’.<sup>180</sup> Though liberal conservatism meant accepting Reform as it stood, it also focused on thwarting further efforts to expand ‘democracy’. Peel saw the crisis in these constitutional terms, with Non-Intrusion as ‘neither more nor less than popular election ... [resulting in] canvassing and intrigue and all the low artificing by which the popular election can be influenced’.<sup>181</sup> He went on to suggest the appointment of ministers would become an area in which election agents were needed, and that fictitious votes would eventually become commonplace in the election of parish ministers. This is by far the strongest evidence that Peel saw Non-Intrusion as the undesirable religious equivalent of electoral reform. For Peel, and many Scottish

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<sup>178</sup> William Gladstone to John Gladstone, 9 Dec. 1839, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/225, ff. 239–41. Gladstone’s approval of Chalmers’s efforts had been on the wane since at least 1837. See Stewart J. Brown, ‘Gladstone, Chalmers and the Disruption of the Church of Scotland’, in David Bebbington and Roger Swift (eds), *Gladstone Centenary Essays* (Liverpool, 2000), 17–20.

<sup>179</sup> For the challenges to religious adherence posed by Scottish urbanisation, see Callum G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707* (Edinburgh, 1997), Chapter 5.

<sup>180</sup> Graham to John Campbell Colquhoun, 25 Dec. 1839, Graham MSS, 79726, ff. 61–3.

<sup>181</sup> Peel to Graham, 29 Dec. 1839, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 131–7.

party members, Reform, Non-Intrusion, and Free Trade were merely three different political, religious, and economic facets of the same overall problem.<sup>182</sup>

Traditionalist scholarly work on Peel's character, spearheaded by Norman Gash, goes into exhaustive detail. Though perhaps slightly too in awe of his subject, he provides a clear and detailed picture of one of the eminent (and flexible) statesman of the age, and suggests that the modern Conservative party began during Peel's tenure.<sup>183</sup> An influential revisionist strand of thought is somewhat less complimentary, holding that Peel was in fact ideologically dogmatic and averse to compromise.<sup>184</sup> More recent research, which effectively distils both viewpoints, recognises the intellectual milieu in which Peel operated, and how this affected his actions.<sup>185</sup> The resultant picture is of a party leader, but not in the modern sense, and ultimately a servant of the Crown. The evolution of his thoughts and actions with regard to the Scottish Church crisis tally with this fresh interpretation.

The decline in amity between the party and the evangelical electors was further accelerated by Peel's disastrous meeting with a church delegation before the election of 1841, in which he explicitly stated that he could never support the Duke of Argyll's legislative efforts to meet their demands. This influenced electoral fortunes, yet it must be noted that 1841 was also the party's Scottish electoral highpoint.<sup>186</sup> In England, the party enjoyed a major electoral victory as a champion of its Established Church, which partly explains why the advance in Scotland was

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<sup>182</sup> Peel, of course, would come to change his mind on the third of these facets, and had already come to accept the first as irreversible.

<sup>183</sup> See Norman Gash, *Sir Robert Peel: The Life of Sir Robert Peel after 1830* (London, 1972).

<sup>184</sup> Boyd Hilton, 'Peel: A Reappraisal', *Historical Journal*, 22 (1979), 589.

<sup>185</sup> Richard Gaunt, *Sir Robert Peel: The Life and Legacy* (London, 2010), 5.

<sup>186</sup> C.S. Parker, *Sir Robert Peel*, 2 vols (London, 1899), ii. 470; Machin, 'Disruption and British Politics', 37; see Appendix C.

less pronounced. In the Scottish counties at least, the effect of the issue was negative but not disastrously so.<sup>187</sup> Perhaps more significantly in the longer term, it prevented the Scottish party from gaining its long-planned for and long-worked for urban foothold.<sup>188</sup> Though the politics of influence mitigated the damage in many counties, Graham was all too well aware that ‘as far as towns and boroughs are concerned, the Church question places us in a false position’.<sup>189</sup> In political terms, the Conservative party bore the brunt of the blame for Disruption, especially among members of the newly formed Free Church.

Below the senior levels of the party, many of the country tory gentry were similarly unsympathetic to Non-Intrusion. Though they had this in common with Peelites, their underlying reasons for this were not entirely identical. Peel believed in the primacy of the state and of parliament, and thus advocated Erastian control. Scottish country tories, on the other hand, expected the state to protect and perpetuate aristocratic governance on a local level. They thus saw attempts to restrict their power over the appointment of parish ministers as democratising in a different sense. As the self-identified leading defenders of social order in the localities, their principal fear was likely that the loss of control over appointments would unbalance the social order on a local level, with attendant effects on national politics. Established Church ministers generally voted for and promoted the Conservative party, and advocated policies (such as protection) which were thought to underpin the agrarian social order.<sup>190</sup> To country tories, Non-Intrusion thus threatened the social balance on both an abstract national and everyday local level. While there was

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<sup>187</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 8; Machin, ‘Disruption and British Politics’, 38.

<sup>188</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>189</sup> Graham to Bonham, 18 Dec. 1840, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 183–4.

<sup>190</sup> Cameron, ‘Anti-Corn Law Agitations’, 283–4.

no doubt a great deal of self-interest involved, they were chiefly motivated, at base, by a desire to maintain what they viewed as the delicate and slowly deteriorating balance of the constitution.

This essentially aristocratic constitutional outlook also precluded their participation in, or approval of, Orange activities in Scotland. This was similar to the English party's tendency to remain aloof from more extreme forms of Protestantism, and the ambivalent attitude of Conservatives in Ireland.<sup>191</sup> Though the Duke of Gordon did act as a figurehead for the Scottish Orange Order in the early 1830s, this short-lived connection was terminated when it became clear that the Orangemen would not passively work towards the party's more moderate 'constitutional' political ends.<sup>192</sup> Patrician conservatives were inherently uneasy about such extra-parliamentary movements. This, combined with the refusal of Scottish Orangemen to conform to a deferential ideal, precluded any significant Scottish cooperation until after 1868.<sup>193</sup> In fact, the particularly authoritarian streak of the Scottish gentry led to the Order being harshly suppressed by party figures. Lodges lacked the legal protection enjoyed by their counterparts in Ulster, and Scottish Conservatives, particularly Archibald Alison, viewed them in the same light as striking workers or Chartists. Despite holding a high rank in the Freemasons, Alison did not discriminate when he perceived a threat to public order. As Michie dryly observed of Alison's

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<sup>191</sup> Hill, *Toryism*, 60; Jackson, *Two Unions*, 289.

<sup>192</sup> Elaine McFarland, "'Outposts of the Loyalists of Ireland": The Orangemen's Unionist Vision', in Catriona M.M. Macdonald (ed.), *Unionist Scotland. 1800–1997* (Edinburgh, 1998), 32.

<sup>193</sup> Elaine McFarland, *Protestants First: Orangeism in 19th Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1990), 60; see also McFarland, 'Unionist Vision', 32–8.



judgements, ‘convicted Protestant Irish were transported as readily as their Catholic counterparts’.<sup>194</sup>

This aristocratic outlook also separated them from the embryonic working-class elements of their own party.<sup>195</sup> The force sustaining the short-lived Glasgow Conservative Operative Association was predominantly religious. Some radicals readily labelled the operatives the ‘Orange Tories’, but unlike their Irish counterparts, they do not appear to have had any explicit links to the Order.<sup>196</sup> However, anti-Catholicism became an increasingly prominent feature of the Association. In 1839, an ‘animated and amicable discussion’ was held by its members in which the perceived advance of Catholicism since the Emancipation bill of 1829 was condemned.<sup>197</sup> It was founded as a result of Peel’s visit to Glasgow, and the Association’s initial address indicates that it was concerned with promoting a conservative-radical alliance. It stated that they regarded ‘the interests of the working classes as identified with, and inseparable from, those of the aristocracy’.<sup>198</sup>

Nevertheless, it also declared its support for Church Extension, and by 1842 they regarded ‘the total abolition of the law of patronage as indispensable, not only to the peace, but also the efficiency of the church’.<sup>199</sup> Scottish minister Robert Buchanan wrote in 1841 that he had received a letter from the Secretary of the Glasgow Operatives, stating that ‘out of its 500 members, not more than six are

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<sup>194</sup> McFarland, ‘Unionist Vision’, 31; Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 171.

<sup>195</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>196</sup> Ward, ‘Working-Class Conservatism’, 147; Jackson, *Two Unions*, 286.

<sup>197</sup> 6 Nov. 1839, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>198</sup> ‘Address of the Conservative Operatives of Glasgow to... Peel’, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>199</sup> 10 Mar 1842, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

opposed to the church's movements; and that the whole of the remainder so entirely identify their Conservatism with the church's principles and present proceedings'.<sup>200</sup>

While the operatives moved away from the Conservative party, the Scottish party was also moving away from the operatives. A public dinner given by the Association in 1837 was attended by 'a few of the leading Conservative gentlemen of the city', and by the height of Conservative popularity in 1839 its second annual dinner attracted 'several of the leading Conservative gentlemen of the city and neighbourhood, who were present by special invitation'.<sup>201</sup> By 1841, however, their third annual meeting was attended 'almost exclusively by the working classes, scarcely any of the leading Conservatives who were invited having been present on the occasion'.<sup>202</sup> The group's wellspring was almost entirely religious, and it was thus destroyed by the party's actions in this area.

The elitist attitudes of many country Tories was compounded by their religious affiliation. A disproportionate number of Scottish Conservatives were practising Episcopalians, including Buccleuch, Dalhousie, Aytoun, and Alison.<sup>203</sup> Many were able to maintain a double-allegiance, taking part in the activities of their local Established church as the patron and local squire, while maintaining their Episcopalian faith. Even Archibald Alison, an Episcopalian and staunch defender of the Church of England, was not overly concerned with this issue; only three of his

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<sup>200</sup> Robert Buchanan to Alexander Dunlop, 29 Apr. 1841, in Norman Walker, *Robert Buchanan: An Ecclesiastical Biography* (London, 1882), 192.

<sup>201</sup> 17 Mar. 1837, 29 Jan. 1839, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>202</sup> 21 Feb. 1841, Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSS, Acc. 10424, No. 65.

<sup>203</sup> The aristocracy's relationship with the Scottish Episcopal Church is explored in Rowan Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland: Religious Responses to a Modernizing Society* (Oxford, 2002), Chapter 6.

171 *Blackwood's* articles were concerned with the subject.<sup>204</sup> Though the defence of the Anglican establishment may possibly have been the overriding preoccupation of the English Conservative landed class, this was definitely not true of Scotland.<sup>205</sup>

Alison and the vast majority of Episcopalian country Tories broadly supported the Church of Scotland so long as it played the same role in promoting social stability as the Anglican Church south of the border.<sup>206</sup>

While the Church of Scotland was undergoing an evangelical revival in one direction, the Scottish Episcopal Church, in flirting with the Oxford Movement, was moving in a broadly opposite direction. This served to increase the distance between Scottish Conservative Episcopalians and the Non-Intrusionists. Though both Tractarians and Non-Intrusionists emphasised spiritual independence, there was no love lost between the two movements.<sup>207</sup> Indeed, the Episcopalian faith of landowners who had allegedly refused to provide sites for the building of Free Churches (most prominently Buccleuch) was noted in both parliament and the press.<sup>208</sup> If the Conservative party was perceived by many electors as an 'other' in popular-aristocratic terms, it also laboured under the disadvantage of being perceived as an alien entity in terms of religious adherence, separate from Scotland's Established Church.

This was one of the most prominent reasons why Scottish romantics joined the wider stream of British romanticism in this period, and why British romanticism

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<sup>204</sup> Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland, 1843–74* (Edinburgh, 1975), 63; Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 174.

<sup>205</sup> See Sack, *Jacobite to Conservative*, 2.

<sup>206</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 172.

<sup>207</sup> Brown, *National Churches*, 321, 312–13.

<sup>208</sup> *Reports from the Select Committee on Sites for Churches (Scotland)*, P.P. 1847 (227) XXXIII, 19–20; *Witness*, 29 Jun. 1844.

made little headway in Scotland. Pragmatic Episcopalians such as Buccleuch and Dalhousie could not publicly support a British romanticism which was underpinned by a very robust Tractarian Anglicanism.<sup>209</sup> Peter Borthwick had at one point intended to take Anglican orders, and though Baillie-Cochrane was ambivalent about Roman Catholicism, he was stridently anti-Kirk.<sup>210</sup> Robert Monteith, a social romantic, was primarily concerned with the impact of the Church crisis on Anglican affairs: ‘if it will spread into England ... the voluntaries will become puritans, the puritans democrats; and we shall have again a fatal circle, which two centuries ago brought Charles to his scaffold and inveigled Great Britain in civil war’.<sup>211</sup> Young England was distrusted on both sides of the border because of its vaguely Anglo-Catholic underpinnings.<sup>212</sup> Eglinton’s tournament, though anticipating Young England in many ways, was deliberately shorn of any religious content – perhaps because Eglinton shrewdly recognised that this would automatically limit the size of his potential audience.

Overall, the Episcopalian and paternalist character of the Scottish Conservative party made it very unlikely to embrace Non-Intrusion wholeheartedly. Moreover, these elements were also the chief reason behind the party’s failure to nurture working-class operatives and their unwillingness to court Orange support. Despite this, the most uncompromising attitudes towards the Church question came not from the party in Scotland, but instead the UK party leadership. Having done

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<sup>209</sup> Brown, *National Churches*, 335.

<sup>210</sup> Faber, *Young England*, 116, 20.

<sup>211</sup> Letter from Robert Monteith, enclosed in Graham to Bonham, 23 Dec. 1939, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 142–3.

<sup>212</sup> Hill, *Toryism*, 16.

most of the work to create a space for Scottish liberal conservatism, they also bore chief responsibility for destroying it.

## VI. The Scottish Party Divided

Sir James Graham stated that, on the Church question, ‘our friends in Scotland must take their own line, each according to his individual opinion, taking care of course not to commit others’.<sup>213</sup> Despite the party’s dominant country tory character, there were significant and substantial elements of the Scottish party which leaned decidedly towards greater concessionary efforts. The Scottish party, despite its predominant dislike of Non-Intrusion, was more willing than the senior UK leadership to consider compromise. This willingness stemmed from political expediency, but also out of some genuine sympathy for the evangelicals’ cause. Peel would not (and could not) enforce a single party line on the Church crisis, and by no means ignored backbench Scottish opinion altogether: ‘How will the new Scotch members vote on the proposition for new endowments ... Established Church of Scotland. After all our theories this after all, will be no unimportant one for you and for me to look at’.<sup>214</sup> Despite this, Peel’s conception of executive authority meant that their opinions would always be a secondary consideration. After winning the 1841 election, ‘Conservative backbenchers found that a triumph for Peelism meant scant regard for their religious, economic or social sensibilities’.<sup>215</sup> In Scotland,

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<sup>213</sup> Graham to Bonham, 11 Jul. 1840, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 160–1.

<sup>214</sup> Peel to Rae, 24 Jan. 1835, Peel MSS, 40339, ff. 349–51.

<sup>215</sup> Hawkins, ‘Parliamentary Government’, 654.

many backbenchers and rank-and-file party members came to realise this even earlier, from 1839 onwards.

A small group, the most influential and public of whom was the Dean of Faculty Sir John Hope, advocated making little or no concession to the Evangelicals. Chalmers himself warned Peel that if he persisted ‘in his violent and infatuated course he will alienate from Conservatism the best men I know in Scotland; There are many who viewing his proceedings as a premonitory symptom of what we have to look for under its reign’.<sup>216</sup> Despite attempts by the party leadership to rein him in, Hope was notorious for publishing an uncompromising pamphlet which further polarised the situation, though it was described by Graham as ‘tedious beyond endurance, and proceeds on the assumption, that no argument is good, unless it is repeated twenty times’.<sup>217</sup> As the Evangelicals made increasingly ambitious demands, however, Hope’s influence over party policy increased. Though Peel worried about ‘The extreme opinions of Hope on one side of the Church question and the intemperance with which he urged them’, the course that he urged was usually followed.<sup>218</sup>

Hope was stauncher than most, but many were also increasingly anti-Evangelical as time wore on. In the Lords, though Dalhousie was initially sympathetic to their cause and close to Chalmers, he broke away from him very publicly during the General Assembly of 1839.<sup>219</sup> Similarly, in the party outside of

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<sup>216</sup> Chalmers to Peel, 26 Dec. 1839, Peel MSS, 40427, ff. 353–4.

<sup>217</sup> Lady Frances Balfour, *The Life of George, Fourth Earl of Aberdeen* (London, 1922), 31; John Hope, *A Letter to the Lord Chancellor on the claims of the Church of Scotland in regard to its Jurisdiction and on the proposed changes in its Polity* (Edinburgh, 1839); Graham to William Gladstone, 8 Dec. 1839, Gladstone MSS, 44163, ff. 10–11.

<sup>218</sup> Peel to Graham, 17 Oct. 1841, Graham MSS, 79681, f. 33.

<sup>219</sup> Chalmers to Peel, 1 Dec. 1837, in Chalmers, *Memoirs*, ii. 401; Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 303.

parliament Archibald Alison strongly opposed concessionary efforts, and Robert Dundas, former MP for Edinburgh, was decidedly of the opinion that ‘it would be useless to attempt any intermediate arrangement’.<sup>220</sup> Moreover, there is some evidence that sizeable elements of the Glasgow party were opposed to the Non-Intrusionists.<sup>221</sup> C.L. Cumming Bruce, MP for Elginshire and Nairnshire, was deeply religious, but also a strong advocate of the primacy of the state. He went so far as to state in the House that ‘he knew that many Scotchmen were afraid to declare their feelings on this subject. But if he were called upon to conceal his feelings, and his seat depended upon it, he should throw his seat to the winds, and do justice’.<sup>222</sup> At the parliamentary level, however, this was not the dominant attitude – most were willing to be swept along by the winds of change. This was amply demonstrated when the Lord Advocate himself, Sir William Rae, found it necessary to publicly break with the policy of his own party leadership. He did so to placate the electors of his Bute constituency, and received significant internal criticism from party leaders. Despite this, Rae was unrepentant, telling Hope that ‘there are situations in which prudence is the better part of valour’, and that he had deliberately included ambiguities in his statements – though ‘obliged to sail as near to the wind as possible ... am happy to state that I have got out of the scrape without committing myself in any way’.<sup>223</sup>

Many candidates found themselves caught between the need to court Non-Intrusionist electors and the need to maintain the internal unity of the local party. The

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<sup>220</sup> Robert Dundas to Aberdeen, 7 Mar. 1840, Aberdeen MSS, 43237, f. 126.

<sup>221</sup> John Russell to Aberdeen, 4 May 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43237, f. 266; Machin, ‘Disruption and British Politics’, 36.

<sup>222</sup> HC Deb, 15 Mar. 1842, vol. 61, c644.

<sup>223</sup> Rae to John Hope, 11 Jul. 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43205, ff. 134–5.

exceptional ability of local party groupings to hide their internal disagreements from the public played no small role in this. The incumbent MP for Perthshire, Henry Home Drummond, told his likely successor that ‘it would be far better if you were left free and uncommitted on the subject; but I doubt if we shall be able in this way to keep our party united’.<sup>224</sup> It was thought that a private declaration censuring Non-Intrusionism would placate the local party, but Stirling worried ‘how such a declaration could be made known without also being made public – and how far it might be expedient to admit that such a preliminary step had been thought necessary by the party’.<sup>225</sup> Because of these difficulties, Home Drummond agreed to stand again for Perthshire, and successfully adopted an ambiguous position. Though he privately stated that could not ‘see, how the clergy can be prevented from destroying the establishment if so determined or why we should make a common sacrifice of other interests’, he had since 1840 publicly and repeatedly stated that though he would not pledge himself, he was strongly in favour of Non-Intrusion.<sup>226</sup> Such hedging was a common tactic for Conservatives throughout Scotland.<sup>227</sup>

One Conservative county gentleman thought that ‘of the members returned by Scotland, much more than half, are pledged to Non-Intrusion principles – or rather to support the majority of the General Assembly’.<sup>228</sup> Though he was overstating his case, the fact remains that a significant proportion of Scotland’s Conservative MPs

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<sup>224</sup> Home Drummond to William Stirling, 27 Feb. 1841, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/75/11.

<sup>225</sup> Draft, Stirling to Home Drummond, (?) Feb. 1841, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/75/11A.

<sup>226</sup> Home Drummond to Stirling, 4 Mar. 1841, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/75/12; Home Drummond, ‘To the Independent Electors of the County of Perth’, 22 Feb. 1840, Abercairney MSS, GD24/1/1068/4; Printed Report of Home Drummond’s Meeting with Constituents, 28 Apr. 1840, Abercairney MSS, GD24/1/1068/7.

<sup>227</sup> See, for instance, George Dempster, ‘To the Electors of the Northern Burghs’, 10 Jun. 1841, Loch MSS, GD268/139/10.

<sup>228</sup> Alexander Thomson to Aberdeen, 1 Aug. 1841, Aberdeen MSS, 43237, ff. 270–7.



advocated compromise out of conviction and/or expediency. Moreover, even in the more senior echelons of the party, there was more diversity in attitudes than has been acknowledged. The most important of these dissenters (as it were) was Sir George Clerk, who was firmly ensconced in the senior party establishment. Indeed, Gladstone thought that Clerk was one of the four most important figures in the party leadership who would decide policy on this issue.<sup>229</sup> Clerk suggested that presbyteries should be permitted to reject a ministerial nominee on voting numbers alone, even if the reason for that objection was questionable.<sup>230</sup> He had, however, lost his Scottish seat by this time. Because he now sat for the English borough of Stamford, he was relegated to the Scottish party in exile, and this perhaps limited his ability to influence high-level decision-making.<sup>231</sup>

Chalmers regretted the loss of Clerk in 1837, but told Peel that he was happy to have ‘gained two, Mr. Colquhoun and Lord Ramsay, the former ... who in everything connected with the ecclesiastical or educational state of Scotland has as sound and enlightened views as any one I know, whether in or out of parliament’.<sup>232</sup> While his hopes for Ramsay (later Lord Dalhousie) were spectacularly dashed, he was not disappointed by John Campbell Colquhoun of Killermont. Formerly a Liberal MP for Dunbartonshire, Colquhoun was an evangelical Anglican who became the Conservative MP for Kilmarnock Burghs between 1837 and 1841. After his election, Graham informed Peel that ‘he is warm almost to intrusionism in his religious feelings; but he is an upright independent gentleman ... [of] considerable

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<sup>229</sup> William Gladstone to John Gladstone, 9 Dec. 1839, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/225, ff. 239–41.

<sup>230</sup> Machin, ‘Disruption and British Politics’, 30; Michael Fry, ‘The Disruption and the Union’, in Stewart J. Brown and Michael Fry (eds), *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh, 1993), 33.

<sup>231</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>232</sup> Chalmers to Peel, 1 Dec. 1837, in Chalmers, *Memoirs*, ii. 401.

abilities’, and Peel in turn informed Chalmers that ‘I share sincerely your satisfaction at the return to parliament of Mr Colquhoun and am confident that he will be of the greatest use in the interests of the Church of Scotland’.<sup>233</sup> Colquhoun’s repeated and determined efforts to convince Peel, Graham and Aberdeen of the necessity of further compromise were entirely unsuccessful.<sup>234</sup> By 1841, the senior party leadership had tired of him, including Peel.<sup>235</sup> When it became clear that Colquhoun would likely lose his Scottish seat, Graham told Bonham that ‘I cannot safely advise you to take any active part in recommending our Scotch Urquhart ally to any English constituency’, as he thought him a ‘very hellish and dangerous personage, to be treated with great caution; and it would not do to have his god-faction at any popular election’.<sup>236</sup>

Colquhoun was not entirely exceptional; another Scottish Conservative MP, Alexander Campbell of Monzie, was a Presbyterian evangelical Non-Intrusionist. Apart from the Commons cohort, the chief Conservative Agent for Glasgow and western Scotland, Robert Lamond, inclined towards ‘the Non-Intrusion party, but has stood aloof from their violence and their follies’.<sup>237</sup> On a local municipal level moreover, Non-Intrusionist Conservatives stood in Edinburgh Town Council elections from 1841 onwards, and Free Church Conservatives remained an ‘important minority voice’ in the Edinburgh party until at least the late 1850s.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Graham to Peel, 14 Nov. 1837, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 70–7; Peel to Chalmers, 21 Dec. 1837, Peel MSS, 40424, ff. 266–7.

<sup>234</sup> See, for instance, Graham to Campbell Colquhoun, 25 Dec. 1839, Graham MSS, 79726, ff. 61–3; Peel to Graham, 29 Dec. 1839, Graham MSS, 79680, ff. 131–7.

<sup>235</sup> Graham to Bonham, Aug. 1841, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 219.

<sup>236</sup> Graham to Bonham, Jul. 1841, Peel MSS, 40616, ff. 216.

<sup>237</sup> Graham to (?), 27 Jan. 1843, Graham MSS, 79745, ff. 47–50.

<sup>238</sup> Williams, ‘Edinburgh Politics’, 22.

Overall, then, the Scottish Conservative party displayed at all levels a distinctly inconsistent attitude towards the Church question. Many were uncompromising Moderates, others pragmatic dissemblers, and still others genuine supporters of Non-Intrusion. This wide spectrum of opinion illustrates the highly diverse nature of Scottish conservatism, and that this particular issue cut across factional groupings. Liberal conservatives, ultra tories, and country tories each approached the issue from different angles, but this was further complicated by their overlapping religious loyalties.

## VII.

The Scottish Conservative party after 1832 contained an overlapping mix of ultra tories, romantic conservatives, tory radicals, liberal conservatives, and country tories. However, only one of these was of paramount significance. The ultras declined in significance with remarkable rapidity, and liberal conservatives made significant but limited inroads in isolated areas. These extreme ends of the spectrum were peripheral. Radical conservatism was almost non-existent in Scotland, and the unique evolution of Scottish romantic conservatism was not yet paying political dividends. Scottish romantics were more likely to join the British stream of romantic conservatism than to work actively within the Scottish party. Overall, the Scottish Conservative party was more of a country party than its southern counterpart. Without a liberal conservative leadership or prominent Peelite talent to reform the party, it remained dependent on electoral support in the counties, bolstered by landed

influence. As such, it remained a bastion of traditional paternalism and agrarian attitudes, augmented with somewhat robust authoritarian tendencies.

The Conservative party after the Disruption carried on much as before – on the surface, at least. The party kept its internal disagreements out of the public eye, and continued to enjoy a strong position in the counties, courtesy of the politics of influence, registration, and vote-making. This ensured that the religious crisis which had torn Scotland's Established Church in two did not have a similar effect on the Conservative party. Nevertheless, its approach to the issue was far more diverse than has been assumed, with Conservatives at all levels of the party adopting a wide spectrum of stances on the Church crisis. While the party emerged intact, its voting base was damaged. This once-and-for-all destroyed any chance for the party to shed its image as the 'country', 'moderate', somewhat Episcopalian party which had opposed Reform. The Scottish Conservative party thus remained, under Buccleuch until 1846, the country party. Moreover, the broadly based Liberal party, despite its similarly unfriendly disposition towards Non-Intrusion, managed to position itself as the party of Presbyterianism, which constituted the base of Scottish identity. The Conservatives, unable to present themselves as a force for moral or religious integrity, were seen as increasingly alien



## CHAPTER FIVE: MID-VICTORIAN SCOTTISH CONSERVATISM

Between the 1840s and the Second Reform Acts of 1867–8, Scottish conservatism did not undergo any fundamental transformation. Certain aspects, such as romanticism, became more influential. Others, such as liberal conservatism, declined in importance. Scottish conservatism may have been a generally reactive phenomenon in this period, but it was not merely passive. Though the party more often found itself vigorously adapting to change, rather than leading it, Scottish conservatism did influence the development of mid-Victorian Scotland.

As will be explored, though the split between Free Trade and Protectionist Conservatives was initially acrimonious, cooperation between these groups quickly became the norm in Scotland. Peelites were generally reabsorbed into a broader conservatism during the 1850s and 1860s. Following on from this, the party's changing relationship to religious and related social issues will be examined. Scottish conservatism, though more religiously diverse than has been assumed, did not benefit from the fractured religious landscape after 1843. It was an influential force in terms of religious change, but this did not increase the party's popularity. Next, the party's efforts to promote conservatism in urban Scotland, through various innovative methods, will be discussed. These efforts did not bring electoral success, but were nevertheless historically significant. Finally, the effects of broader social changes on Scottish conservatism will be examined. These changes increasingly threatened the party's preeminent position in rural areas, and Scottish conservatism thus declined in popularity as the period progressed. By the eve of the Second Reform Acts, the

Scottish party lacked a distinctive platform, and did not possess the intellectual capacity to formulate one.

### I. Peelites and Protectionists

In tandem with the rest of the UK party, the Scottish Conservatives split over Peel's decision to repeal the Corn Laws. There was, during much of the 1850s, a Scottish Peelite party. However, this party was even weaker than its southern counterpart (which was not in itself very robust). There were fewer liberal conservatives in the Scottish party and among the Scottish electorate before 1846, so the Scottish Peelites began at a particular disadvantage. Perhaps because of this, they were less given to internecine warfare than in other parts of the UK. They quickly formed informal cooperative relationships with Scottish Protectionists, and had faded away by the late 1850s, with the clear majority being reabsorbed into the Derbyite Conservative party.

In 1846, however, it appeared (on the surface at least) that Scottish liberal conservatism was in fact stronger than in the rest of the UK, given the higher proportion of Scottish Conservative MPs who followed Peel, in addition to powerful magnates such as Buccleuch, Dalhousie, and Wemyss.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, this positive appearance was misleading. Dalhousie followed Peel for ideological reasons, but retired from domestic politics to take up the post of Indian Viceroy, and indignantly wrote to Derby that 'I am no personal adherent of Sir Robert Peel quietly following

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<sup>1</sup> Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, 51.

wherever he chooses to go'.<sup>2</sup> More importantly, Buccleuch was only a Peelite insofar as he remained loyal to Peel, his initial conversion to Free Trade not being borne of powerful conviction.<sup>3</sup>

Loyalty, rather than conviction, also accounted for the conversion of some lower down in the party hierarchy. This included many county gentlemen; one Free Trade Conservative MP, Alexander Pringle, informed Sir George Clerk that he had met very few Conservatives who approved, 'but so far as I can attain, the chief proportion of them are not inclined to resist; but rather to support the present ministry ... In the south, they appear to take it up much more violently'.<sup>4</sup> It is perhaps no coincidence that Pringle's trajectory closely followed that of Buccleuch, his political patron. Even from the beginning, signs of cooperation were evident between the two Scottish groups.<sup>5</sup> The popular sitting Free Trade MP for Perthshire agreed, in conjunction with Protectionist county gentlemen, to postpone his retirement, thus ensuring that the county did not fall to the Liberals. The county gentlemen on both sides of the divide found him to be an acceptable compromise candidate. His expected replacement, William Stirling, also 'did not take the Protectionist view of politics', but it was thought that putting up a new candidate might provoke a contest.<sup>6</sup>

Confusion reigned among the Scottish gentry into the early 1850s, with allegiances frequently unknown. Indeed, Eglinton was forced to assume that the new

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<sup>2</sup> Dalhousie to Derby, 3 Nov. 1846, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/578.

<sup>3</sup> Buccleuch in fact intended to resign over the issue, but was persuaded to remain in the cabinet. See Gash, *Sir Robert Peel*, 549–50, 562.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Pringle to Clerk, 3 Feb. 1846, Clerk of Penicuik MSS, GD18/3808.

<sup>5</sup> For the organisational implications of this, see Chapter One.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Home Drummond to William Stirling, 24 Jul. 1847, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/78/5; William Stirling to Archibald Stirling, 3 Oct. 1846, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/78/2.



Lord Seafield was a Peelite merely because he was married to the sister of one.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the rupture, most Scottish Peelites, even those in parliament, remained moderate Conservatives. Sir George Clerk, despite sitting as a Peelite MP for Dover, remained on the Conservative committee in his old seat of Edinburghshire.<sup>8</sup> The general experience of Scottish Peelites throughout most of the 1850s was of being associated with, yet not quite part of, the Conservative party. Buccleuch, despite also retaining his membership of the Edinburghshire Conservative committee, would only ‘subscribe in proportion to my estate in the county and no more’ to fund the potential candidacy of the ultra-Protectionist Lord John Scott, his own brother.<sup>9</sup> Though he disapproved of Scott’s uncompromising protectionism, he nevertheless agreed to contribute, though on a far lesser scale than his previously lavish election spending.<sup>10</sup>

The Scottish Protectionist and Peelite groups were keen above all to keep dissension and disagreement strictly private and confidential, much like they did in the run-up to the Disruption.<sup>11</sup> This was, however, very difficult to maintain on the hustings. Just as Scottish MPs and candidates had been free to take their own positions on the Church question, Peelites and Protectionist tailored their public pronouncements on Free Trade to suit local electoral conditions. Thus, Archibald Campbell Swinton, soon to contest the Haddington Burghs, was presented to Buccleuch by future Derbyite Lord Advocate Charles Baillie as ‘decidedly Conservative in general politics’, but also who would ‘oppose any re-imposition of duties’.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Buccleuch advised a prospective Conservative candidate that in

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<sup>7</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 25 Aug. 1853, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/136.

<sup>8</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, lxii.

<sup>9</sup> Buccleuch to John Hope, 15 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/19.

