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The Patrick Gordon Diary And Its Context

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Cover image: Patrick Gordon, Lithograph by Kliukvin (early nineteenth century) after a portrait formerly in Winter Palace, St. Petersburg (present whereabouts unknown) from Tagebuch des Generals Patrick Gordon, 1849.
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The six papers gathered in this collection all originated from a meeting held in Aberdeen in May 2009 to mark the publication of the first volume of Patrick Gordon’s Diary in its original language, a most welcome and significant event after three centuries of delay. Dmitry Fedosov of the Institute of General History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who is carrying out the onerous task of editing the Diary as well as translating it into Russian, was invited to attend the meeting along with Mikhail Ryzhenkov, the Director of the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, in which much material pertinent to the Scottish diaspora is to be found, and Oleg Nozdrin, who lectures in Orel and who, together with Dmitry Fedosov, is compiling a prosopography, ‘Lion Rampant to Double Eagle: Scots in Russia, 1600-1700’. These Russian colleagues all gave most interesting addresses, whetting our appetite for the publication of ‘Lion Rampant’ and of further volumes of the Diary.

Paul Bushkovitch, of Yale University, gave the keynote address, ‘Patrick Gordon and Russian Court Politics’, drawing on his intimate knowledge of the subject exhibited to the full in Peter the Great: the Struggle for Power 1671-1725. As Buskovitch says, throughout Europe, monarchical government in the seventeenth century depended on an intricate network of patronage, in which leading individuals vied for advancement and even survival. Although Gordon had made the close acquaintance of the Polish and Swedish military systems during an apprenticeship lasting ten years, he was taken sharply aback by his first encounters with minor officials in Russia. However, because of his valuable expertise, he rose to become the adviser of the greatest in the land. Bushkovitch illumines this process in the context of the structure of Muscovite high society.

The first volume of the Diary is largely devoted to Gordon’s early military experience in Poland. Waldemar Kowalski, of Kielce University, who has carried on pertinent researches in Scotland as well as in his homeland, is supremely fitted to the task of a commentary on ‘Patrick Gordon in His Own Words: a Soldier, a Scot, a Catholic’. Kowalski adds to our understanding of Gordon’s first years as a military man at a critical time for Poland, ‘The
Deluge’ of the 1650s. He also underlines the manner in which our hero depended on his fellow countrymen and his faith to sustain him through mortal danger. Kowalski does not shrink from pointing out errors and misunderstandings in the Diary, few though they might have been, in his rounded appreciation of a valuable source for Polish as well as European history.

When Patrick Gordon answered the enquiry of a fellow Scot for the names of his parents in 1654, his questioner disdainfully responded: ‘Gordon and Ogilvie! These are two great clannies, sure you must be a gentleman’. We are indeed indebted to Barry Robertson of University of Aberdeen for guiding us through a major genealogical thicket in the shape of ‘The Gordons and the North of Scotland’. From the ‘myths and romanticism’ of the medieval origins to a major shift in its fortunes in the 1690s, the family experienced many vicissitudes in its fortunes, and Barry Robertson, who belongs to North East Scotland, makes good use of his provenance as well of his scholarship in his exposition.

Another son of Aberdeenshire, Steve Murdoch of St. Andrews, has produced a wide range of publications on the Scottish diaspora, especially to Scandinavia in the seventeenth century. In collaboration with Alexia Grosjean, he is also responsible for a remarkable database, located at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne. Having already extended his attention on occasion beyond the centre to the east of the continent, he now takes to the sea in ‘Surfing the Waves: the Scottish Diaspora in Maritime Warfare in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Russia in the Baltic Context’. Murdoch clearly establishes a pattern of migration for Scottish sailors, from Denmark-Norway to Sweden and then on to Russia. Thus, he demonstrates that, by the time of Peter the Great’s first manoeuvres on the White Sea in 1694 with Patrick Gordon as Rear-Admiral, mariners from the homeland were poised to take advantage of the opportunities soon to be offered as the Russian Navy took shape in the early eighteenth century.

Until the end of the seventeenth century, Russian activity had been confined for the most part to dry land. Its growth had gone largely unheeded by observers accustomed to think of empire as an overseas phenomenon. However, John E. Wills has argued that: ‘The greatest geopolitical transformation of the world of the seventeenth century was the explosive expansion of trade and settlement across Siberia’. Christoph Witzenrath, until recently Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Aberdeen University, subjects this assertion to a telling analysis, drawing on his remarkable monograph, Cossacks and the Russian
Empire, 1598–1725. Far from subjecting Siberia to their absolutist control, Witzenrath points out, the Romanovs ruled east of the Urals through a virtual compromise with Cossack bands, who played a vital role in the exploitation of this vast region remote from Moscow.

The great historian S. M. Soloviev dubbed foreign mercenaries ‘the Cossacks of Western Europe’, yet few of them penetrated Siberia in the seventeenth century. Gordon himself was told soon after his arrival in Moscow that ‘they would not only not dismiss me, but send me to Siberia or some remote place’ if he persisted in his wish to return to Poland. In fact, although he was to serve in Russia for nearly forty years, he never went even as far as the Volga. The boundaries of the activities of the Scottish and other mercenaries can be taken as an indication of the perimeters of the much-discussed ‘General Crisis’ of the seventeenth century suggested by Eric Hobsbawm in 1954 and revived by Geoffrey Parker and others in 2008. Returning to a subject which he first addressed thirty years ago, Paul Dukes makes use of Patrick Gordon and other Scots in Russia to maintain that the east of Europe needs to be included with the west and centre of the continent in any meaningful consideration of the ‘General Crisis’ and its sequel.

These essays are aimed at enhancing appreciation of Patrick Gordon and his Diary in their context, the subsequent volumes of which will be published by the Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies at the University of Aberdeen. When the complete Diary is available, our understanding of the role of Scots in eastern Europe will be ready for further revaluation, which we look forward to publishing in a future issue of the Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies.

Paul Dukes
University of Aberdeen
Patrick Gordon and Russian Court Politics
Paul Bushkovitch

Peter the Great’s transformation of Russia in the years 1689–1725 is one of the eternal themes of Russian historiography, and is likely to remain so. Peter brought to Russia new forms of state administration that imitated European (mainly Swedish) absolutism, a modern army, a new Europeanized culture that implied a diminished role for religion, and a new capital, Saint Petersburg. Long ago historians saw in the various foreigners living and working in seventeenth-century Russia one of the principal conduits of new ideas and practices. They have been debating the significance of these foreigners ever since. At the beginning of the twentieth century S. F. Platonov believed that the residents of the ‘German Suburb’ (*Nemetskaia sloboda*), merchants and officers, were crucial to the process, especially since Peter himself was in close contact with them in the 1680s. More recently historians and scholars of Russian literature have gone back to a different and earlier group, the Kiev trained clerics who began to introduce new ideas and new forms of education to the Russian elite a generation before Peter.\(^1\) While the various Kievan clerics produced a great many writings that allow us to trace their own views and impressions, the West European foreigners left almost no records, with one dramatic exception, the diary of Patrick Gordon. The Gordon diary, however, has been available only in a highly selective and often inaccurate nineteenth century German translation, a translation that omitted much of the most interesting material.\(^2\) From the full text scholars will be able to investigate a whole range of issues, military, cultural, social, and also political. The politics in question are the politics of the Russian court, from Gordon’s arrival in 1661 until his death in 1699, a period of immense importance in the genesis


of Peter’s transformation of Russia. Court politics were the essence of the Russian state—as well as of most early modern European monarchies—and they are crucial to the understanding of the period. Gordon’s diary allows us to understand more clearly both the rise of the favorites of Tsar Aleksei (1645–76) that is noticeable from the 1660’s onward as well as the rivalry of the Naryshkin faction (Peter’s family and boyar allies) with the regent Sophia and her supporters in the years 1682–89.

The history of the politics of the court is essential to understanding the circumstances that brought Peter, his father’s younger son, to the throne and to power in August-September, 1689. The factional battles of the 1680s grew out of the rise Artamon Matveev (1625–82), in 1671–76 the head of the Ambassadorial Office (Posol’skii prikaz) that directed Russian foreign policy and Aleksei’s principal favorite in those years. It was Matveev that managed to marry Natalia Naryshkina, the daughter of a former fellow officer and Matveev’s client, to Aleksei as his second wife. Her first child was Peter, born in 1672. With Aleksei’s death and Matveev’s fall and exile, the Naryshkin family and its allies tried to keep afloat in a hostile court environment under the weak and sickly Tsar Fyodor, a struggle that ended in 1682 when Fyodor died and (after much uproar from the strel’tsy, the musketeers) Peter was proclaimed co-tsar along with his older half-brother Ivan. As Peter was young, Ivan was in poor health, and the musketeers hated the Naryshkins, actual power went to Peter’s half-sister Sophia and her favorite, Prince V. V. Golitsyn. For Peter and the Naryshkins to come to power, they had to deal with Sophia and Golitsyn. While Peter grew up, his mother Natalia, Prince Boris Golitsyn (V.V.’s cousin), and the more exotic Circassian Prince Mikhail Cherkasskii conducted a battle at court in the name of Peter to prepare his accession to real power.3 Behind the scenes these contending factions determined the fate of Russia, and the new Gordon material throws a great deal of light on that history.

One of the central issues in Russian history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the character of the politics of the Russian court, the interplay of aristocratic factions, their relationship to larger politics and everyday governance, and the all-important question of the role of the tsar. While historians of the sixteenth century have studied this topic for half a century, there are

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far fewer attempts to uncover the analogous story for the seventeenth century, and they are relatively recent.\footnote{A. A. Zimin, Reformy Ivana Groznogo (Moscow, 1960); idem, Oprichnina Ivana Groznogo (Moscow, 1964: new ed., Moscow, 2001); idem, V kanun groznym kh potrasonii: predposylnik pervoi Krest’ianskoi voyny v Rossii (Moscow, 1986); R.G. Skrynnikov, Tsarstvo terrora (St. Petersburg, 1992); idem, Rossiia nakarnune “Smutnogo vremeni” ((Moscow, 1980), Nancy Shields Kollmann, Kinship and Politics: the Making of the Muscovite Political System 1345–1557 (Stanford, California, 1987); A. P. Pavlov, Gosudarev Dvor i policheskaia bor’ba pri Boris Godunove (St. Petersburg, 1992). For a long time the only similar work on the seventeenth century was Robert O. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors: the Boyar Elite in Russia 1613–1689 (Princeton, N. J., 1983), now supplemented by A. P. Pavlov (ed.), Praviashchaia elita Russkogo gosudarstva IX–nachala XVIII veka: ocherki istorii (St. Petersburg, 2006), 373–469, and the works listed in note 2 above.} The cause lies in the relative neglect of the seventeenth century, for the sources are much richer than for earlier periods. Diplomatic sources are much more helpful than for the sixteenth century, for Sweden had a resident agent in Moscow from about 1630, and after the Andrusovo truce with Poland (1667) the obviously enhanced importance of Russia brought permanent ambassadors from Denmark and the Dutch Republic as well. A permanent Polish embassy came after 1684, though its records have not survived in large quantity. Furthermore, Russian sources are both more abundant and more useful for this purpose. From the 1670s onward there is some correspondence of at least a few boyars, the most important being that of prince V. V. Golitsyn. Pavel Sedov has uncovered a source of unmatched interest in the correspondence of monks from provincial monasteries reporting on their dealings with Moscow offices and grandees.\footnote{Lindsey Hughes, Russia and the West: the Life of a Seventeenth Century Westernizer, Prince Vasily Vasil’evich Golitsyn 1643–1714 (Newtonville, Mass., 1984); Bushkovitch, Peter, 106–10; Sedov, Zakat, 8.} The importance of such private sources is that they allow the historian to move beyond the problem of coordinating the information in diplomatic reports with the evidence of promotions and office holding contained in the records of the Razriad (‘Ordering’ Office’), that managed the military and kept records of military and court ranks), a method that inevitably involves some degree of uncertainty in its results. The Gordon diary provides an inside view of the Russian army, court, and elite over thirty years that no other source can offer.

Gordon’s position as a Scottish mercenary officer of Catholic faith in Russia gave him an angle of vision possessed by no other source. As a daily participant in the affairs of the Russian army and the offices that administered it (in his case mainly the Inozemskii prikaz, or Foreigners’ Office, which managed the mercenaries), Gordon reports on the reality of events that otherwise
we know only from the official record. As a foreigner, there are inevitably aspects of government affairs and daily life that he did not know about, but the same position as a foreigner means that he noticed things that Russians simply took for granted. Like the diplomats, he allows us to move beyond the endlessly repeated clichés about foreign observers of Russia and their stereotypes. Gordon could certainly repeat those, as he does at the beginning of his description of his time in Russia (II, 129v–130v), but for the rest of the text he provides a pragmatic account of events and conversations free of generalizations. He also clearly did not find Russia incomprehensible or enigmatic. He may have had his views on Russian character, but neither the army nor the government seemed to him peculiar. The diplomats were the same: they did not agonize over questions such as the nature of the Russian boyarstvo (was it a nobility or not?). They just called it Adel in German or noblesse in French and left it at that. For the Scandinavian diplomats writing in German, the duma was simply the Reichsrat, a literal German translation of the Swedish/Danish riksråd, the aristocratic council of state that advised the Kings of Sweden and Denmark. Similarly Gordon has no difficulty with the structure of the Russian state; to him it is comprehensible in familiar terms: a monarch, his court, the great nobles, the army.

Gordon was an observer of Russian court politics, not a participant. He describes the disputes among the great, but seems to have scrupulously kept to his military position, following the orders of his superiors and providing them with advice when needed. Until 1687 he worked well with Prince V. V. Golitsyn and did not get involved with the Naryshkin faction, though he had many personal ties with it through his fellow officers (Daniel Crawford, Paul Menzies) dating back to the 1660s. When the Naryshkin group approached him in 1688, he was friendly but did not rush into their arms. He was not a client, rather a professional military officer whose contract was to serve in the Russian army, and that is what he did.

What follows is not a complete study of Gordon’s observation of Russian court politics. It is merely an attempt to place Gordon in the complex network of alliances at the Russian court, which extended to some degree into the army, and to record the information that he provided on these issues. This information begins from the very first moment of his arrival in Moscow, indeed in a sense before that moment.

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6 References to the unpublished Gordon Diary in the text are given in the form of volumes in Roman numerals and folio numbers in Arabic numerals.

7 Bushkovitch, Peter, 8–10.
According to the diary, it was Daniel Crawford who (with the Russian envoy Z. F. Leont’ev) convinced Gordon to come to Russia, and he left Warsaw for Moscow in July, 1661, in the company of Daniel Crawford and Paul Menzies (II, 119v–20). On arrival in Moscow, Gordon’s first Russian contacts were, as was to be expected, with the Inozemskii prikaz and its then head, the boyar II’ia Danilovich Miloslavskii, tsar Aleksei’s father-in-law and one of the most powerful men at the court until 1668. His first meeting was not a happy one, for it was Miloslavskii that made Gordon show his ability to handle arms like a private soldier (II, 128–28v). By the end of the year the relations at the court were already clear, for it was F. M. Rtishchev’s ‘great dissension’ at that time with Miloslavskii that allowed Gordon to come out unscathed from a nasty dispute over housing (II, 137–37v). He also reported Ordin-Nashchokin as ‘a very wise statesman and in great favor with the Tzar’ (II, 142) under December, 1661, and July, 1663, as ‘a favourite of the Czars’ (II, 173). Gordon seems to have had some informal ties to Ordin-Nashchokin, as he sent a letter to his fiancée in Moscow with the dignitary (or someone in his suite) in July of the next year (II, 189v). Early in 1665 the affair of Lt. Generals Drummond and Dalyell’s release from Russian service shows Gordon’s awareness of the power relations at court. The tsar had granted their release at their own request supported by Ordin-Nashchokin and prince Iurii Alekseevich Dolgorukii (II, 200v), but ‘the better sort of the Russes were hugely displeased with their demission, especially Elia Daniel. [Miloslavskii], the Emperours father in law, was in the highest degree irritated’ (II, 204v). The escape of colonel Kalkstein, an officer in Polish service and prisoner of war in Russia, gave an excuse to try to stop them, and Drummond wrote to Gordon to ask him to procure an order from the tsar ‘by the meanes’ of Ordin-Nashchokin or Dolgorukii to prevent any attempt to hold them back. Gordon saw the two dignitaries the next day and got the order (II, 205).

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8 Bushkovitch, Peter, 60–3. 75, 81, 89–90, 149; N. V. Charykov, Posol’stvo v Rim i sluzhba v Moskve Pavla Menzizia 1637–1694: issledovanie (St. Petersburg, 1906).

9 S. K. Bogoiavlenskii, Moskovskii prikaznyi apparat i deloproizvodstvo XVI–XVII vekov (Moscow, 2006), 263.

10 Gordon’s evidence shows that Ordin-Nashchokin was in favor rather earlier than usually reported. Ordin-Nashchokin was a dumnyi dvorianin in 1658–65, rising to okol’nichii in 1665, boyar in 1667 when he took control of the Posol’skii prikaz: Marshall T. Poe, Ol’ga Kosheleva, Russell Martin, Boris Morozov, The Russian Elite in the Seventeenth Century, Annales Academiae scientiarum fennicae, Humaniora 322–3 (2 vols, Helsinki, 2004), I, 431. In the same years 1661–2 the imperial ambassador Meyerberg did not notice Ordin-Nashchokin among the tsar’s favorites. Historians, including the present author, dated his rise from the the success of the negotiations.
In the summer of 1666 Gordon went to England to deliver the tsar’s letters to King Charles II, so he did not record the Andrusovo treaty of January 30, 1667, which raised Ordin-Nashchokin so much in the tsar’s estimation that he appointed him head of the Posol’skii prikaz in February of that year.

The first volume of Gordon’s diary is followed by a gap of ten years, from 1667 to 1677. Thus there is no description of the crucial years of Ordin-Nashchokin’s tenure as head of the Posol’skii prikaz and favorite of the tsar, nor of his fall and replacement in both positions by Artamon Matveev. Similarly we do not know what Gordon did at the time of the accession of tsar Fyodor and the fall of Matveev. When the diary resumes Gordon was in the south at Sevsk with the army, though he does mention the decision to confiscate more of Matveev’s property and send him to Pustozersk under May 25, 1677 (II, 6v). Nevertheless the second volume does contain some information about Gordon’s relationship to the emerging court factions, since he tells us that from his arrival in Moscow in 1661 he served with Paul Menzies in the regiment of Daniel Crawford (2, 128v). Gordon had come to Russia with the two Scots, and it is not surprising that he would serve with them at first. Crawford was promoted to Major-General in July, 1663, but Gordon seems to have continued to serve under him (II, 173v). He went with him to Smolensk, arriving 25 May, 1664 (2, 186v). When Crawford was recalled to Moscow at the end of the year, Gordon was supposed to take the regiment but soon returned to Moscow himself (II, 199, 200). There Gordon received the rank of colonel in February and was ordered to remain in Moscow rather than proceed to Smolensk as he had planned (II, 207–8). In this situation it was Paul Menzies whom Gordon asked to take care of his affairs in Smolensk (II, 208–8v). Crawford returned to Smolensk, where Gordon wrote to him as well as Menzies, throughout the year (II, 209, 214). Crawford then disappears from the diary (he died in 1674), but Gordon does mention handling the correspondence of Menzies with his father from London in November-December 1666 (II, 250v, 252).

The Crawford-Menzies connection is important because both directly and through their friends among Marselis clan the two Scottish friends of Gordon were part of the larger network of the Naryshkin family and their patron Matveev. Kirill Naryshkin, the father of Natalia, served as colonel of a regiment of musketeers with Crawford in Smolensk. Indeed at the time of her marriage to tsar Aleksei in 1671 the rumor in Moscow was that Natalia had picked up Polish habits from her time as the colonel’s daughter in Smolensk. Indeed at the time of her marriage to tsar Aleksei in 1671 the rumor in Moscow was that Natalia had picked up Polish habits from her time as the colonel’s daughter in Smolensk. Menzies

even described her on his Italian embassy as a ‘girl from Smolensk’. Before his command in Smolensk, Kirill and his brother had served under Matveev in his regiment, and entered the court ranks only after Matveev had married off Natalia to Aleksei. This, in fact was the real background of the Naryshkin marriage, not the eighteenth century fantasy that Natalia was Matveev’s ward (*vospitannitsa*).\(^{11}\) Finally, the Dutch ambassador in Russia in 1669–70, Nicholas Heinsius, met Daniel Crawford and Peter Marselis, and from them learned of the Naryshkin marriage project a full year before it came to completion. Marselis was also the main informant later for the Danish ambassador (who for foreign policy reasons was pro-Matveev) and on the death of Marselis Menzies took his place as the Dane’s chief source of information.\(^{12}\)

The significance of these rather complex interrelations is twofold. First, Gordon was close friends with the circle out of which came, under Matveev’s guidance, the second marriage of tsar Aleksei. There is no evidence that Gordon knew Matveev himself well, which is not a surprise since the Scot was at that time too far down in the military hierarchy. It does, however, make one think about Gordon’s later success with Peter. Second, Gordon’s diary provides further evidence of the ties of friendship as well as marriage among the Crawford, Marselis, and Menzies families, making it clear that the foreign officers and merchants in Russia were solidly enough established by the 1660s to form such ties, ties that lasted over decades, and that their networks were entwined with Russian networks of similar type in the army and the court.

Unfortunately the third volume of Gordon’s diary has very little to illuminate his ties to the various groupings. He does describe the wedding of the widow of Peter Marselis to Menzies on 11 February 1677, who also served at Chigirin. Other guests at the wedding included unspecified princes Golitsyn and the ‘young’ Dolgorukii, presumably prince Mikhail Iur’evich (III, 3, 41v). Among the Golitsyns was surely prince Vasilii Vasil’evich, with whom Gordon had dined a few weeks earlier (III, 1). Yet among his protectors was also prince V. V. Golitsyn’s rival, prince G. G. Romodanovskii (III, 1v). It seems that both Menzies and Gordon were keeping up good relations with all the main groupings at court in 1677, the Golitsyns, Dolgorukiis, and Romodanovskiis. Most of the volume is taken up with the siege of Chigirin and other moments of Gordon’s service in the south. Gordon had a great deal of contact with princes V. V. Golitsyn and Romodanovskii, but as they were the principal commanders, these contacts reflect mainly reflect his service with the army.

\(^{11}\) Bushkovitch, *Peter*, 57–60.

\(^{12}\) Bushkovitch, *Peter*, 61 note 29, 75 note 58, 80–1 note 2.
The fourth volume, in contrast, covering 1684 to 1689, reveals a great deal about the court politics of the time as well as Gordon’s own attitude toward them. It opens with Gordon making a trip to Moscow from his usual residence in Kiev. Gordon had been ordered to Kiev at the end of 1678 to supervise the fortifications, and he remained there for the next five years (IV, 7v). Thus his contacts were primarily with the Russian officers and officials in Kiev, as well as with the Ukrainian Cossack commanders, including Hetman Ivan Samoilovich, the Kiev city elite, and a number of prominent local clergymen. He also came into contact with more of the foreign officers, the most important for the future being François Lefort, whom he requested and received as a subordinate in 1678. Lefort’s wife was also Gordon’s cousin by marriage.13

The contacts with the Russian elite made when Gordon was in Kiev centered around the commanders of the army sent south to Sevsk and Kiev as well as the Russian governors in Kiev itself. Among the Kiev governors the most important contacts were with the Sheremetevs. On his trip to Moscow in January, 1684, he dined with P. V. Sheremetev the elder, who had served as governor in Kiev and was now the head of the Oruzheinyi prikaz (Armory Office) and several other palace offices (IV, 1v).14 Gordon may have met Sheremetev many years before, since the former served in various southern fortresses in 1667–9, while the latter was governor of Kiev (1666–8)15, and the garrisons on the western part of the southern frontier had many dealings with the Kiev governors. While Gordon was in Sevsk (1670–7), however, Sheremetev served as voevoda (governor) in Simbirsk, Novgorod, and Tobol’sk in succession and did not return to Kiev until 1681. With him came his son Fyodor Petrovich as his ‘tovarisch’ (associate) and his younger son Boris, Peter’s future field marshal.16 The elder Sheremetev was much more than an official contact, for Gordon did not only dine with him in Moscow. Sheremetev’s son Fyodor Petrovich arrived in Kiev as voevoda in August, 1684 (IV, 27v), but at first Gordon did not see much of him (two dinners, 16 November and Christmas, IV, 36v, 40). He received letters from the father late in 1684 and in January 1685 and Gordon wrote to Sheremetev ‘in answer to his, with promise of faithful advice to his sonne’ (IV, 54). In May the Scot received another letter ‘full of love’ (IV, 73). From then onward Gordon dined with the

14 Bogoiaevskii, Moskovskii prikaznyi apparat, 304.
16 Barsukov, Spiski, 103, 154, 208, 241.
governor more often, including a wedding and a feast where Mazepa was one of the guests (IV, 56v, 57v, 61, 64, 70v, 71v, 77). Gordon describes the illness, death, and funeral of the younger Sheremetev’s wife (the daughter of Hetman Samoilovich) in some detail (e.g. IV, 64v) as well as the property complications afterwards.

Patrick Gordon was clearly friendly with the Sheremetevs beyond the official level. He records similar contacts, with the previous governor, A.P. Saltykov but there are no personal letters (IV, 17, 17v, 18, 26). Gordon records writing to another previous governor, prince N. S. Urusov, who had served in Kiev in 1679, but in neither case is there any hint of greater intimacy (IV, 12, 63v).17

The friendship with the Sheremetevs placed Gordon alongside one of the most powerful boyar clans, and one that kept its distance from the circle around V.V. Golitsyn and Sofiia. The Sheremetevs seem not to have involved themselves in the increasingly acrimonious relationships of Sofiia and Tsaritsa Natalia, of Prince Boris Golitsyn and the Naryshkin clan with the supporters of the favorite. The younger Sheremetevs served in the household of tsar Ivan, not Peter. Nevertheless in 1689 they would land on Peter’s side and be rewarded for their efforts, perhaps following the lead of P.I. Prozorovskii, Ivan’s d’iadka (tutor), who came over to Peter in the crisis.18

The Sheremetev connection also puts into perspective Gordon’s relationship with pr V.V. Golitsyn himself and followers. Golitsyn was not just the dominant favorite at court after 1682, he was an important military commander under whom Gordon had served several times, and many of Golitsyn’s clients (L.R. Nepliuev, V.A. Zmeev, S.F. Tolochanov, and the Narbekovs) were among the Scot’s frequent correspondents.19 In January, 1684, in Moscow Gordon had ‘private conference’ with Golitsyn himself on the prospect of a war with the Ottoman Empire and Crimea and the alliance with Poland and the Empire, presenting the favorite with a detailed memorandum on the subject (V, 1b–6v). He was certainly aware of the situation at the Russian court, for one of the possible objections to the war, according to Gordon, was ‘That there are two [rulers], by which means the state is divided into factions, the nonconcordance, jealousies, and dissentions among the nobility breeding confusion and irresolution in counsells’ (IV, 2). The objection, he thought, was not so serious since the two tsarevich were young, and as long as the ‘most

17 Barsukov, Spiski, 103.
18 Bushkovitch, Peter, 129, 133, 161, 171.
19 Bushkovitch, Peter, 168–9.
eminent persons’ agreed, the war could be successful (IV, 3–3v). Gordon remained cautious, for he at first declined the offer to meet one of the young princes, preferring to meet them both. In the event, Peter’s illness (an excuse?) meant that he only met Ivan, who was ‘sickly and infirm’ (IV, 7). As Gordon was preparing to return to Kiev in March, Golitsyn told him “that for my liberty to go out of the country I should rely on him, and that I should writt confidently to him of all things that passed in Kyow” (IV, 9). This latter task Gordon fulfilled regularly, as the diary records.

The Diary’s account of these discussions with Golitsyn leaves the impression that Gordon wanted to discuss the Turkish war, but that he did not want to be forced to make a choice between the rival factions. He wanted a formal audience with both Ivan and Peter, not just one. Golitsyn’s offer to him, to see just one and to choose himself which, seems almost like a trap, designed to find out the Scot’s estimation of which side was more important or with which he had greater sympathy. The request to inform him of all matters in Kiev, coupled with the promise to support his plans to go to Scotland, sounds like the prince was telling him that unless he cooperated, the Scot would never leave the country.

