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The Fatal Land: War, Empire, and the
Highland Soldier in British America,
1756-1783

Volume I

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*Behold my Doom! This feather'd omen,
Portends what dismal times are coming.
Now future scenes before my eyes,
And second-sight forms arise;
I hear a voice that calls away,
And cries, The Whigs will win the Day;
My beck'ning Genius gives command,
And bids us fly the fatal land;
Where, changing name and constitution,
Rebellion turns to Revolution,
While loyalty oppressed in tears,
Stands trembling for his neck and ears.*

- John Trumbull, *MacFingal* (Philadelphia, 1776), Canto III, p. 117.

do m' mhàthair 's do mo bhràthair

na mój ojciec

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and that no part of it has previously been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification, nor has it been published in any form.

10 October 2010

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the experiences and impacts of the deployment of Highland soldiers to North America in the mid to late-eighteenth century. Between 1756 and 1783, Britain sent ten Highland battalions to the North American theatre, where they fought for the duration of both the Seven Years' War and the War of American Independence. The pressures of recruiting, utilizing, and demobilizing these men created powerful new forces in the Scottish Highlands, occurring, and in some cases prefiguring, the region's severe socio-economic problems. The impact of military contributions to the imperial state also had significant implications for Gaelic self-perception and the politics of loyalty and interest. This thesis asserts the importance of imperial contacts in shaping the development of the Scottish Highlands within the British state. Rejecting the narrative of a centrifugal empire based on military subjugation, this thesis argues that Gaels, of all social groups, constructed their own experiences of empire, having tremendous agency in how that relationship was formed. The British Empire was not constructed only through the extension or strengthening of state apparatus in various geographical spaces. It was formed by the decision of local actors to willingly embrace the perceived advantages of empire. Ultimately, the disproportionately large Highland commitment to military service was a largely negative force in the Highlands. This thesis establishes, however, the importance of political and ideological imperatives which drove these decisions, imperatives that were predicated on inter-peripheral contacts with British America. It establishes the extent to which Highland soldiers willingly ensured the development of British imperialism in the late eighteenth century.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
ANOM	Archives nationales d'outre-mer, Paris
BanQ	Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, Québec City
BL	British Library, London
CLIMC	Crown Lands Information Management Centre, Department of Natural Resources, Halifax
CWM	Canadian War Museum, Ottawa
DCA	Dundee City Archives, Dundee
GUL	Glasgow University Library, Glasgow
HCA	Highland Council Archives, Inverness
HL	Huntington Library, San Marino, California
JRL	John Rylands Library, University of Manchester
<i>JSAHR</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research</i>
LAC	Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa
LoC	Library of Congress, Washington DC
NAS	National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh
NCSA	North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
NMS	National Museums of Scotland, War Museum, Edinburgh Castle
NSARM	Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Halifax
PARO	Public Records and Archives, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
<i>SHR</i>	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i>
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
<i>WMQ</i>	<i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i>

NOTES ON THE SOURCES

In the completion of this thesis, I have attempted to remain as close to the eighteenth-century format as is possible and still retain comprehension. The original spelling of quotations, even where they are not standardized, has been left in their original form with corrections only if the meaning requires elaboration. Throughout the text, names such as Macdonald and Macleod have been standardized, but in quotations or cited sources they remain how the author spelled them. Mc and Mac are interchangeable in Gaelic and do not represent the common assumption that Mc is the Irish form. For reasons of authenticity, Gaelic sources are quoted within the text. If a short quotation, it is followed by the English translation in brackets. For longer quotations, the English translation is placed below the Gaelic. While it might have been helpful for bilingual readers to have parallel text, this has not been possible in order to retain the structure of the original Gaelic songs.

The most problematic nomenclature of this thesis consists of the designations of British regiments. Regiments in this period were often known by the name of their colonel, with Highland regiments increasingly known by the localities in which they were raised, ie., 92nd (Duke of) *Gordon Highlanders*, raised in 1793. There were, however, two regiments known as *Fraser's Highlanders*, the 78th Foot (1757-1763) and the 71st Foot (1776-1783), both raised by Simon Fraser of Lovat. Numbers are also problematic, for disbanded regiments lost their designated number in the Establishment. For instance, during the Seven Years' War, the 77th *Montgomery's* Foot was raised and disbanded. A completely new regiment, with no affiliation to the earlier incarnation, was

raised in 1778 as the 77th *Atholl* Foot. I have decided to refer to all regiments by their number, ie. 78th Foot, and, have provided a comprehensive set of appendices with details on the formations and leadership of all the Highland regiments raised in the period to ease comprehension.

Several further pieces of military nomenclature require elaboration. A regiment was an administrative unit consisting of one or more battalions of infantry. Most British regiments consisted of just one battalion, making the terms regiment and battalion largely interchangeable for modern audiences. I have referred to the military formations in this thesis as regiments, except where there existed two or more battalions within that regiment. Battalions are referred to by a number in front of the regimental designation, thus 2/42nd Foot is the second battalion of the 42nd (Royal from 1758) Regiment of Foot, the *Black Watch*. Soldiers' ranks have also been left in their original form. The rank-and-file consisted of the lowest ranks of the army, the men who made up the width and depth of the regiment in the line of battle, the ranks and files. Above them were corporals and sergeants, the non-commissioned officers (NCOs), responsible for most of the daily organization of the rank-and-file. Above them were the junior commissioned officers, the subalterns, access to which was largely the preserve of social or monetary elites. These ranks consisted of the ensigns and lieutenants, the highest of which was the Captain-Lieutenant, a rank not used since the eighteenth century. For ease, I refer to all grades of lieutenants as Lt. Above the Lieutenants were the captains (Cpt.), generally responsible for the administrative leadership of a company of infantry, which at full strength would consist of 100 rank-and-file. There were ten such companies, eight of the line (standard infantry companies) and two flank companies, one each of light infantry

and grenadiers. Above the captains were the majors, responsible for a 'wing' or half of the battalion. Then there was the Lieutenant-Colonel, commonly known as the Commandant, the senior officer in charge of the battalion on campaign. Above him was a full Colonel, who administered the entire regiment, but rarely accompanied them overseas. For example, Simon Fraser of Lovat was colonel of the 71st Foot, consisting of two battalions. He did not serve in America during the War of Independence, however, and the battalions were led by various Lt. Cols. during the course of the war. Of course, these notes should be read as generalizations to make the designations used in this thesis comprehensible. Variations were inevitable. During the War of Independence, for example, the army had a propensity to use composite Grenadier and light infantry battalions drawn from the companies of several regiments. This left the supplying regiment without effective flank companies.

Regiments with numbered designations were described as being 'on the Establishment', meaning they had a place in the army's list of regular regiments. Every Highland regiment which was numbered was part of the establishment, though only the 42nd Foot was a permanent member of the peacetime establishment. In addition, there were numerous non-regular Highland formations raised, most notably the *Royal Highland Emigrants* (1775-1778), who were 'established' to the wartime establishment as the 84th Foot in 1778. Home defence units, militias and Fencible regiments, were not part of the Establishment and could not be sent overseas. Establishment was most significant for the officer class, as it awarded them half-pay, a level of income which they would receive as long as they remained on the Army List. Half-pay officers were required to volunteer their services in the event of a war but in peacetime had no further

commitments. For Highland officers, half-pay was a vital injection of specie into a cash-poor rural economy. Most had no difficulty in volunteering in the event of war and, for many, farming was a stop-gap measure to more lucrative employments within the army. A commission in the Highland regiments was usually gained by recruiting a set number of men, though a commission could also be purchased (see Chapter 1). As newly-raised regiments, rather than permanent regiments of the establishment, Highland officers could rise quickly through the ranks, having no long-term incumbents in the positions above them. The advantages of these 'New Corps' were bitterly decried by the officers of established regiments who, without the credit to purchase, might remain junior officers for well over a decade, or even their entire careers.

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Thoiream taing riutha sin ’nan cànan fhéin a chuidich leis a’chànain a’ Ghàidhealtachd. Tha mo Gàidhlig ás aonais, ach e a’ fàs nas fheàrr. Mu dhéidhinn a’ Ghàidhlig ceart, tha a h-uile creideas aig na daoine seo: aig Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann, chiad Dòmhnall Meek ’s Wilson Mcleòid airson luathsachadh dhomh a’ eisgeach Gàidhlig nuair ’s e lar-cheumnach a bh’ annam. Cuideachd Anja Gunderloch, Joan Macdonald, Ann Paterson, Chrisma Bould, Rona Wilkie, Ailean Turner, Michael Newton, Vincent

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INTRODUCTION

SETTING

On 16 January 1778, two men stood before a small table in the centre of the city of Glasgow. Both named Macdonald, they were in one of the most urbanized cities in Western Europe, the key location for the Atlantic tobacco trade and soon to be a vital node in the industrial revolution; both were there to ensure their own social and material security. They were, however, greatly divided by age, experience, wealth, and social standing. One stood in the deep scarlet coat of a British officer, and a belted tartan plaid, the emblematic uniform of the Highland regiments; by 1778 there were eight such regiments, forming or already deployed across thousands of miles of ocean in what had become a global war for Britain's American empire. The expensive uniform, replete with bearskin cap and gold-embroidered epaulettes, had been purchased at the owner's expense, possibly with money made through his brother's slave plantation, the product of which was refined a few streets away at the nearby Western Sugar House on Candleriggs. The man across the table came from a different world and stood in the dark clothes of an unemployed labourer from near Inverness. One was thirty-five, a veteran of the Seven Years' War in Germany. The other, at twenty-two, had been just five years old when the older man had first put on a redcoat.

The older man leaned over, picked up the quill and, being illiterate, made his mark. He was Alexander Macdonald and he was the fifth man that day to place his mark on the attestation sheet for the newly-formed 76th Regiment of Foot. The officer in front of him was twenty-two year old Lieutenant Allan Macdonald. Over the next three weeks,

five more veterans would enlist, all much older than their officer. Many of these men would serve three and a half years in the army, during which time they would fight two major battles. In 1779, they would turn on their officers for the alleged breaking of promises made to them on that day in Glasgow. In 1781, they would endure the humiliating surrender at Yorktown, where members of the regiment, some with tears in their eyes, threw their muskets to the ground with such force that the stocks split.

In Allan Macdonald's possession that day was the long, triangular pennant that would accompany his platoon to North America. It bore the emblem of Clan Donald, reflecting the familial identities which stood at the heart of conceptions of loyalty and duty in the eighteenth-century world. It had been carried in the Jacobite rebellion thirty-two years before, and, like many Jacobite flags, used images of the thistle, one in each corner of the central motif, to underwrite the anti-Union agenda underpinning the dynastic and religious struggle of Jacobitism. Allan's Catholic father, Donald Macdonald, had supported Charles Edward Stuart's attempt to place his father James on the throne of Great Britain. Donald had lost his estate on the Outer Hebrides as a result of the defeat of the rebellion in April 1746 and now the family lived in the Lowland weaving town of Paisley. There had been a change, however, made to this particular flag. In the top left corner, one of the thistles had been unstitched. In its place was a carefully reproduced Union flag.¹ A former flag of rebellion was on its way to assert imperial dominion over another constituent part of the British Empire.

¹ NRAS139, f. 14, Allan Macdonald's platoon book, [1778-1782].

I OUTLINE

This thesis offers a major new assessment of the processes that brought Alexander and Allan together in 1778. It assesses the reception of British colonialism in one locality, the Scottish Highlands. De-emphasizing the fitful directing of such processes from the metropolitan centre, it asserts that the empire did not, as countless historians of the region have suggested, enter the Highlands through the barrel of a musket and the ‘punitive civilizing’ of the region that accompanied the collapse of the last Jacobite rebellion in 1746.² It entered through the state’s demands for Highland manpower and, crucially, the embracing of these needs by peripheral actors to advance localized, but far from parochial, agenda. The region’s inclusion into the imperial state required a largely internal rather than external colonization of the Highlands. State patronage was re-directed toward the areas of the Highland economy which were most profitable, in this period the raising of military manpower, which as Andrew Mackillop has brilliantly shown was ‘Gaeldom’s equivalent of Glasgow’s tobacco trade’. A ‘patriotic partnership’ between elites and government was the pre-requisite for the formation of the fiscal-military state, and the building block of Britain’s rise to imperial dominance in the

² For an especially powerful articulation of this argument, though one which does advocate the centrality of pre-1745 interactions, see Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce, and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1996), pp. 211-12; other sources lack Macinnes’s sophistication and use the terms genocide and even final solution with scant regard for historical perspective, see John Sadler, *Scottish Battles* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2010), pp. 270-1; Magnus Magnusson, *Scotland: The Story of a Nation* (London: Harper Collins, 2000), p. 623.

eighteenth century.³ Most critically, however, this thesis goes further, beyond the social and economic arguments for these processes, arguing that the political identity of the Highlands at this critical stage was re-defined within the context of an expanding empire, not within the problematic domestic confines of the nation. Embracing the potential of inter-periphery connections, Highland people constructed distinctly regional perspectives on the region's place within the empire and with North America in particular. Historians have already shown that inter-peripheral links, rather than centrifugal forces, were defining features of the empire in the Atlantic region.⁴ The Highlands, in a regional variant of this, sought advantage from an *a priori* unequal relationship by using the potential of the empire, and benefiting from the new forces it placed on a region. The benefits were political and cultural, collective and individual, and impacted upon almost every facet of Highland society. These forces, not violent repression, made the Scottish Highlands an intrinsic part of the British Empire.

This thesis outlines the processes of regional development in the imperial state within a core/periphery framework. If we are to approach the experience of the Scottish Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth century as meaningfully as possible, the narrative of conquest and colonization, arising from the suppression of Jacobitism,

³ Andrew Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil: Army, empire, and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2001), pp. 190-201, 241.

⁴ John Clive and Bernard Bailyn, 'England's Cultural Provinces: Scotland and America', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 11 (1954): 200-13; *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005); Ned Landsman, 'The Provinces and the Empire: Scotland, The American Colonies and the Development of British Provincial Identity' in *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 258-87; *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600-1800*, ed. Ned Landsman (London: Associated University Presses, 2001), *passim*; Alexander Murdoch, *Scotland and America, c.1600-c.1800* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), *passim*.

should not provide the only point of departure. It is of course accurate that regional development was mediated through the institutional and commercial authority of the core, centred on the state and its representative proxies, men such as Archibald Campbell, third Duke of Argyll and Sir Adolphus Oughton.⁵ In any imperial relationship, there is always an element of colonialism, an exploitation of a weaker region's resources and a subsequent re-inscribing of cultural inferiority as a result. This is different, however, from conquest and subjugation, which made the victim entirely subservient; little in the Highland experience describes the latter. We are perhaps, in the post-imperial age, too influenced by notions of Orwellian anti-imperialism, an entirely justified revulsion against the imperial regimes of the twentieth century.⁶ The eighteenth-century empire was a different entity. This is not to revise the deserved reputation of the British state in the eighteenth century as a body politic capable of horrific brutality. It asserts, however, the limited totality of colonialism in the eighteenth century.

The assumption of cultural colonization and suppression has blinded historians to the confidence and agency that was at the centre of Highland interactions with the imperial state. By demanding that the Highlands and the metropolitan centre conform to a relationship of power, there has been a false imagining of the actual social and political boundaries between the two, reduced to the simplistic model of a strong imperial state

⁵ Archibald Campbell was the most prominent Scottish unionist in the first half of the eighteenth century and the hub of Scotland's patronage network, see Alexander Murdoch, *The People Above: Politics and Administration in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980), pp. 46-7; Oughton served as deputy to John Campbell, fifth Duke of Argyll, the Commander-in-Chief of North Britain, until taking over the post in 1778. He also, reputedly, learned Gaelic and defended James Macpherson during the *Ossian* controversy.

⁶ See George Orwell, *Facing Unpleasant Facts: Narrative Essays*, ed. George Packer (London: Harcourt, 2008), pp. 29-37.

versus a colonized periphery. This separation results in the Gael being placed beyond the dominant structure, without the agency to form localized reactions to it or to impact upon the nature of the relationship in any real sense. These interpretations have served only to highlight the continuing attraction of victimhood in the Highland narrative and fundamentally distorted how the region saw itself.

The primary vehicle for imperial integration was the British army, and this thesis reveals the intellectual, cultural, and social history of a region embracing the empire through the medium of military service. As the principal means of Highland contacts with the state and its colonies, the Highland soldier serves as an invaluable subject in understanding the nature of imperial relations. Studying the Highland soldier also offers the opportunity to embrace the clarion call laid out by Bernard Bailyn and P.D. Morgan two decades ago, that empire can only be understood through movements and interactions between groups, with common people and peripheries playing as dynamic a part as the metropolis. It was the marginalized soldier who experienced empire and played an active part in its formation. Indeed, as David Armitage has recently suggested, the notion that the empire could mean more to those who theorized about it, than to the people who actually saw it develop under the most trying circumstances, is grossly misleading.⁷

To understand this imperial dynamic effectively, proper periodization is essential. Prior to 1756, the Highland contribution to the British army had consisted of just one battalion, the 42nd Foot, formed in 1739 from the companies raised in 1725 to address the

⁷ *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and P.D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp. 1-9; David Armitage, unpublished paper delivered to 'Transatlantic Ideas in the American Founding', IASH, Edinburgh, 27 Mar. 2008.

‘Highland problem’ of lawlessness and cattle-thieving. The famous mutiny of the regiment in 1743 and the refusal of the government to deploy it against the Jacobites, through fear of desertions, gave the regiment an ambiguous history prior to the Seven Years’ War. The opening of major hostilities in North America prompted the regiment’s dispatch to that theatre in 1756, followed a year later by two new battalions, the 62nd (later 77th) and 63rd (later 78th) Foot. The processes behind the raising of the Highland battalions from 1756 until the end of the War of American Independence in 1783 are the focus of this study. This twenty-seven year period was one of the most significant in the development of the Scottish Highlands, marking a period of profound social, political, economic, and religious change. The recruitment of Highland regiments was a key factor in some of these changes. There were elements of continuity, but this was a period of imperial departures. Of course, this is not to be read as an entire rejection of structural factors. Contrary to popular assumptions, the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 had been a bitter civil war in the Highlands. Some eighteen Loyalist companies were raised by John Campbell, fourth Earl of Loudoun, during the Jacobite rebellion and the strength of the Loyalist militia on Skye at the end of the rebellion alone was some 600 men.⁸ Engagement with the fiscal-military state and the possibly deliberate overpaying of the loyal companies by local paymasters were well underway in 1746.⁹ The raising of multiple battalions from 1756, however, did create a new dynamic. It is perhaps best to see this periodization as within Stephen Jay Gould’s model of evolutionary theory, that of punctuated equilibrium. Long periods of incremental change can be punctuated at a

⁸ HL, LO11564, Subsistence accounts, May 1746; HL, LO11562, Subsistence accounts, Jun. 1746.

⁹ HL, LO11573, Subsistence accounts, n.d. [1746].

tipping point, where the moment of inflection becomes a moment of genuine and definable change. To call this revolutionary in the Highland context would be inaccurate, but it is clear that a long history of government centralization, integration, state-backed patronage, and social change, dating back at least as far as the reign of James VI and I, was significantly strengthened by the moment of imperial commitment after 1756.¹⁰

II CURRENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

The centrality of the army to the Highland experience is far from being an entirely new claim. The publication of Andrew Mackillop's magisterial *More Fruitful than the Soil: Army, Empire, and the Scottish Highlands* (East Linton, 2000) marked the most brilliant study of the eighteenth-century Highlands to date. Mackillop vigorously attacked traditional notions of the Highland regiment as an extension of the old clan system and stated that for landowning elites, military service was a lucrative diversification of estate economies, only marginally different to other improvements such as sheep farming or kelping. Elites colonized various levels of the fiscal-military state as military officers, extracting benefits that conformed to individual or familial interests, a process mirrored among the lower orders. The poor adeptly used military service as a lever to secure

¹⁰ I would like to thank Clifford Rogers of the United States Military Academy for his suggestion of punctuated equilibrium. For the military and patronage relationship between government and the Highlands, see James Hayes, 'Scottish Officers in the British Army, 1714-63', *SHR*, 37 (1958): 23-33; George K. McGilvary, *East India Patronage and the British State: the Scottish Elite and Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Tauris, 2008), pp. 42-69.

landholding, often creating tensions as families who were willing to provide men for the army were privileged in tenancy agreements over other sub-tenant groups.¹¹ Viewing the Highland military as a social and economic or gendered entity advanced a pattern that had begun in the late 1980s, but accelerated after 2000.¹² Mackillop's book fitted well with a wider contextual historiography that privileged an economic interpretation of Highland history. Due to its function as an efficient antidote to the scourge of romantic history in Scotland, the study of economics became central to many areas of Scottish studies. Indeed, recent concerns have been raised that this revisionism has gone too far and that the Highlands no longer have a political or intellectual history between Culloden and the Crofters' agitation of the 1880s. That these concerns were partly demonstrated through a study of the economic impact of politics on tenant / landlord relations suggest such concerns may be understated.¹³

The socio-economic narrative was, however, largely a domestic story. Imperial commitments were recognized as intrinsic to the growth of the Highland military, but the impact was seen in purely domestic terms. It lacked a focus on what Highland soldiers were actually required to do, allowing the distillation of the Highland military experience within the boundaries of socio-economic normalcy.¹⁴ Highland military service could be

¹¹ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 41-167.

¹² Diane Henderson, *Highland Soldier: a Social Study of the Highland Regiments, 1820-1920* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1989); Stuart Allan and Allan Carswell, *The Thin Red Line: War, Empire, and Visions of Scotland* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 2004); Stana Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury: The Highland Gentry in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (John Donald: Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 90-106; Rosalind Carr, 'The Gentleman and the Soldier: Patriotic Masculinities in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 28 (2008): 102-21.

¹³ Andrew Mackillop, 'The Political Culture of the Scottish Highlands from Culloden to Waterloo', *Historical Journal*, 46 (2003): 511-32.

¹⁴ Andrew Mackillop, 'For King, Country, and Regiment?: Motive and Identity in Highland Soldiering, 1746-1815' in *Fighting for Identity: Scottish Military Experience, c.1550-1900*, ed. Steve Murdoch and Andrew Mackillop (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 185-212.

equated to kelping because its domestic context missed the distorting impact of imperial service on identity, interest, psychology, mobility, and political allegiance. Socio-economic revisionism tends to obscure the enormous cultural impact of military service, and divorces the Highland soldier from important political contexts. Portraying military service as a normal pursuit made sense within the context of enlistment in the Highlands; it is hollow when placed alongside the experiences of the Highland soldier in the empire. Furthermore, the socio-economic interpretation has proved seemingly insufficient in overturning traditional interpretations, which remain surprisingly resilient. The idea of the regiments as clan levies still holds a particular appeal with publications issued from the National Museums of Scotland even stating that the regiments were ‘raised for the most part as “clan regiments” by the chieftains from their estates’.¹⁵ The two most recent studies of the Highland soldier, one of which claims to be the most complete account of the subject to date, do not cite Mackillop and unapologetically continued to trumpet various shibboleths alongside superficial revisionism.¹⁶

A further problem which has stymied the study of the Highland soldier has been the very success of iconoclastic historiography. Many historians have forcefully addressed the development of ‘Highlandism’: the co-option of the image of the Highland

¹⁵ Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *From Clan to Regiment: Six Hundred Years in the Hebrides, 1400-2000* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2007), p. 1; *Fonn ‘s Duthchas* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 2006), p. 85; for another emphasis on clannish loyalty, see Ronald Sunter, ‘The King’s Men or Glengarry’s?: Discipline in a newly Raised Highland Regiment during the Napoleonic Wars’ in *The Scottish Nation, Identity and History: Essays in Honour of William Ferguson*, ed. Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2007), pp. 71-87.

¹⁶ Stuart Reid, *Wellington’s Highland Warriors: from the Black Watch Mutiny to the Battle of Waterloo* (Barnsley: Frontline Books, 2010), *passim*; Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (London: Constable, 2009), *passim*; see also Hew Strachan, ‘Scotland’s Military Identity’, *SHR*, 85 (2006): 322; Stephen Conway, *War, State, and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), pp. 42, 74.

soldier by Lowland Scots. In the early nineteenth century, Lowland Scots feared that their nation would become no more than an indistinctive cultural protrusion of Englishness, and needed an icon that could represent a distinctively Scottish contribution to empire.¹⁷ They found it in the Highland soldier, not by changing racist attitudes towards him, but changing the meaning of these racist attitudes to fit a new political expedient. The skill with which various historians exposed the invention of the Highlander was welcomed and their sympathy for the Highlands was clearly evident; it had an unforeseen consequence, however. It re-inscribed the place of the Gaels as victims of larger historical forces to which they could offer no reciprocal response. Recent historiography has become a post-modernist Highlandism, the study of the Highlands from an external viewpoint without the Gael being the subject of study.

The meta-narrative of Highland engagement with the British state has been distorted as a result, and on the basis of privileging external sources, the meta-narrative of Highland defeatism has become powerful. The suppression of Jacobitism in 1746 was deeply significant for the Highlands and for the British Isles. Coming in the middle of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), Gaelic Scotland was subjected to occupation; the improving zeal which sought to extirpate the cultural pillars of Highland

¹⁷ See Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands* (London: Macmillan, 1989), *passim*; Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland' in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), 15-41; Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero: The Image of the Highlander, 1745-1830* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1995); J.E. Cookson, 'Napoleonic Wars, Military Scotland and Tory Highlandism in the Early Nineteenth Century', *SHR*, 78 (1999): 60-75; Charles W.J Withers, 'The Historical Creation of the Scottish Highlands' in *The Manufacture of Scottish History*, ed. Ian Donnachie and Christopher Whatley (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1992), pp. 143-56; Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), pp. 247-67. For a recent challenge to the lack of agency among Gaels in Highlandism see Kenneth McNeil, *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands, 1760-1860* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2007), pp. 16-18.

distinctness was as much about strategic security as improvement, though the two were largely inseparable.¹⁸ For this reason, it is hard to escape the assumption that, post-1746, the Scottish Highlands experienced an asymmetric relationship between the region and the imperial state, predicated on conquest, pacification, and subordination. Eric Richards has argued that the Highlands had a semi-colonial relationship with the rest of Britain, and that Gaelic expressions of loyalty grew out of their ‘inferior, indeed conquered status’.¹⁹ Most histories of the region underscore the causative link between imperialism and subordination. Colin Calloway has recently posited that relations between Gaels and Amerindians in the New World owed little to shared cultural experiences, but much to the similar exposure of their tribal societies to colonial powers and capitalist forces.²⁰ The comparison drawn between the two, while highly sophisticated, relies on Anglo-American narratives which conflated the groups on the external assumption of a relationship to the imperial centre. The narrative of a ‘suppressed people’ or the even more inaccurate ‘suppressed Scotland’, occupies the centre ground of other comparative studies. In *Revolutionaries: A New History of the Invention of America* (New York, 2010), Pulitzer prize-winner Jack Rakove argues that the Coercive Acts passed on Massachusetts and the port of Boston in 1774 turned a political controversy into an imperial crisis, for, unlike Ireland or Scotland, American colonists claimed the rights of

¹⁸ For one aspect of the international dimension of Jacobitism see Thomas Kaiser, ‘The Drama of Charles Edward Stuart, Jacobite Propaganda, and French Political Protest, 1745-1750’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30 (1997): 365-81.

¹⁹ Eric Richards, ‘Scotland and the Uses of the Atlantic Empire’ in *Strangers within the Realm*, pp. 95, 107-8; see also Mike Kennedy, ‘Is Leis an Tighearna an talamh agus an Lan’: A Gaelic Settlement History of Prince Edward Island (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1995), pp. 8, 501-2

²⁰ Colin Calloway, *White People, Indians, and Highlanders* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), pp. 10-13.

freeborn Englishmen and were not a defeated or subjugated people.²¹ Of course, it is not to be expected that historians of the early Republic understand the intricacies of Highland politics in the eighteenth century. The assumption of defeat is, however, revealing, and such simplistic models distort not only the comparison, but the subject.

The scope for a positive articulation of Highland identity has been completely absent from the historiography. War has long been recognized as one of the most significant human activities in forging communal cultures and identities. These connections are not confined to modern nationalisms, but inhabited the popular patriotism and identities of early modern Europe. Linda Colley's *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Yale University Press, 1992) established that war, expansion and identity, while always contested, occupied synergistic intellectual ground.²² The widespread engagement of the British public in the imperial expansionism of the fiscal-military state underpinned levels of popular patriotism in the British Atlantic world rarely seen elsewhere in Europe until 1789. Pre-existent chauvinisms were exaggerated by the acquisition of territory, and success against foreign markets bolstered

²¹ Jack Rakove, *Revolutionaries: A New History of the Invention of America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010), pp. 46-7, 70; see also J.G.A. Pocock, 'British History; a plea for a new subject', *Journal of Modern History*, 47 (1975): 617.

²² The literature on war, state-formation, and its impact on culture and identity is exhaustive, but for some of the most effective additions to the historiography in the British context see John Brewer, *Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Routledge, 1989), esp. pp. 221-49; Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), pp. 137-286; T.H. Breen, 'Ideology and Nationalism on the eve of the American Revolution: Revisions once more in need of revising', *Journal of American History*, 84 (1997): 13-39; Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. 85-128; Eliga H. Gould, *The Persistence of Empire: British Political Culture in the Age of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 72-105; Stephen Conway, 'War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles', *English Historical Review*, 116 (2001): 863-93; M. John Cardwell, *Arts and Arms: Literature, Politics, and Patriotism during the Seven Years' War* (Manchester: MUP, 2004), *passim*; Holger Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War, and the Arts in the British World, 1750-1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010), esp. pp. 39-204.

the attractiveness of expansionism. Where this did not constitute a genuine attachment to ‘Britishness’, it is evident that war helped define the culture and society of the archipelago’s peoples during the long eighteenth century. Despite the wealth of literature dedicated to studying the Highland regiments, however, there has been a lack of scholarly analysis of the interaction between war and identity in the Highlands.²³ For a considerable time, historians have analysed military service as a major source of Highland integration into Great Britain, concluding in a polarized fashion that the very formation of armed forces inculcated identity or, conversely, that the regiments lacked the capacity to transmute identity at all. Both have limitations which this thesis will address. The first assumes that service in a major institution of the modern state was a sufficient mark of integration. For Linda Colley, the Highland regiments were the channel through which an excluded region of the archipelago found acceptance, while P.J. Marshall believed that ‘little needs to be added to Colley’s account of the importance of the Seven Years’ War for the integration of the Highlands in particular ... into the British Empire’.²⁴ The second is entirely dismissive of ‘Britishness’.²⁵ It is teleological itself, however, to dismiss cultural changes that did not see evident long-term impacts. Where this thesis adds to an impressive array of scholarship is in the assertion that loyalty to the

²³ Recent accounts have been compelling but follow the conventions of traditional military history, Ian Macpherson McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains: The Highland Regiments in the French and Indian War, 1756-1767*, 2 vols. (New York: Purple Mountain Press, 2006); the notable exception is Steven Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), pp. 264-89.

²⁴ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 103, 120; P.J. Marshall, ‘A Nation Defined by Empire, 1755-1776’ in *Uniting the Kingdom: The Making of British History*, ed. Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 208-22; Richards, ‘Scotland and the Uses of the Atlantic Empire’, pp. 91, 106; see also Duane Meyer, *The Highland Scots of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), p. 131; Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero*, p. 153; T.M. Devine, *Scotland’s Empire* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 305.

²⁵ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 204-33; J.E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation, 1793-1815* (Oxford: OUP, 1997), esp. pp. 3-13; see also Stana Nenadic, ‘The Impact of the Military Profession on Highland Gentry Families, c. 1730-1830’, *SHR*, 85 (2006): 77, 97-8.

British state was accepted, adapted, even created at a local level, rather than being an entirely salient notion which was propagated by certain interested parties.²⁶

It is the ability of Highlanders to embrace or interpret ideas which were seen only as the preserve of freeborn Englishmen that makes this study different. It was recently remarked that ‘The Highland Soldier was unlike any other in the British army ... differences set them apart – inherent national characteristics, background, clan system, even language.’²⁷ This narrative of Highland exceptionalism needs to be challenged.²⁸ Of vital importance, and a major theme running through this work, is that rarely in the medieval, early modern and eighteenth-century literature, is there any suggestion that two cultures, even two distinguishable *nations* could not inhabit the same political entity.²⁹ Such ideas were the invention of later nationalisms. As rejected from the civilized norms of Anglo-Scottish society as the Highlanders may have been, they were part of a British political structure.³⁰ Indeed, the idea of Great Britain, from as early as the late sixteenth century, possessed a distinctly Scottish connotation.³¹ The inaccurate reading of the Highlands as an exceptionalist region within the history of eighteenth-

²⁶ The model here is S.J. Connolly, ‘Varieties of Britishness: Ireland Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian State’ in *Uniting the Kingdom: The Making of British History*, ed. Grant and Stringer, pp. 193-207.

²⁷ Reid, *Wellington’s Highland Warriors*, back cover.

²⁸ There has emerged an inexplicable paradox in the literature where historians can recognize that ‘Gaels themselves ... crossed the Highland line in far greater numbers than their Lowland counterparts’ while simultaneously asserting that ‘the strongest characteristic of the Highlands and Islands, one that virtually guaranteed their distinctiveness, remained their isolation’, see Margaret C. Szasz, *Scottish Highlanders and Native Americans: Indigenous Education in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 2007), pp. 56, 60.

²⁹ Robert Bartlett, ‘Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 31 (2001): 50.

³⁰ For the most explicit anti-Gaelic racialism, see *Ancient Scottish Poems Never Before in Print*, ed. John Pinkerton (London, 1786), I, xxiv-xxxiv; *The State Records of North Carolina*, ed. Walter Clark (Raleigh, NC: M.P. Hale, 1886-1907), X, 714; [Anon.], *The Scotch Butchery* (London, 1775).

³¹ Arthur H. Williamson, ‘Scotland, Antichrist, and the Invention of Great Britain’ in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, ed. John Dwyer, Roger A. Mason, and Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), pp. 34-58.

century Britain is a major theme addressed in this thesis. Viewed in this way, Samuel Johnson's disappointment at not finding an alien world in the region when he travelled there in 1773 seems entirely understandable. This thesis sees the Highland region as a variant within a wider, but surprisingly homogenous, framework of transatlantic political discourse.

III BOUNDARIES AND FOCUS

Is the army an appropriate context in which to analyse dramatic changes in the Highland experience? Military recruitment was the largest government intervention in the Highlands between 1746 and the Crofters' War of the 1880s. Military service became central to the whole Highland experience in this period. Between 1756 and 1783, at least twenty-two battalions of regular infantry were raised in the Highlands. A newly-established battalion in the late eighteenth century consisted of forty-two officers and one thousand men. Supernumeraries (brought with the battalion to be distributed as replacements to the army) and replacements brought the figures for each battalion higher still. A very conservative estimate would, therefore, put the number of Highlanders in uniform in this period at 20,000. Not all twenty-two battalions recruited to its full strength and not all the men in Highland battalions came from the Highlands.³² These reductions were, however, more than offset by the vast numbers of Scots (up to fifty-six per cent of one regiment serving in America in 1757), who were enlisted in 'English' and

³² Fifty-nine of the 1060 men in the 77th Foot in 1757 were marked as non-Highlanders, though the numbers of non-Highlanders increased over time as recruitment widened across the British Isles, HL, LO6695, General return, 18 Sept. 1757.

‘Irish’ regiments.³³ The population of the Highlands in 1778 was estimated by John Walker as 327,904, of which one quarter would have been eligible males of military age. This figure increased by three per cent per annum as boys reached military age. If, as seems likely, the population of the Highlands stood at around 315,000 people in 1757, the total number of males eligible for military service between 1757 and 1783 will have been 169,832. Around one in eight of the male population of the Highlands, therefore, served in the regular army in this period. Stephen Conway has shown that during the War of American Independence, an estimated one in seven or one in eight of the total male population of Britain served in the armed forces. Those figures, however, include naval enlistments (larger than the army by a third), as well as volunteer and militia units, which were more numerous, popular, and less prohibited in England and Ireland, than in Scotland. If we were to compare enlistment in the regular army alone, during the American War of Independence around one in twenty-eight eligible males in the British Isles served.³⁴ The statistical conclusion is a proportional Highland commitment to the regular army of at least three times what was seen elsewhere in the British Isles. By 1783, the Highlands were one of the most heavily recruited localities for the regular army anywhere in Western Europe.

As a measure of the utility of cultural history to the present trend in privileging economics, it was the financial consequences which truly expose the scale of the army’s impact, particularly in comparison to other imperial intrusions into the region. These intrusions can broadly be divided into three categories: judicial, cultural, and economic.

³³ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, p. 318.

³⁴ TNA, SP54/47, ff. 79-82, John Walker to the Earl of Suffolk, 7 Feb. 1778; Stephen Conway, ‘British Mobilization in the War of American Independence’, *Historical Research*, 72 (1999): 65-6.

Of these, the economic impact is the most difficult to quantify, consisting of multifarious ‘improvements’ which were intended to improve the commercial viability of the Highlands and its people. Judicial and cultural intrusions are easier to measure. The post-Culloden Acts of Parliament, particularly the Heritable Jurisdictions (Scotland) Act (20 *Geo. II*, c.43), was designed to alter significantly the way in which the region was governed, removing judicial control of the localities from local landowners and replacing them with qualified and salaried Sheriff-Deputes. While a vital change, finding suitable and committed advocates proved difficult, the combined salary of all Highland Sherriff-Deputes amounted to less than £2,000. In addition, most of the significant re-fashioning of Scottish feudal law in this period came from case law and new precedents, which would presumably have occurred regardless, rather than through parliamentary legislation.³⁵ Also judicial were the confiscation of fourteen Jacobite estates under the Vesting Act (20 *Geo. II*, c.41) and their subsequent annexation by the crown in 1752 for administration by the Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates which began in 1755. This huge effort was directed toward the ‘Purposes of civilizing the Inhabitants upon said Estates ... the promoting amongst them the Protestant Religion, good government, Industry and manufactures, and the Principles of Duty and Loyalty to his Majesty’.³⁶ Its annual rentals, designed to implement this grand scheme, however, was just over £7,000, and many of its schemes collapsed through lack of interest or funding.

³⁵ *The Albemarle Papers; being the correspondence of William Anne, second Earl of Albemarle, commander-in-chief in Scotland*, ed. Charles S. Terry (Aberdeen: New Spalding, 1902), p. 536; Rosalind Mitchison, ‘Patriotism and National Identity in Eighteenth-Century Scotland’ in *Nationality and the Pursuit of National Independence*, ed. T.W. Moody (Belfast: Appletree Press, 1978), p. 85.

³⁶ *Reports on the Annexed Estates, 1755-1769*, ed. Virginia Wills (Edinburgh: HMSO, 1973), p. vi. For the most effective analysis of the demobilization of soldiers on the annexed estates see Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, p. 91.

At the centre of the cultural intrusion was the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge [SSPCK], established in 1709 with the aim of civilizing the Highlands. The teaching of Protestantism was to go hand-in-hand with the teaching of English, there being a presumed link between the Highlands' barbaric culture and her language.³⁷ Historians have tended to emphasize the impact of the Society on the decline of Highland exceptionalism. Charles Withers presented an extremely sophisticated reading of the Anglicization of the Highlands in *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Cultural Region* (London, 1988), but stated, however, that the SSPCK was 'the single most important instrument of Anglicization in the 1700s' which succeeded in 'devaluing Gaelic in the Highland mind'. A linear and simplistic narrative of Lowlanders 'impos[ing] Lowland understandings of culture on the Scottish Highlands' continues to permeate recent writing on the SSPCK, and only helps re-entrench the victim narrative.³⁸ The SSPCK's annual budget for salaries, however, was just £995.13.1, with a total budget not exceeding £2,000 per annum for most of the century.³⁹ Principal donations to the Society from private individuals from 1709-1773 averaged just £326 a year.⁴⁰ In the late nineteenth century, 250,000 people spoke Gaelic (almost as many people as lived in

³⁷ See Charles W.J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Cultural Region* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 15.

³⁸ Szasz, *Scottish Highlanders and Native Americans*, p. 3; Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, pp. 122-36, 405; Clotilde Prunier, *Anti-Catholic Strategies in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004), *passim*.

³⁹ NAS, GD95/1, General Meeting Minutes of the SSPCK, iv, pp. 596-7, 18 Nov. 1756; M.G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement: a Study of Eighteenth Century Puritanism in Action* (Cambridge: CUP, 1938), p. 178; my thanks go to Rusty Roberson for his assistance with this reference.

⁴⁰ A. Murray and J. Cochrane, *An Account of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, from its Commencement in 1709* (Edinburgh, 1774), pp. 63-6; NAS, GD95/11, f. 2, Society reports, [1732-1794].

the Highlands), with as many as one in five speaking no other language.⁴¹ Certain conditions may have been set in the eighteenth century, but we must not overemphasize, in the interests of a single narrative of declension, the cultural colonialism of the post-Culloden period.

The cost of raising and maintaining the Highland regiments, money which was often directed, perhaps co-opted, from the fiscal-military state into the hands of local actors was proportionally astronomical. For the year 1776, the Treasury estimated that the cost of paying, let alone equipping and training, the proposed 2,000 men of 71st Foot would be over £112 per day, or an annual figure of £40,880; add the regulation £3 bounty which was delivered to each recruit upon enlistment, the pay for the 71st Foot in its first year cost the government over £47,400.⁴² Half-pay to demobilized officers added to the specie being directed toward the region. In 1765, there were some 274 Highland half-pay officers, whose estimated combined income, given their likely ranks if they were proportional to the distribution of ranks in a standard regiment, would have amounted to around £11,877 per annum.⁴³ Even after raising a new regiment, the costs of deploying it were tremendous. The cost of maintaining no more than 6,000 troops in North America in 1771-72, for example, was £377,468.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Charles W.J. Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland, 1698-1981: The Geographical History of a Language* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984), p. vii.

⁴² TNA, T1/514, ff. 127-36, 151-4, 155-60; TNA, T1/515, ff. 25, 28, 127; TNA, T1/519, f. 50, Treasury estimates, [1775-1776]; these treasury estimates correspond very closely with the War Office's own estimates.

⁴³ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, p. 177; TNA, WO24/326 & 327, Establishment Papers for the 77th and 78th Foot, Jan. 1757.

⁴⁴ Peter D. G. Thomas, 'The Cost of the British Army in North America, 1763-1775', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 45(1988): 514.

Of course, this was not a regional subsidy. When deployed, much of this money was not remitted back into the local economy, though there were enough cases of this to suggest a trend.⁴⁵ In addition, as will be argued throughout, the Highland regiments did not simply mark the relationship of a periphery with the metropolitan centre; they were partly defined by the relationships within the region. Much of the money which was paid to enlisted soldiers as increasingly inflated bounties came directly from the officer elite, transferring specie within a cash-poor economy, rather than having it injected from external sources. Average bounties in two companies of the 71st Foot in 1776 were around £4.3.0 per man, which if we subtract the £3 allotted by government means Highland elites were transferring £1,150 per battalion to the lower orders within the Highland economy; it is true, however, that the credit networks on which Highland elites drew often originated in the financial urban centres of the south.⁴⁶ Military service, the most obvious example of the Highlands' involvement in the imperial project, helped bankrupt many elites while also eroding existing patterns of land tenure, making eviction and clearance more likely.⁴⁷ These figures serve to demonstrate, however, the importance of an institution often overlooked as a significant cultural actor in the eighteenth century.

What does this study understand as the Highland region? There are two means of defining the Highlands, broadly understood as the explicit and the implicit. The explicit consists of the geographical boundaries of the Highland region. While there is a

⁴⁵ See Chapter 3.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 1.

⁴⁷ Nenadic, 'The Impact of the Military Profession on Highland Gentry Families': 93; NAS, GD170/1063/1, f. 1, Major Alexander Campbell to Campbell of Glenure, 17 Mar. 1763.

geological fault line between the north Precambrian and southern Palaeozoic sedimentary rocks, the most obvious geographical difference is the variation in height and climate between Highland and Lowland.⁴⁸ Compared with the rest of Scotland, the Highlands lack the quality of soil, the fair climate, and the natural resources of the south, and large areas of the region are either too high or too wet for arable farming. The fertile green fields of Moray, Nairn, and Aberdeen-shire, as well as the coastal plains of Caithness, have generally been considered less ‘Highland’ than the rest of the region. The implicit form, which is considered of primary importance here, must be more situated in eighteenth-century understandings of customs and manners. The cultural boundaries of the Highland line largely derived from Lowland and English commentators, from John of Fordun through James Wolfe and largely rested on the foundation of perceived Highland savagery. That said, this ill will should not be interpreted as part of a single narrative, for all had particular contexts in which their opinions were formulated. For this reason, this thesis rejects the imposed definitions of the region, a meta-narrative that implicitly charts the increase of Lowland values and thus civility into the region, and attempts to understand it only as contemporary Highlanders did. Many Highlanders considered themselves as a distinct race. James Thompson of the 78th Foot and Captain Alexander Macdonald of the 84th Foot both rested their definitions of the Highlander on hardiness and physical toughness. Captain Donald Macdonald of the 78th Foot instead stated that alcohol might be one distinguishing feature: ‘for a Highlander always takes two

⁴⁸ Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, p. 1.

drinks'.⁴⁹ The Gaelic language significantly problematizes these boundaries. In a work published posthumously in 1808, Rev. Dr. John Walker, stated that the Highland region was best defined 'by the boundary of the Gaelic Language'.⁵⁰ Yet, non-Gaelic speakers had few difficulties in the period in defining themselves as 'Highlanders' without possessing the language.⁵¹ Many of those young labourers who were recruited into the Highland regiments came from Nairn and Moray, where according to the *Old Statistical Account* (1791-1799), 'The Gaelic Language has long disappeared'. In Moray, however, an estimated twenty-three per cent of the population in 1765 spoke Gaelic, while in Nairn it was 50.4 per cent.⁵² In the mid-1750s on the forfeited estates of Struan, which owing to its somewhat notorious cattle trade might have been expected to have widespread contact with the English-speaking Lowland markets, of the 1,235 people living on the estate, only 262 spoke English.⁵³ For Gaels, the Highlands were the *Gàidhealtachd*, the limits of Gaelic and its distinctive culture. Gaelic was Highland, but the Highlands were not necessarily Gaelic. As a geographical line, this thesis follows the model of Walker's Gaelic speaking parishes, c.1765-1769, encompassing everything west of a line from Loch Lomond through Crieff, Dunkeld, Blairgowrie, Ballater, Strathbogie, and Nairn, excluding the tip of Cromarty, and six parishes of upper Caithness. But this geographical

⁴⁹ See Chapter 6; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec [BAnQ], P450 (microfilm), James Thompson Journal, 5, pp. 46, 72-3; Alexander MacDonald, *The Letterbook of Captain Alexander MacDonald of the Royal Highland Emigrants, 1775-1779* (New York, 1883), pp. 309-11, 353-62.

⁵⁰ John Walker, *An Economical History of the Hebrides and Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1808) quoted in Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, p. 1; Harold W. Scott, 'John Walker's Lectures in Agriculture (1790) at the University of Edinburgh', *Agricultural History*, 43 (1969): 439-46; Charles W.J. Withers, 'The Rev. Dr. John Walker and the practice of natural history in late eighteenth-century Scotland', *Archives of Natural History*, 18 (1991): 201-20.

⁵¹ See Chapter 3.

⁵² *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, ed. Sir John Sinclair (Edinburgh, 1792-99), VIII, 399; XIV, 264; Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland*, p. 71.

⁵³ *Statistics of the Annexed Estates, 1755-1756* (Edinburgh: HMSO, 1973), pp. 42, 59.

line is far less meaningful than the abstract self-identification of Gaels and non-Gaels alike as Highlanders. And as a distinctive cultural identity was forged in a large part on the martial virtues of the Highland regiments, the regiments themselves serve as the most salient ‘regional’ line within this study. Lt. Colonel John Small of the 84th Foot serves as a paradigm of the methodology behind this approach. Born in Atholl, Small served in the 42nd Foot during the Seven Years’ War and commanded the 2nd Battalion of the *Royal Highland Emigrants* from 1775. He spoke fluent Gaelic and was a tireless advocate of his soldiers’ rights. Small, however, largely operated in an Anglophone world. He spent much of his career in the 21st Foot and was well integrated into British and colonial society, being a personal friend of Thomas Gage and Israel Putnam. To reject Small from our analysis on the grounds of his primary linguistic context would only be to reinforce the ostracism of the Gaelic Highlands.

While the term Highland or Highlands is used as the basic pronoun of this study, there were myriad differences across the region which were important and will be drawn out in the subsequent chapters. Recruiting, for example, was most heavily focused on Argyll, upper Perthshire, and the eastern Highlands. Military service developed from localized contexts. Captain John Macpherson, a middle-ranking member of the *fir-taca* (lit. supporting men, sing. *fear-taca*) class who lived at Ballachroan near Kingussie, had a deserved reputation for violent coercive means of acquiring recruits, but rather than a sign of rigid social hierarchy, Macpherson’s methods derived from looser social controls in places like Badenoch, compared with the Hebrides and west.⁵⁴ As a significant

⁵⁴ The *fir-taca* were the middling ranks of Highland society, tenants of the chief or landowner who subletted to others. By the 1750s, their role as facilitators of the clan’s military power was obsolete, though

adjunct to this, it must also be noted that the eastern and central Highlands were the areas which saw the least growth in population in the second half of the eighteenth century, in contrast to Morvern, Moidart, Knoidart, and Torridon, where increases of at least fifty per cent were seen.⁵⁵ While the exact interactions of population change and military service are beyond the scope of this thesis, it is safe to say that those areas most affected by military service were those going through massive socio-economic disruption. Rivalries between groups in the Highlands over military service, between sub-tenants, between different regiments, and between competing elites were also as important as the outward projection of Highland martial capabilities.

This imperial narrative largely excludes the Indian sub-continent and is less concerned with Europe than with the empire. Numbers are part of the rationale for this. Of the twenty-two battalions raised in this period, ten served in North America. Two served in Germany during the latter stages of the Seven Years' War. Five never left the British Isles and until the end of the Second Anglo-Mysore war in 1784, four battalions served in India. Of greater consequence, the Indian sub-continent never held a place in the popular imagination of the Highlands to the same extent as North America, giving additional meaning to the dispatch of Highland battalions there. A popular perception in the likelihood of death in the East Indies undercut its appeal among the landowning class and the rural poor, and for every Sir Hector Munro, who first returned to the region in

many had turned to various commercial ventures, of which military recruitment and service was one, with some success. My thanks go to David Taylor of the University of the Highlands and Islands for his extremely helpful comments on the Badenoch *fir-taca*.

⁵⁵ Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, p. 186.

1765 much enriched by his service, there were hundreds who died or failed.⁵⁶ A variation on Zipf's Law seems to have operated in this regard. High levels of potential taxation, surplus native populations and a belief in the innate suitability of Indians as cultivators of the soil also meant that there was little support for land settlement in India.⁵⁷ Without land, India could not provide long-term, respectable, and safe satisfaction of personal interest. Worryingly for eighteenth-century Britons, it served the political nation with ambitious and corrupt men addicted to oriental luxuries and despotic tendencies. These concerns were integral to the formation of empire and are part of this narrative, but they are less important in direct and physical terms in relation to the Highlands before 1783.

This thesis is an explicit assertion of the force of imperial contacts in fundamentally altering political and social relationships within the Highlands. It should not, however, be considered dogmatic in its privileging of imperial contacts; this thesis shares with recent historiography a regard for how important Europe and European concepts remained to the early British Empire. A number of prominent works, each with their own exceptional contributions, have forced historians to reconsider the geo-strategic framework in which Hanoverian Britain operated.⁵⁸ No longer can we see empire as the

⁵⁶ Andrew Mackillop, 'The Highlands and the returning nabob: Sir Hector Munro of Novar, 1760-1807' in *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000*, ed. Marjory Harper (Manchester: MUP, 2005), p. 241.

⁵⁷ P.J. Marshall, 'Empire and Opportunity in Britain, 1763-75: The Prothero Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Ser., 5 (1995): 113.

⁵⁸ Andrew Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688-1756* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006); Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Nick Harding, *Hanover and the British Empire, 1700-1837* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2007); Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (London: Penguin, 2007); Stephen Conway, 'Continental Connections: Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century', *History*, 90 (2005): 353-74; Marie Peters, 'Early Hanoverian Consciousness: Empire or Europe?', *English Historical Review*, 112 (2007): 632-68.

dominant interest in eighteenth-century British foreign policy. A cursory review of the personal letters, newspapers, and Gaelic texts of the period, which provides much of the source material for this thesis, demonstrates that Highland elites still looked to Europe. In one Gaelic poem, for example, it was reported that ‘Bithidh Breatuinn ’s Erinn ’s Eorp gu leir, Geur amhrac Ghàoidhl Albnach [Britain and Ireland and all of Europe will be observing the Gael]’ when they went to fight in America. News from Europe was much sought after and available in the Highlands.⁵⁹ Where this thesis draws a distinguishing line is that much of this recent scholarship concerns the pre-Seven Years’ War period, that is, before territorial expansion in 1763 determined a more dualistic, if far from discrete, divide between Europe and empire. Even as early as the Glorious Revolution, as Steve Pincus has shown, Englishmen were investing in the empire and the Glorious Revolution was both a consequence of and driving-force behind Britain’s changing relationship with her overseas possessions.⁶⁰ This thesis is the exploration of the impact of imperial contacts during and after the Seven Years’ War in microcosm, focusing on a small region in which military-driven territorial expansion served an important function.

IV SOURCES

The use of source material in Highland historiography presents a particularly controversial problem. Highland historiography remains an emotive battleground where

⁵⁹ John Gillies, *Sean Dain, agus orain Ghaidhealach; air an tabhairt o dhaoin uaisle, araid an Gaeltachd Alba* (Perth, 1786), p. 117; NAS, GD170/1016, f. 32, John Campbell to John Campbell, 22 Sept. 1759.

⁶⁰ Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), esp. 305-99.

agenda-driven history often co-opts certain evidence to portray a narrative largely misrepresentative of the people such history seeks to commemorate. The other more significant limitation remains the relative dearth of source material. Illiteracy was prevalent in the region in this period and few sources written from the Highland soldier's perspective have emerged. The Library of Congress catalogue contains some ninety-three personal accounts by British participants in the War of American Independence. Only five, however, were written by Highlanders or men from the Highland regiments, none of whom was from the rank-and-file. Compare this with the twenty-five personal narratives by soldiers of the German states which include officers' accounts and entire journals by enlisted men.⁶¹ Personal accounts by enlisted soldiers from the Seven Years' War are equally sparse. One was written by an Irish recruit of the 77th Foot, Robert Kirk. There is also a largely fictionalized account of one veteran, and another written down by the soldier's son, from his father's stories, in 1828. All three are useful, but they hardly constitute a wealth of material.⁶² Kirk's memoir, for example, was seemingly more concerned with describing America and its indigenous population than with the conflict in which he had taken part. From this, however, the utility of the source becomes more evident. Kirk's overriding concern was not conflict but environment, a fascinating insight into eighteenth-century imperatives.

This thesis attempts, where possible, to use the writings of enlisted soldiers. In the absence of direct narrative accounts, and no more than a dozen written letters, this

⁶¹ Johann Conrad Dohla, *Hessian Diary of the American Revolution*, ed. Bruce E. Burgoyne (Norman; Oklahoma University Press, 1990).

⁶² Robert Kirk[wood], *The Memoirs and Adventures of Robert Kirk, Late of the Royal Highland Regiment* (Limerick, 1770); [William Thompson], *Memoirs of the Life and Gallant Exploits of the Old Highlander Sergeant Donald MacLeod* (London, 1791); BAnQ, P450 (microfilm), James Thompson Journal.

thesis relies on the unenviable expedient of interpreting the soldiers' experience from the perspective of their social superiors. Thousands of letters written by Highland-born officers survive in various archives across the Atlantic world. These have served as the principal resource of this work, but they have been used as much as possible to support a bottom-up study. The greatest concentration of letters is in the National Archives of Scotland, but I have tried to explore less-utilized sources. Most interesting are sources from archives in North America, including Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, Provincial Archives and Records Management, Prince Edward Island, and the Huntington Library, San Marino, all previously under-utilized by British historians. I have relied as much as possible on the letters of young and junior officers as they were more intimately connected to their soldiers. Owing to the widespread interest in the Highland regiments, few of these sources have not been investigated in recent memory, but there are notable exceptions which add much to our understanding. The letters of James Maclagan, chaplain of the 42nd Foot, at the Dundee City Archives, for example, part of which were written in Gaelic, are remarkable.

Without consulting various Gaelic sources, for which I had immeasurable help, this thesis would have been much weaker. The rationale for utilizing Gaelic texts is not simply to provide a veneer of bilingual history. Vernacular song was still the main outlet for Gaelic public opinion during this period, the later notion of the writer as an individual writer not appearing fully until the nineteenth century.⁶³ This was no stasis, however, and the change from the poet as sponsored-patron of the chief to mouth-piece of the community was a phenomenal cultural change. As Wilson McLeod has highlighted,

⁶³ Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce, and the House of Stuart*, p. 233.

however, blanket acceptance that the artist represented the community is problematic and, at the very least, requires ‘elaboration and qualification’. The highly-stylized fashion of Gaelic song is, for example, a barrier to a literal understanding of song as a statement of fact.⁶⁴ In analysing how the Highland soldier was interpreted in the region, however, Gaelic texts are essential. These come in the form of printed material published during and after the period. I have largely rejected songs attributed to the period, but published much later, there being the possibility of vast alterations to the original text. The most successful printed books of Gaelic songs, the collections of John Gillies and Donald and Alexander Stewart, both contained a number of poems addressed or attributed to Highland soldiers.⁶⁵ A special mention must go to Michael Newton, whose *We’re Indians sure Enough: The Legacy of the Scottish Highlanders in North America* (Richmond: Saorsa, 2001) feature many of the poems and songs used in this thesis with translations. I returned to the original sources for the completion of this work, but his vastly superior knowledge of the Gaelic world made my own meagre tapping of these resources possible.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Wilson McLeod, ‘Gaelic Poetry as Historical Source: Some Problems and Possibilities,’ in *Ireland (Ulster) Scotland; Concepts, Contexts, Comparisons*, ed. Edna Longley, Eamonn Hughes and Des O’Rawe (Belfast: Cló Ollscoil na Banríona, 2003), pp. 171-3.

⁶⁵ John Gillies, *Sean Dain*; Donald and Alexander Stewart, *Cochruinneacha taoghta de shaothair nam bard Gaelach* (Dun Eidean, 1804).

⁶⁶ For Michael Newton’s impressive appraisal of the Gaelic world, see Michael Newton, *Warriors of the Word: The World of the Scottish Highlanders* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009); Michael Newton, *A Handbook of the Scottish Gaelic World* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

V STRUCTURE

The chapters that follow are an exploration of the experiences and impacts of Highland soldiers in British North America, emphasizing themes that are fundamental to any larger exploration of the army's role as a facilitator of empire. The actions of Highland soldiers made huge inroads on the popular psyche of the Highlands, often at odds with the realities of imperial service. For this reason, the division of this thesis into broad, but linked parts is essential. Volume I focuses on the experiences of Highland soldiers. Chapter 1 examines recruitment and the political discourses that impacted upon the development of raising Highland regiments. Analysis of recruitment helps establish just how invested the region as a whole was in the ideals of eighteenth-century British political economy. Chapter 2 focuses on the experiences of combat. It places particular emphasis on how Highland soldiers behaved in the new world, a subject with a problematic historiography. Chapter 3 investigates social relations in the early Highland regiments, articulating the significant divisions which existed, individualizing the agency of the Highland soldier. Chapter 4 ends Volume I with a discussion of imperial settlement and the intrinsic role played by Highland soldiers in imperial conquest. Volume II focuses on impacts, particularly the use of the imperial environment to serve regional ends. Chapter 5 examines loyalty and personal interest in a transatlantic perspective. Through the availability of American land, land being central to Highland conceptions of place, the chapter investigates an emerging pro-government political establishment in the Highlands, formed in great part due to imperial military service. The thesis concludes with Chapter 6, an analysis of how the Highland soldier impacted upon Gaelic self-perception in ways which utterly dispute the established and popular

narratives of the region. As a whole, the thesis centres military service in the empire as the single most important factor in the development of the Highlands in the late eighteenth century.

VI APPROACH

This is a narrative of centres and peripheries, but one in which the imperial state is partially built in the periphery. Highlanders articulated their place as within the boundaries of an imperial project. James Maclagan, for example, described the Corrieyairack Pass as the highest in the ‘British dominions’, excepting those through the Allegany Mountains.⁶⁷ The empire was not the preserve of intellectual or political elites, but a meaningful concept to the many people who interacted with it. This is not simply decentralizing revisionist history; the Highland / North American relationship had meaningful consequences for how Highlanders engaged with the imperial polity. And there was never any single imposed metropolitan ideal of empire.

Many Highlanders in the late eighteenth century were imperially-situated people. The region’s experiences do not reveal exceptionalism, but a variant on a characteristic of many people in a global age of empires. They did not, as a group, understand the empire through subjugation, but through their own myriad reactions to the emergence of empire. In order to understand the region’s development it must be placed in this imperial, rather than national, context. The converse is equally relevant. In order to understand the structural dynamics of eighteenth-century imperialism (if we can affix *ism*

⁶⁷ DCA, We/6/4, ‘A Tour through the Ebridee’, [1774].

to the underdeveloped theories of British expansion in the period) we must understand, from the Gael's own perspective, the Scottish Highlands.

Volume I: The Experience of Imperial War

CHAPTER 1

A PERFECT PURGATORY: NEGOTIATIONS OF AUTHORITY IN HIGHLAND RECRUITING

INTRODUCTION

The ministerial commitment to send large numbers of Highland soldiers to North America began in the office of Thomas Gore, Commissary General of Musters, in Whitehall on 4 January 1757. On that day, William Pitt had signed his name to a warrant appointing Archibald Montgomery as Colonel of the newly-formed 62nd (later 77th) Foot, the first of two Highland battalions which would follow the 42nd Foot across the Atlantic that year.¹ It was events over 500 miles to the north, however, that truly mattered. In mid-March, John McPhail, a 24-year-old Appin man stood before the local Baillie of the forfeited Locheil estate, and placed a mark next to where his name had been written. After being read the Articles of War, explaining the military discipline he was agreeing to now live by, and having taken an oath of loyalty to George II and the protestant Hanoverian settlement, McPhail was formally enlisted into the 62nd Foot. There may have been worlds of difference between Pitt, Montgomery, and McPhail, but all had now entered into a grand contract. All hoped to gain in some way from the avenues of opportunity presented by the fiscal-military state and Britain's involvement in the Seven Years' War. It would be easy to see these commitments as inequitable, of relative worth, dominated by the social, political and economic hierarchies of the eighteenth-century

¹ The decision to send Highland troops to America in 1775 came on 21 June, at an impromptu meeting of the cabinet held at Lord North's house on Albemarle Street, see *The Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, ed. George Ethan Billias (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), III, 318.

world. The inferiority of McPhail in this world was utterly assured. It would be a mistake, however, to presume that the relative worth of their commitments operated in a vacuum. In recruiting for the army, the interests of thousands of men like McPhail would prove just as important, if less well understood, than those of any of the men who considered themselves to be his superior.²

Hierarchy was an intrinsic part of the Highlands and the Highland regiments. To understand this as a clan-based system of military recruitment, however, seriously misrepresents the social and political systems operating in the Highlands by the late 1750s. Clanship, while it still held an enamouring appeal among Highland elites, had ceased to be a legitimate form of political authority in the region. The Highland elite, particularly in the south and east, were commercial landowners whose primary concern was the financial viability of their ancestral lands, an imperative that relied on the payment of rent in specie.³ It was the perceived financial benefits of recruiting that meant that the needs of the fiscal-military state were thoroughly embraced by regional elites, for whom regiment raising was an attractive form of economic diversification, a rational response to the demands of a commercial society. The middling and upper ranks of Highland society, providing the bulk of the officer class, utilized their dirigiste control over the lives of their tenants to enlist men, simultaneously cementing their own place in

² NAS, GD3/9/11, f. 7, Commission of Archibald Montgomery, 4 Jan. 1757; NAS, GD 170/3431, Attestation of John McPhail, 3 Mar. 1757; Horatio Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II*, ed. John Brooke (Yale: Yale University Press, 1985), II, 69-71; for the advocacy of the top-down approach see Robert Scott Stevenson, 'With swords and plowshares: British and American soldiers in the trans-Allegeny West, 1754-1774 (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Virginia, 1998), p. 162.

³ Leah Leneman, *Living in Atholl: a Social History of the Estates, 1685-1785* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), pp. 1-43; Andrew Mackillop, 'Highland estate change and tenant emigration' in *Eighteenth Century Scotland: New Perspectives*, ed. T.M. Devine and J.R. Young (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1999), pp. 237-58.

the social hierarchy of the Highlands. Metropolitan perceptions that the region's manpower could be quickly and easily mobilized, views fully encouraged by local elites, created a regional peculiarity with the Highlands as the recruiting ground *par excellence*.⁴ In recognition of this, there has emerged an emphasis on coercion as a source of Highland manpower in the historiography. Coercion could be direct, involving the cynical exploitation of state-backed violence to enlist men, or passive, operating as an economic damoclean sword on the rural poor. In an hierarchical society, all relationships were to some degree or another coercive. Some interpretations, however, remain predicated on a more simplistic strict division of authority and marginality. The subordination of the common soldiery to the imperatives of the inequitable world in which they lived has been overemphasized by the vague and ill-defined line between elite and government interest. There was considerable overlap between government, civil administrators, regional elites, and army officers. Justices of the Peace [JPs] were instrumental in enforcing the Press Acts, and many of those responsible for recruiting, and the officers and landlords benefiting from it, were tied to the same interest, or were even the same individuals.⁵

As a result of this assumption of unity, historians have neglected the intimate processes of recruitment, and the relationship between recruitment and wider questions of authority, jurisdiction, civil liberties and the politicization of the Highlands.

⁴ For the encouragement of these views see TNA, WO1/614, f. 295, Lord George Beauclerk to Barrington, 5 Feb. 1760; TNA, T1/520, f. 37, List of Field Officers and Captains of the *Royal Highland Emigrants*, 10 Jul. 1776; TNA, SP54/47, fos. 79-82, Dr. Rev. John Walker to the Earl of Suffolk, 7 Feb. 1778.

⁵ For the emphasis on coercion see John Prebble, *Mutiny: The Highland Regiments in Revolt, 1743-1804* (London: Penguin, 1975), pp. 93-105; Andrew Mackillop, 'Continuity, coercion and myth: the recruitment of highland regiments in the latter eighteenth century', *Scottish Tradition*, 26 (2001): 43-4; Brumwell, *Redcoats*, pp. 273-4; Robert A.A. McGeachy, *Argyll, 1730-1850* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), p. 230; Ian Macpherson McCulloch, *Highlander in the French-Indian War* (Oxford: Osprey, 2008), pp. 13-15.

Highlanders, to a greater degree than other marginal people throughout the British Isles, are seen to have suffered through the interaction of poverty and powerlessness, and a civil government fearful of further Jacobite risings and willing to co-opt them as cannon-fodder for imperial expansion.⁶ Interpretively, there has been a conflation of authority with jurisdiction, combining them in the figure of the Highland landowner. As we shall see, authority and jurisdiction were very distinct concepts.

This chapter will confront the significant political debates in the Highlands over recruiting and the strictures which operated upon would-be recruiters. The region was far from exceptional and the context of recruiting reveals the extent to which the Highlands were already integrated into the wider discourses of the British Atlantic world. To demonstrate this, this chapter draws the dividing line in recruiting between military and civilian interests, rather than between a unified elite operating on a marginalized rural poor. While it is utterly correct to avoid ahistoric constructions of definable ‘military’ and ‘civilian’ spheres in the eighteenth century, to characterize involvement in the fiscal-military state as no more than an extension of economic taxonomy, is to miss the opportunity to confront the significant demands placed on the Highlands by recruitment. The political utility of soldiering created conditions that were ideologically and culturally divisive as well as economically so. The dividing line in this complex

⁶ For the analysis of the overlap between government and local elites in England, see Ian Gilmour, *Riot, Risings and Revolution: Governance and Violence in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Pimlico, 1993), pp. 138-41; for the blurring of interest in landed groups and the fiscal-military state see P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (London: Longman, 1993), *passim*; H.V. Bowen, *Elites, Enterprise and the Making of the British Overseas Empire, 1688-1775* (London: Macmillan, 1996), *passim*; P.K. O’Brien, ‘Inseparable connections: trade, economy, fiscal-state and the expansion of empire, 1688-1815’ in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. II*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: OUP, 2001), pp. 53-77.

phenomenon was advantage and interest rather than wealth or power; it was possible for all social ranks to be arrayed along either side of this more complex axis.