<sup>10</sup> For the wider significance of this, see Chapter Two.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter Four.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Baillie to Buccleuch, 24 Apr. 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

‘a burgh constituency Protection ... will not go down’.<sup>13</sup> The Bairds of Gartsherrie, despite publicly campaigning in the Falkirk Burghs as Liberal Conservatives, were also members of a Glasgow Protectionist body.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the Conservative Peter Blackburn, when contesting Glasgow in 1852, found that the party there was still split between Free Traders and Protectionists, though the latter group included the more powerful sugar and West Indian interests.<sup>15</sup> Yet, given the electoral realities of Scotland’s largest urban constituency, Blackburn was forced to deny that he was a Protectionist.<sup>16</sup>

After the demise of the Aberdeen administration in 1855, Peelites slowly drifted into either the Liberal or Conservative camps. Some scholars have concluded that Peelites on a wider British level did not eventually re-join the Derbyite Conservative party, generally moving towards the Liberal party.<sup>17</sup> Scholars who take this view often point to the presence of some leading Peelites at the 1859 meeting in Willis’s Rooms as a conspicuous turning point. The movement of many rank-and-file Peelite MPs back into the Conservative fold was, by contrast, a muddled and erratic process. More recent and specific work on Scotland, moreover, which places less emphasis on prominent and senior Peelites, has illustrated this progression.<sup>18</sup> An overwhelming proportion of Scottish Peelite MPs were reabsorbed into the Conservative party by the end of the 1850s and early 1860s.

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<sup>13</sup> Buccleuch to John Maxwell, 6 May 1852, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/3.

<sup>14</sup> George Sutherland to Benjamin Disraeli, 23 Jan. 1849, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 31–2.

<sup>15</sup> Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 352. See also the correspondence between George Sutherland and Disraeli contained in Hughenden MSS, 144/3.

<sup>16</sup> Hutchison, ‘Mid-Victorian Glasgow’, 353.

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, Stewart, *Foundation of the Conservative Party*, 260; Blake, *Conservative Party*, 81–5.

<sup>18</sup> See Millar, ‘Conservative Split’.

There were some Scots who moved towards liberalism, most prominently Lord Elcho, who went on to become a prominent Adullamite.<sup>19</sup> Elcho was, however, a rather extraordinary exception to the rule. Peelites in parliament sustained themselves during the 1850s through ‘the pious cult of a dead leader and a self-adulatory sense of superiority’.<sup>20</sup> The stark fact was that, with the arguable exception of Elcho, the Scottish Peelite members were all mediocrities, with little to feel superior about. This is perhaps why, with the exception of Elcho, they so quickly disappeared or re-converted. Elcho had in fact crossed party lines back and forth so often that his 1857 address to his constituency was over five pages long. Indeed, he concluded it by writing that ‘My address has now attained a length which, I fear, must have exhausted your patience, and which I feel requires an apology’.<sup>21</sup> Millar suggests that Elcho ‘offers a good example also of how a member of this group could move explicitly towards independent support of Palmerston rather than of Derby’.<sup>22</sup>

In fact, by 1860 he was the only example; others were, like William Stirling, ‘a member of the Carlton and a Liberal Conservative, not a Liberal or Whig’.<sup>23</sup> Though some Scottish MPs continued to use the Liberal Conservative label, all moved, explicitly or implicitly, into the Derbyite camp. Of those who did not, such as James Stuart Wortley, all had been defeated, voluntarily retired, or had moved to English constituencies by 1865.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Maurice Cowling, *Disraeli, Gladstone, and Revolution: The Passing of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge, 1967), 9–11.

<sup>20</sup> Hawkins, *Art of Politics*, 15.

<sup>21</sup> Lord Elcho ‘To the Electors of the County of Haddington’, 14 Mar. 1857, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/1025A.

<sup>22</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 247.

<sup>23</sup> A. Haywood to Stirling, 30 Oct. 1855, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/7/36.

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix F.

Many party members below the parliamentary level did, however, drift away from the party during the 1850s. They were encouraged in this by Palmerston's foreign policies, but also the conservative aspects of his domestic platform. One 'liberal-conservative' Perthshire elector, for instance, identified himself as a 'general supporter of Palmerston, so long as he keeps off the Radicals'.<sup>25</sup> Yet, many of these waverers, especially the more senior ones, only gave their support in conditional terms. Even an ideologically committed Peelite such as Lord Drumlanrig still saw himself in 1853 as a Conservative. As Gordon Millar has pointed out, this was similar to the way in which adherents of the Free Church viewed themselves as the rightful upholders of the Establishment.<sup>26</sup> While lay patronage would remain a barrier to rapprochement between the churches until late in the century, the barrier of agricultural protection which separated the parties steadily weakened during the 1850s.

On the Scottish Protectionist side, things had looked bleak in the late 1840s. Buccleuch, who had provided leadership and much-needed funding, was content to withdraw from national politics, being 'too happy and too busy in attending to my own affairs and county business'.<sup>27</sup> Repeal had widespread support outside of the gentry, and even in some Scottish rural areas. The Duke of Richmond's Factor informed him that in counties across the northeast, 'there is great apathy in Scotland in regard to the Corn Laws'.<sup>28</sup> As such, the Scottish party found itself even more isolated than the English party. The Scottish Conservatives also shared the English

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<sup>25</sup> W.S. Stirling Crawford to Stirling, 20 Mar. 1857, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/79/21.

<sup>26</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 234.

<sup>27</sup> Buccleuch to Dalhousie, 31 Dec. 1846, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/578/35.

<sup>28</sup> Balmer to Richmond, 23 Jan. 1846, Gordon MSS, GD44/44/22/6.

party's lack of organisational apparatus, being forced to start from scratch. Just as the Protectionists lost Bonham alongside Peel, the Scottish Protectionists lost Horne alongside Buccleuch.<sup>29</sup>

Much work was done to rebuild the party in the late 1840s and early 1850s, essentially from scratch. It helped that the majority of the Scottish squirearchy, especially lesser lairds, remained loyal, as did a great number of voters. It would also appear that the majority of those who held fictitious qualifications manufactured by the party remained protectionist in inclination. They often refused to switch over to Free Trade doctrines even if the landowner who had created their vote was one of the converted. Indeed, some Selkirkshire parchment voters who remained protectionist despite their patron's conversion saw 'themselves [as] Conservatives, but I cannot help looking upon them more in the light of Dissenters'.<sup>30</sup>

From 1849 onwards, the party embarked on a UK-wide campaign to convert public opinion, which included the formation of the National Association for the Protection of Industry and Capital throughout the British Empire.<sup>31</sup> In Scotland, native action was also taken; William Aytoun and John Blackwood served as delegates to the National Association, and as members of the new Scottish Protective Association, which was led by Eglinton.<sup>32</sup> Scottish efforts in this area were particularly needed, as the northern electorate's particular disdain for protection was beginning to dampen the enthusiasm of the party internally. John Blackwood informed Eglinton that, having 'spoken to most of the members of committee now in

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<sup>29</sup> Hill, *Toryism*, 244.

<sup>30</sup> Ogilvie to Buccleuch, 1 Oct. 1847, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/582/7/4.

<sup>31</sup> Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, 204.

<sup>32</sup> For its foundation and activities, see *John Bull*, 20 Apr. 1850; *Dundee Courier*, 8 May 1850; *The Standard*, 24 Apr. 1852; *Aberdeen Journal*, 24 Mar. 1852. See also George Makgill to John Gladstone, 22 Jan. 1850, Glynne-Gladstone MSS, GG/335, ff. 176–7.

Edinburgh’, they had concluded that a Protectionist demonstration would be inadvisable owing to a ‘certain degree of apathy and down-heartedness abroad among the supporters of Protection at present’, because ‘it is not so clear that our broadside would be loud enough to tell amid the general silence throughout the country... [without] a fall of 6/ or 7/ in the price of wheat’.<sup>33</sup>

The Glasgow section of the party, already damaged by the Disruption, might have been expected to disappear altogether. In fact, a significant faction survived in the city; one that was, moreover, still wedded to protectionism. A lengthy correspondence between George Sutherland and Disraeli made clear that while ‘the religious party differences remain’, they were ‘nearly unanimous in our aversion to Peel’s policy’.<sup>34</sup> The Glasgow Industrial and Reciprocity Association was thus founded, on the understanding that ‘The old Clique will not join us – we could not expect that, but they will not oppose, that is enough’.<sup>35</sup> Sutherland soon found that he had ‘overestimated religious differences, Frees and Old Church, are meeting on this, who did not used to meet’, and that meetings were attended ‘by several of undoubtedly the leading and most extensive merchants and manufacturers of Scotland. They have entered ... into the scheme and I can see no reason for supposing that the Association will not be influential and numerous’.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> John Blackwood to Eglinton, 8 Oct. 1850, Blackwood MSS, 30009, ff. 231–2.

<sup>34</sup> Sutherland to Disraeli, 8 Nov. 1848, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 3–4. George Sutherland, of Sutherland and Sons, Glasgow Manufacturers, was a local Conservative who went on to become Secretary of the Glasgow Industrial and Reciprocity Association.

<sup>35</sup> Sutherland to Disraeli, 10 Jan. 1849, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 29–30. The Association advocated Free Trade, but only on reciprocal terms.

<sup>36</sup> Sutherland to Disraeli, 29 Jan. 1849, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 33–4; Sutherland to Disraeli, 1 Feb. 1849, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 35–6.

Yet, the lack of active leadership on a national level was hampering its prospects; Sutherland frequently hinted at the ‘difficulty, or uncertainty of any movement here until the Conservative leader be announced’, and Blackwood also asserted more generally that if they were to ‘set the country societies again in motion, it appears to me that some declaration from our leaders would be the best course’.<sup>37</sup> Scottish protectionism made substantial progress given its disadvantaged position, but it lacked public support. More importantly, the central party was unable (or unwilling) to provide support for such extra-parliamentary agitation. During the 1852 election in the Leith District of Burghs, the Conservative candidate, who supported reciprocal Free Trade, lost the election handily; as Omond observed, ‘The old cry of free trade and cheap bread, as potent then as it had been during the lean years that were past, carried the day’.<sup>38</sup>

Just as Peelites made great efforts to cooperate with Protectionists, so Protectionists made great efforts to accommodate Peelites. Intransigent Protectionists were forcefully suppressed by more moderate party elements. In 1851, James Drummond of the Midlothian Protection Association was severely censured and effectively ostracised by the local gentry for attempting to foist a rigidly Protectionist candidate on the county.<sup>39</sup> The moderate Protectionist incumbent, Sir John Hope, agreed to stand again.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Blackwood to Eglinton, 8 Oct. 1850, Blackwood MSS, 30009, ff. 231–2; Sutherland to Disraeli, 13 Dec. 1848, Hughenden MSS, 144/3, ff. 27–8.

<sup>38</sup> Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 163.

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of this incident from an organisational standpoint, see Chapter Two.

<sup>40</sup> Sir James Drummond to Sir John Hope, 3 Aug. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/5; Sir John Hope to Clerk 7, 14, 20 Apr. 1851, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/526/7/23.

Within the Derbyite Conservative party, many in Scotland already considered protection a dead issue, given the impracticability of re-imposing it.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the candidate for Banffshire, H. McDowall Grant, was advised by a local Conservative laird that ‘even many of the strongest Protectionists in England seem to be abandoning the idea as hopeless’, but that he should nevertheless ‘make your principles and hopes known to the farmers (for I do not think you will get the shopkeepers to support you)’.<sup>42</sup> This fluidity initially served to confuse electors and worked to the party’s disadvantage. The Lord Advocate John Inglis, for one, professed his Free Trade sentiments when unsuccessfully standing for election in Orkney in 1852. The audience at his nomination, however, thought that as a member of a Protectionist government, there was ample doubt as to his allegiance on the issue.<sup>43</sup>

Generally, from the early 1850s onwards the Scottish party followed the lead of early adopter G.W.H. Ross. An unsuccessful Derbyite candidate for Ross and Cromarty, he had campaigned in 1852 for the relief of the agricultural interest, rather than renewed tariffs.<sup>44</sup> Such a shift was assisted by Derby’s strategy. He had consciously avoided committing the party to uncompromising protectionism in the late 1840s, and ensured that it was not the ‘main plank’ of his 1852 administration.<sup>45</sup> By the late 1850s, even this compromise was increasingly untenable, as Lord Home observed that farmers in Berwickshire were ‘better off than before, they are no

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<sup>41</sup> Brash, *Scottish Electoral Politics*, xxvi.

<sup>42</sup> Abercromby to Macdowall Grant, 29 Oct. 1851, Abercromby of Forglen MSS, GD185/31/168.

<sup>43</sup> *Scotsman*, 7 Aug. 1852.

<sup>44</sup> *Scotsman*, 21 Jul. 1852.

<sup>45</sup> Angus Hawkins, ‘Lord Derby and Victorian Conservatism: A Reappraisal’, *Parliamentary History*, 6 (1987), 294, 288.



longer Protectionists and that link which bound them to the Tory party being broken'.<sup>46</sup>

During the breakup of the Conservative party, new leader Lord Eglinton had lamented that 'no measure could be passed so prejudicial to the interests of the country as the repeal of the Corn Laws'.<sup>47</sup> Eglinton was a particularly ardent Protectionist in the late 1840s and early 1850s, even by the standards of the Derbyite party at that time.<sup>48</sup> After losing its remaining liberal conservative sections, the party might have been expected to become even more of a 'country' party than before. Yet, some larger magnates with diverse business interests did not follow Peel on Free Trade. Similarly, Eglinton combined landholding with significant industrial interests, and actively involved himself in industrial matters. In 1843, for instance, he wrote to Peel to request a change in the mail packet schedule between Scotland and Ireland, having 'been so fervently and repeatedly asked by the leading commercial men of Glasgow and elsewhere to bring [the issue] before your notice'.<sup>49</sup> His longstanding relationship with the ironmaster Bairds of Gartsherrie led James Baird to record that 'I think I have never met a man with more thorough business habits'.<sup>50</sup> The party, like its leader, was never merely an agrarian and traditionalist grouping. Given Eglinton's continuing importance in the party up to his death in 1861, it is safe to assume that his views softened as Derby sought to wean the party from protectionism.

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<sup>46</sup> Lord Home to Buccleuch, 22 Nov. 1858, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/18/36-7.

<sup>47</sup> Eglinton to Archibald Hamilton, 26 Dec. 1845, Hamilton of Rozelle MSS, AA/DC17/53/3.

<sup>48</sup> Hawkins, *Ascent*, 391.

<sup>49</sup> Eglinton to Sir Robert Peel, 9 Apr. 1843, Peel MSS, 40527, ff. 159-60.

<sup>50</sup> McGeorge, *Bairds of Gartsherrie*, 79.

Nevertheless, its most powerful remaining Scottish intellectual lights – Alison and Aytoun – continued to espouse hierarchical and elitist ideals. Moreover, the paternalist mindset of the landlord survived within new facets of the state, such as in the central Board of Supervision tasked with overseeing the implementation of the new Scottish Poor Law.<sup>51</sup> Its chairman, Sir John McNeill, carried out his duties on the basis of his belief that the landed classes had a duty to support the poor. Though this paternalism was of limited scope, it did, as Levitt points out, mean that ‘that the poor, unlike in England, were saved from the wrath of the utilitarian Whigs’.<sup>52</sup> As late as 1865, a recently retired Conservative Constituency Agent asserted that his professional object was to ensure that ‘the landed interest, and the noblemen and gentlemen and educated classes of the country should occupy their natural position in the management of the affairs of the country, instead of the Cotton Lords and selfish manufacturers’.<sup>53</sup> The underlying attitudes of the country Tories up to 1868, and arguably beyond, were still based on the representation of interests over individuals.

There had, however, been some changes in outlook within this overarching framework. There was an increasing willingness by some prominent party members to appeal directly to those interests in a popular sense, rather than focusing almost exclusively on creating and registering pliant voters. Eglinton took the lead on this, and though he was not able to ‘get up’ a mass national demonstration in favour of protectionism, that he would even attempt such a thing represented a decisive break

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<sup>51</sup> For the party’s role in such bodies, see Chapter Three.

<sup>52</sup> Ian Levitt, *Government and Social Conditions in Scotland, 1845–1919* (Edinburgh, 1988), xl–xli.

<sup>53</sup> John Hope to Buccleuch, 13 Sep. 1865, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1033/1/10.

from earlier party strategy under Buccleuch.<sup>54</sup> Eglinton had shown his independent willingness to engage in mass events from his 1839 tournament onwards, but at least part of this stemmed from a change of ethos in the Derbyite party. Derby held a different conception of constitutional authority to Peel's which, though by no means populist, placed a lesser emphasis on executive authority within parliament, and acknowledged the increasing importance of 'party' and party organisation. The organised UK-wide campaign to win over public opinion was therefore carried out by Eglinton and his Scottish allies with Derby's express approval.<sup>55</sup>

Traditionalist intellectuals such as Aytoun and Alison became increasingly central to promoting Scottish conservative ideals after the Corn Law split, which was recognised by Eglinton and Derby.<sup>56</sup> It is notable, however, that the infamously authoritarian Alison was given a baronetcy rather than a senior judicial post, which was instead awarded to the more moderate (and Peelite) Duncan McNeill, brother of Board-of-Supervision chairman Sir John McNeill.<sup>57</sup> This was an indication that, by the early 1850s, Eglinton was going along with Derby's efforts to move the party towards a more moderate position in certain areas. Alison, having been in many ways at the vanguard of the party in the 1830s, now found himself lagging behind. Indeed, one of his articles was rejected by *Blackwood's* in 1850 because it was too critical of Peel, and Michie has observed that, due to his later obsession with currency and Free

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<sup>54</sup> See Eglinton to Derby, 30 Dec. 1849, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/22; Eglinton to Derby, 4 Jan. 1850, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/23.

<sup>55</sup> Hawkins, 'Derby and Victorian Conservatism', 282–4; Gambles, *Protection and Politics*, 204.

<sup>56</sup> See, for instance, W.E. Aytoun, 'Sir Robert Peel and the Currency' *BEM*, 62 (Jul. 1847); W.E. Aytoun, 'Conservative union', *BEM*, 64 (Nov. 1848); Archibald Alison, 'Thirty Years of Liberal Legislation', *BEM*, 63 (Jan. 1848); Archibald Alison, 'Free-Trade Finance', *BEM*, 67 (May 1850); Martin, *William Edmonstoune Aytoun*, Chapter 5; Eglinton to Derby, 26 Apr. 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/49.

<sup>57</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 13 May 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/53.

Trade by the late 1850s, he became, ‘in his embittered old age ... in effect, a currency crank’.<sup>58</sup>

Despite appearing to be an increasingly old and tired party north of the border, there were occasional indications of youthful vitality. Eglinton found himself, in succession to the likes of Peel and Graham, elected as Lord Rector of Glasgow University. This was not instigated from on high, as he was elected despite his ‘desire to give way to the Duke of Argyll’.<sup>59</sup> The University of Glasgow Conservative Club continued to thrive, attracting donations from MPs across the Peelite-Protectionist spectrum, and even from former party managers Robert Lamond and Donald Horne.<sup>60</sup> Peel had been selected as patron of that organisation in 1849, and its honorary members included Derby and William Wordsworth.<sup>61</sup>

Overall, the Scottish Protectionist party moved towards becoming a more purely ‘country’ party than it had been previously, as the last liberal conservatives split off. It was not, however, exclusively so. Despite starting in a somewhat stronger position than their southern counterparts, the Scottish Peelites declined with greater rapidity. The Peelite and Protectionist contingents quickly began cooperating in Scotland, with most Peelites (at least in the higher echelons) being reabsorbed into the Derbyite fold by the later 1850s. Though the intellectual heavyweights of the Scottish party continued to nurse traditionalist ideals, various figures sought to move the party towards a greater popular engagement with the electorate.

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<sup>58</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 177.

<sup>59</sup> Eglinton to Derby, 20 Nov. 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/148/2/116.

<sup>60</sup> Donations, 1852–3, University of Glasgow Conservative Club, Glasgow University Conservative and Unionist Association MSS, GB 248, DC180/2/1/1.

<sup>61</sup> Eglinton to James E. Cumming, 17 Apr. 1849, Paton MSS, 3218, f. 135; Derby to Cumming, 21 May 1849, Paton MSS, 3218, f. 136; William Wordsworth to Cumming, 18 Jun. 1849, Paton MSS, 3218, f. 137.

## II. Religious Change and Social Policy

Though the influence of the Established Church was reduced after 1843, it remained an important institution, and the secession of its more radical elements meant that it became even more wedded to the ‘country’ mores espoused by the Conservative aristocracy. Given the newly fractured Scottish religious landscape, especially in the towns, the party found itself even more restricted to its rural base. Furthermore, the actions of some landowners in refusing Free Church sites and dismissing Free Church labourers served to sour relations in rural areas.<sup>62</sup> Though this was also true of some Liberal and Whig landowners, such as the Duke of Sutherland, the disproportionate number of Conservative lairds meant that it damaged the party more severely. The party contained a surprisingly diverse assortment of religious denominations, but did not benefit from this in electoral terms. The Scottish Conservative party, and conservatism more broadly, thus had a meaningful effect on Scotland’s religious landscape across a variety of denominations. More broadly, the role and prominence of religion itself was changing in mid-Victorian Scottish society; the party also played a significant part in shaping these trends.

The connection between local religious tensions and national politics was illustrated by the decision of an Aberdeenshire Free Church congregation at Rhynie not to build on a land plot provided by the Duke of Richmond. Richmond’s Factor thought that their change of heart in demanding a better site ‘must have arisen from Maule’s proposed measures’ to ‘enable Christian congregations in Scotland to obtain

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<sup>62</sup> Brown, *National Churches*, 359.

sites for places of worship, manses, and school-houses'.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, Conservative landowners were deeply unnerved by the evangelising efforts of the new Free Church, and their political implications. In the Dumfriesshire village of Wanlockhead, the Minister Lewis Irving 'delivered from the tent an inflammatory harangue exhorting the people to "stand out" for what he called "their rights" ... [which has] renewed the animosity of party spirit which had begun to subside'.<sup>64</sup> Buccleuch, who essentially owned the parish and had refused to grant a site to build a Free Church, thought that Irving's 'conduct in this matter has been a most impertinent interference when he had no concern and in a most impudent manner'.<sup>65</sup> The negative attitude of many Conservatives towards the Free Church, let alone Nonconformists, decisively precluded any efforts to appeal to these substantial groups.

Free Church adherence, combined with strong anti-landlord sentiments, was particularly damaging to the party in the Highlands, as an evangelical Presbyterian ethos unique to that region and integral to its culture evolved.<sup>66</sup> The monopoly of the landowners' power in the Highlands was particularly visible. Popular dislike for them, and by extension the party which represented their interests, was widespread. The Free Church vote throughout Scotland was, however, not strong enough to conclusively affect electoral outcomes on its own. Nevertheless, it did negatively affect the party's fortunes in conjunction with other factors. Church influence in

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<sup>63</sup> Balmer to Richmond, 19 Jun. 1846, Gordon MSS, GD44/44/22/42; Hansard, HC Deb, 19 May 1846, vol. 86, cc872-4.

<sup>64</sup> Patrick Ross to William Maxwell, 12 Aug. 1844, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/367/1/3.

<sup>65</sup> Buccleuch to John Gibson, 26 Oct. 1848, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/367/1/18.

<sup>66</sup> Allan W. MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community: Christianity and Social Criticism in the Highlands of Scotland, 1843-1893* (Edinburgh, 2006), 74.

politics was common, such as in 1868 in Perthshire, when the Weem District alone was thought to be ‘Priest ridden by the Free Kirk clergy’, as ‘The parson from Killin drove thirty-five of ... [Stirling’s] pledged voters into the polling booth like a flock of sheep’.<sup>67</sup> The Conservative Sir William Stirling lost the county by 279 votes. The Free Church vote, especially as the electorate gradually expanded, prevented Conservative victories and influenced internal Liberal politics.<sup>68</sup>

The continuing adherence of many Conservative aristocrats to the Scottish Episcopal Church was also a running sore-point, though there were challenges to the predominance of the aristocracy even within this institution.<sup>69</sup> Some of the more romantic and/or anglicised Scottish Conservatives were more problematic, however. One of these, Alexander Baillie-Cochrane, lost his Lanarkshire seat in the election of 1857 despite having gained it at a by-election only three months before. Though he provoked local disapproval for his vote against Palmerston on the China question, his links to the Church of England, Young England, and Puseyism had also damaged his prospects.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, local Conservative Lord Home referred to Cochrane as an ‘Impudent Dog’, and observed that ‘the Ministers in the county are persuading their flocks that Mr. Baillie Cochrane is a Romanist in disguise; and ... this alone would destroy all chance of his re-election’.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, George Hope was advised not to contest Linlithgowshire in 1852 because there was a general feeling among the gentry that he was ‘a great deal of a Catholic’, and that he was ‘turned out of Southampton for being suspected of being so’.<sup>72</sup> As late as 1865, Liberal candidates

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<sup>67</sup> (?) Menzies to Stirling, 23 Nov. 1868, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/80/152.

<sup>68</sup> Pentland, ‘By-Elections’, 281; Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 225.

<sup>69</sup> Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, 287.

<sup>70</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 243.

<sup>71</sup> Home to Buccleuch, 7 Jul. 1857, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1031/18/11.

<sup>72</sup> James Hope to George Hope, 3 Mar. 1852, Hope of Luffness MSS, GD364/1/173.

could refer in their election literature to the ‘powerfully organised High Tory opposition, which, in its zeal for the Episcopal Establishment (although inclined to court the *Roman Catholics*,)...’.<sup>73</sup>

To be associated with anything approaching Catholicism was anathema to many Scots, and part of a wider British situation – anti-Catholicism was pervasive in mid-Victorian Britain.<sup>74</sup> Though Scotland’s Presbyterians were now more divided, the country was still deeply religious, especially members of the middle-class electorate. Even a professed ‘Liberal Conservative’ of Scottish extraction scolded Lord Aberdeen for considering the inclusion of Sir James Graham in his government, as in his opinion ‘a more reckless and ungodly man does not exist’, because in the past ‘he was in the habit of going to the Home Office on a Sunday morning ... and tempting the subalterns to be there in attendance upon him’.<sup>75</sup>

Continuing religiosity was amply demonstrated by the pronounced effect which support for (or opposition to) the Maynooth grant played in Scottish politics up to the mid-1850s, though Derby quickly sought to distance the party from anti-Catholicism. Uniquely in Scotland, the Free Church could negatively compare the treatment of Roman Catholics to their own unhappy experience in dealing with Peel. Conservatives initially made use of their opposition to the measure, which was a significant test of candidates’ religious integrity. Crucially, it also set them above many Peelites who had supported Maynooth and then compounded this by

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<sup>73</sup> Sir Andrew Agnew, ‘To the Independent Electors of the County of Wigton’, 28 Jun. 1865, Maxwell of Monreith MSS, Acc. 7043.

<sup>74</sup> G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain, 1832–1868* (Oxford, 1977), 253–4.

<sup>75</sup> ‘A Liberal Conservative’ to Aberdeen, 14 Jan. 1853, Aberdeen MSS, 43248, ff. 211–12.



supporting Russell's 1851 Ecclesiastical Titles bill.<sup>76</sup> Yet, the opposition to Maynooth held by Free Church members could not be transformed into electoral support for the Conservative party, given its staunch support of the Established Church. Similarly, though some United Presbyterians opposed Maynooth due to anti-Catholicism, others did so out of opposition to state support of religion in general. It thus became yet another issue which was fought over most fiercely within the bounds of the Liberal party.<sup>77</sup>

As Maynooth was pushed into the background, religious sensibilities continued to play a major role in Scottish political issues as the 1850s progressed. The force of politicised religiosity increasingly came to be expressed in the area of educational reform.<sup>78</sup> This chiefly involved inter-denominational disagreements over the extent to which (or, indeed, if at all) religious education and the Established Church should play a role in any new system.<sup>79</sup> No fewer than three Scottish education bills foundered in parliament between 1854 and 1856 because of this, despite a clear majority of Scottish MPs voting in favour.<sup>80</sup> Though Fox-Maule's non-sectarian proposals in the early 1850s were opposed by both the Established and Free Churches, Lord Advocate Moncrieff's subsequent bills were mainly objected to by the Established Church and its Conservative political allies. They did so on the

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<sup>76</sup> Gordon F. Millar, 'Maynooth and Scottish Politics: The Role of the Maynooth Grant Issue, 1845–1857', *RSCHS*, 27 (1997), 224; Millar, 'Conservative Split', 229, 257.

<sup>77</sup> Millar, 'Maynooth', 222.

<sup>78</sup> For discussions of this issue more generally, see R.D. Anderson, *Education and the Scottish People, 1750–1918* (Oxford, 1995), Chapter 3; Donald Withrington, 'Adrift Among the Reefs of Conflicting Ideals?: Education and the Free Church, 1843–1855', in Brown and Fry (eds), *Age of the Disruption*, 79–97; Wilson H. Bain, "'Attacking the Citadel": James Moncrieff's Proposals to Reform Scottish Education, 1851–69', *Scottish Educational Review*, 10 (1978), 5–14.

<sup>79</sup> See, for instance, *National Education for Scotland: Proposed Basis for Legislation*, 1857, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/511/22/3.

<sup>80</sup> Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 257; Donald Withrington, 'Church and State in Scottish Education before 1872', in Heather Holmes (ed.), *Institutions of Scotland: Education* (East Linton, 2000), 59.

grounds that they interfered with that church's role in running its parochial schools, and were too favourable to the Free Church.<sup>81</sup> Throughout the 1850s, Scottish Conservative MPs and their English allies contrived to block these efforts.<sup>82</sup> When the Conservative MP Sir James Fergusson broke ranks, he was attacked by a fellow party-member C.L. Cumming Bruce, illustrating how closely the party identified with the position.<sup>83</sup>

In 1859, *Punch* accused Derby of 'inflicting another outrage upon the north', because of his refusal to tackle the issue on the grounds of religious divisions.<sup>84</sup> Much of this division emanated from senior Scottish Conservatives. Buccleuch wrote a strongly worded letter to Aberdeen asserting that there was significant feeling in Scotland at 'present in favour of our present Parochial System of schools', and that the Free Churchers' and Voluntaries' motivation was 'not education but political power, which under that guise many of them seek to obtain ... not caring one farthing about education'.<sup>85</sup> Buccleuch's hard-line views on educational reform were a significant factor in his slow movement towards Derby after the fall of the Aberdeen ministry.<sup>86</sup> The issue continued to affect Scottish politics up to 1868 and beyond. When yet another of Moncrieff's measures was withdrawn in 1862, *Punch* highlighted that this may have been due to a 'dread of the upper house', containing as it did 'the influence of the landocracy in Scotland'.<sup>87</sup> Apart from continuing to

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<sup>81</sup> Millar, 'Maynooth', 261; Rev. Dr Cook to Derby, 5 Mar. 1852, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/39/6/1/1. See also a printed declaration in favour of Church of Scotland Parochial Schools, signed by many prominent Scottish Conservatives, in Aberdeen MSS, 43201, f. 138.

<sup>82</sup> See, for instance, HC Deb, 12 May 1854, vol. 133, cc246–54; HC Deb, 8 Apr. 1856, vol. 141, c674.

<sup>83</sup> HC Deb, 2 Jun. 1856, vol. 142, cc886–90.

<sup>84</sup> *Punch*, 26 Feb. 1859.

<sup>85</sup> Buccleuch to Aberdeen, 25 Jun. 1854, Aberdeen MSS, 43201, ff. 124–8.

<sup>86</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 246.

<sup>87</sup> *Punch*, 7. Jun. 1862.

generate conflict between the party and voters of Nonconformist denominations, it also reinforced the perception that the Scottish Conservatives were an aristocratic 'country party'.

Nevertheless, even after the Disruption, it was never a monolithically 'establishment' party. Though the Free Church was predominantly Liberal in inclination, there were prominent Free Church ministers who openly professed Conservative allegiance. One, the Minister Dr James Begg of Newington, combined his Free Church ministry with prominent membership of the Scottish Conservatives.<sup>88</sup> Archibald Campbell of Monzie had left the party and resigned his Argyllshire seat as a result of the Disruption. However, he continued to run as a candidate in the Free Church interest as a Liberal Conservative. The majority of Conservative votes in the 1852 Edinburgh election went to the Establishment Conservative, T.C. Bruce (and tactically to the radical Free Churchman Charles Cowan). Nevertheless, Campbell did manage to garner 626 votes, suggesting that, in Edinburgh at least, there was a significant minority who were Free Church and conservative in inclination (or, at least, liberal conservative).<sup>89</sup> Campbell did not drift towards liberalism. Instead, he once again stood as a Conservative in the later 1850s.<sup>90</sup>

Below the parliamentary level, the Edinburgh party boasted a number of prominent Free Churchmen, including the Chairman of the Edinburgh Conservative committee in 1856, Alexander Pringle. Though there was occasional party infighting,

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<sup>88</sup> Crapster, 'Scotland and the Conservative Party', 356.

<sup>89</sup> Cockburn, *Journal*, ii. 284; Mackie, *Duncan McLaren*, ii. 34. For a detailed analysis of the dynamics of this election, see Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 101–9.

<sup>90</sup> Machin, *Politics and the Churches*, 248; see Appendix A.

it nevertheless managed to contain religious diversity within its confines.<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, Established Church Conservatives were not all staid Moderates. Many Conservative members of the Church of Scotland combined their denominational allegiance with deep piety, and, in some cases, strong evangelical fervour. The most zealous of these was perhaps Hay McDowall Grant, an Aberdeenshire landowner and former West Indian merchant who had unsuccessfully contested Banffshire as a Derbyite in 1852. His defeat prompted one Free Church-inclined newspaper to suggest that his defeat was a blessing, as Grant supported an administration which had been 'patronising Antichrist' through its grant to Maynooth.<sup>92</sup> Yet, during the latter part of 1859 Grant proved himself to be a deeply pious lay preacher, and was a prominent instigator and promoter of the famous Ferryden revival in Forfarshire. During this, he made strenuous efforts to complete a widespread evangelical conversion of the local populace. Grant was, in addition to his conservatism, a radical evangelical whose beliefs were driven to a significant extent by the advance of romanticism in this sphere. While it is notable that Grant did not speak at either of the local Free Churches, he did speak at two United Presbyterian Churches, and though the most prominent Free Church minister privately disapproved of the way in which Grant preached, he did give him public praise.<sup>93</sup>

Even the party's traditionalist base was showing showed tentative signs of change by the 1860s. One former Conservative Constituency Agent was convinced by 1865 that the time had come for the party to embrace lay patronage, in order to

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<sup>91</sup> Williams, 'Edinburgh Politics', 22.