As it happened, Gordon did go to England and Scotland in 1686 to take care of his own business as well as that of the Russian government. The trip came after a year of lobbying with the government for redress of various grievances, mainly about pay and promotion, that had accumulated over the years (IV, 73v–6). He wrote to Golitsyn himself about this matter in June, with requests for support to P. V. Sheremetev and L. R. Nepliuev (IV, 77v–8). Then he was called to Moscow, and in January, 1686, he left for London (IV, 99v–101v), returning at the end of August with a letter from King James II to the tsars (IV, 143v–4v). Back in Moscow, Gordon’s relationship with Golitsyn and Sofiia deteriorated sharply. He composed an even greater petition than before which produced such a negative reaction that he was told by ‘some Russes, who pretended to by my ffriends, that if I did not petition for favour or grace’, he might be sent with his family to some remote place of exile. Two additional issues appeared, one that the Russians felt that James was too pro-Turkish, and the other was that Sofiia was angry at his ‘obstinacy’ apparently in persisting in presenting his grievances (IV, 145, 146–6v). Gordon realized that he had to surrender: he went to Izmailovo, where Sofiia and Ivan were staying, and met Golitsyn, who reproved him for trying to leave Russian service and demanded that he acknowledge his error and ask forgiveness. The assembled courtiers ‘did all
fall to the Boyars syde and in his favour, though even against reason and their owne judgment’ (IV, 147–7v). He then went to the Posol’skii prikaz, where its head, Emel’ian Ukraintsev, gave him a petition with the right formulas to copy, which Gordon did with some amendments (IV, 147v–48). Gordon was forgiven (IV, 148–49v). He continued to be entertained by Golitsyn, who obviously was also trying to efface the bad impression he had created (IV, 155, 158).

Much of the rest of the diary for 1687 is taken up with Gordon’s account of the Crimean campaign of 1687 during which, in Gordon’s account, Golitsyn instigated and managed the ouster of Ukrainian Hetman Samoilovich and his replacement by Ivan Mazepa.20 Back in Moscow in the fall Gordon had many official encounters with the favorite, but was entertained only once (14 December: IV, 187v; there are gaps in the diary for that autumn).

Early in 1688 Gordon, apparently suddenly, began to make contact with a whole new group in Moscow, the household of tsar Peter. On January 7, 1688, he records that ‘I dined by Kniaz Boris Alex. Golitzin, was merry, and came late home’. The next day princes Petr Alekseevich Golitsyn and Boris Fyodorovich Dolgorukov dined with Gordon (IV, 193–3v). This was a highly important trio. Prince Boris was the kravchii (cupbearer) for Tsar Peter, effectively the head of his household, as well as the most important and most visible leader of his faction at court. Prince Petr Golitsyn was his brother, a komnatnyi stol’nik (roughly equivalent to gentleman of the bedchamber) of Peter since at least 1676, and Prince Boris Dolgorukov was a komnatnyi stol’nik to Peter’s mother, Tsaritsa Natalia. His brother, Prince Iakov Fyodorovich Dolgorukov, also served as komnatnyi stol’nik to Peter, and was at that moment on a diplomatic mission to France and Spain. Both Iakov Dolgorukii and Petr Golitsyn had prominent careers in the army, the Senate and diplomatic corps in later years.21

Ten days later Gordon visited Andrei Artamonovich Matveev, and the next day dined with him (IV, 194). He too served Peter as komnatnyi stol’nik, but even more important he was the son of Artamon Matveev, tsar Aleksei’s last

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20 Golitsyn’s role in the ‘election’ of Mazepa is a sore point of Ukrainian historiography, for whom the role of Mazepa as a Russian stooge in 1687 is an uncomfortable fact. See Bushkovitch, Peter, 152–3, note 50, and most recently Tat’iana Tairova-Iakovleva, Mazepa (Moscow, 2007), 48–54.

21 Bushkovitch, Peter, 125–69, 175–7, 194; Poe, Russian Elite I, 397, 404; [P. I. Ivanov], Alfavitynyi ukazatel’ familiy i lits, upominaemykh v boiarskikh spiskakh (Moscow, 1853), 93, 118.
favorite and the man responsible for the tsar’s marriage to Peter’s mother.\footnote{Bushkovitch, \textit{Peter}, 49–79, 123–30, 141–2, 177; Sedov, \textit{Zakat}, 111–89.}
The diary now begins to record more information about Peter, his fireworks at Maslenitsa (Shrovetide, February 21) and his return to Moscow (June 23), his name day and return to his favorite suburban residence at Preobrazhenskoe a few days later (IV, 196v, 206–6v). Gordon continued to see Golitsyn: ‘A feast by Kniaaz Boris Alex. Golitzin at his countrie house, where with much company merry’ (July 25; IV, 208). Prince V. V. Golitsyn’s movements continue to appear in the diary, but Gordon saw less of him personally, and now always without incident. He dined with him on August 30, where the prince again complained that King James was not favorable enough to Russia, apparently over commercial dealings (IV, 210v).

September, 1688, brought a whole new element to Gordon’s life. Peter began to ask for drummers from the Scot for his own regiments, to the anger of V. V. Golitsyn. On the fifteenth Gordon dined with colonel Le Fort, one of several meetings recorded that year, but this time prince Boris Golitsyn, one of the guests, ‘came to my house but did not stay’. What they probably discussed becomes clear in the next entry, for 17 September: ‘In the afternoon the yongest Tzaar comeing from Prebrozinsko, I did meet his M. and was honoured with a kiss of his hand, and enquired of my health’ (IV, 211v, –2).

Gordon realized that he was now meeting regularly with members of a faction at court, the Naryshkin faction opposed to Sofiaia and V.V. Golitsyn. Describing one of his now rather rare meetings with the latter he wrote that ‘I dined by Elias Tabort, where was the Boyar K. V. V. and \textit{most of that party}’ (emphasis mine, IV, 213v, 30 September). His new friends did not mean that he totally ignored the still dominant party, for he had plenty of business to transact. The autumn of 1688 was the moment of the Glorious Revolution in England, which naturally caused dismay to Gordon and he discussed it at length with Fyodor Shaklovityi, the ‘second favorite’ at the end of November (IV, 220). He remained in contact with Zmeev and L. R. Nepliuev, and dined again with V. V. Golitsyn and his son in February, 1689 (IV, 229).\footnote{Fyodor Leont’evich Shaklovityi was the main supporter of Sofiaia and V. Golitsyn among the government clerks (d’iaki) and an important figure in his own right. After 1682 he headed both the \textit{Razriad} and the Musketeer Office, giving him control over the army. He achieved the rank of duma secretary, the highest rank of clerks, giving him access to the duma. A major actor in 1689, he was executed on Peter’s victory. Bushkovitch, \textit{Peter}, 159–62, 165–8.} Thus by the time of the second Crimean campaign Gordon had made solid contact with
the Naryshkin faction and Peter’s household, without breaking ties with prince V. V. Golitsyn, though those seem to have become more of a formality of his military service. How can this change be explained?

There is clearly some personal side to the new contacts. François Lefort was Gordon’s relative by marriage, thought the diary does not suggest that they were personally very close (or Gordon did not record all contacts with Lefort because they were too common). Lefort, however, was close to prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn from at least 1685, for that it is what he wrote to his brother Ami in Geneva in March of that year: ‘le Prince Knese Borris Alexevits c’est celuy qui m’ayme d’une amitié extraordinaire’. Prince Boris had promised him a cavalry regiment and dined frequently with Lefort. Lefort may not have wanted to put on paper the role of the prince in court politics, but he was perfectly aware that his other role, besides that of kravchii to Peter, was to head the Kazanskii dvorets (Kazan palace). There is no way of knowing whose was the initiative in the meetings of Gordon and Boris Golitsyn, but Lefort undoubtedly had some role. Another intermediary may have been Paul Menzies, who also seems to have been a friend of Boris Golitsyn. The other personal side to Gordon’s sudden contact with the Naryshkin faction may be his bad experiences with V. V. Golitsyn and Sofiia in late 1686 over the rejection of his grievances. Gordon never records that sort of inner thoughts, though he did mention his very unhappy state of mind, and the dinners with V. V. Golitsyn seem to become rarer after this moment. Neither does Gordon record his thoughts about the 1687 Crimean campaign, though reading between the lines he clearly noted the failures of leadership. He does not tell us what he thought of the removal of Samoilovich, with whom he was in constant contact during his time in Kiev, though he makes it clear that Mazepa received the Hetmanate not from the desires of the Ukrainian Cossacks but as the result of Golitsyn’s manipulation of the election. More careful study of the 1687 campaign might throw more light on Gordon’s conclusions about it.

Whatever personal grievances the Scot might have had, there is another element in his new-found contacts with Peter and his household. In 1688 Peter reached the age of sixteen, and even before his birthday, exactly in January, the diplomats report that the young tsar for the first time began to take at least formal part in public affairs. He was brought to the duma, and his uncle Lev Kirillovich Naryshkin received the rank of boyar. In other words, Peter

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24 F. Lefort: Sbornik, 77.
25 One of the diplomats reporting all this was the Dutch resident Keller, with whom Gordon was in frequent contact: Bushkovitch, Peter, 154.
was approaching manhood, and V. V. Golitsyn and Sofiia could not pretend otherwise. The Naryshkin group was coming out into the open, and perhaps it was they who (through Lefort) wanted to meet Gordon, by now a general and an important figure among the foreign officers.

The final crisis of the regency of Tsarevna Sofiia came in the wake of the Crimean campaign of 1689. The campaign was no more a success than that of two years before, and at the end of June the soldiers were sent home, the orders coming with V. V. Golitsyn’s client V. S. Narbekov, with forewarning from Andrei Lyzlov, the future author of the *Skifskaja istoriia*, an account of the Ottoman Empire that was among the first Russian historical works to rely mainly on Western sources (IV, 243). The last part of the diary for 1689 is one of the sections that earlier historians most often cited from the Posselt translation, the description of the collapse of the regency of Sofiia and Peter’s rise to power. S. M. Solov’ev, E. Shmurlo, M. M. Bogoslovskii, and all later historians used the diary in Posselt’s translation, directly or through earlier historians. Fortunately this part of Posselt’s translation was among the fullest, and has provided the most detailed chronology of events, apart from the gap for 19–31 August. Solov’ev was among the first to use the diary, though he was not interested in Gordon’s relationship to the court factions. He cited the Scot merely as an ‘eyewitness’ or even impersonally: ‘сохранилось любопытное известие’ (‘a curious notice has been preserved’). Gordon himself entered Solov’ev’s account of events only as a commander in September, when he openly went over to Peter. Bogoslovskii used him more extensively and did investigate his connections. He used Gordon with other sources to demonstrate that Boris Golitsyn was in charge at the Trinity Monastery. He also cited Gordon in the Posselt version to mean that Gordon believed that Boris Golitsyn was sending orders to the ~strel’tsy~ without Peter’s knowledge, but Gordon actually wrote only that ‘it was bruted about’ (IV, 250v). Even so, Bogoslovskii does not seem to have realized how thoroughly Gordon understood the factional lineup at the court. He asserted as if it was new that under 23 September 1688 Gordon noted the division of the court into two factions. In fact the statement may not refer to court parties (IV, 213), though the later comment under 29 September (IV, (213v) does clearly refer to them.

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As we know, however, Gordon was aware of the divisions already early in 1684 (above). Bogoslovskii did derive from the Posselt version that in 1688 prince B. A. Golitsyn ‘особенно сблизился’ (‘grew particularly close’) with Gordon and Lefort, but he did not realize how new was Boris Golitsyn’s contact with Gordon nor (since he did not have Lefort’s correspondence) that Golitsyn and Lefort were already close in 1685. For the actual events of 1689, however, Gordon provided the basic chronology, and on that basis historians have added the information derived from Russian sources such as the Shaklovitiy trial and other archival material. Bogoslovskii created the fullest account on that basis, and later historians, Reinhard Wittram, N. I. Pavlenko, A. S. Lavrov, Lindsey Hughes, and the present author largely followed Bogoslovskii’s version of events, supplementing it with other sources. Only Hughes had some direct access to Gordon’s original text. Thus Gordon’s diary provided the skeleton of the narrative of 1689, fleshed out by other foreign and Russian material.

The original text of Gordon’s diary, in the original language and without Posselt’s omissions, provides a revised picture of Gordon’s relationship to Russian court politics. He did not merely come into contact with the Naryshkin faction early in 1688. From the time of his arrival in Russia in 1661 his Scottish friends and fellow officers, Daniel Crawford and Paul Menzies, had most of their Russian contacts with the Naryshkin group, starting with the father of tsaritsa Natalia. By 1678 Gordon had François Lefort under his command, who was also to become his relative by marriage. In these years none of the foreign officers were any sense involved in the Russia court factions, rather they seem to have kept out of the disputes and served diligently in the army under whoever fate placed over them, Il’ia Miloslavskii, princes Vasilii Golitsyn and Grigorii Romodanovskii. As time went on, this degree of distance became harder to sustain. As the years passed, Lefort and especially Gordon rose in importance and rank. By 1684 Gordon was speaking very frankly to prince Vasilii Golitsyn about foreign affairs, and trying to maintain his neutrality in Russian politics, even under some pressure from the prince. When his relative Lefort described Prince Boris Golitsyn as his friend in 1685, Gordon had become indirectly entangled the Naryshkin faction. Personally he held off until early 1688, when he came into frequent contact with Boris Golitsyn and Peter himself, though even then he does not seem to have been as closely involved as Lefort. In the crisis of August, 1689, the foreign officers were at

29 See above, and Bogoslovskii, *Petr*, I, 93.
first not pressed to make a choice. Only on 4 September, when orders arrived from Peter to come to the Trinity Monastery, did Gordon make a move. After some discussion among the officers, and after they had informed Vasilii Golitsyn, Gordon told his colleagues that ‘I was resolved to go, and would be gone in the evening’. This decision decided the rest of the mercenary officers: ‘whereupon all great and small made ready’ (IV, 253v).

Even so Gordon was not taking the initiative. Prince Vasilii Golitsyn, by the Scot’s account, was already looking for a way out of the crisis, a sign of weakness (IV, 252v: 3 September 1689). It was not to be expected that Gordon would take the initiative. Aside from the unpredictability of the outcome, Gordon knew that the relations between the factions were complicated. He recorded both Boris Golitsyn’s attempt to get his cousin Vasilii to surrender peaceably and ask for Peter’s favor on 2 September, and the later moves by Prince Boris to lighten Vasilii’s sentence (IV, 252, 256v). Most important, Gordon as a foreign mercenary officer, however high in rank, did not get totally involved in Russian court politics. He stood just outside them, and though clearly aligned with the Naryshkin faction in 1688–89, he was not a participant until the very end. What his story shows is the complexity of court factions in late seventeenth century Russia, with their long reach into the community of foreign officers, merchants, and diplomats. Around the actual actors, the great boyars at the court and the members of the ruling dynasty, were a larger number of lesser folk, Russian and foreign officers and others, on whom the factions hoped that they could rely in a crisis. Gordon was not an independent actor in Russian court politics, but he was more than a passive witness.

Patrick Gordon was the highest ranking and most prominent of the foreign officers in the Russian army and his story reveals a great deal about the role of those officers. His attitude was not, of course, universal. Many of the officers, maybe most of them, stayed out of Russian politics entirely. Others, most prominently Paul Menzies, were more deeply involved, and perhaps that is the reason that the more cautious Gordon says relatively little about him. As the foreign officers were, at the end of the seventeenth century, essential to the Russian army, Gordon’s account of their role is enough to make it a crucial source, but there is more. It is an important source for the politics of the court. From the full text of the diary we have new information about the relations among the prominent figures at the court in the 1660s and a much more nuanced chronicle of the factional battles of the 1680s. Unfortunately most of the entries for the reign of tsar Fyodor are lost, except for the Chigirin
campaign, where there is naturally little about the disputes among grandees back in Moscow.\footnote{For the 1680s Gordon also provides much information on the relations among the colonels of the Ukrainian hetmanate and the doings of the Hetmans themselves as well as their ties to prominent figures in Moscow, especially prince V. V. Golitsyn. This is an important topic that will repay further investigation.} Finally, the Gordon diary in its original version remains the best account of the course of events in 1689.

It has been normal in Russian historiography to divide sources into ‘foreign’ and Russian. This classification ignores the radical differences among the foreigners, lumping together the reports of casual tourists with those of diplomats who spent years cultivating contacts at the court. It also ignores the unique features of the records of foreigners who to a greater or lesser degree integrated themselves into Russian life. Gordon’s diary has normally been considered one of the ‘foreign’ accounts of Russia, and to be sure he was a Scot and not a Russian. Nevertheless, the diary—again, something visible only in the full version—reveals a man who was indeed a foreigner, but at the same time an insider on the Russian scene. Perhaps he is better classified among the many foreigners who came to Russia and retained ties with their original homes, but whose life was nevertheless more involved with Russia more than with their countries of origin. Such were Gordon’s contemporaries such as the Marselis family or Paul Menzies, in a later century the sculptor Carlo Rastrelli and his son Francesco (the architect of the Winter Palace) or the boyhood tutor of Tsar Paul, Baron Ludwig Nicolai, and many other Europeans whose lives ended up forever tied to Russia and her history. As a source the Gordon diary is not of the same type as the works of even the most talented diplomats of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Baron Sigismund von Herberstein and Adam Olearius, much less tourists such as Cornelis de Bruyn or Francesco Algarotti in the eighteenth. However well-intentioned, the diplomats and tourists came to Russia for a short time, had few unofficial contacts, and normally knew nothing of the language. Gordon’s diary is more of a piece with the memoirs of count Ernst Münnich from the time of Catherine the Great or those of General Theodor Schubert in the nineteenth century, foreigners who became part of the Russian scene, who wrote in French and German but saw Russia from the inside. It is this insider view, combined with Gordon’s literary talent and sharp eye, which makes it an invaluable testimony to a central moment in Russian history.

\textit{Yale University}
Patrick Gordon in His Own Words: 
a Soldier, a Scot, a Catholic

Waldemar Kowalski

Introduction

The *Diary of General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries* is without a doubt one of the most important and yet to this day lesser known sources of life in seventeenth-century Poland. Admittedly, this diary is known to British and Polish historiography not only because of its unique wealth of information on the topic of Scottish immigrants in central Europe but also for its testimony of the wars that occurred in the region. One reason for the diary’s fragmentary use has been the lack of a modern publication of the source material which would meet the needs of the modern reader. Thankfully, such an edition is now, at least partly, available. The goal of the paper below is therefore to take a closer look at selected cognitive advantages of this unique source.

The Scot Patrick Gordon was born in 1635 to a noble family in Aberdeenshire. After acquiring a rudimentary education and, as a confessing Roman Catholic, not wanting to attend the Protestant university in his country,
he decided to emigrate. He left in 1651 and his choice of destination was a matter of chance. He had no contacts abroad but it happened that in the Aberdeen port at that time was a ship from Gdańsk (Danzig) getting ready to sail. On 18 July that ship arrived in Gdańsk. After eight days, he made his way from there with Scottish priest Father Blackhall and others to Braniewo (Braunsberg) in order to begin his studies at the city’s well-known college. Remembering these moments from the perspective of his whole life he praised the educational endeavours of the Braniewo priests. Gordon, a deeply believing Catholic, always described the Jesuits with respect. However in 1653 he took a break in his education as he could not bear the discipline demanded of the students.

Nevertheless, he did not return to his fatherland. Some of his fellow countrymen, who he met on an almost daily basis throughout Prussia, suggested that he involve himself in trade, but the eighteen-year-old Patrick was more tempted by military service. He also constantly thought of returning home. Aware of this desire, he made his way to Poznań. He believed with certainty that that city in particular would be a worthy place to look for an opportunity to travel by land. From there, however, instead of going to Scotland, he travelled to Hamburg in 1655, having decided to accompany one of the young Opalińskis on an educational journey. In Hamburg, Swedish military recruitment was already in operation in preparation for an attack on the Commonwealth of Poland. Patrick gave in to the encouragement of one such recruiter with whom he shared a table in an inn. He was tempted by the rewards that came from being a soldier: honour and wealth, which during times of war was said to be within arm’s reach. Scottish soldiers were uniquely praised for their dedication: ‘then whom no better sojors were of any nation to be found’.

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3 Cf. M. Yellowlees, *So strange a monster as a Jesuite* The Society of Jesus in Sixteenth-Century Scotland (Isle of Colonsay, Argyll, 2003) and also A. Biegańska, ‘The Learned Scots in Poland (From the Mid-Sixteenth to the Close of the Eighteenth Century)’, *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 43, 1 (2001), 7–11.

4 See, first of all T. A. Fischer, *The Scots in Eastern and Western Prussia* (Edinburgh, 1903).

Patrick entered Poland in July 1655, with the Wittenberg army. He was taken into captivity in November 1658, when, seeing the end of the war approaching and the uncertain perspective of life in one of the besieged garrisons still held by the Swedes, he decided to break contact with them. The decision was wise, as within a short time he was presented the opportunity to take leadership of a division under the great Crown marshal Jerzy Sebastian Lubomirski. He later abandoned this service in 1661 to transfer to the Muscovite army. He then served Russia without pause until his death in 1699.

The goal of this paper is to evaluate the young Scottish soldier’s perception not only of the world surrounding him, but also of his place within it. Gordon was at the same time a soldier in various multinational armies, a citizen of his country and member of his church, not to mention one of thousands of wanderers who roamed the Poland of his days. His Polish experiences will be discussed in the above mentioned order.

Soldier

War skirmishes and their results as well as military traditions are the main threads in the many plots of The Diary. The depictions of Polish opposition against invading armies include, among others, the manifestation of the nobility of the Sandomierz palatinate in April 1656 (or rather as early as March). Poles, not able to bear the audacity and sacrilege perpetrated by the Swedes, ignited an uprising killing the guards of army marshal Robert

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Douglas\textsuperscript{8} – about a thousand armed men. The marshal was forced to hurry back to the king, leaving in Sandomierz only one garrison. The memoirs mention the blowing up of the Sandomierz castle in April 1656 (a well known event thanks to other sources) after first luring Poles into an ambush. The surrounding circumstances and pronouncement of that triumph are in agreement with the account given by Hieronymus Christian von Holsten.\textsuperscript{9} In that same month Poles attacking Swedes in the forests surrounding Radom inflicted them with severe losses. Until the Diary’s publication these facts had been seen in a different light.\textsuperscript{10}

Writing about the events of the last days of July 1656, when returning Swedes took Warsaw, Patrick Gordon recalls how Queen Marie Louise Gonzaga de Nevers rode to the bank of the Vistula. Seeing the advancing invaders, she commanded the horses of her carriage to pull two cannons along the coast of the river and then herself effectively led the shooting ‘walking downe her self on foot Amazonian-lyke’.\textsuperscript{11}

Such accounts often contain significant value. An example from The Diary could be the description of the destruction and murders perpetrated by the Hungarians in 1657 in the Jedrzejów Cistercian monastery (mistakenly called Jesuit by Gordon). These events are not otherwise known, as the years of ‘The Deluge’ are generally a black hole in the town’s history.

An element of the army’s activity that should not be omitted is the plundering, frequently mentioned by the author of The Diary. Plundering occurred whenever and wherever possible, without concern as to whether the victim was an enemy or an ally. Those guilty of these abuses were hanged immediately, but that did little to help. It also occurred that Swedish troops stole among themselves horses and anything else, which could be of value. Reading Gordon’s autobiography one gets the impression that expeditions for spoils were not only ventured to provide for one’s needs or with the desire to gain wealth, but also to ‘kill’ the boredom while waiting for the next command. Evidence of this includes the practice of waiting in ambush along the road in the hopes that Prussian travelling peasants would be small in number and without armed defence. It was often, however, the opposite, which increased the waiting time and the risk of an unplanned attack. Nevertheless, as the

\textsuperscript{8} See A. Grosjean, ‘Douglas, Robert’, in ODNB.
\textsuperscript{11} Vol. I, fol. 69.
author of *The Diary* claimed, returning with empty arms was evidence of a lack of sense and providence.\(^{12}\)

According to the author’s account of 1657, the claim that the Polish soldiers in the service of the Swedes equalled them in cruelty by attacking nobles and peasants hiding in the forests for plunder would appear to be irrefutable.

In recording events to which he had been witness in 1659, he describes the universal abuse of power by leaders of Polish divisions. Not only did they commit excessive plundering, but also commonly carried out looting raids in villages and towns over the border in Pomerania, Prussia, and Hungary. Conscription of recruits took on the character of a private enterprise for their respective leaders, who derived benefits from illegal recruitment. Residents of cities and villages, peasants as well as nobility, defended themselves against the occupation of their territory, most frequently by offering a bribe. In 1656, Gordon was stationed in the Elbląg (Elbing) region, in Sienhagen, in the home of the Mennonite Bartholomew Peters. Every morning his host gave him a thaler to back his request for peaceful behaviour and, as he was leaving, Gordon was generously supplied.\(^{13}\) Three years later, when he traversed Greater Poland with his division, a noblewoman invited him to her home, hoping to achieve merciful treatment for her peasants. Gordon was treated to such a level of card playing and fine dining that he ordered his soldiers to bring beer and vodka from his own supplies. The invitation to board at the home of the village owner was not unusual. It also clear what sort of a greeting an enemy received; Gordon this more frequently.

Living in captivity in general was in no way desirable, primarily because of the poor quality of food and living conditions. At the beginning of January 1656, Gordon was sent to prison in the Nowy Sącz town hall. He was counselled by the nobleman who had arrested him to turn over to him anything he had of value for ‘safe-keeping’. Unfortunately, he never recovered his possessions as his ‘protector’ turned out to be a murderer who had attacked and tortured his own father. Gordon recalls that citizens of the town tended to show sympathy regarding his fate rather than express satisfaction with his suffering. After being tried by the city elders and commanding officer, a German, he was sent to the local court captain’s manor, where he was served a delicious dinner. However, because leading citizens did not believe his testimony, for ‘dessert’ he found himself threatened with torture. The crowd gathered in front of the

\(^{12}\) ‘it being great folly and improvidence to returne empty’, Vol. I, fol. 203.

\(^{13}\) Cf. E. Kizik, *Mennonici w Gdańsku, Elblągu i na Żuławach Wiślanych w drugiej połowie XVII i w XVIII wieku. Studium z dziejów małej społeczności wyznaniowej* (Gdańsk, 1994).
town hall calmly watched him being led from the prison basement. Years later he added that ‘the women even pittyed my condition with teares’.14 Luckily, this did not reach the point of torture. However, the young soldier had been so frightened that for a long time he could neither swallow nor chew.

Indications of sympathy which he experienced sitting in the basement of the tower of the town hall included, among other things, fish given to him as a secret addition to his meagre rations by the wife of the continuously drunk mayor. ‘The ruder sort of Polls’15 visiting the captives were drunk townsfolk, who would continuously mock them and on occasion beat them with the permission of the guards. The worst, however, was the fear that, in revenge for alleged crimes committed against Poles, prisoners would be executed. Awareness of this fear increased the possibility of receiving marriage propositions from women of the lowest classes. The prisoners knew, of course, of the Polish tradition, according to which a virgin, upon receiving the approval of the magistrate, could save a condemned man from death by marrying him. Gordon repeats here the well-known circumstances portrayed in a novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz.16 He recalls that the man rescued from the blow of the executioner’s sword was wrapped in a white shawl and forced to immediately make his way to church with his bride-to-be. Gordon adds that he heard of one, who kneeling on the block lifted his head and upon seeing one such woman, asked the executioner to do his duty. Luckily at this time, Gordon and his fellow prisoners did not have to decide between decapitation and marriage to a prostitute. Nevertheless, after a few days, the townswomen who sent them food made their act of mercy conditional on a definite decision regarding marriage.

Despite the difficulties mentioned here, there was a code of honour in captivity. This was partially dependent upon army tradition, which, according to the writings of the memoirist, was set or being developed throughout the period of the Thirty Years’ War. Taking him into captivity, the corporal of the Gdańsk troop loudly expressed his satisfaction with the loot he had gathered on that occasion, which included weapons, horses, and cloaks. However, he was disappointed when, after a short time, the Scot asked to buy beer in order to increase the meagre ration given to the prisoners. He evidently had sewn in

14 Vol. I, fol. 48v.
15 Ibid., fol. 51–51v.
16 A Polish writer (1846–1916) famous for his historical novels. See also H. Zaremska, Niegodne rzemiosło. Kat w społeczeństwie Polski XIV–XVI w. (Warszawa, 1986), 74; M. Mikołajczyk, Przestępstwo i karä w prawie miast Polski południowej XVI–XVIII wieku (Katowice, 1998), 170–2. The authors refer to this custom only in general, however.
his clothing an additional 200 thalers. The corporal became the laughing-stock of his company, and the Gdańsk commandant ordered that even if a prisoner had 1000 thalers on him, no one could take it from him after he had been searched when taken into captivity.