In the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion, traditional hierarchies and power-bases were increasingly antithetical to ministerial plans for the region. This had immense consequences for how recruiting was conducted. Elite engagement as part of a wider pan-British aristocracy reveals that while military service was a disproportionate regional response to the state, the depth of this engagement provoked concern as well as approval. There was no absolute correlation between state interests and local aspirations. It is the role of the poor in recruitment, however, that is most remarkable. The divide between military and civil interests was increased by the willingness of the poor to seek advantage from military service. They were also instrumental and willing actors in facilitating the extension of the military entrepreneurship in the Highlands. While the risk may have been greater, the potential gains relatively limited, the rank-and-file were adept in colonizing the fiscal-military state, at least within the allowed limits of their circumstances.

Most significantly, there was a considerable shift in the negotiation position of various regional actors under the pressures of the fiscal-military state. The change can be charted by the speed with which Highland people adapted to a new imperative and used military service as leverage in social negotiations that would continue long into the nineteenth century. Given the right conditions, therefore, questions of authority and debates over the impact of the fiscal-military state could permeate the lives of some of the most marginal people in the eighteenth-century British Isles and directly contribute to the most localized interactions.

I THE ARMY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Viewed as a linear process, it is perhaps easy to presume that a firm alliance existed between national and local interests over recruiting. As Simon Fraser, colonel of the 78th Foot had argued, '[The] Strength and operation of government, is like the operation of fire, which burns from the centre outwards, rarely from the circumference inwards'.⁷ The interest of government could easily be translated into a given locality through the widespread overlap between landed interest and local administration, and most officials had strong ties to the county and local magnates. All Commissioners of Supply (responsible for collecting land taxes and organizing local government) and JPs (responsible for law and order) were to be local freeholders with land valued at over 400 pound Scots per annum.⁸ The value of the land was decided by those same Commissioners who, in turn, elected the officials from among their own number. In the mid-eighteenth century, approximately three per cent of people paid land tax, ensuring that only a tiny minority could have been appointed as JPs or Commissioners.⁹ If those same individuals had a vested interest in the expansion of recruiting, legal power was easily manipulated to those ends.

⁷ NRAS2696, Vol. 50, f. 25, Simon Fraser to Charles Jenkinson, [n.d.].

⁸ Prior to the Union of 1707, the exchange rate had been £1 sterling to 13 pound Scots, meaning that had this exchange rate held into the 1750s, the required land values for franchise would have been around £30 sterling. This low figure suggests that the exchange rate was slowly coming into line with English rates, rather than being simply an archaic method of expressing contemporary monetary values.

⁹ Robert Boyd, *The Office, Powers, and Jurisdiction of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace and Commissioners of Supply*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1787), *passim*; Rosalind Mitchison, 'Government and the Highlands, 1707-1745' in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement: Essays in Scottish History in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. N.T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), pp. 39-42; Murdoch, *The People Above*, pp. 22-7; Ann E. Whetstone, *Scottish County Government in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1981), p. 6.

An analysis of local conditions, however, questions the degree to which the Highland soldier was the victim of a coherent elite, operating in unison with government. Local government had never been designed to ensure that interested parties could raise men in times of war. None of their functions offered the recruiting officer much in the way of assistance. While attestations had to be made in front of a civil official, their power did not extend much beyond this. Magistrates could send criminals into the army, but the criminal class of recruit only ever accounted for a small minority, and has always been over-represented in stereotypes of the British army.¹⁰ It would also be a mistake to overestimate the effectiveness of local government in carrying out any directives or interests connected with the state. Corruption, rivalries, poor pay, ineptitude, and feeble legal backing ensured that local government worked effectively in the maintenance of the status quo, but did little else. Perhaps more significant, the propertied qualifications for JPs were flagrantly ignored, owing largely to the unwillingness of resident landowners to accept a commission. While still the preserve of elites, the office, therefore, was open to an increasingly wide spectrum.¹¹ Most important, local government was increasingly a means of curbing the power of local elites *vis à vis* the state, not a means of facilitating the expansion of their interest.

This was not an insignificant point given the extent to which the supposed ‘cruel and stupefying [*sic*]’ ‘Tyranny of the Chiefs’ had been blamed for the Jacobite rebellion,

¹⁰ Stephen Conway, ‘The Recruitment of Criminals into the British Army, 1775-81’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 58 (1985): 46-58; Conway, ‘British Mobilization in the War of American Independence’: 69.

¹¹ John Findlay, *All Manner of People: The History of the Justices of the Peace in Scotland* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 2000), p. 70.

prompting the abolition of Heritable Jurisdictions in 1747.¹² The Heritable Jurisdictions (Scotland) Act (20 *Geo. II*, c.43) was considered by Prime Minister Henry Pelham as the most important statute for dealing with the Highland problem, eclipsing statutes such as the Disarming Act (19 *Geo. II*, c.39), the Attainder Act (19 *Geo. II*, c.26), and the Vesting Act (20 *Geo. II*, c.41). The Disarming Act was designed to disarm entirely Scotland north of the Forth and to proscribe Highland dress. The Attainder Act allowed captured Jacobites to be declared guilty of treason without recourse to trial, while the Vesting Act saw the forfeiture of the major Jacobite estates. Prior to the abolition of heritable jurisdictions, landed elites had exercised judicial control over both civil and criminal cases as hereditary local sheriffs. Hereditary jurisdictions had increased in the late seventeenth century and by the eighteenth century two-thirds of Scottish sheriffdoms were operated in this way. It was estimated in 1748 that the value of all heritable civil appointments in Scotland was worth £589,588 to the incumbents.¹³ Such judicial power, it was thought, had created the conditions for chiefs to coerce their clansmen into rebellion against the Hanoverian regime. Abolition permitted the crown to appoint salaried Sheriff-Deputes as their judicial replacements, with eligibility requiring qualifications as an advocate.

There were inherent problems in the new system that had to be overcome. The Inverness jurisdiction, extending toward Lochaber and to Skye, was the area of most

¹² [Anon.], *Remarks on the People and Government of Scotland. Particularly the Highlanders; their original Customs, Manners* (Edinburgh, 1747), pp. 7-10; *The Albemarle Papers*, 'Memorial Concerning the Disaffected Highlands', pp. 305-11; see also [Anon.], *A Second Letter to a Noble Lord Containing A Plan for effectually uniting and sincerely attaching the Highlanders to the British Constitution, and Revolution Settlement* (London, 1748), pp. 2-5, 18, 30; NAS, GD248/654/, f. 1, 'Causes of the Present Disorderly State of the Highlands of Scotland', [n.d.].

¹³ James Budge, *A Genuine List of the Jurisdictions entered in the Court of Sessions in Scotland, in Pursuance of a late Act of Parliament* (London, 1748), p. 24.

concern for the government and required a ‘young man of spirit’ to enforce the laws; but such a qualified individual could not be expected to give up his lucrative practice in Edinburgh, the result being that he would be resident in the Highlands for only four months of the year. In certain localities, the Sheriff-Deputes were, therefore, to be assisted by Sheriff-Substitutes, though they were not required to have legal qualifications until 1818. In addition, the resigning heritable sheriffs were often called upon to recommend the new incumbents, which were accepted in Sutherland and Caithness (areas which had remained loyal in 1745), forging partial continuity with the old system.¹⁴ Local administration still consisted of the most significant landed elite and the significant number of Highland gentry in the legal profession still provided a close link between landed interest and the law. Nevertheless, judicial powers had been professionalized and local monopolies over the legal system weakened. The crown had taken a significant step towards extending its jurisdiction in the region.

What the Act had done was to draw an explicit line in the Highlands between authority and jurisdiction. Authority implied the power, and sometimes the right, to enforce obedience upon other individuals. The authority of Highland elites was entrenched through their control over landownership and was an entirely acceptable means of social governance. Nowhere in elite Georgian society were there any suggestions that hierarchical landownership was not most preferable. This was different from jurisdiction, however. There was far less enthusiasm for Highland elites to possess jurisdiction, to have a role in the administration of justice, the declaring and administering of the law. Elite jurisdiction was vastly reduced, except where they were

¹⁴ *The Albemarle Papers*, pp. 536-42.

qualified advocates and subordinated to the court system and to the constitutional monarch. This suggested two things. First, that this was *prima facie* an extension of the policy of direct rule, subordinating local elites to central government. Second, and partially contradictory but far more significant, local qualified advocates and their staunch Whig patrons were given a more central role in the administration of the region. Far from exposing the region to overwhelming imperial subordination, therefore, the Hereditary Jurisdictions Act recognized the continuing utility of local rule and patronage. The region was not, therefore, a conquered and pacified region, devoid of agency in the construction of the strategic relationship between centre and periphery.

The problematic institution in this process was the army. It quickly became obvious to the military authorities that further subordination of the Highlands was necessary if judicial authority was to be the basis of local administration. A succession of Commanders-in-Chief in Scotland complained about the inability of the military to root out rebelliousness in the face of civil obstinacy. Their perception that all Scots were Jacobites was unquestionable wrong, but they were right that there was a great deal of resistance to military rule in the region. Most British officers shared the belief that the army could act as a civilizing force in the Highlands.¹⁵ They found, however, that this would have to be done against the will of local magistrates, rather than in full cooperation with them. Less than three years before the start of widespread recruiting in the Highlands in the winter of 1756-57, Scotland's Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-General Humphrey Bland, complained that the greatest barrier to the military's

¹⁵ Geoffrey Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p. 7.

subjugation of the Highlands were local civil powers. The army, Bland claimed, could only carry out effective measures to alter the region *if* civil administrators cooperated, ‘but there lies the difficulties we are to struggle with’. According to Bland, in the Inverness region, no JP was willing to assist the army in hunting down Jacobites or prosecuting tenants for violations of the post-Culloden acts of parliament. As such, Bland continued, the military was ‘obliged to act frequently in points not all together as the law directs’. His solution was extra-legal and revealing. There would be more British officers appointed as JPs in the Highland counties, especially Inverness, Lochaber and the Isles. In pursuit of this, Bland attached a list of British officers (no longer extant) he deemed suitable to be made JPs in the aforementioned counties. In effect, the army was to co-opt civil power to achieve its ends.¹⁶ The depth of this desire is difficult to ascertain; the army was an instrument designed principally to defend the state. The aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, however, marked a critical stage in ministerial thinking on the problems of loyalty and civility where there was scope for the army’s application. Bland’s objectives concerned the suppression of Jacobitism, but, if the Highlands were to be changed, then occupation had to do more than raise the loyal and punish the disloyal. It had to ensure that Highlanders were forever freed from slavery and dependence. As such, civic failures to bring prosecutions were the metaphorical tip of the iceberg in a conflict that was seen as a problem of state security being threatened by entrenched localism and judicial foot-dragging.¹⁷ On the estates of the Duke of Argyll, for example, it appears as if the duke continued to exert control over

¹⁶ TNA, SP54/44, f. 67, Bland to the Earl of Holderness, 13 Jun. 1754.

¹⁷ TNA, SP54/44, f. 73, Bland to Lady Margaret Macdonald, 12 Jun. 1754; TNA, SP54/44, f. 18, Bland to Holderness, 13 Apr. 1754; TNA, SP54/44, f. 129, Bland to Holderness, 13 Aug. 1754.

the appointed Sheriff-Depute and was confident that warrants for the sequestering of cattle in lieu of late rents would invariably be issued. Alternatively, there can be little doubt that part of the problem was resistance to the imposition of parliamentary law onto the Scottish legal system, which was the most broadly popular and least divisive issue in eighteenth-century Scottish national identity.¹⁸ When recruitment for the Highland regiments began in earnest, in 1757, these tensions were very much current.

Local elites were equally as mindful as Bland about the uneasy relationship between the army and local politics. The resistance of local elites and magistrates to the military was intended to safeguard their judicial powers, but it would be an error to presume that Whig discourses on rights and liberties were absent from these regional problems. Eighteenth-century British societies believed that the threat of military control was a very real possibility. Not only were standing armies the portent of tyranny, but they denigrated society, made it morally weak and curtailed individual rights. The British army, it was thought, introduced ‘brutal debauchery and real cowardice’, as well as ‘venal haughtiness’.¹⁹ The Highland elite were worldly and cosmopolitan, and if their urban lifestyles were the source of a great deal of criticism in the *Gàidhealtachd*, they identified themselves with the interests of the British landed aristocracy in a wider sense. Dominant themes of what it meant to be a member of the elite in British society were less

¹⁸ *Argyll Estate Instructions: Mull, Morvern, Tiree, 1771-1805*, ed. Eric Cregeen (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1965), pp. 103, 119; Mitchison, ‘Patriotism and National Identity in Eighteenth-Century Scotland’, p. 75.

¹⁹ Josiah Quincy, *Observations on the Act of Parliament Commonly Called the Boston Port-Bill* (Boston, 1774), pp. 32-5; *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, no. 26 (1767), p. 216; see also John Trenchard, *An Argument Shewing, that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government, Etc. By A B C D E F G* (London, 1698); Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Oxford, 1765-9), I, 402-4; Lois G. Shwoerer, ‘No Standing Armies’: *The Anti-army Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

ethnically specific than was once thought, allowing widespread, if not uncritical, identification with the post-1689 constitutional settlement.²⁰ James Grant, who would later serve as an officer in North America, informed his tutor in 1756 of his intention of reading Locke's 'On Civil Government' [*Two Treatises of Government* (London, 1689)]. The reply was encouraging: 'The principles of Locke are the principles of Liberty which no man should be a stranger to ... God almighty never created 9 or 10 million of his creatures with saddles on their backs, and bridals in their mouths, & one man to mount them for no reason or view, but to use them as beasts of burden'. The tutor added that he should also read the 'excellent laws of K[ing] Alfred, the father of English liberty'. The books possessed by Highland elites included works written by John Locke, David Hume, Samuel von Pufendorf, and Sir William Blackstone. According to one Highland officer, Alexander Campbell, who was wounded at Breed's Hill in 1775, the rebellion of the American colonies was the product of an assault on liberty, not by Parliament but by 'desperate men'; this Highlander was not oblivious to the dangers of a populace ceding control of their affairs to a military and government more willing to 'Calculate to oppress their country than protect them'.²¹ As such, many Highland grandees were as hypersensitive to conceptions of liberty as most Anglo-American elites. The third Duke of Argyll, for example, had objected to the Heritable Jurisdictions Act (which robbed him of the hereditary justiciarship of Scotland) on the grounds that decentralized jurisdictions were a check on the crown and therefore a bulwark of liberty. Philip Yorke,

²⁰ Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, pp. 31-96; Murray G.H. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), p. 54.

²¹ NAS, GD248/49/1, f. 62, William Lormier to James Grant, 6 Nov. 1756; JRL, BAG5/3, f. 7, Catalogue of Lord John Murray's books, [1762]; NAS, GD170/1595, f. 13, Alexander Campbell to Alexander Campbell, 20 Feb. 1776.

first Earl of Hardwicke, the head of the Council of Regency and the legal mind behind the Act, countered that, thanks to the Glorious Revolution and the imposed limits on the royal prerogative, liberty was secure in Britain and was most under threat from the conflating of local authority with judicial power.²² In a sense, the Highlands became an ideological battleground for the benefits of British liberty and a case study for the practical application of an imperial hegemony in which liberty was an essential component.

This was not lost on the American revolutionaries of the 1770s, and the British state's treatment of the Highlands was marked out as evidence of the 'wanton acts of cruelty', which were an insightful 'reflection on the national character [of the English].'²³ One American contributor spoke to the fascinating fluidity of ethnic traits in the British Atlantic world when he argued that the Highlands of Scotland were a kinder and more benevolent place than England, the later being inhabited by people of great cruelty.²³ The key reason the post-1746 Highlands saw social engineering on an unprecedented scale was not necessarily fear of the martial capacities of the clansmen, but the misguided need to reorder Highland society, to modernize and improve it. Most critically, the Highland poor had to be removed from dependence and the tyranny of their superiors, so that perceived martial capacities were not misused.

What did this political context mean to the actual process of recruiting?

Adherence to these politically contentious discourses circumscribed the limits of

²² Reed Browning, *Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Court Whigs* (Baton Rouge: University of Louisiana Press, 1982), pp. 172-3.

²³ *New-Hampshire Gazette*, no. 1258 (1780), p. 2; *Continental Journal*, no. 119 (1782), p. 4; see also *Massachusetts Spy*, no. 569 (1782), p. 2; *Boston Evening Post*, no. 23 (1782), p. 2; *New-Jersey Gazette*, no. 144 (1780), p. 1.

arbitrary authority in the Highlands and defined the socially acceptable context of recruiting. The most significant civil role in recruitment was the JP, who was legally charged to assist the military. Historians have noted that the powers enjoyed by JPs in the period were precisely those most likely to bring them into conflict with the common people, and have taken a dismal view of the activities of JPs, particularly in the Highlands.²⁴ In the case of regional recruitment, a more complex picture emerges. With the JPs' primary consideration being the maintenance of order in their locality, it is not to be assumed that this consideration was easily relegated in the interests of recruitment. With late eighteenth-century recruitment being so infamous in its disregard for the welfare of the poor, the potential for recruiting officers to impede this primary role was massive.

This was exemplified in February 1762, when Duncan Campbell of Glenure, the Sheriff-Substitute for Killin in Perthshire, arrested a local man, Peter Ferrol, for a violation of the Disarming Act of 1746. Ferrol had been brought before him for wearing the outlawed 'Highland dress' and in accordance with the law, Glenure forcibly enlisted Ferrol into the army as punishment. The case proved contentious, however, there being some question over whether Ferrol had actually worn tartan or whether Glenure had abused the legal powers of the act as a pretext to recruit for his relatives who held military commissions. The objection came from Archibald Campbell, the presiding JP for Killin. In his objections, Archibald pointed to his very real professional interest as a JP, stating, 'It is my inclination to encourage the Recruiting of His Majesty's forces, & wou'd very willingly give my assistance to any of your friends, for that purpose'. To

²⁴ Whetstone, *Scottish County Government*, pp. 34-9.

Archibald, however, it was entirely unacceptable to ‘make use of the Law to cover Irregularities ... it is not agreeable to Law to seize a person, that wears a Cover of Black and White’. Of course, Archibald’s concern was not simply the upholding of the law, but the prevention of unnecessary criticism of the Campbell family; as he explained, ‘I need not mention to you, that the manner of recruiting in the Country about you has made rather too much noise for some time past’. Even so, his local role as a JP conflicted with Glenure’s methods and Archibald directed that, if Ferrol were not charged with any unlawful behaviour, ‘you will give him his liberty’. Perhaps most significantly, Archibald asserted that the release of Ferrol would actually be beneficial to Duncan ‘as it maybe obliging to him who wishes to be always esteem’d’.²⁵ In effect, if Duncan was to be respected in the area, lawful actions were more effective than the abuse of arbitrary authority. As H.T. Dickinson has observed, while governing elites accepted that active political rights did not extend to all subjects, they agreed that all should enjoy certain civil liberties and protection from potential abuses. By this construction, elites became prisoners of their own ideological rhetoric, unable to use truly arbitrary power to suppress grievances against their policies.²⁶

Cases like this were replicated across the major recruiting areas of the Highlands, Argyll, Perthshire, and the Grant lands of the north-east. While officially required to assist the army, magistrates often feared their occupational identity was being threatened enough to regret that they had done anything to help recruiting officers. They could not ‘shut their eyes and permit his Majesty’s subjects to be treated in [such] a manner’ and

²⁵ NAS, GD170/1076, f. 2, Archibald Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 17 Feb. 1762.

²⁶ H.T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), pp. 5, 174-89.

genuinely feared that war-time conditions would permit the military to dictate to the civil powers in a manner ‘never yet heard of’. Reports that men were being taken and charged by the military powers without recourse to civil law came from several jurisdictions. On the fourth Duke of Gordon’s estates, it had taken the officers of his step-father, Colonel Staats Long Morris, some time to find a compliant local magistrate who would enlist men after widespread coercion had been reported in the recruitment of the 89th Foot in 1759.²⁷ Fears over the military’s methods in the Highlands were taken up in political pamphlets and not everyone condoned direct coercion as an effective method of enlistment.²⁸ There were even cases of prosecutions of soldiers for their coercive practices and the overlap between local administration and landed interest was sometimes employed not to ease recruiting, but to intercede in the lawsuits brought against recruiters. Ewan Cameron, an officer in the 71st Foot, asked his father-in-law, Duncan Campbell of Glenure, to intercede in a case in 1778, when the leader of his recruiting party faced a lawsuit over accusations of coercion in the enlistment of fishermen in Nairn.²⁹ There was little that could be done, however, if, as in one case, soldiers brutally assaulted a local artisan and beat him repeatedly in front of a dozen witnesses. Of this case, which was instigated when a rumour spread that the artisan had been a Jacobite, the official reported that he was ‘sorry those fellows who I’m sure are

²⁷ NAS, GD248/52/1, ff. 96-99, Robert Skene to Sir James Grant, 6 Nov. 1776; Alexander Murdoch, ‘More “reluctant heroes”: new light on military recruiting in north-east Scotland, 1759-1760’, *Northern Scotland*, 6 (1985): 157-68.

²⁸ [Anon.], *Considerations Upon the Different Modes of Finding Recruits for the Army* (London, 1775), p. 24.

²⁹ NAS, GD170/1051, f. 8, Ewan Cameron to Duncan Campbell, 3 Mar. 1778.

designed for the protection and peace of the country, should become Disturbers of it'.³⁰

The extent to which civil officials actively worked with recruiters to a common end is questioned by a review of the origins of Highland recruits to the 78th Foot in 1757. Hugh Rose of Geddes, for example, was the Sheriff-Depute of Ross and Cromarty at the same time as his brother-in-law was recruiting a company for the regiment. Geddes' area of administration, however, produced just fifteen per cent of his brother-in-law's eventual company.³¹

JPs even took a proactive role in the safeguarding of local people who had enlisted in the army. In Perthshire, JPs pressured the army to ensure that the personal effects and back-pay of deceased soldiers was delivered to their relatives. In conjunction with letters written by local ministers, JPs made out certificates for the families of several enlisted men of the 42nd Foot who had died while on active service in America during the Seven Years' War. Such certificates, given to often illiterate siblings, ensured that the army could not avoid its responsibilities towards the families of dead soldiers or, as in the case of Sergeant James Grant, that other claimants would not supersede the rightful claims of his brothers to his effects. When these certificates proved insufficient evidence for a claim, letters from JPs, or their assistants, were sent directly to the man's commanding officer. In the case of Adam Stuart, whose credit had helped Lord John Murray raise a company of the 42nd Foot, it appears as if the wife of deceased soldier had been so much trouble that the motivation for him writing was to give himself a reprieve

³⁰ NAS, GD170/1213/13, f. 2, James Erskine to Duncan Campbell, 1 Jul. 1749; NAS, GD170/1249, f. 3, John Roydon Hughes to Duncan Campbell, [n.d.].

³¹ NAS, GD125/22/16, ff. 9 -17, Letters and reports on recruits, Feb.-Mar. 1757.

from her enquiries.³² The local minister of Glenorchy and two JPs would sign an affidavit in 1789 which requested that a returned veteran and his family were ‘real objects of Charity’. It was through such interventions that money was raised to allow the soldier, James Campbell, to travel to his interview for admission to the Chelsea Hospital in London.³³

The army was aware of mounting criticism it received as the establishment expanded to deal with costly imperial wars. In light of this, the army consciously and repeatedly subordinated itself to civil powers. By 1780, recruiting instructions for the Highland regiments made it clear to officers that local officials had to be informed if recruiting was to take place and that all soldiers were to give ‘due respect to civil magistrates’ during the process. The consequences of illegal measures were indicated, the reputation of the corps being adversely affected and the potential for future recruiting damaged.³⁴ Throughout the British Isles, the army willingly ceded authority in controversial matters to civil officials, and there was a fear in both civil and military circles of being held accountable for popular disturbances. Sir Ralph Abercromby, for example, was forced to resign as the senior officer in Ireland after his orders that troops were not to open fire without the permission of a magistrate were rescinded by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Camden. This removed the army from civilian control and was partly responsible for the military excesses of the following year: 1798. The subordination of

³² BCA, MSS. 259, Minister of Weems to Captain James Murray, [n.d.]; BCA, MSS. 259, JP certificates for Mary Cuming, Jonathan and Peter Grant, and Marion and Andrew Tait, Apr.-Aug. 1763; BCA, MSS. 259, Unknown to Captain James Murray, May 1763.

³³ Stephen Brumwell, ‘Home from the wars: army veterans in mid-Georgian Britain’, *History Today*, 52 (Mar., 2002): 46.

³⁴ BCA, MSS. 345, Recruiting Instructions for 77th Foot, [1782]; NAS, GD170/3457, Charles Gordon to James Campbell, 21 Jul. 1781.

the army to civil officials was generally considered essential to the deployment and use of the British army. The only exception that was made prior to 1783 was in the American colonies and, even then, permission for British officers to act against disturbances without the consent of local magistrates was only granted in March 1775, less than a month before Lexington and Concord. This led to bizarre incidents such as the one Major Alexander Macdonald reported in early 1775; while attempting to enlist Highland emigrants in Nova Scotia to put down any potential rebellion, Macdonald found himself having to defer to, and act under, the direction of a local JP, who was himself, 'as great a rebel as any in New England'.³⁵

Bland did not get his wish, nor did the military overcome civil obstinacy. While a far greater analysis of the role of the military in local government is needed, for the extent to which the Highlands became one of the most heavily recruited places in the western world, no alternative military hierarchy replaced or assumed the power of civil magistrates, and there was no conspicuous effort to co-opt or subordinate civil law to military interests. There was an increasing influence of military men in local government and a number of the Commissioners of Supply for Sutherland and Inverness were half-pay officers. It was not unknown for the Commissioners to apply to the Commander-in-Chief to have quartering parties placed on the estates of landlords who were in arrears until the debt was paid. Of the eighty-three registered freeholders in Elgin in 1786, seventeen held commissions in the army; others, including Sir Hector Munro of Novar, held commissions in the East India Company. The contrast with other provincial towns

³⁵*An Eighteenth Century Secretary at War: The Papers of William Viscount Barrington*, ed. Tony Hayter (London: Bodley Head, 1988), p. 23; MacDonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander MacDonald*, pp. 205-6.

such as Dundee, where in the late 1770s not one of the fourteen town councillors was a military man, is striking.³⁶ The percentage of the electorate that were military officers in the Highlands was 25.8 per cent, outstripping the Lowlands whose corresponding figure was 14.5 per cent. Entire estate economies and land use were also adapted to facilitate military recruiting, but this was because of the material and social benefits to landed elites from such conversions, rather than a concerted ideology of militarism.³⁷

Nevertheless, there is little evidence to suggest that military influence in the local government of the Highlands was sufficient to cancel out civil suspicion of the army or signal the breakdown of the divide between civil and military professionalisms.

II ELITES AND THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

If absolute unity did not exist amongst recruiters and magistrates, it should not be imagined that common status caused Highland elites to unite in the pursuit of acquiring men. Increased military recruitment in the 1750s entered the elite mindset as part of the enlightened notion of ‘improvement’. Highland grandees looked to the enlightened sciences for the tools to fashion the Highlands into a ‘prosperous internal colony’, satisfying to commercial viability, intellectual constructions of modernity, and imperial vitality.³⁸ While military recruitment re-inscribed certain aspects of traditional systems,

³⁶ HCA, CS1/1/1, Commissioners of Supply Minute Books, 1736-1790; DCA, Council Minutes XII, 1779-1793, pp. 1-5; NAS, GD248/521/3, f. 23, Copy roll of freeholders of Elgin, [1786].

³⁷ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, p. 52.

³⁸ Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, ‘The Enlightenment in the Highlands: Natural History and Internal Colonization in the Scottish Enlightenment, 1760-1830’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 2005), p. iv.

namely the advocacy of non-rationalized sub-tenancy (which kept surplus populations on certain estates for recruiting purposes) it sustained this essential trinity. Recruitment, however, conflicted with other population-based policies that were equally important. Some landlords actively discouraged the people on their estates from entering the army, for the simple reason that it was nonsensical for another to benefit from the estate's manpower. Recruiting officers, rather than targeting estates where they might exercise socio-economic control over sub-tenants and cottars, often targeted neighbouring estates. Fearing loss of income and depopulation, there being a recognizable link between service and emigration, some landlords sought to shield their tenants from the army. Alexander Macdougall, the hereditary chief of the clan, advised his tenants and their sons on how best to avoid being 'Persuaded' into the army, suggestions which were replicated in Sutherland. James Grant of Ballindalloch, who was deployed to America when recruiting began in the region during the War of American Independence, reported 'tis to be hoped, [the 71st's] officers will keep clear of any Estate – If I had been at home I should have defended it. Carron [probably Ballindalloch's factor] will do his best'.³⁹ Even with the Press Act in place, the reaction of elites was not always predictable. One officer of the 76th Foot even returned from Ireland to protect his tenants, 'There is for certain a press act to take place & it will be dangerous not to strengthen the tenants against the attacks of others', he wrote.⁴⁰ If military recruitment did fit into the sphere of estate economies, it also had to rival attempts to industrialize the estates of progressive

³⁹*Highland Postbag: The Correspondence of Four MacDougall Chiefs, 1715-1865*, ed. Jane MacDougall (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1984), p. 83; NAS, GD153/7, f. 17, John Fraser to Dugald Gilchrist, 13 Feb. 1794; LoC, M 2267, reel 29, James Grant to John MacKenzie of Delvine, 26 Apr. 1776.

⁴⁰ NAS, GD170/1090, f. 25, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 27 Jan. 1779.

landlords and the ever present demand for hands to work the ground. A mark of just how Highland tenants conceived of themselves as intrinsic to the operation of the estate is found in the petition of John Robertson, a tenant on the estates of the Duchess of Gordon. He appealed to her to secure his release from the army after he had enlisted while drunk.⁴¹

The potential disruption of recruiting parties to the internal workings of non-military orientated estates created a counter-intuitive pattern: the spread of recruitment over vast geographical areas and a want of familiarity between officers and their men. A key, but entirely understudied, figure in this was the recruiting agent. The most expedient solution to the balancing of recruiting interest against tenant safety was the use of vast networks of recruiting agents spread across the British Isles, often family members but also business contacts, merchants, creditors, and sympathetic individuals with no familial relationships. These networks were critical to the successful enlistment of men. Patrick Campbell, a young officer whose father, Duncan Campbell, was an important figure in the northern Argyll elite, utilized a John Rob at Dunblane when he began recruiting in 1775, specifically outlining the details of what bounty he was willing to pay over and above the legal figure of £3 sterling. He later attempted, in recognition of the utility on non-estate recruiting, to secure a commission by having his father intimate to the Duke of Argyll that his son's residence in Ireland meant the he could recruit 'without draining Argyllshire of a man'.⁴² Colin Campbell of the 71st Foot

⁴¹ NAS, GD248/52/3/39, f. 1, Thomas Cornish to Sir James Grant of Grant, 30 Apr. 1776; NAS, GD44/47/1, f. 58, Petition of John Robertson, [1776].

⁴² NAS, GD170/391, f. 1(a), Patrick Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 27 Nov. 1775; NAS, GD170/1090, f. 33, Patrick Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 5 Aug. 1779

employed his cousin, Donald Cameron, to recruit for him. As Cameron was at that time based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a number of men were recruited there, and marched to Edinburgh in early 1776. Twenty others, destined for the 71st Foot, were recruited in London. According to official instructions, while permission was given to recruit anywhere in Britain, Lord Barrington, the Secretary at War, and George III, both disapproved of Highland regiments recruiting in England. Any potential resistance to the recruitment of Englishmen could be bypassed, however: ‘Donald Cameron ought to be wrote to change the place of the Recruits’ birth to the nearest Scots County’.⁴³ Recruitment by agents could spread recruitment patterns over extensive areas (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2).

⁴³ NAS, GD 170/1048, f. 1, Duncan Cameron to Duncan Campbell, 15 Feb. 1778; NAS, GD170/1380, f. 2, John Murray to Duncan Campbell, 2 Feb. 1778; NAS, GD170/1090, f. 16, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 17 Feb. 1778.

Figure 1.1 Origin of Recruits (Approximate) for Major Clephane's Company, 78th Foot, Jan.-Mar. 1757.⁴⁴



⁴⁴ NAS, GD125/22/16, ff. 9 -17, Letters and reports on recruits, Feb.-Mar. 1757; William Roy, *Military Map of Scotland, 1747-1755* [<http://www.nls.uk/maps/roy/index.html>, accessed 17 Nov. 2008].

Figure 1.2 Origin of Recruits (Exact) for Captain Maxwell's and Captain Skelly's Company, 71st Foot, Dec. 1775-Feb. 1776.⁴⁵



⁴⁵ NAS, GD44/47/1 f. 2, Muster roll of Maxwell's and Skelly's company, 14 Jan. 1776; Captain Maxwell was brother-in-law to Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon.

A further advantage to agents was that they could permit recruitment to begin before a given officer was prepared (or legally allowed) to, giving potential officers an advantage over other recruiters. Captain Charles Cathcart's accounts suggest that the majority of his men, ninety-one in total, were recruited for his company of the 77th Foot in 1778 by agents. It is likely, however, that agents did not necessarily provide a good return on recruiting and of the ninety-one men only forty-nine were accepted or did not subsequently desert. In Perth, hired agents for the 77th Foot trawled the streets to seek out the most vulnerable to fill out the regiment. This was in addition to the city council and the town's corporations who procured men by 'parade[ing] the streets at night with flambeaux, offering high bounties, and the freedom of the trade to all who would come forward'.⁴⁶ Details such as these directly contradict the prevailing notion that a natural attachment to particular individuals prompted Highland enlistments. While agents did not undertake a clearly defined role, the reliance upon them led to their semi-professionalized place in regimental recruiting.

What the use of agents suggests is that effective recruiting required the abandoning of the arbitrary methods that were seen to typify social relationships in the Highlands. A high demand for men, coupled with the absence of socio-economic control through the diffusion of recruiting networks, brought monetary interactions to the fore of Highland recruiting. Some potential recruits, particularly those with prior military experience or those whose physical attributes fitted the military ideal, were able to dictate

⁴⁶ BCA, MSS. 341, Charles Cathcart's Recruiting Accounts, [1778]; George Penny, *Traditions of Perth: Containing Sketches of the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants* (Perth, 1836), p. 60; for another example of an entire company being recruited before its officer appeared, see NAS, GD125/22, f. 2(8), James Clephane to John Clephane, 21 Mar. 1757.

terms to recruiters. They demanded large bounties for their military labour and played recruiting parties off against each other. Rival parties complained that some officers ‘ruined’ areas for recruiting by offering massively inflated bounties, making it impossible for less munificent officers to enlist men.⁴⁷ After the defeat at Saratoga in 1777, Lord North’s administration permitted the formation of thirteen new battalions of infantry, altering the system of augmentations to existing regiments which had prevailed in the first three years of the American war. The demands for manpower prompted widespread abuses of the system, of which poorer men took advantage. In 1778, every single one of the 911 men recruited for the 77th Foot cost the recruiter more than the regulated bounty. John Macmillan received twenty-one pounds as a bounty for enlistment, the equivalent of over a year’s pay for the average labourer, but deserted within a week. Another individual, having accepted the bounty money, was rejected as unfit, but still proceeded to enlist in another regiment. With the average rental on a smallholding in the central Highlands at this time standing around ten to twelve pounds, there was a massive economic incentive for enlistment. This holds, particularly, when we consider that these were people of limited economic horizons who were experiencing increased rents and recent famine.⁴⁸ The demand for manpower, however, had created similar problems as early as the 1750s. Recruiters for the Argyll Fencibles in Kintyre in 1759 faced local sub-tenants demanding ‘high premiums ... some ten, some fifteen guineas’ as the condition for enlistment.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ NAS, GD170/1051, f. 6, Ewan Cameron to Duncan Campbell, 21 Feb. 1778.

⁴⁸ TNA, WO17/198, f. 1, Robert Skene’s Inspection of the 77th Foot, Apr. 1778; BCA, MSS. 341, Charles Cathcart’s Recruiting Account, [1778].

⁴⁹ NAS, GD170/1020, f. 1, Margaret Campbell to James Campbell, 2 Dec. 1759.

Reduced to pure economics, military service was not unappealing. The Minister of Ardcloch, a parish in Moray which was predominately Gaelic-speaking, noted in 1792 day-labourers could be satisfied with 6d. per day. Taking inflation into account, it would have assured that the 6d. per day promised by military service in the 1770s, appeared economically sound, particularly when placed alongside the regulation £3 in bounty money.⁵⁰ It is thought that the relative poverty of the Highlands contributed to recruitment, though bounties distributed elsewhere in the Atlantic region do show similar levels of monetary incentives. By 1778, it even appears as if bounties being paid for enlistment in the Continental Army by the Treasury of the State of Pennsylvania or recruiters in Connecticut, for example, were several pounds sterling below the average being offered to Scottish Highlanders. The problems faced by Continental Army recruiters in a monetary-based market of military labour would have been easily recognized by Highland recruiters.⁵¹ In one increasingly criticized narrative thread of the War of American Independence, the Continental Army consisted of patriotic farmers, rustic but blessed with zealous notions of individual rights and liberties, and deeply conscious of the assault on both by the machinations of Parliament and its standing army. It is an error, however, to apply rigid ethnic or regional structures onto what was a remarkably homogenous British Atlantic polity. In terms of mobilization and concepts of military service, the Highlands were similar to Revolutionary America. Highland soldiers commanded a much higher price for their services than the supposedly worldly

⁵⁰ *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, XIX, 151-5.

⁵¹ *State of Accounts of the County Lieutenants During the War of the Revolution, 1777-1789*, ed. William H. Egle, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1896), I, 331; *Correspondence and Journals of Samuel Blachley Webb*, ed. Worthington C. Ford, 2 vols. (New York, 1893), I, 185-86, 188.

and independent soldiers of the Continental Army.⁵² The Highlands were relatively impoverished, but the assumption that the region bred good soldiers exaggerated the value of Highland military labour. This is not to say that all of the rural poor embraced the economic advantages of military service. The reluctance of many Highlanders to enlist in the army is well-known. The very reluctance of the poor to enlist combined to exaggerate the value of Highland military labour.

Contributing to this problematic context was the youth of Highland officers, such as Allan Macdonald, whom we met in the introduction to this thesis. The junior ranks of ensigns and lieutenants were the least experienced of the officer class, and sometimes demonstrated a naivety that was not surprising for that station. When Patrick Campbell received his commission and beating orders in 1775, his first inclination was to send them to his brother, who might be able to recruit for him. It was only in his postscript that he reconsidered; he correctly assumed that he would look ‘mightily foolish’ without them. Analysis of junior officers in the British army suggests that the average length of service from first commissioning for a lieutenant in the 1750s was approximately five years. Owing to the determination of Highland families to provide for their offspring through military service, this fell to approximately two years in the Highland regiments, and in the case of the 2/42nd, raised for service in America in 1758, it was just 1.7 years (see Figure 1.3).

⁵² Charles P. Neimeyer, *America goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), p. xiv; John Ferling, ‘Oh That I Was a Soldier: John Adams and the Anguish of War’, *American Quarterly*, 36 (1984): 258-75.

Figure 1.3 Average years military service from first commissioning, 1757-1777.⁵³

	Lt.-Col.	Major	Captain	Lieutenant
1757 <i>Army average</i>	22	18	15.5	10
1757 <i>77th Foot</i>	16	13	8	2.4
1758 <i>2/42nd Foot</i>	-	-	11.6	1.7
1759 <i>Army average</i>	15	19	14	5
1777 <i>Army average</i>	30	23.5	17	10

Stana Nenadic has demonstrated that the army was looked upon as a cheap, quasi-education for young elites that was not only socially acceptable, but offered a vast range of potential benefits; the pay was stable regardless of performance, it required no prior skills base, it offered networking opportunities, and it enabled sons to live in modestly respectable circumstances. The known average age of an ensign or lieutenant entering the 78th Foot between 1757 and 1763 was twenty-three. Only six were thirty or older and almost half were younger than twenty. Elder officers took on the role of educating men, or boys, who, ‘got no education before [they] left the country’. A Major of the 77th Foot noted that when he took a young ensign into his charge, ‘he really could hardly read or write’, and that at present he would go home as only ‘fit to be a companion for a ploughman’.⁵⁴

⁵³ J.A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (Oxford: OUP, 1981), pp. 108-11; Stevenson, ‘With Swords and Ploughshares’, p. 173.

⁵⁴ NAS GD170/1711, f. 11, Pat Campbell to Sandy Campbell, 7 Dec. 1775; Nenadic, ‘The Impact of the Military Profession on Highland Gentry Families: 78; Marie Fraser, ‘Officers of the Old 78th Regiment of Foot’, *Clan Fraser Society of Canada* (2006) [available at <http://www.clanfraser.ca/78th1.htm>, accessed 5

These young officers were as much part of a coercive system as the rank-and-file. The influence of a family's patriarch on directing a son into the army was an important one.⁵⁵ Once in the army, to achieve rank, potential officers had to acquire a certain number of men to be fully commissioned. A lieutenancy could be made by the enlistment of forty men. Alternatively, after 1766, an ensigncy cost £400, a company as much as £1500. As such, young officers had to use every possible expedient to ensure rank. For this reason, recruiting was detested, particularly if it was done without the support of family or in an uncomfortable environment. Writing from Ireland, Colin Campbell complained that:

its [*sic*] not consistent with Reason that an officer who has been sent to a place against his will Recruiting, will exert himself as he would do otherwise & besides desertion is so common that its dangerous to inlist [*sic*] any person with whom you are not acquainted, or at least with people who knows them.⁵⁶

Campbell eventually decided on the expedient course of selling his recruits to another officer, so that he could take the easier option of buying his commission instead. He later called the system, 'a perfect purgatory'.⁵⁷

A money-orientated recruiting market was also, however, the result of the increased importance of recruitment in a national context. The entire system of recruiting-for-rank in newly established corps was predicated on the ability of local

Nov. 2008]; Captain Wimberely, 'The Bighouse Papers', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, 14 (1904): 34-5.

⁵⁵ NRAS934/514, f. 3, Charles Campbell to father, [n.d.].

⁵⁶ NAS, GD170/1090/6, f. 1, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 6 Apr. 1776.

⁵⁷ NAS, GD170/1090/9, ff. 10-12, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, Jul. 1778.

families to provide men for the forces. Rivalry centred on an elite's potential to recruit *vis à vis* other parties. In the interpretive framework of this rivalry pride was taken in not only the number of men enlisted, but the manner in which they were recruited. The relations of Major James Clephane keenly presented the recruits as 'volunteers'. In highlighting the voluntary nature of enlistments, Clephane's brother-in-law, Sheriff-Depute Hugh Rose of Geddes, contrasted his own benevolent hold over the people with the methods used by other families in order to secure men. Rose congratulated himself on the volunteers, given that, as he claimed, dozens of men were being forcibly taken from their beds at night to fill out companies being raised by the Frasers, Grants, and Munros.⁵⁸ Of course, there was some inconsistency. The Rose family bitterly decried the advantages possessed by Archibald Montgomery's 77th Foot, whose officers allegedly employed coercion to acquire men, over their own patron Simon Fraser.⁵⁹ The practical application of coercion was, therefore, seen as more effective in acquiring men. Significantly, however, it was far less satisfying to familial and intellectual sensibilities.

In this way, Whig recruiters evidenced an ideological zeal in their chosen method of Highland improvement. At the same time rentals were being adapted on some estates to facilitate recruitment, a partial mirror of sixteenth and seventeenth-century practices, Whigs could contrast their own modernity with the arbitrary and coercive strategies of Tories and surreptitious Jacobites. There was an interpretative relationship in Whig circles between arbitrary power and Jacobitism and the very principle of recruiting-for-rank was questioned by those who saw it as a means of preserving the authority of

⁵⁸ NAS, GD125/22, f. 2(6), Hugh Rose to John Clephane, 2 Feb. 1757.

⁵⁹ NAS, GD125/22, f. 2(12), Betty Rose to John Clephane, 9 Mar. 1757.

Highland chieftains over their clans. It was, to such individuals, a violation of the rationale behind the ending of Heritable Jurisdictions. Equally concerning was that regional recruitment removed authority from central government and handed it to the localities; this could only strengthen provincial identity, weakening the ‘National distinction’ that was Britain.⁶⁰

The cumulative effect was that military recruitment did not signal the overwhelming power of state and elites to enforce their will on a reluctant rural poor. Instead, this was an environment where the diffusion of power and interest through various administrative or personal rivalries, and the place of ideological considerations in the process, offered Highland recruits a degree of latitude and scope for the pursuit of their own interests.

III THE RURAL POOR: VICTIMS OR PERPETRATORS?

The same imperatives that drove the elites to support the fiscal-military state, advancement, status, and security, also drove the enlisted soldier. While the benefits were relative, it is clear that many rural poor realized the advantages that could be secured by fastening their own interest to the expansion of the military in the Highlands. It is entirely accurate that the poor and dispossessed were drawn to the army by circumstances, but this was not necessarily because it was their only option and such marginal elements evidenced a keen desire to secure social betterment. This was most apparent among the non-commissioned officers. Muster lists from a huge range of

⁶⁰ [Anon.] *A Letter to the Author of a Pamphlet Entitled Considerations Upon the Different Modes of Finding Recruits for the Army* (London, 1776), pp. 38-9.

Highland regiments show that most recruiting was undertaken by parties led by non-commissioned officers, with only the slightest intervention by the officer class.⁶¹

Enlisted men were brought into recruiting to ensure the highest possible returns for recruitment and intelligence on where to find potential recruits often came from enlisted men themselves.⁶² The actions of recruiting parties mirrored the stereotypes of the British army more generally, being an admixture of legitimate recruiting, persuasion, and direct and indirect coercion. The wording of recruiting instructions went so far as to suggest that while officers could be trusted to conduct themselves in an honourable fashion, the actions of their parties were not so assured.⁶³

A system of incentives was established to promote the zeal of individual soldiers. To augment the 42nd Foot for American service in 1756, Lord John Murray authorized the promotion of enlisted men to non-commissioned roles in order to assist recruiting. The agent of Major James Clephane recommended a nineteen-year-old private, Alexander Bell, to be made a non-commissioned officer for the assistance he gave in recruiting the 78th Foot. Money was offered to any person who brought in recruits, in the case of the 76th Foot in 1776 the offer was one guinea, the equivalent of six weeks pay for a private soldier.⁶⁴ With average bounties rising incessantly from 1775, it was recognized that, ‘the only way to cheapen them [the cost of recruiting] is to pay the Man

⁶¹ TNA, WO4/100, f. 8, Barrington to Richard Rigby, 5 May 1777; PARO, Acc. 2737, f. 2, 84th Foot Returns, [1778].

⁶² NAS, GD170/1090/9, f. 10, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 2 Jul. 1778.

⁶³ BCA, MSS. 345, Recruiting Instructions for the 77th Foot, [1782].

⁶⁴ JRL, BAG5/1, f. 2, Lord John Murray to Duncan Campbell, 24 Jan. 1756; NAS, GD125/16, f. 20, John Strachan to James Clephane, Apr. 1757; NAS, GD 170/3471, Recruiting poster for the 76th Foot issued at Newcastle, [n.d.].

that brings them'.⁶⁵ A party of twelve men under one sergeant successfully enlisted fifty-eight men for the 42nd Foot in Blair Atholl in 1757. While recruiting for the 77th Foot in 1778, a Sergeant Menzies received three cash advances for bounty money in the space of just three weeks, amounting to over £50. With bounties by 1778 as high as £10-£15, the five men he recruited in that time serves to demonstrate that enlisted men could recruit men but with little more success than their officers, if money was absent. Company commanders received an extra subsistence allowance to pay two recruits to assist in recruiting, though such were the abuses of this system that George II ordered it to be withdrawn in 1759 if a company was not kept up to strength.⁶⁶ In this way, soldiers and civilians were brought into a system that unemotionally balanced cost against return. It might be said that the poor were co-opted by self-interested elites with paltry rewards. The returns were far too significant, however, and the zeal of individual people too great for such an interpretation entirely to account for this process. One agent became so distressed with recruiting that he knowingly kept a violent sergeant as his head recruiter so that the men would desert: 'I heartily wish they were fairly off my hands,' he reported. As he explained to his patron, 'my reason for continuing Brown [the sergeant] is, that he is a notorious rascal [*sic*], and the same principle that induced him to be so active in enlisting, will likewise prompt him to persuade some of the fellows to desert.' His distress must have been great because, as he recognized himself, he could get £10 for each recruit by illegally 'selling' them to other recruiters. Things got worse and it transpired that Brown had not even formally enlisted and the agent could not prevail

⁶⁵ NAS, GD170/1090/9, f. 1, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 30 Jan. 1777.

⁶⁶ BCA, Mss. 259, Weekly Returns, n.d.; BCA, Mss. 341, Charles Cathcart Recruiting Accounts, Jan.-May 1778; Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason* (London: Routledge, 1987), p. 68.

upon him to either enlist or return the pay he had been drawing for several months.⁶⁷

Most localities in eighteenth-century Britain had problems with overzealous recruiting sergeants and the Highlands were no different. By the end of the period, the process of paying men who brought in recruits, ‘crimping’, was being abused to such an extent by poorer sections of society that it caused deep concern.⁶⁸

The zeal of enlisted men cannot be entirely reduced to economic motives. As it was for officers, the status of private men began to be reflected in their own assessment of their professionalism and ability. Some pursued recruitment in such a way that demonstrates that it was not simply an economic issue, but a matter of personal honour. In February 1775, Peter Mackenzie, a private soldier in the 42nd Foot, entered a tavern in Strathspey and drank with a local servant, James Smith, before offering him a guinea to enlist in the King’s service. Standard procedure would have been for Smith to appear before the local bailie or JP at Grantown to be attested, but Mackenzie refused to take him before the officials and, instead, demanded with the threat of violence, that Smith accompany him to Nairn to be attested there. Subsequent letters between the local JP and Lieutenant John Grant, Mackenzie’s commanding officer, reveal that the reason had probably been that Mackenzie had no official permission to beat for recruits. Without beating orders, pass or furlough, and with his officer more than twenty miles away, Mackenzie had taken it upon himself to recruit for his regiment. Unwilling to condone

⁶⁷ NAS, GD170/1048, ff. 1-2, Duncan Cameron to Duncan Campbell, 15 Feb. 1778.

⁶⁸ John Burgoyne, *The Dramatic and Poetical Works of Late Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne* (London, 1808), II, ‘The Lord of the Manor’; [Anon.], *Reflections on the Pernicious Custom of Recruiting by Crimps* (London, 1795).

such illegal measures, the local JP took the bounty money and sent Mackenzie back to Nairn until the matter could be settled.

Mackenzie was evidently not satisfied and, a week later, returned with several other enlisted men and again apprehended Smith and demanded that he come to Nairn. This was prevented only when Smith's friends intervened and prevented him being dragged away. The role of John Grant up until this point is not known and it is unclear if he had directed Mackenzie to conduct illicit recruiting. In April, however, he wrote to the JP and demanded that the bounty money given to Smith be returned. This was refused, the JP having already handed it back to Smith and apologized for his treatment. As well as demonstrating the zeal of men like Mackenzie, this episode also supports the claim that civil government refused to allow its powers to be subverted or corrupted by recruiting.

At the end of summer and unable to re-claim the money through civil avenues, Grant ordered Smith to be apprehended as a deserter and, demonstrating a complete lack of judgement, directed Mackenzie and his associates, Corporal Macdonald and Private Watson, to carry out the order. Mackenzie, now a sergeant, presumably a reward for his earlier zeal, found Smith at his master's house and dragged him away. His master went to the JP and again Smith was released. An hour after Smith's release:

A quarrel arose [in Grantown] between the soldiers and some of Smith's friends, which it's said took its rise from Corporal Macdonald who is a country man there and for a long time before he went into the army, was well known to be a remarkable turbulent man, and was frequently prosecuted and punished for his quarrels. In this quarrel some blood was shed,

but luckily no lives were lost owing to the intervention of some gentlemen who happened to be in town at the time.⁶⁹

Even after this incident Mackenzie would not let the matter rest. He continued to threaten Smith and his friends and reportedly threatened to burn Smith's house to the ground. The JP at Grantown eventually sought a prosecution of the sergeant, although on the appointed day, Mackenzie did not attend.

Mackenzie had the authority to proceed as he did. He had been invested with this authority by his appointment as the head of a recruiting party, giving him certain rights to enforce obedience. As a soldier, he also held a partial monopoly of violence as a military representative of the state in the locality of Grantown, the most naked expression of power. He did not, however, possess any jurisdiction. His actions were correctly questioned by that jurisdiction, the local JP. As disrespectful of that jurisdiction as Mackenzie might have been, he had been circumscribed by it and prevented from operating to the limits of what his authority allowed. In the end, the JP sought to have the recruiting party completely withdrawn from the district. Whether he achieved this is not known, but his efforts to prosecute Mackenzie point to the robustness of the Grantown authorities. This was the essence of socio-political relationships in the late eighteenth-century Scottish Highlands, reflected in the deep divisions of authority, jurisdiction, and interest, and not in its socio-economic taxonomy. To assign the label of victim or perpetrator arbitrarily to any one group on account of eighteenth-century social hierarchy is misleading. Highland society was divided in more complicated ways.

⁶⁹ NAS, GD248/52/1, ff. 96-99, Colonel Robert Skene to Sir James Grant, 6 Nov. 1775.

IV CONCLUSIONS

Recent scholarship has placed the Highland soldier in a context that has served as an insightful corrective to an older historiography of clansmen inspired to military service by traditional notions of martial loyalty. It has also been, however, the point of departure for a new emphasis on an overlap between government interest and local elites, between authority and jurisdiction. Subordination of the individual Highland soldier to varied asymmetrical hierarchies has been the meta-narrative behind recent interpretations of eighteenth-century recruiting.

Contrary to this, wider processes were vital and shaped a more sophisticated environment. Policy-makers and Highland elites were as concerned about the protection of liberties as their counterparts across the Atlantic region. Attempts at engineering a less problematic Highland Scotland through the Heritable Jurisdictions Act were designed to negate the very processes historians have come to rely upon as the contextual setting for recruitment. Fear of arbitrary power constrained the worst excesses of recruitment, ensuring a division of interest in and between the army, local elites, and civil government. Through this, authority was dissipated across conflicting bodies, creating a contentious and ideologically problematic debate, which focused attention on the successes of the improvement of the Highlands, the survival of clanship, and the role of military service in those processes. In essence, while clanship remained intellectually central to Highland elites, the physical collapse of clanship as a viable method of social organization was the prerequisite setting for the service of the Highland regiments in the British Empire.

This study does not question the established argument that imperial expansion cemented the place of the British ruling class into the nineteenth century. Indeed, it is broadly supportive of such an interpretation. The extent of elite participation in the army changed landholding patterns and social habits, solidifying local political and cultural authorities. It does suggest, however, that we need to be careful in assuming that new laws and new ideas, derived from close participation with the British state, could not have a significant impact on the most localized interactions.

For this reason, it is important to analyse the Highlands, despite their peripheral location, as a vital component of larger imperial discourses. As a test case for the introduction of British liberty to a ‘conquered’ region, the scale and sophistication of debate was infinitely greater than might be assumed. The conspicuous presence of the military in the Highlands allied local problems to Whig theory. Charles Lucas, a Member of Parliament for Dublin, had argued in 1768 that any legislator, though appointed to a small district, ‘becomes a trustee and a guardian for the whole kingdom’. His writings, which made no mention of the Highlands, nevertheless spoke to the same problems being experienced in that region. Lucas noted that in a free state it was inappropriate for the military to serve also as administrators of justice; their despotic tendencies might lead to a dilution of the rule of law.⁷⁰ It was not simply, however, that commentators such as Lucas expended vast amounts of ink on the subject of law and liberty. It was that these philosophies directly impacted on the way in which the extension of the fiscal-military state was conducted. The processes outlined above ask

⁷⁰ Charles Lucas, *A Mirror for Courts-Martial: In Which the Complaints, Trial, Sentence and Punishment of David Blakeney, are Represented and Examined with Candor* (London, 1768), pp. iv, 37-9; Sean Murphy, ‘Charles Lucas, Catholicism and nationalism’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 8 (1993): 83–102.

historians to reconsider the assumptive interpretations of the entirely accurate analysis that there was an overlap between government and landed elites. In the most peripheral region of mainland Britain, this overlap did not necessarily mean a unilateral authoritarian elite operating on an enfeebled poor. The extension of the state, and varied arguments on its ability to secure or threaten an individual's liberties, moved in conjunction. The Highland variant of this conjunction suggests we should not see the eighteenth-century British Empire as the English-speaking world with exotic adjuncts. It was, instead, an imperium of multiple peoples connected not just by the crown, but by alluring discourses that could alter ideas and policy in the entire body politic. As throughout the British Isles, the Highlands were witnessing the vestiges of a slow shift from aristocratic to a bureaucratic system of government. Ultimately, it was not the clan system that made recruitment a perfect purgatory. What gave it this appearance was the partial abandonment of traditional methods in Highland recruiting, in large part because of an engagement with pan-British discourses. But the sins of these young men, such as they were, had not yet been fully purged.

CHAPTER 2

COMBAT, IMPERIAL SAVAGERY, AND THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR IN NORTH AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

The perfect purgatory of recruitment preceded the violence and brutality of imperial war in North America. Colonial warfare was an unnerving and unworldly experience, for which the average Highland soldier, despite the suggestion that he possessed an innate martial culture, was utterly unprepared. War enforced the distance between the soldier and his origins, severely testing the notion of military service as within the normal boundaries of existence. It is clear from the extant letters that soldiers experienced acute displacement and disconnection from their normal lives.

It is strange then, that Highland soldiers established a reputation that has overshadowed the practical experiences of their actions in the colonies. Estimates of casualties, implicitly provided to support an established meta-narrative of the heroic Highland soldier, courageous in the face of appalling casualties, is particularly common.¹ The anecdote related by an observer of the siege of Québec in 1759, that he saw a Highlander lose an arm to a cannonball only to go on to kill nine Frenchmen literally single-handedly, bears far too much resemblance to the similar story of James Campbell

¹ McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, I, xv; David Allan, *Scotland in the Eighteenth Century: Union and Enlightenment* (London: Longman, 2002), p. 176; Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity': 322.

at Fontenoy in 1745 to be taken entirely seriously.² Such indulgent anecdotes have helped define appraisals of the Highland regiments. The very courage of the Highland soldier has disengaged him from a more wide-ranging discussion of his actions.

Sustaining these debates is Gaelic exceptionalism. In its most explicit and languid form, it focused on the ‘primitive’ nature of the Highland warrior.³ The more insidious form, however, was the implicit: the false historicism of the Highlander as an enemy of the Hanoverian state. In this narrative, William Pitt masterminded the return of Hanover to the Seven Years’ War, succeeding in tying French troops down in Europe, allowing British naval supremacy to overwhelm the Bourbon monarchy’s overseas dominions. Critically, Pitt’s blue-water policy created an opportunity to deploy dangerous Jacobites to North America. The Secretary at War, Lord Barrington, moved to reassure the Duke of Cumberland in July 1757 that ‘it was agreed that both officers and men should go to America as fast as the companies were raised, and none of either [are to] remain in the Highlands.’ With no small amount of glee, the Lord Justice Clerk, Charles Erskine, reported shortly after the victory at Québec that the scope for problems in the Highlands had been much reduced, potential Jacobites having been ‘happily of late ... thinned – by employing the greatest part of them as good food for our enemy’s powder’.⁴

The merits of the blue-water policy, or whether indeed William Pitt was responsible for the vision which achieved victory in North America by 1760 is a subject

² [Anon.], *The Highland Hero* (London, 1745); James Michael Hill, *Celtic Warfare, 1595-1763* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986), pp. 165-6; Colley, *Britons*, p. 104.

³ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, p. 64.

⁴ *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765: Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle*, ed. Stanley Pargellis (London: D Appleton-Century, 1936), pp. 381-82; TNA, SP54/45, f. 95(a), Charles Erskine to Secretary Holderness, 17 Nov. 1759.

for debate.⁵ The chronology of the Highland regiments also supports such scepticism, as rumours of the formation of Highland battalions were already rife by the time Pitt entered the Devonshire coalition in December 1756. For our purposes, however, the narrative of Pitt's masterstroke, as well as ignoring the local motivations for military service, reinforces the suggestion that North America served as a means of ridding the British state of an internal problem, portraying the region as both different and disloyal.

This chapter highlights the experiences of Highland soldiers in the colonies, forcefully challenging Gaelic exceptionalism. While distinct in dress and language, the Highland regiments functioned as integrated units of the British army. What is more, they were generally treated as such by senior officers, who, despite some misgivings, recognized them as a potentially effective military resource, to be safeguarded and employed to the greatest effect. Military experiences did not rest on ethnicity but on the function and effectiveness of military formations. This is not to say that cultural understandings were inconsequential to military imperatives; cultural understandings were part of how these imperatives were formed. It is these cultural values, however, which need to be more fully explored and contextualized.

This chapter begins by exploring the training, conduct, and combat experiences of Highland troops, demonstrating the considerable overlap of experiences with the rest of the British army in North America. It explores the conduct and tactics of the Highland battalions which were closely similar to those of other British regiments. The chapter

⁵ Marie Peters, 'The Myth of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, Great Imperialist Part I: Pitt and Imperial Expansion, 1738-1763', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 21 (1993): 43-6; Richard Middleton, *The Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and the Conduct of the Seven Years' War, 1757-1762* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 211-13.

concludes with an investigation of savagery in North America, exploring how the Highland regiments were brought into an imperial system which emphasized the ill-treatment of ethnic minorities. In the experiences of North American warfare, the violence of imperial warfare was as disturbing to the Highland soldier as it was to English, Irish, and Lowland counterparts. It did not take long, however, for Highland soldiers to embrace this decidedly political, rather than ethnic, view of empire.

Why are exceptionalist arguments, particularly those based on martial courage and savagery, a misleading line of enquiry into the conduct of Highland soldiers in America? They rely on a crude reading of two wars defined by an incredibly complex set of sociological, imperial, and environmental assumptions. Geoffrey Plank argues that the senior British officers who suppressed the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 learned many lessons about punitive and civilizing actions against imperial minorities during the 1745 rebellion. These officers, primarily William Blakeney, Humphrey Bland, Edward Cornwallis, John Campbell and James Wolfe, went on to deploy military power in colonial possessions in the Mediterranean and North America, to replicate the civilization, commercial prosperity, and legal reforms thought to have been brought to the native Gaels of the Highlands. Whether there is enough evidence to suggest an explicit link between lessons learned in Scotland and an overarching imperial design amongst high-level military officers is questionable. It is likely that such men were constricted by available resources and based their actions on a reading of localized parameters. Plank is correct, however, in highlighting that military action against imperial minorities was viewed (and conducted) in a way that was fundamentally different from the wars waged against European states. During the Jacobite rebellion, Gaelic-speaking elites could gain

immunity from prosecution if they could demonstrate they had been born in France.⁶

When the Highland battalions embraced savage measures against imperial enemies they took on the arguments that justified the utility of such methods within an imperial environment. The actions of young Highland soldiers reveal how invasive the culture of empire was and how easily it was embraced. It was only by embracing such horrific measures, as fully-fledged participants in the imperial project, that the Highland regiments carved their place in the historiography of empire. This chapter is not a judgement on the conduct of war in the eighteenth century, or those who carried it out, but an argument against continuity in the Highland experience and for the transformative impact of imperial military service.

I FIT FOR SERVICE?

The reputation Highlanders were to acquire as ferocious warriors, repeated *ad nauseum* in historical accounts of the regiments, is a clear exaggeration of the innate militarism of the Highlands. Militarized clanship had been in long decline, even prior to the Disarming Acts of 1716, 1725, and 1746. Early eighteenth-century surveys of Highland estates showed the limited possession of arms in several localities.⁷ Coming of age in the post-Proscription era, Highland soldiers would likely have possessed little proficiency with weapons nor, given their relative youth, would many have experienced the post-Culloden repressions.

⁶ Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery*, p. 31.

⁷ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, p. 7.

Highland soldiers were young. Of a company raised in 1776, the average age was twenty-one, though this does not convey the full extent of the men's youth; seventy per cent were below that age, over half were eighteen or younger. In Archibald Campbell's company of the 78th Foot in 1778, the average age was between twenty-two and twenty-three. Twenty-two years old was also the average age of surviving attestation papers for the 76th Foot in 1778. Limited data from the Seven Years' War show similar average ages, eighteen years old amongst a collection of men made for James Clephane of the 78th Foot in early 1757. Scribbled on the back of the official recruiting instructions for an officer of the 77th Foot in 1777, was written, 'Boy's ... may be taken under the above age [18] ... if broad shouldered well limbed and able to bear arms'.⁸

Youth has often been the mark of generations of servicemen; it is estimated, for example, that the average age of American servicemen in the Vietnam War was nineteen, compared with twenty-six during the Second World War.⁹ Compelling evidence, however, suggests that the Highland regiments were youthful compared with other British soldiers. In the 8th Foot in 1782, for example, the average age was almost thirty-seven, and the men had been in the army for an average of over fourteen years. Even allowing for seven years of active service in America, this was an older body of troops than ever appeared in a Highland regiment. Other British regiments were not quite as experienced as the 8th Foot, but still retained a large veteran cadre. Drafts from various

⁸ NAS, GD44/47/1 f. 2, Muster roll of Maxwell's and Skelly's company, 14 Jan. 1776; NAS, GD13/90, Attestations for the 78th Foot, Jan.-Mar. 1778; NAS, GD170/3441, Attestations for the 76th Foot, Jan.-Feb. 1778; NAS, GD125/22/16, f. 17, Letters and reports on recruits, Feb.-Mar. 1757; NAS GD170/3438, f. 1, Beating orders for the 77th Foot, [1777].

⁹ Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1993), p. 27; in 2007, Defence Minister Adam Ingram admitted that Britain deployed under-age soldiers to Iraq during the invasion of 2003 in violation of the UN Convention of the Rights of Children, Article 38 (1989).

regiments into the 4/60th Foot in 1757 show an average age of twenty-eight while men recruited in Boston for the 47th Foot the following year averaged over twenty-six years of age. There were proportionally fewer individuals of this age in the Highland regiments.¹⁰

Figure 2.1 Age brackets in the 77th Foot, Sept. 1757.¹¹

<i>Age</i>	<i>Total in age-group in the battalion</i>
35 - 40	3
30-35	14
25-30	166
20-25	432
18-20	383
18 and under	62

If they were young, Highland soldiers were also of necessity inexperienced. The vast majority of the Highland regiments were raised for specific periods of service, and disbanded following the cessation of hostilities; unless willing men with previous military service came forward, the regiment severely lacked combat experience. Even in the 42nd Foot, a permanent regiment of the line, significant augmentations, raising companies from thirty-five to one hundred men resulted in an overwhelming number of

¹⁰ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 24; HL, LO6778, Return of drafts, 19 Oct. 1757; AL, Forbes Papers, Box 2, f. 49, Returns, 19 Feb. 1758.

¹¹ HL, LO6695, General return, 18 Sept. 1757.

inexperienced soldiers.¹² The vast majority of the augmentations were raw recruits and when the 42nd entered combat in August 1776, half the men had been in uniform less than a year. John Adlum, a militia officer who faced the 42nd Foot at Fort Washington in November that year, noted that, by the time the Highlanders received the order to fire, most of them had already discharged their pieces into the air as if it were a, ‘*feu de joie* [*lit.* fire of joy] ... 99 shot out of 100 [going] a considerable distance over our heads’.¹³

Not long after the 42nd Foot was first deployed to North America in 1756, Major George Grant produced a short exercise manual to provide inexperienced officers with an up-to-date and simple set of motions that would facilitate training. *The New Highland Military Discipline* (London, 1757) took it as read that combat was a terrifying ordeal, but with revealing insight into the youth and naivety of the Highland recruit, it warned officers to keep a close eye on their men, particularly while facing artillery: ‘for by eating Cannon and grape Shot at a Distance, throws a Panick [*sic*] upon the Men, that perhaps, never saw a Cat killed in their Lives’. Outside Fort Duquesne on 14 September 1758, ‘Fear ... got the better of every other passion’ as a Franco-Amerindian force overwhelmed the 77th Foot and supporting Virginia provincials. The 77th’s senior officer that day, Major James Grant of Ballindalloch, hoped ‘I shall never see again such a panick among Troops, till then I had no conception of it’.¹⁴

The inexperience of the Highland battalions was not helped by the rudimentary training they received before arriving in America. The process of recruitment, from the

¹² Nicholas Westbrook, “‘Like roaring lions breaking from their chains’”: The Highland Regiment at Ticonderoga’, *Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*, 16 (1998): 2.