<sup>92</sup> *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 20 Aug. 1845, cited in Millar, 'Maynooth', 226.

<sup>93</sup> Bebbington, *Victorian Religious Revivals*, 161–2, 176, 179, 187.

prevent a closer alliance between the Free Church and United Presbyterians.

However, he also supported it because it constituted ‘the great and leading ground of opposition to the Established Church’, and because patronage had by this time ‘been reduced almost to a mere name and is not worth retaining, and to patrons must be a source of anxiety, not to say annoyance’.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, Admiral Hay informed Disraeli that while he thought that ‘popular election of a parson has degenerated and always will degenerate into the nomination of a priest, by priests’, patronage was of actual benefit to no-one, and if abolished by the party it would ‘unite the Free Church to the Established Church [and] they will hold the majority of Scotchmen, conservative in Church and State’.<sup>95</sup> It is notable that when patronage was abolished in 1874, it was done by Disraeli’s Conservative administration.<sup>96</sup> Though this slow shift in party attitudes was driven more by practicality than conviction, this illustrates that Scottish conservatism was far from static in terms of religious attitudes.

Despite the still-strong religiosity present in Scottish society, there is also significant evidence that popular attitudes were not static either. Though some have claimed that the Enlightenment had petered out in the 1820s, it continued to have ever-wider effects on Scottish society, resulting in a Scotland where ‘science and practical theology suited the national spirit’.<sup>97</sup> In a broader British political context, the mid-Victorian period witnessed a conscious effort by Palmerston and Derby to partially insulate religion from the intensity of partisan politics. This was done by reframing issues with religious significance through the use of more secular

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<sup>94</sup> John Hope WS to Buccleuch, 13 Sep. 1865, Buccleuch MSS, GD224/1033/1/10.

<sup>95</sup> Adm. Hay to Disraeli, 11 Jun. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 131/1, ff. 43–8.

<sup>96</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 115–7.

<sup>97</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 61.

terminology, thus presenting it as social policy.<sup>98</sup> Though Disraeli would not manage to transform ‘social reform’ into a popular element of the party agenda until after 1868, it was a significant feature present in the first two Derby ministries.<sup>99</sup>

The fractured, noisy, and chaotic religious landscape might give the impression that Scotland’s religiosity was increasing in the mid-Victorian period. In fact, much of the bustle constituted a reaction by some religious figures to perceptions that their influence was on the wane. The Disruption ended a specific type of Church influence on Scotland’s politics.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the fractured nature of Presbyterianism meant that no one church could now plausibly claim to speak for the nation, as was illustrated very clearly by the 1851 census.<sup>101</sup> The different viewpoints of the various denominations were now reduced to mere competing interests, arguably on the same level as, rather than above, others such as the manufacturing and agricultural interests. This was not absolute; governments still ‘respected the churches as sources of social advice, the Lord Advocate for example consulting them over educational reform’.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, even the idea that education constituted a ‘social’ issue, rather than one that was unquestionably and primarily religious, is indicative of a wider shift. The broader fact was that, despite the great and diverse

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<sup>98</sup> ‘Social’ was, in this period (and subsequently), an evolving, ambiguous, and contested term – nonetheless, it captures the essence of broader movements. See, for instance, Lawrence Goldman, ‘A Peculiarity of the English? The Social Science Association and the Absence of Sociology in Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Past & Present*, 114 (1987), 133–71; Sanford Elwitt, ‘Social Science, Social Reform and Sociology’, *Past & Present*, 121 (1988), 209–14; Lawrence Goldman, ‘Social Science, Social Reform and Sociology: Reply’, *Past & Present*, 121 (1988), 214–19.

<sup>99</sup> Hawkins, ‘Parliamentary Government’, 663; P.R. Ghosh, ‘Style and Substance in Disraelian Social Reform, c. 1860–80’, in P.J. Waller (ed.), *Politics and Change in Modern Britain: Essays Presented to A.F. Thompson* (Brighton, 1987), 60.

<sup>100</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 56.

<sup>101</sup> See Donald Withrington, ‘The 1851 Census of Religious Worship and Education: With a Note on Church Accommodation in mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Scotland’, *RSCHS*, 18 (1974), 133–48.

<sup>102</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 57.

efforts of a wide variety of individuals, there had been no great increase in church attendance. By the late 1840s and early 1850s, this had resulted in ‘hints in the published sermons and other pamphlets that their writers are questioning, however gently, some of the basic assumptions of the earlier era’.<sup>103</sup>

However, within the bounds of Scottish conservatism, this questioning of assumptions occurred much earlier, suggesting that the party was at least partly responsible for furthering these wider changes. The elements of the party most receptive to evangelicalism were the liberal conservatives who had largely deserted the party long before 1846.<sup>104</sup> The party’s abandonment of a commitment to evangelical-inspired notions paralleled the decline in its opinion of Chalmers, between 1839 and 1843. His worldview, after all, epitomised the confluence of moderate liberal conservatism and evangelicalism. The course of this disengagement can best be charted by examining the divergence of Chalmers and the party on the topic of the Scottish Poor Law.

The main intellectual challenge to Chalmers’s preferences came from Dr William Pulteney Alison, a physician, social reformer, and brother of Archibald Alison.<sup>105</sup> Both Alison brothers, in contrast to Chalmers, were profoundly sceptical of Malthusian theory.<sup>106</sup> This theory suggested that population growth would eventually outstrip growth in food supply, necessitating population control.<sup>107</sup> Some

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<sup>103</sup> Donald Withrington ‘Non-Church-Going, c. 1750–c. 1850: A Preliminary Study’, *RSCHS*, 17 (1972), 113.

<sup>103</sup> Paterson, *Autonomy*, 57.

<sup>104</sup> Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 220.

<sup>105</sup> L.S. Jacyna, ‘Alison, William Pulteney (1790–1859)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/350> [accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>106</sup> Indeed, this was something of a family crusade; their father, the Rev. Archibald Alison, had also been a prominent Scottish critic of Malthusianism. See Olive Checkland, ‘Chalmers and William Pulteney Alison: A Conflict of Views on Scottish Social Policy’, in A.C. Cheyne (ed.), *The Practical and the Pious: Essays on Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847)* (Edinburgh, 1985), 130–40.

<sup>107</sup> See Thomas Robert Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (London, 1798).

advocates of Malthusianism therefore pressed for a harsher Poor Law which would discourage population growth. W.P. Alison's immensely popular pamphlet employed a critique of Malthusianism as part of his proposals to extend the English Poor Law to Scotland.<sup>108</sup> He proposed a system which was similar, but not identical to England's. Though in favour of workhouses, he favoured keeping families intact and providing assistance to the able-bodied in certain circumstances.<sup>109</sup> The issue held the interest of the Scottish party; Henry Home Drummond noted that 'there is ... agitation at present about the Scotch Poor Laws', and advised William Stirling to 'read Dr Alison's tract'.<sup>110</sup>

Crucially, these proposals rested on framing the Condition of England question (in Scotland) as a social issue. The new Scottish Poor Law would eventually remove the management of poverty from the local parish, its ministers, and the Established Church more broadly, placing it into the hands of ostensibly disinterested 'professionals'. Interestingly, Archibald Alison, despite his country tory leanings, supported this on the basis that the aristocracy had been every bit as ineffectual in handling poverty as the Church had been.<sup>111</sup> This attitude stood in stark contrast to Chalmers, who wished to establish a 'Godly Commonwealth' in response to increasing urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>112</sup> This ideal Christian society would be one in which the Established Church played a central role in the management of

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<sup>108</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 462; Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, 82; W.P. Alison, *Observations on the Management of the Poor in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1840).

<sup>109</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 118.

<sup>110</sup> Home Drummond to Stirling, 20 Apr. 1840, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/3/123i.

<sup>111</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, i. 461; Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 119. This was at least partly because Alison was himself the sort of 'professional' who would have taken charge of the Poor Law Boards.

<sup>112</sup> See Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*.



poverty. Indeed, he put his voluntary ideals into practice in the Glasgow parish of St John between 1819 and 1823.<sup>113</sup> There was, however, a rapidly growing public scepticism of Chalmers's vision. In 1840, Archibald Alison supplemented this, and his brother's arguments, by publishing a large two-volume work.<sup>114</sup> This labelled the St John's experiment an abject failure, and made a renewed attack on its Malthusian underpinnings.

This direct challenge resulted in the arrangement of a debate between Chalmers and Alison. Held in September 1840, this wide-ranging discussion, during the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, lasted for four days. It attracted an enormous crowd, and its proceedings were widely reported in Scottish newspapers. At its core, the argument was a competition between moral and environmentalist views of society. Chalmers asserted that moral reform of individuals would lead to an improvement in the social environment, whereas Alison asserted the opposite, that reform of the wider social environment would in turn lead to moral improvement.<sup>115</sup> Though reports indicate that Chalmers's masterful oratory won over the audience in the room, Alison's viewpoint (or at least parts of it) won the wider argument taking place in Scottish society. As Drummond and Bulloch put it, 'all Scotland knew that the scope of the problem had long passed beyond hope of solution through voluntary efforts'.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> See Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, Chapter 3; Mary Furgol, 'Thomas Chalmers' Poor Relief Theories and their Implementation in the Early Nineteenth Century', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1987, Chapter 4.

<sup>114</sup> Archibald Alison, *Principles of Population, and Their Connection with Human Happiness*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1840).

<sup>115</sup> Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 292; *Scotsman*, 26 Sep. 1840; *Fife Herald*, 24 Sep. 1840.

<sup>116</sup> Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, 82.

Michael Michie has observed that Archibald Alison's fundamental social vision was in many ways similar to that of Disraeli's public platform later in the period. However, Alison did not need to temper his opinions as a politician seeking to win power and build party alliances. He was therefore free to attack the more uncompromising extremes of political economy and alienate the liberal conservatives, conservative liberals, and christian economists who shared his essentially agrarian outlook. Both Alison brothers, alongside Sir James Graham, convinced Peel to establish a Commission of Inquiry into the Scottish Poor Law in 1843–4.<sup>117</sup>

Indeed, the Commission would have been convened in the immediate wake of the debate, if it had not been for the objections of Lord Advocate Rae.<sup>118</sup> Religious interests were represented on the Commission, but it was publicly bipartisan in nature, intended to encompass as many societal 'interests' as possible. This reflected its purpose in dealing with what was by then considered an avowedly 'social' issue.<sup>119</sup> The new Scottish Poor Law adhered to principles of political economy more than the Alisons might have liked. Nevertheless, it is notable that the aristocrats who generally ran the central Board of Supervision, as established by the 1845 Act which followed the Commission, followed a pattern of 'benevolent collectivism'.<sup>120</sup> This

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<sup>117</sup> Milne, 'Conservative Controversialist', 441. See also R.A. Cage, *The Scottish Poor Law 1745–1845* (Edinburgh, 1981), Chapter 8.

<sup>118</sup> See Peel to Rae, 10 Jan. 1842, Peel MSS, 40499, ff. 195–6; Rae to Peel, 25 Jan. 1842, Peel MSS, 40427, ff. 197–201.

<sup>119</sup> For private discussions (and disagreements) on the composition of the Commission, see Graham to Rae, 13 Dec. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 66–7; Rae to Graham, 13 Dec. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 68–9; Graham to Rae, 27 Dec. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 70–1; Graham to Rae, 29 Dec. 1842, Graham MSS, 79666, ff. 72–4.

<sup>120</sup> Ian Levitt, 'Welfare, Government and the Working Class: Scotland, 1845–1894', in David McCrone, Stephen Kendrick, and Pat Straw (eds), *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change* (Edinburgh, 1989), 114.

was tellingly similar to the Alisons' paternalist and environmentalist ethos.<sup>121</sup> Peter Mandler has suggested that the English Poor Law represented not a revival of paternalism, but instead reflected a new ethos prevalent among the English gentry. Some of the Scottish gentry on a local level may possibly fit into this mould, but the primary motive in the drafting and subsequent national operation of the Scottish Poor Law was (at least among the Scottish party figures who counted) paternalist.

The decline of religion in the political sphere from the 1840s onwards must not be overemphasised; the churches continued to hold an overwhelming moral influence, and social and political power at a local level. On a purely electoral level, this was particularly true outside of the central belt. Moreover, the churches adapted to the times, and theological disagreements did not prevent them from working together in arenas such as the Poor Law Boards, which were now somewhat more secular in character.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, though they constituted important elements of these boards, they no longer aspired to entirely supplant them.

This context is crucial to understanding the role played by religious issues in mid-Victorian Scottish party politics; the Established Church opposed educational reform so vehemently at least in part because it had already lost control of the Poor Law, only two years after losing so many of its adherents and ministers to the Free Church. They were fearful of further encroachments, especially as the Disruption had resulted in the loss of over 500 schools from the parochial sector.<sup>123</sup> More broadly, the wider shifts taking place within Scottish society can also be seen in the gradual evolution of the vexed Sunday question in Scottish and British politics. Non-Scots

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<sup>121</sup> See Peter Mandler, 'The Making of the New Poor Law Redivivus', *Past & Present*, 117 (1987), 131–57.

<sup>122</sup> Millar, 'Maynooth', 276; Paterson, *Autonomy*, 57.

<sup>123</sup> Withrington, 'Church and State in Scottish Education', 59.

frequently illustrated (and lampooned) the country's religiosity, as expressed through the staunch sabbatarianism of many churchgoers.<sup>124</sup> However, the evolution of this issue also reveals the increasing relaxation of some religious strictures. There was, after all, significant and increasing opposition to sabbatarianism within Scotland itself.<sup>125</sup>

Overall, the Scottish Conservative party was primarily perceived to be the party of the Moderate Established Church and Scottish Episcopal Church, and operated in a much more fractured religious landscape. These strong links reflected and reinforced its essentially aristocratic character. Nevertheless, it played a notable role in promoting the evolution of 'social' policy in certain areas, and in fashioning the implementation of such policies. More broadly, it also played an influential role in shaping the sectarian landscape of mid-Victorian Scotland. Given that it contained hitherto underemphasised evangelical and dissenting elements, this role was more far-reaching than might be expected.

### III. Scotland and Britain

Though efforts to translate Scottish romantic conservatism into political support were unsuccessful in the 1830s and 1840s, this did not deter party figures. If anything, a hard core of stalwarts increased and diversified their exertions. After the Corn Law

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<sup>124</sup> See, for instance, *Punch*, 20 Apr. 1850.

<sup>125</sup> See, for instance, Charles MacKay, *Forty Years' Recollections of Life, Literature, and Public Affairs*, 2 vols (London, 1877), i. 327–35; *Scotsman*, 5 Jan. 1850.

split, the party found itself deprived of many of the great magnates who had dominated it, many of whom had been only lukewarm supporters of romantic conservative Scottishness. Certainly, they had been sceptical of efforts to promote this in a more popular sense, as had many of the more cosmopolitan liberal conservatives. Lord Eglinton was the leading Scottish Conservative after 1846, however, and was one of the most romantically inclined figures in the entire party. The party made efforts to promote itself through monuments and commemorations, and through the advocacy of Scottish rights. These efforts were, for a wide variety of reasons, unsuccessful. It thus found itself operating in a political landscape characterised by a jumble of 'British', international, and local issues during Palmerston's ascendancy. Caught between this and its continued exclusion from urban Scotland, the party declined further.

Eglinton and the party's increasingly active efforts to promote a romantic and country tory version of Scottish cultural identity was in tune with the changing times in some ways, and discordant in others. On one hand, the distinctiveness of Scottish identity within the Union was increasingly bolstered by confident cultural expressions, including monuments, and by an increasing popular interest in the Scottish past. On the other hand, that distinctiveness was increasingly perceived in modern and Whiggish terms. Macaulay's *History of England*, the first two volumes of which were published in 1848, epitomised and reinforced this trend.<sup>126</sup> This rendering of the past, written by a historian who was also an active Scottish Whig politician, went out of its way to condemn past Tories and their motivations.<sup>127</sup> By

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<sup>126</sup> T.B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, 5 vols (London, 1848–61).

<sup>127</sup> See Fry, 'Whig Interpretation of Scottish History', 75–8.

extension, it sought to discredit the version of history which Eglinton and his ilk were promoting.<sup>128</sup> The implicit intellectual assumptions engendered by such works occasionally revealed themselves in the somewhat less rarefied arena of electoral politics. The Liberal candidate for Wigtown Burghs in 1865, for instance, stated that he was an ‘adherent of that great Historic party’, and that he did not suppose that ‘any true sons of the Covenanters wish for a return to Tory policy’.<sup>129</sup>

Archibald Alison, in addition to his other varied pursuits, also indirectly combated Macaulay’s version of history. Alison’s ten-volume *History of Europe* was published before Macaulay’s, between 1833 and 1843, but had been an extremely popular bestseller. Despite his generally elitist outlook, Alison consented to the publication of a People’s Edition in the early 1850s, intended for a mass audience. Alison sanctioned this ‘novel experiment’ partly because his publisher ‘calculate[d] upon an enormous sale’.<sup>130</sup> It was also explicitly intended to popularise his belief, implicitly evident throughout the book, that excessive democratic reform would lead to war, chaos, and revolution.<sup>131</sup>

The Conservatives also made continued efforts to propagate their distinctive view of society in the area of commemoration. They were, however, increasingly unsuccessful in doing so because of wider cultural changes. The memory of Sir Walter Scott, for instance, had become increasingly de-politicised since his death in 1832, in spite of party efforts. Despite (or perhaps because of) this, party members

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<sup>128</sup> For a contemporary Tory version of the Scottish past, see Patrick Fraser Tytler, *The History of Scotland*, 7 vols (Edinburgh, 1828–43).

<sup>129</sup> Sir Andrew Agnew, ‘To the Independent Electors of the County of Wigtown’, 28 Jun. 1865, Maxwell of Monreith MSS, Acc. 7043.

<sup>130</sup> Blackwood to Alison, 13 Feb. 1853, Blackwood MSS, 30010, ff. 69; Blackwood to Alison, 9 Feb. 1853, Blackwood MSS, 30010, ff. 65–6.

<sup>131</sup> Michie, ‘Conservative Response to Reform’, 129.

were able to carve out a niche for themselves in popular celebrations of Scottishness. During the nationwide Burns centenary celebrations in 1859, for instance, senior Conservatives were prominent contributors and even directors of proceedings.<sup>132</sup> The Burns festival at Glasgow was chaired by Alison – but it is nevertheless interesting to note that Baillie-Cochrane thought that this was only because the Duke of Montrose had declined to preside.<sup>133</sup> Though its more active elements had pushed the Scottish Conservative party in an increasingly cultural and romantic direction, the unobtrusive and aristocratic base of the Scottish party contained many who disdained such activity.

This internal dissonance was most evident in the preparations and planning for the National Wallace Monument at Stirling.<sup>134</sup> Alison reluctantly accepted the chairmanship of a related meeting, ‘on the ground that some nobleman of high rank would be more suitable’, but found that ‘they all held back’.<sup>135</sup> Prominent Conservatives were increasingly troubled by the debates surrounding the proposed character of the monument, expressing this both publicly and in private.<sup>136</sup> As Alison observed, ‘The management had got into Radical hands, so far as the local committee was concerned, and the Tory landed proprietors in consequence stood aloof’.<sup>137</sup> This narrative was by then a familiar one to such party stalwarts – having acted to

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<sup>132</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 157–60, 175.

<sup>133</sup> Baillie-Cochrane to Stirling, 16 Dec. 1858, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/8/34.

<sup>134</sup> For a discussion of this in a broader context, see James Coleman, *Remembering the Past in Nineteenth-Century Scotland: Commemoration, Nationality and Memory* (Edinburgh, 2014), 50–8.

<sup>135</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 314.

<sup>136</sup> See, for instance, Home Drummond to Stirling, 31 Jan. 1859, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/9/30; Home Drummond to Stirling, 23 Mar. 1859, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/9/31; *Glasgow Herald*, 10 Feb. 1859.

<sup>137</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 315.

stimulate such expressions of Scottishness, they found that their efforts were moving in unwelcome directions.

This was very true of the short-lived National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights, an extra-parliamentary organisation which existed between 1853 and 1856, and sought to redress various immediate and longstanding Scottish grievances. The movement for the erection of the National Wallace monument had in fact followed on from its dissolution.<sup>138</sup> The Association essentially sought to promote Scotland's national interests within the Union. The UK Conservative party, at least, did pay more attention to Scotland and its affairs than was popularly perceived.<sup>139</sup> Nevertheless, there was a persistent (and not entirely unjustified) public perception that there was, in the words of even a dedicated Whig like Henry Cockburn, an 'occasional disregard, if not contempt, by England, of things dear to us, merely because they are not English'.<sup>140</sup> Scottish business was often side-lined in parliament, and many legislators had little knowledge of or interest in Scottish affairs. There was sporadic agitation from various quarters advocating the recreation of the post of Scottish Secretary – figures as disparate as Henry Cockburn and Lord Melville both thought the idea to be a sound one.<sup>141</sup>

The Association's main contemporary impact on Scottish public life was through its organisation of large meetings. Several of these were held – in late 1853 alone, its first meeting in Edinburgh was attended by 2,000, while a follow-up event

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<sup>138</sup> H.J. Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism: Romantic and Radical', in Robert Robson (ed.), *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark* (London, 1967), 171.

<sup>139</sup> See Chapters Two and Three.

<sup>140</sup> Cockburn, *Journal*, ii. 293.

<sup>141</sup> Cockburn, *Journal*, i. 126–7; ii. 300; Melville to Peel, 15 Nov. 1829, Peel MSS, 40317, ff. 217–18.



in Glasgow drew 5,000 listeners and supporters.<sup>142</sup> Though it attracted a mishmash of people from across the political spectrum, the actual leadership of the movement was strongly dominated by Conservatives. These included Eglinton, Alison, and Aytoun. They were romantically inclined and notably intellectual Conservatives, and this strongly influenced the way in which the Association's platform was formulated and propagated. As Alex Tyrrell has put it, 'Eglinton and his *Blackwood's* friends assumed the right to define policy at the Association's public meetings and in parliament'.<sup>143</sup> Eglinton's past efforts, which included his medieval tournament and the 1844 Burns festival, had failed to bring political advantage to his party. They had, however, made him the most obvious choice to lead such a movement. He became the Association's spokesman in parliament, and it was publicly suggested that by doing so, he had sacrificed both his position in the Conservative party and his hopes of office.<sup>144</sup> In fact, he had done nothing of the sort – as Chapter Two has illustrated, he was the leading Scottish Conservative throughout the 1850s, and would go on to hold the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland after the organisation was wound up.

Scottish Conservatives had been flirting with such ideas long before the official establishment of the NAVSR; Aytoun, for instance, had publicly criticised centralising tendencies since the early 1850s at least, and alongside Alison, had opposed Peel's assimilationist Scottish banking legislation in the 1840s.<sup>145</sup> Other prominent Conservatives were also present in the Association's ranks – the Bairds of Gartsherrie were supporters, and the Duke of Montrose chaired the Glasgow public

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<sup>142</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 4 Nov. 1853; *Times*, 19 Dec. 1853.

<sup>143</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 102, 97.

<sup>144</sup> Hanham, 'Scottish Nationalism', 147; Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 136.

<sup>145</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 96–8; Aytoun, 'The Scottish Banking System', *BEM*, 56 (Dec. 1844).

meeting. Most tellingly, with the exception of Charles Cowan and Duncan McLaren, there were no really prominent Liberals among its membership.<sup>146</sup>

Nevertheless, the Association was not perceived (initially at least) to be merely a Conservative proxy, as there were other prominent backers. These including figures such as Glasgow solicitor William Burns and the historical novelist James Grant.<sup>147</sup> Before Eglinton and the *Blackwood's* friends took a leading role, the initial impetus had come from them. They were not party members, but did have longstanding reputations as opponents of centralisation. The party had sought for years to utilise broader romantic currents present in Scottish civil society. Eglinton and his ilk managed – briefly and partly – to reach out and co-opt an ostensibly nonpartisan vehicle to advance their agenda.

Initially, they were successful in their object of attracting a broad base – those who signed the Association's petition to English and Irish MPs included Peelites, Derbyites, radicals, and whigs.<sup>148</sup> Moreover, it also attracted a broad spectrum of religious figures, including the Free Church Minister James Begg, and Hugh Miller, editor of the Free Church organ the *Witness*.<sup>149</sup> Fourteen peers, a host of municipal leaders from across Scotland, and many local magistrates were signatories, and its large committee included newspaper editors, leaders in the major professions, and captains of industry.<sup>150</sup> These were the leaders of the liberally minded civil society which had largely evicted the Conservative party from urban Scotland twenty years

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<sup>146</sup> Hanham, 'Scottish Nationalism', 164; Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 32.

<sup>147</sup> Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500–2000* (Cambridge, 2008), 273; Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 96; *Address to the people of Scotland, and statement of grievances by the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights* (Edinburgh, 1853).

<sup>148</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 136.

<sup>149</sup> Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*, 270; Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 185n.

<sup>150</sup> Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 136; *Address ... Vindication of Scottish Rights* (Edinburgh, 1853).

before. The Conservatives involved must have thought that all their wishes had been granted; if they could shape and direct opinion in such a broadly based group, they might finally be able to successfully (re)introduce romantic, paternalist, and hierarchical notions of Scottish identity into the political sphere. This would also, incidentally, do much to detoxify conservatism in Scotland. It might even eventually lead to the rehabilitation of the party, as a vehicle through which this politicised identity could be expressed.

The NAVSR's platform was largely formulated with this romantic and hierarchical worldview in mind. It focused on promoting Scotland's interests, but with a strong emphasis on the primacy of the Union: 'Lord Eglinton and I were perfectly united in our views, which were to abide firmly by the Union, and utter nothing which could shake the general attachment to it'.<sup>151</sup> However, the Association's platform did contain elements which were considered, at the time and subsequently, to have been frivolous. There was, for instance, adverse reaction to complaints by William Burns that the word 'England' was being increasingly and incorrectly conflated with that of 'Britain'. This type of complaint was ridiculed in the Scottish and English press, especially (and tellingly) by whiggish organs.<sup>152</sup> The conservative press, and *Blackwood's*, however, generally displayed a positive attitude towards the Association.<sup>153</sup>

The subsequent (and abundant) historiography on the NAVSR has likewise tended to focus on these more frivolous aspects.<sup>154</sup> Though the Association appealed

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<sup>151</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 31.

<sup>152</sup> See, for instance, *Scotsman*, 24 May 1854; *Times*, 10 Nov. 1853.

<sup>153</sup> Aytoun, 'Scotland since the Union', *BEM*, 74 (Sep. 1853).

<sup>154</sup> See, for instance, Hanham, 'Scottish Nationalism'. The most recent honourable exceptions to this are Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', and Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*.

to a romanticised and idealised past in order to justify its defence of Scotland's ancient institutions, the whole movement cannot be summarily dismissed as merely the result of emotional outpourings and antiquarianism. Beneath the surface, it represented an attempt by Conservative figures to promote a version of Scottish identity which was hierarchical and paternalist. Alison had some romantic sympathies, but these were by no means excessive, and Eglinton's industrial interests and refusal (as a Lowlander) to be swept along by the prevailing currents of Highlandism are indicative.<sup>155</sup> Romanticism was of secondary importance to the Conservative leaders of the movement, being a shell surrounding a core of more practical political objectives.

A more romantic Scotland would also be a country that did not wholly embrace the more excessive strictures of political economy. There were echoes of vaguely tory-radical and Young England-esque themes in the ideas of its principal adherents. Aytoun, for instance, wrote a novel which (like Baillie Cochrane's and Disraeli's before him) criticised the essential inhumanity of many aspects of modern society.<sup>156</sup> Yet, more so than the conservative romantics who preceded him, he emphasised that much of this stemmed from excessive centralisation. Advocacy of anti-centralisation could be interpreted in a convenient number of ways. For urban Scots, it could be seen as an assertion of confidence in the new bourgeois dominance of municipal affairs, while the country tories could see it as an implicit advocacy of localist and paternalist dominance in the counties. Though convenient, these

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<sup>155</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 97–8.

<sup>156</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 98; W.E. Aytoun, *Norman Sinclair*, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1861).

interpretations were so incompatible that any alliance built on such a foundation was bound to be short-lived.

Despite its brief existence, the NAVSR did sow the seeds for the eventual introduction of administrative devolution in Scotland, both in terms of public opinion and internal Conservative party opinion. After its dissolution, Eglinton picked up right where he left off as a senior and trusted member of the party. He strongly lobbied Derby for administrative devolution – interestingly, not on the model of a Commons-based Irish Chief Secretary. Instead, he advocated turning the sinecure office of Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland into a Minister for Scotland.<sup>157</sup> Having been Irish Lord Lieutenant, Eglinton sought to create a Scottish equivalent of this post, which would obviate the need for the post-holder to find a Scottish Commons seat.<sup>158</sup>

Moreover, it would have bolstered the influence of the Scottish aristocracy, and provided an additional inroad for the peerage into urban Scotland. When the party was in power in London, a Scottish Minister would be able to curry favour in Scotland through the judicious dispensation of patronage. It is notable that Disraeli's *Press* was not unfavourable towards the NAVSR, and that the first attempt to re-establish the post of Scottish Secretary was during Disraeli's second ministry in 1878.<sup>159</sup> The most important consequence of the NAVSR was therefore internal to the Conservative party, as the principle of administrative devolution was significantly advanced within it. While the eventual establishment of the post of

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<sup>157</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 106.

<sup>158</sup> For this difficulty in relation to Conservative Lord Advocates, see Chapter Three.

<sup>159</sup> Tyrrell, 'Eglinton', 105–7.

Scottish Secretary was the result of cross-party efforts, it did come to pass during the Conservative ministry of 1885–6.<sup>160</sup>

Derby appears to have been keen on the idea, though in keeping with his view that parliament was the ‘authoritative arena of national politics’, it seems unlikely that he would have supported it if the popular and extra-parliamentary NAVSR had not been wound up by this time.<sup>161</sup> He even went so far as to consult Buccleuch on the proposal, but his many objections killed the scheme. Principally, as the sovereign’s representative to the Kirk, the Lord High Commissioner’s post was a sinecure, but was nevertheless an informal ‘means of communication between the Government and the Church’.<sup>162</sup> The party had already borne the brunt of public anger for its perceived role in the Disruption. As such, attempting to give an office so closely associated with the Established Church such wide-ranging temporal powers would have provoked apoplectic fury among the increasingly strident Nonconformist denominations, especially the United Presbyterians, who advocated the separation of Church and State, and elements of the Free Church.

This was also one of the main reasons why the NAVSR could never have constituted a broad and robust base on which to build an urban Scottish conservatism. Though the Association attracted a wide range of religious adherents, it could only achieve this by excluding religious issues from its platform. Moreover, the Conservatives who drove the movement were largely Episcopalians. Though there was a great deal of fractious infighting between different forms of

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<sup>160</sup> James Mitchell, *Governing Scotland: The Invention of Administrative Devolution* (London, 2003), 25–8.

<sup>161</sup> Hawkins, ‘Derby and Victorian Conservatism’, 281–2.

<sup>162</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 12 Mar. 1858, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/2.

Presbyterianism, it was nevertheless an essential pillar of a distinctive Scottish bourgeois identity. Further, the public became increasingly aware of the overlap between the NAVSR's leading lights and the Protectionist leadership, despite their attempts to downplay and conceal this.<sup>163</sup> Once again, the party's reputation as anti-Reformers came into play, as Cockburn observed that it was curious that though the NAVSR might want Scotland to have more MPs than its then-current fifty-three, 'this complaint proceeded from those who did all they could to prevent us from getting even the fifty-three we have'.<sup>164</sup> Further, significant elements of Scottish society were indifferent to centralisation, and some smaller commercial elements were actively in favour of integrationist measures.<sup>165</sup>

The Association's demise was deliberately engineered by the very Conservative leaders who had initially done so much to promote it. The broad spectrum of ideas which such a strident (but steadfastly pro-Union) platform attracted quickly began to worry Eglinton and his allies. Alison stated that 'other more ardent and hot-headed patriots were not content with this object ... the Irish Repealers were stretching out the hand of amity', and therefore 'accordingly Lord Eglinton and I agreed that it should be allowed to drop'.<sup>166</sup> It is possible that its backers wished to encourage something not unlike Irish patriotic Toryism, but had instead found themselves attracting other Irish movements. The fact that such figures were willing to ally with, and even lead, such a populist and extra-parliamentary movement shows how far leading Conservatives had progressed since their reactionary response to Reform. Though Eglinton presented its giant and populist

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<sup>163</sup> Eglinton to Aytoun, 25 Oct. 1853, Blackwood MSS, 4896, ff. 117–8.

<sup>164</sup> Cockburn, *Journal*, ii. 300.

<sup>165</sup> *Scotsman*, 5 Nov. 1853; Hutchison, 'Anglo-Scottish Political Relations', 252–3.

<sup>166</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 31.

petition to parliament as a ‘respectful’ appeal, the fact that he consented to present it in the first place is telling.<sup>167</sup> Derby, for one, would not have become even peripherally involved in such an organisation, strongly believing as he did that parliament was the ‘authoritative arena of national politics’.<sup>168</sup> Indeed, apart from the hustings, his only significant foray into extra-parliamentary public speaking had been his 1834 Glasgow Rectorial address.<sup>169</sup>

Though some Scottish Conservatives were now more comfortable with new means of winning over the electorate, they still held fundamentally hierarchical outlooks. Such popular movements were now acceptable, but only if the ‘right people’ were leading them, and if their followers conformed to a moderate and deferential ideal. The Association thus ran into the same barriers as the Duke of Gordon had in the 1830s, when attempting to convert the Orange Order into a tool of the Scottish party. Members continued to hold their own ideas, and would not always defer. For instance, it seems very likely that Eglinton did not approve of the Grant brothers’ criticism of the romanticised Scottish aristocracy.<sup>170</sup>

Viable nationalist movements needed to contain a ‘strong collective democratic component’.<sup>171</sup> Given the outlook and leadership of such Conservative figures, this was never a possibility. The movement drew on significant support from Scottish urban leaders. However, it never made a sustained effort to reach further down the social scale, in order to build up a genuinely popular support base. Though

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<sup>167</sup> HL Deb, 6 Apr. 1854, vol. 132, 496–504, cited in Tyrrell, ‘Eglinton’, 103.