A prisoner, who promised to abandon any attempt to escape, could individually or in the company of an enemy soldier, move about on the terrain of the garrison. In another place, Gordon mentions that it was the right of the prisoner to try to escape, although murdering a guard to gain such an opportunity ‘taken in the strictest sense, is not allowable’.\(^{17}\) Once an attempt at escape ended in an unexpected way, although not in the worst imaginable. Swedes, condemned in 1659 to the cellar of the Meve tower, interrupted their tunnelling when they reached a supply of wine. When this was discovered, the Swedes defended themselves by saying that they had remembered to drink to the health of the owner, who happened to be the head of the garrison and showed the prisoners mercy.

Scot

In a multinational army, ethnic conflicts were not infrequent. Occasionally it even occurred that an insult turned into a stronger argument despite the fact that duels were punished by death. In 1657, near Zawichost, Scots were treated with disrespect by their German comrades, who scoffingly referred to them as ‘gentlemen’. The German officer contemptuously called Gordon a ‘trench-licker’, taking him, as he claimed, for a general’s lackey. The Scots responded as one man, ‘falling on with our good Scots hearts and swords’.\(^{18}\)

Soon after, a temporary pact was signed with György Rákóczi II’s soldiers, who they teamed up with in search of loot; but the coalition nearly ended in tragedy for the Scots. At the very start of the excursion, Gordon became convinced of the more than average cruelty of his partners, previously unknown to him. The Scots began to fear that they themselves might be seen as competitors for the loot and thus murdered by their allies. When one evening the Hungarians, who held numerical majority over the Scots, ordered them to watch over the horses while they themselves went to sleep, Gordon and his comrades considered whether or not to slit their throats. They refrained, however, from such an idea and the expedition finished without bloodshed. A

\(^{17}\) Vol. I, fol. 223v.
\(^{18}\) Ibid., fol. 161 – 1v.
mere two days later, the Scots fought effectively against the Finns, defending a
noblewoman from being raped.

Gordon summarises his observations regarding the Swedish army with
the statement that ‘we were not well beloved of the Sweds and Dutches’. Al-though they tried to establish mutual relations in a regular manner with
German officers, ‘yet was there always a jealousy, if not an undermineing of
one another amongst us, which the coll[onel] fomented and occasioned, as a
piece of policy – divide et impera’.¹⁹

Although the Scots were not always appreciated by their allies, they were
esteemed by others, including the citizens of Elbląg, among whom they were
quartered. Summarizing one of his successful expeditions against the citizens
of Gdańsk, Gordon boasts: ‘This with diverse other exploits which wee
had done gott the Scots such a vogue amongst the burgers and pawres, that
whosoever brought in any prisoners or done any notable service against the
enemys, it was always said to be the Scots’.²⁰

During ‘The Deluge’, just as in other European wars of those days, the
Scots fought against each other, serving in warring armies. This, however, did
not mean they held any personal enmity. For example, General (later to be
marshal) Douglas recommended that Gordon recruit Scots as his guards after
the latter’s return from captivity in 1656. For this purpose, Gordon travelled
to Warsaw, where he met two countrymen who he recalled as having been in
the service of the Swedes before transferring to the Polish side. After a short
time, three other Scots who had once helped the Polish army, but were actu-
ally ‘free persons’,²¹ joined them. The mission was successful, and in a short
time around thirty new recruits from Scotland were added to the marshal’s
guard.

Mentions of Scots constantly appear on the pages of Gordon’s work. The
author generally has positive memories of his comrades in a variety of
situations. He accents their solidarity and mutual assistance, generally given
willingly, although not without conditions. Rarely, although very clearly, does
the author give hints that not only mutual sympathy but also mutual aversion
were brought from the fatherland.²² When Gordon was taken into captivity
in 1657, Captain [James] Leslie, a relative of the well-renowned marshal

¹⁹ Ibid., fol. 215v–16.
²⁰ Ibid., fol. 213v.
²¹ Ibid., fol. 75v.–7.
²² For more on this see A. I. Macinnes, Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603–1788 (East Linton, 2000) and S. Murdoch, Kith and Kin, 21–46.
Alexander Leslie,\(^{23}\) was indifferent to the fate of his fellow countrymen. When the prisoners’ daily ration was seized, they were forced to beg. Seeing this, the Polish army officers helped them generously. One Saturday, Captain Reid sent a cart for Gordon and his fellow prisoners and received them into his home, and later returned them to arrest by the same cart. Being once again a Polish captive the following year, Gordon requested permission to visit Scots in the Emperor’s army and received it.

This was not a unique occurrence of national and occupational solidarity. Captain Crawford, who was taken captive by Colonel Lord Harry Gordon, not only shared a table with him at his Warsaw quarters, but was also freed by him without ransom and with the proposition to become his cavalry-captain. In 1659, warmed by the alcohol at a Polish wedding, friends of the diarist, Kennedy and Greechs, got into an argument with the Hungarian foot soldiers’ captain, for which they were arrested the following day at the command of Lubomirski. Punishment was avoided, however, due to the intervention of the well-known doctor William Davidson, who was the court physician of the marshal and his wife.\(^{24}\)

Although most of his memories of Scots are positive, this is not always the case. When taken into Danzig captivity in 1659, Gordon was attached to a group of ninety prisoners and led under guard to the city, the burghers of which had gathered on the pavement to greet them aggressively. Gordon recalls that ‘wee were reviled for kowstealers, horsestealers, robbers, sacrilegious, incendiaries and what not by the common people, some of ours answering them in their owne language’.\(^{25}\) This was neither the first nor the last time that wealthy Scottish merchants living in Gdansk, both as citizens and residents, treated their countrymen as enemies for harming their reputation.\(^{26}\)

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\(^{25}\) Vol. I, fol. 146.

Moreover, it seems that ethnic solidarity did not serve to deter horse theft among comrades of the same regiment.

From the memoirs of Gordon, it becomes clear that he had the capacity to adapt to new surroundings relatively quickly. He was led to Greater Poland in 1654 by another immigrant from Scotland, whom he described in the following way: ‘My comerad had been two or three yeares in the countrey, could speak Polls and Dutch, had some skill in merchandising, and so, for getting a livelihood, had many wayes the adventage of me’. Immediately, however, he adds that the Scottish merchants he had met lost interest in him upon hearing that he would prefer to remain a soldier. They apparently feared that, instead of being helpful to them, he would become a burden. It could be deduced that Scottish merchants and solders not infrequently regarded one another with reserve. As a Polish prisoner in 1659, Gordon received permission to visit a Scottish merchant. The purpose of the visit, which had been kept secret from the Polish guard, was to receive money belonging to his Scottish captain who remained in the Swedish service. The merchant was amazed at how much honesty was to be found in a poor soldier. Touched by hearing such a judgment, Gordon explained that ‘he was in a great mistake, for the ends of our two professions were different, ours being honour and theirs gaine, and that for his estate and ten tymes more I would not staine my honour’.

Marriages of Scots to Poles while not a rule were nevertheless not uncommon, and give testimony to the level of Scots’ adaptation to Polish surroundings. Such pairs appear on all levels of the social hierarchy of the day. Gordon recalls ‘a simple fellow’ born of a Scottish father, who had gained his freedom by marrying the daughter of a dignitary from one of the small towns. In that same year, 1656, while living among Poles, Gordon was asked by a nobleman to rescue his daughter from a besieged Warsaw (she had previously married a Scot by the name of John Ross). Later in the same year, in the company of Jerzy Sebastian Lubomirski, he met Jan Andrzej Morstein, who was at that time engaged to Catherine Gordon, daughter of the margraves of Huntly.

In 1659, as a young soldier, Gordon bought a weapon in Poznań from a Scot of an unknown last name, and was also wined and dined by James Ferguson.

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28 Ibid., fol. 239v – 40.
30 Their wedding took place on 27 April the same year. Gordon calls her Henrietta. See L. Kukulski, Nota biograficzna, xxi – xxii.
and Robert Farquhar, ‘the two principall Scots merchants in the town’.31 He recalls how, when travelling through Piotrków the following year ‘and being invited to a Scotsmans house, I was very well and kindly entertained’.32 Shortly thereafter in Cracow he experienced the hospitality of, among others, a wealthy merchant of the city, who he refers to as ‘Mr. Blackhal’.33 When he arrived in Krosno at the beginning of 1661, preparations for the funeral of Robert Portius (Porteous) were in progress. The author recalls that merchant as:

a very rich man and great benefactor to the poor there and the contrey thereabout. He did many workes of charity and magnificence to the monasteryes and churches, and left great legacies to the King, Queen, spirituall persons and principall nobility, as also the churches, monasteryes and poore. And yet three persons whom he left his aires had great estates left them, so that it is incredible what a vast estate he had. He had his only or greatest trade in wynes, and was accounted upright in dealing and magnificent in living.

Only praise flowed from Gordon’s pen. It serves as evidence to the fact that the citizen must have enjoyed the respect of all contemporary the Scottish diaspora in Poland as well as by the whole community of Krosno.34

Patrick Gordon not only met wealthy merchants but also Scots living in towns on principal trading routes. Wandering the Sandomierz palatinate with a division composed of Scandinavians who had converted to the Polish side, one of the places he visited was Szydłowiec. Well aware that the owner, (Michał Kazimierz) Radziwiłł, ‘was a great patron of all strangers’,35 Gordon decided to quarter his soldiers in the villages located about a mile outside the town, and thus entered it alone. The local mayor, a Scot, did not reciprocate the mercy shown his town.

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32 Vol. II, fol. 41v.
33 This could have been Robert Blackhal, as mentioned by W. Węgierski, Kronika zbior ewangelickiego krakowskiego, ed. J. P. Bandtkie (Kraków, 1817), 115 known also as Albert, who paid subsidium charitativum three years later. See Pernal and Gasse, ‘The 1651 Polish Subsidy’, 20.
34 Vol. II, fol. 98. Cf. Seliga and Kocz, Scotland and Poland, 8–9; F. Leśniak, Rzemieślnicy i kupcy w Krośnie (XVI–pierwsza połowa XVII wieku) (Kraków, 1999), passim.
It must be emphasised that, however popular with the soldiers, the stationing of soldiers in the town created problems for the commander, as Gordon explains, ‘because of … drinking, whoreing and quarrelling’. The exception was Prussian towns, whose proud citizens constantly provoked conflicts ‘so that wee wished for countrey cottages rather as these palaces’. 

Not long afterwards, the division approached the outskirts of the township of Skrzyelno at a time when they were preparing for a fair. The memoirist was justified in expecting a lavish bribe in return for restraining from looting. However, the quartermaster, sent beforehand, reported that the local authorities were not prepared to negotiate, upon which the army moved in the direction of the settlement. About half a mile before the little town, the soldiers sighted two robust cavalymen, dressed in a youthful manner and armed ‘according to the fashion of the Polls gentlemen’, that is with bows and quivers. However, their long hair gave Gordon reason to believe that they were not Poles. When the guard brought the men to Gordon, it was learned they were Scotsmen. The locals began with compliments directed towards Gordon’s ability to speak Polish. Later they declared in the name of the numerous foreign merchants gathered in the township, that they expected that their fair would not be disrupted. The memoirist admits that ‘their peremptory way of speaking and vain behaviour’ caused him to answer that his men had enough cash to go shopping. In the evening, after the soldiers had quartered themselves in the town, three ‘sage-like Scotsmen’ stood before Gordon, bringing gifts along with the mayor.

In summarizing his experiences of 1659 and his impressions gathered from the people he met, the memoirist claims that foreigners lived very comfortably in Poland and a clever person could quickly make a fortune. Nevertheless, he immediately adds that the general pride of Poles did not allow them to give foreigners the respect they were due. He also observes that Poles respected foreigners only when the Commonwealth was in need. Even then, however, foreigners did not receive a satisfactory return for their service. Nonetheless,
sources analyzed confirm a large presence of Scottish merchants in Poland during the age of ‘The Deluge’.

The aforementioned meeting near Skrzynno suggests that the Scots were able to communicate in Polish. That said, Patrick wrote his diary in English. In this language, and not in Scots, Lord Robert Douglas spoke to him, when Gordon asked him for intercession, and, as may be recalled, he consented. Isolated information about the use of English testifies that the immigrants from Scotland communicated among themselves most frequently in Scots. Next to Scots, Polish was the mother tongue of children born to immigrants living in Poland. The Lingua franca of the multi-national army of the Swedish Kingdom, at least among its leaders, was High German. Gordon spoke Latin with Poles as well as with Rákóczi’s Hungarians, who accompanied them on raids. In the first years of his time on Polish soil this was a necessity as Latin was the only foreign language he had brought with him from home. However, it appears that his choice to use Latin throughout his service among Poles and in contacts with the elite of Polish gentry was primarily to give evidence of his scholarship. He had built his hope of achieving a permanent and elevated position in Polish society on his knowledge of Latin, among other things.

In 1659, Gordon came to Königsberg in order to settle the estate of a friend and fellow countryman who had died. While there, Gordon observed that it was a common occurrence for Scots to stand before judges in Poland condition, unlesse the republick stand very much in need of military persons, or that his services have been very eminent. And even then for the most part the respect is more formall as materiall, and continueth but so long as your employment is active, or you enter into competition with any. And it is well knowne that every one is good to their owne, and no reason but that a native ceteris paribus should be advanced befor an alien.

Indeed in such places where their chieffe profession is military, and the natives not much enclined thereto, as in Holland, strangers are much looked upon and have been often preferred befor the natives, of purpose to oblidge and encourage them. Yet even there of late wee have seen high military charges put by strangers of better and greater and bestowed on natives of lesser meritt” (Vol. I, fol. 243 – 3v).

For more on that see W. Kowalski, “The Placement of Urbanised Scots in the Polish Crown During the 16th and 17th Centuries,” in A. Grosjean and S. Murdoch (eds), Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period (Leiden, 2005), 53 – 103.

‘I promised to my self a bettering of my fortune, intending to use all endeavours, and by industry, diligence and good behaviour draw from every one a good opinion; assureing my self that my religion, knowledge in the languages, especially the Latine, and being knowne to be a gentleman, would be no small helps in such a country and among such people, where learning, nobility and vertue make way to the most eminent honours and fortunes’ (Vol. I, fol. 244 – 24v).
and neighbouring countries in order to defend their rights of inheritance.\textsuperscript{42} The memoirist occasionally mentions information reaching him from his fatherland. This included both political and family affairs. However, it is difficult to make a judgement as to the general awareness of Polish Scots regarding events in the Isles on this basis.

Catholic

The worldview of the author is evident in his personal relationship with God and the Catholic Church as well as in writings which relate religious aspects of ‘The Deluge’. Patrick Gordon frequently placed himself in the protection of God Almighty and Mary during critical moments. This was true in 1657. When fighting in Prussia he quartered at the home of a peasant. He was so ill that he asked for the Catholic priest to be brought, who nevertheless could not be found. Because the village had been conquered by the soldiers of Gdańsk, who searched homes and killed the injured, a female servant dressed him in the clothes of the household and put him in bed. He credits this event, which saved his life, to God’s providence. It is worth adding that the favourite reading of the memoirist was a Latin version of one of Thomas à Kempis’ works (most likely the well known \textit{De Imitatione Christi}).

When in prison in Nowy Sącz in 1656, he asked for permission to attend confession and Holy Communion in the local collegiate\textsuperscript{43} or Franciscan church. In response, the Poles arranged for the memoirist and his Catholic colleagues in captivity to participate in the sacraments in the town hall. For this reason they were visited first by an unknown Franciscan and then a few days later by the provincial Father Innes, who had just returned from surveying the area under his control. The priest severely censured Gordon: ‘first, that, being a Catholick, I did with hereticks fight against the Catholick religion; next, that, being a Scotsman, I would fight against Polland, where our countreymen had such large priviledges, protection, and where many getting large estates

\textsuperscript{42} ‘The next morning I went and enquired for William Gordon, and he not being at home, I spoke with his brother in law, who told that he thought that he could not pay that money to us notwithstanding of the bond, because he knew that the deceased had nearer friends in Scotland as any of us, who would undoubtedly come and persue the said William’ (Vol. II, fol. 15v).

\textsuperscript{43} He calls this church erroneously cathedral.
enjoyed great freedome’.\textsuperscript{44} Despite these reproachful warnings, the Franciscan helped the prisoner obtain his freedom.

A year later, dying in an Imperial military prison, before Gordon’s eyes, the quartermaster of his division, a Scot and Protestant, made use of the spiritual assistance of Jesuit priests. However, when he asked that they return, the Protestants there refused to grant permission.

Gordon participated in The Lord’s Supper at every opportunity that availed itself, such as in the Benedictine Abbey at Łysiec.\textsuperscript{45} In 1660, he also visited the Benedictine monastery at Tyniec. As the son of his protector, Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, had just become the commendatory abbot,\textsuperscript{46} the Scot gave the monks gifts, among which was a volume of Baronius’ \textit{Annales Ecclesiastici}. It is rather unlikely that the volume came from the Jesuit library at the cloister in Rawa Mazowiecka, which the memoirist plundered in 1655 at the request of field marshal Gustav Otto Stenbock and simultaneously satisfied his own needs for reading materials. As only two older priests of that order remained in the town, Gordon gave them the relics that he had picked up from the floor of that monastery church.\textsuperscript{47}

The behaviour of Protestant invaders crossing Poland estranged not only the local people. One Catholic, a Lieutenant in the division of Lord Pontus de la Gardie,\textsuperscript{48} offended by the placement of surplice under a saddle, challenged a Protestant colour-bearer to a duel.

Making contact with Protestants is not mentioned frequently in The Diary, most likely due to the fact that it was something natural. Gordon’s attitude towards people of other faiths is positive, and even warm, when he mentions his visit to Kedainiai in 1661. At that time, the community of Scottish

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{44} Vol. I, fol. 42v.
\item \textsuperscript{46} This has been confirmed by J. Wimmer, ‘Lubomirski Hieronim Augustyn h. Szreniawa’, \textit{PSB}, vol. 18 (Wrocław, 1973), 11.
\item \textsuperscript{47} The pillage perpetrated in that religious house and its library was also noted in that community’s chronicle. See S. Załęski, \textit{Jezuici w Polsce}, vol. 4, pt. 3 (Kraków, 1905), 1105; L. Grzebień et al., \textit{Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy, 1564 – 1995} (Kraków, 1996), 563.
\end{itemize}
Calvinists living there was significant in influence as well as numbers. The memoirist praises the Radziwiłłs for creating conditions for the liberty of cult, and its adherents for offering him their hospitality.\(^{49}\) In describing a situation in Cracow and the surrounding area, which took place during the first fortnight of December 1655, Gordon recalls how one of the Schlichtings, an Arian, warned the Swedes of attacking peasants.\(^{50}\)

Among the incidents of late spring 1656, Gordon mentions the expulsion of Catholic clergy from cities at the command of the head of the garrison, mentioning Cracow and Toruń (Thorn) as examples. Praising the large donations of the Church’s silver made by the clergy to cover the numerous costs associated with war, Gordon preached the apologue of the Church as the backbone of order in the country. He also explains why a poor Church does not make sense in the community: a priest in a modest robe does not command respect. Furthermore, poverty would cause the priest to focus on material matters at the expense of the spiritual.\(^{51}\)

\(^{49}\) ‘Wee crossed the river Niemen at Vilsk, where wee lodged all night, and the next day to Kiadany. This towne belongeth to the family of the Radzivills, where is the publick exercize of the Protestant religion, and because of that many Scotsmen here living, by one whereof wee lodged; and being welcomed by some of our countreymen with a hearty cup of strong meade.’ Vol. II, fol. 121v. On this Scots’ community, see L. Eriksonas, ‘The Lost Colony of Scots: Unravelling Overseas Connections in a Lithuanian Town’, in Macinnes et al., Ships, Guns and Bibles, 173–87 and S. Murdoch, ‘The Scottish Community in Kedainiai in its Scandinavian and Baltic Context’, Almanach Historyczny 9 (2007), 47–61.


\(^{51}\) ‘So ane act was condescended to amongst themselves, that all the silver and plate which served rather for decorment then use, reserving only for each cathedrall two chalices and two patins and for other churches but one, should be given to the state to coine money with, which came to some millions. The great prelates also gave large summes of ready coyne, which was done with such alacrity and so liberally, that it was not found needfull to impose any taxation on the people.

Thus let not statesmen or worl[ldly persons envy or carpe at the riches of the church or the office-bearers therein. For it is always the surest anchor and pillar of a state and a certaine refuge for princes. Besides, the hospitality of the spirituality to all, and the lenity and ease they give to those who live in their lands, is very pleasant and profitable to a state, and it is well knowne that poverty bringeth contempt and misregard on persons of all qualities, especially on churchmen, which should by no means be, seing reverence and respect is due to men of their coat. And how can it be possible, that when churchmen ar in poverty and troubling their minds how to gett themselves provided of necessaries, but that they must be distracted from their devotions and be forced sometymes to use unseemly, yea, sometymes unlawfull shifts, which openeth a doore to confusion and atheisme?’ (Vol. I, fol. 118–18v).
As a captive of the Imperial army, Gordon intercepted by chance a satanic pledge signed with the blood of a corporal. He subsequently burned it, describing it as ‘a great deale of nonsense’. Gypsies, who formed a sizable group in the Swedish regiment in which he served in 1655, made a similar impression on him. In the area surrounding Wiślica, where he spent the end of 1659 and beginning of 1660, he heard that in the past ages there had appeared an uncountable number of vipers and poisonous animals. However, the prayers of the saintly prelate and the noise of the consecrated bell had chased the beasts away. This tale is testimony to the deep-seated belief in supernatural intervention, common to the era: faith which tied Catholics over the Vistula to those at the Don and Dee. It is also a rare piece of evidence that bells served to call for God's help, as suggested by the inscriptions they contained.

Conclusions

In Gordon's writings, descriptions of the terrain are rare and tend to be cursory. It is fair to assume that instead he gave more attention to those places and people that made an above average impression on him. He therefore singles out Western Pomerania as ‘this pleasant and fruitfull countrey’. The peasant daughters near Elblag, ‘who after the fashion of this countrey were very coy’, interested him. He was only restrained from catching their attention by their father who clearly explained that they maintained the custom of giving their daughters only to their equals. Working his way further northeast, to Courland, he was able to traverse the ruins of a castle from the Middle Ages,

54 Such legends concerning the Wiślica collegiate bells have also been documented by W. Siarkowski, Dzwony w gubernii kieleckiej. Rzecz archeologiczno-historyczna (Warszawa, 1878), 9–12; J. Wiśniewski, Historyczny opis kościołów, miast, zabytków i pamiątek w Pińczowskim, Skalbmierskim i Wiślickim (Mariówka Opoczyńska, 1927), 448. Cf. W. Kowalski, ‘Do zmartywstania swego za pewnym wodzem Kristusem…’: Staropolskie inskrypcje północno-zachodniej Małopolski (Kielce, 2004).
55 Contexts of such early modern sources have been discussed by J. Tazbir, ‘Bariera druku i gusta czytelnicze w dobie baroku’, Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce 30 (1985), 84–8.
57 Ibid., fol. 127v.–8.
a testimony to the war that once engulfed the Teutonic Knights, Poles and pagan Prussians. Traces of an era long past were also visible during his visit to Chelmno (Kulm).

Of the Polish cities, Gordon seems to have been overcome only by Poznań, which impressed him with its unique cleanliness and the overall good manners of its citizens. He credits this to the city’s proximity to Germany as well as the frequent and numerous visits of foreigners. In 1655, watching from a distance the smoke over Kleparz, Cracow’s satellite town, he condemned Poles ‘for burning and destroying their own country, especially such a brave town as this appeared to be’. A reason for commenting on the plague of suffering caused by the destruction of ‘The Deluge’ might be the author’s testimony as he crossed Mazovia in 1659 (‘Wee marched the way towards Lovicz, crossing the rivers Senna, Pilcza and Rava, taking free quarters upon the villages

58 “This Culm is very ancient and hath been of great account in former tymes, which may appear by its giving name to all that district; and the common law, which is observed throughout all Prussia, is ordinarily called Culmish law. It was fortified by the – wi – with a very strong brick wall of a large circumference. It is but meanly inhabited, and slenderly built; only about the market place are some very faire houses, with wealthy indwellers. Albeit, it hath many gates, yet hath it but three which they make use of, one which leadeth to the river, the other to Culmsee and Grawdents, the third to Torun. It is under the jurisdiction of a bishop, who hath his title from it, and resideth in a towne about 15 miles from thence, called Libava [Lubawa – W. K.]. It hath its owne magistrates and peculiar lawes and very great and ancient priviledgep. It is very pleasantly situated on a large corner of the high continent’ (ibid., fol. 9 – 9v).

59 ‘Posna or Posen of all the citties in Polland is the most pleasant, being very well scituated, having a wholesome aire, and a most fertile countrey round about it. The buildings are all brick, most after the ancient forme, yet very convenient, especially those lately builded. The market place is spacious, having a pleasant fountaine in each corner, the shopps all in rowes, each trade apart, and a stately radthouse. The streets are large and kept cleaner as any where else in Polland. It hath on the west side within the towne on a hill a castle built after the ancient manner and some[ugh]t decayed. The river Warta watereth the east side thereof, makeing an iland, w[hi]ch is inhabited by Germans, most whereof being tawners, giveth the name of the Tawners Suburb to it. There is a fair street which leadeth to the Thume eastward, being halfe a mile in length [sic].

The Thume is a stately structure. There are diverse monasteries of both sexes and several orders and a vast cathedrall, which make a stately show. The suburbs are large and decored with churches and monasteriep. The city is fortified with a brick wall, yet not very tenable by reason of its wastness. But that which surpasseth all is the civility of the inhabitants, which is occasioned by its vicinity to Germany and the frequent resorting of strangers to the two annuall faires, and every day almost; the Polls also, in emulation of the strangers dwelling amongst them, strive to transcend one another in civility.’ (ibid., fol. 10v. – 11).

60 Ibid., fol. 31v. – 2.
and little townes where wee had abundance of all things. Whereat I admired, considering how the countrey had been so often ruined by the enemies, and no much better used by our owne souldiery\(^61\). Shorter, although similarly meaningful, were the impressions of Royal Prussia remaining after 1658. The abundance and ample choice of food is accented even more in his description of Kežmarok\(^62\) and Spiš,\(^63\) where he spent the year 1660. The memoirist was especially fascinated by the Tatra Mountains, and there, at Morskie Oko, he recalls hearing mountaineers’ legends while dining on trout.\(^64\) The best salmon ‘in any of Poland’ he tasted near Opatowiec on the Vistula, and the strongest beer in the town of Osiek, in the vicinity of Sandomierz.\(^65\)

In general, he remembers with fondness his meetings with Polish gentry. He appreciated their religious ardour and hospitality. He was surprised by their pompous orations given during weddings. It was difficult for him, on the other hand, to protect himself against the necessity of giving a toast. Such a reaction, however, among Scottish soldiers was rather the exception than the rule. Nevertheless, he gives written acknowledgement of the economic resourcefulness of men and women of the nobility, as well as the good manners, independence, and high social position of women.\(^66\)

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\(^61\) Vol. II, fol. 7.  
\(^62\) ‘Here are all sort of victualls at easy rates, by reason of the fertility of the countrey and industry of the inhabitants’ (ibid., fol. 44v).  
\(^63\) ‘The people are very plaine and honest, very few of them travelling to any other countrey; the women very bashfull and hugely afrayed to converse with strangers, especially sojourp.Here is plenty of all sorts of victuallp. In the small rivolets are aboundance of excellent trouts’ (ibid., fol. 51v).  
\(^64\) ‘[I] tooke a view of the hills called Tetry and wondred to see a great lake in so high a place. By this lake were some cottages, the people liveing therein speake Windish or Slavonish. They told me strange things of this lake, as that in some places thereof there was no ground to be found, and to which places with their boats they durst not at certaine times adventure, and would needs perswade me that it had communication under the ground with some sea or other, to prove which the[y] showed me some planke[s] which they had about their cottages, resembling those of ships, and which they said were cast out now and then on the sydes of the lake, which some of these who came with me confirmed. They presented me with some trouts which were so leane as could be’ (ibid., fol. 45).  
\(^65\) Ibid., fol. 4, 35v.  
\(^66\) This can be illustrated with the following observations of December 1659: ‘The next day I was very well entertainted by a gentlman at dinner, where I heard excellent musick both vocal and instrumentall. I quartered this night a mile short of Przedbors. The next day, being the 22 of December and Moonday, I marched through Przedbors and dined with a gentleman called Porembsky, where I was very well entertained, as I had been in many places befor, and had both vocal and instrumentall musick, every gentlman of quality being furnished herewith. And indeed the Polls
The decision taken in 1661 to look for happiness under Tsarist rule was something Gordon soon regretted. His early experiences in the new environment were a painful contrast to his memories from Poland, which remained for him a lost paradise.