¹³ Matthew H. Spring, *With Zeal and with Bayonets Only: The British Army on Campaign in North America, 1775-1783* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), p. 211.

¹⁴ George Grant, *The New Highland Military Discipline, or a Short Manual Exercise Explained* (London, 1757), p. 7; HL, AB794, James Grant to John Forbes, 30 Oct. 1758.

issuing of warrants to embarkation at Glasgow, was typically five to six months. Prior to departure, the men were trained in marching, posture, and the simple evolutions of the musket drill, so called material training. In Major James Clephane's company of the 78th Foot, each man received a 'stick on his shoulder [and] a good sack On his back', providing some measure of uniformity, but nothing like the materials required to gain a working understanding of the soldier's duties.¹⁵ It was only after collection into larger formations that mechanical training began, involving the full manual exercise, firings and manoeuvres. This seems to have been unusual, however, and Simon Fraser would complain that his regiment did not spend more than four days together prior to departure, and did not have time to learn the evolutions required to conduct a review. The men of the extra battalion of the 42nd Foot which was raised in 1758 before being sent to the Caribbean 'were merely taught to march' prior to departure and only issued with firearms upon arrival in theatre.¹⁶ J.A. Houlding asserts that training in a given regiment was independent, and thus determined by the skills base of the officers in command. With so large a proportion of inexperienced officers in Highland regiments, it is likely that the training was largely *ad hoc*, with officers only slightly ahead of the majority of their men on the learning curve.¹⁷

John Campbell, fourth Earl of Loudoun, who served as Commander-in-Chief of forces in North America between July 1756 and March 1758, did not think much of the arriving 42nd Foot. He would report to Cumberland in the winter of 1756 that they were

¹⁵ NAS, GD125/22/2, f. 17, Betty Rose to John Clephane, [n.d.].

¹⁶ McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, I, 17n; HL, LO4310, Simon Fraser to Earl of Loudoun, 25 Aug. 1757.

¹⁷ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, pp. 259-76.

mostly newly-enlisted soldiers: ‘five hundred recruits thrown in just now’. Loudoun refused to send any of the regiments on testing active service in the 1757 campaign, even refusing to allow the recently arrived 42nd Foot to do garrison duty on the frontier, fearing their inexperience made them unfit for such a task.¹⁸ Simon Fraser was keen to put the best face on his battalion, the 78th Foot, to Loudoun’s replacement, James Abercromby, after the unit’s first winter in North America. But even he had to concede: ‘As soldiers, they are not what I would have them’. Some companies were so poor as to be a hindrance to operations; Fraser noted of his additional companies:

In what I have said of the regiment I do not include the additional companies, they are not so good bodys [*sic*] of men, and till they came here most of their arms never were taken out of the chests, so that they know nothing. In this situation I should be sorry to rest the character of the regiment upon their behaviour ... most of the men of these 3 companies are really by no means fit for immediate service.¹⁹

So poor did Fraser believe these troops to be that he recommended that they be left at Halifax and not join the rest of the battalion.

II PROFESSIONALIZATION: CONDUCT

The opinion of senior officers on the quality of the Highland battalions offers a revealing insight into how commanders considered the utility of the Highland soldier. Officers did

¹⁸ *Military Affairs in North America*, pp. 235, 264-8.

¹⁹ HL, AB188, Simon Fraser to James Abercromby, 23 Apr. 1758.

not see anything innately agreeable to Highland capacities. Lt. Col. Henry Bouquet, who served alongside the 77th Foot in Charleston in 1757, described the Highlanders as ‘quite raw men’, though appalling levels of morbidity was largely responsible for this assessment. The following June, however, Bouquet informed John Forbes that ‘The new recruits [77th Foot] will make you a thousand troubles; they need blankets, clothing, and so on – endlessly. Their officers haven’t an idea of the service, and one cannot depend on them to carry out an order.’²⁰ The quality of a battalion had nothing to do with its origins, and everything to do with its experience and the quality of its officers.

Senior officers, from the Commander-in-Chief to the colonels of the Highland battalions, all believed that the regiments were of sub-standard quality. They equally agreed on the potential for the regiments to improve within a year providing they were trained and disciplined. Maintaining the Highland battalions as regiments on the establishment duly ignored, perhaps even challenged, the racialized hierarchy of the Atlantic world in the interests of military effectiveness. The inability of the imperial state in America to feed, clothe, and quarter the massive influx of troops in 1756-58, brought the military into conflict with heavily-entrenched colonial authorities, particularly in New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, as the army sought to quarter troops and defray the expense of quartering onto colonial governments. The arrival of the 77th Foot in Charleston, South Carolina, in September 1757, brought troop levels in the town to over 1700, including a battalion of the 60th Foot under Bouquet and 200 Virginia provincials. Despite the voting of significant funds by the Commons House

²⁰ HL, LO4649, Bouquet to Loudoun, 16 Oct. 1757; *The Papers of Henry Bouquet*, ed. S.K. Stevens, Donald H. Kent, and Autumn L. Leonard, 6 vols. (Harrisburg: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951-1994), II, 72.

of Assembly and the generosity of the town's inhabitants in voluntarily quartering 187 Highlanders, the available accommodation was simply inadequate. Most problematic was the Assembly's refusal, at least until November, to provide bedding and other necessities, forcing expedient decisions in the interests of military effectiveness. In October 1757, for example, Henry Bouquet gave the limited available straw to the Highland regiment, leaving him with nothing to issue to the American-raised 60th Foot and Virginia provincials.²¹ Similar quartering problems occurred in the north. General Hopson at Halifax informed Loudoun that he did not have the facilities to accommodate the 78th Foot in the winter of 1757, necessitating a move to Connecticut and a reliance on civilian bodies, which would result in friction that sustained colonial paranoia over the next two decades.²²

Highland soldiers desired to prove themselves as valuable additions to the fiscal-military state by demonstrating their credentials as established British regiments of the line. The acid test of the quality of a Highland regiment, to both its officers and men, was professionalism similar to that demanded of other British corps. While largely inexperienced, many officers sought to educate themselves on the proper discipline of their companies. Malcolm Fraser of the 78th Foot purchased *A New Exercise, to be Observed by His Majesty's Troops* (New York, 1755) to drill his men. Bennett Cuthbertson's *System for the Complete Interior Management and œconomy of a Battalion of Infantry* (Bristol, 1776) was used in at least one Highland regiment during

²¹ HL, LO4649, Bouquet to Loudoun, 16 Oct. 1757; Jack P. Greene, 'The South Carolina Quartering Dispute, 1757-1758', *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 60 (1959): 193-204; see also J. Alan Rogers, 'Colonial Opposition to the Quartering of Troops during the French and Indian War', *Military Affairs*, 34 (1970): 7-11.

²² HL, LO4462, Hopson to Loudoun, 13 Sept. 1757.

the War of Independence. The publication of the *New Highland Military Discipline* (London, 1757) suggests a keen desire to regulate the martial skill of the Highland soldier; the emphasis the publication placed in its pictorial plates on learning the musket drills also suggests a strong element of consistent professionalization.²³

Officers attempted to replicate such professionalism amongst the lowest echelons by a system of internal monetary and professional rewards; evidence suggests that this was reasonably successful. A scouting party of the *Royal Highland Emigrants* took three prisoners in February 1778 after Private Macdonald of the light company surprised them. Macdonald was promoted to corporal for his leading role and each man on the patrol received up to eight dollars for their part in the action. The entire command structure of a battalion was predicated on seniority or a hierarchy of merit amongst both officers and private soldiers. In action, the 71st Foot was directed to deploy each company into four firing sections, to be commanded by the NCOs considered most meritorious, so that the captain's section would be commanded by the most highly-regarded NCO. Two months later, the best private men were ordered to be delivered to the light company. The use of *ad hoc* battalions formed from the elite light and grenadier companies of multiple regiments became extremely common during the War of Independence, undermining the growth of talent and skill in the companies of the line.²⁴ In a statement given by Lt. Col. Campbell to the 71st Foot, he appealed to their professional identity as 'real soldiers', but

²³ LAC, MG23, K1/1, 'A New Exercise'; Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 396-400.

²⁴ LAC, MG23, GIII23/4, Orders at Isle aux Noix for the Regiment of under John Nairne, [1777-78], p. 17; HL, HM617, Orderly Book of the 2/71st Foot, 30 Jun. 1778 & 4 Aug. 1778; Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, pp. 58-61.

in a sentence which might be interpreted as nominally subversive, Campbell explained to the rank-and-file that:

The road to preferment being open from the station of a private soldier to that of a general officer in his majesty's service every man of spirit has by that means an opportunity of Gratifying his ambition of receiving from his king and country the just reward of merit.²⁵

The result of this attempted professionalization was a collection of battalions keen to exhibit themselves as fully fledged members of the British army. Equality, not exceptionalism was what Highland officers sought from the fiscal-military state. It would be wrong to assume, as some historians have, that rehabilitation was a major characteristic of Highland military service or that the Highlanders zeal for the service originated in atonement for the region's Jacobitism.²⁶ The letters of Highland officers instead reveal a deeply-engrained private interest and the assumption that the advantages of seniority or half-pay were entirely justified given their service and stature. The embodying of the battalions as regiments of the line was also an implicit admission that Highland elites were not generalized as closet Jacobites but as regional actors to be enticed by state patronage.²⁷

The corollary effect of this professionalization was an assertion, from within the regiments, of the praise they felt entitled to. Chaplain Robert Macpherson would

²⁵ HL, HM617, Orderly book of the 2/71st Foot, 3 Jun. 1778.

²⁶ Michael Newton, 'Jacobite Past, Loyalist Present', *eKeltoi*, 5 (2003): 40; Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), p. 168.

²⁷ For a discussion of equal treatment see HL, LO4530, Simon Fraser to General Hopson, 24 Sept. 1757.

complain in 1761 that while his veteran regiment, the 78th Foot, sat idle at Québec, newly-raised and inexperienced Highland regiments were gaining laurels in Germany.²⁸ Equally significant was the experience of the 77th Foot during the Anglo-Cherokee War of 1759-61. Following a Cherokee attack on Fort Prince George, a retaliatory act for South Carolina's dispatch of an expeditionary force to the Lower Cherokee settlements, Governor William Henry Lyttleton appealed to Jeffrey Amherst for assistance. Amherst dispatched the 77th Foot to conduct operations against the Cherokee between April and August 1760. Several Cherokee towns, including Estatoe and Echoe, were devastated and there were heavy casualties on both sides. Commanding the 77th Foot, Archibald Montgomery failed to push on to relieve Fort Loudoun, forcing his subordinate, James Grant of Ballindalloch, to resume operations in 1761. Richard C. Cole has argued, with some justification, that Montgomery's failure was due to his expectation of retaining his regiment's integrity to fight French regulars at Montreal. Fighting Native Americans, due to their assumed inferiority and the lack of legal restraint in conducting operations against them, ensured that neither glory nor honour, so central to military reputation, could be gained in such operations. As Adam Smith would succinctly put it, 'Nothing can be more contemptible than an Indian war in North America.' It is true that Edmund Burke did praise the qualities of the soldiers involved in suppressing Pontiac's rebellion in 1763 in *The Annual Register* of that year. The Anglo-Cherokee war, however, because the Cherokee were not formal allies of the French, ensured that the campaign

²⁸ LoC, M 2267, reel 47, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761.

could not be easily linked into a wider narrative of the Seven Years' War.²⁹

Montgomery's frustration was exacerbated by both his and Grant's recognition that the army was being used to further the parochial interests of the South Carolina Assembly, which was keen to suppress the Cherokee in an unjust and deliberate war of annihilation. It was an opinion probably arrived at through correspondence with another Highlander, Inverness-born Indian trader and diplomat, John Stuart.³⁰ As we shall see, this in no way led to any great moderation in confronting the Cherokee, but in asserting their own deserved utility and frustration at the dubious ends of colonial regimes, Highland officers adjudged their position as one of professional equality within the fiscal-military state.

As established regiments and equal partners, the pressures which affected other British battalions applied equally to the Highlanders. While professionalism was attempted, the accompanying truisms of military life were alcohol, violence, and sexual misconduct. Alcohol and alcoholism were degenerative parts of the military experience. In 1778, officers were forced to apply extreme measures to the 71st Foot to prevent the continuing misuse of pay by the rank-and-file: 'instead of using their money with desecration they continue to squander it on liquor and debauchery by which they injure their health ... their morals & sully that valuable character, they have already acquired as soldiers'. Under the provisions, accounts were to be settled more regularly to prevent soldiers acquiring too much money at one time. Stoppages were also increased and of

²⁹ Richard C. Cole, 'Montgomery's Cherokee Campaign, 1760: Two Contemporary Views', *North Carolina Historical Review*, 74 (1997): 34; Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Dublin, 1776), III, 46; *The Annual Register, Or a View of the History, Politicks, and Literature* (London, 1764), pp. 24-32.

³⁰ John Oliphant, *Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier, 1756-1763* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 201-4; Murdoch, *Scotland and America*, pp. 119-21; see also Alex[ander] Murdoch, 'James Glen and the Indians' in *Military Governors and Imperial Frontiers, c.1600-1800*, ed. Andrew Mackillop and Steve Murdoch (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 141-60.

the remaining pay, only one shilling, or less than half of a man's weekly pay, was to be given to him. The rest was to be hoarded by the officer and given out, most probably at his discretion.³¹ But discretion was not always to be relied upon. While at Isle aux Noix in 1777-78, the *Royal Highland Emigrants* (later 84th Foot) were warned about the 'notoriously practised' habit of NCOs and their wives selling large quantities of alcohol to the regiment, despite orders against it. The habit of NCOs creating a monopoly of supply to the detriment of discipline was also reported in the 78th Foot while it had been at Québec in 1762.³²

The 84th Foot seems to have had a justifiably poor reputation for discipline. Within a few months of the issue of equipment to the regiment, its officers were reviewing the accoutrements twice a week, when it became evident that many of the soldiers were selling their government-issued equipment for profit. Within a month, private men's pay had even been stopped because it was believed that they were not making proper use of it; instead their pay was being given directly to creditors to whom many of the men were already deeply in debt. Things did not improve and, in 1779, Major John Nairne reported that he had never before 'had so many complaints of riotous and licentious behaviour amongst the men of the regiment than at present'.³³

The 84th Foot's discipline problems were, like all problems affecting Highland soldiers, a result of external parameters operating on an inconstant military culture. The 84th Foot was unique among the Highland regiments for being recruited largely, though

³¹ HL, HM617, Orderly Book of the 2/71st, 15 Aug. 1778.

³² LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orders at Isle aux Noix for the Regiment under John Nairne [1777-78], p. 13; LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orderly Book of the 78th Foot, 11 May 1762.

³³ LAC, K1/20, Orderly Book of the *Royal Highland Emigrants*, 17 Nov. 1775, 21 Dec. 1775 & 11 Feb. 1779.

not exclusively, in North America, in which they served as a Loyalist provincial unit, without the advantages conferred on other Highland regiments, until their establishment as the 84th Foot in 1779. Fears over whether the regiment would be established plagued officers for almost four years and created a deeply unstable command structure. An internal culture of false promises also created the conditions for problems and it appears as if both officers and men were enlisted on the basis of promises which its colonel, Allan Maclean of Torloisk, had no authority to give.³⁴ As the regiment was recruited among Highland emigrants in the colonies, many of its soldiers had friends and family, even wives and children, in rebel-occupied areas, a fact that unquestionably led to frustration and anger at the monotonous garrison duties the 84th Foot was employed upon for long periods of the war. One officer, ‘Spanish’ John Macdonald requested that if his family in New York could not be quickly rescued, he would rather have a party of Indians bring him their scalps than ‘to linger any longer in misery’. Entire companies petitioned to be employed on more active operations to rescue their families from Upper New York.³⁵ Dispersion also critically undermined unit cohesion and a sound basis for unified leadership. The battalion was dispersed in penny-packets for most of the war, with sub-divisions in the vicinity of Québec, Montreal, Windsor, Amherst, Gaspé, New York, and Charleston, South Carolina at various stages of the war.³⁶ It is true that the 84th Foot was more ethnically varied than any other Highland regiment, but the names of

³⁴ TNA, WO28/9, f. 74, John Nairne, Alexander Fraser, George Macdougall, Malcolm Fraser and Daniel Robertson to Guy Carleton, 30 Sept. 1777.

³⁵ ‘Spanish’ John quoted in Marianne Mclean, *The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1830* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s UP, 1991), p. 96; TNA, WO28/9, f. 149, Petition of Macdonald’s company to Guy Carleton, [1777].

³⁶ For complaints about the effect of such dispersion see Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, p. 444.

the soldiers charged with misdemeanours and the early origins of the problems when the regiment was ethnically Gaelic suggests these circumstances were the pivotal factor in the appalling levels of regimental indiscipline.

The 84th were not unique, however, and it comes as little surprise that discipline problems always arose toward the end of hostilities or when a battalion had been stationed amongst a civilian population for long periods of time. During the four years the 78th Foot were at Québec, complaints were increasingly made that the men had not only begun to disobey orders from their officers, but that a culture of ‘personal resentment’ had developed against some NCOs with outright disrespect for officers, particularly those from other regiments. Stealing was becoming more common. Officers began to put in place certain policies to prevent irregularities and, in August 1762, stopped allowing the soldiers to sleep outside the camp in order to limit the time soldiers spent with townspeople and beyond the watchful eyes of their officers. Increasing punishments were delivered to stop the rot.³⁷ Corporal Angus Macdonald was sentenced to 2000 lashes for engaging in an extortion racket among the French-Canadian inhabitants around Québec. By the end of the 78th’s stay in Québec, the problem of alcohol abuse resulted in camp women no longer being served rations, there being a misogynistic perception that women were the root cause of soldierly misconduct.³⁸

Similar attitudes predictably infused debates on sexual relations. Venereal disease seems to have been as much a problem in the Highland regiments as in any other.

³⁷ LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orderly Book of the 78th Foot, 1 Jun. 1762, 10 Jun. 1762 & 17 Aug. 1762.

³⁸ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, p. 281; LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orderly Book of the 78th Foot, 27 Dec. 1762.

It was again the 84th Foot who excelled in this particular regard. While garrisoned at Isle aux Noix and Montreal from 1778-79, the regimental surgeon reported:

that several of the men of the regiment, by their Debauchery with Whores, have brought Disease upon themselves; which being not only to the scandal of their own Characters, but to the prejudice of the king's service, there by disgracefully rendering themselves incapable to do their duty.³⁹

It was not the sexual relations which caused a problem and, indeed, the presence of wives and camp followers were accepted as inevitable and even good for morale; but the impact on effectiveness was a constant threat. The same regiment had a Mrs. Daly removed from the barracks, warning the soldiers against 'having any carnal Connection with her, as there is greatest reason to believe that she is Dangerously Disordered'.⁴⁰

Stephen Brumwell has suggested that Highlanders appeared before courts martial with less frequency than other soldiers, something which may indeed be true. To ascribe this to ethnic exceptionalism, however, is to misread the contextual parameters of Highland military service and the careful construction of Highland identity around a myth of good behaviour. Alexander Macdonald, for instance, refused to administer corporal punishment to two drunken NCOs in 1775 on the basis of the impact it would have on morale in the garrison to see two Highlanders so punished. Such attitudes appear to have been widespread, at least within the 84th Foot. Macdonald wanted a deserter by the name of Farquhar McQuarrie to be hanged or shot, but in a letter to Major

³⁹ LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orderly book of the *Royal Highland Emigrants*, 30 Oct. 1778.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 8 Dec. 1778; for venereal disease problems in other Highland regiments, see LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761.

John Small he warged that ‘you will send me word to let him at his Liberty for a bare reprimand because he is a Highlander’. There was just one execution and thirteen floggings for 140 convictions for capital and minor crimes in the 84th Foot between 1775 and 1783.⁴¹ The problems of discipline did not mark child-like misdemeanours or even a failure of Highland professionalization, but quite the opposite, a shift in the enlisted Highlander’s professional mentality from socially proscribed labourer to semi-independent veteran soldier. Indeed, by simply becoming soldiers, Highlanders had to defend themselves from the warnings and accusations of relatives about drunkenness and gambling and their professional military identity was defined more by negative attributes than positive ones.⁴²

Many of these problems might also be attributed to the enormous feeling of displacement and separation experienced by Highland soldiers after exposure to the imperial environment. Professionalization should not be seen as singularly positive, for it forced acceptance of a brutal military environment for which civilian experiences and conceptions had inadequately prepared them. Until the 1790s, it was often felt that a soldier dispatched overseas was lost to his native community, to be given up in a marginally less hyperbolic thought process than the mock funerals which accompanied nineteenth-century serf conscripts into the Russian imperial army.⁴³ Men in positions of authority, officers and chaplains, had more opportunity for leave, but also felt isolated. Major John Nairne of the 84th Foot asked his thirteen-year-old daughter, Madie, to

⁴¹ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 218-23, 233-5; Kim R. Stacy, ‘Crime and Punishment in the 84th Regiment of Foot, 1775-84’, *JSAHR*, 79 (2001): 108-18.

⁴² LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to William Macpherson, 20 Nov. 1776.

⁴³ David Stewart of Garth, *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1822), I, 170.

inform him, ‘if you have seen or heard of your mother since I left Quebec’ three years previously. Nairne probably saw his daughter only once between 1777 and 1782.⁴⁴ Nairne returned to Scotland after the war and his sister later commented that Nairne was a stranger to his daughter.⁴⁵

There did not have to be intimate family connections for soldiers to feel isolated by their service. Chaplain Robert Macpherson seems to have been particularly embittered by the lack of correspondence from Scotland. Lamenting the lack of contact, Macpherson played on the allegory of the Prophet Mohammed on the mountain and reported that if his friends would not come to him, he would have to return to Scotland. Four months later and still without having received a letter, Macpherson decided that the only expedient was to fill his letters home with incoherent nonsense in an attempt to elicit a response. He would later complain of not having had a letter in two years.⁴⁶ The effects were amplified by the logistical difficulties of epistolary correspondence in the eighteenth century. One Highland officer in Halifax received a letter from a fellow officer in his regiment only after it was found on a road near the town. Chaplain James Maclagan’s reason for not replying to a letter from Scotland for at least several months was that he lacked his ‘wanted conveniences’ while on campaign with the 42nd Foot in 1778. He would eventually write to Reverend Hugh MacDiarmid of Glasgow from a tent

⁴⁴ LAC, MG23, GIII23/1, ff. 19-38, John Nairne to Madie Nairne, 18 Sept. 1780-13 Oct. 1782; Madie was looked after by the family of Nairne’s fellow 84th Foot officer, Malcolm Fraser, in Quebec while Nairne’s wife continued to run the estate near La Malbaie further down the St Lawrence.

⁴⁵ LAC, MG23, GIII23/1, ff. 70-73, Margaret Rowland to Madie, 26 Mar. 1784.

⁴⁶ LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 16 Nov. 1758, 27 Feb. 1759 & 24 Dec. 1761.

on Long Island, in which he had fixed four stakes in the ground and nailed a board to the top as a rest.⁴⁷

A sense of isolation was expanded exponentially by the brief, but terrifying moments, in which soldiers experienced combat. Their civilian contemporaries may have assured their relatives that, ‘I think your face would rather be, to be envy’d as pitied, for such honourable scares always become a soldier’, but the extent of the horrors were probably lost on them. It is unknown, for example, whether Lt. Alexander Campbell, who had his face ‘disfigured and is a good deal hurt’ at Louisbourg would have thought it honourable. John MacPherson, the younger son of George Macpherson of Invereshie, a veteran of twenty years service with the 40th and 17th Foot, reported the moment his friend, Captain Sir Alexander Murray of the 17th Foot, was hit by a cannonball at Brooklyn in 1776, ‘in all my life I never saw a man so mangled – He was a gentle young man, deservedly regretted’. William Leslie, another friend who had attended school with Murray, similarly lamented the death. Leslie was killed four months later at Princeton.⁴⁸

If soldiers perceived their service in the context of their civilian lives, the impact of war could be devastating. Sir Alexander Murray’s friend, John Macpherson, was himself wounded at Princeton, a musket ball tearing through the joint of his left hand, rendering it useless, and another passed through his chest. He spent three months lying on his back, unable to turn over. The chest wound reopened over the course of the next two years, giving him immense pain, something he kept from his future wife, though he

⁴⁷ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, p. 459; DCA, GD/We/5, f. 12, James MacLagan to Hugh MacDiarmid, 20 Sept. 1778.

⁴⁸ NAS, GD170/1480, Robert Campbell to Alexander Campbell, 9 Jun. 1746; LoC, M 2267, reel 47, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 29 Jul. 1758; LoC, M 2267, reel 47, John Macpherson to George Macpherson, 2 Sept. 1776; NAS, GD26/9/513, f. 16, William Leslie to the Earl of Leven, 2 Sept. 1776.

believed without much success.⁴⁹ Macpherson probably kept the information to himself as it might have reduced his masculinity in the eyes of his fiancé. Furthermore, wounded soldiers were primarily concerned about the disfiguring effect of battle wounds on their senses or extremities, which were most damaging to their continued ability to function as part of society. The ability to maintain a trade was central. Private John McNaughton enlisted in the 42nd Foot in the early stages of the Seven Years' War and fought in most of the major actions until he was shot through both thighs. He was discharged and returned to Scotland, but found that, at least, initially, he 'was so weakly as to be incapable of any business, and his pension yielded but a scanty subsistence'. The problem of earning a wage involved McNaughton in a rancorous legal battle as he sought to establish himself as a shoemaker in Leith.⁵⁰ Alexander Campbell, a member of the Argyll elite, was greatly relieved that, although a ball had taken an inch of bone from his calf at Bunker Hill, it was, 'not disfigur'd at all', and he 'thank[ed] God I have made a most remarkable recovery'. Captain James Murray received his wound, a musket ball in the thigh shortly before the 42nd Foot was obliged to retire from its doomed assault on Ticonderoga in 1758. Doctors believed the wound looked as well as could be expected, and Murray felt confident three days later that he was out of danger, 'as it [the ball] has only grazed the bone'.⁵¹ In the ethos of the eighteenth-century elite, wounds could be honourable, but the primary concern remained functionality in the post-war world. This

⁴⁹ LoC, M 2267, reel 47, John Macpherson to William Macpherson, 25 Sept. 1778; LoC, M 2267, reel 47, John Macpherson to Sir Henry Clinton, 21 Jul. 1779.

⁵⁰ John McNaughton, *Answers for John M'Naughton late soldier in the Royal Highland regiment, to the petition of Archibald Shanks, and John Scot cordiners in Leith* (Edinburgh, 1765), p. 2.

⁵¹ NAS, GD170/1595, f. 13, Alexander Campbell to brother, 20 Feb. 1776; Frederick B. Richards, *The Black Watch at Ticonderoga: Campaigns in the French & Indian War* (Great Falls: New York State Historical Association, 1912), p. 65.

was something which mattered more to the labouring class than to their officers. These problems and concerns, expressed by Highland soldiers, accompanied every British regiment to North America.

III PROFESSIONALIZATION: TACTICS

The Highland regiments improved tactical efficiency in North America as part of their integration into the British army. The British army in the period placed a premium on order and discipline and measured regiments on this basis. During the Québec campaign of 1759, James Wolfe was determined to emphasize order and discipline as the key to success. Rather than rely on vigorous assaults, Wolfe directed that disciplined platoon firing was to be employed in a 'regular manner' until the enemy was defeated. Before the battle on the Plains of Abraham, on 13 September, he encouraged the soldiers by emphasizing their professionalism as formed bodies and, if they remained as such, they would not be defeated by 'five weak French battalions, mingled with a disorderly peasantry'. Impetuosity was discouraged until the closing stages of any action and any man who fired before being ordered to do so was to be put to death.⁵² A similar discouragement of irregular impetuosity was consequently enforced at the lowest levels in the Highland regiments. Manual exercises were taken very seriously by Highland officers, keen to present their men as reliable and efficient. Both officers and men were

⁵² LAC, MG23, GIII23/4, Orderly Book, [1759], pp. 4-5, 14-15.

rebuked for their failure to attend the exercises.⁵³ The extent of Highland adherence to close order tactics in the early stages of the Seven Years' War is exhibited in the report published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* following the disastrous action outside Fort Duquesne involving the 77th Foot in 1758. It reported that while the provincials had made a good defence by concealing themselves behind obstacles, 'The Highlanders exposed themselves without any cover, and were shot down in great numbers.'⁵⁴

Highland battalions seem to have acted with regularity, impetuosity being seen by Highland officers as an aberration of slowly inculcated drills. Orders to attack with bayonet or broadsword came from above in response to particular tactical circumstances. Lt. Malcolm Fraser of the 78th Foot stated that on 13 September 1759 the Highlanders had been ordered to draw their swords by General James Murray. Murray's rationale was to break French morale with an aggressive assault *after* exchanges of musketry had weakened their resolve. Fraser, in fact, complained that the decision had saved many French lives, it being impossible for the artillery to do its work through fear of hitting the attacking Highlanders. It is also highly likely that the 76th Foot's bayonet charge at Green Springs on 6 July 1781 was likewise instigated on the orders of Charles Cornwallis.⁵⁵ Officers of the Highland regiments were forced to walk a fine line between discipline and an aggressive response to the highly emotional circumstances of combat.

⁵³ R.F.H. Wallace (ed.), 'Regimental Routine and Army Administration in North America in 1759: Extracts from Company Order Books of the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment', *JSAHR*, 30 (1952): 10; see also John Peebles, *John Peebles' American War: The Diary of a Scottish Grenadier, 1776-1782*, ed. Ira Gruber (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole, 1998), p. 179.

⁵⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, no. 1278 (5 Oct. 1758), p. 4; see also James Smith, *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the life and Travels of Col. James Smith, During his Captivity with the Indians* (Lexington, 1799), p. 103.

⁵⁵ *Extract from a Manuscript Journal relating to the Siege of Quebec in 1759, kept by Colonel Malcolm Fraser Then Lieutenant of the 78th and serving in that Campaign* (Quebec, 1865), p. 21; Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, p. 221.

After the action at the falls of Montmorency on 31 July 1759, there was a good deal of recrimination over the failure, some of which was directed at the Highlanders. Wolfe himself believed that the battle would have been won had the 78th Foot been more aggressive. In the aftermath of the battle, he made it known to the entire army that ‘Amherst’s and the Highland Regiment alone by the soldier-like and Cool manner in which they formed, would undoubtedly have beat back the whole Canadien [*sic*] Army, if they had ventured to attack them’.⁵⁶ The link here between ‘Cool manner’ and aggressive spirit was made clear, but this was little help to inexperienced Highland officers commanding largely inexperienced troops, trying to discipline them in the accepted ethos of the British army.

The external praise that emerged for the Highland soldier was given precisely because their actions reflected a reading of skills and professionalism that was expected across the British military establishment. The *Morning Chronicle* praised the actions of the 42nd Foot at Piscataway in May 1777, when the regiment’s *piquet* was attacked by a large body of rebels. With support from a composite light infantry battalion the rebels were driven off, but there was no suggestion that ‘the very spirited and intrepid behaviour’ of the 42nd was in any way unique or different from the praise reserved for other British troops. On this occasion the light infantry was equally praised for its ‘impetuosity’ and the ardour of the troops was markedly British, rather than Highland.⁵⁷ With insight into how dominant narratives are created from the selective use of source material, an officer who wrote an excellent post-war history of the Seven Year’s War

⁵⁶ LAC, MG23, GIII1, George Allsopp Orderly Book, [1759], p. 38.

⁵⁷ *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, no. 2526 (25 Jun. 1777), p. 2.

made no mention of the much celebrated role of the 42nd Foot at the assault on Fort Carillon in 1758. For Thomas Mante, an English officer who joined the 77th Foot in 1762:

The regulars advanced with the greatest intrepidity, to storm the breast-work, which they now, when it was too late to retreat, found well covered with felled trees, extending one hundred yards in front, with the branches pointing outwards, and strengthened with logs, stumps of trees and every other kind of rubbish they could collect, that was fit for the purpose.⁵⁸

Although Mante was English, he held a commission in a Highland regiment. His silence on the 42nd Foot is interesting, however. It may have been that this reflected the regimental rivalry of officers of the 77th Foot. If it did, it is suggestive of how much a unified ‘Highland’ contribution to the army was a later invention. Most significantly, however, was his opinion that Carillon would ‘prove a most useful lesson on the little consequence of the most consummate bravery, when not steadily directed by ability and experience’.⁵⁹ For this leader of Highland manpower, no extent of bravery could overcome an entire lack of regular military discipline.

The efficiency of tactics was a two-fold process. By seeking professionalization as British regulars, inexperienced Highland soldiers exposed themselves to disaster, as at Fort Duquesne. Equally, however, they became more adept at combat in North America and, with the British army more generally, grew extremely proficient as a result. John

⁵⁸ Thomas Mante, *The History of the Late War in North-America, and the islands of the West-Indies* (London, 1772) p. 149.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 151-2.

Forbes reported from Shippensburg in September 1758, that the Highlanders were ‘ten times more steady and Cautious’, following ten days of active operations against Amerindian war parties, sleeping in the rough the whole time.⁶⁰ By June 1764, men of the 42nd were able to conduct complicated manoeuvres at camps on the frontier. Returning to the garrison at Dublin following the war, the skeletal remains of the regiment performed the light infantry manoeuvres they had used at Bushy Run to on-looking officers. With the light infantry companies already disbanded, their ability to perform these manoeuvres suggests a great deal of proficiency across the regiment. Likewise, during the assault on Guadeloupe in April 1761, the regiment’s second battalion ‘behaved, on this occasion, with the greatest coolness and resolution, keeping up, as they advanced, a regular platoon-firing’.⁶¹

During the War of American Independence, Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell described in great detail the standing orders for his men of the 71st Foot. Campbell clearly desired the deployment to be made according to regulations, though what exact regulations he was referring to is unknown. He allowed, however, that in the case of ‘real action’, order was to be structured by what was expedient, rather than by dogmatic adherence to regulations. If combat was to take place in wooded areas, one or more sections per company would deploy as skirmishers ‘to occupy every tree stump, log, bush ... hedge, wall or in short any kind of covering’. These men were to advance ‘with the utmost agility and continue to fire, load and spring [from cover] as they advance upon or from the enemy’. The versatility of non-specialized sections to operate in such a

⁶⁰ BL, Add. Mss. 21640, f. 161, Forbes to Bouquet, 4 Sept. 1758.

⁶¹ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, IV, 585; JRL, BAG/5/1/47, Donald Grant to Lord John Murray, 14 Sept. 1769; Mante, *History of the Late War*, p. 186.

manner suggests efficiency in open order tactics across the extent of the regiment. By contrast, the reliance on close order tactics and Von Steuban's Prussian drills by some elements of the Continental army constrained revolutionary soldiers in the face of more adaptive tactics used by British regiments. This was the case during the battle of Green Springs on 6 July 1781, when a bayonet charge by the Pennsylvania Line enabled Brigadier-General Anthony Wayne to extricate his force but (reversing the tactical narrative of the war) resulted in the Pennsylvanians being raked by the 76th Foot from covered positions in the woods.⁶²

Open order tactics were in no way, however, unique to the Highland regiments, but evolved to deal with the tactical and environmental parameters of the American rebellion. The notion that the British army failed to adapt to the requirements of the war is now largely accepted as fictive; the army's tactical versatility led to new approaches to combat, with more emphasis on aggressive charges. British units used extended rank-and-file spacings and, in the main, entered the killing zone at a measured trot, limiting the time they were exposed to rebel fire. The assaulting formation accelerated as they approached the enemy position, placing a premium on the aggressive *élan* of a single volley followed by a bayonet charge. With sufficient numbers it was often effective. General Orders issued shortly before the British occupied New York City on 15 September 1776 reminded the troops of the success they had had at the battle of Long Island, 'The soldiers are reminded of their evident superiority on the 27th of August, by charging the rebels with their bayonets, even in the woods, where they thought

⁶² HL, HM617, Orderly book of the 2/71st Foot, 30 June 1778; Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, pp. 140-51.

themselves invincible ... The general therefore recommends to the troops, an entire dependence upon their bayonets.’ Orders given to the *Royal Highland Emigrants* by Major John Nairne in 1777 stated pointedly: ‘The bayonet is the weapon that must be depended upon.’ It was not always successful, however. The single volley was often ineffectual in physically incapacitating rebel soldiers and, while such aggressive tactics generally gave British troops command of the field, often in the face of a superior enemy, it resulted in heavy casualties. A recent study of the combat efficiency of the British army in North America suggests that the army performed extremely well but that the topography favoured the Fabian tactics and political objectives of the rebels.⁶³ What is important is that British tactics developed through an adaption to the political, tactical, technological, and environment parameters of the war. To view the aggressive spirit of the Highland regiments in North America as an ethnically-based military culture, which referenced the Wars of the Three Kingdoms era ‘Highland Charge’, is to entirely misunderstand the adaptation of the British army in the period more generally.

While improvement in military conduct was evident, this does not mean, however, that Highlanders were ever uniquely effective in the North American environment. In 1763, Henry Bouquet could still report of the remaining Highlanders of the 42nd and 77th Foot: ‘Having observed on our march that the Highlanders lose themselves in the Woods as soon as they got out of the Road, [they] cannot on that account be employed as flankers.’ By this point, after a horrific period of service, thirty individuals were simply

⁶³ HL, HM615, General Orders at New York, 13 Sept. 1776; LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orders at Isle aux Noix for the Regiment under John Nairne, [1777-78], p. 8; Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, p. 203.

incapable of walking any further, much less skirmishing on the frontier.⁶⁴ A remarkable assessment of the Highlanders' capacities was penned by an army surgeon, Dr. Richard Huck-Saunders of Philadelphia, at the beginning of the 1758 campaign. He explained the 'total Revolution' in the army since service in America and that 'The art of War is much changed and improved here'. 'Our hair is about an inch long; ... hats ... are worn slouched ... The Highlanders have put on breeches ... Swords and sashes are degraded, and many have taken up the Hatchet and wear Tomahawks.'⁶⁵ Many officers believed that Highland uniform should be converted to more utilitarian, indeed more pan-British formats, to ease efficiency. During both conflicts, Highland soldiers were quick to abandon their plaids and swords as a burden, adapting to a regularized place in the British army in tandem with an adaptation to alien environmental conditions.⁶⁶ In effect, part of the process of military effectiveness in the new world was the abandonment of the very signifiers of Highland military exceptionalism.

Why then, did the myth of the Highland soldier as an innately exceptional soldier develop? Part of the reason is the use of highly selective source material without contextualization. Compare, for example, two accounts of the battle of Stono Ferry, fought in South Carolina on 20 June 1779. To Alexander Garden, aide-de-camp to Continental general Nathaniel Greene, the 71st Foot were 'the elites of the British army', making their annihilation by a bayonet charge of the South Carolina Continental Line an

⁶⁴ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, VI, 325-6; Peter E. Russell, 'Redcoats in the Wilderness: British officers and Irregular Warfare in Europe and America, 1740-1760', *WMQ*, 35 (1978): 629-52.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Daniel J. Beattie, 'The Adaption of the British Army to Wilderness Warfare, 1755-1763' in *Adapting to Conditions: War and Society in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Maarten Ultee (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1986), p. 73.

⁶⁶ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 233-5; Samuel Graham, *Memoir of General Graham with Notices of the Campaigns in Which He was Engaged from 1779 to 1801*, ed. James Graham (Edinburgh, 1862), pp. 13-14.

impressive feat. The assault was so devastating that only nine men of two full companies of the 71st Foot escaped. This was not, however, how the battle was later interpreted by South Carolinian historian, Edward McCrady, for whom the engagement was ‘so obstinately maintained by the Highlanders that they did not retreat until all their officers were either killed or wounded; and of the two companies only eleven [*sic*] men were able to make good their retreat’.⁶⁷ Guillaume, le vicomte de Deux-Ponts, who commanded a regiment of Rochambeau’s army at Yorktown in 1781, was told by captured British officers that at the opening of the French assault on Redoubt 9 on 14 October 1781, Lt. Col. Duncan Macpherson of the 71st Foot and thirty others took the opportunity to abandon the Hessians defenders of the Redoubt and retreat to the main siege lines. Macpherson, who was to be the subject of a fawning Gaelic eulogy in 1792, was charged by his fellow officers with cowardice. It is impossible to know whether this was genuinely a case of cowardice or a product of personal antipathies directed at Macpherson, or indeed, a later invention to serve an American grand narrative. What is clear is that in a multiplicity of sources, there is a narrative tradition that does not put Highland soldiers beyond reproach.⁶⁸

There was, it has to be confessed, a pre-existing belief in Gaelic martial skill which sustained the myth of Highland prowess. James Glen, the governor of South Carolina between 1738 and 1756, believed the 77th Foot and George Washington’s

⁶⁷ Alexander Garden, *Anecdotes of the Revolutionary War in America with Sketches of Character of Persons the Most Distinguished* (Charleston, 1822), p. 111; Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina in the Revolution, 1775-1780* (New York: Macmillan, 1901), p. 388; John W. Gordon, *South Carolina and the American Revolution: A Battlefield History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2003), pp. 68-9.

⁶⁸ Guillaume, le vicomte de Deux-Ponts, *My Campaigns in America: A Journal kept by Count William de Deux-Ponts*, ed. S. A. Green (Boston, 1868), pp. 142-8; see also *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, ed. Edmund B. O’Callaghan, 15 vols. (Albany, 1850-87), X, 997.

‘American Highlanders’ to be the only solution to the massive superiority held by the French and their allies in *petite guerre*. Underpinning Glen’s assessment was the presumption that the Highlanders, both metropolitan and colonial, shared a military culture more akin to their savage opponents than to Lowland-born observers. The spread of these assumptions of Highland exceptionalism was impressive. Benjamin Franklin’s *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported the Highlanders to be ‘spirited martialists’. On hearing of the dispatch of the 42nd Foot to America, the Governor of New France, Pierre Francois, Marquis de Vaudreuil, requested a regiment of soldiers from Roussillon: ‘They will be very useful, if it were only to respond to the dispatch of the Scotch Highlanders by the English, and to excite the vanity of our Indians ... that no light infantry can beat them.’ Likewise, Louis-Joseph de Montcalm concluded that the English were weak and ‘when transplanted, are no longer like those in Europe’. But he warned, ‘We must look to my Lord Loudoun’s Scotchmen, for it appears that general has arrived.’ As early as 1744, a French officer had commented on a projected British fort at Wood Creek, New York: ‘that they [the English] were surely making this settlement to place there Scots, who fear the Indians less than the other peoples whom they get from Europe’.⁶⁹

There is little evidence, however, to suggest that the regiments were employed in vastly different ways from other units; senior officers did not easily subordinate military decisions to ethnic interpretations. Despite histrionic contemporary comments on the expendability of the Highland regiments, the Gaels were never utilized as cannon-fodder

⁶⁹ Murdoch, ‘James Glen and the Indians’, pp. 156-7; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, no. 2016 (13 Aug. 1767), p. 2; *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, X, 462, 479, 498; ANOM, COL C11A 81, f. 110, Charles de la Boische to Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, comte de Maurepas, 14 Apr. 1744; my sincere thanks go to Jean-Francois Lozier of Université Laval for this reference.

in the wilds of America.⁷⁰ A comparison of the service histories of the Highland regiments with the 17th and 35th Foot reveal some startling conclusions and place Highland casualties in context. The 35th Foot left Ireland in 1756, and like the Highlanders, was considered ineffective by senior officers (including the Duke of Cumberland) due to the inexperience enforced by pre-deployment augmentations. They were bloodied at Fort William Henry before seeing action at Québec in 1759, Sainte Foy in 1760, Martinique in 1761-62, and Havana in 1762, before being sent to Florida in July 1763. By August 1765, the regiment numbered just ninety-two rank-and-file. It was reported in the *Scots Magazine* that of the 1000 men who had left Ireland in 1756, only forty returned, a casualty rate comparable or worse than that suffered by the 77th and 78th Foot. The 17th Foot left Ireland in 1757 and was at Louisbourg in 1758, Ticonderoga in 1759, Martinique, and Havana, and like the 42nd and 77th was dispatched to the frontier during Pontiac's rebellion. By June 1763, it was down to eight officers and sixty-eight men. It returned to Britain in skeletal form in 1767 having already seen most of its best troops transferred to battalions remaining in America.⁷¹ Established English regiments of the line suffered as horrifically as the Highland regiments when deployed on similar service.

⁷⁰ Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Clans of the Great Glen* (London: Methuen, 1984), p. 144; Ian H. Adams and Meredyth Somerville, *Cargoes of Hope and Despair* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1997), p. 142; Calloway, *White People, Indians, and Highlanders*, p. 95.

⁷¹ Mark Frederick Odintz, 'The British Officer Corps, 1754-1783' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 1988), pp. 113-27; TNA, CO5/582, f.107, Major William Forbes to Welbore Ellis, 29 Jan. 1764; TNA, WO12/4949, ff. 41-9, Returns, Aug. 1765; TNA, WO12/3405, ff. 78-90, Returns, Jun. 1763.

IV IMPERIAL SAVAGERY

High losses in North America help reveal a salient feature of war in the colonies: the savagery with which it was conducted. Lurid accounts of brutality were a staple of contemporary commentaries and continue to fascinate modern readers.⁷² The colonial environment supposedly led to an ‘American way of war’, which was distinct to European methods and in which one central feature was savagery. The North American environment, it was believed, was a corrupter of values that could reduce even civilized nations to barbarity. Lt Malcolm Fraser of the 78th Foot, who participated in the Québec campaign of 1759, believed that members of the provincial *Goreham’s Rangers* were ‘worse than savage’ for killing a man and two boys they had taken prisoner: ‘[T]his barbarous action proceeded from that cowardice and barbarity which seems so natural to a native of America, whether of Indian or European extraction.’⁷³ As Jill Lepore has argued, the brutality of King Philip’s War in the 1670s was inspired, in part, by the colonists’ fear of losing their ‘Englishness’ to the savage environment, prompting a war of extermination to expunge the Natives from their collective consciousness.⁷⁴ The impact of location on all manner of human and animal functions was a view shared by leading intellectuals in the eighteenth-century Atlantic World. Thomas Jefferson and the Comte de Buffon would famously challenge each other on the effects of North America

⁷² Stephen Brumwell, *White Devil: A True Story of War, Savagery, and Vengeance in Colonial America* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004).

⁷³ *Extract from a Manuscript Journal relating to the Siege of Quebec in 1759, kept by Colonel Malcolm Fraser Then Lieutenant of the 78th and serving in that Campaign*, p. 6.

⁷⁴ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), p. 112.

on the size of wildlife; both accepted, however, that environmental factors were responsible.⁷⁵

One hundred years after King Philip's War, environment was less of a central factor in the conduct of North American warfare. What made American warfare different was its imperial nature, based on assumed imperatives, societal perceptions, and expediency. The savagery of military action against non-white minorities (as they were understood by Anglo-Americans in the period) rested more on a complicated set of socio-political perceptions than the environment in which a society lived. While the two were never discrete, class distinctions, labour use, military mentality, and an assumed place on the stadial scale, were privileged as marks of civility. According to Scottish enlightenment thinkers, while environment was important, it was increasingly questioned as a reason for societal differences. David Hume dismissed the 'physical causes' of climate as of lesser importance than 'moral causes', maintaining that Scots and English differed in character despite similar climates.⁷⁶ Scottish thinkers still wrote about soil, terrain, climate, but were more willing to emphasize human drive to explain perceived differences in the ability to succeed.⁷⁷

As a result, Highland soldiers, like their Anglo-American counterparts, were predisposed to savagery in the new world. When contact with Native Americans exposed Europeans to different military values, Europeans escalated the brutality of

⁷⁵ Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia; written in the year 1781* (Paris, 1782), pp. 69-83; Gaye Wilson, 'Jefferson, Buffon, and the Mighty American Moose', *Monticello Newsletter*, 13 (2002): 1-3; for the use of North American deployments as a means of improving the horticulture of Scottish estates, see HL, LO4770, Alex Murray to the Earl of Loudoun, 21 Feb. 1756.

⁷⁶ David Hume, *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*, 2 vols. (London, 1772), I, 207-15.

⁷⁷ John Millar, *Observations Concerning the Distinctions of Rank in Society* (London, 1771), *passim*; for a more detailed discussion, see Chapter 6.

warfare to eradicate civilizations considered dangerous and a threat to established order.⁷⁸ This is not to say that savagery was purely North America, or even wholly imperial. War in Europe, in which one side was defined as savage, different, or a challenge to legitimate political or religious authority, had always been fought differently. There was clearly overlap, however, as imperial war, whether it was against Native Americans, colonists, Black slaves, or indeed rebellious Highlanders, necessitated a similar reading of these conflicts.⁷⁹

Many of the brutal actions carried out by Highlands soldiers might have occurred on most battlefields in the eighteenth century. Stephen Conway has clearly shown how soldiers' poor conduct resulted from material problems, poor pay, temptation, and from a general lack of regard for irregularities by junior officers, who ignored their men's actions for a variety of personal, professional, and political reasons.⁸⁰ A major disadvantage of the army's response to the rebellion was that it conflicted with the desire to win over the colonists rather than with the need to treat them as enemies to be subjected to imperial violence. '[F]orce does not Alter inclinations', General Robertson told his daughter on 15 September 1780 after the British victory at Camden and the advocacy of harsh methods usually only applied to private property.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Patrick M. Malone, *The Skulking Way of War: Technology and Tactics amongst the New England Indians* (Lanham: Madison, 1991), *passim*; Adam J. Hirsch, 'The collision of military cultures in seventeenth-century New England', *Journal of American History*, 74 (1988): 1187-1212.

⁷⁹ John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), *passim*; Ronald Dale Karr, '“Why Should you be so Furious?”: The Violence of the Pequot War', *Journal of American History*, 85 (1998): 876-909; Nicholas P. Canny, 'The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 30 (1973): 575-98.

⁸⁰ Stephen Conway, '“The Great Mischief Complain'd of”: Reflections on the Misconduct of British Soldiers in the Revolutionary War', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 47 (1990): 370-90.

⁸¹ Stephen Conway, 'To Subdue America: British Army Officers and the Conduct of the Revolutionary War', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 43 (1986): 381-407.

But it must also be admitted that imperially-based assumptions were vital to the expansion of savagery. Tactics rarely considered between established European nations were legitimated during the colonial wars in North America. Having led the expedition against the Cherokee in 1761 and, firmly believing in the ability of the army to resolve an internal crisis, James Grant advocated an approach to the American rebellion that had paid dividends in 1761: ‘Don’t flatter yourself with hopes of submission or accommodation, till the Americans are crushed or forced to terms ... treat them with severity and you’ll soon make them sick’. He had earlier argued for the burning of Philadelphia and noted, ‘Law subsides in a country where civil war subsists’.⁸² Relatives of Grant residing in the eastern Highlands wrote to him suggesting the destruction of the harvests to starve the rebels into submission, a policy previously carried out in the western Highlands, and, to an extent at Québec. For men like Grant, it was only too late that they realized the army alone could not solve the American rebellion.⁸³ Not all officers condoned overt violence. John Small suggested to the recently replaced American Secretary, the Earl of Dartmouth, on 26 January 1776, that naval methods employed during the Jacobite rebellions be used to prevent the landing of arms in the colonies by Dutch ships. But Highlanders recommended harsher methods with increasing frequency. Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling of the 42nd Foot became sick of the war and saw hard-line measures as the only solution to shortening it.⁸⁴ The threat to established order, as we will see in Chapter 5, was central to Gaelic conceptions of the

⁸² LoC, M 2267, reel 29, James Grant to John Harvey, 10 Aug. 1775 & 29 Nov. 1775.

⁸³ LoC, M 2267, reel 35, Robert Grant to James Grant, 29 Jun. 1777; LoC, M 2267, reel 29, Grant to unknown, 12 Oct. 1778.

⁸⁴ *Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, II, 413; NAS, GD24/1, f. 458, Thomas Stirling to Sir William Stirling, 3 Jul. 1777.

American rebellion and prompted the legitimization of certain methods, given the threat to order that the rebellion created.

A presumption of inferiority in ethnic minorities was also responsible for the savagery of imperial war. For the majority of Highlanders, including those who fought in North America, the Indians were ‘savages’. The superiority of the Gael over the Native American was political, ethnic, societal, and sexual. Donald Cameron wrote in 1762 of passing his time in Halifax by taking ‘squaws’ into the woods. He joked that he would probably leave his Scottish family some ‘savages’ as relatives in America. At the siege of Louisbourg in 1758, a naked Native American warrior was shot through the groin by a Highland soldier. Having been buried, he was dug up and dragged through the encampment to the delight of some soldiers who were ‘passing their jokes upon it [the hole through the groin]’. James Thompson reported of this incident that it was thought by the Canadian women that he had been dug up to be cannibalized, though, in an irony probably missed by the author, they were assured that the Highlanders ‘lived the same as other civilized people’.⁸⁵

The 2/42nd Foot participating in the capture of Guadeloupe in 1761, during which time vicious tactics were employed to defeat the slaves who had been armed by their French owners in order to defend the island. In one instance in February, ‘a body of armed Negroes had concealed themselves in the canes, and from thence annoyed the troops’. In response, British troops ‘set fire to the several corners of the field, and

⁸⁵ Roderick Mackenzie, *Strictures on Lt. Col. Tarleton’s History of the Campaigns ... of North America* (London, 1787), p. 181; *Scotland and the Americas, c.1650-1939: A Documentary Source Book*, ed. Allan I. MacInnes, Marjory D. Harper and Linda G. Fryer (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 2002), p. 108; BAnQ, P450, James Thompson Journal, 5, pp. 44-5.

burn[ed] the Negroes and the canes'.⁸⁶ Montgomery's expedition against the Cherokee in 1760 was conducted with equal venom and official reports suggest the 77th Foot destroyed 388 hamlets or cultivations up to September 1760, an average of more than two a day. In his journal, Amherst recorded his approval of Montgomery's methods, noting it was 'the greatest stroke the Indians have felt'.⁸⁷ Even biological warfare seems to have been employed, and justified, with more frequency than the infamous use of smallpox by Jeffrey Amherst suggests.⁸⁸ The very fact of such cruelty demonstrated a Highland interaction with British values.

The advocacy of such measures was the product of investing the Highland regiments with a monopoly, or at least a legitimacy of violence. Armed with the superiority of violence, Highland soldiers became agents of the state within an imperial sphere. Furthermore, as Highland contacts with the imperial state were largely through the medium of military service, their natural reaction to internal problems was defined by military responses. The result was a one-dimensional view of the empire and a legitimization of violence in its defence. The violent agency of Highland soldiers also challenged the imagined hierarchy of the Atlantic world. Violence was an essential way of defining hierarchy and Highland soldiers could interact with local populations in an arrogant and sometimes brutal manner. In April 1778, Archibald Campbell had to issue a special order to his battalion, the 2/71st Foot, reporting that he:

⁸⁶ Mante, *History of the Late War*, p. 177.

⁸⁷ John Knox, *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760*, ed. Arthur G. Doughty, 3 vols. (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1914), II, 519; III, 85.

⁸⁸ Elizabeth A. Fenn, 'Biological Warfare in Eighteenth-Century North America: Beyond Jeffrey Amherst', *Journal of American History*, 86 (2000): 1552-80.

Can hardly give credit to the justness of the complaints that have been reportedly made to him of the irregular and unmilitary conduct of the soldiers of the 71st regt quartered near the south shore of this island [Staten Island] so opposite to the wanted and well deserved reputation acquired by the national troops to which the[y] belong.⁸⁹

The previous night, one hundred men of the regiment had robbed fishing nets belonging to the local inhabitants and, when challenged, had beaten several individuals before threatening to kill them, using their bayonets as knives. This was not an isolated incident in the battalion and Campbell directed that officers were to visit the encampment every night to prevent further incidents.⁹⁰

A sense of the bitter actions that typified North American warfare may be found in a report penned by an officer of the 84th Foot, shortly after his return from a dawn raid in June 1779. A detachment of the 84th Foot was ordered to Caughnauga to take two Indians, who were known to be sympathetic to the rebels, prisoner. Leaving Montreal, the party arrived in the village shortly before daybreak. With dawn fast approaching, Lt. Maclean and four soldiers forced entry into a house from the front, while a similar section went in through the back door. Inside, they found only women, children, and an old man. According to the report, the inhabitants told Mclean that if he wanted to find the men, he should do so himself. Without the light of day, Mclean was unwilling to risk a search of the upper level of the house, instead attempting to coax down any who might be upstairs, with erroneous words explaining through an interpreter that the men's fathers

⁸⁹ HL, HM617, Orderly Book of the 2/71st Foot, 22 Apr. 1778.

⁹⁰ For the use of violence against colonists during the Seven Years' War, see HL, AB457, James Abercromby to Simon Fraser, 19 Jul. 1758.

and the tribal chiefs wished to see them. Getting no response, Mclean waited until the light was sufficient before proceeding upstairs; as he did so and with his escort in another room, when he was attacked by men with 'knives and tomahawks'. They were fought off in a confused scuffle. Not willing to be arrested, however, and with the 84th men almost on them, the assailants seized hold of their firearms and directed several shots at Mclean and his men. One soldier was hit 'two or three' times in rapid succession. In the crowded confines of the house, the Highlanders returned fire, hitting both Indians, one 'just a dying' in front of them. The other, severely wounded, jumped from the window into the yard, severely injuring himself further. With the detachment's objective apparently met, one assailant dead, the other dying in the yard, 'In this situation we left them and marched off,' Mclean reported, 'Carrying our wounded man'.⁹¹

There was a developing fascination among Highlanders with imperial exoticism. Alexander Farqharson sent a letter from Oswego to the eastern Highlands in August 1760, in which he reported he had 'a few shells & other Indian Curiosities' to deliver to Lady Stair. Contained in the letter was also:

A small Indian present, which I got here, A French Indian scalp, and as it can add no great weight to this letter, I hope small as it is, you will accept it. I have several large ones which are rather too bulky to transmit in this manner, but I hope to bring those myself.⁹²

⁹¹ LAC, MG23 K1, Lt. Mclean's report, Jun. 1779.

⁹² NRAS61, Alexander Farqharson to John Farqharson, 8 Aug. 1760.

Farquharson most probably had not participated in the act of scalping, but had acquired several examples and was keen that his relatives enjoyed such curiosities. Chaplain Robert Macpherson invoked scalping in complaining of the laurels the Highland regiments were reaping in Germany in 1761. He reported that if ‘our scalpers’ had been in Germany the 87th and 88th Foot ‘would be no more spoken of’. Implicit in Macpherson’s letter was the idea that the regiments in America had become scalpers by virtue of their theatre of service and that imperial wars in the colonies were being forgotten next to events in central Germany.⁹³ In effect, whether it was fascination with Indian curiosities or the lack of attention devoted to their own prowess, Highland soldiers were defining themselves by their association with savage warfare. One of the most revealing of these links is the portrait of Hugh Montgomery, twelfth Earl of Eglinton, in the National Gallery of Scotland, by or after J.S. Copley, c.1780-1790. Montgomery had served in the 77th during the Cherokee expedition, but went on to serve in the prestigious 1st Foot, was Lt. Col. of the Argyll Fencibles, three times MP for Ayrshire and Inspector of Military Roads in Scotland from 1789. Nevertheless, the backdrop Montgomery chose for the martial portrait of himself in Highland garb, was the burning of a Cherokee village in 1760.⁹⁴ By the 1780s, imperial savagery had become a positively defining enterprise in a way that it had not been when the regiments were first embodied in the 1750s.

⁹³ LoC, M 2267, reel 47, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761.

⁹⁴ Major A. McK Annad, ‘Hugh Montgomerie, 12th Earl of Eglinton, K.T.’, *JSAHR*, 39 (1961): 37-40.

V CONCLUSIONS

The culture of war in the Highland regiments was defined by imperial perceptions and professionalization. They sought status within the imperial sphere, a demand which led to an embracing of professional skill and imperial savagery. This was a transformative experience for the young officers and soldiers of the Highland regiments as they were handed a superiority of violence over peoples in far-flung parts of the empire. If domestically the Highlander was exposed to cultural assumptions of Gaelic inferiority, on the North American continent, they were, as soldiers, offered full licence to expressions of agency, martial identity, masculinity, and conquest of subordinate peoples.

Gaelic military exceptionalism did exist, but it did not originate in an innate Highland capacity for war. Gaelic military exceptionalism rested on the assumptions attributed to the cultural group. Highlanders and non-Highlanders alike continued to invest the regiments with distinct attributes even when their socio-economic origins and their functioning as soldiers were analogous to the experiences of other British troops. It helped create the conditions for the highlighting of differences in military culture. The direct experience of warfare in North America cannot be disconnected from the development of martial imagery in the Scottish Highlands. His military experiences, made him in the eyes of others, a distinct and exceptional character. It was this that allowed him to be later moulded to suit the imagery of the noble savage imperial Highland soldier, despite all evidence to the contrary.

CHAPTER 3

IMPERIAL WAR AND THE CONTRACTUAL BASIS OF MILITARY SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

The social make-up of the Highland regiments emerged primarily from the utility of military service as a means of economic security. The most significant change to the historiography of the Highland soldier, in recent years, has been the rationalization of motives for raising the regiments. Military service was a lucrative diversification of estate economies, only marginally different to other commercial improvements. The army was conceived of as a normal means of securing private interest. In characterizing, however, regional involvement in the fiscal-military state as no more than an extension of personal, familial or estate interest, historians miss the opportunity to confront the significant demands engendered by military service. Indeed, the impact of these experiences are explicitly dismissed on the correct, but misunderstood, basis that short-term regiments ensured that no permanent regimental culture existed to inculcate military life and corporate identity into the men who enlisted.¹ As a consequence of this interpretive framework, an incongruity has emerged in recent literature. The hierarchical nature of the army and Highland society has meant that deference and a strong attachment to superior officers remains important in accounting for social relations in the early Highland regiments. At the same time, the role of coercion as a facilitating factor in recruitment is increasingly emphasized, being placed awkwardly alongside the

¹ Mackillop, 'For King, Country and Regiment?', pp. 188-91.

antithetical assumption that, '[t]he bond between a Highlander and his officer was ... closer than the relationship between the English soldier and his superiors', and that 'such men shared a common culture and heritage'.²

Citing the motivational and cultural bonds between officers and their men engages a long tradition in regimental historiography. Its leading advocate was David Stewart of Garth and his *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1822), a text which would become the foundation of the stereotype of the Highlander as a martial race in the nineteenth century. Garth, a Highland officer in the 42nd Foot who had served since 1787, tellingly interwove the history, language, and customs of the Highlands with accounts of the Highland regiments. Amongst a plethora of exaggerations concerning the martial prowess of the Highland soldier, Garth explained that a mythical force 'spurred on the Highlanders to follow their chieftains to the cannon's mouth'.³ Later historians are more nuanced, but describe variations on this theme - the direct and personal nature of regimental recruiting in the Highlands and the affinity promoted between respective ranks by a shared cultural context.

In doing so, however, there was an unquestionable lack of adequate contextual awareness of the environment in which Garth's evidence originated. The dominant emotional motif of *Sketches of the Character* was one of steady decline, from what Garth saw as the pure Highland regiments of the mid-eighteenth century to the ethnically varied

² Brumwell, *Redcoats*, p. 281.

³ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 54-5; James Irvine Roberston, *The First Highlander: Major-General David Stewart of Garth CB* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1998), pp. 86-7.

and inferior soldier of the 1820s. That this decline had taken place within two generations made Garth's critique of social change clear and present.⁴ Garth's narrative necessitated the invention of an idealized Highland society, one in which martial prowess and military culture had underpinned all social, political, and economic functions. As the clan system had provided warriors on the basis of hierarchy, Garth's understanding of the Highland warrior was predicated on deference and hierarchy, as well as on pure martial spirit. But as well as engaging Gaelic concepts of social order, Garth's invention of the Highlander mirrored contemporary historicism. In constructing a narrative of declension, Garth adhered to the model set out by Edward Gibbon, in making Tacitean claims about the emasculation of martial strength through social change.⁵ Garth's reading of Highland social order was, therefore, tied to these two mutually reinforcing intellectual traditions: a Gaelic tradition which stressed hierarchy as the basis for good social order and an enlightenment concern with the weakening of martial strength. Revealingly, Garth also shared with Gibbon the proposition that religion was a major cause of this degeneracy, though Garth did not attribute the problem to religion *per se*, but to 'fanaticism' which 'tend[ed] to the most deplorable results in the Highlands', in promoting a culture of disbelief in superiors and a lack of respect more generally. This ahistoric reading of Highland social order has coloured popular perceptions of the region and its people throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

⁴ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the highlanders of Scotland*, I, 126.

⁵ Arthur Quinn, 'Meditating Tacitus: Gibbon's Adaption to an Eighteenth Century Audience', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70 (1984): 53-68; Gareth Sampson, 'The Rise and Fall of the Roman Historian: The Eighteenth Century in the Roman Historical Tradition' in *Reinventing History: The Enlightenment Origins of Ancient History*, ed. James Moore, Ian Macgregor Morris and Andrew Bayliss (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2008), pp. 187-218.

This ahistoricism is, perhaps, understandable, given that the original letters of Highland officers in the period also contained narrative constructions. Elite accounts were prejudicial. The advantages of securing access to the public purse of the fiscal-military state rested on convincing the government, particularly the Secretary at War, that enlisting men was within the personal capacities of Highland elites. All Highland regiments during this period, the 42nd Foot excepted, were raised for rank during times of war, meaning that elites were commissioned to rank on the basis of recruiting a set number of men, risking having their commissions revoked if they were unable to secure the requisite number. Pressure to fill quotas and local competition for the finite number of military commissions was inevitably fierce and prompted wild hyperbole on the part of families seeking commissions. Ranald Macdonnell of Keppoch flattered himself in a letter to Lord Barrington that ‘I have so much the command of men’. The justification of appointing three men with no prior military experience as captains in the *Royal Highland Emigrants* was made based on their ‘great Weight & Influence with the Emigrants’.⁶ In internal discussions, Highland elites were much more sanguine about the limits of their recruiting abilities and this rare honesty should be remembered.⁷

This chapter is a re-evaluation of social relations within the early Highland regiments and an analysis of the role of imperial military service in those relationships. The Highland military experience was not based on personal or traditional bonds, but on contractual obligations. The structural tradition of military service in the Highlands led

⁶ Quoted in Prebble, *Mutiny*, p. 101; TNA, T1/520, f. 37, List of Field Officers and Captains of the *Royal Highland Emigrants*, 10 Jul. 1776.

⁷ See the discussion between Mackenzie of Seaforth and Lord Macdonald of Sleat quoted in Cookson, *The British Armed Nation*, p. 131.

to the eighteenth-century British army being viewed as a labour-market, where men protected their value as labourers, forming a market-orientated definition of rights and duties. As service was based on market-valued contractual obligations, far from dictating stronger bonds of traditional kinship, enlistment provided the impetus for the questioning of these traditional ties. Highland men were unlikely to view their officers as cultural leaders when that leadership depended on a strict adherence to their obligations. The propensity of Highland soldiers to mutiny suggests just how seriously the protection of rights was taken.⁸

What do we mean by a market-orientated definition of labour rights? Markets, either in labour or produce, had a powerfully transformative impact on the development of social relations and political rights, providing the ideological impetus for the development of a moral economy of the poor. The demand for soldiers created a military labour market in which enlisted men understood their own moral economy and what their rights and obligations toward their officers entailed.⁹ This was not a value system innately hostile to markets and capitalist forces. Like many dispossessed poor in eighteenth-century Britain, Highlanders embraced the market because a value was placed upon their labour.¹⁰ It did not also mean a 'crass economic reductionism' or mercenary

⁸ G.M. Fraser, *The Strathspey Mutineers: A History of the First Highland Fencible Regiment, 1793-1799* (Kinloss: Librario, 2003), *passim*.

⁹ E.P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 50 (1971): 76-136; see also the development of Thompson's ideas in E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: Merlin, 1991), pp. 259-351; for a review of the impact of Thomson's moral economy on historians, see *Moral Economy and Popular Protest: Crowds, Conflict, and Authority*, ed. Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), *passim*.