<sup>168</sup> Hawkins, *Art of Politics*, 45.

<sup>169</sup> Hawkins, *Achievement*, 419.

<sup>170</sup> Tyrrell, ‘Eglinton’, 104.

<sup>171</sup> Michie, *Enlightenment Tory*, 197.



the enormous meetings indicate that a potentially popular support base might have existed, the movement was kept deliberately exclusive, and, as Graeme Morton has observed, ‘rank and file membership was more in the 100s than the 1,000s’.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, this potential popular base was by no means unanimous. In particular, Scottish participation in the Empire served to make such quasi-nationalistic complaints seem irrelevant – this did much to encourage a British identity which spanned Scotland, England, and Wales.<sup>173</sup> It is significant that the Crimean War was the main public excuse which Eglinton and his allies used for winding up the Association, ‘upon the ground that England’s danger was *not* Scotland’s opportunity’.<sup>174</sup>

It is intriguing to note that the period immediately following the mid-1850s, the time in which the Scottish party was at its most distinctively ‘Scottish’, there followed a phase in which Scottish politics more broadly was at its most essentially ‘British’, yet also simultaneously local. After the NAVSR’s attempt to appropriate Scottish patriotism for the Conservative party, Palmerston succeeded in capturing a near-monopoly on British patriotism in Scotland and England, through invoking an ‘atavistic notion of “England” in defence of the Empire’.<sup>175</sup> Though Disraeli would go on to appropriate this later in the century, Scottish elections during Palmerston’s ascendancy were fought on a mishmash of competing local and international issues, putting the Scottish party once again on the back foot.

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<sup>172</sup> Tyrrell, ‘Eglinton’, 103; Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 136.

<sup>173</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 45.

<sup>174</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 31.

<sup>175</sup> Julia Stapleton, ‘Political Thought and National Identity in Britain, 1850–1950’, in Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian William Young (eds), *History, Religion, and Culture: British Intellectual History 1750–1950* (Cambridge, 2000), 246.

Though it was by no means a primary factor, Scottish Conservative candidates tended to do better if they praised Palmerston during the 1857 election, and worse if they did not.<sup>176</sup> The Palmerston factor, which included moderate conservatism in domestic affairs, endeared him to many otherwise conservatively inclined electors. This hindered the Conservatives in both Scotland and the UK until Palmerston's death in 1865.<sup>177</sup> Palmerston even managed to steer clear of Scottish controversy on perennially thorny religious issues, despite his widely acknowledged indifference to Scotland. In consciously making English ecclesiastical appointments which favoured low churchmen, Palmerston endeared himself to a variety of Presbyterians.<sup>178</sup>

All of this had a cumulative effect on the fortunes of the Scottish party in the late 1850s and early 1860s. In the realm of foreign policy, moreover, Scottish Conservatives do not appear to have formulated distinct Scottish positions.<sup>179</sup> Scottish Conservative newspapers implied, for instance, that the outbreak of the American Civil War demonstrated the impracticality of democracy, but this was little different from broader UK currents of party opinion.<sup>180</sup> Scottish conservatism may have contained variant attitudes on domestic affairs, be they Scottish or British, but

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<sup>176</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 238.

<sup>177</sup> J.B. Conacher, 'Party Politics in the Age of Palmerston', in P. Appleman, W.A. Madden, and M. Wolff (eds), *1859: Entering an Age of Crisis* (Bloomington, 1959), 166.

<sup>178</sup> Millar, 'Conservative Split', 239.

<sup>179</sup> Work on Scotland's public attitudes towards foreign affairs in this period is unfortunately sparse. The Scottish party's attitudes towards the American Civil War, however, appears to be near-identical to broader UK party attitudes. See Robert Botsford, 'Scotland and the American Civil War', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1955; Lorraine Peters, 'Scotland and the American Civil War: A Local Perspective', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2000.

<sup>180</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 24 Jul. 1862.

on imperial and foreign matters the party's attitudes were essentially indistinguishable from those in the wider UK party.<sup>181</sup>

Overall, the prominence of British and international issues put the Scottish Conservative party at the same disadvantage as the party more broadly. Before this, Eglinton and the newly ascendant Scottish Conservative intellectuals had made renewed and more inclusive efforts to win over urban and bourgeois Scotland. They had done so through a continued focus on monuments, commemorations, and related antiquarian pursuits. Primarily, they had sought to utilise the NAVSR and advocacy of 'Scottish Rights' to finally connect cultural and political expressions of Scottishness. This romantic, elitist, and paternal vision of an ideal Scottish society was, however, contrary to the spirit of the age.

#### **IV. Social Change and Political Reform**

From 1832 onwards, the Scottish Conservatives had always possessed a majority of the county seats, and at least one burgh constituency. The election of 1857, however, deprived the party of its sole remaining urban seat, and led to a roughly equal division in the counties between Conservatives and their opponents. Popular preferences and political issues played a role in both urban and rural seats, but changes in the influence- and registration-riddled counties were somewhat distinctive. In the 1850s, Eglinton and others had been busy attempting to make

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<sup>181</sup> The only in-depth work on the Scottish Liberal party in this period illustrates that imperial and foreign issues did play a prominent part in public opinion and voting in Scottish elections. It does not, however, indicate that the party itself formulated distinctive attitudes on these issues. See Millar, 'Liberal party in Scotland', Chapter 4.

inroads into urban and bourgeois Scotland. However, the majority of the country tory squires who had remained on the Protectionist side had continued to act (or not act) much as before. Ostensibly 'local' issues such as the Game Laws and Hypothec revealed the extent to which the social structure of the Scottish countryside was changing. The party, though not static, failed to adapt fully to this. By the eve of the Second Reform Acts, the party showed signs of tentative innovation on a deeper level. However, the primary impetus for this came from the central party.

The deteriorating political situation after the 1840s did not stimulate any invigoration of activity. The close connection between local and national political issues declined, meaning that localism once again came to the fore in the counties. This, combined with party splits, meant that much of the formal party organisation had decayed or vanished. The political activity of the gentry had diminished or vanished along with it. As such, the issues which the rural party concerned itself with were more prominently local.<sup>182</sup> Even by 1868, when William Stirling wrote a draft letter to one of his Perthshire constituents on his beliefs, he spent as much space discussing his position on a proposed Salmon Fishing bill as he did on parliamentary reform.<sup>183</sup> These issues were not entirely traditional or concerned with parliament, however; Stirling was also advised to play on his potential investment in a local railway line from Meigle to Alyth as there were 'a good many voters in Alyth'.<sup>184</sup>

In many ways, this localist turn must have been a relief to the conservatively minded, as it enabled them to more securely view such issues in terms of local

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<sup>182</sup> This may also have been true of Scottish MPs in parliament itself. See Cragoe, 'Local Interests in Parliament', 133–48.

<sup>183</sup> Draft, Stirling to Sir Robert Menzies, 20 Jul. 1868, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/81/32A.

<sup>184</sup> Airlie to Stirling, 23 Mar. 1857, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/79/3.

‘interests’. Indeed, these could cross constituency lines, as in 1849 when Inverness-shire MP Henry Baillie was expected to play a prominent role in shepherding a parliamentary bill. This would have authorized the construction of a new bridge at Inverness with fifty per cent government funding, provided the ‘the four northern counties would be willing to assess themselves to pay the remaining half’.<sup>185</sup> It is such issues which best illustrate how the politics of registration and influence were no longer enough to maintain the party in the counties. The main ‘local’ issues which revealed this change were Hypothec and the Game Laws.

The Game Laws allowed the gamekeepers of landlords to kill tenants’ animals, even their cats and dogs, if they interfered with game animals. They also prevented tenants from killing game animals which had trespassed on their holdings, even if these had damaged crops and other property.<sup>186</sup> Landowners, mostly Conservatives, had long been dogged by complaints from their tenants regarding the iniquity of the laws. This had long played a prominent part in opposition campaigning.<sup>187</sup> By the late 1850s, however, the issue had been brought into sharper relief by the more systematic exploitation of game, as the land-use pattern of Scottish estates increasingly favoured that pursuit.<sup>188</sup> During by-elections in the dying days of the Palmerston administration, there was significant evidence that farmers were no longer willing to ignore the issue. By 1865, the single largest cause of Peter Blackburn’s defeat in Stirlingshire was his support for the Game Laws.<sup>189</sup> His position as a local Justice of the Peace, ruling personally on poaching offences, and

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<sup>185</sup> Henry Baillie to James Grant, 25 Apr. 1849, Warrant of Bught MSS., GD23/6/730/4.

<sup>186</sup> Carter, *Farm Life*, 68.

<sup>187</sup> For this issue in Haddingtonshire alone, see, for instance, Dalhousie to (?) Watson, 20 May 1846, Dalhousie MSS, GD45/14/578; Hope, *George Hope*.

<sup>188</sup> Carter, *Farm Life*, 68.

<sup>189</sup> Pentland, ‘By-Elections’, 284; Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 153.

his role in herding the Night Poaching Act through parliament cannot have helped matters.<sup>190</sup> Kincardineshire was also lost by a large margin because of this, despite the seat having been held by the party since 1826.<sup>191</sup> This year also saw activity in the northeast, as local anti-Game Law committees spontaneously formed in five counties. Blackburn's case, though, was somewhat exceptional; though farmers were willing to punish pro-Game Law candidates at the polls, the overall tone of relations in the northeast was fairly cordial. Local squires recognised that good relations with their agricultural tenants was at least as important as their game income. Though the laws would continue to be a running sore-point until after 1868, at this point the party appeared at least somewhat amenable to compromise on the issue.<sup>192</sup> This conciliatory attitude illustrates that the authoritarian and strictly hierarchical worldview of the Conservative lairds had mellowed somewhat since the 1830s. The lack of any actual action, however, illustrates that this change was limited.

The extent of their willingness to treat with farmers and tenants on more equal terms was more clearly revealed by their actions on Hypothec. Their attitudes toward reforming Scottish Hypothec laws was far less flexible. Hypothec, yet another long-running sore-point between landlord and tenant, enabled landlords to collect debts from defaulting tenants in the form of property or agricultural output. They could do so in preference to any other creditors, even where such property had already been sold on. This security allowed lairds to gamble when letting farms to poorer applicants, encouraging social mobility. However, it also encouraged them to

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<sup>190</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 107; see Appendices F and G.

<sup>191</sup> Henry Miller, 'Kincardineshire', in *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1832–1868*.

<sup>192</sup> Carter, *Farm Life*, 68–9; Crapster, 'Scotland and the Conservative Party', 359.

foreclose at the first sign of trouble. More damagingly, it irritated merchants and other elements of the rural economy who might lose grain and stock which they had already paid for. The stage was thus set for an unusual set of alliances, as landlords and upwardly mobile small farmers were united in support of Hypothec, whereas merchants, manufacturers, and larger capitalist farmers were united against it.<sup>193</sup> It was the latter group, of course, which was far more likely to possess the franchise in significant numbers. English Conservatives were by this point attempting to make inroads into urban areas. Scottish Conservatives on the other hand, after the failure of the NAVSR, were fighting a defensive action to retain even their last remaining rural strongholds.<sup>194</sup>

Both Hypothec and the Game Laws brought the party into conflict with the bedrock upon which it had built its rural edifice – the tenantry. Yet, it is also true that both issues were by no means novel when they flared up in the late 1850s. Rather, the controversy was more a symptom than a cause of the decline in Conservative support. The fact that the tenantry was now both willing and able to make an issue of it was symptomatic of a greater economic independence, and a less deferential attitude. Indicators of this change had been present for years; for instance, Lord Aberdeen would sit at the gate of Haddo House on Saturday afternoons to discuss his tenants' problems and issues, but discontinued the practice after 1850 when he found that they were only attending for social reasons.<sup>195</sup> The Conservative MP for Peeblesshire was right to assert that, with regard to the Game Laws, 'liberals are quite as great transgressors in this matter as any of us'.<sup>196</sup> Nevertheless, the

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<sup>193</sup> Carter, *Farm Life*, 70.

<sup>194</sup> Pentland, 'By-Elections', 285.

<sup>195</sup> Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, 116.

<sup>196</sup> Graham-Montgomery to Disraeli, 21 Jun. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 137/1, ff. 81–8.

overwhelmingly Conservative makeup of the Scottish gentry (with a few notable exceptions) made it a disproportionately worrisome development for the party. As the holders of the majority of county seats, they also had more to lose. Even after the Second Reform Acts, one Scottish Conservative candidate thought that these issues had been the principal reason for their poor performance in 1868, and that it was ‘not the reduced franchise which has defeated us – very much the reverse’.<sup>197</sup> Broadly speaking, the self-confident and independent attitudes which had led to the eviction of the party from urban Scotland had by now spread into the surrounding countryside. This, combined with the natural rise in voter numbers, created an increased electoral threat to the party.

Though the Conservatives still considered themselves the bulwark of the agricultural interest, they increasingly recognised that the balance of power within this interest was shifting away from the landed class to further down the social scale. Some attempts were thus made to adapt to the changing times; many candidates, such as William Stirling, deliberately sought out tenant seconders and proposers for the nomination, with party workers recognising ‘that a change of men from those who proposed and seconded formerly is most desirable’.<sup>198</sup> The party increasingly selected candidates who would be popular with farming voters, and by the late 1870s almost all Scottish candidates had publicly declared themselves in favour of Game Law reform.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Fergusson to Disraeli, 27 Nov. 1868, Hughenden MSS, 125/3, ff. 160–3.

<sup>198</sup> Patrick Murray Thriepland to Stirling, 23 Apr. 1859, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/9/193.

<sup>199</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 153; Crapster, ‘Scotland and the Conservative Party’, 359.



In the Highlands, similar (though not identical) conditions and trends were increasingly evident. The forthright expression of a strident Highland voice on a range of political issues was not to be heard properly until the 1870s and 1880s. Though conditions had improved, insecurity and poverty remained a constant feature of life for many. The twin calamities of the Disruption and Highland Famine had revealed the divergent interests of landlord and tenant even more so than in other parts of Scotland. As such, land reform was a more prominent issue, and the anti-aristocratic ethos of the Free Church in the region both reflected and itself intensified such attitudes in wider society.<sup>200</sup> Though many landlords had made vigorous efforts to mitigate the effects of famine, these were less visible than those who had not, souring relations over the long term.<sup>201</sup>

As David Roberts has observed, ‘the paternalist mentality of the country squire was a curious mixture of prejudice, self-interest, local loyalties, and benevolence’.<sup>202</sup> To an increasing number of Scots, it seemed that self-interest was their primary motivating factor. Buccleuch, for instance, had slowly gravitated back towards the Derbyite party partly because he feared the loss of constituencies which he controlled, should another Reform Act be passed. One of his overriding concerns for most of this period was to ensure that the small counties of Peeblesshire and Selkirkshire, both of which he dominated, would not be amalgamated.<sup>203</sup>

The party continued to nurture a fundamental belief that the aristocracy were the natural leaders of society; Derby held this attitude to an extent, but many in the

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<sup>200</sup> MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, 74–5, 26–31.

<sup>201</sup> MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, 36; T.M. Devine, *The Great Highland Famine: Hunger, Emigration and the Scottish Highlands in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1988), Chapter 4.

<sup>202</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism*, 259.

<sup>203</sup> Buccleuch to Derby, 23 Mar. 1859, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/164/17b/3.

Scottish party were effectively blinkered.<sup>204</sup> It was thus unwilling, or even unable to envisage, possible ways of winning over electors. Despite acknowledging their unpopularity on the Game question, Graham Graham-Montgomery frankly stated that ‘in regard to remedies I have really nothing to suggest. I know of no grievances to address’.<sup>205</sup> Though they were willing to deal with electors on slightly more equal terms, there was a fundamental disconnect between what many voters wanted and what Scottish Conservatives were willing to conceivably do. As such, they concentrated on a narrow range of issues – and even in this area, they could not keep up with the tide of popular opinion. Archibald Alison showed evidence of this progressive-but-blinkered approach. He was willing to support the introduction of direct taxation in the 1850s, but only because Free Trade had made it necessary, and he decried ‘the Ten Pound Notables [who] like their aristocratic predecessors in France refused to submit to any direct taxation’.<sup>206</sup> Thus, his underlying worldview remained unchanged. There was tentative evidence of a newer Scottish conservatism in its infancy, though this would not become influential until well after 1868. John Skelton, for instance, was a prominent Scottish supporter of Derbyite and Disraelian ideas, and made efforts to promote this in his articles for *Blackwood’s*. It was for this reason that Disraeli made him Secretary of the Scottish Board of Supervision after 1868.<sup>207</sup> Nevertheless, even this appointment illustrates that innovation and change was largely driven by party figures outside of Scotland. Indeed, *Blackwood’s* itself

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<sup>204</sup> Hawkins, ‘Derby and Victorian Conservatism’, 282.

<sup>205</sup> Graham-Montgomery to Disraeli, 21 Jun. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 137/1, ff. 81–8.

<sup>206</sup> Alison to Disraeli, 31 Dec. 1852, Hughenden MSS, 116/3, ff. 3–4.

<sup>207</sup> Levitt, ‘Welfare, Government and the Working Class’, 111.

was by then an Edinburgh magazine in name only, with an agenda largely dictated from London.<sup>208</sup>

In a UK context, the broader Conservative party gradually reconciled itself to Derby's intentions during the 1850s.<sup>209</sup> Derby, like Disraeli, was convinced that the towns were full of conservatism disguised as moderate liberalism, but the party had made only limited progress in winning over this group.<sup>210</sup> In Scotland, there had (it appeared) been no progress at all. As explored in Chapter Two, this was the one of the main reasons behind the organisation of Disraeli's 1867 Edinburgh banquet. The fact that the Whigs agreed with local Conservatives to offer Disraeli the freedom of the city, while radicals insisted on giving it to John Bright also, suggests that there was scope for Whig-Conservative cooperation on both sides of the border.<sup>211</sup>

By this point, the last active and innovative figures in Scottish conservatism, such as they were, had passed from the scene. Eglinton had died in 1861, Aytoun in 1865, and Alison in the May of 1867.<sup>212</sup> Younger Scottish thinkers such as Skelton were not yet influential or of sufficient standing. By the eve of the Second Reform Acts and Derby's retirement, Disraeli was, essentially by default, the most influential remaining Conservative who supported and promoted innovation in that sphere. As Maurice Cowling has demonstrated, passing the new Reform Acts involved immensely complex manoeuvring and political compromise.<sup>213</sup> As such, innovative Scottish measures were, quite understandably, secondary considerations. Derby and

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<sup>208</sup> See Joanne Shattock, 'The Sense of Place and Blackwood's (Edinburgh) Magazine', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 49 (2016), 431–42.

<sup>209</sup> R.B. McDowall, *British Conservatism, 1832–1914* (London, 1959), 60.

<sup>210</sup> Smith, *Disraelian Conservatism*, 24–5.

<sup>211</sup> Edward J Garden(?) to Disraeli, 15 Sep. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 18–20.

<sup>212</sup> Warner, *Scottish Tory Party*, 154.

<sup>213</sup> See Cowling, *Second Reform Bill*.

Disraeli were not, however, entirely indifferent to Scotland. Its share of redistributed seats was often discussed in Reform proposals, and Disraeli was even willing to consider extending the Scottish (and Welsh) practice of grouping burghs into non-contiguous district constituencies to England.<sup>214</sup> Conversely, Reform proposals remained sensitive to Scottish precedents; because there was ‘no example in Scotland of a county returning two Members’, over-populous counties were split, rather than extra members added.<sup>215</sup> Similarly, attention was paid to repeated warnings that Scottish urban electors were even more anti-Conservative than their English counterparts. Certainly, the first attempt to pass Scottish Reform in May 1867 redrew county constituencies in a way which excluded urban voters to a greater extent than the eventual English bill.<sup>216</sup> Bowing to Scottish Liberal objections, a slightly modified bill, still somewhat favourable to the Conservatives, was agreed upon after an all-night cabinet session involving Disraeli and the Lord Advocate.<sup>217</sup>

Disraeli was not able offer a significant increase in the number of Scottish seats. Despite knowing that ‘the Scotch public look with great interest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s statement on the subject’ of reform and redistribution, he was advised that, during his banquet speech, that ‘It may be better not to advert to this matter’.<sup>218</sup> Though there may have been a tentative private willingness to

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<sup>214</sup> Robert Dudley Baxter to Disraeli, 12 May 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 122–3; Dudley Baxter to Disraeli, 14 May 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 124–5.

<sup>215</sup> ‘Confidential Supplementary Memorandum in reference to the Reform Bill for Scotland’, 1867, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/56/3/4.

<sup>216</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 262.

<sup>217</sup> Disraeli to Derby, 11 Feb. 1868, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/146/4/15.

<sup>218</sup> Archibald Campbell Swinton ‘Suggestions as to National or Local topics – apart from Politics’, 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, ff. 37–9.

consider innovation, the political considerations of the day meant that this was deferred.

Widespread discussions about the definition of what constituted sufficient ‘respectability’ to earn the franchise were not confined to England.<sup>219</sup> Scottish party members participated in nationwide debates over the possible and desirable limits of constitutional change. Serious misgivings about an expansion of the franchise were by no means restricted to the Conservatives; Palmerston had been opposed to parliamentary reform, and the Liberal party’s long-serving Lord Advocate was a self-professed ‘old Whig’.<sup>220</sup> In keeping with the Scottish Conservative party’s slightly more country tory character, suggestions from north of the border disproportionately focused on separating town and country. Inverness-shire MP Henry Baillie proposed the creation of specific constituencies with ‘a franchise calculated to give a representation to the working classes ... [giving] suffrage to all towns of more than 100,000 inhabitants’, but commented (not entirely coincidentally) that though there were twenty-two of these in England, only two existed in Scotland.<sup>221</sup> Other rank-and-file party members suggested that, in Scotland, ‘members of some boroughs be elected by universal or by household suffrage, ... [and] others by a £6 franchise’.<sup>222</sup> Similarly, the MP for Perthshire and a more junior party member both supported the creation of Scottish university seats because they thought that would constitute an acceptable ‘lateral extension of the franchise’.<sup>223</sup> Two Scottish university seats were indeed created in 1868.

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<sup>219</sup> Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture*, 223–4.

<sup>220</sup> Millar, ‘Conservative Split’, 239; Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*, 238.

<sup>221</sup> Henry Baillie to Disraeli, 19 May 1866, Hughenden MSS, 117/2, ff. 111–12.

<sup>222</sup> Dr John Orchard to Disraeli, 24 May 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 163–6.

<sup>223</sup> William Stirling to Derby, 16 Feb. 1861, Derby MSS, 920 DER (14)/13/13/25, D. Harvester(?) to Disraeli, 21 May. 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, f. 104.

Notions of ‘respectability’, and who constituted the legitimate political nation were still limited, and the opinions of party members from 1866 onwards reflect this. This is neatly illustrated by a Glasgow party member, who thought that ‘The people of Scotland, that is fifteen out of every hundred, is perfectly satisfied that the present £10 rental is low enough’.<sup>224</sup> Similarly, a member of the Greenock party thought that his town’s ‘wealth and intelligence would be completely swamped and the right of election placed in the power of the workingmen’, and that ‘with the exception of the magistrates, and a few leaders among the shopkeepers and working classes, the respectable portion of the community have given no countenance to the Reform movement’.<sup>225</sup> In fact, an energetic and popular Reform movement had emerged throughout the UK, and across Scotland, by the mid-1860s, with a pragmatic convergence of opinion between working-class reformers and the middle classes occurring by early 1867.<sup>226</sup> The urban Conservative party, still broadly sceptical about Reform, did not have much to lose in electoral terms. The county party members, however, had more to worry about: ‘until last election we could boast of a considerable number of Conservative county members. I am sorry to say that even as the franchise now is we are gradually losing ground there’ – the writer thought that if ‘a £20 or even a £30 clause carried, Scotland would not send a single Conservative representative to parliament’.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Courtney Ware to Disraeli, 17 Apr. 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 69–70.

<sup>225</sup> Archibald Guill(?) to Disraeli, 10 Apr. 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 51–2.

<sup>226</sup> See Malcom Chase, ‘The Popular Movement for Parliamentary Reform in Provincial Britain during the 1860s’, *Parliamentary History*, 36 (2017), 14–30.

<sup>227</sup> Alexander Tod(?) to Disraeli, 24 May 1866, Hughenden MSS, 44/1, ff. 167–9.

Their fears were, it turned out, ill-founded. Though Sir William Fraser was right to state that, after the 1868 election, ‘The Scotch counties are now very much like the Scotch burghs’, that election was the party’s low-point, with successive results showing a (modest and slow) improvement.<sup>228</sup> Despite these almost apocalyptic missives from Scots party members, the fact remains that the Scottish party did not publicly challenge Derby and Disraeli’s attempts to push through parliamentary Reform. Derby and (to a lesser extent) Disraeli had succeeded in shifting party opinion towards accepting that some measure of parliamentary Reform was necessary. Though the Scottish party might have been somewhat more reactionary in character than the party more generally, this was trumped by loyalty towards the leadership. Alison again put his finger on the pulse of contemporary opinion when he suggested that many in the party (and in the opposition, for that matter), were deeply opposed to franchise extension. Despite his ever-more outspoken attitudes, he asserted that he did ‘not blame the Conservative leaders for adopting these tactics ... directing, so far as it was possible, the dangerous tendency of a current which it was impossible openly to withstand’.<sup>229</sup> Though many in the Scottish party did not actively embrace Reform, they nevertheless tolerated it as a rear-guard action. This constituted a shift in their attitudes – at least in terms of a willingness to acknowledge the increased power of public opinion in politics.

The party’s tentative organisational revival was partly fuelled by the changing times. Their opponents continued to remind electors of the party’s links to the pre-1832 authoritarian Scottish Tory regime and their previously staunch

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<sup>228</sup> Sir William Fraser to Stirling, 24 Nov. 1868, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/80/93.

<sup>229</sup> Alison, *Life and Writings*, ii. 365–6.

protectionism. These issues, however, were of less immediate importance to the electors of the 1860s.<sup>230</sup> Similarly, while the party's Scottish Reform proposals could not please everyone, the fact nevertheless remained that it was the Conservative party which was spearheading it. In Glasgow, the 1868 election brought them over twenty-five per cent of the new electorate, of whom as many as 3,000 were working-class plumpers.<sup>231</sup>

Disraeli's message found receptive ears among many working-class Scots. Over 2,500 working-class Edinburgh residents, for instance, signed an address to him in which they told him of their 'public approval of your parliamentary efforts'.<sup>232</sup> Similarly, in the run-up to his banquet, he received a 'deputation of influential working men'.<sup>233</sup> Nevertheless, this rapprochement was not caused by the evolution of Scottish conservatism; rather, the effect of wider British conservatism on Scotland was responsible for this. While some Scottish Conservatives, such as the MP for Perthshire, might irritate his opponents with his 'handsome attentions to the working classes', the main impetus for change came from the central party.<sup>234</sup> The Scottish party's eminent leaders and thinkers were, by this time, all deceased. It thus ended the period without any recognised leader, bereft of any coherent Scottish platform beyond the positions of its individual candidates, and without any intellectual figures who could go about formulating one. The Scottish countryside was changing, and Conservative squires found themselves increasingly out of step with the needs and

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<sup>230</sup> Jackson, *Two Unions*, 227–8.

<sup>231</sup> Hutchison, 'Mid-Victorian Glasgow', 354, 409.

<sup>232</sup> 'Address to the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli M.P., from Working Men of Edinburgh', 1867, Hughenden MSS, 371/1.

<sup>233</sup> Charles Scott to Disraeli, Oct. 1867, Hughenden MSS, 42/1, f. 57.

<sup>234</sup> A. Hart to Stirling, 20 Oct. 1868, Stirling of Keir MSS, T-SK 29/80/108.



desires of an increasingly self-confident rural tenantry. The party's organisational apparatus was, however, on the brink of a revival, and its electoral performance would improve somewhat after 1868, especially in the next election of 1874.

Nevertheless, the impetus for this came from south of the border.

## V.

In sum, the changes (or lack of changes) which took place within Scottish conservatism during the mid-Victorian period did not endear the party to an expanding and increasingly assertive electorate. Peelites and Protectionists quickly found that more united than divided them in terms of a shared conservatism, but neither were in harmony with much of the Scottish public. Urban and bourgeois voters would, by 1868, be even more wedded to liberalism than they had been during the immediate post-Reform period. This, however, owed as much to Conservative action (or inaction) as it did to Liberal efforts. Conservative attempts to promote a romantic and paternalist conservatism through more innovative means fell flat, and the more 'British' and localist period of Scottish politics which followed exposed the party's lack of a distinctive platform beyond such traditionalist ideals. Similarly, changes taking place in rural Scotland increasingly chipped away at the relationship between the Scottish Conservatives and the 'agricultural interest', despite limited attempts to mitigate this. Issues such as the Game Laws and Hypothec illustrate that this interest was increasingly heterogenous and assertive.

In religious terms, the transformed sectarian landscape of post-Disruption Scotland also worked to the party's disadvantage. Though it was more religiously diverse than has been acknowledged, Scottish conservatism essentially appealed to adherents of the Moderate Established and Episcopalian Churches. It did, however, play a prominent role in hastening the decline of a particular type of evangelicalism in Scottish society, and in promoting the rise of 'social' issues. Moreover, by the later 1860s Scottish conservatism was showing tentative signs of revival. This revival was, however, the result of outside intervention by UK party figures, which essentially bypassed much of the remaining party establishment. As such, the Scottish Conservative party, and Scottish conservatism, was less autonomous and less distinctive than it had been in 1832. It would remain so for years to come. Nevertheless, the party was intimately involved in myriad facets of Scotland's mid-Victorian development. This involvement was not merely passive, constituting simple reactions to wider events. Scottish conservatives took an active and spirited role in shaping Scottish society, especially in its promotion of bodies such as the NAVSR. Scottish conservatism, while not dominant, was thus an important element in the overall character of society during the period. Though the wider populace did not generally approve of it, they were most certainly shaped by conservatism, or opposition to it.



## CONCLUSION

After the party's lacklustre performance in the Scottish elections of 1868, in which it won a mere six seats, its prospects improved. The new Scottish National Constitutional Association was the first national organisation to function since the ignominious collapse of the Conservative Association of Scotland in the late 1830s.<sup>1</sup> Though its candidate for Glasgow was defeated, the party's overall performance was nevertheless auspicious. Despite conducting an uninspired campaign which promoted a tedious candidate, over a quarter of the newly expanded electorate in that city had voted for him to take up one of the three available seats. If the party could make significant inroads into Scotland's largest city and industrial powerhouse, then the rest of Scotland might be even closer within reach. The further expansion of the franchise was not to be the unmitigated disaster that many in the Scottish party had feared. With longer to prepare and campaign, the party made significant gains in the election of 1874. It in fact managed to almost triple its number of MPs, having emerged victorious in twenty seats – including one for Glasgow. Villa Toryism and the changes wrought by fresh Reform played a role in nurturing this broader trend. Though it remained an electorally unpopular entity for most of the later Victorian period, Scottish Conservatives (and later Scottish Unionists) became a force to be reckoned with. In the twentieth century, the party had a variable presence in Scotland. It has been periodically influential, and at times been the most powerful

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<sup>1</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 113–4.

party north of the border.<sup>2</sup> The origins of this party lie in its formative phase, between 1832 and 1868.

In addition to its subsequent importance, the Scottish Conservative party was a deeply influential force during the mid-nineteenth century. The Scottish Conservatives were the most aristocratically dominated constituent section of the UK party, and firmly ensconced within the wider British landowning classes. Nevertheless, while the party was closely associated with landownership and its attendant interests, it was not solely defined by this. The background, attributes, and characteristics of its MPs, candidates and peers reveals that the party was far more diverse than might be assumed. The Scottish party boasted representatives with diverse interests, facilitating numerous and intimate interactions with the everyday social life of rural Scotland. Given the issues raised, this original research suggests that further work is needed on the character and nature of the Scottish landowning classes during a period of transformative social change. With regard to politics, these connections and interactions played a significant part in the business of winning elections.

The party's deep embeddedness in social life enabled it to undertake a truly extraordinary range of electoral activities, making it a significant presence and influence in mid-nineteenth century Scottish society. Though it was by no means a wholly inclusive entity, the party's complex and highly developed local organisations did contain diverse elements, and were extremely flexible, depending on local conditions. When the activities undertaken by rank-and file-party members and supporters (not to mention the vast majority of the Scottish aristocracy) are taken into

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish Unionists in fact achieved a plurality in 1955, garnering 50.1 per cent of the popular vote.

account, it becomes clear that the Scottish Conservative party was one of the most significant institutions existing in the Scottish countryside. Moreover, low-ranking party groups, especially the crucial multitude of professional agents, retained a significant degree of autonomy. These factors were, however, weakened after the 1830s, and the party finished the period much as it had started – dominated by country gentlemen.