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The gentry are very good and hearty housekeepers, their wives also extraordinary industrious in having all things within their houses, wherewith to make up multitudes and variety of dishes. And albeit many of their houses look very wastlyke, as being destitute of hangings, standing beds, stools or pictures, as having only opposite to the table a carpet or two on each side of the corner of the wall, on which their arms sometimes, as bows and arrows with cases, pistols and riding furniture for horses beat with silver and overgilded, as also their stables or simitars, and then sometimes a picture or two; yet their is superfluity of good, well dressed victualls and liquor. At dinner the lady sits in company, as also their daughters and kinswomen without exception as with us in Scotland.

When the tables are drawn, the young ladies ordinarily entertaine their friends with vocal musick, making no scruple, being commanded thereto by the lord of the house, until the servants have dined; who afterwards come in and as the company and occasion serves, they begin to play upon violins, viol-de-gambo or cimball, making a pretty good harmony in their own countrytunes, having of late also used themselves to forreigne melodies, yet such as hath some conformity and consonancy with their own. Melancholy they cannot well away with. If you drink to be merry, or be familiar with them, then will they invite and even urge you to dance. They dance by pairs, so many pairs as the room is well capable of.

The women are very jovial, merry and confident with great discretion, whom you must by no means in saluting kiss, nor in most places shake hands either, only with a profound reverence. With the ordinary sort, you may stoop, as if to take them with both your hands, or embrace them as low down as their knees, yet without letting them feel you and retiring as soon as possible; with these of higher degree, after a French mode, putting your hand as low down, but not near the hem of their garments; and with these of the highest, or far above your degree, a profound reverence at a great distance, but ‘Holla, whither do I go’ (ibid., fol. 28v–9v).
The Gordons and the North of Scotland
Barry Robertson

I

In November 1690, General Patrick Gordon wrote a letter to his kinsman and head of the noble House of Huntly, George, 1st duke of Gordon. In it he expressed his sorrow at the outcome of the Williamite Revolution on 1688–9, in which the Catholic monarch, James VII and II, had been ousted from the thrones of Scotland, England and Ireland, and replaced with the Protestant Dutch Stadtholder, William of Orange, and his wife, Mary Stuart. He further intimated that he wished that he had been present in Scotland at the time to have given direct service to King James, and that he was ‘ready still to hazard lyfe and all I have in his Majesties service’.\(^1\) The following May he sent another letter to the Duke, this time referring more specifically to the efforts and sacrifices of the latter on behalf of the fledgling Jacobite cause. Again, he expressed a willingness to expend his life and fortune in pursuit of a Stuart restoration, as well as a hope ‘that your Grace may enjoy your owne in tranquility’.\(^2\) Of course, while he wrote these lines, General Gordon remained perfectly aware of how difficult it would have been for him to return to Scotland, or to travel to the exiled Stuart court in France, to make good on such offers. He had been an officer in the Russian army since the 1660s and knew from personal experience that obtaining a release from the service of the Tsars was a very hard thing to engineer.\(^3\) However, this should not detract from the fact that he was evidently very concerned about recent political developments in Scotland and how they had impacted on the chief of the Gordon families.

Such a desire on the part of Patrick to keep in touch with affairs in his homeland, and amongst the Gordons, was also illustrated at a more intimate

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level in letters written at around the same time to members of his more immediate family circle in the north-east of Scotland. These were concerned primarily with matters relating to finances and his lands at Auchleuchries, and demonstrated just how fully he kept in touch with the minutiae of such intricate affairs. He can, for example, be found referring to money due to his cousin, John Gordon of Nethermuir, as well to the need for his son, James, to keep him more regularly informed of matters relating to his estate.4

Certain it is, then, that he remained highly attuned not only of his own household’s position in local society, but also of the powerful position of the extended Gordon family as a whole in the north of Scotland. In particular he will have cherished the blood ties that were claimed to older and more illustrious branches of the name, households such as the Gordons of Haddo (by then ennobled as earls of Aberdeen), and beyond that to the Gordons of Huntly themselves. With this came the awareness of a common past, and of a long and proud heritage that ran through centuries of Scotland’s history. Alongside this, however, he will have come to have known something of the grave trials and tribulations facing these same households during his own lifetime.

II

The true origins of the Gordons are by no means easy to establish with any degree of certainty, particularly so given the level of ‘myth and romanticism’ peddled in a number of the family histories and genealogies circulating from the Middle Ages onwards.5 Some sources, for example, posit the view that the family must have originated in France and would have come across to England at the time of William the Conqueror—a suitably romantic idea.6 This seems largely fanciful and at most it seems safest to assert that they originally came from the north of England and eventually occupied the lands of Gordon in Berwickshire sometime between the years 1058 and 1153.7

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7 Most sources venture the arrival of the Gordons in Scotland as having taken place
Arguably, the first member of the family to rise to any degree of note was Sir Adam Gordon during the early fourteenth century. After initially supporting the English Crown during the Wars of Independence he had latterly seen fit to side with Robert the Bruce, and as a Scottish ambassador to Pope John XXII he had been one of those responsible for the delivery of the letter that would become known to posterity as the Declaration of Arbroath. Through such loyal service, belated though it was, Sir Adam was rewarded with new lands, with the result that the recently forfeited North-East barony of Strathbogie fell to the family. His descendents were to show similar levels of service. Indeed, it seems that the steady rise of the household could not even be compromised by the fact that the line of male heirs died out in 1408. At this point the estates fell to a female, Elizabeth Gordon, and to her husband, Alexander Seton, second son of Sir William Seton of that Ilk. Seton had been happy to adopt the title, Lord Gordon, and the eldest son of this marriage, another Alexander, eventually forsook his given surname in favour of that of Gordon.

It was this particular Alexander who found himself elevated by James II to the title of Earl of Huntly. Essentially he had managed to make some shrewd political decisions during the 1440s and 1450s, first of all showing a degree of solidarity with the sometime ascendant Livingstone-Douglas faction, and then backing the Crown when the Black Douglases themselves were in rebellion. Indeed, Huntly had gone a long way to help ensure victory over the latter, not least of all with his success in battle against the Douglas-aligned Earl of Crawford at Brechin in 1452. Clearly, the Gordons had by this time arrived as a major force in Scottish politics, a situation that they looked to build on and exploit.

The Gordon earls were certainly never to be found too far away from the political spotlight in the decades that followed. They were, for example, present at the battles of Flodden (1513) and Pinkie (1547). They also, on occasion, occupied some of the highest offices in the land. Indeed, in 1497 George, 2nd during the reign of Malcolm III. See Gordon, Family of Gordon, I, 2–5; Gordon, House of Gordon, 4; [Gordon], Records of Aboyne, 353. Graeme Ross has suggested that the family first moved from England during the reign of David I. See Ross, Royal Lieutenancy, 13–14.

8 National Archives of Scotland (hereafter NAS), Gordon MSS, GD44/2/1/1–2.
10 Ibid., 372–80.
11 Norman Macdougall, James III. A Political Study (Edinburgh, 1982), 13.
earl of Huntly, was the first of the household to obtain the chancellorship of Scotland.\textsuperscript{14} George, 4th earl of Huntly, also attained the same lofty position for periods during the 1540s and 1550s.\textsuperscript{15} In addition, following the demise of James IV, Alexander, 3rd earl of Huntly, was one of the senior statesmen appointed as a councillor to the Queen Mother, Margaret Tudor, a position similar to that held by the 4th Earl upon the death of James V.\textsuperscript{16} This latter earl had also been one of the regents of Scotland for a period of months from 1536 to 1537 when James V was in France in search of a bride.\textsuperscript{17}

The Reformation of 1560 heralded a half-century of mixed fortunes for the family. In 1562 the Catholic 4th earl rose up in rebellion against the new Protestant regime and was defeated by Lord James Stewart (subsequently confirmed as Earl of Moray) at the Battle of Corrichie in October of that year. Huntly died of a seizure while being led off the field and his third son, John, was subsequently executed in Aberdeen.\textsuperscript{18} The family, however, soon benefited from the fluid political situation that developed as the decade wore on, and in 1565, George, 5th earl of Huntly, found himself restored to his titles and to royal favour.\textsuperscript{19} George, 6th earl of Huntly, became a great favourite of James VI during the 1580s, but did much to endanger his position on account of his status as a high-profile Catholic noble and his decision towards the end of the decade to establish and maintain contacts with the authorities in Spain. Huntly eventually found himself denounced a rebel, and in 1594 defeated a royal army under the command of Archibald Campbell, 7th earl of Argyll, at the Battle of Glenlivet (1594). He was lucky enough to be received back into favour in 1597 following a timely submission to the Crown and the Kirk, and as if to cap this newly regained loyalty, James VI elevated him to the title of Marquis of Huntly in 1599.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{14} Macdougall, James IV’, 152.
\textsuperscript{15} Merriman, Rough Wooings, 202; Harry Potter, Bloodfeud. The Stewarts and Gordons at War in the Age of Mary Queen of Scots (Stroud, 2002), 39, 45; Pamela E. Ritchie, Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548 – 1560 (East Linton, 2002), 125.
\textsuperscript{17} Jamie Cameron, James V. The Personal Rule, 1528 – 1542 (East Linton, 1998), 133.
\textsuperscript{18} Jenny Wormald, Mary Queen of Scots. A Study in Failure (London, 1988), 123–4.
\textsuperscript{19} Gordon Donaldson, All the Queen’s Men. Power and Politics in Mary Stewart’s Scotland (London, 1983), 74 – 92.
\textsuperscript{20} Ruth Grant, ‘The Brig o’ Dee Affair, the Sixth Earl of Huntly and the Politics of the Counter-Reformation’ in Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (eds), The Reign of James I/VI (East Linton, 2000), 93 –109; Barry Robertson, Continuity and Change in the Scottish
Over time the Gordons of Huntly had also managed to acquire large quantities of territory stretching across the north of Scotland. These included the lands of Strathbogie, Aboyne, Glentanner, Glenmuick, the Enzie, Auchindoun, as well as the Highland lordships of Badenoch and Lochaber. For the most part these had been accumulated piecemeal across the decades, usually in the form of gifts from successive monarchs. On top of this the earls had also secured positions as the hereditary sheriffs of the shires of Inverness and Aberdeen. These remained very important as it was through them and the associated courts that the Gordon earls established and maintained themselves as legitimate power-brokers and custodians of the law in the north of Scotland. Meanwhile, as major landowners, the earls retained the right to hold barony and regality courts. Added to this was their hold over successive commissions of royal lieutenancy for the north of the country and the additional power and legitimacy and power that this provided them with. Like other regional landowners the earls had also established themselves as key regulators of feuds and disputes in the locality.

Perhaps most importantly the household could look to the support of an extended kin network in that part of the world. It has been postulated that by around the middle decades of the sixteenth century the number of families sporting the Gordon surname exceeded 150. Not all could claim a direct bloodline relationship to the House of Huntly; some had no doubt merely looked to affiliate themselves to the strongest power in the area, for protection if for no other reason. Successive Huntly earls, with an eye to their own expanding power and influence, had naturally been only too keen to welcome them. For the most part, though, it seems that the majority of the Gordon cadet families—particularly the more important ones—looked to claim a link by blood. There were two main strands to this. Some families were of Seton-Gordon stock in that they claimed descent from the earls of Huntly themselves. These included such notable branches as the Gordons of...
Abergeldie, Gight, Letterfourie and Cluny.\textsuperscript{25} Also influential in this grouping were the Gordons of Sutherland—a branch that stemmed from the marriage of Adam Gordon, a son of the 2nd earl of Huntly, to Elizabeth, heiress to the earldom of Sutherland, sometime prior to 1514. As a result of this union, the earls of Sutherland subsequently came to bear the Gordon surname.\textsuperscript{26} Other cadet families looked to claim kinship stretching back further to the pre-Seton Gordon lords. Notable branches in this instance included the Gordons of Haddo, Caitnburrow, Lesmore, Craig, and Buckie.\textsuperscript{27} The Gordons of Auchleuchries claimed descent from the Haddo line.

What all this amounted to was a situation where, for the most part, such families remained willing and able to take the part of the House of Huntly should this be required. This support was, for example, to be seen in abundance at the battles of Flodden and Pinkie.\textsuperscript{28} It was likewise highly evident during a period of confrontation between the House of Huntly and another notable regional family, the House of Forbes, in the early 1570s.\textsuperscript{29} With the full and undivided support of the cadet lines, the Gordon earls could field a considerable show of strength, particularly so in comparison with neighbouring households. In particular it can be claimed that with regards to the quality and potential quantity of horsemen, not even the mighty earls of Argyll could look to compete.\textsuperscript{30} This was made starkly evident at the 6th earl of Huntly’s victory over the 7th earl of Argyll at Glenlivet in 1594.

\section*{III}

By the time of the birth of Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries in March 1635 the House of Huntly remained the major force in the north of the country.


\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 14; ‘Tables compiled and collected together by the great paines and industrie of Sir Robert Gordon, Knight Baronett of Gordonstoun sone to Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, copied out of his papers and continued be Maister Robert Gordon, his son’, 1659, ed. J. M. Joass in Bulloch (ed.), \textit{House of Gordon}, II, 130–1.

\textsuperscript{27} ‘Balbithan MS’, 26–68.


\textsuperscript{30} Jane E. A. Dawson, \textit{The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary Queen of Scots. The Earl of Argyll and the Struggle for Britain and Ireland} (Cambridge, 2002), 53.
But this position had certainly not gone unchallenged in the intervening years. The 6th Earl (now the 1st marquis) of Huntly had continued to find himself in trouble over his abiding adherence to the Catholic faith. This had resulted in brief periods of imprisonment during the first two decades of the century and in 1629 had brought about a decision on his part to surrender his hereditary sheriffships of Aberdeen and Inverness to the Crown in order to avoid having personally to pursue and prosecute his co-religionists in the North. Furthermore, between 1625 and 1632 the new king, Charles I, had looked to enhance the power of James Stewart, 3rd earl of Moray by conferring upon him a lieutenancy of the North, an honour that the Gordons had held monopoly over for decades. Huntly and his eldest son, George, earl of Enzie, had also struggled to enforce their will in the Highland lordships of Badenoch and Lochaber, particularly in the face of sporadic resistance from powerful clans such as the Camerons and the Mackintoshes. This in turn had impacted on the ability of the Gordons to serve the king as agents of royal power in the western Highlands and Islands and duly opened up opportunities for others to enhance their own power-brokering credentials, most notably the Mackenzie earls of Seaforth. Perhaps most damaging to Huntly’s domestic position was the bitter feud that broke out between the Gordons and another local noble household, the Crichtons of Frendraught, in the early 1630s. This ultimately resulted in Huntly being imprisoned once again, this time for covertly encouraging the violent actions of some of the younger and wilder Gordon lairds and other Highland associates.

The House of Huntly and the extended Gordon kin network was to face an even stern test of strength with the coming of the Civil Wars of the mid-seventeenth century. From the outset of the Covenanting revolt against Charles I, George, 2nd marquis of Huntly and the Gordon lairds of the North-East remained steadfast supporters of the royalist cause. As early as June 1638 Huntly involved himself in discussions on how best to counter the Covenanting threat, and from October became highly active in obtaining subscriptions to what became known as the King’s Covenant. This was essentially a royal-approved alternative to the National Covenant through

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which the king looked to regain the political initiative in Scotland and shore up support. Huntly’s efforts in this regard met with some marked success in the shires of Aberdeen and Banff, particularly in areas where his personal influence was strong.\footnote{John Spalding, *Memorials of the Troubles in Scotland and in England, A.D. 1624–A.D. 1645*, ed. J. Stuart (2 vols, Aberdeen, 1850–1), I, 89, 112; John Row and John Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland from the Year 1558 to August 1637 … with a Continuation to July 1639*, ed. David Laing (Edinburgh, 1842), 500–1.}

Leading on from this the Gordons were central to royal plans to regain control of Scotland by force. Charles I envisioned an ambitious multi-pronged plan of attack that would unleash forces from all three of his kingdoms. While the king would march to the border at the head of an English army, Randall MacDonnell, 1st earl of Antrim, would invade the west of Scotland with an Irish force, while James, 3rd marquis of Hamilton, the overall commander of the royal forces in Scotland, would land a seaborne army at Aberdeen with the intention of linking up with a force under the command of Huntly. It was also mooted that the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Thomas Wentworth, should look to land troops at Dumbarton.\footnote{Jane H. Ohlmeyer, *Civil War and Restoration in the Three Stuart Kingdoms: the Career of Randal MacDonnell, Marquis of Antrim* (Second edn., Dublin, 2001), 82–3; Mark Charles Fissel, *The Bishops’ Wars: Charles I’s Campaigns against Scotland, 1638–1640* (Cambridge, 1994), 3–6.}

However, before this plan could be put into operation Huntly came under increasing pressure from the Covenanters in the North. On 7 February 1639 a Covenanting force captured the castle of Inverness in the face of an attempt by William Gordon of Knockespock to garrison it on Huntly’s behalf.\footnote{Huntly to Hamilton, 25 February 1639, NAS, Hamilton MSS, GD406/1/756; same to same, 7 March 1639, NAS, GD406/1/758.} A week later Huntly marched on Turriff with a view to overawing a Covenanting delegation that had gathered there, but when the prominently-placed local kirkyard was defended against him Huntly declined to fall to arms. Similarly, on 30 March, upon the approach of a Covenanting army under the command of James Graham, 5th earl (later 1st marquis) of Montrose, Huntly saw fit to retreat and give up Aberdeen rather than to stand and fight. Moreover, some days later he negotiated a cease-fire with Montrose and signed an oath acknowledging his submission.\footnote{Barry Robertson, ‘The House of Huntly and the First Bishops’ War’, *Northern Scotland*, 24 (2004), 3.}

A number of contemporaries roundly condemned Huntly for his inaction at this time, but they failed to appreciate many of the difficulties that he had
to contend with. He clearly suffered from a lack of experienced troops and officers and from the fact that neither Aberdeen nor his own castles were particularly defensible in light of the standards of warfare of the time. Huntly was also weighed down with crippling levels of debt which restricted him in terms of how long he could afford to keep an army in the field. On top of this, neither Hamilton nor the king provided Huntly with any clear warrant or idea of when, or if, they wanted him to take offensive action. He was also aware that his forces would be outnumbered by those of his enemies by a considerable margin. With this in mind it seems that Huntly concluded that the best course would be to seek a temporary accommodation with the Covenanters and sign a short and vaguely-worded oath of submission. He may even have been thinking tactically when he made his submission, hoping it would leave him free from Covenanting aggression and enable to wait for the expected arrival of Hamilton and his army. If so, this quickly backfired as shortly afterwards the Covenanters took Huntly and his eldest son George, lord Gordon, prisoner in Aberdeen and transported them south to be interred in Edinburgh Castle.37

By this time the grand royalist plan had not been progressing well on other fronts. Antrim had been unsuccessful in his attempts to raise an Irish army and at the same time the king experienced similar problems. Meanwhile, Hamilton and his seaborne army had been held up in the port of Yarmouth and had been unable to provide timely assistance to Huntly and his supporters.38 Despite this, a number of the Gordons and other royalist lairds rose up in the North-East in May and succeeded in defeating a Covenanting force at Turriff on the 14th. They afterwards occupied Aberdeen but were soon beset by problems similar to those experienced by Huntly in March. By 23 May they had duly disbanded their army and Aberdeen had been recaptured.39

Royalist fortunes in the North-East briefly rose again with the arrival of Huntly’s second son, James, Lord Aboyne, from England sporting a warrant of royal lieutenancy. He reoccupied Aberdeen and succeeded in marshalling the traditional Gordon support base once again. It was to be a short-lived success. On 15 June the Gordon foot—most of them ill-trained Highlanders—melted away in the face of enemy cannon fire at Megray Hill near Stonehaven. Shortly

37 Ibid., 3–7.
38 Fissel, Bishops’ Wars, 10–22; Aidan Clarke, ‘The Earl of Antrim and the First Bishops’ War’, Irish Sword, 6, no. 23 (1963), 108–15.
39 Spalding, Memorialls, I, 185–91; Gentlemen of Aberdeenshire to Hamilton, 21 May 1639, NAS, GD406/1/837.
afterwards Aboyne was defeated by Montrose at the two-day battle of Brig’ o’ Dee (18–19 June). As had been the case in March and May, many blamed Hamilton for failing to reinforce the royalist lairds with the men that had been under his command. However, by the time of Aboyne’s defeat that matter had in any case become largely academic. By 18 June the king had already agreed to negotiate with the Covenanters in what became known as the Pacification of Berwick. With hindsight it seems clear that Charles I had missed his best opportunity to bring the Covenanters to heel through force and thereby prevent the disintegration of his rule in the three Stuart kingdoms. Little advantage had been taken of the active support granted him by the Gordons and their allies. Instead, the Covenanters found themselves with free rein to mobilise on a significant scale in order to cope with the situation.40

The implications would be profound for both Charles I and his subjects over the years that followed. During the Second Bishops’ War of 1640 the Covenanters inflicted a decisive defeat upon the English forces of the king, and by the end of 1641 had brought about a revolution in the governance of Scotland.41 This also had a more wide-ranging impact on the three Stuart kingdoms as a whole, being instrumental in creating the conditions that allowed for a break-down in royal government in Ireland and in England.42

For the Gordons the impact was no less devastating. The strains of the First Bishops’ War had evidently taken their toll, with the result that little further resistance was offered to the Covenanters. Huntly was present at the Scottish Parliament that commenced in September 1639 and formed part of a faction which sought unsuccessfully to halt the revolutionary process and defend the prerogative of the king.43 But over the course of 1640, and for much of 1641, he removed himself to London, while in the North-East any hopes that the Gordons would rise again remained unrealised.44 Meanwhile, during the course of 1640, Covenanting armies managed to overawe those areas which remained royalist in sympathy, the North-East being thoroughly subdued by Colonel

40 Robertson, ‘House of Huntly and the First Bishops’ War’, 8–12.
44 Spalding, Memorialls, I, 240.
Robert Monro over the summer months. Huntly’s castle of Strathbogie was occupied and the immediate Gordon hinterland was plundered for livestock, horses and oatmeal.\textsuperscript{45} More seriously for Huntly personally, his backing of the royalist cause only added to his already chronic state of indebtedness, and left him at the mercy of major creditors like his brother-in-law, Archibald Campbell, 8th earl (later marquis) of Argyll. Indeed, Huntly’s plight became so extreme that he was forced to relinquish control of the Highland lordships of Badenoch and Lochaber to Argyll in return for the latter’s aid in paying the extensive dowries due upon the marriages of his three eldest daughters.\textsuperscript{46}

There is nothing in Patrick Gordon’s diary entry for the year 1640 that refers to the trials and tribulations of Huntly and his adherents during the Covenanting Revolution. The extent to which his father, John Gordon of Auchleuchries, may have been involved is not even hinted at, and Patrick merely notes the fact that he went to school at the kirk of Cruden, and was to be lodged in the vicinity along with his elder brother for the space of four years.\textsuperscript{47} Little can be traced in written records of his father’s activities at the time, although it is fairly likely that he would have taken his place in the Gordon forces alongside other men of his standing. This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that he is mentioned along with many others of the surname Gordon in a roll of delinquents dating from 1641.\textsuperscript{48} It very much stands as testament to Gordon commitment to the royalist cause.

Many Gordon lairds once again took the side of the king when civil war broke out in Scotland in 1644. This was very much a reaction against attempts by the government to enforce subscription to the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, as well as its decision to send an army into England in support of the king’s enemies, the Parliamentarians. As had been the case in 1639, the hostilities in 1644 broke out in the North-East first. On 19 March Sir John Gordon of Haddo led a raid on Aberdeen and succeeded in capturing a number of prominent local Covenanters. Following on from this, Huntly raised a larger force and for the space of just over a month from late March to late April he occupied Aberdeen for the king.\textsuperscript{49} On this occasion, the involvement of John Gordon of Auchleuchries on the royalist side is unquestionable.

\textsuperscript{46} Robertson, \textit{Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility}, 118–22.
\textsuperscript{48} \textit{The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland} (hereafter RPCS), 1638–1643, ed. P. Hume Brown (Edinburgh, 1906), 510–12.
\textsuperscript{49} Spalding, \textit{Memorialls}, II, 324–53.
is clear that he formed part of Haddo’s retinue, and in particular he is noted to have taken part in a raid on the house of Auchnagatt pertaining to the Covenanter, Alexander Strachan of Glenkindie.\(^{50}\)

In the end the rising achieved little. Huntly made no real attempt to engage in arms with the Covenaners and upon the approach of a stronger army under the command of Argyll he felt obliged to disband and flee to Strathnaver in the far north of Scotland. The main rationale behind this decision was similar to what it had been in March 1639: the lack of support from elsewhere. He had also not yet received a commission authorising him to take up arms. Once again this left the North-East open to Covenanting domination and Argyll duly crushed all remaining resistance. Perhaps the most shocking outcome for the Gordons was the capture of Haddo and his subsequent execution in Edinburgh in July.\(^{51}\) He had undoubtedly been a key force behind the rising and had paid a heavy price as a result.

When the Marquis of Montrose (now a royalist) eventually arrived in the North-East with his army in September 1644, few Gordons joined his banner. Partly this was due to the fact that Huntly was still in Strathnaver, and partly because his eldest son, Lord Gordon, was at that time a top-ranking Covenanter in the shires of Aberdeen and Banff. Lord Gordon had subscribed the National Covenant in April 1641, doubtless convincing himself that this was the best means of securing the future well-being of his family. However, with the mounting success of Montrose’s campaign, he soon began to reconsider his position. Finally, in February 1645 he defected to the royalist side, thus providing Montrose with the opportunity to gain significant numbers of recruits from the Gordon heartlands. Montrose took full advantage of this and the Gordon formations duly played a prominent part in the royalist victories at Auldearn (9 May), Alford (2 July), and Kilsyth (15 August).\(^{52}\)

However, the relationship between Montrose and the Gordons was rarely a smooth one. Lord Gordon was killed at the battle of Alford, and Montrose seems to have got along less well with James, lord Aboyne. In early September 1645, instead of marching south with Montrose towards England, Aboyne chose to put family priorities in the North-East first, and withdrew with the


\(^{52}\) Robertson, *Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility*, 121, 133–6.
Gordon forces. Most of the Highlanders chose a similar course, thus resulting in a serious weakening of Montrose’s army. Montrose soon found himself defeated at Philiphaugh (13 September) by a superior Covenanting force under the command of Lieutenant-General David Leslie.\(^{53}\)

The relationship reached a further low following Huntly’s return to the North-East at around that time. Over the course of the first half of 1646, he and Montrose failed to mount a co-ordinated campaign with the result that no revival of royalist fortunes in Scotland was forthcoming. Huntly did continue to engage in sporadic campaigning into 1647 but by that time the cause was lost. A Covenanting search party captured him in the Highlands of Strathavon in either late November or early December of that year and dispatched him to Edinburgh for imprisonment.\(^{54}\) He was beheaded on 22 March 1649.\(^{55}\)

An ongoing commitment to the royalist cause had clearly continued to exact a heavy toll of the Gordons. It had resulted in military defeat and much devastation to their landholdings. Moreover, the need to furnish armies did much to exhaust the remaining funds and credit of the House of Huntly and added significantly to the overall problem of burgeoning debt. Most serious was the manner in which this allowed the chief creditor, Argyll, to gain full legal control of the Huntly estates. Argyll had spent much of the 1640s looking to secure this claim by methodically buying up as many of Huntly’s debts as he could.\(^{56}\) In 1653 he obtained a bond from Lewis Gordon, 3rd marquis of Huntly, confirming this. By that time the Scottish armies of Charles II had been defeated by Cromwell’s New Model Army and the Gordons had been left with no one to turn to for help. Lewis died in December 1653 leaving his widow, Mary Grant, with four young children to support.\(^{57}\)

The entries in Patrick Gordon’s diary for the second half of the 1640s have little to say on the momentous events of the time or on how they affected his father and immediate family circle. Patrick does refer to the fact that all public schools were closed in 1644 ‘because of the great troubles’ and so he

\(^{53}\) Ibid., 137–41.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., 141–9.