¹⁰ Dale E. Williams 'Morals, Markets and the English Crowd in 1766', *Past and Present*, 104 (1984): 70.

attitude, however.¹¹ The commodifying of labour resulted in a sophisticated reading of rights which was not static or tradition-bound. Military labour was a national market within a pan-British moral economy. This market strained pre-existent local assumptions as men selectively reconstructed the paternalist obligations they felt they were owed by elites. Indeed, as this chapter will argue, it was exposure to a national market of military labour that defined the most intimate dynamics of the supposedly unique Highland regiments. This interpretation of a moral economy of the poor, which became increasingly assertive during the century, fits with current understandings of social divisions within late eighteenth-century Scotland. Social tensions ran deep and the paternalistic attitudes of elites were a fearful response to the lower orders, not the benevolent re-orientation of elite rule.¹²

This chapter will begin by questioning the overly positive representations of the officer class that have existed in accounts of the Highland battalions and will demonstrate the significant structural barriers to such relations. This is not to say that the enlisted Highlander was the victim of a pitiless officer class. Soldiers expressed genuine attachment to commanders who demonstrated uncommon bravery and shared their privations.¹³ But Highland battalions reflected assumed social roles, creating theoretical barriers to personal bonds that were enforced by all sections of the regiments. Subjective discussions of the personal qualities of Highland officers are misleading, for their

¹¹ *Markets, Market Culture, and Popular Protest in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, ed. Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), p. 5.

¹² Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Toward Industrialization* (Manchester: MUP, 2000), p. 205; Val Honeyman, ‘“A Very Dangerous Place”?: Radicalism in Perth in the 1790s’, *SHR*, 87 (2008): 278-305.

¹³ Tabitha Marshall, ‘The Health of the British Soldier in America, 1775-1781’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McMaster University, 2006), p. 73; for one soldier’s view of Charles Cornwallis see Roger Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences During the Late American War* (Dublin, 1809), p. 381.

assumed roles and responsibilities created a form of paternalism, with as much potential for abuses as benevolence.

A contractual dimension to Highland militarism is not a new concept and has been highlighted with great sophistication.¹⁴ The assumption that military service was an extension of civilian norms needs, however, to be elaborated and qualified. Enlistment in the regular army for the Highland male was to enter an entirely alien world. He may have conceptualized his service as a labour-market, but the civilian character of Highland identity was exposed to the hard reality of military life. What needs to be added to the narrative of contractual service is the effect of war in the service of the British state on established notions of military life. What needs to be added is the moral and cultural dimension to military labour. The agency of the Highland soldier consisted of his increasing ability to negotiate as a minor partner in the relations created by a national fiscal-military state. As a result, military service exacerbated the tensions produced by deteriorating social cohesion in the Highlands and led to the adoption of a language of rights that was not simply traditional, but consistent with an exposure to the political discourses of a wider British polity. Highland soldiers not only articulated their rights with greater sophistication, but recognized the contexts in which those rights could be defended, to ensure that the value of their military labour was maintained, or even enhanced.

¹⁴ Mackillop, 'For King, Country and Regiment?', pp. 185-211.

I STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS

The Highland battalions were often typified by mutual distrust and hostility between officers and the rank-and-file. The two most obvious examples of this hostility, coercive recruitment and mutiny, do have an existing scholarship and do not require much elaboration here. What does need to be questioned is the degree to which Highland officers had a direct and intimate connection with their men. This assumption is entirely undermined by the distribution patterns of the Highland regiments which we saw in Chapter 1. In one company of the 71st Foot, recruitment covered an area of over 12,000 square miles. A muster roll of the 42nd Foot from 1751 shows similarly widespread distributions.¹⁵ On campaign, many officers found themselves in possession of substantial sums of money owed to dead soldiers, awaiting their networks of correspondence in the Highlands to identify relatives.¹⁶ In addition, as we have seen, the effective running of an estate was not always conducive to military recruitment. In order to avoid removing valuable labour from a patron's estate, officers might target neighbouring areas where they were often 'troublesome' and reliant on coercive measures in the absence of any social leverage.¹⁷ Lieutenant Colin Campbell, based in Perthshire in 1780, asked his father not to repeat to anyone that he was deeply distrustful of his men. While unwilling to elaborate in writing, Campbell believed the spread of such rumours would make it 'very dangerous for me if they [the recruits] should know

¹⁵ NAS, GD44/47/1, f. 2, Muster roll of Maxwell's and Skelly's company, 14 Jan. 1776; JRL, BAG/5/3, f. 6, Muster roll of the 42nd Foot, [1751].

¹⁶ LoC, MMC British Army in America Collection, 1759-1782, f. 1, Captain Archibald Campbell to Baillie Lochnell, 15 Jan. 1759.

¹⁷ LoC, M 2267, reel 38, Robert Grant to James Grant of Grant, 12 Jan. 1778.

that I had the least suspicion of them'.¹⁸ Under these conditions, it is highly unlikely that officers would have possessed an intimate knowledge of the majority of their men, and the methods employed to bring men into the army was hardly conducive to loyalty and affection.

If there was distrust amongst officers of the common men's attitudes towards soldiering, it was fully reciprocated by the rank-and-file. Highland regiments had a reputation for mutiny, with five major cases in regular regiments between 1743 and 1783. Highland mutinies generally began with a rumour that promises made by officers were not to be honoured. A letter by an observer of the 77th Foot mutiny in Portsmouth in 1783, mentioned that 'they [the mutineers] believed their officers had bartered them away' to the East India Company. The rumour, erroneous or not, had begun when it was revealed that many of the officers would not be accompanying the men overseas.¹⁹ The high level of officer absenteeism, particularly when regiments were sent abroad, could hardly have inspired confidence amongst the rank-and-file. Highland regiments which were raised for rank, owing to the desire of officers to advance through acts of bravery in combat, tended to suffer absenteeism to a lesser degree than other regiments. That said, in the 42nd Foot which was on the permanent establishment, absenteeism ran at one in

¹⁸ NAS, GD170/1090, f. 38, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 8 Jan. 1780.

¹⁹ [Anon.], *Athol Highlanders: The Following Account is taken from the Public Newspapers published in 1783; And is sufficient to demonstrate that the Whole force of Government is incompetent to compel the Soldiers of a single Scots Regiment, to Surrender to their Officers, or any Body of Men whatever their Rights and Liberties* (London, 1783), p. 4; the mutiny took place when the 77th Foot, who had enlisted to serve for the duration of the American war, were marched to be embarked after the cessation of hostilities, leading to the conclusion that they were to be used in the East Indies. The regiment was pardoned and marched to Berwick and disbanded, a rare instance of violent collective action being met with sympathy.

three, a comparable rate to other British regiments.²⁰ From Fort Pitt in 1763, Henry Bouquet complained to the commander-in-chief of North America, Jeffrey Amherst, that the 42nd Foot was suffering discipline problems due to the number of officers on leave, and that he had to prevent decommissioned officers from returning home due to the shortage.²¹ In a detachment of the 71st Foot at New York in mid-1783, just four officers and the regimental chaplain commanded ten companies.²²

The conclusion reached about officer absenteeism by mutinous Highland soldiers reveals much about their opinions of their officers at such critical junctures. In the case of the 77th Foot at Portsmouth, when it was insisted that the soldiers embark on the transports, they violently beat their lieutenant colonel and several other officers. The city of Edinburgh experienced four separate mutinies in the space of thirteen months in 1778-79, all of which were accompanied by violence toward superior officers. The mutiny of the 78th Foot in the city in September 1778 was no different. While no officer was killed in the disturbances, the mutineers had fired shots at several officers and threatened to kill Kenneth Mackenzie, first Earl of Seaforth, the man responsible for raising the regiment. One of their major grievances was the frequent recourse to corporal punishment, used by officers of the regiment. With officers normally possessing the monopoly of violence, the rank-and-file took steps to ensure they maintained some form of protection. In the year leading up to its mutiny in Portsmouth, the 77th Foot lost twenty-two swords, sixty-

²⁰ TNA, WO12/5479, f. 168, 42nd Foot returns, Dec. 1785-Jun. 1786; Odintz, 'The British Officer Corps', p. 29.

²¹ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, VI, 436, 454; for the rise in applications for leave when regiments were sent abroad, see NAS, GD248/56/4, f. 55, A.P. Cumming to James Grant of Grant, 2 Aug. 1779.

²² TNA, WO12/7847, 71st Foot returns, Jun. 1783.

six bayonets and twenty muskets due to desertion.²³ Some officers, such as Captain George Mackenzie of the 78th Foot, came to the Highland regiments from service in other regiments, sometimes bringing with them an elitist, but fully reciprocated, contempt of the private soldier. Their harsher methods in dealing with private soldiers were often imitated by the young and impressionable Highland officers of their battalions.²⁴

Violence and coercion were extreme cases, but structural organization while on active service was the most telling factor in preventing close connections between the ranks. Bennett Cuthbertson, who was a leading authority on the management of infantry battalions conceded that in sparsely populated areas a battalion could be distributed over a seven mile radius, making it next to impossible for officers to keep a close eye on their men. Chaplain Robert Macpherson was only required to visit various detachments of the 78th Foot every two to three months over the winter of 1761-62, there being over 80 miles between his quarters and the furthest detachment. General orders at Montreal in the same period required captains to visit their companies just once a week.²⁵ Alternatively, some procedures were deliberately followed to prevent overly close relations. Captain Robert Grant stated that just prior to his regiment, the 77th Foot, being dispatched to North America in 1757 all the officers were transferred from those companies to which they had first belonged, a policy that prevented men serving under the officers that had recruited them.²⁶

²³ LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to George Macpherson, 25 Sept. 1778; BCA, Mss. 345, 77th Foot returns, [1782].

²⁴ Prebble, *Mutiny*, pp. 113-16.

²⁵ Cuthbertson, *Cuthbertson's System*, p. 36; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761; BCA, Mss. 259, Thomas Gage to Gordon Graham, 1 Oct. 1760.

²⁶ NAS, GD248/507/3, f. 62, Robert Grant to John Grant, 1 May 1757.

A different system prevailed in most regiments. The 42nd Foot transferred enlisted men between companies, transferring 58 men in November 1757. The regular transfer of large numbers of men from one company to another was also a feature of the 84th Foot's service during the American War for Independence. Captain Alexander Macdonald's company of that regiment, while stationed at Halifax in 1778, underwent frequent transfers of personnel. At any one time, a fifth of Macdonald's troops had been under his command for less than six months.²⁷ These transfers were structurally essential. The very integrity of the battalion, both on the march and on the battlefield, depended upon the ability of the formation to adapt to the losses and inconsistencies that were inevitable on campaign. The equal distribution of firepower, being delivered by volleys from various platoons in the line of battle, necessitated the near equal distribution of manpower to prevent weak points in the line. If Humphrey Bland's directions for platoon firings had been followed, the equalization of companies would have been less tactically necessary, the platoon being a distinct tactical body, differing from the administrative body of the company.²⁸ But the broken nature of the terrain in North America rarely offered clear opportunities for platoon firing. At Bushy Run, for instance, fought by troops of the 42nd and 77th Foot on 5-6 August 1763, it seems clear that the company served as the basic tactical unit in the battle.²⁹ That said, some companies

²⁷ BCA, Mss. 259, 42nd Foot returns, Nov. 1757; TNA, WO12/8741, 84th Foot returns, 1779; PARO, Acc. 2737, ff. 2-10, 84th Foot returns, 2 Sept. 1778.

²⁸ General Bland's work was the most influential tactical and administrative treatise of the eighteenth century, and was reprinted at least seven times, Humphrey Bland, *A treatise of military discipline; in which is laid down and explained the duty of the officer and soldier* (London, 1727), p. 65; Bennett Cuthbertson, *Cuthbertson's System, for the Compleat Interior Management and œconomy of a Battalion of Infantry* (Bristol, 1776), pp. 18-19.

²⁹ Don Daudelin, 'Numbers and Tactics at Bushy Run', *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 68 (1985): 172.

transferred men for no numerical advantage, suggesting that something more than equalization for tactical effectiveness was influencing the minds of officers.³⁰

Officer losses and turnover further undermined an important connection with their men. Less than a quarter of the officers of the 42nd Foot who began the 1777 campaign remained with the regiment in 1782. Over a four year period, from 1778-1782, the 42nd Foot saw a turnover of sixty per cent of its company commanders.³¹ As early as 1771, Lord John Murray had to request a formalized list of all the officers of the 42nd Foot, ‘as so many new ones have come into the regiment and many changes [have taken place]’.³² There were a small number of men, such as drummer Thomas Carroll of the 71st Foot who served under Captain Francis Skelly for the entire length of the War of American Independence. Such individuals were only ever a minority, however, and a sample of names in various regimental returns suggest an almost complete turnover of enlisted men from 1776 to 1783, though the multiplicity of Highland names make firm conclusions difficult. By the end of the war, some soldiers who were prisoners with the rebels were being listed in the returns without their Christian names, there being probably no officer who remembered who they were.³³ The rigours of campaigning and the interior management of battalions in relatively inactive wartime garrisons resulted in such a high turnover of both officers and men, that establishing close relationships between company officers and their commands was a difficult, bordering on impossible, task.

³⁰ See Murdoch MacLaine’s company of the 84th Foot, PARO, Acc. 2737, f. 10, 84th Foot returns, 24 Aug. 1778.

³¹ TNA, WO12/5479, ff. 1-10, 169, 42nd Foot returns, June 1777-June 1786; BCA, Mss.342-343, 42nd Foot returns, 1778-1782.

³² JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 71, Lord John Murray to Major Stirling, 30 March 1771.

³³ TNA, WO12/7847, 71st Foot returns, Jun. 1783.

If distrust combined with structural and operational requirements diluted the bonds within Highland regiments what of the shared cultural and regional identity of Highland soldiers? Regional identity was an important part of combat motivation. Yet it would be wrong to assume that such identities necessarily bound leaders and led. If there was a shared cultural bond between Highland-born officers and privates, then the Gaelic language should have provided the most powerful example of this. Evidence suggests, however, that this most salient of indicators was not shared, and reflected the different origins of privates and commissioned officers. The Highland gentry, from which the officer class was drawn, was largely educated outside the Highlands and prided itself on knowledge of historical and philosophical works, not Gaelic oral tradition. Chaplain Robert Macpherson of the 78th Foot, who administered to the regiment in Gaelic, judged the officers in his mess on their ‘liberal education’, reserving particular praise for Captain Alexander Campbell, who was, ‘universally knowing in ancient and modern literature’. Educated officers were keen to display their knowledge of thinkers such as John Locke and explicit comparisons of themselves to historical figures were more liked to be made to men such as Xenophon than Gaelic or Scottish heroes.³⁴ Indeed, the use of classical and modern historical analogies by one Highland officer in his analysis of Banastre Tarleton’s *History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces* (London, 1787) was judged by an unsympathetic officer of the British Legion to have

³⁴ LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761; NAS, GD146/18, f. 6, Charles Robertson’s Letterbook, p. 1, [1779]; LoC, M 2267, reel 28, Robert Grant to James Grant, 25 Mar. 1752.

been an attempt to ‘bewilder our judgement’.³⁵ Many officers lacked the linguistic skills to converse in Gaelic and supporters of the language found it abhorrent that positions of authority within the regiments should be inhabited by men who spoke no Gaelic; ‘Was there ever so gross an insult offered to a community,’ was how one Gael perceived the problem.³⁶

Sergeant James Thompson used Gaelic to explain the misapprehension of Highland soldiers about military service, and their misunderstanding of the orders of superiors. When Highlanders breached discipline, or could not comprehend a given order, Thompson attributed it to their incomprehension of English, emphasizing a linguistic divide between officers and their men. Instructions given to officers of the *Royal Highland Emigrants* in 1777 demanded that all orders be read to the men and explained in the case of those who did not understand English.³⁷ Where Gaelic was employed by officers, it was often to control dissent. Even a fluent grasp of Gaelic, however, did not guarantee the silencing of complaints. Major Alexander Donaldson, who commanded the 76th Foot in 1778, used Gaelic to harangue soldiers who objected to the levels of stoppages. When that failed, Donaldson instead relied on other methods, a court martial and the flogging of the ringleader.³⁸ Captain John Grant, who happened to be in Edinburgh during the mutiny of the 78th Foot in September 1778, reported to General Philip Skene, that ‘Being a Highlander I thought I might have some influence

³⁵ George Hanger, *An Address to the Army in Reply to Strictures by Roderick Mackenzie (late Lieutenant in the 71st Regiment) on Tarleton’s History* (London, 1789), p. 37.

³⁶ John Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War; Animadverting on the Late Mutinies in the Highland Regiments* (Edinburgh, 1780), pp. 18, 21, 29.

³⁷ BAnQ, P450 (microfilm), James Thompson Journal, 5, p. 34; LAC, MG23, Orders at Isle aux Noix for the Regiment of under John Nairne [*Royal Highland Emigrants*], 1777-8, pp. 9-10.

³⁸ Graham, *Memoirs of General Graham*, p. 12.

with these poor deluded men'. But Grant could not speak Gaelic, and failed to comprehend the soldiers' complaints until he dispatched his servant whose entreaties failed. The dispatch of Grant's servant might also have been motivated by the fact that several of the mutineers were discharging their weapons at any officer who came within musket shot.³⁹

Regional or cultural loyalty was a secondary consideration to many officers, as they sought to secure the most advantageous access to the fiscal-military state. Charles Campbell of the 71st Foot told his father that due to the costs involved, his only avenue for advancement in the army was through preferment, '[L]et it be in what corps, or what country it will'. Campbell noted that he would serve in the 'deserts of Arabia' if it meant promotion. For men like Campbell, the Highland regiments were only important in as much as they were officered on the basis of appointments or recruiting for rank, a cheaper commission than one secured through the purchase system.⁴⁰ For the overwhelming majority of elites, personal or familial interest trumped cultural loyalties. In 1775, Colonel Allan Maclean of Torloisk, a Jacobite veteran and a British officer since the amnesty of 1754, was given command of the disparate Loyalist corps, the *Royal Highland Emigrants*. Maclean found his commission an unappealing one, complaining that after over thirty years of military experience, 'I should find myself now only a [Lt. Col.] of American Provincials'. Officers in the *Royal Highland Emigrants* had no claim

³⁹ NAS, GD248/227/4, f. 33, John Grant to Philip Skene, 24 Sept. 1778; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to William Macpherson, 25 Sept. 1778.

⁴⁰ NRAS934/514, f. 2, Charles Campbell to father, [n.d.].

to rank in the army and no entitlement to half-pay and consequently petitioned Guy Carleton for vacancies in other ‘established corps’.⁴¹

An example of the complexities of regional identity, and the more pressing imperatives that overtook such identities, can be found in the experience of Chaplain Robert Macpherson of the 78th Foot. Macpherson, according to one historian ‘represented an intellectual focus for the oral traditions of the Highlands’, administered religious services to the men in Gaelic, and was apparently well-liked. But his post-war experiences reveal that ethnic sympathies were only ever partial. Macpherson requested the tacks of Aberarder and Tullochcrombe near Loch Laggan in Badenoch for his services during the war. The tacks were occupied by Ronald and Alexander Macdonald, Catholic *fir-taca* who had supported Charles Edward Stuart in 1745-46. On the basis of memorials submitted to the Court of Session and the House of Lords pertaining to their Catholicism, Macpherson received the tack at the same rent and immediately evicted over eighty tenants and cottars to convert the ground into a sheep-walk. Despite armed threats against him, letters of support from Lt. John Macpherson of Phones, who stated that the Macdonalds were excellent providers of recruits, and the foot-dragging of the Sherriff of Inverness and the Court of Session to issue eviction notices, nine farms were depopulated by Macpherson. It was the first clearance made for sheep in the central Highlands. The tenants ‘could hardly persuade themselves that the mildness of Government would allow fourscore honest highlanders to be turned adrift, without

⁴¹ *A Prime Minister and his Son: From the Correspondence of the 3rd Earl of Bute and of Lt. General the Hon. Sir Charles Stuart, K.B.*, ed. E. Stuart Wortley (London: E.P. Dutton, 1925), pp. 103-7; TNA, WO28/9, f. 65, Colin Campbell to Guy Carleton, 23 Jun. 1777; TNA, WO28/9, f. 229, Lachlan Maclean to Guy Carleton, 10 Sept. 1781.

having anywhere to go ... by a bachelor clergyman'. Macpherson cemented his hold over several other tacks in the area over the next few years, including nearby Gallovie, and even received a forty pound annual salary for 'preaching in the Irish language', but he was not successful as a farmer. The tack passed to a man Macpherson had brought onto the estate in around 1780, William Mitchell, an Ayrshire sheep-farmer who would briefly serve as the Duke of Gordon's factor. Recent accounts of Macpherson's role in the 78th Foot make no mention of these clearances, and his role in them suggests that support for the traditions of the Highlands did not preclude the altering of that society for private gain.⁴²

Much of what might have been considered as cultural identifiers which bound Gaels of all ranks together, had a much more practical utility, carefully noted by senior officers and theorists. The emphasis placed on Highland dress did not simply reflect a cultural interest, but was considered important to the interior operation of the battalion. Military uniforms were used as totemic objects, inculcating pride, courage, self-esteem, but also subordination. As Cuthbertson's tract made clear, 'once a soldier can be brought to take a delight in his dress, it will be easy to mould him to whatever else may be desired', throwing off 'the sullen, stubborn disposition which characterizes the peasants of most countries'.⁴³ Clothing was also deeply connected to modern commercial concerns, and to the balance of cost versus outcome. As concerned as Lord John Murray was over the aesthetic appearance of his men, he demanded that regimental equipment be

⁴² McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, II, 159-60; NAS, GD44/27/10, f. 197, John Garden to the Duke of Gordon, [1770]; Fraser Macintosh, 'The Depopulation of Aberarder in Badenoch, 1770', *Celtic Magazine*, 33 (1877): 418; William J. Ramsey, 'Construction, Contention and Clearance – Life in Eighteenth-Century Badenoch', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, 63 (2002-2004): 337-57.

⁴³ Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason* (London: Routledge, 1987), p. 100; Cuthbertson, *Cuthbertson's System*, pp. 107-9.

made out of the cheapest materials, at least until garrison duty in an urban centre such as Dublin exposed the men to the public sphere, and the potential to embarrass his reputation. The Deputy Adjutant-General of the Dublin garrison found in 1769 that the accoutrements of the regiment were 'extremely bad', though Murray refused to replace them, arguing that he had done so in 1767, and paid more towards their uniforms than English colonels.⁴⁴ This is not to suggest that officers such as Lord John Murray did not have a deeply engrained and genuine interest in Highland culture, but there was something distinctly contemporary about its use in the late eighteenth century. Highland officers were entirely rational in their primary aims of familial security and military discipline, but this was not always consistent with notions of cultural loyalty to the Highlands or to the Highland regiments.

II CONCEPTUAL DIVISIONS

Hierarchical tensions were unquestionably present in the Highland regiments. The importance of regimental tension, however, lies in what it says about the different assumptions concerning rights and responsibilities, which broadly defined social groups brought with them into the army. These assumptions were relevant to how people operated in the military, regardless of their unique individualism. For the officer class, military service was deeply connected to the assertion of gentlemanly status and elite masculinity. The actions of Highland officers cannot be explained without reference to

⁴⁴ JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 36, Lord John Murray to Gordon Graham, 18 Nov. 1767; JRL, BAG/5/1/44, Donald Grant to Gordon Graham, 12 Sept. 1769; JRL, BAG/5/1/49, Lord John Murray to William Montgomery, 31 Oct. 1769.

such masculine norms, which were pan-European and predicated on a code of honour and the essential quality of courage.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, Highland officers did have a unique social imperative within the Highland regiments, which provided an alternative reading of elite and gentlemanly status. This was the cultural importance attached to military service as a means of establishing status, position and cultural authority. The martial culture of the British army allowed access to a renewed form of Highland clanship. The bulk of lower-ranked Highland officers came from the middling sections of Highland society, the *fir-taca*. The transformation of Highland society in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had given rise to new attitudes toward commercial landlordism, and significant changes to social behaviour.⁴⁶ Commercial landlordism saw the low rents and security of tenure formerly enjoyed by the *fir-taca* under threat, and the collapse of his former role as the facilitator of military service. From the 1750s, the army not only provided a vital external income, but reinvigorated a lost connection to their former place in Highland society. As commissions were granted on the basis of patronage, networks of kinship were refigured in such a way that the illusion of clannish dependence was re-forged. Of the thirty-nine commissioned officers selected for the 77th Foot in 1756, twenty-six had no previous military service and had been recommended by relatives or patrons, and there was an assumed favouritism expected to be displayed by officers of the same

⁴⁵ Carr, 'The Gentleman and the Soldier: Patriotic Masculinities in Eighteenth-Century Scotland': 101-21; Scott N. Hendrix, 'The Spirit of the Corps: The British Army and the Pre-National Pan-European Military World and the Origins of American Martial Culture, 1755-1783' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 2005), *passim*.

⁴⁶ Douglas Watt, "'The laberinth of thir difficulties'": The influence of debt on the Highland elite, 1550-1700', *SHR*, 85 (2006): 28-51.

‘clan’.⁴⁷ Officers desired to see the Highland regiments as clan regiments; Lieutenant Donald Macdonald wrote to relatives in St John’s Island that ‘There are Regts. of Mcdonalds, Campbells, McKenzies, McLeods, Hamiltons, Gordons, Murrays ... raised in Scotland, in short ... every clan worth the mentioning.’ In 1777, Duncan Grant amused himself with the hope that one day there would be another war with the United States, so that his newly-born son might ‘carry the royal standard under one of his Chiefs’.⁴⁸ Clannishness in the regiments was no more than the operation of networks of patronage and, indeed, established English regiments were probably more clannish in the way long-serving colonels administered commissions to their clients.⁴⁹ But given the dramatic changes in Highland society, and the quite intense feelings of betrayal that accompanied commercial landlordism, it was understandable the regiments were viewed in this way.

Land and property also underpinned ideological views of military service. The most effective social lever used in the recruitment of Highland soldiers was the promise of secure holdings or favourable rents made to willing sub-tenants who provided men.⁵⁰ By altering the nature of landholding patterns on Highland estates to facilitate recruitment, landlords ensured that, as in former days, control of land and rents was made the basis of military society. To many, the acid test of authority was still control over sizable numbers of dependents. According to one scion of the Grant family, Sir James

⁴⁷ *Highland Postbag*, pp. 95-6; see Appendix B.

⁴⁸ PARO, Acc. 2664, f. 37, Donald Macdonald to Elizabeth Macdonald, 17 May 1778; NAS, GD248/54/4, f. 74, Duncan Grant to Lady Grant of Grant, 16 Jul. 1777.

⁴⁹ Alan J. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714–1763* (Manchester: MUP, 1985), pp. 137-61.

⁵⁰ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 130-1.

Grant of Grant's authority over 1500 dependents was enough to make a 'man of some consequence in any country'.⁵¹

The myth of land, authority and clanship was also central to the outward expression of Highland status within a pan-British context. James Grant of Ballindalloch (1720-1806) was keen to employ Highland soldiers to assist his claims on status as a member of the political elite. From his house in London, Grant issued instructions to his relatives in Badenoch to find local recruits to augment the 55th Foot, of which he was colonel. Quality was imperative for the intended purpose, for as he explained, 'I have pledged myself to Lord Amherst [from 1779 General on the Staff] to bring up a better company than has been raised during the war to be seen by his Lordship at London, perhaps by a greater man [the king] upon the road to Windsor'. Unfortunately for Grant, the recipients were unable to use their influence to procure even a few recruits. Their failure left Grant with a dilemma. He was unwilling to issue beating orders, his previous requests resting on a naïve assumption that the influence of men of status would succeed in the absence of bounties or written securities. Such methods would undermine his claims on command of the people and expose his lack of authority. As he wrote of the non-existent recruits: 'If I cannot have the credit of getting them on the Banks of the Spey they are not worth having.'⁵² It may not have been a coincidence that at the time Grant was seeking re-election after having been defeated in the parliamentary elections as the representative for Tain in 1780, a position he had held since 1773.

⁵¹ LoC, M 2267, reel 28, Robert Grant to James Grant, 1 Aug. 1770.

⁵² LoC, M 2267, reel 45, James Grant to William Macpherson, 27 Dec. 1781 & 30 Jan. 1782; LoC, M 2267, reel 45, James Grant to William Macpherson, 30 Jan. 1782.

If images of clanship fettered the imaginations of Highland elites, their conception of their role within the social order was also firmly grounded in pan-British views of hierarchy. David Stewart of Garth believed that the conduct of the soldiers was almost entirely dependent on the qualities instilled by superiors. Writing of the 42nd Foot in the 1770s, he noted ‘A judicious selection of officers’, is vital, for though ‘[t]here have been instances, in which national spirit and patriotic feelings have existed amongst troops for years, independently from example or influence from superiors ... such instances are rare’. Archibald Montgomery, colonel of the 77th Foot, agreed. Combining elite assumptions with ethnic conceit, he explained to Governor Bull of South Carolina that the colonial provincials would perform better if they were led by men of better stature. To Montgomery, unlike in his own regiment, some of the officers were ‘worse than privates’, leading to their perceived chronic underperformance. For members of the elite, military quality was predicated on the prudent actions of hierarchical elites.⁵³ This was the militarized expression of the prevailing aristocratic ethos of paternalism, in which the rank-and-file were divested of agency and required firm paternal leadership.

Enlisted men envisaged an increasingly divergent view of military service and their dependent relationship with social superiors. Like Highland elites, the rural poor would probably have seen society in distinctly hierarchical terms. But the recognition of inferiority did not produce a submissive deference. Enlisted men constructed their own conception of military service to face the ever increasing demand for manpower from the late 1750s. The state had never called upon such high numbers of soldiers, which

⁵³ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 131, 149, 168, 171, 393; LoC, M 2267, reel 31, Archibald Montgomery to Governor Bull, 12 Jul. 1760.

resulted in a shift in the negotiating position of Highland men. As we have seen, potential recruits began to demand huge sums for their military labour and quality recruits could effectively sell their services to the highest bidder.

With recruiting concentrated disproportionately in the eastern, central, and southern Highlands, it focused on areas which had seen the most exposure to commercial improvements and, with it, a divergence from traditional hierarchies. Landlord absenteeism, the turnover of middling tenants, and the payment of rent in specie was more common in the east than in the west. The *fir-taca*-led mass emigrations which typified the western Highlands in the 1770s, for example, were not replicated to the same degree in the east. Access to alternative means of material security was also possible in the east with the more varied commercial activities. The result was that the labouring class which was drawn into the fiscal-military state was already conversant with disruptive socio-economic change and the demands of modern commercial society.

It would be simplistic to assume that there was a strict class division between officers and their men. Vastly differentiated levels of wealth and social standing in the Highlands, and the localized intricacies of client networks, often shaped recruitment. Nevertheless, it is evident that the rural poor entered into direct and forceful negotiations with recruiters and landlords, revealing a confidence usually ignored in the Highland narrative. So great was the divide that one Gaelic commentator made the case that having officers sit on the courts martial of private men was an abridgement of a soldier's liberty; a man could be tried only by a jury of his peers, a legal process that the disparity

of status in the military did not allow.⁵⁴ As the demand for men was the commercial response of landlords to the fiscal-military state, and the acquisition of men was increasingly predicated on the rising market value of military labour, Highland soldiers' understanding of their labour became similarly market orientated. For the landless cottars, or the poorest sub-tenants, who were explicitly targeted for recruitment, military labour became their most valuable commodity, definable in market terms as land or money. Recruits became less dependent on their superiors because, through negotiation, the recruit rather than the officer became the provider of social and material security for himself and his family. This redefinition of military service as a commodified market product was not inconsistent with elite conceptions of clanship, but it did create the potential for distrust - the assertion of a moral economy by the participating recruit versus the paternal instinct of the officer class.

If military service was a commercial market, the protection of that most vital of commodities, the soldier's labour, depended upon officers strictly adhering to contractual promises in a situation of great disparity. The majority of Highland attestations involved an enlistee declaring that he was a Protestant followed by the swearing of an oath to the king. A number of attestations in which written promises were made survive, however, to suggest a more dynamic relationship between the recruiter and the enlistee. One 'poor man' enlisted on the condition that his wife be allowed to accompany him overseas. John Macpherson, a labourer from Killin who enlisted in the 42nd Foot aged twenty-five in 1780, received a promise he was to serve only for the duration of the war and that he would not be turned over to any other corps. The common practice of moving soldiers to

⁵⁴ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, pp. 12-16.

different corps, to circumvent their terms of enlistment, was apparently well-known and something soldiers were protecting themselves from in writing. A similar promise was made by Lord Frederick Campbell to Donald Kennedy when the latter enlisted in Lord Campbell's Fencible regiment in 1781. Lord Campbell personally signed the attestation, a measure which showed the depth of personal guarantees between the highest and lowest.⁵⁵ Interestingly, the attestations of Macpherson and Kennedy were printed, suggesting that by 1780, contractual obligations were increasingly official. In these written, but rarely legally binding contracts, Highland soldiers were participating in their own variation on the attempts by crowds to sanction food riots by drawing reluctant vendors into written declarations of adherence to the crowd's demands.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, with literacy rates in the regiments generally low, the spoken word of officers in contractual negotiations became deeply important. Lord John Murray demanded that his officers make it clear to recruits *before* attestation that they would be required to serve abroad. Memories of the mutiny of the regiment in 1743 were undoubtedly important in reaching this decision. Not all officers were as conscientious with their oral promises as Murray. One recruiter received a promise from a deserter's father that he would return to his unit, all the while planning to have the deserter immediately transferred to a non-Highland corps, a move which directly contravened an explicit act of parliament.⁵⁷ British and colonial military mutinies did occur on the breaking of promises, but were generally touched off by accompanying long-term

⁵⁵ BCA, MSS. 341, Charles Cathcart's Recruiting Account, [1778]; NAS, GD170/3454, Attestations, Nov. 1780; NAS, GD170/3450, Attestations, 27 May 1781.

⁵⁶ Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century': 76-136.

⁵⁷ JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 11, Orders for 42nd Foot Additional Companies, 15 Jul. 1757; NAS, GD44/47/1, f. 55x, John Grant to James Ross, 30 Jan. 1775.

hardships, casualties, poor pay, and constant service.⁵⁸ By contrast, Highland troops endured enormous hardships and were much better at maintaining discipline under such conditions. During the Stoppages Mutiny of 1763, Captain James Robertson feared violence when he announced to the 42nd and 77th Foot changes to the levels of stoppages; but the expected violence never materialized, unlike almost every other garrison on the American frontier, where there were widespread problems.⁵⁹

Highland soldiers could react with bewildering speed, however, in the absence of harsh conditions, if major promises were perceived to have been broken. The most common reaction was desertion. Major John Ross, commanding at Oswego where the Grenadier Company of the 84th Foot was stationed at the end of the War of American Independence, experienced first-hand the problems created by soldiers' conceptions of their rights, and by the methods they used to protect them. As early as November 1782, enlisted men had been petitioning him to be discharged, and he had begun to acquiesce. But after May 1783, and the announcement that active operations would cease, calls for discharges became problematic. He informed his superior that 'With respect to the young corps, they are very desirous to have their discharges and hearing of no limit to their services put the worst construction on things'. He also reported that, in the absence of discharges, desertion had become a frequent problem.⁶⁰ There were similar problems in the 71st Foot. Over the course of ten days, between 7 May and 17 May 1783, a

⁵⁸ See, for example, the Pennsylvania Line Mutiny of 1781, *Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series*, ed. John B. Linn and William H. Egle (Harrisburg, 1880), XI, 631; Steven Rosswurm, *Arms, Country and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and the "Lower Sort" during the American Revolution* (New York: Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 240-1; John A. Nagy, *Rebellion in the Ranks: Mutinies of the American Revolution* (Yardley: Westholme, 2008), *passim*.

⁵⁹ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, VI, 401; Paul E. Kopperman, 'The Stoppages Mutiny of 1763', *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 69 (1986): 241-54.

⁶⁰ TNA, WO28/8, f. 335, John Ross to Major Lernoult, 22 Jun. 1783.

detachment of the 71st Foot under Sir Thomas Stirling at Newtown Creek, New York, was decimated by desertion; over forty men from various companies deserted *en-masse*. No evidence points to the immediate cause of this unprecedented event, but the previous month, much of the rest of the regiment had been disbanded at Perth. Rumours of a coming peace were rife and the forty deserters probably felt that their obligations had been met and were taking the opportunity to remain in America.⁶¹ With the conditions of their labour as soldiers met, but no obvious end to their service in sight, these men were voluntarily withdrawing themselves from the labour market.

Rather than desert, Highland soldiers could also turn on their officers if contractual obligations were not met. Charles Townsend, Baron Bayning, and Edmund Burke both blamed the mutiny of the 77th Foot in 1783 on the false assurances of officers. The contractual problem in the 77th Foot is revealed by the claims for pay and bounty money to recruits that had yet to be received, and which in the year prior to the mutiny amounted to over seventy pounds. Erroneous promises of land grants and preferment, made by Allan Maclean of Torloisk to his officers and men, caused festering problems of discipline in the 84th Foot throughout the War of American Independence and even into the post-war era. The use of the 84th Foot as sailors at Fort Howe in late 1778 also led to the rank-and-file ‘Charg[ing] their officers with a breach of faith or promise which indeed was made to them’.⁶²

⁶¹ TNA, WO12/7847, 71st Foot returns, Jun. 1783.

⁶² *The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser*, no. 4276 (30 Jan. 1783), p. 1; BCA Mss. 345, Accounts for the 77th Foot, [1782]; Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 433-44, 471; NAS, GD174/2179, War Office to Murdoch Maclaine, 13 Apr. 1784.

The independence of the rank-and-file and their differing, carefully guarded conceptions of their rights is most obvious in an analysis of post-war military settlement. Following the Seven Years' War and the War for American Independence, Highland soldiers were settled, under the auspices of the Royal Proclamation of 7 October 1763, on land grants in British North America. The land was free land, creating property holders out of the cottars and sub-tenants who had served as rank-and-file soldiers. It was first granted to the care of senior officers, and the knowledge and credit of former officers was essential for the establishment of successful settlements. There can be no doubt that military settlement on the imperial frontiers was a hard undertaking, and for this reason it is unsurprising that many soldiers chose to remain with their settled officers. Nevertheless, the difficulties experienced in such an inhospitable environment, and the erosion of dependency through the provision of free land, ensured that enlisted men rarely remained close to their officers through slavish devotion. Nor were Highland soldiers entirely dependent on their officers. While expressing his desire to settle with Captain Murdoch MacLaine on the 2nd battalion of the 84th Foot's 81,000 acre grant near Windsor, Nova Scotia, piper Niel Maclean requested from his father that he be sent all available resources to assist the settlement. Maclean was calling upon his own networks of interest to assist him and, though he remained in contact with former officers over the course of the next ten years, he operated with independent agency in the Atlantic world, being asked to play for the Highland Society of London in 1790, and becoming a member of the St Andrew's Society in Halifax by 1794.⁶³ He was not the only soldier to

⁶³ CLIMC, Old Grant Book 13, p. 52; NAS, GD174/1348, Nile Mclean to his father, 2 Sept. 1782; NAS, GD174/1451, Nile Maclean to Murdoch MacLaine, [1790]; NAS, GD174/1501, Niel Maclean to Murdoch

leave the 84th's grant. The poor quality of the ground and the lack of supplies meant that former officers had great difficulty keeping their men together. Half-pay captain Hector Maclaine, who laboured hard to ensure the success of his settlement and was the only officer who attempted to commence farming, noted that his men 'shewd [*sic*] such evident signs of discontent and a determination to leave the settlement'. When he had asked his twenty or so former soldiers what they intended to do, 'the greatest number walked out without a word', literally voting with their feet.⁶⁴ Despite Maclaine's continuous efforts to improve and sustain the township, only a tiny minority of the rank-and-file remained with him on the grant and the land was reclaimed by the crown in escheat in 1798.

There does, therefore, seem to have been a social contract operating between officers and men in regard to settlement. With the Treaty of Paris not yet signed, but rumours of imminent peace spreading through the 84th Foot, a petition was delivered to Captain Murdoch Maclaine expressing the intention of unnamed soldiers at Fort Edward to settle with him, submitting themselves under the penalty of five pounds for failing to honour the agreement. There was more, however, to this petition. Knowing that the land would be granted via the regiment's officers and that this was a contractually-binding agreement, it warned that 'the said Capt Maclaine should proceed on this business with all possible dispatch'.⁶⁵ Even with regard to the grants, enlisted men did not allow

Maclaine, 22 Dec. 1794.

⁶⁴ NAS, GD174/2154, f. 16, Hector Maclaine to Murdoch Maclaine, 12 Nov. 1784; NAS GD174/2154, f. 11, Hector Maclaine to Murdoch Maclaine, 4 Nov. 1783.

⁶⁵ NAS GD174/2177, f. 1, unsigned petition to Murdoch Maclaine, 12 Aug. 1783; Maclaine did not settle but continued in the army, a more lucrative career path than farming, though his correspondence reveals he thought seriously about acquiring land in Canada, perhaps with a view to settle. It was the failure to receive

themselves to be dictated to. Several veterans also took to paid labour rather than farming. This decision caused their former officer to complain bitterly that farming had become unprofitable, owing to the high price of labour in the township.⁶⁶

It is the experiences of one 84th Foot officer, John Macdonald of Glenalladale (1742-1811), which reveals the extent to which Highland men viewed military service as a contract of labour and not as a clannish act of dependence. Glenalladale was the son of a prominent Catholic Jacobite, Alexander Macdonald, who had served as a Major in the '45 rebellion, though Glenalladale appears to have had no Jacobite sympathies himself. As a leading *fear-taca*, his own disillusion with changes to Highland society led him to agree to Bishop Hay's plan to lead an emigrant party of 210 people from South Uist and Lochaber to St John's Island in 1772. For the South Uist emigrants, attempts at forced conversion to Protestantism by the landowner, Colin Macdonald of Boisdale, had been part of the decision and Glenalladale had financed much of the expedition through the mortgaging of his own estates. There is little evidence to suggest, however, the Glenalladale's motive was an entirely altruistic protection of fellow Catholics. Glenalladale's relationship with other branches of the Clanranalds had been acrimonious, with Glenalladale increasingly embittered by the shift from paternalism to commercial landlordism amongst the upper echelons of north-west Highland society. The collapse of the Ayr Bank in 1772 also destroyed his source of credit, making the problem of rack renting more acute and the family bankrupt. Glenalladale hoped that emigration would

the lands he sought that decided his course of action, see NAS, GD174/2177, f. 4, Charles Morris to Murdoch Maclaine, 25 Aug. 1783.

⁶⁶ NAS GD174/2154, f. 14, Hector Maclaine to Murdoch Maclaine, 27 Feb. 1784.

‘very deservedly’ destroy the Highland lairds.⁶⁷ But for traditionally-minded middling tenants such as Glenalladale, emigration to North America was not undertaken in order to create egalitarian societies, built upon equal ownership of land. Instead, paternally-minded lairds in North America would create conditions for a benevolent form of hierarchical society, where lesser tenants would form dependent relationships with community leaders. It was not a wholesale return to clanship, however, and Glenalladale thought of himself as an improver. Revealingly, among the tenants on his Tracadie estate, Glenalladale attempted to limit the amount of grain produced in order to stimulate cattle rearing, replicating the economic response of *fir-taca* to increased rents in the Highlands. His vision for the new world was therefore a mixture of idealism, conservatism, and commercialism. His own enlistment in the *Royal Highland Emigrants* in 1775 was also, in addition to being a genuinely patriotic response to the American rebellion, an economic choice, it being impossible to live well on St John’s without the inflow of external capital, as was the case in the Highlands. Like similar *fir-taca*, however, Glenalladale experienced the enormous distance between his own conceptions of what was beneficial to emigrant society and the conceptions of the emigrants themselves. Glenalladale found that his nominal leadership of the community and his control over the landholding patterns of his tenants was not enough to ensure male enlistment in his company. Only fourteen men were recruited by Glenalladale or his brother into the 84th Foot, and while Glenalladale served in the colonies, over half of his tenants left his estates to take up better tenancies on neighbouring estates, or moved to available free

⁶⁷ Allan F. Macdonald, ‘Captain John Macdonald “Glenalladale”’, *Canadian Catholic Historical Association*, Report 31 (1964): 21-8; J.M. Bumsted, ‘Captain John Macdonald and the Island’, *The Island Magazine*, 6 (1979): 16.

land in the north of the island.⁶⁸ In North Carolina and New York, emigration leaders such as Flora Macdonald's husband, Allan Macdonald of Kingsburgh or Allan Macdonnell of Collachie, both experienced perennial difficulties in enlisting Highland emigrants, and were often left feeling abandoned, particularly after the defeat of the Highland Loyalists at Moore's Creek in North Carolina in February 1776, after which 'the men were not to be kept together, and ... the officers had no authority over the men'.⁶⁹ The whole experience left Glenalladale, in particular, deeply disillusioned. In unguarded moments to his sister he called the people a 'damned tribe' and reported that 'I am convinced that nothing leads to more hurt, than for a man to allow himself to be looked up to even by his nearest concerns'. In a revealing twist on the commonly held assumption that it was elite betrayal that broke the social bonds of Highland society, Glenalladale believed it had been he who had been betrayed by the failure of the people to keep their promises and remain with him. He facetiously told his sister to 'offer them my best thanks to these good people [his tenants], who after all I have done for them, making myself the greatest sufferer in every point, do not spare my character in my absence, but are foolish enough to run to these other gentlemen [neighbouring proprietors] with such stories [of misuse and the cost of the passage]'.⁷⁰ The social hold Glenalladale and others believed they possessed over their communities was entirely exposed as chimerical by the availability of free land and the pressures of the American rebellion.

⁶⁸ J.M. Bumsted, *Land, Settlement, and Politics on Eighteenth-Century Prince Edward Island* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1987), p. 106.

⁶⁹ NLS, MS. 2618 Misc., Memorandum of Flora Macdonald, pp. 82-83; Mclean, *The People of Glengarry*, p. 88; *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783*, ed. K.G. Davies, 21 vols. (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1979), XII, 116.

⁷⁰ PARO, Acc. 2664, f. 16, John Macdonald to Helen Macdonald, 12 Sept. 1789; PARO, Acc. 2664, f. 5, John Macdonald to Helen Macdonald, 26 Jun. 1781.

While most Highland soldiers displayed a contractual understanding of military service to one degree or another, the men of the 84th Foot were probably the most sophisticated in this regard; the radical step of emigration reveals a set of individuals willing to subvert traditional obligations in the pursuit of personal interest. This commitment to material security produced a market-orientated contractual understanding of the duty of a soldier. Demobilization removed him from any obligations he had accepted as part of this relationship, creating the potential for violence when conditions were not met, but more commonly, a positive independence when operating in the post-war environment.

III THE DEMANDS OF IMPERIAL WAR

A market-orientated definition of soldiers' rights was the central component of Highland views of military service, made more, not less, acute by the particular socio-political situation in the Highlands. This did not mean, however, that the mentalities of Highland soldiers were simply an extension of their civilian selves. The platitude that an army reflects the society which produces it fails to account for the considerable impact made by military service on the internal dynamics of heavily recruited societies. Claiming that the enlisted man viewed military service only within the confines of his civilian imperatives suggests stasis in a period of profound change and fails to integrate the soldiers' experience of imperial wars with that of the wider society. The imposition of

regularized Highland regiments on the region created a constituent male population increasingly able to negotiate as a partner in the fiscal-military state.

The army promoted a confidence that helped sever the soldier from his community. Enlisted men became aware that the army was a discrete body distinct from the civilian population, with its own internalized system of rewards and punishments. Christopher Duffy has highlighted that even in the absence of a regimental identity, the corporate identity of being a soldier began to colour men's reactions to the civilian population, and led to the development of a distinct occupational identity. Commentators argued that a soldier should never be seen in public without side-arms as without them he is 'at once reduced to a level with the vilest plebeian, and deprived of that which gives him an air of consequence, not only in his own opinion, but likewise in that of the common people, who are principally caught by outside shew'.⁷¹

The argument that Highland soldiers maintained civilian imperatives is based on two salient points: that enlistment was for a limited period of service and that it was seen as a means to the civilian end of material security. This did not mean, however, that an intensification of occupational identity was impossible. The evident pride felt by Highland soldiers is reflected in the accounts we have by their own hand. James Thompson reported of his initial enlistment in 1757: 'We staid [*sic*] some days at Inverness, walking about the streets to show ourselves, for we were very proud of our looks.'⁷² Gaelic texts considered soldiers to be a distinct class of men. Kenneth

⁷¹ Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason*, p. 299; Cuthbertson, *Cuthbertson's System*, p. 113.

⁷² BAnQ, P450, James Thompson Journal, 5, p. 19; Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 170.

Mackenzie addressed one poem to a recruiting sergeant, Donald Fraser, contrasting the author's lowly status as a poet with that of the sergeant, telling him ' 'S math learn suas thu gun airce [I am glad you are elevated without poverty]'.⁷³ It seems likely that many Highland soldiers were more professionalized than previous historiography has suggested. While most regiments were raised on the basis of short-term service, the 42nd Foot was an established regiment of the line, where enlistment was for life. Even in regiments raised for short-term service, there were a number of long-term veterans. In a platoon of Lt. Allan Macdonald in early 1778, forty per cent of the men born in Highland parishes had previous military experience. Enforced transfers also occurred.⁷⁴ Sizeable numbers of Highland soldiers were therefore, by choice or circumstance, far from civilian-orientated males in uniform.

Professional attachments conditioned the enlisted men to create their own system of rewards and punishments. A piper of the 78th Foot was ostracized by his comrades following the battle on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 for not being present on the battlefield. No one in the regiment would draw rations with him until his presence at the battle of St. Foy in April 1760 atoned for his previous absence. It appears as if courage was a pivotal quality in the men's interpretation of themselves and their peers.⁷⁵ Disparaging comments on the fighting qualities of opponents, particularly during the War of American Independence, suggest that whilst the depth of British patriotism is difficult to measure among Highland soldiers, professional rivalry with the rebel army

⁷³ Kenneth Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach, agus Bearla air an Eadar-Theangacha* (Edinburgh, 1792), p. 35.

⁷⁴ NRAS139, f. 14, Macdonald platoon notebook, Feb. 1778; see Chapter 4.

⁷⁵ BAnQ, P450, James Thompson Journal, 5, p. 82; see also Spring, *With Zeal and With Bayonets Only*, pp. 60-1.

was a large factor in their assessment of the conflict. During the grounding of arms at the surrender at Yorktown in 1781, soldiers of the 76th Foot, some of them in tears, threw their muskets down with such force that the stocks split.⁷⁶ If they felt a professional superiority, and were deeply affected when that superiority was called into question, Highland soldiers had embraced a masculine corporate identity as military men.

With the vestiges of an enlisted corporate identity in place, social divisions were not simply traditionally orientated, but were expedient solutions to the problems of hierarchy and authority in military life. The relationship with officers, even in the relatively homogenous Highland regiments, did not entrench regionalism, but dragged Highland soldiers out of parochialism and into a complex imperial environment of alternate and conflicting authorities. While Highland soldiers remained low in the social hierarchy of the imperial world, by no longer being dependent on local networks, he became a minor partner in the fiscal-military state, with access to wider benefits. Admission to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, was the most obvious example of a national benefit derived from service to the imperial state, though recommendation still depended on the regimental colonel. Highland soldiers recognized their ability to appeal beyond their immediate hierarchy, when those avenues of redress were ineffective. Lt. William Grant of the 42nd Foot, commanding Fort Pitt during the summer of 1764, found his men (including draftees of the 77th) in a ‘tumultuous manner’ after a rumour was spread by ‘malicious [sic] villains’ that the garrison was permitted a larger ration of flour than was forthcoming. Grant was relatively sympathetic, given that arrears had not been paid for

⁷⁶ Graham, *Memoirs of General Graham*, p. 64; James Thatcher, *Military Journal During the Revolutionary War* (Boston, 1827), p. 280; a broken musket belonging to a member of the 76th Foot is contained in the collections of the Colonial National Battlefield Park at Yorktown, Virginia.

almost a year and no new clothing had been issued for two. What surprised him, however, was that the men were appealing above him. As he explained, ‘The men said even to myself that they would memorial the general about it.’ Private Andrew Macdonald of the 84th Foot wrote to Guy Carleton: ‘That your excellencies petitioner is much wronged since I joined this Regiment notwithstanding I have often solicited the Commanding Officer of this regiment to be re-dressed which was still refused me.’ Macdonald had received a written promise from his officer, Captain Macleod, that he would be made a sergeant and receive one shilling a day pay, a promise which had not been honoured. He demanded of Carleton that his arrears be backdated to the date of the agreement and he included a copy of the said agreement with his correspondence.⁷⁷ It is unlikely that such petitions were effective, but Macdonald was willing to engage with the highest echelons of military hierarchy for the re-dress of perceived wrongs. A unique but important example of wider sovereignties was the ghost-written narrative of Donald Macleod, a veteran of the Seven Years’ War. His account was allegedly written to raise money to allow Macleod to emigrate and he appealed to the readers’ sense of justice and patriotism to assist a soldier who had so loyally served his country.⁷⁸

The extent to which soldiers were aware of their rights is revealed in a letter written in Nova Scotia in 1784 by Private John Macdonald of the 77th Foot. He wrote to Mariot Arbuthnot, former Lieutenant Governor of the province, to request land at Pictou as ‘your petitioner never has had any Lands granted to him in consideration of his service

⁷⁷ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, VI, 598; TNA, WO28/9, f. 159-60, Andrew Macdonald to Guy Carleton, 13 Aug. 1778.

⁷⁸ [William Thompson], *Memoirs of the Life and Gallant Exploits of the Old Highlander Sergeant Donald MacLeod* (London, 1791), p. 86.

during last war'. Macdonald hoped Arbuthnot would 'take the case into consideration, and direct such further grant of Lands to be bestowed upon him as your petitioner may be intitled [*sic*] to agreeable to His Majesty's most gracious Proclamation [of 1763]'. While Arbuthnot had, by this point, been replaced by Sir Richard Hughes, what is remarkable was that Macdonald signed the letter with a mark. An illiterate, retired emigrant soldier was fully aware of what was owed to him, under what provision it was owed, and had found someone capable of writing to Arbuthnot to claim it. Discharged members of the 42nd Foot were similarly attentive and petitioned on the basis of 'His majesty's Royal Bounty of Provisions'. Experience even dictated that the king might intercede on behalf of private men. When the 42nd Foot returned from America in 1767, it was reported to Lord John Murray that a number of men had deserted, owing to their being beaten by their officers. In this particular case, the king offered pardons to the deserters, further cementing the link between negotiated military service and contractual promises.⁷⁹ Alternative hierarchies did not create new forms of indebtedness. Rather they were co-opted as a means of acquiring what the soldier, through his own military labour, had already provided for himself.

The recognition of a wider imperial sphere in negotiations of contractual military service promoted the Highland soldiers' identification with the political loyalties of the British Atlantic world. This did not amount to an embracing of 'Britishness' as a mode of self-identification. In constructing a market-orientated definition of labour rights, however, Highland soldiers increasingly called upon national symbols in defence of

⁷⁹ NSARM, RG20, Series A, Vol. 6, John Macdonald to Mariot Arbuthnot, [1784]; NSARM, RG20, Series A, Vol. 13, Petitions of John and Roderick Macleod, [1785]; JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 415a, Lord John Murray to unknown, [n.d.].

those rights. When the 78th Foot mutinied in Edinburgh in 1778, among their demands was that ‘they [get] their colours’. The King’s Colours had practical utility. In its absence, the troops were not officially constituted as a regiment in the royal army, and as such, they believed they were more exposed to being sold to the East India Company. In effect, the King’s Colours provided a professional symbol of national benevolence, which would protect them from mistreatment.⁸⁰ The confidence of enlisted men was heightened by the relevance of their plight to issues in pan-British discourses. When Highland soldiers of the 76th Foot mutinied in Portsmouth in 1783, their unlikely defender was Lord George Gordon, who encouraged their resistance and was the subject of an obsequious letter of praise, published in the *Public Advertiser*. According to the soldiers, Lord Gordon had saved ‘almost a thousand men from slavery which to a Briton is far worse than Death’. It continued:

Your name will ever share a record for the zeal you have shewn for the interests of your country, in defence of its laws, both civil and religious against all popish ... tyranny whatsoever; and which emboldened us to lay hold upon you. We glory to think that we have a countryman, so zealous for our rights and privileges.⁸¹

In 1779, three discharged sergeants of the 42nd Foot likewise employed military symbols in a defence of rights. Even after being offered money, they refused to return their plaids. They were primarily concerned with being clothed but the plaids may also have been an important mark of their distinction and a vital symbol of their status in an

⁸⁰ NAS, GD248/227/4, John Grant to General Skene, 24 Sept. 1778; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to William Macpherson, 25 Sept. 1778; Prebble, *Mutiny*, pp. 129-37.

⁸¹ *Public Advertiser*, no. 1596 (15 Feb. 1783), pp. 2-3.

increasingly militarized state. In fact, the importance of these symbols reveals that symbols of an emerging national political culture were not simply elite devices.⁸² This was further evidence that military service, rather than being defined by localized and tradition concerns, was operating in a new environment, where imperial wars and national politics promoted an assertive reading of labour rights, privileges and obligations, available to even the most dispossessed of the rural Highland poor.

IV CONCLUSIONS

Service in the British army did not mark a return to the traditional bonds of clanship. Military service was a labour market, and the fiscal-military state's demands for men made military labour a valuable commodity. In order to protect the value of that labour, enlisted Highland soldiers defined their rights and obligations within a contractual framework; when the value of that labour was under threat, Highland soldiers reacted on the basis that the contract was in danger of being broken.

There were unquestionably some superb Highland officers. Perthshire-born Colonel John Small was a universally respected officer who worked tirelessly to provide his men with the land grants they had been promised.⁸³ Moreover, unlike notorious

⁸² JRL, BAG/5/2, ff. 35-6, Alexander Anderson to Lord John Murray, 9 Mar. 1779; for the use of symbolism, see John Brewer, *Party, Ideology, and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge: CUP, 1976); pp. 182-9; Frank O'Gorman, 'Campaign rituals and ceremonies: the social meaning of elections in England, 1780-1860', *Past and Present*, 135 (1992): 79-115.

⁸³ Small is portrayed in John Trumbull's pro-American painting *The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill* (1786), attempting to save the life of the mortally wounded Joseph Warren. Small later maintained that it had been General Israel Putnam who had saved his life, knocking down the muskets of his men who attempted to shoot Small as he advanced on the rebel positions, see Garden, *Anecdotes of the Revolutionary War in America*, pp. 282-4.

regiments such as the 17th, 27th, or 35th Foot, there is no example in the Highland regiments of institutionalized violence.⁸⁴ But it would be wrong to assume on this basis that status relations were significantly better in the Highland regiments owing to regional affinities. Such affinities were of secondary importance, and were more likely to promote tension than ameliorate it, underpinning a divergent reading of military service, as officers sought to re-instil authority, and enlisted men sought to shield their value as military labourers. Small himself believed in a natural hierarchy, and felt a paternal obligation to his ‘officers and soldiers who look up to one for promotion’.⁸⁵ Exactly those same instincts that prompted Small to defend his men’s interests could also, under different circumstances, lead to conflict.

These divergent readings did not entirely originate in localized and traditional concepts of military service. Imperial conflict created many of the barriers to close relations. Exposure to the empire demanded so much of the soldier that it separated him from his civilian experiences. Even short-term service professionalized him, allowing him to call upon authorities outside the parochial hierarchies of Highland society. By being no longer dependent on localized hierarchies, the Highland soldier became, more than he had ever been, the provider of his own security. The combination of this, and nationalized symbols of higher authority, gave Highland soldiers more effective avenues to express their interest, and achieve their material security. The national market of military service did make military labour a commodity and exposed Highland society to another type of capitalist tension. Yet the market was also empowering and

⁸⁴ LoC, M 2267, reel 33, William Keppel to James Grant, 2 Dec. 1762.

⁸⁵ NAS, GD174/2177, f. 10, John Small to Charles Morris, 5 Sept. 1785.

commoditization, for all the justified historic and contemporary criticism of the free market, did not necessarily result in the eclipse of individualism.

All of this is not to say there was an entirely arbitrary division between officers and men. Local networks complicated social relations. Gendered, familial, or localized identities may have been as important as status or rank. The error of a Marxist interpretation of soldiers' rights is that it assumes all soldiers shared a common goal and articulated their rights in resistance to a prevailing system. Power is a relationship and these rights were constructed between constituent individuals, not by classes within a dystopian system. Labour rights helped re-inscribe the subordinate position of the rank-and-file as a class. As individuals, however, it provided a vital means of self-protection. Not all Highland soldiers bore an evident antipathy toward their officers. During the 78th Foot's mutiny in 1778, around a third of the regiment remained loyal, and fought the mutineers. Some mutineers were prevented from surrendering by the coercion of those who were still disaffected.⁸⁶ We also know relatively little about the violence that was unquestionably directed at fellow rankers by soldiers themselves. The willingness of the loyalists to follow orders, however, was a mark of their professionalization as soldiers. Internal regimental tensions are vitally important, not because we can hold them up as a counter-point to an outdated historiography, but because they reveal that military service in the eighteenth century was not simply a story of hierarchy and deference, but of self-interest, agency, and, at times, independence.

⁸⁶ NAS, GD248/227/4/33, John Grant to General Skene, 24 Sept. 1778.

CHAPTER 4

A' TILLEADH DHACHAIGH (RETURNING HOME): EMPIRE, DEMOBILIZATION, AND MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

The end of hostilities in North America in 1783 precipitated the mass demobilization of the inflated war-time strength of the British army. During the War of American Independence, the British army grew from an established strength of around 36,000 men to four times this figure.¹ With the loss of thirteen North American colonies and the Floridas, the inundation of veterans at demobilization nodes back in Britain forced the soldier into the public consciousness, as an object to be derided, avoided or pitied, depending on the capricious sway of popular patriotism.²

The significance of the demobilization of Highland regiments was disproportionately greater than elsewhere in Britain. The Highland regiments on the army's peace-time establishment consisted of just one battalion, the 42nd Foot, all others being raised on the basis of service for only the duration of the war. This resulted in the most heavily recruited region of the British Isles (in proportional terms) seeing the most widespread demobilization of soldiers as a percentage of war-time strength. The impact of Highland demobilization was intensified by the structural necessity of military service

¹ The army's established strength in 1775 was 48,647 all ranks, but it is likely that the actual strength was around three quarters of this figure as regiments rarely mustered full complements even in peacetime, Conway, 'British Mobilisation in the War of American Independence': 59.

² For the domestic issues of soldier demobilization, see H.V. Bowen, *War and British Society, 1688-1815* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), pp. 40-55; J. Innes, 'The Domestic Face of the Fiscal-Military State: Government and society in eighteenth-century Britain', in *An Imperial State at War*, ed. Stone, pp. 96-127.

to the Highland economy. Military service served a crucial role by injecting much needed specie into the Highland economy and providing economic opportunities for economically surplus Highland men. Demobilization, problematic for urban centres, was crippling for the rural Highlands, removing a major source of employment, while indirectly undermining job opportunities in other seasonal employments as Lowland veterans flooded the towns.

While recognizing these considerable problems, this chapter analyses Highland demobilization in an imperial context, across a wide geographical space with conflicting imperatives. The 1763 Treaty of Paris gave Britain an expanded territorial empire in North America, the management of which posed challenges not previously dealt with on such a scale. Sound economic arguments in favour of retaining French possessions in the West Indies lost out to the irresistible desire to remove the Bourbon threat to the vulnerable colonies on the eastern Atlantic seaboard.³ Highland troops had an important place in these debates. Not only had their service been instrumental in the conquest of Canada, but successive ministries recognized, for various reasons, the utility of Highland military settlement. Naturally, ministerial objectives were prioritized, creating an imperially-situated context for Highland demobilization.

Nevertheless, this chapter is also about agency. Highland veterans actively carved out opportunities within this context. The assumption that government imperatives were uniform and, that this unitary objective outweighed the desires of its

³ Philip Lawson, *The Imperial Challenge: Quebec and Britain in the Age of the American Revolution* (London: McGill-Queen's UP, 1989), pp. 3-24; Stephen Conway, 'The Consequences of Conquest: Quebec and British Politics, 1760-1774', unpublished paper delivered to the '1759 Revisited' conference, University College London, Sept. 2009, pp. 3-5; my sincere thanks go to Professor Conway for supplying me with a written draft of this paper.

soldiery, seriously misunderstands eighteenth-century government. Imperial government was diffuse, a product of both local actors and ministerial directives, which could conflict or align over a multitude of policies. Demobilized Highland soldiers were actors with their own agencies, and their minor place in the empire did not necessarily relegate them to mere tools in that empire's expansion.

To explore the extent of this agency, it is first necessary to investigate the context of imperial designs which regulated the opportunities offered to demobilized Highlanders. Various imperial designs helped promote Highland soldiers as vital participants in the creation of the imperial space. For this reason, it is also important to quantify settlement as precisely as possible, investigating how soldiers chose to be demobilized and where. From this we can see to what extent the designs of imperial administrators conformed to the interests of the veterans themselves. The following two sections focus on the development of individual settlement patterns and chart the rise in mobility and opportunity through demobilization. Veterans were exposed to an unfathomable expansion of their horizons through their military service. Military service, while far from uniformly positive, created a class of individuals, with variegated experiences. The broad and generalized historiography, which posits that Scots made a huge impact on the new world, particularly North America, has for methodological reasons missed these individualistic experiences. The historiography has, more importantly, missed how the individual soldier strengthened imperial dominance. This chapter serves as a corrective to these earlier interpretations

I IMPERIAL IMPERATIVES

Imperial imperatives defined the context of demobilization. The traditional reading maintains that senior figures feared the return of military-trained men to the Highlands, where they might ferment anti-government disaffection and provide the exiled Stuarts with a potent source of manpower for further risings. Policy-makers were also motivated, the argument suggests, by the need to defend the new imperial frontiers from external enemies, viewing the ‘rugged’ Highlander as a potent source of national defence, pre-suited to settlement on a harsh frontier and innately willing to abandon farming for military service. Military considerations of defence are assumed to have been the determining factors in settlement.⁴ This interpretation is entirely unconvincing and extrapolates assumptions of government policy across a dynamic period of imperial expansion.

There was little substantial fear by 1763, among the upper echelons of the Bute or Grenville ministries, that returning Highlanders were a danger to the integrity of the Hanoverian regime. The Duke of Argyll had commented when recruitment began in 1756 that none of the Highlanders would be allowed to return to Scotland owing to government mistrust. Nevertheless, this mistrust, expressed most vehemently in 1748 by John Russell, fourth Duke of Bedford, and, in 1756 by the Duke of Cumberland, had largely dissipated.⁵ The last major Jacobite attempt at supplanting George II, the Elibank Plot, had been uncovered ten years previously, exposing bitter divisions in the Jacobite

⁴ Adams and Somerville, *Cargoes of Despair and Hope: Scottish Emigration to North America, 1603-1803*, p. 144; David Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), p. 6; J.M. Bumsted, ‘The Scottish Diaspora: Emigration to British North America, 1763-1815’ in *Nation and Province in the First British Empire*, ed. Landsman, p. 136.

⁵ Stevenson, ‘With Swords and Plowshares’, p. 165; *Military Affairs in North America*, pp. 6-7, 381, 395.

movement. The failure of the Duc de Choiseul, France's Minister of Foreign Affairs, to include the Jacobite Prince seriously in plans for a French invasion of Britain in 1759 also precipitated the complete collapse of foreign support for Jacobitism by 1766.⁶

More significantly, contemporary English commentaries suggest a more complex view of the Highlander. There was unquestionably Scotophobia in 1760s England, sparked by the perceived Scottish takeover and subsequent corruption of the British government and its values. It is a mistake, however, to see the bigotry of Wilke's *North Briton* as entirely pervasive. Samuel Johnson remarked that 'England has for years been filled with the achievements of seventy thousand [*sic*] Highlanders employed in America.' The winning proposal by Joseph Wilton (1722-1803) for a statue of James Wolfe in Westminster Abbey portrayed the hero's last moments in the arms of a Highland grenadier, the design provoking a negative response from one English officer: '[F]or what reason Highlanders above any other people, are made the only attendants ... there were surely English as well as Scotch regiments present when that gallant officer was kill'd.'⁷ The press was often sympathetic and pitied the 'incurable' wounded Highlanders after Fort Carillon in 1758, 'so lacerated by the ... broken nails the enemy fired'. The pro-government journal *The Briton* reminded readers of 'those swarms of miserable maimed Highlanders' on London's streets 'with scarce any vestige of the

⁶ Doron Zimmermann, *The Jacobite Movement in Scotland and in Exile, 1746-1759* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 75-158; Zimmermann's account convincingly asserts that Jacobitism was still perceived as a viable threat to the British state until the battle of Quiberon Bay in 1759, but his argument that Jacobitism was still a threat in real terms is undermined by the lack of significant popular support for the movement in the Highlands.