This did not, however, inhibit its vigorous activities. Though the party lost much of its vigour after the events of 1843 and 1846, in its heyday it was at the vanguard of Conservative electoral activity. This was no mean feat for a party which, given the pre-Reform oligarchic Scottish electoral system, had never before needed to undertake such activity. The party treated and transported electors, engaged in extensive canvassing and hustings activity, and much else. Keeping the party at the forefront of local life in-between elections, it also engaged in regular registration and vote-making activities which both expanded electorates and politicised large swathes of the rural populace. Moreover, it exerted influence over electors in innumerable ways, ensuring that the economic, social, and cultural life of the localities was intimately connected to politics. Given the sparsity of scholarship on Scotland's political culture in both cities and rural areas, this illustrates that there is much additional work to be done. Indeed, the party's electoral activities also had a marked, though lesser, impact on urban Scotland, thus illustrating that Scotland's cities were not exclusively liberal. Finally, and perhaps most tellingly, the party directly incubated a Scotland-wide (though ultimately subordinate) network of conservative newspapers. While these many activities were generally unsuccessful in the long run, they did firmly embed the party in Scotland's society and culture.

On a national level, the party's fortunes illustrated both its potential and its limits. Rancorous factionalism foiled efforts to create and operate an effective national organisational apparatus – the Conservative Association of Scotland. The embryonic club was even more ambitious in scope than the Carlton Club, this being yet another area in which the Scottish party was (in ambition at least) at the forefront of party developments. Significant elements within the Scottish party were notably willing to encourage complex and formidable extra-parliamentary organisations. These efforts also reveal how Scottish Conservatives themselves viewed their own party as a separate and coherent territorial entity (at least in electoral terms). More broadly, this suggests that British political parties and territoriality in the nineteenth century is a potentially fruitful area of further inquiry. Indeed, even within Scotland, the geographical centre of the party was a subject of contestation. In the late 1830s, Glasgow came close to replacing Edinburgh as the party's primary city, as the failure of the Edinburgh-based Conservative Association of Scotland coincided with the positive aftermath of Peel's Rectorial banquet in Glasgow. The close involvement of senior UK party figures in these efforts illustrate that the Scottish party, though in some ways separate, was nevertheless closely integrated into the broader British party.

Neither Glasgow nor Edinburgh proved to be suitable party centres – as such, the party's focus remained in the counties, under the leadership of the Duke of Buccleuch. Though this meant that urban conservatism was essentially abandoned to inadequate local exertions, Buccleuch proved himself to be an effective and dedicated national leader. This was thrown into sharp relief by the quality of his interim replacement as leader in the late 1830s, the Earl of Aberdeen. After the 1846

Corn Law split, the somewhat diminished Scottish party was largely overseen by the Earl of Eglinton. Though he did not (and, indeed, could not) match Buccleuch's bustling activity in electoral terms, he made notably innovative efforts to promote the party's interests north of the border. The continuing decline in the party's electoral fortunes from the late 1850s onwards, however, went hand in hand with a want of effective (or, indeed, any) national leadership. After Eglinton's death in 1861, the Scottish Conservative party no longer possessed a recognised leader. Disraeli's tentative efforts to revive the party's vigour were indicative of native apathy.

These issues also affected the parliamentary side of the party – the number of Scottish Conservative MPs declined dramatically after the election of 1847. Throughout the period, the Scottish party was less distinctively 'Scottish' at Westminster than in Scotland itself, being (to an extent) subsumed within the broader UK parliamentary party. Nevertheless, Scottish MPs and peers did retain several informal characteristics and mechanisms which set them apart from their fellows. This suggests that a broader examination of territorial interests within a parliamentary context would advance our understanding of how the legislature operated. Given the overwhelmingly Conservative character of the Scottish peers in parliament, Scottish Conservative distinctiveness was even more pronounced in the upper house. Both MPs and peers had separate whipping arrangements, and many of these figures held private meetings to discuss and agree on collective action. Further, the periodical election of Scottish representative peers made that group perhaps the most politicised and organised body of peers in the Lords. Finally, successive Conservative ministries made sure to carefully consult Scots in Westminster before embarking on legislative activities which affected that country.



Successive Westminster leaders, from Peel to Disraeli, showed a marked interest in, and knowledge of, Scottish affairs. Despite (or perhaps because of) its relatively poor electoral performance, central party leaders tended to show a disproportionate interest in affairs north of the border. Concurrently, backbench Scottish MPs who went on to sit for English constituencies gave the overall UK party a more distinctively Scottish flavour than might have been expected. Moreover, these exiles exerted a limited but nonetheless notable influence over Scottish affairs. In terms of governance, Conservative Lords Advocate and Solicitors-General had a marked effect on Scotland before 1847. After this, successive Derby ministries experienced notable difficulties in finding effective Scottish administrators. This affected both internal party and external popular attitudes towards Scotland's place in the Union. More unobtrusively, the party dominated Scotland's legal profession, particularly the Faculty of Advocates and county Sheriffships. The party thus influenced the evolution of Scots law and the routine management of wider society in both the countryside and the cities. Conservatives also made their presence felt in the new bodies which increasingly supervised Scotland's social welfare, despite these being largely controlled by Liberals. The party's deep embeddedness in all levels of governance raises some fundamental questions about its influence over Scotland's ostensibly 'liberal' civil society, in both urban and rural areas.

Just as Scotland's civil society was more complex than has been assumed, so was the party's internal composition in terms of beliefs. After 1832, the party comprised country tories, ultra tories, romantic conservatives, tory radicals, and liberal conservatives. By a large margin, country tories were the predominant influence in the Scottish party; most ultras had disappeared (or gradually mutated

into country Tories) by the late 1830s. Tory radicals were almost non-existent in Scotland, and romantic conservatives were a significant but subordinate element. Many of these, in fact, were most active outside of the Scottish party, giving a Scottish flavour to British romanticism. Liberal conservatives enjoyed a brief and rapid rise in influence and numbers. Their decline, however, was just as rapid, and they were never a significant internal party influence outside of western Scotland. The Scottish party was distinctly country Tory in character throughout the entire period, possessing an enduring affinity for varieties of paternalist, authoritarian, and agrarian ideals.

Country Tories also tended to be Established Church Moderates or Episcopalians, harbouring increasingly deep suspicions about Thomas Chalmers and Evangelical Non-Intrusionists. They shared this attitude with Peel and the UK party leadership, though their underlying reasoning was somewhat different. An alliance between these two groups resulted in the party playing a prominent (and politically unpopular) role in the resultant Church crisis. Nevertheless, the party was in fact far more internally divided on the issue than has been assumed. Nascent liberal conservative sections of the party, themselves originally built up by Peel, genuinely advocated the Evangelical cause, while many peers and a great many Scottish Conservative MPs favoured greater compromise with the Evangelicals for more practical and political reasons. Nevertheless, the party was, after the 1843 Disruption, incapable of courting vast swathes of the deeply religious Scottish electorate. It was to remain, in the popular imagination, the Episcopal and Moderate country party which had sought to block Reform. This was despite the fact that, both before and after the Disruption, the party contained a far more diverse set of religious adherents

than might have been expected. The party thus became an influential but peripheral electoral force in a more sectarian Scotland. It did, however, play a prominent role in hastening the decline of a particular type of evangelicalism in Scottish society, and encouraged the increasing prominence of 'social' issues.

From the early 1850s, both Peelites and Protectionists found that it was necessary to collaborate in Scotland, given their electorally vulnerable position. Innovative efforts, which included the promotion of the NAVSR, illustrated the party's willingness to change, but also the limits to this. Though electorally unrewarding, such efforts had a marked impact on the evolution of Scotland's society and romantic culture. However, by the 1860s, newly controversial issues in the countryside were telling indicators that change in rural Scotland was accelerating. The party, though it showed tentative signs of moving with the times, was not yet entirely able to accept the increasing independence of the tenantry. By the eve of the Second Reform Acts, the party was on the verge of a modest revival, but the impetus for this came from south of the border. The Scottish party, and Scottish conservatism more broadly, would eventually regain lost ground. At that moment, however, the party was in the doldrums. It was not more influential than the vast group of (often conflicting) factions which comprised the broad church of Scottish liberalism, but it was, nonetheless, a significant force throughout the entire period.

Overall, this thesis has demonstrated that the Scottish Conservative party was a wide-ranging, multifaceted, and influential entity. It was an important conduit through which connections between high and popular politics were forged, in a variety of different contexts. Potential bridges between the internal world of Conservatives and broader Scottish society and culture, however, were not always

built – this hampered the party’s ability to improve its fortunes. Its various autonomous (but largely interdependent) facets were not all equally authoritative or influential. However, they played interrelated (and occasionally conflicting) parts in seeking to achieve the party’s core objects. Care has been taken within and across chapters to highlight the extent of these interconnections (or, indeed, any noteworthy absence of these).

For instance, Appendix G demonstrates that the Scottish Conservatives did, in fact, boast a number of candidates concerned with industrial and commercial interests. These figures, alongside rank-and-file party workers, were shown to have affected the party’s urban organisation and campaigning in Chapter One. Concurrently, the strict limits of these effects were also set out. As Chapter Two illustrates, urban activity (especially in Glasgow) was not stimulated by Buccleuch – rather, senior UK party figures, including Peel and Graham, played a prominent role in this. Further, as Chapter Four has revealed, they were instrumental in promoting liberal conservatism in ideological terms, appealing to a potential electorate that was concerned with industrial and commercial affairs – but was also, crucially, evangelically inclined. Their subsequent actions in relation to the Church crisis effectively destroyed liberal conservatism in Scotland. In Chapter Three, the Scottish MPs and peers are shown to be somewhat distinctive, but nevertheless highly integrated into the broader parliamentary party. The Scottish Conservative party was, after all, a bottom-heavy entity in terms of influence. This partly explains why these figures did not more strongly urge additional compromises with the Evangelicals, despite possessing deep misgivings about the wisdom of Peel’s position. The party leadership’s break with the Evangelicals, however, opened other avenues. As

Chapter Five explores, it left its leading Scottish intellectuals free to openly question the harsh theories on poor relief expounded by that faction's leader, Thomas Chalmers. The resultant character and operation of the somewhat paternalist Scottish Poor Law after 1845 was thus heavily influenced by party figures. This complex strand, one of many running throughout the thesis, highlights the ways in which the party affected, and was affected, by the society in which it operated.

Scottish conservatism, while not dominant, was thus an important element in the overall character of society during the period. Though a plurality of the limited electorate did not generally endorse it, the wider populace was at least partly shaped by conservatism (or, more likely, by their opposition to it). Liberal ascendancy must not be mistaken for outright hegemony. Even in the supposedly liberal Scottish cities, Conservative candidates very rarely received less than one-third of the vote when they went to the polls. Indeed, the affinity of Scotland's electors for more whiggish candidates might be partly ascribed to tactical voting by conservative electors. Beyond narrow electoral considerations, it is true that Scotland boasted far more liberal newspapers than it did conservative titles. Nonetheless, the existence of many conservative papers across the whole country indicates that there was a substantial readership which did not actively object to their contents. The party possessed a genuine popular constituency among the newly expanded electorate, and even (to a limited extent) among non-electors. Working-class conservative support did exist in Scotland – it cannot be dismissed as an out-and-out aberration. Just as the party-influenced Poor Law affected many non-electors, non-electors had a limited effect on the party. This thesis has sought to question the myth of liberal Victorian Scotland. Scottish society was not liberal – at least not in an absolute sense. The

Scottish Conservative party occupied a subordinate but nevertheless noteworthy position. This indicates that significant elements of Scottish society were much more conservative than has been assumed. This conservatism was represented and nurtured by an emergent, complex, and deeply influential Scottish Conservative party.



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## Appendix A

### Scottish Conservative Candidates, 1832–1868<sup>1</sup>

#### A Note Regarding the Definition of a ‘Conservative’ candidate:

Determining the exact number of Scottish Conservative MPs and candidates is difficult, given the fluid contemporary conceptions of party loyalty. This problem is particularly acute before 1835 and after 1846. During the 1850s, while parties (though not in the modern sense) did exist at Westminster, the complex mosaic of political identities then existing meant that party leaders were often unaware of their exact numerical strength until confirmed by post-election voting tallies in the division lobby.<sup>2</sup> The Peelite group formed after the split in the Conservative party over Corn Law repeal. It consciously self-identified as a distinct and separate party – or, at least, its leaders did.<sup>3</sup> However, parties were more than vote tallies in the House. Candidates used many different labels, including ‘Moderate Conservative’, ‘Liberal Conservative’, ‘Protectionist’, and ‘Tory, but a Liberal one’.<sup>4</sup>

These labels serve to conceal critical underlying similarities. The very term ‘Liberal Conservative’, as opposed to ‘Independent’, may well indicate that these figures tacitly recognised the continuing relevance of broader party definitions.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, factors specific to Scotland suggest a greater unity among its cohort. The wide variety of factions contained within the Liberal party was most plainly noticeable in local electoral contests. Contested elections in Scotland between 1832 and 1868 largely took place *between* Liberal candidates.<sup>6</sup> Yet, it is still possible to speak in general terms of a Scottish Liberal party and a cohort of Scottish Liberal MPs.

Conservatives displayed a greater sense of party unity than their Liberal counterparts – on only four occasions did Conservative candidates stand against each other on polling day.<sup>7</sup> These were unrepresentative and isolated cases. Indeed, the majority of these incidents occurred *before* the 1846 party split. Despite the confusion caused by the Corn question, it was the Scottish Liberal party which was more perennially schismatic. Even after the Corn Law split, a shared Scottish Conservative culture enabled amicable negotiation, which largely succeeded in maintaining the peaceful coexistence of Conservative factions.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all information is sourced from Craig, *Election Results*. Candidates listed are Conservative, unless otherwise stated. Elections highlighted in bold indicate that the defeated Conservative candidate failed to garner votes from more than one-third of those polled. This is not highlighted in contests for Edinburgh and Glasgow, Scotland’s only double-member seats.

<sup>2</sup> Conacher, ‘Age of Palmerston’, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Beales, ‘Parliamentary Parties and the “Independent” Member, 1810–1860’, in Robson (ed.), *Ideas and Institutions*, 13.

<sup>4</sup> The party affiliations listed in Appendix F are taken from Stenton, *Who’s Who*. Stenton’s data was collected from *Dod’s Electoral Facts*, whose descriptions were (in all possible cases) taken from the precise words of the member himself, supplemented by records of their votes on key questions such as Corn Law repeal and the Maynooth grant.

<sup>5</sup> Beales, ‘Parliamentary Parties’, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, 59.

<sup>7</sup> Inverness District of Burghs and Lanarkshire in 1832, Bute in 1841, and Edinburgh in 1852.

<sup>8</sup> Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, 57; see Chapter Five.



| Candidate <sup>9</sup>                   | Constituency (Borough or County) <sup>10</sup> | Elections won?   | Elections Lost?          |
|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| Agnew, Lieut.-Col. Patrick Vans          | Wigtown District of Burghs (B)                 |  | 1841                     |
| Agnew, Robert Vans                       | Wigtown District of Burghs (B)                 |  | 1868                     |
| Aitchison, William                       | Leith District of Burghs (B)                   |  | 1834 (by-election), 1835 |
| Alexander, Col. Claud                    | Ayrshire, Southern (C)                         |  | 1868                     |
| Anderson, James                          | Ayr District of Burghs (B)                     |  | 1868                     |
| Anstruther, Sir Ralph A.                 | St Andrews District of Burghs (B)              |  | 1832                     |
| Arbuthnott, Maj.-Gen. Hugh <sup>11</sup> | Kincardineshire (C)                            | 1832, 1835, 1837, 1841, 1847, 1852, 1857, 1859         |                          |
| Baillie, Charles                         | Linlithgowshire (C)                            | 1859   |                          |
| Baillie, Henry James <sup>12</sup>       | Inverness-Shire (C)                            | 1840 (by-election), 1841, 1847, 1852, 1857, 1859, 1865 |                          |
| Baillie, William <sup>13</sup>           | Linlithgowshire (C)                            | 1845 (by-election)                                     |                          |
| Baird, George                            | Falkirk District of Burghs (B)                 |  | 1857                     |
| Baird, James <sup>14</sup>               | Falkirk District of Burghs (B)                 | 1851 (by-election), 1852                               |                          |
| Baird, William                           | Falkirk District of Burghs (B)                 | 1841   |                          |
| Balfour, James                           | Haddingtonshire (C)                            | 1832   |                          |

<sup>9</sup> Candidates often contested separate constituencies at different elections. As such, some are listed more than once. Similarly, some (such as Lord Elcho) are listed as contesting elections after they had explicitly moved away from conservatism.

<sup>10</sup> The only constituencies not contested by any Conservative candidate during this period were Hawick District of Burghs (created in 1868), Kirkcaldy District of Burghs, and Stirling District of Burghs.

<sup>11</sup> Protectionist in 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>12</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>13</sup> Protectionist in 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>14</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

|                                   |  |  |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| Balfour, James Maitland           | Haddington District of Burghs (B)      | 1841   |                    |
| Balfour, John <sup>15</sup>       | Fife (C)                               |  | 1847               |
| Balfour, Thomas                   | Orkney and Shetland (C)                | 1835   |                    |
| Bannerman, Alexander              | Elgin District of Burghs (B)           |  | 1847               |
| Black, William Faichney           | Perth (B)                              |  | 1841               |
| Blackburn, Peter                  | Edinburgh (B)                          |  | 1847               |
| Blackburn, Peter <sup>16</sup>    | Glasgow (B)                            |  | 1852               |
| Blackburn, Peter <sup>17</sup>    | Stirlingshire (C)                      | 1855 (by-election), 1857, 1859 (by-election), 1859 | 1865               |
| Blair, Forbes Hunter              | Edinburgh (B)                          |  | 1832               |
| Blair, Col. James Hunter          | Ayrshire (C)                           | 1852   |                    |
| Blair, Col. William               | Ayrshire (C)                           |  | <b>1832</b>        |
| Blair, James                      | Wigtownshire (C)                       | 1837   | 1835, 1841         |
| Boyle, Archibald T.               | Ayr District of Burghs (B)             |  | 1852               |
| Boyle, Hon. George Frederick      | Bute (C)                               | 1865 (by-election), 1865                           |                    |
| Brodie, William                   | Elgin District of Burghs (B)           |  | 1835               |
| Broun-Ramsay, James (Lord Ramsay) | Edinburgh (B)                          |  | 1835               |
| Broun-Ramsay, James (Lord Ramsay) | Haddingtonshire (C)                    | 1837   |                    |
| Brown Douglas, J. <sup>18</sup>   | St Andrews District of Burghs (B)      |  | 1857               |
| Bruce, Hon. James                 | Fife (C)                               |  | 1837               |
| Bruce, Hon. Thomas C.             | Edinburgh (B)                          |  | 1852               |
| Bruce, Robert                     | Clackmannanshire and Kinross-Shire (C) |  | <b>1832</b> , 1835 |
| Buchanan, Robert Carrick          | Lanarkshire (C)                        |  | <b>1832</b>        |

<sup>15</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>16</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>17</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Cragoe, 'Local Interests in Parliament', 137.

<sup>18</sup> Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|   |   |  |                    |
|---|---|--|--------------------|
| Caird, James <sup>19</sup>                            | Wigtown District of Burghs (B)            |  | 1852               |
| Cameron of Lochiel, Donald                            | Inverness-Shire (C)                       | 1868   |                    |
| Campbell of Monzie, Alexander <sup>20</sup>           | Edinburgh (B)                             |  | 1852               |
| Campbell of Bythwood, Col. Archibald C.               | Paisley (B)                               |  | 1868               |
| Campbell of Inverawe, J.A.                            | Kilmarnock District of Burghs (B)         |  | 1852               |
| Campbell Swinton, Alexander                           | Haddington District of Burghs (B)         |  | 1852               |
| Campbell Swinton, Alexander                           | Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities (U) |  | 1868               |
| Campbell, Alexander                                   | Argyll (C)                                | 1841   | 1837               |
| Campbell, Alexander                                   | Inverness District of Burghs (B)          |  | 1857, 1859         |
| Campbell, Sir Archibald I. <sup>21</sup>              | Argyll (C)                                | 1851 (by-election), 1852                               |                    |
| Campbell, Sir George                                  | Glasgow (B)                               |  | 1868               |
| Campbell, Sir George                                  | Inverness District of Burghs (B)          | 1832   |                    |
| Campbell, James                                       | Glasgow (B)                               |  | 1837, 1841         |
| Carr-Boyle, James (Viscount Kelburne)                 | Ayrshire (C)                              | 1839 (by-election), 1841                               | 1837               |
| Cathcart, Sir John A.                                 | Ayrshire (C)                              |  | 1835 (by-election) |
| Charteris, Hon. Francis W. (Lord Elcho) <sup>22</sup> | Haddingtonshire (C)                       | 1847, 1852, 1853 (by-election), 1857, 1859, 1865, 1868 |                    |
| Chisholm, Alexander William                           | Inverness-Shire (C)                       | 1835 (by-election), 1837                               |                    |
| Clerk, Sir George                                     | Edinburghshire (C)                        | 1835   | 1832, 1837         |
| Cochrane, Alexander Dundas Ross Wishart Baillie       | Lanarkshire (C)                           | 1857 (by-election)                                     | 1857               |
| Cochrane, Sir Thomas J.                               | Greenock (B)                              |  | 1841               |

<sup>19</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>20</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>21</sup> Protectionist according to Craig, *Election Results*.

<sup>22</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|  |                                   |  |                    |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Colquhoun, John Campbell                                       | Kilmarnock District of Burghs (B) | 1837   | 1841               |
| Cruikshank, James  | Ayr District of Burghs (B)        |  | <b>1832</b>        |
| Cumming Bruce, Charles Lennox                                  | Inverness District of Burghs (B)  | 1833 (by-election), 1835                               | 1832               |
| Cumming Bruce, Charles Lennox <sup>23</sup>                    | Elginshire and Nairnshire (C)     | 1840 (by-election), 1841, 1847, 1852, 1857, 1859, 1865 |                    |
| Dalrymple, Charles   | Bute (C)                          | 1868   |                    |
| Dempster, George   | Wick District of Burghs (B)       |  | 1841               |
| Douglas, Archibald William (Viscount Drumlanrig) <sup>24</sup> | Dumfriesshire (C)                 | 1847, 1852, 1853 (by-election)                         |                    |
| Downie, Robert   | Kilmarnock District of Burghs (B) |  | <b>1835</b>        |
| Duff, Thomas Abercromby  | Elgin District of Burghs (B)      |  | 1841               |
| Dundas, George   | Linlithgowshire (C)               | 1847, 1852, 1857                                       |                    |
| Dunlop, Harry  | Bute (C)                          |  | 1841               |
| Elphinstone, Sir James D.H.                                    | Greenock (B)                      |  | 1852               |
| Elphinstone, Sir James D.H.                                    | Aberdeenshire (C)                 |  | 1866 (by-election) |
| Erskine, Robert St Clair (Lord Loughborough) <sup>25</sup>     | Fife (C)                          |  | 1859               |
| Ewing, James   | Glasgow (B)                       |  | 1835               |
| Fairrie, John  | Greenock (B)                      |  | 1832               |
| Farquhar, Sir Arthur   | Aberdeen (B)                      |  | 1835               |
| Ferguson, Capt. George   | Banffshire (C)                    | 1832, 1835   | 1837               |
| Fergusson, Sir James   | Ayrshire (C)                      | 1854 (by-election), 1859 (by-election), 1865           | 1857               |
| Forbes, William  | Stirlingshire (C)                 | 1835, 1837 (declared                                   | 1832               |

<sup>23</sup> Protectionist in 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>24</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>25</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|  |   |   |                                |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------|
|  |   | void), 1841,<br>1847, 1852  |                                |
| Fraser, John                                       | Inverness District<br>of Burghs (B)         |   | 1840 (by-<br>election)         |
| Gladstone, John                                    | Dundee (B)                                  |   | 1837                           |
| Gladstone, Sir Thomas                              | Kincardineshire<br>(C)                      |   | 1865                           |
| Gordon, Edward Strathearn                          | Aberdeen and<br>Glasgow<br>Universities (U) |   | 1868                           |
| Gordon, Lieut. James E.                            | Paisley (B)                                 |   | <b>1834 (by-<br/>election)</b> |
| Gordon, Capt. William <sup>26</sup>                | Aberdeenshire (C)                           | 1832, 1835,<br>1837, 1841,<br>1841 (by-<br>election), 1847,<br>1852 |                                |
| Graham-Montgomery, Sir<br>Graham                   | Peeblesshire and<br>Selkirkshire (C)        | 1852, 1857,<br>1859, 1865,<br>1866 (by-<br>election), 1868          |                                |
| Grant, Francis William                             | Elginshire and<br>Nairnshire (C)            | 1832, 1835,<br>1837   |                                |
| Grant, Francis William                             | Inverness-Shire<br>(C)                      | 1838 (by-<br>election)  |                                |
| Grant of Arndilly, H.<br>Macdowall <sup>27</sup>   | Banffshire (C)                              |   | 1852                           |
| Grant, Hon. James Ogilvie                          | Elginshire and<br>Nairnshire (C)            | 1868  |                                |
| Grant, John Charles Ogilvy<br>(Viscount Reidhaven) | Banffshire (C)                              |   | 1841                           |
| Halliday, Sir Frederick J. <sup>28</sup>           | Falkirk District of<br>Burghs (B)           |   | 1865                           |
| Hamilton, A.J.                                     | Lanarkshire (C)                             |   | <b>1832</b>                    |
| Hannay, James                                      | Dumfries District<br>of Burghs (B)          |   | <b>1857</b>                    |
| Hay, Sir John                                      | Peeblesshire (C)                            | 1832, 1835  |                                |
| Henderson, D. Wingate                              | Leith District of<br>Burghs (B)             |   | 1852                           |
| Hepburn, Sir Thomas Buchan                         | Haddington<br>District of Burghs<br>(B)     |   | 1837                           |

<sup>26</sup> Protectionist in 1847, and Liberal-Conservative in 1852 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>27</sup> Protectionist according to Craig, *Election Results*.

<sup>28</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|  |                         |  |             |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------|
| Hepburn, Sir Thomas Buchan                   | Haddingtonshire (C)     | 1838 (by-election), 1841   |             |
| Home Drummond, Henry <sup>29</sup>           | Perthshire (C)          | 1840 (by-election), 1841, 1847                                   |             |
| Hope, Sir Alexander                          | Linlithgowshire (C)     | 1832   |             |
| Hope, Hon. Charles                           | Linlithgowshire (C)     | 1838 (by-election), 1841, 1841 (by-election), 1859 (by-election) |             |
| Hope, Capt. James                            | Linlithgowshire (C)     | 1835, 1837   |             |
| Hope, John Thomas                            | Haddingtonshire (C)     |  | 1835        |
| Hope, Sir John <sup>30</sup>                 | Edinburghshire (C)      | 1845 (by-election), 1847, 1852                                   |             |
| Horne, Maj. James                            | Caithness (C)           |  | <b>1868</b> |
| Houstoun, George                             | Renfrewshire (C)        | 1837 (by-election), 1837   | 1835        |
| Howard, Hon. William                         | Sutherland (C)          | 1837   |             |
| Hume Campbell, Sir Hugh Purves <sup>31</sup> | Berwickshire (C)        | 1834 (by-election), 1835, 1837, 1841                             |             |
| Inglis, John                                 | Orkney and Shetland (C) |  | 1852        |
| Innes, William                               | Aberdeen (B)            |  | 1841        |
| Johnstone, John James Hope <sup>32</sup>     | Dumfriesshire (C)       | 1832, 1835, 1837, 1841, 1857 (by-election), 1857, 1859           |             |
| Kerr, Schomberg Henry (Lord Schomberg-Kerr)  | Roxburghshire (C)       |  | 1868        |
| Laing of Papdale, Samuel                     | Orkney and Shetland (C) |  | 1832        |

<sup>29</sup> Liberal-Conservative in 1841 and 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>30</sup> Protectionist in 1845 and 1847, but not in 1852 according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*, and Gordon Pentland, 'Edinburghshire', in *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1832–1868*.

<sup>31</sup> Protectionist according to Craig, *Election Results*.

<sup>32</sup> Liberal-Conservative from 1841 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

|   |                                   |  |                          |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Learmouth, John   | Edinburgh (B)                     |  | 1834 (by-election), 1835 |
| Leslie, William   | Aberdeenshire (C)                 | 1861 (by-election), 1865                   |                          |
| Lindsay, Col. J.  | Fife (C)                          |  | 1835                     |
| Lockhart, Alan Elliot <sup>33</sup>   | Selkirkshire (C)                  | 1846 (by-election), 1847, 1852, 1857, 1859 |                          |
| Lockhart, Alexander M.  | Lanarkshire (C)                   | 1837                                       | 1835                     |
| Lockhart, Sir Norman Macleod  | Lanarkshire, Southern (C)         |  | 1868                     |
| Lockhart, William <sup>34</sup>   | Lanarkshire (C)                   | 1841, 1847, 1852                           |                          |
| Macdonald of Rossie and St Martin, Col. William Macdonald Colquhoun Farquharson | Montrose District of Burghs (B)   |  | <b>1868</b>              |
| Mackenzie, Holt   | Elgin District of Burghs (B)      |  | <b>1832</b>              |
| Mackenzie, James J.R.   | Inverness District of Burghs (B)  |  | 1837                     |
| Mackenzie, Thomas   | Ross and Cromarty (C)             | 1837 (by-election), 1837, 1841             | 1835                     |
| Mackenzie, William Forbes <sup>35</sup>   | Peeblesshire (C)                  | 1837, 1841, 1845 (by-election), 1847       |                          |
| MacLeod, Norman   | Inverness-Shire (C)               |  | 1832, 1835               |
| Maitland, Capt. Anthony   | Berwickshire (C)                  |  | 1832                     |
| Makgill Crichton, D.M.  | St Andrews District of Burghs (B) |  | 1837                     |
| Makgill, George   | St Andrews District of Burghs (B) |  | 1841                     |
| Marjoribanks, Sir John  | Berwickshire (C)                  |  | 1859                     |
| Maxwell, George <sup>36</sup>   | Kirkcudbrightshire (C)            |  | 1857                     |

<sup>33</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>34</sup> Protectionist in 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>35</sup> Protectionist in 1841, 1845 and 1847 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>36</sup> Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|   |                                   |                                      |                          |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Maxwell, Thomas                                       | Kirkcudbrightshire (C)            |                                      | <b>1841</b>              |
| McDowall, Col. J.                                     | Kirkcudbrightshire (C)            |                                      | 1845 (by-election)       |
| McKerell, John  | Paisley (B)                       |                                      | <b>1832</b>              |
| McNeill, Duncan <sup>37</sup>                         | Argyll (C)                        | 1843 (by-election), 1847             |                          |
| Milne, Adm. Sir David                                 | Leith District of Burghs (B)      |                                      | 1835 (by-election)       |
| Monteith, Robert                                      | Glasgow (B)                       |                                      | 1837 (by-election), 1837 |
| Montgomerie, Roger                                    | Ayrshire, Northern (C)            |                                      | 1868                     |
| Munro of Novar, Hugh<br>Andrew Johnstone              | Ross and Cromarty (C)             |                                      | 1832                     |
| Mure, David <sup>38</sup>                             | Bute (C)                          | 1859                                 |                          |
| Mure, Col. William <sup>39</sup>                      | Renfrewshire (C)                  | 1846 (by-election), 1847, 1852       | 1841                     |
| Murray, Sir George                                    | Perthshire (C)                    | 1834                                 | 1832, 1835               |
| Murray, William David (Viscount Stormont)             | Perthshire (C)                    | 1837                                 |                          |
| Orr Ewing, Archibald                                  | Dunbartonshire (C)                | 1868                                 |                          |
| Oswald of Ochincruive, Alexander H. <sup>40</sup>     | Ayr District of Burghs (B)        |                                      | 1865                     |
| Oswald, Alexander H. <sup>41</sup>                    | Ayrshire (C)                      | 1843 (by-election), 1847             | 1854                     |
| Pelham-Clinton, Henry (Earl of Lincoln) <sup>42</sup> | Falkirk District of Burghs (B)    | 1846 (by-election), 1847             |                          |
| Pringle, Alexander                                    | Selkirkshire (C)                  | 1835, 1837, 1841, 1841 (by-election) | 1832                     |
| Prinsep, Henry Thoby                                  | Kilmarnock District of Burghs (B) |                                      | 1844 (by-election)       |

<sup>37</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>38</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>39</sup> Liberal-Conservative in 1846, 1847 and 1852 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>40</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to J. Vincent and M. Stenton (eds), *McCalmont's Parliamentary Poll Book: British Election Results 1832–1918* (Brighton, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>42</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to H.J. Hanham (ed.), *Electoral facts*.



|   |                             |  |            |
|---|-----------------------------|--|------------|
| Rae, Sir William                                  | Bute (C)                    | 1833 (by-election), 1835, 1837, 1841, 1841 (by-election) |            |
| Ramsay, William Ramsay                            | Edinburghshire (C)          | 1841   |            |
| Riddell, H.B.                                     | Orkney and Shetland (C)     |  | 1868       |
| Ross of Cromarty, George<br>William Holmes        | Ross and Cromarty (C)       |  | 1852       |
| Ross, Capt. Horatio                               | Paisley (B)                 |  | 1835       |
| Scott, Hon. Francis <sup>43</sup>                 | Berwickshire (C)            | 1847, 1852, 1857   |            |
| Scott, Hon. Francis <sup>44</sup>                 | Roxburghshire (C)           | 1837   | 1841       |
| Scott, Lord Henry J.M.D.                          | Selkirkshire (C)            | 1861 (by-election), 1865                                 |            |
| Scott, Lord John                                  | Roxburghshire (C)           | 1835   | 1832       |
| Scott, William Montagu Douglas (Earl of Dalkeith) | Edinburghshire (C)          | 1853 (by-election), 1857, 1859, 1865                     | 1868       |
| Shaw, A. Mackenzie <sup>45</sup>                  | Wick District of Burghs (B) |  | 1857       |
| Shaw Stewart, Sir Michael Robert <sup>46</sup>    | Renfrewshire (C)            | 1855 (by-election), 1857, 1859                           | 1865       |
| Sinclair, Sir George <sup>47</sup>                | Caithness (C)               | 1837   |            |
| Smith, James                                      | Greenock (B)                |  | 1837       |
| Smollett, Alexander <sup>48</sup>                 | Dunbartonshire (C)          | 1841, 1847, 1852, 1857                                   | 1835, 1837 |
| Smollett, Patrick Boyle <sup>49</sup>             | Dunbartonshire (C)          | 1859, 1865 (tie, duly elected)                           |            |
| Stewart, Alan (Lord Garlies)                      | Wigtownshire (C)            | 1868   | 1865       |
| Stirling, William                                 | Perthshire (C)              | 1852, 1857, 1859, 1865                                   | 1868       |
| Stuart, Capt. Charles                             | Bute (C)                    | 1832   |            |
| Threipland of Fingask, Sir Patrick Murray         | Perth (B)                   |  | 1837       |

<sup>43</sup> Protectionist according to Craig, *Election Results*.