\(^{57}\) Robertson, Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility, 156–8.
was certainly not unaware of what was going on. He also mentions how his father changed his place of residence on a number of occasions, something which in itself may reflect the uncertainties of the time. 1651 turned out to be a key year in Patrick’s life. With Scotland in the midst of the war against England, and being unable to go to university in Scotland due to his Roman Catholicism, he resolved to leave the country. He took ship from Aberdeen on 12 June, starting out on what would become a great and profitable adventure. 58

IV

Like most other royalist households, the Gordons of Huntly benefited greatly from the restoration of Charles II to the thrones of Scotland, England and Ireland in 1660. September 1660 saw the elevation of Lord Charles Gordon, fourth son of the 2nd marquis, to the peerage as Earl of Aboyne. 59 Even more spectacular were the gains made by the family following the forfeiture and execution of the Marquis of Argyll in May 1661 for having complied with the Cromwellian regime. What this brought to the House of Huntly was the sudden windfall of the return of all the estates that had fallen into Argyll’s hands during the 1640s and 1650s. The household would also not be held liable for all the debts that Argyll and his heir, Lord Lorne, had built up on the lands in the meantime, a situation that left the latter under considerable financial duress. 60

Nonetheless, George Gordon, 4th marquis of Huntly made hardly any political impact at a national level during the 1660s and 1670s, largely on account of his young age and emphatic devotion to the Roman Catholic faith. He spent much of his time during these years travelling on the Continent and pursuing a bitter dispute with his uncle, Aboyne, over some of the family lands that had been granted the latter as part of the new earldom. This was not finally resolved until 1672 when a decision was arrived at whereby Aboyne had to renounce title to many of the holdings in favour of Huntly. 61 It was only

61 Robertson, Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility, 164–9. For more detail on Huntly’s grand tour of the continent, and for the family’s contacts with mainland Europe more generally, see Barry Robertson, ‘The Gordons of Huntly: a Scottish
in 1684 with the elevation of James Drummond, 4th earl of Perth, (himself soon to convert to Catholicism) to the post of Chancellor of Scotland that Huntly’s national profile began to improve. The former headed a group of powerbrokers that would look to dominate Scottish political life for the remainder of the decade, and he evidently saw Huntly as a useful ally. Indeed, it was largely due to Perth’s influence that Huntly found himself elevated to the title of Duke of Gordon in 1684.62

Huntly did work hard during the reign of Charles II to retain or rebuild meaningful links with some of the Gordon cadet families. This was particularly the case with the Gordons of Sutherland, who had been steadfast Covenanters during the Civil Wars. By the 1670s there had been talk of that family changing its surname to Sutherland, an act that doubtless would have further distanced them from the House of Huntly. However, from the early 1680s relations between the two households began to improve. In 1682 Huntly and the heir to the Sutherland earldom, John, lord Strathnaver, drew up a bond of amity promising mutual friendship and assistance. At the same time Strathnaver also obliged himself and his heirs to retain the surname of Gordon.63 The fact that Gordon lairds, such as Lesmore, Knockespock, Cocklarachy and Artloch, were employed by Huntly as bailies also points towards the desire of the latter to build and retain a support network based on kinship.64

Not all cadet families remained closely allied to the main Huntly line. The relationship between Huntly and Aboyne certainly deteriorated during the 1660s and early 1670s over the landholding dispute. The second case in point was that of the Gordons of Haddo. From the time of his joining the ranks of the Privy Council in 1678, the political star of Sir George Gordon of Haddo had gone on to rise with startling ascendancy. This culminated with his elevation to the peerage as Earl of Aberdeen as well as to the position of Lord Chancellor of Scotland in 1682.65 This left Haddo in a position whereby he

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64 RPCS, 1678–80, ed. P. Hume Brown (Edinburgh, 1914), 311.
could assume a dominant role and seek to do favours for Huntly, instead of the other way around.66 Huntly later described how the Earl of Aberdeen began to act coldly towards him and at one point sought to persuade him to resign superiority of some lands so that they could be held by the Haddo Gordons directly from the Crown.67 In short, Haddo’s rise, like that of Aboyne, was indicative of a subtle change in the balance of power in the North-East. The Gordons of Huntly had always had to contend with rival households, but now such challenges were emerging from within the Gordon kin network. The new dynasties of Aboyne and Aberdeen conducted themselves with an independency that had rarely been seen prior to the Restoration. Such families could look to forge their own political destiny and not necessarily have to toe the Huntly line.

To a large extent this was facilitated by the fact that by the 1680s the House of Huntly could no longer be regarded as the pre-eminent powerhouse of the North that it had once been. Much power still remained but the family had less currency than at the time of the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Where once the Huntly lords had been leaders of the northern pack, they were now arguably merely part of the pack; the fact that families such as the Haddo Gordons had arisen to become fellow members of that pack was symptomatic of the change. Another key indicator was the fate of the lost sheriffships of Aberdeen and Banff. Where they had once been the sole hereditary preserve of the Gordons, they were, by the second half of the seventeenth century, falling into the hands of other key rival families. In 1661, William Keith, 6th earl Marischal, was granted the sheriffship of Aberdeen during his lifetime.68 The Earl of Aberdeen also later gained this title for a time, as did John Hay, 12th earl of Errol.69

In a similar fashion, the Gordons of Huntly had lost ground as Highland powerbrokers. Particularly indicative of this new reality were the commissions granted by the government in 1680 for keeping the peace in the Highlands. Huntly, Archibald, 9th earl of Argyll, John, 1st marquis of Atholl, and Kenneth, 4th earl of Seaforth, were each conveyed an annual sum of £500 sterling in return for maintaining order in areas that had been designated to them. However, in Huntly’s case there was a catch. His jurisdiction being deemed

67 WSRO, Incomplete memoir of the 1st duke of Gordon, Goodwood/1428, ff. 6, 12.
69 CSPD, 1682, 479.
too large for one man alone, the decision was made that it should be split in
two, with Alexander, 5th earl of Moray, being given control of the other half.
Huntly’s bounds would include the Mearns, Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and the
areas of Badenoch and Lochaber lying within the shire of Inverness. Moray
was to oversee the shire of Nairn and those parts of the Inverness-shire not
granted to Huntly. Traditionally, Huntly and Argyll had been the two main
Highland powerbrokers to be granted lieutenancies, but over the course of the
seventeenth century Seaforth, Atholl, and to a lesser extent, Moray, had also
succeeded in jostling for position.

With the accession of the Catholic James VII and II to the Stuart thrones,
Huntly (now Duke of Gordon) did begin to garner more favour at Court
as well as rewards such as the governorship of Edinburgh Castle. However,
the Williamite Revolution of 1688–9 soon reversed this situation. Gordon
did defend the castle during a three-month siege in 1689, but with supplies
running low, and with no sign of the approach of a Jacobite army, he saw
fit to surrender on 13 June. The option had been there for him to hold out
somewhat longer but it seems that he was determined not completely to ruin
himself and his family as his grandfather had done during the 1640s. In this,
at least, he was successful. For the most part his titles, estates and landed
privileges remained intact.

He did continue to come under pressure from the government over his
Jacobite sympathies during the years that followed. In this he laid himself open
to attack, particularly on account of his visit in 1690 to the exiled Stuart court
at St. Germains-en-Laye. His decision to make this journey remains a curious
one, particularly given that the opportunity was there for him to retire to his
estates and lead as quiet a life as could be managed. But he had been confined
to Edinburgh for much of the latter half of 1689 and, no doubt, had built up
a degree of resentment as a result. Moreover, in February 1690 he had had an
audience with the new king, William III and II, in London, a meeting which,
according to one contemporary source, did not go to the Gordon’s liking, he
‘not being received as he thought his family deserved’. On top of this he also
felt compelled to regain James’s favour through justifying his surrender of
Edinburgh Castle. In this he met with little success. The counsel of Gordon’s
enemy, John Drummond, 1st earl of Melfort, held sway at St. Germains at

70 Historical Notices of Scottish Affairs selected from the Manuscripts of Sir John Lauder of
Fountainhall, ed. David Laing (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1848), I, 261; RPCS, 1678–80,
428–9.
71 Robertson, Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility, 176–81.
the time, and the former eventually departed on being told by James that his services were no longer required. He was subsequently arrested in the town of Willingen and by November 1692 was languishing in prison in The Hague. 72 Despite this, his domestic position remained little affected upon his return to Scotland and, although under suspicion from time to time, he remained coolly disposed towards the Jacobite cause for the remainder of his life. 73

The day to day running of the family went on, but in a number of ways the noble House of Huntly was a shadow of its former self. The days when the Gordon lords had exercised a commanding power across the north of Scotland and within the corridors of government were long gone. The independence of branches such as the Gordons of Aboyne and the Gordons of Haddo had become all too apparent. There had been temporary splits in the extended family in the previous century but by the late 1600s these were becoming much more permanent and fundamental in nature. The best years of the household were clearly becoming a thing of the past.

V

To what extent Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries would have known the details of the fluctuating fortunes of the House of Huntly is hard to say. By the early 1690s he had seen many years distinguished service as a soldier and occasional diplomat in Russia, but at the same time he had clearly tried to keep himself as informed on Gordon affairs as possible. During a diplomatic mission to the court of James VII and II in 1686, Patrick made a point of making a trip from London to Scotland where he visited the Duke of Gordon in Edinburgh Castle. He then journeyed north to Aberdeen to settle some family affairs, and from there took ship for his return journey to Moscow. 74 Patrick’s concern and


73 Ibid., 93–105. He died on 7 December 1716.

74 Paul Dukes, Graeme P. Herd, and Jarmo Kotilaine, Stuarts and Romanovs. The Rise and
support for the head of the House of Huntly remained apparent in his letters to him of 1690 and 1691. Alongside this Patrick worked hard to promote the Jacobite cause within Russia. What is noticeable, however, is that when the Duke of Gordon lost out in the power struggles at the exiled Stuart court, Patrick’s loyalties were first and foremost with his kinsman rather than with James and ministers such as Melfort. His efforts on behalf of the Jacobites tailed off markedly from that point. It stands as testament to the fact that, for some at least, the links of Gordon kinship could still be very strong.

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*Fall of a Special Relationship* (Dundee, 2009), 144–8.

Ibid., 172–84.
Surfing the Waves: 
Scottish Admirals in Russia in their Baltic Context

Steve Murdoch

It has long been established, and frequently reaffirmed, that the origins of 
the Russian navy and her distinctive Saltire insignia can be traced back to the 
final years of General Patrick Gordon in his guise as Rear Admiral of the 
Russian navy.¹ There is no doubt that after Gordon’s participation in Russia’s 
first tentative naval manoeuvres off of Archangel in 1694, and the first real 
amphibious operation against Azov in 1696 (in which Gordon had reverted 
to a land role), the Romanov dynasty attracted a notable presence of Scottish 
naval officers to their cause.² This reached something of a crescendo during 
the reign of Catherine the Great. Indeed, we find that among the officer class 
in the Russian navy during the eighteenth century there were admirals of all 
classes, as well as ships’ captains, lieutenants and numerous other officers 
and men.³ Impressively as the sheer numbers of Scottish admirals in Russian 
service is, there is seldom an opportunity to see them in the context of 
wider maritime migration. And this is crucial, for without such an overview, 
we could find ourselves constructing one of those uncritical histories which 
might over-celebrate the importance of these men and the relevance of their 
migration to Russia. That is not to say that they are not to be celebrated, 
or indeed that they were not important. It simply reiterates the obvious 
historical point which requires us to take a step back and view our subject 
matter in a different way. Rather than focus on simply one recipient country 
of Scottish maritime expertise—or indeed on one category of migrant—this 
essay will look to the Northern European world over a two-century time span

² Dukes, The Making of Russian Absolutism, 67; For the Azov campaign see Lindsey 
Hughes, Russia in the Age of Peter the Great (Yale, 1998), 17–18.
³ See for example S. Murdoch, ‘Soldier, Sailor, Jacobite Spy; Russo-Jacobite relations 
1688–1750’, Slavonica, no. 3, vol. 1 (Spring 1996/7), 7–27; R. Wills, The Jacobites and 
Russia 1715–1750 (East Linton, 2002), passim; A. G. Cross, ‘Scoto-Russian Contacts 
in the Reign of Catherine the Great (1762–1796)’ in The Caledonian Phalanx: Scots in 
Russia (Edinburgh, 1987), 24–46.
and follow the migration of maritime Scots into Scandinavia and Russia. For this purpose two categories have been selected: firstly those who attained the rank of ‘admiral’ in a foreign regular navy and secondly, as a control group, shipwrights. From this wider perspective it should be possible to trace patterns in maritime migration from Scotland to the Baltic region, albeit there may be some requirement to mention geographical areas beyond the confines of this to fully understand the various processes at work.

Space prevents a full discussion here of those Scots who served as naval admirals and senior commanders in either the Scottish Royal Navy (pre-1603), Stuart-British Royal Navy (1603–1688) or in the Royal Navy in the post-Union period. Suffice it to say that the Scots were fully represented at all ranks and not as devoid of naval expertise as one might expect, or, as Andrew Little has observed, ‘[Scots] were found aboard British warships in large numbers, forming appreciable portions of the crews, with many later attaining senior rank’. There is no scope here to investigate the numerous Scottish maritime forces deployed as privateers or naval allies to the powers under discussion. Rather the focus remains firmly on Scandinavia and Russia and opens with a review of the Scottish commanders in the service of one of Scotland’s closest allies, Denmark-Norway.

**Denmark-Norway**

Without doubt one of the most important destinations for Scottish mariners in the early modern period was the kingdom of Denmark-Norway whose power derived from her navy. The early part of the sixteenth century saw many famous (even infamous) Scottish privateers serve the various Danish monarchs. However, after the regal alliance of 1589 which re-cemented the Stuart-Oldenburg alliance, this auxiliary service was turned into something more concrete. James VI (& I) recommended numerous naval officers into

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Christian IV’s navy (Appendix II) right up until his death in 1625. At least five Scots held the position of ‘admiral’ during the reign of Christian IV, with a sixth serving as vice-admiral. Their overall contribution to the Danish-Norwegian fleet has been written up elsewhere, but it is worth reiterating a few general points. For great periods during the reign of Christian IV, Scots were put in charge of large sections of his rivers and territorial waters. Alexander Durham, commanded the entire Baltic fleet as its admiral between 1578 and 1586 and the North Sea fleet from 1587–99 in the same capacity. Andrew Mowatt joined as a naval captain in 1580 and continued to serve as an admiral into the 1600s, particularly in the North Sea. John Cunningham’s main role involved the naval exploration of Greenland and the northern seas between 1605–19 in order to expand Danish claims to the North Atlantic. He took with him other Scots like John Broun as well as Scottish ships like The Gilbert. Sometime after (1631–33), Axel Mowatt, Andrew’s son, became admiral of all the ships in the seas between Iceland and the Faeroes. In autumn 1633 the younger Mowatt was moved from his northern command to act as the senior admiral in and around the river Elbe. He must have returned to Norway as

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7 J. T. Topsoe and E. Marquard, Officerer i den danske-norske søetat 1616–1814 og den danske søetat 1814–1932 (2 vols, Copenhagen, 1935), I, passim. Anton Espelland lists a number of foreign, probably Scottish, officers in the Danish-Norwegian navy but has not given sources for their Scottish origins. Two of these, Jacob Hall and Hans Kansler are certainly Englishmen from Hull. Others, such as Kato Gertsen, Thomas Normand de la Nancet and Jørgen Hjelt do not appear as Scots in Topsoe, Jensen and Marquard, though Hjelt may be a Shetlander. See A. Espelland, Skottene i Hordaland og Rogaland fra aar 1500–1800 (Norhemsund, 1921), 34.


10 T. Riis, Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot (2 vols, Odense, 1988), II, 87; A. Thiset and P.L. Witurup (eds), Nyt Dansk Adelslexicon: Fortegnelse over Dansk Adel i Fortid og Nu (Copenhagen, 1904), 70; Espelland, Skottene i Hordaland og Rogaland, 19; N. M. Probst, Den Danske Flådes Historie, 1588–1660; Christian 4.s Flåde (Copenhagen, 1996), 80, 81 and 87.


by 1638 he had become senior admiral of the entire Norwegian fleet. The Scottish presence at the highest operational level continued into the 1640s. In 1645, Colonel Alexander Seaton, former governor of Stralsund, served as ‘Admiral for Marines’ with command over a squadron of eight ships. With these he prosecuted an amphibious offensive against Gothenburg, in consort with Vice-Admiral Sigvard Gabrielsen Akeleye.

One historian who discussed foreign enlistment into the Danish-Norwegian navy noted that ‘only a few skilled English and Dutch officers were hired by Christian IV, but they had little real impact on the navy as a whole’. Given the numbers and status of Scots and English officers given above and in Appendix II, this conclusion is obviously in need of revision. Between 1580 and 1678 Scotland produced at least 42 senior naval personnel for the Danish-Norwegian navy including five admirals and a vice-admiral. It would be amazing if these men ‘had little real impact’, especially when the various operations they took part in appear to prove otherwise. More importantly, we should consider what this period represented in terms of Northern European power politics. If we look to when the bulk of the men enlisted, it was without doubt at a time when Denmark-Norway was the most important navy in the north. But as the seventeenth century progressed and the Copenhagen monarchy lost power and prestige, so the numbers joining her navy began to dry up correspondingly. Furthermore, Christian IV’s realms were not the only Scandinavian lands hosting Scotsmen in their navy, nor did they take in the majority of Scots seeking naval service. As Denmark’s star was falling, Sweden’s was on the rise.

Scots in the Swedish Navy

When Gustav II Adolf restructured the navy in 1614, he retained sixteen commissioned naval captains who between them had command of a fleet of forty ships. As Alexia Grosjean has demonstrated, at this juncture we

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14 E. Marquard, Kancelliets Brevbøger, 1637–1639 (Copenhagen, 1949), 338. Orders to Admiral Mowatt from Christian IV, 11 April 1638.
16 Bellamy, ‘Danish Naval Administration’, 304.
17 The following section on Sweden is largely drawn from A. Grosjean, An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden 1569–1654 (Leiden, 2003), 112–37. I thank Dr Grosjean.
can be sure that 25 per cent of those captains kept on were Scots; Andrew Forrat, John (Hans) Forrat, Alexander Forrat and Richard (Jacob) Clerck. Two of these men commanded significant fleets that year, Alexander Forrat and Richard Clerck. The latter, by now an admiral, was one of two Scots with the rank in Sweden in 1614 as William Robertson Ruthven remained in Sweden with the rank of varfsadmiral (admiral of the wharf) that year.

According to Grosjean, the high percentage of Scottish involvement continued as the regular Swedish navy established itself. Still in late 1627 and early 1628 some nine Scottish-born captains are known to have been in service at sea, or incredibly 64 per cent of the total of fourteen naval captains which Sir James Spens, the British Ambassador, noted were active in regular Swedish naval service that year.\(^\text{18}\) The total number of active ship commanders rose to thirty captains by the end of Gustav II Adolf’s reign, bringing several more Scots into service. When the new rank of vice-admiral was formalised in 1630, two of the appointments made at this rank were Scots: Simon Stewart and John Clerck. Eventually both of these men received further promotion, Stewart to lieutenant admiral in 1644 and Clerck to holmadmiral (admiral of Stockholm royal shipyard) in 1631.\(^\text{19}\)

A concentration on the officers of only the rank of captain and above would ignore the contribution of the many other Scots who commanded Swedish ships at lesser rank. The data analysed by Grosjean indicates that these Scots served in a navy dominated by fellow Scots in terms of a total British involvement. The Scottish admirals commanded many of their compatriots in the lower ranks, including some particularly effective lieutenants and captains. During the Swedish-Danish Torstensson War (1643–5), one Scottish lieutenant admiral, one major, three other captains and four lieutenants participated in the conflict at sea for the Swedes, while Holmadmiral John ‘Hans’ Clerck remained in command of shore facilities in Sweden.\(^\text{20}\) Lieutenant-Admiral Simon Stewart commanded a fleet of six

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\(^\text{18}\) These nine were: Vice-admiral and Captain Andrew Stuart; Major Simon Stewart; Senior Captain John Forrat; Senior Captain John Clerck; Captain John Hay; Captain Richard Clerck the younger; Captain Alexander Forrat; Captain Andrew Forrat and Captain James Forbes. From Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance*, 132.


\(^\text{20}\) The Scottish officers in service in 1644 were: Holmadmiral Hans Clerck, Lieutenant-Admiral Simon Stewart, Major Richard Clerck, Captains Alexander Clerck, Hans Kinnaird, Richard Stewart and Lieutenants Thomas Gray, William Allen, George
warships patrolling between Bornholm and Stralsund. Major Richard Clerck put to sea in Admiral Flemming’s squadron and commanded the third squadron in Admiral Rynning’s fleet the following year which consisted of ten warships plus auxiliary vessels. One of the Scottish lieutenants, George Liddel, proved to be particularly effective in the 1644 campaign. At the battle of Femarn on 13 October, Liddel obliged the Danish vice-admiral, Stenzel von Jasmund, to surrender his command *Oldenborg* for which exploits he eventually received a financial reward February 1650.21

Three particular Scottish families had substantial influence at officer level in the seventeenth century Swedish navy: the Stewarts, the Forrats, and the Clercks. Of the Stewarts, Simon—as already discussed—rose to the rank of admiral, while his son Richard also joined the fleet as an officer. Their countryman, Andrew Stuart ‘*den äldre*’ (the elder), also earned the rank of vice-admiral and served between 1621–41.22 The Forrats similarly did well for themselves, though for more unusual reasons than the Stewarts. Andrew, John (Hans) and Alexander all served between 1597 and 1660. Alexander, in his capacity as vice-admiral, received a degree of fame after choosing to blow up himself and his ship, *Solen*, rather than let it be captured by a squadron of Polish ships off the coast of Danzig during the battle of Oliva in 1627.23 Sir James Spens, a Scotsman working as the Stuart ambassador to Sweden and Swedish resident in London, recorded the incident:

The King had left in the Danzig roads only five of his smallest and worst ships to prevent Danzig vessels coming out this year, for winter storms of frost and snow often lead to loss of ships in the narrow rocky waters; whereupon the Danzigers prepared ten ships which on a night of full moon sailed out, with the subsequent fight lasting two days; during the second day the admiral’s vessel was captured, whereupon his captain, a Scotsman called Forath, decided to blow it up and die courageously rather than fall into the enemy’s hands; the other four, unable to endure, sailed for home.24

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21 Krigsarkiv Stockholm [KRA], Biografiska Anteckningar om Officerare vid Örlogsflottan, 1600–1699, unpublished manuscript, 250. For more on the battle see Probst, *Christian 4:s Flåde*, 244–51.
Ironically a Scottish vice-admiral was killed in the operation against a fleet of ships built by a Scottish shipbuilder for the Poles, Colonel James Murray. The Forrats and Stewarts were, however, not the most impressive examples of the rise and integration of seafaring Scots in Sweden. That distinction fell to the Clercks (Klerks), many of whom became holmadmirals of the fleet. Richard held this title from 1619 to 1625, his brother Johan held it from 1631–44, their nephew Richard the younger held it from 1655 to 1668, His brother Hans Williamson Clerck, became holmadiral from 1668 to 74. Hans Richard Clerck received the appointment on 31 January 1677 while Hans Hanson Clerck became a full admiral the same year. Numerous others in the family, served as ship’s captains in the Swedish navy at the same time.

Sweden’s naval strength was a prerequisite for her successful military and trade relations during the seventeenth century and Scotsmen were vital to the process of expansion. Once Scotland had become occupied by the English (1651–60) and after that country secured an alliance with Sweden (1654), the intake and importance of Scots to the Swedish state declined. Although there were individual Scots who did make it to Swedish naval service thereafter, the ‘waves’ of recruitment had run their course. Equally importantly, there were new destinations which absorbed Scotland’s naval elite, particularly as the House of Stuart went to war against the Dutch Republic in the 1660 and 1670s. As Andrew Little has admirably demonstrated, even outwith the Baltic arena, there were impressive waves of Scottish maritime recruitment into both the Stuart Royal Navy and the Dutch fleets against whom they fought. Noticeably though, Scots did not rise to the same rank in Dutch service as they did in the north. Perhaps this tells us something about the opportunities available to experienced foreigners in ‘young’ navies. Certainly this was the case in Russia, where the Scots again did well in terms of the rank and status they achieved there.

The Scottish Admirals in Russia

If we break the service of the Scottish admirals in Russia down into specific periods then we see two main ‘waves’ of naval migration into Russia. We can

loosely term these the Jacobite period (1694–1750) and the Era of Catherine (1762–96).\footnote{For the ‘Jacobite Period’ see Murdoch, ‘Soldier, Sailor, Jacobite Spy’, 7–27; Wills, The Jacobites and Russia, 27–31. For the ‘Era of Catherine’ see Cross, ‘Scoto-Russian Contacts’, 24–46.} Even within these dates we can subdivide again, pointing to a first influx of officers after 1698 and a second after the failure of the 1715 uprising in the Jacobite period. Similarly we can demarcate two sub-groups within the era of Catherine the Great.

We must be careful here not to ascribe ‘Jacobite’ credentials too quickly to all those taken into Russian service in the early period of the Romanov navy. Among the first group of Scots enlisted were a group of ten hired in Amsterdam in 1698 by Peter the Great, of which Commodore George Walker was the highest in rank.\footnote{D. Fedosov, The Caledonian Connection (Aberdeen, 1996), 117.} Given they were recruited after the conclusion of the Nine Years’ War (1688–97) it is just as likely that many of these men were simply redundant British officers as Jacobite exiles. Importantly, they also joined numerous English and Dutch officers, few of whom were likely to be sympathisers of the exiled James VII & II and his heirs—it was for their skills as seamen that they were recruited, not for their politics. Nonetheless, the men of the Jacobite period can demonstrably be shown to have participated in a number of naval campaigns and largely did good work for the Russian navy, even if there were a couple of incidents which displeased the Tsar. Although Rebecca Wills credits all Jacobite officers with ‘disproportionate success’, their reputation as superlative military commanders (army and navy) does not always stand up to scrutiny.\footnote{Wills, The Jacobites in Russia, 187; Hughes, Peter the Great, 80–9.} Wills is perhaps overly defensive of their errors and ignores their absolute failures. Thus, though she frequently mentions the Russian service of Admiral Thomas Gordon and the naval captains Robert Little and Adam Urquhart, the fact that they all wrecked ships through neglect is ominous by its absence from her discussion of them (Little was demoted and jailed, Urquhart was killed trying to salvage his command).\footnote{Murdoch, ‘Soldiers, Sailors, Jacobite Spy’, 9.} Furthermore, in her assessment of the Russian navy under Peter the Great, Lindsey Hughes makes no mention of any Jacobite admirals at all, not even Thomas Gordon. Rather the Norwegian, Cornelius Cruys, is held up as the most prominent naval expert (foreign or domestic), and not without good reason. That is not to say that Hughes claimed a definitive assessment of the navy.

Wills has undoubtedly done more research on the Jacobite period in Russia than anyone else and in combination with Hughes we learn much
of methods of recruitment, payment and opportunities for promotion for British and other foreign officers in the Russian navy. Russo-British diplomacy went from a position of alliance in 1716 to hostility soon after which impacted on the opportunities for Royal Naval officers to transfer to Russian service. By 1719 plans were even set afoot to try to capture Peter the Great at sea. These came to nought while Jacobites were not deterred by restrictions designed to prevent Britons from entering hostile service. This group included the hugely important English and Irish duo, Thomas Saunders and Christopher O’Brien, reminding us again that other foreign contributions to the Russian navy in the Jacobite period were as significant as the Scots. However, Thomas Gordon and Kenneth Sutherland, Lord Duffus both went on to have successful careers at the highest level within the Russian navy. With the end of the Great Northern War (1721), and the death of Peter the Great (1725), the highpoint of ‘Jacobite’ recruitment was over, even if numerous Jacobites remained in service for the next 20 years. Gordon in particular was credited with numerous maritime and amphibious victories on behalf of the Russians, particularly against the Poles in 1733–35. With his death in 1741, Scottish input to the Russian navy became largely insignificant, at least until the reign of Catherine the Great.