⁷ Samuel Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1775), p. 227; *Boston Evening Post*, no. 1456 (1763), p. 2.

human form'.⁸ Similar sympathies were expressed as memories of the panic which gripped London in late 1745 abated. Oliver Goldsmith, who gained fame with the pastoral poem, *The Deserted Village* (1770), criticized the lack of 'humanity' shown to the rebels. The prefix of 'Butcher' to Cumberland's name originated with an English alderman of the City of London after it was suggested the duke should be made a freeman of the city.⁹ A wonderful irony regarding a relation of the Duke of Cumberland emerged in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1783. The Duke of Cumberland's regiment, named after Prince Henry, nephew to William Augustus, was a Loyalist corps raised from captured Continental soldiers in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1781. They spent the last months of the war under the direction of Archibald Campbell of the 71st Foot and, 'Warmed with a generous glow of gratitude', thanked Campbell for the appointment of one John Macdonald as major to the battalion. Two Highlanders serving as the senior officers of the Duke of Cumberland's regiment was a notion which thirty years before might have seemed laughable. Perceived character and patronage, not ethnicity, determined respect, ethnicity often becoming an issue only if those traits were not in evidence.¹⁰

Positive views of the Gaelic soldier were stronger in government circles, but popular praise for his actions was not unknown. Benjamin Franklin's famous eulogy to the 42nd Foot announced how the Highlanders had 'restored a beneficial and advantageous Commerce' and gifted Pennsylvania the 'Blessing of Peace', that they had

⁸ *Annual Register* and *The Briton* quoted in Brumwell, 'Home from the Wars': 41-2; *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-63*, ed. Frederick A. Pottle (London: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 71-2.

⁹ Oliver Goldsmith, *An Abridgment of the History of England* (London, 1774), p. 329; Horace Walpole, *The Letters of Horace Walpole*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1842), I, 493.

¹⁰ NSARM, RG1/365, f. 241, Officers of the Duke of Cumberland's regiment to Archibald Campbell, 22 Nov. 1783; see also BL, Add. Mss. 21732, f. 88, Allan MacLean to Frederick Haldimand, 19 Jul. 1778.

in effect, secured the colonies' liberty.¹¹ The fact of positive representations of the Highland soldier lends itself to an alternative reading of metropolitan views. As Linda Colley has astutely observed, while Wilkite anti-Scottishness was much more than a fringe element, 'Scotland was coming to be seen by those in power as useful, loyal, and *British*,' and so as entitled to the safeguarding of its people and laws, as was England.¹²

Government policy supports these readings. In 1754, it had been the Duke of Cumberland who had first rejected the king's suggestion that the 42nd Foot should be sent to America. Hatred of the Gael did not preclude counter-intuitive reactions and Cumberland feared the men would be lost to the army's establishment if the soldiers were to remain in that theatre.¹³ The duke's attitude toward the newly-raised battalions in 1757 differed from those toward the 42nd Foot, demonstrating that cultural attitudes were not all-encompassing. There had in any case, by the early 1760s, been a swing away from ministerial anti-Scottishness under Grenville and Pitt, whose astute reading of the imperial polity had led to the praising of the Scottish soldier in parliament in 1766.¹⁴ The various ministries of the 1760s were too divided for an entirely negative policy toward Highland recruitment to emerge. Bedford, who objected to Highland demobilization in Britain, was incensed when William Pitt stated he would take office only on condition that Bedford was excluded from the government.¹⁵

¹¹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, no. 1287 (30 Jul. 1767), p. 1; see also John Adams's comments in *The Hampshire Chronicle*, no. 147 (1789), p. 2.

¹² Colley, *Britons*, p. 119.

¹³ Reid, *Wellington's Highland Warriors*, p. 20.

¹⁴ Basil Williams, *The Life of Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, 2 vols. (London: Longman's, 1913), II, 189.

¹⁵ Martyn J. Powell, 'Russell, John, fourth duke of Bedford (1710–1771)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept. 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24320>, accessed 27 Apr. 2010].

The proof of the ineffectiveness of anti-Highlandism in demobilization can be found in the details of government policy. Jeffrey Amherst, commander-in-chief in North America in 1763, believed that it was the king's intention to have the Highland regiments demobilized in Britain. Amherst's difficulty was that this clashed with his ongoing operations against Pontiac's rebellion. In accordance with royal wishes, however, Amherst issued orders that the soldiers had complete freedom to 'Return home, or Remain in North America, as they themselves Chuse [*sic*]'; passages to return home were also to be provided.¹⁶ Highland battalions in other theatres were as free to return to the Highlands as the American battalions. The 87th and 88th Foot, deployed to Germany, were both demobilized in Scotland, the officers of which recommending the majority of their men for privileged settlement on the annexed estates on the basis of their service. Over 700 men of the 78th Foot returned to Britain to be demobilized in Scotland in 1763.¹⁷ Tellingly, Sir Allan Maclean of Torloisk's 114th Foot, raised by a former Jacobite who had accepted the 1754 amnesty, were left to return to their home districts.

The governments of the day were reactive to concerted pressure and demobilization was an issue on which interest could make its presence felt. The Highland elite, in particular, were extremely keen on having the regiments demobilized in the Highlands. Many Highland elites, still seeking to improve rather than overhaul the existing landholding system, were wedded to the mercantilist vision of population retention. For them, the war in America in 1775 was a god-send, halting the precipitous flow of migrants to the colonies. Many landowners logically sought to have the soldiers

¹⁶ BL, Add. Mss. 21653, f. 205, Instructions for reducing the 42nd Regiment, Aug. 1763; BL, Add. Mss. 21634, f. 347, Amherst to Bouquet, 7 Aug. 1763.

¹⁷ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, p. 93; TNA, T1/422, ff. 83, Disbandment muster, Sept. 1763.

returned to their estates to provide sufficient labour. Others correctly identified that there was a sequential link between military service and emigration.¹⁸ Landlords attempted to influence demobilization, either through resettlement schemes on their own estates or through correspondence with senior figures.¹⁹ In 1763, the ‘Nobility and Gentry’ of the Highlands petitioned the then Secretary at War, Welbore Ellis, to disband the Highland regiments in Scotland. Conscious of the need to justify their requests on grounds of national interest, the unnamed petitioners requested ‘the few remains of these gallant men [might] be sent home to re-people the Country, and Breed a Race of Soldiers who may emulate the actions of their Fathers in another war’. They reported that as the regiments had been reduced to a tenth of their original strength anyway, this would not be problematic and, besides, ‘the service of these poor men seem to merit this mark of public attention’. Still, the petitioners could not hide their real concerns that during the war they had given up ‘their own private conveniency [*sic*] for the good of the publick’, but now that it was over, they needed ‘hands to labour the ground’.²⁰

The overall success of this lobbying is open to question, but it did not clash with the ideas of officials and the policies of the Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates. Andrew Mackillop has shown that the apparatus of the annexed estates became as focused on Highland ex-military settlement as it had been on its original policy of improvement.²¹ Overall, the majority of the regiments were eventually disbanded at towns such as Perth, within easy reach of the Highlands. Such broad support was less

¹⁸ NAS, GD293/2/78, f. 66, Peter Stewart to James Montgomery, 20 Jul. 1775; TNA, CO45/5880, f. 164, Lord Justice Clerk Report on Emigrations, [1774]; see Chapter 5.

¹⁹ NAS, GD248/358/3, ff. 36-7, James Grant to General Mackay and reply, 4-8 May 1783; P&KDA, B59/32, f. 64, William Young to General Mackay, 21 Mar. 1783.

²⁰ NAS, GD87/1, f. 95, Petition of the Nobility and Gentry of the Highlands, [1763].

²¹ Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 88-94.

enthusiastic in England where the overriding fear was the perceived inability of ex-soldiers to gain honest employment: ‘In times of Peace, reduced soldiers are a burthen to the mother country, because for every one that takes to industry at home, ten take to evil course’, was how the incumbent Secretary at War, Lord Barrington, explained English concerns.²²

These complex arguments could not, however, compete with wider imperial desires for the settlement of Highlanders in North America. Demobilization occurred in the context of immensely complicated geo-political concerns of which actors such as individual landlords were minor players. Highland demobilization in North America was not a mechanical consequence of a metropolitan impression that Highlanders would efficiently defend the frontiers. Upper New York, Québec, and Nova Scotia were the principal areas of Highland settlement, but these were areas under little immediate threat from external powers by 1765. The defeat and expulsion of their Acadian allies led the Mi’kmaq Nation of Nova Scotia to sign a treaty with Britain in 1761. In New York, after the collapse of Pontiac’s confederacy, the external threat was also of secondary consequence. Sir William Johnson was instrumental in maintaining a nervous peace between Britain and the Six Nations Confederacy. While never able to win over all of the Iroquois, his close relationship with the Mohawk had a beneficial effect for the crown on the other Nations, keeping most of them out of the rising, and securing peace with Pontiac at Oswego in 1766.²³ While rarely amiable to British rule, the removal of French

²² BL, Add. Mss. 32911, ff. 263-4, Lord Barrington to the Duke of Newcastle, 12 Sept. 1760.

²³ Daniel K. Richter, ‘Johnson, Sir William, first baronet (1715?–1774)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept. 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14925>, accessed 8 Apr. 2010].

power undercut the ability of pro-French Amerindians to conduct offensive operations against the colonies. Where there was a more significant threat, in the southern backcountry, the scene of venomous relations with the Cherokee, no attempt was made to establish Highland settlements.

Highland settlement was, therefore, not about a militarily potent counterpoint to an external threat to empire, but the effective management and growth of its internal vitality. The temporary halt to westward expansion imagined in the Proclamation Line of 1763, as well as attempting to secure cordial relations with the indigenous Nations, was designed to encourage Protestant settlement into the newly ceded territories of Québec and East and West Florida.²⁴ Facing a politically unreliable Catholic population of 75,000 people in the St Lawrence Valley, the Line's architects, men such as the earls of Shelburne and Hillsborough, envisaged an Irish-style solution to the problem, creating a Protestant ascendancy that would dominate landownership and office holding, and who would underscore the establishment of British rule in the province. The prerequisite of this model was a large-scale Protestant settlement and to this end, military settlement was encouraged in the province by offering land grants to soldiers through the Royal Proclamation. Grading these land grants to conform to military rank, 5,000 acres to field officers, falling to 50 acres for the private soldier, created a ready-made, hierarchical Protestant landowning class of both grandees and the yeoman farmers who would elect them.²⁵ Demobilized soldiers would be paragons of Lockean individualism,

²⁴ Francis D. Cogliano, *Revolutionary America, 1763-1815: A Political History* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 8-9; Colin G. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), *passim*.

²⁵ Conway, 'The Consequences of Conquest', pp. 13-15.

politically supportive of the Protestant interest and militarily capable enough to bear arms in the realm's defence.

Highlanders were deemed suited to this process, revealing a sophisticated view of the Highlander. Confidence in the qualities of the Highland fighting man, at first purely utilitarian, spilled over into a new cultural definition of the Gael. This definition placed a premium on the ability of the Highland soldier to create the conditions for imperial vitality, facilitating the administration of peace and justice. If correctly governed, it was believed there was no reason Highlanders could not provide, 'a bulwark ... to liberty ... united to the constitution'.²⁶ There was also a societal reason for these attitudes. As control of Québec's population necessitated a hierarchical Protestant landed elite, in effect, what was required was the transplanting of Georgian social organizations onto a colonial space. Given the contemporary metropolitan views of Highland society, that it possessed strong bonds of social organization, Highland veterans were expertly placed to promote the Protestant ascendancy in Canada.²⁷ There was, of course, some inconsistency here. The supposedly arbitrary nature of social control in the Highlands was the subject of a great deal of criticism in the period, largely associated with the problems of Jacobitism and emigration. Yet in challenging contexts such as Québec, such concerns were disconnected from these domestic issues. As much as Whig commentators did criticize clanship in the Highlands, they accepted without question that a landed-elite based hierarchy was to be fully encouraged at home and abroad.

²⁶ [Anon.], *A Second Letter to a Noble Lord*, p. 29.

²⁷ TNA, PRO30/29/3, f. 5, Josiah Martin to Earl of Dartmouth, 30 Jun. 1775; [Anon.], *Considerations Upon the Different Modes of Finding Recruits for the Army*, p. 5.

It was no coincidence that one of the ‘frontiers’ where Highland soldiers were settled was the problematic border region between New York and the New Hampshire grants. The colonial assembly in Albany made the decision to grant lands to the 42nd and 77th Foot near what became Vermont upon which New York had a claim, a claim rejected by the *de facto* government of the region under the Allen brothers and the settlers known as the Green Mountain Boys. John Reid, a former captain in the 42nd Foot, was granted land near Bennington, a Green Mountain Boys heartland, from where his tenants were forcibly evicted in 1772. Governor William Tyron lamented to the American Secretary that no land grants could be fully confirmed until jurisdictional lines were fully settled.²⁸ By the settling of Highlanders, it was hoped that law and order might be more effectively established. By the inconsistencies of colonial administration, the white settlers of the New Hampshire Grants had become an internal threat to be held in check by Gaelic-speaking Highlanders, who were to enforce the dominion of English law.

It was by the same logic that the 42nd Foot were the regiment most involved in suppressing the colonial disturbances on the Pennsylvania frontier in 1765, an event which Patrick Griffin has called ‘the beginning of the end of the British empire in America’. On 6 March 1765, the regiment was called upon to take prisoner a group of local settlers known as the Black Boys, who had intercepted and burned crown supplies containing gifts for local Amerindians. The Highlanders caught the men involved, but

²⁸ *Documents relative to the Colonial History of New York*, VIII, 312.

were surrounded in their garrison at Fort Loudoun. Charles Grant, commanding the post, sensibly turned the suspects over to local magistrates, who release them without charge.²⁹

Internal considerations were also at work in the southern colonies. On 10 December 1757, Governor William Henry Lyttleton of South Carolina requested the withdrawal of the German and colonial-raised 60th Foot, under the command of Henry Bouquet, from his colony. Throughout his time in South Carolina, Bouquet had reportedly been ‘measured upon all occasions by his views of establishing himself here and have seen so much of duplicity ... that it is impossible for me to repose ... confidence in him’. According to Lyttleton, Bouquet had conspired to have the 77th Foot removed from the town thereby granting himself uncontested military command. Lyttleton’s solution was, however, revealing. He wished the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Loudoun, to remove the 60th Foot while retaining the 77th Foot and, to have the latter demobilized in South Carolina at the peace: ‘[T]hey would, very many of them, perhaps the far greatest part become settlers here, which would be a most substantial and lasting benefit to these parts that want very much an addition of white inhabitants.’³⁰ From Lyttleton’s point of view, the Highlanders were the more attractive subjects to secure the expansion of the white population, despite the questionable place of the Highlander in the taxonomy of imperial peoples.

The inconsistencies created by imperial expansion could create some remarkable paradoxes. As early as the 1670s, an anonymous author had suggested that 600-700

²⁹ Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007), p. 74; Smith, *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith*, pp. 108-10.

³⁰ HL, LO6852, Lyttleton to Loudoun, 10 Dec. 1757.

Highlanders might be used to combat Catholicism in Maryland. Among the requests of the petition were calls for the establishment of Protestant churches and schools in Maryland and, for the colony's proprietary status to be revoked so that Protestant governors could be appointed. In effect, Highlanders would be called upon to underpin the establishment of Protestantism in the colony, a remarkable assertion given contemporaneous beliefs in the intersect between the Highlands and Catholicism.³¹ In addition, as much as Highlanders had been selected to defend the frontiers of the Georgia Trusteeship in the 1730s on the basis of military potency, great efforts had been made to facilitate the development of commercial networks between the Savannah trustees and the Darien Highlanders, albeit within the implausible confines of the trustee's regulation of commercial growth.³² Nevertheless, there was a link within imperial thought between Protestantism, hierarchy, commercial progress, and militarism, irrepressibly intertwined in the North American context. This recognition, implicitly, but not entirely, suppressed the association of Highlanders with savagery. Travellers over the next few decades consistently highlighted the achievements of disbanded Highland soldiers in bringing areas of settlement into cultivation and civility.³³ It is likely that metropolitan conceptions of these attributes in the Gaelic diaspora informed the choice of Highlanders

³¹ For one of the clearest assertions of this, though dated to the 1740s, see [Anon.], *Chevaliers Market; Or, Highland Fair* (London, 1745).

³² [Anon.], 'Complaint from Heaven with a Hue and Crye and a Petition out of Virginia and Maryland', *Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1667-1687/8*, ed. William H. Browne (Baltimore, 1887), pp. 134-49; Anthony W. Parker, *Scottish Highlanders in Colonial Georgia: The Recruitment, Emigration, and Settlement at Darien, 1735-1748* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997).

³³ Patrick Campbell, *Travels in the Interior Inhabited Parts of North America in the years 1791 and 1792*, ed. H.H. Langton (Edinburgh: John Guthrie, 1937), p. 295; LAC, MG23 F1(2), Joseph DeBarres Papers, *Report of John Macdonald on DeBarres Estate* (1795), p. 44.

for imperial settlement and, that this was at least as important as government confidence in the martial capacities of the soldiers.

To this end, policies were put in place to encourage Highland settlement even before the King's Proclamation was issued. While ordering the strengthening of the 42nd Foot with draftees of the 77th, Amherst directed that Bouquet offer any of the disbanded officers and soldiers unstipulated quantities of colonial land. All discharged men were to be given every encouragement to settle in America. Revealingly, Amherst was also of the opinion that invalids and men rendered unfit through service should be discharged in America, even though such men were unlikely to be of much use in a martial capacity. He justified this on the grounds that the reduced men were more likely to find work in the expanding colonies. According to Amherst, their remaining in the colonies was important to the development of commerce, a theme not unrelated to the Protestant interest.³⁴ While problematic within the domestic confines of Scotland, not only had the Gael been rehabilitated through imperial conquest (an overemphasized staple of the existing historiography), but they had been imagined as acceptable pioneers of the values which needed to be extended within that empire.

II QUANTIFYING SETTLEMENT

How many Highland soldiers were demobilized in North America? The prevailing perception, then and now, was that the regiments that 'went to the American war, went to their destruction'. It was Rev. Dr. Walker's opinion that the trickle of men who

³⁴ BL, Add. Mss. 21634, f. 347, Amherst to Bouquet, 7 Aug. 1763.

returned to the Hebrides from the Seven Years' War was because so many were 'slain' in America.³⁵

We must not, however, confuse casualty rates with attrition. Losses to British forces during this period were significant, but not all losses were caused by deaths, which occurred largely through disease.³⁶ Discharges, owing to age or infirmity, were responsible for a large percentage of the attrition in this period. The effect was that in wartime, regiments were required to recruit an average of 2.1 per cent of strength per month simply to maintain troop levels.³⁷ Figure 4.1 demonstrates the levels of attrition for select months in the 42nd Foot during the Seven Years' War. Average discharges suggest that from June 1756 to June 1767, perhaps as many as 300 men were discharged, lost to the regiment, but likely to have survived the war. This extrapolated figure would have accounted for about a quarter of the regiment that was recruited in this period.

³⁵ Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, p. 104; *The Rev. Dr. Walker's report on the Hebrides of 1764 and 1771*, ed. Margaret M. McKay (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980), p. 40.

³⁶ Illness accounted for over eighty per cent of military deaths in North America, Marshall, 'The Health of the British Soldier in America', p. 18.

³⁷ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, pp. 125-6; for the concern of senior military figures about the disproportionate losses to disease in the Highland regiments, see *The Siege and Capture of Havana, 1762*, ed. David Syrett (London: Naval Records Society, 1970), p. 281.

Figure 4.1: Regimental losses of the 1/42nd Foot for select months in North America, 1759-1767.³⁸

Dates	Effective strength	Deserted	Discharged	Deaths	Losses as per cent of total	Percent lost to desertion; discharge death
Oct 1759- Apr 1760	722	0	16	7	3.1	0; 70; 30
Apr 1761- Oct 1761	645	4	0	1	0.7	80; 0; 20
Apr 1762- Oct 1762	882	0	45	349*	44.6	0; 11; 89
Oct 1763- Apr 1764	435	3	33	8	10.1	7; 75; 18
Oct 1766- Apr 1767	384	4	28	6	9.9	10; 74; 16

*Siege of Havana

Figure 4.2 gives similar statistics for the War of American Independence. Here on average, thirteen soldiers were discharged every six months, for a possible discharge total of 234 men during the period the regiment was in America - eighteen per cent of the regiment.

Discharges and demobilizations were, therefore, far more extensive than has previously been realized. While these soldiers had no restrictions on their movements, save economic circumstance or the nature of their age or infirmity, it is impossible to track their movements once they were discharged. Overall, figures based on the extant returns of the Highland regiments which fought in America suggest that between eighteen and twenty-five per cent of the Highlanders that went to the colonies were

³⁸ TNA, WO12/5478, ff. 1-145, 1/42nd Foot returns, 1759-1767.

discharged there, excluding those reduced when the regiments were disbanded in 1763 and in 1783-84.

Figure 4.2: Regimental losses for the 1/42nd Foot for select months in North America, 1775-1785.³⁹

Dates	Effective strength	Deserted	Discharged	Deaths	Losses as per cent of total	Percent lost to desertion; discharge death
Dec 1775-Dec 1776	1030	2	19	80	9.8	2; 18; 80
Jun 1777-Dec 1777	1033	2	6	45	5.1	4; 11; 85
June 1779-Dec 1779	1050	6	1	43	4.8	12; 2; 86
Jun 1781-Dec 1781	871	5	4	28	4.2	13; 11; 76
Dec 1782-Jun 1783	804	18	24	28	8.7	26; 34; 40
Dec 1784-Jun 1785	385	2	37	5	11.4	6; 84; 10

This is not an insignificant figure, for the propensity of Highland males to enlist must to some degree have been formed on the basis of the likelihood of survival. Life was not cheap in the eighteenth century and we have seen how soldiers protected their rights as labourers. Perhaps as significant, the entire concept of military service as a means to an end was predicated on the likely receipt of those benefits. We are, of course, still left with the questionable extent of how far stories of success or survival permeated the minds of the rural population of the Highlands. Rev. Dr. Walker's flawed statement that the majority were slain in America suggests that it did not. Even so, Gaelic song

³⁹ TNA, WO12/5479, ff. 1-257, 1/42nd Foot returns, 1775-1785.

reinforced notions of reward through military service in this period, one poem told soldiers there would be ‘‘S le mòr chliù a thighinn dachaidh le nì [Great fame and bounty to come home with]’. Another by Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir made similar claims.⁴⁰ The hopes of what might occur at the end of military service were the militating factor in enlistment, and the fact that more survived military service than were killed or died of disease might have assisted the continual attraction of the service in this period.

Where were Highland soldiers demobilized? While the ideological underpinnings of land and military service will be explored in the following chapter, settlement in North America was emphasized to recruits as a reward for their service. Land settlement by Highland soldiers in North America, however, should not be seen as the expression of an unrestrained desire for new beginnings. It was, instead, a demonstration of the speed with which individual Highland soldiers embraced opportunity. According to the disbandment musters of the 78th Foot in September 1763, 170 men, including over seventy per cent of the regiment’s NCO cadre, chose settlement in North America. Of those, eighty settled in Québec, where the regiment had been stationed for the final four years of the war, the balance seeking lands in New York and Nova Scotia. This was around one in five of the remaining rank-and-file.⁴¹

Troops were generally offered the location of their demobilization as a choice, often with significant minorities choosing American settlement. On 17 September 1783, the headquarters at New York issued orders that men ‘desirous of settling in Nova

⁴⁰ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, p. 40; *Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin*, ed. Aonghas MacLeoid (Dun Eidean: Comunn Litreachas Gaidhlig na h-Alba, 1978), p. 22.

⁴¹ McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, II, 173-78; for the locations of New York settlement see *Calendar of New York Colonial Manuscripts Indorsed Land Papers, 1643-1803*, ed. Edmund B. O’Callaghan (Albany, 1864), pp. 317-623.

Scotia' were to submit their names and those of their wives and children to the Adjutant General. In all, 586 men and women of the 42nd Foot left New York in October 1783 for Nova Scotia on board three transports; ten days later, 177 left for England. Removing the number of men remaining in the regiment that was to be on garrison duty in Halifax until the late 1780s, this suggests around one third of the regiment chose colonial settlement.⁴² The figures for the 76th Foot are among the most explicit. By March 1784, there were 364 men left on the 76th Foot's musters. Of these, 142 (thirty-nine per cent) remained in America, either through capture, desertion or by choosing to settle in Nova Scotia. In some companies, the numbers that chose to go to Nova Scotia outnumbered those who decided to return for demobilization in Stirling.⁴³

Between 1756 and 1783, eleven Highland battalions served in North America, that is, approximately 11,700 men.⁴⁴ Based on the extant muster lists of these battalions, thirty-six per cent, approximately 4,200, died in the fatal land. Another 2,800 were demobilized in America, either to remain there or find passages back to Britain. To this we may add the 1,300 who chose to remain in America when regiments were demobilized and the 1,200 emigrants of the 84th Foot who remained in Canada in 1784. Around 2,200 returned with their regiments to be disbanded in Britain. These figures have never been examined in such depth. What is remarkable is that more remained in North America than chose to return home, excluding the demobilized of whom we will never know their eventual destinations. Put quite simply, if only a tiny minority ever returned to the Highlands, it was not because of appalling losses, or government concern

⁴² NAS, GD13/94, Orderly Book of the 74th Foot, pp. 5, 20.

⁴³ TNA, WO12/8191, 76th Foot returns, Mar. 1784.

⁴⁴ See Appendix A.

and neglect, but because a significant number chose not to return to their original localities.

It is revealing to compare the Highlander soldier with the troops of the German states who served in North America during the War of American Independence. Like the Highlander, German soldiers shared a fascination with America and invested much of their hopes in its aspirational potential. More so than the Highlanders, German troops had a reputation for desertion and a desire to merge with colonial populations, where there were already substantial German settlements and an active German political community.⁴⁵ Despite this, the majority of German troops returned to central Europe. We should not over-estimate the otherness of the Gaelic-speaking Highlander in the American colonies, particularly one with military experience.

⁴⁵ The German-speaking population of the thirteen colonies in 1775 has been estimated at 125,000, A.G. Roeber, ‘“The Origin of Whatever is Not English Among Us”: The Dutch-Speaking and German-Speaking Peoples of Colonial British America’ in *Strangers within the Realm*, p. 243.

Figure 4.3: Selected demobilization rates of American service troops, 1756-1783.⁴⁶

Region	Troops sent	Troops returned	Per cent (average based on available data)
<i>Britain, 1756-63</i>			
Outer Hebrides	479	54*	11.2 (17.0)
Inner Hebrides	1,561	71*	4.5 (18.9)
1/42 nd Foot	c.1,300	312	24.0
<i>Britain, 1775-83</i>			
1/42 nd Foot	1,308	c.200*	15.2
71 st Foot	2,693	862	32.0
76 th Foot	1,051	213	20.2
<i>German states, 1775-83</i>			
Anhalt-Serbst	1,152	984	85.4
Anspach-Beyreuth	2,353	1,183	50.3
Brunswick	5,723	2,704	47.3
Hesse-Cassel	18,970	10,784	56.8
Hesse-Hanau	2,422	1,441	59.4

*Data incomplete

III THE NATURE OF SETTLEMENT

It was common in the eighteenth-century British Empire for policy to be enacted on the ground before systemized imperial ideologies had emerged.⁴⁷ As we have seen, demobilization was hardly a government-orchestrated *fait accompli* and many veterans chose to remain in North America. The result of this was two-fold. First, as relatively

⁴⁶ David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), p. 53; Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, Appendix 4; LoC, MMC Samuel Townsend fl. 1782, Troops raised for North American service, 1775-1782; TNA, WO12/7847, ff. 1-145, 71st Foot returns, 1776-1783; TNA, WO12/8191, ff. 1-145, 76th Foot returns, 1778-1783; TNA, WO12/5478, ff. 1-145, 42nd Foot returns, Oct. 1759-Apr. 1767; TNA, WO12/5469, ff. 148-64, 42nd Foot returns, Jun. 1784-Jun. 1785; NAS, GD13/94, Orderly book, Sept.-Oct. 1783.

⁴⁷ Marshall, 'A Nation Defined by Empire, 1755-1776', p. 216.

free agents, the system enforced the development of individualism as men left soldiering to become independent-minded settlers. Success became entirely dependent on an individual's ability to manipulate personal contacts or government incentives. Second, imperial policy was partially shaped by the imperatives of demobilized soldiers on the ground, who operated not as the meek tools of an imperial centre, but as active agents with their own role in the development of British North America.

The notion of individualism among Highland soldiers has been severely undermined by a historiography that asserts the Gael was an obtuse product of the clan system. When Bernard Bailyn identified a 'provincial' model of British emigration in the era of the American Revolution, consisting of small family units, in contrast to the individualistic economic migration of the 'metropolitan' model, his conclusions mirrored the established interpretation of Highlands and Islands emigration. Historians asserted that communal cohesion in the new world might be understood through a clannish desire to remain together.⁴⁸ While easily challenged (many failed to recognize that Bailyn's 'provincial' model applied to just fifty-four per cent of Highland emigrants) historians did not look beyond the *fir-taca*-led emigrations that appeared to typify the Highland exodus. Such hierarchical approaches have influenced interpretations of military settlement. It is accepted that officers were central to settlement, being the only persons

⁴⁸ Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), pp. 134-47; David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (Oxford: OUP, 1989), p. 663.

with sufficient credit to purchase equipment and form networks for commercial viability, and the skills to organize such ventures in newly-settled territories.⁴⁹

The distribution of land grants does not justify this contention. Government land grants were issued to senior commanding officers who, in turn, distributed such lands to their soldiers. The officers were free to sub-divide their lands among tenants but the land granted to a dependent soldier was entirely his own property, as long as quit rents were paid and the land was sufficiently cultivated. This was consistent with the government's desire to create independent yeoman farmers within a hierarchical land structure. As land was individual property, however, it had the effect of forging a direct link between administrators and demobilized soldiers, often to the detriment of their officers' influence. In many cases, land grants were issued to NCOs on behalf of the rank-and-file, suggesting a strong predilection for existing hierarchies, though far from purely officer-led settlements.⁵⁰

This was assisted by the periodic institutionalization of settlement, where land grants became the accepted norm of state/subject relations. In the period 1783-85, the settlement of Nova Scotia was a primary concern of Governor John Parr and, under his direction, a system of surveyors encouraged a veritable flood of petitions, which would eventually top 6,000. Parr preferred small group and individual grants and was largely unwilling to grant huge tracts to would-be proprietors. Delays were inevitable and not

⁴⁹ Christopher Moore, 'The Disposition to Settle: The Royal Highland Emigrants and Loyalist Settlement in Upper Canada, 1784' in *Historical Essays on Upper Canada*, ed. J.K. Johnson and Bruce Wilson (Carleton: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991), p. 68.

⁵⁰ NSARM, RG20, vol. 3, John Small to John Parr, 26 Apr. 1784; NSARM, RG20, vol. 17, Petition of Sergeant Alexander Macdonald, 7. Jan 1786.

all officials acted well, but petitioning individualized the land and made the provisions of the grants common knowledge to the meanest of ex-soldiers.⁵¹

We must distinguish between communal settlement and collective settlement. Communal settlement implies a situation where pre-determined patterns subordinated the individual to the group. The settlement of Highland soldiers was not communal but collective, a societal form determined by a collection of individual persons. Individual success was predicated on group support but the individual was prioritized. Few directly petitioned for land on an individual basis but logically coalesced into groups, often of a dozen individuals or fewer to petition for the lands they were due. There was strength in numbers. In North American settlements, it was foolhardy to begin the clearance of uncultivated lands as a single man. An individual could clear only between two and four acres of uncultivated backcountry every year. Requests to remain with comrades were common, but they were not exceptional expressions of Highland clannishness; instead they derived from a natural desire for networks of support. In the same way that has been argued for the officer class, these networks provided information which allowed ex-soldiers to make claims on land near demobilized friends. This was the case with John Macleod of the 42nd Foot, who received 100 acres in 1785 in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, having established there were still vacant lands near others of the same regiment.⁵²

It is also possible that the petitioners understood ministerial desires to create cohesive bonds in the settled populations and used joint petitions to suggest the necessity of acceding to the requests. A sign of this understanding was that it was unheard of in

⁵¹ Peter Burroughs, 'John Parr (1725-1791)', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000 [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01, accessed 22 Apr. 2010].

⁵² NSARM, RG20, vol. 13, Petition of John Macleod, [1785].

the petitions to promise future military service as an argument for securing the land grants. Instead, petitioners emphasized their desire to ‘cultivate and improve that ground’ or their ‘Hard working, labouring and Industrious’ temperaments. Scribbled notes on the petitions that ‘We know the above person to be an industrious Man’ could mean the difference between success and failure.⁵³ John Small, commanding the 2/84th Foot, in a letter to the commander of British forces in Nova Scotia, outlined similar arguments. To justify the settlement at Windsor in 1784, Small employed the argument that the settled soldiers might be a source of future manpower, but this argument was second to his emphasis on the importance of cultivating the land and expanding the commercial vitality of this area of Nova Scotia. John Small, in fact, was largely against communal settlement, recognizing that local material factors could destroy such cohesion. He reported that forcing ex-servicemen to settle together was generally counter-productive, particularly close to winter, the provisions generally being inadequate to feed all of the soldiers. This is indeed what happened and while Small’s advocacy of a non-dictatorial policy to encourage free choice was ignored, his request to make Windsor the location of the demobilization was granted sixteen days after he wrote the letter by General Henry Fox.⁵⁴

Some settlers became entrepreneurial manipulators of the land grant system, operating within localized military networks to accrue numerous tracts. Private William Macdonald fought in North America during the Seven Years’ War and settled on fifty

⁵³ NSARM, RG20, vol. 17, Petition of James Macdonald [84th Foot], [1786]; NSARM, RG20, vol. 17, Petition of James Macdonald [73rd Foot], [1786].

⁵⁴ NSARM, RG1/365, f. 83, John Small to Henry Fox, 21 Sept. 1783; NSARM, MG12, vol. 6, f. 29, Orders of Henry Fox, 7 Oct. 1783.

acres in Nova Scotia in 1763. In 1777-78, he bought out nine other fifty acre grants awarded to Highland veterans in the Shubenacadie river valley before enlisting in the *Royal Highland Emigrants*. Service during the War of Independence provided him with a further 300 acres which he received in 1783, giving Macdonald 800 acres of land in total. With this he purchased sheep, cattle, and adjoining land before selling 400 acres to his sons James and Andrew. By 1794, on the basis of military service in two wars, Macdonald had become a landowning entrepreneur, establishing an estate of 1,300 acres and successfully using the imperial system to establish his family's security.⁵⁵ Robert Macdonald was similarly entrepreneurial. When his neighbour died unexpectedly in 1787, Macdonald quickly requested that he might take over this land near Shelburne on the basis of having 'improved' four acres of his own land, a request which was granted by the Parr government.⁵⁶ The scope of some individuals knew no bounds. Captain Alexander Macdonald of the 84th Foot had held several thousand acres of land on Staten Island prior to the Revolution, having been granted them for his service in the 77th Foot during the Seven Years' War. He lost these lands through his Loyalism and during the war he had been sentenced to death *in absentia*. In 1783 he asked for land that had formerly been given to other proprietors, including his former commanding officer, Archibald Montgomery, but which had been unsettled and reclaimed by escheat. In all,

⁵⁵ NSARM, RG20, vol. 1, William MacDonald land grants, 1763-1783; Donald B. Smith, 'From Swords to Ploughshares: The Context for Highland Soldier Settlement in Nova Scotia, 1710-1775' (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Mary's University, 2003), pp. 107-42.

⁵⁶ NSARM, RG20, vol. 19, Petition of Robert Macdonald, 23 Feb. 1787.

Macdonald unsuccessfully requested 190,000 acres, almost double what the entire second battalion of his regiment received.⁵⁷

It was, on occasion, possible for Highlanders to manipulate the system for social self-aggrandizement. One Macpherson, ‘a very great man’, who settled at Chedabucto in 1784, declared that the appointed surveyor of the new settlement knew nothing of his task and suggested his own candidate for the job. Macpherson had also taken to conducting weddings without a licence, had declared himself the local surgeon, and was demanding to be made a Justice of the Peace and refusing to act under the official appointee. For determined men, the new townships offered a remarkable opportunity for establishing new hierarchies though this did not stop Macpherson ingratiating himself to an arriving colonel who seemed determined, so it was thought, to become a local ‘dictator’. In this particular township, the best lots and the stores had all been secured by the first arrivals, with Macpherson and others dividing the lots as they saw fit, without consulting the surveyor.⁵⁸

The confidence of ex-soldiers is best seen in the high number of petitions that questioned the quality or quantity of the allotted government grants. In a joint-memorial signed by eight enlisted men of the 84th Foot, the petitioners described how they had been shown two of their allotted 100 acres in Canada, but found them woefully inadequate. They asserted that settlement there ‘would only destroy their provisions and ... seeing and perceiving no inhabitants near the place and that they could make no

⁵⁷ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 218-23, 268, 274, 496; NSARM, RG20, vol. 1, Petition of Alexander Macdonald, Jan. 1783.

⁵⁸ NSARM, MG1/948, f. 284, R.F. Brownrigg to Gideon White, 8 Jun. 1784.

use of their provisions thereof for the benefit of themselves and their families', they decided to petition the governor for equivalent lands elsewhere.⁵⁹

In the absence of land grants, or prior to those grants being made productive, ex-soldiers had to find the means of sustaining themselves. The government issued provisions of seeds, tools, and supplies for the first year of settlement to allow planting. Even so, as in the Highlands, opportunities for wage labour were essential to the financial viability of new world settlement and many even sold their seeds and tools for specie.⁶⁰ This similarly reinforced individualism by making the labour and credit of the individual settler the source of stability. There were 400 military and Loyalist families in the Nova Scotian town of Shelburne by the end of 1783, a settlement adjoining the Free Black community of Birchtown. Detailed by Sergeant John McVicar of the 76th Foot, 386 men, including ninety-five veterans of the 76th were employed in cutting streets for the Shelburne township. Such employment could not possibly provide long term sustenance and the lack of jobs and a perception that the Black Loyalists were undercutting employment resulted in the violent expulsion of the Blacks from Shelburne in July 1784 by groups of ex-soldiers. The violence provoked by labour problems demonstrates that wage labour was not an adjunct to land settlement, but a symbiotic process to settlement. During the race riot in Shelburne, the soldiers had threatened to hang Benjamin Marston, the chief surveyor, for the slow delivery of their lands.⁶¹

Settlers did not pursue subsistence farming and specie from the sale of goods was the

⁵⁹ G. Murray Logan, *Scottish Highlanders and the American Revolution* (Halifax: Private publisher, 1976), pp. ii-iii.

⁶⁰ NSARM, MG1/948, f. 284, R.F. Brownrigg to Gideon White, 8 Jun. 1784.

⁶¹ NSARM, MG1/948, f. 235, Return of discharged men employed, 4 Nov. 1783; UNBA, Winslow Family Papers, vol. 22, Benjamin Marston Diary, 26 Jul. 1784.

ultimate objective of cultivating the land. As such, Highland soldiers elsewhere in Nova Scotia linked disposable income to settlement. Thirty-three veterans of the 84th Foot under Evan McPhee offered money or their own day-labour to the Nova Scotia administration for the upkeep of a road linking their settlement near Nine Mile River with the wider world. It was only with ‘the assistance of Almighty God, the aid of Government and their own very Great Exertions’ that the road had been built, but its poor condition prevented the product of their labours on the farms lots being transported to market for sale.⁶²

IV MAKING THE EMPIRE BRITISH

The empire was not an abstraction, separate from the lives of people in the Atlantic world, but was created by the vested interests of those who lived within its borders. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the conquered province of Québec after 1763.

Demobilized Highlanders carried out ministerial plans for a Protestant ascendancy in Québec in pursuit of their own security. Officers and men of the 78th Foot shared with the government an equal distrust of what they saw as Catholic licentiousness and corruption, whether in Canada or elsewhere. Both consequently trumpeted Protestant values as a morally superior imperative for the colonies. Even those officers who were the sons of Jacobite elites, or Catholic themselves, were aware of the dangers to imperial stability from the influence of ‘papists’ and were hostile to the influence of Catholic

⁶² NSARM, MG12/6, f. 29, Petition of Evan McPhee, [n.d.].

priests on the lower orders.⁶³ For Robert Kirkwood, a Protestant enlisted man of the 77th then 42nd Foot, his experience of the *Canadiens* offered, ‘striking proof of the difference between a free and independent people, and an abject multitude’.⁶⁴ By 1791, around a third of the seigneuries in Québec were owned, or partly owned, by British residents and, during this time, Highland officers sought to establish social models consistent with security and their own social importance.⁶⁵

The enlisted men of the 78th Foot did the same. A number settled in Québec City, and the impact of this small collection of disbanded Highlanders should not be underestimated. John Fraser, who was wounded during the battle of St. Foy in 1760, established an English language school in Garden Street, the first English school in the city. The majority of the children of 78th veterans were educated there. These veterans established a close community, which was an intrinsic part of the re-development of the city following the war. John Macleod kept a hotel; his fellow soldier Lauchlan Smith kept a store. Sergeant Hugh McKay also kept a store until it was demolished to make way for extended fortifications, following which he served as the First Sergeant at Arms for the House of Assembly in the 1790s.⁶⁶ It appears that the Highland veterans were broadly supportive of the repeal of the Québec Act of 1774, and the Constitution of 1791.⁶⁷

⁶³ NAS, GD146/11, William Munro to father, 9 Jun. 1757; BAnQ, James Thompson Journal, 5, p. 68; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Reverend Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 24 Dec. 1761; TNA, CO217/53, f. 71, John Macdonald to George Germain, 30 Oct. 1776.

⁶⁴ Robert Kirk[wood], *The Memoirs and Adventures of Robert Kirk, Late of the Royal Highland Regiment* (Limerick, 1770), p. 68.

⁶⁵ John Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2000), pp. 170-3.

⁶⁶ BAnQ, P254/Box 9, Assorted newspapers, c.1790-1830.

⁶⁷ LAC, MG23 K1 vol. 32, Petition for the repeal of the Quebec Act, Sept. 1783, pp. 103-6.

Much of this support probably emanated from resistance to the concessions allowed to Catholicism that were crucial parts of the Québec Act. Religion was a key component of the relationship between Highlanders and Québec. As noted, many veterans of the 78th were extremely suspicious of the Catholic population and, in June 1762, had to be warned to behave during a French Canadian parade in the city, and were explicitly warned not to break the windows of houses not illuminated to mark the king's birthday.⁶⁸ Most of the veterans who settled did entertain thoughts of converting the local populace. John Nairne attempted to bring a Presbyterian minister from Scotland for the task, but was disappointed, and the region remained overwhelmingly Catholic. James Cuthbert, an Inverness man formerly of the 15th Foot, did bring a minister from Scotland to educate his children and succeeded in establishing the first Presbyterian church in lower Canada at Berthier in 1786.⁶⁹

Protestantism underpinned a vital, but understudied, part of the machinery of empire: freemasonry. Freemasonry was a key cultural institution in the spread of proto-British values. The lodges arrived with British troops, quickly initiating civilian members who cooperated with demobilized soldiers in founding more permanent institutions when the regiment was re-deployed. This was the case in both Québec, where there was a travelling lodge with the 78th Foot, and Montreal, where Lodge 195 of the Grand Lodge of Ireland operated in the 1/42nd Foot.⁷⁰ Within two months of the victory on the Plains of Abraham, representatives of six regimental field lodges had met

⁶⁸ LAC, MG23, GIII23, Orderly book of the 78th Foot, 3-10 Jun. 1762.

⁶⁹ Lucille H. Campey, *Les Écossais: The Pioneer Scots of Lower Canada* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2006), pp. 9, 22.

⁷⁰ Jessica Leigh Harland-Jacobs, "'The essential link': Freemasonry and British Imperialism, 1751-1918" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Duke University, 2000), p. 45.

to form a permanent institution in Québec. Members of the 78th Foot were prominent members, the chaplain of the regiment, Robert Macpherson serving the same role in the Quebec Select Lodge and Lt. Col. Simon Fraser serving as Grandmaster from summer 1760. The Lodge in the 78th Foot maintained its military character from the disbanded veterans in Québec, changed its name to the St. Andrew's Lodge and functioned in its original form until around 1792.⁷¹ Amongst the Highland freemasons in Québec was James Thompson, who served the lodge almost continuously as Master, Senior, Warden, and Secretary.⁷² Thompson's stay in Québec coincided with a shift in the political repercussions of British freemasonry. While, to a great degree, an international order, after about 1780, the inclusive ideals of global brotherhood in freemasonry gave way to a more limited, circumscribed order, with an increasing emphasis on political loyalty. This was particularly important in Québec where the staunch Protestantism of the order made freemasonry a pillar of British dominance.⁷³ There is no question that membership was a deeply personal choice, but the strength of freemasonry in the Highland regiments during this time was a demonstration of commitment to British political and cultural institutions.

These pro-imperial experiences have been ignored, in part because it appears to give the problematic suggestion that Scottish Highlanders made the Empire 'English'; they did not. Their very participation and agency gave the Empire pan-British overtones. The early imperial world of seventeenth-century Britain and America demonstrates that

⁷¹ Brother A.J.B. Milborne, 'The Lodge in the 78th Regiment', *Quatuor Coronati Lodge*, 65 (1952): 19-33; Brother A.J.B. Milborne, 'Provincial Grand Lodge of Quebec, 1759-1792', *Quatuor Coronati Lodge*, 68 (1955): 11-29; Brother A.J.B. Milborne, 'British Military Lodges in the American War of Independence', *Transactions of the American Lodge of Research*, 10 (1966): 22-85.

⁷² Christian Rioux, 'James Thompson (1733-1830)', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000 [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01, accessed 21 November 2009].

⁷³ Harland-Jacobs, "'The essential link': Freemasonry and British Imperialism", pp. 78-122.

the ideology of altering customs through plantation was, contrary to previous thought, never a purely uni-national or uni-cultural phenomenon. It was not just the Protestant Jacobean English who participated in plantation, but their efforts were part of a wider European phenomenon of attempted centralization at all levels. Highland leaders sought to assert territorial control over clan territories and Catholic orders were planted in the western Highlands to cement Catholicism in the region at the same time James VI and I was looking for ways to extirpate the clans of the Western Isles.⁷⁴ The administration of empire often consisted of variegated aims and conflicting objectives. There was nothing paradoxical, therefore, in the Gaelic transformation of North America to a more ‘British’ model of government, as long as those Gaels were integrated, as they were, into the ideology of modernization and improvement.

John Macdonald of Glenalladale believed that ministerial interests might be conformed to Gaelic imperatives in the administration of the empire. As a junior officer in the 84th Foot, who had settled St John’s Island in 1772, Glenalladale wrote to the American Secretary, George Germain, in the autumn of 1776 as the colonial rebellion looked to be on the verge of collapse. In a forty-four page memorandum, Glenalladale outlined how to ensure the security of the colonies in the post-war world. Glenalladale astutely observed that should the rebellion be crushed, and if its governance returned to normal, the colonies would soon grow strong enough to ‘support ambitious designs’ for independence once again ‘never more to return to the same situation, but to swim, at

⁷⁴ Steven G. Ellis, *The Making of the British Isles: The State of Britain and Ireland, 1450-1660* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2007), esp. pp. 271-85; Alison Cathcart, ‘The Western Gàidhealtachd’ in *Scotland: The Making and Unmaking of the Nation c. 1100-1707*, ed. Bob Harris and Alan R. Macdonald (Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2007), pp. 90-106; see also Allan I. Macinnes, ‘Making the Plantations British, 1603-38’ in *Frontiers and the Writing of History*, ed. Steven G. Ellis and Raingard Esser (Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2006), pp. 95-125.

liberty, in the vast political ocean of the world'. Such a course could lead only to the colonists' conquest of South America, the West Indies and the eventual subordination of Europe to the United States. '[T]heir ambition to be Lords of the Universe, must be corrected', he said. To this end, in addition to the judicial murder of the principal leaders, the disarming of the general population and the forfeiture of landed estates, he considered the inherent paradox of American land. If settlement was restricted, then Americans would turn to manufacturing and eventually out-trade Britain. On the other hand, if settlement was left unrestricted there would be no barrier to the demographic triumph of the American Empire. Schemes to prevent the colonists from engaging in direct competition with Britain had similarly occupied the minds of some parliamentarians throughout the crisis.⁷⁵ These considerations had to be balanced against excess restrictions that would 'in time [unfairly] reduce the Americans, to the poverty, wildness and barbarity, of the aboriginal natives'. His solution revealed the considerable overlap between his own interests, socio-economic assumptions and government policy. Highland emigrants were to be 'usefully spared ... for the purpose of laying the foundation of a useful scheme for government' in the colonies. Three or four isolated collections of people spread throughout the colonies would act as loyal 'friends of government' and a check to American designs. It was men like Glenalladale who would be the conduit through which government was ordered. Simultaneously, he advocated the cultivation of islands in the north and south to supply the standing army that was essential for the governance of the colonies. The economic development of his own

⁷⁵ *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America, 1754-1783*, ed. R.C. Simmons and P.D.G. Thomas, 4 vols. (New York: Kraus International, 1983), II, 4.

struggling estates on St John's could not have been far from his mind. Glenalladale believed this natural order was predisposed to form a pillar of imperial dominion. It is not known whether Glenalladale ever received a reply; his assertion that current ministerial plans to end the war 'I dismiss ... as silly, & inadequate' probably did not help his case.⁷⁶ Glenalladale's memorandum reveals, however, dynamism in the imperial process that could be carved out on the ground by the careful adjusting of interest to policy.

V MOBILITY AND IMPROVEMENT

While helping to support individualism among Highland soldiers, service also helped expand the horizons of the Highland male. Military service was a contributing factor, however, to a more complex process of transformation. Large numbers of recruits were already mobile, literate, and commercially-minded when they entered the army.

Seasonal migration was an intrinsic part of the Highland economy and it is unsurprising that many men enlisted far from their home parishes. Indeed, enlistment may have been the most distinct phase of a migratory pattern that had been going on much of their young lives.

Already mobile, the soldiers' intellectual capacities reflected this. R.A. Houston has estimated that illiteracy levels in the Scottish Highlands in the period were around sixty per cent; a little less than double the English and Lowland equivalents. This rose to

⁷⁶ TNA, CO217/53, ff. 67-112, Glenalladale to Germain, 30 Oct. 1776.

as much as eighty-three per cent among the rural poor of the western Highlands.⁷⁷

Highland soldiers, however, were not the most marginal of the poor. Estimates based on names written in army paybooks suggest that illiteracy in two Highland regiments during the War of American Independence was around sixty-five per cent, higher than the Highland average but below that of most rural poor.⁷⁸ Active steps seem to have been taken, at least in some regiments, to improve literacy and promotion to an NCOs position necessitated literacy and a knowledge of book-keeping and arithmetic. Bennett Cuthbertson recommended that a school be formed in every regiment, led by an old soldier and paid for by voluntary subscriptions from the officers, as was the case in the Scots Dutch Brigade.⁷⁹ Highland soldiers, who desired to, could pay for their own education and a receipt by a John Fraser of the 84th Foot to pay for seven weeks of schooling suggests that this happened. While marching recruits of the 71st Foot from their depots in the Highlands to embarkation points at Glasgow in 1776, accounts of expenses included 'Paper spent for the use of recruits', enabling them to write to their families. When Sergeant Jonathan Grant of the 42nd Foot died on active service in the early 1760s, a bible worth three weeks' pay after stoppages was auctioned off, a system common in the army. The bible was bought by John Grant, a private who signed for it with his mark. A different Sergeant Grant's personal effects also contained 'several books' which were similarly auctioned the same year. In the two Highland regiments

⁷⁷ R.A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 56, 72-4, 78, 81.

⁷⁸ Frey, *The British Soldier in America*, p. 68.

⁷⁹ Cuthbertson, *Cuthbertson's System*, pp. 8-9; Sylvia Frey, Michael McConnell and David Hackett Fischer have all mistaken the school in the Scots Dutch Brigade as being formed in one of the Highland regiments, though this does not preclude the existence of such schools, Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, p. 48; Frey, *The British Soldier in America*, p. 69; Michael McConnell, *Army and Empire: British Soldiers on the American Frontier, 1758-1775* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), p. 55.

serving on the Pennsylvania frontier in 1763, officers counted 120 letters addressed to the 273 soldiers remaining in the regiments.⁸⁰ It would be inaccurate to suggest that the army was an education of comparable utility as apprenticeships, but for the Highland poor it was a more expansive intellectual venture than labouring. Scottish males who gave their occupation as soldiers in legal depositions in the eighteenth century had a seven per cent lower illiteracy rate than those in England, suggesting that if soldiers in England were the most dispossessed and illiterate, Scottish soldiers were more reflective of their societies.⁸¹

It might also be presumed that owing to the limited economic opportunities of the Highlands that the men were overwhelmingly labourers and lacked employable skills. The skills possessed by Highland recruits were, however, broad and utilitarian. Among the professions listed in Highland regiments were tobacconists, shoemakers, square wrights, masons, and gardeners. Before the French-held Fort Carillon in November 1757, the 42nd Foot contained more artificers than any other regiment present. They were outnumbered only by local tradesmen. In all, the regiment had arrived in America with sixty-one artificers, a total which compared favourably with other British regiments.⁸²

Like their British counter-parts in the 1760s, the revolutionary governments of the early United States were quick to recognize the potential of Highland soldiers to internal economic development. On 29 May 1776, Nicholas Biddle of the Virginia Navy

⁸⁰ NAS, GD174/2126, f. 27, John Fraser to James Davis, 23 Dec. 1782; NAS, GD44/47/1, f. 17, Sergeant Peter Thompson's accounts, Feb. 1776; BCA, Mss. 259, Effects of Sergeant Jonathan Grant, 25 May 1763; McConnell, *Army and Empire*, p. 61.

⁸¹ Houston, *Scottish Literacy and Scottish Identity*, p. 33.

⁸² HL, LO6801, List of artificers, 7 Nov. 1757; HL, LO5678, Army returns, 19 May 1757; HL, LO5908, Return of arms, 3 Aug. 1756.

took two British ships, the *Oxford* and the *Crawford* transporting reinforcements to the by then rebel-occupied Boston. On the *Oxford* were over 200 Highlanders of the 71st Foot, ‘Among them, we are told are many valuable Artificers’. Edmund Randolph informed Thomas Jefferson that ‘Measures are in Agitation to reconcile them to prosecute their different Occupations in this Country’.⁸³ After much of the 1/71st Foot was captured at Yorktown in 1781, some were similarly offered wage labour on local plantations during their march to York and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was readily accepted. Three officers were chosen by lots to remain with the prisoners on parole, but they found during their occasional visits to the barracks at York that few remained in the camp, and that the privates had as much freedom to come and go as the paroled officers. Many privates, it was reported, married local girls and settled in the area.⁸⁴

Highland soldiers were an increasingly sophisticated and consumer-orientated constituency. The common soldier grew up in the period of the consumer revolution, fuelled in part by a desire to emulate the conspicuous consumption of elites.⁸⁵ While relatively poor, the Highland gentry were stupendous consumers and in an attempt to match the spending habits of other pan-British elites, spent high proportions of their wealth on demonstrative luxuries. Prior to the Jacobite rebellion, British officers in the

⁸³ *The Papers of Jefferson Papers*, ed. Julian P. Boyd, 36 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), I, 407; C. Thomas Long, ‘Green Water Revolution: The War for American Independence on the Waters of the Southern Chesapeake Theatre’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, George Washington University, 2005), pp. 169-72

⁸⁴ *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, ed. William James Morgan, 11 vols. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), V, 712, 1011; Graham, *Memoirs of General Graham*, pp. 67-73.

⁸⁵ *Consumption and the World of Goods: Consumption and Society in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993), *passim*; John Brewer, ‘The Errors of Our Ways: Historians and the Birth of Consumer Society’, Lecture given to the Royal Society (2003) [available at <http://www.consume.bbk.ac.uk/publications.html#articles>, accessed 16 Apr. 2010]; for the impact of consumer materials on identity see T.H. Breen, ‘An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776’, *Journal of British Studies*, 25 (1986): 467-99.

Highlands had mocked the attempts at luxury displayed by all sections of Highland society. There was no doubt, however, in Edmund Burt's mind that emulation was carried on to an 'exorbitant height' and that the common people would adjust their habits in economic proportion to their elites. Goods from London were available, even outside the main urban centres, and Burt characterized many Highlanders as profit-driven.⁸⁶ Highland soldiers in America were not entirely dependent on government-issued victuals and equipment, but actively sought to acquire material goods of varying luxury. Soldiers of the 42nd Foot bought silk handkerchiefs and bed linen while at Fort Pitt in the summer of 1765. The personal effects of one private, Walter Stewart, included six stockings, four shirts, a bladder of snuff, a table cloth, and two pairs of shoes. A fellow soldier's possessions included a silk vest. Some soldiers loaned each other relatively large sums of money on credit.⁸⁷ It was even reported among the 78th Foot that:

Compleants hav[e] been made ... that some of the non commissioned officers and men of the detachment had imposed on some merchants and others in town & taken up good[s] in credite which they are not able to pay it & ... this stands very much to the discredit of the regiment.⁸⁸

Michael McConnell justifiably speculates that soldiers used luxury goods to fashion selfhood and used modest refinement to define their existence as worth more than Georgian society allowed them. Like their social superiors, soldiers used material

⁸⁶ Edmund Burt, *Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland*, ed. R. Jamieson, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1876), I, 66, 118, 264; for the best account of consumerism in the Highlands see Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury*, *passim*.

⁸⁷ McConnell, *Army and Empire*, pp. 77-81; BCA, Mss. 259, List of personal effects, 20 May 1762; BCA, Mss. 259, 42nd Foot accounts, [1762].

⁸⁸ LAC, MG23, Orderly book of the 78th Foot, 27 Nov. 1762.

goods on public occasions to assert their success within their chosen profession. It did not revolutionize their consuming lives, he argues, much of the habits being brought from civilian life, but it did confuse class distinctions.⁸⁹ Clothing, for example, was utterly central to a professional military identity. The selling of government-issued equipment and the individualizing of uniforms through purchases were not simply a breach of discipline, but a subversive challenge to an entire social system. That said, the maintenance of order and was not simply enforced by officers but expressed from within the ranks as well. An argument that developed out of an acting sergeant removing his coat, considered as a bad example to the men by a fellow sergeant, led to the murder of one of the sergeants involved. The investment of clothing with the politics of male identity was equally a part of the consumer revolution that eighteenth-century soldiers were experiencing.⁹⁰

Military service did not, however, simply deflect civilian habits into a new orbit. If the bonds of empire were material and consumerist as well as political in nature, exposure to that empire through military service could vastly alter the habits and horizons of individuals. One officer of the 77th Foot reported to James Grant at the end of 1763 that he was returning to Britain with 100 guineas, made while in the service, but stated he could have brought back much more were it not for the conspicuous consumption which accompanied military service: ‘Col. Montgomery’s regiment was a school in which I learned a lesson that in part sticks by me yet.’ Even on campaign,

⁸⁹ McConnell, *Army and Empire*, pp. 80-1.

⁹⁰ BAnQ, P450, 1, ‘The Dirk’; Linsy Brekke, ‘“To Make a Figure”: Clothing and the Politics of Male Identity in Eighteenth-Century America’ in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, ed. John Styles and Amanda Vickery (London: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 225-46.

some complained of getting greedy and opulent, often blaming their fellow officers for these habits.⁹¹ Networks of credit operated within regiments, seemingly without regard for rank. Some evidence even suggests the impact of luxury was felt among the lower ranks. The servant of the Surgeon Sandy Macdougall of the 2/42nd Foot was said in 1779 to have become ‘a man [of] too much fashion, tea, Coffee and Chocolate with every kind of fruit you can imagine in the Greatest perfection for breakfast, two Elegant courses and a desert, with as much wine as I chose to drink, for dinner’.⁹²

Moderate success through military service was possible, but analysis of this has been stymied by interpretive limitations in the historiography. Improvement of the common Highlander is largely viewed as an external assault, orchestrated by non-Gaels or Anglo-landowning grandees. Samuel Johnson’s assertion, for example, that Highland civility was improved through exposure to English habits through institutions such as the army, is rightly viewed as reflective of Johnson’s ethnic conceit.⁹³ Scottish historians have been largely unwilling to acknowledge the possibility that such views were shared by many within the region. The literacy of Highland soldiers and the emulation of consumer spending were both bottom-up declarations of a desire for improvement. While touring the Outer Hebrides, shortly before taking up his post as the chaplain of the 42nd Foot in North America, James MacLagan stayed with a former soldier of the Foot Guards. A property owner, the 80-year old had served thirty years in the army before retiring to his native Stornaway. The man was a leading figure in the community and

⁹¹ LoC, M 2267, reel 34, John Dunnell to James Grant, 3 Dec. 1763; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, Robert Macpherson to William Macpherson, 28 Aug. 1758.

⁹² *Highland Postbag*, pp. 95-6.

⁹³ Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 178-94.

MacLagan found that he was the only member of the local congregation who could read, though he did not own a bible, and saw no reason to acquire one.⁹⁴ Post-war incentives for soldiers to practise trades without serving apprenticeships, first introduced in the mid-seventeenth century, also marked a type of improvement which was embraced by the poor. So common was this in towns such as Perth that questions about whether demobilized soldiers were liable to pay the burgh dues were raised in a memorial by the townspeople, to which the opinions of the town clerk and a local advocate were added.⁹⁵

Highland soldiers remained ‘unimproved’ in the eyes of contemporary English opinion. It is also true, however, that large numbers of the men saw no better occupation for the improvement of their lives than military service. When the 42nd Foot was reduced in 1783, its officers bitterly argued over who had the right to half-pay and, who was to remain, gaining the advantage of continual service in the regiment.⁹⁶ Some half-pay officers sought an immediate return to the army or sold their services to the East India Company. Archibald Campbell described how by going on half-pay, ‘I’m stripped of all my grandeur in a moment’ and that he neither had money or credit to re-enter army even as ensign.⁹⁷ A correspondent of the Earl of Loudoun had informed him in 1757 that gaining his son a commission was ‘the most probably and effectual means of reclaiming him’ from his debts and gambling. The young man had ‘promised in the most solemn manner a thorough reformation’.⁹⁸ Donald Leodhasach Morison, the great nephew of *An*

⁹⁴ DCA, GD/We/6, f. 4, ‘A Tour of the Ebridees’, [1774].

⁹⁵ P&KDA, B59/32, f. 67, Memorial of the Town of Perth, May-Jun. 1786.

⁹⁶ NAS, GD170/3463, Board of General Officers to George III, 24 Jun. 1785.

⁹⁷ *Soldiering in India, 1764-1787: Extracts from Journals and Letters left by Lt. Col. Allan Macpherson and Lt. Colonel John Macpherson of the East India Company's Service*, ed. W.C. Macpherson (Edinburgh: private publisher, 1928), pp. 4-9; NAS, GD170/1074, f. 3, Archibald Campbell to brother, [n.d.].

⁹⁸ HL, LO4771, Alexander Montgomery to Loudoun, 6 Nov. 1757.

Clarsair Dall [the Blind Harper] returned to Stornoway following the War of American Independence.⁹⁹ Morison became a merchant and improver, writing to Henry Beaufoy, Member of Parliament for Great Yarmouth, in an attempt to establish fisheries in the Outer Hebrides. He seems, however, to have entirely failed in all lines of business. His inn failed, he claimed because local people subverted the act of parliament which allowed ex-soldiers to carry on trades; he went bankrupt in the mid-1790s. But he never lost hope of re-entering the army and tried repeatedly to secure a commission, recruiting men for Francis Humberston Mackenzie, first Baron Seaforth, but failing in that too.¹⁰⁰ Morison's fate is unknown, but in this sad story (which also included personal tragedy) are two strands of the Highland soldiers' narrative: the desire for improvement and the view of military service as a crucial measure of that improvement. Continual military service was not just confined to the officer class. It was not unknown for demobilized Highland soldiers to immediately enlist in other regiments. Jeffrey Amherst warned James Grant in 1761 never to be too hasty in demobilizing soldiers as some often re-enlisted for the bounty immediately upon arrival in Britain or travelled back to America to enlist.¹⁰¹

This should not be interpreted as a celebration of military service. Kirk Session Minutes in towns such as Dundee are replete with stories of Highland soldiers who eked out meagre existences, often getting local women pregnant before migrating further

⁹⁹ It is highly likely that Donald Morison was the same Morison who emigrated to Cross Creek, North Carolina, in 1772, where he established a cooper's business. He served at Moore's Creek in February 1776 and was later an ensign in the North Carolina Highlanders, raised in 1780. For Morison's Loyalist claim, see TNA, AO12/34, f. 357.

¹⁰⁰ HCA, D368, Donald Morison Papers, [1787-1797].

¹⁰¹ TNA, WO12/8191, ff. 135-45, 76th Foot returns, Jun. 1783; LoC, M 2267, reel 32, Amherst to Grant, 12 Mar. 1762.

afield.¹⁰² We should distinguish, however, between moralist judgements of an entire group of people and how individuals judged the relative merits of their military service. Many died, and many failed, but military service survived, on an individual level, as a means, however difficult, of economic and social improvement.

VI CONCLUSIONS

There is no question that military service vastly altered the economic and landholding structure of the Highlands from the 1750s onward and would continue to do so into the nineteenth century. Some Highland estates were almost wholly converted to military entrepreneurship.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, the impact of Highland military service fitted into a much wider imperial debate, where the Highlander, divorced from his difficult domestic context, was to serve as the paradigm of imperial expansionism. The Highlander seemed to encapsulate Britain's imperial expansion: formidable, dominant, and assured. The Highland soldier not only served the imperial cause, but embodied the perceived progress of British imperialism. Instead of being a threat to internal stability, the rural Highlander was being employed to conquer foreign parts for settlement and cultivation, and deny hegemony to Catholic France. There were stereotypical views of the Gaelic soldier that informed opinion, but government policy was much more sophisticated; by assuming that policy was formulated on the basis of disparaging views, we implicitly recast the Highland soldier in the negative terms we presume eighteenth-century ministers applied.

¹⁰² DCA, CH2/1218/6, Kirk Session Minutes, pp. 37, 75, 196.

¹⁰³ NAS, GD170/1090, f. 14, Colin Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 13 Jul. 1778.

In fact, for entirely selfish reasons, British ministers had far more sophisticated views of the Highlander, predicated on the imperatives of empire.

In spite of this, it was the Highlander's own agency that led to his utility within an imperial setting. Faced with difficult circumstances, Highland soldiers acted in pursuit of their own imperatives, imperatives that often overlapped with ministerial policy. Indeed, the two cannot be easily separated for the actions of people on the ground helped forge imperial administration before a systematized theory of empire had emerged. The demobilized Highland soldier was important in another significant respect. He was the living embodiment of the impact, positive and negative, of service to the state in the mid-eighteenth century. He represented achievement to the Gaelic population and was the most important conduit through which the Gael was exposed to the empire. It is to these interactions, impacts rather than experiences, which we now turn.

Volume II: The Impact of Imperial War

CHAPTER 5

200 ACRES OF FREE GROUND: LOYALTY AND INTEREST IN TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE

INTRODUCTION

In late September 1759, James Campbell of Danna wrote to his father in Edinburgh to report on the triumphs secured by British forces in North America that summer.

Campbell had not been present at the fighting and wrote his letter from near Inverary in the south-west Highlands. He was confident enough, however, to report that ‘The campaign is I think happily over almost in America: at least as far as our private concern reaches.’ While not explicit about what this private concern entailed, his ‘private comfort and satisfaction’ were evidently important enough to be ranked alongside ‘the publick [*sic*] utility’ of victory. Campbell could hardly be accused of disregard for the public good. His contacts kept him informed of events in Central Europe where Frederick II of Prussia, Britain’s foremost ally on the Continent, was fighting the combined forces of Russia, France and Austria. The war impacted upon the family closer to home. A mutual friend of Campbell and his father had lost two sons during the conflict with France, one at Louisbourg, another in Bengal.¹ Campbell was himself active in recruiting men from the family’s estate to serve in the army. He clearly understood the interaction between private interest and the public good. The letters

¹ NAS, GD170/1016, ff. 12, 31-2, John Campbell to John Campbell, 7 Mar. & 18-22 Sept. 1759; Campbell was misleadingly informed that Frederick II had won a victory that summer but at Kunersdorf on 12 August 1759, Frederick II suffered one of his worst defeats of the Seven Years’ War.