<sup>44</sup> Protectionist in 1841 according to Hanham, *Electoral facts*.

<sup>45</sup> Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>46</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>47</sup> Liberal until 1837.

<sup>48</sup> Liberal-Conservative in 1847 and 1852, but not in 1857 according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

<sup>49</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|   |                                 |  |      |
|---|---------------------------------|--|------|
| Walker, Capt. George Gustavus <sup>50</sup>   | Dumfries District of Burghs (B) |  | 1859 |
| Walker, Maj. George Gustavus                  | Dumfriesshire (C)               | 1865   | 1868 |
| Wortley, James Alexander Stuart <sup>51</sup> | Bute (C)                        | 1842, 1846 (by-election), 1847, 1852, 1857 (by-election), 1857 |      |
| Wortley, Hon. John S.                         | Forfarshire (C)                 |  | 1835 |

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<sup>50</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*. Not listed as such in his candidacy for Dumfriesshire elections.

<sup>51</sup> Liberal-Conservative according to Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.



**Appendix B**  
**Scottish Constituency Profiles – Electorates and Influence<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Constituency</b>  | <b>Electorate<br/>1832</b> | <b>Electorate<br/>1865</b> | <b>Electorate<br/>1868</b> | <b>Influence</b>   |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Aberdeen (B)   | 2,024                      | 3,996                      | 8,132                      | None prevailing in 1853 – formerly the Duke of Gordon and the Farquhar family.                         |
| Ayr District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Ayr, Campbeltown, Inveraray, Irvine, Oban.                | 631                        | 1,340                      | 2,565                      | The Marquess of Bute and Earl of Eglinton possessed some, but little remained by 1853.                 |
| Dumfries District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Dumfries, Annan, Kirkcudbright, Lochmaben, Sanquhar. | 967                        | 1,124                      | 2,353                      | The Earl of Mansfield, Marquess of Queensberry, and Duke of Buccleuch, but this was restricted.        |
| Dundee (B)   | 1,622                      | 3,039                      | 14,798                     | Lord Panmure and the Earl of Breadalbane had some influence, but this was almost non-existent by 1853. |
| Edinburgh (B)  | 6,048                      | 10,343                     | 20,779                     | No influence remained – formerly possessed by the Duke of Buccleuch and the Dundases of Arniston.      |
| Elgin District of Burghs (B)   | 776                        | 1,059                      | 2,962                      | Possessed by the Earl of Seafield, Earl of Fife, and to  |

<sup>1</sup> Influence and the size of the electorate in 1832 are from Hanham *Electoral facts*. Electorate figures for 1865 and 1868 are sourced from Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*.

|   |       |        |        |   |
|---|-------|--------|--------|---|
| Comprising Elgin, Banff, Cullen. Inverurie. Kintore, Peterhead.   |       |        |        | some extent by the Earl of Kintore.   |
| Falkirk District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Falkirk, Airdrie, Hamilton, Lanark, Linlithgow.              | 969   | 1,510  | 4,704  | Influence mainly held by the Bairds of Gartsherrie, some possessed by the Earl of Zetland, additionally by the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Dunmore. |
| Glasgow (B)   | 6,989 | 16,819 | 47,854 | None by 1853 – formerly the Campbells of Bythswood.   |
| Greenock (B)  | 985   | 1,871  | 6,223  | None mentioned.   |
| Haddington District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Haddington, Dunbar, Jedburgh, Lauder, North Berwick.      | 545   | 698    | 1,477  | Chiefly possessed by the Earl of Lauderdale, some by the Earl of Hopetoun, Sir Hew Hamilton Dalrymple, and the Duke of Roxburgh.                  |
| Inverness District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Inverness, Fortrose, Forres. Nairn.                        | 715   | 1,022  | 1,995  | Held by Mr. Matheson, some possessed by the Cumming-Gordons of Altyre, Brodies of Brodie, and Roses of Kilravock.                                 |
| Kilmarnock District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Kilmarnock, Dumbarton, Port Glasgow, Renfrew, Rutherglen. | 1,155 | 1,645  | 6,531  | Divided among many, including Archibald Campbell of Blythswood.   |
| Leith District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Leith, Musselburgh, Portobello.                                | 1,624 | 2,672  | 6,223  | Little influence existed, but some was possessed by Sir John Gladstone in Leith, the Duke of Buccleuch, and                                       |

|   |       |       |       |  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--|
|   |       |       |       | Sir John Hope in Musselburgh.  |
| Montrose District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Montrose, Arbroath, Brechin, Forfar, Inverbervie.                                       | 1,494 | 1,806 | 6,337 | Held by Lord Panmure and the Farquhar family.  |
| Paisley (B)   | 1,242 | 1,361 | 3,264 | Influence possessed by the heads of the Silk and Cotton Factories. Some also by the Marquess of Abercorn.  |
| Perth (B)   | 780   | 982   | 2,801 | None mentioned.  |
| St Andrews District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising St Andrews, Anstruther Easter, Anstruther Wester, Crail, Cupar, Kilrenny, Pittenweem. | 621   | 839   | 1,847 | None mentioned.  |
| Wick District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Wick, Cromarty, Dingwall, Dornoch, Kirkwall, Tain.  | 366   | 793   | 1,673 | The Duke of Sutherland had paramount influence.  |
| Wigtown District of Burghs (B)<br><br>Comprising Wigtown, New Galloway, Stranraer, Whithorn.  | 316   | 518   | 966   | Formerly the Earl of Galloway, more by the Earl of Stair by 1853. Mrs. Gordon, widow of Lord Kenmure, Sir John McTaggart, and Sir Alexander Reid also possessed influence. |

|  |       |       |       |  |
|--|-------|-------|-------|--|
| Aberdeenshire (C)                      | 2,271 | 4,384 | N/A   | Formerly the Duke of Gordon, then the Earl of Aberdeen, but little remained by 1853. |
| Argyll (C)                             | 995   | 1,914 | 2,870 | The Duke of Argyll and various branches of the Campbells.                            |
| Ayrshire (C)                           | 3,150 | 4,642 | N/A   | Chiefly held by the Earl of Eglinton, Marquess of Ailsa, and Duke of Portland.       |
| Ayrshire, Northern (C)                 | N/A   | N/A   | 3,219 | N/A.   |
| Ayrshire, Southern (C)                 | N/A   | N/A   | 2,558 | N/A  |
| Banffshire (C)                         | 498   | 1,062 | 2,291 | Held by the Duke of Richmond, Earl of Fife, and Earl of Seafield.                    |
| Berwickshire (C)                       | 1,053 | 1,247 | 1,580 | Possessed by the Earl of Lauderdale, Earl of Home, and the Hume-Campbells.           |
| Bute (C)                               | 279   | 513   | 1,073 | The Marquess of Bute and the Duke of Hamilton had some influence.                    |
| Caithness (C)                          | 221   | 512   | 1,005 | Held by the Sinclairs of Ulbster, but this was not predominant.                      |
| Clackmannanshire and Kinross-Shire (C) | 879   | 1,162 | 1,802 | Lord Abercromby, the Adams of Blair Adam, and the Bruces of Kennet had influence.    |
| Dumfriesshire (C)                      | 1,123 | 2,097 | 2,989 | Possessed by the Duke of Buccleuch, Marquess of Queensberry, and Earl of Hopetoun.   |

|                               |       |       |       |   |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Dunbartonshire (C)            | 927   | 1,597 | 2,156 | Divided between many; chiefly the Colquhouns of Luss, some by the Dukes of Montrose and Argyll, and the Campbells of Succoth. |
| Edinburghshire (C)            | 1,298 | 1,656 | 2,489 | Chiefly held by the Earl of Stair, some by the Duke of Buccleuch.   |
| Elginshire and Nairnshire (C) | 642   | 863   | 1,580 | Chiefly held by the Earl of Seafield, some by the Earl of Fife.   |
| Fife (C)                      | 2,185 | 2,725 | 4,206 | Partly possessed by Admiral Wemyss of Wemyss, but this was not predominant.   |
| Forfarshire (C)               | 1,241 | 2,108 | 3,379 | Lord Panmure and the Hallyburtons of Pitcur had influence.  |
| Haddingtonshire (C)           | 617   | 666   | 895   | Divided between many, including the Earls of Haddington, Lauderdale, and Wemyss, but none were predominant.                   |
| Inverness-Shire (C)           | 669   | 878   | 1,661 | Divided between many.   |
| Kincardineshire (C)           | 763   | 987   | 1,731 | Chiefly possessed by Barclay Allardice of Ury and Allardice, Sir James Carnegie of Southesk, and General Arbuthnot.           |
| Kirkcudbrightshire (C)        | 1,059 | 1,353 | 1,940 | Possessed by some extent by the Earl of Galloway and Earl of Selkirk, but not predominant as                                  |



|                                   |       |       |       |   |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|
|                                   |       |       |       | the other landowners were of opposite political affiliation.  |
| Lanarkshire (C)                   | 2,705 | 5,183 | N/A   | The Duke of Hamilton and Lord Belhaven, but not predominant by 1853.  |
| Lanarkshire, Northern (C)         | N/A   | N/A   | 4,458 | N/A   |
| Lanarkshire, Southern (C)         | N/A   | N/A   | 2,871 | N/A.  |
| Linlithgowshire (C)               | 600   | 813   | 1,226 | Held by the Earl of Hopetoun, Earl of Rosebery, and the Dundas family.  |
| Orkney and Shetland (C)           | 272   | 685   | 1,486 | Held by the Earl of Zetland, also Arthur Anderson (co-founder of P&O).  |
| Peeblesshire (C)                  | 307   | 499   | N/A   | Chiefly possessed by the Graham-Montgomeries of Stanhope, and partly shared with the Earl of Wemyss and Duke of Buccleuch.  |
| Peeblesshire and Selkirkshire (C) | N/A   | N/A   | 889   | N/A.  |
| Perthshire (C)                    | 3,180 | 3,448 | 4,876 | Chiefly possessed by the Duke of Atholl, also considerable weight held by the Marquess of Breadalbane, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby, Earl of Kinnoull, and Earl of Mansfield. |
| Renfrewshire (C)                  | 1,347 | 2,276 | 3,571 | Chiefly held by the Stewarts of Ardgowan, shared by the Mures of  |

|                       |       |       |       |  |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|--|
|                       |       |       |       | Caldwell and Earl of Glasgow.  |
| Ross and Cromarty (C) | 516   | 933   | 1,564 | Held by various branches of the Mackenzies, heirs of the extinct Earldom of Seaforth. By 1853, much influence had been acquired by James Matheson, the Macleods of Cadboll, and the Baillies of Tarradale. |
| Roxburghshire (C)     | 1,321 | 1,639 | 1,664 | Chiefly possessed by the Duke of Buccleuch, but also considerably by the Marquess of Lothian, Duke of Roxburgh, Lord Douglas, Earl of Minto, and Lord Polwarth.  |
| Selkirkshire (C)      | 281   | 502   | N/A   | Chiefly possessed by the Duke of Buccleuch.  |
| Stirlingshire (C)     | 1,787 | 1,943 | 2,751 | Chiefly possessed by the Duke of Montrose, but also shared with Earl of Zetland and Lord Abercromby.   |
| Sutherland (C)        | 84    | 180   | 358   | Almost wholly possessed by the Duke of Sutherland, who owned four-fifths of the county.  |
| Wigtownshire (C)      | 845   | 1,087 | 1,517 | Previously held by the Earl of Galloway, but chiefly the Earl of Stair by 1853.  |

|   |     |     |       |      |
|---|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Aberdeen and Glasgow Universities (U)     | N/A | N/A | 4,368 | N/A. |
| Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities (U) | N/A | N/A | 4,880 | N/A. |

**Appendix C**  
**Scottish Conservative Election Results, 1832–1868**

| <b>Election<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>Conservative Seats</b> | <b>Other Seats<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>+/-</b> | <b>Percentage of Scottish Total<sup>3</sup></b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|---|
| 1832                        | 10                        | N/A                            | 10           | N/A        | 19  |
| 1835                        | 15                        | N/A                            | 15           | +5         | 28  |
| 1837                        | 20                        | N/A                            | 20           | +5         | 38  |
| 1841                        | 22                        | N/A                            | 22           | +2         | 41  |
| 1847                        | 9                         | 0                              | 9            | -13        | 17  |
| 1852                        | 11                        | 0                              | 11           | +2         | 21  |
| 1857                        | 6                         | 4                              | 10           | -1         | 19  |
| 1859                        | 5                         | 3                              | 8            | -2         | 15  |
| 1865                        | 7                         | 3                              | 10           | +2         | 19  |
| 1868                        | 6                         | 0                              | 6            | -4         | 10 <sup>4</sup>                                 |

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<sup>1</sup> By-election wins or losses are not included in this Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> These were seats held by 'Liberal Conservatives', or candidates who used similar labels, but were nevertheless *de facto* Conservatives (or Independent Conservatives) from the mid-1850s onwards, who eventually returned to the Conservative fold. See the biographical sketches contained in Appendix F, and data contained in Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> Percentage of fifty-three Scottish seats.

<sup>4</sup> Scotland had gained seven seats in the 1868 redistribution, returning sixty MPs to parliament.



**Appendix D**  
**Scottish Representative Peers, 1832–1868**

| Peer   | Service | Notes  |
|--|---------|--|
| Alexander Home, 10 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Home  | 1807–41 | Possessed some electoral influence in Berwickshire. <sup>1</sup>                         |
| Alexander George Fraser, 17 <sup>th</sup> Lord Saltoun                               | 1807–53 |  |
| Francis Gray, 14 <sup>th</sup> Lord Gray   | 1812–41 |  |
| John Colville, 9 <sup>th</sup> Lord Colville of Culross                              | 1818–49 | An Admiral in the Royal Navy, who saw much active service. <sup>2</sup>                  |
| George Hay, 8 <sup>th</sup> Marquess of Tweeddale                                    | 1818–76 | A Field Marshal in the Army, who saw much active service. <sup>3</sup>                   |
| Thomas Bruce, 7 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Elgin  | 1820–41 | Army officer and diplomat, collector of eponymous marbles. <sup>4</sup>                  |
| John Arbuthnott, 8 <sup>th</sup> Viscount Arbuthnott                                 | 1821–47 | Brother of Hugh Arbuthnott MP, also possessed influence in Kincardineshire. <sup>5</sup> |
| James Andrew Drummond, 8 <sup>th</sup> Viscount Strathallan                          | 1825–51 |  |
| George Sholto Douglas, 17 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Morton                               | 1828–58 |  |
| David Leslie-Melville, 8 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Leven and 7 <sup>th</sup> of Melville | 1831–60 |  |
| Dunbar James Douglas, 6 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Selkirk                                | 1831–85 | Some influence in Kirkcudbrightshire. <sup>6</sup>                                       |
| David Ogilvy, 9 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Airlie   | 1833–49 |  |
| John Elphinstone, 13 <sup>th</sup> Lord Elphinstone                                  | 1833–4  | Long-serving Indian administrator, Governor of Bombay during Indian Mutiny. <sup>7</sup> |
| Thomas John Hamilton Fitzmaurice, 5 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Orkney                     | 1833–74 |  |
| Charles St Clair, 13 <sup>th</sup> Lord Sinclair                                     | 1833–59 |  |
| Eric Mackay, 7 <sup>th</sup> Lord Reay   | 1835–47 |  |

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> W.R. O'Byrn, *A Naval Biographical Dictionary*, 3 vols (London, 1849), i, 220.

<sup>3</sup> H. G. Keene, 'Hay, George, eighth marquess of Tweeddale (1787–1876)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12721> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>4</sup> William St Clair, 'Bruce, Thomas, seventh earl of Elgin and eleventh earl of Kincardine (1766–1841)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3759> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>5</sup> See Appendices B and F.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>7</sup> H.M. Stephens, 'Elphinstone, John, thirteenth Lord Elphinstone and first Baron Elphinstone (1807–1860)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8750>, [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

|  |         |   |
|--|---------|---|
| John Rollo, 8 <sup>th</sup> Lord Rollo   | 1841–6  |   |
| Francis William Ogilvy-Grant, 6 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield                               | 1841–53 | Political influence in Banffshire, Elginshire, and Elgin District of Burghs. <sup>8</sup> |
| Cospatrick Alexander Douglas-Home, 11 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Home                             | 1842–74 | Some political influence in Berwickshire. <sup>9</sup>                                    |
| Henry Francis Hepburne-Scott, 7 <sup>th</sup> Lord Polwarth                                  | 1843–67 | Some influence in Roxburghshire. <sup>10</sup>  |
| John Gray, 15 <sup>th</sup> Lord Gray  | 1847–67 |   |
| John Elphinstone, 13 <sup>th</sup> Lord Elphinstone <sup>11</sup>                            | 1847–59 |   |
| William Rollo, 9 <sup>th</sup> Lord Rollo  | 1847–52 |   |
| David Graham Drummond Ogilvy, 10 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Airlie                                | 1850–81 |   |
| Charles Stuart, 12 <sup>th</sup> Lord Blantyre   | 1850–92 |   |
| Charles John Colville, 10 <sup>th</sup> Lord Colville of Culross <sup>12</sup>               | 1851–85 | Served as a Conservative whip.  |
| Thomas George Lyon-Bowes, 12 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne                  | 1852–65 |   |
| William Henry Drummond, 9 <sup>th</sup> Viscount Strathallan                                 | 1853–86 |   |
| John Charles Ogilvy-Grant, 7 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield                                  | 1853–9  |   |
| James Sinclair, 14 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Caithness   | 1858–68 | Scientist and inventor, including of a steam carriage. <sup>13</sup>                      |
| George Baillie-Hamilton, 10 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Haddington                                 | 1859–70 | Some influence in Haddingtonshire. <sup>14</sup>  |
| Sholto John Douglas, 18 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Morton   | 1859–84 |   |
| Alexander Fraser, 18 <sup>th</sup> Lord Saltoun  | 1859–86 |   |
| John Rogerson Rollo, 10 <sup>th</sup> Lord Rollo   | 1860–8  |   |
| John Thornton Leslie-Melville, 9 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Leven and 8 <sup>th</sup> of Melville | 1865–76 |   |

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>11</sup> Served non-contiguous terms.

<sup>12</sup> Created Baron Colville of Culross, in the peerage of the United Kingdom, in 1885. Later created Viscount Colville of Culross, in 1902.

<sup>13</sup> T.F. Henderson, 'Sinclair, James, fourteenth earl of Caithness (1821–1881)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25623> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix B.

|   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| Thomas Maitland, 11 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Lauderdale                    | 1867–78 | Naval officer, Rear-Admiral from 1857. Influence in Berwickshire, Haddingtonshire, and Haddington District of Burghs. <sup>15</sup> |
| William Buller Fullerton Elphinstone, 15 <sup>th</sup> Lord Elphinstone | 1867–85 |   |

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<sup>15</sup> J.K. Laughton, 'Maitland, Thomas, eleventh earl of Lauderdale (1803–1878)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17837> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015]; See Appendix B.





**Appendix E**  
**Conservative Lords Advocate, 1832–1868<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Name</b>     | <b>Period in Office</b>                                   | <b>Parliamentary Seat<sup>2</sup></b>            | <b>Reason for Leaving Office</b>  |
|-----------------|---|--|---|
| Sir William Rae | December 1834 – April 1835, September 1841 – October 1842 | Bute, September 1833 – October 1842 <sup>3</sup> | Died in office.   |
| Duncan McNeill  | October 1842 – July 1846                                  | Argyllshire, September 1843 – June 1851          | End of Peel ministry.   |
| Adam Anderson   | February – May 1852                                       | None   | Appointed to the bench, with the judicial title Lord Anderson; appears to have been a caretaker figure. |
| John Inglis     | May – December 1852, March – July 1858                    | Stamford, March – July 1858 <sup>4</sup>         | Appointed to the bench as Lord Justice Clerk, with the judicial title Lord Glencorse.                   |
| Charles Baillie | July 1858 – April 1859                                    | Linlithgowshire, February 1859 – April 1859      | Appointed to the bench as a judge of the Court of Session, with the judicial title Lord Jerviswood.     |
| David Mure      | April – June 1859   | Bute, May 1859 – February 1865                   | End of Derby ministry.  |
| George Patton   | July 1866 – February 1867                                 | Bridgwater, June 1866 <sup>5</sup>               | Appointed (by himself) to the as bench Lord Justice Clerk, with the judicial title Lord Glenalmond.     |
| E.S. Gordon     | February 1867 – December 1868                             | Thetford <sup>6</sup>                            | End of Disraeli ministry.   |

<sup>1</sup> Information sourced from Vincent and Stenton, *Poll Book*, and Omond, *Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second series*.

<sup>2</sup> Held between 1832 and 1868

<sup>3</sup> Rae also served as Lord Advocate between 1819 and 1830, sitting for Anstruther Burghs, Harwich, Bute, and Portarlington.

<sup>4</sup> Unsuccessfully contested Orkney and Shetland, July 1852, and Lisburn, December 1852.

<sup>5</sup> Unsuccessfully contested Bridgwater again in July 1866.

<sup>6</sup> Unsuccessfully contested Aberdeen and Glasgow Universities in the election of 1868, but won it at a by-election in November 1869.



## Appendix F

### Biographical Sketches of Scottish Conservative MPs, 1832–1868<sup>1</sup>

#### **Arbuthnott, Maj.-Gen. the Hon. Hugh** (1780–1868)

Service: Kincardineshire 1826–1865

5H Albany, London. Hulton-Bervie, Kincardineshire. Athenaeum and Carlton Club. Second son of the 7<sup>th</sup> Viscount Arbuthnott (estates comprised 13,560 acres, valued at £13,036 in 1883). Entered the army, 1796, promoted to General, 1854. Was a Colonel of the 38<sup>th</sup> Foot 1843–1862, after which he was appointed Colonel of the 79<sup>th</sup> Foot. Received a gold medal for service in the Battle of Busacco in 1810, and also served at the siege of Copenhagen and at Corunna. Deputy-Lieutenant of Kincardineshire.

#### **Baillie, Charles** (1804–1879)

Also known as: Lord Jarviswood 1859–1879

Held offices: Solicitor-General of Scotland 1858, Lord Advocate 1858.

Service: Linlithgowshire 1859–1865

Brother of George, 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Haddington (estates comprised 34,046 acres, valued at £46,616 in 1883). Carlton Club.<sup>2</sup> Educated at St Andrews and the University of Edinburgh. Married Anne, daughter of the 4<sup>th</sup> Lord Polwarth. Described as the lawyer with the closest links to the Scottish aristocracy in his generation. Lord of Session 1859, Lord of Justiciary 1862–74, Sheriff of Stirlingshire. Convenor of the acting committee of the Wallace monument, and president of the Edinburgh Border Counties Association, involved in organising the centenary celebrations of Sir Walter Scott's birth.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Baillie, Henry James** (1804–1885)

Held offices: Joint Secretary to the Board of Control 1852, Under-Secretary of State for India 1858–1859, Joint Secretary to the Board of Control 1858–1859

Service: Inverness-shire 1840–1868

Elsenham Hall, Bishop's Stortford. Redcastle, Killearnan, Inverness-shire (estates comprised 11,959 acres, valued at £7,038 in 1883). Carlton, Brooks' and Travellers' Clubs. Only son of Colonel Hugh Baillie, of Redcastle and Tarradale, Ross-shire. Married, first, Hon. Phillipa, daughter of 6<sup>th</sup> Viscount Strangford; second, Clarissa, daughter of George Rush of Elsenham Hall, Essex, and Farthinghoe Lodge,

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all sources are from Michael Stenton (ed.), *Who's Who of British MPs*, 4 vols. (Hassocks, 1976). Acreage and value of annual income in 1883 are as stated in John Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883). Some estates are likely to have fluctuated in terms of acreage and income before 1883. Members listed are Conservative, unless otherwise stated in Stenton. MPs who moved away from the party during the period (e.g. Lord Elcho) are included; however, those who can be subsequently classed as Conservative after 1868 but not before that year (e.g. Lord Haddo) are not included.

<sup>2</sup> Seth Alexander Thévoz, 'Database of London Club Memberships of MPs, 1832–68', compiled from over fifty archival and print sources, and used in the writing of Seth Alexander Thévoz, 'The Political Impact of London Clubs, 1832–1868', PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon F. Millar, 'Baillie, Charles, Lord Jarviswoode (1804–1879)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1059> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

Northamptonshire. A Conservative, in favour of moderate Parliamentary Reform. Deputy-Lieutenant of Ross-shire.

**Baillie, Lieut.-Col. John** (1772–1833)

Service: Hedon 1820–1830, Inverness District of Burghs 1830–1831, Inverness District of Burghs 1832–1833

Lieutenant-Colonel, Bengal Establishment, 1815, entered in 1790. Brooks' and Carlton Clubs.<sup>4</sup> Estates valued at £1397.1.6 in 1855–1856.<sup>5</sup> A director of the East India Company, 1823–1833. Publications include *A Course of Lectures on Arabic Grammar* (1801).<sup>6</sup> Professor of Arabic and Persian Languages and of Mahomedan Law in the College of Fort William, Political Agent at Bundelcund, 1803–1807, resident at Lucknow, 1807–1815. A moderate Whig before 1832.<sup>7</sup>

**Baillie, William** (1816–1890)

Service: Linlithgowshire 1845–1847

Polkemmet, Linlithgowshire. Carlton Club, White's, and New Club, Edinburgh.<sup>8</sup> First son of Sir William Baillie (estates comprised 4,320 acres, valued at £2,825 in 1883). Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. Voted for agricultural protection, 1846. Captain of the Royal Midlothian Yeoman Cavalry, 1852–1872.

**Baird, James** (1802–1876)

Service: Falkirk District of Burghs 1851–1857

Gartsherrie House, Lanarkshire (estates comprised 19,599 acres, valued at £8,043 in 1883). Carlton Club. Son of Alexander Baird of Lochwood, and brother of William Baird. Married, second, Isabella Agnes, daughter of Admiral James Hay. An Ironmaster at the Gartsherrie Works, near Airdrie. William Baird & Co. produced approximately twenty-five per cent of Scottish pig-iron by the mid-1860s, employing 10,000. Succeeded to the estates of Auchmedden in 1857, having already bought Cambusdoon, Ayrshire in 1853.<sup>9</sup> Founded the Baird Trust in connection with the Church of Scotland at a cost of nearly £500,000 in 1873. A Moderate Conservative, in favour of a revision of the excise laws.

**Baird, William** (1796–1864)

Service: Falkirk District of Burghs 1841–1846

First son of Alexander Baird, of Lochwood. Carlton Club.<sup>10</sup> Bought the Elie estate in 1853, which comprised 3,575 acres, valued at £8,815 in 1883. Married Janet Johnstone, had six sons and five daughters. Was an Iron-Master.

<sup>4</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>5</sup> Inverness-shire 1855–6 Valuation Roll, VR103/2–3.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Casey, 'Baillie, John (1772–1833), of Leys Castle, Inverness and Devonshire Place, Mdx.', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/baillie-john-1772-1833> [accessed 22 Apr. 2015].

<sup>7</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, 'Baillie, John (1772–1833)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1064> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>8</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>9</sup> Arthur H. Grant, 'Baird, James (1802–1876)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1100> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>10</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

**Balfour, James** (c. 1775–1845)

Service: Anstruther Easter Burghs 1826–1831, Haddingtonshire 1832–1835  
3 Grosvenor Square, London. Whittingham House, Dunbar. White's and Carlton Club.<sup>11</sup> Second son of John Balfour of Balbirnie. Purchased Whittingham estate (comprised 10,000 acres, valued at £11,000 in 1883). Married Eleanor, daughter of the Earl of Lauderdale. An East India Proprietor, and formerly civil servant to the East India Company at Madras, and Agent. Suspended and sent home for allegedly accepting gifts in 1800, returned to India in 1802. Made £300,000 as a victualing contractor for the Royal Navy. Grandfather of Arthur James Balfour, prime minister 1902–1905.<sup>12</sup>

**Balfour, James Maitland** (1820–1856)

Service: Haddington District of Burghs 1841–1847  
Whittingham, Haddingtonshire. First son of James Balfour (see previous entry). White's and Carlton Club.<sup>13</sup> Married Lady Blanche, daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Salisbury. Deputy-Lieutenant of Haddington from 1846. Voted for agricultural protection, 1846. Father of Arthur James Balfour, Prime Minister 1902–1905.

**Balfour, Thomas** (1810–1838)

Service: Orkney and Shetland 1835–1837  
18 Curzon Street, Mayfair, London. 9 Doune Terrace, Edinburgh. Cliffdale, Orkney. First son of David Balfour, would have inherited estates valued at £1892/6/0 in 1854–1855 (predeceased).<sup>14</sup> Carlton Club.<sup>15</sup> First son of Captain Balfour, RN, of Elwick, Orkney. F.R.S. A Scottish Advocate, Director of the Highland Society and Vice-Lieutenant of Orkney.

**Blackburn, Peter** (1811–1870)

Held offices: Junior Lord of Treasury 1859  
Service: Stirlingshire 1855–1865  
10 Prince's Gardens, London. Killearn. Carlton. First son of John Blackburn, a Jamaica proprietor, who left £107,109 at his death in 1840. Estates in Killearn, Stirlingshire valued at £1739.3.0 in 1854–1855.<sup>16</sup> Carlton Club.<sup>17</sup> Educated at Eton. Senior brother of Sir Colin Blackburn (Lord Blackburn of Appeal from 1876), and Hugh Blackburn, Professor of Mathematics at Glasgow University.<sup>18</sup> Married Jean, daughter of James Wedderburn, former Solicitor-General for Scotland. Entered the army as Cornet, 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Guards 1829, retiring 1836. Was the chairman of the

<sup>11</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>12</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Balfour, James (c.1775–1845), of Whittinghame, Haddington; Balgonie, Fife, and 3 Grosvenor Square, Mdx.', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/balfour-james-1775-1845> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>13</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>14</sup> Orkney and Shetland 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR111/205–7, VR111/1/25–7.

<sup>15</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>16</sup> Stirlingshire 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR119/1/162–3.

<sup>17</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>18</sup> A. J. Crilly, 'Blackburn, Hugh (1823–1909)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/59883> [accessed 22 Apr. 2015].

Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway from 1846. Unsuccessfully contested Edinburgh City, 1847, and Glasgow, 1852. Justice of the Peace and Deputy-Lieutenant of Stirlingshire. A Liberal-Conservative.

**Blair, James** (1817–1841)

Service: Saltash 1818–1820, Aldeburgh 1820–1826, Minehead 1826–1830, Wigtonshire 1837–1841

3 Portman Square, London. Penninghame, Wigtonshire (estates comprised 37,268 acres, valued at £9,035 in 1883). Carlton Club.<sup>19</sup> Inherited estates in Berbice, Demerara and Surinam as coheir of Lambert Blair, his uncle.<sup>20</sup> Married Elizabeth, youngest daughter of the Hon. Edward Stopford, uncle of the Earl of Courtown.

**Blair, Col. James Hunter** (1817–1854)

Service: Ayrshire 1852–1854

3 St James's Place, London. Blairquhain Park, Athenry (estate comprised 21,672 acres, valued at £12,892 in 1883). Carlton, White's, Guards', and Coventry Clubs.<sup>21</sup> First son of Sir David Hunter Blair. Educated at Eton. Entered the Scots Fusilier Guards, 1835, became Lieutenant-Colonel in 1848. Appointed a Deputy-Lieutenant of Ayrshire, 1845. Killed leading a battalion at the Battle of Inkerman 1854.<sup>22</sup> Was opposed to unreciprocated free trade, to the Maynooth Grant, and to any extension of the franchise.

**Boyle, Hon. George Frederick** (1825–1890)

Also known as: 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow 1869–1890

Service: Bute 1865–1865

Second son of 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow. Succeeded his half-brother as 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow in 1869 (estates comprised 37,825 acres, valued at £34,558 in 1883). Carlton Club.<sup>23</sup> Educated at Christ Church, Oxford. Supporter of the Oxford Movement in the Scottish Episcopal Church.<sup>24</sup> Deputy-Lieutenant of Bute and Ayrshire.

**Cameron, Donald** (1835–1905)

Also known as: Cameron of Lochiel 1835–1905

Service: Inverness-shire 1868–1885

Achnacarry, Fort William, Inverness-shire. Estates comprised 126,008 acres, valued at £10,721 in 1883. White's and Carlton Club. First son of Donald Cameron of Lochiel. Married Lady Margaret Elizabeth, daughter of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch. Educated at Harrow. Entered the diplomatic service as attaché at Berne 1852; was attaché to the Earl of Elgin's special mission to China, 1857–1858. Appointed paid attaché to Stockholm 1858, paid attaché to Berlin the same year, resigned in 1859.

<sup>19</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>20</sup> R.G. Thorne, 'Blair, James (?1788–1841), of 12 Devonshire Place, Mdx. and Penninghame House, Wigton', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/blair-james-1788-1841> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>21</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>22</sup> J. Foster, *Members of Parliament, Scotland, 1357–1882* (London, 1882), 29.

<sup>23</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>24</sup> Rowan Strong, 'Boyle, George Frederick, sixth earl of Glasgow (1825–1890)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52581> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

Was a Groom in Waiting to the Queen, 1874–1880. Unsuccessfully contested Wycombe, 1862.