A.G. Cross has pointed to two sub-groups of Scottish naval officers arriving in Russia within the reign of Catherine the Great. The period 1764–1772 was one which saw no less than thirty British officers enter Russian naval service (though Cross does not detail how many were Scots), while the year 1783 alone saw the arrival of another thirty-eight British officers in a group. As with the first wave of British recruitment into Russia, the first of Catherine’s Scottish admirals arrived after a major European conflict was over—on this occasion the Seven Years’ War (1756–63). Among the first major successes of Catherine’s Scottish admirals were the victories against the Turks in 1770 at Chesme in which John Elphinstone and Samuel Greig played a role at least as significant as the Russian admirals G. A. Spiridov and Alexis Orlov. From

31 Wills, The Jacobites in Russia, passim.
32 Hughes, Peter the Great, 53–5
33 Wills, The Jacobites in Russia, 31, 55 and passim.
34 Murdoch, ‘Soldiers, Sailors, Jacobite Spy’, 14; Wills, The Jacobites in Russia, 190.
36 For the strength of the Russian fleets during this war see Dukes, The Making of Russian Absolutism, 129.
37 Dukes, The Making of Russian Absolutism, 165; Cross, ‘Scoto-Russian Contacts’, 27. The composition of the Russian fleet is given in the same volume on page 181 of Dukes.
then on his stature grew (not without some problems such as the Tarakanova affair), and he reached the rank of full Admiral in 1782.

Apart from his strategic contribution at sea, Greig oversaw the entry into Russian service of at least another 20 British officers whose services had become redundant in the Royal Navy after the end of the American War of Independence. He was responsible for ensuring that their proposed petition against another Scottish recruit, Admiral John Paul Jones, was not pursued with Catherine the Great and thus ensured the Russians had the service of a mariner of proven skill and courage. He had, of course, served against the British on behalf of the United States Navy which made him very unpopular with his British colleagues. Like Greig’s, John Paul Jones’ career in Russia is a matter of record, and his successes on the Black Sea campaigns are as well known to scholars of this period of Russian history as are the allegations of rape which led to his return to Paris. As with his forebears, John Paul Jones served in a multi-national Russian navy consisting of Russians, Britons, Greeks, Spaniards and Germans. He was loathed by most which helped fuel the various attempts to smear his name. Given this situation it was unlikely from the outset his service would be of any duration. With the death of Samuel Greig in 1788 and the departure of Jones thereafter, the period of Scottish Admirals in the service of the ‘Northern Powers’ came to an end, albeit officers of the rank of captain and lower continued to serve for a few years thereafter.

**Shipbuilding**

If we want to test the wave analogy against another facet of maritime migration we could can look to ship builders and find a near match to the waves of admirals and senior officers who left Scotland for northern European navies. Scotland is not renowned for her naval shipbuilding, and the larger warship projects are usually attributed to French shipwrights, particularly the flagship of James IV’s navy, *Michael*. That is not to say that Scotland did not have her own shipwrights or naval potential—she most certainly did—only that these are frequently overlooked in terms of Scottish naval history. Take for

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example Martin Bellamy’s conclusions that Balfour and Sinclair came from a country without a warship building tradition and that they represented something of an enigma.\textsuperscript{41} However, the resources available to Scottish (and foreign) shipbuilders have received scholarly attention and thus the fact that Scotland had a more established naval shipbuilding tradition becomes easier to comprehend.\textsuperscript{42} Having learned their trade in Scotland, many Scottish shipwrights travelled abroad for one-off commissions or to take service in the navies of the northern powers.

The Danish-Norwegian navy was financed by the Sound Tolls enabling Christian IV to bring in shipwrights from Scotland, England and Holland with impunity ‘to build for him warships of the most modern design’.\textsuperscript{43} The Danish need coupled with the ability of the shipwrights allowed the Danish-Norwegian navy to grow considerably throughout Christian IV’s reign. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, many Scottish shipwrights worked in Denmark-Norway on a private basis. Andrew Watson received permission to complete a ship he had started building in Norway in 1589.\textsuperscript{44} The following year Archibald Douglas also received permission to build a ship of eighty lasts despite a ban on foreigners building vessels over twenty lasts in Norway. Permission in this case had been granted through the intervention of James VI directly.\textsuperscript{45} This avenue of using royal patronage was bolstered after the royal wedding of James VI to Anna of Denmark in 1589. Anna herself gave permission to one Andrew Forrat of St Andrews (already mentioned in the Swedish navy) to build a ship in Norway while other Scottish noblemen also wanted to build two ships there. Christian IV honoured his sister’s promise and Forrat was allowed to bring his ship to Scotland.\textsuperscript{46} However, Christian’s patience began to wear thin, especially when the Scots started building vessels without even seeking permission from Copenhagen. In 1599 Christian only dropped his case against two Scottish shipwrights, James and David Lenteren because, as he admitted, they had produced some clever supplications in

\textsuperscript{41} Bellamy, ‘Danish Naval Administration’, II, 359–60.
\textsuperscript{42} For more on the capacity of Scotland for shipbuilding see T. C. Smout, A. R. MacDonald and Fiona Watson, \textit{A History of the Native Woodlands of Scotland} (Edinburgh, 2005), 192–202, 319–39.
\textsuperscript{44} C. C. A. Lang and O. G. Lundh et al. (eds.), \textit{Norske Rigs-Registranter Tildeels i Uddrag} (12 vols, Oslo, 1861–91), III, 49–50.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Norske Rigs-Registranter}, III, 140 and 210.
support of their activities. He allowed them to complete their ship but others were not so lucky. When William Duncan, Richard Waddell and Jacob Clerck all built ships in Norway in 1605, Christian IV wanted the vessels either confiscated or bought from the Scots as cheaply as possible.

Apparently the Danish king delighted in the design of Scottish ships and consequently employed several Scottish shipwrights directly into his service. Robert Peterson entered Danish-Norwegian service in 1596 with a commission to build four ships, and eight years later he was appointed as a ‘royal’ shipbuilder to Christian IV. He built the 44 gun Victor as a private contractor and in 1599 she became Christian IV’s flagship. In 1597 David Balfour entered Danish service as a shipbuilder, where he remained until 1634. Daniel Sinclair also entered Danish service as a shipbuilder and certainly served between 1614–36. The contribution of Balfour and Sinclair in Denmark-Norway during the Thirty Years’ War period as two of the three royal shipbuilders is incalculable. Certainly they built some of the prime ships of the fleet including the Hummeren (Balfour), Den Røde Løve and the Store Sophia (both Sinclair). When Christian IV asked his nephew, Charles I, for a new master shipbuilder in 1640, the British king found himself in no position to send Scots due to his ongoing conflict with the Scottish Covenanters. Instead

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47 Norske Rigs-Registranter, III, 558.
48 Danish Rigsarkiv [DRA], TKUA England A 1, 2. James VI to Christian IV, 4 April 1606; Norske Rigs-Registranter, IV, 79 and 123.
49 Espelland, Skottene, 50–1 and 66.
50 Espelland, Skottene, 50; Riis, Should Auld Acquaintance, II, 72; Bellamy, ‘Danish Naval Administration’, 315.
51 Probst, Den Danske Flådes Historie, 49, 62; Bellamy, ‘Danish Naval Administration’, 316.
52 Probst, Den Danske Flådes Historie, 36, 40–51, 62–8, 128, 162.
53 Riis, Should Auld Acquaintance, I, 108. Riis notes that in a move typical of the Scots in Scandinavia he married David Balfour’s step-daughter; Probst, Den Danske Flådes Historie, 130, 155, 181, 187; In the description of Laaland in November 1627, Robert Monro mentioned that the island ‘is plentiful of wood for building of ships, where his majesty every yeare hath some builded by his owne master builder, a worthy gentleman begotten of Scots ancestors, called Mr. Sinclaire, who speaks the Scottish tongue, and is very courteous to all his countrymen which come thither’. See R. Monro, His Expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment called Mac-Keys (2 vols, London, 1637), I, 42; Bellamy, ‘Danish Naval Administration’. A section on David Balfour can be found on 318–41. The section on Daniel Sinclair can be found on 342–54.
55 Tandrup, Svensk Agent ved Sundet, 525–6.
he sent an Englishman, James Rubbins, whom Christian IV made Royal Shipbuilder and effectively ended the ‘Scottish’ period of Scottish influence in Danish naval design.56

Elsewhere in Scandinavia, Scottish shipbuilders had also been in demand. Grosjean’s careful analysis of the 401 ships listed in Zettersten’s history of the Swedish navy revealed information pertaining to twenty-two shipbuilders. Three of these came from the British Isles and all appear to be English: Robert Turner, Francis Sheldon and Thomas Day, all of whom worked in Sweden in the 1660–80 period.57 However, it is clear that Zettersten’s work was far from complete. Another of the key sources for information is C.O. Cederlund’s article on Dutch shipbuilders and their contribution in Sweden in the early seventeenth century. Cederlund specifically discussed two Dutch master shipwrights but also mentioned the presence of one Scot and one German employed in the same industry.58 Grosjean argues that both these works significantly underestimate the impact of Scottish shipbuilders between the mid 1500s and the first quarter of the seventeenth century.59 From Gustav Vasa’s reign onwards, Scottish naval design had been coveted in Sweden. In 1544 Gustav requested a Scottish built ship for his navy and in 1550 he ordered his shipbuilders to study a Scottish ship he had seen in one of his harbours so that they could copy it.60 Thereafter, Scottish shipwrights were encouraged to enter Swedish service directly. Andrew Forrat arrived in Sweden in 1597 soon after completing his ships in Norway. In 1608 William Williamson undertook shipbuilding in the Stockholm shipyard though information on his remains scant.61 Much more is known William Robertson Ruthven, a man who would later hold the rank of admiral, who appeared as another master shipbuilder at

56 Rubbins produced at least three warships for the Danish navy. These were sent to Norway under the control of Hannibal Sehested. C.F. Bricka and J.A. Friderica et al. (eds), Kong Christian den Fjerdes egenhændige Breve (8 vols, Copenhagen, 1878–1947), VIII, 183–4, Christian IV to Korfits Ulfeldt, 8 June 1642; J.T. Lauridsen, ‘Skibsbyggeri for den Danske Krone i Neustadt i 1640’rne’ in Særtryk af Handels–og Søfartsmuseets Årbog (1982), 79; Murdoch, Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart, 195.


Nyköping and Ulvesund’s shipyards between 1609–13.\textsuperscript{62} Another, unnamed, Scottish master shipbuilder also arrived carrying accreditation from the British ambassador, Sir James Spens in 1624.\textsuperscript{63} More important than any of these men was Jacob Richard Clerck. He had entered the navy as a shipbuilder in 1606 and was probably the same Jacob Clerck mentioned in Norway the previous year. On entering service, he built the ship \textit{Mars} which was completed by 1608. Between 1615 to 1625, and in addition to any shipbuilding duties, he held the monopoly over all rigging, tackles, and material supplies for the navy on contract from the Swedish Crown. The monopoly was passed onto Hans Clerck after Jacob Richard’s death.\textsuperscript{64} The contribution of the Scottish shipbuilders in Sweden is hard to gauge, but in Grosjean’s analysis may have exceeded the contribution of other nations, particularly the two Dutchmen mentioned by Cederlund.\textsuperscript{65}

After the loss of \textit{Vasa} in 1628, the Swedish government stepped back from a large scale building project. Interim solutions were offered by the Swedish state council (\textit{Riksråd}) who believed that ships might be bought inexpensively elsewhere. One Swedish merchant was ordered to obtain a replacement for a ship he had lost for the price of 1,000 \textit{riksdaler} or less from Scotland in 1629 suggesting a continued recognition of Scottish naval design. But buying abroad was never as viable as building at home.\textsuperscript{66} By 1636 the only Scottish shipbuilder still employed directly by the Swedish Crown was William Ruthven although that did not mean an end to warships being built by Scots in Sweden. In 1644 a pearl-fisherman by the name of Robert Buchan de Portlethen privately built a warship in Gothenburg which he hoped to sell onto the Swedish Crown for a profit, with help from the Scottish admiral, Simon Stewart. In a letter to the Swedish Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, he recorded:

I have here a ship made for military service and now nearly finished. If it please the most illustrious lords of the Crown, I would sell it. Let the price be however much respectable men think it is worth. Everything


\textsuperscript{63} Specifically, Spens recommended an unnamed Scotsman as a naval architect, a knowledgeable navigator and a skilled mathematician. Swedish Riksarkiv [SRA], Anglica 3, Spens to Gustav II Adolf, 26 April 1624.


\textsuperscript{65} Grosjean, \textit{An Unofficial Alliance}, 123–24.

is at hand to finish it. But since the workmen have been conscripted to work for the Crown, I have no one here who can finish it. So far I have sent Admiral Simon Stewart\textsuperscript{67} its size and length.\textsuperscript{68}

Buchan’s warship was the last of the Scottish, or even British built warships in Sweden until the arrival of the three Englishmen noticed above, so it appears that the influx of Scots in this maritime capacity was slightly shorter lived than that of senior officers.

Across the Baltic in Poland-Lithuania, a Scot once more proved to be important to the development of the national navy. As early as 1601, James Murray had been appointed as a courtier to Sigismund III. In 1620 Sigismund appointed Murray as his senior naval architect. His first ship was a 14 gun, two-masted pink launched in 1622. The following year, Murray received instructions to build another 10 ships of up to 400 tons. Murray’s ships were successfully employed in the naval battle against the Swedes at Oliva in 1627, although Murray himself refused to take part in the naval campaign as he had been passed over for the position of admiral.\textsuperscript{69} Nonetheless, in Denmark-Norway, Sweden and Poland-Lithuania Scottish shipbuilders had, at various times, proven to be the most numerous of the foreign shipbuilders and perhaps the most important too.

It is clear from this survey that many Scots were building ships in Norway at the end of the sixteenth century, and across the Baltic throughout the seventeenth (Appendix V). This should not surprise us, as the advantages of doing so are obvious. Much of the timber trade was devoted to gaining wood for shipbuilding, so it would have made great economic sense to build the ship in Norway and sail it home rather than transport all the bits to Scotland.

\textsuperscript{67} Admiral Simon Stewart came from Orkney. A one time pirate, he was taken into Swedish service and ennobled for his services to the Crown of that country. He died after a long career in November 1646. In all probability, Buchan showed this particular admiral the details of his ship due to their shared ethnic origins. For more detail about Stewart’s career read Grosjean, An Unofficial Alliance, 131–3; A. N. L. Grosjean, ‘Stewart, Simon (d. 1646)’, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/63439, accessed 17 Aug 2009.


Moreover, when a ship was brought home, it could also be laden with a cargo, increasing the benefit by not having to pay the costs of an outward journey. Gustav Vasa’s admiration for Scottish ships in the 1540s and 50s suggests that Scottish naval architects had already achieved worthy designs by mid-sixteenth century. Andrew Forrat, James Clerck and Daniel Sinclair working in Norway, probably represent a continuation of this Scottish tradition. However, the likes of William Ruthven (a cavalry captain), James Murray (a courtier and diplomat) or Robert Buchan (a pearl-fisher) seem to have been self-taught or more likely, bought in expertise to assist their building projects. Certainly in 1645 a military officer, Captain George Scott, built a ship for Venetian service in Inverness but brought the carpenters from south—though whether it was the south of Scotland or abroad is not stated. Nonetheless, the ship he built served the Venetians well and led to the promotion of his brother William Scott to the position of vice-admiral in the service of Venice after he put the vessel to good use against the Turks. More importantly Scott, Ruthven and Murray remind us that instead of only looking to Scotland for the source of the skilled workforce, we should also consider the adaptability with which many Scots appear to have acquired new skills, brought in artisans where they lacked skills and spotted opportunities for themselves at home and abroad.

**Conclusion**

In this brief survey it has been possible to contextualise the presence of Scottish admirals in Russian service by comparing and contrasting their

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70 From one source we learn that ‘Captain George Scott came to Inverness and there built a ship of a prodigious bigness, for bulk and burden, none such ever seen in our north seas. The carpenters he brought with him north, and my Lord Lovat gave him wood, fir and oak, in Dulcattack woods. I myself was aboard of her in the road of Kessock, April 1645, and many more to whom she was a wonder […] This Captain Scott enlarged the ship afterwards as a frigate for war, and sailed with her to the Straights, and his brother William with him, who was made Colonel at Venice, whose martial achievements in the defence of that state against the Turks may very well admit him to be ranked among our worthies. He became Vice-Admiral to the Venetian fleet and the only bane and error of Muhametan navigators’. See William Mackay (ed.), *Chronicles of the Frasers: The Wardlaw Manuscript entitled Polichronion seu Policratica Temporum or The true genealogy of the Frasers, 916–1674* (Edinburgh, 1905), 297. The spelling has been modernised for this article. I thank Dr David Worthington for passing on this reference. For more on William Scott see also Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, *The jewel*, edited by R. D. S. Jack and R. J. Lyall (1652, Edinburgh, 1983 edition), 137–8.
service to that of other high ranking Scottish officers in a variety of other European navies. By so doing it is clear that those men did not enter Russian service because of any special relationship between Edinburgh and Moscow (or Leith and St Petersburg). Rather their presence highlights a number of aspects relating to emigration in general and from Scotland in particular. It is clear that when the Scots took service abroad their actions could represent one of several motivations.

There is an unmistakable correlation with the development or regularisation of a navy in the early modern period and the influx of suitably experienced foreigners to it. The opportunities available to skilled officers or shipwrights can certainly be traced in the case-studies noted above, albeit further research will be required to see how many Scottish shipwrights ever made it into Russia. However one need only look to the importance of Thomas Blake Glover and the Aberdonian shipwrights of the nineteenth century in Japan to see the correlation between a fledgling navy, financial opportunities and an entrepreneurial Scot to see the waves continued beyond the geographical area or specific time period discussed here.71 In the early modern period there was an unmistakable similarity in the recruitment in Scandinavia of shipwrights and admirals. In the Danish-Norwegian, Swedish and Russian cases for the admirals and senior officers, the presence of Scots usually reached its epoch as the transition to regular navy was still in progress. Once the navy was fully established and trained indigenous personnel became available, the requirement for foreign experts diminished.

A second noticeable factor in recruitment occurred at those times when circumstances came together allowing for the departure of an individual from their homeland at that same time of need in a particular country in search of a specifically skilled migrant. In the case of Denmark-Norway, their ongoing hostility with Sweden coupled with their alliance with the House of Stuart led redundant Scottish mariners to seek promotion through royal patronage in an allied country, and with a great deal of success, particularly in the reign of James VI. That said, dynastic alliances were only one factor that could encourage the migration of skilled mariners. Others without opportunity at home could be attracted into foreign service through forced exile, financial incentive or a combination of both. Thus the Scottish renegade Simon Stewart could join the regular Swedish navy and become an admiral alongside compatriots who were not in exile, but simply reaped the rewards of the

71 A. Mackay, Scottish Samurai: Thomas Blake Glover, 1838–1911 (Edinburgh, 1993), 75, 87 and passim.
Swedish treasury (and in the process contributed greatly to that ‘Unofficial Alliance’). Political exiles also formed a significant proportion of those senior admirals who joined Russian service (particularly Jacobites, besides others like John Paul Jones), but as discussed above, they could only find service there at a time when the Russian navy was still in its infancy or desperate due to ongoing wars. By the end of the eighteenth century the Russians were more than capable of commanding their own fleets and had by then an established pedigree of indigenous commanders.

As noted in the introduction, we could have substituted several other nautical capacities to test the wave theory, albeit that shipbuilding sufficed in this case. Indeed there the analogy could have been extended beyond the confines of the maritime world. There is no doubt that the waves at sea were replicated in other capacities on land. The maritime migration closely followed the military migrations in Denmark-Norway, Sweden and Russia. For sure there was not a time between the late sixteenth and later eighteenth centuries when there were no Scots simultaneously serving in each country. But in terms of weight of numbers we can undoubtedly look to a Danish period that reached its height in the 1620s (13,500 soldiers between 1626 and 1629), or a Swedish phase that was over by the 1650s (30,000 between 1628 and 1648). Russia never attracted the same number of soldiers but in terms of importance there were numerous commanders of note including Patrick Gordon and James Keith in addition to the admirals noted above. Even beyond the maritime and martial we could also look to comparative waves of engineers, doctors and artisans to find similar results in the waves of migration. In the Russian case (with the exception of Patrick Gordon) the most noteworthy Scots arrived just as Sweden’s ‘Age of Greatness’ came to an end and Russia became the new power in the north. And for those Scots who wished to exploit the opportunities of another great power and shores elsewhere, there were always opportunities in the Royal Navy and the British Empire.

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72 Murdoch, Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart, 202–25.
73 Grosjean, An Unofficial Alliance, 74–111.
74 The Caledonian Phalanx, passim; Fedosov, The Caledonian Connection, passim.
Appendix I: Scottish Admirals in Russia, 1699 – 1796

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Highest Rank Achieved</th>
<th>Known Service Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Gordon</td>
<td>Admiral</td>
<td>1694 – 1699†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Walker</td>
<td>Commodore</td>
<td>1698 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Gordon</td>
<td>Admiral</td>
<td>1717 – 1741†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth Sutherland, Lord Duffus</td>
<td>Admiral</td>
<td>1722 – 1733†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Anderson</td>
<td>Vice-Admiral</td>
<td>1736 – 1770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Mackenzie</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1736 – 1766†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Douglas</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1764 – 1764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Roxburgh</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1764 – 1765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Greig</td>
<td>Admiral</td>
<td>1764 – 1788†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Mackenzie</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1765 – 1786†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Elphinstone</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1769 – 1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Paul Jones</td>
<td>Rear Admiral</td>
<td>1788 – 1789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II: Scottish Ships’ Commanders in Denmark-Norway 1580–1651

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank Attained</th>
<th>Known Service Dates and Ships Commanded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert Young</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1568–1591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiral Alexander Durham</td>
<td>Captain (1569), Admiral (1578–86 Baltic Fleet), Admiral (1587–99 North Sea Fleet)</td>
<td>1569–1599, Raphael (18–32 guns) 1590, Josaphat (36–52 guns) 1591 &amp; 1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Meldrum</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1577–1581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Morton</td>
<td>Captain (1587) Admiral of North Sea Fleet (1599–1610)</td>
<td>1585–1587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiral Andrew Mowatt</td>
<td>Captain (1587) Admiral of North Sea Fleet (1599–1610)</td>
<td>1587–1610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allan Lentron</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Neptunis (28 guns) 1595–1596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karsten Richardson</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Gilbert 1606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Ross</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1607–1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Scott</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1609–1613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Robertson</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1611–1619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamis Cunningham</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1611–1619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claus Fleck</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Walter</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Patterson</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Gordon</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Hartem</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1628–1630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Ship/Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hill</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>Bergens Galej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Lumsden</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Macdougall</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(aka MacDonald?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Jack</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1636–1644, Gabriell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Kinnear</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Williams</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1637–1644, Nældeblanet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Kinnear</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Arrat</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1639–1654, Gabriell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Smith</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Sinclair</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogens Davidson</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Fleck</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Shearer</td>
<td>Privateer Captain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiral Alexander</td>
<td>Admiral of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seton</td>
<td>‘Gothenburg’ Fleet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix III: Scottish Ships’ Commanders in Sweden 1597–1651

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank Attained</th>
<th>Known Service Datses &amp; Ships Commanded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Forrat</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1597–1631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Admiral Andrew Stewart</td>
<td>Captain (1598), Vice-Admiral and Under-Admiral in the Riksadmiral’s fleet (1621)</td>
<td>1598 &amp; 1621–1641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Farlay</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holm-Admiral Richard J. Clerck D.A.</td>
<td>Captain (1610), Admiral (1610), Under-Admiral in Riksadmiral’s fleet (1611), Holm-Admiral (1619)</td>
<td>1606–1625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varf-Admiral William R. Ruthven</td>
<td>Admiral (1609), Admiral of the Wharf (1610)</td>
<td>1609–1614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holm-Admiral John (Hans, Johan) Clerck D.A.</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Holm-Admiral John (Hans, Johan) Clerck D.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hay</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>John Hay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- **Lejoninnan Gale:** 1611
- **Orfeus:** 1616
- **Hollands Falken:** 1617
- **Hannibal:** (22 guns)
- **Scepter:** (38 guns)
- **Engeln:** 1618–1620
- **Solen:** 1628
- **Mercurius:** 1617
- **Jupiter:** (22 guns) 1618
- **Tigern:** 1627
- **Stockholm:** (36 guns) 1630
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank and Positions</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Ship and Guns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holm-Admiral Richard Clerck D.Y.</td>
<td>Captain (1628), Holm-Captain &amp; ‘Gårds’-Captain for Skeppholmen (1630), Holm-Major (1640), Lieutenant-Admiral (1654), Holm-Admiral (1655).</td>
<td>1628–1668, Svärdet (34 guns) 1644</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Netherwood</td>
<td>Captain (1629), Court Master to Riksadmiral (1629)</td>
<td>1629–1633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakob Crome</td>
<td>Lieutenant (1630)</td>
<td>1629–1630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johan Dick</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holm-Admiral Hans Williamson Clerck D.Y.</td>
<td>Senior Gunner (1632), Ensign (1633), Artillery Lieutenant (1636), Major and Flag Captain (1658), Lieutenant-Admiral (1664), Holm-Admiral (1668)</td>
<td>1632–1679</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heide Duwall (MacDougall)</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1634–1635</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Fogart</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Clerck</td>
<td>Gunner’s Mate/Konstatapelsmatt (1637), Lieutenant (1652), Captain (1654)</td>
<td>1637–1658</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans Kinnaird</td>
<td>Captain (1639), Major (1658)</td>
<td>1639–1658, Vesterviks Fortuna (24 guns) 1644</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Years/Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Stewart</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1639–1645, <em>Gripen</em> (12 guns) 1645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Gray</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>1641–1647</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Allen</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>1642</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Liddel</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>1643–1650, <em>Nya Fortuna</em> (18 guns) 1644</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrick Forbes</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johan Forrat</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>1645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix IV: Scottish Shipbuilders in Scandinavia and Poland-Lithuania 1580-1650

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Highest Status</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Watson</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Forrat</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1589-1591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Naval Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Peterson</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Royal Master Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1596-1604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Balfour</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Royal Master Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1597-1634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Lenteren</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Lenteren</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Duncan</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1600-1606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Richard Clerck</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder Royal Master Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1603-1605 1606-1625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Waddell</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1603-1605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Williamson</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Naval Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William R. Ruthven</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Royal Master Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1609-1634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Sinclair</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td><em>Royal Master Shipbuilder</em></td>
<td>1614-1636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Murray</td>
<td>Poland-Lithuania</td>
<td><em>Royal Master Shipbuilder</em></td>
<td>1620-1627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unnamed</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Naval Architect</td>
<td>1624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob ‘Skibbygger’</td>
<td>Denmark-Norway</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1625-1645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Buchan</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Private Shipbuilder</td>
<td>1644</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SSNE Database, www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne
As John E. Wills aptly remarks in his *1688. A Global History*, ‘the greatest transformation of the world in the seventeenth century was the explosive expansion of Russian trade and settlement across Siberia’. That summarizes succinctly what is commonly known on the level of world history about one twelfth of earth’s land surface in the seventeenth century—very little indeed—and it fits in with the subject of the conference and volume since the Russian expansion into Siberia was intimately linked to that other expansion of the maritime European empires and specifically to the Military Revolution across Europe, which brought Patrick Gordon and most Scots to Russia—although very few went to Siberia. The requirements of financing skilled people like Gordon, of making Russian court life attractive and paying for weapons imports account for one side, the demand side of the question which Wills’ statement provokes, but does not answer: Why did the Russians progress so quickly? More than two centuries before British troops founded Victoria, Cossacks reached the Pacific in 1648 at Okhotsk, where they built just another trading outpost in a whole chain of forts, roughly half a century after the initial thrust, the conquest of the Western Siberian khanate by Ermak’s Cossacks. Wills highlights this with a metaphor that is at the same time evocative and questionable. The truly astonishing fact is distorted by an image of destruction and volatility, for Siberia remains Russian to this day and the record of this conquest is decidedly ambivalent. The questions eschewed in world histories consulted are—just how did the bureaucratic colossus Russia manage to reach a base on the Pacific before British joint stock companies? How were transaction costs reduced across enormous territories without infrastructure, the main obstacle to attempts to mobilise resources in early modern empires?