Campbell wrote to his father reveal several key aspects of the Highland's interaction with imperial developments during Britain's transition from maritime power to territorial empire. Our understanding of eighteenth-century British imperialism must be intellectually refined. The spread of the empire was marked not only by its military progress, but by the state's ability to engage pre-imperial economic and social structures to ends which suited the periphery.

The expansion of the fiscal-military state into the Highlands was such a process, as regional elites sought to co-opt the financial benefits of state intervention to secure the economic and social solvency of their place in the upper echelons of Highland society. What was significant about the imperial relationship in the Highlands, however, and the topic under investigation in this chapter, was that imperial integration did not simply reinforce a pre-extant social pattern, but helped define what was required of an individual to secure these benefits. Loyalty to the crown and the Hanoverian government was a choice that privileged private interest, much as Campbell of Danna had made clear. It could not operate, however, with scant regard for a wider political context. Owing to the unquestionable privileging of private interest over public good, historians have tended to neglect the sophisticated way in which the two became increasingly inseparable. The argument, for the Highlands, has been made that conscious displays of loyalty emerged largely as an epistemological device to secure patronage.²

This chapter takes a more inclusive approach, challenging the notion that loyalty and political allegiances meant little to the development of private interest. The satisfying of private interest did create genuine attachment to the imperial state, which

² Nenadic, 'The Impact of the Military Profession of Highland Gentry Families': 75-99.

played out in the choices made by individuals, choices which make little rational sense if read purely from the viewpoint of private interest. It asserts that we cannot chart the loyalty of imperial subjects through explicit declarations of loyalty. A far more profitable approach is to analyse how Gaels conceived of the empire and the ideological context of the crisis of empire in the 1760s and 1770s. What did these challenges mean to a people gradually becoming accustomed to the potential advantages of imperial dominion of North America? Broadly speaking, historians have tended to rely on simplistic readings of Highland loyalties. Traditional monarchism, suggesting that most Highlanders could not conceive of a constitutional settlement more complex than the figurehead of the king being the source of all political actions, is viewed as a primary motivator in the region. David Hackett Fischer mistakenly portrayed Highland settlers of the American colonies as lacking the intellectual framework to extend their ideas beyond a fundamental attachment to the British crown. The Highlands had, at least as far as unsophisticated readings are concerned, instigated a rebellion in support of the Stuart dynasty, and their support for the crown in America was a continuation of a Gaelic predilection for absolutist monarchy.³

Conversely, this chapter asserts that Highland loyalty to the British state verged on Loyalism, not Royalism. The latter rests on the principle that the king is the centre of government and wielder of all authority. It requires belief only in the divine right of an incumbent monarch to rule. Loyalism, on the other hand, requires that people accept that

³ Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, p. 663; Christopher Moore, *Loyalists: Revolution, Exile, Settlement* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1994), p. 21; T.C. Smout, 'Problems of Nationalism, Identity, and Improvement in later eighteenth-Century Scotland' in *Improvement and Enlightenment: Proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar*, ed. T.M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1989), p. 3; James Hunter, *A Dance Called America* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1994), pp. 45-6; Jenni Calder, *Scots in the USA* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2006), pp. 76-7; Maclean-Bristol, *From Clan to Regiment*, p. 1.

they are beneficiaries of a system in which there are multiple sources of authority and, in which, loyalty to a broad cross-section of principles is essential. For many Gaels, particularly those who wrote at length on the American rebellion, their principles suggest Loyalism, combining, as they did, ideas of parliamentary sovereignty, social order, imperial vitality, and state-backed trade regulation. One word of caution is required at this junction. This chapter integrates the Highland poor into the political debates of the time; it is a gross error to dismiss the poor from political analysis on the basis of lack of written evidence. Nevertheless, sophisticated Loyalism was largely confined to literate elites, just as it was throughout the British Isles. The perplexing mistake made by some historians is to ascribe political loyalties to ethnicity rather than socio-economic circumstance. Highland elites were among the most sophisticated thinkers on political loyalties in the British dominions in this period, owing to their historical experiences and status. As Bob Harris states of Scotland in the aftermath of the '45, 'Loyalty became the touchstone of politics'.⁴

This Loyalism was formulated through Highland contacts with the perceived benefits of the empire in North America. Inter-peripheral links, rather than centrifugal forces were defining features of the empire in the Atlantic region. Highland relations with the empire derived from distinctly Highland conceptions. It has been argued by Allan Macinnes, that the imperial dimension of the 1707 Union was as important a political event for the Scottish Highlands as the defeat of the Jacobite cause in 1746.⁵ The chapter which follows puts meat on the bones of this perceptive argument,

⁴ Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, p. 150.

⁵ Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce, and the House of Stuart*, p. 133.

investigating how loyalties were constructed as Highlanders became exposed to the empire in increasingly large numbers after 1756. There were, of course, various notions of loyalty as diverse as those individuals in the Highlands interested in the vitality of the imperial project. The common theme, however, was the centrality of imperial military service in forming the relationship between the Highlands and the North American empire.

We will first analyse why the Highland regiments were so central to an understanding of the empire that emerged in the Highlands. The chapter will then explore, in much greater depth, an issue which highlighted these processes: the availability of land in America. Land grants proved utterly essential to how imperial government was conceived by Gaels. Land was an issue which held huge resonance to the Gaelic world, becoming the most unique aspect of Highland interactions with the empire. This was, however, understood in broader political terms and the following section will then chart the link between private interest, loyalty and reward, which was increasingly recognized as dependent on the imperial state. This process did not, of course, signify an incipient imperial nationalism. Instead, the individual remained the judge of what was consistent with his or her loyalty and needs. It was deeply personal, but had a much greater scope for popular patriotism than many scholars have been inclined to assert. The conceptions which emerged during the Seven Years' War, highlighted in the first half of this chapter, were severely tested during the American rebellion. This chapter centres the American rebellion in the political history of the Scottish Highlands. As Vincent Morley has recently demonstrated for Ireland, the Revolution asked questions of constituent parts of the empire, shaping the loyalties of

those regions.⁶ What is revealing is that in the Highlands, the American Revolution was a significant moment in the construction of regional loyalty to the central government which has not been significantly challenged since that time. The Seven Years' War may have revealed the utility of Highland manpower to the expansion of the territorial empire. It was the War of American Independence, however, which defined the region's political meaning. The commitment of Gaels to the war in America from 1775-1783 reflected how much of an individual's self-interest had been transferred to the vitality of the imperial state.

I WAR AND KNOWLEDGE

Highland contacts with the overseas British Empire in the early eighteenth century were multifaceted, encompassing emigration, trade, military service, political and criminal transportation, religious conversion, and one of the earliest anti-slavery petitions in American history. The Camerons of Locheil, whose support for the Jacobite cause under Donald Cameron was critical in the early stages of the 1745 rising, had interests in New Jersey land, colonial timber, and West Indian sugar plantations.⁷ There were notable, if isolated, emigrations to the colonies beginning in the mid-1730s, which established

⁶ Vincent Morley, *Irish Opinion and the American Revolution, 1760-1783* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).

⁷ David Armitage, 'Making the Empire British: Scotland and the Atlantic World, 1542-1707', *Past and Present*, 155 (1997): 34-63; T.M. Devine, *Clearance and Improvement: Land, Power, and People in Scotland, 1700-1900* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2006), p. 168; Harvey H. Jackson, 'The Darien Antislavery Petition of 1739 and the Georgia Plan', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 34 (1977): 618-31.

Highland communities in Georgia, North Carolina, and New York.⁸ One event, however, changed the entire structural dynamic of Highland connections with North America. The Seven Years' War provided the opportunity for estranged elements of British society to integrate in a manner acceptable to the cultural assumptions of the Anglo-Protestant governing class. More critically, from our regional perspective, the war witnessed a massive rise in the number of Highlanders in North America. Estimates of Highland emigration prior to 1756 suggest that around 3,000 Gaels were in the colonies at this time. An account for one month, February 1758, suggests that of the 24,000 British soldiers in North America, 4,200 were in the Highland regiments. The Seven Years' War at least doubled the number of Highlanders with direct experience of the North American colonies, altering significantly the way in which contacts were formed and the social groups instrumental in these processes.⁹

Numbers, however, were only one measure of the impact. The post-war period saw a huge rise in commentaries, political tracts, debates, songs, and emigration literature, all concerned with the relevance of North America to Britain. In 1752, British publishers produced twenty-four pamphlets relating to America or American affairs; in 1754, it was forty-two; in 1755, it was fifty-nine, and in 1756, it was eighty-eight separate publications.¹⁰ Sections on American affairs began to appear regularly in the *Scots Magazine* at this time. William Thom, the minister for Govan, saw how information, even in printed form, was available to the lower orders:

⁸ For evidence of individual contacts with the empire involving Highlanders, see NAS, GD24/3, f. 369, Jo Finlayson to James Drummond of Blair Drummond, 11 Mar. 1735; NAS, GD112/61/15, Notes written by John, third Lord Glenorchy, on American plantations, [1739].

⁹ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, p. 266.

¹⁰ Conway, *War, State, and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, pp. 224-5.

By the intercourse which hath been carried on between the West coast of Scotland and North America our common people have been gradually informed ... during the late war, and since the peace was established, particular and encouraging accounts of its provinces have been published in such periodicals and papers as fall into the hands of our common people.¹¹

Outside the public sphere, the social consequences were massive and increasingly beyond the abilities of government and regional elites to control. Knowledge of the world beyond the Highlands expanded with correspondence from the war and the return of veteran soldiers. Contemporary commentators noticed the changes and reflected on how interest in the American colonies had expanded exponentially across the Highland community. ‘It is believed’, Thom explained:

that many soldiers from the highlands, who, at the conclusion of the late war, got, from the government farms in north America, correspond with their relations and acquaintance in the highlands, and by accounts they give of their own happy situation, persuade them to forsake the highlands.¹²

Robert Kirk’s account of the war in North America was a detailed example of this information transference. Published in Limerick in the early 1770s, the title-page of Kirk’s account detailed in two lines what the reader might read of the late war, but ran to eight lines in describing the information he had written regarding ‘great lakes, rivers, and

¹¹ William Thom, *A Candid Enquiring into the Causes Of the Late and the Intended Migration from Scotland In a Letter* (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 50.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

Waterfalls ... Birds, fish, fruit, trees' and 'the customs of the Indians'. Kirk's account was remarkable, but not atypical. Twenty-fives pages of appendices covered descriptions of the natural environment of America, including such information as the price of various skins. A list of subscribers contained in the 1775 edition shows Kirk's account was widely distributed among the rank-and-file of the 27th and 45th Foot, deployed to Boston that year. Soldiers from Kirk's old regiment, the 42nd Foot, also subscribed. As much as we might be inclined to appreciate narrative accounts of the Seven Years' War from the soldier's perspective, Kirk was far more concerned with descriptions of America and its people, an agenda which reflected the interests of Kirk's readership. Scotus Americanus, probably Alexander Campbell of Balole, a vocal advocate of Highland emigration, explained that his flattering account of North Carolina could be corroborated: 'I might appeal', he said, 'to numberless letters from those very settlers, to their friends and acquaintance in the Highlands'. Americanus reported that the information he received from people who had never left the Highlands was so accurate that 'I would be tempted to think they had lived for some time in that country [America]'.¹³ Published emigration literature was certainly widespread enough to fall into the hands of the Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, who forwarded a copy to the American Secretary, the Earl of Dartmouth.¹⁴

There was, of course, a plethora of push factors prompting Highland emigration in this period, but these accounts must constitute one of the most central pull factors, which

¹³ [Scotus Americanus], *Information Concerning the Province of North Carolina addressed to Emigrants from the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland, by an impartial hand* (Glasgow, 1773), p. 12; for Balole, see Alexander Murdoch, 'A Scottish Document concerning Emigration to North Carolina in 1772', *North Carolina Historical Review*, 67 (1990): 438-49.

¹⁴ *Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, II, 200.

saw at least 10,000 Highlanders leave Britain for North America between 1763 and 1775, with the overwhelming majority from 1770 onwards.¹⁵ There is an excellent historiography of the great Highland exodus of the 1770s and little needs to be added here. It is evident, however, that America began to assume the mantle of a panacea for Highland problems in the minds of many rural people. John Macdonald of Glenalladale reported to his cousin how America was being integrated into the existing mindset of his own family. For Glenalladale's staunch Jacobite father, Alexander, a desire to go to America had 'driven the Pretender out of his Nodle [*sic*] entirely: He never speaks of him now, & he is quite a good subject.'¹⁶ 'The only news in this island is emigrations', Flora Macdonald's husband reported in 1773. 'This spirit began in the Western Isles' commentators explained, 'but has now come to the inland parts of the country'. So great was the exodus that hyperbole overtook several authors who reported that not one person would remain in the Highlands if the emigrations of the early 1770s continued apace.¹⁷ It is fair to say that military stimulants were only part of a larger development of transatlantic connections brought forth by the victory in 1763.¹⁸ For the common people of the Highlands, however, with a disproportionate commitment to overseas military service, these military-orientated experiences of America were essential to how the empire was increasingly framed.

¹⁵ These figures are difficult to detail in any precise sense but for the most effective studies, see Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West*, pp. 89-113; Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America*, pp. 135-93.

¹⁶ Iain MacKay, 'Glenalladale's Settlement, Prince Edward Island', *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, 10 (1964): 9.

¹⁷ NLS, MS. 1306, f. 67, Allan Macdonald of Kingsburgh to John MacKenzie of Delvine, 2 Mar. 1773; [Anon.], *Present Conduct of the Chieftains and Proprietors of the lands in the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1773), p. 4.

¹⁸ Conway, *War, State, and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, p. 92.

The soldiers' knowledge of American lands was the product of the processes seen in the previous chapter. Government land grants as a reward for military service, following the Royal Proclamation of October 1763, were increasingly important in the recruitment of Highland soldiers. But we should not submit to determinism. In 1756, Lord John Murray had made it clear to his second-in-command, Major Duncan Campbell of Inverawe, that in order to augment the 42nd Foot to full strength, the intention of sending them to North America was not to be mentioned, 'least it may hurt the recruiting'. Across the British Isles, Lord Barrington found that few would enlist to go to America if there was sufficient potential for service in Britain or Ireland. Less extensive opportunities in Highland home defence battalions, rather than a pre-existing desire to leave for America, was the determining factor in ensuring Highland exposure to North America.¹⁹ It was only after 1763 that favourable reports of the region began to permeate personal correspondence, emigration literature, recruiting promises, and Gaelic texts in the Highlands. As we have seen, a significant minority of veterans chose colonial settlement. The influence of land must be understood within the contextual parameters of demobilization and imperial settlement. Anti-militarism in the Highlands, the preferment of enlistment in home defence units, desertion, and the aforementioned comments by Lord John Murray, all tell against a linear connection between a desire to emigrate and military service. In 1756, upon hearing that Adam Ferguson was planning to accompany the 42nd Foot to America, a friend wrote to his sister that, 'I suppose [Ferguson] will be going to America with the regiment in which case we may bid an

¹⁹ JRL, BAG5/1, f. 2, Lord John Murray to Duncan Campbell, 24 Jan. 1756; BL, Add. Mss. 32912, ff. 287-9, Lord Barrington to the Duke of Newcastle, 2 Oct. 1760.

eternal adieu to his loggy-reat [Logierait, Ferguson's place of birth] soul for he will be slain assure as he's a highlander.'²⁰ We should, also, never overemphasize the altruistic motives of senior figures or institutions in this period. Adjudging claims for losses sustained in the Bushy Run campaign in 1763 to be too high, Henry Bouquet wanted the new Commander-in-Chief, Thomas Gage, to arrange the reduction of the 42nd Foot before warrants were issued to pay the men what they were owed.²¹ We do not have enough evidence from the perspective of the enlisted soldier to assert, with confidence, that the letters from America - hyperbolically claimed by *Scotus Americanus* - were uniformly favourable. In the case of some officers, they were decidedly ambiguous.²²

Nevertheless, there seems little doubt that, owing to land grants, military service was a generally positive encouragement for North American settlement. Military service constituted a form of subsidized emigration or 'a form of entrepreneurial activity'.²³ The explanation for this lay in the structural foundations of Highland military emigration, and the ideological imperatives of Highland military service. Military emigration had been a major facet of the political economy of the Highlands since at least the medieval period, and service in foreign armies remained important until the 1750s.²⁴ Unique, however, was the centrality of military service to private economic security. Prior to the collapse of clanship in the Highlands, men had pledged their military service to a chief in return

²⁰ *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, ed. Vincenzo Merolle (London: William Pickering, 1995), I, xxv.

²¹ *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, VI, 588.

²² NAS, GD170/1176/10, f. 1, Patrick Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 10 Feb. 1777.

²³ *Scotland and the Americas, c.1650-1939: A Documentary Source Book*, p. 16; Devine, *Scotland's Empire*, p. 138; Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 168-90.

²⁴ John Marsden, *Galloglas: Hebridean and West Highland Mercenary Warrior Kindreds in Medieval Ireland* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2003), *passim*; Stephen Conway, 'Scots, Britons and Europeans: Scottish Military Service, c.1739-1783', *Historical Research*, 82 (2009): 114-30.

for economic security and a safety net from famine and starvation. The end of clanship as a viable form of communal organization did not sever the connection between military service and familial security. This was reinforced in the post-Culloden Highlands as landed elites invested increasing energies into military recruitment, underpinning the role of the army as a logical guarantor of private interest.

In the eighteenth-century Highlands, the foundation of private interest was access to land. In much of the Scottish Highlands, community was centered on the social and political space of the township, with its hierarchy of landownership. Rights and obligations in Highland communities were, therefore, rooted in the land, or whoever held authority over those lands. Land was the main form of property and thus essential to economic security. This does not suggest, however, that Highland military service was confined to a traditional localist model; rather, it was increasingly immersed in a broader imperial culture. The pursuit of private or familial interest, almost always prioritized above considerations of community or country, was increasingly rationalized in a world of expanding opportunities.

Land grants for the private soldier in North America consisted of fifty acres, initially rent free, but then requiring only the payment of limited quit-rents. Vivially, quit-rents lacked the potential for a landowner (in this case the crown) to rack-rent. For a society still shaped by the contours of land as the basis of success, the provision of cheap or free land without rents proved an effective means of giving Highlanders access to colonial land. The limited evidence available from rank-and-file soldiery suggests that promises of land were part of their conception of military service. William Mackenzie, a piper in the 71st Foot wrote from New York to a relative in Argyll in early 1778: 'I am as

well as ever I was in my Life my pay is as good as one shilling & six pence Per Day and I hope my fortune within two years will be as good that I will have 200 acres of free Ground of my own in this Country.’ Similar accounts were echoed by Nile Mclean, a piper in the 84th Foot.²⁵ A recruiting poster for the 71st Foot, distributed in Dundee in 1776, made no appeals to the volunteer’s patriotism, instead promising, on the terms of the Royal Proclamation, a ‘*full discharge* at the end of *three years* ... or of the present *American rebellion*’. With revealing intent, the appeal continued:

They [the 71st Foot] are to go to *America*, and by his *Majesty’s* royal and *most gracious proclamation*, they will be entitled to a *full discharge* at the end of *three years*, *that is in 1779* or of the present *American rebellion*. Now, considering that the British army will be from forty to fifty thousand strong, there, in spring next, it cannot in all probability, fail to be entirely quelled next summer. Then, *gentlemen*, will be your *harvest*, and the best one too you ever *cropt*. You will each of you, by visiting ‘This’ *New World*, become the *founders of families*. The lands of the *rebels* will be divided amongst you, and every one of you become *lairds*. No old regiment will have such advantages.²⁶

A very similar proclamation, written in Gaelic around the same time for the 42nd Foot, made similar appeals: ‘Ma ta duine bhar measg, a dhaoin-uailse, ag mianughadh na h-onoire sho, ghigeadh e da m’ ionsiudh sin ... neach a bheir dearbh chinnteachd dha, gu ’n cuirear gach comhara cliuiteach air & gu faigh e gach ardughagh Inbhe ris am fead Duil a bhi aige mhuintir a dhucha & o cho-shaideiribh fein [If there is a man among you, gentlemen, desirous of this honour, let him come to me ... who will give him an absolute

²⁵ NAS, GD170/3158, William Mackenzie to unknown, 7 Feb. 1778; NAS, GD174/1348, Nile Mclean to his father, 2 Sept. 1782.

²⁶ NMS, M.1982.97, Recruiting poster for the 71st Foot, 8 Jan. 1776.

guarantee that every distinction will fall upon him and that he will acquire that elevation of status to be expected].²⁷

What Highland soldiers might achieve in America for their kin or community became the topic of much embellishment. There was a correlation of interest between military land grants and the land hunger of civilian Gaels. Metropolitan propaganda derisively satired the ‘Scotch exodus’ to America or ‘Mony land’, bitter that many Scots were apparently so willing to take advantage of ‘English’ triumphs. Such satire fed off a prevailing English assumption that Scots were infiltrating every facet of the British government. Frederick Montagu, MP for Higham Ferrers, quipped after two Scots broke into his house, they were ‘the only two, I am persuaded, who are not in office and employment’. When one satirist had a starving Highlander in an engraving cry out ‘I shall soon be a laird’, however, he touched on a truism.²⁸ Hope of individual success was an essential motivating factor in emigration. What this satirist got wrong was that, while he considered colonial victories a product of English triumphs, this was not how this was appreciated in Scotland. Highland commentators tended to see the benefits for individuals, or in some cases, Highland society in a wider sense. Americanus conceived of the actions of Highland soldiers in the Seven Years’ War as being for the single purpose of providing Highlanders with ‘a state of ease and happiness’:

Some of them were officers in America, and our common men served as soldiers there during the last war, and both acquired immortal honour. It would seem as if they had made such

²⁷ GUL, Gen MS 1042/135(a), ff. 1-2, Recruiting Proclamation, [1775].

²⁸ *Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, III, 207; NMS, M.1955.83, *The Caledonian March and Embarkation* (London, 1770).

important conquests in that quarter of the globe, in order to secure for themselves, and their countrymen, an agreeable and happy retreat, and a large and fertile field for them and their posterity to flourish in.²⁹

There was a substantive belief not only that Highland prowess secured the colonies for Britain but that Highlanders had secured the colonies for themselves. It was said that, ‘dh’ eug moran eile [na saighdearan a chaidh a dh'Ameireaga] dhiubh gu glormhor g'ar dionadhsan & bhar nith & ag cuir dacha ur fa chis dibh; Chuireadh mise [Mhormhair Iain Moireach], air an abhar sin a thogbail urachadh ghaisgeach nan aite sin [many others of them [soldiers who went to America] died gloriously protecting you and your worldly goods, and conquering a new land for you; I [Lord John Murray] have been sent for that reason to raise a new set of heroes]’. One Highlander would later express the view that the ‘most desirable holding of any for a Highlander’ was to conquer land from the Indians by the sword.³⁰ Simply to dismiss this as histrionics, however, is, perhaps, to misunderstand how people were beginning to see imperial conflict.

A song dedicated to the 42nd Foot, who had been awarded land in New York, stated that the 42nd Foot had been employed: ‘Cuir Innseinich air àireachas. Màr chùire grian le làthaireachd, An dealt do bharr a'n fheior [Putting the Indians onto the summer grazing, as the sun puts with its presence, the dew off to the tips of the grass]’. In a revealing appeal to natural imagery, the writer explained how the soldiers had forced the

²⁹ [Americanus], *Informations Concerning the Province of North Carolina*, p. 10.

³⁰ GUL, Gen MS 1042/135(a), ff. 1-2, Recruiting Proclamation, [1775]; [Anon.], *The Present Conduct of the Chieftains and Proprietors of Lands in the Highlands of Scotland*, p. 6; NLS, MS. 3431, f. 80, Observes or Remarks upon the lands and islands which compose the barony called Harris, [1806].

Amerindians from the better quality land at lower elevation to the higher summer grazing, making available the lower land for settlement. What is more, when the Highland soldier cleared the land, he had done something which was entirely natural, comparable to the rising of the sun. If that was not sufficient justification, the writer explained that these actions were possible within the bonds of àbhaist - custom. The 42nd Foot, it was said, were ‘’N America gu ’m b’ àraidh iad, Gun dealachadh ri n’ àbhaisteachd [distinguished in America, without departing from their customs]’.³¹ Nowhere did the writer, Kenneth Mackenzie, explore the horrendous casualties that the 42nd Foot had experienced. The fact was it did not really matter. Gaelic interpretations of the Highland regiments were creating the conditions for Highland emigration.

II THE ESSENTIAL LINK: LAND AND LIBERTY

The post-Culloden period saw monumental change in the landholding patterns of the *Gàidhealtachd*. These changes did not originate in imperial contacts with the state, either in 1746 or 1756, and had antecedents in the early seventeenth century. The scope, however, for understanding and reacting to these changes was entirely altered by imperial contacts. Here was an essential link. In the changing relationship between social groups in the region, the independence and liberty associated with American land politicized interest, entrenching socio-economic divisions within the Highlands. This

³¹ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, p. 13; the movement of cattle to the summer shielings, grazing areas at higher elevation, was a common practice in Highland townships.

went further, however, and Highland views of liberty and property were subsumed into imperial attempts to secure the North American empire.³² The soldier was essential, both as agent and as beneficiary, of access to colonial land as a solution to the socio-economic problems of the Highlands. In time, many would come to believe that support for the expansion of the British Empire in North America was the most rational approach to the pursuit of private and familial interest.

By the late 1760s, the situation of sub-tenants across increasingly broad swathes of the Highlands was severely deteriorating. This was not a simplistic story of increased rents, enforced on a languid and unified tenantry by villainous landlords. Greater economic opportunities and rising rents promoted dissension between tenant groups, the upper tenantry extending their economic hold over the lower orders as they passed rents on down the social ladder. Paradoxically, it was middling, intellectually vibrant, tenants who had responded best to these changes – by becoming leaders in the cattle trade - who were most likely to emigrate when prices fell sharply in the 1770s.³³

As emigration was the product of an inability fully to pursue commercial possibilities within the strictures of Highland society, imperial settlement opportunities made colonial land important. For middling Highlanders affected by financial instability, America became part of an aspirational ideal. Rural Highlanders conceptualized America as a land of liberty because it was associated with freedom from the arbitrary power of landowners. Direct ownership of land would, it was thought, safeguard

³² For eighteenth century associations of liberty and property, see H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977), *passim*; Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1993), pp. 11-95.

³³ Devine, *Clearance and Improvement*, pp. 126-56; Mackillop, 'Highland Estate Change and Tenant Emigration', pp. 237-58.

families from any future inability to meet rising rents. The equation of land and liberty held considerable popularity in the British Atlantic world, but its precise meaning depended on varied historic experiences. The deterioration of Highland conditions meant that Gaels could insist that ownership of property defined liberty. These emigrants did not have English common-law experience, where property was explicitly understood as a bulwark against tyranny; but the frustrations of rack-renting, where in some areas rents rose 300-400 per cent between 1750 and 1800, convinced upwardly mobile Highlanders of the benefits of full ownership of property. In 1772, Alexander McAllister wrote from North Carolina that in that colony, ‘we breathe the air of liberty, we have no rents’. One observer noted how Highland emigrants leaving Scotland, ‘launched out into a new world breathing a spirit of liberty and a desire of every individual becoming a proprietor’. Duncan Lothian considered these issues in ‘A Song for America’, published in 1780: ‘Tha h-uile neach chaidh null; Toirt cunntas math nas leor air; On gheibh iad fearann soar ann; Chan fhan ach daoine gorach [Every person who has gone over yonder; Gives a favourable report of it; Since they can get cheap land there; No one but fools will stay here].’³⁴ Captain Robert Grant likewise invested the colonies with a particular form of independence. He was confident of the opportunities when he settled in America following the Seven Years’ War, even remitting some of his earnings back to Scotland, declaring that his half-pay alone ‘will enable me to live independent in this part of the

³⁴ Mackillop, ‘The Highlands and the returning nabob’, p. 250; NCSA, PC.1738, Angus McCuiag to Alexander McAllister, Aug. 1770; Alexander McAllister to John Boyd, Nov. 1770; James McAllister to Alexander McAllister, Oct. 1771; Alexander McAllister to Mary McAllister, n.d. 1772; I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Alexander Murdoch for his making available a microfilm copy of the McAllister Papers from the North Carolina State Archives; Duncan Lothian, *A Collection of Gaelic and English Songs* (Aberdeen, 1780), p. 22.

world'.³⁵ Those who had gone to America with the army had the clearest idea of the distinction between the relative potential of Scotland and colonial settlement. As one officer wrote on his return to Coll following the War of Independence, 'any interest I have in this country will not keep me from joining my old friends [in America] ... this country is damned'.³⁶ In this environment, the people affected did not regard knowledge of opportunities and deteriorating conditions as distinguishably discrete bodies. As Samuel Johnson noted, it was only when a man 'cannot live as he desires at home' that he 'listened to tales of fortunate islands ... where every man may have land of his own, and eat the product of his labour without a superior'.³⁷

The availability of American lands exposed divisions within Highland society, offering the Highland poor an admittedly radical solution to new land patterns.³⁸ This was not confined to the relationships between demobilized soldiers and their officers, which we have already investigated. It went to the heart of elite attempts to maintain manageable social relations in the region, based on hierarchical landholding. The rebellion of the American colonies, for landlords, at least, was something of a god-send, halting the precipitous flow of migrants from Highland estates: 'Government may never have a more proper opportunity of chiquing [*sic*] this Emigrating Disposition without force', Sir John Grant of Grant explained to the Lord Advocate in 1775, in a letter overflowing with faux sympathy for the departing people. Others pleaded: 'for god's

³⁵ NAS, GD 248/507/3, f. 27, Robert Grant to Patrick Grant, 17 Oct. 1762.

³⁶ NAS, GD 174/1362, Lachlan Maclean to Murdoch Maclaine, 9 Mar. 1784.

³⁷ Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, p. 219.

³⁸ The threat of emigration was actually more common in dealing with social change than emigration itself, though as T.M. Devine has correctly highlighted, the notion that, in general, Gaels were conservative in this era requires significant revision, see T.M. Devine, 'A Conservative People?: Scottish Gaeldom in the Age of Improvement' in *Eighteenth Century Scotland: New Perspectives*, pp. 225-36.

sake make the news of the arrival of Emigrants from America [Loyalist refugees] as publick as possible, to see and prevent our own deluded Country Men from emigrating to a Country where nothing but anarchy and Confusion reigns'. Of course, all elite opinion cannot be dismissed as disingenuous; it is possible that elites such as Patrick Campbell, younger of Glenure, did fear that departing tenants would leave their 'son[s] & grandson[s] heirs to [their] ignorance' in the wilds of America.³⁹ Most emigrants, however, it was reported, recognized the negative reports of America being filtered through official channels as 'the artifice and cant of landlords'.⁴⁰

The incongruity between elite and common accounts of America suggests a wide divergence of opinion. Patrick Campbell, quoted above, commanded a company of the 71st Foot during the War of Independence. One of the regiment's pipers was William Mackenzie, the same man who had stated that he hoped to acquire 200 acres of free ground. Mackenzie is likely the same piper who had first refused to be attested, and then deserted, in late 1775. Evidently, however, several years in America had changed his opinions, opinions increasingly polarized from his officer, Patrick Campbell.⁴¹ It is clear also, that interested parties attempted to manipulate information coming from America regarding settlement, undermining elite attempts to control information. This was best demonstrated by the publication, in Glasgow, of a letter by the prominent New York lawyer and politician, William Smith (1727-1793). Smith's letter was a positive encouragement to 'Farmers, Labourers, and mechanics' to emigrate to New York, stating

³⁹ NAS, GD170/1176/10, f. 1, Patrick Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 10 Feb. 1777.

⁴⁰ NAS, GD248/244/7, f. 2, James Grant to the Lord Advocate, 19 Apr. 1775; NAS GD170/1065, f. 1, Alexander Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 2 Aug. 1775; [Anon.], *Present Conduct of the Chieftains and Proprietors*, p. 5.

⁴¹ NAS GD170/1585, ff. 10-12, Ewen Cameron of Fassifern to Alexander Campbell, recruiting for his brother, Patrick Campbell, 9 Dec. 1775-22. Apr. 1776.

‘Innumerable farms may be had at a very easy rate’. Smith was careful though, to narrowly define those he thought fit for New York settlement. For Smith, cottagers and other groups of rural poor might find a farm on a lease, but for those who could bring cash, ‘the emigration [was] most strongly recommended’. Smith noted that for those who ‘depend on mere charity’, New York could offer little as ‘none can expect to have the lands given to them for nothing’.⁴² Smith’s reserve, however, was not mirrored in the comments of his publisher.⁴³ Where Smith noted that ‘there is a great difference between one farm and another’, the publisher portrayed the entire colony as ‘In short ... a land of liberty and plenty’. More significantly, the potential emigrant that both men sought to inform was very different. Smith had encouraged the middling sorts to bring their money to New York. For the publishers, Morrison & McAllum, their money was not the source of potential prosperity, but actual misery. ‘The useless luxuries of the east’, they denounced ‘ruins our middling sort of people, the money that might cultivate our lands ... and give bread to the poor, is lavishly squandered away upon ornamental trifles’. Quoting Voltaire, the publisher prophesied that the only ‘animals’ left in Britain would be ‘Tyrants and Slaves’. The publisher did not see America as a haven for the *fir-taca* class. Instead, America was a haven for the victims of those middling farmers, who had ‘contributed all in their power to rack and raise the landed rents ... over-bidding one and other and ruining the poor, industrious small farmers, by turning them out of their possessions’. ‘Nature is content with few things’, he added, but ‘nothing can satisfy

⁴² William Smith, *Information to Emigrants, Being a Copy of a Letter from a Gentleman in North-America, containing a Full and particular Account of the Terms on which Settlers may procure Lands in North-America* (Glasgow, 1773), pp. 3-11.

⁴³ Smith’s tract was published by Morrison & John McAllum who had a shop in Gibson’s Land saltmercat, between 1772 and 1774. McAllum was a Burgess and Guild Brother and the son of a Glasgow merchant, William McAllum. Nothing is known of his partner Morrison.

luxury'.⁴⁴ The contrast between Smith and the person(s) who decided to publish it for the benefit of Highland emigrants is striking.

The divisive issue of emigration reveals the greater place North America was fashioning in the dynamics of Highland society and how the poor were gaining an understanding of the imperial context far beyond what we might expect from such a society. Alexander McAllister, a prominent colonist in Cross Creek, North Carolina, had left for Cape Fear with his father in the late 1730s. McAllister maintained correspondence with his brother Hector and seven other potential emigrants in Islay and Arran during the key period between the Seven Years' War and the War of American Independence. His views, however, Barbara DeWolfe states, extended beyond this relatively small network with influences as far as Skye and Greenock, the main emigrant port.⁴⁵ While hardly impartial in his views on the success Highland settlers might have in the colonies, it was the language he chose to represent these views that was significant. 'This is one of the best poor man Country you ever heard of', he told a vacillating Highlander in November 1770. The phrase would appear consistently in his writing that year. To Angus McCuaig, there was no place for ambiguity. McCuaig was told that each of his children would get 'a pice [*sic*] of land which is mor [*sic*] then they can expect where they are this is the best poor mans Country I have heard in this age'.⁴⁶ The 'best poor man's Country in the World' had initially been used to describe public charity in early eighteenth-century Virginia, but became a byword for the potential of colonial

⁴⁴ Smith, *Information to Emigrants*, pp. 12-16.

⁴⁵ *Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America During the Revolutionary Era*, ed. Barbara DeWolfe (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 27-9.

⁴⁶ NCSA, PC.1738, McAllister to Angus McCuaig, 29 Nov. 1770; see also NCSA, PC.1738, McAllister to John Boyd, Nov. 1770.

settlement in general, applied in circumstances as diverse as Jesuit evangelism in Maryland and the land grab on the Pennsylvania frontier.⁴⁷ It was a phrase frequently quoted in literature relating to Highland emigration.⁴⁸ America was often framed with specific reference to the poor. As Benjamin Franklin would later note, ‘Multitudes of poor people from England, Ireland, Scotland and Germany, have ... in a few years become wealthy farmers, who in their own countries ... could never have emerged from the mean condition wherein they were born.’⁴⁹

During his three decades in North Carolina, McAllister had evidently been exposed to these descriptive terms for North America. McAllister’s network also employed a messianic motif. For McAllister, North Carolina was ‘the door that god is opened for them [the poor of the Highlands]’. McAllister’s brother, Hector McAllister may have been preaching to the converted when he wrote to his brother that ‘it would seem as [if] providence had ordered for the peopling of that vast continent’.⁵⁰ Such religiously imbued rhetoric may not have matched the histrionics of Cotton Mather, but it ran parallel with contemporaneous commentary in the British Isles on the messianic potential of America.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia, in four parts* (London, 1705), p. 39; James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972); Nicholas P. Cushner, *Why Have You Come Here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelisation of Native America* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), pp. 171-91.

⁴⁸ Smith, *Information to Emigrants*, p. 7; [Americanus], *Informations Concerning the Province of North Carolina*, p. 29; Thom, *A Candid Enquiry into the Causes Of the Late and the Intended Migration*, p. 39.

⁴⁹ Benjamin Franklin, *Two Tracts: Information to those who would remove to America and, Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America* (London, 1784), pp. 12-13.

⁵⁰ NCSA, PC.1738, Hector to Alexander McAllister, Sept. 1771.

⁵¹ John Erskine, *Shall I go to War with my American Brethren?: A Discourse Addressed to all Concerned in determining that important question* (London, 1769), p. 16.

The way in which America was framed to appeal directly to the poorer members of society suggests a nuance and complexity to the imagery that is not immediately apparent. Centre and periphery should not be imagined only as geographical definitions, but as relationships to influence and power. For poorer people, with more restricted freedom of action, a belief in the redeeming power of land acquisition was important. There is something which must be acknowledged here. As much as McAllister and others portrayed America as an appealing destination for the poor, in general, early Highland emigrants paid for their passages and were the middling sorts who had been frustrated by shrinking margins in their economic activities.⁵² Information was, therefore, manipulated on the basis of an increasing divide in the social structure of the Highlands, which such information unquestionably contributed to. It was, most likely, from the divide between elites and poor that the ambiguity of images of America in the eighteenth century evolved.

How did this imperially-situated, but ultimately traditional, reading of land-ownership translate into a politicized interest in imperial vitality? The key event was the new demands on political loyalties prompted by the American Revolution. If liberty was freedom from the tyranny of landowning elites, both in Scotland and in America, Highland conceptions of liberty were necessarily negative ones; Highland emigrants demanded the absence of constraint and the freedom to be left in relative peace.⁵³ Free

⁵² It should be noted, however, that in several key emigrations, such as Glenalladale's to St. John's in 1772, all the emigrants had their passages paid for by the Catholic Church or Glenalladale himself, on the basis of indenture upon arrival, see James P. Lawson, 'Passengers on the Alexander', *The Island Magazine*, 29 (1991): 34-9.

⁵³ For definitions of positive and negative liberty, see Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty: An Inaugural Lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 31 October 1958* (Oxford: OUP, 1958), *passim*; J.C.D. Clark, 'Liberty and Religion: The End of U.S. Exceptionalism?', *Orbis*, 49 (2005): 21-35.

land provided the physical space where socio-political and economic constraint could not materialize. The belief of people like McAllister, that their fellow countrymen could gain liberty by emigration to the colonies, demonstrated a belief in the ability of the British constitution to provide this most central of rights. Land was, therefore, perfectly suited to negative conceptions of liberty and, as such, reinforced an imperial reading of the conflict. As most Highlanders sought negative liberties, they did not claim rights as Englishmen, a positive approach to liberty favoured by American Whigs. Instead, they expressed their rights by seeking the free ownership of land. In this reading, an imperial balance was maintained between government and individuals, and between periphery and centre, in which all were protected from tyranny and arbitrary authority. The quest for liberty and independence among Highlanders, socio-economic in origin but with increasingly political overtones, can be understood with reference to Alexander Macdougald, ‘a simple man about 26 years of age’. Macdougald expressed his desire to become a settler and petitioned for land of his own, comparable with others in the areas, having previously lived with his parents.⁵⁴ In Macdougald’s case, imperial government was the source of his liberty, removing him from the dependence of his parents.

This was a deeply hierarchical world in which liberty could only be understood in relation to the multitudes who possessed none, be they enslaved Africans, indentured servants, tenants, or the dependants of free men. It was, despite this, an inequitable system of checks and balances against overt tyranny, at least as far as tyranny was defined. Indeed, in the same poster which had advertised rebel farms as a reward for military service in the 71st Foot, a contrast was drawn between America and ‘drudging

⁵⁴ NSARM, RG20, vol. 19, Petition of Alexander Macdougald, 9 Nov. 1787.

like slaves' in Scotland.⁵⁵ It would take one of the most brilliant political minds of the century to express this counter-intuitive system:

Without subordination, it would not be one Empire. Without freedom, it would not be the British Empire ... The most anxious work for the understanding of men is to govern a large Empire upon a plan of freedom; but it is as noble as it is anxious, and it is necessary because it can be governed by no other.⁵⁶

By demanding positive self-mastery and rational control over their political destinies, the Revolutionaries launched a direct attack upon this assumed uniformity of rights; they also undermined the constitutional order that created this balance. Adherence to negative conceptions of liberty necessarily brought the Highlanders into more direct conflict with revolutionary authorities, who demanded more concrete expressions of obligation, through the administering of patriotic oaths, or forcible enlistment in patriot militias. Two Highlanders, Iain Mackenzie and Sim Cameron, were fined in 1777 for missing militia exercises with the militia of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, though they were excused on the grounds that they did not speak English.⁵⁷ These impositions, so contrary to negative freedoms, were later cited by Loyalists as a major cause of their resistance. Helen Macdonnell, the wife of a leading New York Loyalist, Allan Macdonnell of Collachie, summed up Highland imperatives when she assured

⁵⁵ NMS, M.1982.97, Recruiting poster for the 71st Foot, 8 Jan. 1776.

⁵⁶ *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke, Vol. II: Party, Parliament, and the American Crisis, 1766-1774*, ed. Paul Langford, 9 vols. (Oxford: OUP, 1981), p. 50; see also Richard Bourke, 'Liberty, Authority, and Trust in Burke's Idea of Empire', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61 (2000): 453-71.

⁵⁷ Michael Newton, *We're Indians Sure Enough: The Legacy of the Scottish Highlands in America* (Richmond: Saorsa, 2001), p. 247.

patriot commanders that though aggression would be met with equal violence, her fellow Highlanders had ‘not done anything against the country, nor intend to, if let alone’.⁵⁸

The reason Highland Loyalism was relatively strong in the initial phase of the war, was that previous military service in the Seven Years’ War had secured free land and there was every reason to assume that, in 1775, this would be repeated. For recently arrived Highlanders, entirely receptive to the view that the imperial state was unconquerable, and that it was only through imperial dominion that they had ‘been enabled to visit this western region’, the idea of defeat was incomprehensible. Recruiting officers deliberately cultivated the idea that the war would soon be won. As late as 1777, Highland officers were still making plans to bring their families to America, presuming the rebellion would soon be over. The idea that the ‘Yankies’ would soon give up the rebellion and that ‘The Congress and leaders of rebellion will be sent home to take their fate at Tyburn’, was a common one. It took Alexander Macdonald of the 84th Foot until late 1777 to realize that the landed rewards might never be forthcoming. Even then, he still placed his faith in a negotiated settlement that would allow him to return to his Staten Island farm.⁵⁹ For a region with decades of reciprocal relations with the imperial state, and indeed for individuals with personal experience of the material benefits of service, the idea that revolutionary authorities could satisfy Highland interests could not possibly develop in the short years between arrival and the mobilization of Patriot militias against Highland settlements in North Carolina and New York in early 1776. As

⁵⁸ TNA, AO12/34, f. 357, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Donald Morrison; John P. Mclean, *An Historical Account of the Settlements of Scotch Highlanders in America Prior to the Peace of 1783* (Glasgow, 1900), p. 211.

⁵⁹ *State Records of North Carolina*, XI, 278-79; Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 159, 321; NAS, GD248/54/4, f. 60, John Grant to Grant of Grant, 26 Jun. 1777.

Donnchadh Ban Mac an t-Saoir had expressed as early as 1767: ‘Bidh sinn uil’ aig Rìgh Deòrsa; ’S cha ghòraiche dhuinn; O ’s ann aige tha ’n stòras; Is còir air a’ Chrùn; Bheir e ’m pàigheadh ’nar dòrn duinn [We will all belong to George; And we are not foolish for it; For he is the one with the provisions; And right to the Crown; He will give payment in hand]’.⁶⁰

The most brilliant articulation of land, liberty, and loyalty had emerged as early as 1748, when security was of immediate importance to Anglo-Scottish Whigs. A *Second Letter to a Noble Lord Containing A Plan for effectually uniting and sincerely attaching the Highlanders to the British Constitution, and Revolution Settlement* (London, 1748) was most likely the product of a Scottish Whig, perhaps a Highland one, owing to his rare ability to dissociate Jacobitism from the Highland region as a whole. For this anonymous writer, the solution to changing the region was not re-orientation or replacement of rebellious elites, but a bottom-up approach: ‘it is absolutely necessary to make it [for the individual tenant farmer] not theoretically only, but directly and immediately their Interest to be free and independent,’ he said. What he eventually proposed was a revolution in social patterns. Major landlords would be forced to sell their estates, most of the product of which would go on paying their financial debts. The land would be divided among the people, where no farm was to consist of less than sixty acres and leases were to be of at least twenty-ones years’ duration. The people would have a vested interest in agricultural improvements and in possessing a large acreage

⁶⁰ *Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin*, p. 23.

would be less deferential and more capable of independence.⁶¹ Proto-Communist this was not, but it was the most radical declaration of Highland land rights in the eighteenth century. What is especially worthy of analysis is the centrality of personal interest which was envisioned in *A Second Letter*. The distribution of lands was not to emanate from the monarchy, which would only invest the crown with increased powers, making Highlanders servile to another chieftain. Instead, the people were to be made to look only toward their own interest and prosperity. What principles the author believed had motivated Gaels prior to his self-evident convention remains unclear. Private interest would, however, ‘Bring in View a publick Interest, composed and made up of the private Interest of each; from whence will result a publick Feeling, a publick Affection, an honest Patriotism and love of County’. The ultimate aim was the realization that ‘the Happiness and Advantage of the subject ought to be the End and Aim of government’. The right of regicide was even defended and legislative powers were to be with ‘the people’. This was evidently an extreme, probably unique, stance, within the discourses of Highland political economy; it highlighted, however, the intention to instil a public patriotism through individual private interest.⁶² Indeed, as far as theorists such as Adam Ferguson were concerned, it was only once a man had a sense of himself and his interest that he could be capable of public good. His philosophy, grounded in that of the Stoics,

⁶¹ [Anon.], *A Second Letter to a Noble Lord*, pp. 22, 30-2; it is difficult to ascertain how the author envisaged the ownership of land. Lands were to be sold but he evidently still considered renting and, thus, hierarchical ownership, as the most natural form of landholding,

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

asserted that only once you had full knowledge of yourself as a free actor could you be capable of selfless and uncorrupted sacrifice for the public good.⁶³

Whether there was a direct link between *A Second Letter* and government policy is highly unlikely. What is clear, however, is that its more benign ideas were embraced as a method for governing the North American empire. On 6 April 1775, thirteen days before shots were fired on Lexington Green, secret instructions were issued to Governors Josiah Martin of North Carolina and William Tyron of New York to form an ‘Association’ of Highlanders. The Associations were to consist of the heads of Highland families residing in both colonies with the stated intent to prevent ‘all such proceedings and practises that are contrary to the laws of the land, and the authority of the king’. The heads were to receive 100 acres for this service, plus fifty additional acres per member of their family, with no quit-rents for the first twenty years. Should those heads be required to become enlisted soldiers in His Majesty’s service, they would receive additional land on the basis of the 1763 Royal Proclamation.⁶⁴ It was a system which granted liberty to the heads of Highland families by giving them the ability to provide, and maintain social control, over their own dependants.

What Martin or Tyron may not have known was that their instructions had already been superseded by the zealotry of several Highland individuals. ‘Recruitment’ for a militia of Loyalist Highlanders to deal with the discontented colonists had begun as early as winter 1774. There were numerous and rival contending offers to raise Gaels for service against the colonists, a schism which eventually resulted in the formation of a

⁶³ J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume Two: Narratives of Civil Government* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 347.

⁶⁴ TNA, CO 5/76, ff. 69-72, Earl of Dartmouth to Martin and Tyron, 6 Apr. 1775.

regiment with a two battalion structure. Agents such as Alexander Macdonald travelled from Staten Island, to the Mohawk Valley and then across to Boston, before returning to Staten Island, in order to receive promises of enlistment. Actual enlistment was impossible, being illegal in the absence of a declared state of rebellion.⁶⁵ The products of these efforts, the *Royal Highland Emigrants*, were officially embodied in early April 1775. The *Royal Highland Emigrants* were raised on the basis of relatively generous terms of enlistment:

They are to engage in the present troubles in America only. Each soldier is to have two hundred acres of land in any Province in North America he shall think proper, the King to pay the Patent fees, Secretary's fees, and Surveyor General's; besides twenty years free of quit rent; each married man gets fifty acres for his wife, and fifty for each child on the same terms. And as a gratuity, besides the above great terms, one guinea levy money.⁶⁶

Governor Martin was quick to realize how far the provision of land attached Highland emigrants to government. A month before the outbreak of hostilities, he had informed the Earl of Dartmouth, that, despite attempts to prevent them, recently arrived Highlanders had begun squatting on royal lands because the land office closures gave them no access to land through official means. Martin also reported that those Highlanders who had fought against the Regulators at the battle of Almanace in 1771,

⁶⁵ *Documents of the American Revolution*, VII, 295; Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 353-62; *Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, II, 353.

⁶⁶ *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books: A Journal Kept in Canada and Upon Burgoyne's Campaign in 1776 and 1777*, by Lieut. James M. Hadden, *Royal Artillery*, ed. Horatio Rogers (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), pp. 549-50.

had been questioning him whether the King's Proclamation of 1763, providing lands to veterans of the Seven Years' War, extended to their own military service.⁶⁷ By November, Martin had grown in confidence and detailed how he had begun to implement a land policy in the absence of the land office to a group of Highlanders who arrived on the 21 October:

I was induced to Grant their request [for land] on the Terms of their taking such lands in the proportions allowed by his majesty's royal instructions ... thinking it more advisable to attach these people to government by granting as matter of favour and courtesy to them what I had not power to prevent than to leave them to possess themselves by violence ... as it was not only the means of securing these people against the seditions of the rebels ... I think my lord, with submission, that the expediency of making some rule of favour and indulgence in granting lands to these emigrants ... may be worth His Majesty's Royal consideration.⁶⁸

Highlanders residing at Cross Creek had already attempted to use their service against the Regulators as a means of providing themselves with the freedom that accompanied the possession of land. Martin clearly believed that these land grants were 'the sure means of restoring and establishing the good dispositions of the large body of their countrymen'.⁶⁹

For the New York Highlanders there was a clear landed imperative to Loyalism. Fifty families, who had arrived from the Western Highlands in 1773, settled on the lands

⁶⁷ *Documents of the American Revolution*, X, 56.

⁶⁸ *State Records of North Carolina*, X, 324-28.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, X, 264-79.

of Sir John Johnson, all of whom were given 50-200 acres of land at just £6 per 100 acres, with no rents to pay until the farms were established. With their available credit, some, such as settler John Cameron began buying more land and were invested, economically and emotionally, in their farms. Many had cleared an average of two to eight acres when the war began, which not only had to be protected, but through military service might be expanded up to four times the original allotment, and on even better terms than Sir John had offered, being free land. The rank-and-file were men of modest means, sometimes sub-renters working on land rented by others from Johnson, suggesting that they used their military labour to secure land in the absence of available credit.⁷⁰ Donald Cameron possessed no land and made his living from three cows he was permitted to graze on the twelve acres owned by Angus Cameron near Johnstown. He joined the *King's Royal Regiment of New York* in 1776, but transferred to the *Royal Highland Emigrants* where the land grants were of greater value. His immediate superior, Angus, who was probably less motivated given his partial security, would not join the Loyalists until 1777.⁷¹ When making post-war claims, Highland Loyalists included the valuation of their lands, often at inflated rates. The result was modest Highlanders claiming over £100 sterling in compensation for their losses in the war. Some of the Mohawk Valley Highlanders, who had arrived in 1773, were not in full possession of their land grants before the war broke out, and there was understandable

⁷⁰ TNA, AO12/27, f. 209, Loyalist Claims Testimony of John Cameron; TNA, AO12/29, f. 245, Loyalist Claims Testimony of John Macdonnell; TNA, AO12/29, f. 54, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Donald Ross; TNA, AO12/27, f. 157, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Ranald Macdonald; TNA, WO28/9, f. 159, Petition of Alexander Macdonnell, Jun. 1776.

⁷¹ TNA, AO12/29, f. 210, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Donald Cameron; TAN, AO12/29, f. 250, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Angus Cameron; it is not known if there was any familial relationship between the two men.

support for the maintenance of the pre-1775 political order to ensure these lands were delivered.⁷² The aspiration to landholding was the most important motivational factor in Highland Loyalism. Given the number of Loyalist claims from Highlanders that indicated they had rented from Johnson, and the number of armed men revolutionary General Philip Schuyler disarmed in 1776, we must conclude that the number of sub-tenant Gaels who served the Loyalist cause in New York was a significant majority. The poor were political actors.

III THE ESSENTIAL LINK: LOYALTY AND INTEREST

Land was the most obvious and key element of loyalty and interest. It was, however, relatively localized, and as discussed, predicated on the specific contextual environment of the mid-1770s. There were, nevertheless, more broadly situated ideas which underpinned the specific equation of loyalty and interest seen in the land issue. The following sections explore these principles.

The British fiscal-military state was, by the standards of the time, incredibly effective in mobilizing resources to finance the expanding costs of overseas expansion. Whether this was achieved through the creation of a national debt or by taxation – historians still dispute which was more effective - the mobilizing of these resources rested on political stability and the acceptance of the state by wide sections of the British

⁷² TNA, AO12/26, f. 411, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Alexander Cameron; TNA, AO12/29, f. 203, Loyalist Claims Testimony of Alexander Cameron.

population.⁷³ Why did Britons accept the heavy burdens of the fiscal-military state? In return for political loyalties, ‘patriotic’ Britons received privileged access to markets and commercial opportunities. Demonstrating just how central market access was to political allegiance, colonial trade with belligerent powers during the Seven Years’ War, in violation of the discriminatory Flour Act of 1757, was a major precursor of the American Revolution.⁷⁴ Still an overwhelmingly mercantilist-based economy in this period, British popular patriotism was bolstered by military success against foreign, predominantly French, markets. Patriotic loyalty rested not on the post-1789 notion of collective patriotic enterprise in which the people were bound to the nation; instead, the fiscal-military state bound key individuals to a central political purpose, the security of the British state and, by extension, her trade and empire. This made the process deeply localized, but no less individually significant for that.

It was William Thom who most forcefully articulated the Scottish perspective. Writing at the conclusion of the Seven Years’ War, Thom stated that ‘Our joy, at the commencement of the war, proceeded entirely from the hope that other people’s quarrels might give us an opportunity of enlarging our trade, and be the occasion of increasing our wealth.’⁷⁵ There were other suggestions that foreign war might, through commercial

⁷³ While dated, John Brewer’s, *Sinews of Power* remains the standard text on the success of British bureaucracy in financing the eighteenth-century empire. Criticisms of Brewer have refined, rather than overturned, his arguments, see Eckhart Hellmuth, ‘The British State’ in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. H.T. Dickinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 19-29; Patrick Karl O’Brien, ‘Fiscal and Financial Preconditions for the Rise of British Naval Hegemony 1485–1815’, London School of Economics Department of Economic History, Working Papers in Economic History, 91/5 (2005) [available at <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/workingPapers/economicHistory/2005.aspx>, accessed 16 Aug. 2010].

⁷⁴ Thomas M. Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2008), *passim*.

⁷⁵ William Thom, *The Scheme for Erecting an Academy at Glasgow Set forth in its own proper Colours In a Letter* (Glasgow, 1762), p. 25.

markets, bind people to the state. In 1756, it was reported that even in formerly Jacobite areas of the Highlands, hostility toward the French was emerging. It was increasingly understood that the war was being fought to protect British commercial markets in the Americas, a war aim vital to the growth of linen industries in several parts of the Highlands. Linens from Europe were the staple garment of slaves and indentured servants across the West Indies and the North America colonies.⁷⁶ A Board of Trustees for Manufactures was established in Scotland, based on the earlier Irish model, as early as 1727. The idea of boosting the industry through quality control was a sound one and allowed Scottish linen to compete with French linen for colonial markets, with successful, if inconsistent, results.⁷⁷

The centrality of markets and opportunity began to transcend the satisfaction of private interest but, again, for initially localized reasons. For many Scottish elites, the incorporation of Scotland into the Union - on the basis that Scotland could never maintain a balance of payments with England - was a severe humiliation. There was, therefore, an element of economic patriotism which underpinned commercial enterprise within the empire. The vision of seventeenth-century Scotland as a poverty-stricken and bigoted religious state, troubling for many Moderates, further reinforced commercial trade as a form of patriotism.

Improvement was the pinnacle of this patriotism, the long-term alteration of Scottish agriculture and industry. The issue was that, by the 1760s, improvement had become intertwined with the rhetoric of empire. The Scots' desire to re-write national

⁷⁶ TNA, SP54/45, ff. 11-13, Lord Justice Clerk Erskine to Holderness, 1-26 Jun. 1756; see also TNA, SP54/45, f. 174, Memorial of the linen manufacturers of Perth, 15 Dec. 1779.

⁷⁷ Mitchison, 'Patriotism and National Identity in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', pp. 79-81.

history in more polite terms, but not yet having the confidence to articulate their nation as a civilized country on a par with England, ensured that Scottish historiography was directed toward a more universal approach to history. Certain groups, no matter their supposedly barbaric ways, could be, eventually, incorporated into the civilized list of nations with this model.⁷⁸ The language of improvement was thus based on universal moral sentiments and entirely underpinned intellectual readings of the empire.⁷⁹ Improvement in the Highlands was incorporated as a distinct facet of pan-imperial designs. So many of the Scottish commercial elites were based in outwardly-looking centres in England, and so integrated into British colonial trade were they, that a Scottish-centered commercial patriotism appeared less and less rational. Adam Smith, for example, while he had favoured the loosening of Britain's trading monopoly over the colonies, accepted that this was unlikely and explicitly invoked the Scottish example to support the advantages of political union.⁸⁰

Glasgow, with its dominant control over the Chesapeake tobacco trade, was a place where policies toward the colonies did touch a nerve and localized commercial interest might have trumped the attempted centralization of the state. The Glasgow merchants prevented Glasgow joining the list of public bodies which presented loyal addresses to the king in 1775.⁸¹ Yet the tobacco trade rested on wider, largely English centres to facilitate its business model, not least of which was the provision of enslaved

⁷⁸ See Chapter 6.

⁷⁹ Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion Volume II: Narratives of Civil Government*, p. 261; Colin Kidd, 'Ethnicity in the British Atlantic World', in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), p. 273.

⁸⁰ Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, III, 390-410.

⁸¹ Dalphy I. Fagerstrom, 'Scottish Opinion and the American Revolution', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 11 (1954): 263-4.

labour. When the war expanded with the entry of France and Spain, a belated loyal address was sent to the king and Glasgow's dissenting voices only ever amounted to calls for reform of the political system, not a change in its overall structure. State-based patriotism, as opposed to regional or ethnic identities, proved to be an increasingly common outcome of commercial enterprise.

It would be inappropriate, however, to essentialize profit-driven economic motives as a means of national patriotism without acknowledging the political context which gave these advantages their emotional traction. It was the ability of middling Highlanders to embrace, what we have been hitherto inclined to see as cultural impositions, which was the most significant theme underpinning this period. These principles, of which improvement was the most important, were fully understood as deriving from the imperial state. The Gaelic scholar and chaplain of the 42nd Foot, James Maclagan, was a vigorous defender of Gaelic but, while touring the outer Hebrides in 1774, did not shy away from describing the people of the west of Lewis as 'naturally indolent', a phrase which might have appeared in any of the English-language accounts of the isles. The origin of this supposed indolence was a lack of education and, for Maclagan, improvement was primarily about the ability of educated people to form commercial relationships for the betterment of themselves and their nation. He was fully behind the planned villages, which as well as ending 'Popery' and superstition, would allow the people to sell cheaply to British overseas markets:

This seems to be no trifling consideration. The body of the British Empire is already overlarge for the head, or the head too small for it, some limbs or members of it now refuse to bear your own weight, and seem determined never to do the head or

heart any good ... and if Britain take all the burden and grant all immunities to other Parts of the Realm who that was not mad would stay in it. Encouragement [for emigrants] to stay at home ... *seems absolutely necessary to our preservation.*⁸²

Already, in 1774, Maclagan was looking towards a future where Britain's success would be entirely predicated on its ability to educate and keep its sons and daughters. Being a part of the British state was, therefore, an agreeable situation, though Maclagan, even if the zealotry of the improvers had distracted them from their true goal, the educational improvement of the Highlands.

IV IMPERIAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION

Having analysed the intersection of loyalty and interest, we now turn to the more abstract impact of imperial contacts on the political environment of the Scottish Highlands: the sophistication in Gaelic views of the king and government. Many Highlanders, particularly the literate classes, possessed of highly sophisticated readings of the body politic, which underpinned the aforementioned self-interested loyalties. At times, this may have been condensed to traditional declarations of the right of the king to rule, but this did not necessitate a rejection of complexity. These ideas were the contextual setting for understanding the American rebellion and contributing greatly to Highland resistance to the Revolution. Critically, however, the American rebellion helped re-define the place of the Highlands within the British state.

⁸² DCA, We/6/4, 'A Tour through the Ebridee', [1774].

What precisely were the tenets of Loyalism in the Highlands? It can be broadly understood as a popular conservatism. Overwhelmingly, Gaels possessed a persuasive belief that success was dependent on parliamentary monarchy, the rule of law, and the continuance of the present social order.⁸³ Contrasted with the dangerous potential of the American Revolution, this was seen to be a noble cause, which, in the interests of the majority, favoured the practical enjoyment of justice above an inalienable right of every man to have a say in government. The rejection of parliamentary sovereignty, it was feared, would precipitate the total collapse of all social order. Major Alexander Campbell, a Highland Loyalist, hoped:

The ministry will act with true British spirit & not suffer a Parcell of wrong headed Bandittie of desperate Fortunes to disturb & Disconcert their just rights & authority. This, sir, is a valuable Country the whole of it, every Colonie producing one or more Stapple Commodity peculiarly native ... & surpassing almost in Quality and Quantity that of other Countries, ever since the last war this Country was left bair of Troops in so much that mobs Lauch'd at the legall authority ... so that any Cunning and Designing Desperate got himself made a Select man & Committeeman & so forward his interest in Leading them on to Confusion & Rebellion by imposing on the weakness & Credulity of the illiterate whose passions are always as moveable as was work to the command of every Pretender to Patriotism.⁸⁴

⁸³ For an analysis of popular conservatism during the French Revolutionary era, in which most work on this has been done, see H.T. Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism, 1789-1815' in *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789-1815*, ed. H.T. Dickinson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 103-26; Ian R. Christie, 'Conservatism and Stability in British Society' in *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, ed. Mark Philp (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), pp. 169-87; Bob Harris, 'Print and Politics' in *Scotland in the Age of the French Revolution*, ed. Bob Harris (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 164-95.

⁸⁴ NAS, GD170/1595, f. 13, Alexander Campbell to Alexander Campbell, 20 Feb. 1776.

Campbell's major concern was the lack of social stratification and stability of hierarchy that the Revolution seemed to endorse. Without hierarchy, it was thought, as previously suggested in this chapter, liberty was unobtainable and the tyranny of the multitude would prevail. Strangely, for a nation which had declared its independence three years earlier, one Highland officer declared that the Americans knew 'no national faith'. In this reading, the Americans' mistake was their lack of loyalty to a legitimate authority, however genuine their grievances may be.⁸⁵ The lack of legitimate authority and social order was something which terrified other Highland witnesses. Such rejection of legitimate authority and hierarchy was not just abstract, but impacted on the intellectual honesty of American colonists in the most day-to-day interactions. 'They make no ceremony of forging signatures' on bills of credit, declared Patrick Campbell of the 71st Foot.⁸⁶

Was the ultimate source of this stability a linear hierarchy which placed the king at the top as an archaic chieftain? It is true that Gaelic song from the period and earlier had considered the king, and loyalty to him, as the ideal mark of Gaelic society. Donnachadh Bàn's Hanoverian poetry had made much of the disloyalty of the Jacobite rebels, much in the same way Jacobite writers had believed the Hanoverian succession to be a disloyal act to the true dynasty.⁸⁷ This ignored, however, the sophistication of Highland constitutional values. When loyalty was expressed in Highland thought it was not directly solely at the crown, but at the powerful authority of the British state,

⁸⁵ NAS, GD153/1/4, f. 2, William Sutherland to Dugald Gilchrist, 30 May 1779.

⁸⁶ NAS, GD170/1176/14, f. 1, Patrick Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 14 March 1780.

⁸⁷ *Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin*, pp. 26-34; see also *The Songs John MacCodrum*, ed. Uilleam Matheson (Dun Eidean: Comunn Litreachas Gaidhlig na h-Alba, 1938), p. 57.

expressed by the constitution and through the institution of Parliament. The concept of the King-in-Parliament, welding unlimited sovereign power, was central to British constitutional values. Only the resolute application of unitary sovereign power could create the orderly governance that the empire needed to prosper. This was reflected in Gaelic statements of constitutional values. One song from the period described the balance that was maintained through a hierarchical constitution:

An ceithir àirdean an t-saoghail
Tha fearann is daoine aig Deòrsa;
'S tha chinn-eaglais anns gach àite
Chum an sàbhaladh o dhò-bheairt;
Tha lagh is pàrlamaid aca,
Chumail ceartais riu is còrach.⁸⁸

[In the four corners of the world George has land and men; And his prelates in each place To save men from iniquity; They have law and parliament, Maintaining right and justice for them.]

This idea of a protective imperial constitution, predicated on unitary sovereignty, was expressed by John Stuart, an Inverness-born Indian trader in South Carolina. In the early 1760s, he had helped convince James Grant of Ballinalloch that it was not in the state's best interest to entirely subjugate the Cherokee to the South Carolinian planter elite. Highland traders such as Stuart and his agent David Taitt argued that only an expanding British imperial sphere could protect native interests.⁸⁹ In effect, the imperial polity could be seen as a protective umbrella under which minorities could most effectively progress through the stadial model. This could be done with the minimal

⁸⁸ *Orain Dhonnchaidh Bhàin*, p. 30.

⁸⁹ Murdoch, *Scotland and America*, pp. 122-3.

unnecessary disruption that inevitably accompanied interaction with more ‘developed’ societies.

American colonists, largely ignorant of the constitutional developments which had occurred in Britain since 1688, remained welded to an older understanding which saw the king as a separate sovereignty, rather than, as James Macpherson put it, ‘the Great hereditary magistrate, who carries into effect the laws of the Legislature’.⁹⁰ The rejection of the Olive Branch Petition was a key moment for many moderate colonists, a brutal wake-up call to modern imperialism for which their concepts, based on the seventeenth century writings of figures such as James Harrington, had not prepared them.⁹¹ We may even claim that Highland commentators were more in touch with contemporary political models than many colonists.

The only major difference between Scotland and England in constitutional models was the absence of the king as the protector and head of the state religion. There was still a powerful tradition in Scotland, dating back to the National Covenant of 1638, of the purity of the Presbyterian Church being above allegiance to the head of state. This was a separation only seen among the dissenters of England. From this point of view, most Lowland Scots, and an increasing number of Highlanders, had less ideological reasons for a strict adherence to kingship, when loyalty to God and the kirk came above that to the king. The National Covenant had been based upon the Confession of Faith, signed by James VI, in 1581. It consciously placed religion within a constitutional

⁹⁰ James Macpherson, *The Rights of Great Britain Asserted Against the Claims of America: being an Answer to the Declaration of the General Congress* (London, 1776), p. 3.