**Campbell, Alexander** (1814–1869)

Also known as: Alexander Campbell Cameron 1814–1869

Service: Argyll 1841–1843

Monzie Castle, Perthshire. Inveran, Argyllshire. Estates comprised 83,500 acres, valued at £5,658 in 1883. Carlton Club.<sup>25</sup> Only son of General Campbell.

Unsuccessfully contested Edinburgh, 1852, and Inverness, 1857 and 1859. Married Christina, only child of Sir Duncan Cameron of Fassifern. Assumed the additional surname of Cameron upon his marriage. A Conservative.

**Campbell, Sir Archibald I.** (1825–1866)

Service: Argyll 1851–1857

34 Eaton Street, London. Succoth, Dunbartonshire. Estates comprised 10,601 acres, valued at £11,308 in 1883. Carlton Club.<sup>26</sup> Only son of John Campbell, who represented Dunbartonshire, 1826–1830. Married Lady Agnes Grosvenor, seventh daughter of the Marquess of Westminster.<sup>27</sup> Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he was awarded a second-class degree in Classics, 1847. Appointed Captain of the Glasgow Yeomanry, 1849. A Conservative, voted for an inquiry into Maynooth, 1853. Lieutenant-Colonel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lanarkshire Rifle Corps, 1860.

**Carr Boyle, James** (1792–1869)

Also known as: Viscount Kelburne 1792–1849, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow 1843–1869, James Boyle 1792–1869

Service: Ayrshire 1839–1843

Kelburne House, Ayrshire. Eldest surviving son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow, whose estates comprised 37,825 acres, valued at £34,558 in 1883. White's and Carlton Club.<sup>28</sup> Married the daughter of Edward Hay Mackenzie of Newhall and Cromarty, a Lieutenant in the navy. Lord-Lieutenant and Sheriff Principal of Ayrshire from 1844. A Conservative.

**Charteris, Hon. Francis W.** (1818–1914)

Also known as: Lord Elcho 1818–1883, Earl of March and Wemyss 1883–1914

Held offices: Junior Lord of Treasury 1852–1855

Service: Gloucestershire Eastern 1841–1846, Haddingtonshire 1847–1883

23 St James's Place, London. Amisfield, Haddington. Gosford House, Longniddry, Edinburgh. White's and Carlton Club.<sup>29</sup> First son of the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Wemyss, whose estates comprised 62,028 acres, valued at £54,968 in 1883. Married Lady Anne Frederica, second daughter of the first Earl of Lichfield. Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1841. Appointed Deputy-Lieutenant of

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<sup>25</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>26</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>27</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 47.

<sup>28</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>29</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.



Haddingtonshire, 1846, and Lieutenant-Colonel in the London Scottish Rifle Volunteers, 1860. A Liberal-Conservative, who voted for Lord Derby's Reform Bill in 1859, and against Lord Russell's Reform Bill in 1866; also for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, 1869 and in favour of a measure for 'the simplification of the land laws'.

**Chisholm, Alexander** (1810–1838)

Also known as: 'The Chisolm'

Service: Inverness-shire 1835–1838

Erchless Castle, Inverness-shire. Estates comprised 113,256 acres, valued at £8,858 in 1883. Carlton and United University Clubs.<sup>30</sup> First son of 'The Chisholm' (William). University and Carlton Clubs.

**Clerk, Sir George** (1787–1867)

Held offices: Lord of the Admiralty, 1819–1830, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury 1834–1835, Financial Secretary to the Treasury 1841–1845, Vice-President of the Board of Trade 1845–1846, Master of the Mint 1845–1846

Service: Edinburghshire 1811–1832, Edinburgh 1835–1837, Stamford 1838–1847, Dover 1847–1852

8 Park Street, Westminster, London. Penicuik, Edinburgh. Estates comprised 13,196 acres, valued at £8,993 in 1883. Athenaeum, Carlton, and St James's Clubs.<sup>31</sup>

Married Maria Anne, daughter of Ewan Law and niece of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Ellenborough. An Advocate at the Scottish Bar. Honorary D.C.L. Oxon, 1810, Fellow of the Royal Society, 1819, and Chairman of the Royal Academy of Music.<sup>32</sup> A Conservative, but in favour of Free Trade. Unsuccessfully contested Edinburgh, 1837, and Dover, 1857.

**Cochrane, Alexander Dundas Ross Wishart Baillie** (1816–1890)

Also known as: Baron Lamington, 1880–1890, Alexander Cochrane, 1816–1890, Alexander Cochrane-Baillie, 1816–1890

Service: Bridport 1841–1846, Lanarkshire 1857–1857, Honiton 1859–1868, Isle of Wight 1870–1880

26 Wilton Crescent, London. Lamington, Biggar, Lanarkshire. Estates comprised 12,078 acres, valued at £10,463 in 1883. Carlton Club. First son of Admiral Sir Thomas John Cochrane, K.C.B. Educated at Eton College and Trinity College, Cambridge. Married Annabella Mary Elizabeth, first daughter of Andrew Robert Drummond of Cadlands, Hampshire, and granddaughter of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Rutland. Appointed Captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lanark Rifle Volunteers, 1860. Author of *The Morea*, and many other novels, poems, and articles. Prominent member of the Young England movement.<sup>33</sup> A Conservative.

<sup>30</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>31</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>32</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 70.

<sup>33</sup> M. G. Wiebe, 'Baillie, Alexander Dundas Ross Cochrane-Wishart-, first Baron Lamington (1816–1890)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5760> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

**Colquhoun, John Campbell** (1802–1870)

Service: Kilmarnock District of Burghs 1837–1841, Newcastle-under-Lyme 1842–1847

8 Chesham Street, Belgrave Square, London, Garscadden, and Killermont, Dunbartonshire. Estates comprising 3,879 acres, valued at £6,960 in 1883. Athenaeum, Carlton, and National Clubs.<sup>34</sup> First son of Archibald Campbell Colquhoun, Lord Register of Scotland. Author of a number of tracts and pamphlets.<sup>35</sup> Married Henrietta Maria Powys, daughter of Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Lilford.<sup>36</sup> Educated at Edinburgh High School and Oriel College, Oxford. Episcopalian and Evangelical. Voted against the abolition of the Corn Laws, 1846. Originally a Radical, but sat as a Conservative for Kilmarnock Burghs.<sup>37</sup>

**Cumming Bruce, Charles L.** (1790–1875)

Held offices: Joint Secretary to the Board of Control 1852

Service: Inverness District of Burghs 1831–1832, Elginshire and Nairnshire 1840–1868

Dunphail, Forres, Morayshire. Kinnaird House, Falkirk, Stirlingshire.<sup>38</sup> Carlton and United Service Clubs. Second son of Sir Alexander P. Gordon Cumming. Succeeded to the Elginshire estates of Roseisle and Dunphail in 1806, valued at £2467.16.<sup>39</sup> Married Mary, the granddaughter of James Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, and assumed the additional surname of Bruce.<sup>40</sup> Voted for an inquiry into Maynooth, 1853, and in favour of national education on a religious basis. One of five members of the Conservative Scottish elections committee in 1832. A Protectionist.<sup>41</sup> Deputy-Lieutenant of Elginshire.

**Dalrymple, Charles** (1839–1916)

Held offices: Junior Lord of Treasury 1885–1886

Service: Bute 1868–1880, Ipswich 1886–1906

20 Onslow Gardens, London. Newhailes, and Musselburgh. The Athenaeum and Carlton Club.<sup>42</sup> Second son of Sir Charles Dalrymple Fergusson of Kilkerran,

<sup>34</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>35</sup> When asked to very briefly summarise his political affiliation and beliefs in a form sent by Charles Dod, he instead enclosed a full speech and further mentioned his published works on issues including Ireland and Reform. See Flysheet from *The Parliamentary Pocket Companion*, 1834, in 'Autobiography of Five Hundred Members of Parliament, Being a Collection of Letters and Returned Schedules Received by Charles R Dodd, during the First Four Reformed Parliaments, viz. from 1832 to December 1842 and Constituting Materials for Compiling the Successive Editions of The Parliamentary Pocket Companion, London, December 1842, Collected by RPD [Robert Phipps Dod, the son of Charles], Osborn Collection (hereafter Dod MSS), d 50, (3 vols), i, f. 283.

<sup>36</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 78.

<sup>37</sup> John Wolffe, 'Colquhoun, John Campbell (1803–1870)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5991> [accessed 3 May 2015].

<sup>38</sup> Dod MSS, i, f. 164.

<sup>39</sup> Elginshire 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR109/1/40, 64–5.

<sup>40</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 84.

<sup>41</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Cumming Bruce, Charles Lennox (1790–1875), of Roseisle, Elgin and Kinnaird, Stirling', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/cumming-bruce-charles-1790-1875> [accessed 14 Apr. 2015].

<sup>42</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 90.

Ayrshire, whose estates comprised 22,630 acres, valued at £13,334 in 1883. Married Alice Mary, daughter of Sir Edward Hunter Blair of Blairquhan. Educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. Assumed the name of Dalrymple in succeeding to the estates of his great-grandfather, Sir David Dalrymple (Lord Hailes), 1849. Called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, 1865. Justice of the Peace for Midlothian, Deputy-Lieutenant for Haddingtonshire, and Honorary Major of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers. Became the chairman of the Select Committee for Public Petitions, 1893, and served on the Royal Commissions on Cathedral Establishments, Reformatories, Vaccination, and Universities (Scotland). A Conservative.

**Douglas, Archibald William** (1818–1858)

Also known as: Viscount Drumlanrig 1837–1856, 8<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Queensbury, 1856–1858

Held offices: Comptroller of the Royal Household 1853–1856

Service: Dumfriesshire 1847–1856

Kinmount and Glen Stenart, Dumfriesshire. Carlton, Arthur's and St James's Clubs.<sup>43</sup> Only son of the Marquess of Queensbury, whose estates comprise 13,243 acres, valued at £13,384 in 1883. Married Caroline, the daughter of Sir William Robert Clayton. Educated at Eton. Was a Cornet in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Guards, retired 1844. Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire and Colonel in the Dumfries Militia. 'A Tory, but a Liberal one', who supported any well-considered measure for the extension of the franchise. Voted against the ballot in 1853, and opposed any endowment of the Roman Catholic clergy, but was an advocate of religious liberty.

**Dundas, George** (1819–1880)

Service: Linlithgowshire 1847–1859

26 Pall Mall, London. Dundas Castle, South Queensferry. Carlton and Conservative Clubs.<sup>44</sup> First son of James Dundas of Dundas, Linlithgowshire, whose estates comprised 2,094 acres, valued at £4,783 in 1883. His father was chief of the Dundas family. Deputy-Lieutenant of Linlithgowshire. Officer in the Rifle Brigade, served in Bermuda, Nova Scotia, and the Mediterranean. Retired from the army, 1844. Lieutenant-Governor of St Vincent, 1874–1878, and Windward Islands, 1878–1879.<sup>45</sup> A Conservative, opposed to the admission of Jews to Parliament. Favoured an 'extended system of national education'.

**Ferguson, Captain George** (1788–1867)

Service: Banffshire 1832–1837

37 Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London. Pitfour, Aberdeenshire. Estates comprised 23,150 acres, valued at £19,938 in 1883. Carlton Club. Son of Rear-Admiral George Ferguson.<sup>46</sup> Married, second, Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Langford. A Post Captain in the Navy. A Conservative.

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<sup>43</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>44</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>45</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 111.

<sup>46</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 133.

**Fergusson, Sir James** (1832–1907)

Held offices: Under-Secretary of State for India 1866–1868, Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department 1867–1868, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1886–1892, Postmaster-General 1891–1892

Service: Ayrshire 1854–1857, Manchester North East 1885–1906

80 Cornwall Gardens, London. Kilkerran, Ayrshire. White's, Carlton, and Junior Carlton Clubs.<sup>47</sup> Estates comprised 22,630 acres, valued at £13,334 in 1883.

Educated at Rugby and University College, Oxford. Married Lady Edith Ramsay, daughter of the Marquess of Dalhousie. Served in the Grenadier Guards, 1851–55, including the Crimean War. Was wounded at the Battle of Inkerman, on the same day as his friend and Scottish MP James Hunter Blair was killed. Fergusson was nominated to succeed him as MP at Blair's suggestion, before he succumbed to his wounds.<sup>48</sup> Served as Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the Royal Ayr and Wigton Militia, 1858–1873. Governor of New Zealand, 1873–1875, and Governor of Bombay, 1880–1885. A Magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant of Ayrshire. A Conservative.

**Forbes, William** (1806–1854)

Service: Stirlingshire 1835–1837, 1841–1855

Callendar House, Stirlingshire. Purchased estate which comprised 56,704 acres, valued at £25,442 in 1883. Carlton Club.<sup>49</sup> First son of William Forbes of London, merchant.<sup>50</sup> Married Lady Louisa Antoinetta, daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Wemyss. Vice-Lieutenant of Stirlingshire. A Conservative, who voted for agricultural protection in 1846, and favoured 'relief' to the agricultural and commercial classes. Also wanted a withdrawal of the Maynooth Grant.

**Gordon, Captain Hon. William** (1784–1858)

Held offices: Lord of the Admiralty 1841–1846

Service: Aberdeenshire 1820–1854

Argyll House, Argyll Street, London. Haddo House, Aberdeenshire. Carlton Club. Second son of Lord Haddo (who was the first son of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Aberdeen). Brother of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Aberdeen, whose estates comprised 62,422 acres, valued at £44,112 in 1883. Educated at Harrow school.<sup>51</sup> Became Rear-Admiral of the Red, 1851. A Conservative, who voted for agricultural protection, 1846.

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<sup>47</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Harnetty, 'Fergusson, Sir James, of Kilkerran, sixth baronet (1832–1907)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33112> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>49</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>50</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 140.

<sup>51</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Gordon, Hon. William (1784–1858)' HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/gordon-hon-william-1784-1858> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

**Graham-Montgomery, Sir Graham** (1823–1901)

Held offices: Junior Lord of the Treasury 1866–1868

Service: Peeblesshire 1852–1868, Peeblesshire and Selkirkshire 1868–1880

45 Grosvenor Place, London. Stobo Castle, Peebles. Kinross House, Kinross-shire.

Estate comprised 20,634 acres, valued at £11,904 in 1883. Carlton and Conservative Clubs. First son of Sir James Montgomery. Married the daughter of John James Hope-Johnstone of Annandale. Educated at Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1845. Appointed Deputy-Lieutenant of Peebleshire, 1844, and Lord-Lieutenant of Kinross, 1854. Lieutenant in the Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry, 1850–1854. Brigadier-General of the Royal Company of Archers.<sup>52</sup> The patron of five livings. A Conservative, who voted against the disestablishment of the Irish Church, 1869, a supporter generally of Lord Beaconsfield's policy.

**Grant, Colonel Hon. Francis William** (1778–1853)

Also known as: 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield 1840–1853, Francis William Ogilvie-Grant

Service: Elgin District of Burghs 1802–1806, Inverness District of Burghs 1806–1807, Elginshire 1807–1832, Elginshire and Nairnshire 1832–1840

42 Belgrave Square, London. Cullen House, Inverness-shire. The Athenaeum and Carlton Clubs. Brother of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield, whose estates comprised 305,930 acres, valued at £78,227 in 1883. Second son of Sir James Grant. Married Mary Anne, only daughter of J.C. Dunn, Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness-shire. Acting chief of his family estates and electoral interests from 1811.<sup>53</sup> A Conservative. A Representative Peer, 1841–1853.

**Grant, Francis William** (1814–1840)

Service: Inverness-shire 1838–1840

Cullen House, Inverness-shire. Carlton Club.<sup>54</sup> Eldest son of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield and nephew to the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl, whose estates comprised 305,930 acres, valued at £78,227 in 1883. A Conservative.

**Grant, Hon. James Ogilvie** (1817–1888)

Also known as: 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield 1884–1888, Baron Strathspey 1884–1888

Service: Elginshire and Nairnshire 1868–1874

Invererne, Forres, Scotland. Carlton Club. Fourth son of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield, whose estates comprised 305,930 acres, valued at £78,227 in 1883. Married Caroline Louisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter of Eyre Evans of Ashill Towers, Limerick. Married, second, Constance Helena, fourth daughter of Sir Robert Abercromby. Appointed Captain of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Foot, 1854 and retired, 1855. Became Major of the Inverness Militia, 1857, and was Lieutenant-Colonel of the Elginshire Volunteers. Vice-Lieutenant of Elginshire.<sup>55</sup> A Conservative.

<sup>52</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 256.

<sup>53</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Grant, Francis William (1778–1853), of Castle Grant, Elgin', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/grant-francis-william-1778-1853> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>54</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>55</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 161.

**Hay, Sir John** (1788–1838)

Service: Peeblesshire 1832–1837

103 Pall Mall, London. Smithfield and Hayston, Peebleshire. Estates comprised 9,755 acres, valued at £4,514 in 1883. Carlton Club. First son of Sir John Hay. Married Anne Preston, niece and co-heiress of Sir Robert Preston, of Valleyfield. Brother of Adam Hay, formerly MP for Peebles. A partner in the firm of Forbes and Co., Bankers at Edinburgh. A Conservative.

**Hepburn, Sir Thomas Buchan** (1804–1893)

Service: Haddingtonshire 1838–1847

Hepburn, Haddingtonshire. Estates comprised 2,772 acres, valued at £8,512 in 1883. Carlton and Smeaton Clubs. Married Helen, daughter of A. Little, of Shelden Park, Surrey. Unsuccessfully contested the Haddington District of Burghs, 1837. A Conservative.

**Home Drummond, Henry** (1783–1867)

Service: Stirlingshire 1821–1831, Perthshire 1840–1852

Blair-Drummond, Perthshire. Estates comprised 40,668 acres, valued at £32,014 in 1883. Carlton and Union Clubs. First son of George Home Drummond, and grandson of Henry Home, Lord Kames. Director of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Appointed as one of the Board of Supervision for the Relief of the Poor in Scotland, 1835. Was called to the Scottish Bar. Vice-Lieutenant of Perthshire. Author of a work on the course of education pursued in the University of Oxford, in reply to an article in the *Edinburgh Review*. A Conservative, but in favour of free trade.

**Hope, Hon. Captain James** (1807–1854)

Also known as: James Wallace 1807–1854, James Hope-Wallace 1844–1854

Service: Linlithgowshire 1835–1838

Chelsea Hospital, Middlesex. Carlton Club. Second son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Hopetoun, whose estates comprised 42,507 acres, valued at £39,984 in 1883. Married Lady Mary Frances Nugent, daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Westmeath. Deputy-Lieutenant of Linlithgowshire.<sup>56</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel in the Coldstream Guards. Succeeded his uncle, Sir Alexander Hope, as MP for Linlithgowshire. Assumed the additional final surname and arms of Wallace in compliance with the will of Lord Wallace, 1844. Thus, inherited estates comprising 6,591 acres, valued at 2,605 in 1883. A Conservative.

**Hope, Hon. Charles** (1808–1893)

Service: Linlithgowshire 1838–1845

Greenwich Hospital, London. Carlton Club.<sup>57</sup> Third son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Hopetoun. Brother of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Hopetoun, whose estates comprised 42,507 acres, valued at £39,984 in 1883. Married Lady Isabella Helen, first daughter of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Selkirk. Was called to the Scottish Bar, 1831. Was a commissioner of Greenwich

<sup>56</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 186.

<sup>57</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

Hospital and was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of Man 1845. A Conservative.

**Hope, Hon. Sir Alexander** (1769–1837)

Service: Linlithgowshire 1832–1835

Chelsea College, London. Craighall, Farnham, Surrey. The Athenaeum and Carlton Club.<sup>58</sup> Second son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Hopetoun, whose estates comprised 42,507 acres, valued at £39,984 in 1883. A Lieutenant-General in the Army, and Colonel of the 47<sup>th</sup> regiment. Lieutenant-Governor of Chelsea Hospital, enjoyed a pension for the loss of his arm at Buren, Holland, in 1795.<sup>59</sup> A Conservative, in favour of the Corn Laws.

**Hope, Sir John** (1781–1853)

Service: Edinburghshire 1845–1853

17 Fludyer Street, London. Pinkie House, Edinburgh. Carlton Club. First son of Sir Archibald Hope. Estate valued at £1945.11 in 1854–1855.<sup>60</sup> Married Anne, youngest daughter of Sir John Wedderburn. Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry. Vice-Lieutenant and Convenor of Edinburghshire. Deputy-Governor of the Royal Bank of Scotland.<sup>61</sup> A Conservative and in favour of protection to agriculture.

**Howard, Hon. William** (1781–1843)

Service: Morpeth 1806–1826, Sutherland 1837–1840

16 Grosvenor Street, London. Second son of the Earl of Carlisle, whose estates comprised 78,540 acres, valued at £49,601 in 1883. Elected for Sutherland without opposition. A Conservative, said that he did “not much care who was destined to be at the head of the government, so that whoever filled that high station would throw the shield of his ministerial protection over the vulnerable venerable institutions of this country”. Accepted Chiltern Hundreds in April 1840.

**Houstoun, George** (1810–1843)

Service: Renfrewshire 1837–1841

Johnstone Castle, Renfrewshire. Oxford & Cambridge, and Carlton Clubs. Owner of Easter Cochrane estate. Only son of Ludovic Houstoun. Contested Renfrewshire unsuccessfully in 1835. Was ‘an enemy to every species of corruption, opposed to all useless expenditure, a supporter of the institutions of the country, civil and sacred, although friendly to every practicable reform by which their efficiency can be increased, or their permanency secured. Would firmly oppose any measure which can be considered even an indirect attack on the Protestant interests of the country’.

**Hume Campbell, Sir Hugh Purves** (1812–1894)

Service: Berwickshire 1834–1847

72 Portland Place, London. Purves Hall, and Marchmont House, Berwickshire. Estates comprised 20,180 acres, valued at £17,976 in 1883. Carlton Club. Married

<sup>58</sup> Thévoz, ‘Database’.

<sup>59</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 182.

<sup>60</sup> Midlothian 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR108/1/139.

<sup>61</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 187.

Margaret Penelope, youngest daughter of John Spottiswoode of Spottiswoode. His father changed his name from Purves to Hume-Campbell on succeeding to the estates of his maternal ancestors, the Earls of Marchmont. A Conservative, voted for agricultural protection in 1846.

**Johnstone, John James Hope** (1796–1876)

Also known as: Earl of Annandale and Hartfell 1818–1876, Lord Johnstone 1818–1876

Service: Dumfriesshire 1832–1847, 1857–1865

Raehills, Lockerbie, Scotland. White's, Brooks', and Carlton Club.<sup>62</sup> First son of Admiral Sir William Johnstone, whose estates comprised 65,336 acres, valued at £28,236 in 1883. Married Alicia, first daughter of George Gordon, Keeper of Lochmaben Castle, and niece of Sir David Baird. Formerly a Lieutenant in the navy, and claimant of the dormant Earldom of Annandale. A Liberal-Conservative, in favour of extension of the franchise, retrenchment of expenditure, and a national system of education.

**Leslie, William** (1814–1880)

Service: Aberdeenshire 1861–1866

31 Eaton Square, London. Warthill, Aberdeenshire. Drumrossie, Aberdeenshire. Estates comprised 4,164 acres, valued at £4,560 in 1883. Carlton Club. First son of William Leslie of Warthill, Aberdeenshire (where the family had been established since 1518). Married Matilda Rose, second daughter of William Rose Robinson.<sup>63</sup> Educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he graduated M.A. in 1832. Was for some years in China; a partner in the firm of Messrs Dent and Co. A Magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire. A Conservative, in favour of free commercial intercourse with other nations on principles of reciprocity and of non-intervention in foreign politics, but of the maintenance of the highest state of efficiency in the army and navy, and of a 'sound Scriptural education for the people, aided by government grants'. Opposed to the system of centralisation especially as applied to Scotland.

**Lockhart, Alan Elliot** (1803–1878)

Service: Selkirkshire 1846–1861

Borthwick Brae, Selkirkshire. Cleghorn, Lanarkshire. Estates comprised 7,142 acres, valued at £4,642 in 1883. Carlton Club. First son of William Elliot Lockhart, who represented Selkirkshire for twenty-four years. Married Charlotte, fifth daughter of Sir Robert Dundas. Educated at the University of Edinburgh. Called to the Scottish Bar, 1821. A Deputy-Lieutenant of Selkirkshire and Roxburghshire. Lord Lieutenant of Selkirkshire, 1867–1878. A Liberal-Conservative, who said he would give Lord Derby a general support; in favour of inquiry respecting the Maynooth grant; opposed to the 40-shilling freehold movement in Scotland.

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<sup>62</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>63</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 213.



**Lockhart, Alexander M.** (1806–1861)

Service: Lanarkshire 1837–1841

Carnwath, Lanarkshire. Mount Pleasant, Berwickshire. Carlton Club.<sup>64</sup> Third son of Sir Alexander Macdonald-Lockhart, whose estates comprised 32,274 acres, valued at £22,387 in 1883. A Deputy-Lieutenant of Lanarkshire. A Conservative.

**Lockhart, William** (1787–1857)

Service: Lanarkshire 1841–1857

19 Grosvenor Street, London. Milton Lockhart, Lanarkshire. Junior United Service and Carlton Clubs. Estates comprised 1,059 acres, valued at £2,582 in 1865.<sup>65</sup> First son of Revd Dr Lockhart (and grandson of William Lockhart of Kirkhill). Married Mary Jane, daughter of Sir Hugh Palliser. Was in the East India Company's Bengal Army, and received a medal for services in Nepal. Dean of Faculties at the University of Glasgow. Deputy-Lieutenant of Lanarkshire, and Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the Lanarkshire Regiment of Yeomanry Cavalry. Was 'a decided Conservative', who supported the repeal of the Maynooth Grant.

**Mackenzie, Thomas** (1793–1856)

Service: Ross and Cromarty 1837–1847

17 Clarges Street, London. Applecross, Ross-shire. Estates comprised 63,000 acres, valued at £1,957 in 1883. Carlton Club.<sup>66</sup> First son of Kenneth Mackenzie of Inverinate. A Writer to the Signet. A Conservative, who voted for agricultural protection, 1846.

**Mackenzie, William Forbes** (1807–1860)

Held offices: Junior Lord of the Treasury 1845–1846, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury 1852

Service: Peeblesshire 1837–1852, Liverpool 1852–1853

38 Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London. Portmore, Peeblesshire. Estates comprised 9,685 acres, valued at £4,859 in 1883. Carlton Club. First son of Colin Mackenzie of Portmore. Married Helen Anne, first daughter of Sir James Montgomery.<sup>67</sup> A Deputy-Lieutenant of Peeblesshire. A Conservative, who voted for agricultural protection, 1846. Contested Derby, 1857.

**McNeill, Duncan** (1793–1874)

Also known as: Baron Colonsay 1867–1874

Held offices: Solicitor-General for Scotland 1834–1835, 1841–1842, Lord Advocate 1842–1846

Service in parliament: Argyll 1843–1851

73 Great King Street, Edinburgh. Carlton Club. Second son of John McNeill of Colonsay, whose estates comprised 11,226 acres, valued at £2,305 in 1883. Educated at the University of St Andrews and University of Edinburgh. Called to the Scottish Bar, 1816, and was Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. Appointed Junior Counsel for the Crown, 1820. Sheriff of Perthshire, 1824–1834. Deputy-Lieutenant of Midlothian

<sup>64</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>65</sup> F.H. Groome, *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland*, 6 vols (1882–4), v, 34.

<sup>66</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>67</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 232.

and Argyllshire.<sup>68</sup> A Conservative, but in favour of free trade. A Director of the Royal Bank of Scotland, Extraordinary Director of the Edinburgh Life Assurance Company, and of the Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Company.

**Mure, Colonel William** (1799–1860)

Also known as: ‘The Historian’

Service: Renfrewshire 1846–1855

14 Jermyn Street, London. Caldwell, Beith, Ayrshire. Estates comprised 5,024 acres, valued at £6,248 in 1883. United Services Club. First son of Col. William Mure. Married Laura, second daughter of William Markham of Becca Hall, Yorkshire, and granddaughter of the Most Reverend William Markham, Archbishop of York. Educated at Westminster, Edinburgh University and in Germany. Author of a *Journal of a Tour in Greece, etc. in 1838, Dissertation of the Calendar, etc. of Ancient Egypt, History of Grecian Literature*. Vice-Lieutenant of Renfrewshire and Colonel of the Renfrew Militia. Lord Rector of Glasgow University, 1847–1848. A ‘Liberal-Conservative’, opposed to protection, but supported other measures for the relief of agriculture. Voted against the Ecclesiastical Tithes Bill as being ineffective, and opposed to the Maynooth Grant. Unsuccessfully contested Renfrewshire, 1841.

**Mure, David** (1810–1891)

Held offices: Solicitor-General for Scotland 1858–1859, Lord Advocate 1859

Service: Bute 1859–1865

12 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh. Third son of Col. William Mure, whose estates comprised 5,024 acres, valued at £6,248 in 1883. Carlton Club.<sup>69</sup> Brother of Col. William Mure (see entry above). Married Helen, first daughter of John Tod of Kirkhill. Educated at Westminster School and at the University of Edinburgh. Called to the Scottish Bar, 1831. Sheriff of Perthshire 1853–1858. Appointed a Senator of the College of Justice 1865. A Liberal-Conservative, but one who gave a general support to Lord Derby; opposed to the ballot and to the grant to Maynooth; in favour of the army and navy being maintained in a high state of efficiency, and of National Education being based on religion.

**Murray, Sir George** (1772–1846)

Held offices: Master-General of the Ordnance 1834–1835

Service: Perthshire 1824–1832, Perthshire 1834–1835

Second son of Sir William Murray, of Ochertyre, whose estates comprised 17,876 acres, valued at £11,051 in 1883. White’s.<sup>70</sup> Educated at Edinburgh High School and the University of Edinburgh. Married Lady Louisa Erskine, widow of Sir James Erskine. Enjoyed a long and successful administrative career in the military, a trusted associate and ally of the Duke of Wellington.<sup>71</sup> President of the Royal Geographical

<sup>68</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 237.

<sup>69</sup> Thévoz, ‘Database’.

<sup>70</sup> Thévoz, ‘Database’.

<sup>71</sup> S.G.P. Ward, ‘Murray, Sir George (1772–1846)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19608> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

Society, and Fellow of the Royal Society. A Conservative. Contested Westminster 1837, and Manchester, 1839 and 1841.

**Murray, William David** (1806–1898)

Also known as: Viscount Stormont 1806–1840, Earl of Mansfield, 1840–1898

Held offices: Junior Lord of Treasury 1834–1835

Service: Aldborough 1830–1831, Woodstock 1831–1832, Norwich 1832–1837, Perthshire 1837–1840

Scone Palace, Perthshire. Carlton Club. First son of the Earl of Mansfield, whose estates comprised 49,074 acres, valued at £42,968 in 1883. Married Louisa, third daughter of Cuthbert Ellison, former MP for Newcastle. One of five members of the Conservative Scottish election committee in 1832. Largely withdrew from political life after the death of his wife in 1837.<sup>72</sup> A Conservative. Lord-Lieutenant of Clackmannanshire. Lord High Commissioner to the Kirk of Scotland in 1852, 1858, 1859.<sup>73</sup>

**Orr Ewing, Archibald** (1818–1893)

Also known as: Archibald Ewing, 1818–1893

Service: Dunbartonshire 1868–1892

Lennoxbank, Bonhill, Dunbartonshire. Ballikinrain, Balfron, Stirlingshire. Gollomfield, Fort William, Inverness-shire. Purchased estates which comprised 6,041 acres, valued at £7,385 in 1883. Carlton Club, New Club, and University Club, Edinburgh. Western Club, and New Club, Glasgow. Seventh son of William Ewing of Ardvullan. Married the only daughter of James Reid of Caldercruix. Educated at the University of Glasgow. A Merchant in Glasgow, where he had been established since 1845. A Deputy-Lieutenant of Stirlingshire. Also, a County Councillor of Dunbarton and a Magistrate for the counties of Dunbarton, Stirling, Lanark, and Inverness. Created Baronet, 1886. A Conservative.

**Oswald, Alexander H.** (1811–1868)

Service: Ayrshire 1843–1852

27 Eaton Place, London. Auchincruive, Ayrshire. Estates comprised 36,120 acres, valued at £41,874 in 1883. White's, Brooks', and Travellers' Clubs.<sup>74</sup> Eldest surviving son of Richard Alexander Oswald and nephew of James Oswald, former MP for Glasgow. Married Lady Louisa, only daughter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Craven. Deputy-Lieutenant for Ayrshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, and Lanarkshire.<sup>75</sup> A Conservative, but in favour of free trade. Contested Weymouth, 1852.

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<sup>72</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Murray, William David, Visct. Stormont (1806–1898)', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/murray-william-1806-1898> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>73</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 337.

<sup>74</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>75</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 279.

**Pelham-Clinton, Henry** (1811–1864)

Also known as: Henry Pelham-Clinton 1811–1864, Earl of Lincoln 1811–1851, 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Newcastle 1851–1864

Held offices: Lord of the Treasury 1834–1835, Commissioner of Woods and Forests 1841–1846, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1846, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies 1852–1855, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1859–1864

Service: Nottinghamshire Southern 1832–1846, Falkirk District of Burghs 1846–1851

16 Carlton House Terrace, London. Runby Hall, Nottinghamshire. Carlton Club. First son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Newcastle, whose estates comprised 35,547 acres, valued at £74,547 in 1883. Married Susan, only daughter of the 10<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. A Conservative, but in favour of free trade, and supported the endowment of the Roman Catholic clergy. One of the Council of the Duchy of Cornwall.