The solutions proposed in the existing, very limited specialised studies so far did not make it into global histories. Dmytryshyn and recently Vershinin claim that the administration coerced cossacks to move onwards and, besides, that cossack life was grey and dull in the extreme. This reinforces the image of the omnipotent state so effectively destroyed in recent debates on early modern governance anywhere outside Siberia. It is in keeping with both the imperial Russian statist school wishing to portray the tsar in control, and their hesitant opponents, the Siberian regionalists of the nineteenth century, who strove to present the Sibiriaki, the Russian settlers in Siberia, as victims.

As will be shown below, the Siberian cossacks were not victims, but beneficiaries of expansion. They developed specific institutions reducing transaction costs and they exploited the empire, but rarely vice versa. Using as a measure the livelihood of European mercenaries, the closest contemporary analogy to cossacks, the assumption of regular and reliable supplies as an inalienable right which histories of the Siberian Cossacks uphold as proof of oppression is anachronistic. While Moscow provided its steppe frontier forts in Russia west of the Urals with hardly any grain at all, leaving them to feed from the crops the military settlers planted themselves, Siberian towns and forts received grain regularly, plentifully and largely at the expense of northern Muscovy. In the light of economic rationales such a pattern is hardly surprising, since Siberian furs represented one of the very few highly-prized commodities Muscovy could offer for exchange with Western

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5 This article builds on research published in Christoph Witzenrath, *Cossacks and the Russian Empire, 1598–1725. Manipulation, Rebellion, and Expansion into Siberia* (London, 2007), setting it in a world history context.


7 Carol B. Stevens, *Soldiers on the Steppe. Army Reform and Social Change in Early Modern Russia*, (DeKalb, 1995), 11.
Europe, representing ten per cent of the tsar’s revenue and paying, as already mentioned for the military reforms. Cossacks were the only efficient military power beyond the Urals, placing them in an advantageous position. Historical literature left this fact in the shadows, since it did not concur with the dominant hypothesis of the oppressed town cossack. Yet, up to the late 1670s the ‘oppressed’ could even live exclusively on salary, and so could his wife and at least partly their children, who earned him extra pay—in comparison, German mercenaries could manage neither. Another fact which only occasionally crops up as a curiosity in socio-economic accounts of Siberian cossacks is advances on salary, which could amount to no less than three years. Obsessed with the issue of control, historians have overlooked the fact that such advances amounted to a hefty credit; moreover, they were free of interest in a cash-starved country with soaring interest rates. Their tax privileges amounted to up to fifty roubles, to which cash entitlements might be added, which made trading easier while in service. These privileges added further weight to the reductions of transaction costs which status as a cossack offered to people living in a cash-strapped economy, with high interest rates equalling or even exceeding those found elsewhere in the early-modern period.

Given the well-established paradigm of the over-centralised empire, it may be even more surprising that such fundamental economic and political questions as the actual amount of salary to be paid out before a campaign or distant services were often decided locally. In 1634, for example, 250 cossacks sent from Tobolsk to distant Iakutsk opposed their new governors who had just arrived from Moscow offering to pay only one year in advance, while the cossacks demanded three years’ salary to be paid on the spot. They were well informed about price differences and calculated the advantage of buying supplies and merchandise in Tobolsk. To cut short a long array of negotiations, in several steps during preparations for campaign, cossacks relied on a strategy of open conflict and on precedence. Finally, they were awarded the full three-year advance they expected. It is noteworthy that the restless cossacks at Tobolsk had no formal organisation since they had been drafted from rank-and-file cossacks, from cossack relatives, and from fugitives. The onset of a campaign was a relatively favourable situation for cossacks:

negotiating their salaries, they could rely on precedence filed in the local governor’s office at Tobolsk and delay preparations. Their numbers made it difficult for the governors assigned to this campaign to intervene, while the governor of Tobolsk was more than anything interested to get rid of potential troublemakers.\footnote{N. N. Pokrovskii (ed.), \textit{Pervoe stoletie sibirskikh gorodov} (Novosibirsk, 1996), 88.}

This was a typical situation for a cossack group which formed to serve the sovereign-tsar. Although they had no formal organisation, and were likely to know each other very little, cossacks bound for Iakutsk were very much able to make a common stand to liberate their comrades arrested after the initial conflict. It was only after conditions of service had been agreed that they finally elected \textit{desiatniks} and \textit{piatidesiatniks}—leaders of ten and fifty—a fact which is typically hard to reconcile with the portrait of the cossack group as an estate in much of Soviet literature.

In the rim of the steppe region south of Muscovy, cossack institutions first had coalesced from Tatar and East Slavic traditions. Conditions during this formative period meant that cossack groups were in dire need of good defensive capabilities. Gradual disintegration of the Mongol empire’s Tatar successor khanates and demand for slaves in the Mediterranean wrought havoc on the agricultural steppe frontier from the late fifteenth century as individual small nomad groups often unrestrainedly raided for booty and slaves. These freebooting groups were called \textit{qasak} in Tatar, deserters or free men—for they no longer acknowledged the leadership of the Chingisid dynasty, difficult to control by neighbouring sedentary powers due to what recent studies call autonomous agency.

From depopulation and general insecurity people fled to the few remaining towns in the steppe frontier. Resources were very limited—agriculture was precarious and only possible close to the secure harbour of the town, while hunting in the steppe demanded suitable organization for defence. For economical rather than military ends, therefore, cossack groups reached a modest size of twenty to sixty men suitable for hunting and assembled each season anew. There was no lasting social structure surviving the season, since groups formed for a peculiar hunting or fishing haul lasting several weeks or for raids in the Black Sea coastal area, on cities and merchant vessels. During their first assembly, or \textit{krug} they decided on their aim and distributed tasks according to personal capabilities. Only after constituting the temporary primary group, the leader or \textit{ataman} was elected with regard to capabilities conducive to the
group’s aim. He knew the hunting and fishing grounds, the Black Sea shore, or could solicit a good deal with local administration and promised booty or a good catch. His authority derived not from abstract social worth, the cement of neighbouring states, whose authority hardly extended to the steppe and especially not to the isolated cossack group relying on its own forces in the steppe. Military sociology has established that the units with the greatest valour are small groups relying on face-to-face relations who fight for their comrades rather than against an abstract enemy; they are also best at reducing fear, which was omnipresent in the open steppe. Organisation in the group thus was derived from their common aim, and authority depended on the leader capable of embodying the primary group’s aim even better than other members. Once the aim was defined and agreed upon unanimously, individuality disappeared in the temporary primary group’s collective purpose—nobody was allowed to change plans arbitrarily or run away, for the group depended on their capabilities and was ready to punish absconding members corporally. This was group rule, not anarchy, and it was at best in a remote sense democratic. On the other hand, there was hardly a formal military hierarchy on the steppe frontier, but equality prevailed. Especially vigorously the group members observed their leader, who had to report to the cossack circle and ask for advice.10 Likewise, defending themselves in court, even Siberian rebel leaders like Moisei Borisov in the Transbaikal fort of Udinsk in 1696 claimed they had been forced by ordinary cossacks to accept the honour of leading them.

With regard to the sources of the dynamism of Russian expansion, therefore, at this point particularism and local agency seemingly overwhelm integrative and coordinating forces. Almost every larger town in Siberia experienced mostly successful rebellions, and some of them, like Tomsk, multiple. This potentially raised numerous concerns, chief among them financial and economic. Why did rebellions not increase transaction costs to such heights that expansion was slowed down? The regular payment of salaries mentioned above indicates that the Siberian rebellions may have been less characteristic of the over-centralised Russian Empire to which we have grown accustomed. In fact, a typical feature of seventeenth century Siberian politics is the influence exerted by the local level on financial decisions, namely

by means of rebellions and institutions. How, then, can such variance from the apparent imperial norm be reconciled with interpretations so thoroughly entrenched and well-documented in historiography?

Institutionality accommodates both variance—or change—and permanence. Institutions are often seen as lasting, solid and unchanging, but what is thus taken for granted is actually their major end in any quest for that elusive aim, social stability. Since social change is inescapable, any effectively permanent institution can only survive if it is build on something that transcends the social sphere. Stable societies are therefore built around myth or religion.\footnote{Arnold Gehlen defined ‘institution’ as ‘stabilized tensions’: K.-S. Rehberg, ‘Weltrepräsentanz und Verkörperung’, Gert Melville (ed.), Institutionality und Symbolisierung (Cologne, 2001), 9–17, citation: 13; K.-S. Rehberg, ‘Institutionenwandel und Funktionsveränderung des Symbolischen’, Gerhard Göhler (ed.), Institutionenwandel (Opladen, 1997); Susanne Rau and Gert Schwerhoff, ‘Öffentliche Räume in der Frühen Neuzeit’, idem (eds) Zwischen Gottesbans and Taverne (Cologne, 2004), 24–5. See also P. J. DiMaggio and W. L. Powell, ‘Introduction’, idem (eds), The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis (Chicago, 1991), 1–18.}

In the Russian Empire, and specifically in Siberia, this place was filled by the myth of the tsar and cossack service ethics. In the Tobolsk example above, as well as in many others, cossacks relied on their role as ‘servitors of the tsar’, or služišche lindi, a designation used interchangeably with cossack. In negotiations for salary, they claimed that they served the tsar loyally and would be unable to serve if not paid properly. They used their customs privilege to augment entitlements with trade, enhanced by the cheap credit obtained. Whatever service for the absent tsar—he never travelled to Siberia—meant in this context, it was subject to interpretation. The interpretation of the governors clearly stated that it was treason to demand more than one year salary in advance, but their stance foundered on the sustained resistance of the cossacks. In fact, it was the often stated aim of the tsar to cut expenses, for, as Filaret’s letter in 1621 stated, the Siberian grain tribute was a heavy burden on Northern Russia, causing many villages to be deserted.

So how did the rebels comb the institution of service against the grain to contest the purposes of the tsar? To take an example, in early 1696 cossacks from three trans-Baikal forts on the river Selenga united to claim salary. Actually, they expected payment not just for the current year, but also for the next, 1696–7, in advance and fully. In petitions signed individually and sent to Moscow they explained that Irkutsk governor Savelov rendered them incapable of serving the tsar by withholding their due. In actual fact, Savelov tried to accommodate them, offering part of their advance salary. Nonetheless,
rebels claimed that this constituted a sovereign’s affair. Finally, they crossed the lake in two boats carrying two hundred cossacks to collect their salary, or else depose him. The sovereign’s word and affair (*gosudarevo slovo i delo*) is a punitive norm for infringements of the security of the person of the tsar and officials, relating to financial, political, and even magical misdemeanours (*slovo*) and treason. The sole exception from the rule that disrespectful or aggressive behaviour towards these persons must be punished severely is made where it is proven conclusively that ‘a small number’ of people approached an official in order to submit a petition accusing him or other officials for improper behaviour, without showing an aggressive or insolent attitude.\textsuperscript{12}

Irkutsk cossacks seized on the rule of small number to denounce Transbaikalian actions in a petition signed by virtually the whole town, siding with the governor. They justifiably feared the influence from the other side of the lake, since Irkutsk was better placed for trade. Referring to the same institution, each side set up opposing guiding ideas, relying on rules contained in the institution and recognized customs, such as the deposition of the governor in analogy to the cossack leader, which had found entry into chronicle writing. The journey to salvage Transbaikalian salaries ended with armed threats of a siege, warning Irkutsk cossacks that they should not obey the ‘traitorous’ governor, either. When accusations of a sovereign’s affair were voiced, ambiguous reactions or passive bystanders were not allowed as they would have been considered traitors themselves. By law, every subject of the tsar was obliged to report a sovereign’s affair, so there were two options: side with those who raised their voice or call them traitors.

The position taken by one of the cossack leaders demonstrates that the conflicting guiding ideas were not only local in nature, but depended on contingencies of time and power. The bondsman of the cossack leader (*golova*) Afanasii Beithon, who claimed he had been tricked into indenture, denounced Beithon for accepting the leadership of the rebels during the abortive siege.\textsuperscript{13} According to the denunciation, the rebels one night came to Beithon’s Irkutsk house and demanded he should order the cannoneers not to shoot at them, offering to make him their representative in Irkutsk. Beithon accepted and they raised cups, confirming the agreement. Irkutsk was never taken by the rebels, and Beithon had thus found his own way between Scylla and Charybdis. It is possible that the bondsman invented the episode, however: he had been

\textsuperscript{12} Richard Hellie (ed.), *The Muscovite Law Code (Ulozhenie) of 1649* (Irvine, 1988), Ch. 2, art. 1 – 22.

\textsuperscript{13} Beithon, who signed in Latin script, may be of Scottish or Prussian extraction.
a cossack himself and his detailed report spoke, if not indeed the truth, at least of experience. In any case, Beithon was never punished for his stance. What happened confirmed custom; cossacks felt free not only to depose the governor or other leaders, but to choose their own. Beithon was loyal and a sought-after leader, so he had to serve the Transbaikalian rebels’ cause represented as a ‘sovereign’s affair’, or as service rendered to an in this case very virtual tsar.

Months later, in a kind of velvet revolt, Irkutsk cossacks deposed the governor who tried to renew tenure following the death of his successor. Irkutsk cossacks, relieved from the threat of Transbaikalian influence, made the successor’s underage son the new governor. They appointed one of their own as coequal and investigated the tenure of the former governor.

Outcomes of investigation depended on several factors—patronage saved some of the governors arrested by rebels, but in the current situation, Savelov could not make recourse to it. Moreover, petitions signed and sent to the capital usually restricted the choices open to local witnesses. Once the chancellery had registered the petition, new statements could be checked against the evidence given in investigation, and discrepancies would give away the witnesses. Thus, while literate devices eased communication, in local negotiations opaque oral communication allowed concealment of the fault lines that might lead to the division of the rebels and their loss of power.\textsuperscript{14} Therefore, in keeping with primary group habits of isolation, in many cases Siberian Cossacks declined to give individual statements during investigation despite the lawful requirements ruling out collective statements. Thereby, they built a platform which it was difficult to let down without harming oneself and which served as a power resource in dealing with the governor or Moscow.

The pivotal point in such rebellions was cossacks’ relations to the tsar. In the historiography of Siberia, the paradigm of naïve monarchism is still predominant—according to this interpretation, people believed the tsar would always intercede on their behalf, if only evil boiars did not intercept messages and give bad advice. Yet recently, naïve monarchism has been called in question by Maureen Perrie, who found bargaining strategies among Don Cossacks. Angela Rustemeyer has shown that Muscovites in the late seventeenth century not only differentiated between popular boiars and the foes of the rebels, but also had a more elaborate concept of the tsar. Thus, the tsar could not only be imagined as pious, or as Anti-Christ, but also as

an economically minded landlord managing his estates, merchandise and resources.\textsuperscript{15}

It is a sign of the particularities of Siberia that these concepts, developed for westernising Russia at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, do not fit in the same way: in Siberia economic mindedness was visible already in the first decades of the seventeenth century. The sovereign’s word and affair became an increasingly frequent form of denunciation after the Time of Troubles, when Moscow was especially concerned about risings and pretenders and it consequently covered treason and indecent words.

During the first half of the seventeenth century in Russia west of the Urals, financial issues remained a tiny minority in cases of ‘gosudarevo slovo i delo’ and were rather unsophisticated: outright robbery of the tsar’s treasure, concealing knowledge of a cache or raw materials. In Siberia, however, the sovereign’s affair was distinct in contents as well as in its agents—more often than not it was cossacks or other lower ranks who sued their superiors.

As Peter B. Brown suggests, Muscovy’s administration was sufficiently professional to be subsumed under the historical bureaucratic type—it was capable of making rules, staff was specialised, professional and organisation was hierarchical. To an astonishing degree, chancellery staff maintained a culture of accountability. Yet in the chancellery system such characteristics were compatible with scaled social worth and a concomitant inclination to do nothing without appropriate payments to officials. Even the tsar displayed a silent commitment to economise on chancellery staff salaries—the lower ranks were not paid at all, and in general, it was only deemed illegal to accept more than the usual amount.\textsuperscript{16} Nobles wishing to become governors in Siberia did so with the express intent to overhaul their finances—‘to be able to serve you, gosudar’ and were ready to provide gifts for the clerks. Appropriately, the term gosudarevo delo as it was used in instructions as well as in law contained a broad spectrum of connotations—apart from treason it could mean any task or orders given by the sovereign. Thus, interests of the tsar in Siberia were contradictory, and irreconcilable with the interpretation of a new, unified rational ‘absolutist’ bureaucracy encroaching on former cossack liberties as an estate.


Siberian cossacks learned early on to take advantage of these contradictions. When governors, caught in a typical double bind, ‘heed your sovereign’s affairs’ and economised on cossacks’ salaries, while at the same time attempting to siphon off gifts given by the Cossacks in the hope of receiving the whole amount, Cossacks retorted that ‘we, your servitors, are unable to serve you, sovereign’ as long as they did not receive the full salary. Institutionalisation of the sovereign’s affairs meant that different guiding ideas were reflected in the struggle for its correct interpretation under the conditions of absent or virtual tsar and a central chancellery, each exclusively relying on written communication and reports.

As financial affairs proved highly contentious, opposing groups sent petitions to Moscow and to governors in superior (razriadnye) towns. Both sides of the trade in furs, Moscow and the Siberian Cossacks, depended on reliability, since they paid or acted in advance and in absence of the other side; therefore, information and interpretation of events became decisive. As some cossack families amassed wealth in trade, their sons learned to write. In the 1690s, eleven per cent out of 939 cossacks in Irkutsk district were able to write. The measure, the rukuprikladstvo, has been recognised in comparative literature as more reliable than the usual signatures. Signatories wrote at least a short two-line formula adapted to the document in individual handwriting. Cossacks insisted on institutionalisation of the sovereign’s affair—for example in a ceremony on the occasion of introducing the new governor—every two to four years, an event which included public reading of the tsar’s instruction for the governor.

On the other hand, there were signs of opposite processes of de-institutionalisation which were closely related to the specific relations between Siberia and Moscow. Petitioners in ‘Moskovskaia Rus’, as Sibiriaki called the territories on the other side of the Urals, kept postal contact with their communities while they stayed in Moscow to further community aims and were not allowed to go on their private business. Siberian delegates eschewed those rules but formed large groups, sometimes thirty or seventy delegates. Among them were cossack merchants who used the journey lasting between three and nine months a year one-way for their own and other cossacks’ business. For such business, the sovereign’s affair served as a gate-keeper—by deposing the governor, his opponents stood a good chance to have their turn

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in interregional trade. The governor had the right to hold back travellers to make sure forts and towns were sufficiently manned and to restrain excessive private fur trade. Such a provision inevitably curbed the freedom of trade, but increased the leverage of the primary cossack group.

**Conclusion**

In a cash-strapped economy, signing up for service reduced transaction costs due to the offered credit and financial security to Siberian Cossacks, who would otherwise never have been able to overcome the huge distances involved in trade. Cossack primary groups lessened transaction costs owing to their superior qualities in defending fur and other goods transports in a volatile frontier region as well as the small numbers involved in setting them up. Siberian natives provided the skills of marksmen for killing the small sable aiming between the eyes without harming the valuable fur. In ambiguous political situations, which in a less distant and less frontier-like setting would have favoured reliance on patronage, the sovereign’s affair forced actors to decide which side to take—in support of the tsar or against as a question of perspective. However, the need to side with one guiding idea overrode particularistic concerns as soon as someone had been accused of treason. Once deliberations had led to a version of events approved by a majority, the petition was signed and submitted to the chancelleries, preventing independent action and consolidating a platform for negotiations. Since the rebels could only be overthrown militarily by sending superior forces from outside, incurring further losses in furs, a united town was hard to destabilise and it was usually better for the authorities to settle. Thus, two fairly self-determining partners depended on each other for trade and to guarantee reliability. Such a setting is generally conducive to processes of institutionalisation, and rebels were usually dependable and duly received their salaries. Often, a year or more passed before local conflicts became the overriding concern, encumbering trade. Thereafter, rebels again became well-disposed towards imperial interference and settled with new governors, delivering up some of those in their group who had transgressed.

Regarding relations of subjects and the tsar in Siberia, Russian autocracy differed from Western Europe in that these relations varied extensively: in

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18 See now Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy. Lessons from Medieval Trade* (Stanford, 2006).
Russia west of the Urals, Moscow roped in local groups for its aims, using patronage, including local interests and in some cases adapting to local needs. In Siberia, Moscow’s chancelleries, local agents and emissaries usually adapted to local needs or faced the consequences, which makes Siberia much more similar to the Western European norm as discerned in the debate on absolutism among historians narrowly concerned with Western Europe, stressing the consensual modes of integration; obviously, this occurred in a frontier area in which the social networks of the elite were weak and which therefore in many respects compares more readily to the fledgeling northern maritime colonial empires. However, in Siberia the role of the absent, virtual tsar was exalted, whereas the joint stock companies minimised that of the monarch. The specific conditions in Siberia set it apart from comparable areas due to its particular combination of colonial and semi-metropolitan traits, where the local community actively travelled to maintain direct contact with the capital and sought central interference in local affairs as a local power resource. By contrast, communication in early modern maritime empires was concentrated within the factories and administration of joint stock companies. As Bavani Raman notes, written communication failed to compensate for the growing British disdain for conversing with Indians, an argument that could bear greater elaboration in the British case. Moreover, as demonstrated by the cossack primary group and the literate skills it honed, as well as the secondary orality of native groups, who employed although usually not acquired literate skills, the amalgamation of medieval, predominantly oral and early modern, increasingly literate modes of communication adjusted Russian and Western European migrants, Polish prisoners of war

and Siberian natives$^{24}$ to imperial frontier conditions in the distant continental steppe and arctic, accelerating Russian expansion and strengthening local community bonds.

The study of history cannot proceed without theory, or at least without generalisation. This is not to dismiss scholarship. The Soviet historian E.V. Tarle put the point well in 1922, asserting that ‘The more powerful, the more authentic the generalising thought, the more it needs the erudite and erudition.’ Nevertheless, for Tarle, erudition should never be identified with science.\(^1\) Of course, a problem immediately arises for users of the English language, for whom the word ‘science’ has a more restricted meaning than in Russian, German, French and other European languages. Moreover, the problem is not just semantic for English-speaking historians, who tend to place their emphasis on empirical research. However, there have been occasions when they have been able to overcome or at least circumvent their reservations about ‘science’ and engage with colleagues not only in Europe but also in the wider world to discuss generalisation and theory, a major instance being consideration of the ‘General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century’ inaugurated by Eric Hobsbawm in *Past and Present* in 1954. A few words about *Past and Present*. Launched in 1952 by a group of British Marxist historians, the journal initially had a subtitle, *A Journal of Scientific History*, expressing ‘the belief that historical phenomena have an objective existence and may be studied by the methods of reason and science’. But this subtitle aroused the suspicion that ‘scientific history’ was a synonym for Marxism, and was dropped in 1958 when the editorial board was diversified.\(^2\) Indeed, Marxism as propounded in the late 1950s, especially Soviet Marxism-Leninism, gave scientific history a bad name, from which it has yet to recover fifty years on.

Arguing in favour of scientific history in 1941, Marc Bloch conceded that the science of man would always have its peculiar characteristics, adding: ‘When all is said and done, a single word, “understanding”, is the beacon light of our studies’.\(^3\) Certainly, Muscovite Russia in particular has been on the

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\(^1\) E. V. Tarle, ‘Ocherednaia zadacha’, *Annaly*, no. 1 (1922), 17–18, with his own italics.


\(^3\) Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft* (Manchester, 1954), 143.
receiving end of a lack of understanding. In the sixteenth century, foreigners often looked upon it as a ‘rude and barbarous kingdom’, to quote the title of the well-known collection edited by L. E. Berry and R. O. Crummey. However, it is worth recalling that Russians were not alone in receiving harsh criticism from outside. For example, describing the sequel to the shipwreck of the first Russian ambassador to England on the shores of North East Scotland in 1556, the English chronicler Hakluyt wrote of the theft of the precious gifts being carried by the ambassador by the ‘rude and ravenous people of the country thereunto adjoining’. More generally, Montaigne observed in his essay ‘Des Cannibales’, published in 1588: ‘… chacun appelle barbarie, ce qui n’est pas de son usage. Comme de vrai nous n’avons autre mire de la vérité et de la raison, que l’exemple et idée des opinions et des usances des pays où nous sommes’. (‘Everybody calls barbarity what he is not used to. Indeed we have no other criterion of truth and reason, than the example and the idea of the opinions and customs of the countries where we are’.) Montaigne was publishing his essay in 1588 when the threat posed to England encouraged further racial stereotypes. For J. H. Hexter, the essential task of the historian was expressed by Garret Mattingly in his balanced judgement of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the Admiral of the Spanish Fleet in 1558, when Englishmen believed that they were about to witness ‘the beginning of Armageddon, of a final struggle to the death between the forces of light and the forces of darkness’. We will return to the subject of cultural relativity later.

For the moment, let us note that ‘The General Crisis’ as presented by Hobsbawm and others was concerned with the dual transition in Europe to capitalism and absolutism, with special reference to the contemporaneous revolutions sweeping through Europe around the middle of the seventeenth century.

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5 Michel de Montaigne, ‘Des Cannibales’, in Denis Bjaï and others (eds), *Les Essais* (Paris, 2001), 318. Incidentally, one of Montaigne’s tutors in Bordeaux was the Scottish scholar George Buchanan, later tutor to James VI.


In this essay, the principal focus will be on the Scottish diaspora in Muscovy as an aid to our understanding of the ‘General Crisis’, for enough Scots lived in seventeenth-century Russia to fulfil Montaigne’s criterion of making observations on the basis of ‘the example and the idea of the opinions and customs of the countries where we are’. Let us begin with a survey of some of the events leading up to and including the political crisis of mid-century, first in the homeland, from which so many soldiers of fortune, scholars and merchants set out from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and second in Russia, to which soldiers of fortune in particular travelled in considerable numbers from about the same time. To illustrate what was a dual process, I shall recall take episodes from the career of two generals with the same name, Alexander Leslie.

The first of them, later Earl of Leven, achieved an outstanding reputation in the army of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden before returning to home to Scotland in 1638, the year in which the National Covenant was signed. Then, according to Spalding, he ‘causit send to Germanye, France, Holland, Denmark, and vther countries, for the most expert and valient capitanes, livetennantis, and vnder officiareis, who came in gryte numberis vpone hope of bloodie war’. The ‘gryte numberis’ were confirmed in a report of September 1640 that ‘26 of the principal colonels and officers that have served the Swede have obtained their license and got their rests in munition of war, a course begun by Leslie the Great [Leven], and are preparing at Gottenburg to sail in three ships for Scotland’. Then, in the campaign of 1644, when the Scottish army went into England to give important support to the Parliamentary cause, according to at least one calculation, in addition to the generals, ‘every Lieutenant-Colonel save four, and every Major save three, had served in the Continental wars. Military expertise was joined to religious fervour to produce a force as efficient as it was highly motivated, playing a significant part in the later campaigns of the 1640s’.8

After the execution of the Scots-born Charles I on 30 January 1649, on 5 February, the Scottish Estates proclaimed his son King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, but then laid down conditions on 7 February. Charles II

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would have to accept the anti-episcopalian Covenant and swear to maintain the Presbyterian religious settlement. This he duly did by signing the agreement of Breda on 1 May 1650, even though the Covenanters knew well that his convictions differed from their own. An invasion from the south could not be resisted for long after Cromwell led an army into Scotland in July 1650. Leven could postpone the inevitable no more than briefly, and the end for his army came at Dunbar on 3 September. At first confined in the Tower of London, then released on parole, Leven was finally freed in September 1653 at the intercession of Queen Christina of Sweden, for whose service he probably tried to raise a regiment in Scotland before retiring to his estate at Balgonie in Fife in May 1654 and dying there in 1661.9

Back in July 1651, Charles II himself led an army into England in the hope of attracting royalist supporters. But the hope was dashed at Worcester on 3 September.