⁹¹ Harrington’s *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (London, 1656) was an exposition on the ideal republic, though his figure of Olphaus Megalator, the beneficent lawgiver, influenced colonial views of kingship as distinct from the corruption of lower forms of government.

framework separate from the crown, by enshrining the laws already declared by various acts of the Scottish parliament. If this did not produce a definable increase in loyalty to the king and state, in various ways it did underpin the political stability of Scotland. The Ministers and Church Elders of the National Assembly believed it was incumbent upon them to press the people in their sentiments of loyalty, and critically, ‘attachment to the constitution’.⁹² Surprisingly, this unique connection between church and state even helped non-Presbyterian Scots understand the benefits of the constitution. Bishop Hay was informed by Glenalladale that, ‘On account of their intollerancy [*sic*], Of all the People on earth, The Scots, & of all Denominations the Rigid Presbyterians ... are to me the most hateful and disagreeable’.⁹³ Yet Glenalladale was celebratory in his praise of the British constitution, suggesting a religious component to the understood balance of the constitution against tyranny, enshrined only in the British model.

An advocate of the legalizing of Highland dress perceived a fairness to this model: ‘Every subject in this country values himself upon *British liberty* ... Our constitution is certainly the mildest and best in the world; and it is the peculiar happiness of the present reign, that Administration studies to reward merit, without local distinction’.⁹⁴ Any upset in this balance, such as a brutalization of enlisted men in the army, was perceived as an ‘attack ... on the liberty of the subject’ which dealt a ‘moral wound ... to the constitution of Britain’. Indeed, Highland commentators seem to have used the language of

⁹² TNA, SP54/47, ff. 29-30, National Assembly to George III, 26 May 1777.

⁹³ John Macdonald to Bishop Hay, 9 May 1782, quoted in Prunier, *Anti-Catholic Strategies in Eighteenth-Century Scotland*, p. 89.

⁹⁴ *Caledonian Mercury*, no. 8819 (23 Mar. 1778), p. 2.

constitutional values to create political capital in advance of various rights.⁹⁵ This did not mean, however, that such sentiments were not genuine.

The events of the year 1775 forced these underdeveloped theories to form a salience that had not been previously necessary. As so much loyalty was bound up in the provision of land and commercial opportunities, what truly defined Highland support for the continuing vitality of the British imperial project was the demand for stability. To call this *pax imperium* would be inaccurate, for as the events of that year demonstrated, the empire proved incapable of maintaining peace. And besides, the provisions of land were largely predicated on imperial disruption or war. Nevertheless, in the initial stages of the American rebellion, most Highlanders, hoped for a quick resolution which would return events to their antebellum status quo. A Highland merchant in New York, Donald Mclean, writing in mid-1775, lamented to a London contact, that the ‘sinew of trade is already broken and that only anarchy and confusion stare land in the face’. When the Loyalist Highlanders, as many as 1,200 of them, had risen against Revolutionary authorities at Cross Creek in February 1776, it was for the purpose, Brigadier-General Donald Macdonald said, ‘to restore peace and tranquillity ... to open again the glorious streams of commerce – to partake of the blessings inseparable from a regular administration of justice’.⁹⁶ Gaelic writers had envisioned the wonders of imperial peace as early as 1756. The defeat of the French in North America, it was said, would usher in a joyous peace:

⁹⁵ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, pp.16, 20, 23, 24; [Anon.], *Present Conduct of the Chieftains and Proprietors of Lands in the Highlands of Scotland*, p. 4; [Americanus], *Information Concerning the Province of North Carolina*, p. 7.

⁹⁶ *Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth*, II, 325-6; Mclean, *An Historical Account of the Settlement of Scotch Highlanders in America*, p. 126.

'N sin gabhaidh croabh na sìth le freamh,
Teann ghream do 'n doimhne thalmhainn;
Is sìnsidh geuga gu rig Nèamh,
Gach àird le feamh-mheas 's geal-bhath;
Bithidh ceiler èibhinn eun na meaghlán,
'S daoine le'n clainn ag fealbhachadh;
Toradh is saoth'r an làmh gun mhaoim,
Faoi dhubhar caomh a sgàilsi sgàilsin.⁹⁷

[Then the roots of the tree of peace will, Take a hold of the earth's depths; And its branches will stretch to Heaven, Every height with delicate fruits and white blossoms. The melody of birds in its branches, Families taking residence, The produce of their hands unfailing, Under the follicle's proven splendour.]

Peace, however, would have to come from the barrel of a musket, with the defence of parliamentary sovereignty being sufficient justification for the violence to be inflicted upon fellow Britons. Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell of the 71st Foot was called upon to define the meaning of the conflict when accosted by a distressed Loyalist, Andrew Peppernell, after his property had been confiscated by the Royal Navy. Campbell had to assure Peppernell that such acts were not intended to harm loyal subjects, but that it was utterly essential that the rebels 'recognize the constitutional authority of Great Britain over her Colonies in America'. Campbell would later state his belief that the restoration of civil government would be more effective in establishing peace than 20,000 British soldiers.⁹⁸ In Adam Ferguson's response to Richard Price's defence of the colonists, published at government expense in 1776, he too advocated the necessity of a balanced constitution to prevent anarchy:

⁹⁷ Gillies, *Sean Dain*, pp. 115-16.

⁹⁸ TNA, T1/520, ff. 262-4, Archibald Campbell to Andrew Peppernell, 30 Oct. 1776; Conway, 'To Subdue America': 391.

Is Great Britain then to be sacrificed to America ... and a state which has attained high measures of national felicity, for one that is yet only in expectation, and which, by attempting such extravagant plans of Continental Republic, is probably laying the seeds of anarchy, of civil wars, and at last of a military government ...?⁹⁹

Always a careful and balanced thinker, Ferguson was ill at ease with the unfair strictures placed upon the colonists. But violent rebellion was a more terrifying threat to order than unfair government. ‘We do not subject ourselves to Government’ he had preached to the 42nd Foot in 1745, ‘merely to satisfy the Lusts of those who are fond of power. It is because society, under the regulation of Laws and Government, is the state for which Providence has calculated our Natures’.¹⁰⁰

Echoing Ferguson was the London-based agent of the Nawab of Arcot and future MP for Camelford, James Macpherson. Macpherson was already a major literary figure, at the centre of a rancorous debate over the authenticity of *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem* (London, 1762), in which there were Gaels and English-speakers on both sides. In 1775, Macpherson was commissioned to defend the policies of Lord North’s government. The resulting pamphlet, *The Rights of Great Britain Asserted Against the Claims of America: being an Answer to the Declaration of the General Congress* (London, 1776), a direct attack on the Declaration of Independence, went through at least ten editions in its first two years and represents one of the most significant counter-Revolutionary texts of the

⁹⁹ Adam Ferguson, *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately Published by Dr. Price* (London, 1776), p. 59.

¹⁰⁰ Adam Ferguson, *A Sermon Preached in the Ersh Language to His Majesty's First Highland Regiment of Foot* (London, 1746), p. 7.

period.¹⁰¹ There was no other method of governing, claimed Macpherson, than on the principle of ‘uncontrollable [*sic*] power’. In the British constitution, however, power was invested where it was safest, in the combined legislature, consisting of the king, Lords, and Commons.¹⁰² Highland appeals to the constitution recognized this and serve to demonstrate just how connected to contemporary debates many Highland thinkers were.

Were Macpherson and Ferguson exceptions, worldly-wise men whose literature had little resonance outside London? After all, one of the reasons Horace Walpole doubted the authenticity of the Ossianic verses was that he was not convinced that a ‘savage bard’ would have written ‘with the fear of criticism’, a sure sign of a metropolitan author in a literary world.¹⁰³ Upon his arrival into the village of Ruthven, in early March 1776, William Tod, the Duke of Gordon’s factor in Badenoch, found a small parcel waiting for him. Opening it, he discovered a copy of James Macpherson’s pamphlet. He had already had a ‘perusal’ of the ninety-four page document with the duke’s treasurer, James Ross, but now he had his own copy. In fact, ‘I find copies of it are sent to everybody here by the Government – I found one waiting me which had come by Post – gratis’, he told Ross. Astonishingly, Lord North’s government was sending free copies of Macpherson’s pamphlet into the very localities in which a high percentage of *fir-taca* were attempting to enlist men. Duncan Macpherson of Cluny, future Lt. Col. of the 71st Foot, already had seventy men. His brother-in-law and cousin, Duncan

¹⁰¹ This study uses the tenth edition in which further arguments against Price’s pamphlet were added by Macpherson.

¹⁰² Macpherson, *The Rights of Great Britain Asserted Against the Claims of America*, p. 3.

¹⁰³ Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George III*, ed. Derek Jarrett, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), III, 120.

Macpherson of Breakachy, was also recruiting. Aging Malcolm Macpherson of Phoness, promoted for heroism on the Plains of Abraham in 1759, was another local officer, though age would prevent him from returning to America. John Macpherson of Invereshie also intended to go, provided he got a good commission and John Macpherson, younger of Benchar, hoped to become a lieutenant.¹⁰⁴ All of these men lived within seven miles of James Macpherson's birthplace, a fact which may have given reading the pamphlet greater resonance. Sending the pamphlet may have served several purposes. It may have been to prompt vacillating half-pay officers to return to the service. It may have helped explain to officers about to cross the Atlantic why they were to go. It may even have been to set out the arguments recruiters could use on local men to supplement the material promises of land and bounty. The relevance of the political dimensions of the conflict to Highland recruitment, however, was clear. While the state could be reasonably certain of a Highland military commitment to America, explaining the reasons for sending the troops appears to have justified the expense.

We must confront the expedient use of the American Revolution by politically-minded Highlanders. Loyalty in the period gave regions and individuals political significance. Paradoxically, there was utility to previous rebelliousness in regard to interactions with the state. Gaels could demonstrate a loyalty that other Britons could not, as the loyalty of Englishmen was rarely questioned before the 1790s. The collapse of social order in the colonies was contrasted with the limited aims of the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, implicitly demonstrating the loyalty of the Gael. For Highlanders, the Jacobite challenge to the Hanoverian settlement had sought to replace one king with another. The

¹⁰⁴ NAS, GD 44/43/157, f. 1, William Tod to James Ross, 2 Mar. 1776.

degenerative potential of the Revolution, as far as many Highlanders were concerned, was much worse:

What in the name of God had the Highlanders been Guilty of in the year 45 they acted from principles of honour they thought themselves right th'o they were certainly in the wrong, they Did not ayme at the totall [*sic*] Destruction & Subversion of the constitution like the Americans for they not only mean'd to be independent States, but to Give laws.¹⁰⁵

An explicit hatred of American republicanism was expressed by James Maclagan, while he served in the colonies in 1777:

We sometimes, at least some of us, mistook the right king, but we were always friends to Kings and monarchy in general, the American rebellion, on the other hand is entirely selfish and void of every spark of generosity that ever graced the human nature.¹⁰⁶

A 'Wellwisher to the Highlanders' declared that the measures used against the Jacobites in 1746 had been correct:

But the ghastly spectre of rebellion is no longer characteristic of our Highlanders. They are a brave, an honest, and a worthy people, and, as such, have distinguished themselves, on many important occasions, for the present illustrious Royal family.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ MacDonal, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 319-20.

¹⁰⁶ JRL, BAG5/1, f. 140, James Maclagan to Lord John Murray, 12 Jul. 1777.

¹⁰⁷ *Caledonian Mercury*, no. 8819 (23 Mar. 1778), p. 2.

Remarkably, even loyal Whigs in the Highlands were beginning to ascribe Jacobitism to the entire region, much as English commentators had done, in order to assert the importance of their own loyalties in the 1770s. This raises the important question as to whether monarchy truly served as the touchstone of Highland concepts of government. In fact, the appeal to monarchism did not reflect static conservatism in Highland understandings of government, dating back to the days of clanship. Instead, they were a modern interpretation suited to a contemporary need. Had Whig Highlanders engaged the realities of Jacobitism, they would have become trapped in a quagmire of problematic motivations. How much had anti-Unionism underpinned the Jacobite challenge in Scotland?¹⁰⁸ Did the denominational undercurrent to Jacobitism fit with religious sensibilities in 1770s Britain? How differently had Whigs and Tories envisioned the constitution and the operation of the empire and how far had parochial rivalries been responsible for the mobilization of Jacobites?¹⁰⁹ Instead, a Jacobitism which privileged loyalty to the crown as the source of all political authority avoided these issues and served as an unproblematic interpretation of the relationship between the region and the state. The fact that most Jacobite leaders had been vehemently critical of Charles Edward Stuart's decision not to recall a Scottish Parliament was ignored. Loyalty to the state, for the benefits of commercial enterprise and improvement had already been accepted by the vast majority of the middling and upper Highland elite. An

¹⁰⁸ For a strong declaration of the nationalist element in Jacobitism, see Daniel Szechi, *1715: The Great Jacobite Rebellion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), *passim*.

¹⁰⁹ For some of these issues, such as the role of the Argyll estate's decision to offer tenancies on the basis of bidding in 1737, see Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, p. 164.

intellectual return to a monarchist model of Jacobitism could only give succour to this allegiance.

Jacobitism was a usable past that could be employed in the context of the present. It could even, in some circumstances, be a pillar of loyalty. In one text, dedicated to Lt. Col. Duncan Macpherson of the 71st Foot, Jacobitism was used to great effect.

Macpherson, known in the Highlands as Donnachadh na h-Ath (Duncan of the Kiln), had been born in a kiln while his father, Ewan Macpherson of Cluny, was on the run from government forces in the aftermath of Culloden. It was reported, however, that these experiences had prepared Macpherson for an equally hard military life in the service of the crown: ‘Slion’ar crudal air seachdan, Fhuair Donnacha’ Mac’ Phearson, Tric air uabairt ’s air sèachran, Dh’fhàg sud cruaidh ann am pèars è [Plentiful are the hardships in the army, That Duncan Macpherson got, Often expelled, dispossessed, wandering, That left him hard, strong in person].¹¹⁰ This was not, it cannot be overemphasized, atonement nor rehabilitation, a common trope in Highland historiography, but a conscious declaration of loyalty in order to assert a position as deserving of recognition and, thus reward, within the imperial system. This ability to re-interpret Jacobitism helps explain its continuing utility into the nineteenth century.

And while these were evidently considerations confined to the elite, some evidence suggests that the rank-and-file also participated in the articulation of Highland loyalty in contrast to colonial disloyalty. A complaint printed in the *Caledonian Mercury* in 1777 offers a rare, though secondary insight, into the attitudes of enlisted Highland soldiers:

¹¹⁰ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, p. 39.

A correspondent, who has frequent intercourse, by letters, with the officers of the Highland regiments at present serving in America, informs us, that nothing displeases the common men of that corps so much as to hear the provincials called *Rebels*. On a former occasion many of themselves were dignified with that application. They then fought bravely, in what they thought a just cause. The Americans will scarce fight at all, though they pretend their cause is equally just. The Highlanders, therefore, conceive themselves highly affronted, when the designation of *Rebel* is applied to an American. They think it involves in it a tacit reflection against themselves, as if they were *cowards* as well as rebels. Of this they can by no means admit, and consequently will allow the Americans no other title than that of *cowardly rascals*.¹¹¹

The wording of this article suggests that it may have been mediated for its intended audience. Nevertheless, as we have seen, Highland soldiers defined themselves partly through a corporate military identity in which they considered themselves to be vastly superior to their colonial opponents. The article in the *Caledonian Mercury* serves to demonstrate the importance of the American war in re-configuring Highland self-imagery.

Why did the Highland region not see any of the disruption that typified the American colonies? Both had, after all, experience of conflict with the imperial state. The reason was actually remarkably simple. The Highland region had a significant say in its own governance, a fact that furthers the argument against the conquered and subordinated interpretation. Highland counties were represented in parliament. There was an overlap between landed and moneyed hierarchies and political power. The

¹¹¹ *Caledonian Mercury*, no. 8628 (1 Jan. 1777), p. 1; I wish to thank Hisashi Kuboyama for this reference (Arigato-gozai-masu Kuboyama Hisashi-San).

Highlands, in this period, were still ruled and run by Highland elites, albeit elites with vastly different orientations from the majority of the people. The landlords were grounded in the politics and social structures of the Highlands, knowledgeable and sympathetic to its proper governance, at least as far as they understood it. They were not appointed impositions as colonial governors were in America. They were not, in general, segregated from the people by culture and religion, as in Ireland. Perhaps most significantly, through military service, Highland elites were accepted, at least in official terms, as equal partners in the state. In 1754, the state offered an amnesty to all former Jacobites, prompting a number of Highland officers from the Scots Brigade in the service of the United Provinces to join the British army.¹¹² Indeed, it might even be suggested that the crisis of empire experienced in the American colonies in the 1770s emerged, not because of the belligerent expansion of the British Empire and its military arm, but the failure to extend a viable and respectable role in this expansion to the American colonies. In the Highlands, access to the advantages and triumphalist discourses of imperial expansion was never officially denied. If English public opinion was often bitterly anti-Scottish, this often stood in proportion to the significance of Scots in the highest positions in the land.

On a more common level, this very fact even gave the region a negotiating edge when dealing with the state. It was around this period that military service emerged as an argument against rising rents and dispossession. As early as 1773, one author claimed that if social change continued to force Highlanders to emigrate to the colonies, there

¹¹² Conway, 'Scots, Britons and Europeans': 117; *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1782*, ed. James Ferguson (Edinburgh: T. & A. Constable, 1901), II, 394n.

would be no Highlanders left to join the army. These were not idle threats. As the author explained, ‘The genius of the Highlander will fall in at once with the nature of the country [America] ... They will make excellent partisans for the first enterprising genius that shall aspire to form an independent establishment in America.’¹¹³ The context of political loyalty in the Highlands was evidently fluid enough for the author, who styled himself a ‘Highlander’, to imply that state-backed estate policies might resurrect the Highlander as a military threat. Implicit in his statement was that Highland loyalty was negotiable, but only on terms acceptable to those affected by social change. Military service had become vital to the dynamics of social change and loyalty in the Highlands.

V CONCLUSIONS

The advent of widespread imperial contacts between the Highlands and the North American colonies after 1756 was hugely significant for the loyalties and interests of numerous groups within the Highlands. What is more, as Campbell of Danna had expressed so well, the two were intimately connected. Private or familial interest was privileged above other considerations, but to understand this as a zero sum game, however, is inaccurate. Highland allegiances conformed to the significance which could be gained from political loyalty, but this is not to suggest that economic self-interest was the only motivator in Highland loyalties. Many Highlanders, emigrants especially, had deeply invested in the vitality of the British Empire and took tremendous risks to defend

¹¹³ [Anon.], *The Present Conduct of the Chieftains and Proprietors of Lands in the Highlands of Scotland*, pp. 5-7.

it. Others genuinely believed in the British constitution as the best form of government, threats to which had to be met with unforgiving violence. Ultimately, however, the empire served as the political space for the pursuit of private interest, the pinnacle of which was access to cheap or free land. It was a deeply personal loyalty with huge scope for fulfilling only those obligations which conformed to personal interest. The number of Highland emigrants who supported the British government in the colonies suggests, however, it was no less significant for that.¹¹⁴

One significant question remains. While the American Revolution altered the political dynamics of the Highlands, were the results of the war a vehicle for change? The reaction of many people in the Highlands to the American rebellion suggests that, unlike in other parts of the empire, they were not. Irish Whigs successfully used the war to browbeat Westminster into a repeal of the Irish Declaratory Act and, in the decades before the Union, largely re-discovered their 'British' identity in opposition to an increasingly seditious Irish patriotism. The American Revolution helped form the polarities which were to be so important in Ireland in the crisis of the late 1790s.¹¹⁵ In India, major reforms, instituted after Charles Cornwallis became Governor-General in

¹¹⁴ Making up no more than 0.8 per cent of the colonial population, Highlanders may have accounted for more than ten per cent of those who served in Loyalist units during the war. Estimates indicate that there were approximately 2.5 million subjects in the colonies in 1776, of which around 2 million were white. Estimates of the Loyalist population are fifteen to twenty per cent of the White population, making a white Loyalist population of around 400,000. Paul H. Smith has estimated that 21,000 men served in the Provincial Corps, units raised from amongst the American population. *The Royal Highland Emigrants* enlisted over 1700 men, though not all were ethnic Gaels. Significant numbers of Highlanders also served in *Butler's Rangers* and the *King's Royal Regiment of New York*. For the figures which form the basis of these estimates, see Francis D. Cogliano, *Revolutionary America, 1763-1815: A Political History*, 2nd Edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 32; Robert M. Calhoon, 'Loyalism and neutrality' in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of the American Revolution*, ed. Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1991), p. 247; Paul H. Smith, 'The American Loyalists: Notes on their Organisation and Numerical Strength', *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 25 (1968): 274.

¹¹⁵ Morley, *Irish Opinion and the American Revolution*, esp. pp. 330-4.

1786, massively increased British influence in the sub-continent. There were few significant calls for reform or change in the Highlands. It might even be argued, from the perspective of the Highlands elites, that the region had got what it wanted out of the conflict: privileged access to the advantages of loyalty. They had become full beneficiaries of the imperial system. The events of 1775-1783, were used to assert, with more force than ever before, the allegiances, the contributions, and the rights of a region that was decidedly tied, by the 1780s, to the British state.

CHAPTER 6

THE HEROIC FABRIC OF THE MIND: CULTURE AND IDENTITY THROUGH IMPERIAL WAR

INTRODUCTION

Contrary to the popular meta-narrative of Highland history, confidence was not absent from the region in the period following the 1745 rebellion. For Gaelic society, there was a cultural payoff for sending her sons to North America, which has not yet been fully appreciated. War in the colonies not only exported men out of the Highlands, it also exported Gaelic domestic concerns into a different intellectual sphere. Imperial wars created an ambiguous space where cultural concerns and political loyalties could be segregated from domestic realities. The Highland soldier, when he was interpreted in Gaelic popular culture through the medium of songs, engendered a pride in the Gaels' martial qualities, and became a figurehead for Gaelic confidence. Deployed as Highland battalions, complete with distinct cultural trappings, these battalions provided an explicitly Highland role in the British Empire. As that empire could increasingly be interpreted as a dominant world power, excessive celebrations of Gaelic martial triumph did not strain credulity, and offered an appealing alternative to a narrative of victimhood.

The motive to enlist owed little to notions of pro-British patriotism and cultural identities. If we consider the way in which the Highland regiments were interpreted, however, a more complex picture emerges. As the majority of regiments raised in this period were intended for overseas service, the national/imperial element to military

service was necessarily emphasized, diminishing but not eclipsing the more assertive socio-political localism that defined the home-defence battalions. These have been analysed with consummate skill by J.E. Cookson, Austin Gee, and Kevin B. Lynch.¹ Service in a wide imperial dominion had the potential to create a different dynamic, interpretively speaking, from the volunteer corps. As a pillar of imperial expansion, the Highland regiments had the potential to be interpreted in cultural terms as a regional contribution to a British and imperial institution. This in no way meant the emergence of a teleological ‘Britishness’; quite the contrary. Imperial military service did not fundamentally alter Gaelic identities, but created an autonomous space where pre-existent early modern Gaelic identities were allowed to emerge and develop without much overt inconsistency. This did not mean that the imperial context was incidental, however, for it was the prerequisite of such confidence. As we shall see, there were also moments when identity transcended the local and embraced supra-national identifications. We should not imagine, however, that confused local identities progressed to form more salient national principles. Most remarkably, the discourses of imperialism were adopted, adapted, and turned back upon metropolitan ideals. In effect, imperial minorities used imperialism to strengthen their own place in the body politic. Virtues which had underpinned the seventeenth-century Highlands, the vitality of Gaelic and of martial culture, were strengthened, and while not uniformly pro-British, were entirely predicated on a meshing of early-modern identities with a new imperial context.

¹ Cookson, *The British Armed Nation*, *passim*; Austin Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement, 1794-1814* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), *passim*; K.B. Lynch, ‘A Citizen and not a Soldier: The British Volunteer Movement and the War against Napoleon’ in *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1790-1820*, ed. Alan Forrest, Karen Hagemann and Jane Rendall (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 205-21.

Why have these identities been ignored? Historians have thought it necessary to question the emergence of Britishness by highlighting the more fundamental imperatives of socio-economic security within localized contexts. This has led, however, to an implicit dismissal of all assertive identities under the intellectually-safe vagueness of concentric identifications. Concentric identities, of course, did exist, but the argument presented here is that without an understanding of wider pan-British identities, the localized identity of the Highlands could not have formed in the way that it did. The Gaelic identities highlighted here were largely independent of political regimes, but operating in conjunction with the expansion of empire.

Three discrete themes combined to form a Gaelic self-confidence which challenged the subordinate identity imposed on the region. The first theme emerged from theories connected to the Scottish enlightenment. Theories of civil society consolidated the pre-established assumption of a cultural divide in Scotland between the civilized Lowlands and savage Highlands. Theories of civil society were reciprocal, developing out of this dichotomy while simultaneously reinforcing it. The historiographical error has been to see theories of civil society as the direct antecedents of romantic Highlandism, where savagery mellowed to the sublime. These were connected principles, but were vastly different intellectual constructs. The principal civil society theorist of the period, Adam Ferguson, was a Gael and while he often sought to distance himself from his Gaelic origins, he never repudiated them. He asserted the authenticity of James Macpherson's Ossian poems for longer than many enlightened thinkers. Most important, his views of civil society offered a conceptual framework for Highland self-confidence that was asserted prior to romantic Highlandism. Second, there

was the place of the Gaelic language. Gaelic as a language was legitimized and revived in the Highland regiments. The nature of military service was to provide both a measure of martial confidence as well as a relationship with an institution which was most definably 'British', allowing the Gael to take a justly deserved place in imperial triumph. Third, the Gaels' uncertain status within the British Isles stood in stark contrast to their own role as white oppressors within the larger boundaries of empire. The movement of Highlanders into imperial administration and the army, offered the Gael a position of unquestionable superiority in relation to other groups. Superiority of this nature fostered a supercilious confidence. It was this confidence which marked the full extent of the Gaelic embracing of British principles, for the views of Gaels toward imperial minorities sat firmly within a supra-national framework. It is hard to identify any material difference between Gaelic views of imperial minorities and those of other Britons. The narrative of eighteenth-century Highland decline, despite genuine sympathy toward the fate of the region, cannot account for this confidence.

I LUXURY, VIRTUE, AND MARTIAL VALOUR

Five months before representatives of the colonies of North America absolved themselves of their allegiances to the British crown, Edward Gibbon published the first volume of his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, an immensely influential work which posited that the fall of the Roman Empire had been precipitated by the loss of martial virtue among its citizens. Gibbon had been heavily indebted to other authors, many of who were responsible for the narratives of moral declension that

framed the *History of the Decline and Fall*.² One was a Gaelic-speaking former chaplain of the 42nd Foot, Adam Ferguson, who would expand Gibbon's narrative with the three-volume *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* from 1783. Ferguson's keen interest in the themes that faced all developed societies, virtue, luxury, and potential decline, highlighted most effectively in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh, 1767), would create an unparalleled foundation for Highland identities within the British Empire; these parochial identities, however, could only be formed on the basis of knowledge of much larger and more sophisticated worldviews.

In *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Adam Ferguson spoke to the most immediate concerns of contemporary British readers. He provided a framework for understanding how nations evolved to a state of political maturity, commerce, and civility. This was no apotheosis, however, and Ferguson was particularly careful to discuss the associated problems in such refined societies of political slavery and the corruption of luxury. It was the invocation of moral philosophy, Ferguson's questioning of the moral sentiments of cultural and national distinctions, however, which was of critical importance. He admitted that demographic growth was a great object for all nations:

[B]ut to extend the limits of any particular state, is not, perhaps, the way to obtain it; while we desire that our fellow-creatures should multiply, it does not follow that the whole should, if possible, be united under one head.³

² J.G.A., Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume Three: The First Decline and Fall* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), pp. 304-6.

³ Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh, 1767), p. 89.

It was admitted, he said, that people admired the Roman Empire ‘as a model of national greatness and splendour’, but Ferguson contended that that very greatness had been ruinous to the virtue of the body politic: ‘It was found to be inconsistent with all the advantages which that conquering people had formerly enjoyed in the articles of government and manners.’⁴ Imperial expansion was potentially hazardous to the wellbeing of a virtuous society.

It was this implicit referencing of Britain and her empire which brought Ferguson’s ideas into the reflective mood of the thinking classes. The work of Ferguson and the harrowing context in which Gibbon’s magnum opus was read, established that the British Empire, fighting a vicious imperial civil war in the colonies, might be experiencing a mirror of Roman decline. Whereas Gibbon had controversially blamed the influence of Christianity for the decline, with its pacifying of traditional Roman militarism, he had blamed much of the decay on the moral corruption of the metropolis, which had become effete through lack of military activity. While the charge of a lack of military activity could hardly be affixed to the British Empire, Gibbon’s narrative served as a critique of what had happened in eighteenth-century Britain. Imperialism had exposed large sections of British society to overseas luxuries. In a sermon preached to an Edinburgh audience in August 1779, shortly after Spain had entered the war, Ferguson’s contemporary, the Reverend Andrew Greenwood, partly blamed the cause of national distress on gluttony and luxury.⁵ Another fear arising from the Gibbonian narrative was

⁴ Ibid., p. 89.

⁵ Andrew Greenwood, *The Cause and Cure of National Distress* (Edinburgh, 1779), p. 12.

the rise of a large standing army to fight imperial wars. Instead of being greeted as a measure of patriotic fervour, this force was interpreted as the same separation of soldier and pacific citizen which had led to the Roman collapse; this was a worry much enhanced by plebeian opposition to the Militia Act of 1757 in England, which demonstrated to the Pittites the enormous reluctance of the poor to be the embodiment of civic virtue.⁶

There were, of course, a myriad of interpretations of the Roman Empire, and a degree of confusion over the parts of the Roman Empire, or indeed Republic, to be emulated or despised in Georgian Britain. One author, who sought a loose confederation between Britain and her colonies, asserted that, the virtuous aspects of a balanced constitution could not survive the forced dominion of overseas territories. This had been the case as the Roman Republic had collapsed through the conquests of Gaul, Iberia, and the Hellenic territories. From an opposition point of view, the virtue of Britain's rulers was corrupted with delusions of Roman grandeur; John Adams, in typically histrionic style, had criticized 'court sycophants' for their attempts at emulating imperial Rome.⁷ Overall, however, the invocation of Roman history was clear. Had Great Britain's emergence as the preeminent world power after 1763 marked, in Ferguson's analogy, the full 'measure of empire' and 'the finishing hand to the internal corruption of the state'?⁸

Britons, by the end of the American rebellion, could be forgiven for believing the empire had irrevocably changed. Put in the essentialist terms of eighteenth-century

⁶ Gould, *The Persistence of Empire*, pp. 72-105.

⁷ [Anon.], *Reflections on the American contest: in which the consequence of a forced submission, and the means of a lasting reconciliation are pointed out* (London, 1776), p. 26; John Adams, *History of the Dispute with America* (London, 1784), p. 32.

⁸ Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, pp. 426-7.

commentators, the loss of America had been the loss of the virtuous part of the empire. What had once been an empire of common bonds was now one defined by racialized difference and authoritarianism; the conquest of the Indian sub-continent was not a renewal of imperial virtue, but a civic and moral stain on the empire of liberty. The east could only expose virtuous subjects to oriental despotism and the goods returning from imperial expansion were little more than ‘trinkets and baubles we could well do without’.⁹ Contrary to such fears, the loss of America had actually made the empire stronger. It had removed any illusion that the empire was a voluntary partnership of common cause and identity; it was polyglot and inequitable.¹⁰ But strength remained a relative term for a people so immersed in the language of rights and liberties.

The crisis of empire and virtue spoke directly to the Highland soldier, long before 1783 made this new empire a reality. Adam Ferguson largely rejected the legalistic interpretation of the social contract and the evolutions of natural law, instead, following Montesquieu in privileging climatic and cultural factors which influenced the development of nations.¹¹ Ferguson’s *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* was the work of a thinker navigating a fine line between his own cultural origins and his affirmation of the benefits of civility. While Ferguson’s self-identification remains a

⁹ [Anon.], *An Account of the Constitution and Present State of Great Britain, together with a view of its trade, policy, and interest* (London, 1779), p. 236; for analysis of these theories of empire, see Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence*, p. 345.

¹⁰ P.J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, America, c.1750-1783* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), pp. 207-28.

¹¹ Lisa Hill, ‘Adam Ferguson and the Paradox of Progress and Decline’, *History of Political Thought*, 18 (1997): 677-706; Fania Oz-Salzberger, ‘Ferguson, Adam (1723–1816)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept. 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9315>, accessed 15 May 2010]; Charles Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws: Translated from the French of M. de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, by Mr. Nugent*, 2 vols. (London, 1758), I, 9.

subject of some debate, he was a Gaelic speaker.¹² He meticulously framed *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* as a sympathetic discussion of the place of the Gaelic Highlands within a sophisticated intellectual framework. Ferguson rejected the conjectural history of a Hobbesian state of nature and believed that history could only start with societies, that it was societies which created individuals and their narratives. In this way, all societies were legitimately historicized.¹³ In effect, Ferguson provided plurality within the stadial structure. Critically, Ferguson claimed there was no universal model for understanding the civility of a people, but that there were criteria for judging the virtue of a nation. This pointed to a more complex system of social narrative than the simple dichotomy of primitive and civilized, without necessarily resting on a rigid stadial progression. The energy of Highland society, the energy which Ferguson had seen in the 42nd Foot, could produce a citizen who was at once distinct and possessing of virtuous qualities. Furthermore, Ferguson's criticism of society was not directed at luxury *per se*, but instead at the loss of civic virtue arising from societies that had privileged luxury. The conspicuous consumption that typified Highland elites was acceptable, as long as they continued to join the military in large numbers.¹⁴ There was, in Ferguson's opinion, a place for human pathology in social vitality, a sign of innate zeal.¹⁵

This navigation of the Gaelic fringe in Ferguson's thoughts expressed itself most distinctly in his views on independence and freedom. Ferguson, Hume, and Smith all recognized the importance of individual independence; nevertheless, they feared a man

¹² Colin Kidd, 'Bastard Gaelic Man', *London Review of Books*, 18 (14 Nov. 1996), pp. 14-15.

¹³ Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume Two: Narratives of Civil Government*, p. 333.

¹⁴ Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, pp. 375-82.

¹⁵ Kidd, 'Bastard Gaelic Man', pp. 14-15.

might lose such independence by engrossing himself in one specific contribution to society to a point where he could only recognize himself in the capacity assigned to him by society. What made Ferguson different was that he asserted that an individual remained free as long as he remained virtuous, and he remained as such as long as he remained a possessor of himself. In such a way, Gaels, at least those selling their military labour, were virtuous, free, and capable of an essential contribution to commercial society.¹⁶

Ferguson was also the only member of the literati to have served with the regular army, a fact of great consequence to Highland identity. More than any other figure of the Scottish enlightenment, Ferguson believed in military service as the foundation of civic virtue, and as the founder of the Poker Club had campaigned passionately for the right to a Scottish militia.¹⁷ The troubling inability of the Scottish Lowlands to contend with the Jacobites, a concern which shaped the early debates of the Select Society, had emphasized a critical Gibbonian problem. While southern Scotland had become a polite and commercial society, its martial capacities, which had been so central to the national narrative in the early modern period, had been lost as a result. This implicitly made the Highlands a major repository, in both ethnic and civic terms, of the virtues expressed in earlier Buchananite Scottish historiography.¹⁸

Somewhat contradictorily, however, in asserting virtue as key to successful societies, Ferguson provided a narrative where the divide between military and

¹⁶ Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume Two: Narratives of Civil Government*, p. 346-7; Ferguson, *A Sermon Preached in the Ersh Language*, p. 7.

¹⁷ Adam Ferguson, *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (London, 1756), *passim*.

¹⁸ For the civic humanist intellectual tradition in Scotland, see Roger Mason 'Rex Stoicus: George Buchanan, James VI, and the Scottish Polity' in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, pp. 9-33.

commercial society was less artificial than other commentators were inclined to assert. While Gibbon had narrated decline and fall partly through the handing of martial responsibilities to the periphery, Ferguson believed that the nations of Europe would never again see the disparity that existed in Rome between the ‘pacific citizen’ and the soldier. Modern Europe was less inclined, he thought, to privatize their border defences to peripheral war bands. Ferguson believed that the modern citizen was easily taught the nature of war. It was probably this which reconciled his fear of standing armies with his advocacy of military virtue. The dangers of a standing army could be held in check, and were being held in check, by the overlap between the Highland gentry’s interest in commercial profitability and their independent choice to enter the army: ‘[T]he children of opulent families’, said Ferguson, could be ‘made to contend with the savage. By imitating his arts, they have learned, like him, to traverse the forest’.¹⁹ Thus, not only were military imperialism and commercialization indelibly linked, but Ferguson did not see Highland military service as a mark of the privatization of the state’s defence to peripheral savages. It was, instead, the very pinnacle of virtue in a modern, commercial society. In Samuel Johnson’s writings too, there was an element of this idealized dualistic society. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to say that there was an irrevocable incompatibility between modern society and ‘the most favourable parts of the earth’, where the people owing to ‘the qualities of the race ... in respect to ingenuity or courage, possess ... a distinguished superiority’.²⁰

¹⁹ Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, pp. 351-2.

²⁰ Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands*, p. 210; Adam Ferguson, *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*, 3 vols. (London, 1783), III, 370.

It seems unlikely that most commentators embraced Ferguson in the sophisticated terms he had intended. The Ferguson-like rejection of metropolitan luxury, however, was a critical element of regional identity. Alexander Macdonald, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, the most brilliant Gaelic lyricist of the eighteenth century, had asked, ‘need it surprise anyone’ that the genius of the Highlander might be found ‘among a people so remote from the commerce of nations famous for arts and sciences’.²¹ The most astounding expression of provincial superiority was penned by John Clark, a Gaelic author and translator, in the context of the mutiny of Highland regiments during the War of American Independence. Clark argued that Highland poverty made recompense, ‘by sending happiness to their breasts through avenues open only to themselves’. It forced them, he said, ‘to dig for those comforts within itself, which the inhabitants of the south enjoy from the produce of their fields’. Clark finished with the improbable, but extremely significant assertion that the Highlander looked down with pity on the grovelling wealth of his southern neighbours, as he alone, would never forfeit his virtues for any affluence.²² Four decades later, David Stewart of Garth would similarly argue that the Highlanders regarded the English-speaking Lowlanders as ‘a very inferior mongrel race of intruders, sons of little men, without heroism, without ancestry, or genius’, adding, ‘Whatever was mean or effeminate, whatever was dull, slow, mechanical, or torpid, was in the Highlands imputed to the Lowlanders.’ Clark, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, and Garth entirely lacked the intellectual sophistication of Adam Ferguson, but, as in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, they placed a

²¹ Alexander Macdonald, *Ais- eiridh na Seann Chanoin Albannaich* (Dun Eideann, 1751), p. vi.

²² Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, Esq. Secretary at War*, p. 23.

premium on virtue and independence as the foundation of the Highland soldier. ‘Can we expect high-spirited chivalrous soldiers’ from a population heavily exposed to commercial progress, Garth asked rhetorically.²³

Nevertheless, late eighteenth-century Highland commentaries did not mark a utopic admiration of savage virtue that could be segregated from mainstream Britain. John Clark was a zealous improver, serving as a land agent in Wales and steward to George Devereux, thirteenth Viscount Hereford. Clark’s studies of agriculture were intended to invigorate a nation-wide philosophy of improvement and were published through the Board of Agriculture.²⁴ Garth, too, was an improver and objected to its overly rapid implementation, rather than being against it as a philosophy *per se*. Even the most fervent romantics tended to privilege marks of civility. Of a social gathering in Inverness in 1774, Anne Grant of Laggan was pleased to report that, since many of the gentry had served in the army, they added ‘liberal notions and polished manners to the acute and spritely genius of the country’. She held similar opinions of the courtesy, civility, and intelligence of her neighbours in Laggan in 1781.²⁵ Military figures were, therefore, admirable for their imperial service, their manners, and their Highland traits. They were definably modern and British as well as being innately superior.

Provincial superiority was a regional invention which created virtuous sections of the British Empire. While the emulation of English practices were important to Scots,

²³ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 107, 131, 159.

²⁴ John Clark, *General View of the agriculture of the county of Brecknock, with observations on the means of its improvement* (London, 1794), p. 1.

²⁵ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 149; Anne Grant, *Letters from the Mountains, Being the Real Correspondence of a Lady Between the Years 1773 and 1807*, 2 vols. (London, 1807), II, 6-7, 80.

they largely invented themselves as provincials in antithesis to metropolitan corruption.²⁶ Given the evident metropolitan corruptibility, only the provinces would defend empire from itself, or so they thought. It was this reason that as early as 1773, Highland emigrants had been implored to carry over the ‘remains of the true old British spirit before it be ... extinguished’.²⁷ Campbell’s referencing of Britain was conscious and revealing. Regional confidence in the *Gàidhealtachd*, while it had always existed in one way or another, could only be formed in this period on the basis of external factors. Gaelic confidence was at once, therefore, Highland, British, and imperial, without being necessarily concentric. Highland identity, as a construction of cultural boundaries within a wider body-politic, rather than constructed of essentialist traits, was only possible because of an awareness of an external ‘other’. By the 1780s, the perceived danger posed by metropolitans was increasingly sinister: ‘the only risk this effeminate, selfish, and luxurious age runs, is totally to forget every duty which they owe to the Author of their existence, *and the interests of society*’.²⁸ Anne Grant, writing at the height of the imperial crisis, saw the American war as ‘divine justice ... taking signal vengeance on the iniquities of the times’: ‘The corruption of the parent state, which leads her to an inordinate enjoyment of those advantages, that she possesses in pre-eminence of all others, and her ungrateful neglect of the source of all those blessings.’²⁹ The intervention

²⁶ For the counter-argument that Scottish identity was marked by fervent Anglicization, see Kidd, *Subverting Scotland’s Past*, *passim*.

²⁷ [Americanus], *Informations Concerning the Province of North Carolina*, p. 32.

²⁸ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, p. 20.

²⁹ Grant, *Letters from the Mountains*, I, 182-3.

of divine justice on the moral failures of the age reflected closely Ferguson's conclusion about the Jacobite rebellion of 1745.³⁰

In these readings, fault lay with the metropolis. Highland writers did not simply challenge the assertion of metropolitan values upon the region. They helped structure the meaning of the metropolitan centre and its innate corruptibility. In a number of important works, chiefly those of Ned Landsman, scholars have convincingly demonstrated that positive provincial identities in Ireland, Scotland, provincial England, and America, were constructed in opposition to effete metropolitan weakness. While of less significance, Gaelic writers thus took their place alongside figures such as Edmund Burke and William Hogarth in constructing the luxury of the metropolitan centre, often, as a danger to the virtues of British society.³¹

The superiority felt by some Gaels is perhaps best exemplified by a stanza from 'Oran do'na Gael a bha sa cuir do America, san Bhliadhna 1778', a poem contemporary to the dispatch of the new Highland regiments to America after Saratoga. Its author, with barely disguised anger over Scottish inequality, announced:

Cha robh Saghsanaich glic
Ann am dùsgadh a mhiosta,
'N'air dhiult iad *Milisi* do Albain;
'N'air theannuich an eigean,
B'e fosgladh gack beul diu,
G'um b'fheumail fir threubhach nan
Garbh Chrìoch.³²

³⁰ Ferguson, *A Sermon Preached in the Ersh Language*, p. 3.

³¹ Landsman, 'The Provinces and the Empire: Scotland, The American Colonies and the Development of British Provincial Identity', pp. 258-87; *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke, vol. 6: India: The Launching of the Hastings Impeachment, 1786-1788*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: OUP, 1991), p. 419.

³² Alexander and Donald Stewart, *Cochruinneacha taoghta de shaothair nam bard Gaeleach*, p. 522.

[The English were not wise to start the mischief, When they refused Scotland a Militia; When their distress began, The first thing that came from every mouth, Was that the mighty men of the Highlands [lit. Rough Bounds] would be of great use.]

The alternative readings of Highland virtue were important to the Gael, but this is not to say that there were intractable changes in metropolitan perceptions of the Highlander. There may have been a ‘rebel to hero’ paradigm shift, but, for most commentators, the Highland soldier remained an unimproved soldier, who could be removed from the region without damage to agriculture or manufacturing. The stature of trade in valuating Britishness necessarily highlighted the otherness of the undeveloped Highlands.³³ The perceived ability of Britons to consume was seen to have taken them out of the savage realm and established them as a commercial nation at the apex of an enlightened hierarchy. By emphasizing the subsistence and virtuous existence of the Highlanders, authors rejected this most central element in British eighteenth-century identity. Fundamentally, however, this represented a largely external construction of negativity in the military character, a construction utterly rejected by most Highland commentators. The incompatibility of commercial modernization with traditional military prowess demonstrated in English intellectual circles was less obvious in the Highlands. Indeed, the various Highland clubs and societies that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century, societies which drew on military imagery and vociferously

³³ Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero*, *passim*; TNA, SP 54/47, ff. 79-82, John Walker to the Earl of Suffolk, 7 Feb. 1778; Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 215-32.

defended the imagined identity of the region, ultimately highlighted an elitist agenda of ‘improvement ... by the establishment of towns, villages, and harbours’.³⁴

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, these relatively sophisticated assertions of martial vitality gave way to an increasingly racialized and exaggerated reading of group identity, based on definable ethnic traits. In this, however, Highlanders were equally responsible for their own imagery. Upon meeting a young student in 1773, Anne Grant was appalled to find a fellow Highlander concerned only about breakfast when Highlanders ought, like herself, to detest ‘every mode of selfish luxury’. ‘He has nothing of the Highlander but his birth’ was her conceited opinion of the young man.³⁵

Alexander Macdonald made a remarkable comment on the 84th Foot after a winter in Canada in which several soldiers had died from exposure. Macdonald reported that the best men, those who had survived the winter, were ‘more highlanders’ than those who had perished. It was a common practice among Highland soldiers to comment on a distinct ‘Highland pride’ or discuss the traits associated with being a Highlander, further evidence of a distinct regionalism among Gaels.³⁶

The aforementioned clubs and societies which emerged in this period were instrumental in the assertion of a regionally-propagated ethnic identity. The first society was *The Highland Society of London*, formed in 1778. Emphasizing the link between the military and identity, Simon Fraser of Lovat was its first president and the ‘keeping up the Martial Spirit; and rewarding the gallant achievements of Highland Corps’ where

³⁴ The charter of *The Highland Society of Scotland and Edinburgh* (1787) quoted in John Prebble, *The King's Jaunt: George IV in Scotland, August 1822* (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1988), p. 108.

³⁵ Grant, *Letters from the Mountains*, I, 17-22, 172.

³⁶ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 309-11; LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to father, 25 Dec. 1776.

among the stated objectives of the organization. Other objectives included the restoration of Highland dress, the promotion of Gaelic, and, of course, the ‘promoting of Agricultural Improvements’. The military seems to have been vital to the work of the society. Among the eleven members admitted on 20 January 1779 were a general, three colonels, one major, two captains, and two lieutenants.³⁷ The society’s scheme in 1779 to produce a Gaelic dictionary involved Major John Small seeking to obtain Sir Henry Clinton’s permission to have James Maclagan sent home from service with the 42nd Foot in America, a request which was granted.³⁸ The London model was soon followed by the *Highland Society of Edinburgh*, formed in 1784. All 189 founding members were Highland proprietors, including David Stewart of Garth. Its first president was the former Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, John Campbell, fifth Duke of Argyll. *The Celtic Society of Edinburgh* closely mirrored the Highland society of that city and had been the brainchild of William Mackenzie of Gruinard, a former officer in the 72nd Foot. Its stated objective was the limited goal of the promotion of Highland dress.

There is, therefore, the powerful suggestion that Highland identity emerged from the manipulation of military service as a brand from within the Highland region. There were celebrations of martial vitality, tartan, bagpipes, and weaponry in Gaelic song long before it was acceptable to Lowland audiences.³⁹ This Highlandism was a reworking of tradition for contemporary results, but it was not the unscrupulous co-option of a subjected region to suit a national interest, the bedrock of analysis of Scottish identity in the early nineteenth century. It was, at least initially, a regional formulation of group

³⁷ Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), pp. 6-7, 38.

³⁸ DCA, GD/We/5/13, Donald McNicol to James MacLagan, 3 Mar. 1779.

³⁹ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, p. 10.

identity. The Highland martial imagery propagated by the Highland gentry, many of whom were former officers, drove the agenda of what was important to the Scottish narrative and the overlap between early Highland concepts of manners and the attributes ascribed by external commentators reveals significant similarities.⁴⁰ Exact parallels were never entirely possible, however, and a common complaint from Highland commentators was the ignorance of external commentators. Writers such as Tobias Smollett, who are seen as key to the Lowland ‘invention’ of the Highlands, were critically attacked for their ‘allowable ignorance’ on the manners of the common Highlander, a criticism that was extended to ministerial officials and the government.⁴¹

By the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the processes which had begun with Adam Ferguson’s invocation of martial identity were nearing the form they would keep for much of the next two hundred years. The name of Sir Walter Scott and, in particular, his role in the 1822 visit of George IV to Edinburgh is synonymous with the creation of Highlandism. Scottish historians have long poured scorn on Scott’s romanticized misrepresentation of Highland culture.⁴² What they ignore, in a legitimate attempt to expose the myths of Scottish historiography, is the role of Gaels within this process. It is known, for example, that Walter Scott was deeply affected by the visit he paid to Ranald Macdonald of Staffa in 1810, where Scott was welcomed by armed retainers, bagpipes,

⁴⁰ Compare, for example, DCA, GD/We/6/4, ‘A Tour through the Ebridee’ [1774] with Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, pp. 66-75.

⁴¹ Grant, *Letters from the Mountains*, II, 53-4; Macdonald, *Ais-eiridh na Seann Chanoin Albannaich*, pp. 7-8.

⁴² Michal Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1993), pp. 354-5; T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters’ War: The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 8-9.

and musketry, four years before the publication of *Waverley*.⁴³ Scott's principal assistant in the forging of the nation in 1822 was David Stewart of Garth, recently established as a leading authority on the Highlands through the publication of his *Sketches*. Historians have been rightly keen to dismiss Garth as a romantic, an ethnic chauvinist of the highest order. But Garth was a Gaelic-speaker and was, to a far greater degree than Scott, responsible for the vulgar imagery of the Highland soldier that has survived to the present day. His role in the 1822 visit, in which he organized the great Gathering of the Clans, was that of a Highlander, as well as a Scot(t). Another figure of significance to the 1822 visit was Alexander Ranaldson Macdonnell of Glengarry. Glengarry thought of himself as a chieftain of old and kept up the pretence while all the time clearing his ancestral lands of people for sheep walks. He had served as a captain in the Strathspey Regiment of Fencible Highlanders and operated his company as if he was its chief, rather than acting as the administrative officer of a functional military unit. Upset at the supposedly faux Highlandism he had seen in the members of various Highland societies, he established *The Society of True Highlanders* in 1815 and was deeply offended when it was refused precedence in 1822.⁴⁴

There were, of course, deep divisions within the Highlands over these propagated identities. Major Donald Macgregor of Learnan had spent much of his adult life in the Highland regiments during the Napoleonic wars and excused himself from parading alongside the 'Spurious Highlanders', who did not accord 'with my view of the dignity

⁴³ Prebble, *The King's Jaunt*, p. 10.

⁴⁴ Sunter, 'The King's Men or Glengarry's?', pp. 71-87. For a biography of Glengarry, see Brian D. Osborne, *The Last of the Chiefs: Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonnell of Glengarry, 1773-1828* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 2001).

due to the clans'. Sir John Macgregor Murray, a member of *The Highland Society of Edinburgh*, *The Celtic Society of Edinburgh*, and *The Society of True Highlanders*, quizzed Glengarry over how genuine his society could be when it had never granted any funds for the promotion of Gaelic. Indeed, astute men such as Macgregor Murray had no illusions as to the role of the societies as little more than a gathering of elites, in which effective estate management, if necessary at the expense of the common people, were the primary objectives.⁴⁵ Formulated by regional elites, Highland identity reflected elite agendas, allowing extravagant romanticism as grotesque as anything seen south of the Highland line.

This does not mean that all expressions of Highland identity were elite constructions in which the poor were excluded. The rank-and-file Highland soldier had a seminal impact in this process. In the decades following the treaty of Paris in 1783, attempts by Highlander veterans to impose their own impression of themselves onto a wider Anglo-British mindset proceeded apace. On a visit to Québec shortly before his death from rabies contracted from a fox bite in 1819, Charles Lennox, fourth Duke of Richmond, asked the aging veteran of the 1759 siege, James Thompson, what manner of corps the 78th Foot had been. Thompson's reply was that, while an honourable corps, they had been too impetuous and that they had hated drill for the reason that all knew from birth how to load and fire a musket. Contemporary evidence from Simon Fraser reveals Thompson's claims to be utterly false, but, whether by engaging a pre-existing stereotype of the Highlander or creating it from scratch, Thompson was playing his own part as a veteran in the articulation of the image. The accounts of men who served in the

⁴⁵ Prebble, *The King's Jaunt*, pp. 120, 133.

Highland regiments during the Napoleonic Wars, including the Gaelic texts of Corporal Alexander Mackinnon of the 92nd Foot, contained similar flourishes as the myths gained in popularity.⁴⁶ Cultural imperialism was a two-way process.

II GAELIC AND EMPIRE

Language was a vital determinant of civility in the period and a critical factor in the justification of cultural imperialism. Imperial conquerors defined their own superiority through their language, deciding on the negative appellations with which to describe minorities. The Gaelic language, it had long been thought by the 1740s, was a predominant mark of Highland savagery and, thus, a pillar of Jacobitism. The post-Culloden engineering of the Highlands saw explicit attempts to extirpate the Gaelic language as part of a wider imperial policy in the region. As with virtue and military potency, however, Gaelic underwent a perceptible revival in the Highlands as a result of military service. Despite the widespread acceptance that Gaelic endured an inextricable decline in the face of English cultural colonialism, the language itself was not excluded from the processes of regional identity-making.

Gaelic confidence, expressed through the language, was underpinned by imperial military service. While there was no context in which Gaelic was used in an official

⁴⁶ BAnQ, P254, James Thompson Fonds, Box 6, 'Memoir of James Thompson'; George Billanie, *Narrative of a Private Soldier in the 92nd Regiment of Foot* (Glasgow, 1819); 'Blàr na h-Òlaind' in *An Lasair Anthology of Eighteenth Century Scottish Gaelic Verse*, ed. Ronald Black (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), pp. 354-61; 'Òran air don Bhàrd a dol air Tìr san Èiphit' in *Caran an t-Saoghail / The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse*, ed. Donald Meek (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), pp. 298-303; Ruairidh Maciver, 'A' Moladh na Rèiseamaid: Gaelic poetry and the British Army, 1793–1815', *The Drouth*, 31 (2009): 61-7.

way, unlike in SSPCK schools, there was no institutionalized ban on the use of Gaelic. Barrington's orders, that Gaelic-speakers from other regiments such as the Guards, were to form the NCO cadre of the new regiments in 1757, demonstrates an element of practicality in ministerial circles. All instructions were given in English, but we can only surmise how bilingual Gaelic-speakers taught recruits, who had no English whatsoever. Some sources suggest that after two or three years in the army, some soldiers still had no knowledge of English. There were even calls for the use of Gaelic in certain contexts as a means of improving the experience of military service for young Gaels.⁴⁷ The official language of the regiments was unquestionably English, but Gaelic remained the primary language of the Highland soldier into the nineteenth century. Captain John Macdonald of the 84th Foot used Gaelic in a letter to refute the claims of a fellow officer, Ranald Mackinnon, about the fighting talents of his company, drawing on an older oral tradition of hunting nimble stags:

Vogan a Voggan
whreggan o Whreggan
tobhar fihr Niske a Maddan
gach creigge-forma vreig
i vachagh ehd foho gonna Suillen
forma whruoye
i rachagh ehd foho gonna Glunien.⁴⁸

[From bog to bog from rock to rock well of pure water in the morning from rock to rock they'd go down to their eyes from the bank they'd go down to their knees.]

⁴⁷ TNA, WO 4/53, f.102, Barrington to the Foot Guards, 25 Jan. 1757; LAC, MG23, GIII23/4, Orders at Isle aux Noix for the Regiment of under John Nairne, [1777-78], pp. 9-10; Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, pp. 396-400; my sincere thanks go to Andy Macdonald of Ard Sgoil Cinn a' Ghiuthsaich for his assistance with this passage.

More important than its use within the regiments was the utility of Gaelic in a wider setting. The use of Gaelic in the regiments marked the loosening of cultural strictures on the Highlands in the interests of providing the army with recruits. The notion that tartan and other instruments of warfare were a direct encouragement for young men to enlist should be heavily censured. The language of the Gael, however, also engaged with a similarly broad pattern of the careful articulation of Highland culture, by Highland elites, for imperial or personal ends. Lord John Murray, for example, initially wanted to recruit only those who spoke ‘Erse’, a stipulation he was forced to drop the following year. Of greater significance, Murray wanted the songs of his chaplain, James Maclagan, to be published, along with an English translation, ‘that their actions may be recorded to the latest posterity’, an ambiguous phrase in which the assisting of recruiting was probably not far from Murray’s thoughts.⁴⁹ The potential for Gaelic writing to instil martial ideals into the young men who were to go to America, as representatives of the region, should be considered as an underlying rationale in their creation. Indeed, figures such as Maclagan feared the disgrace of their culture if the recruits failed to emulate an impossibly high pseudo-historic benchmark as warriors. Just as there remained a metropolitan assumption that Gaelic and savagery were interconnected, many Gaels assumed that martial vitality was predicated on Gaelic culture. If Gaelic participation in the British army offered the Highlands a central role in the triumphalist discourses of colonial expansion and triumph, Gaelic was inevitably centered, both as a beneficiary of Gaelic victories, but also as their underlying cause.

⁴⁹ JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 11, Orders for raising additional companies, 15 Jul. 1757; JRL, BAG/5/1, f. 34, Lord John Murray to Maclagan, 5 Nov. 1767; Maclagan’s poem was published in 1786 in Gilles, *Sean Dain*, pp. 113-17.

Gaelic was defended on the basis that it underpinned the ‘honour and heroism’ for which the Gael was renowned. Gaelic songs inculcated these values more effectively than the English language, which was not only considered effete, but was thought to lack an appreciable military emphasis in its popular culture. Gaelic songs were the resistor of external intrusions, which: ‘extend their baneful operation to the remote highlands, decorating the outside, and undermining the internal heroic fabric of the mind ... [that] mind, or interior, ha[s] a cast of high elevation’.⁵⁰

‘Civilisation, it is true’, John Clark argued ‘[had] made great progress; but, in the course of its operations, it destroyed the virtues along with the rudeness of the human mind’.⁵¹ Conversely, praise poetry and its panegyric code, the formulaic base for poetic structure in the period, instilled a set of values that were matched to the martial emphasis of the Highland regiments. Among the factors which underpinned a martial reading of praise poetry in the code was the social contract between patron and soldier, the role of tradition in what was *còir* (proper) and *ceart* (just or right), the right to renown through service, the divine right of Gaelic triumph, and a vicious, and often explicit denunciation of enemies.⁵² The loss of Gaelic meant the loss of martial virtue.⁵³

Gaelic, therefore, was a critical component of the imperial specialization of the region, helping set the intellectual conditions for the employment of Highland

⁵⁰ Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, I, 23; Robert Jackson, *A Systematic View of the Formation, Discipline, and Economy of Armies* (London, 1804), p. 112.

⁵¹ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, p. 27.

⁵² William Gillies, ‘Gaelic Songs of the Forty-Five’, *Scottish Studies*, 30 (1991): 21; John Macinnes, ‘The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background’, *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, 50 (1978): 435-98; Newton, ‘Jacobite Past, Loyalist Present’, *eKeltoi*, 5 (2003): 35; Damhnait Ní Suaird, ‘Jacobite Rhetoric and Terminology in the Political Poems of the Fernaig MS (1688-1693)’, *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, 19 (1999): 93-140.

⁵³ Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London*, pp. 1-2, 15.

manpower. It was, at the very least, a medium through which ministerial designs could be articulated. Whether Gaelic songs had an instrumental role in the motivation for enlistment is open to debate. It was, however, considered an intrinsic part of the region in ways that were inconsistent with a policy of total eradication. The project by the SSPCK to publish a Gaelic version of the New Testament reveals the far from simplistic place of Gaelic in the management of empire. The SSPCK, originally established in 1709 with the aim of eradicating the language, was an imperial agency, designed to safeguard the imperium from the perceived symbiosis of Catholicism and Jacobitism. These twin threats underscore the claim that cultural and racial variations in the period were forged, in large part, on religious difference.⁵⁴ During the Seven Years' War, however, a change occurred, partly brought about by the service of the regiments, which re-formulated the means, but not the ends, of SSPCK policy. If imperial security was best formed on the basis of religious preference, could minority languages not, paradoxically, provide a means of British cohesion? The swearing of Protestant oaths by Highland soldiers had revealed that the region might be usefully employed without the eradication of the Gaelic tongue. Gaelic was the language overwhelmingly used by Presbyterian ministers in the region, a pre-existent pattern which linked language and religion. Indeed, so common was this practice that the Gaelic New Testament was rarely used because of the preferred method of extemporary translation of the Bible from English that had occurred prior to 1767.⁵⁵ The SSPCK remained an imperial agency, still tied to the mantra that strengthening religious knowledge would strengthen the

⁵⁴ Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600-2000* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), *passim*.

⁵⁵ Hugh Cheape, 'Gaelic Genesis', *Scottish Book Collector*, 7 (2004): 19.

empire, only, after the 1760s, it accepted that religious knowledge was best articulated in the native language. Ultimately, evangelicalism probably undermined the commitment of the region to soldiering, a fascinating link with the Gibbonian narrative. The issue in 1767, however, was not the possible outcome of evangelical Protestantism in the region, but the immediate imperial imperative.⁵⁶ In this, the SSPCK was supported by such Gaels, who received stipends for preaching the language, as Robert Macpherson, former chaplain of the 78th Foot. The Gaelic Bible marked, perhaps, one of the most significant articulations of Britain's pre-1783 empire of liberty: an empire theoretically based on shared values in which ethnic variation was seconded to vitality, at least among 'acceptable' ethnicities.

If Gaelic underpinned the functionality of military service, it extended its influence into the popular culture of the region as a whole. What the Gaelic writings of the 1760s-1790s attempted to create was a new heroic age in the history of the *Gàidhealtachd*. Gaelic recruiting proclamations read like Homeric lists of great deeds, naming every battle the 42nd Foot had engaged in since Fontenoy. Engagements such as the raid on Fort l'Orient in September 1746 and the siege of Hulst in April and May 1747, European actions in which the 42nd Foot participated, were probably better known in the late eighteenth-century Highlands than they are today. At Fort l'Orient and Hulst, as at Fontenoy, British defeat did not preclude the celebration of Gaelic martial virtue in the Highlands or its utility as a recruiting tool.⁵⁷ John Gillies, who published a collection of songs in 1786, reproduced an extract written on the occasion of the Highland

⁵⁶ For the impact of evangelical Protestantism, see Mackillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*, pp. 207-15.

⁵⁷ GUL, Gen MS 1042/135(a), ff.1-2, Recruiting proclamation, [1775].

regiments departing for North America in 1756. To the departing soldiers, it advised them:

Leomh' naidh gharg; a fhuil Albnach,
Lean re'r 'n airm 's re'r 'n eideadh;
Faghaibh taragaid eatrom bhall-bhuidh,
Ghabhas dearg-thuadh Chaoilt-Mhach;
'S cuilbheir earr-bhuidh 'n laimh gach sealgair
Seoid air marbhadh chaoil-daimh;
O's mighich d' Albannaich dol a shealg,
Air Francaich chealgach 's Coilt mhich.⁵⁸

[Fierce lions of Scottish descent, Be loyal to your arms and uniform, Get light brightly decorated shields, That will take the blows of tomahawks, A bright-ended musket in every hunter's hand, Gallant youths killing slim stags, Oh it is time for Scots to go hunting, After treacherous Frenchmen and Forest-folk.]

Other songs written in the aftermath of the Seven Years' War were equally unrepentant in their praise for the Highland soldier. It was important, in order to justify the celebratory tone of Gaelic poetic culture, that the Gael had a central role in imperial victories. A song written by a soldier of the 78th Foot in the aftermath of the battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759 was positively ebullient in the defeat of the French:

Bha na Frangaich cho dàna,
An cridhe cruaidh mar an stàillin,
Nuair a dh'aithnich a' ghràisg'
Nach robh sinn làidir gu gnìomh.
Ach fuirich ort fhathast!
Tha latha Chuibic ri labhairt.
Fhuair na Frangaich an sgàthadh
A bhios grathann 'nan cuimhne.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Gillies, *Sean Dain*, pp. 113-14.

⁵⁹ Newton, *We're Indians Sure Enough*, p. 135.

[The French were imprudent, Their hard hearts like steel, When that rabble realized, That we had not the strength to fight. But wait a moment! The battle of Quebec is yet to be told. The French were destroyed, That will stay in their memories.]

The triumph of a ‘Gaelic’ victory at Québec began what became a wider celebration of the uniformed Gael across the British Empire. Writers such as Kenneth Mackenzie continued to reference military service in North America as late as the 1790s. In *Oran don Fhreiceadan Dubh* or *Song for the Black Watch*, Mackenzie noted that, ‘In North America, Frequently were they heroic.’ He continued:

Bha na *Gaidheil* duineil riamh
'S tha iad fiallaidh, ro thapaidh,
'S 'nuair a theannadh iad ri stri,
'S iad nach dìobradh a bhratach.⁶⁰

[The Gael was ever manly They were generous and very bold, When they got into the fight, It is they who would not forsake the banner.]

This was imagery that was repeated throughout Mackenzie’s creative writing. Mackenzie honoured the 42nd Foot for its role in the doomed assault on Fort Carillon in 1758, where he turned the reality of an abject defeat into an astonishing victory:

Cho fad sa mhaireas Breatanach,
Bi' dh cliu orr ann a 'n èachraidheachd,
O linn gu linn le taitneachas,
A' cuir 'an geill a 'n tapachais,
A 'n *Tiganderoga* b' acuinneach;
A gearradh chinn o chraitichean,
'S cuir *Fraingich* as a'm batraidhean.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, p. 35.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[As long as a Briton lives, They will be renowned in history, With enjoyment from generation to generation, elucidating their heroism, They were expert at Ticonderoga; Cutting heads from shoulders, Putting Frenchmen out of their batteries.]

A central salient factor which emerged from these poetic contributions was pride in the Gaelic language. This could also be fastened to notions of virtue and freedom that accompanied the wearing of military uniform and the carrying of military standards:

'S tha 'n èididh fèin mar bhata dhoibh,
'S tha 'n saorsainn mar sgiath àchlais,
'S thug nàduir dànachd fharsuing doibh,
'S tha Ghàilic mar bu chleachda dhi,
Cuir feartan ann nam feoil.⁶²

[It is their uniform which is their staff, It is freedom the shield upon their arm, Nature gave great expression to them, Gaelic was accustomed to it, It put virtue in their flesh.]

This new historic age was vital for the expression of Gaelic confidence which was expressed far beyond the limits of military service. First, the attacks on the region promoted a collective strength which increasingly questioned what was being done to the language. What had happened, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair (Alexander Macdonald) asked when 'in an age so happily distinguished from all others for freedom of thought, love of knowledge, and moderation, this people and this language should be alone persecuted and intolated [*sic*] [?]'⁶³ This feeling of persecution, rather than provoking sad lamentations of their ascribed marginality, provoked aggressive displays

⁶² Ibid., p. 14.