**Pringle, Alexander** (1791–1857)

Held offices: Junior Lord of Treasury 1841–1845

Service: Selkirkshire 1830–1832, Selkirkshire 1835–1846

43 Pall Mall, London. Yair, Selkirkshire. Estates at Yair comprised 3,397 acres, in addition to lands at Whytbank.<sup>76</sup> White's and Carlton Club.<sup>77</sup> Was a representative of the Pringles of Whytebank, an ancient family in the county of Selkirk. Married Agnes Joanna, daughter of Sir William Dick. Not well-known in Westminster, but well-regarded by Scottish Conservatives.<sup>78</sup> Advocate, and Vice-Lieutenant of Selkirkshire.

**Rae, Sir William** (1769–1842)

Held offices: Lord Advocate 1834–1835, 1841–1842

Service: Anstruther Easter Burghs 1819–1826, Harwich 1827–1830, Buteshire & Caithness 1830–1831, Portarlington 1831–1832, Bute 1833–1842

52 Upper Brook Street, London. Eskgrove, Midlothian. Lands valued at £175.9.3 in 1854–1855.<sup>79</sup> Carlton Club.<sup>80</sup> Only surviving son of Sir David Rae, Lord Eskgrove. Educated at Edinburgh High School, Glasgow University, and the University of Edinburgh.<sup>81</sup> Called to the Scottish Bar, 1791. A Conservative.

**Ramsay, Lord James Andrew Broun** (1812–1860)

Also known as: Earl of Dalhousie 1838–1860, Marquess of Dalhousie 1849–1860

Held offices: President of the Board of Trade 1845–1846

Service: Haddingtonshire 1837–1838

<sup>76</sup> Groome, *Ordnance Gazetteer*, vi, 500.

<sup>77</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>78</sup> D.R. Fisher, 'Pringle, Alexander (1791–1857), of Whytbank and Yair, Selkirk', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/pringle-alexander-1791-1857> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>79</sup> Midlothian 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR108/1/440, VR60/1/19.

<sup>80</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>81</sup> Michael Fry, 'Rae, Sir William, third baronet (1769–1842)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23005> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

Only surviving son of the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Dalhousie (estates comprised 138,021 acres, valued at £58,603 in 1883). Carlton and Travellers' Clubs.<sup>82</sup> Stood as candidate for Edinburgh, 1835. Refused to stand for an English seat, preferring stay in Scotland. A Peelite after succeeding to the peerage, focussed on Scottish issues before travelling to India.<sup>83</sup> Constable of Dover castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Lord Clerk Register of Scotland. Governor-General of India, 1847–1856. Married Lady Susan Georgiana Hay, daughter of the 8<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Tweeddale.

**Ramsay, William Ramsay** (1809–1850)

Service: Stirlingshire 1831–1832, Edinburghshire 1841–1845

Barnton House and Lauriston Castle, Midlothian. Sauchie House, Stirlingshire.

Estates valued at £32,131.14 in 1854–1855.<sup>84</sup> The Athenaeum and Carlton Club.<sup>85</sup>

Only son of George Ramsay of Barnton. An infant when he inherited the estates of his father, leading to his becoming popularly known as 'the richest commoner in Scotland'.<sup>86</sup> Married Mary, the daughter of the 10<sup>th</sup> Lord Torpichen.<sup>87</sup> A Conservative.

**Scott, Hon. Francis** (1806–1884)

Service: Roxburghshire 1841–1847, Berwickshire 1847–1859

Mertoun House, Berwickshire. Carlton Club. Fifth son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Lord Polwarth, whose estates comprised 10,664 acres, valued at £15,243 in 1883. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. Graduated B.A. in 1827, M.A. in 1832. Called to the Bar at the Middle Temple, 1832, and joined the Northern Circuit. Appointed Parliamentary Agent for the District of Port Philip, New South Wales, 1845. A Conservative, who voted for inquiry into Maynooth.

**Scott, Lord Henry J.M.D.** (1832–1905)

Also known as: Henry Douglas-Scott-Montagu 1832–1905, Baron Montagu of Beaulieu 1885–1905

Service: Selkirkshire 1861–1868, Hampshire Southern 1868–1884

3 Tilney Street, London. Palace House, Beaulieu, Southampton. Estates comprised 8,496 acres, valued at £7,386 in 1883. Carlton, Junior Carlton, and St Stephen's Clubs.<sup>88</sup> Second son of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch. Married the Hon. Cecily, youngest daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Wharnccliffe. Educated at Eton. Appointed a Captain of the Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry, 1856. A Conservative. Created Baron Montagu, 1885.

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<sup>82</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>83</sup> David J. Howlett, 'Ramsay, James Andrew Broun, first marquess of Dalhousie (1812–1860)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23088> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>84</sup> Stirlingshire 1854–5 Valuation Roll, VR119/1/285–6.

<sup>85</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>86</sup> Terry Jenkins, 'Ramsay, William Ramsay (1809–1850), of Barnton House, Edinburgh and Sauchie House, Stirling', *HoP, Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/ramsay-william-1809-1850> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>87</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 304.

<sup>88</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

**Scott, Lord John** (1809–1860)

Also known as: John Montagu-Douglas-Scott, 1809–1860

Service: Roxburghshire 1835–1837

Montagu House, Whitehall, London. White's.<sup>89</sup> Second son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, and only brother of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, whose estates comprised 460,108 acres, valued at £217,163 in 1883. Married Alicia Anne, first daughter of John Spottiswoode of Spottiswoode. Captain in the Grenadier Guards. A Conservative. Patron of one living.

**Scott, William Montagu Douglas** (1831–1914)

Also known as: Earl of Dalkeith 1831–1884, 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, 1884–1914

Service: Edinburghshire 1853–1868, 1874–1880

3 Hamilton Place, London. Dalkeith Palace, Dalkeith. White's and Carlton Club.<sup>90</sup> First son of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, whose estates comprised 460,108 acres, valued at £217,163 in 1883. Married Lady Louisa, third daughter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Abercorn. Lieutenant-Colonel of the Mid-Lothian Yeomanry Cavalry, Deputy-Lieutenant of Selkirkshire, and Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire. Attached to a special mission to Russia, 1856. A Conservative; said he would uphold 'the Protestant institutions of the country'. Sat for Edinburghshire until defeated in 1880 by William Gladstone.

**Shaw Stewart, Sir Michael Robert** (1826–1903)

Service: Renfrewshire 1855–1865

42 Belgrave Square, London. Ardgowan, Greenock, Scotland. Estates comprised 26,468 acres, valued at £17,378 in 1883. Carlton, White's, and Travellers' Clubs. First son of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, MP for Renfrewshire 1830–1836. Married Lady Octavia, daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster. Educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford. Appointed Cornet and Sub-Lieutenant of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Guards 1845, retired 1846. Deputy-Lieutenant of Renfrewshire. Lieutenant-Colonel of the Renfrewshire Rifle Volunteers. A moderate Conservative, opposed to the Maynooth Grant.

**Sinclair, Sir George** (1790–1868)

Service: Buteshire & Caithness 1811–1812, Caithness 1832–1837, Caithness 1837–1841

5 Suffolk Street, London. Ulbster, Caithness. Arthur's Club. First son of Sir John Sinclair, a celebrated agriculturalist whose estates comprised 78,053 acres, valued at £12,883 in 1883. Educated at Harrow School and Gottingen University. A noted Sabbatarian, and Pentecostal evangelical.<sup>91</sup> Married Catherine Camilla, second daughter of Lord Huntingtower. Wrote *The Debate and Division, an Epistle to a Friend in the Country*, *The Bore*, and other poetical works. Of moderate Conservative principles.

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<sup>89</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>90</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>91</sup> George Stronach, 'Sinclair, Sir George, second baronet (1790–1868)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25617> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

**Smollett, Alexander** (1801–1881)

Service in parliament: Dunbartonshire 1841–1859

Cameron House, Dunbartonshire. Carlton and Union Clubs. First son of Rear-Admiral John Rouett Smollett. Educated at the University of Edinburgh. Member of the Faculty of Advocates. A Conservative, in favour of national education on a religious basis; and opposed to the Maynooth grant. Contested Dunbartonshire, 1835 and 1837.

**Smollett, Patrick Boyle** (1804–1895)

Service: Dunbartonshire 1859–1868, Cambridge 1874–1880

13 Arlington Street, London. Cameron House, Bonhill, Dunbartonshire. Carlton and Conservative Clubs.<sup>92</sup> Second son of Admiral John Rouett Smollett. Brother of Alexander Smollett (see above). Educated at Haileybury College and at the University of Edinburgh. Entered the service of the East India Company, 1826. Was for many years Political Agent at Vizagapatan, Madras Presidency, until 1858. A Liberal-Conservative.

**Stewart, Alan** (1835–1901)

Also known as: Baron Stewart of Garlies 1873–1901, Lord of Garlies 1873–1901, Earl of Galloway 1873–1901

Service: Wigtownshire 1868–1873

Galloway House, Wigtownshire. First son of the Earl of Galloway, whose estates comprised 79,184 acres, valued at £32,197 in 1883. Married Lady Mary Arabella, fourth daughter the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Salisbury.<sup>93</sup> Entered the Army as a Cornet in the Royal Horse Guards, 1855; became Lieutenant, 1857, and Captain, 1861. Captain in the Galloway Militia. A Conservative, ‘but quite prepared to support measures for the progressive improvement of our institutions’. Lord High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland.

**Stirling, William** (1818–1878)

Also known as: William Stirling Maxwell 1866–1878

Service: Perthshire 1852–1868

10 Upper Grosvenor Street, London. Keir House, Dunblane. Pollock House, Pollockshaws, Glasgow. The Athenaeum, Carlton, Travellers’, and Oxford & Cambridge Clubs. Only son of Archibald Stirling. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. A noted book and art collector, and admirer of Sir Walter Scott.<sup>94</sup> Married Lady Anne Maria, the second daughter of the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Leven and Melville. Assumed the name of Maxwell in 1866 on inheriting the estates of his uncle, Sir John Maxwell, which comprised 20,184 acres, valued at £29,854 in 1883. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge where he graduated B.A. in 1839, and M.A. in 1843. Elected Rector of St Andrews University, 1863, Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, 1872, and Chancellor of Glasgow University, 1875.<sup>95</sup> Author of *Annals*

<sup>92</sup> Thévoz, ‘Database’.

<sup>93</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 146.

<sup>94</sup> Hilary Macartney, ‘Maxwell, Sir William Stirling, ninth baronet (1818–1878)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26537> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].

<sup>95</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 337.

*of the Artists of Spain, Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V*, etc. Patron of one living. A Conservative.

**Stuart, Captain Charles** (1810–1892)

Service: Bute 1832–1833

Middle Scotland-Yard. Son of Captain John Stuart, RN, and nephew of Charles Stuart, Lord Rothesay. Married the Hon. Georgiana Stuart (maid of honour to Queen Adelaide), and daughter of Vice-Adm. Sir John Gore. Lieutenant of 1<sup>st</sup> Foot Guards, Buteshire, 1833, Lieutenant-Colonel, 1845, Major-General, 1860, Lieutenant-General, 1868, and General, 1875. ADC to the Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, 1837–1838, Military Secretary to the Governor-General of India, 1857–1859. Vice-Lieutenant of Buteshire.<sup>96</sup> Of Conservative principles.

**Walker, Colonel George Gustavus** (1830–1897)

Service: Dumfriesshire 1865–1868, Dumfriesshire 1869–1874

Crawfordton, Dumfries. Estates comprised 78,439 acres, valued at £6,883 in 1883. Carlton and Conservative Clubs.<sup>97</sup> First son of John Walker of Crawfordton. Married Anne Murray, only daughter of Adm. George Lennox. Educated at Rugby and Balliol College, Oxford. Was a Major in the Scottish Borderers Militia, and Honorary Inspector of Musketry for Volunteers. A Magistrate for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. Patron of one living. A moderate Conservative who gave general support to the Conservative Party.

**Wortley, James Alexander Stuart** (1805–1881)

Held offices: Judge Advocate General 1846, Solicitor-General (England and Wales) 1856–1857

Service: Halifax 1835–1837, Bute 1842–1859

Twysden Building, Temple, London. 3 Carlton Gardens, London. The Athenaeum, Carlton and Travellers' Clubs.<sup>98</sup> Third son of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Wharncliffe, whose estates comprised 33,449 acres, valued at £50,823 in 1883. Married Jane, only daughter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Wenlock.<sup>99</sup> Educated at Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1826, M.A. in 1831. Called to the Bar by the Inner Temple, 1831, joined the Northern Circuit, became a Queen's Counsel, 1841. Was the Recorder of London, 1850–1856. A Deputy-Lieutenant of London and Bute. Severe bouts of depression subsequently curtailed his political career.<sup>100</sup> A Liberal, formerly classed as a Conservative, who voted for inquiry into Maynooth 1853.

<sup>96</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 324.

<sup>97</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 349; Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>98</sup> Thévoz, 'Database'.

<sup>99</sup> Foster, *Members of Parliament*, 329.

<sup>100</sup> G. Le G. Norgate, 'Wortley, James Archibald Stuart-, first Baron Wharncliffe (1776–1845)', *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26731> [accessed 15 Apr. 2015].





## Appendix G

### A Survey of the Scottish Conservative Party, 1832–1868

In a wider British parliamentary context, there is continuing disagreement over the extent to which the Victorian political system at the centre was dominated by aristocratic interests. Recent prosopographical research suggests, however, that whether or not their influence out of doors had declined, aristocratic elements continued to dominate the Commons.<sup>1</sup> It has thus far been assumed that the Scottish Conservative party after 1832 was dominated and defined by landowners and the interests of landownership, and was firmly ensconced within the wider British aristocratic establishment.<sup>2</sup> These assumptions have, however, never been examined on a systematic basis.

This Appendix will assemble and comment upon selected data contained in Appendix F in order to test these assumptions. As will be demonstrated, Scottish Conservative MPs were indeed the most aristocratic section of the UK parliamentary party, with even fairly wealthy sections of the gentry proportionally underrepresented. Moreover, they did possess strong links to the wider British aristocracy. Nevertheless, they also possessed several attributes which set them apart from their colleagues elsewhere in the UK, and ensured that they were intimately associated with everyday society in their own Scottish localities. Most significantly, a hitherto-unsuspected set of connections to a wide variety of commercial and industrial interests are also evident.

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<sup>1</sup> See David F. Krein, 'The Great Landowners in the House of Commons, 1833–85', *Parliamentary History*, 32 (2013), 460–76. This article challenges the assertions of Ellis Wasson, who has suggested that the Reform Acts significantly changed the position of the landed classes in parliament. See Ellis Wasson, *Born to Rule: British Political Elites* (Stroud, 2000); Ellis Wasson, 'The Crisis of the Aristocracy: Parliamentary Reform, the Peerage and the House of Commons 1750–1914', *Parliamentary History*, 13 (1994), 297–311.

<sup>2</sup> The few scholars who have discussed the Scottish Conservatives tend to agree on this point, though they do acknowledge that other peripheral influences did exist. See Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, Chapter 1; Dyer, *Property and Intelligence*, Chapter 6; Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, Chapter 2, Urwin, 'Conservative Party Organisation', 89–111.

Landed Interest*Table 1: Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868 and their relation to landownership*

| <b>Relationship to Land</b>  | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage of MPs</b> |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| Landowners over £1,000 valuation   | 36            | 46.7                     |
| Landowners over £1,000 valuation acquired by purchase                          | 3             | 3.9                      |
| Eldest or eldest surviving sons of landowners with lands over £1,000 valuation | 15            | 19.5                     |
| Younger sons of landowners with lands over £1,000 valuation <sup>1</sup>       | 19            | 24.7                     |
| No relationship to landownership found   | 4             | 5.2                      |

Of the seventy-seven Scottish Conservative MPs in the period, only four (comprising 5.2 per cent) had little or no identifiable relation to landownership. Two of those four, the Smolletts of Dunbartonshire, belonged to a family which had sold long-held family estates at Bonhill. This was done to repay the massive debts incurred by their uncle, Alexander Telfer Smollett.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, those who originally came from other backgrounds also tended to have links to the landowning classes. Primogeniture had long served to create cadet branches of aristocratic families. These branch members moved into areas such as commerce, the armed forces, and the law, but still retained their essentially traditional outlook, and membership (or at least associate membership) of the Scottish elite.<sup>3</sup> Many of those listed as possessing estates were returnees to the landowning fold, such as Archibald Orr-Ewing. His family had previously possessed estates dating from before 1685, but had lost them as punishment for their support of the Monmouth Rebellion against James VII.<sup>4</sup> Orr-Ewing purchased his estates using money acquired in mercantile pursuits.

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<sup>1</sup> Some of these were, however, expected to inherit estates through other familial connections.

<sup>2</sup> D.G. Henry, 'Smollett, Alexander Telfer (c.1764–1799), of Bonhill, Dunbarton', HoP, *Commons 1820–1832*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/smollett-alexander-telfer-1764-1799> [accessed 28 Sep. 2015].

<sup>3</sup> Saunders, *Scottish Democracy*, 27.

<sup>4</sup> Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of Great Britain and Ireland*, 2 vols (London, 1879), ii. 1214.

*Table 2: Landholdings of landowning Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868*

| <b>Annual Income</b>              | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage of Total Landholding MPs</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Landowners under £1,000 valuation | 0             | 0  |
| Landowners over £1,000 valuation  | 11            | 28.2                                       |
| Landowners over £5,000 valuation  | 13            | 33.3                                       |
| Landowners over £10,000 valuation | 15            | 38.5                                       |

The unique pattern of landownership in Scotland also influenced the extent of landowner dominance of the party. The average extent of estates in terms of acreage was much higher than in other parts of the UK, which is unsurprising given the existence of enormous but largely unproductive Highland holdings.<sup>1</sup> These could range from the immense size and wealth of the lowland Buccleuch domains, comprising 460,108 acres and valued at £217,163 in 1883, to vast but unprofitable holdings like those of The Chisholm, making up 113,256 acres but valued at a mere £8,858. Of all the landowning MPs, 38.5 per cent held profitable estates worth over £10,000 per year, and if those with holdings worth over £5,000 are taken into account, then over seventy per cent can be labelled very wealthy landowners. The average value of these holdings was also much higher than in other parts of the UK; even in the landlord-dominated Irish Conservative party, 10.9 per cent of MPs' estates were valued at under £1,000, whereas no small landowners whatsoever can be found among the Scottish cohort.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the similarly aristocratic Welsh Conservative party had a greater proportion of members with no connection to the titled aristocracy.<sup>3</sup>

The Scottish and Irish Liberal parties were also more landlord-dominated than their English counterparts. Of the seventy-one Scottish Liberal MPs who served between 1859 and 1874, forty-three were landowners or the sons of landowners.<sup>4</sup> The Scottish Conservative party was unique in that the minor landholding gentry was entirely unrepresented at the parliamentary level after 1832, as no MPs owning land below a £1,000 valuation could be found. Moreover, while some Scottish Liberal MPs such as James and George Loch were involved in estate management, there were no Land Factors present in the Scottish Conservative cohort.<sup>5</sup> This suggests that, in numerical terms, the party in England was the least dominated by landed interests (in numerical terms at least), and that Scotland was the most aristocratically dominated section of the Conservative party.

<sup>1</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London, 1996), 59.

<sup>2</sup> Shields, *Irish Conservative Party*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Cragoe, *National Identity in Wales*, 244, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Vincent, *Liberal Party*, 48.

<sup>5</sup> Millar, 'Liberal party in Scotland', 28, 281.

Outside Occupations*Table 3: Occupations of Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868, in addition to (or other than) a landowning capacity<sup>1</sup>*

| Occupation                                       | Number | Percentage of MPs |
|--|--------|-------------------|
| Military   | 20     | 26                |
| Lawyer (Scottish)                                | 12     | 15.6              |
| Lawyer (English)                                 | 3      | 3.9               |
| Imperial   | 8      | 10.4              |
| Diplomatic                                       | 2      | 2.6               |
| Commercial/Business<br>(including directorships) | 9      | 11.7              |

Aristocrats also often combined estate management with other professional pursuits. The most common occupation of Scottish Conservative MPs outside of, or in addition to, landowning, was military service. One MP, James Hunter Blair, was killed in the Crimean War at the Battle of Inkerman. This was not unique to Scotland; nine Irish Conservative MPs fought in the Crimean War, with one of their number also killed at the Battle of Inkerman.<sup>2</sup> This military tendency crossed party lines, as a significant proportion of Scottish Liberal MPs who served between 1859 and 1874 were also connected to the military.<sup>3</sup> The second most common occupation among Scottish Conservative MPs was the legal profession. The training of twelve MPs in Scots law is significant, as it indicates that not all Conservatives conformed to the stereotype of the aristocratic part-time gentleman MP. Rather, several the cohort received a thorough and professional training in legal matters, giving them an advantage in dealing with Scottish legislative affairs at Westminster. Moreover, as the Scottish legal establishment was one of the principal separate institutions preserved by the Union of 1707, this also served to distinguish them from their English colleagues in the House. Of the seventy-seven Scottish Conservative MPs, three were trained in English law, including Charles Dalrymple and Francis Scott. This is a strong indication that many MPs were also firmly integrated into English and British professional worlds.

Scottish Conservative MPs were also integrated into the wider imperial and international networks which lay beyond their constituency borders. Many MPs made their fortunes in the East India Company, including James Balfour and Patrick Smollett. Indeed, Lord Dalhousie served as Indian Viceroy after losing his Scottish seat. Military and imperial pursuits could overlap; both John Baillie and William Lockhart served in the Bengal Army. Outside of the Empire, members such as Donald Cameron of Lochiel and Lord Henry Scott were sent to far-flung diplomatic postings, including places such as China, Sweden, Germany and Russia. The Liberal party was not the exclusive champion of commercial interests; Scottish Conservative MPs and candidates were also heavily involved in the commercial

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<sup>1</sup> Some occupations pertain to multiple categories (e.g. an officer in the Bengal Army is both a military and an imperial occupation), and are included as such.

<sup>2</sup> Shields, *Irish Conservative Party*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Vincent, *Liberal Party*, 48.

affairs of Victorian Britain.<sup>4</sup> Many MPs, including Peter Blackburn and Henry Home Drummond, served as directors of commercial and financial concerns. Blackburn's connection to railway companies is an example of the growth of the railway interest in parliament more generally.<sup>5</sup> Duncan McNeill was particularly prolific, serving as a director of many firms. Commercial and industrial connections also highlight that, in many cases, landowning was not the principal financial base of many Scottish Conservatives. William Forbes, MP for Stirlingshire from 1835 to 1837, purchased additional lands to add to the estates inherited from his father, a self-made merchant who had bought them before 1832. In addition to commercial connections, the Conservative party also had links to the rapidly expanding industrial sector through the Bairds of Gartsherrie – both William and James Baird served as MPs for the Falkirk Burgh District. By the 1840s, their pig-iron business accounted for seventeen per cent of all national production, making them almost £270,000 in profit between 1833 and 1840.<sup>6</sup> William and James Baird also held five chairmanships of companies, and directorships of twenty-nine railway companies. Many MPs who might have been mistakenly classed as traditionally aristocratic landowners were, in reality, the product of diverse origins.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, even a cursory examination of unsuccessful Scottish Conservative candidates in the burghs illustrates that this type of Conservative was far more numerous than has been assumed. The twice-unsuccessful Conservative candidate in Leith Burghs in 1834 and 1835 was William Aitchison, a local brewer.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Conservatives in the west of Scotland put forward many candidates with little or no connection to the land. In Glasgow alone, James Ewing in the 1835 election was a mercantile entrepreneur, Robert Monteith in the 1837 election was the heir to a textile fortune, and James Campbell in the 1837 and 1841 elections was a successful merchant.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, James Smith, the unsuccessful candidate for nearby Greenock in 1837, made his fortune in the West Indian trade.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, although generally unsuccessful in their efforts, in almost every contested burgh election Conservative candidates attracted more than one-third of the vote.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Scottish MPs discussed in other recent works on this topic tend to be Liberals. See Alex S. Rosser, 'Businessmen in the Parliament of 1852–7: Players or Spectators?', *Parliamentary History*, 32 (2013), 477–505, David W. Gutzke, 'Rhetoric and Reality: The Political Influence of British Brewers, 1832–1914', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), 78–115.

<sup>5</sup> J.A. Thomas, *The House of Commons, 1832–1901: A Study of its Economic and Functional Character* (Cardiff, 1939), 8.

<sup>6</sup> John Butt, 'Capital and enterprise in the Scottish iron industry, 1780–1840', in Butt and Ward (eds), *Scottish Themes*, 73, 78.

<sup>7</sup> A. Slaven and S. Checkland, *Dictionary of Scottish Business Biography, 1860–1960*, 2 vols (Aberdeen, 1990), ii, 301–2. This was also true of some Scottish Liberal MPs, such as James and Alexander Matheson.

<sup>8</sup> Lesley Richmond and Alison Turton (eds), *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records* (Manchester, 1990), 39.

<sup>9</sup> M. Mackay, *Memoir of James Ewing, Esq. of Strathlever* (Glasgow, 1866), 21; Aspinwall, 'Justice and Peace', 58; James Maclehoose, *Memoirs and Portraits of One Hundred Glasgow Men* (Glasgow, 1886), 70. Campbell was also the father of future Liberal Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

<sup>10</sup> Maclehoose, *One Hundred Glasgow Men*, 285.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix A.

## Local Government

*Table 4: Scottish Conservative MPs in Local Government Positions, 1832–1868<sup>1</sup>*

| Office                                | Number | Percentage of MPs |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Lord-Lieutenants                      | 6      | 7.8               |
| Deputy-Lieutenant and Vice-Lieutenant | 32     | 41.5              |
| Sheriff                               | 4      | 5.2               |
| Justice of the Peace and Magistrate   | 6      | 7.8               |
| Local Military/Militia position       | 16     | 20.8              |
| County councillor                     | 1      | 1.3               |

A Scottish gentleman who owned land was not automatically a figure of political importance. Only when land was used as a ‘basis of public activity’, could it confer political influence.<sup>2</sup> The many local offices held by Conservative landed gentlemen are too numerous and varied to fully uncover. However, the most prominent local positions which they held can be identified. The Lord Lieutenancy as an institution was admittedly not of great political importance, being largely peripheral to Scottish governance. After 1830, it constituted a ‘select club’.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, membership of the lieutenancy was an indication of the local influence and connection of MPs. Though many were inactive, Deputy Lieutenants did most of the actual work of the Lieutenancy. The Lieutenancy-controlled Yeomanry was often used to quell disturbances in the 1830s. After 1832, instances of rioting decreased and policing became more effective, but they were still employed up to 1856 in Lanarkshire. Although a peripheral role, the 41.5 per cent of MPs who were Deputy- or Vice-Lieutenants suggests at least a minor role in the maintenance of local order. Similarly, although the power of Justices of the Peace was also on the decline, they still had a marked effect on rural life.<sup>4</sup> JPs mostly limited themselves to enforcing alcohol licensing regulations and violations of poaching laws.<sup>5</sup> However, temperance and the Game Laws were hotly contested political issues in mid-Victorian Scotland. As such, MPs who also served as JPs were intimately connected to both local constituency affairs and national political questions.

Although Sheriffs were minor officials in England, in Scotland it was one of the most important legal offices. The majority of these were Advocates who possessed extensive experience – in the 1840s and 1850s, the average previous experience of appointees was around twenty-five years.<sup>6</sup> As such, MPs who also served as Sheriffs had extensive experience in legal practice and in managing local affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Many of these roles were held concurrently.

<sup>2</sup> Eastwood, ‘Politics of Deference’, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ann Whetstone, *Scottish County Government in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Edinburgh, 1981), 114, 115, 111, 97.

<sup>4</sup> Saunders, *Scottish Democracy*, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Whetstone, *Scottish County Government*, 59.

<sup>6</sup> Whetstone, *Scottish County Government*, x, 14.

### Educational Background and Marriages

*Table 5: Schools attended by Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868*

| School                | Number | Percentage of MPs |
|-----------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Eton                  | 9      | 11.7              |
| Harrow                | 4      | 5.2               |
| Edinburgh High School | 3      | 3.9               |
| Rugby                 | 2      | 2.6               |
| Westminster           | 1      | 1.3               |
| Haileybury College    | 1      | 1.3               |
| Total                 | 20     | 26                |

Although the educational background of only a quarter of the cohort could be traced, the data garnered does allow some limited conclusions to be reached. For one, the percentage of Scottish Conservative MPs who attended one of the ‘great’ public schools is fairly high, with over ten per cent alone having attended Eton. Many MPs thus spent many of their formative years in England.

*Table 6: Universities attended by Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868*

| University                           | Number | Percentage of all MPs |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| University of Edinburgh <sup>1</sup> | 8      | 10.4                  |
| Christ Church, Oxford                | 7      | 9.1                   |
| Trinity College, Cambridge           | 4      | 5.2                   |
| University of Glasgow                | 2      | 2.6                   |
| University of St Andrews             | 2      | 2.6                   |
| University College, Oxford           | 1      | 1.3                   |
| Oriel College, Oxford                | 1      | 1.3                   |
| Balliol College, Oxford              | 1      | 1.3                   |
| University of Gottingen              | 1      | 1.3                   |
| Marischal College, Aberdeen          | 1      | 1.3                   |
| Total                                | 26     | 33.8                  |

A high proportion of MPs also attended Christ Church College, Oxford – then the most aristocratic of Oxbridge colleges.<sup>2</sup> There was, however, a roughly equal split in terms of numbers attending Scottish and English universities. This suggests that, for some, British social integration took place alongside experiences acquired in a distinctive Scottish educational and intellectual milieu.

Similarly, of those marriages which could be traced, forty-eight of the seventy-seven Scottish Conservative MPs married members of the aristocracy, or those who were related to the political elite. These marriages further bound them to a social and political nexus which promoted homogeneity and unity of cultural outlook. The case of William Forbes, who married a daughter of Lord Wemyss, is

<sup>1</sup> Two of these also studied at St Andrews, and are thus counted twice.

<sup>2</sup> Judith Curthoys, *The Cardinal's College: Christ Church, Chapter and Verse* (London, 2012), 8.



also indicative – even those who had purchased their estates and were relatively new additions to the landed elite also frequently married into this group. In an age preceding formal party communication and organisation, the link between political and social life remained strong. Given the importance of political hostesses in nineteenth-century political culture, it seems likely that some of these MPs' wives exerted some influence. English hostesses did not host parties on their Irish estates, but both Scottish and English hostesses regularly held parties in Scotland. This is indicative of the greater extent to which the Scottish aristocracy (and Scotland in general) was integrated into 'British' political culture.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, 171, 154–6, 160.

## Gentlemen's Clubs

Table 7: Club membership among Scottish Conservative MPs elected between 1832 and 1868<sup>1</sup>

| Club                       | Number | Percentage of MPs |
|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Carlton                    | 63     | 81.8              |
| White's                    | 13     | 16.9              |
| Athenaeum                  | 9      | 11.7              |
| Travellers'                | 5      | 6.5               |
| Brooks'                    | 4      | 5.2               |
| Conservative               | 4      | 5.2               |
| Junior Carlton             | 2      | 2.6               |
| New Club, Edinburgh        | 2      | 2.6               |
| United Service Club        | 2      | 2.6               |
| Arthur's                   | 2      | 2.6               |
| Union                      | 2      | 2.6               |
| Oxford and Cambridge       | 2      | 2.6               |
| University                 | 2      | 2.6               |
| St James                   | 2      | 2.6               |
| University Club, Edinburgh | 1      | 1.3               |
| Guards'                    | 1      | 1.3               |
| Coventry                   | 1      | 1.3               |
| Smeaton                    | 1      | 1.3               |
| Junior United Service      | 1      | 1.3               |
| St Stephen's               | 1      | 1.3               |
| National                   | 1      | 1.3               |

The link between party membership and club membership was never closer than in this period, as the Carlton Club, founded in 1832, served as an unofficial party headquarters.<sup>2</sup> The club contained a party bureaucracy, though its apparatus was a quasi-amateur affair.<sup>3</sup> In one instance, the *ad hoc* club committee formed in anticipation of the 1835 election included Frederick Shaw, MP for Dublin University and overseer of Irish party business, and Sir George Clerk, prominent Conservative whip and former member for Edinburgh.<sup>4</sup> The party machinery, amateur though it was, acknowledged and catered to the differing circumstances in different parts of the UK. By 1859, roughly two-thirds of UK Conservative MPs were members of the Carlton Club.

Over three quarters of Scottish MPs whose memberships could be traced were members of the Carlton (81.8 per cent), a very significant proportion. Given that the cohort examined includes MPs from a much broader time range, including those who served long before 1832 and long after 1868, this highlights the consistency of club membership across the period. Club membership also crossed social boundaries, with industrialists like James Baird and traditional landowners

<sup>1</sup> Memberships were often held concurrently.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart, *Foundation of the Conservative Party*, 121.

<sup>3</sup> Hill, *Toryism*, 38.

<sup>4</sup> Salmon, *Electoral Reform*, 44.

sharing membership. The continuity of club memberships across the entire period also demonstrates that the party's Corn Law split was not quite as acrimonious as some have suggested. Peelites and Protectionists retained their club memberships, with the exceptions of two English Peelites, and therefore presumably continued to mix with one another on a social basis.<sup>5</sup>

Among the broad smattering of additional club memberships set out in Table 7, another pattern (or, rather, a lack thereof) is evident: there was no single Scottish-based gentlemen's club in which membership was shared by a significant number of Conservative MPs. This stands in stark contrast to the Irish Conservative party, whose MPs were members of Dublin clubs. A great many Conservative MPs shared membership of the Sackville club in addition to membership of the Kildare Street club, which catered more generally to members of the landed interest.<sup>6</sup> The failure of the Conservative Association of Scotland in 1835 deprived the Scottish party of a potential equivalent. In fact, a viable Scottish Conservative club was not formed in Edinburgh until 1877.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Jones and Erickson, *Peelites*, 221.

<sup>6</sup> Shields, *Irish Conservative Party*, 7.

<sup>7</sup> Crapster, 'Scotland and the Conservative Party', 360.