On 13 June 1651, Patrick Gordon had watched the sun set over North East Scotland as he left it in a ship bound for Gdańsk. Among the reasons he gave for going, his allegiance to Roman Catholicism figured prominently. His devotion to his faith proved constant till death. So did his loyalty to the cause of the Stuarts, which was suffering severe setbacks at the time of his departure. While all too conscious of the ‘great troubles’, as he called them, racking his homeland and giving him another reason for seeking his fortune elsewhere, he was probably not fully aware of the momentous events taking place in England, Scotland and Ireland as he sailed away. In the mid-seventeenth century, news did not travel fast or completely, and rumour abounded. However, with less excuse, later historians have fallen short of understanding the Revolution in the three kingdoms, persisting for too long in the view that events in the offshore archipelago were cut off from those on the continent and overseas. In his subsequent illustrious career, Patrick Gordon was to provide further substantiation of the basic circumstance of European and wider interconnection in the later part of the century.

Let us move over to Russia, noting before we discuss the career of a second Alexander Leslie, that Scots had been involved in the Russian civil war known as the ‘Time of Troubles’ at the beginning of the century, some of them serving in a Swedish army of intervention. In a work published in London in 1614, Henry Brereton wrote: ‘Now must the miseries of Russia be augmented by the coming of this Armie compounded of so many

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Nations, English, French and Scots. For though they came as a friend, and for their aide, yet who can stay an Armie from spoile and rapine, which the unhappy Russian found true in the pursuit of this bloody warre’. As is becoming more widely realised, an unbroken line of Scottish soldiers is to be found in Muscovite Russia army from the Time of Troubles onwards. An interesting connection most worthy of mention has recently been made by Oleg Nozdrin concerning an expeditionary force from 1612 to 1613 that included James Shaw, John Kerr or Carr, George Drummond and Thomas Garne among others and was led by Baron Adrian Flodorf or Flodroff. It turns out that the Album of the Scot George Craig, an Edinburgher of probable North-East Scottish descent, was signed in Geneva in 1602 by, among others, Otto Henri de Flodroff, Belga, and his brothers Adrian and Jean. James Shaw delivered a letter from Baron Flodorf to the Russian leader Prince D.M. Pozharsky. Dated 10 June 1612, Hamburg, the letter gave advance notice of the arrival of Flodorf and his followers.

At the end of the Time of Troubles soon after the election as Tsar of Mikhail Fedorovich, some Scots remained in Russia but the next significant number of immigrants arrived in the period leading up to the War for Smolensk, 1632–4, many of them along with our second Alexander Leslie. We will not rehearse his illustrious career at this point, but simply point out that he and others stayed in Russia after 1634, and were still there at the onset of further troubles soon after the accession of Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1645. In that very year, the Swedish resident Peter Krusebiörn deemed the situation to be so critical that a general uprising was imminent.

A sharp eye-witness to the unfolding of the crisis was the Swedish resident in Moscow from 1647 to 1649, Karl Anders Pommerenning, in dispatches sent mostly to Queen Christina. On 15 September 1647, Pommerenning

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10 Henry Brereton, *Newes of the Present Miseries of Russia occasioned by the late Warre in that Countrey... together with the Memorable Occurrences of our own Nationale Forces, English and Scottes, under the Paye of the now King of Sweethland* (London, 1614), 37.


14 The dispatches as transcribed and translated by Ardis Grosjean Dreisbach from Riksarkivet, Stockholm, Diplomatica, Muscovitica 39, and passed on to me by Steve Murdoch and Alexeia Grosjean.
reported that many thousand strel’tsy or musketeers formed the guard of this ‘large and populous city’. There were many Swedish and German officers, including three highly-paid Scots, Alexander Crawford, Alexander Hamilton and Mungo Carmichael, the first two of whom had been granted estates, while the third was constantly in the capital. Pommerenning added: ‘None of the foreign officers has any soldiers to command, until they are to go into battle, then soldiers are rounded up or recruited and made available to them’. At this time, the situation throughout Muscovy appeared peaceful.

However, crisis returned in the summer of 1648. A recent authority, Valerie Kivelson, has written of unfair taxes and trading exemptions among townsfolk, dissatisfaction concerning runaway peasants among landlords, as ‘long-term irritants’, while noting the austerity policies of the tsar’s chief adviser and brother-in-law Boris Morozov together with the administrative malfeasance of Levontii Pleshcheev and others as ‘more immediate issues’. On 2 June, after the Tsar had rejected a petition from the ‘common people’, a crowd devastated and looted Morozov’s house in the Kremlin, then went on to mock and kill Chancellor Nazarii Chistyi, who was left naked on a heap of manure, before proceeding to set fire to the houses of other high officials. On 3 June, Pleshcheev was handed over by the tsar and then led from the Kremlin to the place of execution, when the crowd lynched and mutilated his body, before a monk threw it on the flames spreading towards the Kremlin, allegedly with the hope of extinguishing them. After the pleadings of the

16 Loewenson, ‘The Moscow Rising’, 152–6, publishes a document from the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Ashmolean MSS, No. 826, 17–18B, entitled ‘A true historicall Relation of the horrible tumult in Moscow (ye cheife citie in Moscovia, on the 22[sic] of June 1648, caused by the intolerable taxes and contributions, layd on the Commonaltie. All of which is described by a person of qualitie, who was present, and hath imparted it to a friend of his in Amsterdam’. On Chistov, the document relates, inter alia: ‘The first man, that knockd him on the head with an axe, sayd unto him, jsmeenick to la [za] Solj, Traytor, this is for the Salt (for hee was the Man, that layd great Taxes upon the Salt) the Man being halfe dead, they haled him down the stayres by the heeles, draggd him like a dogg over the whole Court, and having strippd him, they flung him starck nacked upon the dunghill, there they put him qujite to death’.
17 ‘A true historicall Relation’ describes the sequel to the crowd’s demands for the handing over of Pleshechev and P. T. Trakhaniotov thus: ‘Thereupon the Emperor presently delivered Plesseoph, to bee beheaded. But the Commons being extremely enraged, could not have any patience, but drackd him on the market place, where they cuggelld him so black & blew and with axes they cut him asunder like a fish, the pieces they let lye nacked here & there’.
popular Patriarch N. I. Romanov and of the Tsar himself, the people consented that Morozov’s life might be spared if the Tsar would keep his promise to send him so far away that he would never come back to Moscow or rejoin the government. Still on 3 June, Morozov’s brother-in-law Petr Tainovich Trakhaniotov was decapitated opposite the Armoury, and his head placed on his chest all day for everybody to witness. However, after the Tsar and Tsaritsa had placated with presents not only the people but also provincial nobles ‘who had come in from the countryside in large numbers to feather their nests’, the situation became calmer and Morozov was able to return to Moscow in October without widespread protest.

However, since the strelytsy could not be counted upon, the Dutchman Bockhoven (Patrick Gordon’s future father-in-law) was to command 5000 men as the Tsar’s Imperial Guard, a move unwelcome to the Boyars and others. On 22 January 1649, the Scots Hamilton and Carmichael were ordered to go to Novgorod to drill the peasants at the border with Sweden, while an embassy to that country was in preparation. General Leslie had also been sent for. In February, Colonels Hamilton and Carmichael left Moscow with 16 captains and their officers, taking muskets, ammunition and grenades for 6000 men. They were to drill the peasants near Lake Onega who had willingly answered the call from the Tsar in lieu of paying taxes. In March, Leslie was allowed to return to his provincial estate. In November, Colonel Bockhoven’s horsemen were preparing to move off, presumably to the northwest, but 200 of the best were to remain in Moscow.

In March 1650, news reached Moscow that Novgorod had followed the bad example of Pskov and risen in revolt, various people claiming that the dissidents in both cities had bound themselves to stand together. There were rumours that the Pskovites were not willing to reach an accommodation and were demanding the freedom that they had enjoyed under Tsar Ivan Vasilevich (IV or Terrible).

The discontent in Pskov, as described by Pommerenning, continued into the summer of 1650. On 11 June, the Pskovites would not surrender those who began the revolt, but made several demands including pardon for all. Detachments of strelytsy and other troops had been sent to quell the

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18 According to ‘A true historicall Relation’, the tsar ‘promised unto ye people, kissing the golden crosse (after the Russian manner at their swearing of an oath,) the which the patriarch held in his hand, and setting the Mother of God for a securitie, that he would send away Morosoph to turne Fryar in a cloister, and to be sent with a shaven head to the outermost frontiers’. 

disturbance. It was said that the Pskovites were divided, but the majority would make an accommodation and that, if not, the Tsar himself would go there. In the meantime, his army was being strengthened: Alexander Crawford and the other Scottish officers had been summoned from their provincial estates (to which they must previously have been allowed to return) to Moscow, and were awaiting orders.

And so, towards the end, as at the beginning, the Scottish officers were there. They deserve some emphasis. Let us consider the three Moscow colonels in turn. Alexander Crawford had previously been in Danish service, during which he reached the rank of captain but was court martialed and sentenced to death for bribery and rape. Pardoned, he was sent with a recommendation to the Tsar, arriving in Moscow on 18 June 1629. Enlisted in the Russian army as a captain, he received pay in cash and kind as well as 650 serfs. In 1632, he was made lieutenant-colonel in the regiment of William Keith, but was soon promoted to colonel with a regiment of soldiers of his own. In 1632–4, he participated in the War for Smolensk, after which he commanded dragoon regiments in Tula and Belgorod. In 1639, following a decree from the Tsar, he instructed the strel’tsy in Western drill and combat skills, much to their resentment. In 1644, he showed that he had added entrepreneurial to his military skills by obtaining permission for seven years to produce potash in Murom. On 19 January 1646, he petitioned to bring his brother John into the Tsar’s army. We have already described some of Alexander’s activities in Moscow during the crisis of 1648–9. In 1649, he was part of B. I. Pushkin’s embassy to Stockholm, of which more below. In 1650, the rebels in Pskov asked the Tsar why Colonel Crawford ‘in going with the Tsar’s envoys, did survey all the fortifications in Pskov’. The Tsar replied: ‘Crawford is in our permanent subjection and serves us loyally, and did submit a draft to us, what forts should be erected in Pskov and about the city’. In June 1651, Crawford submitted a petition to admit to Moscow dyers and saltpetre masters invited by him from abroad. In 1653, while in command of four regiments, he wrote a report to the Boyar V. B. Sheremetev with important information on the use of muskets and ammunition. However, in September of that year, he was deprived of his large estate in the Arzamas district for his refusal to convert to Orthodoxy.

Several other Hamiltons had served in Russia before him, but the first recorded reference to Alexander is in a petition of 30 April 1646 submitted along with other foreigners for the exemption of their serfs from town duties pending a new ukaz on plough taxation. According to a document of
16 June 1646, he held an estate in the Arzamas district, ‘part of the village of Krasnoe, 264 cheti of arable land save one third, 61 peasant households. We have already mentioned his activities during the critical years 1648–9. In 1650, he was sent to suppress the rebellion in Pskov. In September 1653, he lost his Arzamas estate, the reason given being his ‘infringement’ of his peasants in their Orthodox faith. This was not the last record of him, however. From August to October 1656, his regiment took part in the siege of Riga.

Russians had difficulty with the name of Mungo Carmichael, on occasion calling him ‘Mungul Camel’. He came to Moscow on 9 December 1631 after being recruited by Alexander Leslie, and almost certainly fought in the War for Smolensk. We have already described his activities from 1648 to 1649 in Moscow, where he had a house and stayed while Crawford and Hamilton were on their estates. In 1650, he went with Hamilton to suppress the Pskov revolt. On 2 September 1654, ‘Martyn’ (another alias) Carmichael submitted a petition asking permission for his servant to travel to Riga and return to Moscow. Also in 1654, at the outset of the War with Poland, he died of wounds in Belorussia, leaving a widow.

The senior Scottish officer in Muscovy during the mid-century crisis, Alexander Leslie, was held in reserve during the events of 1648 to 1651, although he was called on for advice. Leslie and the others were given the Tsar’s full confidence, held ready for action when the loyalty of others, in particular the strel’tsy, was in doubt.19

With the collapse of the revolts in Pskov and Novgorod, Russia’s mid-seventeenth century crisis came to an end. Certainly, the uprising in Moscow including the lynching of several high officials in 1648 shook the government to its very core and led to the introduction of fundamental reforms. As an important contribution to the restoration of order in Moscow, S. F. Platonov pointed out that ‘Tsar Alexis took a very active part in the discussions with the crowd’, to many of whose wishes he had to accede.20 Moreover, according to S. V. Bakhrushin, he had to bribe the strel’tsy musketeers to make a ‘popular request’ for the return of the tsar’s favourite, since the tsar’s oath concerning the man’s exile could officially be broken in such a manner. Bakhrushin

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19 Information on Crawford, Hamilton, Carmichael and Leslie is contained in the unpublished prosopography by Dmitry Fedosov and Oleg Nozdrin, ‘Lion Rampant to Double Eagle: Scots in Russia, 1600–1700.’

20 Quoted by S. V. Bakhrushin, ‘Moskovskii miatezh 1648g’, Nauchnye trudy, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1954), 53.
suggested: ‘In state conditions alien to all constitutional juridical forms, there was created a unique reciprocal relationship of the supreme power and the people, in which was possible a formal agreement between the tsar and his subjects reinforced by an oath. Thus peculiarly was composed the political life of Moscow’.\(^{21}\) However, for a recent analyst, Valerie A. Kivelson: ‘By spurning the proferred appeals, the tsar had eloquently demonstrated that he had little interest in preserving the traditional image of a merciful ruler extending his personal protection to his people. The act reverberated with significance: the age of personal intercession had given way to the age of the law code and the civil servant’.\(^{22}\)

Although the preface to the *Ulozhenie* or Code of Laws of 1649 declared that it aimed at justice for all, the institution of serfdom was firmly entrenched and other concessions made to the wishes of the nobles and merchants. Thus, in an informal alliance with the upper strata of Muscovite society, the Romanovs consolidated their absolutism at the same time as any pretensions the Stuarts might have had in the same direction were crushed.

In Muscovy, political and economic reasons could be combined with the opportunity of appeasing social discontent. In 1649, for example, one hundred and sixty four deputies from Russian towns petitioned Aleksei, complaining that foreign mercantile competition was causing poverty and hunger amongst Russian mercantile families. In the context of the domestic disturbances, Aleksei decided to act: the Revolution in England, Scotland and Ireland was a convenient political pretext for revoking the Muscovy Company privileges. Of course, were Aleksei not to react in any way against the overthrow of monarchical rule and the imposition of republicanism, he would be displaying a dangerous political weakness.

If the privileges were to be revoked, customs duties previously unpaid would form an additional and valuable source of income for the Russian treasury. Thus perhaps, as Phipps suggests, ‘the same action might have been taken even if the King had triumphed over Parliament in the Civil War’.\(^{23}\) However, Loewenson argues that although political and economic motives were apparent, ‘it would be wrong to presume that the shocking news from England was looked upon merely as a welcome pretext. The extent to which Moscow was impressed by the fact that the English “killed to death their King

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 59.

\(^{22}\) Kivelson, ‘The Devil Stole His Mind’, 756.

Carolus” is shown by the striking differences between the receptions accorded to the representatives of Charles II and of Cromwell’. Moreover, for all the other possible reasons for the revoking of the privileges, the Russians were always to insist that the regicide was the one and only reason.

The regicide was just one incident in a wave of violence circumnavigating the whole world. And this is no twentieth-century superimposition of a theory of ‘crisis’, for the beheading of Charles as just one of many upsets throughout the world affecting monarchs and their subjects alike was clearly discerned at the time it happened. In a survey of the years up to 1650, for example, James Howell wrote ‘…to take all nations in a lump, I think God almighty hath a quarrel with all mankind, and given the reins to the ill spirit to compass the whole earth; for within these twelve years there have been the strangest revolutions’. Howell continued:

and horridest things happened not only in Europe, but all the world over, that have befallen mankind, I dare boldly say, since Adam fell, in so short a revolution of time… I will begin with the hottest parts, with Africa… The Tartar broke over the 400 miled wall, and rushed into the heart of China… The great Turk hath been lately strangled in the seraglio… The Emperor of Muscovia going on in a simple procession upon the Sabbath day, the rabble broke in, knocked down and cut in pieces divers of his chiefest counsellors, favourites, and officers before his face; and dragging their bodies to the mercat place, their heads were chopped off, into vessels of hot water, and so set upon poles to burn more brightly before the court-gate. In Naples, a common fruiterer hath raised such an insurrection… Catalonia and Portugal hath quite revolted from Spain… knocks have been betwixt the Pope and Parma: the Pole and the Cossacks are hard at it, Venice wrestleth with the Turk…

More than 300 years before the enunciation of the General Crisis in Europe was advanced, then, James Howell had observed that the crisis had involved the whole world!

25 Paul Dukes, Graeme P. Herd and Jarmo T. Kotilaine, Stuarts and Romanovs: The Rise and Fall of an Old Relationship (Dundee, 2009), especially Chapters 4–6.
26 James Howell, Familiar Letters on Important Subjects, wrote from… 1618 to 1650 (Tenth Edn, Aberdeen, 1753), 411–12.
There is a strong case for maintaining that this crisis began the modern era in world history, and for placing at its centre the execution of Charles I after a formal trial, not just a straightforward murder, as had always been a threat to heads of state.

Soon after the king was executed, his last words were reported in English pamphlets and newspapers. Not long later, these words came out in translation via German and Swedish in a Russian ‘newspaper’. We do not know for sure what effect the Russian version had on Tsar Aleksei, or even if he heard it, but we may be permitted to speculate that he still had it in mind at Kolomenskoe in February 1663 when he was taken ill and forced to make a sudden exit from a banquet after proposing a toast to the ‘glorious martyr Charles’. Quite possibly, he thought of his own relationship to his people and his Church. No doubt, the Moscow Revolt of the previous year, 1662, was also on his mind.

Swedish involvement in the relay of news from London to Moscow takes on a further dimension in a communication of 9 June 1649 from Stockholm to Moscow. This was actually sent by the Scottish Colonel Alexander Crawford to his brother Colonel ‘Ivan’ Crawford and Lieutenant Colonel ‘Ivan’ Leslie. Alexander Crawford wrote that he had arrived safely in Stockholm on 6 June and brought news with him from Scotland while he was also expecting further news from Riga. As well as showing concern for the pay and conditions of officers and men, he also reported that the Marquises of Hamilton and Huntly

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27 Twenty-five years before Eric Hobsbawm inaugurated the discussion in *Past and Present*, G. N. Clark observed in the *The Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1929), that ‘somewhere about the middle of the seventeenth century European life was so completely transformed in many of its aspects that we commonly think of this as one of the great watersheds of modern history’ (ix). Nine years after Clark’s observation, Roger Merriman, concentrating on Europe, published *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (Oxford, 1938).

28 For example, *King Charles his Speech made upon the Scaffold at Whitehall Gate, Immediately before bis Execution…*, Published by Special Authority, Printed by Peter Cole at the Sign of the printing Press in Cornhill, near the Royall Exchange (London, 1649). The much published and most influential royal meditation *Eikon Basilike* (*The Royal Image*), probably composed by the King’s chaplain John Gauden, also made its first appearance soon after the execution.


had been executed for leading opposition to the new regime, but that the Scots still hoped to carry war to the English.\textsuperscript{31}

To turn to a more recent reference to the same year, in ‘Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered’, Geoffrey Parker notes that many contemporaries attributed the disasters that had befallen them to supernatural forces: in Scotland in particular in 1649, after a decade of revolution, war and drought, when, according to Sir James Balfour, ‘the prices of victual and corn of all sorts were higher than ever heretofore any[one] living could remember’, the Scots Parliament declared ‘that the sin of witchcraft daily increases in this land’. To avoid further cataclysm, the Parliament issued about 500 commissions for the trial of suspected witches, with more executions in 1649–50 than in any other comparable period in Scottish history.\textsuperscript{32}

Only a few contemporaries blamed their misfortunes on climate change, Parker observes, while quoting Francis Bacon to the effect that ‘men need to pray for fair weather’ when the main pillars of government were shaken or weakened and suggesting that the Scottish Revolution ‘offers a perfect vindication of Voltaire’s thesis that rebellions arose during the mid-seventeenth century through a fatal synergy between government, religion, and climate.’ Parker writes that ‘Charles’s insistence on creating “one uniform course of government in, and through, our whole monarchy” especially in matters of religion, coupled with the Little Ice Age, led to state collapse’. However, Parker warns against climatic determinism: ‘Three other factors, all of them related to human agency, also shaped the General Crisis in Scotland (and elsewhere): contingency, imitation, and intransigence’.\textsuperscript{33}

In his wide-ranging essay, Parker certainly includes events in Russia in the General Crisis, but says nothing specific about the role there of climate, although he devotes more than half of his essay to this subject. Indeed, he makes only one reference under this heading to Scandinavia, another important part of Northern Europe. The gap can be filled to some extent by reference to the work of Robert Boyle. In his Preface to \textit{New Experiments and Observations touching Cold, or an Experimental History of Cold}, first published in 1665, Boyle

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\item[\textsuperscript{32}] Geoffrey Parker, ‘Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered’, \textit{American Historical Review}, vol. 113, No. 4 (2008), 1061.
\item[\textsuperscript{33}] Ibid., 1063, 1075.
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wrote that ‘our great Verulam [Francis Bacon] did not speak so inconsiderately, when he called Heat the Right Hand of Nature, and Cold her Left’ before himself observing that ‘though in our temperate Climate the effects of Cold seem not to be very remarkable, yet besides that, in more Northern Regions they are oftentimes stupendious …’

Since ‘some of the eminentest Phoenomena of Cold’ could not be examined in England, Boyle turned to other authors for help: a Dutchman, a Swede and an Englishman. He also writes of ‘having once had the Opportunity of an Hours Discourse with an Ingenious Man, that not only liv’d some years in Muscovy, but was, and is still Physician to the great Monarch of that Empire’. This was none other than Dr. Samuel Collins, author of *The Present State of Russia*, first published in 1671, a year after he died. Collins had written to Boyle in August 1664 that ‘in these thirty years the Winters are become so mild …’ It seems that extremes of temperature were in the other direction. At least, in another work Robert Boyle wrote: ‘The Czar’s chief physician confirmed to me, that in the year 1664, or 63, extraordinary dry and great Scopes of Land were set on Fire, and miserably wasted by the great Heat of the Sun’.

Collins was not Boyle’s only informant on Russia. Among others was a Scottish soldier, Lieutenant-General William Drummond, ‘Governor of Smolensco’, who described the effects of frost not only on alcoholic beverages but also on fish in ponds and lakes ‘frozen over so strongly that men might march with canon over the ice’. It might seem strange that Drummond should observe such phenomena during thirty years of mild winters, but we are, after all, talking of Russia! Drummond as well as others also talked of ‘very intense Frosts’ producing ‘great noise, like the discharge of Muskets’ in wooden

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34 Robert Boyle, *History of Cold* (London, 1665), with italics as in the original, Michael Hunter and Edward B. Davis (eds.), *The Works of Robert Boyle*, vol. 4 (London, 1999), 208, with his own italics. Of course, Francis Bacon is alleged to have died after catching a chill while stuffing a fowl with snow in order to observe the effect of cold on the preservation of flesh.


However, if the observation of Boyle via Collins were correct, and ‘Heat the Right Hand of Nature’ (in Bacon’s phrase) were to be found in Muscovy as well as cold, it is quite possible that the key events of the revolt of 1648 in and around the Kremlin were influenced by summer temperatures intensified by the incendiary activities of the insurgents. If we add that the view of the Tsar was widespread that ‘The Devil Stole His Mind’, there can be little doubt that Voltaire’s fatal synergy between government, religion and climate was as present in Muscovy as in Scotland.

Boyle’s major informant on Russia, Samuel Collins, let us recall, was personal physician to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, perhaps the most eminent of Western doctors resident in Russia during the seventeenth century, normally engaged to care for the tsar’s family and entourage. From the 1640s, demand for modern medicine spread, especially from the army, with surgeons becoming an integral part of army units from the middle of the decade onwards. In 1653, some 30 strel’tsy or their children were drafted to learn a range of medical crafts, and eight boys able to speak both German and Russia were recruited from among newly baptized foreigners for similar purposes. In the 1670s, the government began to encourage the children of the Russian personnel of the Aptekarskii prikaz to learn foreign languages, while new pupils had to be literate. In general, M. V. Unkovskaya notes, its pupils:

were a small group of Muscovites, but they were the first among the lower strata of society to be placed in the position of close contact with foreigners. Their continuing loyalty to the Prikaz and their professions provides a striking example of the change in the attitudes of simple Russians towards foreigners and foreign learning and thus helps us to understand better the rapidity of Russia’s Westernization during the following decades.  

Another important aid to this understanding, on medicine and much else, is the Diary of Patrick Gordon. When we add what we know of the activities in Muscovy of himself and his fellow Scots such as Paul Menzies operating in the higher strata of society, we have an important aid indeed. Gordon and

38 Boyle, History of Cold, Appendix, Hunter and Davis (eds), Works, vol. 4, 551–2, 570. Loewenson writes of G. Drummond, but it must have been William, who left Russia in 1665, not 1664 as Loewenson writes, and probably met Boyle.

many of his colleagues living in Moscow never forgot their homeland or their loyalty to the Stuart cause, but they did become familiar with the ‘opinions and customs’ (to quote Montaigne again) of Muscovy. Compare the Gordon of 1661 first arriving in Moscow, revolted by the city and its inhabitants, with the Gordon of 1678 blowing up the fortress of Chigirin in a spirit of devotion to a second cause, the prosperity of the Romanov dynasty.

Certainly, by the 1660s, with the establishment of a regular postal service between Moscow and the West, the opportunity was to present itself for a more regular exchange of news. Among those to take advantage was Patrick Gordon, who became the Moscow correspondent for the *London Gazette*, as well as showing a great interest in acquiring a wide range of books from London. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that, well before the end of the seventeenth century, there were Russians fully aware of contemporary European cultural developments, for example V.V. Golitsyn and Ya. V. Brius, one of Scottish extraction, the other benefiting from contact with Scots. Possibly, one of the first tutors of the future Peter the Great was Paul Menzies. Without doubt, in many ways, Patrick Gordon contributed to Peter’s early education.

To return as we approach a conclusion to the ‘General Crisis’, let us recall the observation made in 1965 by Christopher Hill, who suggested that there was some agreement that there was an economic and political crisis all over Western and Central Europe during the seventeenth century. Discreetly applied, the comparative method might be ‘a useful tool for the historian, the nearest he can get to a laboratory test’. English history, Hill added, would not then appear as ‘something unique and God-given’. Enthusiasts for Scottish history have also been carried away in this introverted fashion, although the widening recognition of the mid-seventeenth revolution as taking place in the three Kingdoms, in England, Scotland and Ireland, has been a step in the right direction. But, while some specialists remain apprehensive of leaving

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42 See the argument of N. V. Charykov, *Posol’stvo v Rim i sluzhba v Moskve generala Pavla Menezha* St. Petersburg, 1906.

the offshore islands, how far should we attempt to roam? Should we stop now at the boundaries of Western and Central Europe, as Christopher Hill appears to have recommended in 1965? But let us recall the ‘General Crisis’ is no retroactive superimposition, indeed that, in the middle of the seventeenth century itself, James Howell took ‘all nations in a lump’, thinking that ‘God almighty hath a quarrel lately with all mankind’.

In both the discussion of the 1950s–60s and that of 2008, for all its breadth of view, there is a lack of comprehensive coverage or pattern. Europe still appears to consist of the West, South and Centre, without much attention to the North and the East. To a considerable extent, the boundaries of the activities of the Scots in Russia help to indicate the perimeters of the General Crisis. At the end, as at the beginning, an endorsement of Tarle’s observation: ‘The more powerful, the more authentic the generalising thought, the more it needs the erudite and erudition’. The concept of a General Crisis of the seventeenth century seems to me to be authentic. It certainly needs more erudition. There is, too, the danger of abstracting it from the course of history. In other words, the General Crisis needs to be not only scrutinised in itself but also placed in its chronological context. Among their many services, Scots in Russia help us to acquire an understanding of seventeenth-century momentum. Alexander Leslie and his comrades take us from the Time of Troubles to the events of 1648–51. From 1651 onwards, Patrick Gordon gives us an unparalleled account of the decline of Poland in ‘The Deluge’ followed by the transformation of Muscovy in which he and fellow Scots played an outstanding role, preparing the way for the reforms of Peter the Great.

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