⁶³ Macdonald, *Ais-eiridh na Seann Chanoin Albannaich*, p. viii.

of cultural security. Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's pamphlet *Ais-eiridh na Seann Chaoin Albannaich* [*The Resurrection of the Old Scottish Tongue*] (Edinburgh, 1751), in addition to being the first book of secular poetry published in Gaelic, was also a clarion call to Gaels to express themselves more vigorously. It was certainly effective and many writers expressed a venomous hatred at the government's attitudes toward the region: 'you, and all the great officers of state, are totally unacquainted with the language, genius, and disposition, of one half of the kingdom of Scotland, to whom you issue your orders'.⁶⁴

What was most evident, however, was an intense internal debate among writers in the *Gàidhealtachd* over the future of the language. Samuel Johnson had been able to ascribe savagery to the Gael owing to the oral nature of Gaelic culture. Without a strong tradition of vernacular writing, Johnson could not be convinced of the Gael having reverence for the past, having no written history, and, therefore, no history of which to speak.⁶⁵ This was, of course, refuted by Gaelic scholars, but many Gaels shared Johnson's interpretive framework, at least in part. Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's *Ais-eiridh na Seann Chaoin Albannaich*, published more than twenty years before Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands*, marked the beginnings of an internal debate which came to the same conclusion; the lack of printed Gaelic books made the language inferior in many respects and in danger of becoming extinct. James Maclagan, for

⁶⁴ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, p. 4.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

example, doubted that four men in Scotland would spell one page of Gaelic in the same way.⁶⁶

These debates ensured that far from being the language of the church and God, a claim made by Dugald Buchanan, Gaelic could be used as a vibrant assertion of identity with immense political utility.⁶⁷ Notable in this regard was the self-conscious linking of the language with ancient history, providing a powerful historic link with the present. William Shaw, who had attended the University of Glasgow, asserted that Gaelic ‘exists, at this day, one of the greatest living monuments of antiquity’ and that an adequate appreciation of history was vital to understanding the Gael. Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair’s claim that from the Gaelic bosom – by which he probably meant the Celtic bosom more generally - had issued ‘the conquerors of Rome, the planters of Gaul, Britain, Ireland’ was similarly suggestive.⁶⁸ Print culture, just as it was central the political culture of Georgian Britain, was of immense consequence to the place of the Gael. Gaelic scholars thought, just as Johnson did, that the importance of the Gael in Britain could only be asserted by the adherence of the language to the literary principles of a wider political nation.

The result was the exponential expansion of printed Gaelic material after the mid-century. Books published in Gaelic prior to this date had been confined largely to religious texts. In 1741, the first book of vocabulary, *Leabhar a Theagasc Ainminnin*, written by Macdonald, was published in Edinburgh, followed by his book of songs in

⁶⁶ William Shaw, *An Analysis of the Galic Language* (Edinburgh, 1778), p. xi; DCA, GD/We/5/12, James Maclagan to Hugh McDermad, 20 Sept. 1778.

⁶⁷ Buchanan was the senior figure behind the production of the Gaelic New Testament in 1767; for Buchanan’s claim, see Szasz, *Scottish Highlanders and Native Americans*, p. 181.

⁶⁸ Shaw, *An Analysis of the Gaelic Language*, p. vi; Macdonald, *Ais-eiridh na Seann Chanoin Albannaich*, pp. 6-7.

1751. The Rev. William Shaw provided the first book of grammar, *Analysis of the Gaelic Language* in 1778, and a poorly executed two volume dictionary in 1780.⁶⁹ In addition, large numbers of books containing oral traditions were published, inspired by the fear that there was a perceptible declension in Gaelic oral culture as English became the language of commerce and non-familiar interactions. Rev. John Stuart of Luss wrote down the songs composed and recited from memory by Donnchadh Bàn, which were published as *Orain Ghaidhealach* in 1768. The ‘Eigg Collection’, *Comh-Chruinneachidh Orannaigh Gaidhealach*, was published in Edinburgh the same year as Edward Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, being based on the songs and stories collected on Eigg by Macdonald, and published by his son Ranald. The text John Gillies published in 1786, *Sean Dain, agus orain Ghaidhealach; air an tabhairt o dhaoin uaisle, araid an Gaeltachd Alba* or *A Collection of Ancient and Modern Gaelic Poems* (Perth, 1786), contained James Maclagan’s tribute to the 42nd Foot. It was extremely popular, as was Kenneth Mackenzie’s *Orain Ghaidhealach* (Edinburgh, 1792), which had a print run of over 1,000, of which at least seventeen survive.⁷⁰ There were also translations of English works, notably Thomas Broughton’s *Christian Soldier*, published as *An Saighdear criosduidh no na Dleasnais iomchuidh chaum beatha dhiadhaidh chaithe air an sparradh air an armailt o eisempler chorncluis* by Iain Moir in 1797. In all, at least 200

⁶⁹ For the personal relationship between Shaw and Johnson, see William Shaw, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the late Dr Samuel Johnson, containing many valuable original letters, and several interesting anecdotes* (London, 1785), *passim*; Shaw, *An Analysis of the Gaelic Language*, p. xvii; T. Costey, ‘Johnson’s last word on Ossian: Ghost-writing for William Shaw’, *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment*, ed. Jennifer J. Carter and Joan H. Pittock (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), pp. 375–431.

⁷⁰ *An Lasair*, ed. Black, p. 509; Mackenzie is reputed, for reasons unknown, to have destroyed many copies of the book himself, see Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica or Books Printed in the Gaelic of Scotland from the Year 1567 to the Year 1914* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1915), p. 251.

Gaelic texts were published in the eighteenth century, the vast majority after 1750.⁷¹

Most had strong martial overtones, or even directly referenced the Highland regiments.

It raises the possibility that the Gaelic material of the period pre-empted the English language's ahistoric construction of the Highlands as an overwhelmingly martial society, based on disproportionate military service long after clanship had ceased to be.

The effects of Gaelic confidence and the desire of powerful landed elites to promote Gaelic were felt as the War of American Independence drew to a close.

Donnachadh Bàn's poem, *Moladh do'n Ghaidhlig 's do'n Phiob Mhoir, 's a' bhliadhna 1781*, concerning the *Highland Society of London*, suggests that while such societies were elite creations, they were being interpreted as huge strides forward in the history of the language: 'Tha Lunnainn lan a nis, Ag ardachadh na Gaidhlig, A h-uile la mar thig [London just now hums, The Gaelic is elevated high, As every new days comes].'⁷² It is worth noting that the *Highland Society of London* was also referred to as the 'Gaelic Society of London'.⁷³ In 1789, the Highland Society of Scotland acquired £3,000 from the surplus budget of the forfeited estates for its work after the money was appropriated through an act of parliament (29 *Geo. III*, c. 28). It was further evidence of the triumph of self-styled Highlanders in the trusted take-over of the administration of the Highlands

⁷¹ *Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue: A List of Books Printed in Scottish Gaelic from 1567 to 1973*, ed. Mary Ferguson and Ann Matheson (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, 1984).

⁷² *Orain Ghaidhleach le Donnchadh Macantsaoir*, pp. 312-19; Wilson Macleod argues that poetry which celebrated Gaelic being heard outside the Highlands became an increasingly important part of Gaelic language politics in the period and beyond, see Wilson Macleod, 'Language Politics and Ethnolinguistic Consciousness in Scottish Gaelic Poetry', *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, 21 (2003): 91-146.

⁷³ DCA, GD/We/5/13, Donald McNicol to James MacLagan, 3 Mar. 1779.

and out of the hands of strictly governmental agencies.⁷⁴ Another change in this regard was the Disannexing Act (24 *Geo. III*, c. 57) which returned the forfeited estates to their owners' families in 1784.

It might be questioned whether the use of Gaelic in this way differed much from the Gaelic elite's articulation of other forms of regional identity. It was not until the early nineteenth century, for example, that vernacular Gaelic writing from the lower orders became the repository of political protest. Nevertheless, Gaelic was genuinely a source of pride across the region. An eighteen-year old French aristocrat, Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld, travelling through the Highlands in 1786, recognized how proud the Highlanders were of their language.⁷⁵ Many of the language's advocates had not experienced defeat as Jacobites, but were, like many of the individuals connected with the regiments, firm Hanoverians. In 1780, John Clark, in expressing his outrage at the attacks on the language, fell upon something that subsequent historians should acknowledge: 'The favourite plan for annihilating the Galic [*sic*], and crushing the martial spirit ... has not proved more destructive and oppressive ... than it must certainly appear astonishing to posterity'.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ [Anon.], *An Act for appropriating the sum of three thousand pounds, out of the unexhausted balance or surplus arising from the forfeited estates in North Britain, to be applied by the Highland Society of Scotland at Edinburgh to public uses in that part of the kingdom* (London, 1789).

⁷⁵ *To the Highlands in 1786: The Inquisitive Journey of a Young French Aristocrat*, ed. Norman Scarfe (Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2001), p. 175.

⁷⁶ Clark, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson, esq, Secretary At War*, p. 6.

III EMBRACING IMPERIAL TAXONOMY

The most explicit demonstration of confidence, however, emerged not from distinctly Gaelic conceptions of the imperial world, but from the regional adoption of pan-British principles. This did not detract from a Highland identity, but marked the apex (or nadir) of Highland identification with the British Empire.

Gaels began to align themselves alongside their fellow Britons, a process only possible through a Highland role in one of the most vital institutions of the state. The large numbers of Scots in its ranks, and the uniqueness of the pageantry and language that accompanied Highland regiments, gave the army a pan-British culture. From Long Island in September 1778, the Gaelic chaplain James Maclagan described the troubles the ‘British army ... march[ing] about 8 miles in the greatest feat ever known here, their rear ... attacked by the rebels’. Alexander Macdonald similarly contrasted ‘all officers and men in the British army’ with the ‘rebels’ they were fighting, not always drawing explicit distinctions between Gaels and non-Gaels in uniform.⁷⁷

While we should not be uncritical of linear patterns of patriotic cohesion through warfare, it is clear that Highland elites experienced a distain for France which reflected the feelings generated by international rivalry. ‘Britain will have nothing to fear from the Spaniard for some time’, thought a relation of James Grant of Ballindalloch after he heard of the defeat of a Spanish force under General Alejandro O’Reilly at Algiers in 1775.⁷⁸ Such confidence mirrored emotions at the beginning of the Seven Years’ War. In 1756, a Highland officer told a relative he hoped for ‘a damned drubbing to the

⁷⁷ DCA, GD/We/5, f. 12, James Maclagan to Hugh McDearmad, 20 Sept. 1778; Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, p. 214.

⁷⁸ LoC, M 2267, reel 35, Robert Grant to James Grant, 19 Aug. 1775.

French' in the coming campaign. Anti-French sentiments were also seen in the material culture of the Highlands. Lady Macintosh possessed an egg upon which a wit had painted 'Beware of the French 1756'.⁷⁹ Old veterans of the 42nd did sometimes speak of the battle of Fontenoy, comparing it with battles such as Carillon in 1758, suggesting there was at least a partial intellectual link between fighting against the French in Flanders in 1745 and against them in North America in 1758.⁸⁰ There was, in addition, a perceptible anger that French and Spanish entry into the War of Independence had helped the colonists in their war against 'Breatann an àigh [glorious Britain]':

Mur deantadh le cairdeas ri Frangaich 'nan cas
 'S ri Spainntich dhubh lachdainn,
 bu ghrad bhiodh as sas
 Is Duidsich is Olandaich 'dheimhneachadh graidh;
 B' fhad' on chaidh corcach air sgornan na graisg.⁸¹

[Had they not created an alliance with the French in their distress
 And with the dark, swarthy Spanish,
 They would have been in trouble right away
 And the Dutch and Hollanders assuring sympathy
 It is a good while since the hemp rope went around the throats of that rabble.]

It was difficult for Gaels to avoid feelings of superiority when so many perceived national traits, outside constitutional and libertarian models, were based on the martial traits of its soldiery. During his invasion of St Lucia in late 1778, James Grant reported that the French counter-attacks had been made 'with the impetuosity of Frenchmen', but were turned back 'by the determined bravery' of the British soldier. A former surgeon of

⁷⁹ NAS, GD248/49/1, f. 9, Archibald Grant to Ludovic Grant, 5 Sept. 1756; NAS, GD248/49/1/30, James Grieve to Ludovic Grant, Mar. 1756.

⁸⁰ *The Scots Magazine*, no. 20 (1758), pp. 698-9; [Thompson], *Memoirs of the Life and Gallant Exploits of the Old Highlander Sergeant Donald MacLeod*, pp. 63-4.

⁸¹ Newton, *We're Indians Sure Enough*, pp. 156-9.

the 71st Foot would write an entire treatise on how to conduct armies based almost entirely on perceived national traits.⁸² Perhaps most revealingly, there was a common perception, fully shared by Highland officers, that only the continuing interference of French agents could account for the resistance made by the Cherokee to the punitive expeditions of the British army in the 1760s.⁸³

The ranking of national traits through military performance was never more obvious than in Highland / British reactions to the American colonists. The disdain directed at American rebels, like the provincials of the Seven Years' War, bordered on the ridiculous. Loyalist Alexander Campbell described what he had seen at Bunker Hill in 1775, along with a description of the 'Barbarous cruel set' that inhabited New England': 'they are a Cowardly set that will not fight but when fenced by trees, houses or Trenches'. Campbell's namesake who remained in Scotland went as far as to cheer the death of Dr. Joseph Warren. He reported to a relative that 'one of our officers seeing the little son of a b__h running off from behind the trenches' shot him 'like a wood-cock', before adding that he hoped the same fate awaited John Hancock, Sam Adams, and Israel Putnam.⁸⁴ It was later recorded by an American observer that a captured rebel officer was insulted and laughed at by Scottish female camp followers after the capture of Fort Washington.⁸⁵ The supposed cowardly actions of rebel soldiers, while consistently

⁸² LoC, M 2267, reel 29, James Grant to George Germain, 31 Dec. 1778; Jackson, *A Systematic View of the Formation, Discipline, and Economy of Armies*, *passim*.

⁸³ LoC, M 2267, reel 29, James Grant to Colonel Byrd, 11 Jul. 1761; *Broadswords and Bayonets: The Journals of an Expedition under the Command of Captain Thomas Stirling*, ed. Robert R. Carroon (Springfield: Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Illinois, 1984), p. 17.

⁸⁴ NAS, GD170/1063/1, f. 25, Alexander Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 25 Jun. 1775; NAS, GD170/1065, f. 1, Alexander Campbell to Duncan Campbell, 2 Aug. 1775.

⁸⁵ Garden, *Anecdotes of the Revolutionary War*, p. 357.

disproved over the course of the war, were often repeated into the 1780s.⁸⁶ There was an association of the army with salient national distinctions. Lamentable perceptions of the American Loyalists despite their allegiances, was something Charles Cornwallis had to warn his troops to avoid during the southern campaign in 1781.⁸⁷

Some Highland officers evidently identified with the British state to a significant degree. John Macpherson, a Badenoch officer serving in North America, informed his father on Christmas Day in 1776: ‘The campaign is ended – I think gloriously and I hope to the satisfaction of my friend John Bull.’⁸⁸ Macpherson was articulating something of importance. Here was a positive identification with a strong symbol of British bellicosity and superiority. The army, while it was a social and cultural body, as much defined by its own peculiarities, was centred on the political nation as the nation’s primary means of defence. While it cannot be said that the army was an all-encompassing vehicle for integration, it is interesting to note that two groups denied official recognition as part of the regular army, Irish Catholics and American colonists, were the same ‘Britons’ with which the state had the most problematic relationship with in the late eighteenth century. There was nothing unique, compared with other mainland Britons, to these Highland identifications, but the potential for the region to be elevated, simply by association, was clear.

⁸⁶ NAS, GD170/1711, f. 17, Patrick Campbell to Sandy Campbell, 8 Jul. 1778; TNA, AO12/24, f. 49, Loyalist Claim of Alexander Macdonald; John McAlpine, *Genuine Narratives and Concise Memoirs of some of the most interesting exploits and singular adventures of J. M’Alpine a native Highlander from the time of his emigration from Scotland to America 1773* (Greenock, 1780), pp. 70-1.

⁸⁷ Albert R. Newsome, ‘A British Orderly Book, 1780-1781’, *North Carolina Historical Review*, 9 (1932): 381.

⁸⁸ LoC, M 2267, reel 46, John Macpherson to father, 25 Dec. 1776.

Identification with the army and the fiscal-military state, however, was less influential than the Gaelic identification with the world view of the British state.⁸⁹ Britishness was central to the inner-workings of the British imperial project. Britishness, perhaps more appropriately Englishness, was defined by the traits of Protestantism, government by consent, the link of liberty with property, trial by jury, the right to a militia, and loyalty to parliamentary monarchy. It was a conformist system and the direct targeting of cultural difference in the Highlands after 1746 was a result of an inherent connection between culture, loyalty, and Britishness. Provincial interpretations of metropolitan ideologies were a vital part of the imperial process and an important means of confidence. As ‘North Britons’, Highland elites embraced an Anglo-British identity as a means of anglicizing Scottish institutions and bringing about progress in Scotland’s political economy.⁹⁰ It was thus, Allan Maclean of Torloisk, a man who placed huge stock in the Highland garb as a mark of Highland distinction, could refer to himself as an ‘English officer’, a nomenclature favoured by other Highland elites.⁹¹ Scottish Whigs reacted in horror, just as American Whigs did, when they were rejected from the pursuit of these English, but, implicitly universalist political values. While there is much debate on how closely Scots embraced English traits as a means of self-identification, it would be unfair to characterize this identification as Machiavellian and purely in the interests of self-protection against English cultural imperialism. Scottish-orientated patriotism through the medium of British values was entirely genuine. There was no question,

⁸⁹ An extremely good collection of essays focusing on the Scottish Enlightenment’s role in empire can be found in *William Robertson and the Expansion of Empire*, ed. Stewart J. Brown (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), *passim*.

⁹⁰ Colin Kidd, ‘North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-Century British Patriotisms’, *The Historical Journal*, 39 (1996): 361-82.

⁹¹ BL, Add. Mss. 21732, f. 88, Allan Maclean to Frederick Haldimand, 19 Jul. 1778.

however, that the intellectual climate of Scotland revolved around broadly similar values to the rest of the British world. When Highlanders moved from a domestic context into an imperial one, it was these values they took with them.

Many of the Highland elites who went to North America with the army had implemented improvements in the Highlands and sought to extend them in the new world. In reply to Sir Archibald Grant's advocacy of a scheme to colonize St John's Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Sir James Grant of Grant replied that while tempting, his focus must be on 'the improvement of my paternal estate, the establishing of a happy and affluent tenantry, the promotion of every public spirited scheme within the country'.⁹² While rebuffed, Archibald's scheme for St John's Island reveals that Highland identification with British principles were inseparable from imperial conflict. Having secured St John's through the Treaty of Paris, large land grants were being offered on the island, some of which went to Simon Fraser for the 78th Foot. Archibald's plan extended the zealotry of Anglo-British progress to recently conquered French possessions, venturing to make the imperial project work as part of an improving ideology. 'I am daily more and more,' Archibald stated 'confirmed in the opinion, that America will be the grand seat of empire.' Any expense or trouble caused by finding means for the initial land grants would easily be abrogated thought Archibald, and while some settlers would not prosper, those that did would 'improve things for the mother country'.⁹³ The improvement of empire, therefore, served two functions: the improvement of the mother

⁹² For the use of the term 'improver' see NAS, GD248/507/3, f. 33, Unknown to Captain John Grant, 26 Jul. 1763; NAS, GD248/49/2, f. 60, James Grant to Sir Archibald Grant, 22 Apr. 1764.

⁹³ NAS GD248/49/2, f. 57, Archibald Grant to Grant, 7 Mar. 1764.

country through the extension of the empire and a means through which Highlanders could assert their adherence to British values in both contexts.

In the mid-eighteenth century, natural history emerged as a new way of narrating history and a system for classifying groups by taxonomy.⁹⁴ The most explicit (and Scottish) product of this categorization was the conjectural stadial theory that all societies passed through stages from hunting and gathering to commercialism, via the intermediate stages of pastoralism and agriculture. Francis Hutcheson, the leading theorist of moral philosophy in the first half of the century, emphasized moral sense as the mark of societal improvement, rejecting the negative view of human nature seen in the theories of Thomas Hobbes and Bernard de Mandeville. The problem, for many theorists, was that moral sense theoretically offered moral equality to uncivilized peoples. Part of the solution was the stadial theory, in which the moral sense was refined through the four stages, making moral benevolence dependent on social origins. To the eighteenth-century mind then, cultural traits, not ethnicity or race, defined where you fell in the taxonomy.⁹⁵ If Highland elites displayed British cultural norms, they were elevated in status and consciously placed the Gael above other imperial peoples.

Gaelic confidence was asserted by an increasingly pejorative view of other imperial minorities as a result. It is important to appreciate that hierarchy implied superiority at all sub-levels and that the Gaels demonstrated ethnic conceit as powerful as any formed in English-speaking Britain. Adam Ferguson, for example, formulated his ideas about Amerindian nations from European observers, making the Native American

⁹⁴ Michael Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York; Pantheon, 1970), pp. 131-3.

⁹⁵ Griffin, *American Leviathan*, pp. 27-33.

as savage as European values dictated and the Highland Scot more sophisticated as a result.⁹⁶ Supremacy was taken for granted and Highlanders were consummate and proud representatives of Britain's imperial project. This was evidently tied to imperial expansion and war. Colonial warfare and settlement brought even the lowliest Highlanders into contact with ethnic minorities. A Loyalist who had formerly served as an ensign during the Seven Years' War, Samuel Mackay, epistemologically demonstrated the implicit divide between Europeans and Natives when he reported in 1778 that he had been the member of a war party of 'ten men and twenty savages'.⁹⁷ Part of the reason articulated for the benefits of American settlement in the pre-revolutionary period was the possibility of acquiring 'Negroes' who would assist in the clearing of land for Highland settlement.⁹⁸

The supposedly inferior attributes of the nations with which Highland troops had contact were described in deliberately coloured terms in the Gaelic literature of the period. Kenneth Mackenzie described the people of the Indian sub-continent as 'Bu lion'ar *Innseneach*, breun dubh [numerous, putrid, and black]'. Mackenzie also described Hyder Ali's people as 'S iad bu ghile nan ròcas [whiter than the rook], a double entendre which mocked their fighting capacities, but the implied blackness of 'S nial na mara 's na mointich nan aoidh [the appearance of the marshy ground in their faces]' was a clear reference of colour and deceit.⁹⁹ During the southern campaign in the rebellious colonies, enslaved Africans were painted with the number of the regiment for

⁹⁶ Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, pp. 109-18.

⁹⁷ LAC, MG23/B43, Samuel Mackay to General Francis Maclean, 20 Jul. 1778.

⁹⁸ [Americanus], *Information Concerning the Province of North Carolina*, pp. 25-8.

⁹⁹ Mackenzie, *Orain Ghaidhealach*, pp. 39-40.

which they worked. In the brigade to which the 71st and the 76th belonged while in Virginia in 1781, there were reports that soldiers were using the enslaved to plunder local properties for them, and that far more than the one slave allotted by Lt. Col. York to each subaltern was being kept in the camp.¹⁰⁰ The image of the number '71', painted in white, dripping from the bodies of black enslaved human beings should disavow anyone of the nonsense that Gaels, owing to their own experiences, engaged with the empire on a more sympathetic level.

Were there moments when 'Highlanders and Indians reached across the cultural chasm and met each other as humans engaged in a common enterprise'?¹⁰¹ It is possible; Robert Kirkwood of the 77th Foot remembered a Shawnee warrior who 'befriended me greatly'. Kirkwood was, however, in no doubt about the nature of the Native American, calling the massacre of Christian Indians at the Abenaki village of St. Francis in 1759 'justly deserved ... the inhumanity of the savages was rewarded with a calamity'.¹⁰² There was consistently a political context to cultural exchanges which should not be ignored. Captain Thomas Stirling's journal of an expedition by the 42nd Foot into Illinois in 1765 demonstrates the importance of such exchanges. As the commanding officer of the expedition, Stirling took the opportunity of a ceremony, whereby Iroquois and Delaware scouts conferred names upon the Highland officers, to remind his allies that their behaviour thus far had not become them as warriors and as men. Their 'sulky fits' had been, he said, detrimental to the expedition. Stirling went further and attempted to

¹⁰⁰ Newsome, 'A British Orderly Book, 1780-1781': 276; LoC, MMC Records of the British Army, 1781, Brigade Orderly Book, I, 4-5 Jun. 1781.

¹⁰¹ Calloway, *White People, Indians, and Highlanders*, p. 105.

¹⁰² Kirk, *The Memoirs and Adventures of Robert Kirk*, pp. 7, 45.

impress on them that British and Native nations, ‘should live henceforth as one family, cherished and protected by our father the Great King George’. Having received promises of improvement, the tribesmen proceeded to conduct a war dance, in which they were joined by several Highlanders.¹⁰³ Diplomacy was a more powerful force in cultural exchange than a perceived shared heritage as ethnic warriors.

There was nothing unique to these cultural views and they reflected the broad ideas for the successful management of the empire. This interpretation could, however, elevate regional actors such as the Gaelic Scot and place him well above most other imperial peoples. By asserting their adherence to British principles, Gaels positively asserted their own high status within the empire. This could, of course, not offer parity with the English and did simultaneously re-inscribed Gaelic inferiority. But in an imperially-situated reading of taxonomy, there were grounds for confidence, which might have appeared impossible in the domestic setting of the Highlands.

IV CONCLUSIONS

War and empire had an unrivalled impact on Highland cultural definitions in this period. Military service offered the Gael the opportunity to reinvent themselves, not as the defeated relic of a feudal past, but as the spearhead of modern empire. By entering an imperial sphere as soldiers, a category that allowed full licence to expressions of agency, martial identity, masculinity, and conquest of subordinate peoples, Gaels had just enough evidence falsely to convince themselves they were a superior race. This did not amount

¹⁰³ *Broadswords and Bayonets*, ed. Carron, pp. 35-6, 64.

to a coherent imperial patriotism, but the imperial context defined an environment where pre-existing or developing patriotism could be explored without the problematic domestic structures of the British Isles.

The British Empire did not fundamentally alter the nature of identity, but created an autonomous space, where confident Gaelic identities were allowed to emerge and develop, without much overt inconsistency. This did not mean, however, that the imperial context was incidental. Adjusting the internal points of reference for their own self-imagery was relatively simple, but Gaels were also extremely pro-active in the expansion of imperial authority and control over newly won territories. This required not simply a re-moulding of self-imagery to a new imperial context; it required identification with the aims of the British Empire. Indeed, Gaelic poetry was a linguistic variant on the triumphalist discourses that were common among the people of mainland Britain in this period.¹⁰⁴ Gaels embraced a pan-British conception of human taxonomy, embracing it as a means of establishing superiority within an imperial environment. Of course, this process also helped subordinate the Gael to the increasingly racialized hierarchies of English dominion. It marked, however, the fullest expression of Gaelic Britishness: a fully adhered-to vision for governing imperial peoples, which would eventually find its expression in the Scottish contribution to nineteenth-century moral and religious ‘improvement’ in the British Empire.

¹⁰⁴ Wilson Mcleod, ‘Gaelic Poetry and the British Military, 1756-1945 (2010), p. 6 [available at http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_164190_en.pdf]; for triumphalist English verse in this period, see Suvir Kaul, *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), *passim*.

In the late eighteenth century, however, rather than being obscured by their imperial existence, for many Gaels it defined what they were becoming. The Highlands were not reinvented by an external 'other' because of cultural weakness; the *Gàidhealtachd*, or at least elements within the region, in the interests of identity, confidence, and socio-economic development, re-invented itself.

CONCLUSIONS

Imperial war in North America was utterly central to the Gaelic experience in the latter part of the eighteenth century. It defined the place of the Highland region within a wider British polity. It defined the region as a pool of manpower which could fund British expansion. It overcame a number of the fears and prejudices which had emanated from England since the Jacobite rebellion. As Geoffrey Plank puts it: ‘Highlanders would assert themselves and alter their reputation ... after large numbers of Gaelic-speakers begun moving into distant, contested zones in North America during the Seven Years’ War.’¹ It helped, ironically, to replace older fears of Jacobitism with a new fear, that Scots were orchestrating a takeover of English government and would subvert the constitution in order to secure the continuing privilege of themselves and their kinsmen. This particular fear is something which can be detected even today.

Far more important, however, than all of these impacts, was that it defined how the Highlands, from the highest to lowest, viewed themselves and their place in the political world. When historians talk of Highland integration, colonization, rehabilitation, atonement, and reputation, they have achieved brilliant insights. They have also, however, utilized a framework which is entirely inappropriate for understanding the dynamics of eighteenth-century imperialism. They have analysed the region from the perspective of the metropolitan centre, or influenced by selective Highland materials which support a pre-determined view of the region. By highlighting the colonization of the Highlands and its subsequent rehabilitation in the eyes of the state, historians could

¹ Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery*, p. 146.

approach the region with a meta-narrative that explained pro-active imperial involvements while accounting for its disastrous consequences. Scholars squared the circle by offering a one-dimensional interpretation of the Highland experience, one that emphasized the military occupation of the Highlands after 1746.²

This thesis has offered an alternative view of the processes of British expansion in the mid-eighteenth century. Still predicated on the importance of a centre / periphery analysis, it has forcefully argued that the British colonial enterprise must be understood from the periphery as well as the centre. The success of imperialism by the final decades of the century was overwhelmingly based on what the state could offer local groups to secure their support of imperial rule. In North America, the colonists' self-perception as Englishmen clashed with the monumental failure of the British state to offer them a means of imperial integration. There are grounds for arguing that the fatal problem of colonial rule in British America lay not simply in freedoms, but in opportunities, or lack thereof. Just how many sacred rights American colonists would have willingly surrendered for equality of opportunity, we will never know. In India, while equal involvement in the management of empire was never offered, the Permanent Settlement, instituted as part of Cornwallis's reforms, held incentives as the fundamental principle behind the administration of India. It commercialized landholding in Bengal, granting proprietary rights to the Zamindars who had previously had little incentive to improve their lands. Vitality, it offered Indian civil servants the opportunity to accrue small fortunes by buying up undervalued land from those Zamindars who could not pay the

² For a recent, though it must be stated, highly sophisticated example of these types of readings of Highland history, see Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, pp. 148-91.

heavy taxes associated with these proprietorial rights. Through military service, large sections of Highland society were offered incentives which corresponded with the accepted worldview of Gaels. Gaelic ambitions were successfully channelled into military service, not because it satisfied 'traditional' militarism, but because it offered a decidedly contemporary solution to local problems and satisfied individual or familial security and status.

What this thesis advocates, however, is an analysis of change from a cultural and political perspective, marking these processes as integral to the determining social and economic incentives. Viewed in this way, the dynamics of state and empire-building are seen more clearly. The army must be seen as a vital element of British state-building not because it infused Britishness into its soldiers. Instead, it forged a direct link between its soldiers and central government, making the authorities of the state increasingly important in the satisfaction of continuing localized agenda. The relationship between the region and the metropolis and, between the region and the empire, was largely constructed through the role of Highlanders in the military. It meant that the military had a disproportionate impact in framing how many Highlanders viewed and experienced integration into a larger imperial polity. It might be said that this thesis, as a result, reinscribes the association of the Highlands with militarism. Perhaps, but this should not be read as a single causal phenomenon. It was part, the most important part this work asserts, but only a part of the major changes in this period. Furthermore, military associations were, for many upper and lower elites and poor in the region, entirely self-chosen declarations of place and purpose.

There was an unmistakable duality to the empire, exemplified in Highland experiences. On the one hand, imperial contacts reinforced traditional values of landownership, religion, hierarchy, and localized interactions. Empire cemented the role of inequitable landownership in the Highland political economy. There can be little question that the commitment of Highland elites to military service ensured the continuing viability, in economic and moral terms, of their control of the land. Land reform made precious few inroads into the Highlands in the one hundred years after the War of American Independence and it was only through four acts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that Highland crofters gained some measure of security. Even then, they did so within a system which was a far cry from the radicalism seen in late imperial Ireland.³ That said, there was no unity within the Highland elite and the propensity of men to enter the army was due, in large part, to their need to find a place within an economic system in which they were increasingly obsolete and under pressure from senior landowners. The Empire also sustained the Gaels' belief in their innate martial capabilities, which were deserving of recognition. They believed themselves to be a distinct people, a view predicated on martial valour, in which the Gaelic language was a vital component.

On the other hand, imperialism placed radically new demands on the region and its people, a modernity of ideas and identities which could not be fully understood within the boundaries of early modern identifications. Pan-British ideologies made inroads into

³ For an excellent analysis of the Crofters' Holdings Act (1886), the Congested Districts Act (1897), the Smallholders' Act (1911), and the Land Settlement Act (1919), see Ewen A. Cameron, *Land for the People?: The British Government and the Scottish Highlands, c. 1880-1925* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1996), *passim*.

the most intimate of Highland relations, offering alternative hierarchies which significantly complicated the relationship between elites and the rural poor. Imperialism not only established itself on a core/periphery relationship between regions, but also within regions, on class, gender, or linguistic divides.⁴ When James Macpherson retired to the Highlands, he had a grand Georgian mansion built at the township of Raitts, construction of which was completed in 1790. There could be few better examples of the assertions of the *Gàidhealtachd* than James Macpherson. The name Macpherson gave to his house, however, was Belle Ville. There could be few better examples of the way in which elite Gaels distinguished themselves as Highlanders, albeit elite ones, to be understood differently from the poor Gaels. The Gaelicization of Belle Ville to Balavil, as it is known today, reminds us of the fluidity of identity, but also just how vital identity can be at any given time. Cultural symbols, synonymous with Scottish or Highland ‘tradition’ emerged in this period, not simply as declarations of cultural difference, but as modernist responses to the social climates of the time. The uniform of the Highland regiments offered men a status unachievable in their civilian lives. Alexander Macdonald demanded of his commanding officer in 1776 that plaids be sent, for the men were ‘Creasy [crazy] to appear at ... Assembly and shew their fine white thighs and knees’.⁵ Local women were the main civilian attendees of parades and assemblies and such immodest dress established masculinity in a very contemporary context. Highland soldiers sold their labour and became conscious of their rights within market conditions. The ideology of improvement filtered through large sections of Highland society and

⁴ McNeil, *Writing the Highlands*, p. 14.

⁵ Macdonald, *The Letterbook of Alexander Macdonald*, p. 253.

evidence from Highland soldiers suggests that consumerism was limited only by the buying power of the rural poor. Highland men became the assertive agents of a British imperial mission, fully embracing the taxonomy which inscribed the alleged inferiority of non-white actors. This, and the Gaelic role in these processes, would be a mark of British imperialism until its demise in the twentieth century. And the opportunities of empire were used to challenge the status quo of the region, significant enough in the early 1770s to include Highland emigration as one of the great crises of empire in that period. It was the fluidity of people in the empire which marks the period out as significant. Lacking the totality of later imperialism, the eighteenth-century empire created a contextual space in which many Gaels had the agency to decide what was worth their interest and commitments. While it cannot be said that the ‘people’, in a generic sense, determined the form of their world, the region as a whole made a declared commitment to the British Empire, deciding on the form that commitment would take.

One point requires careful elaboration. The two wars fought in America between 1754 and 1783 did not mark the beginning or end of Highland interactions with the empire. The American wars were only part of long-term processes of engagement and the formation of identity. In the early nineteenth century, for example, it was the role of the 42nd, 79th, and 92nd Foot at the battle of Alexandria in 1801 that cemented the place of the Highland regiments in popular consciousness. The *Highland Society of London* had bronze and silver medals cast for the soldiers of the 42nd Foot. Over a decade later, the battle was still being referred to as ‘a proud day for Caledonian valour’.⁶

⁶ Piers Mackesy, *British Victory in Egypt, 1801* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 241; Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London*, p. 29.

The triumphant return of the regiments following the campaign in Egypt was a seminal, but now largely forgotten, event. Yet it predated Scott's tartan pageant by twenty years. Philip James de Loutherbourg's 1802 painting of the battle and the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby, borrowed heavily from Benjamin West and too featured a Highland soldier, informing the dying Abercromby of the French defeat.

The period from 1756-1783, however, was the tipping point of a steady equilibrium which saw the region drawn into the British state. Attempts to do so prior to this fell on the inadequacies of the state and, consequently, the limited resources the state had to draw on to include peripheral elites.⁷ Post-1756, there was a perceptible interest in furthering expansion which fitted regional needs, often with significant cultural overtones. The Highlands would not have developed in the way it did without the military commitments of the American wars. As the state could not control any people by force alone - the emergence of the United States proved this - the periphery had a dynamic role in the creation and interpretation of imperialism. The cultural boundaries of imperialism were often built on the imperatives of individuals in its most intimate settings. On 19 April 1761, for example, Chief Ustanaco of the Cherokee Nation told the British military commander in South Carolina, James Grant of Ballindalloch, that the conflict between the Cherokee and the colony had been caused by a renegade minority and that the nation wanted to live in peace: 'For I am an English man myself', Ustanaco told Grant. Ustanaco defined his Englishness through his loyalty, his literacy, and his

⁷ A recent analysis by George McGilvary does suggest, however, that state patronage in the East India Company was vital in rendering the 1745 rebellion 'impotent'. This Indian connection, particularly with the East India Company which was a major employer of Highland manpower, should be seen as a similar, but distinct, strand of the politics of loyalty highlighted in this thesis, see McGilvary, *East India Patronage and the British State*, esp. pp. 66-7.

wishing to live ‘like brothers’ in peace. Similarly, Christian Huron, at the village of Loretto near Québec in the 1770s, made religious carvings of Christian events, but with Native American iconography: ‘[They] appear as savages in savage costume ... I shall not readily forget good St Peter with his keys and his painted face.’⁸ Peripheral emulation of English models, while easy to dismiss from a metropolitan perspective, were genuine and important to regional understandings of place.

There is, therefore, an argument to be made that the bitterness of the Highland experience in the nineteenth century was not so much caused by regional defeat and forcible incorporation into the British state in the eighteenth century. Instead, bitterness evolved over a long period of time as Gaels realized that the confidence they had gained in the empire was not being reciprocated. In 1792, *Bliadhna nan Caorach* or Year of the Sheep, Highland troops of the 42nd Foot helped suppress local attempts to drive sheep out of Sutherland and Easter Ross. The spread of sheep farming in the area was largely the responsibility of Sir Hector Munro of Novar, who had accrued an enormous fortune from his imperial commitments. Even ex-soldiers of the ‘lower orders’ began to use sheep tracts to improve their economic standing, drawing a clear line between the attitudes of imperial Highlanders and those who were deeply concerned by these changes. Elite interests, despite significant criticism in the southern press, were the order of the day for much of the period from the 1790s to the 1880s.⁹ Military service continued to serve as justification for the security of tenure by poor families into the nineteenth century, but

⁸ LoC, M 2267, reel 32, Ustanaco of Tomotley to James Grant, 19 Apr. 1761; *Letters from America, 1776-1779: Being the Letters of Brunswick, Hessian, and Waldeck Officers with the British Armies during the Revolution*, ed. Ray W. Pettingill (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1964), p. 71.

⁹ Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords, and Rural Turmoil* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), p. 89.

the realization of the ultimate unimportance of the rural poor was a bitter blow.¹⁰ To the horror of many Gaels, they realized that the identities created in the latter eighteenth century did not protect them against continuing social change, and the dire consequences of ‘improvements’ in Highland landholding. These were, nevertheless, nineteenth-century developments. We cannot attach a linear narrative of decline to the entirety of the Highland experience from 1745 to the victories of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act of 2003, allowing community buy-outs of their lands, and the overall rise in population in the region over the past few decades. The period of 1756-1783 was one such period in which Gaels asserted themselves in ways which entirely dispute the popular narrative of victimhood.

This thesis, as I have highlighted throughout, should not, however, be read as a positive analysis of the processes of imperialism. Even neglecting the inherent savagery of imperial expansion, war was a horrific experience. A tour of the paintings and specimens of Sir Charles Bell, collected after the battle of Corunna in 1809 and held at the Surgeons’ Hall Museum in Edinburgh, should be required for every person - historian, policy-maker, or politician - who has any connection with war. Regional confidence was predicated on the misery of Gaels and non-Gaels alike. Nevertheless, it is also fair to assert that from the distance of modern times and our perception of war in the early twenty-first century, it is easy to structure the experience of eighteenth-century warfare on the basis of empirical impacts, be they moral, physical, or financial. This thesis has attempted to interpret the likely narrative of the Highland soldier as a definable group. Between the military deaths, the entrenchment of unsustainable landholding practises,

¹⁰ NAS, GD44/27/7, f. 52, Donald Robertson to Reverend James Anderson, [1819].

and the creation of a confidence which would prove insufficient to meet demands of the nineteenth century, America was a fatal land.

The regiments, however, were made up of tens of thousands of individual experiences. When Alexander Macdonald and Allan Macdonald stood in front of that table in Glasgow, in January 1778, the long-term was unknown. They had come to that place to seek their own individual security, to embrace the new opportunities offered by imperial expansion, and even to improve themselves in an inequitable world. It is these aspirations which are the greatest insight into the human agency of the Highland soldier, from highest to lowest, regardless of the fates which ultimately awaited them. Allan Macdonald survived the War of American Independence and returned home. He died, unmarried, at the age of thirty-seven, in 1793. Alexander Macdonald was already a middle-aged veteran of the Seven Years' War when he enlisted in 1778. He was most likely captured at Yorktown in 1781, after which, he disappears from the historical record. Both men came from the very margins of the British Atlantic world, but, by their actions, placed themselves at the forefront of British expansion. The periphery of the British Isles had become a centre of the British Empire.

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- GD26:** Papers of the Earls of Leven and Melville.
- GD44:** Gordon Castle Muniments.
- GD87:** Mackay of Bighouse Muniments.
- GD95:** Records of the SSPCK.
- GD112:** Breadalbane Muniments.
- GD125:** Rose of Kilravock Muniments.
- GD146:** Robertson of Kindeace Muniments.
- GD152:** Hamilton Bruce Muniments.
- GD153:** Gilchrist of Ospisdale Muniments.
- GD170:** Campbell of Barcaldine Muniments.
- GD174:** Maclaine of Lochbuie Papers.
- GD248:** Seafield Muniments.
- GD293:** Blackwood and Smith, Writers to the Signet Papers.

National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

- MS. 1306:** Mackenzie of Delvine Papers relating to the Macdonalds of Kingsburgh.
- MS. 2618:** Memorandum of Flora Macdonald.
- MS. 3431:** Lee Papers.

The National Archives, Kew

- AO12:** American Loyalist Claims, Series I
- AO13:** American Loyalist Claims, Series II
- CO5:** Board of Trade and Secretaries of State: America and the West Indies.
- CO45:** British North America Sessional papers.
- CO217:** Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Correspondence.
- PRO30:** Charles Cornwallis Papers.
- SP54:** Secretary of State Papers: Scotland.
- SP89:** Secretary of State Papers: Portugal.

- T1:** Treasury Board Papers and In-letters.
- WO1:** Secretary at War in-letters.
- WO4:** Secretary at War out-letters.
- WO12:** General Muster Books and Pay Lists (by regiment).
- WO17:** Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Monthly Returns.
- WO24:** Papers relating to Establishments.
- WO26:** Entry books of Warrants and Regulations.
- WO28:** Records of Military Headquarters.

British Library, London

- Add. Mss. 21,631 - 21,660:** Henry Bouquet Papers.
- Add. Mss. 21,661 - 21,892:** Frederick Haldimand Papers.
- Add. Mss. 32,911:** Thomas Pelham Papers.
- Add. Mss. 46,840:** Diary of John Danford.

Highland Council Archives, Inverness

- CI:** Commissioners of Supply Minute Books, Inverness.
- CS:** Commissioners of Supply Minute Books, Sutherland.
- D 238:** Fraser of Boblainy Papers.
- D 368:** Donald Morrison Papers.
- IB:** Burgh Court Records and Minute Books, Inverness.

Perth and Kinross District Archives, Perth

- B59/32:** Perth Burgh records relating to Military affairs.

National Museums of Scotland, War Museum, Edinburgh Castle

- M.1955.83:** *The Caledonian March and Embarkation* (London, 1770).
- M.1982.97:** Recruiting poster for the 71st Foot.

Blair Castle Archives, Blair Atholl

MSS. 259-345: Documents relating to recruiting in Atholl.

Dundee City Archives, Dundee

CH 2: Dundee Kirk Session Minutes.
Council Minutes: Book XI 1767-1779; Book XII 1779-1793.
GD We: Wedderburn of Pearsie Papers.

University of Glasgow Library, Glasgow

MS Gen 1042: Maclagan Collection of Gaelic Manuscripts.

John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Manchester

BAG: Bagshawe Muniments.
Mss. 938-941: Townshend Papers.

Private collections, various locations

NRAS 61: Alexander Farqharson Papers, Invercauld Estate, Braemar.
NRAS 139: Bell-Macdonald Papers, Rammerscales Estate, Hightae.
NRAS 934: Archattan Bundles, Ardchattan Priory.
NRAS 2696: Fraser of Reelig Papers, Reelig House, Kirkhill.

MANUSCRIPT SOURCES, NORTH AMERICA

Library of Congress, Washington DC

M 2267: James Grant of Ballindalloch Papers (Microfilm).
MMC: British Army in America collection, 1759-1782.
MMC: Christopher French Journals.
MMC: Records of the British Army, 1781.
MMC: Samuel Fisher Papers.

MMC: Samuel Townsend fl. 1782.
0314B: Papers and Collection of Peter Force.

National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC

RG 15: Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Applications.
RG 93: Orderly Book of the 17th Foot, 1779.

Public Records and Archives, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

Acc. 2302: MacAulay Memorials.
Acc. 2379: Muster Rolls for Loyalists.
Acc. 2664: MacDonald Papers.
Acc. 2690: Selkirk Fonds.
Acc. 2702: Smith Alley Collection.
Acc. 2737: Anna MacDonald Collection.
Acc. 3051: Angus MacAulay Fonds.
Acc. 4640: Eric L. Harvey Collection.

Crown Lands Information Management Centre, Halifax

Old Grant Books: Volumes V-XIII.

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MG 12: Great Britain – Army.
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RG 20: Land Grant Papers.

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P 254: James Thompson Fonds.
P 450 M502/1: James Thompson Journal (Microfilm).

Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa

- MG 18:** Pre-Conquest Papers.
- MG 21:** British Museum Transcripts.
- MG 23:** Late Eighteenth Century Papers.
- RG 4:** Civil Secretaries Correspondence.
- RG 8:** British Military Papers.

University of New Brunswick Archives, Fredericton

Winslow Family Papers [available at <http://www.lib.unb.ca/winslow/winslowunb.html>].

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- PC.20:** Colin Shaw Papers.
- PC.1738:** McAllister Papers.

Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

- Mss. 10034:** John Forbes Papers.
- Mss. 10547:** Papers of Sir Walter Scott.

Huntington Library, San Marino

- AB:** Abercromby Papers.
- HM 615:** General Orders New York, 1776.
- HM 616:** Orderly Book of Sir Johnson's Company, 1776-1777.
- HM 617:** Orderly Book of Alexander Campbell's company 2/71st Foot, 1778.
- HM 52666:** Orderly Book of the 17th Foot, 1779.
- LO:** Loudoun Papers.
- PO:** Pocock Papers.
- PU:** Pulteney Papers.
- YO:** Sir George Younge Correspondence.

Private collections, various locations

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF HIGHLAND REGIMENTS, 1739-1784

(Source: [Anon.], *A List of General and Field Officers ...* (London, 1757-84).

The following provides a comprehensive list of the Highland regiments of the British army raised in the mid to late eighteenth century.

Regiments marked with a * served in the North American theatre.

CO: Commanding officer (Colonel); *OC*: Officer commanding (Lt. Col. or otherwise).

Pre-1756:

***1/42nd Foot:** *Am Freiceadan Dubh* 1739-2010.
Description: Established regiment of the line.
CO: Lord John Murray (1745-1787).
Actions: Flanders (1745); Jacobite Rebellion, limited role (1745-1746); Ticonderoga (Jul. 1758); Montreal (Sept. 1760); West Indies (Oct. 1761-Aug. 1762); Pennsylvania/Ohio (Jun.-Nov. 1764); New York (Aug.-Nov. 1776); New Jersey (Jan.-Apr. 1777); Brandywine (Sept. 1777); Paoli (Sept. 1777); Monmouth Court House (Jun. 1778).

64th Foot: *Loudoun's Highlanders* 1745-1748
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO: John Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudoun (1745-48).
Actions: Jacobite rebellion, Prestonpans and Culloden (1745-1746); Bergen-Op-Zoom (Jul.-Sept. 1747).

1756-1765:

***2/42nd Foot:** 1759-1763.
Description: Second battalion.
OC: Francis Grant (1759-62); *battalions then combined.*
Actions: Montreal (Sept. 1760); West Indies (Oct. 1761-Aug. 1762); Pennsylvania/Ohio (Jun.-Nov. 1764).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).

- *77th Foot:** *Montgomery's (62nd Foot until 1758) 1757-1763.*
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: Archibald Montgomery (1757-1763).
Actions: Fort Duquesne (Sept. 1758); Anglo-Cherokee War (1759-1760); West Indies (Apr. 1761-Aug. 1762); Pennsylvania (Jun.-Aug. 1763).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).
- *78th Foot:** *Fraser's (63rd Foot until 1758) 1757-1763.*
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: Simon Fraser of Lovat (1757-1763).
Actions: Louisbourg (Jun.-Jul. 1758); Québec (Sept. 1759); Sainte Foy (Apr. 1760); Signal Hill (Sept. 1762).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).
- 87th Foot:** *Keith's 1759-1763.*
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: Sir Robert Murray Keith (1759-1763).
Actions: Warburg (Jul. 1760); Kloster Kampen (Oct. 1760); Vellinghausen (Jul. 1761); Wilhelmstahl (Jun. 1762).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).
- 88th Foot:** *Campbell's 1759-1763.*
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: John Campbell of Dunoon (1759-1763).
Actions: Warburg (Jul. 1760); Kloster Kampen (Oct. 1760); Vellinghausen (Jul. 1761); Wilhelmstahl (Jun. 1762).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).
- 89th Foot:** *Duke of Gordon's 1759-1765.*
Description: Regiment of the line.
OC: Staats Long Morris (1762-1765).
Actions: Wandiwash (Jan. 1760); Siege of Pondicherry (Sept. 1760-Jan. 1761).
Disbanded: Scotland (1765).
- 100th Foot:** *Kilberry's 1761-1763.*

Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: John Campbell of Kilberry (1761-1763).
Actions: West Indies (1762-1763).
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).

101st Foot: *Johnstone's* 1760-1763.
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: James Johnston (1760-1763).
Actions: Never deployed.
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).

105th Foot: *Queen's Own Royal Highlanders* 1761-1764.
Description: Regiment of the line, raised from recruits for 42nd Foot.
OC: David Graeme of Gorthie (1761-1764).
Actions: Ireland.
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).

114th Foot: *Royal Highland Volunteers* 1761-1763.
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: Sir Allan Maclean of Torloisk (1761-1764).
Actions: Never deployed.
Disbanded: Scotland (1763).

1776-1784:

2/42nd Foot: 1779-1786.
Description: Second battalion, *CO:* Lord John Murray.
OC: Norman Macleod of Macleod (1779-1786).
Actions: Negapatan (Oct.-Nov. 1781); Cuddalore (Jun.-Jul. 1783).
Disbanded: Renamed 73rd Foot in 1786.

***71st Foot:** *Fraser's* 1776-1784.
Description: Two battalion regiment of the line, *CO:* Simon Fraser of Lovat.

OC: 1/71st: Sir William Erskine (1776-1778); John Maitland (1778-1779); Alexander Macdonald (1779-1780); Duncan Macpherson (1780-1781); Sir Thomas Stirling (1781-1784).
 2/71st: Archibald Campbell (1776-1780); Archibald McArthur (1780-1782); Alexander Lindsay, 6th Earl of Balcarres (1782-1784).
Actions: New York (Aug.-Nov. 1776); Brandywine (Sept. 1777); Savannah (Dec. 1778); Briar Creek (Mar. 1779); Stono Ferry (Jun. 1779); Stoney Point (Jul. 1779); Savannah (Oct. 1779); Charleston (Apr.-May 1780); Camden (Aug. 1780); Fishing creek (Aug. 1780); Cowpens (Jan. 1781); Guildford Court House (Mar. 1781); Yorktown (Oct. 1781).
Disbanded: Perth (1784).

73rd Foot: *Lord Macleod's (Earl of Cromarty) Highlanders* 1778-1786.
Description: Two battalion regiment of the line.
OC: James Crawford (William Dalrymple after 1783) & George Mackenzie (1778-1786).
Actions: 1/73rd: Gambia/Senegal (1780); Cuddalore (Jun.-Jul. 1783). 2/73rd: Gibraltar (1780-1783).
Disbanded: Renamed 71st (*Macleod's*) Foot in 1786.

***74th Foot:** *Argyll Highlanders* 1778-1783.
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: John Campbell of Barbreck (1778-1783).
Actions: Penobscot Bay (Jun.-Aug. 1779).
Disbanded: Scotland (1783).

***76th Foot:** *Macdonnell's* 1778-1784.
Description: Regiment of the line.
OC: John Macdonnell of Lochgarry (1778-1784) though led by Major John Sinclair, 11th Earl of Caithness (1778-1779); Francis Needham, 1st Earl of Kilmorey (1779-1781); Sir Robert Stuart (1781-1784).
Actions: Green Springs (Jul. 1781); Yorktown (Oct. 1781).
Disbanded: Stirling (1784).

77th Foot: *James Murray, 4th Duke of Atholl's Highlanders* 1778-1783.
Description: Regiment of the line.

OC: Charles Gordon (1779-1783); John Hutchison (1783).
Actions: Never deployed.
Disbanded: Berwick-upon-Tweed (1783).

78th Foot: *Lord Seaforth's* 1778-1786.
Description: Regiment of the line.
CO & OC: Kenneth Mackenzie (1778-1779); Thomas Humberston (1779-86).
Actions: Cuddalore (Jun.-Jul. 1783).
Disbanded: Renamed 72nd Foot in 1786.

***84th Foot:** *Royal Highland Emigrants* 1775-1784.
Description: Two battalion provincial unit, established in 1778. *CO:* Sir Henry Clinton then Guy Carleton.
OC: 1/84th: Sir Allan Maclean of Torloisk; 2/84th: John Small (1776-1784).
Actions: Québec (Dec. 1775); Moore's Creek (Feb. 1776); Eutaw Springs (Sept. 1781).
Disbanded: Upper & Lower Canada (1784).

***Caledonian Volunteers:** *North British* 1776-1778.
Description: New York Loyalists, eighty in total.
OC: Captain Sutherland
Disbanded: Amalgamated into the *Cathcart's American Legion*.

***Royal NC Highlanders:** 1780-1782
Description: Forty commissioned North Carolina Provincials and no rank-and-file.
Disbanded: Never truly organized.

Fencibles/militias:

Independent Companies: Including Argyle Militia. Organized and led by various Highland grandees (1745-1746).

Local militias: Thirty local units, at least 4,000 men (1745-1746).

- Argyle Fencibles:*** Archibald Campbell, 3rd Duke of Argyll (1759-63).
- Sutherland Regiment:*** William, 18th Earl of Sutherland (1759-63).
- Argyle (Western) Fencibles:*** Lord Frederick Campbell (1778-83).
- Northern (Gordon) Fencibles:*** Alexander Gordon, 4th Duke of Gordon (1778-83).

APPENDIX B: SELECTION OF HIGHLAND OFFICERS IN 1757

The following is a list of the officers of the two newly-raised Highland battalions sent to America in 1757, as well as Allan Maclean of Torloisk's 114th Foot, raised in 1761. It serves to demonstrate the lack of importance attached to the rehabilitation of Jacobites. It would appear that patronage, Whig sympathies, recruiting abilities, and relative military experience were the deciding factors in officer selection.

NB: The affiliations given are not absolutes and, where there is ambiguity, have been left blank. It should also be noted that even in records dating to the same year and, even in the same handwriting, some details referring to particular officers differ. Duncan Bayne of the 77th Foot, for example, is variously marked as having served in the Scots-Dutch, or having had no military experience at all.

77th Foot:

Name	Rank	Rank since	Former Corps	Age	Service (in years)	Affiliation W: Whig J: Jacobite	Connections
Archibald Montgomery	Lt. Col.	1757	36 th Foot	30	16	(W)	Third son of Alexander Montgomery, 9 th Earl of Eglinton.
James Grant	Major	1757	1 st Foot	32	16	(W)	Son of William Grant, Laird of Ballindalloch.
Alexander Campbell	Major	1757	1 st Foot	27	12	(W)	Son to Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine of the forfeited estates.
John Sinclair	Captain	1747	Scots-Dutch (SD)	27	10	(W)	By George Mackay, 5 th Lord Reay.
Hugh Mackenzie	Captain	1749	SD	35	15	(W)	By Norman Macleod of Macleod, 22 nd chief. Also recommended by Argyllshire elite.

John Gordon	Captain	1757	1 st Foot	28	11	(W)	Brother to Charles Gordon, 4 th Earl of Aboyne.
Alex Mackenzie	Captain	1757	SD and 12 th Foot	25	10		
William Macdonald	Captain	1757	-	18	0	(W)	By Archibald Montgomery and son to Sir James Macdonald of Sleat.
George Munro	Captain	1757	42 nd Foot	36	15	(W)	Son to Sir George Munro of Culcairn, 'murdered' by Jacobite Dugal Roy Cameron in a revenge attack on government forces, for the murder of his brother and other Jacobite Camerons, in 1746. Two of George Munro's uncles (brothers to Sir George) also died in government service at Falkirk.
Roderick Mackenzie	Captain	1757	-	24	0	(W) though Kenneth Mackenzie, who recommended him, was the son of the Jacobite, William Mackenzie.	By Kenneth Mackenzie, Lord Fortrose, father to Kenneth Mackenzie, 1 st Earl of Seaforth.

Alex Macintosh	Capt. Lt.	1757	SD	32	10		Brother to a merchant in London.
Charles Farquarson	Lt.	1748	SD	41	15		Cousin to John Farquarson of Invercauld. By Lord Adam Gordon, Lt. Col. of the 3 rd Foot Guards.
Alex Mackenzie	Lt.	1747	SD	36	15		
Nicholas Sutherland	Lt.	1757	-	19	0	(W)	Brother to William Sutherland, 18 th Earl of Sutherland. Initially commissioned into 60 th or 42 nd Foot. Friends in Scotland raised his 30 men for him.
Archibald Robertson	Lt.	1750	SD	30	10		Son of officer in the 18 th Foot.
Duncan Bayne	Lt.	1757	-	27	0		Son to a Presbyterian Minister.
James Duff	Lt.	1747	SD	26	10		Cousin to the Laird of Drummore, south-west Scotland.
Colin Campbell	Lt.	1757	-	29	0		By Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine.

James Grant	Lt.	1757	36 th Foot	24	2		By Archibald Montgomery.
Alexander Macdonald	Lt.	1757	16 th Foot	29	10		‘Has carried arms for several years’.
Joseph Grant	Lt.	1757	Loudoun’s	47	27	(W)	Brother to <i>feartaca</i> of Auchterblair.
Robert Grant	Lt.	1757	-	25	0	(W)	‘a Gentleman who is thought will be very useful in recruiting men’.
Cosmo McMartin	Lt.	1757	-	20	0	(W)	By Lord Adam Gordon, Lt. Col. of the 3 rd Foot Guards.
John McNab	Lt.	1757	-	22	0	(W)	Brother to the Laird of McNab (former officer in the 42 nd Foot). Marked as nephew to unnamed captain of the battalion.
Hugh Gordon	Lt.	1757	-	16	0	(W)	Variously marked as being of the ‘shire of Sutherland’ or ‘Gentleman of Caithness’, synonymous with anti-Jacobitism. Father’s house burned by rebels’.
Donald Macdonald	Lt.	1757	-	21	0	(J)	By Sir James Macdonald of Sleat. Donald’s father is recorded as having served in the rebellion.

William Mackenzie	Lt.	1757	-	46	0	(W) see also Roderick Mackenzie.	By Kenneth Mackenzie, Lord Fortrose, father to Kenneth Mackenzie, future 1 st Earl of Seaforth. Brother to a Captain of the Royal Navy.
Roderick Mackenzie	Lt.	1757	-	22	0	(W)	Son to Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Gairloch.
Henry Munro	Lt.	1757	-	30	0	(W)	By Sir Harry Munro, nephew to Sir George Munro.
Alexander Macdonald	Lt.	1757	36 th Foot	26	0		Relation of Sir James Macdonald of Sleat.
Donald Campbell	Lt.	1757	-	16	0	(W)	Son to Campbell of Balnabie, Islay.
Alex Grant	Ensign	1757	-	21	0	(J)	Son of Grant of Glenmoriston.
William Hagart	Ensign	1757	-	21	0		By Col. Muir Campbell.
Lewis Houston	Ensign	1757	-	16	0	(W)	By Dugald Campbell, 9 th Baron Campbell of Craignish.
William Mclean	Ensign	1757	-	17	0	(W)	Marked as being of the 'shire of Sutherland', synonymous with anti-Jacobitism.

James Grant	Ensign	1757	-	19	0	(W)	Cousin to John Grant, Baron of the Exchequer.
John Macdonald	Ensign	1757	-	18	0	(W)	Relation to Alexander Montgomery, 10 th Earl of Eglinton, father to Lt. Col. Archibald Montgomery. Also relation to Sir James Macdonald of Sleat.
Ronald Mackinnon	Ensign	1757	-	20	0	(J)	Son of John Dubh Mackinnon.
George Munro	Ensign	1757	-	24	0	(W)	By Sir Harry Munro, nephew to Sir George Munro.
Alex Mackenzie	Ensign	1757	-	18	0		
Harry Munro	Chaplain	1757	-	25	0	(W)	
Donald Stewart	Adjutant	1757	SD	24	10		
Alexander Montgomery	Quarter-Master	1757	36 th Foot	36	?		By Archibald Montgomery.
Allan Stuart	Surgeon	1757	SD	26	0		By Dr. Fordyce, former surgeon of 3 rd Foot and SD.
George Mcrae	Surgeon Mate	1757	-	20	0		

Sources: HL, LO6695, General returns, 18 Sept. 1757; LoC, M 2267, reel 48, p. 32, List of officers, [1757].

78th Foot:

Name	Rank	Rank since	Former Corps	Age	Service (in years)	Affiliation W: Whig J: Jacobite	Connections
Simon Fraser of Lovat	Lt. Col.	1757	-	30	0	(W/J)	Son of Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat, executed for treason in 1747. Assisted in the prosecution and judicial murder of James Stewart of Aucharn, for the murder of Colin Campbell of Glenure. Recommended by the Duke of Argyll.
James Clephane	Major	1748	SD	c. 54	>17	(W)	By his brother-in-law, Hugh Rose (see p. 49).
John Campbell	Major	1757	Marines	c. 32	16	(W)	Son of Archibald Campbell of Innellan. Never joined regiment.
John Macpherson	Captain	1747	SD	48	>10	(J)	Younger brother of Ewan Macpherson of Cluny. By Simon Fraser, being his brother-in-law.
John Campbell	Captain	1757	21 st Foot	32	2	(W)	Son of Archibald Campbell of Achatennie.

Charles Baillie	Captain	1757	21 st Foot	c. 32	1	(W)	Son of William Baillie of Rosehall.
Simon Fraser	Captain	1757	52 nd Foot	25	1	(J)	Younger brother of Charles Fraser, who led Fraser's at Culloden. Probably by Simon Fraser.
Donald Macdonell <i>Donull Gorm</i>	Captain	1757	<i>Royal Ecossais</i>	c. 30	15	(J)	Son of Ranald Macdonell, 17 th chief of Clanranald. Undertook to raise 100 men for his commission. Appealed to the Earl of Holderness for commission.
John Macdonnell	Captain	1757	<i>Royal Ecossais</i>	35	10	(J)	By his cousin, Alasdair Macdonnell, 12 th chief of the Macdonnells of Glengarry.
Thomas Fraser	Captain	1757	-	48	0	Prob. (J)	
John Crawford Walkinshaw	Capt. Lt.	1757	58 th and 21 st Foot	35	17	(W)	By William Kerr, 3 rd Marquis of Lothian, Lord Clerk Register, whose son, Sir Robert Kerr, was killed with government forces at Culloden.

Simon Fraser	Lt.	1747	SD	28	>10		Later killed at Saratoga.
Archibald Macdonald	Lt.						‘Can raise a great many men’
Ranald Macdonell <i>Raonall Oig</i>	Lt.	1757	-	c. 35	0	(J)	Son of Alexander Macdonnell, 17 th chief of the Macdonnell’s of Keppoch, killed at Culloden. ‘Can raise a considerable number of men’.
Simon Fraser	Lt.	1757	SD	19	?		Prob. by Simon Fraser.
Hector Macdonell	Lt.	1757	-	27	0	(J/W)	Son of Alexander Macdonell of Boisdale, and cousin of <i>Donull Gorm</i> (above).
Simon Fraser	Lt.	1757	-	?	?		Prob. by Simon Fraser.
Hugh Cameron	Lt.	1749	SD	c. 27	8		
John Macdougall	Lt.	1757	-	<20	0		Son of Alexander Macdougall, chief of the Macdougalls. Recommended by his uncle-in-law, John Campbell of Danna, and the Duke of Argyll, against his father’s will. Never joined.
James Fraser	Lt.	1757	-	49	26	Prob. (J)	

Alexander Macleod	Lt.	1745	Ind. Company	33	2	(W)	
John (Macgregor) Murray	Lt.	1757	-	c. 22	0		Brother to James Murray of the 55 th Foot. Nephew to Captain Murray of the 57 th Foot. Recommended by the Duke of Argyll.
John Fraser	Lt.	1757	-	c. 30	0		Son of William Fraser of Culbokie.
William Macdonnell	Lt.	1757	-	c. 27	0		Son of Alexander Macdonnell of boisdale and, thus, cousin to <i>Donull Gorm</i> .
Rory Macneil	Lt.	1757	-	?	0		By the Duke of Argyll on the basis that he 'Can easily raise men'.
Alexander Fraser	Lt.	1757	-	28	0		
Archibald Roy Campbell	Lt.	1757	-	29	1	(J) Atholl Brigade	Son of John Campbell of Fortingall and Glenlyon.
Donald Maclean	Lt.	1757	-	?	0		Brother to the Laird of Muck. Never joined.
Charles Macdonnell	Lt.	?	<i>Royal Ecosais</i>	c. 27	0	(J)	Brother to Alasdair Macdonnell of Glengarry.

Alexander Macdonnell	Lt.	1757	-	c. 22	0	(J)	Cousin to Alasdair Macdonnell of Glengarry.
Simon Fraser	Ensign	1757	-	?	0		
Archibald McAlister	Ensign	1757	-	16	0	(W)	Son to Charles McAlister of Loup.
Allan Stewart	Ensign	1757	-	22	1	(J) Wounded at Culloden.	Brother to Alexander Stewart of Invernayle.
Evan Cameron	Ensign	1756	SD	?	>1	(J)	Son of Alexander Cameron, 12 th chief of the Camerons of Glennevis. Brother-in-law to Alexander Grant of the 77 th Foot.
John Fraser	Ensign	1757	-	23	0		Son of Angus Fraser of Erroglie.
John Chisholm	Ensign	1757	-	c. 17	0		Brother to the Laird of Chisholm.
John Mclean	Surgeon	1757	-	c. 22	0		

Source: HL, LO6324, List of Officers, [1757]; McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, II, 81-109.

114th Foot (*Royal Highland Volunteers*) [1761]:

Name	Rank	Rank since	Former Corps	Age	Service (in years)	Affiliation W: Whig J: Jacobite	Connections
Sir Allan Maclean of Torloisk	Major	1761	NY Ind. Regiment and SD			(J)	
The Honourable William Boyd	Captain	1761	87 th Foot			(W)	
George Sutherland	Captain	1761	34 th Foot			(W)	
James Stewart	Captain	1761	85 th Foot				
John Forbes	Captain	1761	12 th Foot				
Robert Campbell	Captain	Pre-1761	SD				
Alex Davison	Capt. Lt	1761	14 th Foot			(W)	By General Jeffries.
Robert Campbell	Lt.	1745	Argyll militia			(W)	By John Campbell, 1 st Earl of Breadalbane.
Andrew Gray	Lt.		3 rd Foot			(W)	By James Hay, 15th Earl of Errol.
Hugh Mclean	Lt.		SD				By Torloisk.
Ludovic Innes	Lt.	1761					By Lord Albion [?].
Murdoch Mclean	Lt.	1761					By Torloisk.

Neil Campbell	Lt.	1761		(W)	By Lord Frederick Campbell.
James Arnot	Lt.	1761		(W)	By John Campbell, 4 th Earl of Loudoun.
Archibald Lamont	Lt.	1761			By Stewart Mackenzie MP.
John Grant	Lt.	1761			
Simon Fraser	Lt.	1761			By Lt. Col. Simon Fraser.
John McQuarrie	Lt.	1761			By Torloisk.
Valantine Chisholm	Ensign	1761	3 rd Foot (Sergeant)		
Peter McArthur	Ensign	1761	Argyll militia (Sergeant)	(W)	By Lord Adam Gordon.
Alex Mclean	Ensign	1761			By Torloisk.
William Barclay	Ensign	1761		(W)	By Lord Adam Gordon.
Peter Gordon	Ensign	1761		(W)	By Lord Adam Gordon.

Source: HL, YO582, List of officers, [1761].